

# PORT CHATTER

AUTUMN 2026

## MARINE RESCUE NSW PORT STEPHENS UNIT

*'Volunteers Saving Lives on the Water'*



*Photo credit: Phillip craig*

**OUR PRIMARY FOCUS**  
*Volunteers Saving Lives on the Water*

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**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.

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

- Emergency support to vessels in trouble
- 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).

**Gift Shop :** Marine Rescue Port Stephens operates a unique gift shop on the ground floor of the Marine Rescue Communications Centre at Nelson Head Reserve, Nelson Bay. The shop offers gifts with a nautical flavour and a range to suit every budget. Without income from the Gift Shop, the Unit would find it very difficult, if not near impossible, to operate. Open to the public, 7 days a week from 9am to 3pm.

**Nelson Head Reserve:** Marine Rescue Port Stephens Unit of which Marine Rescue NSW is the responsible entity to the State Government for upkeep of this Crown Land heritage precinct "Reserve".

A small museum is operated by volunteers and is open to the public, 7 days a week from 9am to 3pm.

A portion of the Historic Lighthouse Keepers Cottage is leased to a private operator "Inner Light Tea Rooms" for breakfast, lunch, morning and afternoon teas/coffee, from 8.30am to 3.00pm.

**Wedding Ceremonies:** Bookings can be made to hold weddings on the reserve (see Lighthouse Weddings page).

## UNIT COMMANDER'S REPORT



### **New Base Facilities v2-0 Update**

In the Summer edition of Port Chatter I described the work that had taken place to engage SHAC architects to design a new Marine Rescue Base at Nelson Head.

The Concept Plan for the new Marine Rescue Port Stephens Base has now progressed to nominally 90% completion, marking a significant milestone in the long-term vision for a modern, functional facility.

While the initial concept design work is well advanced, as can be seen from the drawings I have included, we remain acutely aware that this stage represents a start-point rather than finality.

Much remains to be done—particularly in the areas of geo-technical engineering, environmental assessment, costing and cultural consultation—before the plan can be considered complete.

Nonetheless, the emerging concept reflects a thoughtful and sensitive approach to the unique setting and operational needs of Marine Rescue NSW Port Stephens.

A defining principle throughout the design process has been the heritage sensitivity of the site.

The proposed concept has been shaped with respect for the historical significance of the surrounding landscape and built environment.

The present building is a jarring intrusion on the heritage site.

We have stressed the need for the new building to sit more respectfully with the historic cottage, while meeting essential operational requirements.

The architectural team has worked to ensure that the new facility enhances rather than competes with the heritage character of the headland, preserving key sightlines and maintaining the visual integrity of this iconic location.

Equally important has been the drive to improve accessibility for all users.

The current facility presents significant challenges for people with limited mobility, and the new concept directly addresses these shortcomings, ensuring that volunteers, visitors and community members with disabilities can have access throughout the site.

*(Continued on page 5)*



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## UNIT COMMANDER'S REPORT CONT'D

*(Continued from page 3)*

Operational capability has to be a central focus.

The proposed concept delivers a substantial upgrade to the 34 year old working environment for Marine Rescue Port Stephens volunteers.

These improvements reflect the increasing demand on Marine Rescue services in the region and the need for infrastructure that supports rapid, reliable and safe operations.

At the same time, the concept plan recognises the importance of maintaining and even enhancing public access to and use of the site.

The design incorporates better opportunities for the community to engage with the organisation's work and share the use of facilities for weddings and other functions.

The intention is to create a facility that serves essential operational needs without becoming exclusionary—a place where the public can continue to enjoy the headland while gaining a deeper appreciation for the vital role Marine Rescue plays in local safety and maritime culture.

Crucially, ongoing consultation with the Worimi people remains a central and non-negotiable component of the project's progression.

The site holds deep cultural significance, and the project

cannot advance without meaningful engagement and agreement from the Worimi, ensuring that the final design reflects not only operational and community needs but also the cultural values and custodianship of the Traditional Owners.

In summary, I believe the 90% Concept Plan represents a thoughtful, balanced and forward-looking vision for the future Marine Rescue Port Stephens Base.

It honours heritage, improves accessibility, strengthens operational capability, and maintains public connection to the site.

