

SOUNDINGS



Quarterly Journal of Volunteer Marine Rescue NSW | Issue 8 - September 2011

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Cover photo

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Editorial

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Ron Cole

We are so lucky that some very remarkable people volunteer to work in Marine Rescue units. And among the most remarkable are the Unit Commanders. These are folks who agree to take on the responsibility to manage their local unit.

I'm sure when they agree to accept the appointment that they do not realise just how much time and effort is needed to run a successful search and rescue unit.

Each local unit through its Commander is responsible for the everything including at least all the following matters:

- (a) the provision of marine search and rescue services;
- (b) the training and recruitment of members in

From the Editor's Desk

accordance with MRNSW standards and policies that accord with national professional standards;

(c) the procurement, and maintenance of rescue vessels and other assets of the unit;

(d) the procurement and maintenance of the unit's radio base, equipment and internal facilities to required the standards and policies determined by the MR Board;

(e) budgeting, fundraising and accounting to enable the unit to be fiscally viable;

(f) the maintenance of the good image of the unit in the community.

Each Unit Commander (UC) must lead by personal example. The UC is accountable for the overall safety performance of the unit. The UC is responsible for accident prevention and seeks to ensure that the highest possible standard of accident prevention measures is maintained by members at all times.

The UC has the responsibility to ensure that safety performance is regularly reviewed and corrective measures are implemented if required. The UC ensures that any incident is investigated promptly and corrective measures taken to prevent recurrence.

The UC and his Deputy find other members to become Unit Staff Officers who work with the UC and DUC to achieve the unit's objectives.

It is no small task to keep a unit and its members 'on track'. To have all the members motivated to work as a team and to be willing to give up time to constantly train so they are ready to assist when a call comes in from a vessel and its crew with trouble.

It is difficult to keep vessels always in peak condition ready to safely leave the dock when conditions are far from ideal and reliability is essential.

It is not easy to maintain marine radios and associated computers, copiers and phones that are in daily use by a range of operators. The UC has to be sure that trained volunteer crew members are on duty every day to respond to an urgency call.

It is human nature to grumble. 'They' (whoever they are) often get it wrong or could do it better. And who has to listen sympathetically to the grumbles?

Why the UC of course, that's what he/she volunteered to do.

Yep, MRNSW Unit Commanders are remarkable people and likely unaffordable if they were paid employees with the range of responsibilities that they have willingly accepted as their lot.

Where would we be without willing volunteers in our communities?

Ron Cole



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The importance of patrolling on Botany Bay

Saturday June 11 was very windy, a 30 knot day. Skipper Rick Davenport and his crew, Mark Moretti, Robert McLaughlan and Bob Bunton on board 'Botany Bay 20' were on duty and on the water.

Late in the afternoon, after a patrol on Botany Bay they were on the way back to St George Motor Boat Club when a small sailing vessel was spotted. It was overturned, approximately half a kilometre from shore near Towra Point.

The crew went to investigate and found a middle-aged male clinging to the sailing vessel, while his middle-aged female crew member had drifted about 100 metres downstream. The crew picked up the woman, who was very cold and had been in the 11°C water for half an hour. After retrieval she was immediately wrapped in a space blanket.

Botany Bay 20 then headed back to aid the male crew member, who was still trying to right his sailing dinghy. The woman immediately returned to the water to help. The rescue crew was almost ready to take both sailors from the water and leave the sailing vessel when it was eventually righted. *Botany Bay 20* followed the boat back to the sailing club, to ensure that its crew were returned to the safety of land.

Due to the weather conditions, *Botany Bay 20* was the only boat on the water at the time. If it had not been out on patrol that day the rescued sailors may have succumbed to hypothermia and possibly even perished.

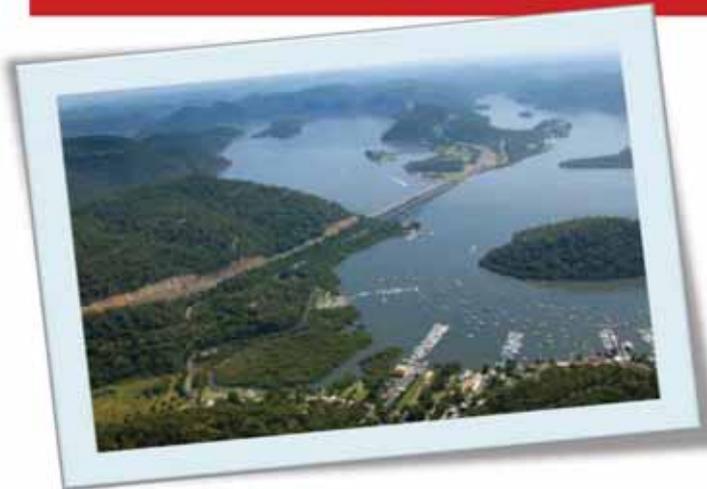
This is the reason for MRNSW volunteers and it shows the importance of patrolling the water, especially on days when the weather is terrible.

Rick Davenport
Botany Bay

'Botany Bay 20' on Patrol in Botany Bay on June 11, Mark Moretti at the helm



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Hastings River floods

In mid June 2011 the upper reaches of the Hastings River received more than 350mm of rain from an East Coast low centred off the Mid North Coast of NSW. Flood warnings were issued for the entire area and all emergency services were put on standby.

On June 15 Marine Rescue Port Macquarie received a request for assistance from the owner of an eighteen foot runabout that had sunk at its wharf in the canal area of Port Macquarie. Although technically a salvage job the rostered skipper decided to provide any assistance possible. *Rescue One* and *Rescue RIB* were deployed and headed up-river.

On the journey, a call was received about a yacht that had broken from its mooring at Hibbard which is further up river than the original job. *Rescue RIB* was sent ahead to investigate. At Hibbard there is a cross-river ferry that connects Port Macquarie with the North Shore. This ferry is operated by pulling itself across the river on two thick steel cables stretched from shore to shore. On arrival, *Rescue RIB* came across a scene of devastation. (picture above right) Two yachts, three oyster pontoons and two NSW Maritime navigation markers were all entangled with the two 25mm steel ferry cables. This was made worse by the 4-5 knot flood waters running down river.

Rescue One arrived soon after and the task of dis-entangling began. Oystermen arrived and started taking oyster trays off the pontoons. *Rescue One* and *Rescue RIB* began with the yachts. Firstly, the upstream yacht was pulled clear and located on a vacant mooring. The downstream yacht was a different story. Its mooring chain was knotted with the ferry cables. Crew from *Rescue RIB* secured a tow line from the bow of the vessel to *Rescue One* and then went about cutting the chain with bolt



cutters. As soon as the yacht floated free the slack of the tow line was taken up and the second yacht was successfully moored on another vacant mooring.

Another call for assistance was received from the owner of a yacht at risk of breaking its mooring. The river was still rising, with a peak expected early evening when a spring tide of 2.0m was also expected. Both rescue vessels proceeded to move this vessel to a more secure location.

Finally, after five hours, the rescue vessels arrived at the scene of the original call-out, the sunken runabout. Salvage crews had managed to raise the vessel, and requested it be towed back to the marina. What started out as a simple assistance job turned out to be four separate jobs spanning six and a half hours in flood waters that were littered with floating debris of all descriptions.

Geoff Shelton
PR Officer Port Macquarie

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1800 406 406

Australian Government
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From the Commissioner

Volunteers are the strength of Marine Rescue NSW. The Board has put its faith in me to lead an organisation where members make an enormous contribution to the boating community through their skills, energy and commitment. Since my appointment on July 1, I have been endeavouring to meet as many members as I can. Becoming familiar with facilities and equipment will be my priority in coming months. I'll do my best to schedule unit visits at times suited to you.

I have already visited Shoalhaven, Port Kembla, Central Coast, Port Stephens, Botany Bay, Port Jackson, Middle Harbour and Lemon Tree Passage units and met the Illawarra Regional Unit Commanders and our six Regional Coordinators. This has given me a snapshot of matters of interest and issues of relevance to members. No doubt this picture will grow as I meet more of you. I attended the commissioning of Port Kembla's new Kevlacat, the *Alex (Shorty) Mathieson*, and Shoalhaven's new Steber, *A.M. McGilvray II*. Thanks go to the NRMA for its donation of six battery kits, four of which have been allocated to new vessels at Batemans Bay, Shoalhaven, Port Kembla and Botany Bay, with the remaining two to be allocated to other vessels about to join the fleet.

A new Steber (No.3) was delivered to Iluka Yamba on August 19 and over the next few months Nelson Bay will take delivery of the first 8.5m Gemini RIB purchased from its own funds. A second 8.5m Gemini RIB is expected to be delivered to Narooma in October, along with Kevlacat No.3 to Evans Head. The last vessel to be delivered this year will be Steber No.4 to Middle Harbour in December.

Long Service Medals are a way for us to acknowledge members for the countless hours spent helping those on the water. I have

presented Medals to deserving members at Botany Bay, Port Hacking, Port Kembla and Port Stephens. The medals recognise service to Marine Rescue as well as the AVCGA, RVCP and VRA. Many such unit presentations are featured in this issue.

The Sydney International Boat Show (SIBS) showcased spectacular vessels and industry innovation, including MRNSW and the services we offer. I acknowledge Club Marine and Team Windcraft for their fundraising support at SIBS, along with NSW Maritime and the BIA for their cooperation in enabling us to promote our rescue, radio and education services as a Boating Safety Partner.

All units should have received new brochures and eye-catching banners around our new theme, *"Saving lives on the water"*. This one phrase captures why we are here and it's our most important role. The brochures and banners, together with soon to be delivered marquees (one to each region), are designed to help at fundraising and community events. A central store is now located in a 300sqm warehouse in Chatswood, enabling more reliable despatch. The phone /fax number is (02) 9882 2869 or alternatively, 0488 211 861.

I want to acknowledge the energy and enthusiasm my predecessor, Acting Commissioner Glenn Finnis brought to the task of establishing a single marine rescue service. The Board, A/Commissioner Finnis, staff and members have worked tirelessly to build our foundations.



Stacey Tannos

Continued on page 8

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Cementing a partnership for boating safety

A strong partnership between Marine Rescue NSW and the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command is crucial to improving boating safety on our waters.

MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Commander of the NSWPF Marine Area Command, Detective Superintendent Mark Hutchings, are working to forge closer operational, training and communications ties between the two organisations. The two leaders met at MRNSW HQ at Middle Harbour on August 12 to explore the potential benefits to be gained by developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) setting out a framework to facilitate even greater cooperation between the organisations and their personnel.

Commissioner Tannos said the two organisations had a joint commitment to saving lives on the water. "MRNSW volunteers and the MAC officers are working cooperatively at every level, from the water up to headquarters, to protect life and property, both at sea and on our harbours and inland waters," he said. "Our volunteer members work side-by-side with Police to assist and protect members of the boating community.

"Detective Superintendent Hutchings and I have had a preliminary discussion around a potential MOU, which could help formalise our joint understanding of our roles, capabilities, consistent SAR training and methods of operation to ensure we provide a seamless emergency response."

Detective Superintendent Hutchings said increasing marine traffic, from both commercial shipping and growing numbers of leisure craft, made it vital for the agencies to work more closely together than ever to help ensure boating safety and security. "Police are responsible for coordinating search and rescue operations but we

rely heavily on the MRNSW volunteers to turn out to assist boaters in trouble and support large-scale Search and Rescue activities," he said. "As well as this, the two

agencies work cooperatively to oversee aquatic events and control spectator craft on occasions such as the Hawkesbury Classic, Sydney to Hobart, New Year's Eve and Australia Day celebrations and events such as the sinking of the HMAS Adelaide off Terrigal.

"Both Commissioner Tannos and I are committed to streamlining systems, procedures and communication to help our members fulfil their roles and responsibilities to the boating public. "This will be the subject of ongoing discussions in coming months."

MRNSW's 3200 volunteers operate 42 Radio units and 44 accredited Marine Rescue units along the NSW coastline. Police vessels and personnel are strategically located at important commercial and leisure coastal ports at Port Jackson, Broken Bay, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Coffs Harbour, Botany Bay, Port Kembla and Eden.



Dramatic Merimbula rescue

Merimbula's notorious bar claimed another victim on Sunday May 29 when two local Merimbula men ventured out to the bar around 0730 hours for a morning's fishing.

Deputy Unit Commander (DUC) Bob Marsh reported that it was a beautiful morning, however, things went pear shaped within seconds when the Merimbula Bar stood up, and with amazing force dumped on the small fibreglass fishing vessel. DUC Marsh said the vessel was picked up by the incoming wave and turned over completely, flinging both occupants into the water. Thankfully, both men were rescued by local surfers Simon Emms and Dave Gilbert who were able to swim the short distance from the beach.

