

PORT CHATTER

MARINE RESCUE NSW
PORT STEPHENS UNIT

AUGUST 2016

“Volunteers doing our jobs professionally”





MARINE RESCUE NSW – PORT STEPHENS UNIT

Postal Address: PO Box 20, Nelson Bay, NSW 2315

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Email: base.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au

Phone: (02) 4981 3585

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VOLUNTEERS SAVING LIVES ON THE WATER

UNIT APPOINTMENTS		
Patrons	Kate Washington MP for Port Stephens The Hon Bob Baldwin	
Unit Commander	Colin Cahill	
Deputy Unit Commander	Lee Uebergang	
Operations Division		
Operations Officer	Lee Uebergang	
Duty Callout Officers	Colin Foote (Lead) Penelope Highland Barney Pinney Neil Fraser Angus MacKenzie	
Communications Centre Manager	Colin Foote	
Boats Manager	Ken Johnson	
Chief Engineer	Bill Haskell	
R.F.S. Liaison	Ross Debenham	
Master Coxswain	Dave Jack	
Coxswains	Rod Reeson	Mike Smith
	Sue Freeman	Ken Johnson
Noel Corcoran	Robert Johnson	Nigel Waters
Finance Division		
Treasurer	Peter Merlino	
Assisting	Colin Couper	
Community Relations Division		
Community Relations Officer	Neil Hansford	
Public Relations/Social Media	Matt Darby	
Editor Port Chatter	Penelope Highland	
Asst Editor Port Chatter	Frank van Druten	
Marine Radio Safety Database	Graeme Abberton	
Social Committee	Laurie & Deb Nolan	
	Frank & Deb van Druten	
	Peter & Jan Holman	
Gift Shop	Sandra Scheuber	
Grants Officer	Tony Dawson	
Education and Training Division		
Unit Training Officer	Eileen Kelly	
Training Systems Officer	Graeme Abberton	
Boats Training Officer	Richard Pizzuto	
Course Presenters	Peter Dentrinos	
	Neil Fraser	
	Ron Lighton	
	Mick Milton	
	Richard Pizzuto	
	Graham Pretty	
Welfare / Liaison	Harold Gibson	
- Asst Welfare	Jenny Fitzsimons	
Corporate Services Division		
Administration Officer	John Reid	
Communications Centre Services	Jenny Fitzsimons	
	W.H. & S Officer	Kevin Griffey
	Base Security	Graham Pretty
	Membership	John P Smith
		Loris Webster
	Rosters	Elizabeth Francis
	Maintenance and Supply	Paul Sullivan
		John P Smith
		John Vassallo
		Erica Smith
	Data Base/Stats	Maureen Wheatley
	Awards and Recognition	Lisa Lodding
	IT & Comms - Hardware Officer	Lee Ryman
	- Software Officer	Brian Richardson
		Peter Baldwin
	Radio Maintenance	Robert Johnson
		Lee Ryman
		Dieter Greiter
	Member Welfare and Protocol	
	Welfare and Protocol Officer	Harold Gibson
	Trust Management Sub-Committee	
	Chairman	Kevin Griffey
	Deputy Chairman	Colin Cahill
	Treasurer	Peter Merlino
	Secretary	Garry Jensen
	Committee	Peter Fitzsimons
	Port Stephens Historical Society	Dennis Corr
	Welfare / Liaison	Harold Gibson
	Wedding Events Co-ordinator	Lynne Jensen
		Jenny Fitzsimons
	Tours	John Cook
	The <i>Port Chatter</i> is the monthly newsletter of Marine Rescue NSW, Port Stephens unit. It is distributed free to all members of the unit, its advertisers, sponsors, and other interested members of the community.	
	Contributions are most welcome from all members, advertisers, sponsors or other interested community members. They should be accompanied by the author's name, address and phone number, and can be emailed to the editor at port.chatter217@gmail.com . Contributions are subject to review by the Executive Committee prior to publishing.	
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	Sponsors can make tax-deductible donations to Marine Rescue NSW Port Stephens. All sponsorships will be acknowledged in <i>Port Chatter</i> if requested.	
	Cover Photographs - Geoff Clark and Roy Jeffrey	

OUR VISION

To be recognised as the most efficient and effective Search and Rescue Coordination Centre and Marine Rescue Unit within Marine Rescue NSW.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide an innovative, reliable and responsive marine rescue service to the Boating Public meeting the requirements of the National SAR policy, the NSW State Rescue Board Policy and Procedure and Marine Rescue NSW Policy and Standard Operating Procedures.

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.

Radio Base & 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 base 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
- Assistance and advice regarding entry to, and navigation in, the Port
- A checkpoint and radio coverage for recreational vessels transiting up and down the coastline, in our area
- 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 base by phone or radio and are also offered in regular radio skeds).

Accredited Rescue Craft Available on a 24 hr call-out basis, subject to Police tasking. (See 'Lifeboats' 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 & 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 Radio Room, 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

I would like to start by saying thank you to all members who attended our Annual General Meeting on 19 July.

We had a good attendance and I am pleased to say we were joined by Neil Grieves, our Regional Controller. Thank you Neil for travelling from Lake Macquarie to be with us.



For those who were unable to attend, I want to talk a little about some of the things we covered.

We have adopted the motto "*Volunteers doing our jobs professionally*" as we believe this precisely encapsulates what our Unit is all about and the performance standard we strive to achieve. I asked the members present at the meeting – as I now ask all members – to adopt this as your personal standard in whatever role you play within our Unit. If we all do this and maintain our adherence to our philosophy of continual improvement we will ensure that our Unit continues to be one of the most efficient and effective Marine Rescue Units in the State.

Elsewhere in this edition we have published, for information, the amended organisation chart now in effect. This does not introduce any major changes but, we believe, it gives us a more efficient and effective reporting structure and better reflects our operational responsibilities.

A copy has also been emailed to all members.

One of the outcomes of this review is that our Executive Committee now comprises seven positions, being Unit Commander, Deputy Unit Commander, Operations Officer, Unit Training Officer, Administration Officer, Treasurer and Community Relations Officer.

This is a more manageable number than was previously the case. Combined with implementing a more efficient delegation and reporting process, Executive Committee will be better able to focus on policy matters and longer term planning.

Regrettably, Iain Blackadder has advised that he wants to

step down from the position of Administration Officer to enable him to commence training as boat crew. Iain has done a terrific job as AdminO and will be missed as a member of the executive team.

John Reid has agreed to take on this role and is presently learning the ropes from Iain before officially taking over shortly. John has already been helping both Lee

Uebergang and me in the development of our 2017/18 strategic plan and I'm sure will fill the AdminO role admirably.

Also, Brian Bibbing has agreed to consider taking on the role of Unit Training Officer to allow Eileen Kelly to step down after many years and, as with John, he has been understudying Eileen to come to grips with what is a very important role within our Unit.

Kevin Griffey has returned to the position of WH&S Officer in addition to his responsibilities as Chair of the Trust Management Sub-Committee. This means that Graham Pretty will now be able to concentrate on his roles as Security Officer and one of our First Aid course presenters.

We also unveiled the draft early stage 2017/18 strategic plan and Lee Uebergang outlined the process that had been followed to date and is now to be followed with the view to the agreed plan being presented at the September monthly meeting.

A very important step in that process is obtaining input from as many members as possible and to this end the "plan on a page" has been circulated to all members for comment. At the time of writing, that process is still open and we look forward to receiving your comments.

Again, at the date of writing, the decommissioning ceremony for PS 40 Danial Thain is still to occur. I'm very pleased to say that we have filled the maximum number of attendees that can be accommodated at Soldiers Point Bowling Club and I am looking forward to what I'm certain will be a most enjoyable, although no doubt sentimental, event and one that will be long remembered.

And thanks to the very generous support of one of our benefactors, we are able to offer this event at no cost to attendees.

Neil Hansford and his team have done another great job in organising this event and we have had wonderful support from both Soldiers Point Marina and Soldiers Point Bowling Club in helping us bring it all together.

That's my lot for the moment.

Keep smiling.

Colin Cahill





PORT STEPHENS MEDICAL CENTRE

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Our surgery features General Practitioners, a Registered Nurse, visiting Specialists and onsite pathology.

Dr Stan Kuchta MBBS (Sydney). Dr Kuchta practices full-time within our surgery and deals with all aspects of primary care in family medicine. His special interests include all types of Skin Cancers, Sports Medicine, Cardiology and Pain Management.

Dr Steve Illiadis BSc MBBS (FUSA). Dr Illiadis also practices full-time in our surgery. His special interests are surgical problems, Skin Cancer, Sports Medicine and Children's Health (Pediatrics).

