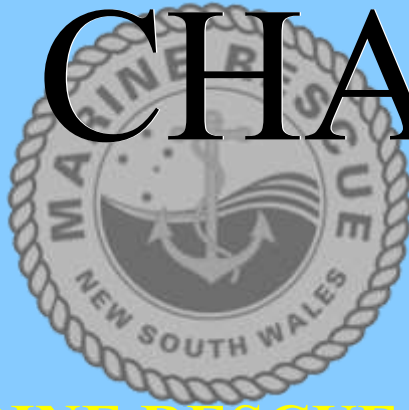


PORT CHATTER



JUNE 2018

MARINE RESCUE NSW PORT STEPHENS UNIT



"Volunteers doing our jobs professionally"



ANZAC March 25 April 2018



Let Us Not Forget

OUR GOAL

To be the most effective Marine Rescue Unit in NSW

OUR PRIMARY FOCUS

Saving lives at sea on open and closed waters in and around Port Stephens

MARINE RESCUE NSW – PORT STEPHENS UNIT SERVICES PROVIDED



Category One Marine Search and Rescue Co-ordination Centre (SARCC). Located at the former Inner Light and now Heritage Site at Nelson Head, 32°42.632 S; 152°09.667 E (overlooking Shoal Bay and looking out through the entrance to Port Stephens). Accredited by the State Rescue Board.

Communications Centre, Nelson Head - VMR217. Operated by trained and qualified volunteers, 24 hours a day; 7 days a week; 365 days a year. Monitoring 27MHz, and VHF marine frequencies, emergency and calling channels. Open during each day to the visiting public.

Apart from radio coverage generally to the local boating community, the Communications Centre offers:

- Emergency support to vessels in trouble
- Emergency and routine after hours communications for Rural Fire Service operating in the Lower Hunter district
- A Marine Radio Safety (MRS) service – Boat Register
- A checkpoint and radio coverage for recreational vessels transiting up and down the coastline adjacent to Port Stephens.
- Weather readings and local conditions observations and
- Current Bureau of Meteorology weather forecasts, sea observations and tidal information. (These can be obtained by contacting the Comms Centre by phone or radio and are also offered in regular radio skeds).

Accredited Rescue Vessels Available on a 24 hr call-out basis, subject to Police tasking. (See 'Rescue Vessels' page).

Weather recording facility Accredited by the Bureau of Meteorology. Regular reports on local conditions are electronically communicated to the Bureau, as well as to Radio, TV and Print media outlets in the local area.

Nelson Head Reserve and Heritage Inner Light Cottage. The Nelson Bay Unit of Marine Rescue NSW is responsible to the State Government for upkeep of this heritage precinct, through its 'Nelson Head Lighthouse and Rescue Station Reserve Trust Management Sub-committee' (which includes a representative of the Port Stephens Historical Society).

A small museum is operated by volunteers and is open to the public, 7 days a week from 10am to 4pm.

A portion of the building is leased to a private operator for morning/afternoon teas/coffee and lunches.

Wedding Ceremonies. Bookings can be made to hold these in the grounds (see Lighthouse Weddings page).

Below the Comms Centre, on the ground floor, is a tourist Gift Shop operated by Marine Rescue Port Stephens. Without profits from the Gift Shop, together with support from the local community, clubs and businesses, the Unit would find it very difficult, if not near impossible, to operate.



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FROM THE BRIDGE

UNIT COMMANDER

Welcome to the June edition of Port Chatter for 2018. This will be my last "From the Bridge" report as the UC.

I'm sure most readers will be aware the Unit is due to hold elections prior to June this year as the UC and DUCs terms of office end at the AGM in June every even year. At the May Members meeting the Election Returning Officer John Reid announced that only one nomination had been received for each position and that both nominations had been endorsed by MRNSW which meant that Colin Foote and Peter Merlino would assume the roles of UC and DUC respectively from conclusion of the June AGM on 19 June.

I know Colin Foote has been considering who will be in his Executive Committee and who will fill the numerous other positions in the broader management team. Details will be promulgated by Colin in due course. Colin and I have also started briefings and discussions in preparation for a

numerous donations totalling \$49,500 courtesy of lobbying by our Patron The Hon Bob Baldwin. The Varley Group have also discounted their construction costs. At this stage the Unit's contribution will be minimal. Colin Foote will manage some form of dedication of the facility which recognises the generosity of Wests Nelson Bay, the Varley Group and the other donors. My thanks go to The Hon Bob Baldwin for his outstanding lobbying, our sponsors and donors and to Tim Boyle, Ian Peacock and Barney Pinney who have managed the design and construction activities.

On 1 June, Neil Hansford, Colin Foote, Monica Thompson and I will be attending a Ceremony for Parliamentary Commendations in Raymond Terrace at which this Unit will receive a Commendation for Outstanding Community Service. A comprehensive article on this event will be included in the next edition of Port Chatter.

As my time as UC draws to an end, I've been reflecting on the achievements of the Executive Committee and broader management team I've had the pleasure in working with. I'll detail these in a separate article.

As this is my last article I want to congratulate all the volunteer members of MRPS for the work they do and the contribution this Unit makes to the local community. When Neil Hansford and I took office we vowed to see out the full terms of office to provide some stability after what had been turbulent times due to circumstances beyond anyone's control. We've done that and I sense

the Unit is appreciative of our commitment. I want to thank Neil for his energy, commitment, counsel and loyalty as my Deputy. He has done everything I've asked of him and more. Thank you Neil.

My sincere thanks also go out to the Executive Committee, the Trust Sub-Committee, the Gift Shop and the members of their respective teams and groups for their diligence and commitment. I also acknowledge the contribution of the Patrons and sponsors. The loudest shout-out is to the partners and families of our volunteers who provide encouragement and sacrifice in allowing our volunteers to do what they do. Thank you all.

That's it from me. Thank you for your support and in the words of a close friend of mine: "maintain course and speed"!!

Lee Uebergang

"Volunteers doing our jobs professionally"



An artist's impression of the Crew Muster Station.

smooth transition to the new leadership team with Colin and others attending selected meetings in preparation for the handover. I wish the new leadership team success.

In the last edition I mentioned the dock facilities project which has been given the official title of the "Crew Muster Station". The project scope is the design, construction and fit out of the Crew Muster Station mounted on a floating pontoon. The Crew Muster Station will be used as an office and for storage, crew briefings and also as a covered work area and a charging station for our battery jump starters. It will have sufficient solar power to trickle-feed both rescue vessels and keep them fully charged. The facility will be connected to the Unit's ICT network so it will have Wi-Fi internet and a link to all the programs running in the Comms Centre. It's expected that the Crew Muster Station will be delivered on 11 June and become operational shortly thereafter. This project is being funded by a grant of \$25,000 from Wests Nelson Bay and

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FROM THE BRIDGE.....