Veteran of a number of serious rescues, duty radio operator Wes Dunn, observed the incident from the Unit radio room. He quickly alerted the local surf club and Police Marine Area Command and then called out Merimbula's Rescue Vessel, *Merimbula 20*. Unit Commander Barry Harrison, DUC Bob Marsh and Boat Master Bill Blakeman launched *Merimbula 20* to assist with the on-scene recovery. Eden Water Police requested that *Merimbula 20* remove the upturned vessel that was blocking the entrance to Merimbula Lake.



Bob Marsh watches as surf lifesavers attach ropes to enable the vessel to be righted.

Pambula Surf Life Saving Club members assisted with a RIB and a jet-ski, and they were called on to cut the vessel's anchor line as the anchor was embedded in the ocean floor.

Once the vessel was released, *Merimbula 20* towed it out into the bay where it was righted before being returned to Merimbula Lake.

Barry Harrison
Unit Commander-Merimbula

Beware when near the bombora

On Sunday May 15 a man, his 16 year old son and his son's mate went fishing off Hoyers Reef, about half a nautical mile offshore near the entrance to Wallaga Lake which is about 10km north of Bermagui on the NSW South Coast

The sky was blue, the swell was small, and the man was sitting back having a cup of coffee. He looked around and saw a large wave swelling off the bombora near the Reef. He got to the ignition and started the engine but did not have time to put the boat into gear. The boat rode out the first wave but unfortunately there was a second and bigger breaking wave immediately behind. The second wave rolled the boat. The man and his son's mate were tipped out. Unfortunately, his son was trapped under water. He managed to get out about fifteen seconds later. Lifejackets were retrieved from the boat.

The son is a strong swimmer. He swam to shore to raise the alarm while his father stayed to assist his son's mate who had a severe gash and a broken leg. The man towed the injured mate to shore, where he was airlifted away to hospital. Marine Rescue Bermagui, the surf patrol, police, ambulance and rescue helicopter all participated.

Initial details of the incident were not clear, so Bermagui Unit's rescue vessel, *James T. Lees*, skippered by Steve Angelo, began a search for any other survivors possibly still in the water. Fortunately, all were on the beach. However, *the James* did find three pairs of work boots (yes, they float) and a sheepskin cap.

The capsized boat subsequently washed up on the beach. The local slipway operator and a local farmer with a tractor unsuccessfully attempted to salvage the boat. The man says he can't thank the locals enough for the assistance given to him, his son and their mate during the incident. In particular, he thanked

the local farmer, MR Bermagui, the Police, Surf Club members and the bobcat driver who happened to be there and gave assistance.

Denise Page
PR Officer
Bermagui



Boat on beach (top) and bobcat assisting.

An unusual job for Port Macquarie

In June this year Marine Rescue Port Macquarie received a request from the Royal Australian Navy to transfer a crew member from shore to 'HMS Success' that would be on station one nautical mile off the bar of the Hastings River.

The transfer was to take place in three days' time, and arrangements were made to meet the crew person at the Rescue Shed on that day. The day of the transfer arrived and the crew of *Rescue RIB* were introduced to the person to be transferred. He turned out to be no other than Vice Admiral R.H. Crane AM, CSM, RAN, the Chief of the Navy and a Patron of Marine Rescue NSW.

The job of course immediately took on an air of importance. The Vice Admiral was briefed on the RIB procedures and departed from the rescue shed wharf. Conditions on the bar and at sea were far from ideal. A large crowd including the media gathered on the headland overlooking the bar watching. They were wondering why a navy vessel the size of the *Success* was sitting just off the bar. Until *Rescue RIB* came into view, speculation among the crowd spread into thinking the *Success* was going to attempt a bar crossing.

When *Rescue RIB* came alongside the *Success* the freeboard of the Navy vessel prevented any 'normal' transfer. Finally the decision was made that the *Success* would launch its own RIB,



Vice Admiral Crane (seated) crossing the Port Macquarie bar in 'Rescue RIB'.

transfer the Vice Admiral, and then recover their vessel. The plan went off without a hitch and the job was done.

Rescue RIB came back into the river under worsening bar conditions and fading light. The crew knew they had assisted the RAN with the transfer of the most important person in the Australian Navy.

Geoff Shelton - PR Officer Port Macquarie



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What is Scouting?

Scouting is a worldwide movement that has shaped the development of youth and adults for 100 years. Scouts are in every part of our community, and Scouts is the biggest and most successful youth organisation in Australia. Nearly 20,000 boys and girls in New South Wales from wide cultural or religious backgrounds or with an intellectual or physical disability enjoy an almost unlimited range of activities.

The aim of Scouting is to encourage the physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual development of young people so they may play a constructive role in society as responsible citizens and as members of their local and international communities. This aim is achieved through a strong and active program that inspires young people to do their best and to always be prepared.

Scouting is fun!

Scouting is definitely fun, and it also prepares young people for life in the adult world by teaching responsibility for their own actions and progress. These achievements lay a solid foundation for the success of our future Australian leaders. But don't tell the kids they're learning...they think they're just having fun!

No matter the age of the participant, Scouts provides fun and exciting programs that promote active learning. Whether the young boys and girls are canoeing, camping, visiting museums or helping their local community, the activity is sure to teach them about themselves and the world around them.

Scouting is Adventurous!

Each year, all sections of Scouts learn to share responsibilities and to live with each other through adventures set in the outdoors. Camping, abseiling, caving, horseback riding, fishing, rock climbing and diving are just a few of the exciting experiences that a Scout may have achieved in his or her time as a youth member.

Scouting is Challenging!

Scouts challenge their minds as well as their bodies. Not everyone looks for the outdoor buzz all the time, so Scouts have challenging activities linked with the internet and amateur radio, performance arts such as singing, dancing, and acting and awards linked to citizenship, community service and personal spiritual development.

Scouting is Commitment!

Scouting makes a direct and positive impact on the community by teaching positive values and leadership skills to youth. Every year, Scouts and their leaders contribute thousands of volunteer hours to their local communities. Sharing time with the aged in the local community, helping with Clean Up Australia Day, and planting trees to help rescue the Murray River are just a few examples of the commitment Scouts make to their communities.

As a parent of a youth member, you are encouraged to contribute some of your time to the Group either through fundraising, working on the Group Committee or assisting with some of the activities.

For more information, please call 1800 SCOUTS (726887) or visit www.scouts.com.au

Dumped emergency beacon sparks false alarm

Commissioner Stacey Tannos has warned of the need to dispose appropriately of unwanted Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs).

Emergency services, including a rescue helicopter, were mobilised unnecessarily in July

when an unwanted EPIRB dumped in a rubbish tip near Perth activated. It was found to be buried under a large pile of rubbish.

“While this incident was on the other side of Australia, the message is exactly the same for NSW,” Commissioner Tannos said. “If an EPIRB is no longer wanted for any reason, it should be disposed of properly to ensure that it will not accidentally activate and spark a major emergency response operation.



A 121.5 MHz EPIRB now discontinued

“Emergency services must respond when an EPIRB signal is detected. Regrettably, there are still instances where owners opt for ‘the easy way out’ when disposing of this equipment.

“Responsible disposal of these items can save the community thousands of dollars in wasted and futile rescue operations, which could also divert the emergency services from genuine, life-threatening emergencies.”

As the Commonwealth Government agency responsible for the regulation and registration of EPIRBs, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority has made arrangements for the safe disposal of unwanted EPIRBs. Owners can easily and safely dispose of their unwanted emergency beacons at no cost by placing them in collection bins at any Battery World store around Australia.

Any individual or groups wishing to dispose of beacons in bulk should contact Battery World to make arrangements. A small handling fee may be charged for commercial quantities.

Kate Woods
Marine Rescue HQ

From the Commissioner continued ...

I am reviewing a number of areas with a focus on how HQ supports members. Particular emphasis from will be placed on:

- *raising the profile of MRNSW, to build community awareness of the professional emergency service our volunteers provide*
- *implementing the Service Delivery Model to guide our decisions on capability development*
- *securing additional financial support*
- *building on our information technology tools and systems and*
- *building constructive relationships with our stakeholders to advance members' interests.*

One of our most important relationships is with the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command (*See story page 6*). The MAC coordinates marine search and rescue activities and is responsible for tasking our units in responding to emergencies.

I would like to thank members for the welcome I have received and look forward to meeting many more of you in the future.

Stacey Tannos

No mystery, Doug's been everywhere...

Ulladulla Unit Commander Doug Musker took an unusual call for help from yacht delivery skipper Paul Doney: "Can you help me sail a catamaran home to Australia . . . from the Caribbean?"

Never one to duck a challenge, Doug grabbed his lifejacket and headed for the Brisbane jump-off point for a trip to the British Virgin Islands and a three-month odyssey most of us can only dream about. The unit was left in the capable hands of Deputy UC Keven Marshall, and with the blessing of wife Gail, an auxiliary member, Doug was off on a memorable voyage.

An experienced sailor with coastal and long-range ocean voyages under his belt, and lots of time as a skipper on Marine Rescue vessels, Doug was well-qualified for the 17,000 km trip. Now back on the South Coast, and with *Kathamaria II* in her new Queensland home, he can still hardly believe the reality of his adventure.

It started when skipper Paul Doney called in to Ulladulla while delivering another yacht and the two fell into conversation. Some years ago Doug was crew delivering a yacht to New Zealand and so was a natural when Paul's Caribbean job came up. With little notice Doug had to do some furious arranging and some serious pleading, to seize the opportunity. By the end of March he was on the island of Tortola in the Windward Islands with Paul and Alan Taylor, the new owners of the 42ft *Kathamaria I,I* preparing for the trip to Australia. The yacht was ship-shape and a few days after arriving, the crew left for the Panama Canal.

En route they heard BVI Marine Rescue doing exactly what MRNSW does, towing a boat. Later they heard the US Coastguard at Puerto Rico searching for a yacht in distress. The trio arrived at Colon on the eastern end of the Panama Canal on April 2.

At the Canal the crew was astounded by the engineering achievement. "It was fascinating to experience the organising that goes into a canal transit," said Doug. Although delays are common *Kathamaria* was given a date less than a week ahead. This allowed the crew to explore Portobello before joining a convoy of yachts for the canal transit.

With the pilot on board, the yachts were organised into rafts of three. After transiting the three locks they moored in the Gatun Lake, and the pilot left. Next morning a new canal pilot joined the yacht and repeated the process through the remaining locks. After a couple of days in a Panama City marina they headed for the Galapagos Islands.

The 2,000nm passage from Panama had mixed weather, currents, and squally showers, and a daily visit from scores of squid and flying fish. These were removed each morning. "Miss one and you smell it all next week" was Doug's comment. In the late afternoon of April 13, *Kathamaria II* crossed the Equator.

The trio anchored in Wreck Bay on Isla San Cristobal to provision for the longest leg of the journey to Les Marquises. They found a pleasant, safe town and popular starting point for tours of the legendary islands. Only two boats were spotted on radar during the whole leg and apart from these vessels none was seen until the island was reached. Next stop was the enchanting Iles Marquises, a French possession. Officially the trio never visited the islands, as when they took passports to be stamped the Gendarmerie was closed.

Consistent trade winds pushed *Kathamaria* along on the next leg of the journey, the 1800nm to Pago Pago in American Samoa. Apart from odd squalls, the winds were so reliable the crew could leave the spinnaker up overnight without fear of a sudden change. About 20nm from Pago Pago the wind died and the port engine was used. It was reading quarter full but just as they

approached the harbour, the engine died. They switched to the starboard engine and had an anxious half hour watching the other gauge. With an ebb tide and no wind, and with no chance of anchoring (the harbour lies inside an extinct volcano with no shallow water), skipper Paul decided to tie up alongside the first vessel he spotted. At daylight they discovered that they were tied alongside the official launch of the Governor of American Samoa and the Water Police base was 20m away.

Kathamaria made good time on the last leg of the trip to Brisbane, warily picking its way through multiple rocks, wrecks, and reefs just south of New Caledonia. Doug said, "Thank goodness for modern chart plotters, navigating these islands at night would have been a nightmare without one."

The final stage of the voyage brought fluky winds and as the vessel approached the Queensland coast the wind moved onto the nose. It was so frustrating to be able to see the low coastline on the horizon and yet be unable to sail in to Brisbane. After initially trying for Amity on Moreton Island, they headed south south west, working in to the coast as they progressed. VMR advised of a favourable northerly wind change and the decision was made make a run for Southport.

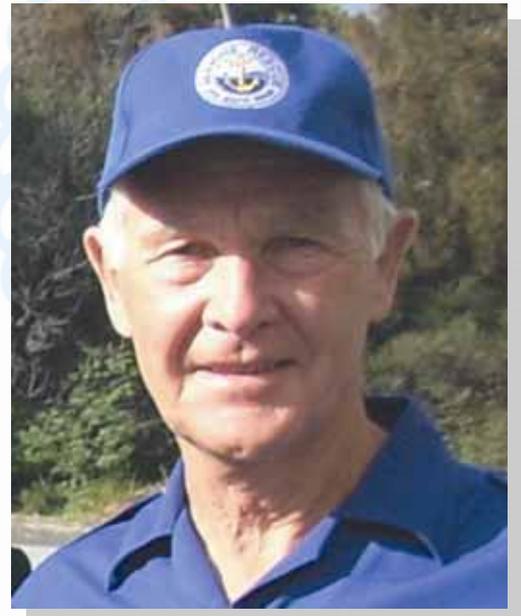
The engines were started up and the yacht turned for home, drinking up fuel reserves. "Half an hour after advising the efficient, friendly volunteer operator at Seaway Tower of our plans, we received a return call. Customs instructed that in no circumstances were we to enter Australia at Southport or pick up fuel there."

