

Vsheet

free issue

March 2015



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VMR₄₀₀
Volunteer Marine Rescue
SOUTHPORT

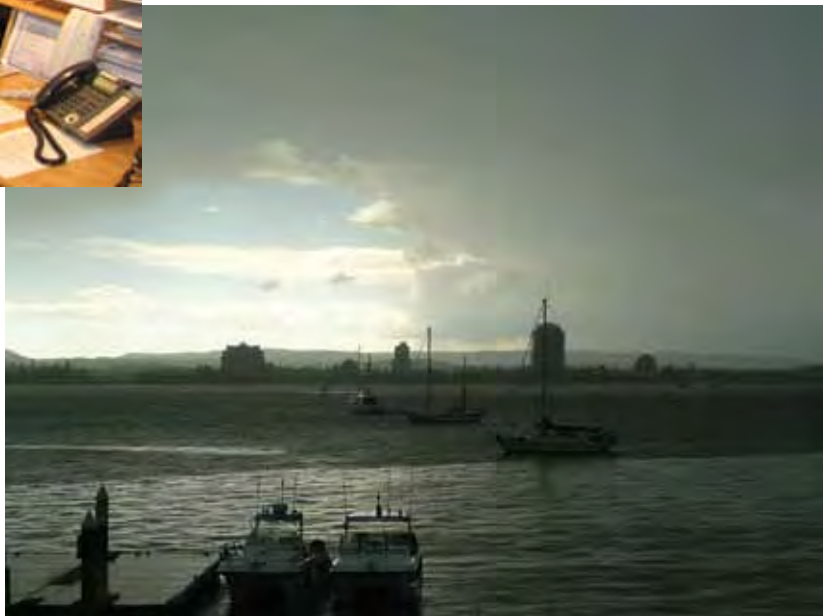
from *MCV*

SCRAP

BOOK



VMR Vice President Dave Macdonald greets Ashmore Rotary President Peter Gilmore on the Clubs visit to the Base.



Dangerous storm approaches the Base



Jess Taylor warms up for the job ahead.



House boat under tow on the Broadwater





Volunteer Marine Rescue
SOUTHPORT - SURFERS PARADISE
Assoc. Inc.

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2014 - 2015

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Vsheet

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President's Report

PRESIDENT Steve Pomas

Happy New Year and welcome to 2015. I hope everyone had a great holiday season and had the opportunity to spend plenty of time on the water. Certainly from a VMR perspective we had one of the busiest summer's we have ever seen with a record number of assists. I'd like to say a big thank you to all our weekend and especially call-out crews who were able to come in at short notice and keep our boats manned and on the water to cover all the calls for assistance. It really is the people that make VMR what it is today!

On a much sadder note in mid January we had to say a final goodbye to VMR Life Member and Senior Skipper Chris Leech. Chris had a long and hard fought battle with cancer and showing his true fighting spirit held on for much longer than the Doctors ever thought he would. Words simply don't do justice to the passion and intensity Chris brought to VMR and we are all in agreement that he will never be replaced. No one would have been more proud than Chris himself to see the many blue VMR shirts and emergency services uniforms that lined the driveway of our Base after his funeral for a much deserved Guard of Honour. RIP Leechie.

Moving onto good news I think it's important we give credit where it due and I'd like to make special mention of a couple of organizations that helped us out of a potentially limiting situation just prior to Christmas. After executing an emergency stop to avoid a wayward PWC some damage was done to the engines of *Marine Rescue 2* that looked like potentially keeping it off the water through the busy Christmas and New Year period. Through the awesome efforts of Brisbane Marine, Nautilus Marine Insurance and our State Association we had our insurance claim approved and the boat operational and back on the water within 3 days, which in the week before Christmas is a mighty effort. *Marine Rescue 2* went on to do almost 90 hours of work over the following 2 weeks which wouldn't have been possible without the swift actions of those companies previously mentioned. Thank you once again. Your efforts were most appreciated!

Looking forward to the year ahead there's still some large projects underway with radio tower replacement and pontoon refurbishment already planned and awaiting final approvals. We once again thank all our members for your continued support and while hopefully you aren't requiring our assistance directly, we look forward to seeing you out on the water!

Regards

Steve Pomas
PRESIDENT

YOU WIN!

AUSTRALIA DAY RAFFLE



CONGRATULATIONS

First Prize \$2000.00 Ticket 31555
U Giufre, Burbank Qld.

Second Prize \$1500.00 Ticket 31138
D Jones, Mornington Vic.

Third Prize \$750.00 Ticket 32547
J Periaho, Biggera Waters Qld.

All winners have been notified.

PROUD SUPPORTERS OF VMR SOUTHPORT





Notable Jobs

with Glenn Norris

VMR Southport crews have been exceptionally busy over the past 2 months. The Christmas / New Year week saw in excess of 35 rescue activations undertaken, ranging from towing of broken down vessels, ungrounding of stranded vessels and battery jump starts through to attending marine medical incidents with the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS).

