

Volume XLVII Number 477



The Lifeboat

Journal of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Autumn 1981 25p



The Captain
takes his hat off
to the RNLI.



THE LIFEBOAT

Autumn 1981

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Volume XLVII Number 477

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COVER PICTURE

Sunset watch for the Margate lifeboatman, a memorial to nine men who lost their lives in the early morning of December 2, 1897, when Margate town surf boat Friend of All Nations capsized on her way to help the ship Persian Empire of West Hartlepool. A strong gale was blowing from the north north east and there were very heavy seas accompanied by rain and snow. The nine men were: Coxswain William Philpott Cook, Snr, Crew Members Henry Richard Brockman, Robert Ernest Cook, William Philpott Cook, Jnr, Edward Robert Crunden, John Benjamin Dike, William Richard Gill and George Robert William Ladd, and Charles E. Troughton, superintendent of Margate Ambulance Corps. The photograph was taken by Frank Mathews.

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

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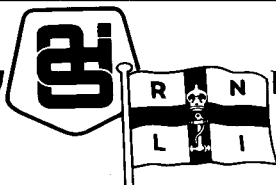
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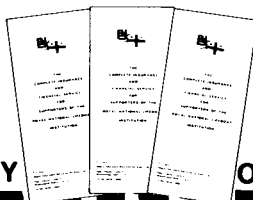
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NOTES OF THE QUARTER

TO MARK the Royal Wedding in July a telegram of congratulations was sent to HRH The Prince of Wales on behalf of the RNLI by its chairman, the Duke of Atholl:

'The Committee of Management, lifeboat crews, voluntary workers and staff of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution send loyal greetings and best wishes on the occasion of your wedding.'

In reply came the following gracious telegram:

'The Prince and Princess of Wales send you their most heartfelt thanks for your extremely kind message.'

In commemoration of the wedding an appeal to raise £100,000 towards a new lifeboat for Wales has been launched. £16,000 has already been promised and the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Councillor Ronald F. Watkiss, has shown his support by agreeing to be president of the appeal committee; the committee is chaired by Raymond Cory, a member of the Committee of Management. The appeal aims to reach every town council, business organisation, sporting and sailing club in Wales to help reach the target.

New York Rowing Race

Generous sponsorship has made it possible for an RNLI team to compete in the International Lifeboat Races in New York for the third year running, and the team from Newquay, Cornwall,



(Above) The last of the RNLI's pulling lifeboats, Robert and Ellen Robson, goes afloat again at Whitby: During lifeboat day demonstrations the combined ages of her 12-man crew came to 742 years.

(Right) New York Harbor Festival 1982: A team of Newquay, Cornwall, lifeboatmen lead the way in the first heat of the International Lifeboat Races on Independence Day, July 4.



won the race and retained the trophy which an RNLI team from Teesbay won last year. The Newquay team was flown to New York by Pan Am and crew members raised funds locally to provide their own blazers, trousers and track suits.

In the first heat of the races, organised by the Maritime Association of the Port of New York and rowed on July 4, Independence Day, the RNLI crew beat two American teams and went on to beat a crew from a Dutch NATO ship in the final race. At the prize presentation in the New York Playboy Club the lifeboatmen received individual cups presented by the Metropolitan Government of Tokyo. The RNLI men presented the race organisers with a model of a traditional Newquay rowing gig.

The American branch of the Institution, which is based in London, has been honoured by United States

Ambassador John J. Louis, Jr, who has accepted an invitation to become president of the branch.

Pulling boats

Former crew members of the last pulling lifeboat in service with the RNLI, Robert and Ellen Robson of Whitby, re-lived the days of oar power on August 1 when they rowed the lifeboat in Whitby Harbour as part of the lifeboat day demonstrations. The combined ages of the 12-man crew came to 742 years and former lifeboat inspector Cdr Leslie Hill went out with them. The following day the present Whitby lifeboat crew rowed the lifeboat from Whitby to Robin Hood's Bay and sponsorship money already collected has passed the four figure mark.

The crew of Aberystwyth lifeboat rescued the occupants of a broken down motorboat on August 12 when they were out in a replica of an old-fashioned pulling lifeboat. The replica had been built to raise money for the RNLI and the crew were at sea practising for a sponsored row when they found the motorboat in trouble. They towed her safely back into Aberystwyth.

Chilean lifeboat

It was reported in the last edition of THE LIFEBOAT, that an ex-RNLI lifeboat, ON 860, had been sold to the Chilean Lifeboat Society. She was re-named Valparaiso III at a very happy ceremony at Valparaiso on June 20 when the bonds between the Botes Salvavidas de

ANNUAL MEETINGS 1982

South Bank, London, Tuesday May 11

Annual General Meeting of Governors: 11.30 am in the National Film Theatre, adjacent to Royal Festival Hall.

Annual Presentation of Awards: 3.00 pm in the main auditorium, Royal Festival Hall.

Further details will be circulated with the winter edition of THE LIFEBOAT.

Valparaiso and the RNLI, described by the Chilean organisation as 'our spiritual mother', were stressed.

Loss at sea

The Department of Trade has just published its statistical analysis of United Kingdom shipping casualties and accidents at sea for 1979, and it is good to see that the figures for merchant shipping were lower than for the previous year. The number of vessels lost fell to ten, well below the annual average for the past ten years and showing a marked reduction in gross tonnage of merchant vessels lost compared with 1978. The total number of lives lost was well down, too; 126 compared with 170 in 1978.

The statistics for fishing vessels, on the other hand, show that losses over the period 1975 to 1979 were higher than in the two previous corresponding periods.

The publication *Casualties to Vessels and Accidents to Men—Vessels Registered in the United Kingdom—Returns for 1979* is available from Her Majesty's Stationery Office, price £4.

Tiger moth rescue

Lowestoft lifeboatmen carried out an unusual rescue as they were preparing for a demonstration on lifeboat day. A large tiger moth was seen fluttering on the water in the yacht basin. The lifeboatmen scooped it out and put it in the lifeboat cabin where it dried out and it was eventually able to fly away. A Norwich couple read of the rescue and sent a £2 cheque to the station 'on behalf of the moth'.

Lowestoft lifeboat day raised £2,283, beating the previous year's total by over £100.

Lifeboats on station are usually solitary craft, but every now and again circumstances brings a group of them together. On the night of June 4 and 5, five lifeboats gathered in Brixham Harbour. Torbay's own Arun, Edward Bridges (Civil Service No. 37), was preparing to go for survey and her relief, the Arun Sir Max Aitken, had arrived to replace her temporarily on station; the new Arun Robert Edgar had come for the night while on trials; the 46ft 9in Watson North Foreland (Civil Service No. 11) had called in on passage from Angle to Poole; and Torbay's 18ft 6in McLachlan was, of course, on station. A few days later the photograph below was taken of new and old lifeboats at Poole depot: (l. to r.) Robert Edgar, back at Poole before going to her station, St Mary's, Scilly Islands; Calshot's 40ft Keith Nelson Ernest William and Elizabeth Ellen Hinde, on trials after survey; North Foreland, arrived at Poole ready to be hauled out; three old lifeboats waiting to be sold out of the service, the 46ft Watsons The Good Hope and Jessie Lumb and the 42ft Beach lifeboat The Alfred and Patience Gottwald; and the 41ft Watson Susan Ashley waiting to be taken by road to the National Lifeboat Museum at Bristol. There was still another lifeboat, a McLachlan, on the quay but out of sight.



The Mayor of Poole, Councillor Peter Coles, has chosen the lifeboat service as the charity for his year of office, giving it his personal, and very active support. He is seen here with the Mayoress, Mrs Coles, at a buffet dance at Poole Arts Centre last July during which Kim Atherden won the title of Miss Poole in a beauty contest; the evening raised £1,000 for the RNLI. A few weeks later Councillor Coles started a sponsored mini-marathon on Canford Heath, organised in aid of the lifeboat service by International Stores.



C of M

Richard Barclay, senior local director of Barclay's Bank, Southampton district, John Clay, deputy chairman of Hambros Bank and director of the Bank of England, John Cox, senior general manager of Midland Bank and chairman of Access, Wilson Ervin, group managing director of Northern Ireland's Northern Bank Ltd, and Lord Stanley of Alderley, a tenant farmer of New College, Oxford, have all been voted new members of the RNLI's Committee of Management.

Mr Barclay is also director of the National Provident Institution (a life insurance company), Barclaytrust International Ltd, Barclays Bank Finance Company (Jersey) Ltd and Barclays Bank Finance Company (Guernsey) Ltd. Dinghy sailing is among his recreations.

Both Mr Clay, who is a member of the Royal Thames Yacht Club, and Mr Cox, who is a fellow of the Institute of Bankers, enjoy sailing.

Mr Ervin is chairman of the Belfast RNLI branch, governor of the Royal

Belfast Academical Institution, vice-president of the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society and a past president of the Institute of Bankers in Ireland.

Lord Stanley of Alderley is a retired captain of the Coldstream Guards; he farms both in Oxfordshire and in Anglesey and is president of Holyhead RNLI branch. Sailing is also one of his pastimes.

Birthday Honours

In the Birthday Honours List:

The Most Noble Hugh Algernon, Duke of Northumberland, KG TD, was appointed to be a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order. The Duke of Northumberland is the Treasurer and also a vice-president of the RNLI.

Frederick William Brooks was awarded the MBE for services to the community in Hampshire. Among his other work for the community, Mr Brooks has been president of Hayling Island financial branch since 1980, after serving as chairman for ten years; he is also chairman of Hayling Island station branch.

David James Cox, coxswain of Wells lifeboat, was awarded the BEM. Mr Cox joined Wells lifeboat crew in 1943 and was appointed coxswain in 1960; he was awarded the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum in 1964 and 1973 and the silver medal in 1979.

Changes of address

The Welsh District Office vacated its premises at The Exchange, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff, at the end of June and moved to: Aberdare House, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff. The telephone numbers remain the same as before: Cardiff (0222) 31831 and 29005. From September the storage and distribution of fund-raising stores, previously undertaken by the Barry Dock store, were also transferred to Aberdare House.

The North London District Office vacated its premises at 553a High Road Wembley, at the end of September, the lease having expired, and moved to: 10-12 St Albans Road, Barnet, Hertfordshire. The telephone number had not been allocated at the time of going to press.

LIFEBOAT SERVICES

West Division

Broken rudder

THE HONORARY SECRETARY of **Moelfre** lifeboat station was informed by Holyhead Coastguard at 0845 on Sunday September 21, 1980, that the yacht *July Morn* had reported that she was in difficulties, her rudder broken, 100 yards off Llanddona Beach in Red Wharf Bay. Maroons were fired at 0850 and then minutes later **Moelfre's** 37ft 6in Rother lifeboat *Horace Clarkson* launched on service under the command of Coxswain William Roberts.

The wind was north easterly, gale force 8, and the sea was rough with a medium to heavy swell. It was half an hour after high water and the ebb stream was setting westerly at about half a knot. Visibility was poor, less than 500 yards for most of the service.