Forced to defy the instruction and invoke international maritime law permitting any vessel under duress to enter any safe haven, the crew headed to Southport. Arriving at the fuel berth at midnight, they were greeted by two armed Customs Officers. The senior officer advised that he had reason to believe they had committed an offence under the Customs Act.

An inspection of the fuel gauges convinced the officer that the vessel was indeed very low on fuel, and the attitude changed completely. He and his offsider (a yachty in his private life) were friendly and completed their duties very quickly.

Five hours later and 7kg lighter, Doug was reunited with wife Gail in Sydney – mission accomplished in the best Marine Rescue tradition.

Jamie Roberts
PR Officer Ulladulla



Doug Musker



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PROUD TO SUPPORT MARINE RESCUE NEW SOUTH WALES

Ulladulla unit actions and aspirations

Although it was the traditional “boating off-season” there was little rest for the volunteers at Ulladulla over the winter period.

Although relatively quiet at sea, crews still had to conduct a search for a “missing” aircraft and recover a yacht beached in foul weather. On land there was plenty of activity to ensure there were very few idle hands.

A big drama was the sea search for an aircraft reported down at sea. Local police alerted the unit when a witness reported a plane had crashed into the ocean off Ulladulla.

Encounter was deployed and conducted a three-hour search off the harbour before being recalled. It later emerged a light aircraft had later landed at Moruya and it was suspected that this had been the “missing” aircraft which had dipped low and been obscured by the headland, giving the impression that it had gone into the sea.

There was no such doubt about the fate of the catamaran beached in Ulladulla harbour during a particularly violent July storm. Heavy seas were battering the harbour and the catamaran broke away from its mooring and landed on a nearby spit of sand.

The owner asked for help and Unit Commander Doug Musker joined him while Deputy UC and duty skipper Kev Marshall took *Encounter* to assist. Although the harbour was sheltered from the worst of the seas, the heavy swell, high wind and very shallow water made it an extremely tricky recovery.

The crew eventually managed to attach a line and drag the catamaran back to its mooring.

On shore there were multiple celebrations as thirty-five members were awarded long service medals in a presentation at the July mess meeting. Together, the volunteers have amassed more than 400 years of service. Senior regional officer Bruce Mitchell did the honours for four twenty-year medals, fifteen ten-year awards and sixteen five-year ribbons – this is a quite record.

This cheerful event made up for the unfortunate loss of revenue from two cancelled monthly harbour ‘fund-raising’ markets.

Rain washed out one event and forecast damaging winds forced the other to be scrapped. The loss of income was unfortunate because the unit is currently focussed on a major refurbishment to its existing premises that were built by the volunteers almost thirty years ago and now need an update.

The project is already underway with the preliminary plans drawn up. A grant application has been submitted since this will be a costly project. Fund-raising will be an all-important activity in coming months.



‘Encounter’ prepares to assist the catamaran grounded in a storm.

Stage I will be a much-needed training room to accommodate the demands of modern training requirements. The existing quarters do not provide an appropriate learning environment and a new computer-based facility is planned for the extension. It is hoped this will just be the beginning – the plans allow for a refurbished radio room (stage 2) then more office and storage space for crew and boat gear. Another priority will be a lift to provide disabled access to the top floor to give physically challenged members the opportunity for greater involvement in activities.



The Ulladulla “vets” line up (from left): John Culley, Ed Duffey, Barrie Lovell-Davis, Ron Williams, Cyril Fenwick, Neil Atkins, Trevor McCarthy, Rex Pymble, Bill Glover, Doug Musker, Ken Lambert, Bill Samuels, Charlie Frendo, Keven Marshall, Jamie Roberts, Wal Laywood, Peter Owen, Ray Brining, Jeff Peterson, Ray Donohue, Bill Barber, Tom Lees, Alleyn Wilkinson, Tony Clifford, Ray Dixon Clive Millen and Jim Pryce.

The new area will also enable Ulladulla unit to present a more professional face to the boating public, especially those who attend the base for boat licence courses, first aid and navigation training and instruction. Meanwhile, the work goes on and a group of new members is preparing for Marine Rescue Crew qualification.

Jamie Roberts
PR Officer Ulladulla



Operational Communications

The MRNSW Operational Communications Branch (OCB) has responsibility for radio communications, including policy advice, licensing, MMSI applications, equipment selection (27MHz, VHF, DSC, DCN and AIS), systems design and maintenance.

The OCB is headed by Ian Brown and he is assisted by Simon Denneen. The OCB is happy to assist units with any aspect of their radio communications needs.

To date, the OCB has migrated to Marine Rescue NSW all of the former RVCP communications licences and the majority of former AVCGA NSW licences. Several of the former VRA marine radio base licences have been migrated over and we are working with VRA to transfer the remainder.

All radio communications base licences will be retained at MR Headquarters and will be managed by the OCB. This means that units no longer have to deal with the detailed paperwork required to manage marine radio base licences. Should any unit require additional licences (i.e. for standby bases, etc) or changes to existing licences they need only e-mail Simon Denneen at simon.denneen@marinerescuensw.com.au and describe what they require.

An audit of standby base licences currently held under the MRNSW ACMA client number has been carried out, to ensure all standby bases are correctly licensed and up-to-date.

The OCB also manages Maritime Mobile Service Identity numbers (MMSI). An MMSI is a unique nine-digit code set into your DSC-capable radio transceiver and/or AIS transceiver, to identify your vessel or coast station. This year the OCB has assisted several units to obtain MMSIs for vessels and radio bases, as well as registering EPIRBs and ensuring these are

linked to the MMSI register. Later in the year we will be working to bring all MMSIs into the one Marine Rescue client database, allowing better access to information and allowing changes to be managed efficiently.

Operational Communications Manager Ian Brown (pictured right) has many years' experience in electrical engineering in the radio communications field. His expertise and experience is available to all units.

Questions relating to radio communications can be directed to him at communications@marinerescuensw.com.au

To date, the OCB has provided technical advice to many units and has assisted with maintenance and repairs at several. Recently, the OCB visited sites at Shoalhaven, Jervis Bay, Cottage Point and South Head. The OCB has submitted a comprehensive budget to HQ for 2011 – 2012. It includes several capital works programmes that will enhance Marine Rescue NSW's radio communications' capability. OCB is working closely with the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner to bring these hopes and plans to fruition.

Ian Brown and Simon Denneen
MRNSW Operational Communications




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Oxy-Viva resuscitator for Crowdy Harrington

On July 20, local Freemasons presented Unit Commander Merv Orpin with a donation of \$2000 to purchase an Oxy-Viva Resuscitator that will be located in the base at Harrington.

The Oxy-Viva Resuscitator provides the benefits of resuscitation, suction and oxygen therapy, all in the one compact unit. Operating off a 400 litre (C-size) oxygen cylinder, these three different treatment modes can be used simultaneously or separately for almost any emergency situation. The equipment will be made available for emergency situations that might arise within the local community, as well as in sea rescue.



Oxy-Viva Unit

Two cheques were presented, one by Masonicare representative John Moore and the other by the Master of Lodge Laurieton-Haven, Jim Allen. Six other representatives from Freemasons, including Greg Redfern, Chairman of Masonicare, and seven Crowdy unit members were in attendance.

The donation was most gratefully accepted by Cmdr Merv Orpin, who thanked the District 44 Masonic Lodges for their generosity. Crowdy Harrington members will undertake training in the



Merv Orpin accepts donation from Jim Allen Masonic Lodge Laurieton-Haven

oxygen unit's capabilities and function with FAIM (First Aid Industrial Medical) that was founded in Taree in 1996 to contribute to the education and safety of the wider community through the delivery of First Aid and Medical Training.

Popular and hard working member Pat Carberry was recognised for outstanding service to maritime safety. At a special presentation on July 13, Pat received her ten year service medallion from MRNSW Board Regional Director, Tony Breen. Pat commenced as a foundation member of the then Crowdy Harrington RVCP on September 1, 2000 and is our longest serving member.

At that time the Coastal Patrol had no operating premises, so Pat generously offered the use of part of her home as the original base. Subsequently, a caravan was purchased and used until the current premises at the Break Wall were opened in March 2005. During her ten years, as well as duties as a base radio operator, Pat has held the positions of Radio Officer, Welfare Officer and Roster Clerk. She is perhaps best known for her tireless efforts in Fund Raising, particularly for organising the unit's successful Market days.

Ross Windred
PR Officer Crowdy Harrington

The eyes & ears of the ocean



Image supplied by Riviera

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Radio traffic, financial grants and re-decorating at Central Coast

Over the last few months there has been a steady flow of work for the volunteer team at Central Coast. The unit has averaged about twenty assists per month and about five hundred radio calls per month at Point Clare radio base and around two hundred calls per month at our Terrigal Haven radio base.

The bulk of the Terrigal calls relates to boats going out with groups to dive on the HMAS Adelaide. The majority of the dive operators are logging on and off on each trip, which is a significant improvement on previous practice, though we still have one or two who do not feel the need to call us. They do their own thing and hopefully, in time that will change.

On July 13 a morning tea was held for Ms Marie Andrews the retired MP for Gosford. It was to acknowledge the unit's appreciation for all the help that Marie had provided to our Unit over almost sixteen years in office. During the morning we were serenaded by entertainer Shane Edwards, who sang a variety of songs and demonstrated his vast vocal talent.

Our Unit has had some successes lately with several grant applications. We received \$49,000 from the NSW Government Community Partnership to upgrade and replace the access stairway into our Terrigal Haven radio base. The NRMA Community Group gave us \$1,122 for the purchase of emergency pumps for both rescue vessels, and we also obtained a \$10,000 CDSE grant from Ettalong Memorial Bowling Club for the purchase and installation of AIS transponders on our vessels. The support from NRMA, EMBC and the State Government is acknowledged with a huge thank you from the unit members.

A repaint the interior of the Point Clare radio base is underway, to make it fresher and lighter. We are in negotiation with Gosford City Council, seeking authorisation to build a storage shed to house our new training boat and equipment, plus we are discussing the issue of siltation adjacent to our base jetty.



Silting at the Point Clare Base during very low tides

Currently during a very low tide we are unable to launch either of our rescue boats from their boat lifts. We are hopeful that as part of the local government Estuary Management Plan we may make some headway with this problem. Finally, significant discussion has been undertaken with Maritime, Fisheries and Gosford City Council, with a view to standardising the signage at the eighteen boat ramps in the Gosford Local Government area. These signs will be tri-signs with MRNSW, Maritime and Fisheries on each. We are observing the KISS principle to ensure that they maintain relevance to boaties as they launch their vessels. It will also be the opportunity to remove many other signs which are outdated or not relevant.

Ian Gallard

Unit Commander Central Coast

Marine Rescue Bermagui goes to Canberra

The Traditional Boat Squadron of Australia formed 20 years ago by a group of traditional boat enthusiasts organised a "Boatfest" in Canberra in April this year.

The venue was on the shore of Lake Burley Griffin in front of the Canberra Yacht Club. More than thirty vessels participated. The idea was to show the general public what boating used to be like with a number of "putt-putts," steam launches, gaff rigged yachts and traditional rowing craft. In addition it was a swap meet for all things nautical.

Marine Rescue Bermagui was fortunate to be invited to attend. An enthusiastic team lead by UC Alec Percival set up the marquee, MRNSW banner, all the pamphlets, and other information from the base in Bermagui.

Canberra is only a three hour drive from Bermagui and many Canberrans are members of Bermagui unit's Marine Radio Safety Service (MRSS) and interested visitors were invited to join.

Others that just enjoy fishing or touring Bermagui, asked questions not only about the area's boating, but marine safety and about the role of Marine Rescue in NSW.

Alec Percival
Bermagui



Unit Commander Alec Percival in front of the MRNSW promotional stand at "Boatfest-2011" at Canberra.

Boats 'all at sea' without secure moorings

In less than a week, Port Stephens Unit was involved in four recovery jobs for vessels that had broken from their moorings in bad weather conditions.

Three yachts ended up on the beaches surrounding Shoal Bay, Nelson Bay and Salamander Bay and a houseboat came floating down the Myall River from Tea Gardens. Two weeks later, yet another runaway, a 16-foot skiff came adrift at Corlette and floated dangerously close to other moored vessels as it meandered down the Bay.