Dr Michael O'Donoghue BSc (NSW), MBBS Dip Av Med, DAME. Dr O'Donoghue performs part-time sessions in our surgery. His special interests include Aviation Medicine and Occupational Medicine.

Dr Douglas Routley BMed (Hons), FRACGP. Dr Routley is a gastroenterologist and visits our surgery fortnightly. His specialties include diseases of the digestive system and the liver.

Australian Hearing Services provides hearing assessments and the fitting and repairing of hearing aids. They have sessions at our surgery weekly.

FROM THE BRIDGE..... AND OPERATIONS OFFICER

DEPUTY UNIT COMMANDER

Life has been pretty hectic for both Col, me, Neil Hansford and numerous others who have done all the heavy lifting that resulted in very successful events around the arrival and commissioning of PS31. By the time you read this, I'm sure Danial Thain will have been given a dignified send-off with due recognition of her outstanding service to the boating public of Port Stephens.

Strategic Plan 2017-18. Those who attended the July Mess meeting will be aware that work is underway on developing the Strategic Plan for 2017-18. A copy of the slide pack presentation given by me at the July Mess meeting has been emailed to all members.

The work so far has been condensed to a "plan on a

page" which was also attached to the email to all members. This was sent to all Members so they could have the opportunity to comment on this important document which will guide the direction of this Unit for the next few years. You are encouraged to provide comments to me by Fri 5th August. Feel free to contact me if any clarification of the plan is required.

One final note - the DUC now has a dedicated mobile number 0428 233 290. Please add it to your contacts.

That's it from the DUC.

Lee Uebergang



OPERATIONS OFFICER

Life has been pretty hectic since taking on the OPSO position in May in addition to the usual DUC duties!! I must admit to the lines between the two roles getting a bit blurred but still getting a fair bit done. A summary of what has been achieved follows:

- PS31 "John Thompson" launched, delivered, commissioned into MRNSW and introduced into operational service
- establishment of the Operations (OPS) Cell
- a joint DCO / Crew meeting which contributed greatly to a better understand between these two groups as well as identifying many items / issues for review and consideration
- approval by the UC of the Safety Management System for PS31
- establishment of the "Forum" (further details below)
- fitting of new twin Suzuki 200HP OBMs to Codi KII
- two Radio Room refresher training sessions conducted

Operational Update. The operational tempo has slowed as can be seen from the stats below. The operational stats for June and July (up to 22nd) are:

Type of Incident	June	July
Search & Rescue	2	1
Tow Assist	0	1
Other Assist	8	4

Radio Room Update. Colin Foote has launched himself into the role of Comms Centre Manager and conducted two very well received Radio Room refresher training sessions on 14 and 16 July. If you didn't get to attend I recommend you read the slide pack that has been emailed to all members.

responsibilities of the RC (Neil Grieves) when attending the Radio Room have been clarified. Neil is required to attend the Radio Room (if possible) whenever we have a SOLAS incident. He is there as an observer. He may offer advice to the Radio Room staff which should be considered and discussed by the Watchkeeper before action is taken. Neil will NOT assume control of the Radio Room unless asked to by the DUC or UC.

Rescue Vessel Update. Since the launch of PS31, she has been delivered, commissioned into MRNSW and introduced into operational service. Richard Pizzuto's training program to bring all crew members "up to speed" on all aspects of the operation and management of PS31 has been implemented with military precision (funny about that!!). The plan is to have all crew fully endorsed by end of July - which reflects the enthusiasm and dedication of our crew members. Well done to Richard, those who led the training and all who participated. Training included day and night operations in normal conditions as well as heavy weather.

PS31 entered operational service (albeit with a limited number of crew members fully endorsed) on 30 June. The first operational tasking occurred on the night of 8 July when PS31 assisted NB Water Police with a search of Shoal Bay after several flares were sighted. Nothing was found. Robert Johnson had the honour of being the Coxswain for the first task.

Our rescue vessels have also conducted three ashes scatterings, one helicopter exercise with CHC and assisted NPWS with their winter inshore bird survey.

Rescue Vessel Crew Forum (the "Forum") In July I took the decision to establish the Forum as the key advisory group on all aspects of Rescue Vessel operations. The function of the Forum is to support the Goals of the Unit with a focus on:

- Ensuring safety of Crew through the Safety Management System (SMS)

Responsibilities of the Regional Controller. The

(Continued on page 9)

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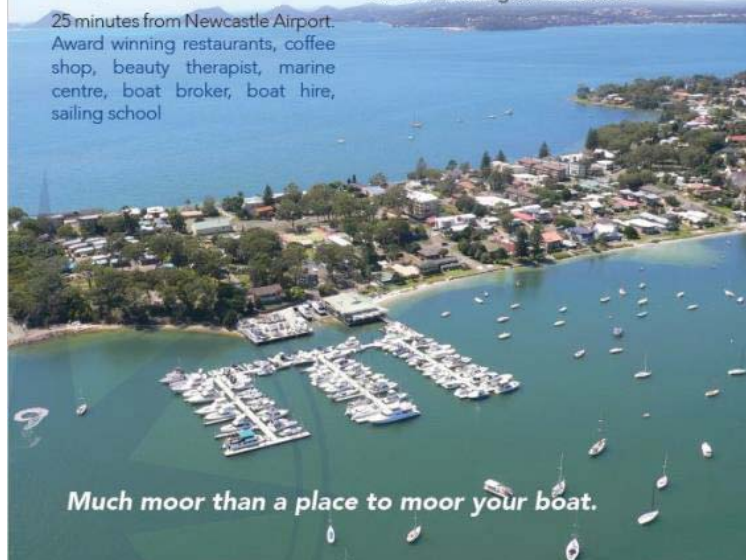
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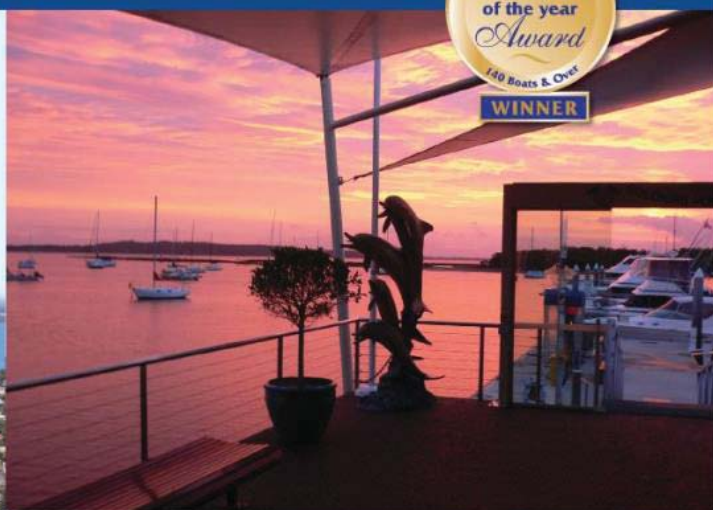
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OPERATIONS OFFICER & COMMISSIONING OF PS31

(Continued from page 7)

- Continually reviewing rescue vessel SMS, LOPs and procedures to ensure our procedures reflect "best safe practice"
- Assisting the Boat Manager and the Boat Training Officer in their vital functions
- Identifying equipment shortfalls and needs

The Crew is comprised of two 'standing members' and five elected crew members from a mix of rating to ensure representation from all levels. Following nominations, the following members were elected to the Forum:

- Tony O'Donnell – Crew (Chair)
- Sue Freeman – Coxswain
- Robert Johnson – Coxswain
- Paul Farnhill – Crew
- Peter Merlino – Crew
- Ken Johnson (Boat Manger - standing position)
- Richard Pizzuto (Boat Training Officer - standing position)

If any Crew member wishes an item to be reviewed by the Forum, then you can approach any of the Forum members who will ensure your request is considered.

During my introductory comments at the Forum's kick-off meeting on 10th July, I stated my commitment to the safety of all crew members and emphasised the important work ahead of the Forum and in particular its primary focus on safety of the crew.

Since its first meeting, the Forum is already 'kicking goals'

with a number of positive outcomes already implemented or in the progress of implementation:

- A Lockout/Tagout System is being developed and will be reviewed at the next meeting on 24 July
- A Near-Miss investigation process is to be reviewed at the next meeting
- The process of Risk Management as required by AMSA has commenced (ongoing)
- Improved communications process to Crew will be reviewed at the next meeting
- Several equipment issues and deficiencies have been rectified

There are many other items being investigated or worked upon by the Forum and these we will communicate on an ongoing basis.

