

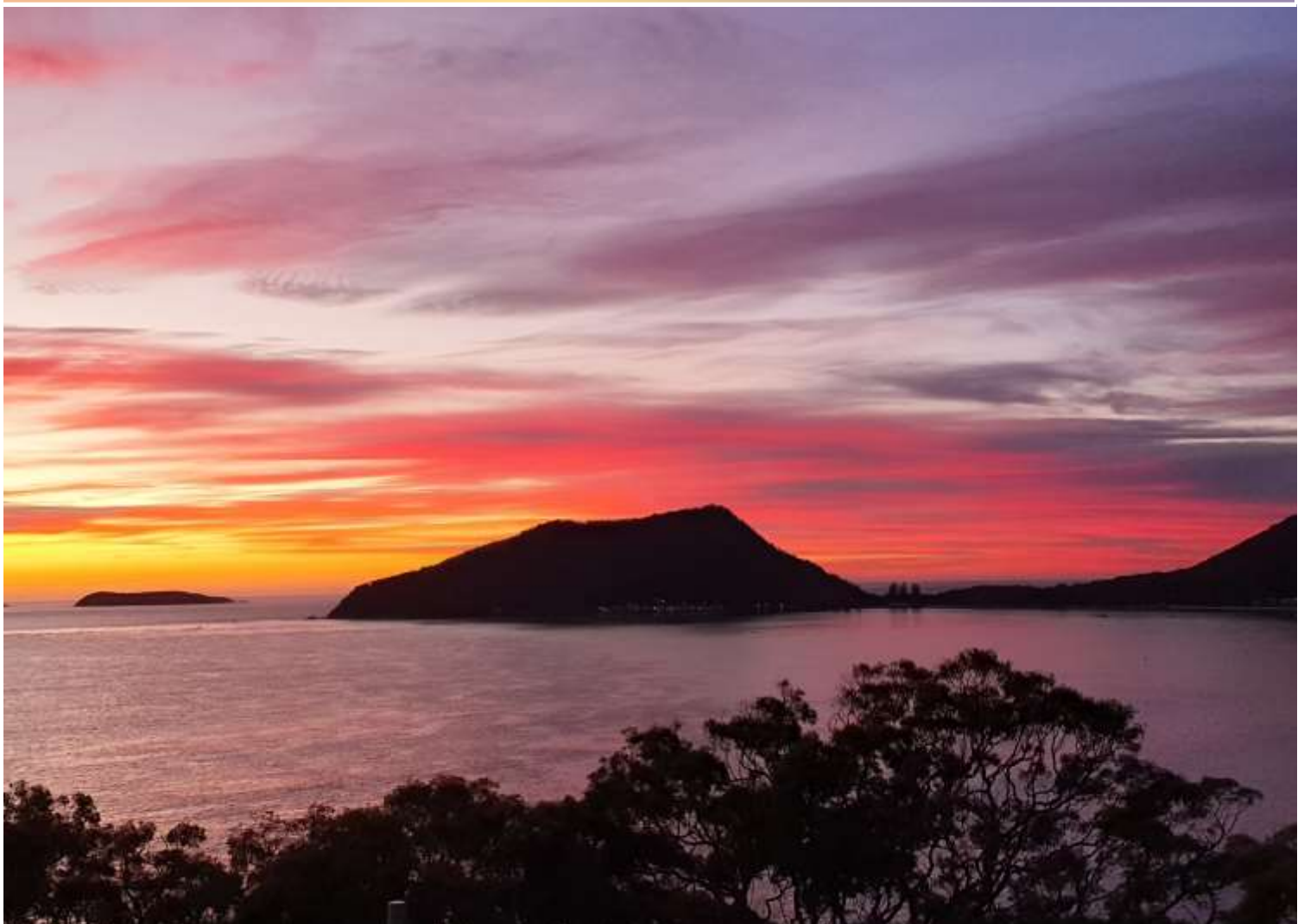
PORT CHATTER



WINTER 2020
JUNE

MARINE RESCUE NSW PORT STEPHENS UNIT

'Volunteers Saving Lives on the Water'





MARINE RESCUE NSW – PORT STEPHENS UNIT

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

Location: Nelson Head, Nelson Bay, NSW

Email: base.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au

Phone: (02) 4981 3585

Fax: (02) 4984 1944

VOLUNTEERS SAVING LIVES ON THE WATER

UNIT APPOINTMENTS FROM 17 JUNE 2020

Patrons: Kate Washington MP, State Member Port Stephens Meryl Swanson MP, Federal Member Paterson Stephen Bromhead LLM MP, State Member Myall Lakes The Hon. Dr David Gillespie MP, Federal Member Lyne		Awards and Recognition Technical Services Lee Ryman Brian Richardson Robert Johnson Dieter Greiter Harold Gibson
Unit Commander Ben Van der Wijngaard Deputy Unit Commander Colin Couper Gift Shop Manager Sandra Scheuber Events Coordinator Dee Gilliland Social Committee: Lisa Lodding, Heather Perry-Comley		Protocol Officer Corporate Services Administration Officer Assistant Jenni Fryer Krystyna Winslow Clerical Assistance Erica Smith Security Officer John Smith WH&S Officer Angus MacKenzie Providedore Jenny Fitzsimmons and Deb Buckley Comms Centre Service Julia Lynch Data / Stats Maureen Wheatley Supply Margaret & Andrew Morrison Membership Loris Webster & Erica Smith Building/Maintenance Trevor Brighton & Steve Harris Historian Paul Farnhill Electricians Doug Craike & Dieter Greiter
Operations Operations Officer Richard Pizzuto Assistant Operations Officer Vacant BOM Contact Trevor Moxham Duty Callout Officers Neil Fraser, Angus MacKenzie, Frank Van Drueten Communications Centre Manager Laurie Nolan Radio Club Manager Elizabeth Francis Ashes Scattering Coordinator Harold Gibson Rescue Vessels Manager Barney Pinney Assistant Manager Vacant Chief Engineer Bill Haskell R.F.S. Liaison Lower Hunter Ross Debenham Hunter Valley Colin Couper Coxswains Sue Freeman Robert Johnson Barney Pinney Laurie Nolan Brian Bibbing		Trust Management Sub-Committee Chairman John Reid Deputy Chairman Vacant Treasurer Adrian Hill Secretary Ross Debenham Committee Jenny Fitzsimons Harold Gibson Port Stephens Historical Society Dennis Corr Wedding Events Co-ordinator: Jenni Fryer Assistant Greg Walsh Tours Kevin Griffey
Finance Treasurer Adrian Hill Grants Officer John Reid		The <i>Port Chatter</i> is the quarterly publication of Marine Rescue NSW, Port Stephens unit. It is available 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 editor.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au Contributions are subject to review by the Executive Committee prior to publishing. Advertising enquiries are welcomed. Contact the editor at editor.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au for more information. 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 Photograph - Stephen Alta
Community Relations Community Relations Officer Will Scott Public Relations/Social Media Will Scott Editor Port Chatter Penelope Highland Asst Editor Port Chatter Geoff Williams Fund Raising Officer Peter Young Webmaster		
Unit Training Unit Training Officer Gary Williams Training Systems Officer Angela O'Dea Training Systems Officer Jan Sami Rescue Vessels Training Officer Brian Bibbing Course Presenters: Paul Buckley, Colin Couper Peter Dentrinos, Neil Fraser, Trevor Moxham, Barney Pinney Provisional Member Support Colin Cahill, Angela Tilling, Krystyna Winslow		
Welfare / Liaison Assistant Harold Gibson Jenny Fitzsimons		
Emergency Services Liaison Colin Cahill		

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 and Hunter Valley districts
- 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 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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UNIT COMMANDER'S REPORT

UNIT COMMANDER

How quickly two years goes by.