These incidents raise questions as to the regular maintenance of moorings (let alone some of the neglected boats attached to them), and the substantial financial costs that owners may have to bear if their mooring fails. Recovering beached vessels can be very tricky and requires coordinated crew work, diligent skippering and strong recovery towlines. Our lifeboat crews took on the challenge with *Danial Thain (PS30)* recovering the beached yachts, and *Codi K (PS20)* the houseboat on the river.

Although tasked by police, these recoveries were undertaken only after a thorough risk assessment by the skipper and crew and then authorisation from the Unit Commander. For example, where one of these breakaways was judged to be too dangerous in the atrocious weather conditions, she was left on the beach until the weather improved. In another, the Unit Commander stayed ashore and carefully watched and directed recovery operations in conjunction with the lifeboat crew.

Nevertheless, boat owners need to be far more vigilant in the servicing and maintenance of their moorings to ensure that they are strong enough to withstand extreme weather events. Failing to do so can result in extensive damage to the vessel and also potential damage to others along its path. The unfortunate consequence of long term neglect of a mooring may render the insurance policy invalid, with the owner becoming liable for not only the repairs to his own vessel, but for any damage to other boats as well as the cost of recovery.

In our latest run of wayward boats, if it hadn't been for the expertise of the water police and our lifeboat crews, expensive salvage charges may have been incurred by the boat owner. To highlight just one event, after two failed attempts by the water police, *Danial Thain* recovered a yacht that beached at Nelson Bay (see footnote). Had our attempt failed as well, the commercial cost to get a larger tow vessel up from Newcastle would have been in excess of \$20,000. Not something for anyone to look forward to!



Bob Young, PR Officer Port Stephens

Footnote: When this yacht was recovered it was placed on the police mooring in Shoal Bay. It has since sunk on that mooring, where it still remains, creating an ongoing navigational hazard for other vessels. We understand that some four months ago it sank on its mooring, was refloated and repaired, only to break free from the mooring during the recent foul weather.

Emergency Services Forum

A forum was conducted in Coffs Harbour on August 2 to highlight the roles of emergency services in the community to refugees, migrants and other new Australians.

Police, Ambulance, Fire and Rescue, Marine Rescue, Surf Lifesaving, State Emergency Service and the local Army Cadet unit were involved. It was aimed at breaking down stigmas which are often attached to people in uniform.

It was a challenge to deliver a presentation about the activities of Marine Rescue to the refugees and migrants, especially with the level of English comprehension that many of them have.

The fitting of life jackets was popular, with some asking if they could wear them at the beach as they could not swim.

Linda Jones
Regional Coordinator Mid North Coast

John Long, from MR Coffs Harbour
teaching Georges Degle how to put on a life jacket.



Comments from Coffs Harbour

The unit has been busy with events around the local community as well as with recognition of our members with long service awards.

The unit assisted the Rotary Club of Coffs Harbour South with its annual Bookfest. It involved many of us lifting, sorting, selling and then finally packing and cleaning up through the week. The effort was appreciated by the Rotarians, and we are the primary beneficiary of the club's fundraising for this event. BBQs continue at Bunnings and at the Deep Sea Fishing Club events, with literally hundreds of snags artfully cooked and dispensed to a hungry public.

We promoted MRNSW Coffs Harbour unit with guest speaker spots during National Seniors Week of the Volunteer at Sawtell Lions Club and at the briefing for the Dave Irvine Classic. Socially, we had an enjoyable unit BBQ at one of the local National Park picnic areas.

Our rescue vessel CR2 has had a mixed bag. One month was the lowest on record for tows and assists, and the next was the busiest month on record. In June, six crew members completed their Coxswain's course at TAFE. CR2 was used to assess the practical on-water component of the course. Fire-fighting training also featured during the quarter.



Greg Taylor (at rear) Alison Bowling and John Long enjoying their fire-fighting training.

The long service of some of our most valued members has been recognised; 5 year service ribbons were presented by Regional Director Tony Breen to Andrew Cox, Kurt Dusseldorp, Mark Halling, Lawrie Hansen, Andrew Innes, Tony Minto, Terry O'Halloran, Lindy Powells and Greg Taylor; 10 year service medals were awarded to Linda Jones, Tony Jones, Dave Levingston and Jenny Lopez, while Evalds Erglis was highly commended with a 20 year service medal. David Horne, who retired recently, was presented with a letter from the Commissioner and a 10 year Service Medal.

Russ Holland
PR Officer Coffs Harbour

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Solar savings for Marine Rescue

Three Marine Rescue bases have installed solar panels to help offset spiralling electricity costs.

As unit operating costs increase, electricity prices in particular are a cause for concern. Increased use of computer systems and the need for air-conditioning in some bases has costs on the rise. Kioloa, Camden Haven and Central Coast commissioned the installation of roof-mounted solar electricity systems to help offset some of this cost.

“Our power consumption has consistently increased as new technology is introduced, and the SolarSave PV system has helped with our energy costs,” Central Coast Unit Commander Ian Gallard said. On the Central Coast interest in solar has extended to more than 5% of the volunteer members, who now have solar systems on their own homes.

Recent amendments to NSW Government legislation has resulted in a net metering system replacing gross metering for new solar PV installations. Although an ongoing net feed-in tariff is yet to be finalised, fitting a solar electricity system remains a viable proposition for households and small businesses, where power is in use throughout the daylight hours.

For a Marine Rescue Base while the sun is shining, solar panels are able to generate free green energy to power lighting, communications equipment, to recharge batteries for radios and offset air-conditioning power consumption. The SolarSave team visited the Central Coast Base and suggested that other Marine Rescue Bases could benefit from a solar PV system, a solar hot water system or energy efficient long-life LED lighting.

(see advert page 5)



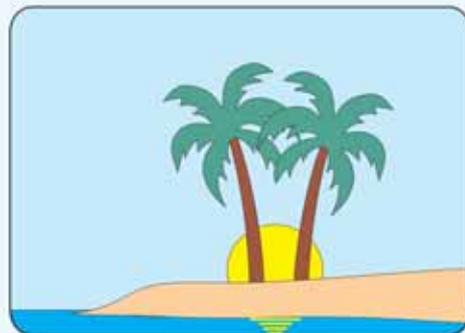
SolarSave installation team member Adam, admiring the 2 kilowatt solar PV system at Point Clare

SolarSave’s James Bailey offered to visit any MRNSW Base to discuss options that could permanently reduce the consumption of energy. “We will review the energy consumption of any interested unit, make recommendations and, if requested, provide a supply and installation quotation,” Mr Bailey said. “We’re also happy to extend this obligation-free offer to any MRNSW member or the readers of *Soundings*.” James Bailey can be contacted on 1300 770 422 or 0488 444 369.

Chris Sullivan - SolarSave

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Cottage Point involved with TV 'Rescue' show

Airing of the Channel 9 action drama, "Rescue Special Ops", now known as just "Rescue" began on May 30. The series focuses on a team of professional paramedics who specialise in rescue operations. Filming for this season has taken place throughout 2010 and early 2011 and two Marine Rescue volunteers have been lucky enough to represent MRNSW on the show.

Marine Rescue Cottage Point was approached, as one of its boats, *Cottage Point 30*, was chosen by the show's directors as being ideal for the filming exercise. The wide beam and stability of the 9.0m Sailfish Catamaran, along with the power of the twin 200hp Yamaha outboards, were important features for the producers.

John Bensley and Eathan Ellem were asked to skipper and crew the vessel, which will be shown in the 11th episode, due to be aired on Channel 9 in August. They spent several days and nights filming both at Broken Bay and Botany Bay - involving scenes with filming in-water, from another boat and from *Cottage Point 30* itself.

"It was great to work alongside well-known Australian actors like Les Hill, Gigi Edgely, Andrew Lees, Katherine Hicks and Daniel Amalm," John said. "There was no alienation or segregation, and the actors would come to Eathan and me to ask questions about us, the boat and volunteering for MRNSW. They were genuinely interested in what we had to say."

"It was very exciting to be involved with the shooting of Rescue Special Ops," said Eathan Ellem, who isn't shy for the cameras, as he has already been on television for the hit series "Renovation Rescue".

"We had some tricky manoeuvres to do in the boat, but luckily the conditions were favourable for us each time we went out, and I was also lucky to have a very capable crew assisting me," John added. "The most onerous part was trying to replicate each scene for the various camera angles that the directors wanted."

Unit Commander David White said: "I am very pleased that CP30 and two of our finest young members have been featured in these episodes. The profile of Marine Rescue will certainly be raised by their participation in this high rating show."

Cottage Point unit and the volunteers received remuneration from producers, Southern Star Entertainment, to cover fuel, time,



(Above Left to right)
Andrew Lees, Daniel Amalm, Eathan Ellem, John Bensley, Gigi Edgely, Peter Phelps, and Katherine Hicks



(Left to right) **Gigi Edgely, Daniel Amalm, Katherine Hicks, Andrew Lees, and an unknown members of the film crew in the cockpit of 'CP30'.**

expenses and maintenance for CP30 - on top of a donation for general unit expenses.

John Bensley
PR officer Cottage Point

School students visit Merimbula

Merimbula Primary School students studying transport safety recently visited the Merimbula Unit at its Spencer Park base.

Dot Green, coordinator from the school, organised 125 students to visit the base over two Wednesday afternoons. They enjoyed the opportunity to inspect the radio base and Merimbula's new rescue vessel. The students also met local NSW Maritime BSO Darren Hulm. Darren gave the students a tour of his vessel and a brief talk about his role in transport safety.

The Unit's Maintenance Officer Rob Bayliss said, "It was a terrific opportunity for Merimbula to showcase our modern equipment and our rescue vessel to local students."

Barry Harrison
Unit Commander - Merimbula



Robert Bayliss with Cooper Noak behind the wheel



Michael Rizzi proudly displays his 30Kg jewfish to his mates at The Entrance
Story page 34



Pat Carberry (Crowdy Harrington) accepting her 10 year award from Tony Breen
Story page 13



Focus on Marine Rescue



Doug Musker en route to Queensland aboard the catamaran 'Kathamaria 11' with a winged friend, and the vessel berthed in Pago Pago
Story page 9



Middle Harbour unit members who were awarded their Long Service Medals by the A/Commissioner at the AGM of Middle Harbour on June 8. L to R John Hayler (30), Simon MacDonald (10), Geoff Cooke (10), Bill Kelleher (10), David Dawson (20), Beryl Callagher (20), Tony Bray (30), Lance Miller (30), and John Stinson (10).

Absent Mike Stringer (30) and Jeff Laight (10).



The Long Service Group from Nelson Bay unit of the lawns at front the Port Stephens Base after the LS Medal presentations. Story page 25



A Ballina team (left) held a public CPR demonstration at the South Ballina holiday park in July, Lorraine Lueckel instructing.

A sad day at Lake Macquarie

On June 11, three teenagers decided to go camping on one of the small islands in Lake Macquarie. The weather conditions were bad for a trip on the lake in a small tinny, and around 1700 the craft overturned between Coal Point and the Drop Over.

The incident will be the subject of a future Coronial hearing. The overturned boat with one male ended up at Green Point; another male came ashore at Marks Point. Water Police contacted Lake Mac unit's Radio Officer, Ray Wall, at the Swansea Radio Base at 1940 hrs with the news that a boat had overturned and there was a 14 year-old girl missing. She had been in the water over two hours. Police required urgent assistance with as many vessels as we could muster.

Boat crew responded immediately and the unit deployed its three rescue vessels. They were joined by a Water Police vessel and a Maritime vessel. The MR vessels were crewed by Steve Davidson and Glen Dowey (*LM11*), John Margrie and John Fenwick (*LM21*) and Bob Suttie and Neil Grieves (*LM20*). The five vessels teamed up and conducted group search patterns in the area where the tinny had overturned and in other locations where it was thought the missing girl may have drifted. The search was coordinated by Sergeant Tony Hogg of the Water Police from the unit's Pelican Base that became the Command Centre for the Operation.

Weather conditions were very difficult with heavy rain and wind chop from the 20 knot southerly. This made the search challenging but the crews stuck to their task. They were assisted by helicopters using searchlights, but time over the search area was limited due to poor visibility and heavy rain. The search continued until 0200 on Sunday morning. The weary crews returned to the Base where they were met with hot coffee and a smile from Chaplain Richard Wrightson.

The saddest things I saw that night was when the overturned tinny was towed to the Base and we pulled it ashore and turned it over. Two lifejackets fell out of the boat. What a different end to the story there may have been if the lifejackets had been used.

At 0600 a fresh set of three crews were at Pelican Base to recommence the search. In all we had six vessels, three Lake Macquarie vessels, two Maritime vessels and a Water Police vessel. Once again a search pattern was used to check the northern areas of Lake Macquarie. The weather conditions were still terrible. In the heavy rain storms it was difficult to see the next vessel and the distance between vessels had to be reduced. The crews appreciated the excellent wet weather gear issued by MRNSW. Drainage run-off created a lot of debris in the lake. The Radio Base was fielding calls from people who had seen 'something' floating in the Lake. Each sighting was investigated.