On the Australia Day long weekend VMR Southport attended to 34 activations over the 3 day period using in excess of 2500 litres of fuel, with 81 hours of engine time, utilising 3 Rescue Vessels. The cheap fuel prices at present are proving very beneficial to the Organisation and it is hoped they continue to stay low in the coming months.

A male jetski rider presented at VMR Southport recently seeking medical assistance for an injured hand. A VMR / QAS First Responder attended to the patient providing pain relief and bandaging in the first instance. The gentleman had fallen from his craft and in the process the throttle lever had penetrated his hand between his middle fingers causing moderate bleeding and extreme pain. QAS Paramedics attended and transported the patient to hospital for required stitching to the injury.

A crew was despatched recently to assist a trio who had been towing each other around on a rubber tube, behind a jetski. The request for assistance came about after the towrope had been caught in the impellor of the jetski, rendering it inoperable. On arrival the VMR Crew assessed the situation to discover that not only had the towrope been sucked into the impellor, so had part of the deflated rubber tube. The craft was towed to the Grand boatramp.

A man contacted VMR over the Christmas period and requested assistance with his large Cruiser that had become stuck in the mud in the northern Broadwater. Being late in the evening a crew was called in and responded to assist the gentleman. The vessel was towed safely into deeper water, and to show his gratitude, the man contributed a very substantial donation. Stating that he had never utilised the services of a Marine Rescue Organisation before, the man could hardly believe that a Crew would respond so quickly, late at night, midweek, and all in a volunteer capacity.

VMR crews often joke when they are requested to do a quick job. A quick tow can often turn into something larger and quite often does. Recently a midweek callout crew was despatched to tow a small vessel from Wavebreak Island to Biggera Creek, leaving the VMR Base at 0900hrs. The job was completed by 0945hrs. A request for a tow from Paradise Point to the Spit boatramp was then received. Activation undertaken and completed at 1100hrs. Returning to the VMR Base the crew had time for a toilet break and cup of tea, when at 1215 a request is received to tow a vessel from 16 nautical miles north east of the Gold Coast Seaway to Horizon Shores Marina. After pre trip checks and notification to Water Police, *Marine Rescue 2* departs at 1250hrs. The broken down vessel is located and taken in tow to return through Jumpinpin Bar and then on to Horizon Shores. Activation completed at 1600hrs. *Marine Rescue 2* then commences returning to Southport, only to be advised that a Gold Member requires a tow from Slipping Sands to the Marine Stadium at Southport. The said vessel is taken in tow at 1700hrs. Arriving back at Southport, a request is then received to assist Gold Coast Water Police to assist in locating a missing vessel. At 2110hrs this assist is completed and *Marine Rescue 2* returns to Base. Another case of dedicated crews and quick VMR jobs. VMR's role is one of being available 24/7 and that is what we aim to do.



Maritime Safety Queensland

On-the-spot fines to keep waterways clean

Operators who fail to meet their ship-sourced pollution prevention responsibilities will face swift penalties with Maritime Safety Queensland marine officers now able to issue on-the-spot fines of more than \$1000.

Maritime Safety Queensland is committed to protecting the environment and these new powers send a very clear message that our waterways should be kept safe and clean.

Previously, offenders would be issued with a summons to have the matter heard in court at a later date, which could result in lengthy delays and excessive costs to the taxpayer.

Marine officers can now board a vessel with a ticket book and deal with specific breaches there and then. Some offences such as failing to keep proper records of sewage and oil disposal or not having proper sewage treatment units on board carry fines of \$1100.

The new powers will be particularly relevant to ports where the large volume and frequency of shipping activity requires a high level of cooperation between vessel operators and regulators. Already marine officers and their water police partners have conducted a series of compliance operations in Gladstone Harbour focusing primarily on safety and pollution obligations.

These new powers will give them added opportunities to protect not only ships' crews and passengers, but the environment as well.

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VISITORS to our shores

Is it the 'BLACK PEARL' ? – NO!!! – 'NOTORIOUS'



with Ken Gibbs



In early December 2014 the 'NOTORIOUS' sailed into our waters on a southerly journey anchoring in front of the VMR Southport base.

'The Notorious' is a replica of fifteenth century caravel that was used by the Portuguese and Spanish from the mid-1400s to 1530. In their time they were quite revolutionary as they were very fast and manoeuvrable and had the advantage of being able to sail into the wind.

This ship was launched on 7 February 2011 after 10 arduous years of construction by Graeme Wylie a cabinetmaker by trade. Graeme and Felicite his wife spent \$20,000 and many thousands of hours working on the ship inspired by a local legend of a now long gone Portuguese shipwreck from his home town in Victoria.

The ship was built from recycled timber mainly Monterey Cypress and weighs 55 tonnes and is 21 metres in length with a six metre beam, the f'ward mast being 17 metres high.