It seems such a short time ago that I was privileged to be able to takeover this amazing Unit and work alongside 200 incredible members. A list of achievements is not what the role of the outgoing UC is all about, it is recognising that nothing happens at Marine Rescue Port Stephens without the enthusiasm and commitment of



Ben Van Der Wijngaart
Incoming Unit Commander

every one of our Members.

It is interesting when you examine the demographics of our members and come to understand the wide range of skills that our people bring to the Unit. Utilising those skills and supporting people to achieve their own personal level of achievement is the major satisfaction that comes from being involved over the last two years. This team have seen us keep two Rescue Vessels on the water and the Comms Centre open 24/7, 365 days of the year. All with Volunteers and yes certainly with a fair degree of personal sacrifice to make it happen.

As we have said previously it takes around \$150,000 a year to fund our operations and we are extremely fortunate to have Community support and a successful Gift Shop run by our Members. With the current restrictions though, the Gift Shop has been closed for four months and external fundraising such as BBQ's and Raffles have been suspended, so this has had a significant impact on our income.

COVID-19 has also impacted on our operational activities

as detailed further in this issue. With all non-essential Operational activities suspended it has impacted on our Trainees being stood down and a suspension of new Member information nights. Fortunately we are now in a position to reintroduce limited Training and we look forward to being able to welcome new Members soon.

Although our operational activities have been limited the Grounds maintenance team have been continuing with their essential maintenance to ensure that the Grounds of Nelson Head Lighthouse Trust will be in their normal beautiful condition when the public return.

And so to the future, the incoming Unit Commander, Ben Van Der Wijngaart and Deputy Unit Commander, Col Couper take over in mid June. Both are current members of the Executive so this should provide a seamless transition for the Unit. I am confident that Ben and Col will continue the great traditions of



Col Couper Deputy
Incoming Unit Commander

Marine Rescue Port Stephens and the 38 year history of our Unit.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Base as Judy and I continue to be active Members.

My best wishes to all of our members and supporters. You make Port Stephens a safer place for all those who use our magnificent waterways.

Colin Foote
Unit Commander

PORT CHATTER EDITORIAL

Marine Rescue Port Stephens is an "all volunteer" organisation built out of community support.

Ordinarily we focus on the boating public but in these difficult times we are mindful of our supporters in the community.

Port Chatter is partly funded by advertisements from local

businesses. Many of those businesses are going through hard times right now.

In the spirit that has made our local community strong The Editors and Command of Marine Rescue Port Stephens have determined that existing advertisers may have a free run for the next two editions of Port Chatter.



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OPERATIONS

OPERATIONS OFFICER

The Operations Group encompasses the Comms Centre, Rescue Vessel and Callout Officer functions.

As we look back on the year thus far, who could have envisaged the turmoil and suffering brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic? It has cast a heavy shadow over our daily lives since it first entered our consciousness in February, and now impacts almost every aspect of society. It will I'm sure claim its place as one of, if not the most, defining events for humanity since World War II.

And yet, in spite of necessarily draconian restrictions to tackle the spread of the virus, private and public enterprises alike have shown remarkable resilience and flair in adapting their businesses to the new paradigm.

Guided by policy statements from the MRNSW Commissioner, Marine Rescue Port Stephens (MRPS) too has changed its operating procedures to minimise the risk to its personnel, the people it serves and visitors.

On the operations front, the Unit's radio room is now off-limits to all but duty personnel, and the number of duty personnel has been reduced to the absolute minimum required to support core operations functions. In addition, stringent hygiene protocols have also been introduced for those on duty.

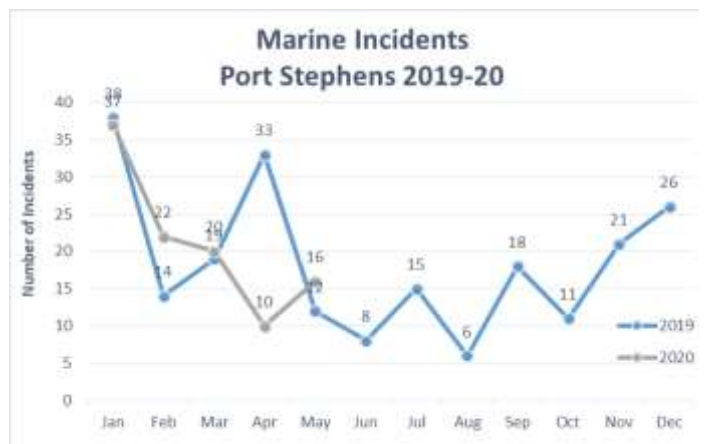
The closure by Port Stephens Council of its boat ramps on 27 Mar 2020 to all but essential users and strong messaging for people to forego travel and stay home had the desired effect. A huge drop in visitor numbers combined with the closure of ramps had a major impact on marine traffic and by extension on the number of marine incidents. The chart makes this point quite dramatically. April is typically our second busiest month of the year owing to an influx of holidaymakers enjoying the Easter Break and/or School holidays. This year however, the number of incidents we dealt with was less than a third compared to the previous year. Interestingly, the council reopened its boat ramps on 27 Apr 2020 to local residents only, and since then, we have seen a reasonably sharp increase in incidents.

If we look at the make-up of incidents also, there's one other thing that stands out. The restrictions and ramp closures clearly kept the vast majority of trailer boat fisherman off the water, but the Government restrictions did permit the use of paddle craft, kite boards etc as a form of exercise. I don't have data on whether the paddlers we subsequently dealt with were new to the sport or not, but kayakers, canoeists and stand-up paddle boarders are clearly overrepresented (compared to historical data) in our incident statistics for the past few months, at something approaching a third of all incidents!

Bureau of Meteorology Weather Station

One of the more unusual roles we perform at the Comms Centre (normally) is to take regular weather observations for the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM). The BOM has a comprehensive network of weather observation stations throughout Australia, its offshore islands and the

Antarctic. These stations vary in type, and include stations staffed by the BOM, automatic weather stations (AWS), meteorological satellites, drifting ocean buoys, ships and aircraft that collect weather data, and more than 400 'manual observation' stations staffed by non-BOM personnel who record weather data at fixed times and report it to the BOM. MRPS personnel perform this last type of role, normally recording a swag of temperature, wind, rain, pressure and other data twice a day, at 9am and 3pm. Our official BOM station ID is 601054, and the station, sited at latitude 32.71 degrees south, longitude 152.16 degrees east and at a height of 25.0 metres is named Nelson Bay (Nelson Head).



You can usually view the observations made by MRPS watch keepers and radio operators on the BOM website, but if you look today, you won't find any data for the months of April and May 2020. The reason is simple. Part of our response to the COVID-19 crisis was to reduce our duty personnel to the absolute minimum. With the massive reduction in boat traffic at the same time, we quickly determined that we only needed one person on shift to monitor the marine channels etc. This person did, however, have to stand by the radios (figuratively speaking) at all times. Normally, with two people on a shift, one would go and do the weather observations whilst the other monitored the radios. With one person on shift only, something had to give and that give was BOM observations and the raising and lowering of flags. We look forward to resuming this valuable and interesting service once things 'return to normal'.