After launching, Coxswain Will Roberts set course south east by south and headed towards Red Wharf Bay. Despite repeated attempts, no direct radio communication was established between the lifeboat and the yacht, although Holyhead Coastguard, via Anglesey Coastguard mobile and Penmon lookout, was able to communicate with both boats. Using the Coastguard to relay messages, the lifeboat asked the yacht for her position and the depth of water in her vicinity. *July Morn* gave her position as two miles off Red Wharf Bay and the depth of water as 35 feet. Shortly after, at 0922, the lifeboat picked the yacht up on her radar, at half a mile range, and then, a few minutes later, *July Morn* was sighted a quarter of a mile away.

As the lifeboat approached, the yacht was seen to be a 33ft ketch. She was almost a mile west by south of Careg Onnen Quarry, her bows pointing east. Apparently she had hit a sandbank about half a mile off Trwyn Dwlban Head, damaging her rudder, and she had then headed east across Red Wharf Bay, using her engine and the wind to steer. Waves were breaking over the yacht and she was barely under control.

Coxswain Roberts decided to try to tow *July Morn* rather than take off her crew, a man and a woman, who were exhausted. The gale was still blowing

from the north east, but in the shallow water near the yacht the seas were broken and confused and about 12 feet high.

After approaching the casualty, at 0930, Coxswain Roberts decided to put Second Coxswain John Thomas aboard. The lifeboat came up astern of the yacht and with skilful seamanship Coxswain Roberts managed to put her bow against the yacht long enough for the second coxswain to jump aboard, taking a towline with him. The lifeboat then drew off seaward and took station off *July Morn's* port bow.

On board the yacht Second Coxswain Thomas made the towline fast, passing it through a fairlead forward. Coxswain Roberts then headed east towards Puffin Sound and the shelter of the Menai Straits. The fairlead, however, had sharp edges and frayed the tow rope. Despite the use of a towing sleeve and towels from the yacht, the tow rope parted 11 times in the 3½ miles from the start of the tow until the two boats finally passed through Puffin Sound. It took three hours to cover this distance during which time Second Coxswain Thomas was constantly exposed to the full force of the sea; several times he was nearly swept overboard. Each time the tow parted a high degree of seamanship was demanded in manoeuvring the lifeboat to pass it again. For the final difficult leg through Puffin Sound Coxswain Roberts ordered a second line to be passed, a decision which was to prove vital because the main tow parted yet again in those confined waters.

During the course of the morning the sun had appeared and visibility im-

proved dramatically although the gale continued unabated and the sea did not lessen until the shelter of Menai Straits was reached.

No further problems were experienced down the straits and the yacht was left at her moorings near Menai Bridge. Having satisfied himself that her crew needed no more help, Coxswain Roberts, at 1335, put his lifeboat on moorings at Beaumaris. **Moelfre** lifeboat returned to station the next day, arriving at 1115, having rescued two children being blown out to sea in an inflatable dinghy on the way.

For this service framed letters of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, were presented to Coxswain William J. Roberts and Second Coxswain John M. Thomas. A letter of appreciation signed by Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution, was sent to Motor Mechanic Evan O. Jones.

South Western Division

Gale search

A 999 CALL was received by Hartland Coastguard at 2125 on Saturday April 25 from the owner and skipper of the 55ft auxiliary ketch *Springtide*. He told them that the yacht had been moored in an exposed position in Ilfracombe Harbour; preparing to move her to a position more sheltered from the force 8 to 9 northerly gale, he had jumped ashore to let go the mooring lines; the yacht had been blown clear of the quay and he

ANNUAL AWARDS 1980

The Maud Smith Award for the most outstanding act of lifesaving during 1980 has been made to Coxswain/ Mechanic Malcolm Macdonald of Stornoway for the rescue of 29 men from the trawler *Junella* on September 29. In a strong southerly gale and heavy breaking seas Coxswain Macdonald took the lifeboat alongside the fishing vessel, which had run aground among dangerous rocks, and held her there for 40 minutes while *Junella's* crew were hauled to safety from a pilot ladder. It was a black night and the operation was made most dangerous by the rise and fall of the lifeboat in breaking seas and heavy swell. Altogether the lifeboat was at sea for more than eight hours. For this service Coxswain Macdonald was awarded the silver medal.

The Ralph Glister Award for the most meritorious service carried out in 1980 by the crew of a lifeboat under 10 metres in length has been made to Helmsman Frank Dunster and Crew

Members Trevor Pearce and Graham Wickham of Hayling Island. On December 14 they rescued four men in a south-westerly gale, a very rough sea and poor visibility in driving spray and pouring rain; their yacht's rudder had broken off a lee shore. After two unsuccessful attempts to take the Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat alongside the yacht, *Fitz Flyer*, in huge seas, two of the crew were taken off on the third run in; it took four more attempts to snatch a third man. A further run in was needed to take off the yacht's skipper. For this service Helmsman Frank Dunster was awarded the bronze medal and Crew Members Trevor Pearce and Graham Wickham were awarded the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum.

The James Michael Bower Fund awards for 1980 have been made to Coxswain/ Mechanic Malcolm Macdonald of Stornoway, Coxswain/Mechanic Charles Bowry of Sheerness, Coxswain/Mechanic Ian Johnson of Troon, and Coxswain/Mechanic Kenneth Voice of Shoreham Harbour, who each received the silver medal.



Launch into south-westerly strong gale, force 9, Sunday March 22: Three progressive photographs of Eastbourne lifeboat, the 37ft 6in Rother Duke of Kent, taken by 16-year-old Matthew Hancock as (left) she launched down her slipway into (below) very heavy breaking seas and (right) cleared out to sea. Duke of Kent, under the command of Coxswain/Mechanic Ronald Wheeler, launched at 1215 to help search for two people swept into the sea at Cooden. A man and a boy had been trying to strengthen sea defences at the back of their garden when they were engulfed by a wave and carried out by the undertow. At 1338 a message was received that the man had managed to clamber ashore but that the boy had been drowned; his body was recovered from the surf by coastguards. The lifeboat returned to station, was safely recovered despite the very rough conditions and was once more ready for service at 1615.

had been unable to get back on board her. The yacht, with three people on board, a 20-year-old man, a girl of 16 and a boy of 12, had then steamed out to sea to ride out the gale. The owner was confident that the young man on board had the experience and ability to handle the boat, but he asked the Coastguard to establish radio contact with the yacht to find out her intentions.

Radio contact was never established. At 2150 the owner was told that the yacht was not replying to radio calls but she could be seen by a Coastguard auxiliary.

At 2205 the Coastguard telephoned the honorary secretary of **Ilfracombe** lifeboat station, but he was ill in bed. At the same time, however, the deputy launching authority arrived at the pier having seen the Coastguard Landrover pass. Seeing the yacht offshore he immediately arranged for the crew to be called by runner.

At 2220 the yacht disappeared from the sight of those watching on the pier. She had run ashore at Capstone Point in the vicinity of Forty Steps. The DLA was asked to launch the lifeboat and maroons were fired immediately. The crew and shore helpers were already assembled and the lifeboat, the 37ft Oakley *Lloyds II*, was hauled out of her boathouse at 2222.

Heard Lane Slipway, down which **Ilfracombe** lifeboat is normally launched, could not be used because it was undergoing structural alterations as part of harbour works. The lifeboat was therefore taken on her carriage to the old slipway at the Britannia Hotel which was being used temporarily during this period. Despite having difficulty in negotiation parked vehicles along the road to the slipway and having to overcome a broken towing-hitch, caused when the tractor and carriage jack-knifed on a bank of soft sand which had built up at the foot of the slipway, the lifeboat was launched on service at 2252. It was half an hour after high water.

When the lifeboat steamed clear of the harbour pier she met very rough seas thrown up by the gale blowing from



the north north east; it was gusting to strong gale force 9. Coxswain David Clemence ordered every man to attach himself to the boat by his lifeline. Five minutes after launching the lifeboat was on the scene and, with an RAF Whirlwind helicopter from Chivenor, searching the sea and rocks around Capstone Point.

The helicopter could not lower a man on to the stranded ketch because of the height of her mast and rigging, and as the yacht had been carried over a large rock, she was inaccessible from the lifeboat.

A girl was recovered by the helicopter from the sea slightly west of the casualty at 2320; she was injured and so was flown ashore to an ambulance. At 2347 the helicopter returned to base to refuel while the lifeboat continued to search the area to the west of the casualty as the tide was now setting down the Bristol Channel.

It was learned at 0020 on Sunday April 26 that the girl survivor had said that a gas bottle had exploded aboard the yacht when about half a mile off shore. The three people on board had donned lifejackets and then jumped overboard.

The crew of the lifeboat endured considerable discomfort during the search. The cockpit was often swamped by seas

coming aboard and Coxswain Clemence was almost washed from the wheel on several occasions. Great concentration was needed to take the lifeboat across the breaking seas while searching very close in to the very rocky lee shore.

Despite the efforts of the lifeboat crew, the helicopter crew (back taking part in the search by 0038) two Coastguard cliff rescue companies searching the foreshore and two Fire Brigade units providing additional lighting, neither the young man nor the boy from the yacht was found. The search continued until 0240, when the lifeboat returned to harbour. She arrived at 0315 and was recovered, rehoused, refuelled and ready for service at 0435.

For this service a framed letter of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, was presented to Coxswain David W. G. Clemence.

Ireland Division

Standing into danger

A MOTOR CRUISER, *Temple Queen*, unsure of her position in a dangerous area just north of the entrance to Strangford Lough was reported to **Portaferry** lifeboat station by Belfast Coastguard at

1900 on Sunday May 17. It was a fair evening but a strong breeze, force 6, was blowing from the south and the seas were rough.

Portaferry's Mark IV Zodiac inflatable lifeboat was launched at 1910 manned by Helmsman J. Desmond Rogers and Crew Members O. John Murray and William Reid. When, ten minutes later, the motor cruiser was reached it was found that her crew were exhausted and that she was standing into danger. Giving command of the lifeboat to Crew Member Murray, Helmsman Rogers himself boarded *Temple Queen* and piloted her in to Portaferry, escorted by the lifeboat. The two boats arrived alongside the quay at 1935.

The lifeboat was rehoused and once again ready for service at 1945.

For this service a letter of appreciation signed by Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution, was sent to Helmsman J. Desmond Rogers.

Needles. Yarmouth's 52ft Arun lifeboat *Joy and John Wade* slipped her moorings at 1305 under the command of Coxswain David Kennett.

A gale, gusting up to force 8, was blowing from the south west, with intermittent rain, and the sea was choppy; high water was at 1532. It was later learned that the motor cruiser *Schesaplana* had been on passage from Poole to the Solent. She was crossing the Shingles Bank when, while turning, she met three large waves and capsized.

The helicopter arrived overhead at 1316, recovered a man and woman from the water and flew them to Haslar Hospital; it was then confirmed that there had been four people on board.

Meanwhile Yarmouth lifeboat had arrived on scene. She found that a member of *MY Pippiri's* crew, Mr F. Northgraves of Fareham, had gone over the side and, clinging to the stern of the motor yacht, was supporting one of *Schesaplana's* crew, a woman. Judging

Siriolla. A search pattern was made and the search was continued until 1600 but, although wreckage was found from *Schesaplana*, there was no sign of the missing man.

The lifeboat was back on her mooring, ready for service at 1620.