To quote Tony O'Donnell:

"The Forum will support MRPS goal "To be the most effective Marine Rescue Unit in NSW" with our primary focus on "Saving lives on open and closed waters adjacent to Port Stephens".

Nicely said Tony.

One final note - the OPSO now has a dedicated mobile number **0437 498 491** and is using the email:

operations.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au.

Please add these to your contacts.

Lee Uebergang



Images from the Commissioning of PS31 *John Thompson*, June 25, 2016.

Clockwise from above: PS31 manoeuvring into position at D'Albora Marina; PS31 entering harbour with Fireboat Delta giving a water salute; Skippers and Crew with UC on board PS31.

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WELFARE & LIAISON AND RFS LIAISON

WELFARE & LIAISON

Stephen Alta - has felt the effects like many of us over the past few weeks, of those dreaded Westerly winds. He has been housebound after coming down with a bad virus. Knowing Stephen, he will be back on deck as soon as he has the all clear.

Ray Calvert - sorry to hear that Ray is back in a Newcastle hospital. Ray's health has been far from good these past months and he just can't seem to shake off the medical problem he has. Members, please send Ray a get well card or give him a call when he returns from hospital. I am sure that Ray would love to hear from you.

Nola Ross-Sampson - has also had a hospital visit recently. However I believe that she is on the mend and will be back on duty very soon at the Gift Shop. We all miss your lovely smile Nola, and look forward to your return very soon.

Ken Ross-Sampson - has also not been well the past few months. However he informs me that he will be the main carer of the house and look after Nola while she is recovering. Well done Ken, I am sure Nola will appreciate all your kind care.

Erica Smith - has had husband John doing all the housework recently, because of her stay in hospital recently. Erica informs me that her operation was very helpful and she hopes that her health improves after all her treatment. I also believe that JP has found house skills that he never new he had!

Pam Smith - had a very nasty fall recently resulting in

a fractured arm. She has spent some time in hospital after an extensive operation to reset and plate this fracture. Pam, as we all know, is a tower of strength to her husband John who has his own medical problems. However, she is now receiving much loving care from her daughter - who lives locally. All your fellow members and friends send their get well wishes, Pam.

Brian Harrold - informs me that he is just starting to get on top of his medical condition, when another problem arose. His wife was taken off to hospital with a nasty post-op infection. By all accounts she has been a very unwell lady, however, well on the road to recovery now.

Bob Carter - I believe has also been in hospital to have hip surgery. This will slow Bob down for a while, but don't worry Bob, not much boating or fishing can be done inn this weather. You should be ok when the weather warms up.

Graham Pretty - is now back home recovering after a knee replacement. The operation went well and Graham informs me that he has regular exercises to help with the healing process. Soon we will see Graham sprinting up the hill feeling like a new man.

Condolences - from the unit have been conveyed to Heather and Jim Harmer who lost their grandson in a tragic road accident recently. On behalf of the Unit Commander, fellow officers, members and friends I wish to offer our sincere prayers and thoughts during this difficult time.

Harold Gibson

RFS LIAISON

Statistics for May 2016. Bushfires 26, grass fires 16, structure fires 7, car fires 8, bin fire 1, tree fires 4, yard fires 2, unit fire 1, unknown 4, shed fires 2, rubbish fires 2, kitchen fire 1, house fire 2, automatic fire alarms 4, scrub fire 1, pile burn 3, hazard reduction 2, motor vehicle accidents 2, ambo assists 1 TOTAL 89

Statistics for June, 2016, Structure fire 1, unknown 2, bush fires 10, house fires 2, motor vehicle accidents 7, oil spill 2, automatic fire alarms 6, grass fires 7, rubbish fires 2, car fires 11, pile burns 8, tree fires 2, yard fire 1, ambo assist 1, wires down 2, tree down 1, bench fire 1, domestic alarm 1, transformer fire 1, POT PLANT FIRE 1. TOTAL 69

Clarence Town First Responder Service. For those who did not attend the Refresher Course and for those who did, it is advised that you study the procedures with regard to the Clarence Town First Responder service that will commence in August. The CALL OUT book will be revised to assist in calling out the members of Clarence Town brigade for this service.

It was great to see Fire Boat Delta escorting PS31 into D'albora Marina at the commissioning of the new lifeboat.



Fire Boat Delta was open for inspection and I went aboard to check it out. The members of Soldiers Point Brigade are keen to train on the boat and are looking at doing training with Lemon Tree Passage as well as our crews. With regards to Fire Boat Delta it is suggested that Watchkeepers study the new procedures with regard to calling out the boat.

Ross Debenham



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DONATIONS & SPONSORS

RECENT DONATIONS

We were very pleased to receive two very generous donations recently.

West's Diggers Nelson Bay

Through the Clubs NSW Community Grants Scheme, Marine Rescue Port Stephens now have sufficient funds to re-engine its vessel - PS30 Codi Kili (an 8.5 metre Rigid Hull Inflatable) with two new Suzuki 200 hp outboard motors.

The grant of \$14,000 was made by long-time supporters, West's Diggers Nelson Bay as part of their community support program.

Deputy Unit Commander, Lee Uebergang said "It's only through the ongoing generous support of Clubs like West's Diggers, the Clubs NSW Community Grants Scheme and local service clubs like Rotary and community donors that we are able to have our volunteers provide a safety



Neil Hansford, Peter Hughes and Lee Uebergang

umbrella 24 hours per day over those using the waters of Port Stephens."

Raymond Terrace Junction Inn Fishing Club

On behalf of the club Peter Hughes, President, presented Lee Uebergang and Neil Hansford with a generous \$2,000 to assist with the new engines.

Raymond Terrace Junction Inn Fishing Club is keen to expand its membership so that they can play their role in advancing safe fishing and providing a circle of friendship for Fishermen around Raymond Terrace.

Deputy Unit Commander, Lee Uebergang



Lee Uebergang, James Gregoratos and Harry Skelton

thanked Raymond Terrace Junction Inn Fishing Club for their timely donation and the commitment of the club members to contribute.

DUC Lee Uebergang said "Marine Rescue Port Stephens members appreciate the donation to enable volunteers to do their jobs professionally".

CHC Helicopters

You will all have seen the role that CHC Helicopters played at the PS31 Sail Past and Commissioning. CHC have used our vessels and crews for some years to train their winchmen is part of their RAAF Williamtown

contract. Lee Uebergang, Neil Hansford and Richard Pizzuto joined me to present CHC with a framed print of their helicopter overflying PS40 and PS31 under the adverse conditions at the Sail Past. We can expect to continue with them - which in the future may involve night operations with them using night vision goggles."

Colin Cahill



Colin Cahill with Andrew Crane (Base Manager)



From left: Lee Uebergang, Andrew Crane, Richard Pizzuto, Colin Cahill, Neil Hansford, Rod Reeson, Brett Hunter, Shane Paton, Wade Coster, and Simon Hook.

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- More likely to have a stroke
- More likely to have a car accident
- More likely to have problems controlling your diabetes.

If you already have a Sleep Apnea machine, it is recommended that it be cleaned every 6 months.

COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE MANGER & IMAGES FROM PS31 COMMISSIONING

COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE MANGER

Radio Room Update

It is that time of year again, when a number of our Members are heading to warmer climates, which invariably places pressure on filling shifts in the Radio Room. Elizabeth Francis has the unenviable task of filling the Roster to ensure that we maintain our 100% record of never missing a shift and our thanks go to all members who take on the extra shifts during this period. Judy and I are included in that migration to 'warmer climes' and will be away for most of August, so the load continues to grow on the shoulders of the OPSO, who will be your contact while we are away.

We have just completed a Radio Room Refresher Course which has reinforced the professional approach we take to our role of making boating activities safer in our region. The course also included new information on our partnership with the Rural Fire Service, with the addition of procedures for the activation of Fire Boat Delta based at Soldiers Point Marina and the newly trained 'First Responder' Team at Clarence Town.

We should take this opportunity to express our appreciation and support for the RFS who have had to attend a number of Motor Vehicle Accident fatalities in the past month. Our night Watch Keepers generally have the task of calling out the RFS crews to these incidents and although we are in the warmth and comfort of our Radio

Room we share the anguish of the RFS members on site. If any of our members feel the need for counselling for any reason we have access to the RFS support network.

Moving forward, we will be conducting regular Refresher Courses for Radio Room staff and we encourage all members to attend these sessions to gain firsthand updates.



If the times for the first two courses (Thursday morning and Saturday afternoon) were not convenient for you, please let me know so we can include a session that suits you.

