



dcrc

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February 2012

Volume 251

Tropic Topics

Welcome to 2012 at DCRC Cairns!

Welcome back to Cairns and DCRC after what we hope was a wonderful, fun-filled and peaceful Christmas time for you all!



We'd also like to give a special welcome to everyone who has posted into Cairns over the holiday period. We hope that you have won the "unpacking battle" and have settled in well! (Has it been warm enough for you?!)

We all know that moving from one end of the country to the other can be a challenge - especially leaving family and friends behind, changing jobs, changing schools... We get it!

One of the greatest challenges we face is overcoming that feeling of "starting over again": finding your way around, making new friends, and finding new friends for your children. DCRC is here to make that process easier for you.

The hardest part is taking that first step through the door into a room full of strangers. What you'll



find at DCRC is a room full of people who know and appreciate how you feel, what you're going through and who are looking forward to helping you settle down into this fantastic part of Australia.



Make sure you mark your calendars/diaries/iphones **NOW** with the two major welcome events we have planned: our family oriented **Open Day** on **Sunday 26 February**, and our spouse "**Wine & Welcome Night**" on **Friday 9 March**), and take that first step towards making new friends in the Cairns Community.

We look forward to welcoming you through our doors and introducing you to the friendship and support that we have to offer.



Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any queries, and make sure you check out our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/dcrc.cairns

From the President...

We have got some great things lined up for you in 2012 and look forward to seeing more and more local defence families through the doors at DCRC. It's YOUR centre, and we want to make sure that we offer something for everyone...

Our calendar of events is starting off very soon with our DCRC family Open day - aimed at showcasing DCRC and the activities we offer for families. If you don't have kids, or have kids that are grown up, or just want a night out to meet people, we have our next regular Girls Night Out on Friday 24 February at Bayleaf Balinese Restaurant, and our very first "Wine & Welcome" Night on Friday 9 March - a chance to share a few drinks, nibbles and meet new spouses. We are very excited about both events and we hope you can all make it!

Keep an eye out for our weekly "What's on" emails, our website: www.dcrc-cairns.com and our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/dcrc.cairns for all our other upcoming events.

Rebecca Schilg
DCRC President



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

dcrc

Open Day

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Sunday 26 February

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **10am - 1pm** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **Free Sausage Sizzle Facepainting** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **Petting Zoo Kids activities** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Come and see what DCRC CAIRNS has to offer you and your family:

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **Facilities, Fun, Friendship, activities, support, and more!** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Meet new and established Cairns families and let the kids have fun in a friendly and safe (and shaded!) environment. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Please RSVP to DCRC: dcrc Cairns@bigpond.com or Ph: 4053 9305 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ or via Facebook: www.facebook.com/dcrc.cairns ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **See you there!** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

New to Cairns?
Don't know many people?
Come along and meet other Cairns Defence Spouses and make some new friends...

Wine &
welcome

Friday 9 March 2012
From 7:30pm

Please bring a bottle of wine, nibbles to share... and bring a friend!

"a stranger is just a friend you haven't met yet..."

at **DCRC Cairns**
3 Jensen Street, Manoora
Please RSVP: 4053 9305
dcrc Cairns@bigpond.com

Meet the new DCRC Co-ordinator **Chrissy Ratcliffe**



Chrissy is originally from Ireland. After moving to London and working for an extended period in accountancy a redundancy offer helped her decide to pursue her dreams - to travel the world. In Australia, she met

Scott, her husband, a member of the Australian Navy.

Being married to a Navy man means that she has lived in cities throughout Australia including Cairns, Sydney and Melbourne.

As well as having an extensive background in administration and office management, Chrissy is a certified life coach. She was also recently appointed by the AG Department as a Civil Marriage Celebrant.

Chrissy is looking forward to putting her experience good use in her role as Coordinator at DCRC. Please feel free to contact Chrissy on 4053 9305 or by email: dcrccairns@bigpond.com with all your DCRC questions and enquiries - she'd love to help!

Farewell & Thank you **Fiona Osborn**

DCRC would like to say a special "Thank you" to our out-going Co-ordinator, Fiona Osborn, who is leaving DCRC to spend more time with her young family.

