



# **MARINE RESCUE WHITFORDS:**

An Abridged History: 1973 – 2020

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Marine Rescue Whitfords would like to thank the following for their contributions to this booklet:

- All the Group members, past and current, who have shared their information and memories in recording this history, in particular Geoff Sparrow, Gary Hollis, Peter Huggins and Neil Dawson.
- Susan Dagleish, Community History Librarian, City of Wanneroo.
- Copy edit by Robin Bower
- All the organisations that provided historical information.

**Marine Rescue Whitfords: An Abridged History: 1973–2020** was compiled by Stephen Bandy.

Document version 202103

Published 31 March 2021.

*The Feb 2019 constitution was a replacement for a previous version dating from before the WA Associations Act 2015 (ie. not our first constitution).*

## DISCLAIMER

This product uses information from various sources. Marine Rescue Whitfords cannot guarantee the accuracy, currency or completeness of the information. Marine Rescue Whitfords accepts no responsibility and disclaim all liability for any loss, damage or costs incurred as a result of any use of or reliance whether wholly or in part upon the information provided in this publication or incorporated into it by reference.

## INTRODUCTION

Within the next few years, Marine Rescue Whitfords (MRW) will celebrate 45 years as a volunteer marine rescue group. The Group was formally established in July 1975<sup>1</sup> by members of the Whitfords Sea Sports Club (later known as Ocean Reef Sea Sports Club) and formally incorporated in May 1977.

MRW has grown over the years to a team in excess of 100 active volunteers and around 1,000 radio subscriber members. In the early years, the Group averaged around 30 rescues a year. Today the Group averages just over 220 calls for sea and rescue (SAR) assistance.

All volunteers give their time and skills generously providing a range of services for the Western Australian boating community.

This booklet provides an abridged history of Marine Rescue Whitfords from the early days to March 2021.

## WHO ARE WE

Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group (WVSRG), trading as Marine Rescue Whitfords (MRW)<sup>2</sup>, has been serving the local boating community for 45 years, during which time we have built an unrivalled reputation for performing hundreds of marine searches and rescues each year in all conditions. MRW is one of the largest sea rescue groups in Western Australia, with 110 active volunteers. MRW provides a marine radio service to the boating public around the clock, 365 days of the year and operates three purpose-built rescue vessels. In the past 12 months, MRW was involved in 225 SAR incidents resulting in around 550<sup>3</sup> people being brought safely back to harbour after having suffered a breakdown or other boating mishaps.



*MRW Green 1 working with police air wing*

The MRW is an incorporated body and is a registered non-for-profit, charity organisation.

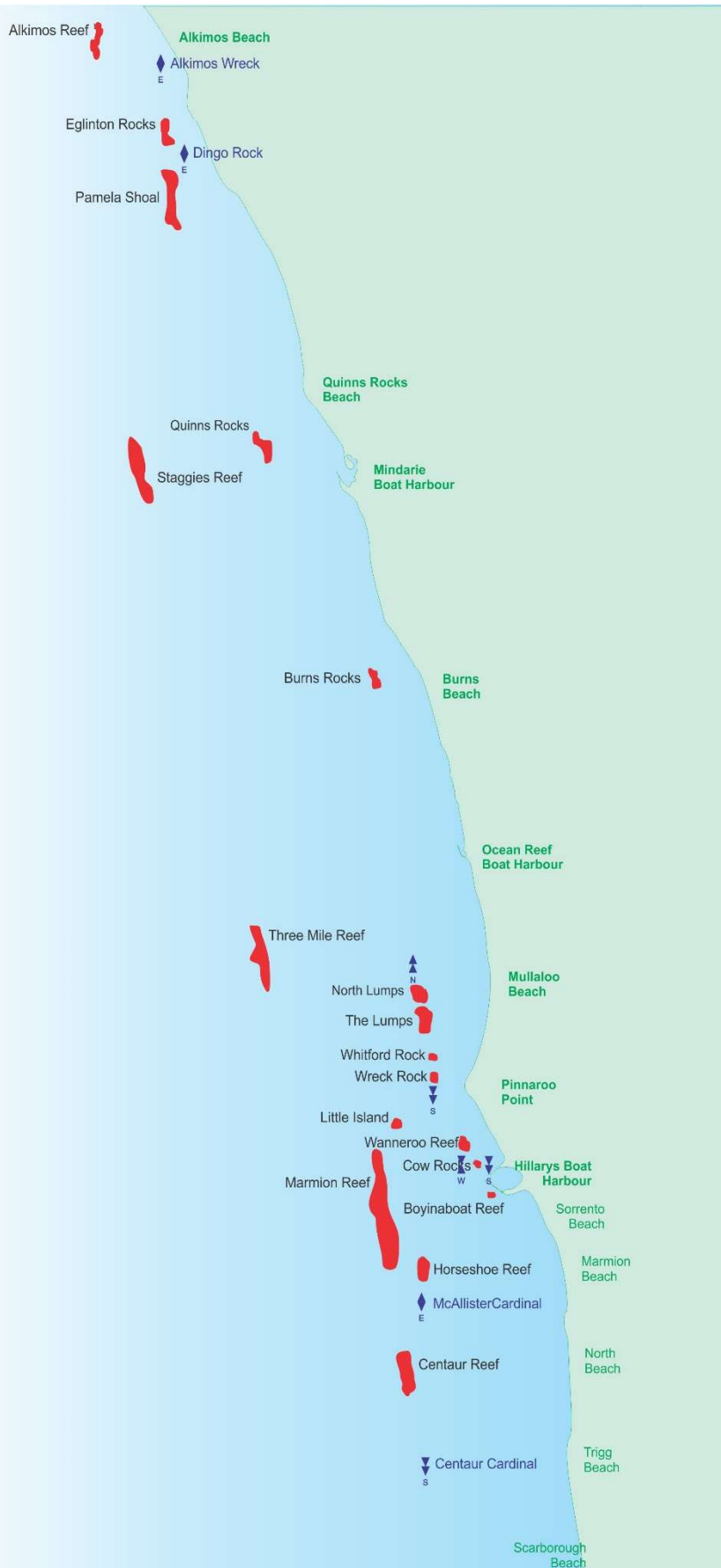
MRW is a member of Volunteer Marine Rescue of Western Australia and recognised by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and Water Police as an integral part of the Perth metropolitan marine search and rescue resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Whitfords Sea Sports Club -- The First Ten Years