Appreciate your support.

Enjoy.

Colin Foote



*Images from the Commissioning of PS31
John Thompson, June 25, 2016.*

Clockwise from above: Monica Thompson dedication to her late husband John Thompson; Worimi Elder Neville Lilley welcome to country; Hon. David Elliott, Minister from Corrections, Emergency Services and Veterans Affairs welcome speech.



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COMMUNITY RELATIONS

COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER

June through July are normally slower months for the Unit - though certainly not in 2016.

The June edition gave you details on the launching of PS31 *John Thompson* at Taree which was a great event enjoyed by over 70 members.

The Sail Past went on despite probably some of the worst weather we have experienced. It was a real sight to see the flotilla lead by Water Police 24 and 49 followed by PS30 and LT30 then PS31 and PS40 followed by Fire



Unit Commander Colin Cahill receiving Commissioning Certificate from Commissioner Stacey Tannos

Boat Delta and overhead the CHC Rescue helicopter contracted to RAAF Williamtown. Despite appalling conditions, the vessels came alongside to be met by over 40 members and friends.

The weather was much kinder for the Commissioning Ceremony overseen by Hon David Elliott, Minister for Corrections, Emergency Services and Veterans Affairs and Commissioner Stacey Tannos. Amongst over 200 members and guests was the highest number of MR Directors to ever attend a commissioning. In addition we had senior Police Officers, MP's and donors plus the region's UC's and DUC's. This event positioned our Unit very highly in the eyes of Marine Rescue and the community. At all events our Membership team solicited for new members alongside RMS promoting safety of life on the water.

If you still want to buy the excellent Commemorative Edition of Port Chatter produced for the Commissioning it is available in the Radio Base for just the cost of full colour production, namely \$5.

By the time you have read this we will have carried out the Decommissioning of Danial Thain at a ceremony at Soldiers Point Marina followed by a luncheon at Soldiers Point Bowling Club.

More details and photographs in the October edition.

We have also produced video of all the PS31 activities which will be used to update the video wall in the radio base and put together a 20 minute video for members.

In addition to our feature in the "Examiner" we have used the launch of PS31 and retirement of PS 40 to raise our profile dramatically - which has attracted some substantial donations. More on fund raising at future monthly meetings.

With the Commissioning Morning Tea attended by 170 members and Guests and the Decommissioning Luncheon we have curtailed our social calendar. This will come back to normal after July.

I will leave it to the Unit Commander to inform you of a significant grant we have received from Clubs NSW/ Wests Diggers to re-engine Codi KII. In addition we received a generous donation from Raymond Terrace Junction Inn Fishing Club during July.

We are at a critical time to renew our MRS members. When members come in to pay please treat them as real benefactors, as this revenue is important to us.

For those of you who are Facebook friendly



Chaplain Richard Wrightson blessing PS31 and all who crew her in the company of Mrs Monica Thompson

make sure you like our page so you see all the timely material Matt Darby is putting up about newsworthy events in the Unit.

When was the last time you looked at the Unit web site? It will soon have even more features like calendars and photo galleries.

The foundations have been laid for a higher profile to attract more users of our services and more people prepared to donate to the maintenance of our 24 hour services saving lives on the water.

Neil Hansford

BOATS TRAINING OFFICER

TRAINING THE BOAT CREW TO SERVE ON PS31

The acquisition of Port Stephens 31 threw up many challenges for our Unit, with crew training being one of the more significant ones. PS31 is clearly a different vessel to the Danial Thain – some 14 feet shorter, displacing about one third as much water, and capable of speeds three times as fast. On top of these obvious physical disparities, she is also very different on the 'inside'; she is essentially an electronic boat, with most functions and systems controlled via touch-screen multifunction displays. She runs the same series of Raymarine electronics as you'll find on the Codi-K II, a small mercy insofar as we didn't have to expend much effort training the boat crew on the specifics of these systems.



We did however have to provide training for all crew in every other aspect of operating the vessel, from pre-start checks through starting the engines to handling the vessel in big seas, securing a tow line and even turning on the wipers.

We adopted a train-the-trainer type of approach and built a training plan around formed crews. Two crews – the Training Crew and Delivery Crew, each comprising two coxswains, a navigator and a deckhand or two – were selected. These crews were trained on the boat first, and were then responsible for training the three remaining crews, imaginatively titled Alpha, Bravo and Charlie crew.

The training for the Training and Delivery crews comprised three elements:

A day of familiarisation for each crew onboard MR Forster's Steber 38.

A three to four hour coastal transit for each crew as part of the two-phased delivery run for PS31, under the ever watchful eye of the man who knows more about Stebers than, well, anybody I'd guess, Alan Steber himself.

A week for these crews to use the boat in its home waters in all conditions to refine their knowledge of the boat and its systems, to hone their skills and to finalise the vessel operating procedures that would underpin all subsequent training.

Following the arrival of PS31 into Port Stephens on 3 June, the first training was on 11 June with a theory session for all boat crew.

The following weekend saw Alan Steber return to the bay and oversee the familiarisation tours for all boat crew. He also put the skippers through their paces in some

reasonably big seas, taking the opportunity to demonstrate the vessel's handling characteristics in less than ideal conditions.

The Training and Delivery crews then had a monopoly on the boat for the next week, in order to complete the third phase of their training, which included taking the boat out at night and in heavy seas. A standardisation meeting was then held at the base on Sunday 26 June for these crews to discuss their lessons learned and to agree on exactly what procedures they would train to. Pre-departure and shut-down checklists were finalised, and Operating Procedures booklets and Emergency Procedures flipcharts produced to assist in the delivery of training.



A complex regime of training then commenced the following day. Come Saturday 16 July, the formal training serials were complete and we thus took the opportunity to revisit whatever elements of PS31 training the crews wanted.

Now all that remained were the operational assessments. These assessments all took place on Saturday 23 July. The assessment was based on a realistic search and rescue scenario. To make it a little more interesting, the target vessel was unable to work out its latitude and longitude. The only clue the rescue vessel was given was a corrected RDF bearing from the base.

Of course, the one thing the Training Officer couldn't control was the weather! The forecast was for gale force winds from the west-northwest, and a 2-4 metre sea on a 1 metre swell. The conditions were definitely quite tough, but they added to the realism of the exercise.

And the results? Let me just say that we now have 21 boat crew who have been assessed as competent to serve on PS31. A great end to what has seemed a long and winding road.

Richard Pizzuto

(One very tired and relieved) Boats Training Officer)

LETTER FROM SEARGENT TONY HOGG

Unit Commander

Marine Rescue Port Stephens

Dear Colin,

I wish to express my sincere apologies for being unable to attend the decommissioning of the *MV Danial Thain* due to operational requirements. I hope you and your members had a fantastic day.

The *Danial Thain* or *DT* as she is affectionately known, first navigated through the headlands of Port Stephens at approximately 2200hrs on Friday 17 September 1999, concluding a long voyage from Sydney Harbour, where she was met and escorted into Port Stephens by a lone



police launch and crew to her berth.

I believe the *DT* crew were exhausted from the journey, however there was no rest for both as she was commissioned the next day and put into full service.

She has been part of the maritime landscape at Port Stephens from that day to this.

On behalf of the Marine Area Command, I wish to acknowledge the contribution and role, the *Danial Thain*, all her skippers and crews both past and present, have played during her service with Marine Rescue Port Stephens.

Now you may think that when I refer to the *DT* it may sound like I am referring to a person, a friend.

But for those of us who work on such vessels and rely on their strengths and capabilities they do become more than just a boat. They in fact become part of the team.

The *Danial Thain* has been involved in every major search and rescue operation since 1999 off the coast of Port Stephens, of which there have been many, enduring severe weather and sea conditions, but always returning safely back to port.

Obviously, this does not happen by virtue of vessel alone, for without the dedication and professionalism of the

skippers and crews that have manned her during such ordeals, this would not have been possible.

I myself have been rescued by the *DT*, having been towed from sea to Port Stephens after being winched onto a yacht from the Westpac helicopter, about 10 nm off Seal Rocks, to assist the crew who had been overcome by sickness and unable to sail the vessel.

Now as a sailor I make a good policeman. My partner and I were unable to make way and were getting blown further out to sea, as the yacht was somewhat unseaworthy, which is an understatement!!!

So as a result I summoned the assistance of the *DT* and her crew.

Now I can tell you that there was no greater sight or sound than seeing the *DT* coming over the horizon to our aid. I have been forever grateful since, as if it were not for the assistance provided, it would have been a very long day.

