

THE LIFEBOAT

THE JOURNAL OF THE RNLI



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THE LIFEBOAT

Summer 1979

Contents

Volume XLVI Number 468

Chairman:

MAJOR-GENERAL R. H. FARRANT, CB

Acting Director and Secretary:

JOHN R. ATTERTON, MBE

Managing Editor:

PATRICK HOWARTH

Editor:

JOAN DAVIES

Headquarters:

Royal National Life-boat Institution,
West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15
1HZ (Telephone Poole 71133).

London Office:

Royal National Life-boat Institution,
21 Ebury Street, London SW1W 0LD
(Telephone 01-730 0031).

Notes of the Quarter, by Patrick Howarth	147
International Lifeboat Conference, by Patrick Howarth	148
Summary of Accounts for 1978	149
Lifeboat Services	150
Lifeboats of the World: Part II—Sea rescue outside Europe, by Eric Middleton	158
Footprints on the Sand of Time, by Edward Carpenter	161
Whitby: The lifeboat station and her people, by Joan Davies	162
Building a Rother Class Lifeboat: Part XII—Trials	166
Around the Coast	168
Shoreline	169
Ideal Home Exhibition	170
Some Ways of Raising Money	171
Letters	174
Book Reviews	176
Offshore Lifeboat Services, December 1978, January and February 1979	177
Inshore Lifeboat Services, December 1978, January and February 1979	178

COVER PICTURE

Launch of St David's lifeboat, the 47ft Watson Joseph Soar (Civil Service No. 34). The photograph was taken by J. Anthony Aldersley who is a branch member at New Milton, Hampshire.

At the annual presentations of awards at the Royal Festival Hall in May, William Morris, who is coxswain of St David's lifeboat and also verger of St David's Cathedral, received the bronze medal for gallantry for the service on March 11, 1978, to a motor fishing vessel with engine failure in danger of drifting on to rocks in heavy, breaking overfalls.

Editorial: All material submitted for consideration with a view to publication in the journal should be addressed to the editor, THE LIFEBOAT, Royal National Life-boat Institution, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ (Telephone Poole 71133). Photographs intended for return should be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope.

Next issue: the autumn issue of THE LIFEBOAT will appear in October and news items should be sent by the end of July. News items for the Winter issue should be sent in by the end of October.

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NOTES OF THE QUARTER

by Patrick Howarth

THE 13TH INTERNATIONAL LIFEBOAT CONFERENCE, on which a report appears on page 148, was as always an extremely harmonious and friendly affair. Indeed it would be difficult to find a gathering of pleasanter people anywhere in the world. To someone of my generation, brought up on the general assumption that the British did most things better than other people and repeatedly disillusioned by the experiences of the last 30 years, it was particularly gratifying to experience once again the esteem in which the RNLI is held internationally. To suggest that any one lifeboat service is better than any other, that it has better crews or better boats, would be both arrogant and absurd. Yet it remains a

Every year many delegates from overseas are welcomed at RNLI headquarters, Poole. One page from the visitors' book, covering just three weeks in March, 1979, records signatures of 12 visitors from the USA, Chile, China and the United Arab Emirates.

fact that the RNLI, through providing the central secretariat for the lifeboat organisations of the world for many years past, enjoys a unique standing, which is readily and generously recognised.

It also became clear at the conference that the RNLI's editing and producing of *Lifeboat International*, the internal annual publication, is increasingly appreciated. This publication came into existence as a consequence of a paper submitted by the RNLI at the eleventh international lifeboat conference in New York City. The proposal to have such a publication was well received at the outset, for it was generally recognised that, with more and more important new developments in technology, the gap of four years between conferences left a void in communications which needed filling.



Rear Admiral Wilfred Graham, the new Director of the Royal National Life-boat Institution.

New RNLI Director

A new Director of the RNLI has been appointed to succeed the late Captain Nigel Dixon. He is Rear Admiral Wilfred Graham, who recently

retired from the Royal Navy after 35 years' service. He was Flag Officer Portsmouth and Port Admiral from 1976 until he retired. He graduated from the Imperial Defence College (now the Royal College of Defence Studies) in 1970 and is a member of the Nautical Institute.

He commanded HMS *Ark Royal* and became well known to the general public when the BBC filmed the television series 'Sailor' on board *Ark Royal*.

Admiral Graham was born in Kilmacolm, near Glasgow, and spent his early life there. He now lives in Cron-dall, near Farnham, in Hampshire and is married with four children.

New intermediate lifeboats

The RNLI depot at Cowes has been working for some time on designs for a new boat which could serve as an intermediate lifeboat between the Atlantic 21 and conventional offshore boats. A prototype boat has been built at Souter's yard in Cowes, and a happy decision was taken to call the new class of boat 'RNLI Medina'. The trial speed of this boat is estimated to be about 25 knots. The hull is in cold moulded mahogany, with an internal structure mainly of plywood and a conning position built of aluminium alloy just forward of midships. There is a righting air bag, which has to be inflated by the crew in much the same way as in the Atlantic 21.

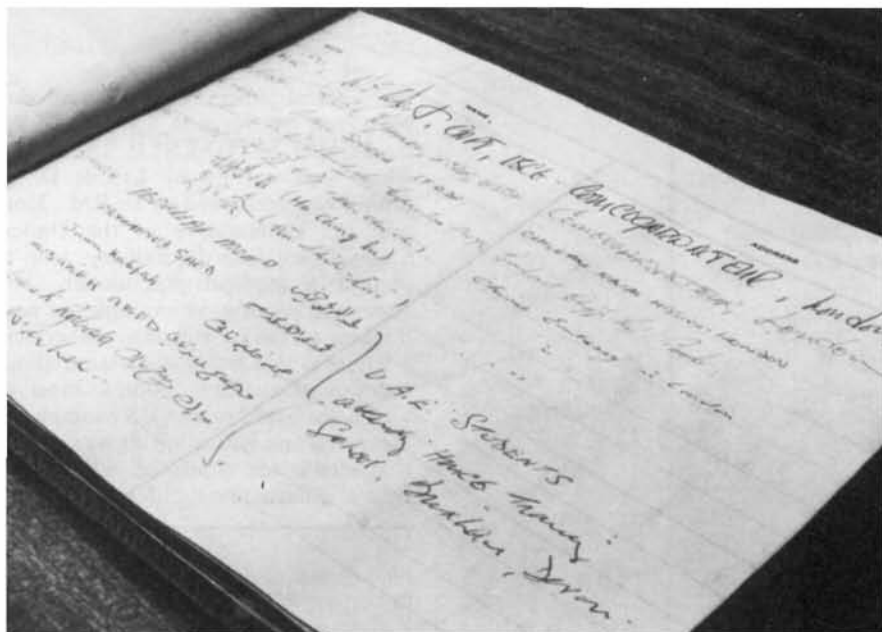
Another intermediate lifeboat, whose estimated trial speed is also about 25 knots, is being developed simultaneously. This is an adaptation of a commercial hull produced by Lochin Marine in GRP. To meet the RNLI's requirements considerable stiffening has been introduced to the hull. So have foam buoyancy, watertight doors and watertight hatches. The engines are twin Caterpillar diesels, each producing 203 hp.

Major lifeboat displays

Through the generous support of sponsors the RNLI will have both the central feature at the International Boat Show, Earls Court, in January, 1980 and the largest and most important photographic exhibition on the subject of lifeboats ever to be staged in this country.

The sponsors of the RNLI's feature at Earls Court are the Midland Bank Limited. A major contribution is also being made by the Department of Trade and Industry, and the theme of the central feature will be search and rescue.

The photographic exhibition is being sponsored by Kodak Limited, who celebrate their centenary year in 1980. The photographic exhibition, to which many fine photographers who have done work for the RNLI will be contributing, will be staged in London in March, 1980. It is hoped to transport the exhibition later to other leading cities.





thirteenth

International Lifeboat Conference

THE NETHERLANDS, APRIL 22-26

by Patrick Howarth

MORE NATIONS were represented at the thirteenth International Lifeboat Conference, which was held in the Netherlands from April 22 to 26, than ever before at one of these occasions. In the early days the countries represented, apart from the United States and Japan, tended to be exclusively European. This year there were delegates from 25 countries, seven of them outside Europe. Among countries represented for the first time were Australia, China, the Faroe Islands and the Netherlands Antilles.

The delegates were housed in the new Hotel Atlantic at Kijkduin near the Hague. All the conference sessions were held in the hotel, the visiting lifeboats being moored in Scheveningen. The organisation of the conference was flawless.

Demonstrations by the lifeboats took place in Rotterdam's Europort. A visit was also paid to Amsterdam, where the

delegates, their wives and crew members were graciously received by Queen Juliana of the Netherlands and Prince Bernhard. The final dinner took place in Rotterdam.

Of the lifeboats present the most impressive, and by far the costliest, was certainly the German rescue

(Above) Delegates from 25 countries met in conference at the Hotel Atlantic, Kijkduin, near the Hague.

(Right) Wilhelm Kaisen, the Federal Republic of Germany's rescue cruiser, with her daughter boat ready to launch. Note helicopter working platform above.

(Below) Visiting lifeboats were moored in Scheveningen. In foreground (l. to r.) lifeboats from the Netherlands, France and Poland.

cruiser, *Wilhelm Kaisen*. In addition to those from the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and Britain, there were lifeboats from France, Norway, Poland and Sweden. The RNLI was represented by the new Arun lifeboat to be stationed at Falmouth, which was under the command of Captain Roy Harding, and by an Atlantic 21. A demonstration of the capsizing and righting of the Atlantic 21 was given by RNLI crew members and then by a Dutch crew.

The opening ceremony took place in the seventeenth century New Church in the Hague, where a choir of Dutch pilots sang sea shanties, most of them in English.

At the conference sessions the chair was taken alternately by the chairmen of the two Dutch lifeboat societies, A. M. Lels and J. F. Dudok van Heel. As always the proceedings took place entirely in English. The Dutch lifeboat societies were fortunate in obtaining sponsorship for the conference and for the various associated functions from Unilever and from a number of Dutch companies.

At the first conference session it was unanimously agreed by the representatives of the 25 nations present that they would seek support for the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Lifeboat Conference in 1980.

The range of subjects discussed at the sessions was exceptionally wide, particular interest being expressed in



the medical papers. One of these was presented by Surgeon Captain F. W. Baskerville of the RNLI. The other, which was written by Lt-Cdr D. S. Smith, was presented by Dr R. L. Horton, the Commodore of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, who is himself a medical practitioner. The American paper gave examples of new thinking on the subject of hypothermia.

There was a lively discussion about the use of auxiliary bodies, most of which are based on the US example, in lifesaving and education. It was agreed that auxiliaries would be welcome at future international lifeboat confer-

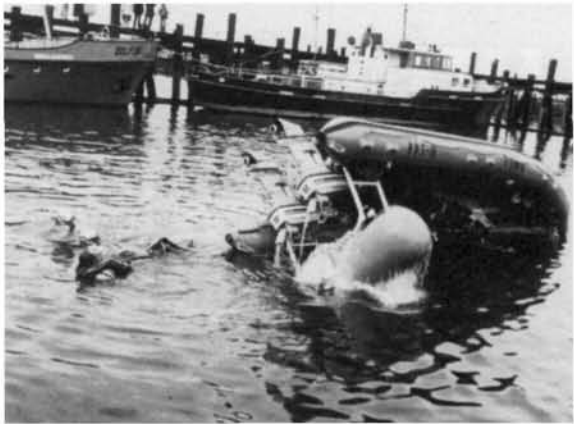
Photographs at Kijkduin and Scheveningen by courtesy of Cees van der Meulen, and of Wilhelm Kaisen by Grahame Farr.

ences and that they should form part of national delegations.

The RNLI delegation, which was most ably led by Major-General Ralph Farrant and which included the Chief Inspector of Coastguard, Lt-Cdr J. T. Fetherston-Dilke, produced, in addition to Surgeon Captain Baskerville's paper, contributions on the development of the Atlantic 21, the RNLI's policy in providing lifeboat cover, the role of lifeboats in intense fires and the reasons why we have voluntary lifeboat societies. The conference passed a resolution expressing concern about the problems of lifesaving when intense fires had broken out and resolved to ask the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation to take the necessary steps to ensure that 'the complex problems involved could be studied and appropriate action taken

Demonstrations included the capsizing and righting of the RNLI's Atlantic 21 ILB. A British crew righted the boat first and then, after being instructed in the righting drill by Mike Butler of the RNLI Cowes base, a Dutch crew took over for the first time and, as can be seen, successfully righted the capsized boat. The crew, led by Skipper J. Flohil, came from Ouddorp where they man one of South Holland's three Atlantic 21s.

photograph by courtesy of the Dutch Atlantic 21 crew



to provide suitable rescue craft for this purpose'.

It was decided that the fourteenth International Lifeboat Conference in 1983 should be held in Sweden. Captain

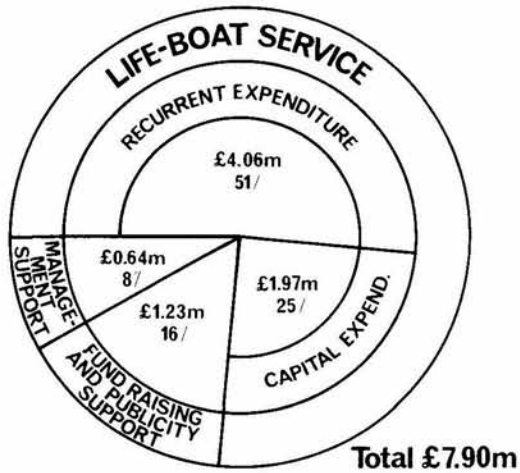
Hans Hansson, the leader of the Swedish delegation, who has attended every international lifeboat conference from 1947 onwards, stated that the site would be Gothenburg.

Summary of Accounts for 1978

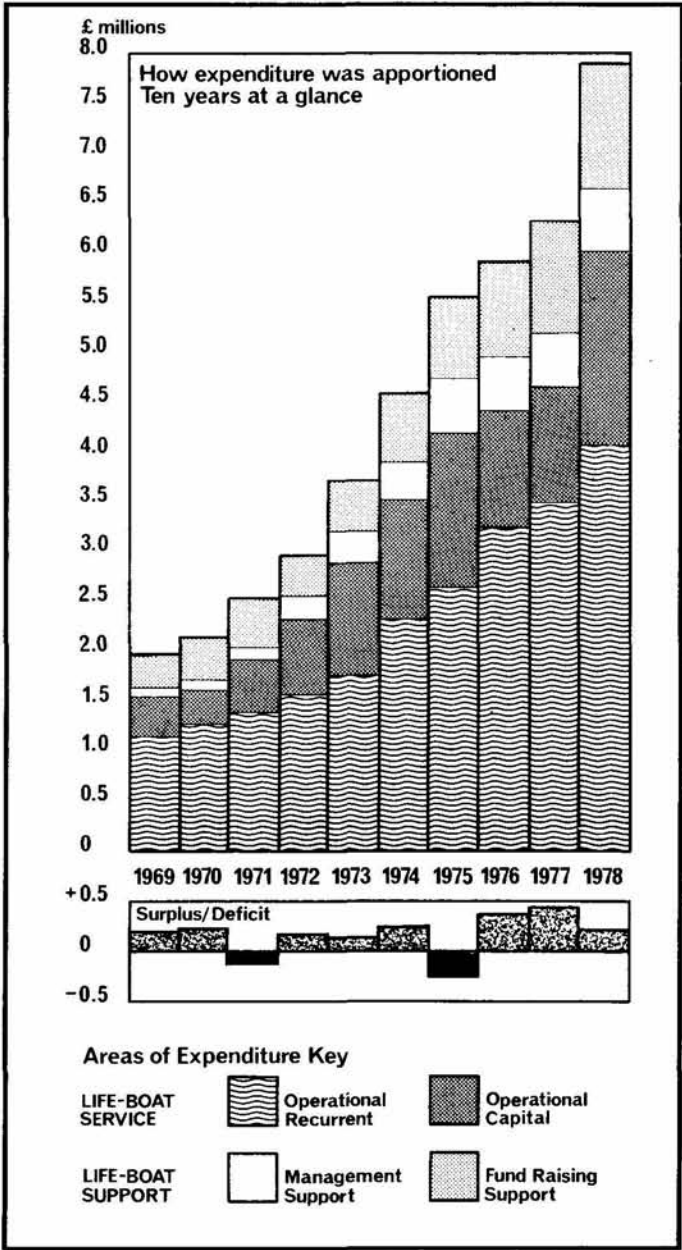
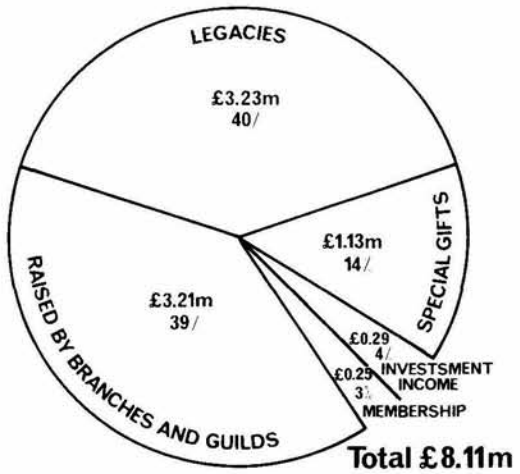
A VISUAL REPRESENTATION

Full accounts are available from Poole headquarters and a detailed report of the annual general meeting held on May 22 at the National Film Theatre, London, will be published in the autumn issue of THE LIFEBOAT.

What it cost in 1978



How the money was raised



LIFEBOAT SERVICES

North Eastern Division

Cargo vessel sinks

HUMBER COASTGUARD informed Superintendent Coxswain Brian Bevan of Humber lifeboat station at 2357 on Tuesday February 13 that the Panamanian motor vessel *Revi* was in distress 30 miles north east of Spurn Light Vessel. At 0015 on February 14 the 54ft Arun lifeboat *City of Bradford IV* slipped her moorings and set out at full speed.

The weather was cloudy with moderate visibility, except in snow storms. A north-easterly gale was blowing, gusting to strong gale force 9 and increasing. The tide was five hours ebb.

By the time the lifeboat had cleared the river and was about two miles north east of Spurn Light Vessel she was heading into very large seas. She crested one and then crashed down some 15 to 20 feet so hard that the elec-

tric breakers on all lights and window wipers opened. Speed was reduced to 14 knots in head seas which were now estimated to be 35ft high.

At 0107 *Revi* informed the British ship *Deepstone*, which was standing by, that she was slowly sinking and asked her master to stand in close to. At this time Humber lifeboat still had eight miles to run. Three minutes later *Revi* informed all stations that she was going to increase speed to full and try to make the River Humber.

The lifeboat arrived 'on scene' at 0136 and took station close astern of *Revi*, which was steaming 6 knots on a course of 210°; she was being completely buried by heavy seas. The wind, recorded on the BP gas platform nearby, was now north east, storm force 10. It was exceptionally cold with intermittent snow showers.

At 0145, with *Deepstone* close to the east and Humber lifeboat close astern, the master of *Revi* said he was slowing down and asked that his two crew members be taken off. At first Coxswain Bevan thought this would be impossible and asked *Revi* to stop to see how she would behave. Stopped, she lay broadside to the weather with heavy seas breaking across her whole length, and the danger to survivors and crew members alike was so great that a rescue in that position had very little chance of success. Coxswain Bevan therefore instructed *Revi* to steer south at slow speed and to have the two men on the boat deck on her starboard quarter, ready to jump.

The lifeboat was fendered on the port shoulder and the crew fastened their

lifelines to the forward pulpit rails. Just as the lifeboat was edged in under *Revi*'s starboard quarter a heavy breaking sea hit the casualty's port quarter, completely covering her stern. The lifeboat's engines were put full astern to clear *Revi* as she dropped menacingly down on to the lifeboat's foredeck. After a number of similar attempts with the casualty often rising 20 feet above the lifeboat's foredeck, the two crew members were taken off one at a time.

