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SOUNDINGS



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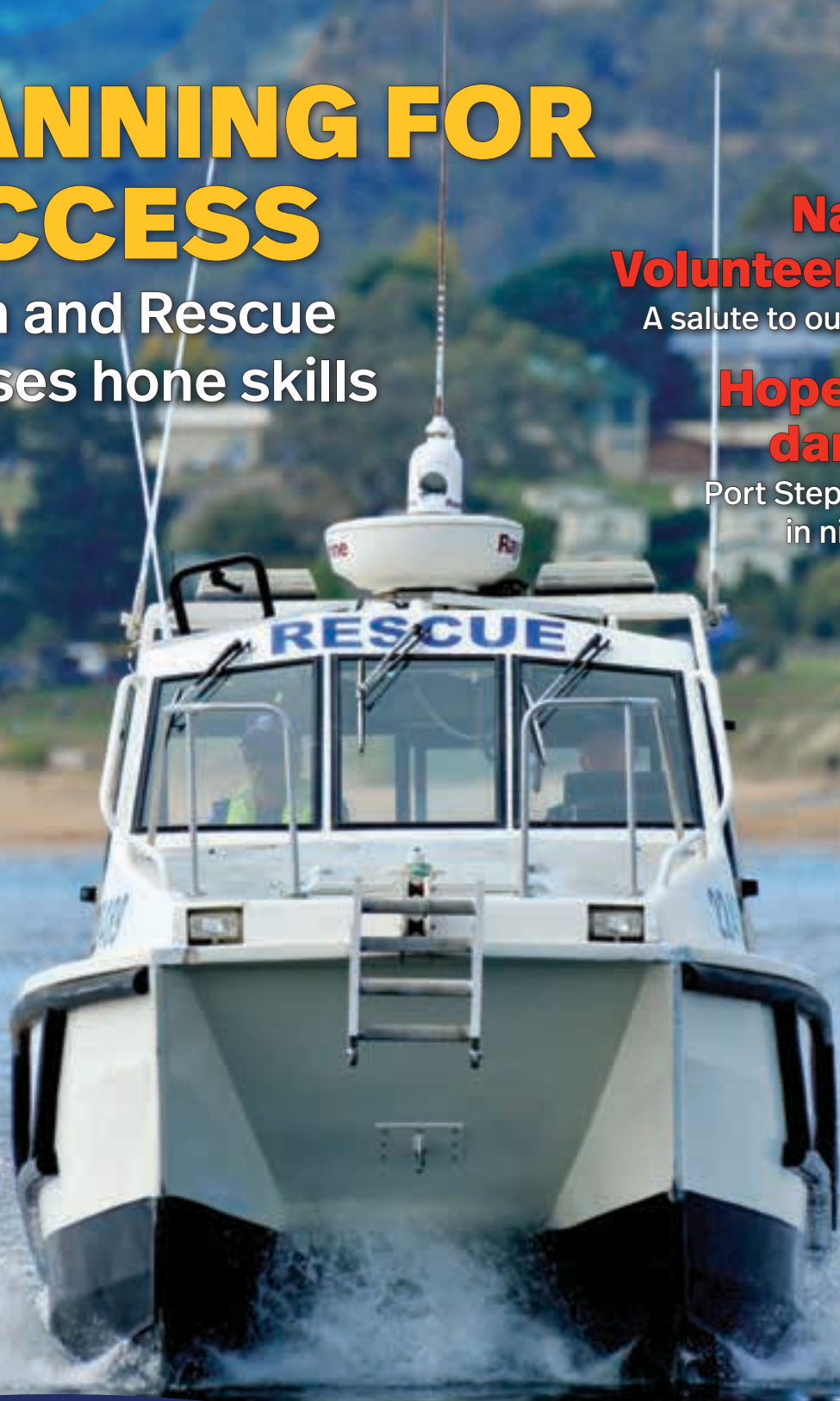
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**Commissioner
Stacey Tannos ESM**

From the Commissioner

Rain fails to dampen busy summer on the water

Another boating season has come to an end, and despite a record wet summer and lingering COVID restrictions, the number of rescues conducted by Marine Rescue NSW members has remained on track to match or exceed the record annual total from 2020-21.

Over the boating season from 1 October to ANZAC Day, 2,800 rescues were performed, many in potentially life-endangering situations, with our members showing great skill, commitment and dedication in bringing 6,433 people including 664 children and 67 pets safely back to shore.

To all our members, whether crewing a vessel, manning a radio or undertaking one of the many other vital tasks needed to keep our bases running, please accept my sincere thanks for a job well done.

As we review the numbers from the boating season, many boaters are seemingly still not getting the message about the importance of boating safety and preparedness.

Taking the time to prepare your vessel, having the necessary safety equipment on board and boating safely when you do hit the water can make the difference between a great day out and a potentially life-endangering emergency.

Particularly frustrating are the number of preventable incidents such as engine failure (41%), flat

batteries (10%) and running out of fuel (9%), these accounting for 60% of all calls for help. While not of themselves serious, these incidents can quickly turn into a life-threatening emergency if disabled vessels begin drifting towards rocks or other hazards, or skippers lose the ability to safely control their vessel.

These numbers are a reminder of the importance of getting your vessel regularly serviced and taking the time to properly plan your day out on the water to minimise the likelihood of a serious incident occurring.

Boating education is one way we can reduce the number of preventable call-outs our members receive. Recently our members

real life scenarios and enable members to practice alongside their counterparts in other rescue agencies. Last year a new and more engaging SAREX format was trialled, with very positive feedback, and I encourage anyone offered the opportunity to participate.

Finally, I'd like to take a moment to thank a true gentleman of the service on the occasion of his retirement – or to be precise, second retirement. Bruce Mitchell finished work for the first time way back in 1998, but before too long, and very much to our benefit, found himself back in paid employment, as Illawarra Zone Duty Operations Manager.

Bruce is a much respected figure in the Illawarra both within our

“Together, we can help reduce the number of preventable incidents on our waterways and a build a safer boating community.”

attended the Fire and Rescue NSW open day at Orchard Hills in Western Sydney, where our display was viewed by over 5,000 people; and in coming months we will be attending the Sydney International Boat Show, which is returning after a two year absence.

I urge all our members to take the time to actively engage with their local community on boating safety, and to use their local media and unit social media pages to reinforce safety messaging. Together, we can help reduce the number of preventable incidents on our waterways and a build a safer boating community.

With winter comes the opportunity to test existing skills, learn new ones and make new friendships at the annual series of Search and Rescue Exercises (SAREXs). These exercises simulate

service and with our emergency service partners. Thank you Bruce for your past contribution to Marine Rescue NSW and your local community, and I look forward to hearing about your ongoing service with Marine Rescue Shoalhaven.

Taking Bruce's place as Zone Duty Operations Manager for the Illawarra is another familiar name, Stuart Massey, who until Bruce's retirement was Zone Training Manager South. I'm sure many of you have already had the pleasure of meeting Stuart and will make him feel welcome in his new role.

To close, I wish you all the best for the winter season, and to use this generally quieter time wisely to get ready for the busy warmer months that lay just around the corner.

*Stacey Tannos ESM
Commissioner*

Commissioner Tannos with Minister Cooke at a media conference on safe boating at Marine Rescue State Headquarters in April.





Bruce Mitchell (centre) with Commissioner Stacey Tannos (left) and Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell (right). Photo: Phil Campbell.

Farewell to the grand man of Marine Rescue NSW

Much loved figure retires

Marine Rescue NSW stalwart, Bruce Mitchell, has retired after a long and distinguished career with the service.

A self-employed businessman, Bruce enjoyed sport and game fishing with his mates, and by his own admission, “Wasted a lot of money on boats.”

Those boats included a 26 foot flybridge cruiser, a Quintrex centre console, a Shark Cat and a Pride Gazelle.

After retiring in 1998, it was not long before Bruce joined the then Australian Volunteer Coast Guard (AVCG) at Port Kembla in 2001.

Bruce rose quickly through the ranks, taking on the role of Deputy Commander in 2002, followed soon after by the role of Commander before eventually being appointed as Squadron Commodore.

When the AVCG transitioned into Marine Rescue NSW, Bruce was offered the role of Regional Coordinator, a position that evolved

into the paid role of Regional Operations Manager Illawarra, and more recently, Zone Duty Operations Manager Illawarra.

In his role as Zone Duty Operations Manager Bruce has earned respect for his dedication to marine safety and to the volunteers under his care.

Asked about his time with Marine Rescue NSW, Bruce said that he'd seen a lot of change, and it was definitely for the better.

“I've seen lots of good changes, with a better fleet, improved radio communications and much better training,” Bruce said.

“It is, however, getting harder to attract volunteers as everyone is travelling more and are not as available to volunteer as they used to be.”

“I'll be doing my bit to address that by spending some of my retirement doing radio shifts at the Marine Rescue Shoalhaven unit.”

For Bruce a few rescues in his

long career stand out in his still razor sharp memory.

“Sometime around 2008,” said Bruce, “I was on radio duty and a lady rang me worried about her husband.”

“He was due back the night before, and had not returned. She had no idea of his car's rego or model, or where he was fishing from, only that his car was blue.”

“Working with VKG Warilla, we had the police check the ramps, and after ringing some of his mates were able to find his car still parked at the ramp at Kiama and where they'd last seen him on the water, a place called Mount Fuji, off Kiama. That led to a big search on the water and in the air.”

“He was eventually located, alive, by a trawler way down the coast off Burrill Rocks. He was lucky it was summer and quite warm, or he might have perished. It was a good lesson in the importance of letting people clearly understand where you

are going before you head out.”

Sadly, not all the rescues Bruce was involved in have had such a positive outcome.

“I remember,” said Bruce, “a lady rang around nightfall when I was on radio duty. Her husband was due back at 3pm, and she was worried as it was getting late and the weather was deteriorating.”

“It was cold and windy, and conditions on the water were pretty bad, serious enough that the search had to be postponed at one point. Her husband and his three mates were all found the next day, still in their lifejackets, but the cold weather had claimed them. That one shook me up for a while.”

Bruce's position as Zone Duty Operations Manager will be filled by Stuart Massey, who as the Illawarra's Regional Training Manager, brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the role.

Thank you Bruce for your service, and all the best for your retirement.



Chair
James Glissan AM ESM QC

From the Chair

Summer jobs to winter training

The boating season has again come to a close, and as expected, was yet another busy one, with rescues coming in only slightly behind last season's record total.

Today, many are alive who may otherwise have perished but for the professional, timely and skilled assistance rendered to them by our members. On behalf of the Marine Rescue NSW Board, please accept my sincere thanks for your efforts over the summer months, and my best wishes for the season ahead.

Winter being an operationally quieter time is the ideal period in which to conduct training, and to practice the skills learned in 'life-like' exercises.

This year, major exercises will be held in Ulladulla, Greater Sydney and Port Macquarie; with localised exercises in Shellharbour, Brunswick/Ballina and Eden. Having the exercises spread around the state provides as many members

these exercises is the inclusion of members of other emergency services including NSW Police Force Marine Area Command, Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter and Surf Life Saving NSW.

Rescues are always a team effort, and the valuable collaboration that occurs at these events ensures that when the real thing happens, that everyone is better able to work together to get the job done.

I look forward to attending some of this winter's scheduled exercises and to witness first-hand the professionalism and skill of our members in action.

Recently I was the guest of Commissioner Tannos at a staff forum held in Bowral.

The past year has seen necessary changes in our strategic direction with a new structure, significant changes to staffing for the service. The forum was an opportunity to

that the service is in good hands, and that all staff are working hard to deliver better resources and processes for our members and improved services and safety for the boating community.

While the work of our members in saving lives on the water is well known, less understood is the role we play in supporting other services in their equally vital work.

Over the past twelve months many of our members have provided extensive support to the NSW State Emergency Service in their flood combat and recovery tasks. These tasks have been wide ranging, and have included evacuation, resupply, logistics support and public communications.

Prior to that we provided significant support to the NSW Rural Fire Service in their efforts to combat the Black Summer bushfires, with many members receiving a Premier's citation for their outstanding efforts.

Now it is Australian Red Cross who needs our help.

Each winter Red Cross runs the Emergency Services Blood Challenge. Last year Marine Rescue NSW received an award as the most improved organisation nationally, with a tripling of our blood donations compared to the previous year, saving over 300 lives.

I'd like to ask all our members able to do so, to drop in to their local Red Cross donation centre over winter to roll up their sleeves for this most worthy cause. Please make sure you let the staff know you are from Marine Rescue NSW and part of the challenge.

Our members have shown time and time again their determination to support the communities in which they live, and I look forward to an even greater result in this year's Red Cross Blood Challenge.

Good sailing
Jim Glissan

“On behalf of the Marine Rescue NSW Board, please accept my sincere thanks for your efforts over the summer months”

as possible with the opportunity to participate, and helps to more widely showcase our member's skills to the community.

A particularly valuable part of

bring together all staff to consolidate the excellent work that has been achieved to date, and to set our service's priorities for the future.

Our membership can be assured



Summer by the numbers

Making our members' efforts 'count'

During each rescue mission, Marine Rescue NSW crew and radio operators collect information including the location, type and size of the vessel, the skipper's level of experience, the cause of the activation, how many people were on board, any injuries, and the activity the vessel was engaged in.

Over the 1 October to ANZAC Day boating season, Marine Rescue NSW crews undertook 2,800 rescue missions, of which 745 were significant (reportable) incidents, with crews bringing safely to shore 5,702 adults, 664 children, and 67 pets.

These figures keep Marine Rescue NSW on track to match or exceed the record number of rescues in the previous 2020-21 season despite the wettest ever start to a calendar year, and the effects of lingering COVID restrictions.

As expected, boat maintenance and planning issues remained the primary causes of rescue, with engine failure accounting for 40.8%, a flat battery 10.0%, and running out of fuel 8.7%.

Groundings accounted for 6.7% of rescues, along with capsizes 3.8%, searches for missing persons 1.8%, and medical emergencies 0.6%.

These figures suggest that if boaters regularly serviced their vessel and paid greater attention to fuel and navigation, a significant reduction in incidents could be achieved, with this information providing vital data for future boater education campaigns.

Before making a call for help, vessels were either fishing 42%, cruising 42%, sailing 10.6%, paddling in a canoe or kayak 3.7% or crossing a coastal bar 1.3%; with vessels most likely to be an open runabout, cabin runabout, motor cruiser or sail mono-hull.

Contrary to expectation, experienced and older boaters were



The sun sets on another boating season. Photo: Lake Macquarie sunset, courtesy Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie.

just as likely to be rescued as those with less experience, with 70% of rescues being boaters aged 35 and over, and with 'very experienced' and 'experienced' boaters making up a whopping 61.5% of the skippers rescued. This suggests that more experienced boaters may be more likely to over-estimate their ability and to take unnecessary risks, with this observation providing a further focus for future boating

education campaigns.

The busiest Marine Rescue NSW unit was Lake Macquarie with 414 rescues, followed closely by the State Communications Centre who helped coordinate 408 rescues. Notable were Botany Port Hacking 220, Port Stephens 167, Middle Harbour 143, and Central Coast and Port Jackson tying on 119 apiece.

Over the boating season there were 41,730 boats who Logged On

with Marine Rescue NSW, carrying over 140,000 people.

This and other information collected is compared with data from earlier periods to enable long term trends to be identified and evaluated, and for management strategies to be developed, particularly in relation to boater education campaigns and resource allocation.

ANZAC Day 2022

Members pause to remember the fallen

On ANZAC Day, as a nation, we pause in remembrance of those Australians and New Zealanders

who served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.