I am sure that the *DT* has become more than just a boat for the skippers and crews that have served on her, and I know she will be sorely missed, not only by Marine Rescue Port Stephens, but by the maritime community she has served.

However, all good things come to an end - and just like those of us who are approaching the end of our working life and who become tired and somewhat challenged to keep up with the younger brigade, we must be allowed to retire

with dignity and respect.

The *Danial Thain* has proven its worth over many years of service conducting the many rescues, performances and displays she has been involved in, and it's now her time to retire with the dignity, respect and the admiration that she deserves, as being a rescue vessel that never took a backward step, always led from the front and always returned her crew to safety, she will be sorely missed.

So congratulations to all members of Marine Rescue Port Stephens, both past and present, for the tireless work and dedication you provide not only to the boating fraternity of Port Stephens and beyond, but to myself and my staff at Port Stephens Water Police.

I really do appreciate it. Thank you.

Regards

Sgt Tony Hogg

Coordinator

Port Stephens Sector

Marine Area Command

HAPPENINGS AROUND THE BAY

HELICOPTER EXERCISE 26.7.16

PS31 participated in the first Helicopter exercise with CHC on Tuesday 26 July. All went well with no mishaps and the CHC crew were happy with the new vessel. PS30 acted as wrangler to keep any other vessels away.



VISITORS TO THE BAY



Young Endeavour



Visitor to the radio base



Dekadence (above & below) came into Port Stephens to get help for a crew member with a suspected broken hand.



Notorious at d'Albora



Tsarina La Rague (above & left) anchored at Fly Point on 23 July during heavy winds, decided that safety in the Marina was a better option than ending up on the beach....



REMINDER... If you want to help save the planet by reducing the number of trees being cut down for paper – then you can subscribe to receive the Port Chatter electronically (via the website (www.MarineRescuePortStephens.com.au) in a PDF format by sending your name and email address to port.chatter217@gmail.com. We now have over 262 recipients who have requested this – so come on... you know you want to do it!.

MESS MEETING JUNE & JULY



Left: Lorraine Shaw with the June cheque;
Left: Brian Bibbing - Advanced Resusc.
Below Left: Barney Pinney Coxswain Epaulettes. **Below:** Rob Johnson - Adv. Res. **Below Right:** Col Couper- Meteorology.



Above: Laurie Nolan -Commissioners Commendation for Courage Award; **Left:** Ken Johnson - Advanced Resuscitation; **Right:** Peter Holman-Elementary Navigation; **Below Left:** Neil Fraser -First Aid; **Below:** Steve Murray - Survival at Sea, Fire Fighters Certificates and Membership Epaulettes;



Above: Harold Gibson - First Aid Certificate.

MESS MEETING JUNE & JULY



Above: Shirley Clarke with the July cheque from the Gift Shop.
Top Right Jeremy Weir, Bob Coghlan, Jenny Frost, & Steve Picton - Meteorology Certificate; Right: Rod Reeson, Jeremy Weir & Bob Coghlan - First Aid. Below: Colin Couper & Frank Van Druten - Watchkeeper epaulettes.



Above: John Reid, Steve Picton, Debbie Buckley, Brian Bibbing, Paul Buckley & Bob Coghlan - SARCC Ops Certificate; Left: Peter Dentrinos, Brian Bibbing, Jenny Frost, Lisa Lodding, Steve Harris - MRO epaulettes. Below: Brian Bibbing, John Reid and Bob Coghlan - SARCC Ops. (All photos with Colin Cahill)



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HISTORY

DANIAL THAIN – THE EARLIEST DAYS

The *Danial Thain* first entered active service on 17 July 1978. At that time the vessel was known as *Spirit of Tayside* and was stationed at Broughty Ferry on Scotland's east coast. Broughty Ferry is a fishing village



Spirit of Tayside 52-09

situated in the Tay estuary about four miles east of Dundee town centre. That means four miles closer to the North Sea – the dangerous waters that the vessel was planned to operate in.

The first recorded operation was on 3 September that year when she towed a small motor launch to safety.

Her baptism of fire, however, came that Christmas Eve after the coaster *Fendyke* found herself in difficulties in a force 10 gale. The *Fendyke* was over 63 metres in length – a much larger vessel than those the *Danial Thain* would be called on to assist in her Australian exploits. The captain of the *Fendyke*, Ron Dennis, decided to run for shelter in the Tay estuary and was approaching the bar to the estuary when his ship was struck by a giant wave that sent water cascading down the funnel into her engine room. The electricity supply was shorted out, the steering gear was disabled and water got into her accommodation and flooded cabins. On the bridge, Captain Dennis was thrown first one way, then the other, breaking both his arms and injuring a leg. Some wave!

The *Spirit of Tayside* set off from Broughty Ferry and a Wessex air-sea rescue helicopter was launched from a nearby RAF base. The coaster was rolling through 60 degrees and in 40 foot seas but the helicopter pilot and crew still managed to winch Captain Dennis off his ship. After transferring him to hospital the helicopter returned to lift off the 55 year old wife of the Chief Engineer. Another helicopter (this time a larger Sea King) managed to take off the six remaining crewmen.

At this point the *Spirit of Tayside* was still trying to reach the *Fendyke*, fighting to get through a combination of an

easterly gale and a strong ebb tide. Everything was against her. The following is the story as related by Second Coxswain, Hugh Scott.

“While crossing the bar the lifeboat encountered three or four enormous seas, two of which threw her on her beam ends. The second of these seas caused the engine cut-out to operate. (Does this sound familiar to the crew of the *Danial Thain* on that dreadful night of 6 January this year?) These are designed to come on in about 110 degrees of heel. The same sea washed the searchlight off the port wing of the flying bridge. The engines were restarted once the boat had regained an even keel and we proceeded only to find a much larger sea approaching, whereupon the engines were increased to full power to climb up this sea. On breaking through the top, the boat fell into a hole and landed on her port side.



Broughty Ferry Lifeboat Station

Four of the crew were injured.

Coxswain Jack and myself were on the flying bridge negotiating these enormous, irregular seas and navigating down the channel as there were no navigation buoys lit. When we landed at the bottom of the hole both he and I received injuries, myself with a broken ankle and the coxswain with torn knee ligaments.”

Despite his broken ankle, Hugh Scott took the wheel as the Coxswain limped below to check on his crew. Second Mechanic Willie Findlay had torn ligaments and all had suffered cuts and bruises but of Angus Munro there was no sign. It was immediately assumed that he had been washed over the side and a helicopter was alerted to search for him. Moments later, the *Spirit of Tayside* was again hurled onto her side and the engine cut-outs operated once more, a desperately dangerous situation in such close proximity to sandbanks at the mouth of the estuary. Motor mechanic Willie Pyke took the wheel and, once the engines were restarted for a second time, kept one hand close to the cut-out switches until the lifeboat was out of immediate danger.

(Continued on page 27)

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DANIAL THAIN THE EARLIEST DAYS & LAUNCH OF PM30 - TAREE

(Continued from page 25)

Eventually a shaken Angus Munro emerged from the forward cabin. It transpired that he had just left the vessel's heads (toilet) - after relieving an urgent call of nature – when the Spirit of Tayside was hit by the huge seas. As the boat crashed down onto her port side, he was flung across the cabin and was knocked unconscious. Angus recalls climbing up to the wheelhouse cabin where he found injured crewmen groaning in agony and loose gear rolling about the deck amid puddles of sea water that had jetted in through one of the side windows.



At this point the Fendyke had been driven ashore onto a sandbank and the crew had already been winched off. Coxswain Jack decided that trying to re-enter the Tay estuary over the bar was far too dangerous, so with his battered crew and vessel he set sail south through the storm to Leith, the port town of Edinburgh.

Reaching there safely, her injured crewmen were transferred to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. The rest sat in

thoughtful silence in the aft cabin, each of them clutching a glass of brandy.

The Spirit of Tayside's storm damage was repaired and Acting Coxswain Bill Ireland took the lifeboat out of Leith on 2 January 1979 to return to Broughty Ferry. The lifeboat was just about to clear the pier heads when the harbourmaster yelled across that a fishing boat was in trouble. The lifeboat was directed to a position 11 miles south east of the Isle of May where they found the stricken vessel suffering from a serious leak. With the help of a portable pump provide by the lifeboat, the fishing boat was escorted back to her home port.

Spirit of Tayside resumed her passage home and Acting Coxswain Ireland was turning into

the Tay and heading for the final leg home when he heard that a pilot cutter had suffered engine failure. The lifeboat rounded off what had been an eventful festive season by taking the cutter in tow to the Broughty Ferry fish dock.