Revi's master hoped to continue to run for the River Humber, but only five minutes later he decided that, as the accommodation was flooding, he and the mate should abandon the vessel; with her cargo of silver sand shifting, she had a list of 45 degrees to port. The captain turned her bows west, giving a lee on the low port side. Preparing to take the two men off from the port quarter, the lifeboat's fenders were changed over—this with great difficulty in the prevailing violent storm—and the crew again made fast their lifelines to the pulpit rails. *Revi* was now settling by the head, while heavy seas swept clear across her full length as she lay broadside to the storm. As the lifeboat came alongside her heaving deck on the first approach a large wave broke right over both boats and swept the lifeboat away from the ship's side. The same thing happened again and again and it took about another twelve attempts before the lifeboat could be brought alongside at a moment when, there being a reasonable height between the two decks, a man was able to jump. The mate jumped six feet into the arms of the lifeboat's crew who broke his fall and hurried him below.

Revi's bows were now almost submerged, No. 1 hatch was completely awash and the stern was clear of the water, poised dangerously above the lifeboat. The last survivor, the master, was hanging on to the outside of *Revi*'s stern rails, ready to jump. On about the tenth attempt to get him off, as *City of Bradford IV* approached *Revi*'s quarter, the stricken vessel's stern rose 20 feet in the air and began to crash down towards the lifeboat's foredeck where the crew were lashed to the rails with little or no chance of escape. Coxswain Bevan rammed the throttles full astern and the Arun's impressive power pulled her clear by only a matter of inches.

While the lifeboat was preparing for yet another approach, *Revi* was completely covered by three successive seas and the captain was feared lost. However, when the water cleared he was seen still hanging on to the stern rails. With *Revi* now in immediate danger of rolling over, Coxswain Bevan decided on a dash in to the casualty in a trough between two waves. The lifeboat was driven under the port quarter, striking the ship's stern, and the captain, the last man, jumped; he almost fell overboard but the crew just

Superintendent Coxswain Brian Bevan was awarded the gold, silver and bronze medals for gallantry for services by Humber lifeboat in some of the worst storms of the past winter. These services were to *Revi*, *Diana V* and *Savinesti* respectively and . . .

. . . the coxswain with his crew, all of whom were awarded the bronze medal for their part in the service to *Revi*: Crew Member Dennis Bailey, Jnr, Crew Member Peter Jordan, Motor Mechanic Bill Sayers, Superintendent Coxswain Bevan, Second Coxswain Dennis Bailey, Crew Member Sydney Rollinson, Assistant Mechanic Ronald Sayers and Crew Member Michael Storey.

photographs by courtesy of T. M. Carter



managed to hold on to him. It was 0233. A few minutes later *Revi* rolled over and sank.

The survivors were landed at Grimsby and were taken to the Mission for Seamen. After some refreshment for the crew, Humber lifeboat sailed at 0609 to make the return passage to station. At 0721, after refuelling and remooring, Humber lifeboat was reported 'ready for service'.

For this service the gold medal for outstanding courage was awarded to Superintendent Coxswain Brian W. Bevan. The bronze medal was awarded to Second Coxswain Dennis Bailey, Motor Mechanic Barry 'Bill' Sayers, Assistant Mechanic Ronald Sayers and Crew Members Michael B. Storey, Peter Jordan, Sydney Rollinson and Dennis Bailey, Jnr.

North Eastern Division

Loss of power

A GERMAN SHIP, *Sunnanhav*, broken down eight miles north east of Flamborough Head, was reported to the honorary secretary of **Bridlington** lifeboat station by HM Coastguard at 0900 on Thursday February 15. She was being storm-driven in a blizzard towards the headland at about 1½ knots. At first the lifeboat was asked to stand by; shortly afterwards came the request to launch. Humber lifeboat might be required for a service well to the south (see below) and Flamborough lifeboat, although the closest, was instructed by the divisional inspector of lifeboats (North East) not to launch as she had no radar and the weather was directly into North Landing.

In blizzard conditions with falling snow and ice re-forming as quickly as it was cleared the 37ft Oakley *William Henry and Mary King* had to be lowered down both slipways on a check rope. At 0945 she launched into heavy breaking seas, with visibility only a few yards making it impossible to see the next breaker. A storm to violent storm, force 10 to 11, was blowing from the north east. The tide was three hours ebb; the temperature was -4°C.

Coxswain Fred Walkington decided that it would be better to leave Bridlington Bay by the south end of Smithic Sands thus avoiding the extra large shallow water waves between the north end of the sand and Flamborough Head. The lifeboat was struck constantly by large seas and Coxswain Walkington instructed his crew to clip on their lifelines inside the cockpit. Smithic Buoy was left to port and course set to the north east. The sea was white over with drift and the lifeboat was heading into driven snow squalls during which the wind became even stronger and visibility was reduced. The main sea was easterly with a cross sea breaking from the north. The throttles had to be eased

and the bows squared towards the frequent breaking waves. The boat was twice lifted and tossed round 40 degrees to starboard.

Shortly after the lifeboat left Bridlington Bay she was informed that *Sunnanhav* had regained limited power and was now four to five miles north east of Flamborough Head but still being driven south west. A mile or so further on, Bridlington lifeboat was lifted by a big sea which filled the cockpit with water (this had already happened on a number of occasions previously) and the radar went dead. Coxswain Walkington continued towards the last known position of the casualty. A few minutes later the Coastguard informed him that *Sunnanhav* had regained full power and was making for Humber for shelter from the still worsening seas, which were now breaking at 30 foot. Visibility was about 50 yards and the ship could not pick up the lifeboat on her radar.

Coxswain Walkington decided to turn west hoping to make a landfall on the high cliffs to the north of Flamborough Head; if he had gone into Bridlington Bay in the prevailing conditions without radar there would have been the possibility of arriving in very shallow water without a positive indication of position, thus not knowing whether to turn north or south to return to station. After about 2½ hours running with the drogue streamed and being constantly pooped, cliffs were glimpsed through the snow at a distance of about half a mile. They were soon identified as the cliffs north of Filey Brig, a notorious outcrop of rocks; at almost the same time Second Coxswain Denis Atkins shouted a warning that he had sighted Filey Brig ahead at about 100 yards. Coxswain Walkington put the wheel hard over to port. As the boat presented her beam to the sea she was struck and knocked over to starboard. The engine cut-out operated and the engines stopped. Coxswain Walkington put his engines to neutral and ordered Assistant Mechanic John Sharp to make the 'capsize switches' and restart. The engines fired first time.

Filey Brig Buoy was sighted to port after the coxswain had brought the lifeboat round head to sea. It was now 1510. The crew, who had all been 'hooked on' and braced against the heavy movement, confirmed that they were well and course was set for Flamborough Head.

Motor Mechanic Roderick Stott had been constantly trying to regain a radar picture; it gradually improved after the knockdown and helped with the return passage to harbour. The Coastguard manned both piers with lifesaving equipment until the boat had entered safely.

The lifeboat returned to harbour and refuelled at 1700, though with great difficulty as the fuel was freezing in the funnel. So that she should not go 'off service' inside the harbour at low

water, the crew decided to have a hot drink, change into dry clothing and then sail again to rehouse, which was just possible with great care. They mustered again two hours later and sailed, eventually rehousing at 2200 after considerable problems negotiating the slip in the icy conditions. It was 13 hours since they were first called.

Bridlington lifeboat was reported ready for service at 2225.

For this service the bronze medal was awarded to Coxswain Fred Walkington. Medal service certificates were presented to Second Coxswain Denis Atkins, Motor Mechanic Roderick W. Stott, Assistant Mechanic John C. Sharp and Crew Members Anthony J. Ayre, R. W. Stork and Paul A. Staveley.

North Eastern and Eastern Divisions

Blizzard

ON THURSDAY MORNING February 15 a Romanian cargo ship, *Savinesti*, with 28 people on board was reported in distress 125° 37.5 miles from Spurn Point; she had engine failure and was dragging her anchor. After liaison (made more difficult because heavy snow had brought down telephone wires) between Yarmouth Coastguard, the divisional inspector of lifeboats (North East) and the stations concerned it was decided that **Wells** lifeboat should launch to try to cut off the casualty which was in danger of grounding on Race Bank or Docking Shoal. Another distress call had come to the north which Humber lifeboat might have to answer and no other lifeboat in the area could launch.

The morning was heavily overcast with continuous snow blizzards and poor visibility; the wind was north easterly strong gale force 9 to storm force 10. Maroons were fired at Wells at 1005 and at 1024 the 37ft Oakley lifeboat *Ernest Tom Neathercoat* launched from her carriage into Wells Harbour and set out to sea. It was 2½ hours after high water.

By 1040 the lifeboat had reached the entrance bar and was confronted by heavy rolling seas and the full force of the wind. The lifeboat was being continually hit and filled by the seas and lost her radar, MF radio and echo sounder. Course was set north by east. At 1052 *Savinesti's* position was given at 331° a mile and a half from South Race Buoy by Wells Coastguard.

By 1100 Coxswain David Cox realised that the lifeboat was labouring to clear the water that she was shipping and had to reduce speed. Although this prevented the labouring, she was still filling and all crew throughout the service had to remain in the after cockpit as the heavy breaking seas made the forward well untenable.

As Bridlington lifeboat had managed

to launch to the casualty to the north, the divisional inspector of lifeboats (North East) was able to release **Humber** lifeboat to help to the south, and at 1124, after her crew had boarded with great difficulty, the 54ft Arun City of Bradford IV slipped her moorings. A course was set to clear the river at 17 knots. Visibility was reduced to less than 75 yards by the blizzard and, with a temperature of -4°C , there was a 3in layer of ice on the boat and rails.

The radar was giving a very poor picture, only just showing Spurn Light Vessel at 1.5 miles, and the Decca Navigator did not appear to be receiving properly. Superintendent Coxswain Brian Bevan eased back and the scanners were checked. They were found to be coated in thick ice which was chipped away before the lifeboat resumed cruising speed.

On clearing the river speed had to be reduced because of tremendous buffeting and nil visibility. The Decca Navigator could only be used if the lifeboat was slowed right down during the infrequent pauses in the heavy snow, when it was hurriedly 'set up' and a reading taken before carrying on.

At 1113 *Savinesti* informed the coastal tanker *Annuity* that she had lost both anchors but had enough power to hold into the weather. At 1124 *Annuity* reported that she was with the casualty and gave her position as 014° 2.6 miles from South Race Buoy. At 1140 the ferry *Norwave* was in the vicinity of the casualty.

At 1213 Coxswain Cox considered that Wells lifeboat was near South Race Buoy and asked if *Annuity* or *Norwave* could see him on radar, but in that weather, neither could. A minute later the lifeboat sighted a ship and by 1307 was standing by *Savinesti*. At 1314 Coxswain Cox asked if he could be relieved by Humber Arun lifeboat as soon as possible as his crew were all extremely cold; then, for the next two hours, Wells lifeboat stood by the casualty as she held her own just north of South Race Buoy.

The wind over this period was north-easterly storm to violent storm, force 10 to 11 and there was a very heavy swell with 40ft breaking seas; the banks nearby were making the rollers run for several hundred feet and the continuous heavy snow, and blown spray brought visibility at times down to nil. At times all that could be seen of the other vessels by the lifeboat was the tips of their masts. Several attempts were made by *Annuity* and *Norwave* to pass a tow line to the casualty, but it could not be done. Throughout this period the lifeboat VHF transmissions had to be relayed to Yarmouth Coastguard by *Norwave*.

Meanwhile the tug *Lady Moira* was on her way to help and Humber lifeboat was also on her way at ten knots, stopping occasionally to chip off ice and fix position.

At 1500 Humber lifeboat was only

seven miles away and Wells lifeboat was released to try to make the Norfolk coast in daylight. By now the wind was east north east, violent storm force 11 gusting to hurricane force 12. A course and distance to South East Docking Buoy of 212° ten miles was given to Wells lifeboat by *Norwave* and with her drogue streamed she started her return trip. It was soon found that the only course she could sustain without violent movement was south west and she was held down to about half speed. The snow was now blowing directly into the after cockpit and it was one crew member's task to keep the screen and compass glass clear.

Heavy white water was seen ahead at 1700. At first it was thought to be the shore but it proved only to be the banks, so course was held. At 1815 some shore lights, thought to be Brancaster, were glimpsed. A parachute flare was put up and an auxiliary coastguard ashore confirmed the lifeboat's position as being just north of Brancaster Golf Club. An easterly course was then set for Wells Harbour. The remaining seven miles took two hours to make good with frequent use of the helm and engines to bring the lifeboat up into the breaking seas.

At 2026 the lifeboat was just west of Wells Bar but no leading lights could be seen through the blizzard. A local fishing boat, *Strandline*, came down channel to act as a leading light and give pilotage help on VHF and, at 2110 with her drogue out to its full extent, the lifeboat entered over the bar, being completely swept again by three seas as she came. As the lifeboat could not be rehoused she berthed in the harbour at 2150. The crew were all helped

ashore and most found that they were unable to walk. They were helped into a change of clothes and driven to their homes.

In all, *Ernest Tom Neathercoat*, an open 37ft lifeboat, was at sea for 11 hours 24 minutes in violent storm conditions with very heavy swell and phenomenal seas frequently washing right over her, with continuous blizzard (Wells was cut off by snow for the following three days), poor visibility and sub zero temperatures.

Back at the scene of the casualty, during the afternoon four or five rockets were fired across *Savinesti* by *Norwave* in an attempt, which proved unsuccessful, to establish a tow; all lines parted. The tug *Lady Moira* arrived at 1800 but considered conditions were too bad to risk men on deck.

By the evening *Savinesti* was making four knots northwards with the intention of steaming north of Dowsing Light Vessel and then running before the sea into Humber. By 0035 on February 16, the snow had moderated to light showers and the wind to strong gale force 9. When in position 000° Dowsing Light Vessel five miles, the casualty and her escorts turned before the sea on a course for the river. *Savinesti* entered the River Humber at 0303 escorted by *Norwave* and *Lady Moira* and was boarded by a pilot.

Humber lifeboat returned to station and refuelled, reporting ready for service at 0425.

For this service the silver medal was awarded to Coxswain David J. Cox of Wells lifeboat and the bronze medal to Superintendent Coxswain Brian W. Bevan of Humber lifeboat. Medal service certificates were presented to

In the February blizzards when East Anglia roads were blocked by huge snowdrifts, Great Yarmouth and Gorleston's 44ft Waveney lifeboat Khami launched to take three patients, one a girl of 14, up the River Yare to Norwich for urgent medical treatment. It was the same day, February 15, that Bridlington lifeboat launched to go to the help of Sunnanhav and Wells and Humber lifeboats to the help of Savinesti.

photograph by courtesy of 'Eastern Daily Press'



Second Coxswain Anthony T. Jordan, Motor Mechanic Albert Court, Assistant Mechanic Alan M. Cox and Crew Members Albert Warner, John R. Nudds, Graham B. Walker and John W. Betts of Wells lifeboat, and Second Coxswain Dennis Bailey, Motor Mechanic Barry 'Bill' Sayers, Assistant Mechanic Ronald Sayers and Crew Members Michael B. Storey, Peter Jordan and Dennis Bailey, Jnr, of Humber lifeboat. Framed letters of thanks signed by Major-General Ralph Farrant, chairman of the Institution, were sent to the master of *Norwave*, Captain Wally Patch, and to the skipper of *MFV Strandline*, John Ward.

North Eastern and Eastern Divisions

Dutch coaster

A DUTCH COASTER *Diana V*, in distress 101° 74 miles from Spurn Head, was reported to Superintendent Coxswain Brian Bevan of **Humber** lifeboat station by HM Coastguard at 1400 on December 30, 1978; her cargo of maize had shifted in rough seas near Well Bank. At 1410 the 54ft Arun lifeboat *City of Bradford IV* slipped her moorings. On clearing the river she encountered very heavy seas whipped up by a strong easterly gale and visibility was reduced to 100 yards by heavy snow showers. The tide was two hours flood.

At 1419 *HMS Lindisfarne* reported that she was 20 miles north west of *Diana V* and heading for her.

Meanwhile, **Cromer** lifeboat had been put on stand by and at 1451, the 46ft 9in Watson relief lifeboat *William Gammon, Manchester and District XXX*, on temporary duty at Cromer, launched on service to give extra cover.

At 1559, Humber lifeboat was driving at full speed into the head seas, and had covered 25 miles from Spurn Point, when she suddenly lost speed; an oil pipe supplying the starboard engine was found to be fractured. Knowing that Cromer lifeboat was on her way, that *HMS Lindisfarne* was now in company with *Diana V* and that the situation on board the coaster was improving, Coxswain Bevan decided to return to Grimsby for emergency repairs.

During the return passage Motor Mechanic Barry 'Bill' Sayers and Assistant Mechanic Ronald Sayers, who are brothers, working in a confined space in the engine room of the violently moving lifeboat, managed to strip down the pump in preparation for fitting a replacement pipe; arrangements had been made with the shore for repairs.

HMS Lindisfarne had assumed on scene command and at 1700 she reduced the distress signal to urgency. *Diana V* was able to get under way at 9 knots for Humber, escorted by *Lindisfarne*. At 1730 *Cromer* lifeboat



The 46ft 9in Watson relief lifeboat *William Gammon, Manchester and District XXX*, on temporary duty at Cromer, launches on service to *Diana V*.

photographs by courtesy of Poppyland Photographs

reported she was returning, heading for Great Yarmouth as, in the rough seas prevailing, she could not have been rehoused at Cromer. She reached harbour at 2250.

On Humber lifeboat's arrival at Grimsby at 1845 a suitable piece of pipe was located. It was found, however, that, because of the heavy swell, if repairs were to be made in harbour the lifeboat would have to lock in to the Fish Dock—and then might be locked in and thus off service until 0400. Rather than that, Coxswain Bevan decided that the repair should be made in the river and asked the dock master to open the pen. Despite the heavy swell breaking on the dock gates, *City of Bradford IV* was penned out without damage at 2030 and 'dodged' down river and towards Spurn to refuel while the mechanics made the repairs.

At 2045 *Lindisfarne* reported that

conditions had become worse and that *Diana V* was taking water. Helicopter help had been requested (a USAF helicopter arrived on scene at 0030 but had to return to base because of the weather). Humber lifeboat informed the Coastguard that she was taking on fuel and would complete her repairs shortly. By 2136 she was once more on her way to the casualty, ETA two hours. *Diana V* was now 097° 28 miles from Spurn Point.

The lifeboat was heading almost directly into the 25ft short, steep seas at full speed and taking a terrific pounding, at times taking off and crashing down into the next wave. At 2235, when still eight miles from the casualty, she crashed down from an exceptionally large sea and all lighting, window wipers and fans failed. Crew Member Dennis Bailey, Jnr, was thrown against the wheelhouse bulkhead, injuring his

right eye, knee and elbow. Speed was reduced to ten knots to give the mechanics a chance to find the fault and restore the lighting.

Before repairs could be made, *Lindisfarne* reported that the lifeboat was now urgently needed to take off *Diana V*'s four crew and two women and asked Humber lifeboat to make best speed to join her. Coxswain Bevan increased speed to full and briefed his crew to prepare to go alongside using only the two hand torches.

Humber lifeboat arrived on scene at 2301 and prepared to go alongside *Diana V* which was steering down sea on an erratic course at 5 knots with a heavy list to port. The lifeboat crew found that both the inflatable dinghy and liferaft had broken loose from their fastenings. They lashed them down and then fendered the starboard bow. With the wind now gusting to 56 knots, storm force 10, and the -4°C temperature freezing the sea water to deck and rails, moving about on deck was very difficult.

