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PO Box 40221, Casuarina NT 0811
Telephone: (08) 8922 6200
Facsimile: (08) 8922 6266

Produced by:

St John Ambulance Australia
Northern Territory
50 Dripstone Road
Casuarina NT 0810

CENTRES

Darwin

50 Dripstone Road, Casuarina NT 0810
Telephone: (08) 8922 6200

Katherine

Kintore Street, Katherine
PO Box 744, Katherine, NT 0851
Telephone: (08) 8973 8555

Tennant Creek

Windley Street, Tennant Creek
PO Box 570, Tennant Creek NT 0861
Telephone: (08) 8962 1144

Alice Springs

Telegraph Terrace, Alice Springs
PO Box 2609, Alice Springs NT 0871
Telephone: (08) 8951 6616

Nhulunbuy

C/o Gove District Hospital
PO Box 521, Nhulunbuy NT 0881

Publishing and Advertising:



Walsh Media Services Pty Ltd
Level 3, 18-20 Grenfell Street,
Adelaide SA 5000

Telephone: (08) 8221 5600

Facsimile: (08) 8221 5601

Email: walshmedia@adelaide.on.net

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Front cover:

Paramedic of the Year Annette Ingham.



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Chief Executive Officer's REPORT

As Top Enders reflect on one of the best Dry Seasons I can ever remember – our colleagues in the Southern Region will brace themselves for another scorcher. But in either case – it's all good. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all at St John!

I'm sure everyone is aware of the continuing pressures that have been placed on us this year, as we attempt to resolve funding and contractual issues for 2006 and beyond, but I cannot repeat often enough my appreciation to all staff and members, who have displayed incredible patience and loyalty during this period of review. I gave up a long time ago trying to perfect the art of crystal ball gazing and that appears to have been a wise move, given so much of what has happened of late.

the troops who were affected by the April floods in that area. While staff and members were fortunate not to have experienced serious domestic flooding, a great number of Katherine residents were not so lucky. Irrespective of each individual's circumstances, what impressed me once again was the tremendous spirit, camaraderie and mateship that prevailed in the town.

To our guys – congratulations and thank you for your tremendous contribution and a special thanks to the Furies, who worked tirelessly



The September announcement by the Chief Minister of additional resourcing and funding for St John was welcome news for everyone – it certainly relieved considerable pressure for Alice Springs and the staff in the JESCC. I am very optimistic about our relationship with Government now and look forward to a very productive 2007

I had the opportunity to travel to Katherine early in the year, to visit

alongside the St John people and were of tremendous support. I had the chance to attend a B-B-Q (curry night actually) with St John and NTFRS staff and volunteers in attendance and it was an absolute pleasure to see the team-work. Thank you again!

On the home front, much work still needs to be done now on ensuring that future years are made secure for the Service, from a funding and



resource perspective. Alan McCarroll (ASNSW) hit town early in the year, as part of his consultancy to develop a high end Strategic Framework/Plan for St John. While here, he also took the chance to engage DHCS and the Union, as part of the project. His work will provide a sound basis for the strategic planning that now needs to take place for 2007-2010.

Training Branch too deserves special accolades for their performance this year - under at times difficult circumstances, resource wise - and it is a great credit to Brendan, Annetta, Admin staff and all Training Officers.

Unfortunately this year the mighty Pies have not had the greatest of Seasons. Maybe 2007 is the Year of the Magpie – here's hoping.

Can I take this opportunity to extend to staff, members, family and friends of St John all the very best for the Festive Season – please take care on the roads and enjoy this special time of the year with your friends and family.

Cheers

DAVID BAKER, OAM **OSTJ JP**
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Training Framework Update

For many editions now, I have slowly been working my way through the 12 Standards for Registered Training Organisations. In comparison to Standard 5 of the Australian Quality Training Framework Standards for Registered Organisations (Recognition of qualifications issued by RTOs), Standard 4 covers quite a large area.

Standard 4 involves St John Ambulance (NT) ensuring that it has 'Effective administrative and records management procedures' in place. Provided below, are areas in which compliance must be met for internal and external audit purposes. Rest assured these areas are constantly monitored by both myself and the Manager, Education & Training Services as the Internal Audit Team.

4.1 The RTO must document and implement procedures to assure the integrity, accuracy and currency of records that include, but are not limited to:

- i. Secure storage, including backup of electronic records.
- ii. Retention, archiving and retrieval of sufficient information on client results to enable the re-issue of a qualification or statement of attainment if required, for a period of 30 years, and transfer of these records consistent with state or territory registering body requirements in the event of closure of the RTO
- iii. Retention, archiving, retrieval and transfer of all other records consistent with contractual and legal requirements and the requirements of the state or territory registering body that has registered the organisation.

iv. **Compliance with external reporting requirements (for example the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) for those RTOs in receipt of government funding.**

v. **Safeguarding any confidential information obtained by the RTO and committees, individuals or organisations acting on its behalf**

vi. **Ensuring that, except as required under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations or by law, information about a client is not disclosed to a third party without the written consent of the client.**

vii. **Access by clients to their personal records**

There are many types of records maintained within the Training Department. While most of these records are maintained by Training Administration personnel, all staff within the Training Department play an important role with helping to provide the necessary information and evidence for record maintenance and reporting purposes.

Our records are maintained and stored both electronically and in hard copy format for retrieval purposes.



Records are only released as per our organisation's Privacy Statement (previously identified/included in an Outback Ambulance Edition) which is in accordance with the Privacy Act and the Australian Quality Training Framework reporting requirements. All participants enrolling into our training programs are provided with course information. Identified within these documents is a statement whereby the information a participant provides us, may be released to a third person/party. There have also been times where past participants have approached us for information in regards to their student history. This has been easily released to them as our 'Student database system (SBM)', allows for instant recall of information i.e: courses attended and completion dates; venue attended; who the trainer was; & results achieved.

Other records maintained within the Training Department include but are not limited to the following: trainer and assessor qualifications for both Paramedic and Public Education (First Aid) Training; Professional Development records; new staff induction programs; minutes of various meetings; course monitoring reports (inclusive of statistics); summarised reports of student feedback received; Partnership Agreements and academic transcripts.

4.2 The RTO must maintain up-to-date records of:

- i. **The verified training and/or assessment and vocational**

Training Framework Update *(Continued)*

competencies of all staff and persons working on behalf of the RTO as training and assessors, consistent with the requirements of Standards 7

ii. Enrolments and participation

iii. Fees paid and refunds given

The Manager, Education & Training Services is responsible for ensuring that advertising for new First Aid and Paramedic Trainers/Assessors is compliant with AQTF Standard 7 'The competence of RTO Staff'. While AQTF Standards identify minimum qualification requirements for training and assessment staff, it is the decision of the Manager, Education & Training Services with support from the Chief Executive Officer that St John (NT) Inc., will incorporate a higher standard of Trainer/Assessor criteria. The criteria can be located within policy and procedural documents. Qualifications are sited at interview with copies taken, verified and held by the Education & Training Resource Officer who is responsible for 'Maintaining Instructor Records'.

As noted before, our Student Database System can provide a lot of evidence. Training Administration Staff can locate information in

regards to a customer's enrolment details including any fees paid and/or refunds given. The system can also provide information in regards to an individual's participation should they have commenced a course.

4.3 The RTO must develop and implement version control procedures for managing materials that relate to its scope of registration (including Training Packages, accredited course documents and leaning/assessment materials) so that:

- i. Materials are reviewed for currency by authorised and competent staff prior to issue or re-issue
- ii. A list of materials with the respective issue and/or amendment status identified is maintained
- iii. All persons required to perform any function under the RTO's scope of registration have ready access to all necessary current materials.

Training Department materials and resources are reviewed at least annually. While the Education &

Training Resource Officer amends documents and resources based on reviews undertaken by various staff, release of documents is confirmed by the Chair of Training (at task delegated to the Manager, Education & Training Services) prior to their release – inclusive of an updated version control number. An electronic register of current and/or archived documents is maintained. Electronic advice is provided to staff regarding implemented changes. This may occur through memorandums, emails or through Training Department Newsletters and/or workshops. Updated documents are released as appropriate to staff through the Manager, Education & Training Services or Education & Training Resource Officer to ensure they have the most current and up to date information. Resource libraries are updated by the Education & Training Resource Officer and maintained by all Training Department staff authorised to access particular areas.

ANNETTA ALBANESE

EDUCATION & TRAINING RESOURCE OFFICER

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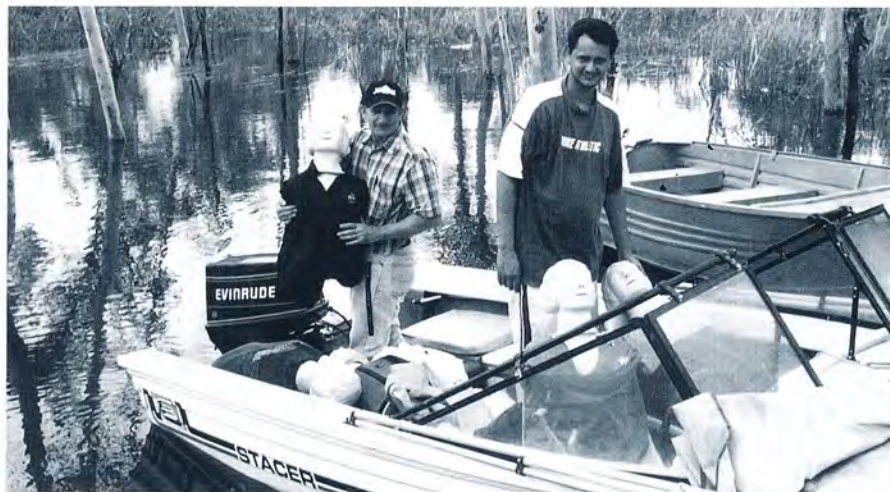
A small community in Daly River "Nayiu" were flooded in and were desperate to run a First Aid course for their Health Workers. They would go to any lengths to have this course delivered in the community.

The only access into the community was by road then dingy and the Manager of the Health Clinic just happened to have a suitable boat to deliver our trainer and all the resources across the flood waters.

The Daly River Inn had accommodation for our Trainer however this would prove to be a problem as the only access to the Clinic where the training was to take place was to walk through flood waters, not a good idea when those big geckos (crocs) were on the move. The Manager decided that a mattress on the floor of the Clinic would be a safer option.