Fiona has worked tirelessly in her role over the last 8 months, and we wish her well. We also hope to see Fiona and her family at some of the upcoming DCRC events - she can enjoy the fruits of someone else's labour for a change!

DCRC will be hosting a "Thank you" morning tea for Fiona during Playgroup on Wednesday 29 Feb. Please join us!

What would bring YOU into DCRC?

The volunteer DCRC Management Committee works very hard to try and ensure that we offer an activity or event to specifically appeal to every demographic of the Cairns Defence "family". While it's often easier to meet people when you've got young kids or aren't working full-time we realise that not everyone has kids, nor the ability to meet during the day.

This year, we are introducing some events to appeal to those who do work - including after hours events and evening activities. We are also focusing on get-togethers without children - to appeal to young partners as well as those more mature spouses among us. We want to give everyone the opportunity to meet other people who share this challenging and unique lifestyle - no matter what your background!

If you have some fresh, new ideas on what you'd like to see here at DCRC, let us know!

We'd love to hear from you...

From the Team at **DCO** Ph 4053 9300

Welcome to 2012! We hope that you all had a safe and merry Christmas with the opportunity to wind down and spend time with loved ones. To all those Defence families who are new to Cairns we welcome you to our beautiful city and encourage you to take advantage of all that is on offer to you in the tropics.

New families should have received a welcome pack in the mail including local area, cyclone and DCO information. If you have not received your pack or have any questions about living in Cairns please contact our Family Liaison Officer,

Liz Pride, on 07 4053 9300 or e-mail dco.cairns@defence.gov.au.

Please be aware that we are still in the midst of cyclone season and that all families should have preparations in place. We have a number of pamphlets and brochures regarding cyclone preparation at the DCO office. If you require any information please call or come in and see us.

We encourage all Defence families to contact DCO (47 536 539) should you require any assistance or support throughout the year.

Regards, **DCO Cairns Team**

"Our partners might not be in the same boat - but we are..."

Connect with us via **facebook**

www.facebook.com/dcrc.cairns

We'd love to see our page become more interactive. So feel free to post your questions, comments, or just send us a post if you're looking for a babysitter or someone to give you a lift somewhere! We also use **Facebook** to advertise all our events, and it makes RSVP'ing easy!

Bellies & Bubs

For Expectant Mums,
new parents & the under 2s...

at DCRC

Mondays 9:30am—11:30am

\$2 per family

Tea, Coffee & Biscuits provided

Fully
air-conditioned!!

Playgroup & Morning Tea at DCRC

Wednesdays 9:30am—12pm

\$4 per family

Please bring a piece of fruit
for the kids to share.

A plate for the adults to share is optional!

Self-Development
Courses &
Special events
Something for Everyone!

Friendly, positive
and supportive
environment

Craft & Chat Day at DCRC

Tuesdays 9:30am—11:30am

Babysitting available for small fee
(Cost & activity varies. Please contact
DCRC for details)

Enclosed, safe and fully shaded
play area for the kids...
LOTS of TOYS!

Playgroup & Morning Tea at DCRC

Fridays 9:30am—12pm

\$4 per family

Please bring a piece of fruit for the kids to
share. A plate for the adults to share is optional!



Cairns Buddies in the Burbs

Have you thought about getting to know other people in your suburb or
welcome new families? to your area?

Check out our Facebook Page for informal get-togethers and information
about what is happening in the Cairns Community...

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Cairns-Buddies-in-the-Burbs/276744935688080>

Or contact Liz Pride (Family Liaison Officer) at DCO on 4053 9300

DCO Cairns is committed to assisting Defence Families with connecting to their communities

What's on @DCRC... February

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
		1 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	2	3 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	4	5
6 Bellies & Bubs 9:30-11:30	7 Craft Day 9:30-11:30am	8 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	9	10 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	11	12
13 Bellies & Bubs 9:30-11:30	14 Craft Day 9:30-11:30am	15 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm WET PLAY DAY	16 Ladies Lunch Dunwoody's Tavern from 12pm	17 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm WET PLAY DAY	18 Welcome to Cairns Expo HMAS Cairns 10am-1pm	19
20 Bellies & Bubs 9:30-11:30	21 Craft Day 9:30-11:30am	22 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	23	24 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm GIRLS NIGHT OUT Bayleaf 7:30pm	25	26 DCRC OPEN DAY 10am - 1pm
27 Bellies & Bubs 9:30-11:30	28 Craft Day 9:30-11:30am	29 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm Morning Tea for Fiona!				