Almost everything onboard is an authentic period design excepting for the GPS navigation system and the diesel inboard engine and a few other comforts most of which are hidden away behind wooden paneling when the ship is open for inspection. 'The Notorious, is quite often mistaken for a pirate ship mainly due to the dark colour of the hull and sails due to the 600 litres of tar applied after construction.



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Volunteer Marine Rescue

SOUTHPORT

VMR Southport's Charter

To save and assist in saving life and property at sea.

To provide personnel and equipment in order to carry out search and rescue operations at sea and on the Gold Coast waterways.

To liaise and work with other marine rescue groups.

To undertake campaigns to educate members of the boating public in matters of marine safety.

SOME STATS

ACTIVATIONS	OCTOBER 2014	NOVEMBER 2014	DECEMBER 2014
Towed Vessels	41	47	44
Jump Starts	1	3	1
Pump Outs	1	3	
Transporting	1	5	3
Fire			1
Standby	2		1
Medical	1	5	4
Searches	2		1
Dispersal of Ashes		1	1
Public Relations	4	8	1
Crew Training	60	91	107
Groundings	5	5	6
Other	2		2
TOTALS	120	168	172

ACTIVE MEMBER PROMOTIONS

Active Members who have achieved higher ranking
Congratulations to:

Senior Crew
 Rex Scott

Crew
 Martin Lott



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MID-WEEK STANDBY RATES*

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VALE:

Harry Frederick Romanis

19.04.1915 - 29.12.2014

with Anne McKee
Harry's Sister

Harry Frederick Romanis joined VMR Southport when it was still called the Air Sea Rescue Association in 1985. His current membership card says 109.

He had been an accountant and he and his wife, Jewel, had come to the Gold Coast on their retirement.

It was an obvious choice to join, as he had been involved with sailing both for himself and for his children. He had belonged to the Middle Harbour Yacht Club in Sydney where he had crewed for a number of skippers on various yachts and, because they raced both within the harbour and outside, he was aware of the need for safety and the comfort of knowing that some organisation was looking out for him. He had also been heavily involved with the Balmoral Moth Club where his children sailed. Harry helped lay out courses and buoys and manned the Rescue boats during the races.

His only disappointment with his time with VMR was that owing to his age, he could not go out in the rescue boats. He was seventy at the time. However he did get to go out when scattering peoples' ashes.

He became a Radio Operator firstly at headquarters and later at the Gold Coast Seaway Tower. He really enjoyed his shifts and when



we came up to visit him, would show us around. He also liked telling us about incidents which happened, both funny and potentially sad.

Jewel, his wife worked hard in the Women's auxiliary and on the occasion of his 80th birthday, arranged a surprise BBQ at Headquarters. It was not just the BBQ that was the surprise but the organisation needed to collect the scattered extended family, all of whom came. He was thrilled to have the party there.

As well as VMR, Harry was a keen lawn bowler, an enthusiastic member of two Orchids Societies, a Mason and a Lay Assistant at the Anglican Church of the Holy Spirit.

He was still a member of VMR, albeit retired, when he died aged 99 and followed keenly the events, the new boats especially Marine Rescue 4.

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME

Do you want to

- Become a volunteer
- Learn new skills
- Meet new friends
- Provide a community service



Vacancies exist for Marine Radio Operators to help maintain communications with the boating public and rescue boat crews on call.

For more details call VMR Base anytime
55 911 300
and talk to the Radio Operator on duty.

Newly elected Management Committee members



Jo Schon - TREASURER



Bob Jordan - COMMITTEE

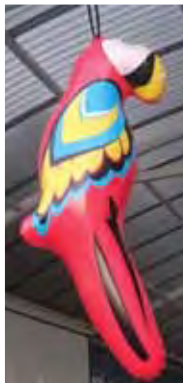
Christmas celebrations VMR style



Peter Holliday



Photos by:
Glenys Pashendag
Jayde Morris



Diana Gibson

Annie Erichsen



Charlie Henry Yvonne Koschel

Dave Macdonald





Vale: Christopher Linden Leech 27.11.1950 – 13.01.2015

Senior Skipper and Past President
Chris Leech



with Diana Gibson

Fortunately for Volunteer Marine Rescue Southport and users of the Gold Coast waterways, an early morning fishing trip on the Broadwater lead to Chris Leech following up on his curiosity, when he heard a vessel logging voyage details by marine radio. Twenty five years later the Base was host to a funeral and celebration of life service, with family, friends, colleagues from other services, and a very large contingent of his fellow VMR Southport Active members in attendance.

Despite him continually denying it, rumour has it that Chris began his Active service as a Radio Operator, but he certainly quickly became an integral member of Yellow Crew and commenced his rise through the Crew boating ranks. Chris's energy and enthusiasm was felt by every person who came in contact with him. A man who was dedicated to the promotion of VMR Southport at every opportunity, Chris was happy to extoll its services and needs to anyone, at any time. His fervor resulted in many donations, sometimes monetary, often equipment, and many times personal involvement.