Around midday the vessels returned to the Base to refuel, take on a fresh crew and go out again. A most welcome surprise was a homemade hot soup prepared by Margaret Foran, the wife of one of our members as well as the welcoming smiles and reassurance of other members at the Base offering assistance. The search continued in the afternoon until late on the Sunday, unfortunately with no result.

On Monday morning Water Police, Maritime and two of Lake Mac rescue vessels again continued the search, this time concentrating on the likely areas and the foreshores. By this time we knew we were looking for a body but holding out hope that the girl may have made it to one of the islands.

Continued at base of page 23 (adjoining →)

Forster Tuncurry vessels kept busy

Foster Tuncurry unit was involved in a varied range of rescue activities over the past few months. Rescue vessels, *Amanda Lani* and *Lani 11* were kept busy.

On June 5 at 0715 hrs, radio operators Gary Dickson and Richard Neal received the a Mayday call. The information received was of a boat on fire 10nm south of Seal Rocks with the one POB about to abandon ship. Marine Area Command (MAC) at Port Stephens was informed and rescue vessel, *Forster Rescue 20 (Amanda Lani)* was despatched with Skipper Ray Mazurek and crew of Greg Long, Geoff Waters and Jack Fantini, heading for Seal Rocks. About halfway to Seal Rocks the Water Police recalled *Amanda Lani* as the Westpac Helicopter had rescued the boat's skipper and a Water Police launch had the vessel in tow.

On June 17 *Amanda Lani* was tasked by the MAC to proceed to Seal Rocks, to assist a fisherman reported to be in the water near the base of the Lighthouse. The rescue vessel with skipper Ray Mazurek and crew of Les Delaney, Greg Long and Steve Evans, was well on the way when it was again recalled as the fisherman had been rescued by lifesavers.

On July 6 Forster Police requested that our rescue boat *Forster Rescue 10 (Lani II)* take Police Officers to search for body reported floating in Wallis Lake near Wallis Island. *Lani II* with skipper Gerard Crowe with Mike Thomas, Peter Nash plus two Police Officers searched near Wallis Island without success but then located a "stuffed dummy" in the water near Miles Island. It is unsure if it was an accident or a stunt but the incident tied up a lot of resources of both Marine Rescue and Forster Police.

Also on July 6, National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) requested *Amanda Lani* assist with a whale entangled in ropes off Seven Mile Beach. With clearance from the MAC and

Regional Coordinator Linda Jones, *Amanda Lani* with skipper Ray O'Connor and crew Tony Breen, Les Delaney, Dave Robinson, Gary Dickson and an NPWS Officer went to Seven Mile Beach where they met another NPWS Officer in a RIB. The team began to remove the entanglement.

Unfortunately they were unable to remove all of the rope and chains and after 6 ½ hours at sea

they returned to Forster. Next day NPWS was able to remove all of the remaining material.

At our May unit meeting Director Tony Breen presented 5-year service ribbons to a number of members, then at the June meeting Regional Coordinator Linda Jones presented Long Service Medals to A Dreckmeyer, B Glover, C Christou, J Christou, G Waters, J Zalocker, R Bramsen, R O'Connor and L Willoughby.

Our fundraisers were busy at Forster Tuncurry's "Crazy Day" on July 7 when the main street of Forster is closed for the day. Unit members joined by our "Breakwall Belles" used an empty shop to sell a range of goods. They then backed up again the following Sunday for "Forster Keys Funday" where they had a stall. Both days were successful fundraising events.

Eric Armstrong
PR Officer



Forster Rescue 10 (Lani II)

Merged Lake Macquarie units going strong

It has been six months since Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie and Marine Rescue Swansea were merged into one unit and we're going strong.



Marine Rescue radio base at Swansea with new MR signage

The combined unit has enough volunteers to have a boat crew 'on duty' during the day, on weekdays as well as on weekends. We trialled this during the boating season and following its success have extended it to be year-round. We now have a call-out roster that covers every night.

The unit has installed new signage on its radio base at Swansea Heads so that both bases, Swansea and Pelican, now feature the new Marine Rescue signs.

We received some community support in July. The Lake Macquarie City Football Club and one of its sponsors, Nova Distributors, made a donation of \$1,659.05 to Lake Macquarie unit. The football club collected donations during its Ocean and Lake Benefit Day held on July 31 at Macquarie Field Speers Pt.

Finally, our unit Fundraising Officer, Thelma McCard, received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Hon Jill Hall MP, Member for Shortland. Thelma was one of seventy volunteers who received Certificates of Appreciation that acknowledge the valuable work that volunteers do for the community.

Martine Tylee
PR Officer Lake Macquarie

A sad day at Lake Macquarie continued...

On Monday afternoon the search was suspended. Lake Mac has a duty boat crew at the Base every day, so its crew was asked to conduct a daily search around the foreshore areas of the Lake until the girl's body was located. The daily sweeps continued with the assistance of the Maritime vessels stationed at Pelican.

On June 21, the body of Courtney Simon floated to the surface and was noted by a passerby walking in the Marks Point area. Water Police retrieved the body and notified the parents.

Unit Commander Jim Wright expressed his pride in the effort, teamwork and strength of all our volunteer members who played a part in the search, either directly or indirectly. He also highlighted the depth of resources that the unit had available to continually put rescue vessels and crews on the water. A big WELL DONE to all our members.

Jim Wright
Unit Commander Lake Macquarie



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New vessel named after Port Kembla member

Long-serving volunteer, Alex (Shorty) Mathieson, shared the attention with his Marine Rescue Unit's new rescue vessel, PK 20, when it was formally commissioned and named in his honour. Alex also received a Long Service Medal marking 35 years of dedicated service.

Marine Rescue Port Kembla can now provide its region with even greater efficiency and effectiveness. At 9.0m LOA, PK 20, the Alex (Shorty) Mathieson, is a fast response vessel and it has already been involved in several rescues.

The commissioning ceremony was held on July 9. Representing the Minister for Police & Emergency Services, the Hon. Gareth Ward MP, Member for Kiama, said "I am very pleased that the units of Wollongong, Lake Illawarra and Hill 60 Port Kembla have combined to form Marine Rescue Port Kembla. This new rescue vessel enables Marine Rescue to serve the large boating community in the Illawarra."

Chairman of the Board James Glissan QC, said "Port Kembla is a busy base. In the last six months it has assisted over thirty local skippers as well as running several emergency SAR operations. The number of vessels logged-on reached more than 3000 during this period".

Commissioner Stacey Tannos ESM, said, "I am proud to be Commissioner of an organisation built on the commitment of its volunteers as demonstrated by the large turnout of members here today, not only from Port Kembla but from other MRNSW units in the Illawarra area. This is a major investment for Marine Rescue", Commissioner Tannos continued, "Its cost of around \$250,000 was financed with support from the NSW Government,



Norma Mathieson naming the new rescue vessel 'Alex (Shorty) Mathieson' after her husband.

NSW Maritime and contributions the state's boating community. The NRMA again supported our work with a battery pack for re-starting flat batteries."

The Commissioner also presented long service awards to:
5 year Pins: B. Belcher, C. Bowers, N. Budge, D. Couchman, J. Dean, J. Didby, F. Grayndler, A. Lloyd, J. Parked, P. Schwinghammer, D. Wagstaff, and B. Weston;
10 Year Service Medal: B. Mitchell;
15 Year Service Medal: J. Aldridge, and K. Ellis;
30 Year Service Medal: A. Mathieson.

Ken McManus
MRNSW PR and Marketing Officer

ITIM Systems

ITIM Systems is a small Australian business enterprise that specialises in the manufacturing of marine alarm monitoring and control modules. Since founding the company in 1983, directors and brothers, Graeme and David Scott, have worked to develop and improve their product range, so that they continue to meet and exceed the exceptional standard expected by their client base.

These products are Australian made, using a high level of technology and attention to detail. The range includes fire alarms, tank level monitoring and display, bilge alarm and bilge pump control systems, gas and fume detection, nav light monitor and trim tab controllers. All ITIM's systems feature marine hardened modules, with plug in terminals for ship's wiring on the rear, and touch switch controls and LED backlit system status displays on the front of each flush mount module.

ITIM are pleased to announce the release of the first of their Next Generation of system modules. Designated the FA1-V2 and the FA2-V4. These two new fire alarm controller modules have benefitted from a full technology and program upgrade, while extending the high standard of function with reliability that ITIM modules are reknown for.

ITIM continues to expand as a business and now supplies system kit sets to boat builders and owners both in Australia and internationally. The company's first export sale was in 1986 to a Taiwanese Patrol boat builder and since then they have successfully entered the international marketplace through exports to New Zealand, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, USA and countries across Europe, Africa, and South America.

These strong international relations have strengthened since obtaining Type Approval Certificates from Chinese Register of Shipping following extensive environmental and EMC testing of ITIM's fire alarm monitoring and control systems.

As a long-term member of Marine Queensland and AIMEX, ITIM Systems has been provided with strong and essential industry networking and has influential Australian representation at all international boat shows.

(See advertisement on page 18)



RIB rescue on Durras Lake at night

'Batemans 10' is a rigid hull inflatable that is estimated to have been in service at Batemans Bay for some 13 years and that has completed at least 2500 hours on-water time.



The RIB (pictured above) was originally purchased from Trial Bay unit, its dimensions are 5.9m LOA with a 2.0m Beam. It is powered by two Honda 50HP 4 stroke engines and equipped with all the usual bits and pieces. Earlier, it even sported a short range radar unit that was removed due to OH&S concerns. In 2008 it received new engines and sponsons.

It is the workhorse of Batemans Bay, training scores of personnel, participating in rescues and assists up and down the coast, to the fresh water areas of the Clyde River, the Moruya River, the little known Buckenbowra River, Lake Durras and as part of our region's new waterway responsibility, a publicity weekend on Lake Jindabyne.

The RIB has ferried paramedics to persons in distress on houseboats, helped a diver with a spear in his leg, saved kids stranded on rocks and cliffs and to more tragic occasions, involving loss of life. Our RIB is well loved and meticulously maintained and is a welcome sight to boat users and others, whether on a mission or regular weekend patrols.

Recently it was no great surprise when it was once again called out by local police to assist in a SAR on Lake Durras on a clear but cold and moonless night. The crew mobilised included our local lake expert Ken Farrant. The lake had not been opened to the sea for some three years, and due to recent rains was some 2.0 metres above normal level. This required some nifty and delicate navigation by Ken to avoid obstacles usually in view but now just under the surface.

After an hour flares were sighted up near Bartlett Arm, and after threading a way through half-submerged trees and stumps, a Dad and his two youngsters were located. After ascertaining all was well apart from Dad's ego, the tinny with its passengers was towed back to the ramp where anxious relatives were waiting. Formalities with Police and family completed, it was back to Base and home to bed by 2200.

This was just another episode in the life of our much loved RIB.

Mick Kelly
Operations Batemans Bay

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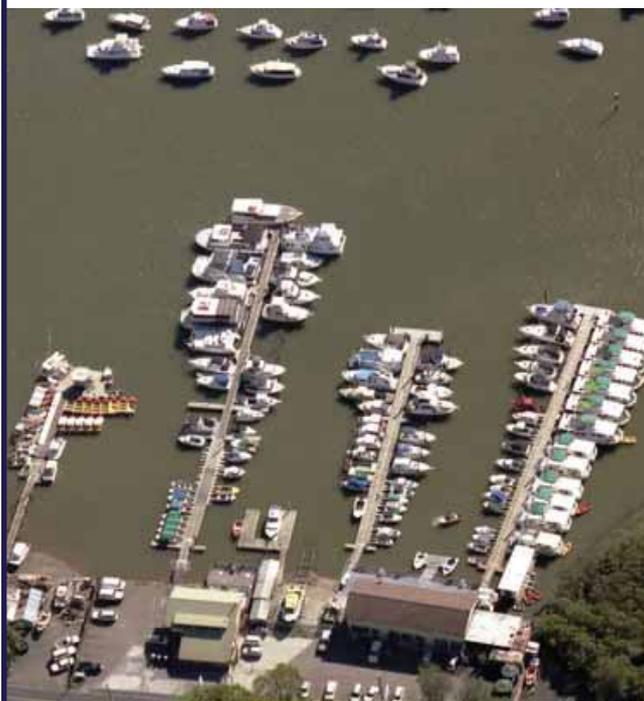


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Tropical dreaming at Eden

On the Far South Coast as the sun shines weakly through the winter clouds and the cold wind blows in from the Snowy Mountains it seems every second person you meet is heading to the warmth of the tropics. And so it goes with the boating public and members of Eden Marine Rescue.

The number of radio watch-keepers has dwindled these past few months to a barely sustainable level, and as one views the passing parade of vessels heading north there are dreams of an escape. Fortunately, most of our members will eventually return and our roster secretary will then relax. We have recruited new members and after training and will soon join the roster.