Coxswain Bevan instructed the master of *Diana V* to have his crew on his port quarter ready to jump and *Lindisfarne* illuminated the coaster with her searchlight. All the lifeboat's crew except for the two mechanics fastened their lifelines to the rails forward. Just as Coxswain Bevan edged the lifeboat in to *Diana V*'s port quarter a breaking sea hit the stern of the casualty, almost washing her crew off the deck; the two vessels were thrown together, part of the lifeboat's rubbing strake being ripped away and her anchor stowage moved aft. Her engines were put full astern as her bows were then some ten feet above *Diana V*'s deck.

After making sure that the crew were all ready, a second approach was made. This time a heavy sea struck the lifeboat's starboard quarter, crashing her starboard bow against the coaster; a fender exploded with a very loud bang and more rubbing strake was torn away. The engines were again put full astern to clear the casualty's stern which, as she heeled over, was only three feet away from the coxswain in the upper steering position on the flying bridge.

On the third run in, as the lifeboat's bow hit the casualty some five feet below where her people were waiting, a 12-year-old girl was dropped into the arms of the lifeboat crew and, as the lifeboat rose up the coaster's side, the other woman and four men jumped aboard, the crew breaking their fall. The engines were again put full astern to avoid being 'laid over' by *Diana V*.

The survivors, wet, cold and suffering from shock, were taken below and cared for while the lifeboat took station on *Diana V*'s port quarter; her captain, his crew safe, had decided to try to save his ship. With only her fo'c'sle and bridge visible most of the time as seas broke clear across her hatches, and escorted by *HMS Lindisfarne* and

Humber lifeboat, *Diana V* headed for the River Humber 20 miles ahead. The river was safely entered at 0145. At 0200, when in smooth water, a pilot boarded and Humber lifeboat returned to Spurn Point and the waiting ambulances.

The lifeboat was refuelled and returned to her moorings, reporting ready for service at 0345 after 13¾ hours on service.

For this service the silver medal was awarded to Superintendent Coxswain Brian W. Bevan. The thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Second Coxswain Dennis Bailey, Motor Mechanic Barry 'Bill' Sayers, Assistant Mechanic Ronald Sayers and Crew Members Michael B. Storey, Peter Jordan and Dennis Bailey, Jnr. A framed letter of thanks signed by Major-General Ralph Farrant, chairman of the Institution, was sent to the commanding officer of *HMS Lindisfarne*, Lt-Cdr A. J. C. Morrow, RN, and a letter signed by Cdr Bruce Cairns, chief of operations, was sent to J. J. Smith, honorary secretary of Cromer lifeboat station, expressing the Institution's appreciation to Coxswain Richard Davies and his crew.

Western Division

Fishermen taken off

THE COXSWAIN of *Angle* lifeboat was informed at 0007 on Friday December 1, 1978, that the 39ft fishing boat *Cairnsmore*, on passage to Scotland, was in trouble five miles south west of the Hats and Barrels. Maroons were fired and at 0030 *Angle*'s 46ft 9in Watson *Richard Vernon* and *Mary Garforth of Leeds* launched and set course at full speed for the casualty.

The wind was easterly force 5 on launching but the weather deteriorated rapidly, the wind veering south easterly and reaching near gale force 7 by the time the lifeboat had cleared St Ann's Head. The sky was overcast, with heavy rain and sleet. It was low water springs.

The weather continued to deteriorate, with the wind rising to strong gale force 9, and there was a weather forecast of gale to storm force imminent. Realising the urgency of getting to *Cairnsmore* as quickly as possible, Coxswain/Mechanic William Rees Holmes maintained full speed. He heard by radio that *RFA Sir Percival* was on her way to stand by the casualty, ETA 0300, and that the tug *Bar-racuda* was also on her way from a position 30 miles north of South Bishops.

The lifeboat arrived at the casualty at 0430, a quarter of an hour after *Bar-racuda*, and it was decided that the tug should tow *Cairnsmore* to Milford Haven while the lifeboat stood by as escort.

The tow began at 0502, speed 4 knots. The wind was now force 9 gust-

ing to storm force 10 with breaking seas of about 20 feet, and *Cairnsmore* was rolling her wheelhouse nearly horizontal. Her crew were sheltering, as best they could, on deck around the wheelhouse.

At 0940 Crew Member Gerald Edwards reported to the coxswain that one of the crew of the fishing boat was in the water. Informing the tug and telling his crew to keep the man in sight, Coxswain Holmes began to manoeuvre into position to recover him. With the lifeboat dropping 20 feet off the waves and the waves breaking over the man in the water, he wanted to come up into the sea so that he had the greatest control of his boat. He therefore turned, ran down sea and turned to come up to the man, lying slightly off while one of the crew threw a heaving line. The line caught round the man, he was pulled alongside the lifeboat and got inboard and down to the after cabin. He was wearing a lifejacket but was very cold having been in the icy water for about ten minutes.

The tugmaster then asked Coxswain Holmes to take off the remaining two fishermen because he thought *Cairnsmore* might capsize. While the tugmaster tried to keep the bows of the fishing boat into the sea, Coxswain Holmes took the lifeboat alongside, a manoeuvre requiring all his experience as *Cairnsmore* was rolling and pitching so heavily that, as she went over, her bottom was clearly out of the water. Nevertheless, the lifeboat was safely brought alongside and the two men taken off.

The tow began again and Milford Haven was reached without further incident at 1306, when the lifeboat put the men ashore. The man who had been in the water was taken to hospital for a check up but was released later the same day.

The lifeboat arrived back at her station at 1510 and was rehoused and ready for service at 1542.

For this service a bar to his bronze medal was awarded to Coxswain/Mechanic William J. Rees Holmes. Medal service certificates were presented to Crew Members Gerald C. W. Edwards, Roger V. O'Callaghan, Norman A. Knowles, Jeffrey Stringer, Danny J. Richards and Stephen J. O'Leary.

South Eastern Division

Storm search

BRIXHAM COASTGUARD asked the honorary secretary of *St Peter Port* lifeboat station at 2030 on Thursday January 4 to put the lifeboat on stand by for *mv Cantonad*, a 2,200 ton Greek freighter with a crew of 16, reported listing heavily about four miles south of the Channel Light Vessel.

The crew were assembled; then came the request to launch. At 2109 St

Peter Port's 52ft Arun lifeboat *Sir William Arnold* slipped from her moorings and set out at full speed. She had 31 miles to go to the reported position and this became 38 miles eventually, due to the casualty's set and drift.

The wind was east north east, gale to hurricane force 8 to 12, and remained so for the entire 12 hours of this service, with poor visibility and snow showers. It had been blowing from the east at gale to storm force since the previous day. It was now two hours before high water and the lifeboat encountered rough seas as soon as she left harbour.

Within 15 minutes, as the lee of Herm was cleared, the liferaft broke adrift from its stowage on the foredeck and Coxswain John Petit turned stern to sea for it to be rescued. As the after door was opened a sea broke over the after deck and entered the cabin, so that the crew had to suffer wet conditions almost from the outset. Messages relayed from St Peter Port were now indicating that the casualty's plight was worsening and so Coxswain Petit resumed course as rapidly as possible and continued at full speed of 19 knots in spite of the steadily increasing sea.

Two helicopters had been 'scrambled' and another vessel was also on her way to help. At 2244 this vessel reported that *Cantonad* had now disappeared from her radar screen in position 49°54'N, 03°05'W. The lifeboat duly altered course for this position.

Soon after 2300, Coxswain Petit turned in the helmsman's seat to speak to the radar operator, behind him on his starboard hand. At the same moment an exceptional sea broke just forward of the starboard beam. The lifeboat was rolled about 45 degrees to port and fell down the opposite side of the wave. The coxswain was thrown out of his seat into the port after corner of the wheelhouse, striking his head on the fire extinguisher, which knocked him unconscious for a few moments and activated the extinguisher. Crew Member John Robilliard was also thrown across the wheelhouse, cracking two of his ribs.

At 2351 the helicopters were sighted by the lifeboat and one of them reported that they were having extreme difficulty because survivors could not get into the strop. The lifeboat replied that she was making best speed to assist. The helicopter then dropped smoke floats to mark the search area for the lifeboat and said that the other helicopter had now departed for Berry Head with one survivor picked up from a liferaft at 0011. Eight minutes later the lifeboat sighted two bodies and, after extreme difficulty, three crew members managed to get them aboard.

The lifeboat searched in co-operation with the helicopter until it was apparent that there was no further hope. At 0400 the lifeboat reported that conditions were now so bad that it had become impossible to search upwind at all. A

Nimrod aircraft had joined the search and dropped flares for the helicopters until about 0520. The helicopters then left to return to Culdrose and the lifeboat was recalled to station ten minutes later.

As the lifeboat set course for home, with the wind now on her port bow, progress was limited to six knots by phenomenal seas so that St Peter Port was not finally reached until 0900. The lifeboat was refuelled and returned to her moorings at 1000.

For this service a third bar to his bronze medal has been awarded to Coxswain John H. Petit. Medal service certificates were presented to Acting Second Coxswain Robert Hamon, Motor Mechanic Eric C. Pattimore, Assistant Mechanic Robert Vowles and Crew Members John H. Robilliard and Graham Eker.

South Western Division

Trawler broken down

A FISHING TRAWLER, *Fairway*, broken down and drifting towards shore about eight miles south of Lyme Regis was reported to the honorary secretary of **Torbay** lifeboat station at 0032 on Saturday December 2, 1978. The trawler's crew, who were trying to repair her engine, gave no indication of urgency and a tug had been declined. However, with the wind south south east strong gale force 9 to storm force 10, and knowing that **Exmouth** lifeboat could not launch until 0230 because of conditions on the bar and that helicopter help could not be expected until 0700, it was decided at 0155 to launch **Torbay** lifeboat. So Coxswain Arthur Curnow and his crew, who were already assembled, boarded **Torbay**'s 54ft Arun lifeboat *Edward Bridges* (Civil Service and Post Office No. 37) and at 0200 she slipped her moorings. There was heavy rain and the spring tide was in the first hour of flood.

After leaving harbour, Coxswain Curnow and his crew cleared the upper deck to the wheelhouse and radio cabin and the after watertight door was closed. A course of 065°M was set at 18 knots, but three minutes later, as the lee of Berry Head was cleared, movement of the lifeboat became so violent with the very heavy sea just abaft the beam that speed had to be reduced to 15 knots; with an adverse tide of about 1 knot as well as the heavy seas, speed over the ground was reduced to about 13½ knots.

Radio/telephone contact was now established with the coxswain of **Exmouth** lifeboat: although she could not clear the bar until 0230, it was agreed that she should stand by. *Esso Cardiff* and another vessel offered help by creating a lee, but the casualty was now dragging her anchor into shallow waters which would present a hazard to these two vessels, so Coxswain Curnow declined their offers with thanks.

Fairway was still over eight miles away when the lifeboat's radar failed after a wave broke over the scanner during a heavy roll. Fortunately both the lifeboat and casualty had **Decca Navigator** so that accurate plotting of interception courses was still possible: heavy rain prevented a visual sighting for a further 35 minutes.

At about 0345, as the lifeboat approached, *Fairway* reported her anchor warp parted. She could now be seen with all lights burning, and Coxswain Curnow asked the skipper whether he wanted the lifeboat to take off the entire crew or to stand by. The skipper asked him to stand by; work was continuing on the trawler's engine, but it proved to be of no avail.

At 0410 Coxswain Curnow went to the upper conning position on the flying bridge and took the lifeboat in towards the casualty. He spoke to the trawler on VHF: 'I am 20 yards off your stern; do you want to abandon?' Receiving the answer 'Yes' he asked the skipper first to let go the trawl board, which was hanging over the side, and then to assemble his six crew on the port side amidships with lifejackets on.

Fairway was lying almost starboard beam to the sea, bows east, her parted anchor warp still out, and she was drifting north westwards at nearly 1 knot towards the shore in a shallowing area of Lyme Bay from which local fishermen keep well clear in south-easterly gales. She was rolling and pitching violently in steep seas ranging to 25 feet.

Coxswain Arthur Curnow brought the lifeboat close in towards *Fairway*'s port side and Second Coxswain Keith Bower once more shouted to the casualty to let go her trawl board and to assemble the crew amidships ready to be taken off one at a time. One lifeboatman stood by on the foredeck with a lifebuoy and heaving line as a precaution while the others stationed themselves along the lifeboat's starboard side to receive the survivors.

When the trawl board dropped clear, Coxswain Curnow brought his starboard bow in against the casualty and the first man was taken aboard. The coxswain then held his bow off with his port engine so that the flare should not overlap the trawler's rails as the two boats rolled together. As the lifeboat came alongside again three more men were taken aboard amidships while another man leapt for the lifeboat's after guardrail and hung over it, legs outboard. Coxswain Curnow saw a large sea approaching, realised that the man was in danger of being crushed, and put both his engines full astern. *Fairway* rolled heavily and her port gal-lows came down scraping the survivor's back as the lifeboat pulled astern. The crew then rolled him inboard, comparatively unharmed.

There was one man still left aboard. The lifeboat was again taken alongside and this last man dived on to the foredeck head first as Coxswain Cur-

now went astern to clear. The time was 0425.

As soon as all the survivors were safely below in the after cabin and all was secured on the upper deck, a course of 240°M was set for Brixham. There was less than half a knot of adverse tide on the return passage but the lifeboat made good only 11½ knots in the severe seas, arriving at Brixham breakwater at 0630.

The following morning *Fairway* was found ashore on the rocks at Charton Bay, five miles north north east of the rescue position, her bottom holed and engine room flooded.

For this service the bronze medal was awarded to Coxswain Arthur L. V. Curnow. Medal service certificates were presented to Second Coxswain Keith W. Bower, Acting Motor Mechanic William J. Hunkin and Crew Members Nicholas Davies, Richard R. Brown, Michael Mills and Ernest C. Fradd.

Ireland Division

Fishing boat sinking

ROSSLARE HARBOUR OFFICE informed Storeman R. Walshe at 1130 on Thursday December 7, 1978, that a Swedish cargo vessel had relayed a distress signal from a fishing boat sinking off Tuskar Rock. Maroons were fired at 1135, the deputy launching authority of **Rosslare Harbour** lifeboat station was informed and at 1155 the 46ft 9in Watson relief lifeboat *Sir Samuel Kelly* on temporary duty at Rosslare launched on service.

A storm force 10 to violent storm force 11 was blowing from the south east and there was a very heavy sea running. High water was at 1140.

Acting Second Coxswain Seamus McCormack was in command on service for the first time, the coxswain being away on lifeboat business. On clearing harbour he set course through the approach channel for Tuskar Rock. Progress was difficult in seas estimated at 10 metres high and extra lookouts were posted to watch for navigation buoys through the driving rain.

At 1215 the casualty's position was amended to 3.5 miles 210°M from Tuskar Rock and Acting Coxswain McCormack altered course to intercept, allowing for the northerly drift. The Swedish cargo vessel was sighted at 1300 and the casualty, *Notre Dame du Sacré Coeur*, ten minutes later. A helicopter was seen to recover a man from the sea and to stand off.

With the storm still blowing at force 10 to 11, Acting Coxswain McCormack circled the casualty to observe her motion in the seaway. He chose his moment to bring the lifeboat alongside the starboard quarter and one fisherman was dragged aboard by Crew Member Thomas Billington and Assistant Mechanic Sean Martley. A second

run was made on to the port quarter and a second fisherman recovered. After checking that there were no further survivors aboard, the fishing boat, obviously sinking, was abandoned.

The lifeboat returned to harbour at reduced speed in the following seaway, arriving at 1445. The fishermen were landed and the lifeboat made ready for service at 1530.

For this service the bronze medal was awarded to Acting Second Coxswain Seamus McCormack. Medal service certificates were presented to Motor Mechanic Matthew W. Wickham, Assistant Mechanic Sean P. Martley and Crew Members Thomas Billington, Peter Breen, Brian J. Wickham and Bernard A. Keogh.

Eastern Division

Struck wreck

WARDEN POINT COASTGUARD informed the deputy launching authority of **Sheerness** lifeboat station at 2046 on Saturday December 30, 1978, that a red flare had been sighted in Gillingham Reach. Maroons were fired at 2049 and at 2106 Sheerness lifeboat, the 44ft Waveney *Helen Turnbull*, slipped her moorings and headed up the Medway at three-quarter speed because of the prevailing conditions.

The night was heavily overcast with snow flurries and moderate to poor visibility. A strong gale, force 9, was blowing from the north east and there were rough breaking seas. It was four hours before high water springs.

At 2118 the lifeboat was given details of a cabin cruiser, *Ma Jolie II*, overdue on passage down the Thames from St Katherine's Dock to the Medway. By 2137 *Helen Turnbull* was off Darnett Ness and put up a parachute flare so that the people who had raised the alarm could gauge the lifeboat's position in relation to the distress flare. At 2145 she was informed that she was in the vicinity of the flare sighting and, realising that the tide and wind would set a casualty south west, Coxswain/Mechanic Charles Bowry headed up Pinup Reach. By this time all crew members were on deck searching with the aid of searchlights, although in the snow, now heavy and continuous, the lights were not very effective.

A small white light flashing SOS was seen at 2151; it came from Cinque Port Marshes, near the position, the coxswain knew, of a partially submerged wreck. The approach from the edge of the channel to the casualty was through yacht moorings.

Not knowing the condition of the casualty, which could only be glimpsed through the snow and spray and the many moorings, and not wanting to lose any time, Coxswain Bowry decided that he could not anchor and veer down. Instead, accepting the fact

that even if he should damage both propellers he should still be able to get the survivors off and then ride out the weather on the lifeboat's anchor, he headed in towards the casualty with the crew trying to illuminate the yacht moorings on all sides.

The lifeboat had to use full rudder and maximum revolutions to come round head to sea about 15 feet from the casualty, which was lying head to sea with her anchor out but dragging. Before the nearness of the yacht moorings made the lifeboat's position untenable and Coxswain Bowry had to clear to the north, the crew managed to ascertain that the boat was *Ma Jolie II* and that she had struck an obstruction and lost her propeller.

The snow was heavy and continuous. With the force 9 wind, the nearness of the land and the strong spring tide coming between the islands the sea was very rough and confused and spray was being driven right across the lifeboat and the casualty.

The lifeboat had taken station off No. 26 buoy in Gillingham Reach to assess the situation. Coxswain Bowry decided that the cabin cruiser must have hit the wreck, and that this wreck should now be on her other side. He took the lifeboat in again through the moorings, turned head to sea and eased in starboard side to *Ma Jolie II*'s port side. One man was taken off before the heavy seas and the hazard of the moorings meant that the lifeboat had again to be taken clear. A third approach was made in the same way and, at 2208, the second man was taken off and the lifeboat cleared the area and re-entered the channel.

The two men were landed at Gillingham Pier into the care of the pier master at 2220. The lifeboat then returned through the Medway and was berthed again and ready for service at 2359.

For this service a bar to his bronze medal was awarded to Coxswain/Mechanic Charles H. Bowry. Medal service certificates were presented to Emergency Mechanic Grant Burnham and Crew Members Colin J. Washford, Ian J. McCourt and Martin R. Oliver.

South Western Division

Injured man

A YACHT AGROUND in Worbarrow Bay was reported to the deputy launching authority of **Weymouth** lifeboat station at 0006 on Sunday September 24, 1978, and at 0030 the 54ft Arun lifeboat *Tony Vandervell*, with Coxswain Alfred Pavey in command, slipped her moorings and headed for Worbarrow Bay, about nine miles to the east.

It was an extremely dark night with an overcast sky. The wind was westerly force 3. It was high water and there was a ground swell of eight to ten feet.

Communication with the Coastguard

was established on Channel 0 VHF, and it was learned that there was a very seriously injured man on the cliff at Worbarrow Tout, about eight feet above water level, and that the only possible means of taking him off would be by sea.