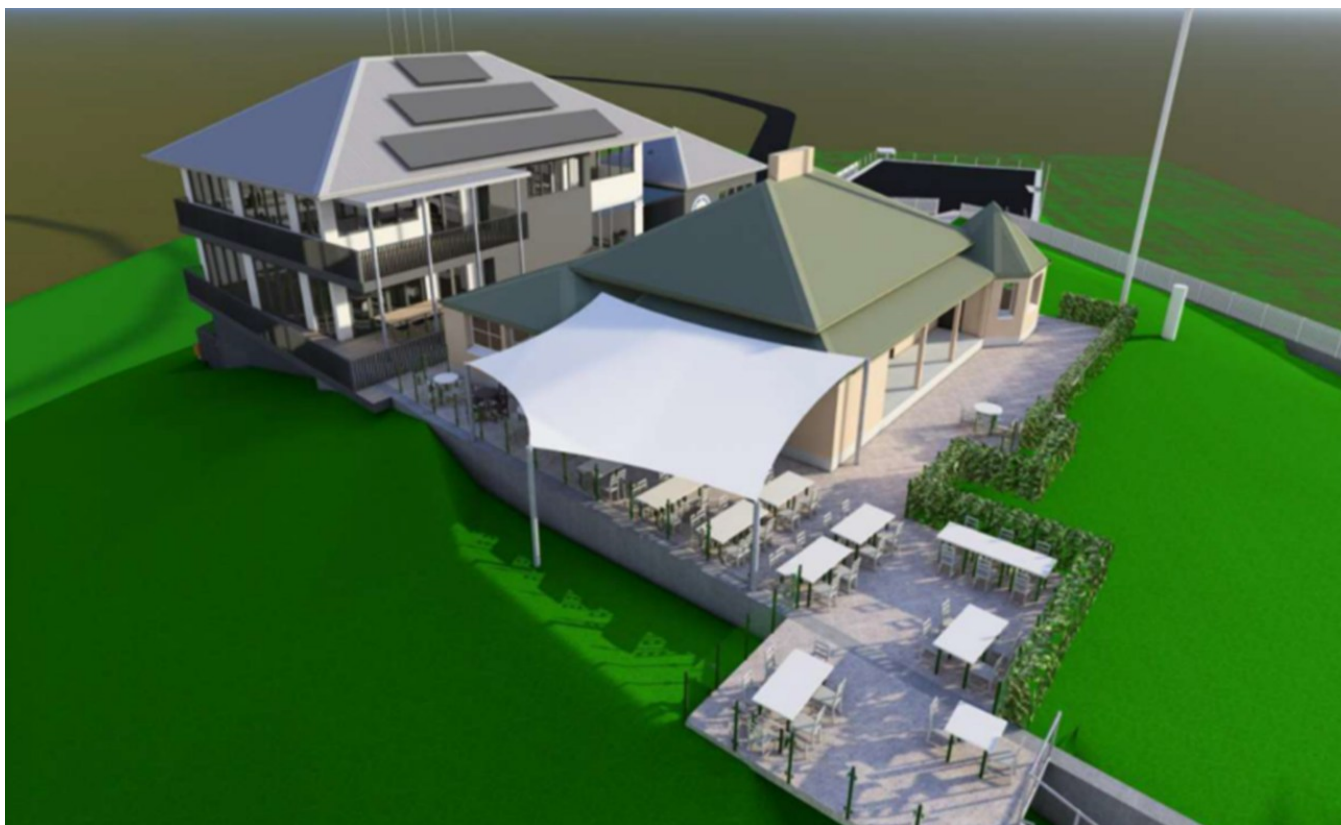
Yet it also stands as a work in progress, with critical technical studies and cultural consultation still ahead. The coming months will be pivotal in shaping the final form of this important community asset.

There is also the need to cover the costs of the new build.

While we can partially rely on our capital savings and some generous donations to date, and apply for Government grants, we will still need more funds from public donations to complete the building project.

I have made the full plans available for public and member viewing in the Patrol Room in the Museum Cottage. I would be happy to answer questions and comments from anyone.

**Ben van der Wijngaart**  
**Unit Commander**



## OPERATIONS OFFICER

### Welcome to 2026

Log On, Stay Safe: A Year in Review from Marine Rescue Port Stephens

Boating safety is built on preparation, communication, and smart decision-making. Over the past 12 months, the volunteers at Marine Rescue Port Stephens have once again demonstrated why logging on before you head out can make all the difference.

### The Numbers Tell the Story

During the past 12 months:

3,964 vessels logged on with Marine Rescue Port Stephens carrying a total of 11,833 people onboard.

Of those vessels that logged on, very few required assistance during the year.

In contrast, the majority of vessels requesting assistance were those that had not logged on prior to departure.

That's not just a statistic — it's a powerful reminder that logging on is one of the simplest and most effective safety steps a skipper can take.

### Incident Response in the Past 12 Months

Marine Rescue Port Stephens managed:

247 incidents involving 475 people.