DEPUTY UNIT COMMANDER & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

It makes me a little sad to be writing my last piece as Deputy Unit Commander and Community Relations Officer. As most of you know I decided not to nominate for the Unit Commanders position after two full years as the DUC.

This has been the first time in many years that the UC and DUC have served their full term of two years. It has been a real pleasure to have served as Lee Uebergang's Deputy and have such a competent, motivated Executive around us.

I will leave it to Lee to outline the achievements of the past two years - sufficient to say the Unit has never been in such a sound financial position with many capital projects moved to the completed position from the "want/nice to have" status. A characteristic has been that in the vast majority of cases the projects were funded by grants and donations NOT out of Unit reserves and fundraising.

Quite simply the time demands of the UC and DUC/CRO positions in a Unit of over 230 members and such a



complex operation with the Gift Shop, Fund Raising, Community Relations, inter Unit relations and our publications is very taxing particularly when you are only partially retired and still have business responsibilities.

To those who came on the journey reporting to me I am eternally grateful.

By the time you read this we will have had 78,000 "hits" on our website since it was revamped to make it the most informative site in Marine Rescue NSW. It is now a single source contact point for everything you want/need to know about your Unit. Peter Baldwin has taken on the challenge and come out a star.

Collection Boxes

Stephen Alta has injected new life into our collection boxes at a time cash is becoming less of a part of our lives. Colin Couper keeps track of the boats at the base where we gain our greatest donations. I sense there are

more notes going into the boats at the base!

Many of our non-performing donation boxes have been moved on so if you don't see them in your usual place they have probably been re-allocated

Port Chatter

Whilst you are reading this you are one of over 1,000 who read it bi-monthly

Penelope and Frank do an outstanding job to produce what is clearly the best Unit magazine in NSW and probably Australia. Our hand distributors save us substantial postage dollars. Thanks Ross and team.

For every copy we don't have to print we are saving over \$4.

Gift Shop

Our Gift Shop is the envy of most Marine Rescue Units and Sandra's team proudly chase even bigger results each month.

To put the Gift Shop contribution into proportion it produces more for the Unit than 50 Bunnings Barbeques.

We are indebted to all the hard work that the ladies put in week after week.

Fundraising

It is encouraging that Peter Young has pulled together such a good team for when we go out into the community to raise funds and spread the word on what we really do.

In some Units EVERY member has to do 4 fundraising events per year to get the money to keep their unit viable.

If every member gave 4 x 4 hour sessions per year we could do over 400 days fundraising per year.

To assist the Fundraising



activities the Executive agreed to the purchase of an enclosed trailer which will carry all the promotional material,

marquees, tables, brochures and signs in addition to the barbeque kit, so it is far easier to hitch up the trailer when the tasks are to be performed. It will be stored undercover by **5 Star Storage, Taylor's Beach** (see photo above before the signwriting)



(Continued on page 9)



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with a smile.



FROM THE BRIDGE.... AND SROCP COURSE

(Continued from page 7)

Facebook

It isn't uncommon for a post by us on Facebook to be viewed by over 10,000 people and over 4,000 are following us regularly.

Tony O'Donnell has done a great job on top of all his other responsibilities to keep our posts interesting and newsworthy with attention getting photographs.

SROCP

After many requests we will be running Radio Courses for the public from June. This is a combined activity of our training and fundraising teams. Our first course has been advertised on the local community radio with free community bulletins and paid spots. At the time of writing the uptake has been a little disappointing.

Nigel Eves will deliver the course with Peter Young coordinating the venues etc. Our pricing will match that of other units and it is a good fundraiser as well as a community safety service. Bookings will be via the website.

At the end of my term you will still see me do Watch Officer shifts at a reduced rate as Sue and I get our lives back after two years as DUC.

Neil Hansford



BE QUALIFIED TO OPERATE YOUR MARINE VHF RADIO

In the interests of boating safety, Marine Rescue Port Stephens will run a Short Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency (SROCP) course on **Saturday 23 June 2018**. It is a one day course running from 0900 to 1400 and includes the exam and the practical.

Further details can be found, and applications made on the Marine Rescue Port Stephens website

www.marinerescueportstephens.com.au.

You will learn what to do when you need to respond to an emergency call and how to make an emergency call that can be understood and responded to appropriately if ever you become endangered on the water. You will also learn how to log on and off with Marine Rescue Units up and down the NSW coastline.

Upon enrolment you will receive the Marine Radio Handbook to study in addition to a Marine Rescue Port Stephens simplified USB Learners Guide to allow home study on your computer prior to the examination day.

On the day of the examination you will receive two hours of course revision followed by the Examination provided by the sole Examination body, AMC (*Australian Maritime College*), then each enrollee will receive a hands-on practical examination as required by the examination body.

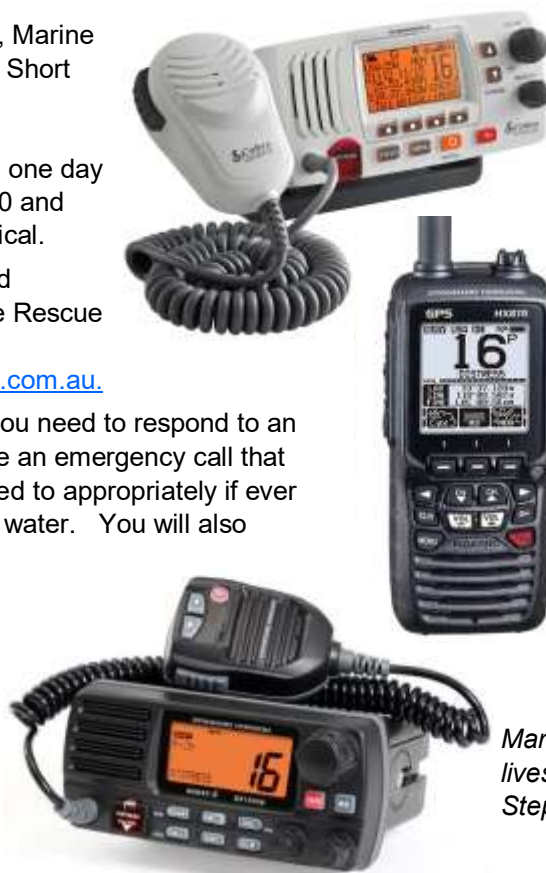
Courses will be held at Soldiers Point Bowling

Club, 118 Soldiers Point Road, Soldiers Point. The enrolment fee of \$220 includes the cost of the Handbook and examination fee and licence issued by AMC.

You will also receive a Certificate of Proficiency issued on behalf of ACMA (*Australian Communications and Media Authority*) to operate a VHF marine radio. This course does not qualify operators for HF radios.