Coxswain Pavey decided that the lifeboat's inflatable dinghy would have to be used but first, on arrival at the scene at 0110, he took the lifeboat within a few feet of the rocks where the casualty lay to make a thorough appraisal of the situation which the dinghy would encounter.

The injured man was seen to be lying face down on the rocks. He had a Coastguard strop around him, the line from which was held by Coastguard Gerald Plant, who had made the very difficult and dangerous climb down over the cliffs and was now astride a pinnacle of rock about two feet above the casualty's head.

The yacht, *Sartorius*, was already smashing up on the rocks below the injured man as Coxswain Pavey took the lifeboat into deeper water to launch the dinghy. *Tony Vandervell* had only about 100 feet within which to manoeuvre between the shallow ledges. She rolled heavily as she lay beam-on to the swells in this confined area so that launching the dinghy was only accomplished with difficulty. Coxswain Pavey kept one of his crew on the searchlight and another on the Aldis lamp, illuminating the casualty and the dinghy, while a third crew member was assigned to report constantly on the echo sounder readings.

With Motor Mechanic Derek Sargent as helmsman, Second Coxswain Victor Pitman, a qualified first aider, embarked in the dinghy taking with him the Neil Robertson stretcher. Another survivor had told the Coastguard that the injured man was only semi-conscious.

After some difficulty, Motor Mechanic Sargent found a place where he could bring the dinghy in to the rocks near the casualty and Second Coxswain Pitman jumped ashore with the stretcher. He was faced with a 45-degree slope of rock to climb which, even in daylight, would have been hazardous. Meanwhile, Motor Mechanic Sargent lay off in the dinghy and tried to circle clear of rocks. There were nevertheless a number of anxious moments when the skag struck rocks and the engine stalled, although it always restarted with the first pull.

On reaching the casualty, Second Coxswain Pitman found that the man had three large cuts across his back, which later required 16 stitches, and a head wound which would also have to be stitched. It was also found later that he had six broken ribs. He was a big man, six feet tall and weighing between 14 and 15 stone and the second coxswain had great difficulty in getting the stretcher around him, particularly as it was apparent that he was severely

injured above the waist, and there were only footholds on the rocks.

Eventually, with the man secured in the stretcher, Vic Pitman passed the stretcher's headrope up to Gerald Plant, who was still holding the strop rope; he then took the rope off the Coastguard strop and secured it to the head ring of the stretcher for lowering down the rock face. Motor Mechanic Sargent brought the dinghy in again to the same place as before while Second Coxswain Pitman, helped by the uninjured yachtsman, worked the casualty slowly round the cliff to a point above the dinghy. With Coastguard Plant paying out the rope, the two men edged the stretcher down to the dinghy's bow level, Motor Mechanic Sargent coming forward to help lift it on board. With Vic Pitman embarked, Derek Sargent took the dinghy back to the lifeboat.

The lifeboat was turned head to swell and it took four men on deck to bring the injured man aboard while Coxswain Pavey manned the searchlight himself so that he could see to keep the boat clear of the rocks.

Such were the difficulties and hazards of the situation that it had taken an hour and a quarter to embark the injured man in the lifeboat. While Second Coxswain Pitman accompanied him on board, Motor Mechanic Sargent, with Crew Member Bernard Wills, took the inflatable dinghy once more inshore to bring the second man out to the lifeboat. He then returned to take off Coastguard Plant, landing him on a nearby beach with the remainder of the Coastguard team; with them was the third member of the yacht's crew, who had originally raised the alarm by a seemingly impossible feat of cliff climbing, and he was ferried out to the lifeboat.

The lifeboat arrived at Weymouth at about 0340.

For this service the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Second Coxswain Victor J. Pitman. Framed letters of thanks signed by Major-General Ralph Farrant, chairman of the Institution, were presented to Coxswain Alfred T. Pavey and Motor Mechanic Derek J. Sargent, and vellum service certificates were presented to Emergency Mechanic Eric L. Pavey and Crew Members Bertie Legge, Chris Tett, Bernard R. Wills and Colin E. Pavey. A letter was sent from the RNLI to the chief coastguard complimenting Coastguard Gerald Plant on his part in the service.

Scotland North Division

Knockdown

A COASTER, *Fendyke*, in trouble off Carnoustie a few miles north of the entrance to the River Tay was reported to the honorary secretary (operations)

of **Broughty Ferry** lifeboat station, who is also the harbour master, by HM Coastguard at 2212 on Sunday December 24, 1978.

The average readings of the gauge on Abertay Light Vessel, which are transmitted to a recorder in the harbour office, gave a wave/swell height of 20 to 25 feet with an occasional height of about 30 feet. The honorary secretary considered these bar conditions well within the ability of Broughty Ferry's 52ft Arun *Spirit of Tayside* and alerted Coxswain John Jack. The lifeboat slipped her moorings at about 2225 and headed down river on service.

Off the moorings there was an easterly fresh to strong breeze blowing, force 5 to 6, with a moderate sea. The tide was just after high water and starting to ebb.

Conditions worsened as the lifeboat approached the bar with the wind increasing to easterly gale to strong gale, force 8 to 9. Coxswain Jack checked the weather with *Fendyke* which was nearer the bar than the light vessel and decided to continue. Speed was reduced to half and a course of about 070° was set.

With the light vessel on reduced power, the channel buoys out of position, the radar only intermittently picking up the coastline and conditions making it impractical to plot, Coxswain Jack had to rely on local knowledge. The wheelhouse windows had badly steamed up. Deciding that pilotage would be better from the upper conning position, he and Second Coxswain Hugh Scott went up to the flying bridge.

The seas were now coming in from different directions over some 30 degrees on the starboard bow. To ride these the coxswain was on the wheel and the second coxswain using the throttles as necessary. Seas were about 20 to 25 feet high and breaking, with some 70 feet between the crests (period five to six seconds).

As the lifeboat neared the middle buoys she was struck on the starboard shoulder by a heavy sea and pushed well over to port. A few minutes later, at about 2315, a heavier sea, estimated at between 30 to 35 feet high and appearing as a solid wall of water, was seen coming in on the starboard bow. As the coxswain tried to head the sea, the second coxswain opened up the throttles to meet the sea and then throttled back as it hit the starboard shoulder engulfing the lifeboat. The lifeboat then dropped some 20 feet into the trough and was knocked right over to port causing the capsize switches to reduce the engines to idling. This sea carried away the top mast together with the blue flashing light and masthead navigation light, and also the searchlight which had been mounted on the port side.

Motor Mechanic William Pike immediately re-engaged the engines
continued on page 177



Lifeboats of the World

PART II—SEA RESCUE OUTSIDE EUROPE

by Eric Middleton

THE LIFEBOAT ORGANISATIONS of the world are to a large extent concentrated in Europe. Taking the wider aspect of general sea rescue, outside Europe it is mainly in the hands of the naval services or, as in the United States and Canada, an organisation closely allied to the navy: the Coast Guard. Unlike the British Coast-guard—and the fact that we spell it as one word and the US and Canada as two will have been noted—the US and Canadian Coast Guard are very much sea-going services and carry out a wide variety of tasks of which sea rescue may not be considered the major one. The US Coast Guard (USCG) is responsible for the provision and maintenance of all navigational marks, work undertaken in Britain by Trinity House. It also operates ice-breakers, runs the North Atlantic iceberg patrol and for good measure does a certain amount of law enforcement. There is also a large and enthusiastic Auxiliary Coast Guard organisation which has an attractive uniform and undertakes a number of general Coast Guard duties under supervision.

The USCG fleet is an imposing one and includes a wide variety of vessels ranging from fine sea-going cutters to 44ft steel lifeboats and small open boats. There is also an extensive air arm and it is interesting to note that the USCG considers the amphibious helicopter to be the most versatile sea rescue craft.

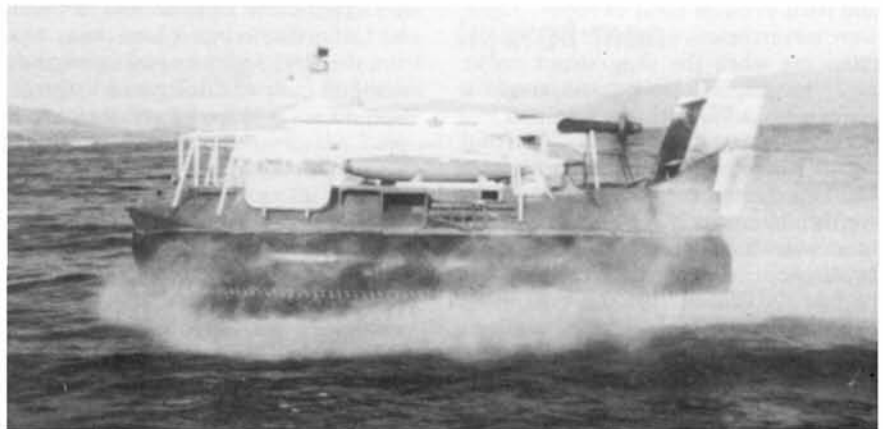
Canada has a fleet on much the same

lines as the US and performs much the same duties. The two services work in close co-operation in their adjacent waters. The Canadian Coast Guard has operated hovercraft for some years and has recently added the latest types to its fleet. Its other specialised search and rescue vessels consist of three large and nine small rescue cutters, 14 self-righting lifeboats, seven crash boats, a catamaran and 30 inshore rescue boats. It is planned to increase the fleet in the next year or two by acquiring two small cutters for Prince Rupert and Campbell River, three small cutters for the Great Lakes, St Lawrence River and lower St Lawrence, a tug and a self-righting lifeboat for Newfoundland, a self-righting lifeboat for the Magdalen Islands and two SAR launches for Vancouver and

Thunder Bay. A Volunteer Canadian Marine Rescue Auxiliary has also been organised by the Canadian Coast Guard during the past year.

Perhaps not surprisingly there is nothing like the concentration of rescue services in the southern hemisphere that there is in the north. There is of course a lot more water and a lot less land but nothing like the same amount of shipping or indeed population. Much of the coastal areas of the southern hemisphere are devoid of both industry and people and the need for lifeboat services correspondingly small.

In South America Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay all have sea rescue services both state controlled and voluntary but they are small in relation to the length of their coastlines by European standards.



In Argentina the search and rescue organisation is under the control of the commander in chief of the navy, with rescue stations at Buenos Aires, Mar del Plata, Puerto Belgrano and Ushuaia.

Brazil's sea rescue service is under the control of the naval operations command which operates five rescue stations and 13 rescue vessels which probably have other duties.

Chile has the Valparaiso Lifeboat Volunteer Institution, which was formed in 1925 by Captain Oluf Christensen as a means of rescue for the crews of ships threatened by the heavy gales experienced in the Bay of Valparaiso in winter. Ex-RNLI lifeboats have been purchased for this service including one obtained in 1955. One of the more unusual services by Valparaiso lifeboat was the landing of an officer from a Chilean naval vessel riding out a gale in the bay. The officer was due to be married that day and the volunteer crew were delighted to help!

The sea rescue service of Uruguay translates its comprehensive and mellifluous name as 'The Honorary Association of Maritime and River Salvage'. This is perhaps misleading as the work is almost entirely devoted to saving life. The association is based at Mon-

Bermuda Search and Rescue Institute has a 9.1m offshore rescue boat. Jet-engined, she is designed to work over coral reefs.



Japan: Line-throwing rocket firing exercise for volunteer crew members of Nippon Suinan Kyusaiikai.



tevideo and also operates an ex-RNLI lifeboat. The influence of the RNLI on sea rescue does indeed extend worldwide.

Other rescue services include the Bahamas Air-Sea Rescue Association,

the Turks and Caicos Rescue Association, the Cayman Air-Sea Rescue Institute and the branch of the Société Nationale de Sauvetage en Mer established in Martinique. Plans are already advanced for the formation of a sea rescue organisation in the Netherlands Antilles.

Moving east across the wide expanse of the South Atlantic to South Africa we find that the Department of Transport is responsible for search and rescue. The commercial ports of South Africa are state controlled and the port captains are allocated areas of responsibility for sea rescue. The ports concerned are Port Nolloth, Cape Town, Mossel Bay, Port Elizabeth and Durban. For some reason East London appears to have been omitted.

In addition there is a flourishing and effective voluntary organisation, the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI). It has a state subsidy and comes under the overall control of the Search and Rescue Committee in Pretoria (PECSAR). The NSRI has numerous rescue stations from Saldanha Bay on the south-west coast to Richards Bay



(Above) Chile: Valparaiso lifeboat is an ex-RNLI 14m Watson.

(Opposite, above) US Coast Guard 15.8m steel lifeboat on winter patrol in Yaquina Bay, Oregon.

(Left) Canadian Coast Guard has for some years used hovercraft in its rescue work. The first, a British Hovercraft Corporation SRN5, became operational at Vancouver in 1969.

(Right) South Africa: Hubert Davies, one of the National Sea Rescue Institute's 10m lifeboats, in Table Bay.





The Sumner Lifeboat Institution, New Zealand, operates an ex-RNLI 10.9m Liverpool class lifeboat, Rescue III, and a fast jet inshore boat, Aid II. When a call-out comes, both lifeboats, a control tower and a mobile base in a Landrover are all manned within four minutes.

north of Durban and operates a variety of high speed rescue craft. The NSRI has carried out many excellent rescues and has a high and well-deserved reputation.

Australia has a number of enthusiastic and efficient sea rescue teams round the coast, including the Australia Volunteer Coastguard, the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia, but never appears to have operated more than a few conventional lifeboats. Probably the best known lifeboat was that at Queenscliff at the entrance to Port Phillip Bay, the approach to Melbourne. Records show that a lifeboat was stationed at Port Phillip Heads in 1853 and in view of the narrowness of the entrance, a sudden 90 degree turn to starboard and strong tides, it was clearly a dangerous spot for sailing ships. Entering in a large modern vessel one might well wonder how sailing craft managed to negotiate the entrance at all.

Later, lifeboats were stationed at Warrnambool, Port Fairy, Portland Bay and Port Albert, but there is no record of a lifeboat being stationed at Sydney or Freemantle although an ex-lifeboat served as a pilot boat at the latter port. A steam lifeboat of the RNLI type was stationed at Adelaide in 1896 but apparently did very little service. It was recently reported that a new lifeboat was being built for use at Queenscliff. In general it would seem that normal working craft are used for rescue work, backed up by the navy and air force. A Marine Operations Centre in Canberra co-ordinates all search and rescue operations, working 24 hours a day.

New Zealand has the Sumner Lifeboat Institution which was founded in 1898 as a voluntary organisation; it is still a flourishing and efficient service which has moved with the times. At present it operates an ex-RNLI Liverpool lifeboat and a fast jet-powered surfboat with top speed of about 30 knots,

carrying out some fine rescues. The Sumner Institution is a member of the International Lifeboat Conference (ILC).

To the north and north-west of Australia and New Zealand lie the East Indies, China and Japan. Until recently only Japan was a member of the ILC with full details of her sea rescue services available. As might be expected of an island race with a great seafaring tradition, these are very comprehensive.

Japan has two sea rescue services—one a voluntary institution aided by municipal grants and the other state controlled through the Marine Safety Board (MSB) which has aircraft and rescue vessels stationed all round the coast.

The voluntary organisation, the Nippon Suinan Kyusaiikai (NSK), or Japanese Lifesaving Institute, maintains 86 lifeboats ranging from 4.14 to 20 metres and has some 18,000 members in its branches. The NSK receives financial help from local authorities because they are required by law to provide assistance to aircraft and vessels in distress in their areas. The MSB also assists and encourages the voluntary institution in many ways.

China was in one time reported to have 200 lifeboats and more than a hundred rescue stations and it has been suggested that this rescue service was started in 1737, therefore pre-dating the first British lifeboat. No western historians have been able to confirm the truth of these reports. In 1979 China was represented for the first time at an international lifeboat conference. A report was presented on the rescue facilities afforded by the Shanghai, Suangzhou and Yantai Salvage Companies.

It will now be apparent that the sea rescue facilities provided by the members of the ILC, extensive as they are, still leave many miles of coastline and vast expanses of ocean without protection. What happens to any vessel

unfortunate enough to need help in these seemingly unfriendly areas?

In the first place much of the coastline involved is uninhabited but where there are habitations the people may well do what they can for seamen in distress.

On the oceans of the world a ship in distress may look for help from any vessel near at hand but the nearest might be several hundred miles away. This situation has been eased considerably by the introduction by the United States of the AMVER system, which stands for 'Automated Mutual-assistance Vessel Rescue'. Ships' courses and speeds are fed into a computer and on receipt of a distress signal the nearest available ship for rescue is informed immediately. Prior to this a vessel in need of help would have to rely on a vessel within range picking up the broadcast distress signal.

But possibly the best chance of rescue that the mariner in some remote spot might have may come from an air organisation. The International Civil Airlines Organisation (ICAO), which has its headquarters in Ottawa, issues details and maps of a world-wide sea rescue service covering every mile of every route travelled by aircraft all over the world. There is no stretch of water flown over by aircraft which is not covered by both air and sea rescue craft, from helicopters to long range aircraft and including short range and long range sea craft. These facilities are provided by the various national authorities adjacent to the sea areas concerned and constitute the most extensive rescue service organised by any authority. Although primarily designed to deal with aircraft forced down into the sea, the ICAO rescue organisation has in the main dealt with ships and craft afloat, rather than aircraft, whose requirements for sea rescue have been mercifully small. No doubt the rescue facilities provided by the various countries under the ICAO arrangements are usually multi-purpose and available for any rescue work.

So it will be seen that sea rescue facilities, not unnaturally, tend to be concentrated close to the busiest shipping lanes and that there are vast expanses of ocean where a ship is very much on her own. However, casualties in the wide ocean wastes are mercifully few and far between, the biggest danger to the mariner being the proximity of land. Nevertheless, some ships are lost far from land and nearly every year some unfortunate vessel disappears, often without a trace.

Footprints on the Sand of Time

GALLANTRY ON THE ROMNEY MARSH COAST IN THE STORMS OF 1891

by Edward Carpenter

THE YEAR OF 1891 was one well remembered for the terrible storms that caused many lives to be lost in the Channel. The Romney Marsh coast was no exception. On March 9, 1891, in a severe gale the Coastguard, with local folk, were called to a wreck at Dengemarsh in the west bay. Using a rocket line, they rescued the crew of eight. Meanwhile, a more serious incident was taking place off No. 2 Coastguard Station (Lade); the schooner *Hugh Barclay* of Fleetwood was sighted in trouble at about seven o'clock in the morning. The coastguards, who at that time formed the crew of Littlestone lifeboat, *Santa Magna*, had been alerted but, with waves dropping on to the beach from a height of 20 feet (never in living memory had conditions been so bad), it took four attempts before they could launch.

Hardly had they gone any distance when a great wave hit them, turning the boat over. She righted immediately, but one man, Coastguard Bennett, was swept out. He was quickly pulled back into the boat by his shipmates but another tremendous wave hit the boat, this time washing out Coastguard William O'Ryan, who was rapidly swept from sight. The next sea to hit them overturned the boat, throwing everybody out. Fortunately, by this time, they were nearly back on shore in the entrance to the Romney Hoy and, with the aid of their cork lifejackets, most of the exhausted crew managed to scramble ashore. Two more of the crew, however, were drowned: 52-year-old Thomas Sullivan, who was chief boatman in charge of St Mary's Coastguard Station and who had joined the crew at the last moment, and Coastguard Samuel Hart.

On October 22, 1891, the coastguards again launched *Santa Magna* in a severe gale blowing from the west, to go to the aid of the Norwegian barque *Jarlen* of Moss, 1,025 tons, on passage between Pensacola and Rotterdam, carrying a cargo of pitch pine. *Jarlen* had run into the sandbank opposite No. 2 Coastguard Station (Lade), then was

driven helplessly way down past Littlestone where she became fast in the sands. Heavy seas were breaking over her and her crew were in great danger. The lifeboat managed to put to sea and the considerable skill of Coxswain Clifton and his crew resulted in *Jarlen's* crew of 15, together with the captain's wife, being brought to safety.