Sadly, the woman who had been rescued by the helicopter later died.

For this service a letter of appreciation signed by Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution, was sent to Mr F. Northgraves. A letter signed by Cdr Bruce Cairns, chief of operations, expressing appreciation to Crew Members Mark Rushton and Clive Smith was sent to Yarmouth station honorary secretary, Mr D. B. Huffam.

Scotland (South) Division

Flooding tide

A PARTY of four wildfowlers, caravanning at Burnfoot on the Nith Estuary, on the north side of the Solway Firth, set off shooting at about 0730 on Monday January 19. It was about two hours after low water. Two of the party set off across the sandbanks which were dried at the time while the other two men stayed on shore.

At 0900 the two men on shore realised that the tide was flooding fast and that their two colleagues on the sandbanks would soon be cut off. They tried to attract their attention by firing their guns in the air, but without success.

By 0930 one of the wildfowlers out in the estuary was seen to be up to his waist in water; the other, further away, was still on a sandbank showing above the water. One of the men on shore, Stephen Latham of Melton Mowbray, ran to a cottage near the caravan and called Ramsey Coastguard by telephone. Then he inflated a very small inflatable dinghy—little more than a toy, but the only boat available—and set out towards the wildfowler in the deeper water. He was prevented from reaching this man, however, by the moderate to fresh west-north-westerly breeze which, in the squalls of rain, gusted up to gale force, and by the strong flooding tide which was setting to the north. Wind and tide eventually set him towards the second man.

At 1030, while Mr Latham was trying to get this man aboard, the dinghy capsized so that both men were now in the water but both were able to keep a hold on the dinghy. Meanwhile a Sea King helicopter had been scrambled from RN Prestwick. She was overhead at 1055 and within minutes had winched these two men to safety.

The remaining man, last seen with the water up to his waist, had by this time disappeared. The helicopter continued to search and at 1250 the honorary secretary of *Silloth* lifeboat station was informed that a man was missing in Nith Estuary. *Silloth's* Atlantic 21 rigid



South Eastern Division

Capsized motor cruiser

THE DUTY COASTGUARD on watch in the lookout of Solent MRSC on the spring bankholiday Monday, May 25, reported at 1256 that a vessel had capsized in the vicinity of the Shingles Bank Elbow Buoy at the western approaches to the Solent; two people were then spotted in the water. An RN helicopter from *HMS Daedalus*, Lee-on-Solent, was immediately scrambled, the honorary secretary of **Yarmouth, Isle of Wight**, lifeboat station was informed and a PAN broadcast made to attract the attention of yachts in the area. One yacht without radio saw the capsized boat and turned to try to help; unable to do so, she made red smoke to attract attention.

Pippiri II, a fast cabin cruiser from Yarmouth, responded to the broadcast and set out at 30 knots at 1301, followed shortly afterwards by the dredger *Arco Tyne* which was working just outside the Bridge reef, running west from the

it inadvisable for the Arun to approach, Coxswain Kennett ordered away the Y class inflatable dinghy carried on board to recover both people. The dinghy was launched and, manned by Crew Members Mark Rushton and Clive Smith, successfully picked up the woman and Mr Northgraves and transferred them to the lifeboat; in the gale force winds and rough water it was a difficult operation. The woman was then taken below and given first aid.

One man was still missing and for the search which followed Coxswain Kennett acted as 'on scene commander', except for a short break when the woman, whose condition began to give cause for concern, was landed at Yarmouth to be taken to hospital by ambulance; during that period *Arco Tyne* co-ordinated the surface search. By now the helicopter had returned and a number of other boats had joined the search; they included **Lymington's** Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat, *MY Pippiri II*, the Needles pilot launch, *Lepe Red* rescue boat, *FV Rowella* and several yachts, among them *Rigo* and



Cliff rescue: Just as Torbay lifeboat crew, together with the honorary secretary, were embarking on the 54ft Arun lifeboat Edward Bridges (Civil Service No. 37), at 1445 on Sunday May 24, for exercise and to take part in the annual Blessing of the Sea at Brixham, a message came that someone had fallen from Berry Head cliffs, three miles from the station. The lifeboat slipped her moorings almost immediately, under

the command of Coxswain Arthur Curnow and had reached Berry Head by 1500. It was found that an 11-year-old boy had slipped 50ft down a 180ft cliff and, with head and arm injuries, was trapped on a ledge. Ambulance men were with him but, as it was impossible to lift him up the cliff, it was decided to lower him to the lifeboat. The Y-class inflatable dinghy was launched with Crew Member Derek Rundle as

inflatable lifeboat was launched at 1310 under the command of Helmsman Colin Akitt and made for Borrion Point at the mouth of the River Nith. Keeping in contact with Drumore Coastguard mobile, she searched up the channel towards Glencaple.

Just after 1330 the body of the missing wildfowler was found and recovered by the helicopter. The lifeboat was released at 1350 and she was once again rehoisted and ready for service at 1435.

For this service a letter of appreciation signed by Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution, was sent to Stephen E. Latham.

North East Division

Search in surf

A REPORT that Runswick Bay Yacht Club safety boat had capsized on the east side of the bay came to **Staithe and Runswick** lifeboat station from HM Coastguard at 1444 on Sunday June 21. Although it was a fine day with only light variable winds, there was a heavy swell which was breaking inshore. Members of the lifeboat crew were already at the boathouse and the Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat was launched in four minutes manned by Helmsman Iain Baxter and Crew Members Sean Baxter and Martin Hopkinson.

The lifeboat reached the area of the casualty at 1500 and, going in through

the heavy surf, saw the club boat being washed ashore. A little while later two men who had struggled to safety through the surf were also seen on the beach, but it was thought that there might be other people still in the water. The lifeboat continued the search in the heavy surf, therefore, until the Coastguard mobile was able to confirm that there had only been the two crew in the club boat and no one else was missing. The Atlantic 21 then returned to station and she was once again rehoisted and ready for service at 1547.

For this service a letter signed by Cdr Bruce Cairns, chief of operations, expressing the Institution's appreciation to the lifeboat crew, was sent to Mr J. C. James, Staithe and Runswick station honorary secretary. Runswick Bay Yacht Club makes a considerable contribution to local branch funds each year.

Eastern Division

Racing dinghies

ON AN OVERCAST Sunday morning, May 3, dinghies from several sailing clubs on the River Blackwater had started racing when they were overtaken by deteriorating weather; soon after 1100 the strong westerly breeze was already gusting up to near gale, force 7, with a forecast of worse to come.

While heading up river on a routine

patrol, Bradwell Coastguard boat (CGB) saw, at 1120, several dinghies capsize. Most were soon righted by their crews, only one needing help; the CGB recovered the two dinghy sailors, righted their boat and took her in tow for Stone. Within minutes, however, more dinghies had capsized, so the CGB anchored the dinghy she had in tow and went to help club rescue boats while Bradwell Coastguard requested lifeboat assistance.

West Mersea Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat had just arrived back on station from exercise during which she had already been helping a club rescue boat with capsized dinghies. Crew Member Simon Broadhurst had in fact gone overboard to help dinghy sailors in the water with their boat.

The Atlantic 21 set off again immediately manned by Helmsman James Clarke and Crew Members Leonard Broadhurst and Charles R. Taylor. She joined the other rescue boats helping to right capsized dinghies and tow them to shelter with their crews. Some dinghy sailors were taken off lee shores and the lifeboat helped check that those people who had had to abandon their boats were safe.

By 1150 the Police launch *Alert II* was on her way from Brightlingsea at full speed to help. By 1220 it was still not possible for the clubs to confirm that everyone was accounted for because of the number of boats now abandoned whose crews were ashore in different places. So Thames Coastguard re-



helmsman; Crew Members John Ashford, Brian Caunter and Derek Winning were taken ashore together with a bucket stretcher (itself on trial) and an Ashford first aid pack. The best ledge from which to embark the boy was 35ft above the sea, but the motion of the inflatable dinghy was too lively for her to receive the boy safely; so Coxswain Curnow nosed the lifeboat's bow in to the face of the ledge and, while



crew members held her off adjacent rocks with boathooks, the boy was lowered on board and taken to Torquay Harbour at full speed. First intimation that the boy was in trouble had come from a young man, Nicholas Berry, who had risked his own life climbing the cliffs to raise the alarm.

quested that an RAF helicopter from Manston should scramble to make a general search of the Blackwater. Starting at Sales Point in the river estuary, the helicopter 'hopped' from one boat to another, cross checking the description of apparently abandoned boats with the CGB and the lifeboat.

At 1251 it was reported that one 505 dinghy and one GP14 dinghy, each with a crew of two, were unaccounted for. Within minutes the lifeboat was able to confirm that she had the missing GP14 in tow and that the crew of the 505 had been rescued.

By 1300 the helicopter had checked all craft within the river and reported that all appeared in hand except for a speedboat with two people on board which had broken down north of Osea Island. By the time the CGB reached her, however, her engine had been repaired and she was making her way to Maldon.

On returning to Bradwell marina, towing abandoned boats, the CGB and *Alert II* learned of a small swamped pram dinghy which had drifted out of the creek. They checked round the moorings and found that the pram had overturned while alongside a yacht unloading. A woman and a boy had already boarded the yacht; a man had been thrown into the water but had been hauled safely aboard the yacht.

After taking the GP14 to Stone and landing her crew, the lifeboat helped another capsized dinghy in Lawling Creek. By then her fuel was running

low so she returned to station, arriving at 1345. By 1400 the Police, Coastguard and club boats had all returned to their stations.

For this service a letter signed by Cdr Bruce Cairns, chief of operations, expressing the Institution's appreciation to the lifeboat crew, was sent to Lt-Cdr Maurice W. Bond, West Mersea station honorary secretary.

South Western Division

Dinghy and catamaran

A TELEPHONE MESSAGE from HM Coastguard at 1410 on Saturday March 28 informed Mudeford lifeboat station that a sailing dinghy had capsized on Mudeford sand bar; her mast was broken and she was in difficulties. A moderate breeze, force 4, was blowing from the south west and the sea was choppy. Within minutes Mudeford's Mark IV Zodiac inflatable lifeboat had been launched with Helmsman David Sweetman and Crew Member John Sutton as her crew.

The lifeboat reached the capsized dinghy at 1420 and helped her crew of two cut away the damaged rigging. The boat was then taken in tow back to Mudeford, arriving at 1455. By 1500 the lifeboat was rehoused and once again ready for service.

A few weeks later, on Thursday April 30, Mudeford's D class inflatable lifeboat launched at 1315, manned by Helmsman Brian Stride and Crew

Members Paul Walker and Dale Parker, to go to the help of a catamaran, being sailed single handed, which had capsized off Southbourne. A fresh breeze, force 5, was blowing from the west and the sea was choppy; the tide was ebbing.

When the lifeboat reached the catamaran at 1329 Crew Member Parker transferred to the upturned boat and helped to right her. The catamaran started to sail back but had soon capsized again; her helmsman was then taken on board the lifeboat. Crew Member Parker boarded the catamaran and righted her once more, this time taking the sails down and making all fast. Then the lifeboat towed her back to the beach where her owner had a trailer. The lifeboat returned to station at 1410 and was rehoused and once again ready for service at 1428.