This course will give you the skills that are essential for the confident and responsible use of a VHF marine radio. Having a marine radio on-board is a requirement to operate in offshore waters.

A marine radio will never reach its full potential unless you know how to use it properly.



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CORPORATE SERVICES AND GIFT SHOP

ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

Administration

Further to the article in the last issue of Port Chatter we have received two nominations for the Executive positions, one for Unit Commander and one for Deputy Unit Commander.

These nominations were sent to Marine Rescue NSW for ratification by the Board. We have now received advice from the Board that these two nominations have been ratified. We are therefore in a position where we can elect Colin Foote as the UC and Peter Merlino as the DUC unopposed at the MRPS AGM on Tuesday 19 June.

Membership

Another Information Night for prospective members was held on 19 April and was well attended by 12 persons expressing interest in becoming members. The concept of Information Nights followed by interviews and then Induction is proving to be very popular with prospective members and is supplying a steady stream of new volunteers. Information nights are being scheduled every 3 months with the next night on 19 July. If you know of any persons expressing interest in joining MRPS please advise them of this date and to contact our Membership Officer Loris Webster. At the end of April, we had a total of 230 members spread throughout all areas of our operations.



Technical Services

All avenues of communication at the Base have now been changed over to our NBN connections and are performing exceptionally well. We now have a back-up system for all of our phone and radio communications ensuring that we can always be "on the air".

Building & Facilities

The second flagpole has now been replaced with a brand-new pole which can be easily lowered if it requires any future maintenance. Particular thanks to Peter Dentrinos for lowering the old pole and Bill Haskell for cutting up and removing this pole. The new pole will now be used to fly all Unit flags – National, State and Marine Rescue with the ability to fly a 4th flag if required.

WH&S/Security

A program for Tagging and Testing all electrical appliances and leads has now been commenced with a spreadsheet of all these items being put together by our WH&S Officer, Angus MacKenzie. The actual tagging and Testing will be carried out over the next few weeks to ensure that we comply with all regulations. This procedure will be on-going as some electrical items require attention every 6 months.

John Reid



This will be the last Port Chatter for our Commander and Deputy Unit Commander. I would like to thank Lee and Neil who have shown support for the work we do in the gift shop and its members. Our best wishes go with them for the future.

We would like to welcome Colin Foote as our incoming Unit Commander and Peter Merlino as Deputy Unit Commander. The members of the gift shop are looking forward to working with them.

Di Baillie is slowly recovering from her broken shoulder, we hope Di will be back soon.

Visitors to the Gift Shop are becoming fewer due to the winter months and therefore sales will be fewer for the next few weeks. We are looking forward to Spring and a seasonal recovery.

Thank you to all the ladies in the Gift Shop for your continued support.



Shirley Clark presenting Gift Shop cheque to Unit Commander Lee Uebergang

Sandra Scheuber



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Garlic Cream Sauce.

Wednesday – \$12 Feed choice of :

200gm rump steak, sides and sauce

Small chicken schnitzel, sides and sauce

Battered whiting fillet, sides tartare & 1

Small roast of the day – roast &
steamed vegetables and gravy

Pasta of the day and side salads

Thursday – Family night Kids Eat Free

from the Kid's Menu when an adult
orders a main meal. Children under 12
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Regular Entertainment

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Visitors welcome

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ATM

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APRIL AND MAY UNIT MEETING



Awards presented by Regional Operations Manager Steve Raymond: **Top Row** from left: Robert Johnson, Ian Jack, Helen Peterson. **Second Row:** Sue Freeman, Mike Smith. **Third Row:** Noel Corcoran, Marian Chappell. **Fourth Row:** Mick Duggan, Peter Dentrinos. **Fifth Row:** Shirley Clark presenting UC Lee Uebergang with the Gift Shop Cheque and the group shot including UC Lee Uebergang.

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WELFARE OFFICER

MEMBERS WELFARE REPORT

PETER FITZSIMONS our very well known member has not been quite himself over recent months, although one would not think so with the amount of work that he does at the base. Peter requires a heart operation and a *stent* inserted. By the time we all read this, Peter will be back on deck at the base doing his duties. All the best Peter and I am sure that I can speak on behalf of all members wishing you a good outcome from your operation.

JOHN VASSALLO has also been on the sick list after an incident with an unleashed dog running into him. I believe that John was on his daily exercise walk when a very large dog nearly knocked him off his feet. John reports all OK but he did suffer a very sore and swollen leg. No reports on how the dog survived other than some many 'Unprintable Words' were thrown at this runaway animal.

Knowing John as we all do he brushed the incident off and carried on home for treatment.

DIANE BAILLIE has also been on the injured list resulting in a trip by ambulance to the John Hunter Hospital after a nasty fall at her home. Diane was giving her plants a bit too much water, resulting in a trip over her lovely garden display. Diane's fall resulted in a broken arm, and severe cuts and bruising with many stitches required.

Diane, however, is back at meetings and supporting the wonderful team of ladies at the gift shop when she can.

All thinking of you Diane and keep up that excellent outlook on life and friendship that you show to all.

JOHN COOK, has not been sailing too well with his health over recent times. Both John and wife Elaine have been members for many years and have contributed countless hours of their time with duties at the base. John and Elaine get well soon and we all send our best wishes to you both.

CHRISTINE GRIFFEY wife of our member Kevin has also been on the sea sick list in recent times. Chris reports that her eye operation and then a knee operation have both been very successful. However, as I compile this report, news has passed on to me that she is now affected by a terrible skin allergy - a very annoying complaint.

Sorry to hear this latest problem Chris. From all your friends at Marine Rescue we send our get well soon wishes.

BOB GILLILAND husband of our member Deniece has also been far from well recently and this has resulted in a major operation. Bob has surprised all with his determination and love for the game of Golf and he was

back on the course in only a matter of weeks after returning from hospital. Bob's opinion is that golf is better than any other therapy for rehabilitation.

Well done Bob and also Deniece. This has been very hard on you both and we are all thinking of you and are here to support you at any time.



CROSSED THE BAR

MARGARET SHEVLIN I am very sad to report of the passing of Margaret Shevlin.

Margaret was the dear wife of the late Commander Peter Shevlin who was a founding member of the Port Stephens Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol. Margaret was very dedicated to the Patrol and was a tireless worker with the ladies' auxiliary and fund raising committees for many years. Margaret and Peter left Port Stephens three years ago to settle into a retirement village on the South coast of NSW.

To her family, may I convey on behalf of all members of Marine Rescue Port Stephens our sincere condolences with the passing of Margaret. *'May the seas be calm and weather fair as you cross the bar on your next journey, dear friend'.*

Harold Gibson

Counselling Service

Marine Rescue has access to the RFS counselling service, the Critical Incident Support Services (CISS). If after a critical incident (rescue vessel, radio, elsewhere) you feel you need help contact the CISS on 1800 049 933. Use of the service is fully confidential between the member and the Counsellor. It is not a sign of weakness to ask for support – it is a sign of strength.