<sup>2</sup> MRW is used throughout the booklet

<sup>3</sup> DFES WAMSAR database 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020



*The extent of MRW operation.*

Our willing volunteers enable MRW to provide a range of services including:

- our "24x7" radio service;
- search and rescue operations using our three vessels;
- training in aspects of boat safety for our volunteers and for members of the public;
- conducting public safety activities including flare demonstrations to increase public awareness of boating safety issues; and
- undertaking public relations including MRW's Open Days.

Our Operations Centre, consisting of our radio tower and the Ron Upton Operations Hall, is located in Ocean Reef, a few hundred metres from the Ocean Reef Marina.

Our rescue vessels are located at Hillarys Boat Harbour..

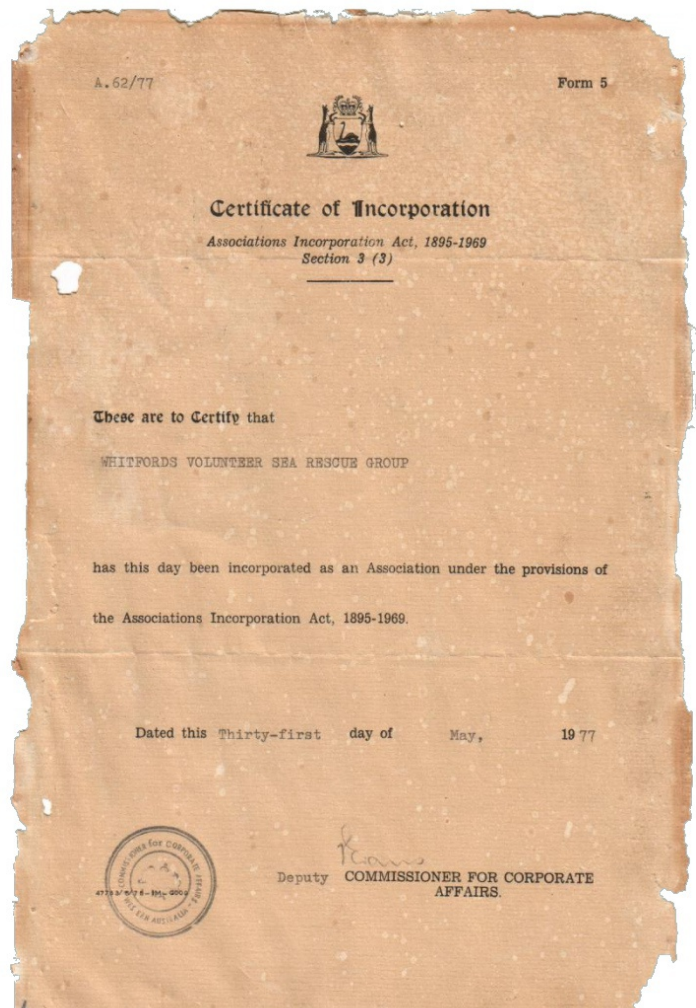
MRW operates from City Beach in the south to the Alkimos wreck in the north and out to sea as far as operational limits permit. This is an approximate area of 700 sq mi and includes Mindarie Keys Marina, Ocean Reef Marina and the Hillarys Boat Harbour.

## THE BEGINNING

One weekend in 1973, an elderly couple were overdue off Pinnaroo Point. A group of worried fishermen went out searching for them. Unfortunately, they found the couple had fallen out of their dingy and drowned.

Following the double fatality, a group of "boaties", all members of the Whitfords Sea Sports Club (now Ocean Reef Sea and Sports Club – ORSSC), saw a need for a sea search and rescue organisation in this area and founded an informal group in July 1973. This group went on to become what we now know as MRW. The role of MRW at that time was to be available and "lookout" for other 'boaties' using the waters off the Whitfords Beach area. Not a lot has changed in over 40 years.

After a couple of years of operation, in 1975 the volunteer group decided that the time was right to formalise their operations through the ORSSC. ORSSC made changes to their constitution to formally recognise MRW. This required members of MRW to be members of ORSSC.



*Original Certificate of Incorporation*

In 1977, a public meeting was held at the old Sorrento Beach Hall to present a proposal to incorporate the Group and formally separate from the ORSSC.

The WA Police, SES, the local surf lifesaving group, the Shire of Wanneroo and members of the public, attended the meeting. The proposal was unanimously accepted and passed that evening, and so MRW was formed.

Incorporation of the Whitfords Sea Rescue Group took place on 31 May 1977.



*Launching boats from the beach*

MRW established itself on the beach at Pinnaroo Point. In the early days MRW used private boats and would launch straight off the sands into the water. The boat trailers would be unhooked from the cars and a tractor/4WD would come along and drag the boat and trailer over the beach and drop the boat into the water. Owners needed to make sure their engines started as you were dropped straight into the surf.

A "logon box" was set up on the beach at Pinnaroo Point for sea goers to record their departure time, number of people on the boat, direction in which they were going and estimated time of return. Remember, this is in the pre-radio days so this important facility was the best technology available at the time.



*Original logon/logoff facility*



*Mobile headquarters*

After some dedicated fund raising the group acquired a caravan, which became their proud "mobile headquarters" at Pinnaroo Point.