Getting to the Community

The road condition was reasonable with a few wash outs, water across the road and rain still falling. I really had no idea exactly where I was to meet the dingy so kept going until I found that the road had turned into a massive lake, it was obvious that there was no access for a boat to reach me at this point so I went back to as small causeway and



found a few small boats tied up to surrounding trees. An hour later my transport arrived, two men in a small dingy and both very happy to see me.

We loaded all the equipment into the dingy, I then moved my vehicle to higher ground to ensure that it didn't become a victim of the flood. Sitting in the small boat and weaving in and out of the trees we finally came to a clearing, this was the oval in the community. We brought the boat along side the road where a vehicle was ready to transport us to the Clinic.

Sleeping arrangements

A mattress was already made up on the floor which was in a small room where the health workers had been painting pictures to be

eventually displayed around their new clinic which hadn't been officially opened. My first nights sleep was interesting as I awoke to find several eyes peering at me through the window. The next day was training as usual. That night I went to sleep in my bed only to find that some one had been sleeping in it during the day, this was not a pleasant feeling but with no other sleeping option, I dusted off the sheets and tried not to imagine if anything else had made a home in my bed.

Getting back to Darwin

The flood waters were subsiding quickly but this was proving to be a concern as the day I was supposed to leave I was informed the water was too low to get out by dingy but the water over the road was too high to get out by car. By afternoon they declared the road open to four wheel drives and by late afternoon I was able to bring my vehicle into the community.

This was my first course where a dingy was the mode of transport and I had forgotten my fishing gear. I had an interesting trip and would do it again if required.

JAN ROWELL



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Put to the Test



The vehicle travelling at 140kmph hit water lying on the highway and lost control and landed rather heavily in a table drain on the side of the highway.

The male passenger escaped with shock and some minor bruising and was attended to by Barbara, whilst the driver was treated for neck and spinal injuries. We later found out that the female driver had a fractured C7 & T1 vertebrae and has since been evacuated to Adelaide.

Alice Springs volleys, Ian and Barbara McKie found themselves ankle deep in mud, mayhem and drama when they came across a single vehicle rollover on the Stuart Highway near Aileron when returning to Alice following a visit to Tennant Creek in early March '06.



Thanks go the Remote Health RN's from Ti Tree who assisted on scene until the cavalry arrived from Alice Springs. NT Fire & Rescue got to practice using there giant can opener, while paramedics TM Elferink and Gary Carter took over patient management and extrication.



Tiwi Islands Grand Final

Another early start on Sunday the 26th March saw a bunch of eager volunteers set off for the Tiwi Islands for the annual AFL Grand Final. The Palmerston contingent left from the Macmillans by bus (driven by Dave) to arrive a short time later at Kormilda to pick up the remaining Cadets at Residence Four. We arrived at the main terminal of the airport at around nine but it took a while to unload all gear that would be needed for the day. We checked and weighed in (that was scary for me) and went to head upstairs to wait for the flight. Nine volunteers went through the metal detectors and 4 of us set them off. Nick Stassi set it off with his chunky necklace which looked like a dog collar. Another had to remove their belt and while we were watching Bevan (new adult member from Darwin Division) take off much of his clothing, boots included; Jessica Ralph had been taken aside to be checked over for explosives. This must have looked good for our public image!!

The flight over was fairly smooth though I always like to keep the vomit bag close by just in case. Emily Colbran was extremely nervous and chewing her gum like crazy. I think that was what keeping me from suffering from motion sickness. A short wait at the Tiwi airstrip and we were in an air-conditioned bus to the oval. We set up in the same place as the year before with the tent being a much needed addition to our group. No sooner was the tent set up and there was a huge downpour. We were very grateful and would like to



thank CGU Insurance representing IAG in the Territory for the donation of the tent. We spent the day in and out of the tent with intermittent heavy rain and cool breezes. A very loud clap of thunder had us all worried as it came out of the blue but we didn't get anymore storms after that. The cadets spent the day making pompoms and plaited wrist ties in team colours. These we gave to the local kids and were a huge success.

We were having a treatment free duty up until we had packed to leave. A pair of males decided to slip and slide around, wrestling each other in the mud. With a St John sling and an ice pack for a suspected dislocated shoulder they were soon treated and sent on their way. Not long after that we gathered all the gear together and headed for the bus stop on the main street. When we arrived at the bus stop Ross realised we were

short a few of our contingent (the paramedics). Ross went back to the refreshment stand for a look around and located them chatting up some tourists. Half of the volunteers went in the first bus to the airstrip with the other half waiting for the lost members. With the latecomers finally located the remaining lot caught another bus to the airstrip. We had another long wait for a plane to arrive and eventually touched down in Darwin at about seven that evening.

The Kormilda boys caught up with their relatives and friends and thoroughly enjoyed watching the footy. It is always a very long day but it is extremely rewarding. We all had a great time and I am sure the St John volunteers will all be there again next year.

KELLY RAVEN



School Divisions Coordinator

Kormilda College Cadets

We started the year with the Casualty Simulation proficiency badge. This badge is usually well received by all as the cadets get to play with "blood". When we make wounds we use play dough, we needed to colour it to match each cadets skin tone. Cocoa was chosen and was extremely successful. One of the first lessons involved making a finger that matched their own. We then place blood on the end with fake fingernails and presto - finger amputation. There were reports of chopped off fingers in bins and

sticking out of locker doors around the school. The staff were a little shocked to say the least. Attendances ran at a constant 20 with a good mix of male and female.

On the 26th of March six cadets and three adults flew to the Tiwi Islands for the AFL Grand Final. The weather was much cooler than last year due to the spasmodic downpours that occurred on and off all day. The cadets enjoyed themselves and will go again next year I am sure.

This term will see the new cadets learning first aid and those that attended last year will complete skills maintenance. The new resuscitation guidelines that have been introduced internationally will make it easier for the cadets to remember and perform successfully if the need arises. In Term 3 the cadets will complete another proficiency titled Eye badge. They will learn the history behind the Ophthalmic Branch and Hospital and eye injuries. Their inspection was held on the 24th of May.

Marrara Christian School Cadets

Marrara Christian School have generously provided more funding to the cadet program this year and I now have four staff members to assist me each week (Thanks ladies for your help). The cadets completed the Casualty Simulation badge as well. We set up some scenarios around the school in which the cadets were given job descriptions. We had Safety Officers, Make-up people, casualties and Props Managers. The cadets soon realised how much energy and work does go into running a competition or setting up a scenario.

This year saw two houses of boys attend. The boys now out number the girls. Term two will be entirely taken up with learning First Aid. All cadets are new this year bar one. Numbers are over 25 each week.

I attended the school's cross country run as a First Aider. Treated a couple of casualties but nothing serious. Hopefully next year I will have cadets from the school assisting me.

I would like to extend a HUGE thank you to Julie Murray (ex Kormilda Cadet) who has attended every week at both schools. She has "Train Small Groups", a qualification that enables her to teach lessons. We have been sharing the work load. Once again - THANK YOU.

KELLY RAVEN

PALMERSTON CADET DIVISION

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Palmerston Cadet Division

This division has been going from strength to strength this year and we have had to start a waiting list. The Junior section has been extremely successful this year with numbers reaching 17 (it's getting a bit squashed in the kitchen).

The Commissioner, Peter Poole, attended Term One to teach the cadets the Road Safety badge. The Juniors joined in and received instruction later on for their interest badge - Road and Home Safety. It does the cadets good to have other lecturers come out to the Division.

The annual Divisional Inspection was held on the 3rd of April. As always the cadets were resplendent in the uniform. We finished the parade and moved inside just as a huge downpour struck. It was well attended by parents and families. Thanks to Terry Mills, James Burke and

Graeme Chin for presenting the trophies.

We had some new awards for presentation this year. We needed trophies for the new Junior section and we introduced a trophy that recognises the contribution to the division by a cadet.

Most Improved Junior

- Samara Staben

Outstanding Participation/Contribution to the Junior Section

- Shannon Raven

Most Improved Cadet

- Shane Johnstone

Most Efficient Cadet

- Phillip Crombie

Achievement Award

- Matthew Sperling

Outstanding Participation/Contribution to the Division

- Joshua Saunders

During the second term we will be completing workbooks and Skills maintenance. The Juniors will also be doing first aid training. The combined Divisional Camp to be held at Lake Bennett on the May Day long weekend was postponed due to the wet weather (Cyclone Monica) and the annual ANZAC Day march was cancelled. The camp was re-scheduled for the August long weekend.

On a happier note - A small group of Palmerston Cadets accompanied by a ring-in from Humpty Doo Cadets attended an overnight hike activity with the scouts. Read the article in this magazine to find out more information on how we 'seized the day'.

KELLY RAVEN

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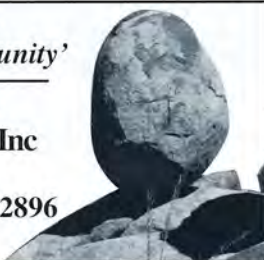
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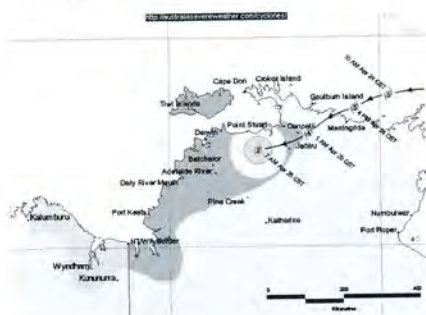
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The Perfect Storm

We have all heard about them, we have all read about them, we may have even seen documentaries about them; some of us may have even experienced them. George Clooney and Mark Whalberg even starred in a movie about one.

The dreaded Cyclone.

April 2006 and we're heading into the dry but still on the cusp of the cyclone season. After the devastating Cyclone Ingrid last year, far north Queensland was hammered by Cyclone Larry on 20th March of this year. These two cyclones had the potential to hit the territory as cyclones are quite unpredictable in their movements. Fortunately for Darwin we were spared the wrath of both of these demons. April 11th 2006, Katherine and surrounding areas were not so lucky with much of the region experiencing severe flooding due to the torrential rains delivered by the two aforementioned cyclones. Still we are not out of the cyclone season.