Scotland (North) Division

Two fishing vessels

A MOTOR FISHING VESSEL sinking off Sarclett Head on her way back from fishing grounds was reported to the honorary secretary of Wick lifeboat station at 0135 on Thursday May 21 by HM Coastguard. The lifeboat crew were assembled and Wick's 48ft 6in Oakley *Princess Marina* launched at 0145 under the command of Coxswain Donald McKay. A gentle to moderate breeze, force 3 to 4, was blowing from the south

photographs by courtesy of Mr A. Hall

east, the sea was slight but it was a hazy night and visibility was poor. It was almost high water.

While the lifeboat was on her way to the stricken fishing boat, five miles south of Wick, the Coastguard received radio messages from MFV *Restless Wave* and MFV *Maid of Honour* saying that they were also steaming for the last known position of the casualty.

When, at about 0220, the lifeboat arrived off Sarclett Head she sighted flares which guided her to a liferaft in which were the four crew of MFV *Andreas*, which had now sunk. The four men and the liferaft were taken on board the lifeboat, which returned to station and landed the survivors at Wick Harbour at 0310.

A fortnight later, on Thursday June 4, the fishing vessel *Scottish Maid* on passage from Wick to Kirkwall went ashore half a mile south of Noss Head Light; there were three men on board. It was a fine night with variable light breezes, a slight sea and good visibility. A message came to the honorary secretary from the Coastguard at 0035 and at 0050 *Princess Marina* launched, once again under the command of Coxswain McKay. It was high water.

At 0105 Coxswain McKay was informed by radio that *Scottish Maid's* crew were in a liferaft astern of their boat. Five minutes later the lifeboat reached the stranded vessel and the best means of approach was planned, taking into account the rocky coastline. The master was asked to join his crew in the liferaft, which was then taken alongside the lifeboat. The three fishermen were taken on board and with the liferaft in tow *Princess Marina* returned to station. She arrived at 0145 and was rehoused and ready for service at 0200.

West Division

Two calls

A SURF BOARD sailor, sitting on his board trying without success to paddle back to shore against an offshore breeze was reported to the deputy launching authority of Ramsey lifeboat station by HM Coastguard at 1530 on Friday June 5. The Coastguard had been unable to find a shore boat which could help.

Ramsey's 37ft Oakley *James Ball Ritchie* launched at 1544 under the command of Coxswain Lawrence Gawne and headed for the surf board, 1½ miles south east of the station. It was a fine afternoon with a gentle to moderate south-westerly breeze and a slight sea. The tide had been ebbing for an hour and a half. The man, by this time exhausted, was taken on board the lifeboat at 1556 and put ashore at Ramsey at 1604. He was taken home by the Coastguard.

On Saturday June 13, at 0420, red flares were sighted east of the station by Ramsey Coastguard. It was an overcast morning with a gale force 8 blowing

from the south. The sea was rough and it was an hour after low water.

James Ball Ritchie launched at 0439 under the command of Coxswain Gawne and reached the auxiliary yacht *Shaula* at 0455. As the lifeboat came within hailing distance she was told that the yacht could not make any progress in the southerly gale and her propeller was fouled; there were three men on board. A tow rope was passed and the lifeboat towed the yacht into more sheltered waters to wait the tide into Ramsey Harbour; she was safely berthed in harbour at 0600.

The lifeboat remained moored afloat in harbour for the time being as there were other yachts still sheltering from the gale in Ramsey Bay, but she was once again rehoused by 0815.

West Division

Broken in two

A MESSAGE from HM Coastguard was received by New Brighton lifeboat station at 1438 on Saturday July 11 to say that a motorboat, *Mary*, was in trouble off New Brighton bathing pool; she was taking in water.

The lifeboat crew were already at the boathouse making ready for the dedication ceremony the next week of their new Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat. Maroons were fired at 1440 and the lifeboat was launched from Portland Slip at 1445 under the command of Helmsman Ian Campbell; with him were Crew Members Anthony Jones, Michael Jones and Robert Robertson.

It was a fine afternoon, but a fresh breeze, force 5, was blowing from the west north west and the sea was very rough. It was just after low water.

The lifeboat first made for the position she had been given off the bathing pool, where there were a number of pleasure boats. Seeing one boat with a fishing party on board which appeared to be lying low by the stern, Helmsman Campbell went alongside, but it was not this vessel which needed help.

At this point, Helmsman Campbell decided that *Mary* must be further out to sea and further to the west, so he set off in that direction at full speed. While on the way, he received information from the coastguard that *Mary*, a 30ft ex-ship's lifeboat, was lying between Askew Spit and Little Burbo Bank, six miles north north west, and she was being pounded by heavy surf; there were two people on board.

The Atlantic 21 found *Mary* at 1522. The owner's wife was taken on board the lifeboat and an attempt made to tow the casualty into calmer water. Very little headway could be made, however, as the boat was still taking water and her pumps could not clear it. Helmsman Campbell decided that *Mary* should drop anchor and the owner be taken off. On the way back to station a request was made for an ambulance.

When you have read

THE LIFEBOAT

please pass it on.

After landing the two people at 1605, the lifeboat returned to *Mary* with the idea of taking her in tow again, but she had taken in much more water and it was decided to leave her and return to station. The Atlantic 21 was back at the slip at 1705 and was washed down, refuelled and ready for service at 1745. By now *Mary*, which had been on passage from the Isle of Man to Birkenhead, was under water with only her mast visible and she was later found to have broken in two.

For this service, a letter signed by Cdr Bruce Cairns, chief of operations, expressing appreciation to Helmsman Ian M. Campbell and his crew was sent to the station Honorary Secretary, Captain J. A. Billington.

Eastern Division

Two dogs

TWO CERTIFICATES OF MERIT have been awarded by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to lifeboatmen of **Great Yarmouth and Gorleston**; one to the crew of the 44ft Waveney lifeboat *Barham* who rescued a dog on August 31, 1980, and one to the crew of the Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat who launched to help another dog on January 4, 1981.

Barham was out on exercise on Sunday morning, August 31, when a message was received from the Coastguard that a dog was in the water near the Links Hotel, two miles south west of the pier heads, and a man was trying to swim out to rescue it. A moderate to fresh breeze was blowing from north north east and the sea was very rough. The lifeboat made for the position and sighted the dog about 50 yards offshore. To reach him Coxswain Richard Hawkins had to manoeuvre between groynes with less than four feet of water under the boat. Then Second Coxswain Michael Brown, wearing his lifejacket and secured with a line, went over the side and recovered the dog. The owner, who had made his own way back to the shore, collected his dog from the lifeboat station and made a contribution to branch funds. After this service a number of other dog lovers also came up to the lifeboat pen to make appreciative donations.

On Sunday January 4 the Coastguard sighted a dog in the river about a quarter of a mile from the harbour mouth; once again, the owner was trying to rescue it. The afternoon was overcast and wintry, with a fresh to strong breeze blowing from the north

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Portrush

PULLING AND SAILING TO FAST AFLOAT ARUN

By Joan Davies



Ramore Head and Portrush from the air. The old lifeboathouse can be clearly seen on the east side of the harbour.

photograph by courtesy of
BKS, Coleraine

AT NOON on Sunday March 1, 1981, a new Arun class lifeboat was placed on service at Portrush lifeboat station, and yet another page was turned in a story of lifesaving on the north coast of Ireland which began in 1860. That was the year in which Portrush, a station which together with Donaghadee, Campbeltown and Port Patrick guards the estuary of the Clyde and the northern approach to the Irish Sea, was first established by the RNLI. The new Arun, 52ft overall with a beam of 17ft 6in, has powerful twin diesel engines to help her in her work of lifesaving. The first Portrush lifeboat, *Laura, Countess of Antrim*, was 30ft long with a 7ft beam, pulling ten oars; her setting was described thus in the November 1875 edition of THE LIFEBOAT:

'Portrush is a small town and harbour at the north-east extremity of the bay, of which Inishowen Head is the north-west extremity, and into which the waters of Lough Foyle flow . . .

'The town is built on a small promontory inclining to the northward. To the west side of it is the small harbour, partly natural, but rendered safe by a breakwater, and thus made available for a refuge harbour for coasters and a point of departure for steamers for Scotch and other ports.

'To the eastward of the town is a wide sandy bay with a fair anchorage, which is to a slight extent sheltered from the north by islands to seaward of it. To a slight extent only, however, and vessels anchoring there with the wind in other directions, which they may do in safety, and caught in that position with a northerly gale, often find themselves in great peril either of foundering at their anchors, or dragging or parting their anchors . . .

'The lifeboat has also her work on the western or harbour side. Vessels which, making for the harbour in stormy weather or by night, fall to leeward of it and among the rocks, or vessels which fail to weather the point of the promontory called Ramore Head, and other like instances, may at any time necessitate the Portrush boatmen doing their utmost to save life with this boat . . .

'The nearest large town from Portrush is Coleraine and some few miles to the eastward is the famous Giant's Causeway. The coast scenery generally is wild and grand, while in the before-mentioned bay, to the east of Portrush, are some beautiful little bits of quieter scenery—sand, rock, and island . . .

The beauty and the grandeur are still there for all to see—and the dangers of this lovely coast are still there, too, with off lying rocks and shoals, overfalls and tidal eddies waiting for the unwise or the unfortunate. Motor fishing vessel or yacht may have replaced brigantine and schooner, but Portrush lifeboatmen of today will tell you, just as their forebears would have done, that on that part of the coast the wind is at its worst when it blows from the west north west: then it is blowing straight off the Atlantic with a long ocean fetch to pile seas up in the bay. Big seas can curl right into the harbour mouth and in an onshore gale it must have been no mean feat to launch a pulling lifeboat even within the harbour.

When entering or leaving Portrush strong winds from the west could be disastrous, even for steam ships. On December 15, 1883, ss *Skelligs* of Glasgow, bound for Liverpool was leaving harbour when she failed to answer her

helm and was driven on to the sand 50 yards south west of the south pier; the lifeboat *John Whitaker* (1876 to 1889) took hawsers from the vessel to the pier preventing her from going broadside on to the sand and enabling her to get off when the tide rose. On April 13, 1909, ss *Hamilton* of Stranraer, bound from Maryport to Portrush with a cargo of coal, was about to enter harbour in a strong westerly gale when she was caught by tide and sea and driven on to rocks; the lifeboat *Hopwood* (1902 to 1924) rescued four of her crew, the remaining three being saved by coastguards with lines from the shore.