These incidents varied widely and included:

- Overdue vessels
- Mechanical breakdowns and vessels unable to return home
- Vessels taking on water or sinking
- Vessel fires
- People reported missing from their vessels

Each incident required a tailored response. Some involved coordinated radio monitoring and follow-up calls. Others required rescue vessel deployments, search operations, or multi-agency collaboration.

But every single incident was handled with the same commitment — ensuring the safety of the boating public.

### Why Logging On Matters

Logging on provides Marine Rescue with:

- Your departure location
- Your intended destination
- Your estimated return time
- The number of people onboard

If you don't log off as planned, the follow-up process begins.

When vessels don't log on, the response to an emergency can be delayed while critical information is gathered. Valuable time can be lost determining where the vessel launched, how many people are onboard, and where they may have intended to travel.

Logging on removes that uncertainty.

How best to Log on.

### Safety on the Water: Marine Rescue App or Radio? Why Smart Boaters Use Both

When heading out on the water in NSW, preparation is everything. Whether you're fishing offshore, cruising the coastline, or enjoying a quick afternoon run, having the right communication tools can make all the difference.

Today's boaters have two powerful safety options:

- the Marine Rescue NSW Log On app, and
- the traditional marine band (VHF) radio.

While some may wonder which is better, the safest answer is simple — both play an important role.



### The Marine Rescue NSW Log On App

*Simple. Smart. Automated.*



The Log On app, developed by Marine Rescue NSW, allows boaters to digitally register their trip details before departure.

### Why boaters love it:

- Quick trip registration – Log your departure and return time in seconds.
- Automated monitoring – If you don't log off on time, Marine Rescue will follow up.
- GPS-recorded details – Accurate trip data improves response capability.
- Perfect for small craft – Ideal for kayaks, PWCs, and small recreational vessels.
- No radio knowledge required – Easy for first-time or occasional boaters.

The app is an excellent tool for trip logging and peace of mind. However, it relies on mobile coverage and battery life — and it does not replace emergency distress communication.

*(Continued on page 7)*

## OPERATIONS OFFICER CONT'D

(Continued from page 6)



### Marine Band Radio (VHF)

*Reliable. Immediate. Essential.*



The marine band radio remains the gold standard for on-water communication.

#### Why it's still essential:

- Immediate distress calls – Channel 16 connects you instantly in an emergency.
- Works offshore – No reliance on mobile reception.
- Two-way communication – Speak directly with Marine Rescue and nearby vessels.
- Weather and safety alerts – Receive real-time broadcast information.
- Industry-standard equipment – Recommended for offshore boating.

When seconds count, a VHF radio delivers instant contact and coordinated response.



### Real-World Scenario: When Both Make the Difference

Imagine this:

A small trailer boat heads 12 nautical miles offshore for a morning fishing trip. Before departure, the skipper logs on via the Marine Rescue NSW app, nominating a 3:00 pm return time.

At 11:30 am, the engine suddenly fails. Attempts to restart it are unsuccessful. The boat begins drifting further offshore.

There is no reliable mobile reception — but the skipper has a VHF radio onboard.

A call is made on Channel 16. Marine Rescue responds immediately, gathers details, and dispatches a rescue vessel. The crew maintains communication via radio while assistance is underway.

Now imagine the radio wasn't available.

If the skipper failed to return by 3:00 pm and did not log off, Marine Rescue would initiate follow-up procedures based on the logged trip details — departure point, number of people onboard, and intended location.

In this case, the radio enables immediate help. The app provides a safety net if direct contact cannot be made.

That layered protection is exactly why both systems matter



### Why Using Both Is Best Practice

The Log On app provides automated trip monitoring. The VHF radio provides real-time emergency communication.

Together, they create a comprehensive safety system:

- Log your trip before departure.
- Carry and monitor your marine band radio.
- Log off when safely returned.



### The Takeaway

The question isn't "app or radio?" It's "are you using both?"

Before your next trip:



### Log On using the Marine Rescue NSW app



### Carry and monitor your marine band radio

Because when it comes to safety on the water, redundancy isn't excessive — it's responsible boating.

Stay safe. Stay prepared. And always Log On.

Cheers

**Mick Duggan**  
**Operations Officer**



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# France

## FAMILY FUNERALS

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### **NEWCASTLE**

209 Maitland Road (cnr Barton St), Mayfield

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## COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER

### AUSTRALIA DAY RAFFLE

This Australia Day, in the heat, 18 of our amazing members joyfully volunteered to be part of the fundraising team down at Fly Point Park, Nelson Bay. We are always proud to see the uniform of Marine Rescue Port Stephens on such dedicated and hard-working folk.