"Cyclone Monica takes aim at Northern Territory", NT News 19th April 2006 (Wednesday) – and so it begins. A category 3 cyclone with winds of up to 220km/hr might hit the regions of Groote Eylandt, Elcho Island and Nhulunbuy. It is time for these regions to start preparing for a potential disaster. Continuous tracking and updating



of Monica's movements and strength continue over the next 4 days. She is now a category 5 cyclone with winds in excess of 300 km/hr. Nhulunbuy is warned to prepare for a direct hit and for residents to head to their nearest cyclone shelter.

Monday 24th April sees Darwin put on Cyclone watch with the news that Nhulunbuy has been spared as Monica changed her course to north – northeast resulting in some strong winds and rain being experienced in Nhulunbuy but otherwise they were spared the full wrath of this category 5 storm.



Monday 24th the word goes out that as a precautionary measure schools in the Darwin and surrounding areas are to be closed, the Anzac day parade and presentations are cancelled. Service stations run out of fuel and there is no masking tape left to be bought by the residents of Darwin.

Tuesday 25th we awake to the headlines "Darwin braces for Monster Monica", (NT News, 25th April 2006). So we wait and wait and wait some more. Wednesday

the 26th arrives and it's over. Nothing happened in Darwin. It was all for nothing, or was it?

We as individuals, with or without families, should consider our preparedness in the event that a cyclone such as Monica could hit Darwin and the surrounding areas with full force. Our own individual preparedness to minimise stress at the crucial time cannot go unmentioned. Protection of our loved ones, pets and homes must be foremost in our minds when a potential disaster looms. Being prepared at the beginning of the wet season can minimise these stressors when and if a cyclone such as Monica does occur. Knowing that we have our cyclone kits fully stocked, our cyclone shelter designated and what we are going to do should such a disaster happen, will not necessarily make it easier to leave home to go to work to serve our community, but knowing that we have prepared ourselves and families will go a long way to helping us cope with having to be away from our families at the time.

So will it happen? If it does when will it happen? If not this year, maybe next year, or the year after that. Who knows, who cares.

But we should care, complacency has no part in our survival plan. Just because we have been spared this year, does not mean that we will be in the future. Beware, you have been warned. Enjoy the dry season and all of its activities and look forward to the wet season and cross your fingers that our communities do not become a part of history again for the wrong reasons.

LEZLIE SAUNDERS

Outback Ambulance Gove

I was really looking forward to working in paradise. I had never been to Nhulunbuy and I must say it did not disappoint. Beautiful white sandy beaches, thick lush green tropical bush lands and crystal clear fresh water swimming holes, with ice cold beer that for some reason tasted sweeter on the north east Arnhem land coast. I got to visit places like Rainbow Cliffs and Little Bondi. I went Fishing on the reefs and caught some big fish off the Arnhem Cape. Water skiing in the bay and a trip on a barge. Even dragon boat racing on the water out the front of the Gove yacht club as we rowed past million dollar yachts and cruises on their round the world trips. Ok I admit I am bragging, but I can't believe that you get paid for this.

The best was yet to come. Yes in the best traditions of St John Ambulance here in the Northern Territory, the commitment and the dedication to duty that our volunteers show in that small community is nothing short of amazing. Most work full time then manage to help out by working shifts on call as a crew member with a career paramedic during the week and weekends. Being called out at all hours of the day or night. What was particularly refreshing about these amazing people was



their attitude towards what they were doing and their willingness to learn. Nothing was too much trouble for them. To be able to call someone up at two o'clock in the morning and say we have a airport and receive a cheerful "no worries see you in a minute" really summed up what these great people are all about.

Cyclone Monica was reported to be the strongest cyclone ever recorded to hit Australian shores as a category five, with wind gusts of up to 350 km/h near her centre she was very dangerous and had Nhulunbuy in her sights. Tuesday 18th of April at 1708hrs EST a Cyclone watch was declared for Nhulunbuy

With all the experts predicting a direct hit to us we started to batten

down the hatches. Being involved in the counter disaster meetings were a big learning curve for me. I felt it was time to polish my boots. As we sat in the meetings there was something interesting. The Gold and Red St John corporate promotional pens that Ross had bought to be given away around Christmas time were being used by every one to take notes. Everyone had one. Monica decided that she was going to play with us for a while and slowed right down in the gulf and built up in intensity and made us sweat. For me there was no concept really of what 350 km/h winds would do to our little town. I remember looking at the trees around town with boats and cars tied down around the houses on our last survey before Monica hitting town and thinking what would be left? Where would everything be? The pictures on the news of the devastation caused by the recent cyclone in Queensland were fresh in many people's minds.

The cyclone shelter ambulance centre, hospital and police cells were the safest places to be. Built like bomb shelters but I must admit I really didn't feel safe.

Ray Roles the permanent paramedic in Nhulunbuy was a great help having had the experience of having faced



Outback ambulance Gove *(Continued)*



cyclones several times before. There is no substitute for experience.

Every single volunteer that was in town made themselves available for ambulance duty. This made my job so much easier.

I admired the courage of a couple of the volunteers that took first aid supplies and returned to their communities to help if needed with the knowledge of, if things had been bad they would be cut off and on their own for a while.

The cyclone shelter was opened 2000hrs Saturday 22nd April although a call to shelter was not issued at that time. This meant that for us the shelter had to have first

aid coverage. A big thank you to Arleen Watson and Troy Pickett who are volunteer student paramedics. Rene Baker and Ruth Haig all who were able to assist us at the cyclone shelter and did a great job. I was able to make it over to the cyclone shelter that is 200 meters from the ambulance centre just in time to help make 300 rounds of peanut butter, jam and honey sandwiches for some hungry shelter residents and a few rounds of steak egg and cheese sandwiches for our hard working ambulance people and the shelter staff, which made me lots of friends. Even Johnno the senior fire officer turned up like magic, out of nowhere for one.

0800 Sunday 23rd April Met bureau advises Gale Force winds were expected at 0930hrs and the sirens to take shelter were sounded and those that had not done so already and were planning to, made their way to the cyclone shelter.

Monica decided to spare Nhulunbuy and missed the town by 30km, although she did remind us that she was close with some strong winds that blew over a few trees and lots of heavy driving rain. At 2100 hrs the cyclone shelter was closed and at 2300hrs the town experienced blackouts and strong weather as the tail of Monica moved past us with very little damage and a big sigh of relief until we realised that Cyclone Monica was on her way to Darwin.

Thank you to all the staff and volunteers in Nhulunbuy for all your support and dedication to duty. I learnt a lot from you.

WAYNE GOODREM

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Katherine Flood

The Wednesday morning before the flood was like any other. Lovely day, warm weather, business as usual at the Ambulance Centre.

About the only difference from a normal day was that Marty (Martin Scaife) headed up to the police station for a meeting. Sure we had been experiencing a fair bit of rain but the river wasn't that high after all, and it hadn't been 500 years since the last big flood so we were all pretty laid back about the whole thing.

Marty returned only to inform us that we were now at stage 3 of the flood plan – what ever happened to stages 1 and 2 we can only guess.

Stage 3 for those who weren't in the last flood means that we start preparing for possible evacuation to the fire station, packing up essential supplies and equipment to take with us, purchasing specific emergency supplies like bacon and eggs, coffee, spare undies and our toothbrushes.

We also discussed our responsibility to the evacuation of the nursing homes and Katherine Hospital.

When this was all done we watched and waited. Most of us at some time walked along the old railway bridge and looked at the level of water running under the high level bridge.

There were many discussions and opinions thrown around Katherine over the next few hours as to what the floodwaters would do this time.

We remained on centre waiting on the word to begin the Hospital and Rock Ridge aged care evacuations to the RAAF base at Tindal. For some reason our hospital evacuations commenced at 1am. We continued until all the patients were safely housed at Tindal.

8am on Thursday Marty's instructions were "keep an eye on the water levels, I am going to have a sleep, (after working 25 hours straight where was his commitment!).

Nat went for a drive to look around only to see the water coming over the top end of Lindsay Street –



which is close to the centre of town. By the time she returned the rise was very quick, and at great risk to her personal health and safety, she decided to wake the sleeping Marty after about 1 hour sleep –fortunately, she survived!

At 10.30am the decision was made to make sure all the vehicles were fuelled up so the trek to BP began. At this time the water had crossed the southbound lane of the Stuart Highway between town and Eastside where we were to be based. This led to some concern amongst certain officers who were keen to fill up their ambulance and get the heck out of there, so much so that when Richard (Jones) who was last in the line of vehicles, was still filling up, the comment was heard "bugger Richard let's go" – however Marty being the calm responsible leader insisted that all the officers wait and go together. After leaving BP we just made it through before the water crossed the Nth bound lane cutting Katherine off.

We arrived at our new head quarters located in the fire station;



Katherine Flood (Continued)

where we were met with open and hospitable arms by the local Furies. This attitude and support continued throughout the whole time. We are grateful to them for regarding us as members of a team and treating us as such. Without their support we would not have had anywhere to operate, eat, shower and sleep etc.

Marty made the comment after a report of some looting that a situation like this brings out the best and the worst in people. Sure there were some negative incidents that made you wonder about how certain people think and react, but these were outweighed by the teamwork, energy, commitment and fun of the majority.

There were many times of laughter and typical Aussie "paying out" like one officer who after seeing the large contingent of tourists in their caravans outside the high school was heard to ask "I wonder where those people are staying" when the response came "probably in their caravans" the officer promptly stated "I can't believe I said that"

Another amusing incident was when Richard and a fire were busy constructing one of the new BBQ's provided. Unknown to them, Frank (another fire) removed 2 of the main bolts needed to successfully complete the BBQ. He did come clean but only after much hair pulling and colourful expressions

about this ##### BBQ. They did get their chance at payback when the fire's wife unlocked the bedroom door at the centre and allow them to decorate the offenders face with lipstick while he slept!!

Rumours also surfaced that several officer's first purchase after the water's receded enough to drive through was much needed Iced Coffee – true territorians.

There have been discussions, suggestions, theories about the responses and decisions made prior to, during and after the flood. Of course there can always be improvements in any major situation, it is a huge learning experience for all concerned.

From a St. John point of view, it needs to be said that we feel our contribution, teamwork and commitment to the flood management went very well. Ably lead by Martin and great support from Management and practical support from Fergie (Fergus Calder) and Cockie (Antoni Kwiatkowski) we not only survived but actually enjoyed the experience.