The winter weather bring strong winds and heavy seas to this part of the NSW coast, so the number of vessels transiting Bass Strait is minimal. The conditions do not deter everyone and occasionally a brave soul sets out on such a voyage. In July a vessel departed Tasmania for the East coast of NSW despite gale warnings. The vessel, with a crew of two including a teenager, ran into difficulties in the mountainous seas, taking water through a hole in its superstructure. The engine was flooded and then its mainsail halyard failed. MR Eden received a call for assistance, and the NSW Water Police were alerted. Their crew battled the conditions to locate the vessel south of Green Cape and then towing it to Eden.

Discussions with Coast Radio Hobart indicated that the skipper had been briefed on the weather forecasts, however, pressing personal situations dictated that the crossing should be made. The crew had lived on Mars Bars for two days during the crossing and had handled the conditions until their world began to fall apart. Fortunately this crossing didn't end tragically. The skipper has had



a valuable lesson that serves to remind us all, that “get home at all costs” is not a recommended practice at sea.

Eden's AGM was in July when the new Deputy Unit Commander Peter Horne was officially introduced to the Unit. He takes over from Glenda Wood and we thank Glenda for her hard work and her unselfish devotion to duty. We also said farewell to long serving Cliff and Gail Truelove who have joined their family and shifted permanently to Cairns.

A highlight was hosting the NSW ABC Radio Statewide Drive show on July 18. Popular radio personality Boni Brown set up her mini studio in the radio room overlooking Twofold Bay (*picture above*) and interviewed guests our unit Commander. Both Boni and the listeners voted the broadcast a resounding success. Valuable publicity was gained for both Marine Rescue and the Eden Unit.

John Steele
Unit Commander

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Members' dedicated long service recorded in Hansard

In one of his last official duties, Commissioner Glenn Finnis recognised members of both Port Stephens Marine Rescue Units (located at Nelson Bay and Lemon Tree Passage), for their long service and dedication to Marine Rescue.

The Commissioner then attended a congratulatory lunch at the Inner Light Cafe at our Radio Base. The Hon Bob Baldwin MP, who attended the award ceremony, addressed the House of Representatives in Canberra and paid the following tribute to our members and to Marine Rescue NSW.

"Having been out at sea, sometimes in less than favourable conditions, it is always refreshing to know that when you put out a radio call there are people there to receive and acknowledge that you are there. It is in fact, part of our maritime safety regime we have in Australia. In fact, there are 56 unit bases along the east coast from Eden to Point Danger which provide that great service"

"I would like to point out to this Chamber that these people are volunteers who will go out to sea in the roughest of weather to save other individuals. The key point here is that they are volunteers, usually in their senior years, who are putting their lives on the line in atrocious conditions to provide safety at sea for others when most people should be home in bed. They do it and get away with what they do because they are highly trained individuals dedicated to the pursuit of survival at sea."

"In recognising these volunteers, some of whom have provided decades of service, I would like to put their names on the record in the Hansard.

From Lemon Tree Passage there was Ray Conibear and Alan Ford who both joined in 2001, Dianne Wilson, who has been volunteering since 1995 and Richard Osborne, who entered the unit back in 1982.

From Nelson Bay, Brian and Maureen Wheatley signed up in March 2001, Heather Harmer, June Toms, Colin Bain and Patrick Johnson have been members since 2000, Marshall Britts, George Lawson, David Fairless, Malcolm Milliken, Nigel Waters, Geoffrey Moore, Joe Kolossa, Louise Moore, Eryl Thomas and Arthur Heiller joined in 1999, Ken Ross-Sampson, James Benson, Yvonne and John Almergren joined in 1998, Barry Hays and Raymond Calvert joined in 1996, Kevin Lanyon, Brice Shade and Alvin Kemp joined in 1994, John Smith joined in 1993, Shirley Clark and Lloyd Cropper joined up in 1991, Peter Phillipson and Rod Reeson joined in 1987, Harold Gibson joined in 1985, Mary Penny joined in 1983,

Kevin Clark and Peter Shelvin joined in 1982 and last but by no means least John Thompson, who has been helping people safe on our waterways since 1968. That is more than four decades of volunteering service.

I quite often say to Thommo, 'Mate, you've got to get a life.' But he is typical of all those people in Marine Rescue who put their lives on the line regularly, going out to save people who are in distressed vessels off our coastline."

A wonderful accolade for all volunteers throughout Marine Rescue and more so for specific members who have given so much over many years at Port Stephens.

Bob Young,

PR Officer Port Stephens

(Reprinted with authorisation from Bob Baldwin MP)

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WHY BEACON REGISTRATION MATTERS

Since the introduction of mandatory carriage of 406 MHz distress beacons in vessels proceeding offshore and the cessation of satellite detection of 121.5 MHz signals in February 2009, over 2000 people have been rescued in the Australian region through the use of distress beacons.

The speed and success of their rescues are due to efforts of a wide range of people, from search and rescue officers working in the Australian Maritime Safety Authority's (AMSA) Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC Australia), police officers coordinating the searches, passing ships and aircraft, as well as marine rescue volunteers who give up their time to assist others. In all of the cases involving distress beacons, one action has been repeatedly demonstrated as being crucial – **distress beacon registration**.

By registering your distress beacon with AMSA, you provide information that can be accessed by RCC officers in the event of an emergency. Having contact details, vessel or vehicle information, and the names of people who are likely to have information to assist in forming a response, is invaluable.

Registration is vital as satellite detection of a 406 MHz distress beacon's signal will initially generate two positions, which can sometimes be thousands of miles apart. Without accurate contact details, and if your beacon is not GPS-enabled, rescue officers face a delay in establishing your position until a further report is received from a polar orbiting satellite. If the beacon is registered enquiries can start immediately.

To ensure that your beacon can serve you best in an emergency, there are some simple actions you can take:



- Ensure that your beacon registration details are up-to-date and that you have entered your trip details, including the number and names of your passengers.
- If you have bought your beacon second-hand, ensure that the beacon registration is transferred to you, and your details are recorded.
- Carry your beacon in a grab bag with other safety and survival equipment, such as flares and a first aid kit.
- Before you go, let your emergency contacts know your itinerary and what time you're expected back.

There are now over 207,000 distress beacons registered in Australia. However, despite all the reminders, some 25 per cent of all beacons sold are still unregistered. If you have an unregistered beacon, or know of someone who has yet to register their beacon, take the time to go online to www.amsa.gov.au/beacons or call 1800 406 406 to register it now. It may be the smartest thing you ever do.

For more information regarding distress beacons, visit the website: www.amsa.gov.au/beacons or call the 406 Database registration team on 1800 406 406.



Australian Government
Australian Maritime Safety Authority



MRNSW vessels assist in search for missing yachtsman

Nine vessels from five different Marine Rescue NSW units in the greater Sydney region were involved in the marine emergency in Sydney commencing early in the afternoon of Sunday June 26.

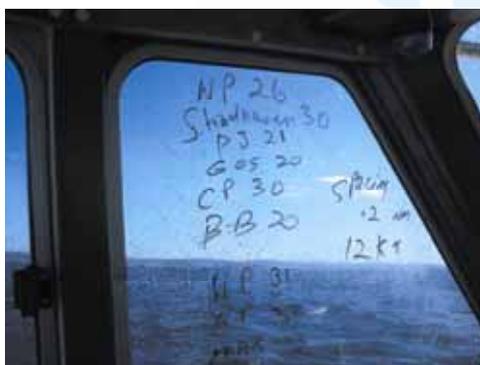
The alarm was raised around 1315 hours with MR Terrey Hills by a woman on a 326 ft yacht off Sydney's northern beaches when she emerged from below decks to discover her husband was missing from the helm. The vessel had departed from Sydney around and the man was last seen around 1030 hours NSW Water Police from Broken Bay and eight Marine Rescue vessels from units at Broken Bay, Cottage Point, Central Coast, Terrigal, Middle Harbour and Port Jackson assisted in the search for the missing yachtsman. They were aided by the Westpac Lifesaver Helicopter, several NSW Life Saving IRBs and a number of private vessels.

The Sunday search was called off when darkness fell and was resumed at 0800 on Monday morning. Again nine vessels were involved in a pattern search lead by Water Police WP 26 assisted by WP 30, WP3, the NSW Maritime vessel MAR 13 and the Lifesaver Helicopter. The Marine Rescue vessels involved were Broken Bay 20, Cottage Point 30, Gosford 20, Port Jackson 21, and Shoalhaven 30. The vessels were stood down about 1230 hours after again searching the area from Sydney Head to Barrenjoey and several miles to sea.

Glenn Finnis, outgoing Commissioner of Marine Rescue NSW said, "This has been a dreadful period for boating emergencies, with three deaths occurring as a result of two separate capsize on the June long weekend, and now, just two weeks later, a fourth death following a collision in Botany Bay and another person missing from his yacht. I urge everyone who goes boating to remember how suddenly an emergency can occur and to always wear a lifejacket."



'Rescue Vessel SA 30', in Sydney for sea trials before deployment to Shoalhaven, was one of nine MR vessels used in the search.



On 'Gosford 20' the crew used the cabin window to record the order and ID of the rescue vessels in the search for the missing man.

Point Danger rescues three from burning cruiser

At around 1100 hours on Tuesday July 12, a 40ft cruiser at sea 11nm off the coast at Tweed Heads, caught fire and the crew was forced to abandon ship.

The three people on the vessel, two men and a woman, launched a Jet Ski that was carried on board and escaped from the burning boat. The heavy plume of smoke from the emergency was seen by volunteers at Marine Rescue Point Danger observation station and a crew of four made a high speed dash for the vessel in 'Point Danger One' an 11.3m (36ft) Naiad RIB (rigid hull inflatable boat).

A local charter boat also saw the dense black smoke and made for the stricken vessel where they found the three safe on their Jet Ski. The charter vessel stood by and until the Point Danger rescue vessel arrived to take the survivors on board. 'Point Danger 1' took the Jet Ski in tow and returned to Point Danger at approx 1500 hours.

There was a large crowd of waiting onlookers as well as both NSW and Queensland Police who will investigate the incident.

Unit Commander Bernie Gabriel said, "The three people saved were very lucky they had the Jet Ski on board. Only the dense smoke alerted us to the emergency. The seas were up and although our rescue boat is a high-speed response unit it took over an hour to reach the scene.



'Point Danger 1' an 11.3m Naiad RIB

"This is a local boat from Tweed Heads," he said. "The skipper hadn't logged-on and if the emergency hadn't been so visible, it may have been some time before the alarm was raised. I urge every skipper who goes offshore to log-on with a Marine Rescue base. Tell us where you're going and when you'll be back. Then when you get back, tell us you're home safe. If we don't know you're out there, we won't know if you're not back, and by the time someone reports you missing, it may be too late."

Paul Quinlan
PR Officer Point Danger

More training in Jervis Bay

The winter period has been unusually quiet this year, with only a small number of rescues performed. Log-ons are down and offshore traffic along the South Coast almost non-existent.

The weather may be the main cause, with a lot of rain, big seas and some freezing days; even the die-hard fisherman would rather stay home. Even so, with the boating public opting to stay ashore, Marine Rescue Jervis Bay has been hard at work behind the scenes. With the help of our education team, much training has occurred on weekends and theory at night lectures. There has been training for Navigation, First Aid, Radar, Weather, Sea Survival, Fire Fighting, Radio and Watch Keeping.

The result is that a majority of our volunteer members has completed many of the courses and acquired competency certificates from the RTO. We have added to our Skipper 1 list and two new Skipper 3 volunteers are now available. Extra volunteer members are also available as crew for our rescue vessel *Colin Woods*.

Thanks go to John Gallimore, who since taking on the role of Education Officer, has transformed training into a most rewarding experience, and to Tony Drover, who has also been hard at work with lectures and practical training exercises.

Our volunteer membership has continued to grow and MRSS membership has also been expanding. Gordon Young, who runs our fund-raising along with Linda and Brian Harrison, has put



Linda Harrison (left) and Lisa Young, hard at work fundraising in the Vincentia shopping centre Jervis Bay

forward some rewarding fund-raising events. There may not have been a lot happening on the water this winter, but in the background the guys and gals at Jervis Bay have been very busy.

With new signage for our base building due shortly, Marine Rescue Jervis Bay has never looked better.

Lester Shute
Publicity Officer

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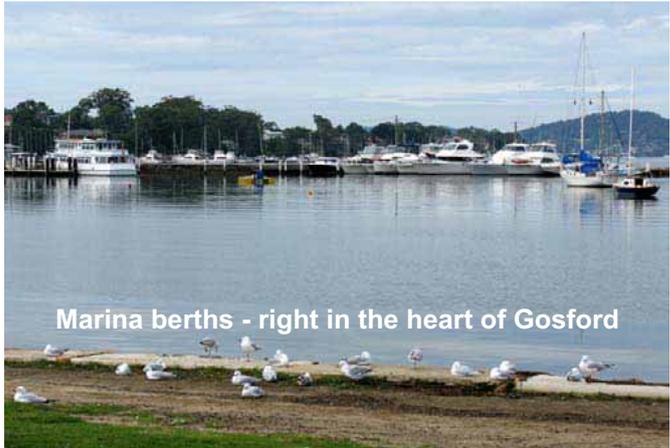


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Sometimes you can be lucky ...