Many of our volunteers were setting up food prep areas from 8:30am to deliver steak sandwiches and bacon and egg rolls to the hungry crowds. But there were a keen few who were on site from 6am! They also sold raffle tickets and did promotions of the Unit.

They do this because they have passion for a shared cause and they have genuine camaraderie with the friends they have made here.

### FEBRUARY INFO DAY

Our first Volunteer Info Night for 2026 was held on Tuesday 3 February and we got a wonderful cross-section of the community coming along to find out what volunteering with us is all about.



We have roles in fundraising (gift shop, weddings, raffles, food service, event management, sponsorship), the heritage site (museum guides, grounds maintenance), and operations (marine radio, boat crew). Plus a range of executive, IT, and admin roles you would find in any club or non-profit.

If you want more information about how to volunteer in future contact our Membership Officer on 0472566450 or email enquiries to

[membership.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:membership.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au)

<https://marinerescueportstephens.au/home/join-us/>

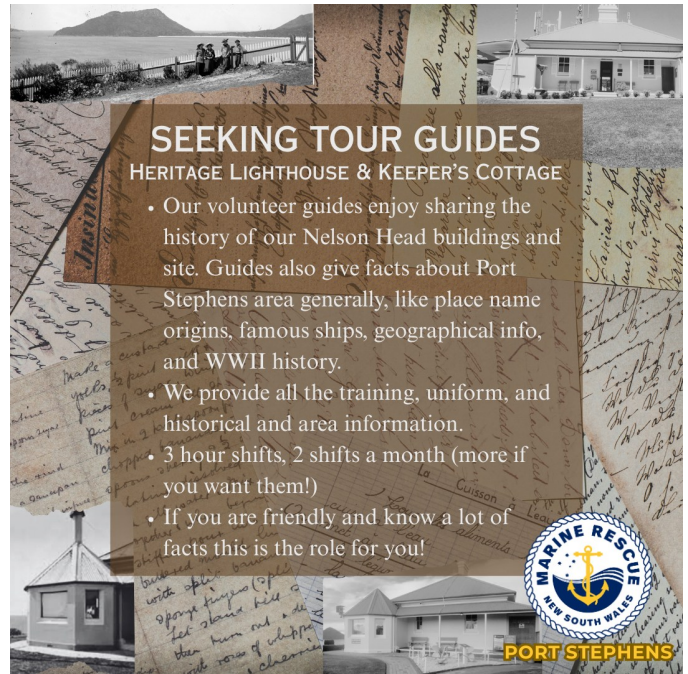
Our next Info Night is **18 May 2026 at 6pm**

Where to go: In the Training Room at the Base, Nelson Head (head up the hill from the Little Beach boat ramp)

With over 200 members — from working professionals to retirees — Marine Rescue Port Stephens is powered entirely by volunteers. If you've got a passion for helping others and want to be part of something meaningful, we'd love to meet you.

Submit an expression of interest via our website and we'll be in touch with next steps.

Together, we'll keep Port Stephens safe, welcoming, and proud, on the water and at the Lighthouse.



We particularly need people interested in local history who enjoy engaging with the public for short shifts in our Heritage Lighthouse and Lighthouse Keepers Cottage.

### JAN 6 REMEMBRANCE

There was ceremony held on 6 Jan 2026 honouring the brave men and women who risked their lives ten years ago during the East Coast Low storms. It was a point of community pride and showed to all those affected by the events that they are still remembered. State MP Kate Washington and Mayor Leah Anderson were in attendance.



Thank you to Lianne Manley Photography for capturing these dignified portraits of the members who were awarded valour and courage honours ten years ago. And for the many portraits of those who came out to thank them for their service.

Honours awarded to Marine Rescue Port Stephens members involved in the East Coast Low Emergency, "Search and rescue operation to recover yachts Amante, Jem, M3 and Out of Sight and search for crewman...

(Continued on page 10)

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS CONT'D

(Continued from page 9)

washed overboard from yacht Amante" on 6 & 7 January 2016 were:

Medal for Valour: Laurie Nolan

Commissioner's Commendation for Courage: Boat crew - Suzanne Freeman, Ron Lighton (Master), Noel Corcoran, Ian Drummond, Michael Duggan, David Jack, Ken Johnson, Peter Merlino, Tom Miller, Richard Pizzuto, Michael Smith, Paul Sullivan, Eryl Thomas.

Commissioner's Citation: Radio room crew - Steven Alta, Peter Baldwin, Colin Cahill, Michael Grover, Tony O'Donnell, Ian C Peacock, Alfred John Vassallo.