Then someone donated a bus. On the weekends radio traffic was monitored from the "new" MRW operation headquarters, in the form of an old converted bus, on the beach at Pinnaroo Point.

MRW then established a compound at Ocean Reef. The compound consisted of an operations shed, radio tower and socialising shed (bar and food). The shed is in the centre of the picture. The sheds and tower were acquired from the Water Corporation left behind after the construction of the Ocean Reef sewerage outfall



*MRW compound at Ocean Reef*

The radio tower consisted of a partially steel structure. MRW added a structure to the top to convert it into the main look-out and radio base station. The tower was erected on high ground to give a panoramic view of the ocean.

Following the compound location MRW moved into the ORSSC building and then in 1988 into its own purpose-built Operations Centre. See the Group Resources (Tower/Hall) section for more details.



*Installing the structure to house the radio operations*

Aside from running the base station, the members quickly determined the need for a suitable launching ramp at Ocean Reef, so construction started on a concrete ramp with all the volunteers carting concrete in trailers and wheel barrows, putting in many hours of back breaking work. Unfortunately this effort was only enjoyed for a few weeks, before Cyclone Alby came through and washed it away.

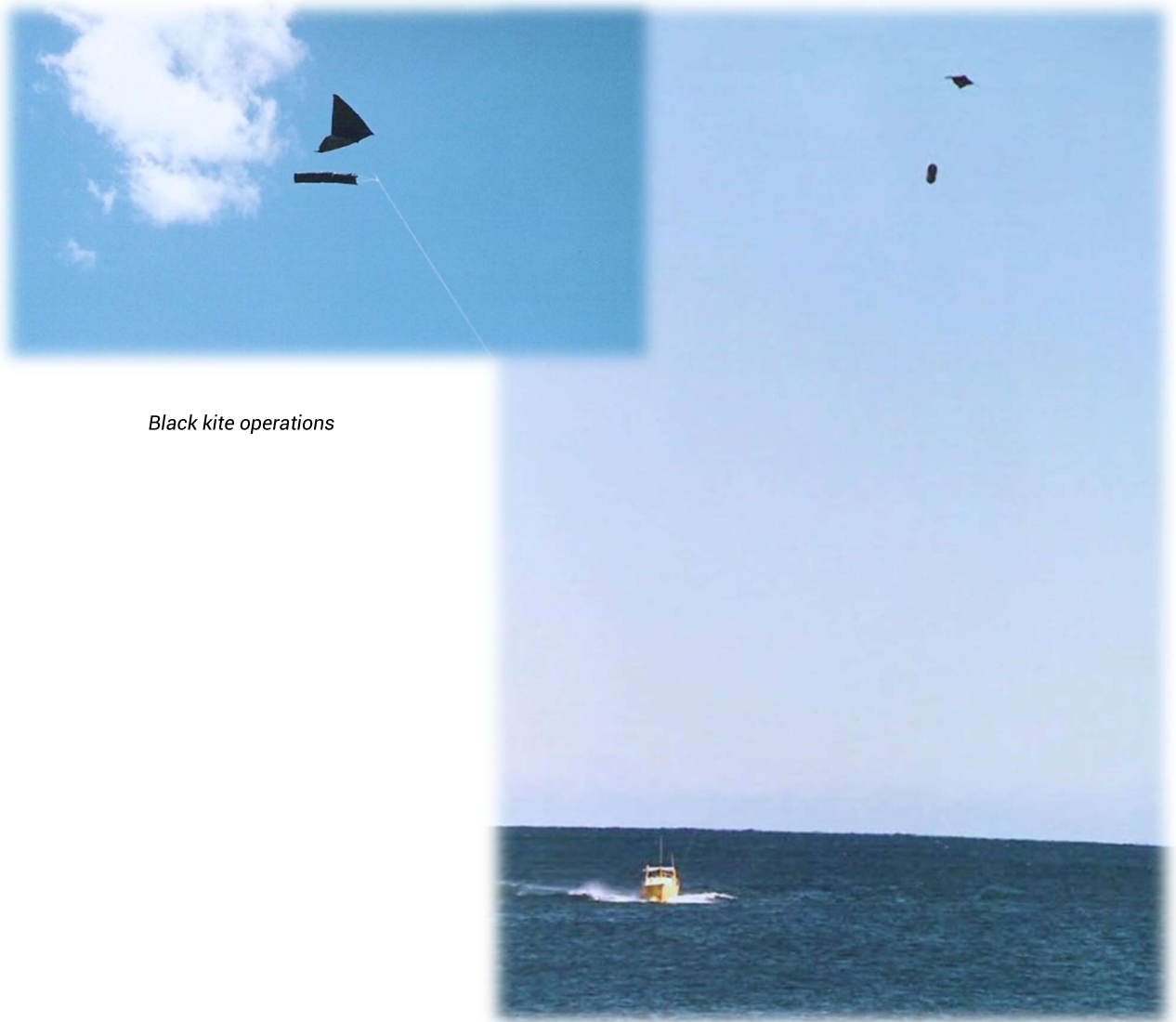
After that, mesh and rubber tracks were tried; however, these just disappeared into the sand.

In time, the Shire of Wanneroo was able to fund the building of the excellent launching facilities we enjoy today, complete with a separate parking area and jetty for the Group's use.

### **Use of black kites**

Before GPS, black kites were flown from the back of private rescue vessels to assist in navigating to vessels requiring assistance.

The kites would be raised and the vessel requiring assistance would call the rescue vessel and indicate the direction of the kite. This allowed the rescue vessel to home in on their location.



*Black kite operations*

## METROPOLITAN VOLUNTEER SEA RESCUE AND DFES

The differences in the way metropolitan and regional Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) groups operated resulted in the formation of two VMR representative bodies. The metropolitan groups formed the Metropolitan Volunteer Sea Rescue Group (MVSRG) and the regional groups formed Volunteer Marine Rescue WA (VMRWA).