Chris was the Duty Skipper of Yellow Crew until promoted to Senior Skipper, rotating amongst all Crews. In acknowledgement of his dedicated service he received Life Membership of VMR Southport in 1999.

Although only serving as Search & Rescue Controller, Vice President, President and Communication Controller on the Management Committee spasmodically for seven years Chris somehow managed to always be involved in any function, activity, building project or need that the Squadron had going. His vision and cajoling of finances, both from Management and outside sources, resulted in the construction of the

outdoor function area, known as "Leechy's Lean To". His time and energy also enabled the Administration Building to be completed with voluntary workers and well within budget.

Never a shrinking violet, Chris gave his all, and expected no less from every Active member of VMR Southport. He loved sharing his wealth of boating and local marine knowledge, in teaching all members seamanship, refining Radio Operator skills or spending long overnight duties discussing values, boating talk or just plain gossip. Ill Health was never a barrier to his service and he never complained or let on regarding his discomfort, even returning in later months to assist in chairing and advising at Radio Operator meetings.

His love of VMR Southport and for the work of VMR Squadrons throughout Queensland was never met more strongly than at a Southern Zone meeting – suggest to State, take this to State, tell them that at State, all being catch phrases to a preamble on any given matter. He may not have always agreed, but he always respected the person, their involvement with VMR and their wearing of the blue uniform.

Over the years his family, Pat, Justine and Nathan probably had many an occasion to attend functions without Chris due to his love of VMR and its service to the boating public of the Gold Coast. Nevertheless, he always spoke so proudly of them and acknowledged their patience with him for his time with VMR Southport activities. The love for, and of, family maintained him through his worst periods of illness and he was determined to meet his first grandchild, Emily, and share in her as much as possible.

Many people have come and gone from the ranks of VMR Southport but Chris Leech certainly left his mark physically and so deeply in the hearts and minds of so many over the years of his service. There is barely a corner of the Squadron's life that doesn't have a memory of Chris and many a tale will be, doubtlessly be told over the years He will be missed greatly.



Offshore Boat Fire



with Scott Gregory



After a quiet time on Blue Crew doing some training, 1100 hrs on the Sunday morning came around. Whilst MR4 and MR1 were off the VMR pontoon doing side-tow training and MR2 doing docking training at the S.Y.C, I was at the base on my own on alert 5 monitoring the Radio Room when everything started to happen.

At 1111 hours, the next 4 minutes went mad. VMR Southport received over 40 calls from members of the public. Phone calls from Kirra to Bayview Towers, all reporting they can see black smoke on the horizon from a boat fire. VHF channels 16 and 73 started to flood in calls from boaties reporting the same.

All VMR boats were called on the radio to return to Base ASAP as my brain started ticking with what the crew were about to take part in.

At the same time, we also received a radio call from a 46ft Riviera in the Seaway that had lost steering. After all 3 boats had returned to Base swiftly, Kate and Mark were the first to join myself in the Radio Room and this is where they were to stay for the event of the emergency.

I meet the rest of the crew on the pontoon for a quick briefing in the matter and then everyone knew exactly what to do from there. Martin and Natalie and I boarded MR2 and went to the Seaway to meet the Water Police, Terry and Karl on MR4 to assist the Riviera in the Seaway and Jake, John and Sed on MR1 to pick up QFS and head out.

Initial reports were that multiple people had abandoned the boat from the fire and were in the water. The Water Police and MR2 responded quickly and headed out 12 nm off Surfers Paradise. No GPS coordinates were necessary for this job as once you were in the Seaway, you could not miss the black smoke on the horizon.

MR2 got half way out and was flagged down by a passing vessel and talking to the occupants on board, there was only one person

on board the burning vessel. They got the passenger on board and then passed him onto another vessel offshore which luckily had a doctor on board, then proceeded to head inshore at a rate of knots.

MR2 carried on to the burning vessel and pulling up to the fire realised there was not much left. The yacht (approx. 46ft) was already close to burnt to the water line and was still bellowing out black smoke. With only the one passenger on board, who was now close to our base with waiting paramedics on the pontoon, MR2 and Water Police waited offshore.

MR1 turned up several minutes later with QFS on board and extinguished the burning yacht. Due to the amount of water now on board the yacht from fighting the fire, it has now rested on the bottom of the sea bed. We collected some debris from the surface that was left and started to return back to the Seaway.

Whilst this was all happening offshore, the Radio Room at our Base was in full swing. A big thankyou to Kate and Mark, also Glenn who was down stairs doing maintenance, who organised everything from QAS, QFS, Police and media. The phones did not stop.