Laurie Nolan and Suzanne Freeman



Laurie Nolan, Harry Gibson (Protocol Officer), Richard Pizzuto



Suzanne Freeman, Lyn Van Homrigh (MRNEW UC), Michael Duggan

Read more about Laurie Nolan's Marine Rescue NSW Medal for Valour: <https://www.marinerescuensw.com.au/volunteer-stories/valour-at-sea>



Ian Drummond



Richard Pizzuto



Ron Lighton (Master)

### FLARE DISPOSAL DAY

On Saturday 17 January 2026 between 3:30pm and 5:30pm NSW Maritime ran their expired flare collection program at Little Beach Boat Ramp, Nelson Bay.

These collection days allow boaters to dispose of expired flares safely at regular intervals during the year. To encourage the public to get along and make a day out of it Marine Rescue Port Stephens was there selling raffle tickets for our Australia Day boat giveaway and cooking up a bbq storm in the food van.

It was a great chance to say hello to some potential new volunteers and let people know a bit more about our organisation

Reminder, it's an offence to ignite flares outside of an emergency, and expired flares must not be discarded in household waste or public bins.

**The next Flare Disposal Day will be Monday 6 April 2026 between 3:30pm and 5:30pm at Little Beach Boat Ramp, Nelson Bay.**

(Continued on page 11)

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS CONT'D

(Continued from page 10)

### SUNRISE DONATION

On 7 February Marine Rescue Port Stephens presented Sunrise with a plaque in gratitude for their generous donation of \$4,000. The plaque was accepted by representatives Trish Wills, Fay Pene, and Rose Fitzpatrick. The money was raised in 2025 supported by the local business community who donated products and vouchers for the Sunrise community fundraising auction.

Thank you Sunrise Lifestyle Resort by Hometown Australia for your ongoing support! Your efforts help save lives on the water in Port Stephens and we appreciate everything you do!



### FISHING COMPS

Our food van was out and about near the Dolphin Watch Cafe at the Public Wharf for two major fishing weekends in February. The fishing comp organisers also used the Marine Rescue Port Stephens radio base and equipment to call in their skeds with all the competitors.

The two comps were the Garmin Billfish Shootout Friday 13 to Sunday 15 February and the NSW Game Fishing Interclub Championships Friday 20 to Sunday 22 February.

Every sale raised in the food van helped fund saving lives on the water.



### BONDI BEACH NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

On 22 February flags were flown at half mast at the Marine Rescue Port Stephens Base to observe the National Day of Mourning for the victims of the Bondi Beach terrorist attack.

On that day all Australians were encouraged to engage in an act of kindness as a symbol of remembrance, mourning and solidarity.

We remembered the 15 innocent lives taken and we honoured the courage of first responders and community members who acted with selfless bravery.

**Morgan Bell**  
Community Relations Officer



**TerryWhite  
Chemmart**

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We are open **7 days a week** (weather permitting) from **8.30am to 3.00pm**.



## FUNDRAISING OFFICER

What's up all! Peter Young here, Fundraising Officer.

Well, what a great Christmas/New Year period! We had all the tourists here in their thousands. The roads were busy and blocked, but everybody was smiling. The Bay was alive!

Our major raffle for 2025 was being sold at many outlets and boat ramps. You all supported it and we thank you for helping us Save Lives on the Water.

We drew the raffle on Australia Day at Fly Point. The winner of the boat was a local from Fenninghams Island. He was a very happy man.

Our Harvey Norman prizes were also well received with two going to locals and three going to Sydney people. Our 6th prize also went to a Sydney-sider.

Marine Rescue would like to thank Wayne from Bay Boats and Greg Chapple from Harvey Norman for their support with the great prizes for our raffle. When shopping think of these Companies and support them so they can continue to support us.



Australia Day at Fly Point was a major fundraiser for us and a chance to meet and talk to so many of you who we usually only make contact with by radio when you are on the water.

It was good to talk to everyone from the community who was in the line or picking up a last minute raffle ticket. We had a fantastic day. Our many workers were flat out keeping up our food and drinks to you. They were a great crew. We are already planning next year's event.

Our food van has been active over the summer. We spent two days at the Lego display at Anna Bay and two weekends at the Billfish Shoot Out and the Game Fish Interclub comps at Nelson Bay.



Our food van is available for events and functions in the Port Stephens area. All you need to do is ring our base and our Fundraising Officer will get back to you to discuss your needs.

**Peter Young**  
**Fundraising Officer**

## GIFT SHOP

A big Marine Rescue Gift Shop welcome to 2026 to all our wonderful members, community, and supporters.