MRW, in conjunction with Fremantle and Cockburn Volunteer Sea Rescue Groups, formed the Metropolitan Volunteer Sea Rescue Group (MVSRG), an alliance created to improve service for the boating community between the Cockburn grain terminal in the South and the wreck of the "Alkimos" in the North.

In 2002, all regional VMR groups in WA moved under the umbrella of the Fire and Emergency Services Authority (DFES).

Following the resignation of Fremantle and Cockburn VSR from MVSRG to operate under DFES, MRW held a Special General Meeting on 15 June 2016 to vote on the motion "...that Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group (Inc) become an approved Volunteer Marine Rescue Service under section 18H of the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998 ..". The motion was passed.

On 1 July 2016, MRW was approved as a VMRS Group under the Act.

Whilst this action has resulted in much greater predictability in our funding and has given MRW access to expanded training and administrative support from DFES, we are still able to provide our marine safety services to the public virtually unchanged.

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### FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

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FE401\*

#### FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES ACT 1998

##### APPROVAL OF VMRS GROUP

Correspondence No. BGU/0038/02

Department of Fire and Emergency Services

Pursuant to section 18H(1) of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998*, I hereby approve the following group of persons as a VMRS Group for the purposes of the Act—

Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group (Inc.)

WAYNE GREGSON, APM, FES Commissioner.

*Government Gazette notice 1 July 2106*

## OVER THE YEARS

### 1973–1984

- July 1973—following the double fatality, members of the Whitfords Sea Sports Club (now Ocean Reef Sea and Sports Club: ORSSC), saw a need to establish an informal sea search and rescue organisation.
- 1975—the informal sea search and rescue was formalised in the ORSSC constitution.
- January 1977—the State Government advised that a boat launching facility at Ocean Reef would be built on Perth's northern coastline.
- May 1977—MRW registered their new Constitution disconnecting the organisation from ORSSC.
- July 1977—The Wanneroo Shire approved concept plans for the ORSSC clubhouse.
- March 1978—the Ocean Reef Boat Launching Facility environment review programme was advertised.
- November 1978—the State Government signed the go ahead for the Ocean Reef Boat Harbour. On 22 January 1979, construction of the Ocean Reef Boat Harbour was commenced following many months of frustrating delays. Temporary launching was permitted from the harbour beach during the construction period.
- 2 December 1979—The Ocean Reef Boat Harbour was opened by the Premier of Western Australia, Sir Charles Court.
- 1983—MRW was allocated a portion of land for its operations and training centre.

### 1985–1994

- Late in 1987, MRW was finally able to raise enough money to commence building its new Training and Operations Centre. Land was granted to the MRW by the City of Wanneroo on the basis of a peppercorn lease. With the help of the volunteer members, donations of materials and equipment by private sponsors, and a lot of fund-raising the building finally reached completion.

The building was officially opened on 23 October 1988.

MRW Headquarters now stand as a tribute to those dedicated volunteers of the early days.



*Construction of the Operations Centre*

- 1991 The first Green 1 was launched.

## 1995–2004

- 1996–saw MRW construct and take ownership of “Green 1” which was the first dedicated, custom built sea rescue vessel. Green 1 was christened on 14 April 1996 at the Ocean Reef Boat Harbour by Mrs Jean Hall.
- 1996–Robbie Young, the Commander of the day, took the opportunity to recognise Jean Hall and her daughter Annette Hall with life membership for their 20 plus years of dedicated service to the MRW.
- 1998–The Group made changes to its constitution which removed the requirement that the Commander be a member of the Whitfords Sea Sports Club and form part of the club's management. This allowed Sea Rescue members who were not members of the Whitfords Sea Sports Club to fulfil roles on the sea rescue committee.

The Whitfords Sea Rescue group still remains very closely affiliated with the Whitfords Sea Sports Club.

- September 2000–Construction of the shed started
- 2000–the Group purchased its second dedicated standby rescue vessel, Green 4. August 2000 saw the start of addressing a replacement for G1
- 2002–The City of Joondalup provided a grant towards the construction of a new Green 1 named the “Stacy-Hall”. The vessel was completed in 2005 at a cost of \$495,000, and is still MRW's main workhorse.



*Stacy-Hall: Green 1*

- 2002–Green 4 was sold, allowing the purchase of a new fast Leisurecat multihull, fast response vessel Green 2, which entered service at Christmas 2006.
- 2004–MRW, in conjunction with Fremantle and Cockburn Volunteer Sea Rescue Groups, formed the Metropolitan Volunteer Sea Rescue.

## 2005–2014

- 22 October 2005–Green 1 was officially launched.
- August 2006 the members vote to adopt a new Constitution. It now meant members of MRW did not have to be members of the ORSSC.
- December 2006–The new Green 2, a Leisurecat multihull entered service.



*Leisurecat – Green 2*

- June 2007–The BBQ trailer was constructed with the support from Martin's Trailers and Mr Ted Moses.



*Customized BBQ trailer*

- April 2008–The Western Australian Government introduced the Recreational Skipper's Ticket as a certificate of competency boat skippers.
- 2010–Green 2, Leisurecat multihull vessel, was replaced with a Naiad fast response boat, which became the new Green 2, City of Joondalup



*City of Joondalup – Green 2*

- 2010–MRW started a newsletter called “Callout”.
- February 2011–Green 4 prepared for sale
- September 2013–MRW established a Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group Facebook page.
- May 2014–Mindarie Marine Management offered a free pen for one of our vessels.

## 2015 and beyond

- 1 July 2016–the Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group was approved as a VMRS Group under the Fire and Emergency Services Act.
- 19 June 2017–Quadrant Energy presented MRW with a new Ford Ranger vehicle to replace the aging Range Rover.
- June 2017–MRW Land Rover Discovery was sold.
- 3 September 2017– Premier Mark McGowan announced the upgrade of the Ocean Reef boat harbour.