RFS LIAISON HUNTER VALLEY & LOWER HUNTER

RFS LIASON HUNTER VALLEY

Finally the 'official' fire season is over for Hunter Valley District after a very busy summer. This means that fire permits are no longer required in rural areas. However, permits are required all year round in areas covered by Fire and Rescue brigades. As a rule of thumb, residents within the 50/60km/h speed zone areas of Branxton, Singleton, Muswellbrook or Denman more than likely need a permit from Fire and Rescue NSW.

Landholders who wish to burn in a rural area are still required to give their neighbours 24 hours notice and give HV Fire Control Centre a call - even for bonfires!! There have been a number of times in the past few weeks where people took the opportunity to burn off but failed to let HV know so that they received a crew of firefighters on their doorstep when smoke was detected.



An RFS helicopter in action.

Colin Couper



Incidents handled by MRPS for LHRFS and HVRFS over the last two months

Month		Bush	Grass	Structure	CFR	MVA	Car	AFA	Other	Total
Mar-18	HVRFS	0	1	0	3	3	0	1	5	14
Apr-18	HVRFS	3	5	0	2	2	4	0	5	21
Mar-18	LHRFS	20	3	6	6	7	12	4	21	79
Apr-18	LHRFS	8	20	3	3	13	14	5	21	87
Total for 2018		31	29	9	14	25	30	10	52	201

RFS LIAISON LOWER HUNTER

Paging of Group Officers

I had an enquiry from a Watch Officer a week or two ago regarding paging of Group Officers. They had been asked to page a certain Group Officer by the RFS Duty Officer. The Watch Officer had never been asked to do such before and didn't know the procedure. Ken Hepplewhite explained that at the very bottom of the drop down menu on the pager screen **Groups One to Seven** are listed. If these are paged they will activate the pager for the Group Officer and the Deputy Group Officer. Ken goes on to

include: "Most of the Group Captains have the Brigade codes they are responsible for, on their phone so they generally get the call at the same time as

the crew. It is rare to need to call a Group Captain, if a crew ask for a Group Captain to be called it is better to

call the Duty Officer who will ring one of the Group Captains".

Fire at the Market

A few weeks ago an ice cream van caught fire at the local Nelson Bay markets. Dave Rogers has kindly provided a photo of the van (at the left) and on fire and response brigades.

Ross Debenham



TWO YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENTS — JULY 2016 TO JUNE 2018

A NOTE FROM THE OUTGOING UNIT COMMANDER— LEE UEBERGANG

It's important to recognise achievement and the last two years has seen the Executive Committee (Neil Hansford, Tony O'Donnell, John Reid, Brian Bibbing, Peter Merlino and myself) guide several projects to successful outcomes. It's also seen the Unit develop, expand and prosper in several different areas.

The **"business as usual"** achievements are detailed below. We:

- We maintained 24/7/365 staffing of the Comms Centre
- We maintained two Rescue Vessels which responded to every incident in which we were tasked
- Improved the Unit's financial position
- We hosted the Awards Ceremony recognising 21 Members involved in the January 2016 multiple Mayday operation and the award of the first MRNSW Medal of Valour to Laurie Nolan
- We raised Honour Boards to reflect the Unit's and Members proud history of courage and meritorious service
- Grew Membership from 170 to 237
- Increased gift Shop turnover - up 130% - and assisted by making Gift Shop more visible to the public
- Increased the amounts received from successful Grants applications to record levels
- Implemented the Strategic Plan
- Achieved much stronger Community links – in particular Soldiers Point Bowling Club, Nelson Bay Bowling Club, PSFM 100.9, Bunnings, BCF, Sail Port Stephens and Women Who Sail Australia and local service clubs like Rotary and Probus
- Continued bi-monthly publication of Port Chatter
- Ran a number of successful social events—created by our Social Committee
- Provided welfare support and comfort to Members
- Farewelled a number of Members with dignity, respect and due ceremony after "Crossing the Bar"
- Continued the practice of inviting informative guest speakers to our monthly meetings
- Implemented Card scanners on Rescue Vessels and in the Comms Centre
- Implemented an "intake approach" to MRV Crew training
- Moved the MRS database to Seahawk Radio Club
- Revised and documented all Membership processes; new process for member recruitment developed and arranged for introduction in January 2018
- Completed review of all keys on issue and in key cabinets
- Improved the safety culture on Vessels with the *"Near Miss"* reporting and investigation procedure
- Improved focus on our *"Emergency Service"* culture and responsibilities within the broader Emergency Service community
- Migrated from "paper lists" in the Comms Centre kitchen to "online signup" for rosters, social and fund-raising activities
- Raised the "Capital Items Forecast Replacement Schedule"
- Raised a "Schedule of Returns"
- Maintained strong relations with our five patrons which has assisted community influence and assisted in grants and donations
- Bought all signage on the Reserve and dock up to MRNSW standards
- Developed a Grants "wish list" to ensure we are prepared to apply when Grant programmes are announced
- Accelerated our exposure of news and events on Facebook
- Upgraded the copying facilities to reduce per copy costs
- Replaced all operational computers in the Radio Base after six years of round the clock operation
- Upgraded Redi-Talk software in the Radio Room to the latest version.

Projects. A number of specific projects were undertaken:

- Implemented a high-speed NBN Telstra Broadband (38 mbps / 19 mbps) FTTN / copper connection to the Base
- Implemented a redundant high-speed NBN Broadband (100 mbps /40 mbps) Air-fibre connection through MyNetPhone from the Ramada Shoal Bay to the Base
- Successfully completed changeover of all phone lines to VOIP on the two NBN connections
- Connected 27MHz radios to voice recorder
- Raised the Emergency Operations Centre
- Revamped the website to the best in MRNSW
- Fostered greater engagement with other Units in Hunter Central Coast region - particularly in the area of training
- Implemented NetSuite as our accounting software package
- Decommissioned PS40 Danial Thain and managed her subsequent sale and departure from Port Stephens
- Renegotiated the agreement with RFS for Lower

(Continued on page 19)

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Brody Gertz
Property Manager
Licensed Agent
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Gemma Chircop
Receptionist
4984 4700

TWO YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNDRAISING

(Continued from page 17)