In the meantime, let me entertain you with some facts deduced from data spanning the years 1881 to the present day. It largely confirms what many of us think about the winter weather, but it does contain a few surprises. I'll start by listing a few generally accepted assumptions about winter; it is cold, wet, and miserable! Now the statistics support the first two, but not necessarily the third. Let's see.

The lowest daily *maximum* temperature on record for Nelson Bay is a rather cool 10 degrees on 8 July 1971. The lowest *minimum* temperature on record was a very

(Continued on page 9)



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OPERATIONS

(Continued from page 7)

sprightly 1.1 degrees, on 10 Aug 1971; obviously a cold year that one. Now both days fall within winter, so we're on the way to proving that winter is cold. To seal the deal however, July is the coldest month on record, with both the lowest mean monthly maximum and minimum temperatures, at 17.6 and 9.1 degrees respectively.

What this means in plain language is that, over the course of almost 120 years of record keeping, July days are, on average, colder than in any other month. To strengthen the case even further, June is the second coldest month and August the third coldest. First assumption proved. Winter is cold.

Assumption No 2 then was that winter is wet. Well, the wettest month on average is June, at 159mm of rain. But May – an autumn month – sneaks in at second. If we add the total monthly rainfall averages for the months of winter – June, July and August – we get 399.2 mm of rainfall; autumn (March, April and May) comes in at 396.6mm. It's official then. Winter is the wettest season (on average). Second assumption proved.

And then we get to the more subjective criterion – misery, or miserability (yes, I did just make up a word!). To my mind, nothing cheers the soul more than sunshine; by interpolation then, a lack of sunshine must surely lead to misery. Clear days equal sunshine. Cloudy days don't. And the statistics: July and August have the highest number of clear days, and the lowest number of cloudy days. Conclusion: despite being cold and wet, winter is also filled with more sunshine than any other season and therefore cannot be miserable...

Operations

My last report in the autumn edition of the Port Chatter covered our operations through to the end of January. Since then, we've managed 68 marine incidents (to 24 May 2020), and our rescue vessels (RVs) have been called upon to assist on 38 occasions.

One such occasion was in early March – Saturday 7 to



Company during a tow to Lemon Tree Passage.

be precise. Both rescue vessels were conducting routine training together in the Karuah River when a call came through regarding a 15m flybridge cruiser in need of a tow

and located outside the heads, just north of Boondelbah Island. PS31 – our 38 ft Steber – was tasked to assist and, after a quick crew shuffle between the two rescue vessels, she departed. She arrived on scene some 30 minutes later, having hit some unexpectedly rough water in the 'washing machine'. The distressed vessel (DV) was located in the lee of the island and this afforded some protection to both vessels, but it was by no means an easy job to set a tow in what was still a sizeable swell. A tow was eventually set after 30 minutes and PS31 then began her cautious approach to the lead light. The swell at this time was still up around 3-4 metres but it was running on the north side with a longer period. The DV was out of the Anchorage, and it took PS31 90 minutes to tow them back to there from the point where their engine had given up. We rafted the vessel on our starboard side as we approached the Anchorage Marina, in preparation for manoeuvring him inside the marina and alongside the fuel wharf. A small crowd had even gathered on the breakwall to watch events unfold. Brian, our skipper, did a very tidy job of placing the DV alongside. He was obviously concentrating on the task at hand however, for he failed to notice the cheers and applause emanating from the onlookers.

A few days later, Brian was at it again with a crew of three, rendering assistance to a seven metre open runabout with four blokes on board and a malfunctioning gearbox. Their location – some 24 nm offshore. PS31



departed the dock at 1:06pm and logged off at 5:45pm, having returned the distressed vessel and its occupants safely to D'Albora Marina. The intervening hours had been spent musing over how best to avoid some of the many behemoths plying their trade up and down the east coast of Australia. The photo below shows one of the tows. If you look to the right just behind the boat, you may be able to make out the containers on one such behemoth.

And more recently, on 29 April in fact, Laurie, Nigel and Stephen went to the aid of a ski boat which had run afoul

(Continued on page 11)

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OPERATIONS AND GIFT SHOP

Continued from page 9)

of some crab traps on the Myall River. For the uninitiated, the Myall River system is, well, not exactly easy to navigate; it's convoluted and quite shallow. In this case, the ski boat was indeed in the Myall River, but at the far end, some 10nm upstream. Unperturbed, the crew of PS30 made their way cautiously up the river and eventually came upon the DV and its eight occupants, including three children under five years old! They were



able to free the propeller and then escorted the DV to Soldiers Point. All in a good day's work, or at least a good few hours.

Dock Refurbishment

And finally, I'm very happy to report that the dock refurbishment, which has been a work-in-progress for more than a year, is now complete. Once the planning issues and permits had all been resolved, the actual work to refurbish the dock was surprisingly quick.

The concrete pontoons had been made off-site and were trucked in. Once craned in to the water, they were marshalled out of the way while a large pile-driving barge removed the old piles, sank new ones and then removed those sections of the old dock that were being replaced. The final act in this finely orchestrated ballet was the installation of the new pontoons. All done inside five days.

The heavy work done, it then fell to a small team expertly led by Barney to replumb the services etc. All in all, an outstanding effort by all and sundry to see the refurbishment through to fruition. That said, one man stands apart for his vision and drive to see this project through, and that man is Tony O'Donnell.

On that note then...its farewell from me folks.

But remember...stay safe on the water and please wear a lifejacket...

Richard Pizzuto
OPSO



Once again circumstances dictate that our door stays locked, but we hope to resume trading soon. Whilst non-operational, we are taking the opportunity to do a few much needed updates to the shop, i.e. a new floor and a user-friendly alteration to the service desk which will suit both staff and customers. Meanwhile till we are once again open for business, we support and communicate regularly with each other and have our uniforms ironed and our shoes shined ready to go.

Sandra Scheuber



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BOATS OFFICER

BOATS OFFICER

CoVid19

As with most other aspects of our work in Marine Rescue we are working in our boat management function to facilitate high levels of hygiene and appropriate social distancing. At the same time, we need maintain as much of our emergency service capability as practicable.

In practice this requires a range of specific measures including:

- Changes to start up and shut down procedures for both vessels.
- Provision of washing and hand/equipment sanitation facilities.
- Limiting the size of crews, including maintenance teams.
- Discontinuing practical training for both new crew and those progressing to higher ratings.

So far so good with some signs of practical relaxation on the horizon.

Dock Facility

Thanks to the tireless efforts of Tony O Donnell,



the bulk of the dock rehabilitation work was completed before the 'lock down' started to bite.

While the facility is now fully operational there have been several outstanding items to be cleared under the restricted work regime.

PS30

Albeit under a reduced workload, PS30 continues to provide good reliable service.

The fact that work space aboard is more confined than that on PS31 lends an additional dimension to the risk assessment carried out by the Duty Skipper in deciding which vessel to use on any particular assignment.

PS31

The good ship John Thompson is probably doing the bulk

of the operational work under the current conditions. She has now completed four years of service with the unit and has proved herself to be an excellent (if at times high maintenance) workhorse.