Across the state, volunteers and staff from Marine Rescue NSW attended local dawn services and

marches, including laying wreaths in memory of the fallen.



MR Hawkesbury volunteer Paul Hudson prepares to sound the last post on ANZAC Day outside the unit headquarters. *Photo: Cassie Byun.*



MR Port Macquarie Unit Commander Greg Davies and Deputy Unit Commander Graham Gibbs at the Port Macquarie ANZAC Day service.



MR Woolli Unit Commander Richard Taffs, Councillor Karen Toms of Clarence Valley Council, and local ex-servicemen at the Woolli ANZAC Day service. *Photo courtesy Councillor Karen Toms.*



MR Tuggerah Lakes Deputy Unit Commander Peter McCann and Unit Chaplain Don Hobbs laid a wreath at the ANZAC Day Ceremony at Toukley RSL.



Members of MR Evans Head at the dawn service. Left to right, Unit Commander Kenneth Exley, James Dowling, Dr Hanabeth Luke, Bob Brown and Kira the Border Collie. *Photo: Kerrie Exley.*



Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos at the annual ANZAC Day service at NSW Maritime's offices at Rozelle. Attending with Commissioner Tannos were Phil Holiday from Port Authority of NSW, Murray Reynolds from NSW Police Service Marine Area Command, Mark Hutchings Acting Executive Director NSW Maritime, and Howard Collins Chief Operations Officer Transport for NSW.

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Port Macquarie members sail the high seas

Team building activity creates lasting memories



Members of MR Port Macquarie aboard the *Soren Larsen* in Sydney Harbour. Photo: FORTEM Australia.

On 2 April, twelve members of the Marine Rescue Port Macquarie unit and a Fortem Australia Community Engagement Coordinator boarded the wooden tall-ship *Soren Larsen* to sail 230 nautical miles from White Bay in Sydney Harbour to Port Macquarie.

Soren Larsen is a 43-metre brigantine, built in 1949 in Denmark from oak and beech. Her current homeport is Sydney.

Our reality for the next four days was limited to the 43 metres of our ship, but team spirit was high and we were all looking forward to

plenty of time for our induction and its range of emergency drills. These included man overboard, abandon ship and fire drills, followed by rope work and learning some strict rules on keeping the deck clean of any obstacles, including loose ropes. The calm conditions in the harbour also provided a great opportunity for the voyage crew to climb the mast some 20 plus metres above the deck to a small platform.

The first night on the anchor was calm and serene, and everyone had a good rest, with a few of the Marine Rescue Port Macquarie crew joining

wind allowing us to hoist two triangular stay sails.

We worked on a rotating watch system - four hours on, eight hours off. The voyage crew was split into three watches: red, blue, and white – each with one professional crew member and the Watch Officer.

There were plenty of duties during each shift, with everyone having the chance to steer the ship, stand lookout, check the deck and perform the galley duties. Every hour somebody was required to go down and record an entry in the logbook – noting our course, speed, wind, sea state, cloud, weather, barometer, latitude and longitude, and engine status including oil and temperature. The morning watch from eight until midday scrubbed the deck and polished brass.

By day three, everyone had settled into the rhythm of life on board and was comfortable with the daily and nightly routines, and having a few moments to relax - snoozing or reading between watches. The night shifts were magical – an amazing sky full of stars, the opportunity to spot

a shooting star in flight, and the glow of bioluminescent algae. It was genuinely inspiring, with talks getting more philosophical in the dark and quiet on deck, with the only other thing listening the big Pacific Ocean.

David Iggulden, the Second Mate and Watch Officer, delivered a great session about sailing, how sails work, and the difference between the sloops and square rigged ships.

We arrived at our destination, Port Macquarie, on the fourth day of our journey, and were overwhelmed by a big crowd of town residents and Marine Rescue NSW members who met us on the Lady Nelson Wharf. What an amazing experience!

Thanks to Marty Woods of the Sydney Tall Ships company and Fortem Australia for their sponsorship, which made this trip a great success. The unique experience of sailing on the ship together created a camaraderie that has forged long-lasting friendships and tight bonds between the crew members.

Larisa Trapeznikova

“The night shifts were magical – an amazing sky full of stars, the opportunity to spot a shooting star in flight..”

learning plenty about seamanship, teamwork, camaraderie, and other new skills at sea.

Due to an extreme swell offshore, Master of the ship Marty Woods decided to stay the first day and night in the harbour, which provided

the anchor watch to note the ship's position and ensure the anchor was holding.

Next morning, after an early breakfast, the anchor was lifted and we set off out of Sydney Harbour with a light five-knot North West

Ministerial visit to Yamba Welding and Engineering

Locally made boats for local conditions

At the start of May, Minister for Emergency Services, Resilience and Flood Recovery, Steph Cooke, inspected the shipyard of Yamba Welding and Engineering on the New South Wales North Coast, where two new rescue vessels for Marine Rescue NSW worth \$986,000 were under construction.

Minister Cooke was accompanied on her visit by Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell, Manager Fleet Kelvin Parkin, and Yamba Welding and Engineering General Manager and Head of Technical Operations Jamie Howden.

Once completed, the two vessels, for Marine Rescue Broken Bay and Marine Rescue Botany Port Hacking, will bring the number of vessels delivered by Yamba Welding and Engineering for Marine Rescue NSW to 19, with several more in the planning stage.

To date, \$10.59 million has been expended on rescue vessels, with the bulk of this in regional New South Wales, supporting skilled jobs, and providing opportunities for youth through a range of traineeships and apprenticeships.

While inspecting the vessels under construction, Minister Cooke tried her hand at welding, and was



Minister Cooke tries her hand at welding. Photo: Marg Deguara.

said.

“Each boat is designed to meet local conditions and the specific needs of the Marine Rescue NSW unit receiving the vessel and is delivering faster, safer and more responsive rescue vessels able to reach the scene of an emergency more quickly and in a wider range of weather and sea conditions.”

“Each boat is designed to meet local conditions and the specific needs of the Marine Rescue NSW unit”

highly impressed at the scale and professionalism of the construction process.

“The strong partnership between Marine Rescue NSW and Yamba Welding and Engineering is delivering state of the art rescue vessels equal to those produced anywhere in the world,” Ms Cooke

After her visit to Yamba Welding and Engineering, Minister Cooke met with volunteers from the nearby Marine Rescue Iluka Yamba unit, and rounded off her visit by heading out on the water aboard rescue vessel *Iluka Yamba 30* where she proved a steady hand at the wheel of the vessel.



Minister Cooke at the helm of *Iluka Yamba 30*.

\$1.2 million investment in Marine Rescue Port Kembla boost to boating safety

Minister commissions vessels and opens refurbished radio base

Early May saw Minister for Emergency Services, Resilience and Flood Recovery, Steph Cooke, pay a visit to the Marine Rescue Port Kembla unit to commission rescue vessels *Port Kembla 20* and *Port Kembla 31* and to officially open the refurbished radio base on Hill 60.

The investment by the state Government included \$869,000 for the two rescue boats, \$273,000 towards the refurbishment of the unit's iconic radio base on Hill 60, and \$55,000 to enhance crew facilities at Port Kembla Harbour.

The radio base on Hill 60 also received generous support from the IMB Bank Community Foundation who donated \$70,000, and the Port Kembla Investment Fund who contributed a further \$180,000.

"*Port Kembla 20* and *Port Kembla 31* are two of 38 new rescue vessels funded by a \$37.6 million four-year State Government investment to support the vital, life-saving work of Marine Rescue NSW volunteers," Ms Cooke said.

"With powerful Suzuki engines and specialist Raymarine suite of maritime navigation equipment, these new rescue boats have the speed and technology to quickly and safely get where they need to when vital seconds count."

"These outstanding rescue vessels are a valuable investment in the safety of the Illawarra's large local boating community and its many visiting boaters."

"The refurbishment of the radio base will ensure clear and reliable radio communications in emergencies, with new crew facilities providing volunteers with an all-weather space to train and from which to coordinate emergency responses."

Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos said the two new rescue boats had



Minister Cooke and Commissioner Tannos present the commissioning certificates to Unit Commander Kevin Bradley. Photo: Phil Campbell.

been purpose-designed and built to meet demanding local operating conditions, and would prove a reassuring presence for locals and visitors alike.

"Boaters in the Illawarra can rest easier knowing that these state of the art craft are at the ready should they run into trouble," he said.

"Built in NSW by Yamba Welding and Engineering, these new rescue vessels are part of our ongoing commitment to support manufacturing in NSW, as well as the safety of boaters."

Marine Rescue Port Kembla Unit Commander Kevin Bradley said the new vessels were a significant improvement over the unit's former boats.

"The upgraded search and rescue

technology on board including radar, sonar and FLIR night vision will improve our search capability, which is vital to our mission of saving lives

of weather and sea conditions." "The Hill 60 radio base refurbishment boasts a unique multi-purpose whale watching and

“These outstanding rescue vessels are a valuable investment in the safety of the Illawarra’s large local boating community and its many visiting boaters”

here on the coastline,” he said.

"With larger windows for better visibility, improved handling and manoeuvrability and greater volunteer comfort, our crews will be able to operate more safely for longer periods and in a wider range

observation tower that is open to the public, as well as improved facilities for our dedicated radio operators; while the new crew facilities on the harbour provide a greatly improved training, meeting and coordination space."

Better Together – thanking our volunteers for their service

Brunswick member shines during National Volunteer Week

Volunteering brings people together, it builds communities and creates a better society for everyone.

National Volunteer Week is an annual opportunity for the community to celebrate and recognise the vital work of volunteers and to say thank you, with this year's theme being 'Better Together'.

In New South Wales alone the value of volunteering is an estimated \$127 billion annually (NSW State of Volunteering Report 2021), with 4.9 million of the state's residents over 18 years of age giving time as a volunteer, or 75.9% of the adult population.

Marine Rescue NSW has over

3,200 volunteers in 45 units across the state who last year undertook 4,251 rescues – bringing 9,922 people safely to shore, and with our dedicated radio operators managing an extraordinary 256,000 radio transmissions.

This year, Marine Rescue Brunswick Unit Commander Jonathan Wilcock became one of the faces of National Volunteer Week.

At the start of the week Jonathan appeared live around the nation on ABC 24, where he was interviewed about the contribution made by the Marine Rescue Brunswick unit to their local community, particularly during the North Coast floods.

Jonathan also appeared live on



Jonathan Wilcock talks on national television on ABC 24.

the ABC Radio National program 'Life Matters' with the CEO of Volunteers Australia Mark Pearce,

where he again talked about the role of Marine Rescue NSW volunteers and the vital contribution they make.



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On for young and old

Acknowledging the contribution of our youth and senior volunteers



Sarah Green Goldberg.

The 3,200 Marine Rescue NSW volunteers encompass an extraordinary age range, from energetic teenagers to old hands aged in their 90s.

This year Youth Week and the NSW Seniors Festival provided the opportunity to focus on the contribution made by our youth and senior volunteers, as seen through the eyes of several of our dedicated volunteers.

Youth volunteer Sarah Green Goldberg from Marine Rescue Newcastle decided to join a volunteer-based organisation to help out her local community and to get

“and I wanted to learn more skills, so the local Marine Rescue NSW unit seemed like a great fit.”

“Since joining, I’m absolutely loving it, and it’s great to be gaining something with the knowledge and friendships I’ve acquired, while giving something back to the community.”

“There’s a perception out there that Marine Rescue NSW is just for older people”, said Sarah.

“But there’s plenty to offer volunteers of all ages, and I’m working on getting my friends to sign up too!”

“I really enjoy being a Marine

it to any young volunteer wanting to do something for their local community.”

Helen Carter is one of half a million seniors aged over 60, and despite her 81 years, remains an active contributor to the Marine Rescue Newcastle unit.

Retirement was not providing Helen with the stimulation and challenges that she had hoped for, and she was quickly, in her own

words, “bored to tears.”

Just over five years ago she was listening to the local radio station when she heard a bar and sea conditions report by the local Marine Rescue NSW unit.

“I immediately rang the radio station up,” said Helen, “and got the number of the local Marine Rescue NSW unit. When I rang them I had no idea what they did, so I asked them. I liked the sound of it and said – I’ll do that! And that’s how I joined.”

“Before I joined the only boat I’d been on was a cruise liner, so I had a lot to learn!”

For Helen, Marine Rescue NSW has given her the opportunity to keep busy in her ‘retirement’ and to have a sense of purpose.

“I think Marine Rescue NSW is an excellent spot for retirees.”

“When you retire it is really important to use your mind and to explore what you can do. Marine Rescue NSW has helped me do just that!”

“It has also helped me find out things I didn’t think I could do, and I recommend it to anyone.”

Thank you to all of our youth and senior volunteers – your contribution is essential in keeping your local boating communities safe.

“I’m always learning something new and I’d recommend it to any young volunteer wanting to do something for their local community.”

to know more people, and decided upon the local Newcastle Marine Rescue unit.

“I like the ocean,” said Sarah,

Rescue NSW volunteer, it’s a community in itself, and like a big family. I’m always learning something new and I’d recommend



Helen Carter (centre).

Planning for an emergency

Search and rescue exercises set to return in 2022



Some of the participants in the planning day at the State Communications Centre at Belrose.

In late March, representatives of Marine Area Command met with senior staff from Marine Rescue NSW to plan for this year's round of Search and Rescue Exercises (SAREXs).

The meeting was conducted at the Marine Rescue NSW State Communications Centre in Belrose, on Sydney's Northern Beaches.

Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell said that the planning day was a great example of agencies working together for the benefit of the community.

"NSW Police Marine Area Command and Marine Rescue

NSW regularly collaborate in a series of exercises designed to build understanding between each agency, so when a real emergency strikes, we are able to better respond."

"These exercises simulate complex, real-life situations, providing our volunteer members with a range of testing scenarios that help build their skills and boost intra and cross agency collaboration."

Major exercises will be held in Ulladulla, Greater Sydney and Port Macquarie; with localised exercises in Shellharbour, Brunswick/Ballina and Eden.

At the exercises, Marine Rescue NSW crews will be joined by personnel from the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command, Australian Maritime Safety

Barrell, General Manager Training and Capability Chris Butler, Zone Commander Central Darren Schott, Zone Commander South Mike Hammond, Zone Commander

"These exercises simulate complex, real-life situations, providing our volunteer members with a range of testing scenarios"

Authority, Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter and Surf Life Saving NSW.

In attendance at the planning meeting were Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioner Alex

North Mal Jeffs and Development Officer Sophie Galvin. Sergeant Ryan Spong, Inspector David Carlin and Chief Inspector Tony Brazzill represented NSW Police.

Force to be reckoned with

Volunteers from Marine Rescue Port Jackson star in new TV series

Members of Marine Rescue's Port Jackson unit based at Birkenhead Point on Sydney's iconic harbour have hit the small screen in a new Discovery Channel series that commenced airing in early April.

The volunteers from Marine Rescue Port Jackson were involved in the filming of the Discovery Channel show *Sydney Harbour Force* over the summer of 2020-21, making it past the cutting room floor and appearing in six of the show's

ten episodes.

The show, supported by Screen NSW, was created following the success of *Sydney Harbour Patrol* that had previously aired on Discovery, and which had proved one of their most popular shows.

The Chief Executive Officer of production company WTFN, Daryl Talbot, said: "Nothing embodies Australia more than Sydney Harbour... showcasing not just its man-made and natural wonders, but



Sydney Harbour Force logo

also the wide range of people who have the mammoth task of policing and protecting this World Heritage Site."