The vessel with the single occupant from the boat fire turned up to Base, the patient was treated by waiting paramedics, and rushed to Gold Coast University Hospital with severe burns to 40% of his body. He was transferred to the burns unit in Brisbane and is now recovering. We wish him all the best. His treatments may take a couple of years for him to fully recover.

As for Blue Crew, I thank you for your efforts as it ran like a well oiled machine and all of our training fell into place without any hiccups. As this was the second fire we were tasked to in one week, everyone on crew handled these emergency jobs well and we should be proud of what we do at VMR for our boating community.



FIRE AT SEA

with Sed Crest

On Sunday 1st February 2015, Blue Crew were tasked to assist after a billowing black column of smoke rose on the horizon offshore. The Seaway Tower asked for all communication on channel 73 to cease during the emergency operation.

Marine Rescue 1 was activated to transport a fire cache and four firefighters from the Grand Hotel to the inferno. *Marine Rescue 2* was already at the scene assisting with the Water Police to rescue the vessel's occupant, who was reportedly in the water after jumping into the ocean after suffering burns to 40% of his body. The Ambulance Service was activated and another passing vessel, luckily with a doctor on board, was speeding the burn victim, to our Base to rendezvous with the waiting ambulance personnel.

Photos: Scott Gregory
Glenn Norris



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Queensland Water Police

BOW RIDING

with Senior Constable Christian DUNN
GOLD COAST WATER POLICE

Many Queensland boat and personal water craft (PWC) owners and their families are now taking full advantage of our “beautiful one day, perfect the next” weather and getting out there and enjoying a day’s boating on our Queensland waterways. The seasonal increase of vessel traffic has also seen an increase in unsafe activities taking place. One such activity is known as ‘Bow Riding.’

‘Bow Riding’ refers to the unsafe practice of passengers remaining on the bow of a vessel while it is under way. ‘Bow Riding’ on boats is something Water Police see quite often and although it may seem to be fun, it’s an accident waiting to happen. If the driver slows down suddenly or hits the wake of another boat, the bow rider can easily fall off and be under the boat and into the path of the propeller in an instant. Unlike cars, boats don’t have brakes and will not be able to stop in time. Also a life jacket will not provide any protection if this happens!

Although no specific ticket or on the spot fine exists for ‘Bow Riding’, as it is intrinsically dangerous it may be deemed an offence under the ‘*General obligation on persons involved with operation of ship to operate it safely*’ This offence incurs a maximum penalty of over \$54,500 or 1 year imprisonment.

Water Police are requesting boat operators to NOT to take part in ‘Bow Riding’.

Remember, enjoy your time on the water and make getting home safe your number one priority!



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Department of Transport and Main Roads -
Maritime Safety Queensland

NOTICE TO MARINERS

Queensland Government

027 (T) of 2015

Issued by Brisbane Maritime Region on 19 January 2015

Area: Southport pilotage area

Locality: Labrador Channel, Southport Broadwater

Activity: commencement of dredge works

Mariners are advised that dredge works have commenced at the southern end of the Labrador channel, immediately south of Loders Creek and will continue in a northerly direction to the South Wavebreak Island Channel until Friday, 24 April 2015. All vessels passing through the dredge area shall navigate at minimal speed and comply with the dredger's day shapes and lights whilst keeping a vigilant lookout for associated dredge equipment.

Refer to notice: none
Cancel notice: none

AUS charts affected: 814

Latitude and longitude positions are on WGS84 horizontal datum and are compatible with GDA94 datum. For further information about this notice, please contact:
The Brisbane Regional Harbour Master's office:
Phone: 07 3632 7500 Email: vtsbrisbane@msq.qld.gov.au

Notice authorised by: Regional Harbour Master (Brisbane) - Maritime Safety Queensland

DID YOU KNOW?



The temperature of green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) nests influences their gender and crawling ability.

The highest mortality in sea turtle hatchlings occurs during the period between when they escape the nest and reach off-shore waters and this mortality is directly related to their locomotor performance. Because sea turtle populations around the world are endangered or threatened, active management of sea turtle rookeries (breeding locations) is becoming increasingly common.

In a project funded by the Foundation Dr Booth discovered that

- most turtles in cooler nests (<30 °C) were faster crawlers and exhibited better self righting ability
- hatchlings from cooler nests were slightly larger but had similar weight than hatchlings from higher nest temperatures
- however warmer water had the opposite effect with hatchlings swimming at 30 °C exhibiting greater power stroke rates and produced greater thrust than hatchling swimming at 26 °C.

Crawling and swimming speed are crucial to help them escape predators and reach the open ocean.

The information gained from this project could be used by rookery managers to identify nests that are outside the ideal temperature environments, and these nests moved to better locations in order to increase the number of sea turtle hatchlings reaching the open ocean.