From October 22 every day saw high winds and rough seas and on the morning of November 11 hurricane force winds were lashing the south coast, causing damage inland as well as at sea. At first light on this fateful day coastguards and local people were summoned from their beds by the rocket apparatus to a vessel in distress in the west bay. She was *Marguerite Marie* of Granville, thrown, literally, on to the beach at Dengemarsh. Owing to the rough seas it was some hours before all the crew were rescued, but for the rescuers there was no rest as a second ship, a Swedish brigantine, *Domin*, was in a more serious position. She was about 400 yards off shore, being battered on to her side, and was beginning to break up. A line was got aboard by rocket and two men hauled ashore before the seas moved the stricken vessel, the line parted and all the remaining crew of six were drowned.

Meanwhile that treacherous sandbank off Lade had claimed another victim, the Swedish brigantine *Aeolus* (God of the Winds) with a crew of eight. Attempts to launch Dungeness lifeboat *RAOB* proved impossible in the terrible conditions and although, after many failures, the coastguards ashore did manage to secure a line aboard *Aeolus*, it parted.

More attempts were made to launch the lifeboat, *RAOB*, and finally she got away, the boat making slow progress through the terrifying walls of water. By the good seamanship of Coxswain James Lucas and the strenuous rowing of his crew *RAOB* finally reached *Aeolus* but the force of the wind made it impossible to bring her alongside. She was blown past the wreck for about a mile, where she anchored hoping that *Aeolus* would drift down to her. And then a heavy sea caught the lifeboat and capsized her. Five of her crew were thrown out. As the boat righted three men were hauled back, but Coastguards Henry Reeves and Daniel Nicol were carried away by the violent seas and lost.

Realising that his crew were in no condition to go to the aid of *Aeolus*, Coxswain Lucas set course for the shore and it was only after tremendous effort that the short and weakened

crew reached the beach. The remainder of the crew were Second Coxswain Charles Taylor and Coastguards Francis Crispin, Henry Mills, William Brede, Thomas Nibbs, John Williams, Michael O'Leary and Albert Freathy and another man named Sarachaga. The thirteenth man was William Tart, a Fisherman of Dungeness.

Once care had been taken of these men, the general talk on the beach was of making another attempt to rescue the crew of *Aeolus* by taking the Littlestone lifeboat, *Santa Magna*. It seemed like sure death to do so and one man said, 'You must be mad, there's been quite enough drowned for one day.' But seeing men clinging to the rigging was just too much for the men on the beach. One man, Isaac Tart, took the initiative to form a crew. 'It's no use, lads,' he said. 'It may be sure death to go in *Santa Magna*, I dare say it is, but it shall never be said that Isaac Tart stood and watched sailors drowned without even trying to rescue them, so I'm going—now who will go with me?'

Seven coastguards stepped forward, together with Isaac's brother, Robin Tart, Charles Oiller and George Richardson, all fishermen of Dungeness, Alec Proctor, brother of Dr J. C. Proctor of Lydd, and the curate of the coast, the Reverend C. A. W. Robins, a man very much respected by the fishing folk and coastguards alike.

The storm was increasing and on the mile walk in the driving rain along the beach to Littlestone boathouse, the furious winds nearly blew the men off their feet. News spread quickly and there was no lack of shore helpers. It took four attempts to launch before they got afloat and then there were many times when they seemed nearly lost; but they just kept pulling.

At last they were upon *Aeolus* and the sailors, who had clung to their totally wrecked vessel for ten hours and had almost given up hope, were plucked from the rigging. All safe aboard, the cry was then, 'Pull for the shore!' Having achieved the seemingly impossible, safety still had to be reached. They put all the energy they could muster into their rowing and, after a long time, the shore suddenly loomed up and the lifeboat was scraping on the beach.

The King of Sweden had a special medal struck and Lloyd's awarded a bronze medal for the courageous conduct of that day. Coxswain James George Lucas was awarded the RNLI's silver medal.

At the funeral service for Henry Reeves and Daniel Nicol it was said of them: 'They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them. They have gone down to the grave, but have left behind them in meek and lowly example, footprints on the sand of time'. These words could be equally aptly applied to all those people of the beach who took part in the 1891 rescues.

A footnote to 1891: Mrs Doris Tart, wife of ex-Coxswain Ben Tart, and Mrs Joan Bates, the last of the famous women launchers of Dungeness, were this year awarded the gold badge of the Institution. Doris, who had been a shore helper for 44 years, is the granddaughter of both Isaac Tart and Charles Oiller; Robin Tart was her great uncle. Ben, who retired as coxswain in 1974 and who was himself awarded the silver medal during his years of service, is the grandson of William Tart. Mrs Bates had been a shore helper for 37 years.

Whitby



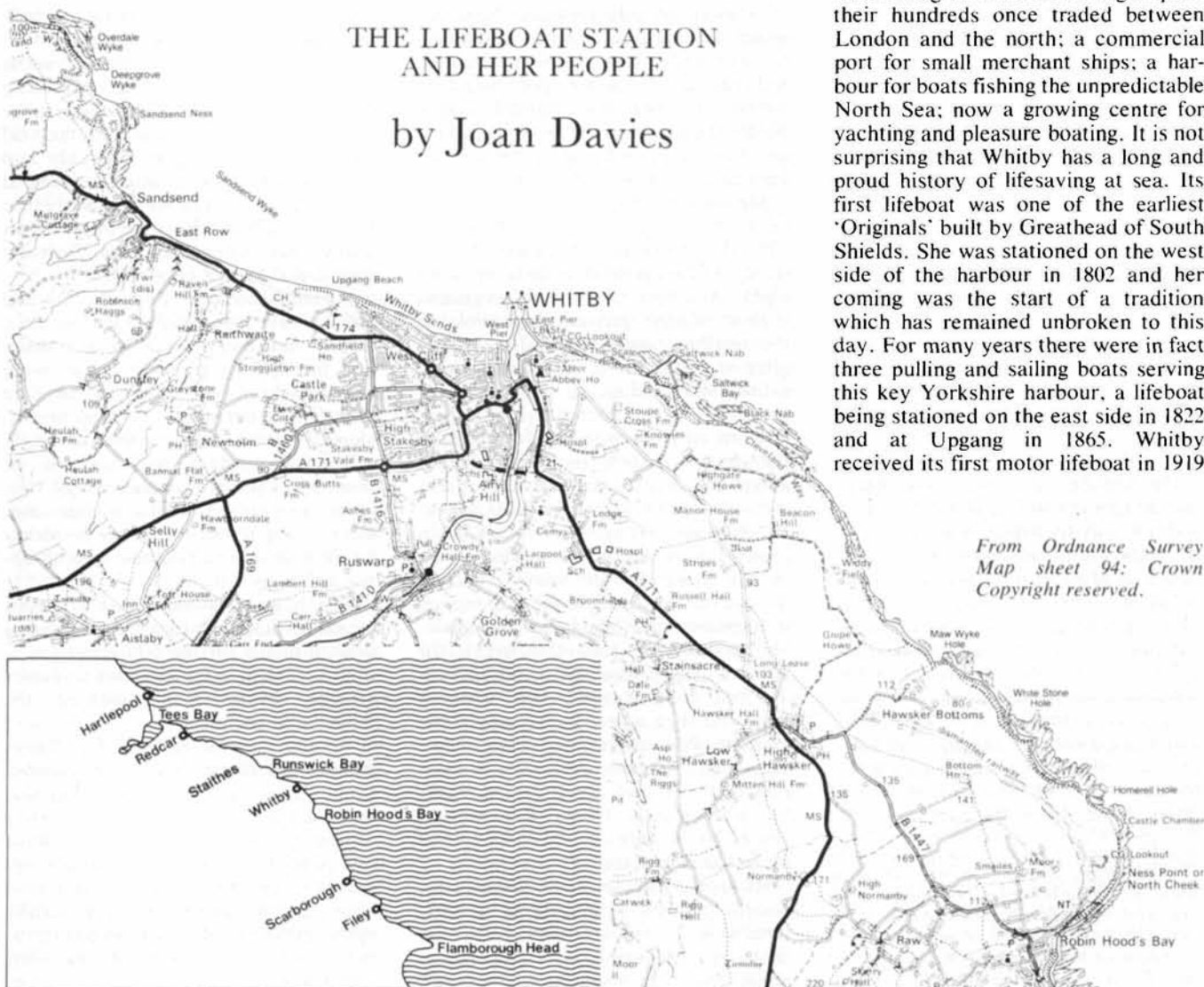
photograph by courtesy of Aeromarine

THE LIFEBOAT STATION AND HER PEOPLE

by Joan Davies

A HAVEN OR REFUGE on a dangerous coast along which small sailing ships in their hundreds once traded between London and the north; a commercial port for small merchant ships; a harbour for boats fishing the unpredictable North Sea; now a growing centre for yachting and pleasure boating. It is not surprising that Whitby has a long and proud history of lifesaving at sea. Its first lifeboat was one of the earliest 'Originals' built by Greathead of South Shields. She was stationed on the west side of the harbour in 1802 and her coming was the start of a tradition which has remained unbroken to this day. For many years there were in fact three pulling and sailing boats serving this key Yorkshire harbour, a lifeboat being stationed on the east side in 1822 and at Uppang in 1865. Whitby received its first motor lifeboat in 1919

*From Ordnance Survey
Map sheet 94: Crown
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but, although the Upgang boat was withdrawn that same year, the original No. 1 pulling and sailing station remained operational until 1934 and the original No. 2 station until 1957.

Whitby still has two lifeboats, and they are two of the most modern in the RNLI fleet: a 44ft Waveney fast afloat steel offshore lifeboat *The White Rose of Yorkshire* which is backed up by an inflatable D class ILB.

Altogether, Whitby lifeboatmen have rescued nearly 900 people and have been awarded 33 medals for gallantry: five gold medals, 14 silver and 14 bronze, the last silver being awarded to Coxswain Robert Allen and the last bronze to Helmsman Richard Robinson for the service to *Admiral Van Tromp*, wrecked after grounding near Black Nab Rock in 1976. Such a fine record was not achieved without sacrifice and over the years 21 Whitby lifeboatmen have given their lives for fellow seamen. The greatest disaster occurred during a storm in February, 1861 when 210 ships were lost along the north east coast, nine of them wrecked on the sands of Whitby. Whitby lifeboats had succeeded in launching five times and had rescued the crews of five of these nine ships before a lifeboat was herself capsized with the tragic loss of 12 of the 13 men on board. It was after this great storm that union with the RNLI took place.

Of the many services of Whitby lifeboats, two are perhaps particularly renowned: those to the brig *Visitor* in 1881 and to the hospital ship *Rohilla* in 1914.

It was a bitter January day in 1881 when *Visitor* sank in Robin Hood's Bay and her crew of six had to take to their boat and come to anchor. There was no way that Whitby lifeboat could reach them by sea but, the townspeople nothing daunted, she was hauled six miles over hills seven feet deep in snow, her carriage dragged by horses while men went ahead to dig out a path. In little more than two hours she had reached the cliff top, been manhandled down the treacherous path into the bay and immediately launched. An hour later, her steer oar and six other oars broken in the terrific seas, she was forced back to the shore. With new oars and manned by a double crew she launched again, finally reaching the survivors an hour and a half later and bringing them 'exhausted and benumbed' to safety. Having in the last year passed through just such a wild and bitter winter we are, perhaps, the better able to appreciate the strength, stoicism and dogged determination of those early lifeboatmen and of all the Whitby people who defied the seemingly impossible.

One of the greatest epics in the whole history of lifesaving was surely the service to the hospital ship *Rohilla*, wrecked at Saltwick Nab in an east-south-easterly gale and tremendous seas on October 30, 1914. The story of

the next 48 hours of struggle against raging wind and sea has been told many times and will never be forgotten: how Whitby No. 2 lifeboat, *John Fielden*, after being dragged along the rocky shore, took off 35 survivors before she herself, repeatedly bumping on rocks, became unseaworthy; how Upgang lifeboat was brought through the town and lowered by ropes down the cliff; how Scarborough, Teesmouth and Whitby No. 1 lifeboats all tried to reach the wreck towed by steam boats, but to no avail; how Upgang lifeboat struggled to within 50 yards of *Rohilla* but had to give up in the end, her crew utterly exhausted; and how finally Tynemouth motor lifeboat, after battling 45 miles against the gale down the dangerous unlit coast, managed to take off the last 50 survivors. For their part in the rescue Coxswain Thomas Langlands of Whitby was awarded the gold medal and Second Coxswain Richard Eglon the silver medal. Another silver medal was awarded to George Peart who, with conspicuous bravery, repeatedly went into the sea to help those who had jumped from *Rohilla* or who had been washed overboard.

That was at the beginning of the First World War and at the end of the war, in 1919, a motor lifeboat came to Whitby. Nevertheless, Whitby has the distinction of being the last station to man a pulling and sailing lifeboat. When the 34ft *Robert and Ellen Robson*, pulling ten oars, was withdrawn in 1957 she brought to an end a chapter of maritime history. Now, in honourable retirement, she still helps the lifeboat service because she is one of the main exhibits of Whitby Lifeboat Museum, in the old boathouse, created and cared for by Eric Thomson who was station honorary secretary when *Robert and Ellen Robson* was operational. Schoolchildren and holidaymakers in their hundreds visit the old boathouse every

year and are welcomed by Eric and his principal helper, William Dryden, a former member of the crew. He had served as assistant mechanic from 1938 to 1951 and as motor mechanic from 1951 to 1967; he was awarded the bronze medal for gallantry in 1940.

As part of the RNLI's 150th anniversary celebrations in 1974, *Robert and Ellen Robson* was exhibited at both the International Lifeboat Exhibition at Plymouth and at the London Boat Show which came at the end of the 'Year of the Lifeboat'. She was also launched again—this time on the Thames to be rowed by a crew of ex-Oxford and Cambridge boat club presidents.

And so the pages turn. What of Whitby today? The cliffs, the rocks, the sands, the sea—they are still there, friends and enemies, as they have always been. At one end of Whitby Bay lies Sandsend Ness, described by the Admiralty *Pilot* as 'as abrupt point fringed by rocky ledges'; at the other end is Saltwick Nab, 'a dark and rocky promontory'; and Black Nab, 'a dark, rocky islet'. Then there are outcrops running out from the land: Upgang Rocks, to the north west of the harbour entrance, and the Scar and Whitby Rock close to the east. These rocks, covered in weed and kelp, dry in places and swell breaks heavily over them. It is a coastline the lifeboat crew must know well and in great detail, so practice in coastal recognition, both visual and radar, plays an important part in the station's regular lifeboat exercise. Old wisdom goes hand in hand with modern aids. Time-honoured knowledge of landmarks and their bearings gleaned from long experience, committed to memory in traditional local saws and passed down by word of mouth from one generation of fishermen to the next, has its place. So does the study of present-day charts and in particular of

Northerly gale: Short, steep seas break on the bar at the harbour mouth.

photograph by courtesy of Dale Robinson





Dedication of D class ILB Gwynnaeth: Miss Milburn with the ILB crew; Senior Helmsman Michael Coates on right.
photograph by courtesy of Tindale's



(Above, right) 44ft Waveney The White Rose of Yorkshire in Whitby Harbour: She was named in May 1975 by HRH The Duchess of Kent, who went out for a trial run after the ceremony.
photograph by courtesy of J. P Morris

the large scale Ordnance Survey map which shows every rock and indentation. Radar practice includes bringing *The White Rose of Yorkshire* back into her harbour pen 'blindfold' and of course knowledge and experience of the harbour itself and its approaches in all states of the sea is vital. The Harbour Authority gives the following description:

'Whitby Harbour is situated at the mouth of the River Esk, with a total area of about 80 acres. The arms of the entrance piers extend out to sea in a northerly direction leaving the entrance exposed in strong winds from the north west through north to north east, and sheltered from other directions.'

'The flood tide sets across the entrance from west to east and care has to be exercised when entering on a spring tide flood . . .'

So Whitby is on a lee shore in northerly gales, and, with no land between Spitsbergen and the Yorkshire coast, a storm-driven sea will have come a long way before it breaks its fury on the land. A shelf or rock running out under the water five miles, then dropping steeply away, produces very short, steep seas with heavy surf and the hazardous conditions which may have to be met crossing the bar at the harbour mouth are well illustrated by the photograph on the previous page. Such waves will certainly stop a boat trying to put to sea unless she has the power to butt her way through. *The White Rose of Yorkshire*, with her twin General Motors 8V53 diesel engines each developing 260 shp at 2,800 rpm, has such power; she can always get out even though, the service done, she may have to take shelter elsewhere, until, the weather abating, it is possible to return safely to station.

Fishing is a major industry in Whitby. Cod, plaice, whiting, skate, salmon, crabs and lobsters are brought into the fish quay in the lower harbour and now, as in the past, the lifeboat fulfils a protective role towards the fishing fleet, launching to stand by cobbles making the dangerous run into harbour in wild weather. Although, with improved weather warnings and with

Coxswain Peter Thomson aboard *The White Rose of Yorkshire* in her pen. Moored on vertical sliding moorings, with low friction fenders, she rises and falls with the tide. Boarding is by vertical ladder.

the coming of larger, stouter trawlers which can stay at sea for two or more days, this is a diminishing responsibility, nevertheless, there are still small boats and there is still the danger that they may be caught out. Lifeboats generally stand by inside the harbour while the boats come in but *The White Rose of Yorkshire* can, if necessary, easily go out to meet them to tell a skipper the exact state of the sea in the entrance.

Whitby also has a long history of commerce and shipbuilding. As early as the sixteenth century alum mined at Guisborough was being shipped out from this harbour, there was trade in coal from Newcastle in the seventeenth century, and the port provided a closed-season home for whalers and Baltic traders in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Captain James Cook, eighteenth century circumnavigator, explorer and marine surveyor *par excellence*, first went to sea as an apprentice to Walkers, ship-owners of Whitby, sailing to Newcastle, Norway and the Baltic.

Sea trade lapsed in the years of depression between the two world wars but the docking of a timber ship from the Baltic in 1958 was the start of a revival and now some 250 cargo vessels of 300 to 1,000 tons come in each year, trading in steel, paper, timber, fertilisers, chemicals and general cargo mostly with north Europe but also going as far as Portugal, Greece and the Black Sea. In bad weather these cargo vessels may have to stand off, and that in itself can be a potential danger.

Side by side with the revival in commercial shipping has been an impressive growth in pleasure boating. Just



after the war there were 18 boats in Whitby Yacht Club; now there are some 400. Holidaymakers have come in increasing numbers to enjoy this picturesque town and its beaches and most of the ILB's calls are to go to the help of small boats or bathers in difficulties, or people cut off by the tide. The cliffs present a particular hazard for the unwary; being crumbly they provide a rewarding hunting ground for geologists or for students searching for fossils, but it also means that they are very treacherous.

The harbour forms a natural focus for the lifeboat station. The harbour master, Captain Gordon Cook, is the lifeboat launching authority, while his deputy, Captain Noel Jameson, is also a lifeboat DLA. From their office on the west side, looking out over the harbour and its approaches, there is 24-hour cover. Coxswain/Mechanic Peter Thomson is also coxswain of the pilot boat; Second Coxswain/Assistant Mechanic Dennis Carrick is a boatman; and Crew Member Howard Bedford is harbour foreman. Together with Crew Members Terence Hansell, a fisherman, and Alfred Headlam, who is an ex-merchant seaman, they make up the regular crew for *The White Rose of Yorkshire*. Reserve members come from the ILB crew, who go out regularly on exercise with the offshore boat. Senior ILB Helmsman Michael Coates, who runs a yacht chandlery, also works down by the harbour.