During the filming, the Port

Jackson volunteers were involved in several emergency responses, showing their skills and abilities to the cameras and a world-wide audience of well over 100 million.

Super-sized first mission for Eden unit

Dawn rescue brings sick sailor safely to shore

Having just completed their training, Marine Rescue Eden have undertaken their first official rescue mission, supporting NSW Police Marine Area Command in the retrieval of a sick crew member from the bulk carrier *Daiwan Falcon*.

The vessel had not long left Eden bound for New Zealand when a crew member became ill, forcing it to make an unscheduled return to port for the crew member to receive urgent medical attention.

As the rising sun coloured the southern skies on Saturday 14 May, Marine Rescue Eden rescue vessel *X30*, with crew Guy Illy, Garry Thornton, Greg Madden, Tom Cousin, Fay Cousin, Roger Barson and Malcolm McConnell, headed out to the pilot pickup point at the entrance to Twofold Bay, about two nautical miles offshore. Accompanying them on their maiden mission was Eden Water Police vessel *Falcon*.



The sun rises as *X30* approaches the *Daiwan Falcon*. Photo: Fay Cousin

While the weather conditions were favourable, a swell of around 3.5 metres made for difficult conditions for the transfer of the crew member from the bulk carrier onto the Eden Water Police vessel *Falcon*, with *X30* standing by to retrieve anyone who might have accidentally fallen into the water.

Falcon and *X30* then moved

to calmer waters where the crew member was transferred to the Marine Rescue Eden rescue vessel.

Once the patient was safely aboard *X30*, it proceeded to the wharf at Snug Cove and a waiting ambulance. Here the final transfer occurred, with the crew member assisted to the ambulance who then transported him to the nearby Bega

Hospital for treatment.

Congratulations to the members of Marine Rescue Eden who have trained hard over the past few months to get themselves ready for this, their first call-out. Thank you too for the efforts of the trainers in helping them to achieve this significant milestone.

Program helps create the leaders of tomorrow

Members attend first post-COVID leadership program

Australia's capacity to respond to disasters relies on emergency management volunteers, such as Marine Rescue NSW.

The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience runs a Volunteer Leadership Program to equip volunteers within the emergency management sector with the skills and confidence to grow as leaders.

The Program experience is immersive and collaborative, bringing together volunteers from different organisations and agencies to build knowledge and share experiences with each other.

Six members of Marine Rescue NSW attended the May course at Port Macquarie: Murray O'Dea (Port Stephens),

Dave Bigeni (Port Macquarie), Ray Angel (Port Macquarie), Mark Neller (Hawkesbury), Grant Morehouse (Port Jackson), and Graham Gibbs (Port Macquarie).

The course afforded the attending volunteers the opportunity to network with peers from other emergency service organisations, to discuss and reflect upon recent events, and to learn skills to better equip them to deal with future emergency response situations.

The course also gave invaluable insight into personality traits and how people act during stressful situations. Knowing how to recognise these traits helps our future leaders better understand how to deal with and get the best



Marine Rescue NSW leaders of tomorrow at the leadership program. Left to right are: Murray O'Dea, Dave Bigeni, Ray Angel, Mark Neller, Grant Morehouse, Graham Gibbs.

from their team, with role playing providing real-life examples and

reinforcing better ways to do this.
Mark Neller

Red Cross Emergency Services Blood Challenge launched

Volunteers rolling up their sleeves for a good cause

With demand for blood increasing in the colder months, our volunteers and staff are again taking part in the one of the country's biggest blood drives to donate much needed blood, platelets and plasma.

This year's Red Cross Lifeblood Emergency Services Blood Challenge was launched at the Town Hall Donor Centre on 1 June, kicking off the annual winter campaign to boost blood supplies.

Representing Marine Rescue NSW was Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell and Manager Fleet Kelvin Parkin, who rolled up his sleeve to give the first life-saving donation on behalf of Marine Rescue NSW.

In the 2021 challenge, Marine

Rescue NSW picked up the award for 'Most Improved' agency, more than tripling donations from the previous year.

Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell said that Marine Rescue NSW members had shown themselves to be adept at saving lives not just on the water, but off it too.

"Last year the donations made by our members helped save 310 people who may otherwise have died."

"I'm confident we can better that mark this year, and save even more lives."

Red Cross need more than 1,000 donations across Australia every week, with each donation



Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell with Manager Fleet Kelvin Parkin at the launch.

saving up to three lives. Members are encouraged to donate, and to ensure that local blood service

staff know that they are part of the challenge and are representing Marine Rescue NSW.

Deputy Commissioners go bush

Inland units play host to senior staff

Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioners Alex Barrell and Todd Andrews, accompanied by Zone Commander South, Mike Hammond, have headed into the outback, visiting Marine Rescue NSW's farthest-flung unit at Moama on the Murray River in the south west of the state and the Alpine Lakes unit in the Snowy Mountains at Jindabyne.

Anthony Clark, before joining unit members for dinner.

The trio then headed east to Jindabyne to catch up with recently installed Unit Commander Cain Hopwood and new deputy David Farmer.

The visit provided an opportunity to better understand the unique operational conditions on the alpine lakes and the needs of the unit and



Deputy Commissioners Alex Barrell and Todd Andrews inspect the Moama unit's vessels.

followed by a Zoom meeting in May with the Unit Commanders, Mike Hammond and the Communications and Engagement team in which the very different conditions and hazards faced by boaters in these areas compared to the coast were

discussed. A key outcome of the meeting will be the production of new, targeted brochures for local boaters in these areas, helping them to stay safer on our inland waterways.

“A key outcome of the meeting will be the production of new, targeted brochures for local boaters in these areas”

At Moama, the trio inspected the unit's facilities including its two rescue vessels, and held discussions with the Moama Unit Commander Luke Sharrock and his deputy

its members.

After the visit, a dinner was held with unit members which allowed for further discussion.

These face to face meetings were



Keep your distance when watching whales this migration season. Photo: Brad Whittaker.

Whales head north as annual migration kicks off

Boaters urged to follow the rules and stay safe

The migration of humpback whales near NSW coast takes place between May and November each year, with the start of the whale watching season now in full swing. The season can be split into two parts depending on the direction of travel for the majority of whales during this time.

During the northern migration,

waters. At this time of year, they swim continuously at 5–9 km/h and have regular surface intervals. During the southern migration, the whales head south from mid-August to November to return to the Antarctic feeding ground for the southern hemisphere summer. When they move southwards, they can swim for hours in any direction

places to witness whales and their annual migration. It is important to understand, however, that whales are wild animals and that whale watching carries with it dangers both to humans, as the observers, and to the whales themselves.

In June last year, two fishermen off Narooma were injured, one critically, when a whale breached and landed on the boat they were travelling in, and each year there are many close encounters.

If you're on a powered or non-powered water vessel such as a boat, surfboard, surf ski or kayak, then you need to maintain a distance of at least 100m from any whale, and 300m if a calf is present.

For all water vessels, a distance of between 100m and 300m is established as the 'caution zone'. In this zone, vessels must travel at

a constant slow speed and leave a negligible wake. It's also important to assess the direction that the whales are traveling in, and then plan the best course of action.

If using a 'prohibited vessel' (that is, a vessel that can make fast and erratic movements and not much noise under water such as a personal water craft or parasail boat), then the distance increases to at least 300m from any whale.

There is also to be no waiting in front of any whale, or approaching from behind.

Following these rules helps ensure your safety out on the water, and ensures that the whales are not distressed by the presence of humans around them.

For more information, visit the National Parks and Wildlife Service website.

“If you're on a powered or non-powered water vessel you need to maintain a distance of at least 100m from any whale, and 300m if a calf is present.”

the Humpbacks head north between May and August mostly to give birth and to mate in the Coral Sea's

at a time, with less regular surface intervals.

On the water is one of the best

Open day puts our capability on show

Public swarm to Emergency Services Open Day display

Formerly the preserve of members of Fire and Rescue NSW, this year's May Open Day at the Emergency Services Academy saw members of many of the state's emergency services join forces to mount an informative and engaging display for the public.

The Marine Rescue NSW display featured a 12 person life raft and Rescue Water Craft (RWC), both of which were extremely popular with the hordes of attending primary school aged children. At times the life raft resembled a bright orange cubby house, with desperate parents trying to coax out younger children; while over on the RWC, the older children enjoyed the chance to hop on and take a 'drive' while talking to members of Marine Rescue Sydney on a portable hand-held radio.

The display also featured a TV with informative videos, and lots of boating safety advice and resources, with the Marine Rescue NSW

colouring books proving a big hit with younger children.

Marine Rescue NSW were represented at the open day by Marine Rescue Sydney members Chris Allen, David Crawford, James Rickards and Pamela Sayers, and were supported by Zone Duty Operations Manager Courtney Greenslade, General Manager Communications and Engagement Alison Dunsford, and Manager Media Phil Campbell.

General Manager Communications and Engagement Alison Dunsford said that the day was a great opportunity to get out vital boating safety messages in a relaxed environment.

"The life raft and RWC did a great job in grabbing the attention of children, enabling our members to talk with their parents on boating safety."

"Our attendance also highlighted our essential role as an emergency



The Marine Rescue NSW display was a winner with kids.
Photo: Courtney Greenslade.

service, and helped to raise our profile with the wider community,

and we look forward to attending bigger and better next year."

New Capability Manager joins Marine Rescue NSW

Wealth of experience to help shape our future capability

Mid-April saw the arrival of new Capability Manager, Craig Lunn, following the departure of the previous incumbent, Chris Jacobson.

Craig brings with him extensive experience in maritime operations, capability and training, having worked in many countries for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Global Maritime Crime Programme in the role of Expert Maritime Law Enforcement Trainer.

Over the past twenty years, he has operated in a range of diverse teams in senior roles as a lead maritime consultant, marine safety coordinator, Rescue Water Craft surf rescue instructor, Coxswain,

and in several command positions on vessels including superyachts, transfer and security vessels.

Craig spent fifteen years serving Her Majesty's Forces as a Royal Marines Commando, advancing to the role of Chief Instructor of Multinational Landing Craft.

Craig has moved from Queensland to Cronulla with his partner and is looking forward to the challenges Marine Rescue NSW will provide him with.

Craig said his vision for the Capability Manager role is to observe and assess our current operational, training and organisational capability and

requirements and to establish our strengths and potential areas for growth and improvement.

"My aim is to support the team in formulating new and exciting strategic goals centred around developing consistent growth in all areas of capability, to continue promoting the organisation's vision and achieve highly sustainable objectives for the future," Craig said.

"I look forward to making my way around to many of the operational units, listening to and supporting our volunteers and staff, with a long term goal to continue increasing their capacity and capability to save lives on the water."



Craig Lunn



Jeff is winched to safety.

SOLAS at Shark Island

MR Port Stephens give hope in the darkness

Propped up in the darkness against a rugged rocky outcrop and half paralysed was not how the skipper of a newly acquired 11 metre motor cruiser expected to spend his maiden voyage.

The proud skipper had prepared well for the journey from Botany Bay to Nelson Bay, and planned to use his new pride and joy *Waterfront* to take his young children adventure cruising and fishing.

A few minutes earlier Marine Rescue Port Stephens Watch Officer Lee Ryman had commenced his 7pm shift at the Nelson Head base, and just like the sinking skipper in distress, the Port Stephens Watch Keeper was on his own.

Around 15 minutes into the shift Lee heard a quick VHF transmission

to the base, but there was no voice. He thought it was a bit curious.

Then at 7:20pm he received a mobile phone call from the distressed skipper.

"Yeah Lee, this is *Waterfront*... Mayday, Mayday, Mayday".

Immediately Lee Ryman's years of Marine Rescue NSW training kicked in and he prepared to launch what quickly became a multi-agency rescue operation.

At times the mobile phone call was inaudible, with the skipper appearing to be muttering and unable to give his exact position.

The Watch Officer asked: "Whereabouts are you located?"

The skipper replied, "Just off Shark Island, Fingal Island... I believe. I can't tell. Um, I am outside

the entrance, I think, I don't know, I don't know."

Immediately Lee knew the skipper's vessel was in a dangerous area that is a haven for protruding and submerged rocks.

"How many people on board?" asks the Watch Officer.

"I hit pretty hard, just one. Boat's going down." The dazed skipper replied.

Watch Officer: "Do you have a radio on board?"

The skipper's reply was indecipherable, muttering sounds.

Watch Officer replies: "I didn't hear that sorry?"

The skipper replied: "I just tried calling you on it. I don't know if it is working at the moment...I got a knock on the head, was lying down

on the deck for a while, just come to."

Watch Officer: "Ok, do you think you have hit a rock or something?"

Skipper: "Yeah, I ran into it pretty hard, I was trying to follow the GPS".

With the vessel about to go under, a calm Lee Ryman guided the injured skipper through the steps to activate his EPIRB.

Watch Officer: "Is it a GME?"

Skipper: "Yep. Green light flashing...yep on. Putting out little flashes."

Watch Officer: "Yep, get in your life jacket if you've not already, and ah, I will just check everything... I'm going to ring the authorities and get someone headed your way. Do you have any injuries?"

Skipper: "I don't know. I was lying



Left to right: Graeme Abberton, Howard Faulks, Robert Johnson, Ben van der Wijngaart, Lisa Lodding, Mick Duggan, Lee Ryman, Anthony Batchler, Tony Baker, Jeff Dallinger, Laurie Nolan and Colin Cooper.
Photo: Laurie Nolan.

down. I knocked myself out.”

The skipper, 49 year old Jeff Casey, was indeed badly injured.

He later told Soundings when he recovered consciousness, he was rolling around the floor on the fly bridge aboard his Ranger 35 Motor yacht and could still hear the engine revving at full throttle.

“I remember a big swell rolled me onto my knees and I was able to force my way up leaning on the seat bench.”

“Even though I had no feeling in my arms and legs, my adrenaline kicked in, and I pulled the engine back into neutral and shut it down. The swell then moved it off the rocks. I told myself I am not going to drown.”

“I went downstairs, water was splashing onto the halfdeck and I called a MAYDAY on the VHF, then again on 27meg radio, the sliding door opened and I could see water coming in. I think the batteries were water affected.”

“So that’s when I went back up to the fly bridge with the portable EPIRB, a V sheet, flares and my mobile phone all stuffed in my shirt.”

“Thank God I had called Marine Rescue Port Stephens’s base earlier in the day to check about my mobile login details, it was the last number I had dialled in my phone.”

“As soon as Lee answered at Marine Rescue Port Stephens’s base I knew I would be safe.”

Jeff explained how the calm Watch Officer talked him through activating the EPIRB. He said he could press the test button, but his hands were hurting, so he used the back of his wedding ring to slide the cover open to activate it.

He put the life jacket between his legs then used his teeth to pull the cord open to inflate.

While this was happening Lee kept Jeff’s line open for 12 minutes while he issued a Mayday Relay then organised the rescue calling NSW Police Marine Area Command (MAC), the Unit’s Duty Callout Officer (DCO), and the Operations Officer. Because the skipper was not responding, he cut the line to free up all the phones, with the base becoming suddenly extremely busy.

The DCO, Graeme Abberton, organised rescue vessels *Port Stephens 31* and *Port Stephens 30* to prepare for rescue. He then made

his way to the base as a backup for Lee.

MAC organised for two ambulance officers to board the second vessel, *Port Stephens 30*, in case medical assistance was needed.

The triggered EPIRB allowed MAC to pass on the latitude and longitude to both rescue vessels as well as the Westpac helicopter which had a paramedic and doctor on board.

With help on its way from Marine Rescue Port Stephens, NSW Ambulance and the Westpac Helicopter, Lee was able to make contact 18 minutes later with the skipper on his mobile.