All Marine Rescue vessels are maintained in survey under the NSCV (National Standards for Commercial Vessels). The standards are regulated by AMSA (Australian Maritime Safety Authority). For both our vessels an annual survey to check compliance is required. Each five years that survey requires the



services of an independent marine surveyor and includes extensive on and out of water components. Every other year the survey is carried out 'on

water' by our Regional Operations Manager. PS31 completed that survey in April with 'flying colours'.

The upgrade to the marine electronics on PS31 was completed last month at a cost of around \$18k. We have managed to recover in excess of \$5000 from the sale of



redundant but serviceable equipment. The result is a more robust, faster and reliable system. The upgrade was precipitated by the failure of one of the multi-function navigation

displays.

Both of the Yanmar diesel engines underwent their 1100 hour service recently with additional work required on both raw water cooling pumps.

We have recently discovered excessive salt build up in the mechanism operating the engine room air cut off valves. These valves form an integral part of the engine room fire suppression system. Supplementary preventative maintenance procedures are being developed to control the problem.

The eight place automatic life raft fitted to PS31 as a requirement for offshore operations is due for service by the end of May. Since there is no spare raft available there will be a period of up to 10 days when offshore operations will only be possible using PS30.

Barney Pinney

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NELSON HEAD LIGHTHOUSE RESERVE TRUST

TRUST CHAIRMAN

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the operations of the Trust over the last three months. The Cottage and Museum have been closed since early March and it appears that it will be some time before they can be reopened. The Tea Rooms also closed in early March and, although restrictions have been eased



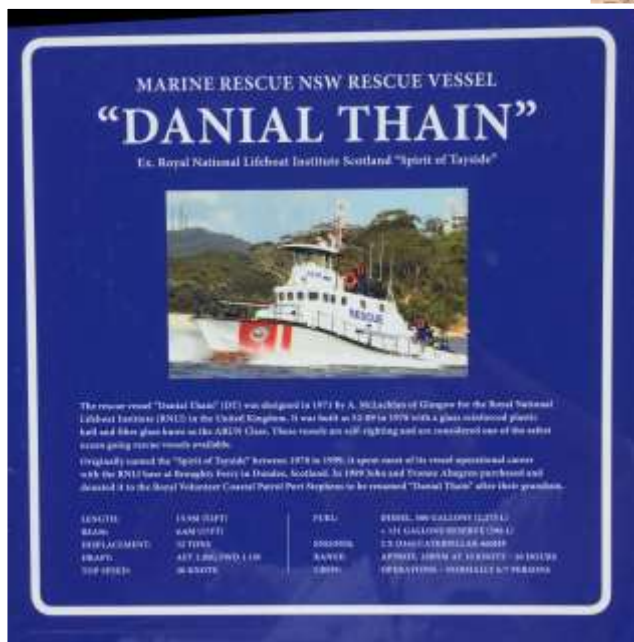
somewhat, it is still not economically viable for the facility to reopen. However that may change with the latest announcement from the NSW government that restaurants can allow 50 customers in their premises. This will allow the Tea Rooms to open on 1 June which would be very welcome to the operators and visitors to the Nelson Head site.

guest numbers will be lifted by then. In the meantime we are taking the opportunity to revise the wedding brochure, advertisement in the Port Chatter and prepare a PowerPoint presentation to use when we are able to commence promotion of the site as a wedding venue.

All tours have been cancelled and, again, we do not see any chance of them recommencing before September at the earliest.

We were very sorry to lose one of our stalwarts, Peter Fitzsimons, earlier in the year. Peter served many years in Marine Rescue and on the Trust management committee and was particularly involved in the maintenance of the grounds at Nelson Head. His enthusiasm and bright disposition will be sorely missed by all. Vale Peter.

The memorial plaque for all of the members of Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and Marine Rescue Port Stephens who have "crossed the bar" has been installed in the John Thompson garden and is admired by all who have viewed it. The second plaque in appreciation of the support of John and Yvonne Almgren in the purchase and operation of the "*Danial Thain*" will be installed sometime



We have not been able to hold weddings at the Base as the great majority of couples are looking to have numbers of guests well above the limits that are currently in place. There are some preliminary bookings in place for September and beyond and we are very hopeful that the

in June.

The maintenance team has been very active over the last few months in looking after the lawns and gardens and their hard work is now being realised. The recent rain has helped in bringing out the best in the lawns and we are looking forward to welcoming back visitors to the Museum and Tea Rooms when restrictions are lifted.

Crown Lands has called for expressions of interest in applying for grants to carry out maintenance and renovation work on Crown Lands sites. We have carried out a survey of all of the work required at the Nelson Head site and are currently acquiring quotes for the projects identified. If we are successful with the grant application we will be able to bring the site up to full potential.

All members of the Trust are eagerly looking forward to the easing of the COVID-19 restrictions so that we can welcome all guests back the site to enjoy the views and the ambience of what is undoubtedly one of the great attractions of Port Stephens.

John Reid

Inner Light Weddings Nelson Head



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please contact:

Wedding Co-ordinator

Mobile 0419 135 102

E mail

weddings.portstephens@gmail.com

INNER LIGHT WEDDINGS

WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR

I hope that you and your families are all well and coping in this challenging time.

I am excited to have the privilege of being the new Wedding Co-ordinator. I would like to thank Jenny Fitzsimons for her dedication and magnificent work as the previous co-ordinator. Fortunately Jenny is staying on as

played host to an elopement ceremony on Friday 24 April. Nicholas and Olivia had a picture perfect afternoon for their intimate ceremony.



Nicholas and Olivia



Maddie and Paul

part of our Inner Light Weddings Team so the fun will continue.

Being able to hold wedding ceremonies (within the government guidelines of course) has brought joy to the wedding team and of course the bridal couples. They and their families were extremely grateful at our willingness to make their dreams come true.

Two wedding ceremonies were held in March. Saturday 14 March Maddie and Paul's ceremony went ahead in the showers under the government conditions in place on that date (less than 100 people).



As you have read, we had a ceremony under each of the different mass gathering guidelines!

At this point in time, there are 10 confirmed ceremonies and one tentative booking between September and December.

Jenni Fryer
On behalf of
Inner Light
Weddings Team



Sophia and Adam.

This couple became engaged at the top of Tomaree so having their ceremony at the base was extra special to them. They were a fun couple as you can see from their novel way of signing the certificates.



Sophia and Adam moved their wedding forward to Wednesday 25 March before the restriction of five people came into place that night (they had a maximum of 20 people).

Nelson Head also



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SS BRIGHTON

A Glamorous Lady in the Duck Hole

In a quiet backwater of Port Stephens lies the rusting hulk of one the most luxurious vessels ever to operate on Sydney Harbour. SS Brighton was a ferry operated by the Port Jackson Steamships Company on the Sydney to Manly run from 1883-1916. The vessel was the largest, fastest and most impressive paddle steamer ever to serve on the Sydney to Manly ferry route.

Brighton was built by Thomas B. Seath & Company at Rutherglen, Scotland, and was completed in 1883. The double ended, iron hulled, paddle steamer was rated at 417 tons gross with a length of 220 feet (67.06 m) and a beam of 23 feet (7.01 m). Her paddle wheels were driven by two, compound, diagonal oscillating steam engines built by A. Campbell & Son of Glasgow, generating 160 hp. These were upgraded to 230 hp in the 1890s. She was capable of a service speed of 15 knots and could carry more than 1100 passengers in summer and 885 in winter. The vessel originally had a single open wheelhouse, located amidships.