Listen to a podcast of Dr Booth at

www.SeaWorld.com.au/research-and-rescue

with Belle McCarthy



Rescue

In July 2014 a juvenile bottlenose dolphin was caught on a drumline hook off Main Beach. Due to the severity of her injuries she needed to be brought back to Sea World for stitches and rehabilitation. This meant separating her from her mother, who was a capable, healthy dolphin and it was not possible for the team to secure her to bring her in with the calf.

Initially the plan was to release Kyra within the first two weeks and a plan of action was devised in preparation to assist in reuniting her with her mother. Due to her age Kyra would still have been suckling from her mother and had not learnt life skills such as catching fish and escaping predators that she would need to survive on her own.

Due to rapid weight loss and a significant infection we were not able to release her in that time frame and re-uniting her with her mother was no longer possible.

We continued to care for Kyra and after four months and two surrogate mothers she is doing well. Her wounds have healed and despite the drumline hook severely damaging one of her eyes causing blindness she is feeding freely and seeks out interaction and attention from the trainers. Due to her young age on arrival the Queensland Government has recommended for her to become a resident here at Sea World.

Did you know different species of dolphin create different sounds when they communicate? James Cook University researcher Dr Soto discovered that it is possible to distinguish between the sounds created by Australian humpback dolphin (*Sousa sahulensis*) and Australian snubfin dolphin (*Orcaella heinsohni*), with 16 and 11 different whistle types respectively. These acoustic variables, in combination with unique species specific sounds (i.e. squeaks in snubfin and wails in humpback dolphins) can play an important role when using acoustic monitoring to estimate distribution, relative abundance and fine scale habitat use of these two near threatened species.

This was discovered in a project funded by the Sea World Research & Rescue Foundation.

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House fire at Couran



It was the eve of Australia Day and all VMR Rescue crews were on duty conducting activations across the Gold Coast Broadwater.

with Glenn Norris



Photos: Karl Brandt and Scott Gregory

Marine Rescue 1 had been transporting a boat owner back to his vessel after an earlier medical incident in which he had been treated at Gold Coast University Hospital, *Marine Rescue 2* was towing a vessel which had run out of fuel near Couran Cove and *Marine Rescue 4* was searching for a vessel in the Aldershots area that was unable to start and had no navigation and deck lights due to an electrical issue.

I was navigating aboard *Marine Rescue 4* along with Skipper Kate O'Shea at the helm and crew members Karl Brandt and Natalie McAuley. At approximately 2100 hours whilst approaching the North Arm of the Coomera River we observed an extremely bright orange light appearing amongst the trees in the Couran Cove area of South Stradbroke Island. As the orange light became intensely brighter, it became evident that a large fire had taken hold of what we thought was initially a vessel. Flames were at least 50 metres in the air and thick black smoke was spiralling into the sky blowing off in a north easterly direction over the Couran Cove Resort.

We altered our course, advising the VMR Southport Base of our observations by marine radio, then cautiously proceeded to the Couran Cove canal entrance where it became visible that a property was ablaze in the first canal in the Couran Point development. Luckily, the smoke from the fire was rising straight up into the sky and was ocean bound allowing us to safely observe what was occurring. Again, passing our observations back to the Base by radio, we were advised that the Queensland Water Police had instructed all VMR Southport vessels in the area to cease their current operations and that *Marine Rescue 1* and *Marine Rescue 4* were to immediately proceed to the Paradise Point pontoon to provide transport to Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Officers (QFES) and Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) Paramedics who had been despatched to this incident. *Marine Rescue 2* was instructed to return to the VMR Southport Base to collect extra fire fighting equipment which is stored there on behalf of QFES. VMR Jacobs Well was also instructed to mobilise and supply the QFES equipment they store at their Rescue Base.

On arrival at the Paradise Point pontoon, Fire Brigade and Paramedic personnel and vehicles were arriving and through a very efficient operation, all emergency services equipment was quickly conveyed to Water Police and VMR vessels. Both QAS and QFES provided 'On Scene Commanders' for the situation. It should be noted that the myriad of equipment they additionally provide is really impressive.

As all vessels departed the pontoon en-route back to Couran, the distant north easterly sky showed a distinct orange glow and the western sky showed the remnants of a lightning display from a passing thunderstorm.

With further information becoming available to the attending Emergency Services, it was clear there were no injured people and that the residence was unoccupied at the time of catching alight. Initial reports of more than one house being alight were also discounted.



After the approximate 20 minute trip to Couran, all equipment was unloaded at the pontoon of the burning home. This pontoon provided an excellent platform to work from as it was quite a distance from the residence thus removing imminent danger. A vessel initially moored at the pontoon had been moved to allow emergency vessels to moor.