Watch Officer: “I got a life boat coming, just want to see how you were doing?”

Skipper: “I got my tender just off the back here.”

It was lucky Jeff had his 2.3 metre tender inflated for the journey. He pulled it to the portside hatch and rolled into it.

He rowed about four metres away and within a few seconds watched his pleasure craft sink.

He started to row towards the Fingal Lighthouse but eventually ended up on a small beach some 150 metres north.

Jeff said he could not move his legs and dragged his body up on the beach tying the tender to a log. He knew that the tide was low, but when

it came in, he would probably need the tender.

At 8:33pm *Port Stephens 31* advised it had reached the *Waterfront’s* location. Jeff couldn’t move. His body had shut down, but eventually *Port Stephen 31’s* search lights spotted him sitting injured and exhausted on a rock.

Then the second rescue vessel, *Port Stephens 30*, arrived, and within minutes both vessels were spot lighting the beach to guide in the Westpac helicopter.

It was too dangerous for the Marine Rescue Port Stephens vessels to go near the rocks, so a paramedic was winched onto the beach.

“I was in a lot of pain. I couldn’t move my right leg, but the doctor reassured me he would have me at the John Hunter Hospital in eight minutes,” said Jeff.

“In my darkest moment Marine Rescue NSW gave me hope.”

Jeff, a heavy machinery plant operator and others later donated \$1,000 to Marine Rescue Port Stephens after he met Lee Ryman and the Executive team at Nelson head base on his release from hospital. He no longer has the boat of his dreams, but knows better than anyone he has his life, and his kids have a dad.

Steve Barrett.

Shoalhaven members appear in stroke video

Couple share their experience to help others

When Marine Rescue Shoalhaven volunteer Anne Simpson saw her husband Mark Asper sitting fully clothed on the toilet with a blank expression on his face, she knew something was seriously wrong.

Her Marine Rescue NSW first aid training immediately kicked in, and Mark was soon on his way to hospital, having suffered a stroke.

Fortunately Mark has made a good recovery and is back with wife Anne helping out at the local Marine Rescue Shoalhaven base.

Mark and Anne recently shared

their story in an ABC 7.30 Report story about a new tele-health service, Telestroke.

For patients in rural and regional Australia, Telestroke puts a stroke specialist electronically in the emergency department of a rural hospital such as the one Mark attended in Nowra, to give patients vital early assistance.

Thank you to Mark and Anne for sharing their experience, and building awareness of this important service.

Mike Boadle



Mark Asper shares his stroke story on ABC's The 7.30 Report

Board on the road again

Illawarra units host visiting Board members

The Marine Rescue NSW Board meets every two months at a formal meeting with the service's senior executive, and to review reports from each business unit.

In between these formal meetings, the Board have informal meetings at regional Marine Rescue NSW units. These meetings are very beneficial, enabling the Board to thank unit members and to have a chat about any issues of concern. These meetings also give the Board a feel for the unit, which helps in future planning.

Over the past few years COVID has put a hold on these meetings, so the visit of the Board in late May to three Illawarra units was most welcome.

The unit visits started with Marine Rescue Jervis Bay, and after talking with unit members, the Board were delighted to take a run along the sea cliffs at Point Perpendicular in *Jervis Bay 40*, the biggest vessel in the Marine Rescue NSW fleet.

The next day the Board travelled south to Marine Rescue Sussex Inlet, who put on a display of their



Attending members of the Board at the Sussex Inlet unit.

Rescue Water Craft operations before taking the Directors for a run on their rescue boat to the local bar. The day was rounded off with a visit to Marine Rescue Ulladulla to meet with members and have a look over

their base and vessels.

The Board members were impressed by all three units visited, and with the enthusiasm and dedication of their members.

The Directors who attended were

Board Chairman Jim Glissan, Darcy Hendrickson, Ray Mazurek, Kevin Marshall, Glenn Felkin and Jim Wright.

Jim Wright

Wooli unit promote bar safety

Local weather data initiative increases boater safety

Crossing coastal bars can be very dangerous, with many factors to consider when making a crossing. Channels through the bars can change frequently, as can waves with the tide and weather. Even in apparently calm conditions, vessels can be swamped, damaged or wrecked, which can result in death.

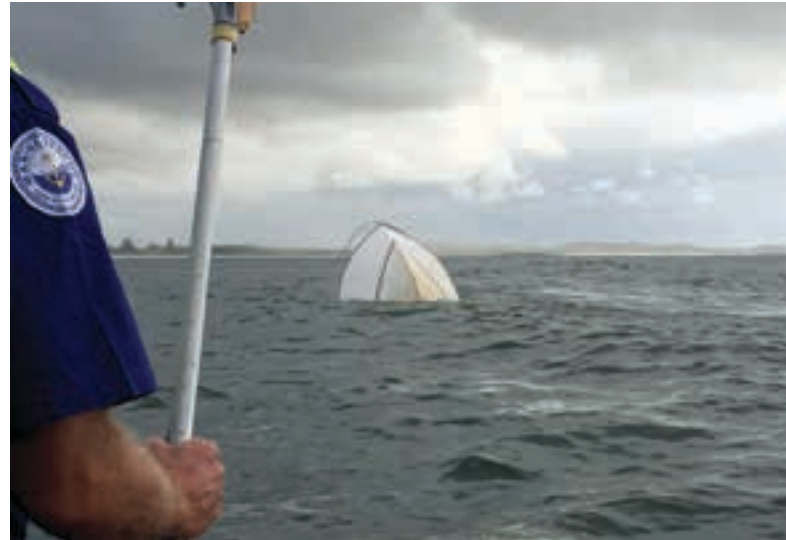
For Marine Rescue Wooli, of specific concern are the emergency responses that involve capsized and swamped vessels in close proximity to the Wooli Wooli River entrance. In recent times these have included a local charter boat, a university dive boat, a professional fisherman and numerous recreational fishers whose vessels capsized and were washed onto adjacent beaches or dragged out to sea on ebb tides.

Unit Administration Officer, Steve Reading, has examined the data from our incident reports. During

the period 2018 to 2021, eight vessels capsized on the Wooli Bar, and a further four were swamped and washed onto Jones and Wooli beaches. The early part of 2021 saw three capsizes in three months. For the period 2014 to 2021, the average number of capsizes on the Wooli bar was four a year.

Always check conditions before you go and be prepared to cancel or delay the crossing and if in doubt, don't go out. Transport for NSW has webcam vision of coastal bars to help boaters and skippers prepare for a safe crossing, but not for the Wooli Wooli River. Marine Rescue Wooli has lodged a submission prepared by Steve for a bar camera for Wooli to address this.

In the meantime, to help boaters plan ahead by checking local conditions, the unit has made publicly available 24/7 the wind



Don't become a bar statistic.

and weather data from the marine radio base's weather station. Member Chris Firth installed a Davis Meteobridge enabling data from the Davis Vantage Pro weather station to

be sent directly to the internet to be viewed via the free WeatherLink app on smart phones or the WeatherLink software on a PC.

Richard Taffs

Iluka Yamba acknowledge member diversity

Youth and senior volunteers recognised

One of the major strengths of Marine Rescue NSW is the diversity of skills and life experience of the volunteers who are the backbone of our organisation.

At Marine Rescue Iluka Yamba we are fortunate to have a great diversity of ages within our membership. Our younger members bring enthusiasm, a fresh outlook and boundless energy. One example is 29 year old Emily Richards, who is employed as a General Duties NSW Police Constable in Grafton. With her growing experience in a highly disciplined career and her keenness to contribute to the unit and the community in general, she is fitting in very well as she works towards her chosen rating as rescue vessel crew.

Our senior members bring



Emily Richards

the experience that only age can provide. As an example of a hard-working, highly skilled and experienced senior, it is hard to look past one of our skippers, Frank Bond. As a 74 year old electronics technician with decades



Frank Bond

of experience in his trade, Frank not only brings a steadying influence and experience as a skipper, he manages all aspects of vessel maintenance, modification and repairs for the unit. Under his steady hand our ageing Class 3 rescue vessel is not only fit

for purpose but has been modified to be an ever more usable and reliable rescue platform.

Thank you Emily and Frank, and all our members, for your contribution.

Ken Brandli



The memorial service at Centaur Primary School.

Training and maintenance time for Point Danger

Students remember WWII tragedy

At the Centaur Primary School, Banora Point, an annual memorial service is held to commemorate the AHS (Australian Hospital Ship) *Centaur* after which the school is named.

On 14 May, 1943, the *AHS Centaur* was travelling past Point Lookout on Stradbroke Island on its way to New Guinea when it was attacked by a Japanese submarine, sinking within minutes of torpedoing. Out of 332 on board, only 64 crew and medical staff survived. This ship holds a special place in history because it is the closest the war came to reaching Brisbane.

The school normally holds the memorial at the Point Danger Lighthouse, however that was not possible this year due to a surf competition, with this year's 79th anniversary held at the school in the presence of several members of Marine Rescue Point Danger.

A big thanks goes out to our Marine Rescue Point Danger members who stepped up and participated in our recent raffle and donation efforts at Bunnings Tweed, particularly our Administration Officer, Lyn McMahon.

On an operational front, Glen Hatton, our unit's Operations Officer, has been busy arranging the servicing of our vessels and putting forward a number of improvements. We've seen an upgrade to *Point Danger 20* with the installation of a power assisted steering system, providing a marked change to helm responsiveness. Both vessels *Point Danger 20* and *Point Danger 31* have undergone routine maintenance checks arranged by skipper Chris Quinn, as well as the implementation of an operational enhancement to refuelling. Thanks to all our Coxswains and Crew members who have enabled us to

have at least one boat on the water every weekend and public holiday this past year.

An internal review of our incident management process has been conducted, and is delivering a higher standard of recorded information,

aboard some new recruits who have joined Point Danger and commenced their crew training.

We have been conducting practical on-boat training for all crew and trainees with Jan Trueman, Gordon Woods or Tod

“A big thanks goes out to our MR Point Danger members who stepped up and participated in our recent raffle and donation efforts at Bunnings Tweed”

review and incident closure among involved teams.

Training is also well underway, and we have a number of crew ready and scheduled for their final assessments. As those members move forward, we've also welcomed

Sheaves on Wednesday mornings, and have just commenced night on-vessel training, which is being well attended. Crew theory classes on Wednesday evenings have also just commenced.

Paul Rockall and Aaron Ashley

Emergency start for epic South Pacific trip

Community cooperation comes to the rescue of sinking yacht

As we head into the winter months, recreational boating activity has naturally slowed in Forster Tuncurry as it has for most other areas. Consequently our attention and activities have focused more to training, fundraising and maintenance – and as this article was written, *Forster 30* was on the slipway in the middle of a week-long maintenance layup.

One recent vessel assist in April does warrant a special mention in that it involved the urgent cooperation of multiple agencies and community support with no notice. It's significant as this was achieved by the maintenance of good and current relations with all the parties concerned.

On 24 April a call for assistance was received at 3.30pm from a visiting 8 metre sailing vessel with two people on board on the first leg of an epic trip sailing the South Pacific. The yacht was taking on water faster than it could be pumped out while sitting at a courtesy mooring off Tuncurry.

Forster 20 was tasked to assist, and upon arrival rafted alongside the slowly sinking vessel in preparation to quickly move it to shallow water or the Tuncurry slipways if necessary. In addition to tasking *Forster 20*,



Forster 30 on the slip getting a maintenance check.

necessary tools for a repair as well as SCUBA gear if required, and advised the slipway operators in case the slip was required.

Community cooperation then abounded as local tour operator, Reel Ocean Adventures on their vessel *Illusion* and Surf Life Saving NSW assets, all of whom happened

assistance if necessary.

Accounts from the Marine Rescue NSW crew on board *Forster 20* testify to the expert skills in rectifying the water leak from within the vessel, and ultimately preventing it from sinking. As the flooding was brought under control, *Forster 20* released the rafting lines and all personnel and assisting vessels were stood down.

The take out from this highlighted the importance of multiple agencies including Marine Rescue NSW, NSW Maritime, Surf Life Saving NSW and the local commercial stakeholders having good local relationships - knowing each other's skill sets and being prepared to work closely with each other as required and on short notice to achieve great outcomes.

Michael Portelli

“This highlighted the importance of multiple agencies including Marine Rescue NSW, NSW Maritime, Surf Life Saving NSW and the local stakeholders having good relationships”

the base also contacted local NSW Maritime officers for their expertise.

A leaking propeller shaft gland was identified as the problem, and once aware of this, the NSW Maritime officers arrived with the

to be on the water supporting a major paddling event, offered their assistance; with *Illusion* ferrying the NSW Maritime personnel and their equipment to the vessel and then standing by to render further

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The fundraising team hard on the BBQs at the Easter market.

From rescue to BBQ for Crowdy Harrington members

Training activities help members hone skills

How grateful we are to live in a community that so brilliantly supports their local Marine Rescue NSW unit.

On 6 April, three members received their 5 Year Service Pins. John Single, who is our most accomplished skipper and an always ready to help volunteer, Tony Dick who has weathered very serious health problems and has returned as a Radio Operator and trainee Watch Officer, and Unit Commander Cheryl Rowe who seems to have been here forever. In volunteering terms five years is quite an achievement, and we are fortunate to have in our unit quite a few with five, ten and more years of experience.

The Easter Markets returned to the foreshore on 18 April, and was a great day for all involved with over 100 sites occupied by a wide variety of vendors, and a huge crowd taking

the opportunity to socialise in a beautiful location. We had *Crowdy 20* on display and it was great to talk with all those who came to check it out, with our BBQ very well supported.

On 22 April we joined Zone Training Manager Rodney Page at Crowdy Harbour at an expired flare collection. Unfortunately very poor weather resulted in very few people appearing to dispose of their flares.

The following day we held our first Unit Open Day and while numbers were probably reduced due to the weather, we are pleased to report that a couple of those who attended decided to join our ranks and have now started training. We also had a crew at Buckets in Taree, always a good fundraiser.

On 25 April, just as the ANZAC Day march was about to begin, we had a call out to help a visiting half

cabin vessel with fuel issues and three people on board located 10 nautical miles out to sea. *Crowdy 30* was quickly to the rescue.

On 28 April we ran a firefighting and sea survival training course for our latest crew trainees. The sea survival element was held in front of our base at the break wall and gave the community the opportunity to observe our volunteers in action.

This was followed on 9 and 10 May with first aid and advanced resuscitation training at our training shed. As on ANZAC Day, two of our members who were completing their refresher training had to firstly attend a call-out, assisting another half cabin vessel with three people on board that also had fuel problems. Fortunately, we were able to return the vessel and its crew to safety in time for our members to attend the training.

Rattletrap came to Crowdy Beach on 14 May with beautiful weather and perfect conditions, and we were back on the BBQs again. This event draws a huge crowd each year with the aim to drag race old hot rods for a mile down the beach. There are usually plenty of people in period dress, although sadly not many this year.

On 22 June elections will be held at our Annual General Meeting to determine who will run the unit for the next two years, with Unit Commander Cheryl Rowe and Deputy Unit Commander Wayne Seach deciding not to re-nominate for their positions. Both are grateful for the support shown to them during their time at the helm and wish the successful nominees all the best in their new roles.

Cheryl Rowe and Wayne Seach.

Coffs Harbour recognise members

Dedicated service honoured

The last three months has been a time where several of our members were formally recognised for their commitment, dedication and professional service to Marine Rescue Coffs Harbour.

Lindy Powells was awarded the National Medal and Unit Life Membership by Pat Conaghan, Federal Member for Cowper. Lindy has been a member of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and Marine Rescue Coffs Harbour unit since 2005.