MATTHEW PEARCE

KATHERINE



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SJA Thanks!

Readers Digest recently released a national survey of "Who do we trust, Australia?" on 23rd May 2006. This survey ranks the people, professions, relationships and products that Australians trust the most. Not surprisingly the survey showed that "Profession wise, Australian's ranked ambulance officers as the most trusted profession out of a field of 30 for the 4th year running along with firefighters (2), pilots (3), nurses (4) and pharmacists (5).

Whilst on any given normal working day an ambulance officer is expected to perform their duties with a no fuss attitude of "lets do the best for our patient and community", you are at times asked by your managers to perform duties above those of the norm. Recent events such as the Beaconsfield Mine rescue highlight to the nation the important role that ambulance

officers play in many differing situations.

The potential disasters presented by the formation of Cyclone Monica as a Category 5 Cyclone, exposed not only ambulance officers of St John Ambulance, but the entire staff of St John Ambulance with more demands over and above their normal daily duties. These extra duties were, as always with our great team, met with no fuss and carried out in a timely manner. Whilst much of the organising and strategising, for potential disasters, takes place out of the eye of the public, you all as our front line staff performed admirably. Not only did you have your own families and properties to prepare, there were many of you willing to be available on request as required. To those of you, and you know who you are, who were present at the early morning meetings and those who did extra

shifts on your days off, we thank you.

Without the continuing support of people, who care about their community, particularly in times of potential crisis, there would be many people within in our community who would or could potentially perish if such a disaster such as Cyclone Monica had hit. Whilst we only made it to stage 2 of the disaster plan, the potential was certainly there for this to affect each and every one of us. It is your generosity of spirit and compassion that often leads you to perform over and above the normal daily expectations.

The management of St John Ambulance takes this opportunity to say thank you to each and every one of you and your families for your assistance in preparing for what could have been a horrific experience for all involved.

LEZLIE SAUNDERS

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Indonesian Mission

Jodie Randford, a former Part-time Training Instructor with St John and active Volunteer, decided to take some time out from everyday life and Volunteer her time for 12 months in an Indonesian Mission. She had some interesting discoveries to make....

Hi everyone,

Haven't been able to establish communication before now, but I am alive and well. In a nutshell I am loving the experience.

Have been here in Simeulue Island now for three weeks after spending 2 weeks in Bandah Aceh and a week in Medan. In Bandah Aceh it was a real eye-opener seeing the effects of the Tsunami devastation: the rebuilding process, many people still living in tents or temporary shelters, many health problems, the Muslim culture, and the friendly Indonesian people. I am really enjoying the experience on mission so far – the people, culture, the work, and the scenery. Perhaps the most frustrating thing has been problems connecting with the outside world via internet, hence the reason I have not been able to get in contact before now.

Everything happens very slow if at all in this village life. Daily there are power blackouts, phones and satellite connections are unreliable, and we have had an earth tremor almost every day since arriving. Its nothing very much to worry about – the locals say to me "Welcome to Simeulue"!

I am enjoying myself, and making the most of the cultural experience, but let me fill you in since Friday (21/4) when I arrived. The one hr flight from Medan was a bit hairy – in a small UN plane. The Japanese pilot concerned me before take-off

when he considered taking a cylinder of Freon gas on board. I think he noted the total horror on my face. In flight I sat chewing on a crusty old biscuit amidst turbulence, rain, and a white-out as the pilots approached the little bumpy dirt runway. I had my fingers crossed that my ton of luggage was not going to be the difference between life and death, however we defied death and touched down on the island safely and I was home as I call it for the next 10 months anyway.

The living quarters are comfortable, and I am getting used to squatting over a hole in the ground for a toilet, but I have drawn the line at using my left hand to wipe my bum ! Our house is probably the only one in Simeulue with toilet paper. We don't have a shower but a 'mandi' which is a tub of water that you ladle water from and tip over yourself – and yes its cold water. I am living with a Territorian (Paul) so it feels more like home, but that's where the familiarity ends. Everything is different – of course the people, the language, the food, every minute of my day. Simeulue is the poorest province in Indonesia and one of the poorest in the world for that matter. It is strictly muslim and the locals wash and pray 5 times a day (now that's squeaky clean living). For each prayer, the mosque loud speaker calls the people even in the early hours of the morning (4.30am), and it

sounds like someone gargling on Listerine ! The women dress completely covered in pristine white showing only the face for prayer and the men come as they please (although most wear a hat). For me at all times I only have to cover from elbows and knees upwards.

The people are friendly and I have started having Indonesian language lessons from a couple of the girls I work with twice a week – my motto: Sedikit sedikit lama lama menjadi bukit (or 'One step at a time'!) All of my work colleagues (about 20 including drivers) are Indonesian from the mainland (apart from Paul and the boss Andrew) and we all have a laugh, catching up for dinner sometimes or on the weekends we visit the beautiful beaches, waterfalls or take a boat trip to any one of the neighbouring islands. Its so interesting here – in the name of vanity, our local female staff go to great lengths to look 'white' so they put a white lotion on themselves everyday and are paranoid about being out in the sun in case they brown up ! Amongst the local Simeuleuns I am something of a circus freak and draw attention to myself because I am the only blonde headed big boobed woman on the island! The kids on the island run up to me and say 'hello mister' – because that's often the only English words they know! People are friendly and give a wave so I don't feel threatened here at all.

My project is interesting – community based first aid which involves educating the people in first aid, health promotion, infectious disease and disaster management. I have a girl called Embun working with me who is a



Indonesian Mission *(Continued)*

pharmacist from Medan, and together we have to implement the program by rounding up volunteers (locals) to train and do community visits to monitor and promote the health within the villages.

Embun and I spend part of our week on field trips visiting villages for health assessments and promotional activities and education. Have visited a few schools, promoting health to the kids and it was so funny listening to them chanting 'OUCH' by mimicking me! Visited the temporary living quarters where approx. 300 people await rebuilding of their houses, have met the regional health minister and accompanied a midwife to a local village for house calls. Seeing poor health and disease thought long gone like polio and leprosy. The health system here is quite inaccessible to many of the poorest people – some villages have no support at all and rely on black magic which is alive and well here. I plan to find out more about it.

Had an interesting time just recently with the livelihoods program (coordinated by Paul) visiting local village leaders to instigate a mud-crabbing industry on the island, beginning with replanting of mangroves.

The Tsunami and then the major earthquake last March, has affected the farming and fishing livelihoods. In fact the island has been raised almost 2 metres out of the ocean after the last earthquake. It is the strangest thing seeing the coral seabed and mangroves perched up out of the water and therefore dead. I joined Paul on a village visit and was asked to sit with the men and chew peanuts and drink sickly sweet coffee while

practicing the handful of Indonesian words I know. I have learnt the traditional Muslim handshake which involves the villagers using both hands to clasp mine and that worries me ... because I know where the left hand has been!

On another field trip I accompanying our water and sanitation team of local staff (Putrie, Fukmi, and Dedi!) This group have just built latrines for each family in Lalla Bahagia Village (In English this means 'Happy Village') about 5 hrs drive in a 4WD. The adventure was in the journey there on a very bad, muddy track. Had to abandon our vehicle at one point and cross a river on a bamboo raft because a wooden bridge had collapsed. Luckily we were able to organise a vehicle on the other side. The village was very small and no

English spoken at all, but together with Embun who can speak some English and my acting skills and baby-talk in Indonesian we were able to get acquainted with the people. The kids stared at me, the blonde headed freak, so I befriended them with lollypops. In the village, the men fish while the women keep house and tend to the family or slave away making mud bricks for about \$2.50 per day. The bartering system with produce and livestock is the way of survival here. The people are beautiful, welcoming us into their homes, sharing food and a place to sleep. The village leader invited us back to give some community health education, so we will go back again in about a month.

As far as all the food goes here – its spicy and fishy! I am getting used to eating chillies and having my nose run and my eyelids go numb. Ate some lobsters the other

day – 3 beauties shared amongst three of us – about \$15 Australian. Our house-keeper cooks lunch and Paul and I usually eat out for dinner (costs about \$2-\$3) for plenty of seafood and rice. The only red meat on the island is buffalo, and that isn't bad. I am saving the mince meat I bought in Medan to cook up spag bol on a special occasion! There is no bread, milk, cheese, OJ, or anything really that you would buy in a supermarket, because there is no shop or food store to buy it. Am flying to

Banda Aceh for meetings this week and then will go to Medan to buy some medical stocks and first aid kits, also some cheese and other food so desperately missed!

So far I am glad I have chosen to do a mission.....The culture shock is a great experience. A cold splash in the morning with a water scoop, a piece of vegemite on toast and I jump into the land cruiser and drive the bumpy 2km road, amongst chickens, goats, even buffalo. The kids are walking to school in their little uniforms and wave, people going to market, dodging a few motorcycles and becaks (little tuk tuks). Once at the office we can see monkeys strolling from the jungle out the back and a goat even made its way into our office the other day! The kids greet me with a smile, a wave, and say 'hello mister!' I AM HAPPY....

JODIE RANFORD

It all continued....

Normally, the hardest part of writing this report is simply how to commence it, no such problems this time. I would like to start off by saying thank you (somewhat belatedly), on behalf of myself and my family, to everyone here at St John NT) and my friends and colleagues from St John, other ambulance services around the country and everyone else, for all of the good wishes I received during my recent ill health.

It was encouraging to see that the work-world continued to turn while I was away and for that I want to particularly thank Annetta Albanese for 'taking over' from me on pretty short notice. Apart from everyone in St John (NT), I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the St John Board (NT) and to David Baker and Ross Coburn for their support.



On the subject of reviews, St John nationally has contributed extensively toward the current reviews of a range of general First Aid competencies and a range of other courses which are targeted towards our volunteer members. I congratulate the national Training Manager, Peter LeCornu, for his extensive work in this area, specifically his untiring efforts to ensure continued national communication on these matters.

I'm sure by now everyone is aware of the changes made to resuscitation and choking management by the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation - and adopted by St John. Introducing the changes has certainly been challenging and I take my hat off to our First Aid Trainers for making the transition between the old and the new so smooth. I am also pleased to hear that the changes seem to have been very well accepted by our course participants, again I see this as testimony to the exceptional calibre of all of our trainers

As we are about to once again participate in another AQTF External Audit, I thought some readers may be interested in the following information from the DEET NT web-site.