*Artist's impression of the Ocean Reef Marina*

- 13 February 2019–The Constitution of Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group Inc. was adopted.
- August 2019–The City of Joondalup (Green 2), had a major refit with a new collar, internal fittings, electronics and engine upgrades.

- September 2019–MRW established the Marine Rescue Whitfords Facebook page. This replaced the Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group Facebook page established in 2013.



MRW Facebook page

- November 2019–The new MRW fast response, rescue vessel Green 3, Ken Blackie arrived.



Record of Registration

- November 2019–Green 3, RV Upton was sold.



RV Upton – Green 3

- December 2019–saw a major refurbishment of Green 1, “Stacy-Hall”.



*Stacy-Hall – Green 1 mid refurbishment*

- 1 December 2019–MRW had its inaugural Open Day where the public were invited into MRW and had the chance to see how the organisation operates. The day's activities included the official launch of the 10m Naiad rescue boat RV Ken Blackie (Green 3).
- February 2020–the Operations Hall was renamed the Ron Upton Operations Hall in honour of the service Ron gave to MRW.
- 24 October 2020–MRW changed its VHF logon/logoff, communication channel from channel 73 (Ch73) to channel 77 (Ch77).

## HONOUR ROLE

### PATRON

In 1996, Mr Paul Filling JP was made Patron of the Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group. He continued as Patron until August 2009.

In August 2009, the position of His Worship the Mayor of the City of Joondalup was appointed Patron for MRW. In 2009, Troy Pickard was Mayor of the City of Joondalup. In 2017 Albert Jacob, the Mayor of City of Joondalup, accepted the position of Patron MRW.

### COMMITTEE

As an Incorporated Association, the ongoing governance of the Group is directed under a constitution. Ongoing compliance with the Group constitution and Standing Orders is dealt with by a Committee. Committee positions as at June 2020 were:

Commander	Radio Operations Leader
Deputy Commander (Administration)	Fuel and Equipment Officer
Deputy Commander (Operations)	Education Officer
Secretary	Personnel Officer
Treasurer	ICT Officer
Boat Squad Leader	

Committee positions are filled by members elected from within the Group on a 12 month basis.

### COMMANDERS

1975–1976 Ron Upton  
1976–1980 Lance Gutheridge  
1980–1981 Chris Hilson  
1981–1984 Gary Hollis  
1984–1985 Lance Gutheridge  
1985–1988 Gary Coby-Smith  
1988–1991 Ken Blackie  
1991–1994 Vicki Richards  
1994–1997 Robbie Young  
1997–2000 Gary Hollis  
2000–2003 Fab Zanuttigh  
2003–2006 Roger Howell  
2006–2009 Mark Carruthers  
2009–2012 Geoff Sparrow  
2012–2013 Mark Carruthers



Left to right: K Blackie, G Coby-Smith, G Hollis, C Hilson, L Gutheridge, R Upton

2013–~~2~~014 Roger Howell  
2014–2016 Mark Carruthers  
2016–2019 Ron Harris  
2019–present Geoff Sparrow

## **Life Members**

Life Memberships are awarded in recognition of exceptional service to MRW over an extended period. Life Membership is an honorary status which is inherited and is complementary to the members' ordinary or associate membership status.

### **Life Members at June 2020 were:**

Henry Hall  
Ron Upton  
Don Baum  
Jorg Muller  
John Stacy  
Gary Hollis  
Ken Blackie  
Jean Hall  
Annette Hall  
Angela Kellett  
Michael Leishman  
Roger Howell  
Mark Carruthers

## **10 Years or More Service**

See Appendix 1 for members who provided ten years of service (as at 31 March 2021).

## GROUP RESOURCES

### VOLUNTEERS

During the early years, the club's membership grew along with, and in parallel to, the population of the area and the enthusiasm and expectations of the new clubhouse and launching facilities. Volunteer member numbers as at June 2020 is 112 – 16 females and 96 males.

Our willing volunteers enable MRW to provide a range of services including:

- our "24x7" radio service;
- search and rescue operations using our three rescue vessels;
- training in aspects of boat safety for our volunteers and for members of the public;
- conducting public safety activities including flare demonstrations to increase public awareness of boating safety issues; and
- undertaking public relations seminars, conferences and the MRW Open Day.

### SUBSCRIBERS

MRW offers a radio 'call sign' registration service. The public can subscribe to this registration service. Since the peak of subscriber registration of 1000 from 1978 to 1980, when the Group's operations centre was built, the Group's subscriber registration steadily declined to a little over 400 in 2001 reflecting the economic situation and different MRW initiatives and policies. Since 2001, the membership has gradually increased.

In 2020, the number of subscribers was around 900.

### TOWER/HALL

In 1980, ORSSC clubrooms were constructed at Ocean Reef near the marina complex. The Control Room for the Yacht Club, at the front of the building, was offered to the MRW for radio operations and monitoring duties.

During this time, the MRW continued to expand its operations, extending its services to the public with boat handling and safety, navigation and training in radio operations.

Late in 1987 after long hours of fund-raising activities, MRW was finally able to raise enough money to commence building its new Training and Operations Centre. Land was granted to the MRW by the City of Wanneroo on the basis of a peppercorn lease. With the help of the volunteer members through "busy bees", donations of materials and equipment by private sponsors, and a lot of fund-raising, the building finally reached completion.

Finally, MRW moved to their own premises adjacent to the ORSSC clubrooms on the club's northern boundary.



*Various stages of the Operations Centre development*

The building was officially opened on 23 October 1988.



*Operations Centre official opening*

MRW Headquarters now stands as a tribute to those dedicated volunteers of the early days.

In February 2020, the Operations Hall was named the Ron Upton Operations Hall in honour of the service Ron Upton gave to MRW.