During her years of service Lindy has dedicated countless volunteer hours as Unit Commander, Executive Officer, Watch Officer, Watch Keeper, Administration Officer, Roster Officer and Training Officer. Lindy's overall knowledge and experience has contributed immensely to the professionalism and efficiency of our unit. Lindy has since retired

and we thank her very much for the enormous contribution and wish her well away from the busy world of Marine Rescue NSW.

The National Medal was also awarded to Greg Taylor, Mark Halling and Andrew Cox who have contributed many hours as trainers, Incident Coordinators and Executive Officers.

David Oliver and Alan Newman both received their 5 Year Service Pin, while Jason Palczewski received his 10 Year Service Medal.

A Unit Commanders Citation was awarded to Ken McNeil, Darryl Mckay and Graham Taylor for outstanding professionalism and skills in rescuing two persons whose boat had foundered. The rescue was carried out at 2am and in horrendous conditions with 3 metre seas. The persons were uninjured however the same cannot be said



Proud award recipients.

for the motor cruiser that was lost to the wild weather.

Suzie Nolan was also awarded a Unit Commanders Citation for her invaluable service and contribution in a number of operational roles for

the last 15 plus years.

Marine Rescue Coffs Harbour is very fortunate to have such a high calibre of membership to enable it to maintain operations.

Russell Shelton

Fundraising and donations help keep Port Macquarie on the water

Rain, hail or shine – fundraising goes on

Fundraising is a very important part of the day to day running within Marine Rescue Port Macquarie, with the fundraising team both the face and backbone of the unit.

The fundraising team can be out an extraordinary four days every week, often starting early and finishing late, and out in all weather - absolutely nothing stops them! These members are the face of our unit as they are the ones the public meet and talk to, ask questions of and laugh with - truly the heartbeat of the unit.

The donations made through fundraising provide Marine Rescue Port Macquarie with the opportunity to have the latest safety equipment



A fundraising team member sets up for yet another event.

for our operational boat crews, and also provide upgrades to our radio base and boat shed equipment.

Thanks to our fundraising

capabilities, our unit has greater access to the up to date equipment that keeps us in top shape to carry out our reason for volunteering -

saving lives on the water.

Ian Brougham

Rescues keep Trial Bay members active

Lucky escape for three fishermen as boat capsizes

On Saturday 19 March Radio Operator Dave Meani received a request for assistance for a vessel with engine problems off Hat Head, with the *Trial Bay 30* crew of Jon Cragg, Ian Turner and Rick Turvey deployed to assess the situation.

After discovering the vessel was off Point Plomer nearer to Port Macquarie, it was decided *Trial Bay 30* would tow the 42 foot cruiser to meet *Port Macquarie 30*, who would return it to Port Macquarie for repairs.

On ANZAC Day, members Rick Turvey, Ian Turner, Val Close, Dave Meani, Jim Wait, Robyn O'Brien, Chris Parkinson, Julie Parkinson, Rob Hose, Loraine Rider, Peter Wood, Alan Neader, Tony Vaughan and Ron Rider represented the Trial Bay unit at the annual ANZAC Day march.

On 2 May, after an alert from



The capsized fishing boat is assessed by Ron Rider on Jet Ski TB11. Photo: Ian Turner

the general public that a vessel had overturned approaching the entrance to the bar, Radio Operator Jane Shearim tasked *Trial Bay 30* to assist. Three fishermen

who had been thrown into the water were rescued by a passing fishing boat, with *Trial Bay 30* crew Peter Holyfield, Ian Turner, Geoff Greenwood along with Ron Rider

on Jet Ski *Trial Bay 11* assessing the situation and deciding to secure the overturned boat to the emergency buoy in Trial Bay for later recovery.
Loraine Rider

Training focus for Nambucca unit this winter

Calls outs keep members busy

As the Marine Rescue Nambucca unit reaches winter, we are endeavouring to keep training foremost in our endeavours. Because of the shutdowns due to COVID, we are not happy with how far our training has dropped, and so the Training Officer has appointed SME to all members completing courses, whether it be Crew, Coxswain or whatever.

The goal is to have all members complete their course and be ready for the busier spring season. Over the past eight years Nambucca has had only one rated Coxswain, which is clearly unsatisfactory. We now have a Leading Crew as well as a Coxswain and four Coxswains in training. There are also a number of newer members getting close to obtaining their Crew rating so

hopefully spring will see Nambucca well and truly prepared for the upcoming boating season.

The unit has also been active on the water, retrieving an overturned vessel within the bar that was the first job for our new Leading Crew, Barry Flynn. With typical Barry skill he handled the recovery well and the entire unit and persons watching from the shore were impressed with his skills. The only issue was that as the boat had rolled the anchor the tow initially was very difficult. Luckily, one of our Rescue Water Craft turned up to assist and managed to cut the anchor free from the boat.

The unit had another callout in late April. A small tinnie was endeavouring to head out from Shelly Beach but through the first



The capsized fishing boat's anchor is attended to by an RWC.

row of waves lost power and was broadsided by the following swell and overturned. The call went out to the unit to recover the overturned vessel as the on board crew were safe on shore. However just as the unit was preparing to launch the vessel sank in the surf zone so

retrieval was not possible. All that remained of the unit was to recover some life vests floating in the surf zone. This was not possible by boat or Rescue Water Craft, so the decision was made to swim out and retrieve them.

Ketch caught out by bad weather

Camden Haven members respond to unusual call-outs

Although poor weather over autumn meant that at times our rescue vessels were out of action, several issues not involving our vessels kept members busy.

On Thursday 24 March a lone skipper moored his 11 metre ketch just inside our river off Pilot Beach. The vessel had some engine troubles which the skipper was working on.

On Sunday 27 March the wind and sea picked up and the ketch's anchor let go, with the vessel ending up on the beach in an impossible position for another vessel to tow it off, with the skipper refusing suggestions from police and ambulance officers to leave the vessel.

Three of our crew talked with him for another hour and finally he agreed to leave the vessel along with his dog, with our members driving him to a local motel and arranging for him to stay for the night with only the wet clothes he was wearing. Sadly three days later the ketch had to be dismantled and was taken away by truck.

Early on Saturday 7 March the cruiser *Cordelia* with five adults and two children on board headed out across the bar to do some trials following some mechanical issues,



The cruiser strikes the break wall.

screaming out.

Shortly after *Cordelia* radioed the base to inform us they had had a mechanical issue with their engines and had struck the south wall. They were taking on water and were heading back under their own power and advised that they may need assistance to moor to a local wharf.

Two of our boat crew helped take off several uninjured but distressed

“Just after 9am a phone call was received... that the vessel had struck the south wall quite hard and persons were heard to be screaming out.”

with the cruiser doing a few tests by crossing the bar and maneuvering close to the bar entrance.

Just after 9am a phone call was received by the base from a member of the public that the vessel had struck the south wall quite hard and persons were heard to be

passengers at a local wharf. The vessel was then motored up to a berth where local fire brigade members rigged up several pumps to pump out the water and assisted them with getting the vessel up onto the slipway for a full inspection.

Ken Rutledge



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Central Coast snag a dragon

Members honoured at unit awards night



Members of Marine Rescue Central Coast celebrated over 295 years of volunteer service at an awards night also attended by Parliamentary Secretary for the Central Coast Adam Crouch, Member for Gosford Liesl Tesch, Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell, Zone Commander Central Darren Schott and Zone Duty Operations Manager Steve Raymond.

On Easter Saturday a May Day call was received after a dragon boat capsized offshore, flinging five people into the water. *Central Coast 21* and *Central Coast 11* responded along with NSW Police Marine Area Command, and the Ocean Beach and Umina Surf Life Saving Clubs.

The five persons in the water were helped into the surf club IRBs, and once they were all safe and accounted for it was decided that *Central Coast 21* would tow the capsized dragon boat back to the safety of Anderson's boat shed in Ettalong. This was a great multi agency response, with an even better outcome.

On 3 May, an awards night was held at the Gosford Golf Club, with awards presented to 25 volunteers representing nearly 300 years of service to the community. These awards included both Marine Rescue and Federal Government long service awards.

One of those members was 80 year old Sherwin Hensby of Yattalunga.

Sherwin's years of volunteering began with the Rural Fire Service, where he spent many years serving food to firefighters on scene through the RFS canteen, along with other duties.

"It was a real family affair," he said. "My wife also gained her 25-Year Pin with the RFS and we used to get the kids involved too. I also used to run the Bunnings sausage sizzle fundraisers."

When he moved to the Central Coast, Sherwin joined the Coastal Patrol, which later morphed into Marine Rescue NSW, with his service largely involving radio work.

"My work background was in communications so I used those skills in my volunteer work," he said.

His expertise with communications saw him involved in three Olympic Games.

"I first went to the Atlanta Games in 1996 to look at their radio systems and how they were used," he said.

"Then for the 2000 Sydney Games I designed and managed the

radio system, supervising 25,000 volunteers using 15,000 radios.

"I then became part of the communications team for the Athens Olympics in 2004."

His expertise with radios came to the fore when he joined Marine Rescue NSW.

"My work with Marine Rescue NSW is mainly staffing the radio desk at base although I have also taught radio and first aid," he said.

As part of the Green Watch, Sherwin's service has seen him staff the radio desk most weekends for the past 20 years, working from 6am to 6pm in summer and from 7am to 5pm in winter.

Following a bout of cancer, he now works reduced hours but still turns up for his shortened shift each Saturday and Sunday.

"I don't stay for the full day anymore but usually help organise lunch and stay until around 3pm," he said.

Other members recognised at the awards night included Norm Smith of Ettalong, for 40 years of service,

Phil Page of Aberglasslyn (near Maitland) for 30 years, and Harry Scales of Somersby for 25 years.

The evening was attended by Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell, Zone Commander Central Darren Schott, and Zone Duty Operations Manager Steve Raymond, together with Parliamentary Secretary for the Central Coast Adam Crouch, and Member for Gosford Liesl Tesch.

Mr Crouch commended the recipients for their "amazing contribution and service to the Coast totalling 295 years."

Our Terrigal base has also been kept busy, with training as well as requests for assistance.

On Saturday 7 May, *Central Coast 30* was tasked to assist a vessel off Forrester's Beach that was having fuel issues, and on Sunday 8 May *Central Coast 30* was tasked to assist a Jet Ski with a rope sucked up into the impeller. Both of these vessels were taken back to Terrigal Haven boat ramp.

Mitch Giles

Media campaign pays dividends for Lemon Tree Passage

After dark training boosts crew skills

A media campaign by Unit Commander Steve Vautier during spring and summer imploring local and visiting boaters to be prepared has paid dividends, with a decrease in calls for assistance for mechanical breakdowns.

As a result of less calls for assistance, there has been an increase in on water training during the last few months. Following a training review with members, night navigation on Port Stephens and its associated tributaries was identified as a priority, particularly as the mainly trainee crew had limited night navigation experience.

A series of night time familiarisation and exercises were subsequently conducted on Port Stephens, the Karuah and Myall Rivers, and other tributaries. During the exercises the crew practiced recognising navigational marks by their light sequences and using the lead lights and sector lights for vessels entering Port Stephens from the sea.

The crews took turns at



Members at the Anzac Day Service. Photo: Steve Vautier

navigating, steering by compass, providing information to the master and instructions to the helmsman. Navigational lights that were identified as not functioning correctly were recorded and reported to NSW Maritime.

To further hone member skills, on 11 May a joint night time exercise was conducted with Marine Rescue Port Stephens. On a dark and rainy night, and with minimal information, a parallel search was conducted around the North Arm Cove area.

Most of the crew had limited experience in this type of operation and gained valuable experience in using radar, steering to compass bearings, and maintenance of track spacing and speed; gaining valuable knowledge and experience.

Congratulations to Greg Fletcher who passed his Leading Crew assessment, and to Martyn Schroom, Matthew Clarke, Karla Kobitz and Carl Wolstenholme for passing their Crew assessment, and David Neale for passing his Radio Operator's

assessment.

Now that COVID restrictions have eased, Marine Rescue Lemon Tree Passage has been conducting regular weekend community engagement activities and sausage sizzles to raise money and to engage with the local community on boating preparation and safety on the water. These are set to continue over the winter and spring. Members also participated in the local ANZAC Day march.

Mick Chubb

Marine Rescue Tuggerah named region's best

Unit's exemplary impact recognised

The members of Marine Rescue Tuggerah Lakes have been awarded the 'Volunteer Team of the Year Award' for the Central Coast, by Volunteering Central Coast during this year's National Volunteer Week.

Volunteering Central Coast is a not for profit organisation with a mission to enable community engagement, inclusion and growth through volunteering. The Volunteer Team of the Year Award is presented to a team who have made an exemplary voluntary contribution and who through their volunteering

has made a significant impact towards the Central Coast.

The sixty members of Marine Rescue Tuggerah Lakes received the award for their ongoing role in assisting local boaters and other recreational waterway users. This assistance continued despite the pandemic, with the members of Marine Rescue Tuggerah Lakes also providing out of area assistance during the flood crisis.

Congratulations to the Marine Rescue Tuggerah Lakes team.

Bob Sutton



Unit Commander Bob Sutton receives the award on behalf of the unit.



The broken down Jet Ski is towed down the Patterson River.

Newcastle make lengthy trip upriver to rescue Jet Ski rider

Members' service acknowledged at award ceremony

Although Marine Rescue Newcastle undertakes the odd job on the Hunter River, in a first for the unit we were recently tasked to assist a Jet Ski on the Patterson River, which joins the Hunter just before Morpeth.

confirmed that depth of water and height of bridges along the route wouldn't be an issue for *Newcastle 30*, allowing Master Coxswain Ron Calman and crew members Lyn Van Homrigh and Stewart Lawson to set off on the lengthy trip upriver.

then transferred onto *Newcastle 30* for a comfier journey, with the Jet Ski towed without incident to the Raymond Terrace boat ramp.

Only a matter of two weeks later another upriver incident occurred, with Ron and Lyn tasked to assist a ski boat with five people on board that had ended up high and dry on a sandbank near Raymond Terrace.

On the way to this job, a call was received by Radio Operator Warren Bramble to assist a vessel that had broken down near the entrance to Newcastle Harbour that required a tow to the Stockton Boat ramp. As the ski boat up-river was safe, this assist was carried out before the uneventful trip upstream to Raymond Terrace.

On arrival near Raymond Terrace,

it was quickly obvious that the ski boat was not going anywhere until a tide change, and as the condition of the ski boat's propulsion was not known, Ron made the decision to 'standoff' for the two hours until the high tide. For safety and comfort, the five people on board the ski boat were brought aboard *Newcastle 30*.

Once the boat was refloated, *Newcastle 30* towed the ski boat to the safety of the Raymond Terrace boat ramp.

In late April, Federal Member for Newcastle Sharon Claydon presented volunteer service awards to seven of Marine Rescue Newcastle's members. Congratulations to all members for their awards.

“In a first for the unit we were recently tasked to assist a Jet Ski on the Patterson River, which joins the Hunter just before Morpeth.”

After Watch Officer Rick Neville called the crew in, a prudent check with our local Boating Safety Officer

After a 90-minute trip, *Newcastle 30* arrived on scene to a relieved Jet Ski operator. The operator was

Foundation Training module proves highly successful

Strong interest from community sees ranks swell

Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie continues to enjoy a high level of interest from members of the public seeking to volunteer.

With a limited number of trainee positions, particularly in the boating stream, the unit undertakes information nights two to three times a year that provide interested persons with an overview of the roles and opportunities available.