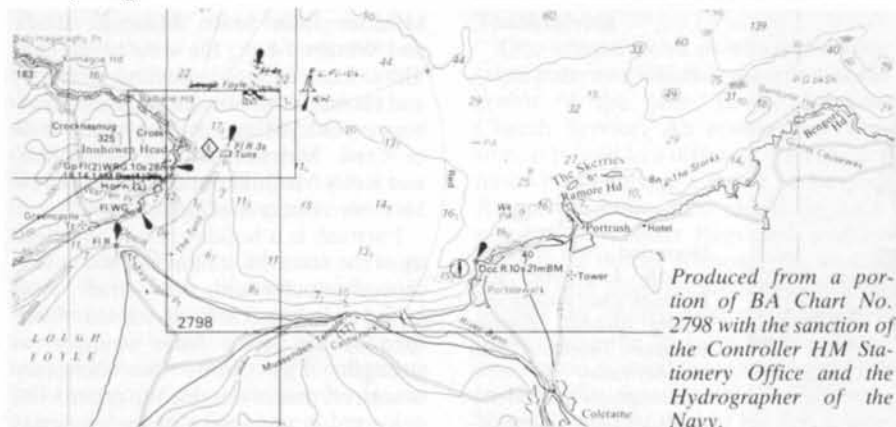
The Skerries Roads

Many early lifeboat services were to vessels which had sought shelter anchoring to the south of the Skerries only to find themselves in a perilous position when gales went round to the north west. Then the lifeboat would have been hauled on her carriage to be launched off the sandy beach 'as nearly as may be under the lee of the wreck', and, with the sand being soft and deep, it is recorded that both horses and men were often 'severely taxed'.

There were hazards in plenty for vessels of the last century, trading under sail. But if the dangers are reflected in the reports of lifeboat services, so is the warm humanity of the people of Portrush: On October 3, 1873, the wind was from the north west and the brigantine *Amanda* of Coleraine was dragging her anchors towards a dangerous lee shore in a heavy gale:

'This was a truly noble service, and tested to the utmost the endurance of the lifeboat's crew . . . at one time it seemed that the effort would fail, as the boat had to drop down under the lee of an island. The crew, however, again returned to the attack; and, after two hours' hard rowing with difficulty got on board the distressed vessel, and eventually safely landed all hands, to the great joy of a large crowd of the inhabitants of Portrush . . .

March 2, 1891: a gale from west to north west and the schooner *Ellen Myvanwy* of Beaumaris, bound from



Runcorn for Ramelton, Co. Donegal, with a cargo of salt anchored in Skerries Roads and showing signs of distress. All through that day and the next the lifeboat *Robert and Agnes Blair* (34ft self-righter, 1889 to 1902) tried to go to her aid but was time and again driven back ashore by the severity of the gale, until . . .

... 4 pm when the boat went off splendidly, her crew toiling manfully at the oars. As soon as practicable sail was set and in half-an-hour the vessel was reached and her crew of three men taken off. After tacking in the bay under sail the boat ran in beautifully to the shore, being greeted with great cheering by the people on the land.

For this service silver medals were awarded to Captain Frederick Watt and Coxswain John Hopkins.

Those are just two random examples. From 1864 for more than a quarter of a century the honorary secretary was the Reverend J. Simpson and perhaps it was he who has been able to convey so vividly to us, over the years, the immediate, lively concern of the community. But the same warm spirit is still abroad today. Whatever time of day or night the maroons are fired, the inhabitants of Portrush come down to the harbour, just as they have always done, to share in the anxiety and the joy of the lifeboat people.

Grandfather, father, son

Lifeboat and town have always been closely knit. Indeed, Samuel Cunningham, who was coxswain from 1946 to 1963, was the Town Clerk, succeeding his father in that office in 1953. From father to son. In just the same way the lifeboat families themselves have passed on their commitment from one generation to another.

James 'Jimmy' Stewart, who became coxswain in 1974, is the grandson of John Stewart, coxswain from 1912 to 1916. Jimmy first joined the crew in 1949; he served as bowman from 1959 to 1963 and second coxswain from 1964-1974 before taking over as coxswain. In his grandfather's day, as in the years before, practically all the lifeboatmen were fishermen. Nowadays a variety of

occupation is represented and Jimmy is the only fisherman in the crew.

Crew Member Louis Craig is the grandson of Thomas Patton, coxswain from 1901 to 1912 and then from 1916 to 1932. It was Thomas Patton who saw through one of the most fundamental changes at Portrush, because he was coxswain of both the station's last pulling and sailing boat *Hopwood* and of its first motor lifeboat, *T.B.B.H.*, a 45ft Watson cabin lifeboat, which came on station in 1924; although a motor lifeboat, she still carried auxiliary sails and oars.

Robert 'Bobbie' McMullan was second coxswain from 1940 to 1963 and then coxswain from 1964 to 1974; his son, another Robert McMullan, is a crew member in the present lifeboat, and Bobbie's grandson, yet another Robert, is waiting to join the crew.

Grandfather, father and son. That has also been the pattern for the motor mechanics of Portrush for the past 57 years. Karl Chambers became the station's first motor mechanic when *T.B.B.H.* came on station in 1924 and, except for one or two years during the war, he remained the motor mechanic until 1947; Gilbert Chambers served as assistant mechanic with his father, Karl, for two years before the war and then took over from him as motor mechanic in 1947, serving as second coxswain/mechanic from 1975 until his death in 1978; the mantle then fell on Gilbert's son, Derek Karl. . . Karl was the motor mechanic in Thomas Patton's crew which, in 1924, brought home *T.B.B.H.*; Gilbert was the motor mechanic in Robert McMullan senior's crew which, in 1949, brought home Portrush's next lifeboat, the 46ft 9in Watson *Lady Scott (Civil Service No. 4)*, and Derek was the motor mechanic in Jimmy Stewart's crew which this year brought home the new Arun.

The record of the Knox family is much the same, with a tradition of service spanning nearly half a century. William R. Knox first joined the reserve crew in 1932 and went on to become station honorary secretary in 1938. The war took him away from home but his wife, the late Mrs W. R. Knox, filled his

place; she is one of the few women to have contributed to the lifeboat service in this way. In 1945, William Knox returned from the war to continue as honorary secretary until 1974; he was awarded the gold badge in 1967 and honorary life governorship of the Institution in 1974. When William retired it was his son, Joe, who took over the office, the responsibilities of which had been part of the background of his life as long as he could remember. He and his brothers were used to helping quickly and efficiently with any tasks allotted to them; Portrush lifeboatmen live close down by the harbour and, during the war, when a call came, Joe and his brothers used to act as runners for their mother, knocking up the crew.

It goes even deeper than that. Some lifeboat people seem to have a sixth sense which tells them when a shout is likely to come. As a small boy, Joe shared a room with his two brothers. One night he roused from sleep and, still only half awake, started to dress.

'What are you doing?' one of his brothers asked, seeing Joe pulling on his socks.

'The lifeboat's needed,' Joe replied.

Just at that moment the telephone rang. Their father answered the call and, as he hurried past the boys' room he looked in.

'The lifeboat's needed,' he said.

The ladies

No one will ever know the magnitude of the support given year in, year out, by the wives and families of lifeboatmen; all that can be said for sure is that it is beyond all praise. Portrush is one of the many lifeboat stations where that quiet continuous background help is extended to embrace active fund raising in aid of the lifeboat. It all began one evening early in 1977 with a discussion between Noel Black, now second coxswain, and his wife Maureen after they had seen, while on holiday, a souvenir stall at a Scottish boathouse. Could it be done at Portrush? Why not?

Roberta Knox, Joe's wife, called a meeting of crew members' wives and it was decided to make a start by selling souvenirs at the boathouse every summer weekend and on weekday evenings in July and August. They were away.

Officers of the guild are Roberta Knox, Fay Scott, the wife of Crew Member John Scott, Maureen Black and Winifred Lee, the wife of William 'Billy' Lee, deputy launching authority and former bowman. Eight other members include Margaret McMullan, wife of Crew Member Robert McMullan, and Betty McQuilken, the wife of Crew Member Albert McQuilken.

Portrush is a holiday resort and right from the start the stall at the boathouse proved popular with the visitors; even in the first year £250 was raised. Since then it has gone from strength to strength. Fay Scott, the honorary treasurer, makes out one big order to be delivered in one load and the souvenirs



Hopwood (1902 to 1924), a 35ft Liverpool, was Portrush's last pulling and sailing lifeboat. Former coxswain Thomas Patton is at her helm.

photograph by courtesy of 'Coleraine Chronicle'



The 46ft 9in Watson lifeboat Lady Scott (Civil Service No. 4) launches from the boathouse. She was on station from 1949 to 1981.

photograph by courtesy of
Colin Watson



Bobbie McMullan (l.), coxswain from 1964 to 1974, with the present coxswain, Jimmy Stewart.

photograph by courtesy of L'Atelier

are stored at the Scott's house, opposite the boathouse. The McQuilken live just opposite the boathouse, too. Betty McQuilken looks after the stall every afternoon and she and Fay are able to keep a weather eye on events and call up other helpers at any time it looks as though it would be worth while 'opening up'. They find that visitors, realising that the stallholders are lifeboatmen's wives, are most interested to stop and talk; one customer turned out to be the daughter of a man rescued by lifeboat after the car ferry *Princess Victoria* had sunk on passage from Stranraer to Larne in 1953.

It is all very personal, very friendly. The same people come back year after year. Sometimes they leave an order to be posted on later. More often than not they say, 'Keep the change', and if they do not want to buy anything, they put a donation in the lifeboat box. In 1980 £1,400 was taken on the stall even though the boathouse had to be shut for a while.

Even the houses of Portrush seem to have their own lifeboat traditions. Whenever the lifeboat is called out, Fay Scott puts on a pan of soup, warming up ready for the returning crew members—and the people who lived in the house before did exactly the same thing.



Silver medallist Samuel Cunningham, coxswain of Portrush lifeboat from 1946 to 1963.

photograph by courtesy of the
'Daily Mail'

Other fund-raising projects followed the sale of souvenirs. One jumble sale was planned, but so many goods were collected that two sales had to be held and the total profit was £150. A spring fair is arranged each year during Easter week, when the town will be full of visitors. Joe Knox himself organises flag days (Portrush has two, one in July and one in August) and the wives are most appreciative of their menfolk's help, on which they can always rely in all their enterprises. 'They are marvellous', is the general verdict.

Strong support comes from other sources as well. The local golf club, for instance, arranges an annual tournament in aid of Portrush station branch, for which Ulster Bank has provided prizes. Each year a substantial cheque is handed to the branch.

Thanksgiving

One annual event in which everyone takes part, and which is regarded as the crown of the year, is the Lifeboat Church Service. An ecumenical occasion, it is held in a different church each time: Presbyterian, Church of Ireland, Roman Catholic. The church is decorated with lifeboat flags and perhaps there is a model lifeboat on display; branch and guild members are waiting outside the church with crew members to welcome the arriving congregation; one lesson is read by a crew member and one by the station's 'neighbour', Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur Hezlet, a vice-

president of the Institution and chairman of the Search and Rescue Committee; the hymns are hymns of the sea.

In 1980 the service was held at St Patrick's one summer afternoon. Singing was led by a male voice choir and soloists and a wonderful sermon was preached by Father Hugh Murphy, a former Royal Naval chaplain and previously a member of Belfast branch committee. It was a truly memorable occasion. Later, everyone who had contributed to the service was entertained to supper.

The children of St Patrick's Church School had played their part, too, taking lifeboats as the subject for a painting project. Every child who entered for a poster competition organised through the parent-teacher association by Mrs Patricia McNally was given a lifeboat pencil—and they do not forget!

Now Patricia's husband, John McNally, together with John Campbell, runs the Harbour Bar which itself organises regular draws in aid of Portrush branch and sells lifeboat calendars. The Harbour Bar, right down on the quay, is the accepted meeting place for lifeboatmen and sailing people, and it is not unusual to find a group of the crew there. Indeed they say that one Christmas Eve when a call came, there being the nucleus of a crew in the bar, the launch was so quick the coastguards couldn't believe it!