Ed.

*** With grateful thanks to Andrew Jeffrey who authored 'Standing Into Danger – 200 years of Lifeboat Service in the River Tay and St Andrews Bay'.*

LAUNCHING OF PM30 - TAREE

On 21 July 2016 Steber International launched the new sister of PS31, for Port Macquarie unit PM30. This vessel has only a few minor differences to our PS31. She will be fitted out starting next week, with the dedication of the vessel due in Port Macquarie in late August.

Ken Johnson, Tony O'Donnell and Robert Johnson represented MRPS at the launch along with members from other bases including Forster.

Another great day for Marine Rescue NSW and Steber International.

Tony O'Donnell



Robert Johnson, Ken Johnson, Tony O'Donnell & UC from Port Macquarie Neil Yates





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RECIPROCITY & JULY STORMS

IT'S CALLED RECIPROCITY

As a volunteer organisation registered as a charity we know only too well how much we rely on those who provide us with support. Without it we do not exist. I hope that where possible we also support those people and organisations that advertise in Port Chatter. It's known as reciprocity.

One aspect of reciprocity I would draw your attention to is in relation to the radio station that we flick on at home or in the car – or have at the top of our pre-set stations.

As you know we send our boating conditions sheet to Port Stephens FM (PSFM) three times each day. This ensures that virtually every hour, just after the news, we get a free radio 'plug'. And if you listen to PSFM you will realise that many of the presenters are very fulsome in their recognition of Marine Rescue Port Stephens. They encourage the public to contact us by phone for further, updated conditions and forecasts and some even remind listeners to log on if they are taking the boat out.

In addition we are a station sponsor, so we have the

occasional 'paid for' advertisement and we also get mentioned from time to time in the station's community announcements. We do rather well out of our relationship with PSFM.

Like us, PSFM is a volunteer organisation. It faces the same challenges we do. They have to generate their own revenue to keep the lights on and all of their staff and presenters are volunteers. Sound familiar?

So, if you fancy flicking on the radio to listen to national news at the top of the hour followed by programs that are heavy on easy listening popular music and light on presenters who like the sound of their own voice then, given a choice, why not put 100.9 in your list of pre-set stations.

It's called reciprocity – and actually it is a very good radio station.



Two vessels broke their moorings during heavy weather on June 4th ending up on Shoal Bay beach. The salvage a few days later was a mammoth undertaking.



Another vessel (left) ended up on shore at Wanda Beach during the same bad weather.

EDUCATION & TRAINING AND GIFT SHOP

UNIT TRAINING OFFICER

LROCP

The next course will be held on 8 August with David Rogers as the trainer. All new members wishing to become Marine Radio Operators must undertake this course. The list for registration is on the notice board.

First Aid and Basic CPR plus Advanced CPR for Crew

The next courses are scheduled for 20 (First Aid and Basic CPR) and 21 August (Advanced CPR and Resuscitation). Peter Dentrinos will be facilitating these courses. All active members must undertake First Aid and Basic CPR every 3 years. Marine Rescue Crew need to update Advanced CPR and Resuscitation annually. The lists for registration are on the notice board.

SARCC OPS

The next course will commence on 5 September with Neil

Fraser facilitating. The list for registration is on the notice board

Meteorology

This course will be held on a Saturday in October with John James presenting. Please check the notice board during late August for exact date and time.

Watch Officers and Marine Radio Operators Assessments.

With a lot of help from the Assessors and other members of the Education team we have been able to assess six members through to become Marine Radio Operators and seven to Watch Officer rank. We have also an extra five rostered trainees assisting with shifts who are currently training to become MRO's.

Thank you to all the members that gave assistance, you know who you are.

Eileen Kelly

UPCOMING TRAINING COURSES

Course	Trainer	Dates	Hours
LROCP	DR	Monday 8 August (8 sessions)	1900 – 2100
WH&S / Orientation	TBA	Thursday 17 August (1 session)	1830 – 2130
First Aid & Basic CPR Advanced CPR & Resuscitation Crew Only	PD	Saturday 20 August Sunday 21 August	0800 – 1600 0800 – 1200
SARCC OPS (It is necessary for trainees to have completed at least 3 shifts before taking this course.)	NF	Monday 5 September (8 sessions)	1900 – 2100
WH&S & Orientation	TBA	Thursday 15 September (1 session) (to be confirmed)	1830 – 2130
Elementary Navigation (It is necessary for trainees to have completed at least 3 shifts before taking this course.)	RP/RL	Mondays and Fridays for 4 weeks starting Friday 7 October (see notice board for dates)	1600 - 1800 1900 – 2100
Meteorology	JJ	To be advised on a Saturday in October – check the noticeboard for the date.	0900 to 1300
Fire Fighting (Crew only)	MM	Saturday 15 October	To be advised
Sea Survival (Crew only)	MM	Saturday 22 October at the Tomaree Pool	To be advised
WH&S & Orientation	TBA	Thursday 20 October	1830 – 2130



Even though we had a lot of school holiday visitors, the gift shop has quietened

down as the winter months have arrived.

At this time of year, the tourists head North to the warmth or South to the Snow.

The ladies from the Probus Club at Raymond Terrace

have been hard at work, knitting, crocheting and sewing donations for our shop. We thank them for all their beautiful work.

The shop will be closed on the 25th, 26th and 27th of July for a small renovation and painting.

I would like to thank all our lovely ladies for the time and support they give to Marine Rescue.

I wish everyone good health and happiness.

Sandra Scheuber

DECOMMISSIONING OF PS40 *DANIAL THAIN*



Clockwise from top left: Danial Thain & Codi K sailing to Soldiers Point; Crew on board; John & Yvonne Almgren receiving presentation from Jenny Fitzsimons & Colin Cahill; the three rescue vessels on their way to Soldiers Point; Lloyd Cropper handing Colin Cahill the flags and Shirley Clark cutting the dedication cake with the Almgrens.



BOATS MANAGER & ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

BOATS MANAGER

There has been no rest for the maintenance crew since the commissioning of PS31 *John Thompson*. As well as developing a new maintenance schedule for the JT the crew has been hard at work on the other two boats.

PS40 *Danial Thain* was still giving overheating problems after Bill Haskell had thought he had solved the problem by freeing up the inlet gate valve. Alas it was not to be, so with more sweat from working in a confined space, Bill and Eryl

Thomas found what they feel is the final problem, a build-up of crud in the area where the heated water from the heat-interchanger enters the exhaust exit.

This section of the exhaust has been removed and sent away for cleaning (See photo of the working area). It should

be reinstalled and PS40 brought back to operational status just in time for her to be decommissioned on 30 July 2016.

PS30 *Codi Kii* was taken off-line in the short time DT was thought to be operational and repowered with two new Suzuki 200 HP engines. The work was carried out by



Bay Boat Sales in just over a week. Some additional work was also carried out while the boat was out of the water. Many thanks to **Marine Rescue Lemon Tree Passage** for the use of their boat trailer to allow all this to happen.

PS31 is finally operational after a thorough training programme drawn up by our training officer Richard Pizzuto and has carried out one 'assist' since then. It was to help WP24 in a search in foul weather after a flare was sighted over the bay late one night. Fortunately nothing was found and there were no reports of missing boats the next day.

There was an Operational Readiness Inspection of our Rescue Craft PS30 and PS31 on Thursday 28 July and our first training session using PS31 with the CHC rescue helicopter flight from RAAF

Williamtown took place on Tuesday 26 July.

Ken Johnson

ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

Uniform Trial - Work Blues

Feedback on the 100% cotton long-sleeve shirts, long pants and new peak cap which were trialled by UCs and DUCs over the summer period will see MRNSW introduce this new material in any future stock order.

Key points of note:

- Shirts (long and short sleeve) – new 100% cotton fabric, addition of ventilation slots, Velcro chest pockets, everything else as per current style.
- Long Pants / Shorts – new 100% cotton fabric, everything else as per current style.
- There will be no change to uniform colour. Existing royal blue will remain.

- The new 100% cotton uniform will start being introduced from November 2016.

It is possible that some uniform items may be in short supply over the next few months as stock is reduced. Please be patient with our Supply Officer.