Unfortunately, at this time the home was nothing more than twisted corrugated iron and burnt timber and the majority of the dozen Fire Fighters in attendance, donned with breathing apparatus, attacked the still alight inferno. Using water supplied from the South Stradbroke Island Fire Appliance and from hydrants near the property, thousands and thousands of litres of water were hosed onto the fire from many different angles and on the arrival of extra water pumping equipment and Fire Fighters from the Wasp Creek Rural Fire Brigade, every corner and position was covered in attacking the flames. Pumps were also set up on the pontoon, pumping water from the canal to the many metres of hose which had been spread across the property. QAS Paramedics stood by in case of injury to any Fire Fighters and Water Police Officers set about carrying out their duties.

Despite the monumental efforts of everyone involved nothing could be done to save any part of the homes structure nor any of the items within the property and after more than 3 hours of exhausting work, the QFES were satisfied that all areas of heat had been extinguished and whatever that was left smouldering posed no further danger of re-igniting. At approximately 0100 hours on Australia Day *Marine Rescue 2* was further tasked to return to Paradise Point to collect a QFES Inspector who attended to liaise with Fire Fighters about the incident.



At about this time, QAS Communications received information that a 19 year old male was needing medical attention relating to the same fire and was experiencing breathing difficulties in the Couran Cove Resort. He was quickly attended to by a Paramedic and as a QAS First Responder. I was also called to assist the Paramedic. *Marine Rescue 4* was then tasked to transport this patient back to Paradise Point where another Paramedic vehicle was waiting to transport him to hospital. After being given the all clear, this patient returned to VMR later in the morning for transport back after a chest X-Ray.

At approximately 0130 hrs *Marine Rescue 2* was allowed to leave the scene and undertake the tow of the vessel that had lost its electrics earlier in the evening. At approximately 0145 hrs *Marine Rescue 1* and *Marine Rescue 4* were tasked to then return the Fire Fighters and Paramedics and all of their equipment to Paradise Point. A huge night was had by all involved and VMR Southport crews returned to Base at 0250 hrs.

On Monday VMR Southport was again tasked to transport QFES Investigators back to the site so they could continue their inquiry.

In almost 20 years of being a member of VMR Southport, this activation was possibly the largest I have attended. Almost 20 QFES staff, 6 QAS staff, 6 Police Officers, 11 VMR Southport Crew, 3 VMR Jacobs Well Crew and 6 Wasp Creek Rural Fire Brigade attended the incident and a fantastic job was undertaken by all involved. A great display of Emergency Services multi-agency interaction. It will be an Australia Day Weekend I will never forget!

Blue Crew Rescue

with Terry Hunt - Coxswain

On Australia Day, 26 January 2015, Blue Crew was under the pump again as a call came through from Rowley, "The Birdman of the Waterways". He was arriving in thirty minutes and we should have a boat ready as a pelican was down and needed help on the east side of Wavebreak Island.

Sed Crest and I were in the boat and ready to go!

On approaching Wavebreak Island the tide was coming in and crashing on the beach and Rowley was advised that we couldn't go closer or we'd not get off again. Quick as a flash, Rowley bailed out over the side with his trusty net and away he went. The pelican had his head on the side and looked very ill. Rowley kept low, nearly crawling, then LEAPED and got him. Wow, what a man! Now to get them back on board... Rowley had to wade out with the bird in his arms. The operation took twenty minutes and another life was saved by Blue Crew. Hooray!!



**L to R:
Terry Hunt, Rowley with his Pelican
and Sed Crest**

Volunteer *Marine Rescue Southport* came to the party yet again by providing boat transport while I rescued a sick pelican off the eastern beach on Wave Break Island. The bird was found early in the morning lying on the beach unable to stand.

These symptoms nearly always point to botulism; a virulent organism they pick up from the water. Botulism quickly paralyses muscles (as any woman who has Botox injected into wrinkles will tell you). In birds the illness progresses very quickly and is nearly always fatal unless treated early, meaning in the first 48 hours. Even with quick intervention only half of the birds I get to hospital will survive.

Happily this little girl looks like one of the survivors.

Thanks again VMR!!

R

**Rowley from Wild Bird Rescues will attend any sick or injured pelican or swan and any species of bird that has been hooked or is entangled in fishing line. This is a volunteer service that operates 6am-9pm, 7 days a week.
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AUSTRALIAN JETCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP 2015

with Lina Heldon

Round 1 and 2 of the 2015 Australian Jetcross Championship kicked off in Perth, WA on the last weekend of January. Plenty of contestants from all over Australia made it over to the Western State to battle it out on the water for the start of what is looking like it's going to be a hugely popular championship this year.

The Australian Jetcross Championship will be happening in several different locations across Australia over the next few months. The next 2 rounds will be held in Redcliffe in Qld over the weekend of Feb 21-22. The tour then continues onto Sydney for the last 3 rounds in March and April. Entries are still open for anyone to join and be part of the ever growing jet ski racing community. Entry forms and racing licences can be applied for on the Australian Jet Sports Boating Association's (AJSBA) website www.ajsba.org.au. If you don't have a current AJSBA competition licence you will also need to purchase either an annual licence or a day licence for each day of competition. The AJSBA is the Australian representative body for all Personal Watercraft Racing. Their aim to help promote, organize and supervise personal watercraft events in a professional and safe manner.