## VESSELS

Since its formation, MRW has had a number of rescue vessels, from the use of private boats in the beginning through to today's modern, all weather fast response vessels. At present, MRW has three rescue vessels:

- The Stacy-Hall: Callsign Green 1
- The City of Joondalup: Callsign Green 2
- Ken Blackie: Callsign Green 3

The current fleet is capable of operating in rough weather and far out to sea. Green 1 is capable of 30 knots, Green 2 is capable of 45 knots and Green 3 is also capable of 45 knots. All vessels are extensively equipped with SAR electronics, first aid, towing equipment, radar, multiple consoles with GPS/Radar/sounder controls, radio direction finders, VHF and 27MHz radios, forward looking infra-red camera for night searches, and defibrillators (AED). All vessels are fitted with mobile devices for communications and record keeping.

### Private Boats

In the early years, 10 private vessels made up Green Squad and these were used for major searches and training exercises.

The boats were organized into three colour coded groups, the Red Squad were the trainee groups, the Gold Squad the more senior experienced members who handled the in-shore rescue work and the Green Squad, manned by the experienced senior Skippers, handled the major rescues.

*Private boats lined up at the Operations Hall opening*



*Private callsigns of Green Squad*

AGE 28. Whitfords Sea Sports Club Inc. April 1978.

PRIVATE CALL SIGNS OF GREEN SQUAD/LAND PARTY. 3/4/78.

Call Sign.	Name.	Green Squad number.
W102	MASON.R.	4
W112	MOTTRAM.A.	12
W113	HILSON.C.	6
W117	WILLIAMS.B.	5
W133	GUTTERIDGE.L.P.	3
W159	FYFE.P.	9
W127	DAY.G.	13
W155	BERGHAN.C.	11
W177	DIXON.A.	7
W120	HEATHCOTE.D.	10
	*****	
W1	UPTON.R.	1
W2	HOLYOAK.J.	(Training Officer).
W3	BAUM.D.	(Land Party O.I.C.).
W4	RIMMER.D.	(Land Party)
W5	FROYLAND.J.	" "
	*****	
Green Squad Number.	Name.	Call Sign.
1	UPTON.R.	Whit. 1
2	MORTON.D.	" 122
3	GUTTERIDGE.L.P.	" 133
4	MASON.R.	" 102
5	WILLIAMS.B.	" 117
6	HILSON.C.	" 113
7	DIXON.A.	" 177
8	MARTIN.N.E.	" 108
8	BERGSMA.B.	" 106
9	FYFE.P.	" 159
10	HEATHCOTE.D.	" 120
11	Not to be used as it sounds like (7)	
12	MOTTRAM.A.	" 112
13	DAY.G.	" 127
14	KNIECKNER.J.	" 115
15	DICKINSON.E.J.	" 176
16	SMALLA COMBE.G.	" 158
17	BAUM.D.	" 101
18	PERRETT.A.	" 128

Robinson (Communications Officer).

-000-

## The Tank

The "Tank" was a 4.5m, 3mm plate hull and bottom, centre console, aluminium vessel with a Yamaha 50HP outboard. It was purchased in September 2006 as a training vessel for Restricted Skippers Ticket (RST) practical training.

Construction cost was \$23,000 included trailer, safety gear with additional ribbing.



*The "Tank"*

## Callsign "Green 1"

In 1996, MRW constructed and took ownership of "Green 1" which was the first dedicated, custom built sea rescue vessel. Green 1 was christened on 14 April 1991 at the Ocean Reef Boat Harbour by Mrs Jean Hall.



*First Green 1*

The next vessel with the callsign Green 1 was a 9 metre aluminium craft registration number AO268. The vessel was built by "Sea Rider Boats" in 1996 to a "Jackman" design. The vessel had twin Volvo diesel motors each with 200HP. It was capable of 30 knots. It was equipped with VHF and 27MHz radios, RD, searchlight, galley, WC, samson post, self-draining deck, fly bridge and radar arch.

The "Sea Rider" was sold towards the end of 2006 for \$70,000.



*Sea Rider Green 1*

The third Green 1 was named "Stacy-Hall" after John Stacy and Henry Hall who were among the founding members of the Group, each having given nearly 30 years' service to the boating community of Perth.



*Stacy-Hall Green 1*

"Stacy-Hall" is our largest vessel at 12.1m. The heavy duty aluminium vessel was designed by Mark Ellis Marine Design and constructed by Legend Boats. When built it was powered by 2x450HP Caterpillar diesel motors and designed to do the "heavy lifting" or extended search and rescue (SAR) operations. "Stacy-Hall" carries 1,500 litres of fuel making it capable of sustaining extended sea operations of up to 22 hours, while providing a safe and comfortable working platform for our volunteer crews. Her registration number is DG188.

The vessel was completed in 2005 and officially launched on 22 October 2005 at a cost of \$495,000, and is still MRW's main workhorse.

Following an extensive refit by Shoreline Marine Fabrication in December 2019 the engines were replaced with 2x450HP Caterpillar C7.1 diesel motors.

The vessel is fitted with a wide range of navigation and search instruments, including an integrated chart-plotter, sounder, and radar. Also on board are 27 MHz, VHF and HF marine radios, radio direction finders and a FLIR infrared camera.

#### [Callsign "Green 2"](#)

MRW's first rescue vessel with a callsign "Green 2" was an 8.23 metre fibreglass craft, registration number DO174, built by "Leisurecat Australia" in 2006. The cost was \$180,000.

It was a purpose built vessel constructed specifically as a fast response craft for the waters in the northern suburbs of Perth. It had an extended cabin which housed a skipper and four crew in comfort.

There is a fixed chart table with a fridge underneath, built in drawer to hold all navigational equipment and loads of storage throughout.