For the voyage from Scotland to Sydney, Brighton was rigged with auxiliary sail and two masts, as the vessels bunkers could not carry enough coal for the voyage. Her accommodation was boarded up to protect it from heavy seas. She set out from Scotland on 2 June 1883. Near Colombo, large waves crashed over the stern and ran the full length of the decks ripping out fittings including seats. She ran aground on several occasions and lack of wind rendered her auxiliary sails useless on the voyage. Steaming down the Australian coast, the crew had to burn planking and cabin doors to keep a head of steam after almost running out of coal as they approached Sydney. She arrived Sydney on 1 September 1883 after an eventful 89 day voyage.

saloon of the steamer is very handsomely fitted up with stained glass panels, representing well-known Scotch, English, and Irish views, and these are set in panels and mouldings composed of polished plane tree, ash and walnut, relieved with gilt cornices and trusses. This, with an elaborate use of white and gold in the ceiling, suitable mirrors, crimson or green velvet in the sofas and lounges, and corresponding carpeting and runners on the floor. The first-class deck saloon is quite equal in fittings and furniture to the above but is rather different in style, having larger plate-glass windows all around, which will be shaded by silk curtains to match the sofas and lounges."

"The ladies' cabin, which enters from this saloon but has also a separate entrance from deck, is similarly fitted up, and is a charming apartment, light, airy and with all the conveniences within itself. The ceilings of these cabins are panelled and moulded throughout, the pillars between the windows are in plane tree and walnut, with gilt Corinthian capitals supporting a carved cornice. The floor is carpeted, sofas and lounges in green or crimson velvet, curtain to match, gilt framed mirrors, a silver fountain for allaying the thirst of passengers with cold water and the curtain rods, door handles, and other furniture, lamps etc. are all in white metal. The forward deck saloon and the cabin under it are of similar size to the first-class cabins but of a plainer design and fittings, though thoroughly comfortable." Brighton carried musicians to entertain the weekend excursion passengers and the women's saloon had canaries singing in cages. She was the epitome of Victorian elegance.

But all that glamour counted for nought when on 7 August 1900, on her way to Manly, Brighton collided with



Brighton outbound for Manly, Sydney Harbour 1884-1895. Photo by Henry King.

When Brighton entered service in September 1883, she was the largest of the Manly paddle-steamers and the most lavishly fitted of any Manly ferry. A newspaper of the day reported the luxurious fit-out, which was far more salubrious than any ferry of the modern era. "The main

the Brunner, a scruffy collier that was one the sixty-milers that daily plied the 60 miles between Newcastle and Sydney. The vessels collided head-on in the middle of the Western Channel off Chowder Bay, near Middle

(Continued on page 20)

SS BRIGHTON

(Continued from page 19)



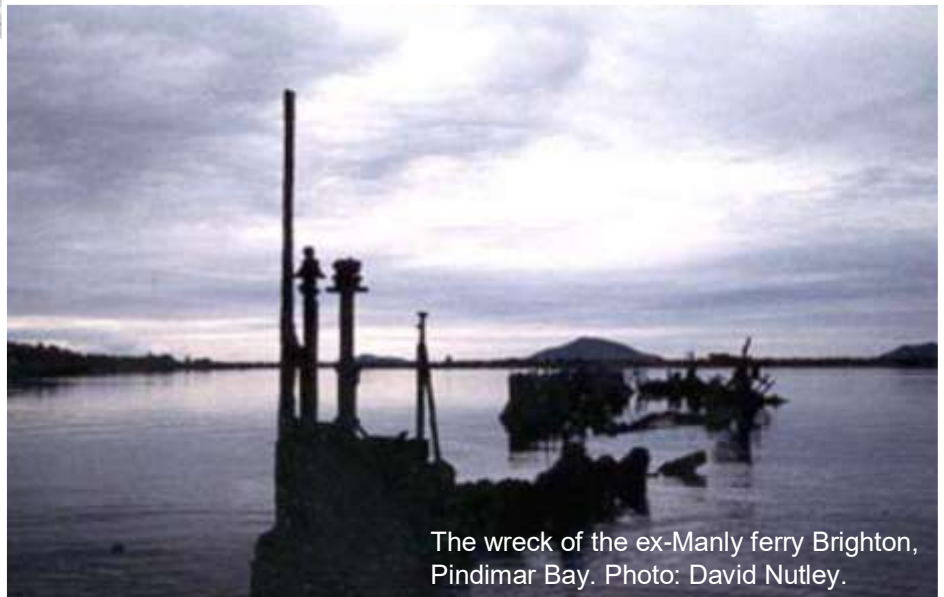
Brighton beached on Chowder Bay, August 1900

Head. Brunner's bow wedged into the side of Brighton long enough for some of the ferry's passengers to scramble on to the collier, while others made their way to the collier in the ferry's lifeboats. All passengers were eventually transferred to the other Manly ferry, Narrabeen. As Brighton was taking on water and in danger of sinking, her master drove it onto the beach at Chowder Bay. The stern of the ferry flooded with the rising tide. Damage to Brunner was minor and it quickly returned to service. Brighton however took three months to repair before re-entering service in November.

A subsequent Court of Marine Enquiry found that the master of the Brighton, George Setterfield, had been at fault for not keeping to the starboard side of the fairway, the master of the Brunner, Archibald Henry, had been at fault for also failing to keep to the starboard side of the fairway, and the mate of the Brighton was at fault for not keeping a proper lookout. Captain Setterfield bore most of the blame and his master's certificate was suspended for

12 months. In addition, the court expressed a strong opinion that the location of the bridge and wheelhouse amidships of the Brighton, made it impossible to see straight ahead. The wheelhouse was relocated following the collision.

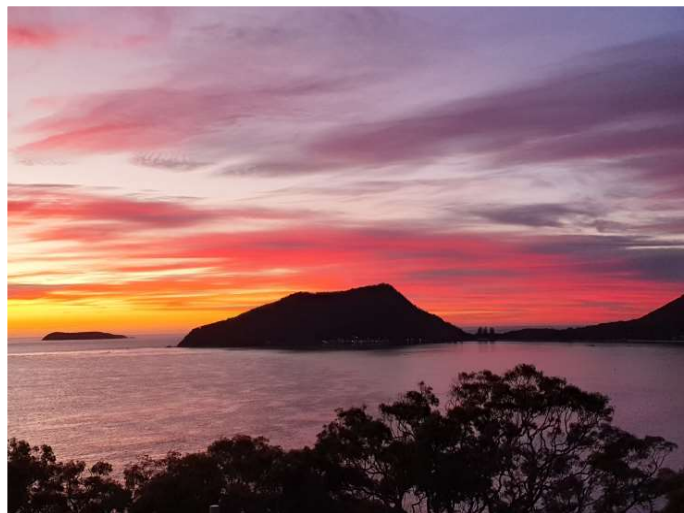
After 1900, new and faster, propeller-driven ferries were built and the paddle ships became relief vessels. Brighton was retired in 1916, was sold to Burns Philp, hulked and converted into a barge. She was used to carry timber on the Myall Lakes and was later used as a stores ship. She was



The wreck of the ex-Manly ferry Brighton, Pindimar Bay. Photo: David Nutley.

eventually abandoned and sank in the Duck Hole, Pindimar Bay. The steamer was later stripped of much of its original iron by salvors in about 1974. Today, one end of the vessel retains much of its structural form and the shape of the vessel can still be interpreted. The wreck is now listed on the NSW Maritime Heritage Register.