- Hunter District and increased annual fee by 25%
- Negotiated a new agreement with RFS for Hunter Valley District commencing 1 August 2017
- Celebrated the Unit's 35th Anniversary with a Dinner Dance function
- Carried out briefing to Ex RVCP Divisional Commanders and Ex MRPS Unit Commanders
- Installed Fire Alert System in Comms Centre with speakers in all buildings and exterior spaces and implemented Emergency Evacuation Procedures for the Reserve.
- Purchased an enclosed box trailer for use by fundraisers and at PR events
- Received a Parliamentary Commendation for Outstanding Community Service from Premier The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP—which was also passed in the Legislative Council
- Commenced the conduct of SROCP courses to the public
- Procured a pool of foul weather gear for rescue vessel crew
- Signed a new Café Lease for five years at significantly increased rent
- Replaced the small flag pole

- Raised funds, designed and had the Crew Muster Station constructed (new dock facility that will be delivered on 11/6/2018)
- Have set aside replacement funds contribution for replacement rescue vessels when they fall due and addition to capital funding requirements
- Improved vastly relations with MRNSW

Work In Progress. There are also several projects that are "work in progress":

- Installing fire suppression system in John Weir Radio Room
- Moving the RMS Web camera to the Comms Centre for streaming of heads conditions for Public and MR use for operational needs
- Structural reinforcing of the Comms Centre roof by Telco's
- Resolving Comms Centre and Command Centre WHS issue of emergency egress
- Establishing a Danial Thain display in the Reserve

I suspect I've missed a few items but I hope all Members will join me in congratulating the Executive Committee for their impressive work and significant achievements over the last two years.

Lee Uebergang
Unit Commander



FUNDRAISING OFFICER

Things have slowed down since our March and April Activities but we are working in the background on new projects.

We had a good result from the Nelson Bay Bowling Club Raffle thanks to Sue, Jan and Addie taking over \$360.00. Well done.

Our Bare Foot Bowls Night is on 22 June so get your teams together and come along. It's at the Nelson Bay Bowling Club

The Short Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency (SROCP)

SROCP course for the general public is being advertised. At this stage bookings are slow but we are doing three, one-day courses over several months. This is a money raiser for the unit

and also a very important requirement for the boating public,

If you are out and about mention it to any boating friends. The first course is on 23 June.

The good news for Promotions and Fundraising is we now have a Promotional Trailer of our own. This is going to be a huge asset to the unit in this area.

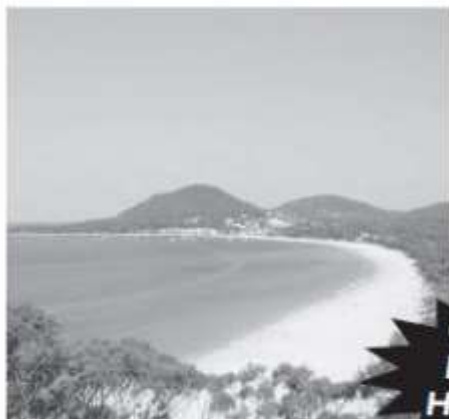
All our promotional Equipment will be stored on board so everything will have its place and setting up and pulling down will be a lot easier for all concerned. We will carry all our stock and BBQ needs. Any member will be able to arrive on site and know that they are able to promote our unit in a professional way.

'Walk the Coast' has postponed their event until next year due to some administration problems. We still have our hand up to be involved.

Peter Young

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BIRDS AROUND THE BASE

BIRDS AROUND THE BASE

Eastern Rosella (*Platycercus eximius*)

The Eastern Rosella is one of six species of brightly coloured Australian broad-tailed parrots and is found throughout south-eastern Australia, from Queensland to Victoria, south-eastern South Australia and eastern Tasmania. Their diet is mainly seeds and fruit and they are often seen around Port Stephens feeding on the ground in parks, gardens and golf courses. Early European settlers first encountered the Eastern Rosella at



Rose Hill, New South Wales, now Parramatta, and they called it the Rosehill parakeet which became "Rosehiller", and eventually "Rosella".

The Eastern Rosella is 30 cm long and weighs around 100 gm. It has a bright red head and distinctive white cheek patches. The beak is white and the irises brown. The upper breast is red and the lower breast is yellow fading to pale green over the abdomen. The feathers of the back and shoulders are black, with yellowish or greenish



margins producing a scalloped appearance. The wings and lateral tail feathers are bluish while the tail is dark green. The legs are grey. The female is similar to the male though duller in colour and has an underwing stripe, which is not present in the adult male. Juveniles are

duller than females and have an underwing stripe.

Rosellas feed predominantly on seeds and fruit, with food held in the right foot. They enjoy bathing in puddles of water and scratch their heads with the foot behind the wing. The courtship display is simple; the male waves his tail sideways, and engages in some head bobbing, and the female reciprocates. Eastern Rosellas mate for life. The female chooses and prepares the nesting site, usually a hollow in a eucalypt tree. A clutch of 4 to 8 eggs are laid on a decayed wood bed and are incubated for around 21 days by the female alone. The male feeds the female through this time and for some time after incubation. The chicks have large orange bills and are covered in a white down. They take around five weeks to fledge. Breeding season is August to February.

Rosellas are native to Australia and nearby islands, where they inhabit forests, woodlands, farmlands, and suburban parks, gardens and golf courses. They are confined to the coastal mountains and plains and are absent from the



outback. They mainly feed on the ground, especially amongst grasses in lawns, pastures and other clearings. They also feed in trees and shrubs when in seed. The main dietary items include seeds, fruits, buds, flowers, nectar and insects.

The Eastern Rosellas conservation status is secure. They tend to be sedentary. They are sometimes kept as pets because of their beautifully coloured plumage. They are intelligent and can be trained to whistle and speak a few words or phrases. However they require a great deal of attention and sometimes won't adapt to life as a family pet.

**Neil Fraser
Twitcher**

LIGHTHOUSE TRUST AND OPERATIONS

TRUST CHAIRMAN

The Department of Industry, Lands (Lands) Maitland Office have given their formal endorsement under the Minister's Delegation of Authority for the new five (5) year lease of the Tea Rooms effective on and from 1 May 2018. Kerry Holman was approved as the lessee of the new lease until 30 April 2023.

Additional signage has been erected around the Reserve. This includes 'no fly zone for drones' because a number of drone hobbyists have attempted to launch drones from the Reserve despite the CASA Drone Licence regulation, the restricted helicopter air space and proximity to persons Regulations.

The Nelson Bay Karingal Preschool intends to visit the Nelson Head Lighthouse and Marine Rescue Port Stephens on Tuesday 5 June 2018. This is an annual event for the Preschool.

Over June and July, the Trust will replace the final section of the damaged white picket fence and carry out landscaping on the eastern boundary. Port Stephens Council has repaired and formed gutter along the southern boundary of Lighthouse Road to repair the erosion at the edge of the road after the recent storms.

I will be in the UK and Ireland in June and July 2018 and Peter Merlino will be acting Chairperson of the Trust.

Kevin Griffey



OPERATIONS OFFICER

(Comms Centre, Rescue Vessels and Duty Callout Officers)

With April now behind us it is a good time to review some statistics. We think you will agree that the table below tells the story of how busy our unit is and how well we serve the community – which is why we all volunteer our time and efforts.