Bonds are very close at Whitby. The branch chairman, Alan Marshall, and station honorary secretary, Ben Dean were both 'founder' crew members of the first inshore lifeboat back in 1966. It

was Ben Dean, then senior helmsman, who trained Peter Thomson as an ILB crew member before he became motor mechanic and later coxswain/mechanic of the offshore boat. Peter's father, Eric, was still at that time station honorary secretary. ILB Crew Member Brian Hodgson, who, like Michael Coates, has been awarded the bronze medal for gallantry and also the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum, is married to the daughter of Captain David Stevenson, the former harbour master and launching authority.

Lifeboat station and Coastguard work together very closely, too. The Coastguard station is up on the east cliffs and from that look-out point a good watch can be kept on the bay, the sands and the cliffs as well as out to sea. In the days before radio a system of light signals had been worked out by which the Coastguard, from their higher viewpoint, could direct the lifeboat to a casualty. Now, during a service, the CG mobile gives a moving Coastguard presence parallel with the lifeboat. Each service can, of course, help the other with searchlights and flares.

There is another member of the 'team' held in great affection by the lifeboat community of Whitby: Miss Gwynaeth Milburn, the donor of both *The White Rose of Yorkshire*, which went on station in 1974, and of the present inshore lifeboat, which went on station in 1978. From the very first Miss Milburn added to her gift a keen

interest in the lifeboat and her people. Warm mutual friendship quickly grew. As soon as *The White Rose* returns from a service Howard Bedford, one of the crew, writes to Miss Milburn to give her a first-hand account of all that took place and every one of those letters is treasured. Treasured, too, are the model of the lifeboat made for her by Peter Thomson in 1976 and the framed pictures of the boats given to her by the crew. Photographs, newspaper cuttings, programmes, in fact all mementos of the lifeboat station are carefully kept in scrapbooks.

It was after the station's former ILB had been thrown back on to rocks in very heavy seas and irretrievably damaged during the service in June, 1977, portrayed on the cover of the last issue of the journal that Miss Milburn made her second gift; and it was the express wish of the crew that this new ILB should be named *Gwynaeth* after her. Miss Milburn has also been elected an honorary crew member and has promised that if she hears the maroons from her home in Harrogate she will most certainly come down to the boathouse. She does, however, have some reservations about manning the ILB!

Miss Milburn has herself worked hard for the lifeboat service. She reorganised the Harrogate ladies' guild after the last war, acting as honorary secretary from 1952 to 1961 and remaining as a member of the committee since then. And that was only one of her many contributions to the com-

munity in a very busy life in which she has certainly lived up to the motto *nil sine labore*.

In the First World War she served as a VAD for five years, nursing in a military hospital at Bethnal Green. There were 60 men in each of the wards which bore such names as 'Innocence' and 'Patience'. *'On air raid nights I always seemed to be in "Hope"'* Miss Milburn remembers with a smile. After that war service and a short acting career, during which she played Beatrice to a very young John Gielgud's Benedict and appeared before royalty in a London charity matinée, Miss Milburn taught elocution in her home town and served as secretary to the judging committee of a Harrogate juvenile drama festival.

The Second World War found her leading a YMCA canteen in Harrogate station yard—*'We cooked 24 miles of sausages in that canteen'*—and later she became honorary secretary of Yorkshire's Women's Auxiliary of the YMCA. She also served as a magistrate from 1943 to 1969.

A busy life indeed, with its threads now woven firmly into the story of the lifeboat service. Miss Milburn is a life governor of the Institution, but more than that she is a well-loved honorary crew member and one of the family of a fine lifeboat station which, looking back with pride to the earliest days of lifesaving at sea, is always ready for whatever demands future maritime traffic may make upon it.

Tribute to the brave

The day of the annual presentation of awards at the Royal Festival Hall ends with an after-theatre supper at the Rubens Hotel for all the medallists and their families. Mrs Anne Wall has very generously made this culmination of a memorable day her personal tribute to the men and women in the front line of the lifeboat service, sending an annual cheque for what has come to be known as the Anne Wall Supper and also to provide small gifts for the wives and sweethearts of *'the men who do such an admirable and indescribably praiseworthy job'*. The letter which accompanied Mrs Wall's cheque this year continues:

'I feel very deeply that it is the women who suffer, never knowing if their loved ones will return, though they proudly share in their men's honour which is so very well deserved. If I may be permitted to express my admiration for them in this way it may inspire other friends of this wonderful work to do the same.'

Helicopter rescues

In the spring 'Notes of the Quarter' mention was made of the rescue by naval helicopter of the crew of the coaster *Fendyke* to which Broughty Ferry lifeboat had put out late on Christmas Eve (see page 157). In fact the rescue was carried out, not by a

naval helicopter, but by an RAF Wessex helicopter from Leuchars and an RAF Sea King from Lossiemouth, and we apologise for this error. For this service the crew of the Wessex from Leuchars have received the following awards:

Air Force Cross: Fl Lt Adrian Murray, pilot (now retired) and Master Air Loadmaster Iain Brunton, winchman.

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air: Fl Lt Brian Canfer, navigator, and Fl Sgt Larry Evans, winchman.

Anniversaries

Southend-on-Sea lifeboat station has been awarded a centenary vellum on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the station in 1879, and Ramsey lifeboat station has been awarded a vellum on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the station in 1829.

Obituaries

It is with deep regret that we announce the following deaths:

February

Thomas John Henry Cooper, coxswain of Ramsgate lifeboat from 1963 to 1975. He joined the crew in 1930, serving as bowman from 1946 to 1952 and second coxswain from 1953 to 1963, and he was awarded the thanks of the Institu-

tion inscribed on vellum in 1968.

March

Mrs Dorothy Theresa Phillips, founder chairman of Little and Broad Haven ladies' guild and wife of Elson Phillips, the station honorary secretary.

Wavy Line appeal

The Wavy Line Grocers' Association, which supplies some 2,000 small grocers in England and Wales, is launching a promotion to raise £137,000 to fund a Rother class lifeboat. All its groceries carry the Wavy Line symbol, and the association will give 2p for every empty Wavy Line container returned to one of their shops between June and August this year. In addition there will be a series of raft races and three or four large charity dances, at the last of which it is hoped to present a cheque to the RNLI.

Maritime Book Society

Due to unavoidable delays, some subscribers to the spring issue of *THE LIFEBOAT* may have experienced difficulty in returning their coupon in the advertisement by the required date to claim their free book 'Little Ship Meteorology'. The Maritime Book Society generously made an appropriate extension to the return date to allow for delayed coupons.

Building a Rother Class Lifeboat

PART XII: TRIALS

THROUGHOUT HER BUILDING a lifeboat is under the regular scrutiny of the RNLI's own hull, machinery and electronics overseers; she also receives periodic visits by Lloyd's Register of Shipping surveyors and an exceptionally high standard is required in all respects because of the exceptional demands which she may have to meet on service in extreme conditions. Her building complete, she is finally submitted to a series of exhaustive sea trials, all of which she must pass before she is accepted for operational service. First, however, come the righting trials.

So, last April, the 37ft 6in Rother lifeboat which will be *RNLB Shoreline* was launched down the slipway at William Osborne's yard, Littlehampton, and taken across the River Arun to a wharf equipped with a crane, ready for her righting trial.

A Rother's self-righting capability rests in the inherent buoyancy of her superstructure, together with a buoyancy chamber built into her wheelhouse roof, so, of course, before the trial starts all watertight hatches, battening down her engine room and

forecabin, are closed. A parbuckle is made fast to temporary brackets fixed to strong members on the boat's port side, passed under her keel and attached to a special release hook on the crane, which then hauls away, capsizing the boat to port. Watch is kept on a dial board temporarily fixed to the stem (see photographs at top of opposite page) which will show the boat's angle of heel when the switch shutting down the engine to idling operates. When the boat is fully inverted, a trip line is pulled and the parbuckle released from the crane; within a matter of seconds the lifeboat will have righted herself and shaken herself free of the water. She is immediately boarded, the hatches opened and a check made that all is in order below decks.

Having successfully passed the righting test, the lifeboat is hauled out again and all remaining work completed in the yard before she is relaunched for her final trials programme. During six or seven days at sea the RNLI's surveyors and headquarters staff will then satisfy themselves that she meets the Institution's stringent requirements in every detail.

There will be, for instance, at least 16 hours machinery trials under the supervision of an RNLI machinery overseer, and these trials are spread over several days so that they can be conducted in different states of the sea. Engines, generators, pumps, controls, fuel, water and ventilation systems—all must be proved in normal working conditions. There will be speed trials, too.

Accuracy of transmission being of first importance, a final check is now given to ensure the true alignment of engine and propeller shaft.

One day is set aside to try out the operation of the whole electrical installation and for tests of all electronic equipment, each piece being put to work in actual service conditions and checked by the RNLI's electronics surveyor. Radio signals are exchanged with coast radio stations and with the Coastguard; the depth recorder's readings are matched against known depths; radar and VHF direction finder are calibrated to ensure that bearings are correct relative to the ship's head; and by the end of the trials any interference and suppression problems will have been ironed out.

On another day, every piece of deck, safety and medical equipment comes under the detailed examination of an operational officer from headquarters. Also included in the trials programme

Righting trials: Parbuckle made fast round hull . . .



. . . and up she comes . . .



. . . is lifted by crane . . .



. . . righting herself to starboard . . .





The future RNLB Shoreline, which will be stationed at Blyth, is launched into the River Arun for her righting trial and (right) brought alongside at William Osbornes.



Note in background crane which will capsize the Rother for her righting trial and, on her stem, dial to indicate angle of heel when engine shut-down switch operates.

are the adjustment of the compass and an inclining test to determine centre of gravity, which is individual to each boat. The opportunity is also taken to procure official 'portrait' photographs of the boat under way.

Finally comes the day for the pass out trials, when the Institution's surveyors and operational staff give the whole boat a thorough inspection. Paintwork, fixings, woodwork, wiring, pipes, equipment—everything comes under the magnifying glass. Anything amiss is listed and put right, and only then is the lifeboat passed as ready for operational duty at her future station.

(The end)

The builders of the boat: (l. to r.) V. Greenyer, D. Belchamber, T. Merritt, J. Legg, L. Durham, R. Silverson, the senior boatbuilder, S. Merritt, K. Boulding, R. Churchill and E. Morgan.



... capsizing boat to port until ...



... and shaking herself ...



... she is fully inverted, when parbuckle is released ...



... clear of the water.



AROUND the COAST



Wessex HAR Mk 5 from HMS Daedalus, Lee-on-the-Solent, piloted by Lt Ray Colborne on exercise with Portsmouth (Langstone Harbour) Atlantic 21 Guide Friendship II. In command of the ILB is Helmsman Adrian West, and with him are Crew Members Steven Alexander (l.) and David Parker. Lt Colborne is a very active member of Gosport branch committee.

*photograph by courtesy of
HMS Daedalus*



When Cdr Bruce Cairns, chief of operations, visited Flint in the spring he had a special word of praise for the very high standard that has been achieved by this ILB station. Cdr Cairns (l. centre) with John Latham, honorary secretary, and (l. to r.) Crew Members, Alan McIndoe, David Moore, Terence Jacklin, John Latham, Jr, Clive Moore, David Roberts and Alan Forrester.

Anstruther: After a branch dinner at 'The Cellar' in April honorary medical adviser Dr Chris Brittain presented first aid certificates to ten members of the crew and launchers; all who took the examination passed. Dr Brittain himself was presented with a certificate of thanks signed by all the first aiders and also a lifeboat tie and jersey. Back row (l. to r.) James Stewart, David Legg, Howard Murphy, John Smith, Robert Murray and Stephen Small. Front row: James Gourlay, Coxswain Peter Murray, Dr Brittain, Second Coxswain Thomas Small and George Milne.



WHEN THE NUCLEAR submarine HMS *Spartan* sailed from Barrow-in-Furness last February she had to navigate an exact course out into Morecambe Bay. A Decca trisponder chain of four 'slave' stations was set up from which distance could be measured with an accuracy of three decimal points of a kilometer and Cdr John L. Hammer III, USN, representing the Hydrographer of the Navy, asked if he could use Barrow lifeboat slipway to calibrate the chain. While he was there Second Coxswain Albert Benson showed him over the station's 46ft 9in Watson lifeboat *Herbert Leigh*, the commander insisting on removing his shoes first. In a letter of thanks following his visit, Cdr Hammer wrote: 'I must say that I was impressed by your station and only just have I come to realise the versatility of the RNLI lifeboats'.



Lymington: An information case has recently been put on the side of the new ILB house. A solidly built metal structure with three opening glazed doors, it was designed, constructed and erected by local 'friends of the lifeboat'. It forms a focal point for information about the station's Atlantic 21 and about branch and guild events. Shoreline insignia and membership details are also displayed, and below the notice board is a half model collecting box.

Aberdeen: Coxswain Albert Bird accepting North Sea rum from W. Massie, area sales manager, MacKinlay-McPherson Ltd, on board the 54ft Arun BP Forties last February. Front row (l. to r.): Rear Admiral J. R. D. Nunn, the Reverend W. Geraint Edwards, Crew Member George Walker, ILB Crew Member Marjorie Mitchell, Capt Brian Atkinson (honorary secretary) and Mrs J. R. D. Nunn. Back row: Crew Members John Corstorphine, William Cowper and Francis Cruikshank. R. M. Addison, branch chairman, is in wheelhouse doorway.



Shoreline Section

OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS Shoreline has taken great strides forward. Our membership has grown faster than ever before, largely due to the support we are receiving from our members and, above all, from financial branches and guilds. We particularly appreciate the hard work of those branch members who, at certain harbours throughout the country, are making an appeal to yachtsmen; every yachtsman coming into harbour is given an enrolment form (with a note attached apologising for troubling them if they are already Shoreline members). The appeal is bearing good fruit: we are astounded by the number of replies we are receiving.

* * *

At the foot of this page you will see a Shoreline enrolment coupon. If you pass on your copy of THE LIFEBOAT to a friend or colleague after you have read it perhaps you, too, will find that you have introduced a new member to the lifeboat service.

* * *

Last March Lt-Col Brian Clark, RNLI national organiser in Ireland, gave a talk illustrated with slides to the commodore and members of the Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club. At the end of his talk, almost everyone present not yet a member of Shoreline 'joined up'; a wonderful response.

* * *

Also, via Ireland, comes news of Shoreline support in America. Irving Anshen of Skipper Travel, Paboahto, California, arranged a holiday in Ireland for Norman and Mildred Woodbury, enrolled them in Shoreline and gave them the address of our Dublin office. Lt-Col Clark and his staff were delighted when Mr and Mrs Woodbury looked in at their office and the American visitors were assured of a warm welcome at any Irish lifeboat station at which they might call.

* * *

The Shoreline club at Portsmouth, about which I told you in the winter issue of the journal, is proving a great success and it is hoped that this is an idea which could spread throughout the country.

I began considering the possibility of forming a Shoreline club many years ago, when I was district organising secretary (South London) and when a

Our Shoreline volunteer enrolment team which had such a fine record at the London International Boat Show in January was back at Earls Court in March hard at work throughout the Ideal Home Exhibition. Three hundred new members were enrolled. Beryl Appleton 'signs on' an eleven-year-old lifeboat supporter.



number of branch and Shoreline members said that they would welcome a social club where they could meet and exchange ideas. When I became membership secretary, therefore, this ambition remained with me and I was still pursuing ways and means by which we could all be brought together in a social environment when, to my great pleasure, I discovered by a chance remark that Jack Chantler, a member of Portsdown branch, was thinking along the same lines. From this meeting a sub-committee was formed of interested branch and Shoreline members and we agreed to run a pilot scheme in the Portsmouth area. A circular letter to 800 Shoreline members brought back more than 700 replies. Everyone liked the idea; there was no criticism at all.

So, on November 1, 1978, by courtesy of the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth who allowed us to use the Mayor's Banqueting Suite and Council Chamber, the inaugural meeting took place chaired by Sir Alec Rose. More than 150 Shoreline members and branch workers attended. It was unanimously agreed that a club should be formed and there were many volunteers to act on the committee. Regular monthly meetings have since been held at the Tudor Yacht Club, which allows us to use its premises free of charge. Talks on various topics have been given, the first social function has taken place and it is encouraging that the average attendance at each meeting is over 50 people.

It is now our hope that similar clubs will be formed throughout the country, rather on the lines of the Round Table, Rotary or Lions clubs, so that our members will be able to visit clubs in

other areas, building up strong, widespread links of friendship based on mutual interest in the lifeboat service.

I would like to stress, however, that these clubs would not be fund-raising bodies; while they would without doubt help local branches and guilds they would in no way cut across their activities.

* * *

Coming back to the more mundane, but nevertheless important, aspect of our work, a letter from one of our members asked why we needed to use a computer to administer Shoreline membership. The answer is that the computer makes it possible for our same small staff to deal with an ever-increasing volume of work. Since we went on to a computer three years ago our membership has grown from 30,000 to nearly 56,000. Without the computer we should have needed an appreciable increase in staff to deal with the extra work. In this way alone great saving has been made possible. I am very conscious of the fact that the change has also meant that a certain amount of personal approach has been lost and for this I sincerely apologise. We try to answer all letters containing a specific enquiry, but if you do receive a stereotyped reply we hope that you will understand that it is not our intention to be impersonal because we are fully aware of the value of the support given by each of you as an individual. Can I please ask you, therefore, to bear with us and be assured that every single one of you is of personal importance to the Institution in its work of saving lives at sea?—PETER HOLNESS, membership secretary, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ (Tel. Poole 71133).

To: The Director, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.
I enclose subscription to join Shoreline as a:

Member	£3.00 (minimum)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family Membership	£5.00 (minimum)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member and Governor	£15.00 (minimum)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life member and Governor	£150.00 (minimum)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send me details of how I can help with a Legacy.		<input type="checkbox"/>

Name _____

Address _____

Over 104,000 people would have been lost without the lifeboat service.

Ideal Home Exhibition

EARL'S COURT LONDON, MARCH 6-31

FOR THE FIRST TIME, the RNLI had a stand at the Ideal Home Exhibition this year. Modest in size, and situated on the balcony floor, it was a market stall, colourful with souvenirs and Shoreline display. The extensive range of attractive gifts represented high quality and real value for money, attracting good business from all age groups.

With the exhibition lasting almost the whole month of March, the RNLI depended for the manning of the stand on hard working teams of branch and guild members from the Southern,

Eastern, South Eastern, Midland Shires and North, South and Central London districts, as well as the Shoreline volunteer enrolment team. RNLI staff, working in pairs, provided backing on a two day shift programme. Not only was the continuity maintained, but the happy and friendly atmosphere which has become the hallmark of such occasions, was evident throughout the period.

Ten well-known personalities added to the gaiety when they spent time at the stand on various days during the

show, autographing cook books and note books: Arthur Lowe, Rodney Bewes, June Whitfield, Paul Heiney, Clive Dunn, Wendy Craig, Ernie Wise, Angela Rippon, Nerys Hughes, David Vine. Another popular visitor was ex-coxswain Dick Evans who spent two and a half days at the exhibition signing copies of his biography 'Lifeboat VC'.

Many other exhibitors had collecting boxes on their stands, and on London Lifeboat Day, March 20, the exhibition organisers allowed our flag sellers to stand in the entrance hall. The Royal Navy collected the staggering amount of £1,000 for the RNLI by 'giving away' freshly baked ship's biscuits and bread rolls for a contribution in a lifeboat collecting box. At a pleasant informal ceremony on the last Friday Mrs Linda Hunter of Kensington and Chelsea branch, presented a plaque to the Catering Division of the Royal Navy for a truly splendid effort.

And that perhaps sums up this new venture. Due to the efforts of everyone concerned, especially the voluntary workers, the venture can be counted a success, with its aims realised. Funds were raised, more than 300 new Shoreline members were enrolled and an almost entirely new 'clientele' had been introduced to the work of the lifeboat service.