Neil Fraser



COMMUNITY RELATIONS

COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER

Not much action on the Community Relations front to report this month with our operations being curtailed by the health crisis.

A project that we are working on is the replacement of the Weather Station. The weather data that we provide to the boating community either directly or by posting on our website is a vital service. The current hardware has some problems and its inaccessibility located on the Command Centre roof hinders maintenance. Other locations at the Base present difficulties relating to shading or blocking by trees. We have started an investigation in conjunction with our Boat Officer Barney Pinney and Tony O'Donnell to relocate the Weather Station to the Dock area and use the WiFi link back to the Command Centre. This also presents some challenges as we need to be able to get the wind sensor above the height of the rock wall. Still work in process and hope to have a solution soon. Stay tuned.

Stay responsible everyone,

Will Scott



CORPORATE SERVICES

With the Base being closed due to the COVID-19 lockdown, there is little to report from the support crew that make up Corporate Services.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to invite prospective members to an Information Session. These sessions explain the benefits, to the boating community of Port Stephens, of volunteering with this incredible organisation. While we have been in contact via email and telephone to keep prospective members up to date with the situation, we appreciate their understanding about the need to adhere to MRNSW and Government

requirements while we combat this pandemic.

It's not all bad news, however. The team welcomes Jenni Fryer as the incoming Administration Officer, which includes participation in the Unit Executive, and Krystyna Winslow filling the newly created Deputy AdminO position. I know their inclusion in the Corporate Services team will ensure the Unit will continue to be ably supported by all these team members working quietly in the background.

Colin Couper
Administration Officer

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RFS LIAISON

HUNTER VALLEY

Like all under the COVID-19 rules, Hunter Valley RFS members have been practicing methods that do not jeopardise the health of their comrades. Certainly a challenge in the confines of a fire truck responding to a pager call.

While it has been relatively quiet (the Q word is really not part of RFS lingo) in the Hunter Valley district, there were still a number of incidents during the onset of autumn. Especially windy conditions whipped a few pile burns back into life. Darlington and Glennies Creek brigades were called out to a re-ignited mulch burn.



Darlington 1, Darlington Pumper and Glennies Creek 1 remained on scene for about 45 minutes with thermal imaging, working with the landowner to pull the pile apart and extinguish it. Despite the recent rains, winds



can still spread an uncontained fire.

Hunter Valley has asked MRPS to assist with weekend comms duties by retaining the 000 Fireline and other routine radio communications over the weekend. We are more than happy to help out our fellow volunteers

Handy Hint One:

With winter upon us, before you crank up the woodburning fire, has the flue chimney recently been cleaned?

Handy Hint Two:

With an increase in the use of hand sanitiser, the RFS would like to remind everyone that its ingredients are flammable. If you're planning a BBQ this weekend, please ensure that you completely dry your hands after using hand sanitiser before coming into contact with a naked flame.

With the 2019/20 fire season officially over, there are some terrifying statistics emerging for the worst bushfire season in NSW.

- 11,400 bush and grass fires
 - 5.5 million hectares burnt
 - 2,448 homes destroyed
 - 14,481 homes saved
 - But saddest of all, 25 lives lost including three RFS firefighters and three US aviation firefighters
- Selfless volunteers keeping us safe.

Colin Couper

Prepare Act Survive

LOWER HUNTER

STATISTICS

February: Bush/grass fires 10; structure fires 3; automatic fire alarms 10; motor vehicle accidents 10; car fires 13; community first responder 6; other 23: **Total 75**

March: Bush/grass fires 9; structure fires 2; automatic fire alarms 9; motor vehicle accidents 7; car fires 9; community first responder 4; other 18: **Total 58**

April: Bush/grass fires 26; structure fires 6; automatic fire alarms 5; motor vehicle accidents 9; car fires 14; community first responder 11; other 26: **Total 97**

There have been two interesting incidents that have occurred in the local area in the last three months.

BUSHFIRE SALAMANDER BAY

A bush fire broke out in the swamp area behind the industrial estate in Shearwater Drive just after sunset on Friday, 24 April. It was in inaccessible bush so the local brigades decided to come back the next day to fight it. The fire persisted in the inaccessible areas for the weekend, being controlled by the crews. It flared up on

Sunday/Monday at the rear of houses in Salamander Way due to a wind change. Due to the excellent work of Lower Hunter crews the fire was extinguished with no damage to any residences. Unfortunately some of the bush burnt was Koala habitat, but at last report no koalas were killed or injured.



(Continued on page 25)



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with a smile.



RFS LIAISON VALE PETER FITZSIMONS

(Continued from page 23)

BOAT FIRE, LITTLE SALAMANDER BAY

A wooden vessel caught fire in Little Salamander Bay, near Wanda Headland, on the night of 14 May. Soldiers Point Brigade was activated and Fire Boat Delta was on the water fighting the fire with other members of the brigade fighting the fire from the land along



with Fire and Rescue resources. PS31 was also

activated along with Water Police resources. Unfortunately the boat was too far gone and was burnt to the water line. Apparently the boat was one of the last wooden boats left in the bay.

Ross Debenham

IN MEMORIAM TRIBUTE TO PETER FITZSIMONS

Marine Rescue Port Stephens and Nelson Head Lighthouse and Search & Rescue Trust (Trust) has lost a very valued member in the passing of Peter Fitzsimons on 10 March 2020 having been diagnosed with cancer in August 2019. Peter's funeral was held Anna Bay in Port Stephens on Friday 20 March 2020 and a guard of honour was performed by members of Marine Rescue Port Stephens.

Peter was born in Lewisham, England 1939 and served with UK Royal Engineers Army in Cyprus. In 1970, he migrated to NSW Australia and worked in the Lithgow coal mine for seventeen years.

Peter and his wife retired to Nelson Bay in 1997 but sadly his wife passed away from cancer in 2003.

Peter was fortunate to meet Jenny and they married in 2007. Jenny Fitzsimons is also a member of Marine Rescue Port Stephens since 2009 when she qualified as a Watch Office and has remained a very active member with the Unit.

In 2010, Peter joined the Marine Rescue Port Stephens as an auxiliary member and Museum Attendant in the retired Inner Lighthouse and Lighthouse Keepers Cottage. The former Cottage is now a Museum which is open every day to the public, coach tours, local high, primary and preschools. As a Museum Attendant, Peter loved greeting visitors and answering their questions

about the purpose of the Inner Light Port Stephens, Marine Rescue and the role Port Stephens played during WWII in the preparation for the American and Australian Army's role in the Pacific Islands.



In addition to his role as Museum Attendant, Peter joined the Grounds Maintenance team that maintains the beautiful grounds and upkeep of the retired Inner Lighthouse buildings. The grounds accommodate the Marine Rescue Port Stephens Operational buildings. Peter loved mowing the lawn in the grounds and set a very high standard with his meticulous care of it. He only apprenticed another member to assist with mowing after he became too ill in early 2020.

Still not content with these roles he joined the Trust as a Committee Member in 2016 to help ensure the retired Inner lighthouse grounds

occupied by Marine Rescue Port Stephens Search and Rescue Station comply with Crown Lands Regulations.

Peter loved to catch up with everyone and ask about how their families, "always the Gentleman." He will be sadly missed by his colleagues here at Marine Rescue Port Stephens and Inner Lighthouse Museum and by regular visitors, school children and the Tea Rooms staff. Most of all, he will be missed by Jenny and their families.