Service

For Portrush, as for so many other lifeboat stations, the saving of life has not been achieved without loss. On the morning of November 1, 1889, *Robert and Agnes Blair*, newly placed on station, was out searching for a schooner; she was thought to be in trouble in the Skerries Roads in a north-westerly gale but in fact had succeeded in getting out to sea. Unable to return to Portrush, the lifeboat ran for Bush Strand . . .

'When close in, the sail was lowered, the mast taken down and most of the oars got out, the port side pulling and the starboard backing so as to bring the boat stern to sea, when an exceptionally heavy sea struck her on the port quarter and capsized her . . . all the crew being thrown out with the exception of one man . . .'

The boat righted, was capsized a second time and righted again, being driven towards the beach. Although most of the crew managed to reach land safely, three men were tragically lost.

By the 1930s, the majority of services were to motor fishing vessels, drifting into danger with broken down engines or fouled propellers. Nowadays there are calls to yachts or dinghies as well as to fishing boats, to bathers, skin divers or people cut off by the tide. Every now and again, however, when the call out comes it is still to go to the help of a merchant ship.

On October 19, 1935, violent westerly gales were blowing when, at about 0200, a collier moored alongside the

quay at Portrush broke adrift and went aground near the lifeboat slipway. The lifeboat crew was assembled and stood by until 1030 when, because it was feared the collier might damage her slipway, the 45ft Watson *T.B.B.H.* was launched, continuing to stand by until, at 2145 that evening, a message came from the Coastguard that a vessel was ashore at Port Ballintrae, down the coast to the east. No trace was ever found of a vessel in distress, but after *T.B.B.H.* had passed the Skerries she was hit by a big sea which struck Crew Member John Fleming full in the chest, carrying him overboard. Tremendous seas were running and it was dark and raining, but nevertheless, due to the presence of mind and splendid seamanship of Coxswain James Martin (coxswain from 1932 to 1936), the promptness with which Motor Mechanic Karl Chambers carried out his orders and the coolness and discipline of the crew, which included two brothers of the man overboard, John Fleming was found and rescued. The thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Coxswain James Martin and Motor Mechanic Karl Chambers and a framed letter of thanks was presented to Crew Member James Fleming who, at the risk of going overboard himself, got a rope round his brother.

It was October again when, in 1961, Portrush lifeboat, the 46ft 9in Watson *Lady Scott* (Civil Service No. 4), was called out in the early hours of the 22nd to go to the help of Greek motor vessel *Argo Delos*, ashore on Inishtrahull Island 24 miles to the north west. In a north-easterly gale, with very little sea room among the rocks and in confused seas which carried the lifeboat 15 feet up and down alongside the casualty, Coxswain Samuel Cunningham brought *Lady Scott* in several times to take off 14 of *Argo Delos's* crew before a rope fouled his propeller. The 14 men were transferred to HMS *Leopard*, which was standing by. *Lady Scott* cleared her propeller and then she also stood by while 15 more of the casualty's crew were lifted off by helicopter.

Every member of the lifeboat crew was presented with an engraved silver tankard by the captain, officers and ship's company of HMS *Leopard*, whose captain wrote in his report:

'The handling, skill and bravery of the crew of this lifeboat were of the highest order and earned the admiration of all on board Leopard.'

The silver medal for gallantry was awarded to Coxswain Samuel Cunningham and the bronze medal to Second Coxswain Robert McMullan, who had been on the foredeck, slippery with oil from the casualty's damaged hull, throughout the operation. The thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were awarded to Motor Mechanic Gilbert Chambers, Assistant Mechanic K. McMullan, Bowman James Stewart and Crew Members J. King and R. McKay.



The 52ft Arun lifeboat Richard Evans at her naming. In background, Galway's 52ft Barnett lifeboat Frank Spiller Locke. photographs by courtesy of Colin Watson

Four years later, on November 1, 1965, a message came at 0916 that five men had been lost overboard from the Norwegian frigate *Bergen*, twenty miles north west of Portrush. A storm, force 10, was blowing from the north west and frequent squalls reduced visibility. It was two hours before high water and the conditions at the harbour entrance were described as 'appalling'. It was the worst weather any one can remember. Nevertheless, Coxswain Robert McMullan decided to try to take the lifeboat out. The crew unanimously volunteered to go with him and they were joined by Noble Ruddock, the district engineer for Ireland from Courtmacsherry who was on duty in the area.

Lady Scott was launched and Coxswain McMullan succeeded in taking her safely through the high breaking seas at the harbour mouth and out to deeper water; people who were watching said that several times the lifeboat appeared to leave the water and drop bodily into the trough of the sea. Although the search continued all day until darkness fell, nothing could be found of the five Norwegians. Wind and sea were too bad to return to Portrush, so *Lady Scott* made for Greencastle, Donegal, at the entrance of Lough Foyle. For this service the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Coxswain Robert McMullan, Second Coxswain James Stewart, Bowman William Lee, Motor Mechanic Gilbert Chambers, Assistant Mechanic Frederick Williams, Crew Member T. O'Neill and Noble Ruddock, district engineer of lifeboats (Ireland).

Fast afloat

The first service of Portrush's new 52ft Arun lifeboat was to a Danish cargo vessel. The Arun, like her predecessor *Lady Scott*, is the gift of the Civil Service and Post Office Lifeboat Fund—the 39th lifeboat these most loyal friends have donated to the Institution. She has been named after the most famous living lifeboatman, former



After the ceremony: Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur Hezlet talks with Richard Evans, former coxswain of Moelfre lifeboat, and Coxswain Jimmy Stewart of Portrush.

Coxswain Richard Evans of Moelfre, holder of two gold medals.

Richard Evans (Civil Service No. 39) came to Portrush in February this year, calling at Moelfre on the way. For the last stages of her delivery trip, from Howth to Campbeltown for exercise with the Arun *Walter and Margaret Couper* and on to Portrush, she was joined by Admiral Hezlet and the late Commodore Peter Kavanagh, Director of the Irish Navy and an Irish member of the Committee of Management. She received a great welcome from the people of Portrush. *Lady Scott* (Civil Service No. 4) came out to meet her and there was a welcoming banner right across the front of the Harbour Bar. The next day a telegram of good wishes arrived from Mr Humphrey Atkins, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. She had come home.

It was just a couple of days later, on Friday February 27 while *Richard Evans* was still occupied with crew training before going on station, that the Danish cargo vessel *Erria* ran aground on the Donegal coast in south easterly gales. *Richard Evans* slipped her moorings at 2230 under the command of Coxswain Jimmy Stewart assisted by Tony Course, divisional inspector of lifeboats (Ireland). Reaching the casualty three quarters of an hour later, she stood by while three of the

Danish crew were taken ashore by breeches buoy. Then, as the captain and chief engineer had elected to remain on board *Erria*, *Richard Evans* put into Greencastle for the rest of the night so that she would be nearby should the situation deteriorate. The two remaining Danes were finally taken off the next day by Foyle pilot boat.

Richard Evans (Civil Service No. 39) was placed on station on March 1 and on Saturday June 27 lifeboat people came from all over Northern Ireland to be present at her naming ceremony. It was an ideal day, with brilliant sunshine. Galway lifeboat, the 52ft Barnett *Frank Spiller Locke*, on passage, was there in support and among the special guests were Miss Connie Henry, honorary secretary of the Civil Service and Post Office Lifeboat Fund and, of course, former Coxswain *Richard Evans* with his wife, Nancy, and their three sons.

Sir Ronald Radford, chairman of the

Civil Service and Post Office Lifeboat Fund, accompanied by Lady Radford, was there to present the lifeboat to the Institution. The *Arun* was received by Admiral Hezlet who in turn handed her into the care of Portrush branch, on whose behalf she was accepted by the honorary secretary, Joe Knox. A service of dedication followed in which the Reverend Winston Graham, the Reverend M. Roycroft, and Father John Hurson all took part.

The service ended, Lady Hezlet stepped on to the dais and named *Richard Evans (Civil Service No. 39)*, pressing a button to break over the *Arun's* bow 'the wine of the country', a bottle of Irish whiskey presented for the naming ceremony by Bushmills, a venerable distillery founded in 1608. After a vote of thanks the lifeboat slipped—perhaps the most moving moment of all.

It has been a wonderful afternoon, and, writing later, Miss Henry said she only wished more of the people who

had contributed to the boat could have been there. But the celebrations were not yet over. *Richard* and *Nancy Evans* were guests of honour at the crew dinner held that evening when *Richard* was presented with an inscribed clock by Coxswain Jimmy Stewart and Nancy with a piece of Irish cut glass by Winifred Lee, chairman of the guild.

When at sea as a young man, *Richard Evans* had visited many Irish Ports; in the speech which he gave after the dinner he said that now there would always be a little bit of Wales in Ireland. *Richard* has many times received standing ovations, but the warmth of the one with which he was honoured by the lifeboat people of Portrush is something he will surely never forget—just as Portrush lifeboat people will never forget his words when, at the end of the naming ceremony in the afternoon, before calling for three cheers for the lifeboat and crew he said: 'Take good care of the *Richard Evans for me*'.

Experimental floating stretchers

TRIALS ARE AT PRESENT in progress on two different possible answers to the same problem: how best to achieve a stretcher which will float. While flotation is obviously a desirable extra safeguard in any marine situation, there are also many occasions when it would have the particular advantage of greatly increasing the chances of recovering a badly injured person either from the water or from rocks with as little further aggravation to the injury as possible.

One of the experimental stretchers, called the all purpose stretcher (see Figs 2 and 3), was designed by Brian Powell, a senior fire officer of Cumbria Fire Brigade. It is manufactured by MFC Survival Ltd. Intended primarily for mountain rescue work, this stretcher can be carried in a comparatively small pack. The rigid base is made up of glass reinforced plastic panels which are locked in position by light alloy box section tubing with spring locking clips. Once the base has been set up a carefully shaped 'collar' is inflated so that, for marine use, the stretcher becomes a small inflatable catamaran. With an inflatable mattress and a vee-shaped

cushion for a casualty's neck, the all purpose stretcher provides valuable shock absorption and some insulation from the cold: a zip-up fly sheet lined with heat-reflecting foil further reduces heat loss from the casualty. A first aider attendant from the lifeboat crew, sitting astride the stretcher, can easily slide a casualty from the water into the stretcher. Should the stretcher be capsized, an



Fig 1 (above): Crew Member John Ashford demonstrates his modified floating basket stretcher.

photograph by courtesy of Nigel Coulton

Figs 2 and 3 (below): The all purpose inflatable stretcher on trials alongside the new *Arun* lifeboat Robert Edgar.

attendant in the water can easily right it; and there is a big enough air pocket under the stretcher when it is upside-down for the casualty to be able to breath.