*Leisurecat Green 2*

Powered by twin Honda 225HP four-stroke outboard motors, she has a top speed exceeding 41 knots, carries 680 litres of fuel, and is fitted with a Furuno NavNet system, GPS, Radar, Plotter, firefighting/salvage pump and a Defibrillator machine as part of the St John's Ambulance's "1st Responder" Program.

The Leisurecat was sold in 2011.

The second Green 2 named "City of Joondalup" is a large 11.3m Naiad Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) built by Kirby Marine. It is powered by twin Yamaha 350HP 4-stroke V8 outboard engines with speeds in excess of 45 knots. Its original domestic registration was EG421. This changed to 8887 when it became domestic-commercial under Department of Transport. This again changed under Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) registration. It was named the "City of Joondalup" in recognition of the significant grant received from the City of Joondalup.



*City of Joondalup– Green 2*

The inflatable collars that are part of the construction help to provide an extremely stable vessel – whether heading into choppy seas or manoeuvring at speed. In normal operations, Green 2 provides an extremely safe and comfortable platform for our volunteer crews and, when the need arises those on board are able to prepare themselves for an express ride as the vessel reaches up to 45 knots in response to an emergency situation.

In 2019, Green 2 underwent a substantial refit where the inflatable collars were replaced with foam collars, the motors were replaced with Yamaha 425HP and the interior layout and electronics were all upgraded (including autopilot).

#### PRINCIPAL DIMENSIONS:

Length overall .....	11.3m
Length waterline .....	9.2m
Beam overall .....	3.4m
Beam waterline .....	2.8m
Beam internal .....	2.5m
Dead rise at transom .....	23°
Estimated weight .....	4500kgs
Draught .....	0.75m
Fuel capacity .....	1000 litres
Propulsion .....	2 x 300hp outboards
Top Speed .....	42 knots
Cruising speed .....	28-30 knots
Tube diameter .....	600mm
Bottom plating .....	6mm 5083
Bottom stringers .....	50 x 6mm 5083
Side plating .....	4mm 5083
Deck stringers .....	40 x 5mm 5083
Deck .....	4mm 5083
Keelson .....	12mm 5083
Transom .....	6mm 5083
Chine stiffener .....	5mm 5083

*Green 2 original specifications*

#### Callsign "Green 3"

MRW's first rescue vessel with a callsign "Green 3" was a 6.8m Naiad with twin 4 stroke Yamaha 115HP engines. The vessel was named the "RV Upton" after Mr Ron Upton – a previous Commander – in recognition of his outstanding service to the Group and the boating community.

The "RV Upton" was purchased second hand from Margaret River Sea Rescue Group and was repainted in MRW colours and had an electronics upgrade prior to coming into service. The vessel was formally commissioned in November 2012.

Green 3 was powered by twin Yamaha 115HP outboard engines and has outstanding sea handling capabilities, but is more suited to inshore search and rescue operations.



*RV Upton – Green 3*

RV Upton was used to add capacity to searches, for inshore and shallow water work, for use with smaller vessels or swimmers/divers, training, event support, to support SLS, or even conceptually moving rapidly by land to aid in other searches.

RV Upton was sold in November 2019.

MRW's second Green 3 vessel is a 10m Naiad, AMSA registration UVI457140. At the official launch on MRW's Open Day on 1 December 2019, the vessel was named "Ken Blackie" honouring MRW founding member Ken Blackie and his years of service to MRW.



*Ken Blackie – Green 3*

The vessel was built by Kirby Marine at a cost of \$620,000. It has a top speed of greater than 45 knots.

Green 3 has a draft 800mm, width of 3 metres, weighs 4880kg and seating for three.

It is fitted with twin Suzuki 325HP motors, Raymarine electronics, a 700 litre fuel tank, Satellite phone, VHF and 27MHz radios.

#### Callsign "Green 4"

In 2000 MRW purchased a Marine and Harbour patrol boat and refitted it to be a dedicated rescue vessel callsign "Green 4". Registration BF750. Green 4 was powered by twin 115 Yamahas.

The vessel was sold towards the end of 2005 for approximately \$32,000.



*Green 4*

## RADIO

The MRW Headquarters is located near the Ocean Reef Marina. It is both a meeting hall, training centre and radio tower. The radio tower is staffed every day and when not staffed operators monitor the radio channels remotely from home based locations. The tower overlooks Ocean Reef Marina and manages logging of boat traffic in and out of Mindarie, Ocean Reef and Hillarys Marinas.

MRW identified the need for radio communications and after long hours of negotiation with the government and authorities, pioneered the first marine radios in Western Australia. Initially 1-watt hand held radios were used.

It was not that much longer when more powerful radios were adopted by the Group. On the weekends radio traffic was monitored from the new acquisition, in the form of an old converted bus, on the beach at Pinnaroo Point. Although the base stations were initially granted for the Group's own use, it quickly expanded to the current full monitoring service it now gives to the public, supplying 24 hour, 7-day-a-week radio monitoring and call-out service.

To provide a 24x7 coverage, MRW incorporates home based facilities using DX64 technology. Home-based radio volunteers are provided with DX64 radios. When MRW first started their 24x7 coverage, Henry Hall (known as 6LQ south) monitored the radio during the day, Dale Lings (known as 6LQ north) monitored the 17:00 to midnight and, Judy and Graham Saxon (known as 6LQ east) did the midnight to 09:00 shift.

On 24 October 2020 MRW changed its VHF logon/logoff, communication channel from channel 73 (Ch73) to channel 77 (Ch77).

MRW monitors VHF (Ch73 in transition period, Ch77, Ch81, Ch16, Ch67) , 27MHz (Ch90, Ch88) and HF (Ch 4125).



*Monitoring VHF Ch16*

In year 2020, WMR had 25,905 radio and telephone calls into and out of the Tower.