Rest In Peace Peter



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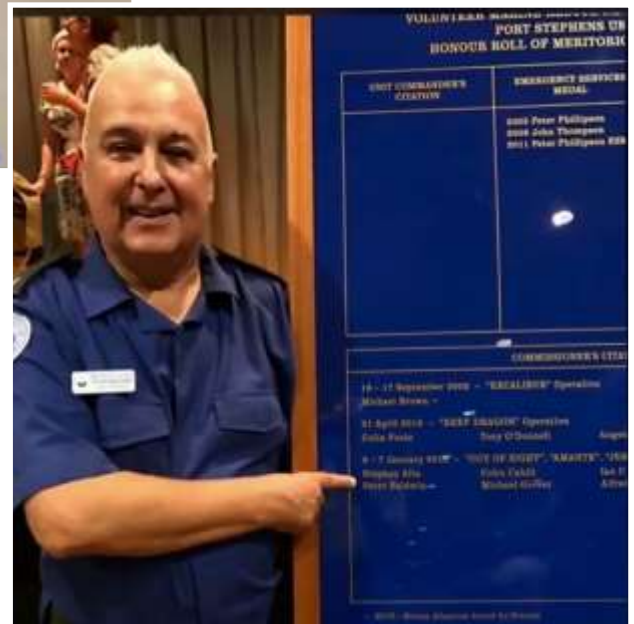
VALE PETE BALDWIN

FAREWELL PETER BALDWIN



Teaching at TAFE in Sydney his love for and interest in, technology, gadgets and “the next new thing” grew, he decided to retrain in computing and information technology, and he began teaching computing. He moved from teaching to project work and curriculum development, all within TAFE.

During this time he was particularly proud of the work he did with the Gay and Lesbian Counselling service and Gay and Married Men’s Association. He said his work with these organisations was a way to give back to the GLBT community and as a way to help and to support gay men in their struggles to



Marine Rescue Port Stephens has lost a true friend and much loved Member. Pete passed away suddenly and with the restrictions on social distancing and therefore the number of people permitted to attend funerals, Pete’s partner Darrell invited all Members to join him on Zoom for the funeral service. Had we been able to attend, the place would have been overflowing and Pete would have been given a full guard of honour.

Pete was a person who gave everything to every task he took on. He quickly progressed through Radio Operator and then Watch Officer assessments along with taking on the roles of Rosters Officer and Duty Call Out Officer. Both arduous tasks that he always fulfilled with his customary smile.

On 6-7 January 2016 Peter was part of the on-duty team that assisted in the rescue and retrieval of several yachts off Port Stephens, during an east coast low. Members of the team, including Peter, were awarded Commissioner’s Citations for their efforts that night. Pete was especially proud of this award.

With an initial background in Chemistry and subsequent

come out and be accepted by their families and the wider community for who they really were.

Coming to Port Stephens, Pete and Darrell have been embraced by our Members and we will always have memory of that ‘smile’.

An ashes scattering and remembrance ceremony will be held when we can all get together again.



BIRDS AROUND THE BASE

BIRDS AROUND THE BASE -

PORT STEPHENS – AN IMPORTANT AREA FOR SHOREBIRDS AND OTHER WATER BIRDS

Port Stephens is one of the most important areas for shorebirds in NSW. The port has an area of 98,000 ha, more than twice that of Sydney Harbour. It has a wide variety of environments that provide suitable habitat which supports large numbers and a wide range of shorebird species. Habitats include ocean beaches, tidal sandbars and mudflats, rocky and sandy shorelines and protected islands. The port receives a constant supply of nutrients and sediment from the Myall and Karuah Rivers.

Port Stephens is a popular residential, tourist and recreational destination and some areas have undergone substantial development. However, many areas of the port remain relatively undisturbed and key shorebird roosting sites are protected. The Gir-um-bit National Park covers shoreline around Swan Bay and Oyster Cove, while the Corrie Island Nature Reserve covers beaches and sandbars at the mouth of the Myall River. All Port Stephens waters are part of the Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park. Three small islands used by shorebirds in the bay are nature reserves - One Tree Island Nature Reserve, Bushy Island Nature Reserve and Snapper Island Nature Reserve.

The Myall River National Park lies immediately north of Port Stephens and includes the Broughton Island group and Nature Reserves on Cabbage Tree Island and Boondelbah Island. The importance of these off-shore islands to pelagic birds such as shearwaters, Gould's Petrel and Little Penguins has been discussed in previous articles. Areas immediately to the south of Port Stephens are protected by the Tomaree National Park and the Tilligerry Nature Reserve.

Each summer Port Stephens becomes home to over a thousand migratory waders that breed in Arctic latitudes during the northern summer. Over 20 wader species have been recorded foraging around the sandbars and mudflats and roosting on isolated shorelines, oyster racks or rocky headlands. Adult birds return to their northern breeding grounds at the end of summer while juvenile, non-breeding birds remain on our shores until the following year. Port Stephens has been a site of

international importance for Eastern Curlew for at least three decades with up to 1.7% of the East Asia-Australasian Flyway population present in surveys from 1982 to 2015.

However, the surveys reveal a significant decline in numbers of most species during this period. Eastern Curlew show the smallest decline of 32% while sandpipers have declined by 88%. Other species and groups in decline are Grey-tailed Tattlers, Pacific Golden Plovers, stints and small plovers. Some small waders recorded in the 1980s have not been seen in Port Stephens for over 20 years.

It is probable that the decline in local numbers reflects overall population decline due to the loss of key habitat on the East Asia-Australasian flyway. However loss of coastal habitat in the Hunter Region is also a contributing factor. Within Port Stephens, dredging around the mouth of the Myall River, foreshore development around parts of the bay and increased disturbance by recreational water craft and foreshore activities all have the potential to impact wader numbers.

While numbers of most migratory waders recorded in Port Stephens have decreased over the past 40 years, numbers of Bar-tailed Godwits and Whimbrels have actually increased. However, this possibly reflects loss of

suitable habitat in the nearby Hunter estuary, and not an overall increase in numbers.

Port Stephens is also an important habitat for some endemic shorebirds including **Australian Pied Oystercatcher**, **Sooty Oystercatcher** and **Red-capped Plover**. (above and left) Port Stephens is



recognised as a site of international importance for Australian Pied Oystercatcher with up to 1.4% of the world population present from 2004 to 2015. Sooty Oystercatcher numbers represent 0.5-1.0% of total Australian population over the same period. However, two species of dotterels recorded in Port Stephens in the 1980s have not been seen for 25 years.



Among the more unusual endemic shorebirds of Port Stephens is the critically endangered **Beach Stone-Curlew** (left) (*Esacus magnirostris*). It is one of the world's largest shorebirds, around 55 cm in length, with a very prominent thick bill. A pair of the birds are frequently seen around Soldier's Point, often accompanied by a juvenile. They

(Continued on page 28)

BIRDS AROUND THE BASE

(Continued from page 27)

forage on sandflats at low tide for crabs and other marine invertebrates. They are thought to breed on **Dowadee Island** off Soldiers Point. Port Stephens is at the



dispersed inland. **Australian Pelican** numbers also decreased by around one third in 2011 as some of the birds present in the bay returned to their birth sites to breed on Lake Eyre or the Coongie Lake system in South Australia.