The second experimental stretcher is a development by Crew Member John Ashford of Torbay, who is also an ambulance man, of the basket stretcher (seen in use on service in photographs on pages 224 and 225). To the basic stretcher, in which a number of round drainage holes have been cut, has been added a flotation jacket made from a modified lifejacket. The jacket is attached to the stretcher by two snap hooks on each shoulder strap and clips on each end of an adjustable cross strap. So, in effect, the casualty is secured in a lifejacket which has a full length rigid extension to give protection from further injury while the man or woman is being got aboard a lifeboat. At whatever angle the stretcher enters the sea the casualty will float with his head above water (see Fig 1).

Both stretchers are undergoing evaluation trials on the coast, with particular attention being given to such vital details as the lifting attachments. The ideas are there; now they are being followed through to see what they have to offer to the work of rescue at sea.

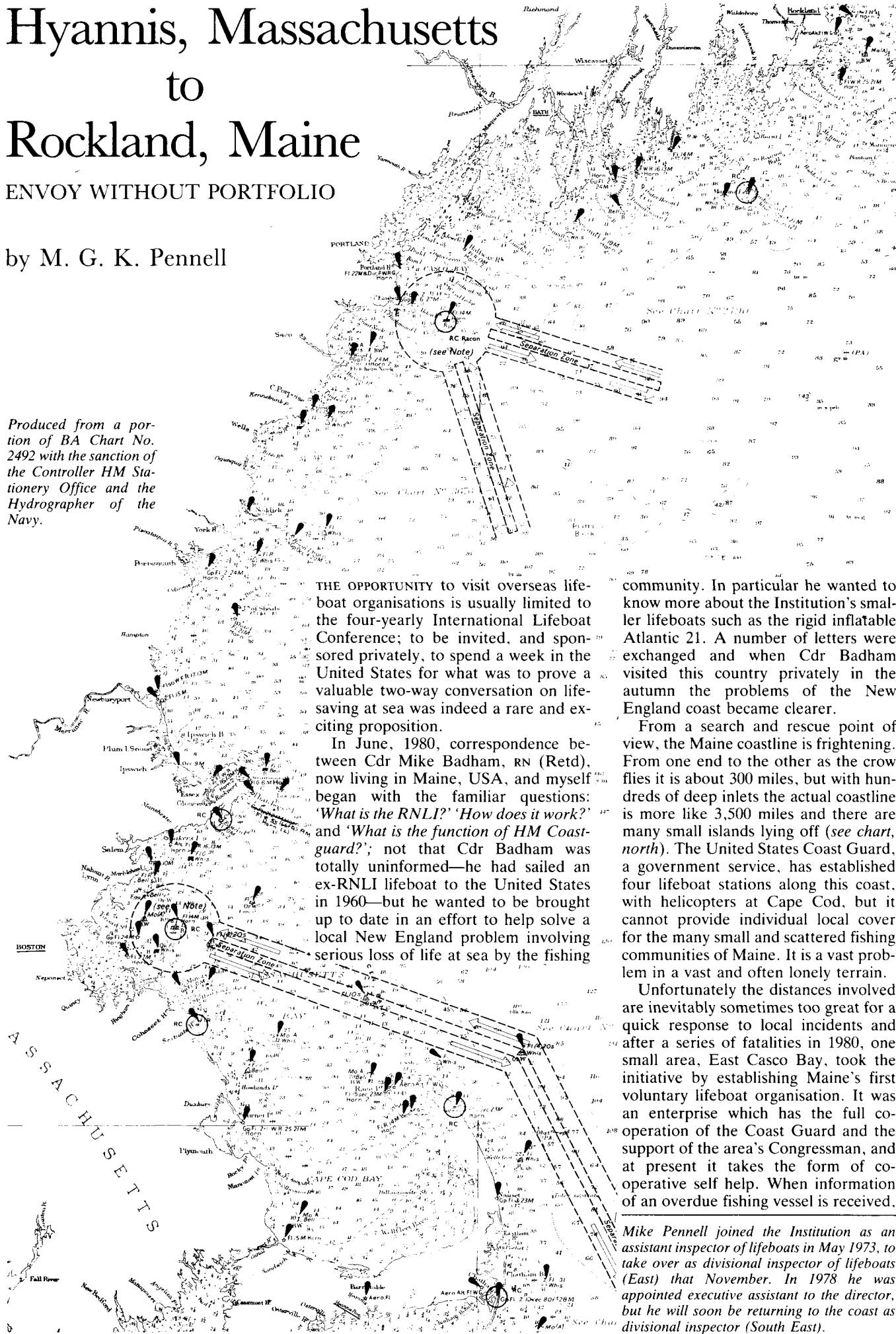


Hyannis, Massachusetts to Rockland, Maine

ENVOY WITHOUT PORTFOLIO

by M. G. K. Pennell

Produced from a portion of BA Chart No. 2492 with the sanction of the Controller HM Stationery Office and the Hydrographer of the Navy.



THE OPPORTUNITY to visit overseas lifeboat organisations is usually limited to the four-yearly International Lifeboat Conference; to be invited, and sponsored privately, to spend a week in the United States for what was to prove a valuable two-way conversation on life-saving at sea was indeed a rare and exciting proposition.

In June, 1980, correspondence between Cdr Mike Badham, RN (Retd), now living in Maine, USA, and myself began with the familiar questions: 'What is the RNLI?' 'How does it work?' and 'What is the function of HM Coastguard?'; not that Cdr Badham was totally uninformed—he had sailed an ex-RNLI lifeboat to the United States in 1960—but he wanted to be brought up to date in an effort to help solve a local New England problem involving serious loss of life at sea by the fishing

community. In particular he wanted to know more about the Institution's smaller lifeboats such as the rigid inflatable Atlantic 21. A number of letters were exchanged and when Cdr Badham visited this country privately in the autumn the problems of the New England coast became clearer.

From a search and rescue point of view, the Maine coastline is frightening. From one end to the other as the crow flies it is about 300 miles, but with hundreds of deep inlets the actual coastline is more like 3,500 miles and there are many small islands lying off (see chart, north). The United States Coast Guard, a government service, has established four lifeboat stations along this coast, with helicopters at Cape Cod, but it cannot provide individual local cover for the many small and scattered fishing communities of Maine. It is a vast problem in a vast and often lonely terrain.

Unfortunately the distances involved are inevitably sometimes too great for a quick response to local incidents and after a series of fatalities in 1980, one small area, East Casco Bay, took the initiative by establishing Maine's first voluntary lifeboat organisation. It was an enterprise which has the full cooperation of the Coast Guard and the support of the area's Congressman, and at present it takes the form of cooperative self help. When information of an overdue fishing vessel is received,

Mike Pennell joined the Institution as an assistant inspector of lifeboats in May 1973, to take over as divisional inspector of lifeboats (East) that November. In 1978 he was appointed executive assistant to the director, but he will soon be returning to the coast as divisional inspector (South East).

other local boats put to sea as an organised unit to complement the work of the US Coast Guard lifeboats or helicopters.

As we all well know, however, a voluntary lifesaving organisation costs money, and there is no state aid available as yet for East Casco Bay. Cdr Badham and the small group of other supporters of the idea have been putting forward their propositions with untiring energy, but it is uphill work. In an effort to give further publicity to the voluntary approach, Cdr Badham suggested an informal visit to the United States by a member of the RNLI who could speak with fishermen and extol the virtues (and problems) of the proven system which has worked so well in Great Britain and Ireland for more than 150 years.

One of the originators of the Maine lifesaving enterprise, already engaged in lecturing on cold water survival, is Robert Pratt, a marine biologist at the Darling Center in Walpole, and in late February this year he was authorised to offer to the RNLI a return air passage to Boston, funded by the University of Maine.

Having been sadly misinformed as to the likely dress requirement in a New England spring, and greatly concerned lest the RNLI films in my overloaded suitcase should be rendered sterile by Heathrow Airport x-ray machines, I made my first trans-Atlantic flight on March 8. Nor was my time in the air wasted; in flight I confirmed a fellow passenger as a Shoreline life governor.

Thus encouraged, I landed in Boston. Cdr Badham was there to meet me and, after driving south to Hyannis, Massachusetts (*see chart, south*), a pleasantly informal first evening was spent in the company of a most gracious elderly lady, a family friend, who knew England well from wartime days.

Day two started with a visit to the Kennedy Memorial before attending the Hyannis Fishermen's Workshop on Cape Cod. This colourful gathering was a cross between boat show and trade fair and I was able to sound out opinion from fishermen, coast guards and those commercially promoting safety at sea.

As with most conferences, much interesting discussion took place out of hours and by 'lights out' at the Hyannis Motel I began to realise that fishermen

and their safety problems are similar each side of the Atlantic. I learned that greater emphasis is placed on survival suits in New England than in the old country, because of the low water temperature, but that there is less emphasis on flares at present, perhaps because both land and sea are much more sparsely populated than they are over here. Radios are in common use, but the greater distances fished off the American shore have encouraged the use of pocket emergency position indicator radio beacons for locating survivors in the water.

Day three was a slight anticlimax because the planned discussion forum, relating to a recent fishing vessel loss, had to be curtailed for legal reasons. It did, however, give me the chance to show the RNLI films I had brought with me. The technical film on Atlantic 21s, borrowed from Cowes base, caused much interest, as did the recently introduced 'Making of a Crew'. The day ended with an interesting six-hour drive northward through pine forests to the Casco Bay area home of my co-host, Bob Pratt. Needless to say, 'the man who spoke funny' caused Bob's young family some amusement.

Houses in this part of New England are all built of wood. Both timber and land are relatively cheap and, away from the towns, most householders own a considerable amount of land which is either pine forest or open ground of fairly poor quality. Planning permission and building control seem to be unknown!

The following day was spent on a visit to the US Coast Guard station at Southwest Harbor, where I was entertained to a wardroom lunch by the group commander. Each Coast Guard station operates as a self-contained unit with workshops and a full maintenance staff. All facilities for the 41ft and 44ft classes of lifeboat are available at the nearest commercial yard on a similar basis to that employed by the RNLI. The communications centre at the base is of a high calibre as it has facility to link into national services defence nets, if required. Considerable interest was shown by the crews in the fact that the RNLI is still building Waveney lifeboats, the 44ft class first introduced from the USA in 1964, and the deputy

group commander provided me with two drawings of modifications they had made to the hull and rudder which he thought might be useful to the RNLI.

During the afternoon time was again spent driving around the coast where I was shown the degree of isolation of some of the small fishing communities. By early evening we were returning down the coast to the home of my English host where I was to spend the night in splendid isolation in my own caravan, only yards from the water's edge. Any thoughts of an early night, however, were soon dispelled by the arrival of six house guests, all interested in discussing lifesaving by the RNLI and how any good ideas could be incorporated into a voluntary system in that part of the USA.

On Friday I had the opportunity of visiting Bob Waddell, the father of two young fishermen lost at sea in 1980 and the instigator of the only voluntary lifesaving organisation on the Maine coast. Mr Waddell was a model of one of our own station honorary secretaries, devoting much of his time to arranging training for local fishermen in search patterns and survival at sea, and to campaigning for the carriage of the right equipment to alert the authorities, should a boat be in distress. It was a most heartening visit, and Bob's dedication following great personal and family loss should be a considerable encouragement to others.

During the day I was also taken to visit apprentice workshops at Bath, Maine (*see chart, north*), where traditional shipbuilding has been revived; a number of very old vessels are being repaired and replicas of past designs constructed using traditional tools and methods. Unfortunately, time did not allow as much detailed inspection of this most interesting industry as I would have wished.