One example was the invitation for Marine Rescue Point Danger to talk to a large group of local boaties and fishermen about boating safety.



The Point Danger BBQ team, (L/R) Ange and Paul Quinlan, Beryl Aldred, Gary and Glenda Ashby (missing Rhonda Frisoli)

The BCF (Boating Camping and Fishing) store at Burleigh invites customer to become members of its 'Club'. On the annual meeting night 350 Club members turned up to check out the newest and best boating, camping and fishing equipment (and accessories) available in the store, as well as to listen to a number of presentations and, of course, enjoy a delicious barbecue cooked by MR Point Danger's intrepid group of fundraisers.

While the fishos are amateurs, the organisation of the night was totally professional, yet relaxed and very enjoyable. BCF manager Matt Pingel and his assistant Jay Cottrell hosted the evening, introducing presenters on outdoor cooking, the latest fishing techniques and Marine Rescue on boating safety.

The BCF club members were very knowledgeable about local boating and weather conditions and curious to learn more at the same time. Many were keen to discuss the benefits of belonging to the Point Danger Mariners Club (CompassNet) and were especially interested in the 24-hour radio coverage, breakdown service and the courses on First Aid, Navigation and Radio (MROCP) available.

The key message for boaties was 'Log On' by radio or mobile phone, but be sure to do it. This gives us the best chance of helping if something goes wrong, and it does happen. The fact that when a boat is one hour overdue we try to contact it, and if we can't raise it we send a rescue vessel to search was of great interest to a lot of those present.

We also stressed the importance of wearing a personal flotation device (PFD 1 lifejacket) which increases chances of survival if you find yourself in the ocean.

Our thanks to Matt and all his team for the opportunity to promote boating safety, one of our primary objectives, and for the pleasant and courteous way they all interacted with us. The members are a great group of locals all interested in the same things that we in Marine Rescue are, enjoying the great outdoors in this beautiful part of the world and staying safe.

It was great to have so many enjoy the barbecue and express their appreciation to our cooks!

Paul Quinlan
PR Officer Point Danger

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Terrey Hills roundup

During the winter months the amount of radio traffic and calls for assistance has reduced at the Terrey Hills Radio Base.

There have been a few spikes of boating activity arising from the annual tuna season, with many boats logging-on to fish the grounds around Browns Mountain.

The radio repeater stations at Killcare, North Head and Maddens Plains have performed very well, providing communications for these offshore fishermen and allowing the duty radio operators to stay in touch with logged-on vessels throughout their fishing trips.

Training remains a unit focus and we have several candidates currently studying for their SARCC Watch Officer qualification. Eight members were invited by Middle Harbour unit to participate in a Sydney Harbour familiarisation exercise. There are thirteen new members awaiting their final acceptance into MRNSW and they will be commencing their training shortly.

On a sad note Andrew Topp, our first Deputy Unit Commander, was forced to resign from his position, citing health reasons. We wish him well and are glad that he has decided to remain a member of the unit and continue to share his vast experience as a Master Mariner.



Andrew Topp (seated front) with Malcolm Everitt in the radio room at Terrey Hills

Andrew is ably replaced in the Deputy Unit Commander position by Roger Holt.

Simon Denneen
PR Officer Terrey Hills

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Activities at Woolgoolga

Marine Rescue Woolgoolga held its Annual General Meeting on Sunday July 18. Commander John Murray gave an overview of unit operations over the last twelve months and an indication of future projects in 2011/2012.



Woolgoolga members assembled following the AGM.

John also acknowledged an increase in unit membership with many new volunteers now undergoing training. Tony Breen (Regional Director for Mid-North Coast) and Linda Jones (Regional Coordinator for Mid-North Coast) also spoke to the meeting and, in particular, thanked all members who had contributed towards successful operations in Woolgoolga.

The Hon Andrew Fraser MP, Member for Coffs Harbour, attended the meeting and spoke about the vital role that volunteers play in supporting the recreational boating community and their commitment to the safety of lives at sea.

Twenty-four members and guests attended. Andrew Fraser and Tony Breen presented many awards and certificates including:- Six 5-year service badges, three 10-year and one 20-year Long Service Award. Ratings epaulettes were given to four of our leading crew and to one coxswain. Nine members received their Senior First Aid Certificates.

At the AGM Ken Heath was elected Deputy Unit Commander, made necessary by the resignation of Sean Carver due to work commitments.

At the completion of the presentation a relaxing and pleasant BBQ was enjoyed by all members and guests.

Cherrill Powell

PR Officer Woolgoolga

Letters or emails to the Editor are welcome, with praise or criticism of the magazine or its content. Please keep your messages short and to the point, and about 200 words maximum. Members must include your Name and Unit and Non members must include a return address / phone number

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Letters and Emails are on page 40

**FAIRY
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THE EFFORTS
OF THE
MEMBERS
OF THE
MARINE
RESCUE
NSW**

Long Service Medal marks 69 years for Life Member

Frank McDonald, at two days short of his 18th birthday and his brother Sid, who was two years older, joined the Volunteer Coastal Patrol on 3 May 1942 as members 587 (Sid) and 588 (Frank). Both brothers served with many of the men who had established volunteer marine rescue services in Australia just 5 years earlier while Frank was still at school.

In May 1942, approaching the age of 18, Frank McDonald received his “call up” papers for military service in World War II but he was prevented from doing so. At his local drill hall he was told that the rules of enlistment had been changed. He couldn’t enlist for two reasons: first he had to complete his apprenticeship and second, his apprenticeship was with the Australian Gas Light Company which had been declared a “protected industry” for wartime. He was not happy.

Frank’s brother Sid spotted an ad in the paper calling for volunteers for the Volunteer Coastal Patrol and the two McDonald boys enlisted at the old VCP Base in Neutral Bay.

Although the VCP was a civilian volunteer organisation, its members, including Frank, found themselves in the thick of wartime service on the home front. Assigned as a crew member of *Nerydah*, a cruiser owned and skippered by Cec Weatherill, Frank was involved in numerous memorable events during the war years – the first just four weeks later.

Although not on patrol in Sydney Harbour on the night of 31 May 1942 when midget submarines attacked Sydney, Frank and his colleagues on *Nerydah* were on the water to observe the operation of raising one of the submarines sunk by depth charges, complete with torpedo protruding from a forward tube. As the wrecked submarine was lifted higher, the torpedo slipped back into the tube and his skipper decided to put as much distance as possible between their boat and that activity.

One close shave included assisting fire brigade units fighting and quelling a fire at Walsh Bay on a Dutch supply ship carrying a cargo of cork. Due to wartime secrecy, it wasn’t until several months later at a ceremony where the Harbour Master thanked the Patrol for its efforts, that Frank learned that beneath the burning cork was a cargo of high explosive artillery shells that could have blown up all the personnel and nearby buildings.

On another night, Frank and the crew on board *Nerydah* heard an aircraft noise and spotted what was identified later as a Japanese float plane. Standing orders sent them to close the three oil booms located in their patrol area of Johnsons Bay, Rozelle Bay and Blackwattle Bay.

In September 1943, Frank took part in the Emergency Services March through Sydney and can be seen with his colleagues in one of the historic photos of this event.

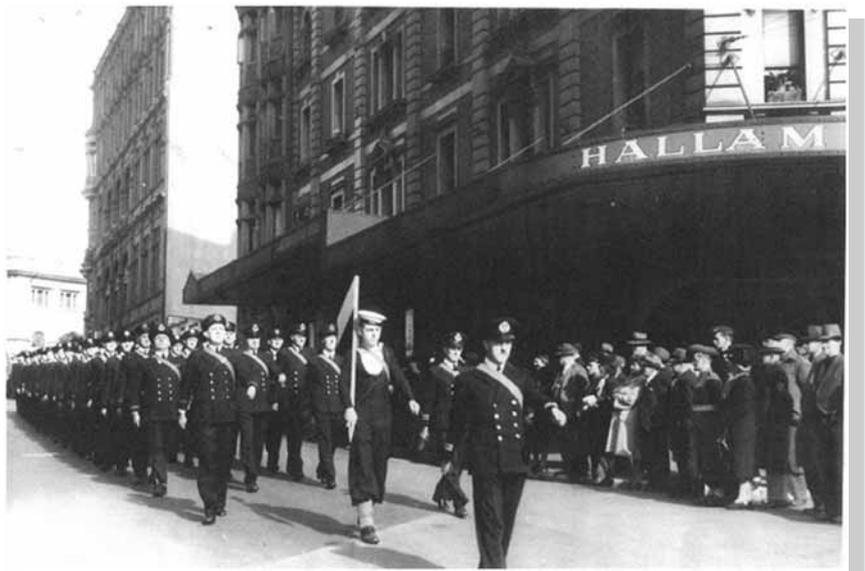
Frank went on to serve the community with distinction as a volunteer member of the VCP, later to become the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol of which he was later honoured with Life Membership. He remained on active duty with the RVCP until 1967 and has continued a close association with volunteer marine rescue ever since.

A key principle of the establishment of Marine Rescue NSW is that service by all members of the three former organisations is



Frank McDonald receiving his Medal from A/Commissioner Glenn Finnis.

recognised by Marine Rescue NSW and those members be presented with the appropriate Long Service Medal. Realisation that there was a need for recognition of a remarkable 69 years of membership caused some short-lived consternation at HQ as the Long Service Medal production line had stopped at 50 years for which a medal with a single gold clasp had been designed. This dilemma was solved with creation of a medal with two gold clasps for 60 or more years of service.



Emergency Services March in Sydney September 1943. Frank McDonald on left in 4th row from front

Former Commissioner Glenn Finnis invited Frank and his wife, Edith, to visit HQ where he presented that medal to Frank on 17 June 2011.

Ken McManus
PR & Marketing Officer MRNSW

Newcastle News

Well folks it's almost the end of winter, and I am sure there are others besides me who are not sorry. Of course, not only is Spring approaching, but so is the end of yet another year...

Over the last few months our members have been involved in training, training and more training. I am sure some wonder where or if it will end. Well the answer is probably not, but most have enjoyed the courses they have undertaken.

Our membership numbers have increased, and we have more younger members. Those of us who have been around the traps for many years are looking forward to watching these younger people take over and eventually, (sooner rather than later) steer the ship.

Unit fund-raisers have continued with the usual "sausage sizzles", and with several ship loads of boats coming in from Florida and elsewhere, our boat crew have been kept on their toes. Word has it that a few hundred more boats will arrive between now and the end of the year. We say..."bring 'em on (or in)". With the number of boats we are handling, some of our fellow members from Units north and south are likely to be considerably busier over the coming months.

We have a few members overseas on leave. We have saved extra work for them to do when they arrive back. I am sure they are looking forward to getting back into the swing of MR duties.

As well as those on holidays, we have had a few members on the "sick list" which seems to be the norm during the colder months, but thankfully they are all on the road to recovery.

Di Sergeant
Unit Commander

Long Service Awards at Broken Bay

On August 13 the Hon Rob Stokes MP, Member for Pittwater, presented Long Service Medals to nineteen members of Marine Rescue Broken Bay.



L/R with years of service, Ron Allsop (10) Martin Thorn (10) John Fleming (10) Terry Joyce (10) Terry Walsh (10) Peter Francis (10) Tom Hughes (20) Jan Walton (20) David Harrison (30) Don Southwell (30) Terry Walsh (10) Brian Kelly (30) Ken Hibbins (20)

The presentation was made at the unit's marine radio base at Rowland Reserve, Bayview. Broken Bay has four volunteer members who have given more than thirty years' service. Many of the Long Service Medal recipients are trainers for boating safety courses, while others assist with rescue services for vessels in trouble. The combination of dedicated volunteers trained to a professional standard provides a local marine rescue service 24/7.

Alan Turner-Morris, PR Officer Broken Bay

Recruitment drive at The Entrance

Col Lewis came up with a recruitment plan that we use an old sandwich board method to attract potential members. It is simple to use and has been very successful.



Col Lewis standing beside the Poster, with crew Bob Williams (L) & Greg McNab on boat

Every weekend two sandwich boards are now set up on the roadside approach to our base from both directions and in full view of cars travelling past the base.

Another board is setup outside the base, so boaties using the nearby boat ramp cannot miss our recruitment poster. Although the promotion has only been going for about two months, we have signed up eleven new members so, it does pay to advertise. This successful recruitment drive has been during our very cold and wet winter so you can imagine how it will go in the summer.

The poster's file is available to any other unit, if it wishes to utilize this already prepared material. Contact Denis O'Mara on (denisom@bigpond.com) with specific information relating to your unit (address and telephone contact details) and we will forward it to you, ready to go.