Members of the Executive have a chat with each of the applicants to ensure there is an understanding of the nature of the roles, and importantly, the level of commitment required for one of the busiest units in the state.

Although previous boating or radio experience is welcome, the unit has shifted its focus towards an applicant's ability to work as part of a team, comply with procedures and to professionally interact with the

public while undertaking tasks.

Once approved, and prior to commencing on shift training, all trainees undertake the unit's Foundation Training Programme.

The Foundation Training Programme was largely designed by the Deputy Communications Officer, Richard Jennings. Richard and a number of the unit's other members deliver training modules that provide an understanding of the nature of the various marine radio bands and marine communication protocols.

Seamanship, navigation, and weather modules are also provided together with training in the use of Seahawk and how to access to procedures and relevant training materials in the Otter intranet.

The Foundation Training initiative allows trainees in both the radio and boating streams to 'hit the ground running' and actively contribute



Richard Jennings delivering Foundation Training to the latest intake of trainees.

to operations from their very first training shift.

Despite the many disruptions in training in the last 12 months due to COVID restrictions, under the guidance of our People and Culture Officer, and with increased support from the Membership Officer, the unit has achieved a 100% retention rate of the 19 trainees that joined us in the 2021 intake, with many

operational trainees achieving their initial ratings in under or shortly after the six month provisional membership period.

Our recent intake included a number of radio and RWCO trainees. It is hoped that the efforts of our members in the training and support of our provisional members will once again prove successful for the unit.

Kelly McNeil

Rare honour for Norah Head Unit Commander

Successful interagency briefing held on marine environment operations

Unit Commander Bill Hignett and his wife Chris had the honour of attending the 80th Anniversary of the Allied Service in the Pacific Commemoration, hosted by the United States Army Small Ships Section at The Grace Building in Sydney.

Bill was invited to be their Guest of honour at this very prestigious function with a myriad of prominent dignitaries in attendance. This was to show their gratitude for the memorial dedicated in honour of the crews and ships of the Royal Australian Navy Air-Sea Rescue units unveiled in Mazlin Reserve, Norah Head, in December 2021.

Bill was overwhelmed with the

respect, gratitude and interest received from the attendees for not only the memorial, but Marine Rescue NSW and the services we provide. Bill stated it was an amazing opportunity and truly an honour to be there, a day in his life he will never forget.

An interagency briefing was held at our base recently with Kris Larkin from Westpac Rescue Helicopters covering marine environment operations.

This was a highly successful day allowing members to ask questions and gain a valuable understanding of the operations, capabilities and restrictions or hazards when working together from both sides, on water



Bill Hignett, front far right, at the 80th Anniversary of Allied Service in the Pacific Commemoration.

and in the air.

Kris certainly held everyone's interest and with his discussions, explanations and photos and we highly recommend other units to

receive such a briefing for their members. The briefing finished with a BBQ and the arrival of the Board just in time for a sausage.

Julie Rostron



Mark Rutherford aboard his new craft. Photo: Mark Rutherford

MR Port Jackson ponder ‘who we are’

A salute to our members - and a cautionary tale

Articles in Soundings describe well what we do and what we have done, but less so who we are.

Let me recount my experience which tells us who we are.

I am a Marine Rescue Port Jackson member of about a

from all of you, I have done that!

I bought a boat in which I had no experience. Groans just got louder.

I'm a yachtie, and my new boat is a high-powered, planing hull cruiser. Great for the grandkids on the Harbour. Not so good for a sailor

planning, foolishness as I now know.

If it had not have been for our community of Marine Rescue from Point Danger to Port Macquarie, my tale might be different. As we struggled our way south, consuming petrol that would make a Russian oligarch rub his hands together, we found ourselves in positions that Marine Rescue NSW might be called upon to assist.

Empty tanks, vigorous bar, no fuelling marina.

Time to phone a friend.

Marine Rescue Ballina, Iluka Yamba, Coffs Harbour, Nambucca, Trial Bay and Port Macquarie. This is a salute to you guys. On the phone and Channel 16/19 you were superb. You went above and beyond. To Ian at Marine Rescue Trial Bay a huge thanks. We entered the Macleay River on a falling tide, on fumes, buoyed by your options

A, B and C.

Dear reader, option C was to bring the refuelling trailer to the public dock and fill us up. I could not accept that, option B worked.

I firmly believe that a delivery voyage, for a seasoned sailor who can now earn beers off the tale, might well have finished differently, if I had not been a member of Marine Rescue NSW and called upon our community for help and advice.

To think that we offer the same service to any boater, no questions asked, no obligation. Marine Rescue NSW volunteers, applaud yourselves.

This is who we are, not what we do.

Oh, in case you were wondering, the boat did eventually make it to Sydney. On a truck.

Mark Rutherford

“Marine Rescue Ballina, Iluka Yamba, Coffs Harbour, Nambucca, Trial Bay and Port Macquarie. This is a salute to you guys.”

year and a bit with a lifetime of professional and personal boating experience to use to the advantage of the public now that I have the time and ability to do so.

I bought a boat. Groans I can hear

who has travelled thousands of miles at five knots.

Five hundred nautical miles delivery from Gold Coast to Sydney? No problem - in a yacht. In a fast boat? Even with careful weather

Close encounters for Middle Harbour

Speedy response saves sinking speedboat



The speedy pump out of this speedboat prevented it sinking. Photo: Anna Kalisiak.

Two close by operations in Middle Harbour have highlighted the importance of a fast response by Middle Harbour crews.

A very quiet morning at the base became very busy when we were alerted to a sinking vessel at the marina next door by a breathless young woman at our front door begging for urgent help. A new speedboat tied up too tightly to the wharf was about to slip beneath the surface.

Middle Harbour 30 masters Geoff Cooke and Joseph Battaglia and crew arrived at the scene in less than five minutes and immediately rigged our powerful pump (which drives off the port diesel engine) for an external pump out.

Onlookers on the wharf and another vessel alongside had attached a maze of lines which were just holding the sides of the

speedboat from slipping under. Others had a bucket brigade going but had been fighting a losing battle.

Joseph Battaglia said that the most difficult part was manoeuvring the stern of *Middle Harbour 30* into position at the stern of the vessel without pushing more water into it or fouling our props with the tangle of lines already in the water.

But the big pump proved its worth and after about 20 minutes, the operation was successfully concluded. The cause, according to owner Trent Lund was not a leak in the hull, but the fact the transom had been moored too tightly on a strong outgoing tide, allowing water to break the seal on the stern door, which combined with big washes from passing vessels created a rapid influx of seawater.

Trent was greatly appreciative of *Middle Harbour 30's* rapid save,

although his 90HP Yamaha outboard had to be written off.

In May, also in our neighbourhood, *Middle Harbour 30* was tasked to pick up a large party of ambulance and police from the Roseville ramp, and to proceed at all speed to an injured woman aboard a large Riviera in Bantry Bay (which has no road access.)

Harbour 30 collected the emergency services, with both vessels in attendance at the difficult location within 30 minutes.

The patient was treated on board the cruiser, then *Middle Harbour 30* conveyed her on a stretcher, attended by the Ambulance officers, back to Roseville, from where she was rushed to hospital.

“The transom had been moored too tightly on a strong outgoing tide, allowing water to break the seal on the stern door”

This had been declared a PAN PAN and we were able to send *Middle Harbour 20* straight to the distressed vessel to assess and commence first aid, while *Middle*

All of which just underscores that trouble can and does happen right in our own backyards, and of course, when we least expect it.

Howard Gipps

Anatomy of a rescue

Marine Rescue Sydney relate a rescue step by step

At 2pm on Saturday 19 March, the Marine Rescue Sydney State Communications Centre (Marine Rescue Sydney) received a MAYDAY call via VHF Radio from a 30ft motor Cruiser with three passengers located 200 metres off Whale Beach that was taking on water. The skipper advised they were going into the water, making getting vital information to guide the responding emergency services both urgent and essential.

Once the information was received, a MAYDAY Relay 'All Ships Alert' was immediately transmitted for all vessels in the vicinity of Whale Beach to assist, and to identify themselves to Marine Rescue Sydney. At the same time NSW Police Marine Area Command (MAC), the Greater Sydney Zone Duty Operations Manager, and rescue vessels *Broken Bay 30* and *Cottage Point 31* were all contacted, with MAC confirming activation of all available Marine Rescue NSW vessels.

In response to the 'All Ships' Alert, Scotland Island and Elvina Fire Boats, which were training in Broken Bay, responded to the MAYDAY relay. Meanwhile, using their navigation software Marine Traffic, Marine Rescue Sydney identified a nearby vessel off Palm Beach and attempted to contact them via VHF radio, with no response received.

At the 8 minute mark, the skipper of the sinking vessel advised that all three persons were now in the water, with Marine Rescue Sydney updating the vessels responding to the MAYDAY.

Marine Rescue Sydney then contacted MAC to give a situation report, advising that Marine Rescue NSW vessels were on route, only to be requested that all vessels stand down as everyone was now safely aboard a Surf Lifesaving NSW craft.

We then contacted the Greater Sydney Zone Duty Operations



Marine Rescue Sydney long service award recipients.

Manager Courtney Greenslade to advise of the stand down. Arriving on scene, *Broken Bay 30* radioed that the only visible part of the disabled vessel was the bowsprit.

As requested by MAC, a 'Secureite Navigational Hazard Warning' message was then transmitted hourly for 24 hours as the disabled vessel remained a navigation hazard as due to rough seas, a buoy was unable to be attached to the bow. MAC advised that the vessel had a high-water alarm and upon investigation the crew had noted the engine bay full of water. Although the bilge pumps were activated, the vessel was already sinking and could not be saved.

This response was an outstanding team effort by both Marine Rescue Sydney members and the Marine Rescue NSW crews on duty, and highlights the vital role our radio volunteers play monitoring the marine radio network 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Special thanks to Duty Officer David Crawford, Watch Officer Marguerite Mason and Radio Officers Tim White, Walter Prolov and Demetrios Demetriou, as well as the crew of *Broken Bay 30*, MAC and our other emergency service partners.

Over the past few years Marine Rescue Sydney has recognised the contribution of 12 of its members and their over 150 years of

combined Marine Rescue service.

Achieving their Ten Year Service Medal were Mike Calloway, Dawn Bradner, Astrid King, David Bornstein, Matt King, John Collins and John Harris.

Last October Robert Elvin was awarded his first Marine Rescue NSW Service Medal Clasp, following 20 years of dedicated service.

Achieving their National Medals were Graham McNaney, Marguerite Mason, Graeme Weston and Mike Evans.

Congratulations to all members for their service to Marine Rescue and the community.

John Collins, Dennis Comber and David Crawford

Broken Bay bid farewell to old base

New base, new boat, herald big changes for Broken Bay unit

Marine Rescue Broken Bay members have had a busy period over autumn, attending to some 58 rescues in the first three months of 2022 while dealing with COVID restrictions and preparing for substantial changes coming into effect at the unit in the coming months.

A year ago, Marine Rescue Broken Bay travelled to Taree to assist with the flood emergency in that community. March once again saw our unit participate in a flood emergency response, this time somewhat closer to home at the upriver community of Wisemans Ferry.

Over two days, the crew on *Broken Bay 20* operated tirelessly on the flooded Hawkesbury River - undertaking welfare checks, providing fuel, medicine and food to stranded residents, and inspecting for water access for the growing SES presence building at the command post.

Broken Bay 20 proved the perfect vessel to operate in the fast-flowing shallow flood waters, being a centre console twin 90hp RHIB. Aboard were two South Australian SES volunteers who together with our members and local SES volunteers worked effectively to complete all the assigned tasks. The tasks were not always easy to complete, and in some instances the SES members had to swim the final 5-10 meters to shore to complete the drop.

The Broken Bay unit was once again proud to assist the community in their time of need and we thank members Deputy Unit Commander Andrew Majewski, Ray Parker, Wayne Laughton, Mike Charlton and Matt Bruin for giving up their time to operate in the unfamiliar flooded waters.

The month of May was a major milestone for our unit and members as we left our home of half a century. We have been operating



Broken Bay's temporary accommodation ready to occupy. Photo: Jimmy Arteaga.

out of a green demountable for over 50 years and while the building has served its purpose, the time to rebuild has come.

We will soon have a modern, free-standing, purpose built building that will serve the needs of the Broken Bay unit well into the future. Before then came the task of packing, clearing and discarding items from the unit including 'The Great Shed' in preparation for our temporary home for the next 6-8 months in a small shipping container. Thanks to those Broken Bay members and to Senior Manager, Property & Infrastructure Mark Cooper who have helped with this project over the last three years and for the \$100,000 contribution from a Community Building Partnership grant.

Mid-June has seen the delivery of our replacement to *Broken Bay 20* which was in part delivered thanks to a \$200,000 My Community Project grant. Our current 6.5 metre RHIB the *David B Harrison* will be sorely missed, having served the Broken Bay and Pittwater community flawlessly. During its operational life it has made innumerable

rescues, participated in major flood responses, and made countless trips to Sydney Harbour in support of key harbour functions such as the Sydney to Hobart and New Year's Eve fireworks.

In its place will be a 7 metre split console Naiaid designed to better assist the larger vessels now visiting our local waterways. This new vessel will have a purpose-built drop-down bow to easily extricate people off beaches or shallow water, reducing their risk of being hurt by trying to climb over the sides. The new vessel is also designed with the safety and comfort of our members in mind with a wider hull for a better stance in the water and a hardtop

kitted out with all the necessary technology to assist in reportable and non-reportable incidents and is scheduled to be operational by late July.

We also would like to congratulate the following members for their service awards: Leanne Chandler and Peter Iles (25 years), Stuart Sperduti and Marcus Collignon (10 years) and Michael Clinen (5 years). We are ever grateful for the time they and our other members freely give as a volunteer to the community.

Finally, a big congratulations to Jim Henwood for successfully completing his Crew operational assessment and becoming our

“We will soon have a modern, free-standing, purpose built building that will serve the needs of the Broken Bay unit well into the future.”

with clears to protect them from the prevailing conditions.

As per the Marine Rescue NSW standard, the vessel will be

newest crew member, well done and thank you for all your hard work getting to your new rating.

Jimmy Arteaga



Member for Gosford Liesl Tesch was pleased to present a NSW flag to the Hawkesbury unit.

Hawkesbury honour long-serving members

Flooded Hawkesbury tests crews

First up, congratulations to several of our loyal and dedicated volunteers on receiving long service awards.

Craig Staff recently received the 35 Year Clasp for the National Medal. Craig has been a valuable member of Marine Rescue Hawkesbury. He is a significant asset and a wonderful part of the team. He is always ready to help out with all aspects of keeping the unit running efficiently. Craig is very involved in our unit and is always ready to assist, from restoring boats, to outdoor maintenance, and every aspect of seamanship, and is always there for his team and the community.

Carmelo Sciberras recently received the 25 Year Clasp for the National Medal. Carmelo is our Padre and the Chaplin for Marine Rescue Hawkesbury and an active member as a Radio Operator. It is always an honour to be on duty with Carmelo and hear his entertaining stories. When he is not on duty, Carmelo has received nothing but praise and great compliments for his tireless hard work in the community

from all who know him. Carmelo is also famous for his desserts which have many times helped us all to refuel at the end of a busy day on duty.

Also receiving the 25 Year Clasp for the National Medal was Mike Bevan. Mike has been a great asset to the unit, making all feel welcomed and supported throughout their training. Mike is an excellent teacher with both radios and boats as well as an interesting story teller, keeping everyone entertained with his great personality and wonderful humour.