These statistics are to April 2018 Year to Date.

Incident Type	Number of Incidents
Marine (on the water) *	101
Our Vessels Tasked to Assist	43 times
Rural Fire Service**	403
Total Incidents Managed	504

* Not all Marine Incidents require our boats to be tasked. For example, the Water Police may handle the incident or possibly no direct intervention is required. This does not lessen the work performed by the Comms Centre Staff.

Our Duty Callout Officers are involved in most of these incidents providing the communications link to the PS Water Police and calling out boat crew.

** We do not fight fires – we manage the communications after a 000 call is made, despatch fire units etc. and work through a RFS Duty Officer.

During the month, there was some sort of record set with a boat we were tracking being 36 hours overdue. This

created a massive effort by not only our Unit but others up and down the coast trying to locate this vessel. It all ended well thankfully.

Thanks to all our volunteers who make this possible and make it happen. For example, every time we refuel a boat (and that is never inexpensive) we know the hard work carried out by the ladies in the unique Gift Shop actually make that financially happen.

PS31 (John Thompson) Damaged

On 14 April at about 6 PM, a severe storm hit Nelson Bay with winds in excess of 100KM/Hr winds and large hail. During this somewhat brief storm, large fish boxes from



(Continued on page 23)

OPERATIONS...

(Continued from page 22)

the adjacent Cooperative were blown across the water and smashed into PS31. The damage to the Targa and Fly Bridge was substantial. The vessel was immediately taken out of service and is unlikely to return until the end of June.

The usual process required for a large insurance claim followed. The result is that Steber International will carry out the repairs. During May the vessel was taken to Forster where the work will be completed.

The repair work includes:

- Replacement of the Stainless Steel Targa
- Replacement of the Port Windscreen
- Replacement of the Radar Unit and other electronic equipment
- Replacement of the Port side bow rail with associated fibreglass work
- Repair of the Fly Bridge structure

PS30 (Codi K-II) remains our only working rescue vessel. She is a very capable vessel but does have some limitations as to the distance she can be tasked out to see, the sea state, and her towing capacity. Already, however, the workload of Codi has been substantial.

Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX)

From 18 to 20 May, we were involved with a well-orchestrated SAREX involving the Water Police, vessels from other units from the Central Coast and Hunter Region and our Comms Centre.

An Emergency Operations Centre was activated in the Command Centre from where the operations were directed. The exercise was set up and conducted by an Officer from the Water Police Marine Area Command Sydney, with input from the Port Stephens Water Police.

The scenario started with an overdue vessel (managed by our Comms Centre staff, Bill Haskell and Roy Dorward) which escalated into a search on the water for two people. The mission was accomplished with the exercise being managed by Marine Rescue in the Command Centre and PS31 Skipper

(Barney Pinney) acting as the On-Scene Commander out on the water.

To cut a two-day exercise down to a few lines, we were so proud of our involvement both on the land and at sea (mainly around Broughton Island). Our people, along with others from neighbouring units, performed extremely well. Great to see some of our newer members (Sarah and Jenny) getting involved and gaining much experience.

With very short notice (which is how in real life this all happens!) our people quickly organised the communications required, logistics, catering, accommodation, fuel and overall management of the process.

Congratulations to Colin Foote, Colin Cahill and Colin Couper (the three Colins) for a job well done. Jenny Fitz – you are amazing the way you can feed so many people with such little notice. Thanks to Debbie Buckley for assisting. Mike Grover handled the Media Relations role – in a real situation a very important and delicate function.

Sue Freeman became our dock manager organising boats in and out and refuelling.

Finally, thanks to the Water Police for their organisation and being so willing to impart knowledge. Also, a well done to the Search and Rescue Support officer from Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie.

Certainly, **Volunteers Doing Our Jobs Professionally.**



(Continued on page 25)



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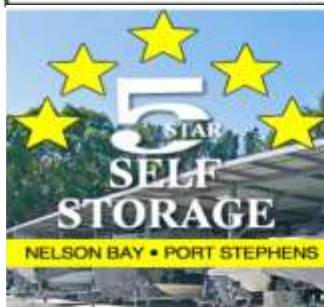
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OPERATIONS AND BOATS OFFICER

Flagpole Replacement



Marine Rescue's Flagpole was replaced in May due to showing signs of corrosion stemming from standing out in the open for 36 years. It was first erected at the original Radio Base (the Bunker) in 1982 and stood there for 11 years before being moved to the current position in 1993.



Tony O'Donnell



Erica Smith set history by being the first person to raise a flag on the new flagpole (the National Flag) followed by Ian Peacock (the State Flag) and the project leader, Admin Officer John Reid, who raised the Marine Rescue Flag.



BOATS OFFICER

PS31, the John Thompson, had to be taken off line due to the damage sustained during the wild storm that occurred on the night of 14 April. A fish box and at least one lid

Steber and returned, possibly mid-June.

Codi K II, on the other hand, survived the storm unscathed. She has been running well with only a few minor issues to be resolved:



blew off the fisherman's wharf into PS31 damaging the Targa and all the equipment it carried as well as fracturing the fibreglass flybridge. The flying debris also bent and loosened the port guardrail and deformed the port windscreen.

The damage is all covered by insurance, however we don't have the use of our main rescue vessel until repairs are completed by



With the coming of the "Crew Muster Station" and its solar power system we may have some answers if both boats can be left connected to a source of shore power.

Hopefully by the time of the next Port Chatter all matters will be resolved and the crew will have better working conditions on the dock.

Ken Johnson



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LIGHTHOUSE WEDDINGS



Right and below: Melissa and Simon Gleeson of Sydney, 7 April

Left and below: Jessica and Blair Frendin of Newcastle, 24 March



Left and below: Brittney and Matthew Tait of Darwin, 12 May

WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR

These three Weddings are our last of the Summer/Autumn Months and lovely they were - with beautiful weather for two but the third having gale force winds which blew a lot of chairs around etc. But lucky they were! As the Bride arrived the wind dropped, and the sun came out just in time for their Wedding Ceremony. We don't have any more Weddings now until September and in that month we have six!!!

Once again thanks to all the Wedding Crew, it has been a great few months.

Jenny Fitzsimons



SOCIAL COMMITTEE & ANZAC DAY MARCH

SOCIAL EVENTS

Regrettably we have not yet been able to reschedule the Trivia Night originally planned for April. We are still trying to find a solution, but it will than likely be later in the year.

Peter Young is handling the arrangements for the Bare-

Foot Bowls Night at Nelson Bay Bowling Club (June 22), so please contact him for more details.

We are still hopeful of organising the Mid-Year Themed Dinner for July - more later.