There have certainly been a number of Training Staff movements since the last edition of Outback with Dave Macmillan and Paul Pankhurst heading off on 12 months Leave without Pay (although Paul is now back at work), and First Aid Trainers Vicki Macmillan, Greg Coates, Alice Jordinson and Alan Ganley having left the Training Department.

Conversely, it's a warm welcome to Peter Round, Shaun Northcote and Laurel Martin who have moved in to take up Training Officer roles. In particular I would like to thank Greg Coates for his contribution toward the Training Department – both First Aid and Paramedic Training. As many people will know, Greg has, over the past few years, been heavily involved in the delivery of our Rescue and Disaster Management course and I take this opportunity to sincerely acknowledge his contribution in this area.

I was very impressed to see the spirit of cooperation and professionalism displayed by Paramedic Training Officers Steve Reubenson and Warren Purse during their delivery of the January/February Clinical 1 class. It was a big group and the results I have seen are certainly reason for Steve and Warren to feel proud of their achievements. It is worth people recognising the manner by which these guys approach their job and the amount of work they put into it, whether that be before, during or after the course.

Another and possibly final, draft of the Health Training Package (HLT06) has been completed with extensive feedback from members of the IRG or from their organisations. The IRG was very competently chaired by Tony Walker from Rural Ambulance Victoria who was the nominated ACAP representative.



It all continued.... (Continued)

Registered Training Organisation Audits

About external audits

State Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies are required under the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) to conduct audits of training organisations to:

1. Validate applications for registration, renewal of registration and extension to scope of registration and;
2. Monitor a Registered Training Organisation's (RTOs) on-going compliance with the AQTF requirements.

When are external audits conducted?

Audits are conducted:

- preceding an initial registration of a training organisation (Registration Audit)
- within 12 months of the RTO's initial registration (Deployment Audit)
- for targeted RTOs within the registration period, undertaken in response to identified risk factors, as part of strategic industry audit programs, or in response to complaints
- prior to renewal of RTO registration (Re-registration Audit)
- for extension to scope of registration applications. (Extension to Scope Audit)
- for on-going compliance (Compliance Audit)

RTOs need to be aware that:

- audits can be carried out at any time
- ongoing compliance with the AQTF is a requirement of being an RTO
- risk management is essential.

How are external audits conducted?

The RTO receives written notice of the intention to conduct an audit. An independent audit team visits the RTO premises/sites where training and assessment activity will be/is being conducted. The team examines documentation-including RTO self-assessments, talks with staff and clients and reports to the Authority.

Where an RTO's activities are carried out at multiple sites, the audit team may sample a number of sites. Auditing may cover diverse aspects of RTO operations, such as on-line delivery and assessment, workplace delivery and assessment, and flexible learning approaches.

What about DEET staff involvement in external audits?

Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) staff attend audits as observers only and are not part of the official audit team. Their role is to assist the auditor as required and to provide Northern Territory policy advice.

What is a strategic evaluation?

From time to time, the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), through DEET, undertake strategic evaluations of aspects of the National Training Framework and the Australian Quality Training Framework. RTOs may be required to participate in these evaluations. Participation involves analysis of particular aspects of the frameworks. Participation by RTOs is a requirement of registration.

About Compliance Audits

In order to be registered and remain registered, a Registered

Training Organisation (RTO) must comply with Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Standards.

Compliance to these standards is checked by DEET through on-site audits.

Compliance Audits are carried out at least once throughout the RTO registration period.

As part of its preparation for a compliance audit, an RTO is required to check its compliance against the AQTF Standards by conducting an internal audit or self assessment.

About internal audits/self assessment

In order to maintain RTO status, RTOs must be able to demonstrate continuous compliance with the Australian Quality Training Framework Standards for Registered Training Organisations.

To achieve this, RTOs are required to undertake internal audits at least annually. These audits are also known as self-assessments. RTOs are required to provide DEET Employment and Training Division with a copy of their completed self-assessment report by the anniversary of their registration date. A Self Assessment Outcome Report will then be issued to the RTO outlining any required actions, evidence or comments.

The RTO's documentation of annual self-assessments is also reviewed when the DEET Employment and Training Division conducts a formal compliance audit.

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Northern Territory District Adult First Aid Competitions 2006.



The Palmerston Adult Division

On Saturday the 6th of May 2006. I, Rebecca Ballinger of Palmerston Adult Division as well as, Debbie Jesson, Graeme Irwin and Hayley Walker also from Palmerston along with teams from Alice Springs and a combined Cadet Leaders team from Darwin Cadet and Cadet Band Divisions competed in the First Aid Competitions.

I felt that I should write this article to gain more interest for next year's competitions and for everyone to be aware of the results. In 1st place was Alice Springs; they will be going on to compete at Nationals later this year in Perth. In 2nd place was the Combined Cadet Leaders Team and in 3rd Place was the Team from Palmerston. There were 2 scenes for both sections and they comprised of a Public duty

scene and a callout to Resuscitation. As a first time Adult competitor after being a Cadet for 6 years can be frightful but it is such a great experience and really prepares you for the real deal.

Now here comes the shocking part there was only one individual competitor for the whole of the NT and that was myself. Although it was a great advantage and I enjoyed the experience I didn't feel challenged because I was the only competitor.

I feel that I should rally interest as I do intend on again competing next year, but I would love some competition.

It was a great day and I think that everyone will agree everything ran smoothly. A big thank you to Chris

Turner for putting the day together as Competition Manager. And a further thank you to the people behind the scenes, Gwyn Balch, Debbie Downs and Rosie Ballinger for doing all the Data entry of scores into the computer. All the time keepers, adjudicators, casualties and Cas Sim Artist Jan Rowell.

A special thank you from Palmerston Division to Jaclyn Meier (Braund) for fitting in time to train us although she had a wedding to plan.

REBECCA BALLINGER
PALMERSTON ADULT DIVISION



Mentoring – a perspective

What is a mentor? It is a word much used these days but perhaps those using it may not fully appreciate what it means.

I remember in my early days listening to those more senior and experienced officers sharing their work stories around the coffee table. I found these times very beneficial, and this was an environment where I learned a great deal.

Mentor – “an experienced and trusted advisor”

I like the Oxford's definition, it has a warmth about it and seems to capture the true essence behind mentoring.

The mentoring process is a very important aspect of our work and involvement with others at St John. Whether you are new to the Ambulance service or have been around “forever” you will be a part of the mentoring process.

I see mentoring as an ongoing situation where you may find yourself giving or receiving “trusted advice”. The balance between the amount received or given may alter as you progress and gain experience, but the principle should remain the same. I also think that the most experienced amongst us should never reach the state of mind that says, “I don't need to learn from others anymore”.

Mentoring is also much more than sharing information. A mentor can mould and instruct another in ways that a textbook or classroom cannot. Healthy and positive attitudes can be exemplified and taught by someone who has been through similar or same situations

For those on both sides of the mentoring process, I would encourage you to value the principles, continue to practice, and recognise the importance of mentoring.

TREVOR KEATCH

KATHERINE

Advanced Resus

On Saturday 13th May 30 members of different Divisions attended an Advanced Resus training course. All but 2 were Cadets or Adults who work with Cadets.

This is the 4th Year that one of these courses has been run and each time there is a large response to the course.

When you see so many young people willing to give up their Saturdays to do training that is not essential you know the future of St John is in good hands. Cadets and their Leaders don't have the opportunity to do training such as this in their own Divisions as there is so many other things that need to be covered on Divisional nights and as the members that attended this

course are the senior Cadets they are the ones who are usually responsible for assisting in the training of younger Cadets.

The Cadets and Leaders who work with youth in these Divisions are either working full time or doing study at school, it is very difficult and asking a lot of them to attend not only their own Divisional nights but either an Adult night or organised extra training, but they find the time because it means that they have extra skills that may be needed on a duty.

This year Cassandra from Katherine Cadet Division joined the course. For someone willing to travel 300km's to do training again proves there are some special people in the Organisation.

I am pleased to report that all members attending passed both the theory and practical assessments and took part in all the exercises with enthusiasm. They also learnt the new DRABCD and resuscitation. I added an extra _ hour onto the course to include this. Thanks to the adult members who assisted with the different groups so enabling such a large group to receive more individualised training. Thanks also to Peter who is a Training Officer and gave up his Saturday to help. Well done everyone.

VICKI MACMILLAN



A Paramedics Journal

Sometimes it is important to make light of things!!!

On Wednesday the 11th June I was sitting at home with Lee-Anne and on call with Stuart, when we received a call from communications in Alice Springs. We were dispatched to a male patient who had put his arm through a window.

On arrival at the scene we were met by the police who directed us to a 23 year old Aboriginal male, sitting in a lounge chair outside with his family and drinking mates (this is how they were introduced).

The patient had no shirt on, a pair of jeans with a belt and a shirt wrapped around his right forearm. The attempt at haemorrhage control was useless (although appreciated), a small laceration on the inside of his right wrist (<40ml blood loss) and a small laceration to the right lumbar region of his back (<10ml blood loss).

His observations revealed a;

Pulse – 76.

Respirations – 22 and normal.

BP – 78 / 50.

Skin temperature – cold.

Skin colour and moistness – normal.

Pupils – PEARL and 3.

Capillary refill - <2 seconds.

GCS – 15.

After preparing the saline soaked universal and the bandages I removed the dirt filled and stained shirt that was being used as a dressing, which revealed a beautiful V shaped evulsion to the right anterior forearm (muscle hanging out and all). Examination of the wound was not that important at

that point but cleaning and haemorrhage control was. The amount of blood on the ground and around the seat (that is not including the blood at the window that he broke) was approximately 750mls. He was compensating satisfactorily (considering the fact that he had left > than 1500mls of his blood on the ground), his BP could have been a little higher (a nice buffer for my first job back leave).

Haemorrhage control was effective with a universal dressing and a firm bandage, which needed to be done twice (second pad and bandage). O2 therapy was quickly placed on the patient (high concentration) at 12Lpm. Due to the low BP I put a 20g cannula in (the size of the vein and my first one in 6 months). The 10ml flush went in nicely and so did the 500ml of fluid that followed. Placement on the stretcher was as quick as possible and the elevation of his feet were quick to follow (with good effect). Loading of the stretcher was swift and so too was the transport to the hospital.