On Friday night August 5 the unit assisted in the recovery of a PWC that hit a cardinal marker near the Toukley Bridge. The driver was killed instantly. Water Police recovered his body while our rescue vessel *TE10*, skippered by Stewart Masters, towed the damaged PWC to police waiting on shore.

Apart from the above incident the wet and wintry days have contributed to a very low incident rate on our lakes. Over the past few months we have been involved with only five other incidents, mainly due to fuel and mechanical problems. The quiet time has, however, given us plenty of time for training and maintenance of the rescue boats and the radio base.

On the night before his watch, Michael Rizzi went fishing and caught a 30kg jewfish. Not one to brag (oh yeah) Michael thought the duty crew at the unit base might just like to look and weep. *(Photo in gallery page 21)*

Denis O'Mara.
PR Officer The Entrance

Evans Head supports Fishing Classic

This is the 16th year of the annual Fishing Classic held at Evans Head each July.

This year 759 adult competitors plus junior and cadet competitors competed for a variety of prizes from fishing rod combinations, cash, ice boxes and a Honda CRV valued at \$35,000. The Classic was held from July 9 to 15. The weather and sea conditions were good until the last day.

Evans Head Radio Base logged-on a total of 584 boats during the week, with 1280 radio calls and 1538 persons on board. Radio Operators put in a lot of extra hours, with two or three operators needed on each shift at the Base because of the additional traffic.

Fortunately, the unit rescue vessel was needed to respond to only one call during the week. In other years the unit has retrieved vessels that have capsized on the bar or had other mishaps at sea.

Many volunteer members assisted with the fundraising held each night at the weigh-in area. Marine Rescue Evans Head and The Evans Head Surf Club run a combined seafood raffle each night during the competition. This year it raised about \$8000, with the amount equally divided between the two organisations.



Busy Evans Head radio operators - Janine Kaiser, John MacDonald and Tony McNally (R)

Evans Head unit is proud of the hard work and support provided by its volunteers during this busy period. The event was run in a professional manner, commencing with a briefing for skippers on July 8. It was attended by all competitors, as well as Maritime NSW, the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command, Fisheries NSW, MRNSW Evans Head and other emergency groups. The briefing gave a very comprehensive overview of the competition and the safety aspects to all competitors.

*Janine Kaiser
PR Officer Evans Head*

SOUNDINGS

**Soundings is the Quarterly Journal
of Marine Rescue NSW**

Marine Rescue NSW is the single, integrated volunteer marine rescue service that provides search and rescue, radio communications and safe boating education for the NSW boating community. **Marine Rescue NSW** is on safety watch at over 50 locations, including 45 radio bases, with a membership now of more than 3,100 skilled, dedicated volunteers.

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Commissioner's commendations for courage

Three members of Marine Rescue Port Macquarie were recently awarded the Commissioner's Commendation for Courage for their efforts in saving five persons from a stricken yacht off Crescent Head in July 2008.



L/R Tony Crowe, Nick Whalen and Brett Looker with their awards.

Nick Whalen, Brett Looker and Tony Crowe were the recipients. Presenting the commendations, Acting Commissioner Glenn Finnis said they were awarded "...in recognition of their commitment to the highest standards of rescue service to the boating community of NSW".

At 2000 hours on July 4, 2008 the 15.0m yacht *Vida* with five persons on board was disabled with a broken mast two nm off Crescent Head. An activated EPIRB alerted Australian Search and Rescue in Canberra which in turn alerted Sydney Water Police. The Water Police tasked Trial Bay to undertake the rescue. On arrival the Trial Bay rescue vessel's propeller was fouled in the yacht's rigging and it was then unable to provide further assistance. Water Police then tasked Port Macquarie to undertake the rescue.

When Port Macquarie's *Rescue One* arrived, the *Vida* had drifted to within 150m of the shore and was in imminent danger of being swept onto the beach. Seas were running at 2-3m with a 20 knot south-east wind. The *Rescue One* crew immediately attached a tow line to try and gain some valuable sea room. The line snapped under the extreme strain and it fouled the port side propeller of *Rescue One*.

With only one motor available, the skipper of *Rescue One* decided to get the crew off the yacht rather than attempt another tow. With conditions deteriorating, the transfers were very dangerous and one *Vida* crew member fell into the water between the two vessels. He was quickly recovered without injury and all crew were successfully transferred to *Rescue One*. With only one motor and rough seas, the journey back to Port Macquarie took four and a half hours with all on board arriving safe and sound.

Unfortunately *Vida* was washed ashore on Hat Head Beach and was subsequently written off. However, five lives were saved by the gallant efforts of the crew from Port Macquarie Marine Rescue.

Geoff Shelton
Port Macquarie

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Marine Rescue on show at SIBS 2011

Marine Rescue NSW again enjoyed the generosity of the Boating Industry Association of NSW and NSW Maritime sharing display space at the 2011 Sydney International Boat Show for five days from July 28 to August 1.

Volunteer members were on duty in numbers in rostered shifts at the two Marine Rescue locations over the duration of the Sydney Boat Show.

In Hall 5 MR was one of the *Partners in Safety* in the Marine Precinct that provides an environment for corporations and organisations whose products or services are directly related to safety on the water.

On the Marina, two of MR new rescue vessels, *Shoalhaven 30*, a *Steber 38* and *Botany Bay 20*, a 9m Kevlcat were on display. These two craft enabled us to show visitors how the financial support from boat registrations and licences plus the annual grant from the NSW Government has ensured that Marine Rescue NSW can provide a first class rescue fleet to serve the NSW boating community.

A strong fundraising program was also conducted, with more donations being made in return for distinctive orange Club Marine lifebuoys, \$2,000 from the sale of floating sunglasses straps by Denovo Trading and a further funds raised from a donation bucket at Team Windcraft on the Marina. Grateful thanks to all involved.



At the stand in Hall 5, Marine Rescue hosted well-known meteorologist, mariner and *AFLOAT* weather columnist, Malcolm Riley from the Bureau of Meteorology, demonstrating and explaining how to use the BOM website to check weather forecasts and conditions for boating.

Paul Jones from Australian Defibrillators demonstrated the Automatic External Defibrillator Resuscitation and Oxygen Therapy Packs that are now part of every new rescue vessel.

Ken McManus
PR and Marketing Officer MRNSW



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In Memoriam



Vale

Niki Freeman

26/03/1919 – 26/05/2011

Niki Freeman, a stalwart and long-serving member of the South Coast's marine rescue community, passed away in May after a long illness.

Niki, properly but rarely known as Eunice, a much loved figure among Ulladulla volunteers, died after a determined battle with cancer. That fight personified a lady who was quick into the fray, a determined fighter and one who never retreated when she believed in her cause.



Niki (Eunice) Freeman

Niki was a dedicated member of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol Ulladulla Division (now Marine Rescue Ulladulla) and she was fiercely proud of the marine rescue organisation and her role as Division Medic.

She had a long and distinguished career in medicine, as a nursing sister, a nurse trainer and in later years a hard-working and much travelled first-aid trainer.

It was in this latter role that Niki became a well-known figure up and down the South Coast. She often travelled to RVCP divisions to conduct courses for crew members and was at the time one of the few women to serve as crew on a lifeboat.

Before recent organisational changes and new training regulations, there were few lifeboat crew members on the coast who hadn't passed through one of Niki's classes and been subjected to a thorough grounding in physiology.

Niki had a great zest for life and could tell hilarious stories of her youth as a young nurse, in an era that wasn't quite used to such outgoing young ladies.

Her enduring work with the Red Cross and RVCP was rewarded with the Red Cross Medal and the National Medal, both worn proudly on her RVCP and Marine Rescue uniforms. When her training days ended and her health began to fail, Niki still turned out to help at the monthly harbour markets.

She had a wicked sense of humour and thoroughly enjoyed socialising with her friends. The camaraderie she enjoyed was evident from the huge turnout of volunteers, past and present, at her funeral service.

Several travelled long distances to farewell a lady who was mentor, colleague and friend to a generation of volunteers.

Niki will be sadly missed by many more than her Marine Rescue comrades.

She is survived by sons Peter and Mark.

*Jamie Roberts
Ulladulla*



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SOUNDINGS



Soundings is the Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW.

Statewide Magazines is proud to be associated with Marine Rescue NSW. For over 74 years, hundreds of thousands of recreational boating and fishing enthusiasts have depended on the support and marine safety watch provided by volunteer marine rescue services.

Marine Rescue NSW was established in 2009 and created a single marine rescue organisation for NSW. This brought together almost 2,000 members with an unequalled depth of experience from existing volunteer marine safety services.

Now with more than 3,100 members and continually growing, Marine Rescue NSW has become widely known in the boating community as the one name to remember for emergency search and rescue, marine radio communications and boating safety education.

Recreational boating enthusiasts now have a continuous marine safety net covering the NSW coast from Point Danger on the Queensland border to Eden on the far NSW south coast. Soon the skilled volunteer services of Marine Rescue NSW will extend into NSW regional waters to provide safer boating on the lakes of the Snowy Mountains and then extending to the Murray River and other major lakes and dams.

Already the Marine Rescue NSW vessel replacement program to provide better services to the boating public has made excellent progress. Brand new, purpose-built rescue vessels have been introduced at three units, fully refurbished boats are now operational at four other units and more new vessels are in the pipeline for strategic deployment to other regions.

Soundings is great reading for everyone concerned about good boating practice and safety of life at sea. It is filled with information that keeps everyone who has an interest in boating up to date with activities at the Marine Rescue units, including reports on any significant rescues.

In short, **Soundings**, in its attractive A4 colour format, provides a valuable marketing medium for any product or service that is related to safer and more enjoyable boating. A welcome bonus for advertisers is that they will be clearly seen actively supporting an organisation of frequently unsung and unrecognised heroes.

Soundings helps ensure greater recognition for those dedicated volunteers as it communicates effectively to a large readership of current and potential customers.

Statewide Magazines is very proud of its role as Marine Rescue NSW's authorized advertising agent for **Soundings**. Our professional team is always ready to assist marketers to reach this important readership target for products and services in the recreational boating industry. We look forward to hearing from you, assisting you to bring your brand to this unique market and continuing to ensure support for Marine Rescue NSW.



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We welcome
your Emails



6/7/2011

It has been a pleasure working with Glenn Finnis over the last two years of service in Marine Rescue NSW.

As Commissioner, he has done a great job. I have mixed feelings as on one hand, it is tough to know he is not around anymore and on the other hand I congratulate him on his achievements during this difficult merger time.

I extend thanks for the remarkable work done for MRNSW. Glenn has displayed exceptional skills and worked with great sincerity and generosity. I am grateful for his dedicated work and would like him to know that I think he has been a great asset to our organisation.

His efforts have helped MRNSW to achieve various milestones and I hope he has also enjoyed working with us. I sincerely hope that he will be now be able to enjoy time as an Ordinary Member.

Andrew Mckellar
Central Coast Unit

17/8/2011

Dear Ron,

These views are my own as a concerned member and don't represent those of my unit.

Sufficient time has passed for Volunteer MRNSW to have ironed out the teething problems and be in a position for us to judge whether the journey has been worth it - I contend it hasn't. The spin, froth and bubble clearly outweighs the real achievements. Has the boating public seen a better service than that offered previously by the former organisations? Has there been an increase in logging on or using the new offshore tracking sheets-again probably not! It is a bloated bureaucracy serving its own ends not necessarily the aims and aspirations of the membership.

Let's look at the wins and losses of this "new" organisation that performs at little cost, thanks to the volunteers.

- The membership appears increased but when it costs nothing to join or renew why would you resign and all our auxiliaries had to become members so is the increase real?
- The OTS system is as poor now as it was when it was rushed into service. It's still got instability and amateurish screen formats and far from user friendly.
- Corporate sponsorship is still almost non-existent
- The training accreditation is late and disorganised and no one really knows what is happening
- The paid officials show little recognition that it is a volunteer membership and little recognition is taken of the massive corporate, legal, maritime and community experience that exists in our membership which remains untapped
- Communication with Units is spasmodic and not carried out in a timely manner. Only when the paid officials are confronted do they react in a timely way.

The time is right for all units to have a fresh look at whether the journey we signed on for is proceeding to sea or are we still yet to even cast off.

Neil M Hansford (Member 455)
Nelson Bay Unit

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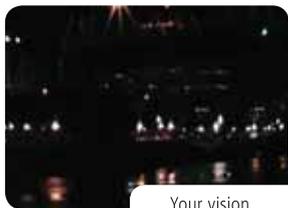


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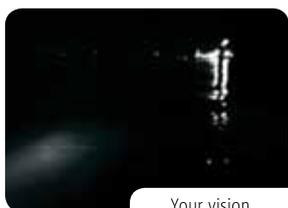
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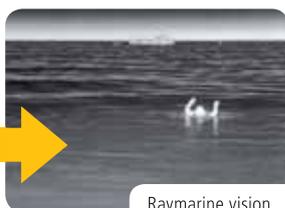
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