Laurie Nolan and Frank van Druten



MRPS Social Committee 2018 schedule

Month	Date	Event	Comments
JUNE	Friday 22 June	Barefoot Bowls	- At Nelson Bay Bowling Club - \$10.00 per person - Make a team of four, bring some friends - Best Dressed Prize (see flyer on page 20)
JULY	Wednesday 25 July	Mid-year Dinner	- At a venue TBA
SEPTEMBER	Wednesday 26 September	Trivia Night	- At Senior Citizens Hall, Norburn Ave Nelson Bay - No upfront cost - Make a table, bring some friends
OCTOBER	TBA	Adventure Outing	- At a location TBA
DECEMBER	Tuesday 18 December	Xmas Dinner	- At a venue TBA

Year 2018 NSW Public School Holidays

Winter Holidays	9-Jul-18	20-Jul-18
Spring Holidays	1-Oct-18	12-Oct-18
Summer Holidays	24-Dec-18	28-Jan-19



MRPS attended the Anzac Day March in Nelson Bay from the Nelson Bay Bowling Club down Stockton Street to Apex Park.

There was an excellent turnout of 16 members and our march position immediately behind the RAAF contingent gave us very good exposure to the large crowd that lined the route.

The rain experienced earlier in the day at the Dawn Service had cleared and the sunshine made for excellent



conditions for the march.

John Reid led the MRPS contingent with Peter Fitzsimons as the flag bearer. Neil Hansford laid a wreath on behalf of all members of MRPS, the first time the Unit has participated in the wreath laying ceremony.



ANNIVERSARIES AND BIRTHDAYS

Service Anniversaries

Congratulations and thanks to all the following members of the PORT STEPHENS UNIT who have given their time and service as volunteers so willingly. Our existence depends on it.

JUNE

Mike BROWN	21	Stephen MURRAY	3	Garry JENSEN	5
Louise MOORE	19	Julie PICTON	2	Lynne JENSEN	5
Geoffrey MOORE	19	Lyndall DAY	2	Peter MILLER	5
Harry McNAMARA	12	David GOUGH	2	Tom MILLER	5
Andrew MACLACHLAN	9	Jay LYNCH	2	Angus STUART	4
Neil HANSFORD	9	Deb VAN DRUTEN	2	Gary BELL	2
Kevin GRIFFEY	9	Rebecca HARBAND	1	Andrew TELLEY	2
Narelle FISHER	7	Jordan COGGAN	1	Ian JACK	2
Robyn WINTER	7	Pam WALTERS	1	Bruce LUNNON	1
John VASSALLO	7	Pamela SMITH	1	Rachel SYMONDS	1
Tim BOYLE	5	JULY		Barry TAYLOR	1
Christine RYNNE	4	Loris WEBSTER	6		
		Colin FOOTE	6		

Happy Birthday

Congratulations to the following members of the PORT STEPHENS UNIT with birthdays in June and July

JUNE

John ALMGREN	John BATES	Eddy VAN DYKEN	Iain BLACKADDER
Kev LANYON	Deb VAN DRUTEN	Barney PINNEY	Greg WALSH
Russell CRAIG	Mike COWELL	Jenny FITZSIMONS	Steve PICTON
Betty TRICKETT		Sharon GRADY	Ann MATHON
Bill HASKELL	JULY	Chris MYORS	Rachel SYMONDS
Deniece GILLILAND	Di BAILLIE	Donna HALLAS	Rebecca HARBAND
Elizabeth FRANCIS	Rod REESON	Barry TIMMINS	Jessica LIGHTON
Donna CLARRIS	Valerie BENNET	Mike GROVER	Zoe EVES
	Colin FOOTE	Rosemary ADAMS	

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Our service to Port Stephens 2005-2017

People saved/ assisted	4,821
Rescues and assists	2,164
Value of vessels saved	\$245M+
Rescue Crew volunteer hours	21,900+
Radio Base volunteer hours	270,000+
Radio calls made/received	276,268
Telephone calls made/received	252,045

Every day, Marine Rescue Port Stephens Members give more than 60 volunteer hours to serve our community

Volunteers saving lives on the water

PORT STEPHENS WEATHER

Nelson Bay, NSW - April 2018

Date	Day	Temps		Rain
		Min	Max	
		°C	°C	mm
1	Su	20.1	26.9	0
2	Mo	19.3	26.5	0
3	Tu	22.1	25.4	0.4
4	We	19.5	27	0
5	Th		26.5	0
6	Fr	18.5	26.6	0
7	Sa	18.2	25.5	0.2
8	Su	18.8	26	0.1
9	Mo	18.6	31.2	0
10	Tu	20	25.5	0
11	We	19	27.6	0
12	Th	18		0
13	Fr	18.6	30.2	0
14	Sa	20.5	30.8	0
15	Su	14.1	24.5	9.9
16	Mo	18.8	28.1	0
17	Tu	18.7	24	0
18	We	18.5	24.8	0
19	Th	17.7	24.7	0
20	Fr	16.9	23.4	26.2
21	Sa	18.1	23	2
22	Su	16.5	22.5	0
23	Mo	16.5		0
24	Tu		22	0
25	We	18.5	22.2	10.8
26	Th	17.9	23.4	1
27	Fr	18.3	22.2	0
28	Sa	15.1	21.4	5.2
29	Su	15.2	19.5	1.2
30	Mo	13.5	19.9	4.2