Unit Commander Derek Whorlow has kept the unit functioning well through the difficult times of late and his support and training have assisted many to realise their potential and achieve their goals. Derek received the Marine Rescue 10 Year Service award and also holds the 25 Year Clasp for the National Medal.

The recent floods presented the unit with a polluted and fast flowing Hawkesbury River to contend with, with lots of debris including trees and fridges being seen and around 1,300 houses with no road access

and no sewers, making hand washing de rigeur to keep our crews safe and healthy. In one response, the fast flowing river presenting a real test for our crews assisting NSW Ambulance with a medivac from Dangar Island.

Fortunately, the floods kept down the numbers of the public out boating, with rescues and assist numbers down, the exception being over the ANZAC Day weekend when we were the fourth busiest unit in the state.

Our newest vessel, *Hawkesbury 30* has proved to be an excellent

workhorse for us and is a tribute to all that were involved in her design and fit-out. All rated members have undergone an extensive induction including an hour-long test, paying dividends in everyone's understanding on how to get the best from the vessel.

In late May Member for Gosford Liesl Tesch visited our base to present a New South Wales flag. Ms Tesch watched as the flag was hoisted and later inspected our base.

Kym Mahoney



A delighted Mike Bevan receiving his award from Unit Commander Derek Whorlow. Photo: Tony Cassin.

Botany Port Hacking members attend thanksgiving service

‘Rescue Sunday’ makes welcome return

On the first Sunday in May, members of Botany Port Hacking unit attended ‘Rescue Sunday’, a special thanksgiving service held at St Pauls Anglican Church Gynea.

The Service celebrates and gives thanks to all members of the emergency services, both paid and volunteer, particularly those in the Sutherland Shire, for their commitment and service.

Normally an annual tradition, the service has been on hold over the past two years because of the COVID pandemic, and made a welcome return this year.

At the conclusion of the service, a Certificate of Appreciation was presented to a representative of



Members of the Sutherland Shire emergency services at the thanksgiving service.

each of the attending emergency service organisations by the Mayor of Sutherland Shire Council, Councillor Carmelo Pesce, followed by an informal BBQ.

The certificate presented to

Marine Rescue NSW was received by Dianne Mitchell, a member of the St Paul’s parish and 35 year veteran member of Marine Rescue NSW and its predecessor, the Australian Volunteer Coastal Patrol.

Dianne was accompanied at the service by Marine Rescue Botany Port Hacking members Geoff MacDonald, Bernie Ward, Jeff O’Brien, Rod Harris, Hope Guy, Beverly Higgins and Ted Bramble.

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Kuring-gai Motor Yacht Club (KMYC) members and Cottage Point Marine Rescue volunteers at the Long-Range Operators Certificate of Proficiency course.

Keeping local boaters safer

Cottage Point hold training and demonstrations

Marine Rescue Cottage Point regularly engage with our local boating community through demonstrations and training programs to support our vision of saving lives on the water.

On Sunday 24 April, 13 Club

trainer Patrick O'Brien, they dedicated the day to gaining their Long-Range Operators Certificate of Proficiency.

The KMYC members learned all about marine radio – including frequencies, EPIRBS, repeater

distress alerts, urgency alerts and safety alerts.

Finally, the team learned the correct way to do a radio check and Log On for a voyage, and practised the phonetic alphabet, before closing out the day with Seelonce Mayday and Seelonce Fenee.

The club thanked Patrick for a very well-structured presentation and for his patient responses to all their questions. Some great feedback was received, with one participant saying "It was fun to meet other members and volunteers and I am sure our waters will be safer for having a few more skilled radio operators around Cottage Point."

On the evening of 28 April, members of Marine Rescue Cottage Point led by Unit Commander Tony Gordon and Leading Crew member Darren Lake hosted a flare demonstration at the Royal

Motor Yacht Club (RMYC) Broken Bay, where the RMYC members were given a safety demonstration on all things flares and smoke signals, rounded off with a life raft deployment in the pool!

The event was a great success with RMYC members getting involved in the demonstrations, asking questions, and gaining valuable information about safety on the water and the use of equipment that we hope people never need to use but must be able to identify and use in perilous situations. There were some great photos, feedback, and a note of appreciation.

With the decreasing of COVID restrictions and more people heading back on to the water, we plan to continue our engagement with our boating community for the rest of the year to support our vision of saving lives on the water.

Stew Burns

“The KMYC members learned all about marine radio – including frequencies, EPIRBS, repeater stations, simplex, and duplex channels.”

Kuring-gai Motor Yacht Club (KMYC) members and Cottage Point Marine Rescue volunteers resisted the call of blue skies and perfect water conditions to hone their marine radio skills. Locked in the clubhouse and ably instructed by our radio

stations, simplex, and duplex channels. They also learned the difference between calling/distress and working channels, the differences between alerts, calls, and messages, and rehearsed protocols, and the scripts for

Kioloa repay past support

Easter market raises funds for flood victims

During the Black Summer Bushfires, the villages of Kioloa and Bawley Point were among the first communities affected by the fires, and fondly recall the outpouring of support received from all around the State.

With the communities of northern NSW and southern Queensland recently devastated by floods, the members of Marine Rescue Kioloa decided it was our turn to give back to those who helped us when we were in need.

Helping people who have been affected by disasters is really important to us, with our unit members unanimously agreeing to donate all proceeds of our Easter

Market to support the flood victims of NSW and Queensland through the Red Cross Flood Appeal.

The funds raised will enable Red Cross volunteers and staff to help with evacuations, relief centres and outreach services, and assist people and communities to recover and to build resilience to disasters.

On a rare warm and sunny day, the local community came out in strength to support our market and with their generosity and the hard work of our unit volunteers, Marine Rescue Kioloa raised \$3,860 for the flood victims. These funds were passed to the Red Cross Flood Appeal with their appreciation.

A huge thank you to the members



The Easter Market in full swing at Marine Rescue Kioloa

of our unit for their generosity of spirit and time to help others. Then again, that's why we joined Marine

Rescue NSW isn't it?
Peter White

Open Day super success for Sussex

Busy start to autumn for unit members



Member Susan Bowman had a visit from two colourful 'tigers' at the Open Day.

Marine Rescue Sussex Inlet has been extremely busy over the last few months. Our membership continues to grow, with another seven members inducted and two Crew, with one Senior Crew and a Radio Operator achieving their rating and many more in training.

On 16 April, after six months of planning, we held a highly

successful Open Day. The highlight was educational boat trips on *Sussex Inlet 20*, with some 40 trips completed by finishing time.

Before embarking, children and adults were informed of the importance of wearing lifejackets, and once on board, talks were given on water safety, the importance of Logging On and Logging Off, and

boat maintenance. Thanks to Zone Commander Mike Hammond who helped us receive permission for these trips to occur.

Our Rescue Water Craft operators Ben Hill and Glenn Wright demonstrated search patterns, and there was a surprise visit from the Easter Bunny, with Gemma Seymour a huge hit with the children. Other highlights of the day were a first aid and CPR demonstration by First Aid Officer Paul Sapsed, and a demonstration on VHF radio operation by Jim Cross.

On the day, the Sussex Inlet Bowling Club presented us with a very generous donation towards new training materials. Another generous donation was received from the Sussex House Caravan Park. On New Year's Eve, a raffle was held there, with the money raised donated to our unit.

Our MC for the day Julia Ross did a wonderful job entertaining the many people who attended, with the

success of the day a credit to the volunteers who worked tirelessly to ensure it was a great day.

On ANZAC Day, 13 members marched proudly, led by Aaron Hayward and Les Pataky, with a Marine Rescue NSW vehicle provided to transport those unable to march.

Our waterways have been relatively quiet. One call of note occurred on 4 May when our Radio Operator received a call from a fisherman stating there was an empty boat floating in St Georges Basin. With no one to be seen and shoes and fish on the bottom of the boat, an intensive search by our unit and Police Marine Area Command was conducted. After four hours of searching the owner was found by the crew of *Sussex Inlet 20* camping on the shore at Swan Bay. His vessel had broken its mooring and floated out to the basin. A great result for all involved.

Karen Lowry

Change at the top for Ulladulla as Dave's depart

Commander's and Deputy's service remembered



The two Daves, Dave Hall and Dave Lindley.

All good things, sadly, come to an end, with Ulladulla Unit Commander Dave Hall and Deputy Unit Commander David Lindley having stepped down from their roles, with members John Samulski and Barry Clapson succeeding them.

Both Daves have made outstanding contributions to Marine Rescue Ulladulla.

Born in Newcastle, Dave Hall

built a successful career in the electrical trades, eventually building his business to 26 staff, and despite his busy work life, managed to find time to play as the bassist in rock band 'Yoghurt Truck'. The saying that bass players always get the girls must have been true, with Dave meeting wife to be Jackie, marrying her, and having a family.

Retiring in 2012 to Ulladulla

In late 2016 Dave became Unit Commander, introducing many systems and standards to improve the unit. Dave's achievements, working with his close mate and DUC David Lindley, are too many to list, but some of which he is proud are the growth of the many assets the base enjoys, effective fund-raising strategies, and strong internal training processes and inter-unit training relationships.

Though stepping down as UC, Dave will assume the Marine Operations job and support new UC John Samulski in the training role.

Born in Nottingham, Dave Lindley migrated with his family to Australia. He joined the Royal Australian Navy after school, serving as an Electrical Rating on *HMAS Vampire* and *HMAS Melbourne* before going under the water as a submariner with the Australian Submarine Squadron.

Dave met and married wife Anne, and after leaving the Navy spent some 25 years working in the ACT for ACTION buses as a driver.

Like Dave Hall, Dave was a keen

fisherman and also had a property in Ulladulla, initially joining Marine Rescue Ulladulla in 2011 while still living in Canberra, before finally settling full-time on the coast.

Dave progressed from Crew to Coxswain before health issues forced him to stand down from active boat duty to concentrate on the role of Watch Officer.

In 2016 he was elected as DUC, and together with Dave Hall, formed a formidable team implementing strong training standards, and in 2020 he completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessing.

In 2021 Dave suffered another medical issue which forced him to stand down from his deputy role. On his retirement from the role Dave commented that he really appreciated the support the members gave him which allowed him to grow in the job and achieve the objectives he and Dave Hall had set.

Thanks to both Daves for their dedication and commitment.

Keith Greenwood.

“Both Daves have made outstanding contributions to Marine Rescue Ulladulla.”

moved as a ten year old to Canberra, where he showed himself to be a talented sportsman particularly in cricket, where as a feared fast bowler he was reputed to have left more than a few batsman's teeth on the pitch!

At this time Dave also acquired a love of fishing, a sport that would eventually lead him to Marine Rescue. Before this, however, Dave

where he and Jackie had a caravan and a holiday house, and being fond of fishing, Dave bought a boat and on several occasions needed to be rescued by the then Volunteer Coast Guard.

Cutting out the middle man, Dave decided to join the local Marine Rescue Ulladulla unit, working his way through Radio Operator, Leading Crew and Coxswain to Master 5.

MR Jervis Bay reaches out

Outreach initiatives at Marine Rescue Jervis Bay

Consistent with the Marine Rescue NSW mandate of educating the general public, the first quarter of 2022 has been filled with opportunities to showcase the diverse skill set of our Marine Rescue Jervis Bay members.

After the severe weather events experienced along the NSW coast during March, the Marine Rescue Jervis Bay Radio Base received a request for assistance from Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue (ASTR).

ASTR is a volunteer organisation whose mission is to reduce the human impact on marine life through rescue, rehabilitation, education and research. *Jervis Bay 20* was promptly tasked in cooperation with an ASTR volunteer to rescue an adult Australasian Gannet – an oceangoing seabird that had been forced into Jervis Bay waters by the severe storm activity.

The Gannet was removed from the protected waters of Jervis Bay in a state of distress, underweight, and with damage to its feathers, for rehabilitation at the ASTR South

Coast facility until well enough to be released.

ASTR sincerely thanked the Marine Rescue Jervis Bay team for their efforts in rescuing the seabird. While our mission is saving lives on the water, and these are normally human, from time to time we partner with organisations such as ASTR and National Parks and Wildlife Service to help wildlife in distress.

Another outreach activity on the Marine Rescue Jervis Bay agenda is a search and rescue exercise simulating a helicopter transferring a casualty onto the rear deck of *Jervis Bay 41*.

On 2 May, Marine Rescue Jervis Bay hosted a team from WIN News Illawarra on board *Jervis Bay 41*. The news team filmed and reported on the training between the helicopters operating out of HMAS Albatross and Marine Rescue Jervis Bay.

The resulting news segment aired the same evening and highlighted the relevant search and rescue capabilities of *Jervis Bay 41* as a



Jervis Bay 41 practiced a range of rescue skills in front of the WIN TV cameras with this Navy helicopter.

vessel purpose designed to push the boundaries in order to operate effectively in a high responsibility jurisdiction.

Marine Rescue Jervis Bay's solid relationship with the Australian Defence Force continued with the RAAF 'airdrop' training programme, designed to simulate humanitarian support.

This exercise involves a C-130J

Hercules aircraft operating at approximately 300ft and dropping simulated disaster relief supplies while travelling at around 300 knots.

During the exercise *Jervis Bay 41* is stationed around 5 nm offshore ready to assist the RAAF training exercise when required. *Jervis Bay 41* now proudly displays a decal provided by No. 37 Squadron in support of the ongoing relationship.

Shoalhaven solve the mystery of the missing tinnie

Happy ending for houseboat owner

The past three months have seen 13 activations for Marine Rescue Shoalhaven, with most of these for fuel or engine problems.

The most unusual was from a houseboat moored on the river, with the owner calling for help after his tinnie had mysteriously disappeared leaving him unable to reach the shore.

Shoalhaven 20 was deployed and after a short investigation it was discovered that the tinnie was at a nearby wharf, with *Shoalhaven 20*

helping reunite it with its the owner before shadowing it on its return trip to the houseboat.

Additions to the unit's bank accounts are always welcome as they help us to do our vital work of saving lives on the water, so in May we were delighted to receive a cheque from the Culburra Bowlo Fishing Club for \$1,000. The cheque was presented by Club President John Castellan to Shoalhaven Watch Officer Robert Rego.

Bruce Mitchell



Robert Rego receives a cheque from Culburra Bowlo Fishing Club President John Castellan.

Multi-agency searches keep Shellharbour members busy

Successful sea survival day sees more crew qualify

The past few months have been fairly busy for Marine Rescue Shellharbour, with ongoing training and several high profile searches.

In late March, *Shellharbour 30* participated in an extensive multi-agency search for a fisherman who went missing near Kiama. At one stage in addition to NSW Police Marine Area Command and a rescue helicopter, five Marine Rescue NSW vessels from four units were involved in searching the waters between Kiama and Jervis Bay.

In early May there was another high profile multi-agency search, with the notorious Hill 60 rock platform claiming yet another life, with volunteers from Marine Rescue Shellharbour aboard *Shellharbour 30* and Marine Rescue Port Kembla

aboard *Port Kembla 20* and *Port Kembla 31* and Surf Lifesaving NSW assisting NSW Police Marine Area Command in the search for a missing teenage rock fisherman.

Mid-May saw yet another significant search, with crews aboard Marine Rescue Port Kembla rescue vessel *Port Kembla 31*, and Marine Rescue Shellharbour rescue vessel *Shellharbour 30*, *Water Police 48* as well as the Australian Navy and a rescue helicopter searching for a reported downed plane off Shellharbour. Despite an extensive search, nothing was found with the search called off.

May also saw Shellharbour as the venue for a multi-unit fire and sea survival training day for eight volunteers from the Shellharbour,



Getting gracefully into a life raft was just one of the challenges of the sea survival course.