DCRC Ladies Lunch



317 Sheridan St, Cairns

**THURSDAY
16 FEBRUARY
FROM 12PM**

See you there!
Children Welcome

RSVP: 4053 9305
dcrccairns@bigpond.com

DCRC Girls Night Out



Bay Village Tropical Resort
Corner of Lake and Gatton St, Cairns

**FRIDAY
24 FEBRUARY
FROM 7:30PM**

See you there!

RSVP: 4053 9305
dcrccairns@bigpond.com

What's on @DCRC... March

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
			1	2 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	3 First Aid Course 8:30am-5pm	4
5 Bellies & Bubs 9:30-11:30	6 Craft Day 9:30-11:30am	7 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	8	9 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm WINE & WELCOME @ DCRC 7:30pm	10	11
12 Bellies & Bubs 9:30-11:30	13 Craft Day 9:30-11:30am	14 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	15	16 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	17	18
19 Bellies & Bubs 9:30-11:30 Child Health Nurse Visit	20 Craft Day 9:30-11:30am	21 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	22	23 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	24	25
26 Bellies & Bubs 9:30-11:30 Child Health Nurse Visit	29 Craft Day 9:30-11:30am	30 Playgroup! 9:30am-12pm	31			



DCRC
First Aid Course

Saturday 3 March
8:30am-5pm
At DCRC

Apply First Aid Fasttrack
(Formerly Senior First Aid)
St John Ambulance course

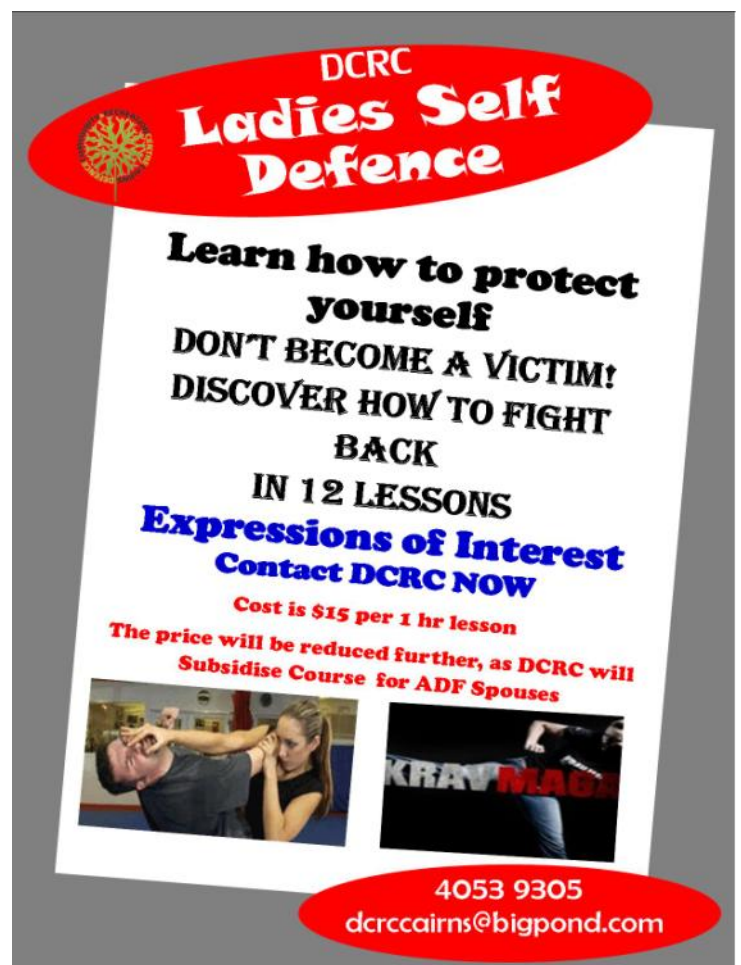
Cost NOW \$75*
Full Payment required by
Monday 27 February

St John **NATIONALLY RECOGNISED TRAINING**

*Course is subsidised for ADF spouses.
\$125 is the full course cost.
Please contact DCRC for more information.