## VEHICLES

### Toyota

A second hand Toyota was donated to MRW in June 2000. This vehicle was used for towing Green 4.

In January 2001, the Toyota “died” and the Committee at the time deemed it not worth repairing. In May 2001, the Toyota was sold.

### Nissan

In early 2001 MRW purchased a Nissan Patrol G60 4 wheel drive. Brakes were drums all round with no power-assistance and the gearbox was a three-speed manual.

The vehicle was a dedicated towing vehicle for Green 4..

The Nissan was sold for \$300 in July 2005.



*Nissan Patrol G60 towing Green 4*

### Land Rover Discovery



*Land Rover Discovery with Green 3*

The next vehicle purchased was a second hand Land Rover Discovery. Its role was to transport equipment and tow MRW assets including a BBQ trailer. The time of purchase is unknown

(circa 2008) but the sign writing was completed in September 2008.

It had a three tonne towing capacity and was capable of accommodating a driver and three passengers. The additional equipment included heavy duty tow bar, winch and various two way radios to enable communication with the Control Tower and the Rescue craft.

The Discovery was sold for \$1,900 in June 2017 with 199,000 kilometres on the clock.

### Ford Ranger

The next vehicle is the current Ford Ranger. The Ranger is a XL model, 3.2 litre diesel 4X4 purchased on 19 January 2017 for \$39,500.

The Ford Ranger is a fully equipped vehicle carrying emergency equipment and a radio system supporting MRW land-based marine search and rescue activities.

The purchase was made possible through a generous grant by Quadrant Energy.



*Ford Ranger showing MRW signage*

### BBQ TRAILER

A custom built BBQ trailer was constructed in June 2007. The BBQ trailer is an important part of the MRW's fund raising and getting its name into the public domain through sausage sizzles. MRW activities included Joondalup Festival, boat shows and Bunnings. The trailer consisted of double BBQs, sink and storage areas.



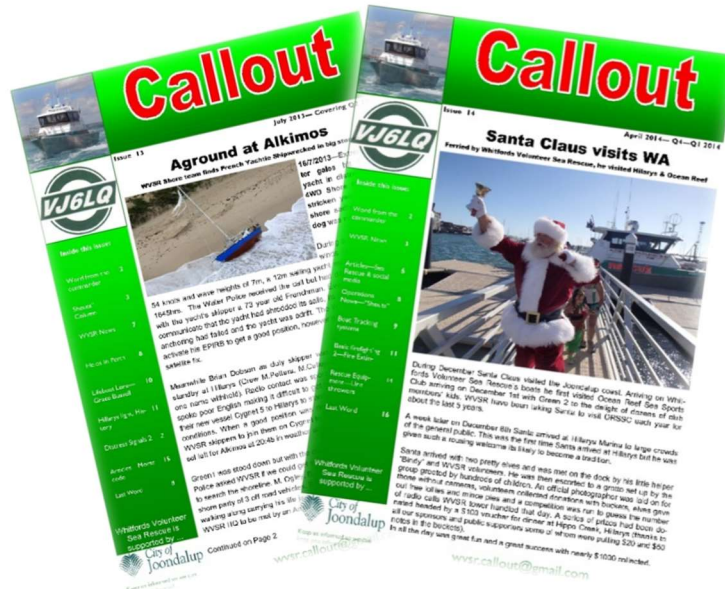
*Sausage sizzle trailer*

## NEWSLETTER

In January 2010, MRW started to publish a quarterly newsletter called "Callout".

The newsletter was edited by Alex McTaggart.

Not a lot is known about when Callout stopped being published but records show it was still being printed in early 2015.



Callout issues 13 and 14

## Appendix 1

### 10 Years or more of service as at 31 March 2021.

Henry Hall	Annette Hall	Alan Cumberworth
Ron Upton	Angie Kellett	Mike Walters
Don Baum	Dennis Murphy	Kevin Beveridge
Jorg Muller	Steven Larchet	Greg Clohessy
John Stacy	Eric Larchet	Gordon Palasin
Laurie Movley	Bob Larchet	Malcolm Petters
Aileen Movley	Shirl Larchet	Phil Van Dyk
DJ Baum	Mike Leishman	Ron Harris
Frank Swallow	Faye Murphy	Geoff Sparrow
Kevin Bryant	Kevin Gillespie	Peter Huggins
J Bryant	Donald Gamble	Del Harris
Rod Richards	Ross Gavranich	Lesley Armstrong
Vicki Richards	Rob Halliday	Bob Armstrong
Brian Raynor	Roger Howell	Judy Boag
Gary Hollis	Dale Lings	Robin Herbert
Peter Fyfe	Judy Saxon	Katie Lings
Ken Blackie	Fab Zanuttigh	Shaun Norrie
Arthur Currie	Robin Bodilly	Brett Byron
Lance Gutteridge	Mike Calleja	Joss Dwyer
Chris Hilson	Mark Carruthers	Steve Thatcher
Gary Scobie-Smith	Brian Dobson	Ron Kremer
Robbie Young	Frank Hancock	Ross Richardson
Roy Lundy	Bob Harrison	Andy Winspear
Wendy Ransome	John Mathews	Paul Doherty
Peter Ransome	John O'Callaghan	John Coral
Roland Gee	Lee Pond	Bob Jacobs
Colin Green	Graham Saxon	Alan Paul
John Van-Tiel	Mike Symes	Mark Barber
Jean Hall	Catherine Voigt	Stephen Bandy



Cartoon presented to Marine Rescue Whitfords by Dean Alston and the West Australian

Readers are invited to build on this story of our history by adding their experiences and knowledge to this document. Please contact [stephen.bandy@whitfordssearescue.org.au](mailto:stephen.bandy@whitfordssearescue.org.au).

This booklet is available as an online PDF at:  
[www.whitfordssearescue.org.au](http://www.whitfordssearescue.org.au) -> About Us -> History.