To ensure that Port Stephens remains a viable habitat for migratory and endemic shorebirds it is essential that further habitat loss in the bay is prevented. There should be no further development around key foraging and roosting habitats, further degradation of existing habitat must be avoided and disturbance of foraging and roosting birds limited

**Neil Fraser
Twitcher**

southern extent of the range of this species in eastern Australia.

In addition to its role as an important habitat for migratory waders and

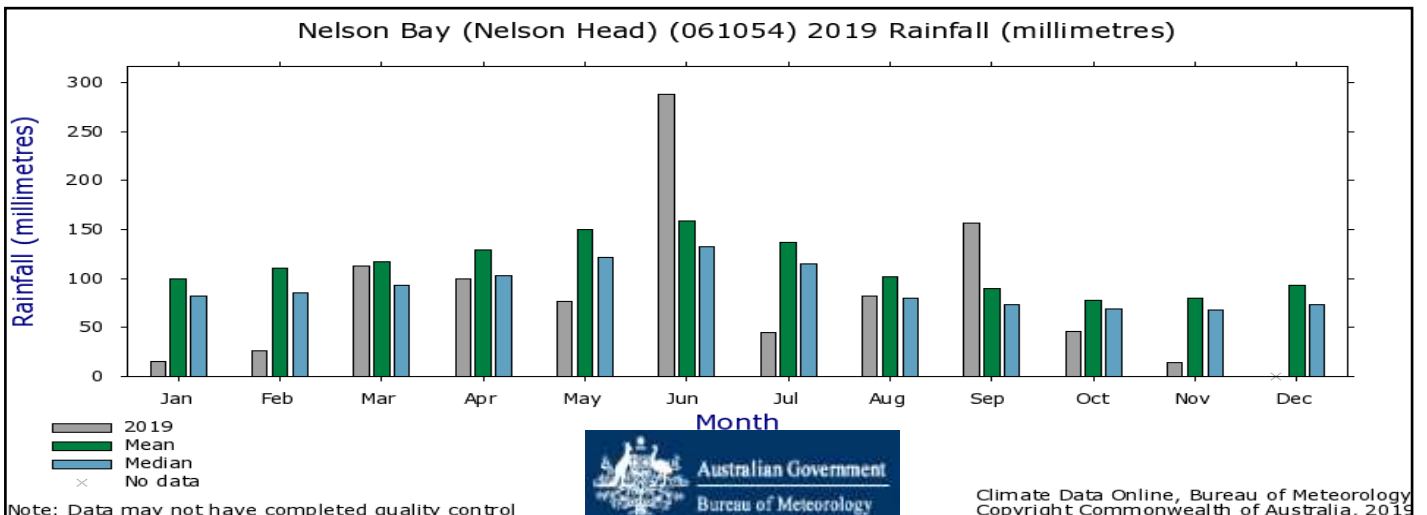


endemic shorebirds, Port Stephens is also an important drought refuge for other

waterbirds. During severe El Niño events, inland waterways, swamps and marshes dry up and waterbirds that depend on these locations, migrate to coastal estuaries such as Port Stephens. Here they remain until the next La Niña event, when they again disperse to live on the inland waterways. The last major El Niño event culminated in the drought of 2009-2010 and was followed by widespread rains associated with the La Nina event of 2011-2012. During this period **Black Swan** numbers in Port Stephens peaked at 1,120 birds in 2010, but by 2013 had dropped to 105. From 2009 to 2012 numbers of **Little Pied Cormorant** decreased by 90%, **Little Black Cormorant** by 82% and **Pied Cormorant** by 45% as they

PORT STEPHENS WEATHER

Williamtown, NSW - April 2020					Williamtown, NSW - May 2020				
Date	Day	Temps		Rain	Date	Day	Temps		Rain
		Min	Max				Min	Max	
		°C	°C	mm			°C	°C	mm
1	We	16.3	27.2	0	1	Fr	11	16.8	6.4
2	Th	16.4	28	0.2	2	Sa	12.7	19.5	0
3	Fr	16.8	26.4	9.2	3	Su	9.4	19.7	0
4	Sa	19.4	27.7	12.4	4	Mo	7.2	19.6	0
5	Su	13.8	24	4.2	5	Tu	10.1	19.7	5.6
6	Mo	13.4	23.5	0	6	We	11.8	21.3	5.6
7	Tu	15.9	22.9	0	7	Th	7.4	21.5	0.2
8	We	14.8	20.8	0	8	Fr	7.4	26.3	0
9	Th	15.1	21.1	0.8	9	Sa	8.5	24.7	0
10	Fr	17.3	20.7	0	10	Su	7.9	18.7	0
11	Sa	14.4	26.9	4	11	Mo	4.8	18.3	0
12	Su	8.9	21.1	0	12	Tu	5.6	20.3	0
13	Mo	6.8	23.1	0	13	We	6.7	21.7	0
14	Tu	10.2	25.9	0	14	Th	6.9	18.3	0.2
15	We	12.1	28.2	0	15	Fr	10.4	18.3	9.2
16	Th	12.6	30.2	0	16	Sa	10.2	20.3	3.4
17	Fr	17.3	27.9	0	17	Su	10.7	20.7	0
18	Sa	13.3	22.6	0	18	Mo	11.2	18.5	6.2
19	Su	7.2	22.6	0	19	Tu	8.9	20.3	2.2
20	Mo	9.5	23	0	20	We	8.7	23.6	0.2
21	Tu	13.9	24.7	0	21	Th	11.5	15.7	0.8
22	We	14.8	25.6	0	22	Fr	8.3	16.3	12
23	Th	9.5	25.3	0	23	Sa	11.2	16.3	0.2
24	Fr	14.2	28.2	0	24	Su	11.2	17.1	0.2
25	Sa	10	27.1	0	25	Mo	13.5	18.5	0
26	Su	10	28.7	0	26	Tu	13.2	21.1	38.8
27	Mo	15.8	21.7	17.2	27	We	11.7	19.1	0
28	Tu	15.3	23.7	4.6	28	Th	10	21.3	0
29	We	13	27	1	29	Fr	9.7		1.6
30	Th	18.9	22	0					
31	Fr	23.5	29	0.2					
Statistics for April 2020					Statistics for the first 29 days of May 2020				
Mean		13.6	24.9		Mean		9.6	19.8	
Lowest		6.80	20.70	0.00	Lowest		4.8	15.7	0
Highest		19.40	30.20	17.2	Highest		13.5	26.3	38.8
Total				53.6	Total				





MARINE RESCUE PORT STEPHENS

“Volunteers doing our jobs professionally”



Our service to Port Stephens 2005-2019

People saved/ assisted	5,883
Rescues and assists	2,528
Value of vessels saved	\$248M+
Rescue Crew volunteer hours	60,932+
Radio Base volunteer hours	298,200+
Radio calls made/received	304,758
Telephone calls made/received	284,594

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

Volunteers saving lives on the water



IN APPRECIATION....

Contributors to this issue of *Port Chatter*:

Colin Couper, Ross Debenham, Colin Foote, Jenni Fryer, Neil Fraser, Harold Gibson, Barney Pinney, Richard Pizzuto, John Reid, Will Scott. Other photos by Stephen Alta, Colin Couper, Ross Debenham, Penelope Highland, Tony O'Donnell, and Richard Pizzuto. 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, Marian Chappell, and Deb Nolan.

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Radio Station		Port Stephens FM 100.9



Marine Rescue Newcastle getting their new rescue vessel delivered.

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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