Port Kembla and Sussex Inlet units, with participant ages ranging from 17 to 73.

This training is an essential pre-requisite for members to get their Crew rating, and includes how to deal with fire on board a vessel,

how to use fire extinguishers and fire blankets, and how to deploy and use a life raft including inflation, safe boarding and long term survival at sea.

Richard O'Connor

Merimbula unit at the technology forefront

Training, fundraising and emergencies keep members busy



Stewart Dietrich using the new Frequentis communication system.

Marine Rescue Merimbula has been busy lately, with several significant requests for assistance from the boating community plus a number of fundraising events supporting local and other charitable organisations while raising much needed funds for our unit.

These fundraising events included the Beyond Blue car rally where Marine Rescue Merimbula hosted a sizable BBQ breakfast at our base

for over 220 participants, followed by another well patronised event at the Merimbula Eats Festival, where we ran a gourmet BBQ next to the tranquil waters of the Merimbula estuary.

Our annual raffle always causes a great deal of excitement, with seven great prizes on offer this year. Despite COVID and other constraints, a record number of tickets were sold, with the winners

a mixture of locals and interstate tourists.

Out on the water, Marine Rescue Merimbula crews were called out to several significant requests for assistance, with our team commencing tows up to 20 nautical miles from shore. As the maritime community know, this is a fair distance offshore and requires the right equipment and resources and a strong reliance on the crew's experience. Throw in a bad sea state and a head wind and the physical and mental demand on the crew can be testing. It is a credit to our crews and radio operators and the training they undertake that all tasks were completed safely and successfully.

On the technology front, Marine Rescue Merimbula has been upgraded to the new Frequentis communication system. Marine

Rescue Merimbula is the first unit outside of the State Communications Centre to implement the new system, helping ensure we deliver safer and more efficient operations to our local maritime community.

Minor adjustments to our operating times have been implemented and training on the new system is already in full swing thanks to our Training Support Officer Bernie Ryan and other senior members. The training would not have been possible without the input and assistance of Deputy Unit Commander Sydney, Sandy Howard.

Training has also continued successfully on other fronts, and we have two new Radio Operators with both Paul Considine and Allan Mullaney obtaining their radio ratings.

Amanda Shane & Allan Mullaney

Fair sailing for Alpine Lakes unit

New ratings give unit capability a boost



Hudson Hermeston of Berridale NSW in *Alpine Lakes 21*. Photo: Karina Hermeston

In April, Marine Rescue Alpine Lakes unit had a visit from then Zone Training Manager, Stuart Massey who spent the weekend with us in Jindabyne.

It was a full-on weekend of training, drills and operational

assessments, with two team members, Phil Brown and John Russell, gaining new ratings.

During 2020, Marine Rescue NSW had offered members the opportunity to become qualified trainers and assessors, with Karina

Hermeston taking up the opportunity and completing her qualification via Zoom over the course of a year.

Having a member with this qualification allows our unit to become more self-sufficient and to perform operational assessments for

those members ready to gain new ratings.

Over Easter, our unit attended the annual Easter Fair at Berridale. This and other local events are a great way to raise awareness of what we do in our region, to speak with locals and visitors alike, and hopefully encourage some new recruits!

It was a beautiful autumn day in the mountains and there were plenty of people about, with lots of eager children taking up a spot at the helm of *Alpine Lakes 21*.

While *Alpine Lakes 21* was parked at the fair, we had a callout on Lake Jindabyne for a father and son out fishing who had lost power to their boat's engine.

Fortunately we were able to deploy our second vessel *Alpine Lakes 20* from the Jindabyne boat ramp, giving the disabled boat a tow back to the local caravan park. Despite being unable to motor home, the pair had had a great day of fishing and were still all smiles when we arrived.

Karina Hermeston



Left to right: Training Officer Karina Hermeston, Zone Training Manager Stuart Massey, Marine Rescue Alpine Lakes members Phil Brown and John Russell



A competitor speeds by during the Southern 80. Photo Mike Hammond.

Moama unit play key role in world's largest ski race

Members help out with Southern 80

Members of Marine Rescue Moama have played a key role in the world's largest ski race, the Southern 80, run by the Moama Water Sports Club.

Normally held in February, the race this year was moved to mid-May and despite the change of date, attracted hundreds of boats and nearly a thousand competitors as well as tens of thousands of spectators.

This year was the first time Marine Rescue Moama had assisted in the race - supporting NSW Maritime and the race organisers by having their two rescue boats on-call in case of an emergency, as well as supporting NSW Maritime in the post-race clearing of the course.

Prior to the event, members of

the unit distributed boating safety education materials and talked to local and visiting boaters to ensure they had a safe as well as an enjoyable time on the water.

Principal Manager Maritime South for Transport for NSW Dean Voyer, praised the involvement of the Marine Rescue Moama volunteers.

"Thank you to the Marine Rescue Moama unit for their engagement and collaboration in assisting NSW Maritime with this year's Southern 80," Mr Voyer said.

"The 80 is one of the marquee NSW aquatic events, along with the likes of those on Sydney Harbour which Marine Rescue NSW also assist with."

"The time of your volunteers, who essentially donated their weekend



Marine Rescue Moama were out on the water for the first time during this year's Southern 80. Photo Mike Hammond.

to support the event, is greatly appreciated and I am sure the role and value of Marine Rescue NSW's

attendance will expand as we work together."

Mike Hammond

The shed that was

Three year journey comes to an end

Some three years ago, it was decided by the Marine Rescue Bermagui executive that the rusty old container kindly given to us by Marine Rescue Batemans Bay, which had served us well, was now leaking too badly to use.

Negotiations started with the manager of the Fisherman's Co-op to see what could be done within the allocated space. Various designs were put forward until a small parcel of nearby unused land was offered, and it was decided to instead build a 6 x 6 metre double garage.

The process of securing the necessary permissions from Crown Lands and both the local and regional Aboriginal Land Councils then commenced, and with the assistance of Senior Manager Property and Infrastructure Mark Cooper, an annual lease was eventually secured. Now we could start planning!

Grant funding of \$25,000 was eventually secured, allowing us to lodge a Development Application with the local Council. That approved, we began our search for a builder and after several months found one who agreed to organise the concrete slab and to erect the shed.

The builder, however, found



The old and the new. Our rescue mannequins take a break while moving into the new shed.
Photo: Debbie Worgan.

found a new supplier who was prepared to organise the whole project.

Because the shed was within 100m of salt water, it had to be

“Steve was recognised for his long and dedicated contribution to Marine Rescue, receiving a Commissioner’s Commendation for his 13 years of service”

excuse after excuse to delay the shed even though contracts were signed by both parties. Negotiations continued even to the extent of shaking hands on site and agreeing to a finish date. Still nothing happened, so we cancelled the contract and after some delays

made of a specific type of steel only available from New Zealand, causing more delays as supplies were very hard to find.

Finally, a week before Christmas, the concrete slab was poured, and late in January the shed was erected. It is well constructed and



Peter Strain carries the last boxes out of the old container.
Photo: Debbie Worgan.

will fit the unit’s needs very well.

A further grant has now been obtained to help with the interior shelving and fit out, so it won’t be long before we can store all the operational equipment and archived material out of the container and our

very tiny training room.

Thanks to all who had a hand in the project. No-one could possibly have dreamed that it would take over three years to build a shed!

Alec Percival.



The State Headquarters team ponder their strategy (it didn't work), ahead of the golf day Photo: Kerry McDonnell

Narooma members honoured at fundraising event

Golf day raises valuable funds

Our unit members have been actively fundraising recently, under the guidance of our fundraising maestro Ross Arnold, culminating in a charity golf day.

Friday 29 April dawned sunny

Narooma Golf Course, with 60 intrepid golfers teeing off for a wide variety of prizes generously donated by local businesses.

A great deal of fun was had by all and a good sum of money raised

field, and who at the presentation afterwards, generously donated their prize back to the unit.

Marine Rescue State Headquarters was represented by a team comprising Deputy Commissioners Alex Barrell and Todd Andrews, along with Membership Officer Adrian Adam and IT guru Matt Sims. They brought with them a brand new outboard motor as a prize for a hole-in-one, but sadly no-one achieved the feat.

The highlight shot of the day was provided by a certain unnamed Zone Commander, who managed to bounce a tee shot off a cart and into the ocean!

Following the golf game, Deputy Commissioner Barrell presented Narooma stalwart Ian Noormets with the National Medal, recognising his fifteen years of dedication to the local community through the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and Marine Rescue NSW - a truly meritorious achievement; with Unit Administration Officer Gilly Kearney presented with her Five Year Service Pin.

The last few months have seen a surge in new members for the unit, both Crew and Radio Operators. We have struggled to get new members for the past couple of years, so this is a welcome change.

Craig Petterd.

“A great deal of fun was had by all, and a good sum of money raised..”

and calm at Narooma, a welcome change from the drenching rain of prior weeks. Reviving a Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol tradition, Marine Rescue Narooma hosted the fundraising event at the beautiful

to help support our unit operations, with participants full of praise for the day, and most vowing to return next year.

The winning team on the day was Narooma Mowing, who blitzed the

What's in a name?

New unit name better reflects ties to local community

On 24 February Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell contacted Unit Commander Alan Blessington with the news that the State Rescue Board had approved the name change of Marine Rescue Tuross unit to Marine Rescue Tuross Moruya unit.

The amount of background work for a unit name change is extensive. New signage and name badges are amongst the more obvious, updating systems templates and notifying affiliated organisations are perhaps less so, and it will take some time to implement all aspects of the change. Our vessel call-sign, however, remains TU.

So what's in a name and why have we changed it?

Marine Rescue Tuross Moruya Unit was initially called the Tuross Rescue Squad, and was part of the Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA). The current unit base and infrastructure was developed over time by local VRA volunteers and officially opened in 1994.

In the 13 years since the marine fleet services in NSW merged to create Marine Rescue NSW, our unit has grown both in size and area of responsibility. We maintain three vessels at Tuross Head: *Tuross 12* and two RWCs, but our main vessel *Tuross 21*, a 7.5 metre Ocean Cylinder, is located at Preddeys Wharf on the Moruya River at South Head.

Our unit performs rescues on the Tuross River, Coila Lake, Moruya River and on the open sea. As the Tuross Bar is considered unnavigable, to undertake an ocean rescue we launch *Tuross 21* from Preddeys Wharf at Moruya's South Head, making Moruya crucial for our unit.

Our unit services and engages both the Tuross Head and the Moruya communities. Our volunteers come from both Tuross Head and Moruya and we organise significant



Commissioner Tannos with a representative of the Moruya Golf Club. Photo: Ilze Svarcs.

community activities as part of our fundraising program at both locations.

Because much of our interests involve Moruya, as well as Tuross Head, it was felt that our unit name should reflect our activities. There was a great deal of discussion as to whether the new name should be "Moruya Tuross", reflecting the fact that our main asset is in the much larger community of Moruya. However, as our unit base remains in Tuross Head, and as a mark of respect to the volunteers who built the base, our name will henceforth proudly be Marine Rescue Tuross Moruya unit.

Recently we held our inaugural golf charity day. A huge thank you to all our unit members who worked so hard to make this a really huge, successful, feel-good community event, with thousands of dollars raised. There was a massive amount of pre-event work done to raise the interest and support of our community.

We were fortunate to gain the support of many VIPs, including Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos, Deputy Commissioner Todd

Andrews, Matt Simms from IT, as well as Mike Hammond, our new Zone Commander. The newly elected Eurobodalla Mayor Matthew Hatcher, and politicians Fiona Phillips, Dr Michael Holland and Federal candidate Andrew Constance all brought kudos, and some great donations! What a coup for a first event!

The weather forecast was grim. Deluges of rain had been promised for days leading up to the event, which had not eventuated. As start time approached, the air thickened and dark rain clouds gathered. Golfers seem to be a funny bunch. "Rain? What rain? We are teeing

off!" And off they went at 1pm! The drizzle started not long after. It got increasingly worse, until it was simply pelting down. Fortunately, the golfers retained their good spirits, even the sodden ones!

The competition was followed by a wonderful evening including entertainment, raffles and door prizes. The Moruya Golf Club provided a fabulous meal and loads of support throughout the event, with the goodwill all round palpable. Feedback was terrific and several sponsors have already committed to support the event again next year, so put Friday 24 February 2023 in your diary!



Part of the cheerful unit work team at Moruya Golf Club with new Zone Commander Mike Hammond, (front right). Photo: Ilze Svarcs.

David Leonard Neville, Port Macquarie unit

It is with great sadness to we mark the passing of David Leonard Neville, who joined the Port Macquarie unit in 2014.

During his time as the unit, David held the roles of Radio Operator, Watch Officer and Duty Watch

Officer. David was a mentor to all, and very well respected and loved by all our members.

In typical David style, he continued to do shifts both day and night until the very end of a long illness.

From myself and all members of Marine Rescue Port Macquarie we give our deepest condolences to his wife Suzanne, and to Keryl, Fred and Peta.

Greg Davies



David Leonard Neville

Noel Finch, Lake Macquarie unit

In April, Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie lost one of its treasured members when Noel Finch passed away after a battle with cancer. Noel is survived by his wife Joy and family.

Noel achieved a Leading Crew rating, and spent many hours at the helm of our inshore vessels as skipper. He was involved in many assists, from flat batteries to full on searches for missing persons in the water, and whoever his crew was on the day, they knew they were in safe hands with Noel as their skipper. Noel particularly made new members welcome and assisted with their training.

Noel joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol at Lake Macquarie prior to its amalgamation into Marine Rescue NSW and was

recently presented with the National Medal recognising 15 years of service to the boating community. Prior to that he also spent time as a Scout Leader where he also loved to provide training and guidance.

Noel was a member of our Boat Maintenance Team and could be relied on to come up with new ideas, and was always making something new to assist our vessels. The team enjoyed many hours around the duty table solving the problems of the world and enjoying each other's company.

Noel was also our expert on knots, splicing, 4WDs, camping and a myriad of other topics. He was a down to earth type of bloke with a good sense of humour and was liked by all.

Noel is missed by the team and



Noel Finch

Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie is all the better for having had Noel as

one of its members.
Rest in Peace mate.

Peter Ashworth, Central Coast unit

Peter passed away on 11 February, just short of his 90th birthday.

After graduating from university, Peter joined Shell Australia as a marine diesel engineer, which resulted in him being away at sea for many years, and visiting ports around the world, with his final posting as Chief Engineer on the Fisheries Research Vessel *Kampala*. Peter was involved in its construction from the laying of the keel through to its maiden voyage. Subsequent trips took him to the Coral Sea, down the east coast of

Australia, and Bass Strait. At the end of his career, he held the rank of Chief Engineer - Marine.

Upon retirement, the family moved to Avoca and Peter joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol on 18 April 1991. Seconded to Green Watch, he soon rose to Coxswain. Over the ensuing twenty-nine years, many members benefitted from his patient instruction. Following the transition to Marine Rescue NSW, he continued to impart his knowledge and experience, and together with his 'blood brother' Norm Smith, could be found working on our

vessels on a weekly basis - even if nothing needed fixing! The two could wear the label of ancient mariners, and exemplified the words of Kenneth Graham in *Wind in the Willows*: "...there is nothing half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats..."

Peter was awarded the National Medal in 2006, to which a clasp was added in 2016.

In 2011, together with Norm Smith, he received a Quiet Achievers Award from North Gosford Rotary club.

Our unit will remember him



Peter Ashworth

with fondness and we pass our condolences on to his sons Andrew and Bernard, and their families.

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