Statistics for April 2018

Mean	18.1	25	
Lowest	13.5	19.5	0
Highest	22.1	31.2	26.2
Total			61.2

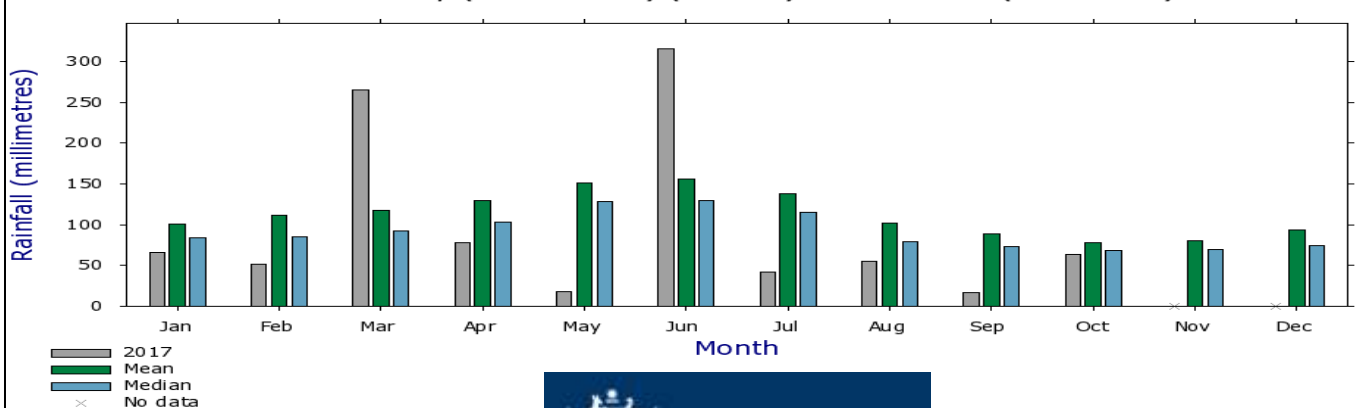
Nelson Bay, NSW - May 2018

Date	Day	Temps		Rain
		Min	Max	
		°C	°C	mm
1	Tu	15	21.5	0.6
2	We	16	23.2	1
3	Th	15.2	23.9	0.2
4	Fr		23.7	0
5	Sa	13.2	23.6	0
6	Su	12.4	22	0
7	Mo	14.5	24.7	0
8	Tu	15.3	23.8	0
9	We	15.3	23.6	0
10	Th	15.5	24.8	0.1
11	Fr	8	17	0
12	Sa	12	19.5	1
13	Su	12.4	17.6	2
14	Mo	12.6	19.4	59.4
15	Tu	13.8	22	3.2
16	We	12.6	18.6	0
17	Th	12.4	19.6	0
18	Fr	12	19	0
19	Sa	12	19.8	0
20	Su	12.4	18.6	0
21	Mo	12.9	21	0
22	Tu	13.5	21.1	0
23	We	14.2	21.8	0
24	Th	12.8	20	0.1
25	Fri	14.2	19.9	3.2
26	Sa	13.7	20.7	2.7
27	Su	13.5		
28	Mo			
29	Tu			
30	We			
31	Th			

Statistics for May 2018

Mean	13.36	21.2	
Lowest	8	17	0
Highest	16	24.8	59.4
Total			73.5

Nelson Bay (Nelson Head) (061054) 2017 Rainfall (millimetres)



Note: Data may not have completed quality control

IN APPRECIATION....

Contributors to this issue of *Port Chatter*:

Colin Couper, Ross Debenham, Neil Fraser, Harold Gibson, Kevin Griffey, Neil Hansford, Ken Johnson, Laurie Nolan, Frank van Druten, Tony O'Donnell, Jenny Fitzsimons, John Reid, Lee Uebergang, Maureen Wheatley and Peter Young. Other photos by Ross Debenham, Jenny Fitzsimons, Neil Fraser, Neil Hansford, Loris Webster and Tony O'Donnell. You too can become a contributor and you will be most welcome. See inside front cover.

Distributors of the *Port Chatter*: This Monthly newsletter does not arrive in your letter-box via the tooth fairy.

The following people give of their time (and petrol) in making deliveries. Distribution Co-Ordinator: Ross Debenham, Maureen Wheatley, Peter Merlino, Elizabeth Francis, Trevor Dowsett, Marian Chappell, and Deb Nolan.

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		Shoal Bay Pharmacy
		Terry White Chemmart Pharmacy, Nelson Bay
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		Soldiers Point Marina
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	Fishing Supplies	Duff's Salamander Bait & Tackle (at Coles Express)
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Real Estate		Century 21 Paradise Waters, Nelson Bay
Restaurants and Cafes		Rock Lobster Seafood – D'Albora Marinas
		Inner Light Tea Rooms, Nelson Head
Radio Station		Port Stephens FM 100.9



NEXT UNIT MEETINGS

TUESDAY 19 JUNE 2018

and

TUESDAY 17 JULY 2018

All Members
Welcome

All members are welcome to come and meet fellow members of
Marine Rescue Port Stephens.

Important information on operational matters will be discussed.

Food and refreshments will be provided.

MARINE RESCUE NSW PORT STEPHENS RESCUE VESSELS CURRENTLY IN SERVICE

The unit currently has two purpose built, specialised rescue vessels, crewed by motivated and trained volunteers who can be called upon at anytime, day or night, to head to the assistance of those who call.

A response time of 20 mins or less is estimated from alert to heading to sea. Our vessels boast a comprehensive inventory of the latest navigation, communication, safety and rescue technologies on board.

PORT STEPHENS RESCUE VESSEL *PORT STEPHENS 31*

JOHN THOMPSON



Specifications

Make / Model:	Steber International 38' - Category 3 SAR Vessel
Length:	11.46m (38ft)
Beam:	3.84m (12.6ft)
Displacement:	11.6 tonne
Draft:	1m
Fuel:	1350L
Engines:	Twin 420hp Yanmar diesel
Top Speed:	30kn
Crew:	Operational - normally 4
VHF:	Sailor 6222
Radar:	Raymarine RD418HD 4 KW
MFD's (Multifunction Display):	ES125-12" x 3, ES9-9" x 1
AIS:	Raymarine AIS950
RDF:	Taiyo
27Mhz:	GME GX400B
DCN:	Tait TM9300

Rescue Vessel Port Stephens 31 John Thompson was built by Steber International, Taree, NSW and completed in May 2016. Her single hull is made of glass-reinforced plastic.

Port Stephens 31 is fitted with state-of-the-art radar, direction finding and navigation equipment as well as forward looking infra red search equipment.

John Thompson has been prepared to Marine Rescue NSW specifications with minor customisation at the request of Port Stephens Unit and is capable of covering Port Stephens and anywhere along the coast for example Broughton Island, Seal Rocks and 30nm out to sea or further if tasked by MACSAR.

**PORT STEPHENS RESCUE VESSEL *PORT STEPHENS 30*
*CODI-K II***



Specifications:

Make / Model:	Gemini WR-850
Type:	Rigid-Hull Inflatable (RHIB)
Length:	8.5m
Beam:	2.8m
Engines: -	2 x Suzuki four-stroke Outboards 200hp each (150kW)
Fuel Capacity:	2 x 200 litre tanks
Fuel Consumption:	Cruising speed - 50 litres / hour
Displacement:	3.2 tonnes
Survey:	2C
Crew:	4 operational
Speed:	Top speed around 40 knots. Cruising speed 25 to 30 knots.

Rescue Vessel Port Stephens 30 Codi-K II was manufactured in South Africa, prepared by Britton Marine of Taren Point NSW, and completed in February 2012. Her single hull is made of glass-reinforced plastic with alloy longitudinal keel reinforcement and her cabin is glass-reinforced plastic. She boasts among her electronic equipment a Raymarine Radar/Plotter, Furuno AIS Class-A and FLIR Thermal Night Vision System.

Codi-K II has been prepared to Port Stephens Unit specifications in consultation with Marine Rescue NSW, and is capable of covering all of the areas of Port Stephens; ie, the Myall River system, Karuah River, and the other shallow areas of our waterways, as well as outside waters as required.



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