RSVP: 4053 9305
dcrccairns@bigpond.com



DCRC
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DISCOVER HOW TO FIGHT BACK
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Expressions of Interest
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Cost is \$15 per 1 hr lesson
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4053 9305
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From HMAS Cairns...

Contributed by **CMDR Wendy Bullen**



Welcome to 2012 – I cannot believe its February already. I'm looking forward to another amazing year - 2011 sure had its fair share of unique events for HMAS *Cairns* and Cairns Based Fleet Units.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome new families to Cairns and I hope you take time out to absorb everything this beautiful part of the world has to offer and enjoy your stay. I would also like to welcome back the 'old hands' and trust you had a well deserved, enjoyable break. Lastly I would like to thank those of you who remained behind to ensure smooth operation of *Cairns* during the reduced activity period.

The Royal Australian Navy is in its centenary year and has named the Top 100 Navy Achievers. On behalf of *Cairns* based personnel, I would like to congratulate: Commander Alex Hawes, Commander Sea Training Minor War Vessels; Chief Petty Officer Kym Van Wetering, Personnel Officer; and Mr Paul Snow, Purchasing Supervisor, Fleet Logistics Support Element as being listed as three of the Top 100 Navy Achievers.

Sailor of the month for January was Able Seaman Jodi Cavin for her commitment and devotion to duty within the Defence Materiel Organisation Hydrographic Systems Program Office.

The Cairns to Cooktown Cardiac Challenge bike ride took place during September 2011 with 10 riders and 10 support crew from *Cairns*. Navy fundraising far surpassed Army, a great victory, with \$21, 255.65. Despite this mammoth effort, we're hoping this year is bigger and better and would like to finish on top of the fundraising tally. Thanks to Chief Petty Officer Rod Brennan and his team of Physical Trainers for their efforts in making this event (and the fundraising) such a success.

Cairns will be hosting the 2012 Cairns Expo for Defence Families on Saturday 18 February 2012, DCO have extended an invitation to all defence members and their families. I hope to see you there.

CMDR Wendy Bullen



Online services for members updated

Defence Housing Australia's Online Services for members have been upgraded.

Members living in a Service Residence can now view all completed and upcoming maintenance requests, and the details of these within the Online Services dashboard.

They will also be able to view upcoming inspections and events within the dashboard. Any important event details, such as an appointment the member needs to attend, will pop up onscreen when the member logs on.

Another new feature in Online Services is the addition of key warranties and instruction manuals under the Property Information > Media area of the dashboard - so no need to search around the house for this information anymore.

If you are a member, log on using the "Online Services" tab at dha.gov.au to view the changes.

SUPPORT DEFENCE SPOUSES

Advertising in Tropic Topics is free to all Defence Spouses for all home based businesses.
To advertise here, please contact the DCRC Office on 40539305.

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Helping kids affected by separation prepare for the new school year

Article Contributed by:



Many children will be returning to school this year for the first time after their family has separated.

Federal Department of Human Services Director of Parent Support Toni Brown said gaining access to quality resources and support services early can make a big difference to how separated families interact over the long term and the effect this has on children.

“Latest Child Support statistics show there are currently around 1.2 million children whose parents are registered with Child Support. Over 74, 500 applications for child support were registered with Child Support last year, with the highest number of applications received early in the year just after the Christmas/ New Year period,” Ms Brown said.

“This year many parents will be dealing with the emotional and financial stress of separation as well as preparing their kids for the new school year. Parents and children may both feel anxious about returning to school after a family separation.

“It’s important try to put aside your differences and plan ahead for the coming year so your children experience as little disruption and adjust to the new situation as quickly as possible.

“Practical parenting arrangements can include organising school drop-off and pick-up times, extra-curricular activities, school holidays as well as those special days such as birthdays, Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day.

“Many children worry about what will happen to them when their parents split up, and it can be a big relief to them if the arrangements are clear and predictable.