PATIENTS CHIEF COMPLAINT

- * The fact that he had mixed good alcohol with bad manners.
- * His wife had locked him out of the house, due to his poor use of the English language and his past history on good alcohol.
- * He decided that his skin was stronger then the shards of glass that appeared after he put his fist through the window (I don't

know if he thought that his muscle was stronger as well or if that was an after thought but the fact remained – IT WASN'T)

- * Last but not least, he may have thought that he had more blood in his body then he really did.

Not to worry, we came, we saw, we saved and we left (him at the hospital)

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.

There is something to be learnt on every job. It may only be that the person you are working with is seeing this type of job for the first time or that you have met someone that you would not like present at your next Bar-B-Que. It does not necessarily have to be about you....nor does it have to be major.

For me it was the following;

I hadn't forgotten as many things as I thought I might after such a long holiday.

My cannulation skills were a little rusty (it is horrible when you see that statement in black and white).

The importance of communication on scene, especially when you are working with volunteers / trainee Paramedics (sometimes they really don't know what is going on and can easily become overwhelmed).

That I really love trauma jobs (small things make a big difference and you know that you are on the right track with your management)

That I was well and truly ready to come back to work.



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A new look for the duty we love to hate

The Tennant Creek Combined Division has provided First Aid and Ambulatory Coverage for the "Brunette Races" for many years. The event is one of the Divisions major duties The ABC Amateur Race Club held the event for the 96th time this year.

The duty has always been considered demanding. There is always a lot of planning required to ensure we provide the coverage that is needed. The event is held at a remote race course and rodeo ground located 30 km from the Brunette Downs Station Homestead. Until recently the facility was only used once each year. Those covering the event have to drive 380 km from Tennant Creek. The members then cover four days of events including the famous horse races, a night rodeo, three days of camp drafting, a gymkhana as well as numerous novelty events. The events also include a formal presentation ball.

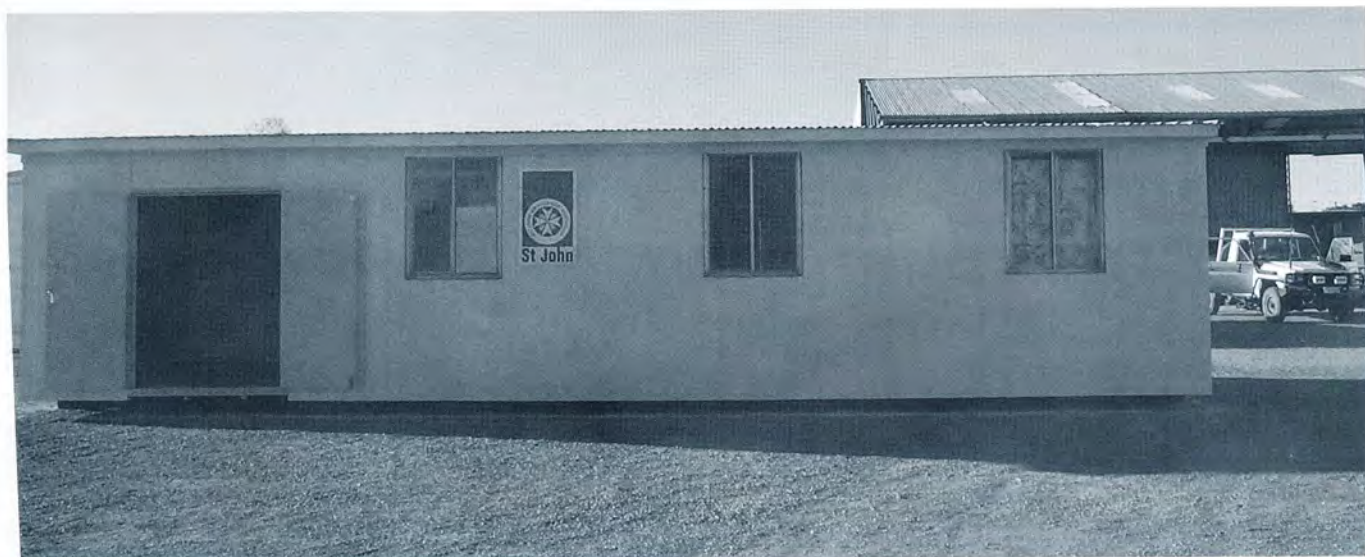
St John Operations Branch Volunteers, Ambulance Officers and Paramedic as well as Doctors and Nurses from the Tennant Creek



Hospital have teamed together to provide the coverage needed. Many times the team has had long sleepless nights caring for those injured. They have provided vital care while the patients await medical evacuation. This can be for prolonged periods and is usually late at night. Evacuation can be by road to Tennant Creek by a "half way meet" with a second ambulance. It is more often by

plane to Mt Isa, or Alice Springs by the Royal Flying Doctor Service or to Tennant Creek by NT Aero Medical Service.

The duty is always demanding and always fun. It's the duty we "love to hate". The weekend is always remembered for the bitterly cold winds, dust, dirt and sleepless nights. It is also remembered for the hospitality of the station people, the great atmosphere and



A new look for the duty we love to hate *(Continued)*



rewarding feeling of being able to provide much needed care over the four days. Over the years that I have attended I have seen so many say they will never do it again as events draw to a close, yet without fail they are there the next year raring to go again.

St John has previously provided a first aid post through a variety of means over the time the organisation has covered the duty. This has included a caravan that was converted to a Public Duty first aid post, a pop up camper purchased as a first aid post and, in recent years the Alice Spring St John Bus, which has been rushed to Tennant Creek as soon as the annual Finke River Race has finished. Those covering the event have slept under the stars, in tents or in the make do First Aid Rooms. Often members have been seen huddling around a fire to keep warm between patients. I can still see one member covered in several blankets close to the fire on a particularly cold day muttering the words "I am over it" many times.

The member had lived most their life in Darwin!

Over the years, many members have proposed, that due to the nature of the event, that a permanent first aid room should be established at the race course. They all believed that this would be beneficial for both the patients being treated and those attending the duty. For many years members have had to provide aid to those seriously injured in less than ideal conditions.

During the previous two years, the venue has hosted a second annual event during September. This is a three day event consisting of Camp Draft, Rodeo, and a Gymkhana. St John now also

provides first aid and ambulance coverage for this event. Those members attending have been housed at the Brunette Station Township travelling 60 km each day to cover the day's events. All coverage has been provided out the back of an ambulance. Once again, the nature of the events has meant we have had to evacuate patients via air.

In 2004 I attended the first annual September event with the then officer in charge of Tennant Creek Station, Scott Loechel. He asked me if it would be possible to source a suitable portable building to convert to a first aid post, from the mining company I work for. I promised to look into it. Initially I earmarked a small abandoned portable building located in the abandoned Warrego Township for this purpose. Work became rather hectic during the next year and I had to put the plan on the back burner. Come September 2005 I found myself in the confined space of an ambulance assisting with the treatment of a patient as we waited for the Royal Flying Doctor to land and evacuate the patient to Mt Isa. I remembered my promise made the previous year to look into sourcing a building as a treatment room. Nothing much more



A new look for the duty we love to hate *(Continued)*

happened until November, and then through an unfortunate set of circumstances I found that I had a lot more time to look into the request. For the first time in my life I was working a 40 hour week!

As circumstance would have it I had, in the latter half of 2005, arranged for the donation of a much larger portable building to the Tennant Creek Child Day Centre. This building had previously been used as a library at the Warrego Mine site up until 1992. It had been abandoned and gone to ruin since then. The Day Care Centre contacted me earlier this year saying that due to a change of strategy that they no longer required the building and they

building previously donated to St John as a First Aid Room. The Day Care Centre signed the ownership of the old Warrego Library over to St John NT with the blessing of the Centralian Minerals and the company's administrator, Pitcher Partners.

We now had one very large portable building to work with but we had quite a few more hurdles to cross. To use our own lingo, on examination the patient was critical. A close look at the building revealed it would take a lot of work to repair. The building was the "best of a bad bunch" left at Warrego.

The first thing we needed was the funds to undertake the repairs and

lots more money to modify this building. We would need to hire trucks and cranes; we would need open accounts at various hardware suppliers. We would have to hire an electrician to rewire the building and we would need the services of a builder. Linda the ABC Amateur Race Clubs' secretary consulted with the clubs committee and was back with an answer within a few days. The club would provide all the funding required to renovate the building. The final commitment to undertake the work was finalised in the early part of April. The big question was could we have the building ready for the races in mid June.

As luck would have it the Centralian Mining has a large industrial yard in the town of Tennant Creek. The company administering the assets of the Centralian Minerals, Pitcher Partners gave permission to use the yard and other company equipment to renovate the building. The race club sent two personnel in from Rock Hampton Downs cattle station to help prepare the building for relocation. The preparation work was done in good time with further assistance from my co worker Carl Milkins.

Andy Anderson owner of TC Sand Supply provided a road train at cost price and Jack Gannon of Fluid Power provided a Crane also at cost price. Centralian Minerals provided a second crane that was in storage at Warrego with the multi talented Carl as operator free of charge. The old library left Warrego after 35 years to start a new life.

The building was unloading at its temporary home in town. As we opened the doors to inspect the "Donga" our initial excitement turned to concern as we discovered several of the panels forming the ceiling had fallen onto



would like to return the ownership of the building back to Centralian Minerals, the mining Company I work for. I suggested that we, the Mining Company had no use for the building and that I would approve the donation of said building to another community group. It was mutually agreed by all parties involved that it would be a good alternative to the smaller

modifications that were required. It was going to cost several thousand dollars to renovate the building. I had previously obtained an undertaking from the ABC Amateur Race Club to provide funds to renovate the smaller building so it was back on the phone to explain that we had sourced a "much better" building for the proposed first aid room but we would need

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A new look for the duty we love to hate *(Continued)*

the floor. We found many of the pop rivets holding the wall and ceiling panels in place were oxidised thus we came to the conclusion that further movement would further exacerbate the problem. Our immediate reaction is "there goes the budget" followed by "how do we tell the race club" So it was back to the drawing board. Carl and I came to the conclusion that we could keep in budget by doing the renovations ourselves and still have the building on site in time for the June races.