We in the Gift Shop are excited for 2026. Our Gift Shop offers a range of thoughtful gifts for all ages.

We frequently have new stock arriving, including a lovely array of local handmade products.



We also have sales on select items from time to time. You will be delighted by the quality and variety our shop offers. Our prices are very reasonable too.



(Continued on page 15)

## GIFT SHOP CONT'D

*(Continued from page 14)*

So, pop in, say hello, and check out our products.

Sharon, our shop manager, and Miranda, our assistant manager, recently attended the Trade Fair in Sydney. They got to see some very fabulous new products and talk with suppliers.

We look forward to introducing you to this exciting new range of stock as it arrives on our shelves soon.

We have a dedicated group of ladies serving our customers. We also welcomed four new ladies to the team the first quarter of this year.

The shop is open daily from 0900-1500 where you will be welcomed with a smile and a no pressure environment in which to browse and take your time to find that special something.

Our Gift Shop members are a social bunch as well; enjoying group excursions and get togethers over lunch or dinner.

If you would like to join us and become a Gift Shop volunteer, please contact Sharon at [giftshop.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:giftshop.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au)

Do come and visit us. You never know what you might find for your family, friends, acquaintances, or even to treat yourself.



Don't forget our 10% discount to all Marine Rescue staff.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

**Tracy Glode-Sivier**  
**Gift Shop Secretary**

**Sharon Barry**  
**Gift Shop Manager**





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## BOAT MANAGER SAVES UNIT MONEY

Once again, our ever-resourceful Boat Manager, ably assisted by our Operations Officer and crew, has saved the Unit another expense.

Donning board shorts and rashie, our intrepid Boat Manager, Laurie, and Operations Officer, Mick, jumped into the sea pen of Port Stephens 30 and undertook a yearly clean-up of the sand, seaweed, and other marine debris that builds up in the pen.

This year involved a change of plan and the pen was emptied prior to cleaning. This allowed the team to pump

out the muck rather than trying to 'float' it out.

Using the sea pen rather than leaving Port Stephens 30 sitting in the water saves having to lift Port Stephens 30 out the water to clean and then use chemicals to anti-foul the vessel's hull, good for the environment and a considerable cost saving.

Well done to Laurie, Mick, and Victoria for their efforts.

**Iain Blackadder**  
Coxswain



## DECEMBER HELICOPTER EXERCISE

On Monday and Tuesday 8 & 9 December, Port Stephens 30 and 31 supported a group of aircrew from RAAF 2 Squadron to complete their annual Marine Rescue drills.

To complete this exercise our rescue vessels transported two groups of aircrew into Shoal Bay and dropped them into the water where they

climbed into their life raft, conducted safety drills, and were winched from their life raft back to our vessels via the CHC Rescue helicopter.

These strong on-going inter-agency relationships provide excellent training opportunities for Marine Rescue Port Stephens and the organisations we partner with.



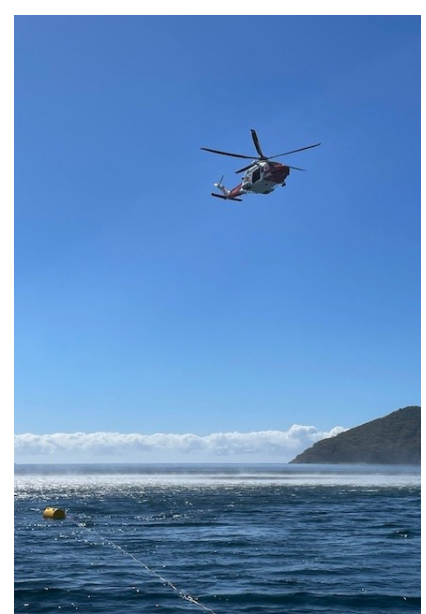
## FEBRUARY HELICOPTER EXERCISE

On 17 February there was morning training with the CHC RAAF Williamstown Search and Rescue helicopter at Shoal Bay and around the waters of Port Stephens up to Soldiers Point.

Our radio operators coordinated with Port Stephens 30 throughout the exercise. It was the first time we used the Port Stephens 30 rescue vessel for this regular

training (in the past Port Stephens 31 has been used) and the buffeting from the helicopter rotor downwash meant we drifted at a rate of 3 knots.

This training helps CHC pilots keep their qualifications current. Marine Rescue Port Stephens is proud to act in cooperation with other emergency agencies to serve the community.



## JUDY WASHINGTON VISIT

The photos you're seeing here are from Judy's recent presentation to Marine Rescue Port Stephens, as shared by Tomaree Headland Heritage Group - huge thank you to Jen Newman Photography for capturing the moment so beautifully.