The RNLI may well become an established feature of the Ideal Home Exhibition, as it is at the International Boat Show.—H.D.



One of the famous visitors to the RNLI stand at the Ideal Home Exhibition was Richard Evans, BEM, the former coxswain of Moelfre lifeboat. Dick Evans, who was awarded two gold medals, one for the service to Hindlea in 1959 and one for the service to Nafsiporos in 1966, signed copies of his biography, 'Lifeboat VC', written by Ian Skidmore.

photograph by courtesy of 'London Daily Mail'



Ernie Wise, who was himself once in the Merchant Service, makes the fifth RNLI national lottery draw. With him (l. to r.) are Fred Williams, appeals office supervisor, Joyce Pearce who organises the lottery at HQ, Cdr E. F. Pritchard, appeals secretary, and Mrs Doreen Wise.

Fifth national lottery

ERNIE WISE, one of the RNLI's most loyal friends, visited Poole on Friday April 27 to draw the fifth RNLI national lottery in the presence of Mrs Georgina Keen, a member of the Fund Raising Committee and Cdr Ted Pritchard, appeals secretary. The draw was also witnessed by members of the staff and their families and by about 60 ex-Round Tablers who were attending a 41 Club international conference at Bournemouth and who also happened to be visiting the RNLI on that day.

It proved a merry gathering. As Ernie walked into the crowded committee room, there, facing him among the

guests, was Eric Morecambe's double. Hardly had he had time to shake hands before another 41 Club delegate (in the front row) was proving himself a master of quick repartee. 'It's like working with Eric!' Ernie declared as the room rocked with happy laughter.

Then down to the business of the day. The drum was spun and Ernie plunged in his arm for the first of the 13 winning tickets. These were the prize-winners:

£1,000: A. Taylor, Heckmondwike.

£500: Mrs Helen MacAlister, Blackwaterfoot, Isle of Arran.

£250: Joyce Ireson, Southall, Middlesex.

£25: J. A. F. Vaudin, Southampton; Mrs S. Fletcher, Droitwich; Miss P. J. Grant, Bexhill-on-Sea; L. J. Gilhooly, Bonnyrigg,

Midlothian; Mr Leach, Thame; R. C. J. Duncalf, Heswall; N. Hinman, Knowle, Solihull; B. J. Young, Hythe, Hampshire; A. R. Murray, Hednesford; Margaret Beard, London SW19.

After the draw, Ernie autographed lifeboat postcards for the visitors, who were asked to put a contribution in a collecting box. The admonishment, 'The amount you put in is according to how much you like me!' put everyone on their mettle.

Commemorative plates

Commemorative plate, being held by Alice Wright, chief clerk, North West District office, is one of an edition limited to 250 being sold on behalf of the Lord Mayor of Manchester's lifeboat appeal to fund a Rother lifeboat to be named Manchester and District XXXII. The plate bears the city coat-of-arms and RNLI crest. Price £15 from RNLI, Princes Chambers, 26 Pall Mall, Manchester 2.



Some Ways of Raising Money



During the 1979 world cruise of the Cunard liner Queen Elizabeth 2, an English country fair was held in aid of the American British Lifeboat Appeal. Introduced by Father Mills and opened by Captain Douglas Ridley, the fair was organised by cruise director Brian Price helped by the QE2's social staff and Mrs Georgina Keen, a member of the RNLI's Committee of Management. A tug-of-war on the helicopter deck ended the fair, which was closed by the Rev. Bill Christianson. Altogether \$1,602 was raised. In addition to supporting the day's activities the officers and crew of the liner collect regularly and generously for the RNLI.

Fund raisers on the Isle of Anglesey stepped up their efforts last year and increased their income from £11,000 in 1977 to £15,000 in 1978. Part of this increase was made possible by the gift of two water colours painted and donated by Cyffyn Williams, RA. An island raffle was organised which, with the party at which the raffle was drawn, raised £1,300.

First year pupils of Truro School, Cornwall, took part in a sponsored spell and raised a marvellous £100.

In 1975 when Herne Junior School in Petersfield first opened in Love Lane a pupil presented Sir Alec Rose with a flag for the Walmer lifeboat, Hampshire Rose, and said 'When it wears out can we buy another?' In February, almost four years to the day, the old flag having worn out, Sir Alec and Lady Rose were presented with two flags, the RNLI house flag and a smaller ensign. The money for the flags was raised from a Christmas concert put on by the children.

photograph by courtesy of 'East Hampshire Post'



For the second year running, East Grinstead branch raised well over £1,000 by giving a Spinners concert at Crawley Sports Centre. At Christmas, the Scriven sisters raised £40 by carol singing.

During a week's intensive fund raising the 28 children of class 1H of St John's Primary School, Cheltenham, ran a raffle, a disco, a games lunch hour and a very successful sponsored bicycle obstacle race, raising £70.30 for the RNLI.

Class 2 of Bengoe Junior School, Hertford, raised £37.30 among themselves following a project on lifeboats suggested by their teacher, Miss Sarah Hopkinson, a member of Royston and District branch committee. In addition, they made cakes, buns and peppermint creams to help a cake stall run by the branch which raised £78.

A cheese and wine evening was held in the home of Mrs J. Fearnhead, a member of Stretford branch. About 80 guests took part in various competitions, including naming the turtle and guessing the advertisement, and at the end of a very successful evening £192 was raised.

Members of Sutton, Cheam and Worcester Park branch were entertained by the Twilight Players, a band of talented singers and dancers, at their olde tyme musical evening before Christmas. From the sale of tickets, raffles and bar takings £154 was raised with a further £63.27 being made from the sale of Christmas cards and souvenirs.

A sponsored canoe paddle on the River Weaver was organised by Mr Curzon of Northwich, Cheshire. It was undertaken by boys aged 13 to 15 years who paddled 11 miles in two hours and then all the way back. They were sponsored by parents and relatives and raised £80.

Sue Boyd, wife of the chief engineer on board BP tanker *British Tamar*, is a supporter of Falmouth ladies' guild. When she accompanies her husband on his sea trips she becomes the crew's barber charging 50p per cut—all of which goes into her RNLI collecting box.



A patchwork quilt, big enough for a double bed, was handmade by members of Bangor ladies' guild, Co. Down. The material for the multi-coloured quilt was generously donated by Whiteweave of Belfast. The ladies who assembled the quilt are (l. to r.) Mrs M. Flynn, Mrs Pat McCarroll, vice-chairman, Mrs May Barnes, chairman, Mrs R. Lynas and Mrs M. Lockwood. After two years of sewing the ladies raffled the quilt and raised £213.

The Local Boat Owners and Yachtsmen's Association of Rushden, Northants, raised £257.36 at a lifeboat evening at Bede House, Higham Ferrers, Northants. A similar event held in 1978 raised £231.76.

An Easter dance, organised by the Waveney Club, Burton-on-Trent, raised £180. Since the club was formed to support the lifeboat service a year ago donations, ranging from £165 to £278, have been given to Whitby, Blyth and Humber lifeboats.

A skin care evening was organised by Hythe (Hampshire) and District branch in November. Rosalind Christie, wife of a branch committee member, is a Jafra skin care consultant and after the evening donated her commission of £15 to the RNLI.

At the national championships of the Royal Life-saving Society held in Coventry on November 18, Mrs H. Cawwood, souvenir secretary of Coventry ladies' guild, set up a stall and sold £91 worth of RNLI souvenirs.

Two intrepid travellers, John Ford and Melvyn Webster, made a 1,000 mile dash last October from St Helier, Jersey, to Aith, Shetland, and raised £2,250 for the RNLI. First they flew from St Helier to Southampton, this leg being sponsored by British Island Airways; a 700 mile car journey followed, driving through the night to Wick, Caithness, to catch another flight to Sumburgh Airport, Shetland. A 50-mile drive over wild moorlands took them to Aith where they delivered a goodwill message from the crew at Jersey. The time taken to do all this?—just 23 hours. Melvyn (l.) and John hand the message to Coxswain Kenny Henry (r.) at Aith.

photograph by courtesy of 'Shetland Times'

Two young school girls, Claire Durbin and Claire Wates, organised a sponsored swim on behalf of the RNLI in the swimming pool of Sutton High School. All ten of the 10-year-old girls taking part completed the maximum half mile, and between them raised the magnificent sum of £185.

The girls and boys in the nursery, infants and junior sections of Beach Road County Primary School, Liverpool, have held weekly collections for the RNLI for many years now. The total collected last year by the 250 children was £84; with £34 already collected during the 1978 Christmas term, this year the children are hoping to raise a record £100 by July.

During the last year Flamborough ladies' guild organised a very full programme of events including the flag day, dances, Christmas fayre, summer fête, a garden party, sponsored knit and two charity concerts. At the end of the year the guild had raised £1,900 which was a record total.

A Mad Hatter Easter party was given by Mrs K. Flood and Mrs L. Halliday of Southport guild. The party, held at the Crab and Lobster Mere Brow Restaurant, owned by Mrs Flood, raised £800 for the RNLI.

Montagu Ventures Ltd, who organised the Beaulieu Boat Jumble on April 8, very kindly gave a stand to Lymington branch for their boat jumble, and also a stand to Lymington ladies' guild for the sale of souvenirs, both free of charge. The branch, selling items such as sails, spars and galley equipment, raised £859.40, double last year's total, and the guild sold £68.53 worth of souvenirs. An auction of goods donated by stall holders at the end of the day raised a further £320.96. The total amount raised was £1,180.36.

Geoff Mears, second coxswain of Exmouth lifeboat, and Bill Parkhouse, area manager of Watney's, push over a column of two pence pieces at the Exeter Inn, Topsham. Worth £515.96½ (£463.56 around the column in 2p pieces and £52.40½ inside) the pile was started on January 1, 1978, and knocked over on December 15, 1978.

photograph by courtesy of John Sculpher





Artist Tony Hart of BBC TV's 'Vision On' programme spent almost two hours making lightning sketches at a coffee morning organised by Guildford branch in the city's Guildhall last September. The sketches were sold for £1 each and altogether the event raised £250.



Gordon Stokes, chairman of Burton-on-Trent branch, recently received a cheque for £410 from John Tester of Burton Diving Club. The money had been collected from a crowd watching the diving club's annual raft race on Boxing Day. Since the money was collected in Derbyshire it was later handed over to Mickleover branch.

photograph by courtesy of 'Burton Daily Mail'



Members of Prestatyn swimming club gather round John Owen, president of Rhyl branch, for the presentation of a cheque for £150.50 to go into the ASA RNLI international sponsored swim fund.

photograph by courtesy of Ian Davies Photography



Heswall and Gayton ladies' guild celebrated its tenth anniversary with a dinner party last February attended by 50 guests. It was held at the homes of Mrs Sonia James, chairman, and Mrs R. Walker, ex-chairman. A special birthday cake in the shape of an RNLI collecting box was ceremoniously cut by Mrs Margaret Collins, the founder chairman and Sonia James. In that ten years the guild has raised some £14,000, running, among other events, a winter luncheon club.

(Below) Ken Voice, coxswain of Shoreham lifeboat, received a cheque for £625 on January 26 from Mrs Joan Hilton, chief ranger of the Court Sussex Elm, Independent Order of Foresters. The money was raised by court members during 1978.



Class 1:0 of Owen's School, Potters Bar, attacked an assault course in the school gym. The children were sponsored and raised £69.07.

Out of the 34 members of Filey and District swimming club who took part in their sponsored swim last July, 29 completed the maximum of 64 lengths; together with spectator fees and a raffle, £386.03 was raised. Rugby swimming club raised £860 at their swim in July. While anchored in Tanga, East Africa, the ship *Clan Macnab* was about a mile away from sister ship *Clan Malcolm* and three keen swimmers decided to swim round *Clan Malcolm* and back; shipmates sponsored them at £1 each way and all together raised £117 for the RNLI.

A loofah, grown and harvested in an office in Luton by Mrs C. Parsons, was exhibited to colleagues at one penny a look, or two pence if you picked it up and felt its skin. As a result £3 was raised for the RNLI.

Aberdovey ILB station is well supported by the local ladies' guild. Their fund raising year starts on the spring bank holiday with a film show and coffee evening. During the summer a stall is opened each Sunday by a young couple and another coffee evening is arranged, as well as a larger event such as a concert and, of course, flag day; at Christmas guild members venture forth and go carol singing. In all last year the guild sent £1,814 to RNLI head office.

An ambitious attempt by Warminster branch to raise the funds to buy an ILB met with an outstanding response and at the branch's AGM in 1978 two cheques were handed over to Lt-Cdr Gifford Rosling, assistant district organising secretary (Southern), one for £1,100 towards general funds and the other for £3,126.50 for the ILB.

As a gesture of thanks to Southend lifeboat station and to celebrate its centenary Leigh Motor Boat Club gave the station a pound for each of the 100 years. The cheque for £100 was presented by Commodore Alan Aldridge at an at home evening on board the club barge *MV Trojan* on March 24.

Mr and Mrs Frank Ellis, landlords of the Fountain Inn, were the winners of a competition for the inn to collect the most money for the RNLI in the Mevagissey branch area in both 1977 and 1978. The trophy, which was first presented in 1978 and which will be

continued on page 174

Letters...

Seafarers all

Kindly accept this 'widow's mite' in aid of your good service. I lost two brothers at sea and three uncles and my great grandfather served under Lord Nelson as a commander.

I admire the bravery of the sailors. God bless them all.—**DOROTHY DUMBELL**, Mrs, Old Mill Lane, Freshfield, Formby, Liverpool.

This letter accompanied a donation to Angle branch.—EDITOR.

Incredible feat

I was delighted to read of Superintendent Coxswain Bevan's richly deserved award of a silver medal for the service to *Diana V*.

However, may I suggest that even that magnificent performance paled into insignificance when compared with his incredible feat some six weeks later when he and his crew rescued the entire complement of *MV Revi* moments only before she sank?

As an auxiliary coastguard at Spurn Point and administrative officer of Withernsea ILB station, I can obviously add nothing to the full operational reports of the service which you will already have received but, as a cruising yachtsman of more years than I care to remember, I can say without hesitation that the conditions both as to weather and sea state on that night were the worst that I have ever seen in the 25 years that I have lived on this part of the coast.

To go through those seas at the speed necessary to reach the casualty in time without sustaining severe damage, must, in itself, have required skill and seamanship of the very highest order. But then, in the dark and appalling conditions prevailing, to lay alongside a vessel sinking by the head some 30

times before the last of the crew was evacuated must surely rank as a truly incredible example of courage, determination and seamanship.—**BRIAN NORDON**, *The Old Owthorne Vicarage, Hull Road, Withernsea, North Humberside.*

Humber lifeboat's services to Diana V and Revi are reported in 'Lifeboat Services' starting on page 150.—EDITOR.

Model service

I am sending a photograph of a model of Shoreham lifeboat which my father made. She is 'stationed' at Southsea canoe lake and has been out 'on service' several times. These 'services' have included assisting power boats with engine trouble to shore, rescuing yachts in difficulties and recovering footballs, one frisbee (rather tricky) and five plastic ducks of an oriental variety.

We have taken the model to Shoreham and sailed her in the harbour near the boathouse which amused those of the crew who were present. I must express our thanks to Jack at Shoreham for showing us over the 42ft *Watson Dorothy and Philip Constant* and also to Evan at Moelfre for going out of his way to show us over both the old lifeboat and their new *Rother*. In

A model of Shoreham Harbour's 42ft Watson lifeboat Dorothy and Philip Constant, made by Mr Holman, Snr, is 'stationed' at Southsea canoe lake.



Some ways of raising money

from page 173

awarded annually, is a decorated lifebelt given to the branch by *HMS Stubbington* earlier in the year.

A supper, organised by Brough and District ladies' guild, was held at Humber Yawl Club on January 26 with 90 people attending. A cold supper was served with a selection of delicious sweets, and in all £184 was raised. A local travel agent donated the star prize for the raffle—a weekend for two in either Paris or Amsterdam.

By buying a 5p ticket pupils of Dereham Neatherd High School, Dereham, Norfolk were allowed to wear their own clothes to school for one day instead of the normal school uniform. The idea, masterminded by four friends, Sharen Burdett, Teena Valerine, Kim Atkinson and Loraine Cheetham, proved so popular that £18.50 was raised for the lifeboats.

Almost £200 was raised at an inshore dance organised by Datchet branch in February. The music was supplied by the Tommy Draper Band and the cabaret by escapologist and caricaturist Larry Barnes who both gave their services free of charge. Over 30 prizes for

fact wherever we have visited boat-houses either with the model or not we have met with nothing but kindness and interest. Swanage and Selsey are two stations whose slipways we used for launching our model.

Milton/Southsea branch kindly furnished us with a collection box which we always have with us whenever we sail the boat and with which we were very pleased to realise a total of £10 over last summer season.—**JULIAN HOLMAN**, 39 Mayles Road, Milton, Southsea, Hampshire.

Pierced coins

The response to the RNLI's appeal for foreign coins has been excellent; literally hundredweights of material have poured in from branches and guilds all over the country. There are, however, depressing aspects as well, for the sums realised could have been even greater but for a habit, all too prevalent, of boring holes in things.

Sorting through a bin of pennies, centimes, bent pesetas and so on I came across a lovely little coin: a 10c of Wilhelmina of Holland as a young girl, with flowing hair; one of the most pleasingly designed of modern coins. In mint state, as this coin was, its value should have been about £30; but someone had pierced it through Wilhelmina's neck—something beautiful had been destroyed and the coin unfortunately will now bring the RNLI only about 5p, its value as scrap.—**JOHN PHILLIMORE**, *The Old Hall, Wem, Shropshire.*

John Phillimore is one of the two numismatists who are helping the RNLI by sorting the coins collected.

the raffle were provided by local residents and tradespeople.

To help the Skegness appeal to cover the cost of radar for the lifeboat, Mrs F. Richardson gave up eating sweets for Lent and was able to make a substantial donation to the station.

A cheque for £4,500, being the money given by visitors to Portpatrick lifeboat museum, was sent to the RNLI's Scottish office by Mrs Patsy Milligan. Mrs Milligan, sister of the late Coxswain Andrew Mitchell, carries on the family's lifeboat tradition with unabated enthusiasm. As well as looking after the museum, she is also treasurer of branch.

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BOOK REVIEWS

● Grahame Farr, one of the honorary archivists of the Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society, is a true historian and whenever he publishes a paper containing the results of his research he makes available a new and valuable chapter to all those interested in the detailed story of the lifeboat service.

Aids to Lifeboat History No. 2 is a historical and geographical list of British lifeboat stations. In his introduction Grahame Farr says:

'The origins of the lifeboat service were far more fragmented than people imagine. They rest within a multitude of Societies, Associations, Trusts—call them what you will—which sprang up between 150 and 200 years ago. They were, of course, formed with the finest of intentions whether they started as an offshoot of a powerful harbour trust, or as the result of a subscription list initiated by the clergy of a seaside parish.'

'It is well known that many failed, but a strong nucleus succeeded and when the time was ripe, in the 1850s, the national body founded by Sir William Hillary in 1824 was ready to integrate all who wished to join while it expanded into the wonderful service we know today.'

In addition to the text there are some very useful diagrams. One shows the first phase of British lifeboat stations, up to 1823; another is a family tree of the RNLI showing how the principal independent lifeboat societies joined the national body; and a third is a graph of station lifeboats showing changes in numbers and types (sailing and pulling, steam, motor, ILB and FAB) from 1860 to the present day.

The booklet is available from Grahame Farr, 98 Combe Avenue, Portishead, Bristol BS20 9JX, price 60p including postage and packing.—J.D.

● Malcolm Robson's **French Pilot** volumes one and two, which cover Omonville to Tréguier and then westward (in volume two) Port Blanc to Ile de Sein, are a welcome addition to his Channel Islands Pilot and are produced in the same professional way. They will be of great use to yachtsmen cruising the Brittany Coast.