The first 2 rounds of the comp in Perth went off without a hitch and plenty of tough battles were fought between the best of the best of Australian jet ski riders. The riders will now go home and put their trophies on display and start to get ready for the next few rounds in Redcliffe later on in February. Even if you are not into racing as a competitor, the jet ski races are great as a spectator sport and can be enjoyed by the entire family. For more information on the upcoming events please contact AJSBA or have a look on their website.



Before



After

Access stairs at the Seaway

The Gold Coast Waterways Authority on 19th December 2014 opened new access stairs onto the short pipe at the Seaway in time for the busy Christmas period. The \$40,000 project is a welcome amenity that now assists in providing safer water access for divers, surfers and snorkellers who in the past had to climb up and down the rock wall to enter the water from this popular site.

As well as the stairs a 7m x 7m concrete slab with concrete seating has been added to assist divers in their gear up for dives.



Coffee anyone?



with Sarah Race

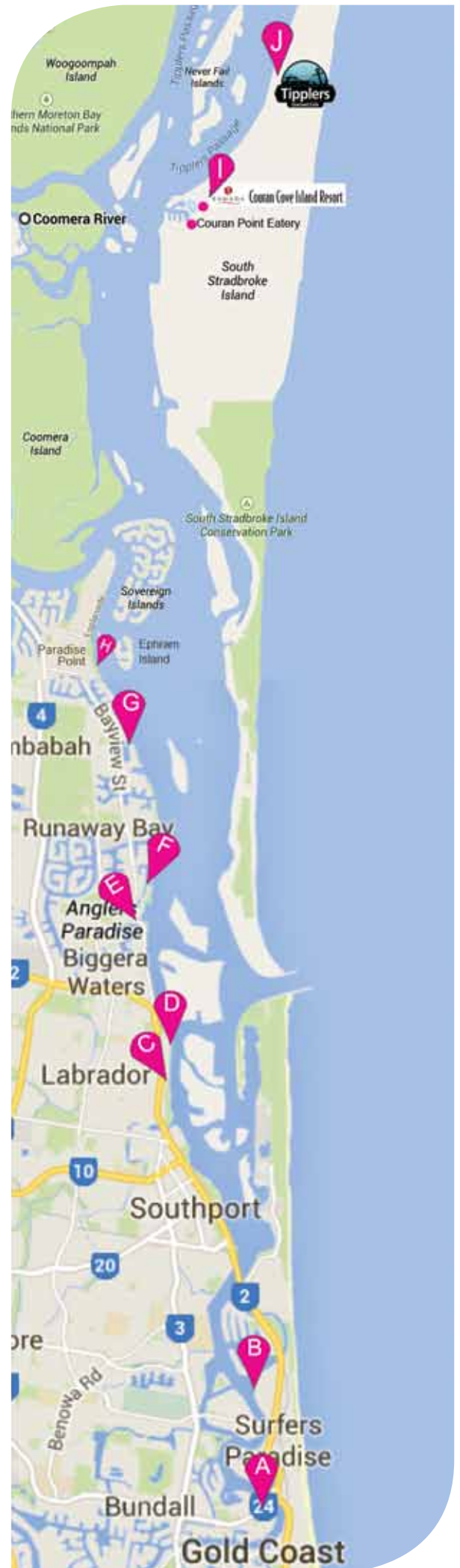


Not everyone has the privilege of a full kitchen complete with a cappuccino maker on board their pleasure boat, I know I certainly don't.

However, there's nothing nicer than cruising the great Gold Coast waterways, and incorporating a nice coffee in the same trip, hanging out with friends and family.

I have located, just a few to wet your taste buds, and if you can add to this list feel free to drop me a line of their location.

- A. Capri Via Roma, Eatery's, coffee shop, deli, supermarket.
Accessibility - Public Pontoon
- B. Budds Beach, Eatery's, WC, picnic area.
Accessibility - Moor on the sand
- C. Labrador, "Aqua" Building, plenty of choices with many coffee outlets
Accessibility - Public Pontoon
- D. Labrador, "Grand" Building, plenty of choices with many coffee outlets
Accessibility - Public Pontoon/boat ramp, moor on sand
- E. Biggera Ck, short walk north to a coffee shop.
Accessibility - Boat ramp, moor on the sand
- F. Runaway Bay Shopping Centre, all the supplies you need.
Accessibility - Public Pontoon
- G. Runaway Marina, Coffee shop
Accessibility - Pontoon
- H. Paradise Point numerous eatery's, picnic area, WC
Accessibility - Moor on the sand
- I. Couran Point Eatery WC
Accessibility - Public Pontoon, moor on the sand
- J. Tipplers, Eatery WC
Accessibility - Public Pontoon, moor on the sand





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