A combination of dozens of trips to the Barkly Hardware and BJ Trading both which provided generous discounts and trips to the derelict homes at Warrego Mine provided the materials needed for the refit. Carl, been a boiler maker by trade, fitted the large double doors designed for stretcher access in and out of the first aid room and carried out a number of other repairs. A wall was fabricated at one end to provide a separate office for police. The centre section of the building was converted into a combined living quarters for the St John crew as well as a storage area. The living area can be quickly converted into a second treatment area as required. It houses two beds with a privacy screen fitted between them. There is direct access between the main first aid room and the secondary treatment area.

With the refit now completed it was time to paint the building. Colour choice was simplified. Various cans of paint were sourced by donation from the mining company, the St John Ambulance station in Tennant and donation from other generous individuals. Marcel Clark OIC of Tennant Creek and I mused over

the choice of colours for some time. Marcel took quite a liking to a colour that the top of the cans told us was "Opal Lilac". After testing the paint I would best describe this colour as a very bright pink! This did not perturb Marcel at all; this was going to be the colour of the first aid treatment area! We compromised and the paint was blended with white to tone it down with some been left at "full strength" for the doors. I have to admit that Marcel choice was more influenced by practicality then colour scheme. This was the only full gloss oil based paint we had. It

lent a hand. In a few hours the building was transformed. It was not all hard work we had a BBQ lunch and time to relax during the day.

The week following the working bee saw the final touches being applied. Contractors re wired the building. Karl and I spray painted the exterior. The furniture required was donated by Centralian Minerals. NTES provided the linen need. The Green family donated a specially designed bed for first aid rooms. Finally everything was in place. The building was ready to



made sense to use it as it would be easiest to keep clean.

The division organised a working bee to paint the building. There was an excellent response to the request for help. The majority of cadet and adult members attended along with services officers, parents and partners. Some people that were just passing by stopped and

move and we had every thing we need to equip it. Linda and Henry, (manger of Brunette Downs) arranged a truck and trailer from the station to collect the building and furniture. The building been over width for road transport required an escort vehicle for the trip. Brain Dohnt and the Bushfires NT volunteered provided a bushfires vehicle as an escort.

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A new look for the duty we love to hate *(Continued)*



Adam and Isaac from Brunette Downs arrived with the truck one week before the races. Jack Gannon provided the two cranes needed to load the building onto the trailer free of charge while the truck was loaded with the furniture and other items needed. It took some seven hours to carefully move the building to its new home. The rest of the day was spent setting out the foundations for the building.

I spent the night as a guest at Brunette Downs enjoying great hospitality. I was up early the next morning along with Adam and Isaac to unload the Donga. Henry had arranged for the Stations two "bore trucks" to meet us at the race course. These trucks have large cranes mounted on them. Finally the building was gently eased into position! The final touches were added and I returned home five days before the Brunette races and camp draft was due to start.

Marcel Clark and I spent the days preceding the races in preparing for the duty. The camping equipment usually taken was replaced with cleaning gear to keep the new room spotless. The ambulance and my car were filled with first aid supplies and all the other odds and ends that would

be required. We quickly settled into our new home enjoying the salubrious surrounding including real beds! It was not long before we treated our first patient in the "pink room".

The "Brunette" duty will never be quite the same again. It will have lost some its character. Gone are some of those things that made us love to hate the duty! We can now shelter from those bone chilling winds, no more smelling of camp fire smoke and running out of clean cloths. No more trying to dress for the ball in a small tent. Challenging times interwoven with many fond memories for all those involved over the years! Of course we will now be able to treat patients and care for the ill far more effectively than we have before and it will be so much easier to get a good night sleep.

Yes things will never be the same again! Instead of deciding who will go collect more fire wood we will



The Tennant Creek Hospital flew in a doctor during the first day of the event. The building was well used over the four days of events. Basic first aid, ambulatory care and doctor's consults were all delivered from it.

We all rated the new building as highly successful and worth the effort. The ABC Amateur Race Club presented us a gift to celebrate the commissioning of the new rooms and with thanks to all those who made it possible.

now have to decide whose turn it is to mop the floor.

JUSTIN HANKINSON

TENNANT CREEK

Operation Thinta

This was an overnight activity organised by David McEvoy from the NT Scouting organisation.

THINTA is an African word that means challenge. It certainly was.

All youth organisations were asked by NT Scouts to enter a team in this leadership activity.

St John Ambulance entered a team of 6 young men. Joshua, Michael, Aaron, Karl and Phillip from Palmerston Cadets and Shaun from Humpty Doo Cadets.



Kelly and Doug from Palmerston, Julie from Kormilda, Marion from Humpty Doo and myself were part of the adult support and set up Base 2 which was a First Aid post.

At each Base there was an activity that tested leadership and team work.

There were some challenging activities set up for the kids to play around with, to keep them amused before the main event. All competitors were in the same area. The kids had to set up their own camp and be prepared to cook their own meals. The adults (us) were in a different area doing the scenario. After the boys had completed their challenge they went back to their own camp and cooked up a feed and brought some sausage and burger

sandwiches down to us. So we were looked after.

The night was wet and early on there was a huge storm that wet everything. At our base we were using the cover sponsored by CGU. It was great keeping things dry from the top but there was so much water that things got wet from the bottom.. Our scenario was done in the mud and we did the marking under umbrellas. It was all part of the challenge.

Base 1 – This was an activity designed to test organisational skills and the importance of communication. The team had to work together to get themselves across a toxic waste area. They had 3 empty 200 litre drums, 4 poles that were 3 meters long and about 8cm in diameter, a few ropes and about 20 short poles to work with. They had to work out how to do it and then put their plan into action.

Base 2 – Was the first aid station. Here they had to treat and

transport a person who had been camping. The casualty had been bitten by a snake and while trying to get away from it they fell over their spare tyre. They also had a severe bleed. On scene there was a basic first aid kit, the beginning of a shelter and a few extra clothes. The team had to treat the casualty and make a stretcher good enough to transport the casualty approx 500 meters using only the equipment available.

Base 3 – Was a rest break, there was also a small puzzle to complete.

Base 4 – This was a large Tangram. Using the shapes they had to end up with the shape of a person sitting down having a siesta. This activity pushed the initiative bounds and the lateral thinking extremes.

Base 5 – This was a real challenge. All team members were blindfolded except the leader. The leader had to talk each member of the team through a



Operation Thinta



3D mine field. The team had to gather things with out touching any of the mines on the ground or the vines hanging form the trees. If they did touch the mines or vines they were eliminated and the rest of the team had to try and gather the things. This tested leadership and initiative.

The event began at about 1300 on Saturday 8th April and finished at

about 0900 on Sunday 9th April. The actual activity began at about 1900 with teams leaving base about 15 – 20 minutes apart to go to Base 1. They had to follow a map and find there way to each base, this, some teams found hard and some got lost on their way. The last team got back to base at about 0300 on Sunday.

Nearly everyone got at least 2 hours sleep, it wasn't a good sleep as the mossies were bad but we at least rested our heads.

We were all back at the main area at 0800 to hear how everyone went. I think there were 9 teams entered and St John were the only non Scout youth organisation that entered. Out of a possible 500 or 600 point (I think) our boys got 390.

THEY WON THE EVENT !!!!!

They won because they completed all the activities, worked well together and were respectful of each other and the adults organising the night and the ones at each base. Well done boys you are a credit to St John and yourselves. You entered, completed and participated in the event, fully.

They all had a good time and hope that it will happen again next year so they can do it again.

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Operation Broad Daylight

Katherine 16/17 August 2006

Operation Broad Daylight was a counter terrorism exercise run by Department of Transport and Regional Security (DOTARS) at Katherine Airport in August. It was an exercise that is being run at regional airports around the country under the Securing our Regional Skies Package (SORS). It was basically a test of all emergency services in Katherine to see how they would respond to a terrorist attack.

The first day of the exercise involved a car load of explosives being parked at a mine. (The mine in this case was an old quarry) The reason we believe for the terrorist attacking this particular mine was that some mining executives from a make believe rogue island state were visiting this mine and were going to be blown up by this car bomb. Fortunately a security guard had noticed this suspicious car and had notified police. Police then called in their bomb squad, and our role was to man the forward command post with Firies and Police while waiting for the bomb squad to arrive. Our role on this day was to provide Medical assistance in the event of something going wrong. While our assistance was not required on the day, it gave us a lot of insight into the requirements of manning a Command Post for long periods of time in the heat. These included getting supplies of food and water to staff on these control posts as well as ensuring there was adequate shade and so forth.

The car was eventually blown up by the bomb squad once the area had been made safe and secure.



Above: a perfectly good car.....

While this may not seem related to airport security, a lot of other incidents were occurring at the airport, and it

was believed that this attack on the "gold mine" was related to the fact that some "mining executives" were due to fly into Katherine this day and visit the mine. The mining executives were believed to be the target for this particular attack. While no attack occurred at the airport on this day, it lead to a heightened level of security at the airport, especially when these executives were supposedly flying in.



Above:gets blown sky high

The following day gave us a different scenario although it was related to the overall "story". It seems the terrorist's plan was foiled the day before and they had a contingency plan of blowing up the mining executives that were due to fly out. While the terrorists were carrying the bombs to the terminal one bomb was detonated accidentally and both terrorists were injured.

We were dispatched the second day to this explosion at the airport. A 'safe zone' approximately one kilometre from the airport entrance had been set up and this was to become our casualty collecting point. A little further down the road we set up a triage area (even though there were initial reports of only two injuries we were concerned there may be more). We were not allowed any closer, due to the risk that one of the terrorists bombs was still unexploded. So we were to stay at this safe zone which was also the forward command post in order to provide medical assistance.

Not Much Left.....

Photos Courtesy NTPFES

The main role of St John Ambulance during both days was to treat any wounded/injured from the terrorist

Operation Broad Daylight *(Continued)*



attacks and also to provide medical coverage for those emergency services agencies involved in rescuing people from the attacks. It was a worthwhile exercise because we were able to experience working as part of a multi agency response with both Federal and Local authorities. It also tested response times and scene control and we could experience some of the problems associated with a terrorist attack but also look at many different aspects of what could potentially happen. For example there were only two people injured in this attack however the potential for the second bomb to go off and kill/injure further people was very possible. So we had the opportunity to visit and plan for all sort of different scenarios that may occur during a terrorist attack. Overall it was a very good learning experience and I believe we are more prepared should something occur.