As part of the enjoyment of any cruise is in the preparation, it is often a help to have photographs, aerial or otherwise, of the harbours or coasts it is proposed to visit, especially when

planning to sail to an area for the first time, and if any criticism of these pilots could be made it might be the absence of photographs. There are, however, excellent sketches and diagrams. In his guide to pilotage, Malcolm Robson depends largely on the traditional technique of transit lines, making use of rocks, lighthouses, churches, water-towers and other prominent landmarks which he has drawn from his own yacht as they appear from the cockpit when actually steering along the line.

French Pilot is published by Nautical Publishing Co.; the price of volume one, Omonville to Tréguier, is £9.85 and of volume two, Port Blanc to Ile de Sein, is £10.85.—E.J.

● Not only does **Practical Sailing** by Wendy Fitzpatrick (Ward Lock, £4.95) give a good introduction to the newcomer to sailing but its wealth of photographs, both colour and black and white, is in itself a positive encouragement to 'go down to the sea'; so much of the joy of sailing as a sport and as a holiday way of life is portrayed.

The author is herself an experienced sailor and, among other successes, won the first British Laser class championship in 1973. Her book includes useful chapters on suitable clothing, the rules of the road and on understanding the weather and it is illustrated throughout by good, clear diagrams.—J.D.



● Latest addition to the library of lifeboat station histories is **The Cromer Lifeboats 1804-1979** by R. W. Malster and P. J. R. Stibbons. Very readable, this booklet is also exceptionally well illustrated with photographs both of lifeboats old and new and of lifeboat people. On one page there are portraits of Cromer's seven coxswains between the years 1872 and 1976, including Henry Blogg (1909 to 1947) and Henry 'Shrimp' Davies (1947 to 1976); another page is a veritable mosaic of the faces of just some of the people associated with the station.

The booklet is available from Cromer station honorary secretary, J. J. Smith, 33 Hillside, Cromer, Norfolk, price 60p plus 15p postage and packing.—J.D.

● **Lloyd's Register Today** is a new brochure brought out by Lloyd's Register of Shipping, the oldest and largest of the world's ship classification societies, describing the services it offers to help in the maintenance of high standards in ship design and building, in offshore services and in industry, and its links with the marine and industrial world. Free copies are available from the Public Relations Officer, Lloyd's Register of Shipping, 71 Fenchurch Street, London EC3M 4BS.

● Readers of **THE LIFEBOAT** are also offered a free specimen copy of **Emergency Services News**, a bi-monthly journal for all emergency and rescue services. Please send a large (12in x 9in) 9½p stamped addressed envelope to Emergency Services News, 106 Middleton Avenue, Chingford, London E4 8EE.

Lifeboat books

The RNLI stocks certain books on lifeboat subjects. A list of titles is available from RNLI, 21 Ebury Street, London SW1. Please send a stamped addressed envelope.

THE FIRST 'specialist holiday' long weekend for lifeboat enthusiasts, held at Skidden House Hotel in March, proved to be a great success. The party visited St Ives, Sennen Cove, Lizard-Cadgwith and Penlee lifeboat stations, meeting the honorary secretaries, coxswains and other lifeboatmen. The photograph shows the visitors climbing up from Lizard-Cadgwith boathouse.

Cornwall's Chief Coastguard, George Rounce, led one party to wreck sites at Land's End and, among other evening film shows and lectures, a helicopter pilot from Culdrose explained the part played by helicopters in search and rescue.

More lifeboat weekends are planned for October and November 1979, and March and April 1980. Details from Jill Elleston, Skidden House Hotel, St Ives, Cornwall. A percentage of all course fees go to RNLI funds.

Lifeboat Services

from page 157

and Coxswain Jack headed out towards Bell Rock. A few minutes later, when clear of the bar, the coxswain handed over to the second coxswain, who had injured his ankle and, as he was unable to get an answer on the intercom, went below to check on his crew. At the first count it was thought that one man was missing but he had knocked his head and was found unconscious in the WC; the rest, who had been belted in, seemed only to be bruised. Damage inside was found to be mainly superficial with small items of gear strewn around.

Coxswain Jack, who had torn a ligament to his right leg, then went back up to the upper conning position together with Crew Member Alistair Piggot. Second Coxswain Hugh Scott, who had in fact broken his ankle, managed to get down the ladder to the wheelhouse and was lifted into the seventh seat and strapped in.

In view of the second coxswain's and his own injuries and information received from the Coastguard that the rescue was now being carried out by helicopter, Coxswain Jack decided to make for Leith. He continued working from the upper conning position for about another half hour until he was well clear of the bar, and then came down to the wheelhouse for the rest of the passage.

Having heard that *Fendyke* was in distress, that two of Broughty Ferry's crew were injured and thinking that one man was missing overboard, **Arbroath** crew mustered at the boathouse. Shortly afterwards the honorary secretary authorised launch and the 42ft Watson lifeboat *The Duke of Montrose* was released down the slipway at 0045 under the command of Second Coxswain Brian Bruce.

Acting Coxswain Bruce held the boat inside the breakwater until masts and radar scanner were erected and then, with the crew in position and lookouts posted either side of the wheelhouse, the lifeboat headed out between the piers to cross the bar. With the easterly wind blowing heavy spray across the port bow of the boat, and in very high seas, the bar was safely negotiated. While crossing the bar a message was received from Forth Coastguard saying that the Broughty Ferry crew member had been found and that there was no casualty for the Arbroath lifeboat. Informing Forth Coastguard that due to

the sea conditions she would not return to Arbroath, *The Duke of Montrose* also made her way to Leith. In beam seas heavy spray made lookout difficult and restricted the coxswain's view but the boat was handling very well and riding waves so that very little water was coming aboard. After rounding Fifeness, course was altered to south west to pass north of the Isle of May. The seas were now fine on the lifeboat's port quarter and the drogue was streamed, making the lifeboat noticeably easier to handle.

On arrival at Leith at about 0430, Broughty Ferry lifeboat was met by an ambulance and the coxswain and second coxswain were taken to hospital. Coxswain Jack was released after a few hours and Second Coxswain Scott was kept in for a few days for an operation to his ankle.

Arbroath lifeboat arrived at Leith at 0810. After changing into dry clothing and having breakfast the crew were taken home by road.

With blizzard conditions in Scotland over the New Year, both lifeboats returned to station as soon as it was possible, on January 2.

Western Division

Two towed

AT ABOUT 1600 on Wednesday December 6, 1978, Robert Gorman, a fisherman and ILB crew member at Aberystwyth, saw a capsized sailing boat and the college rescue boat about 400 yards off shore. Realising that they would need help he prepared to sail his own boat, *FV Lona*. A force 8 gale, gusting, was blowing from the south east. Sunset was at 1550 and high water had been at 1207.

Robert Gorman reached the capsized boat, which had drifted further out to sea, and took her in tow. The college rescue boat headed for harbour but her engine failed, so that she now needed help. Robert Gorman took *Lona* alongside, passed a line and with both boats in tow entered harbour at 1650 and secured alongside. The four rescued people needed medical assistance before being allowed to leave the station.

For this service a framed letter of thanks signed by Major-General Ralph Farrant, chairman of the Institution, was presented to Robert Gorman.

Ireland Division

Family adrift

A FATHER and his three small children decided to go out in their boat on Strangford Lough at about 1600 on Friday September 1, 1978. Launching their boat from Newtownards Sailing Club, they had gone some way round Barr's Bay when the engine suddenly failed and could not be restarted. The father started to row, tried to start the

engine again having given it a chance to cool down, but without success, and then decided to row the boat all the way to shore.

One oar was in place but as he was shipping the other it slipped out of his hand, fell into the water and started to drift away. He tried to reach it, circling the boat round with the oar he had, but it could not be done. He stood up in the boat and shouted for help but got no response from the shore.

While the children stayed in the boat, the father went into the water to retrieve the lost oar but found that he was unable to return to the boat against the strong wind and current. Signalling to his children that he was going for help, he started to swim towards the shore.

Meanwhile, two power rescue launches set out, one from Newtownards Sailing Club and one from Whiterock. The first was manned by Reserve Constables Walter Nelson and David Canavan, John Travis and Angus Jardine who together rescued the father from the water.

The second boat was manned by Don Clarke, a steward at Whiterock Yacht Club and an auxiliary coastguard, who picked up the children, took their boat in tow and headed for the sailing club. On the way he took off the people from the other launch and took their boat in tow also.

All landed safely and were taken to Newtownards Sailing Club.

For this service letters of appreciation signed by John Atterton, acting director of the Institution, were sent to Reserve Constables Walter L. Nelson and David J. Canavan and also to Auxiliary Coastguard Don Clarke.

Services by Offshore Lifeboats, December, 1978, January and February, 1979

Angle, Dyfed

December 1, January 21 and February 10

Arbroath, Angus

January 11

Arklow, Co. Wicklow

December 13

Arranmore, Co. Donegal

December 30, January 30, February 17 and 26

Baltimore, Co. Cork

December 22, January 8 and February 9

Barmouth, Gwynedd

February 15

Barra Island, Inverness-shire

December 2, January 5 and February 28

Barrow, Cumbria

February 18

Barry Dock, South Glamorgan

December 2, January 13, February 25 and 28

Bembridge, Isle of Wight

December 30 and February 18

Blyth, Northumberland

December 17 and February 8

Bridlington, Humberside

December 20, 21, 24, 27, January 10, 28

Year of the Tree

During the Year of the Tree, Torbay lifeboat crew, as their own personal gift, presented 30 Scots pines to Brixham in appreciation of the support given to the lifeboat by the borough of Torbay. The trees were ceremonially planted in Battery Gardens in March.

and February 15
Broughty Ferry, Angus
 December 24 and January 2
Buckie, Banffshire
 December 10
Calshot, Hampshire
 January 28 and 31
Campbeltown, Argyllshire
 December 24, 30 and January 20
Clovelly, North Devon
 December 1 and 13
Cromer, Norfolk
 December 30
Donaghadee, Co. Down
 February 2
Dover, Kent
 December 16 and January 10
Dungeness, Kent
 January 22 and 23
Dunmore East, Waterford
 December 2 and January 4
Exmouth, South Devon
 December 1, 8 and 23
Falmouth, Cornwall
 December 5, 12 and January 21 (twice)
Filey, North Yorkshire
 December 6, 21 and January 28
Flamborough, Humberside
 December 21 and January 28
Fleetwood, Lancashire
 December 17, January 28 and February 28
Fowey, Cornwall
 January 1 and 21
Galway Bay, Co. Galway
 December 24 and 27
Great Yarmouth and Gorleston, Norfolk
 December 23, 29, January 8, 31, February 10, 15 and 28
Hartlepool, Cleveland
 December 6, 14, 15 and 29, January 30 and February 7
Harwich, Essex
 December 6, 18, 29, January 18, 19, 29 and February 22 (twice)
Hastings, East Sussex
 January 13, 22 and February 4
Holyhead, Gwynedd
 December 31
Howth, Co. Dublin
 December 17
Humber, Humberside
 December 2, 7, 8, 18, 24, 30, January 1, 10, 11, 19, February 4, 14, 15 and 25
Islay, Argyllshire
 February 7
Lerwick, Shetland
 December 18 and January 13
Lizard-Cadgwith, Cornwall
 January 5
Lochinver, Sutherland
 December 24
Lytham-St Anne's, Lancashire
 December 18 and February 10
Margate, Kent
 January 4
Moelfre, Gwynedd
 December 11
Newcastle, Co. Down
 January 9
Newhaven, East Sussex

December 16
Penlee, Cornwall
 December 17, January 18, 20, February 13 and 23
Peterhead, Aberdeenshire
 January 19
Poole, Dorset
 February 16
Porthdinllaen, Gwynedd
 February 4
Portrush, Antrim
 December 7
Ramsgate, Kent
 January 28 and 31
Rhyl, Clwyd
 January 21
Rosslare Harbour, Co. Wexford
 December 7, 20 and 28
St Helier, Jersey
 December 29, February 11 and 12
St Ives, Cornwall
 December 11, 30, January 8, February 3, 16 and 24
St Mary's, Scilly Islands
 February 8
St Peter Port, Guernsey
 December 1, 7 (twice), 16, 24, 30, January 4, February 1 and 13
Scarborough, North Yorkshire

December 6, January 1 and February 17
Selsey, Sussex
 December 30 and January 10
Sennen Cove, Cornwall
 February 16
Sheerness, Kent
 December 12, 26 and 30
Sheringham, Norfolk
 January 29
Shoreham Harbour, West Sussex
 December 4 and January 4
Skegness, Lincolnshire
 December 11 and 30
Stromness, Orkney
 December 28
Torbay, South Devon
 December 2, 16, 17 and January 13
Troon, Ayrshire
 December 19, February 10 and 18
Wells, Norfolk
 January 31, February 15
Weymouth, Dorset
 December 12, 14 and 28
Whitby, North Yorkshire
 January 1, 2, February 8 and 17
Yarmouth, Isle of Wight
 December 29, January 14 and February 27
Youghal, Co. Cork
 January 22

Services by Inshore Lifeboats, December, 1978, January and February, 1979

Aberdovey, Gwynedd
 December 8
Abersoch, Gwynedd
 December 10
Atlantic College, South Glamorgan
 February 24
Beaumaris, Gwynedd
 January 1 and 17
Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland
 December 16
Blackpool, Lancashire
 February 26 and 28
Broughty Ferry, Angus
 January 2
Criccieth, Gwynedd
 December 14
Eastbourne, East Sussex
 February 8
Flint, Clwyd
 January 2
Great Yarmouth and Gorleston, Norfolk
 December 21, January 19 and February 13
Hartlepool, Cleveland
 December 9 and January 16
Harwich, Suffolk
 December 10
Hastings, East Sussex
 February 18
Hayling Island, Hampshire

December 30
Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire
 February 16 and 25
Largs, Ayrshire
 December 1, January 31, and February 11
Littlehampton, West Sussex
 December 5, January 18, February 12 and 22
Lytham-St Anne's, Lancashire
 January 3 and February 10
Minehead, Somerset
 December 25
Mudford, Dorset
 January 7 and 21
Peel, Isle of Man
 January 12
Poole, Dorset
 December 3 and January 3
Porthcawl, Mid Glamorgan
 December 16
Portsmouth, (Langstone Harbour), Hampshire
 December 10, 16, 19 (twice), January 1, 4, 14 and February 4 (twice) and 24
Queensferry, West Lothian
 February 4
Southend-on-Sea, Essex
 December 16, 23, 31, January 5, 6, 7, 21 (twice) and February 11
Southwold, Suffolk
 December 24
Staithe and Runswick, Cleveland
 December 9, February 4, 18 and 24
Tenby, Dyfed
 January 10
West Kirby, Merseyside
 December 3
Whitstable, Kent
 December 10 and 14

SERVICES AND LIVES SAVED BY OFFSHORE AND INSHORE LIFEBOATS

January 1, 1979, to April 30, 1979: Services: 364; lives saved 138

THE STATION FLEET

(as at 30/4/79)

133 offshore lifeboats

125 inshore lifeboats operating in the summer

50 inshore lifeboats operating in the winter

LIVES RESCUED 104,357

from the Institution's foundation in 1824 to April 30, 1979

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Personal details	Name	Tel. No.
	Address	
	Experience	
Details of craft	Accident/Losses/Claims in last 5 years (Details on separate sheet) Yes/No	
	Name	Class/Type
	Construction	Year Built
	Length	Beam
Values	Engines	H.P. Inboard/Outboard
	Hull, Machinery, Equipment £	Special Equipment £
	Dinghy/Boats £	Outboard Motor £
	Trailer £	TOTAL £
Use	In commission fromto(inclusive)	
	Moored at	
	Laid up fromtoInclusive. Ashore/Afloat.	
	Cruising Range	
General	(a) Are you entitled to No Claim Discount?years.	
	(b) Do you wish to bear the first part of any claim? Yes/No. If so, state £25 : £50 : £100.	
	(c) SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS. Racing Risks, Water-Skiing, Road Transit Risks, etc.	

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LB 7/79

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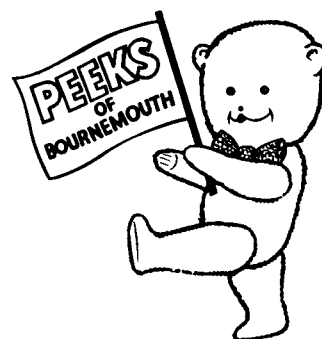
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Evett Sailwear Limited	146
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David Jolly (Tiller Master)	180
Maritime Book Society	Back Cover
Mermaid Marine Engines Limited	175
NECO Marine Limited	175
Peeks of Bournemouth	180
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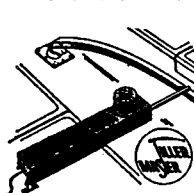
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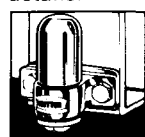
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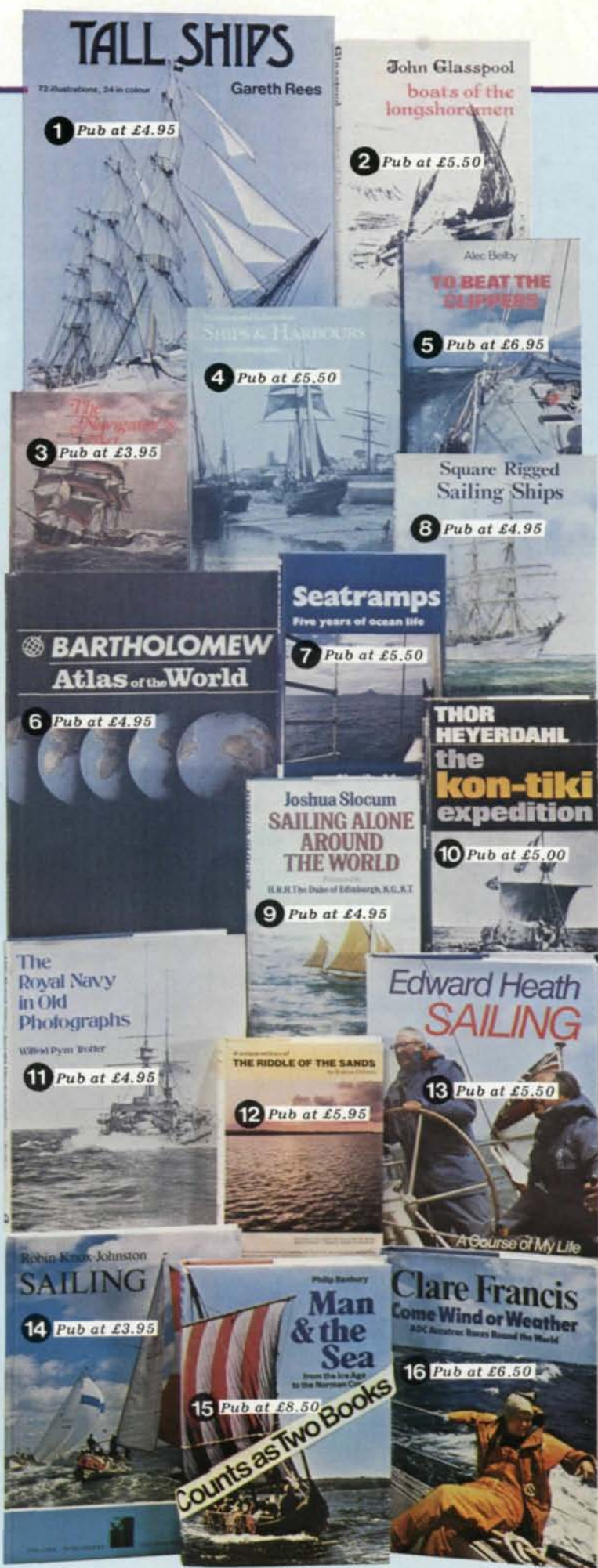
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