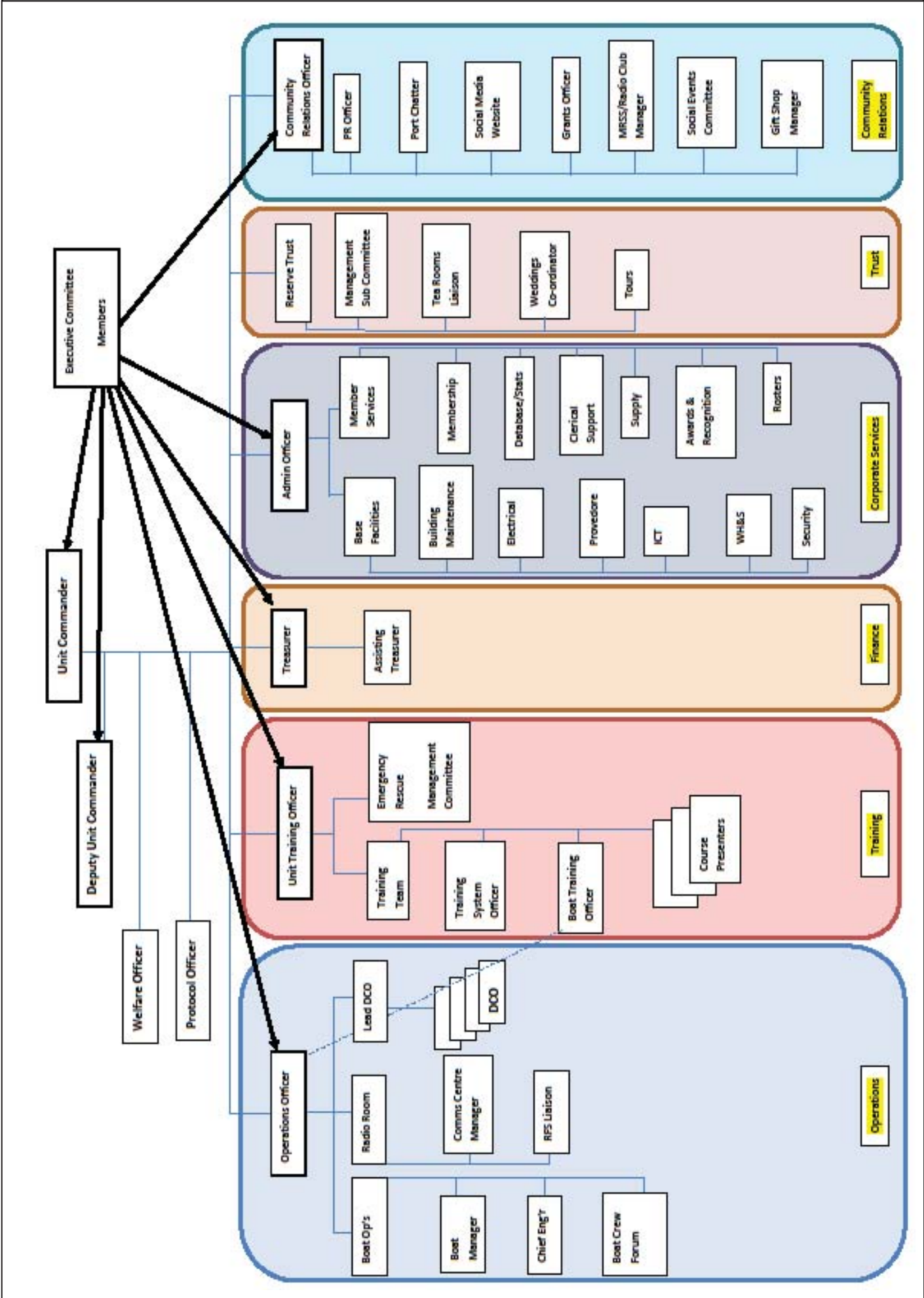
MRNSW Extraordinary General Meeting

A reminder that if you wish to vote your ballot should be posted by 10 August to meet the 17 August deadline.

Remember, this is your opportunity to have your say on the future direction of Marine Rescue NSW.

Iain Blackadder

ORGANIZATION CHART



SOCIAL COMMITTEE

SOCIAL EVENTS CALENDAR – 2016

Regrettably the Dinner planned for 22 June was cancelled, due to a clash with the PS31 Dedication Ceremony. However..... there are still a number of functions/events still planned for the rest of 2016.

WEDNESDAY 31 AUGUST - TRIVIA NIGHT

The first one last year was an instant success. Building on this success, you will definitely NOT want to miss out on this exciting social event, being organised by Frank and Deb van Druten.

Wednesday 31 August, 6pm – 10pm
Nelson Bay Senior Citizens Hall
6 Norburn Ave, Nelson Bay

We encourage you to arrange teams/tables of 6-8 people, from both within AND outside Marine Rescue members. The more the merrier. There will be a number of rounds of trivia questions (interspersed with some other fun activities), so it would be wise for you to choose team members who are either a) smart, or b) just plain good fun to be with.

Prizes will be awarded both for the Trivia Quiz itself, and various other activities. As the Senior Citizens Hall is a little sparse in décor, we encourage you to dress up your table and/or your team members in the hope that you may win the 'Best Table' prize.

Coffee and Tea making facilities will be provided, but you may wish to bring along your own nibbles (remember we are starting at 6pm) and it is definitely BYOG.

We look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible. If you are planning to attend, please put your name (and team numbers) on the attendance list pinned to the notice board in the Radio Room Kitchen.

SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER - CAR OBSERVATION RUN

Again, this was very successful last year, and the participants definitely want another opportunity to demonstrate their navigational and observational skills. For those who do not know what a Car Observation Run is..... Get together with your favourite driver/navigator (teams of two minimum – no individual heroics here!!!). You are given a set of directions for the route to follow, and a list of questions that you need to answer along the way. The directions do not include any street/road names.... just turn instructions at certain distances. The questions are designed to challenge your powers of observation, while not requiring too much distraction from safe driving skills. It is not a time trial, so there is no need for anyone to break any traffic rules. Points are awarded for the number of correctly answered questions, and the top scoring team wins the 'prize'.

There are two stages, with morning tea after Stage 1, and we finish after Stage 2 at a park for lunch. BYO BBQ/ Picnic/Drinks. There will be Council BBQs available for those wishing to cook their lunch. An alternative finish at a local Pub/Club etc will be planned if the weather is not so good.

TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER – XMAS DINNER

Instead of the regular Monthly Communication Meeting, we will be heading off to a local restaurant for Xmas dinner. Details TBA at a later date.

**Laurie Nolan &
Frank van Druten**



MRPS Social Committee

Month	Date	Event	Comments
AUGUST	Wednesday 31	Trivia Night	- At Senior Citizens Hall, Norburn Ave Nelson Bay - No upfront cost - Make a table, bring some friends
OCTOBER	Sunday 16	Car Observation Run	- Great fun, good time had by all in 2015 - Approx. distance to be covered 95km - Finish at a park (BYO BBQ/Picnic/drinks) - Alternate finish at pub/club/café if raining.
DECEMBER	Tuesday 13	Christmas Dinner	- Ever Popular Xmas Festivities - Local Restaurant to be announced.



Year 2016 Public School Holidays		
Spring Holidays	24-Sep-16	9-Oct-16
Summer Holidays	21-Dec-15	29-Jan-17



BIRDS AROUND THE BASE

Birds at the Base - Noisy Miner (*Manorina melanocephala*)

The Noisy Miner is a bold and curious bird belonging to the honeyeater family that is regularly seen foraging through the trees surrounding the Nelson Head base.



The bird is 24–28 cm in length with a wingspan of 36–45 cm. Male, female and juvenile birds all have similar plumage. They are grey on the back and tail and on the breast, and white underneath, with white scalloping on the nape and hind-neck and on the breast. They have an off-white forehead and lores and a black band over the crown. The bill is bright orange-yellow and there is a distinctive patch of yellow skin behind the eye. The tail has a prominent white tip and a narrow olive-yellow panel is present in the folded wing. Feet and legs are an orange-yellow.

The Noisy Miner is found from Far North Queensland through New South Wales and Victoria to Tasmania and into eastern South Australia. It inhabits dry, open eucalypt forests that lack understory shrubs, and degraded woodland where the understory has been cleared. The density of noisy miner populations has significantly increased in many locations across its range where it has benefitted from landscaping practices that create open areas dominated by eucalypts.

The miners forage in the canopy of trees, on trunks and branches and on the ground where they find nectar, fruit and insects. Considerable time is spent gleaning the foliage of eucalypts gathering manna, honeydew and lerp.

Noisy Miners are colonial birds and live within a complex social structure. They are gregarious and territorial and forage, bathe, roost, breed and defend territory communally. Colonies can contain several hundred birds. Each male bird has an 'activity space' and male birds with overlapping activity spaces form associations called 'coterie's of 20-25 birds, the most stable units within the colony. The birds also form temporary flocks called 'coalitions' of up to 40 birds for mobbing intruders and predators such as other birds, snakes and goannas.