Judy spoke at the meeting on Tuesday 27 January. Her presentation included meticulously researched detail from her book *Paradise Interrupted*, a beautifully written history of the Tomaree Headland.

As the Heritage Group said, the fact that Judy's book continues to resonate with our community is a real testament to the power of local stories, told with care and passion. The work captures the layered history of the Tomaree Headland with warmth, insight and respect,

allowing readers to learn, reflect, and connect with this special place.

Judy sold 14 copies of *Paradise Interrupted* when she presented to Marine Rescue Port Stephens. The book is available at Readers Retreat, Salamander Bay.

Judy Washington was Port Stephens' 2025 Citizen of the Year. Judy is also an active volunteer in the Nelson Bay Civic Pride team and the Port Stephens Graffiti Removal Team.

Over four years, Judy researched and wrote the history of the Tomaree Headland and Tomaree Peninsula during WW2. Judy undertook the project on behalf of the Tomaree Headland Heritage Group on a pro-bono basis and continues to give all of the proceeds to them.



## THE NUMBERS

### NOVEMBER

Marine Rescue NSW volunteers across the state returned 823 people safely to shore during November, completing 373 search and rescue missions, including 108 emergency responses.

“Following successive record months in September and October, our volunteers were in high demand throughout November, completing 373 search and rescue missions, just 18 fewer than the record set in 2022,” Acting Commissioner Todd Andrews said.

During the month, 56% of responses were for engine, battery, and fuel issues, while crews also attended 22 groundings.

Marine Rescue NSW radio operators managed 17,566 calls in November and kept watch over 19,467 people on board Logged On vessels.

**Hunter/Central Coast** (across all 8 units): 112 search and rescue missions including 29 emergency responses with 211 people safely returned to shore.

Search and rescue missions in locations of highest demand: Lake Macquarie 45, Brisbane Water 18, **Port Stephens 15**



### JANUARY

Marine Rescue NSW volunteers across the state have begun the year in high demand, completing 688 search and rescue missions during January, including 162 emergency responses and the safe return of 1,644 people to shore.

“In January alone, crews attended 19 medical emergencies on our waterways, including cardiac arrest,” said Acting Deputy Commissioner Duemmer. Crews also carried out more than 50 assists to grounded vessels, which were largely avoidable.

Almost half of all responses across the state during January were related to engine issues.

During January, Marine Rescue NSW radio operators managed almost 27,000 calls and monitored 33,646 people on board vessels that had Logged On.

**Hunter/Central Coast** (across all 8 units): 181 search and rescue missions including 37 emergency responses with 433 people safely returned to shore.

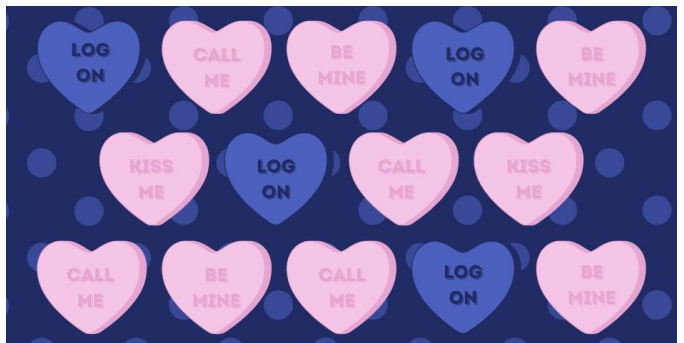
Search and rescue missions in locations of highest demand: Lake Macquarie 77, **Port Stephens 34**, Brisbane Water 26



### THE YEAR OF 2025

During the year of 2025, Marine Rescue NSW volunteer crews performed 4,512 search and rescue missions across the state and safely returned almost 10,000 people to shore.

Marine Rescue NSW radio operators kept watch over almost 270,000 people on board 71,487 logged-on vessels in 2025 and managed 226,946 radio calls, including 105 MAYDAYs and 56 PAN-PANs.



CENTURY 21 PARADISE WATERS—  
NELSON BAY



CENTURY 21  
NELSON BAY  
REAL ESTATE  
Family run  
& owned for  
18 years



**City:**  
**Nelson Bay -**  
**Corlette NSW**

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*"Sam and the rest of the staff are very helpful and any work that needs doing is done quickly and professionally, thank you Century 21 Nelson Bay."*

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4984 4700



Tyneale Kendrick  
Administration  
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Tyrone Hall  
Assistant Agent  
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Assistant Agent  
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## WEDDINGS

Hello Readers

It was a very busy beginning for 2026

### ***Emma Jane and Mark***

2 January 2026

A beautiful intimate wedding.