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An interview... with one of St John NT's longest standing paramedics

Leanne Smith is an Intensive Care Paramedic in Darwin and has been employed with St John Ambulance NT for more than 17 years (Jim Leigh is rumoured to be a close second for on-road staff!!)

Leanne's experiences range from working on-road, at Contract sites such as Bechtel (Gas plant), East Timor and in her earlier days in Communications. Leanne has seen many changes, seen many people come and go and has been a mentor to a long list of aspiring ambulance paramedic officers over the years.

Leanne, we will start with the standard first question:

Why do you love being a Paramedic?

Variety, challenge, diversity a whole myriad of reasons. The fact that my office has four wheels and that I am never cooped up. The difference that I may make to someone and that every minute of every day is different.

Tell us about East Timor, what did your work as a Paramedic over there involve and what was it like?

We were sent over to cover the change over from Australian Army to Civilian takeover of the airport in Bachau. Not a



lot of Paramedic work involved, but a lot of sitting around, painting buildings and talking to locals, meeting people





An interview *(Continued)*

from other countries and seeing the United Nations at work.

Conditions were very basic, we lived in a tent and didn't get a shower cubicle until the third week! Very similar to camping, a lot of fun and a whole range of new friends. The local people were beautiful, very gentle and willing to learn whatever we could teach them.

We had no clinic or Ambulance, just a tiny room to house all our gear and a four wheel drive if we could find it when required. We had a few first aid sessions and some scenarios with the medics taking over from us.

It seems that many Paramedics go to places like Bechtel for some variety and a break from working on-road, how much time did you spend there and what were the best things about it?

The LNG plant, mines relief and seismic vessels offer a different challenge, more clinical and chronic/long term care with the occasional emergency or acute problem thrown in. We get to speak with other health care professionals, administer different medications and put rescue plans into action. We also get to look at our profession from a different perspective and gain a better understanding of our ability to cope when a different situation arises.

Your Husband Mark has just completed Clinical 1 and will soon be working in Communications, so at times you will essentially be working together, what do you think this will be like?

I won't have the last word and will actually have to do as I'm told for a change.

What are the biggest changes you have seen over the last 17 years in St John and work as a Paramedic?

The drug protocols have improved and the fast pace of training from Student officer to Paramedic, has really changed.

A lot of good people have come and gone.

The training of Students has improved no end.

What changes would you like to see take place in the next few years?

Increase in Ambulance Crews on the road.

Single stretcher ambulances.

Huge pay increase!!

What are your plans professionally in the next 5-10 years?

At this stage I'm happy where I am, who knows what will happen in the next 5 years.

What advice would you give to Trainee Paramedics such as myself?

Enjoy what you do, don't over analyse every job you go to and every thing you do.

Don't be afraid to ask questions and learn from your mistakes.

When you are not at work, what do you enjoy doing?

I love spending time with my husband and relaxing at home. Family is also important and the other male in my life is my beautiful grandson, I can't thank my daughter enough for giving him to us. I love to travel and have been able to do a bit of that recently.

And finally, 10 quick questions to finish off:

Favourite food? *Cheese*

Favourite colour?

Blue

Favourite TV show?

CSI

Are you what your star sign Libra, suggests you to be? *Balanced*

Pet hates?

Liars

What makes you laugh?

Most things

Are you ever going to quit smoking?

Not yet

If you weren't a Paramedic, what would you be?

Rich

If you won \$50,000 what would you do?

Take a holiday with my husband and buy a shed.

Finish this sentence... 'Life is...'

..full of opportunities, it's up to you to take them!

Thanks for your time Leanne – Keep Smiling!

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St John Staff and Volunteers honoured

Staff and Volunteers of St John Ambulance took a break from their usual duties to attend a dinner courtesy of Walkabout Lodge.

The scheduled 'night out' was to thank staff and volunteers for their hard work and un-wavering commitment "It is long overdue, our schedules don't coincide as volunteers work on different shifts" said OIC Wayne Bevan.

St John Ambulance started their operations in Nhulunbuy in 1994 providing 24 hour paramedic services to the town and nearby communities as far as Bullman. For over a decade of service, they have seen many situations, some of which they prefer to forget, but some of which are worth remembering, serving as an inspiration which lightens their day.

"Our experiences are very wide, we attend anything from a very simple case to traumatic or tragic, in those cases, it does not matter who or where you are, we provide what is necessary".

The first rule of joining St John is to keep and respect confidentiality "We have to respect confidentiality of the patient, there is always the chance that you will come across someone you know, especially in this small town, maybe someone you are not on terms with, but nonetheless, you have to treat them fairly, and abide by the uniform you are wearing".



However, St John give credit to the backbone of the organisation, the Volunteers. "Without the Volunteers we cannot survive, they are not paid and yet their commitment is unwavering and cannot be questioned", said Michael McKay from the Darwin office.

Most volunteers work for other companies and they spare us their time, whatever they can give us, we have shifts from eighth in the morning to eight in the evening and round".

Wayne would also like to extend gratitude to all the community businesses for their untiring support to the ambulance service. "It is good to feel that businesses are very generous with their support, we get priority if needed, a simple gesture but very meaningful".

While providing services to the community, St John is also looking at expanding staffing by level one "As for our volunteers, all you have to have is Senior First Aid, all follow up training is provided by us as far as going to paramedics. One of the interesting factors in a round the clock duty at St John is not knowing what is coming". Volunteer Rebecca Dexter said "It is a great feeling to help someone, it is important to keep calm while performing your duties. Working with people you trust is also an important thing to consider, it is good to work with people you know and who know you".

Story and photo courtesy of 'Arafura Times'



Hi!

Hi everyone,

I am alive and well. Hope you are all happy and healthy. Gee, time travels fast, with just over 3 months to go before I finish my mission. Sorry its been so long between emails - can't count on our internet system here and apart from that, I have also spent much of my time in the field not at my desk.

If you want to know what I have been up to -paste the link below into your web browser screen

[http://www.redcross.org.au/ourservices_aroundtheworld/emergencyrelief/AsiaOuakeTs/unamisfieldstory22 .htm](http://www.redcross.org.au/ourservices_aroundtheworld/emergencyrelief/AsiaOuakeTs/unamisfieldstory22.htm)

Its been a very busy time to develop and implement the health program, but also enjoyable to mix with the people and culture, learn some language, and get a 'feel' for the way of life here. It's a truly

amazing experience. However, I am so over eating fish and rice, and will make my first meal back on aussie soil a nice big juicy rump steak!

Apart from national staff, there is about a handful of expats from other aid organisations to catch up with so on weekends (when not working) we amuse ourselves playing volleyball, table tennis, salsa dancing and going to the beach. Bought myself a mountain bike and an inflatable kayak in Singapore which the local kids love. So that is the social life taking care of but it still gets pretty lonely.

From Nov onwards, I will be travelling and camping in the remote villages on the island with our team of new health volunteers. Looking forward to seeing the traditional medicine practices and 'black magic out there. Already seen practices of using 'OMO

washing powder on the skin to treat mumps' The fact that it causes a nasty rash is testimony to the poison coming out - or so the dukun (village healers say), and a cement like paste of mud is used to pack wounds, where coconut milk brings malaria, arid spells are cast through the food and water. 'hati hati kakak' (careful sister !) my students warn me during a recent health assessment where I was offered sweet rice & buffalo cake wrapped in pandanas leaf. I politely declined the kind offer 'just in case..', and probably saved myself a bout of diarrhoea.

Take care. I look forward to seeing you all from Feb onwards when I return.

Love Jodie

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St John Ambulance Australia Historical Society

The Membership of our Historical Society in the Northern Territory sends their best wishes and salutations to our friends and colleagues at our Bi-Annual Meeting in Perth 2006.



It is indeed most unfortunate that neither of our Representatives are able to attend from the Northern Territory due to unforeseen circumstances. This is in no way - a reflection of a lack of interest or support to our national body. Both Dr Alan Bromwich KStJ and I send our sincere apologies and regrets at this time.

In particular, it is unfortunate that a planned presentation of a Paper will have to be postponed until our next meeting in Canberra in 2008 and that both of us are missing the opportunity of catching up with friends and colleagues within the St John family.

Many of you that attended our "first-ever" National Conference held in Alice Springs in 2004 would have received a complimentary copy of our Northern Territory publication entitled Outback Ambulance.

A new feature within our magazine this year is entitled History Corner and in this issue, we have

embarked on calling together interested people to assist in the preservation of our old records and photographs held at our Headquarters in Darwin.

In essence, our early records are in an extremely fragile state. Many of us whom hold material in private collections are reluctant to donate material for future research and preservation simply because there is no preserved "archives" as such. Many of us want to see this change and the sooner the better.

Our esteemed friend and respected colleague Ms Beth Dawson KStJ has suggested that our national body investigate ways and means to advise State and Territories on just this specific dilemma and we in the NT certainly look forward to any outcomes from our meetings in Perth this year.

At this juncture, the focus in the Northern Territory is to form an interested cadre of willing and interested people in the immediate concerns of preservation of existing material; to promote the idealism of archiving material and cataloguing; to form an "official" group under one banner and to then feed into our national body through our representatives on the national committee.

The tyranny of distance in the NT makes this traditionally a difficult

task, but with people such as Dr Alan Bromwich KStJ with his tremendous enthusiasm and knowledge of our past in our earlier years; Mr Steve Peers OAM CStJ, Ms Marion Grayden CStJ RN; Ms Gwyn Balch our hard-working Volunteer Coordinator in Darwin Headquarters and many others - I am certain that at our next Conference the NT will have much more to report.

In the meantime, our special thanks must go to Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ as our Priory Librarian/Secretary and also Ms Cheryl Orr whom we know both work tirelessly to make these opportunities into reality - and finally; our congratulations and sincere best wishes to our friends and colleagues in the Western Australian Commandery on the official opening of their new Museum in Perth. Congratulations and well done WA!

With kind regards, and on behalf of the Northern Territory representatives,

Alan Caust OStJ
ALICE SPRINGS
NORTHERN TERRITORY



Merry Christmas and
a Happy (and safe) New Year to all



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Executive Officer of the Trust **Bob Lee**
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