“Child Support has a number of support and referral services available to assist separated families understand and manage the stress of separation. This includes links to websites such as Family Relationships Online which has practical information on parenting plans and related support and mediation services for parents.

“We also have a new website www.youth.csa.gov.au which has links to the latest publications, games and activities for teenagers and children under 12.

“It is very popular with both children and their parents. Since the launch of the youth website last year an average of 54 people a day have visited the site to play the game and download the activity book.

“Young people experience a range of emotions even if their parents are working well together, post-separation. It’s important for them to know they’re not alone and there are people they can talk to.

“I encourage parents to seek help early - talk to the school and the school counselor if necessary or call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800 - to help ensure you and your children are getting the support you need.

“To find out more about your child support options and support services for separated families in your area visit www.humanservices.gov.au or call 131 272.”

Tips for supporting kids after separation:

- Plan ahead with clear arrangements for collecting or returning the kids and stick to them.
- Support kids to have meaningful contact with both parents – face to face is best but where that is not possible, a telephone or skype call, email, letter, video can reassure children they are wanted and loved.
- Encourage children to talk openly about their concerns. Many children in separated families worry about how to please both parents and may feel anxious if they cannot be with one parent.
- See a financial counselor to better manage your new financial situation.
- Don’t be hard on yourself. Take rests or have ‘time out’ if needed.

TROPIC TOPICS SPONSORS

Tropic Topics is grateful to the following local businesses for their support and sponsorship.
Please support them in return if you have the opportunity to do so!
To advertise here, please contact the DCRC Office on 40539305.



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Handy Contact Numbers



DCRC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

President **Rebecca Schilg**

Treasurer **Jacinta Diehm**

Secretary **Veronica Moss**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Kara Preston, Tammy Poing-Destre,
Chey-Lee Sokolowski, Kayannie Denigan.**

DCRC Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9am to 1:30pm

Co-Ordinator: **Christine Ratcliffe**

Telephone 4053 9305

Facsimile 4032 3379

Postal Address 3 Jensen St,
Manoora QLD 4870

Email: dcrccairns@bigpond.com

Next Committee Meeting

(TBA) February 2012

at DCRC (free babysitting provided)



CAIRNS OFFICE:

10 Grove Street Cairns

Phone: 4040 2400

Office Hours 8.30am - 5.00pm

Maintenance (all hours) 139 DHA (139 342)

Defence Community Organisation (DCO)

3 Jensen Street Manoora

Telephone: 4053 9300 Fax: 4032 1340

Office Hours 8.30am - 5.00pm Monday to Friday

Email: dco.cairns@defence.gov.au

Area Manager	Kim Copeland
Social Worker	Paul Davis
Family Liaison Officer (FLO)	Liz Pride
Military Support Officer (MSO)	LEUT Alan Knights
Office Administrator	Julie Conti
Regional Education Liaison (REDLO)	Gail MacDonald (07) 4753 6539

AFTER HOURS NUMBERS

NWCC 1800 801 026

HMAS CAIRNS 0409 637 174

PORTON BARRACKS 0409 667 294

Defence Families Australia (DFA)	1800 100 509
Special Needs:- Margaret Fisk	1800 037 674

Defence Relocations & Housing Manager

(Townsville) PH (07) 4411 7922 Fax (07) 4411 7967

**Deadline for next Tropic Topics
Contributions:**

15 March 2012

Tropic Topics is produced by DCRC for Defence Families in Far North Queensland

SUBMISSIONS: All submissions are limited to an A4 page using Times New Roman Font Size 12. The Editor reserves the right to edit all articles as necessary for publication. Articles not able to be edited will not be considered for publication. Please email submissions to The Editor at dcrccairns@bigpond.com, or drop your submission into DCRC at 3 Jensen St, Manoora.

ADVERTISING: To support your family, we offer FREE advertising for direct selling, home-based services, or for classified type ads. Advertising is provided FREE of charge and is *only available to Defence Families*. Contact The Editor on 4053 9305 or email dcrccairns@bigpond.com.

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CLASSIFIEDS: Free advertising available for Defence Families. Please email your submissions.

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For Further Information please leave a message for The Editor on 4053 9305 or email dcrccairns@bigpond.com.