### ***Melanie and Dwayne***

12 February 2026

A renewal of vows.



### ***Kelly and Joshua***

7 February 2026



## WEDDINGS

*(Continued from page 23)*

The Weddings Team along with the Maintenance Team gathered together to give the Inner Light Weddings grounds a much-needed spruce up.

The fence was cleaned by the Maintenance Team and given a fresh coat of paint by the Weddings Team. They also promoted growth of the new grass-planting with a daily afternoon watering.



Weddings Team (Smurfette) birthday gals: Sue, Deb, Sharon, and Kerry.



On behalf of the Inner Light Weddings Team, we wish the happy couples all the absolute best for the future.

**Bloss Cleary**  
**Weddings Coordinator**

# Inner Light Weddings Nelson Head



What an amazing backdrop for incredible memories!

Tomaree and Yacaaba Headlands together with Port Stephens waters form a unique and amazing backdrop for your wedding ceremony.



Let us prepare the perfect venue for you and your guests.

You are able to style your wedding as little or as much as you wish utilising the items listed in our brochure, including set up by our volunteers, at no extra cost.



Plan your dream wedding ceremony in this idyllic and unique setting.

Prepare in the Charming Lightkeeper's cottage. Then make your grand entrance from this Heritage building.

For all wedding ceremony enquiries and to receive a copy of our information brochure, please contact:

Wedding Coordinator  
Mobile 0490 226 399

Email:

weddings.portstephens@marinerescuensw.com.au

## 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 Q24C Doppler
MFD's (Multifunction Display):	Raymarine Axiom 9 and 5 x Raymarine Axiom Pro 12 Hybrid Touch
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 including Broughton Island, Seal Rocks and 30nm out to sea or further if tasked.

**PORT STEPHENS RESCUE VESSEL PORT STEPHENS 30  
SHIRLEY CLARK**



**Specifications**

Make/Model:	Yamba Welding and Engineering, NAIAD 10M Rescue Vessel
Length:	10 Metres (33 feet)
Beam:	3.22 Metres (10.5 feet)
Displacement:	4.545 Tonnes
Draft:	0.77 Metres
Fuel:	900 Litres
Engines:	2 x 300 HP Suzuki V6 Outboards
Top Speed:	42 Knots
Crew:	Operational – normally 3-4
VHF:	Icom IC-M605EUROB VHF Radio
Radar:	Raymarine Quantum Radar T70416
MFD's (Multifunction Display)	3 x Raymarine Axiom 12" Pro and 1 x Raymarine 9"
AIS:	AIS 4000 Class A AIS
RDF:	Rotheda RDF RT-300
27MHz:	GME GX400B 27Mhz Radio
DCN:	Tait TM 9355 Radio

**Rescue Vessel Port Stephens 30 Shirley Clark** was built by Yamba Welding and Engineering, Yamba, NSW and completed in June 2023. Her single hull is made of aluminium.

**Port Stephens 30** is fitted with state-of-the-art radar, direction finding and navigation equipment as well as forward looking infra red search equipment.

**Shirley Clark** has been prepared to Marine Rescue NSW specifications with minor customisation at the request of Port Stephens Unit and is capable of covering the area between Port Stephens and anywhere along the coast including Broughton Island, Seal Rocks and 30nm out to sea or further if tasked.

## APPRECIATION



**Contributors to this issue of *Port Chatter*:**


Ben van der Wijngaart, Mick Duggan, Morgan Bell, Peter Young, Sharon Barry, Tracy Glode-Sivier, Bloss Cleary, Shane Morgan (photos), Lianne Manley (photos), Jen Newman (photos), MRPS Facebook.

**Distributors of the *Port Chatter*:** The following people volunteer their time in making deliveries of this newsletter. Distribution Co-Ordinator: Ross Debenham, Peter Merlino, Marian Chappell, Deb Nolan.


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	Pools	Adept Pools
<b>Health</b>	Chemists	Terry White Chemart Pharmacy, Nelson Bay
	Eye Care	Specsavers
<b>Funeral Services</b>		France Family Funerals
<b>Windscreen Repairs</b>		Novus Autoglass Shop
<b>Real Estate</b>		Century 21 Paradise Waters, Nelson Bay
<b>Restaurants and Cafes</b>		Inner Light Tea Rooms, Nelson Head
<b>Radio Station</b>		Port Stephens FM 100.9
<b>Apparel</b>	Industrial Uniform	Totally Workwear



TOTALLY  
WORKWEAR



Salamander Bay