Group cohesion is facilitated by vocalizations and through ritualised flight displays, postural displays, and facial displays. It is an aggressive bird, and chasing, pecking, fighting, scolding, and mobbing occur throughout the day, targeted at both intruders and other colony members.

The aggressive behaviour of Noisy Miners results in smaller and less aggressive birds being absent from their territories and only larger more aggressive birds remain. The Noisy Miner is often confused with the Common Myna which is an introduced avian pest.

It has a large and varied repertoire of songs, calls, scoldings and alarms. These include predator alarm calls and calls to initiate mobbing behaviour, contact and social facilitation calls, territorial calls and juvenile begging calls. The Noisy Miner also produces non-vocal sounds by clicking or snapping



its bill, usually during aggressive encounters with other bird species or when mobbing a predator.

The Noisy Miner does not use a stereotypical courtship display, but instead copulation is a

frenzied communal event. It breeds all year long. The female builds the nest which is deep and cup-shaped, woven of twigs, grasses and other plant material, animal hair and spider webs. It lays 2-4 eggs and incubation by the female takes around 16 days. Up to 20 male helpers take care of the nestlings and fledglings. Young birds fledge after around 16 days, and begin to find food for themselves 26-30 days after fledging, but are still regularly fed by adults up to 35 days. Noisy miners have a range of strategies to increase their breeding success including producing multiple broods, family helpers and group mobbing of predators.

As Noisy Miner numbers and their territories have increased and other small birds have been forced out, there is much debate as to whether it has become a pest that should be controlled. However, by restoring understory in cleared areas of eucalypt forest, numbers can be naturally controlled and a more balanced ecosystem can be re-established. For more information see the web site below.

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ecology-environment-and-evolution/dept-of-zoology-documents/Final-low-res-LR-LatrobeUni-Birds-Broch.pdf>

**Neil Fraser
Twitcher**

PORT STEPHENS WEATHER

Nelson Bay, NSW - June 2016					Nelson Bay, NSW - July 2016				
Date	Day	Temps		Rain	Date	Day	Temps		Rain
		Min	Max				Min	Max	
		°C	°C	mm			°C	°C	mm
11	Sa	11.5	17	0	1	Fr	9.5	15.9	0
12	Su	11.7	16.6	1.8	2	Sa	9	16	0
13	Mo	11	18.8	2	3	Su	9	16.8	0
14	Tu	11.6	20	0.2	4	Mo	8.5	16.6	0
15	We	11.6	20.2	0.2	5	Tu	9.8	18.1	0.6
16	Th	11.8	20.3	0.1	6	We	10.2	16.3	0.1
17	Fr	12	20.7	0.1	7	Th	11.7	18.2	8.3
18	Sa	14.3	18.4	0.2	8	Fr	12.6	14.9	38.8
19	Su	14.4	19.4	4.2	9	Sa	11.2	17	13.9
20	Mo	15.5	19.7	16.4	10	Su	10.7	18.5	0.4
21	Tu	14.4	17.6	0	11	Mo	11.5	20	0
22	We	13.9	21.2	0	12	Tu	14.5	21.2	0
23	Th	10.3	18.5	0	13	We	11.3	14.9	0
24	Fr	11.6	19.3	0	14	Th	6.7	15.5	0
25	Sa	8.1	13.1	0	15	Fr	6.1	15.2	0
26	Su	6.6	18.8	0	16	Sa	6.8	16.1	0.2
27	Mo	7.2	13	0.2	17	Su	10.9	17.5	2.6
28	Tu	8.2	16.4	0.5	18	Mo	11.5	22.2	1
29	We	7.6	17	0	19	Tu	12.1	22.5	0.1
30	Th	8	16.8	0	20	We	16.2	19	11.1
Statistics for June 2016					Statistics for the first 21 days of July 2016				
Mean		11.8	18.7		Mean		10.6	17.9	
Lowest		6.6	13	0	Lowest		6.1	14.4	0
Highest		15.5	22.3	134.8	Highest		16.2	24.5	38.8
Total				246.6	Total				77.1

Happy Birthday

Congratulations
To the following members of the
PORT STEPHENS UNIT
with birthdays in August and September

August

Ray CALVERT
Deidre CALVERT
John P SMITH
Loris WEBSTER
Keith COLLIN
John EVANS
Christine RYNNE
Tim BOYLE
Joe KOLOSSA
Brett CHERRY
Emmanuel PAPAGEORGIOU
Richard PIZZUTO
Jeremy WEIR

September

Bruce SHADE
John REID
Peter BLISS
Dieter GREITER
David BACON
Emery KERTESZ
Angus STUART
Brian BIBBING
Ian PEACOCK
Dave WILLIAMS
Peter MILLER
Gerard WOOLDRIDGE

Anniversaries of Service

Congratulations and thanks to all the above
members who have given their time and service
as volunteers so willingly.
Our existence depends on it.

AUGUST

Peter SHEVLIN
Ron LIGHTON 15
John COOK 13
Elizabeth FRANCIS 13
Angela TILLING 9
Mike GROVER 8
Merril LAND 7
Robert STEWART 4

SEPTEMBER

Peter SHEVLIN 34
Lloyd CROPPER 25
Noel CORCORAN 14
Trevor DOWSETT 14
Mike PIERPOINT 14
Steve WASSON 13
Ken JOHNSON 12
David ROGERS 12
Steve ALTA 11
Richard PIZZUTO 7
Barry TIMMINS 6
Tony O'DONNELL 5
Erica SMITH 5
John P SMITH 5
Tony DAWSON 5
Carol BASTICK 4
Keith COLLIN 1

IN APPRECIATION....

Contributors to this issue of *Port Chatter*:

Iain Blackadder, Colin Cahill, Ross Debenham, Colin Foote, Neil Fraser, Harold Gibson, Neil Hansford, Ken Johnson, Eileen Kelly, Laurie Nolan, Sandra Scheuber, Lee Uebergang and Maureen Wheatley. Other photos by Stephen Alta, Iain Blackadder, Geoff Clark, Ross Debenham, Neil Fraser, Tony O'Donnell, Penelope Highland. 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.

Advertisers in *Port Chatter*: The following advertisers with paid advertisements in the *Port Chatter* help to meet most of the costs of production.

Please show your appreciation by giving them your custom.

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	Printer Cartridges	The Cartridge Family
	Outdoor Furniture	Outdoor Obsessions
Medical	Chemists	Salamander Centre Pharmacy
		Shoal Bay Pharmacy
		Chemmart Pharmacy, Nelson Bay
	Doctors	Port Stephens Medical Centre, Keel St
Maritime	Marina	D'Albora Marina and businesses
		Soldiers Point Marina
	Boating Sales & Repairs	Nelson Bay Outboard Services
	Charters	Kunara Charters
	Fishing Supplies	Salamander Bait & Tackle (at BP)
Motor Vehicles	Service Stations/Tyres	Fingal Bay Service Station and Tyres
Windscreen Repairs		Novus Autoglass Shop
Real Estate		Robinsons Property
		Century 21 Paradise Waters, Nelson Bay
Restaurants & Cafes		Rock Lobster Seafood – D'Albora Marinas
		Inner Light Tea Rooms, Nelson Head



NEXT MESS MEETINGS

TUESDAY August 16, 2016 1830 hrs
TUESDAY September 13, 2016 1830 hrs

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.



“have you visited d’Albora Marinas Nelson Bay recently?....
IT IS SO MUCH MORE THAN A PLACE TO MOOR”

Aquablu Bistro & Bar	02 4984 9999	Nelson Bay Marine	02 4984 9777
Blue Bay Collections	02 4984 4763	Noakes Boatyard	02 4984 4150
Boat Hire and Cruise Bookings	02 4984 3843	Nelson Bay Nice Kitchen	02 4981 5883
Broughtons at the Bay	02 4981 0865	Pacific Water Colours	02 4984 1922
Cafe & Convenience on the Bay	02 4981 0921	Pizazz Boutique	02 4984 4177
Corner Secrets	02 4981 1160	Popeyes Laundromat	02 4984 1333
Hogs Breath Cafe	02 4984 2842	Rock Lobster Restaurant	02 4981 1813
R Marine Port Stephens	02 4984 2355	Sandbar Seafood	02 4984 3777
Lets Go Adventures	02 4981 4331	Subway	02 4984 4277
Marina Ice Creamery	02 4984 1788	The Wood Oven Pizza	02 4984 4800
Mavericks on the Bay	02 4984 1203		