Driving north east to Rockland on Saturday to attend the Maine Fishermen's Forum we encountered snow for the first time. Before the day was over, however, the weather had returned to more normal spring temperatures. The forum had attracted some 700 to 800 fishermen and their families and it took place in three or four conference rooms, each with its own programme of lectures, discussion or films. The content varied from fishing methods and new gear to search and rescue, government legislation and other general topics.

I was privileged to sit with the local Congressman during luncheon and he was interested to learn that I had been able to undertake the visit since his name had featured in earlier correspondence regarding the need for additional search and rescue facilities on the coast. I had an encouragingly large and interested audience for my film session and, when sitting with Coast Guard officers and fishermen on a discussion panel, a number of probing questions



US Coast Guard 44ft and 41ft lifeboats as stationed on the New England coast.

continued on page 242



The Duke of Kent, President of the Institution, visited Whitby, Staithes, Redcar and Teesmouth lifeboat stations on Wednesday July 22. Travelling in a helicopter of the Queen's Flight, he arrived at Whitby Abbey where he was received by the Marquis of Normanby, Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire and a member of the Committee of Management, who accompanied him throughout his visit, together with Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the RNLI, Cdr Bruce Cairns, chief of operations, and Lt Alan Tate, divisional inspector of lifeboats (North East). After going afloat in Whitby's 44ft Waveney lifeboat The White Rose of Yorkshire (right), escorted by the D class inflatable lifeboat, the Duke of Kent flew north to Staithes where he watched a demonstration launch and crash net recovery of the Atlantic 21 lifeboat. After visiting Redcar he went on to Teesmouth to embark in the 47ft Watson Sarah Jane and James Season for an exercise off the mouth of the River Tees in which Redcar's 37ft Oakley and D class lifeboats, and Hartlepool's 44ft Waveney and Atlantic 21 lifeboats all took part. At each station the Duke of Kent met members of the crew and branch and other lifeboat people; in the photograph above he is seen being greeted by Staithes guild members in traditional bonnets.
 photograph by courtesy of 'Whitby Gazette'



AROUND THE COAST



While St Mary's new Arun was at Poole before sailing for the Scilly Islands she was visited by her donor, Mrs Esmé Edgar, who in a small private ceremony named the lifeboat Robert Edgar. Coxswain Mathew Lethbridge and some of his crew were there to meet Mrs Edgar, together with Mr R. Ward, chairman of St Mary's branch, and Captain T. A. Buckley, the honorary secretary. After the naming Coxswain Lethbridge led three cheers for Mrs Edgar and then showed her over the boat; she was absolutely delighted with all she saw. The handing over and dedication ceremony which took place in the presence of the Duchess of Kent at St Mary's on September 15, will be reported in the next issue of THE LIFEBOAT.
 photograph by courtesy of 'Bournemouth Evening Echo'

A LARGE CROWD gathered at Selsey on April 25 for the handing over and dedication of the station's new D class lifeboat which is the gift of Selsey Lions Club. The lifeboat was presented by Mr A. E. Ryan, president of Selsey Lions, to Desmond Cockayne, honorary secretary of Selsey branch, who received her on behalf of the Institution. She was named *Sealion* by Lavinia, Duchess of Norfolk, president of the branch. A service of dedication followed led by the Reverend C. Champneys Burnham, the Reverend F. R. Dowson and Father Campbell Price; then *Sealion* was launched for a demonstration together with the station's 48ft 6in Oakley lifeboat *Charles Henry*.

* * *

The Royal Yachting Association Seamanship Foundation is offering an annual award for a particularly outstanding act of seamanship. Recommendations for the award, to be considered each October, must be made by someone who witnessed the incident and should be endorsed and substantiated by a yacht club, by HM Coastguard or by an RNLI station. Information from RYA Seamanship Foundation, Victoria Way, Woking, Surrey.

Three weeks after the visit of the Duke of Kent to the north east, Hartlepool's lifeboats, the 44ft Waveney *The Scout* and the Atlantic 21 *Guide Friendship III*, and Teesmouth lifeboat, the 47ft Watson Sarah Jane and James Season, were once again giving a demonstration exercise together with a Sea King helicopter from RAF Boulmer. This time it was at Hartlepool as part of the annual lifeboat harbour fête on August 16. During the day £5,000 was raised for the lifeboats.

photograph by courtesy of Reflected Images, Hartlepool





The handing over ceremony and service of dedication of the Hayling Island Atlantic 21 lifeboat Aldershot took place at Hayling Island station on Saturday July 4. Aldershot branch, a bequest from Mrs D. M. Chartres and a gift from Cromer all contributed to the cost of the lifeboat. About a hundred guests were there to see Lt-Cdr J. J. Town-Clear, chairman of Aldershot branch, hand over the lifeboat to Lt-Cdr J. Lunch, a member of the Committee of Management and president of Hayling Island station branch. The service of dedication was conducted by the Reverend Nigel O'Connor, vicar of Hayling Island and Southsea Salvation Army Band provided the music.
 photograph by courtesy of 'The News', Portsmouth



After her naming and a service of dedication on Sunday July 19, New Brighton's new Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat is towed across the beach ready for launching. She is one of the Atlantics generously provided by Fred Olsen Lines and named after two of its vessels, Blenheim and Black Watch. The service of dedication was conducted by the Reverend H. Baguley, vicar of St James New Brighton and chaplain of the lifeboat station, assisted by the Reverend P. O'Brien, parish priest of SS Peter and Paul and the Reverend K. Nicholson, minister of St Andrews. Singing was led by the choir of St James and music provided by Merseyside Police Band.
 photograph by courtesy of Jeff Morris

The re-opening of Penarth lifeboat station and the handing over of the new D class lifeboat took place on the Esplanade on Saturday August 8. Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Compston, a deputy chairman of the Committee of Management, first received the security of tenure and the keys of the boathouse from the Deputy Mayor of the Vale of Glamorgan, Councillor Mrs Susan Thomas, and then the lifeboat from her donor, Guy Pain (right, front). To raise the money, Guy Pain, although a diabetic, had successfully completed a 550-mile sponsored walk from Minehead to Poole. The lifeboat station and lifeboat were dedicated by the Assistant Bishop of Llandaff, The Right Reverend David Reece, assisted by Bishop Daniel Mullins, the Reverend Hilary Collins and the Reverend John Garland.
 photograph by courtesy of the 'Western Mail and Echo'



Mudeford's new lifeboathouse, funded almost entirely by the branch with strong local support, was opened on Sunday June 28 by Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Compston, a deputy chairman of the Institution. The ceremony followed the dedication of a Zodiac Mk IV inflatable lifeboat which is on extended evaluation trials at Mudeford. The lifeboat has been funded by a special appeal organised by the Central London Committee and Mrs Richard Saunders, chairman of the CLC, handed her over to Admiral Compston. The service of dedication was led by the Reverend Basil H. T. Trevor-Morgan, vicar of Christchurch, assisted by clergy representing other local churches.
 photograph by courtesy of George Armit



At a ceremony at Silloth on Sunday June 7, County Councillor J. Ormond Holliday, vice-president of Silloth branch, opened the station's new tractor house and then Silloth's new Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat, principally funded by a bequest of Mrs M. E. A. Gregory-Armstrong, was officially handed over to Donald K. Redford, a member of the Committee of Management, who received her on behalf of the Institution. Before the Atlantic was launched to give a demonstration afloat she was named Amelia Gregory Armstrong by Mrs Cyril North.
 photograph by courtesy of Cumbrian Newspapers

In Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, on Saturday April 25 the then Lord Mayor of the City of Portsmouth, Councillor Miss M. W. Sutcliffe, presented to Sir Alec Rose, Freeman of the City of Portsmouth and president of Portsmouth (Langstone Harbour) station branch, a cheque for £18,000 from the Lord Mayor's SOS appeal to fund a new Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat for the station. The result of the appeal was divided between the RNLI and the Salvation Army, which was also presented with a cheque. A service of dedication for the new lifeboat was conducted jointly by the Provost of Portsmouth and chaplain to the City Council, the Very Reverend Michael Nott, and the Salvation Army Corps Officer, Portsmouth, and honorary chaplain RNLI, Major Ewart B. Griffin. Music was by the band of the Salvation Army, Portsmouth.





Stephen Whittle

COXSWAIN OF DUNMORE EAST LIFEBOAT

by Ray Kipling

Public Relations Officer, RNLI

DUNMORE EAST is a fishing port at the mouth of Waterford Harbour in south-eastern Ireland, just off the busy shipping lanes leading from the Atlantic Ocean up St George's Channel and into the Irish Sea. The shore sweeps down to Hook Head on the opposite side of the river estuary and a dangerous tidal race there has given Dunmore more than its share of shipwrecks. After a heavy rainfall, fresh water pours down the river and pushes under the sea and at high tide with a southerly gale huge waves curl up, threatening to pull small boats underneath them and drive larger ones on to the rocks.

The lifeboat records tell their own story. Since the station was established in 1884 Dunmore East lifeboats have launched 209 times, rescuing 203 people. The previous coxswain, Patrick 'Billy' Power, was awarded four bronze medals while the present coxswain, Stephen Whittle, holds a silver and two bronze medals.

As a boy, Stephen had gone fishing with his uncles. Money was scarce and fish helped to supplement the family income. With no sophisticated equipment to find the fish, vital knowledge of sandy patches, shingle and rocks was passed down by the older men. The boys would get up very early to put in four hours' fishing before school and then be back in their boats for another six hours after school. The lifeboat held a fascination for them and Stephen remembers, when he was twelve, standing on the cliff tops watching the lifeboat escort to safety a steamer which had run out of coal; her crew were breaking up hatch boards to burn in her boilers.

Stephen left Dunmore to join the Merchant Navy and spent six years as a 'deep sea man'. Like most merchant sailors, he has dozens of stories from all

over the world and he vividly remembers sailing up African rivers, deep into the jungle, to pick up cargoes of produce from local tribes. Returning to Dunmore, he took up fishing again and joined the lifeboat crew in 1959 as one of its most experienced seamen.

By 1964 Stephen had been appointed second coxswain and in March he won his first medal. The Dutch coaster *Jan Brons* ran aground in a south-westerly gale on Ardnamult Head, a mile north-east of the harbour. The lifeboat, with her boarding boat in tow, quickly reached the ship but Coxswain Billy Power realised he could not get alongside. An attempt was made to use the boarding boat but the seas were too rough. The rocket line was fired and the breeches buoy gear rigged but because of the violent motion of the lifeboat it was decided to use the boarding boat to keep the veering lines spread out. Stephen Whittle and John Power, the assistant mechanic, volunteered to man the boarding boat which was positioned halfway between the lifeboat and the ship. The crew of the freighter were foreign and did not understand how to use the breeches buoy, so the first man, instead of sitting in it, put it around his shoulders.

'When he got down into the surf he was spun around several times,' Stephen Whittle recalls. *'He was just on his last gasp when he got to us. We would have lost him that morning if there had been no boarding boat: he would have just dropped over and gone. We had a job to get him in. It's not easy to pull a fellow into an ordinary boat.'*

Luckily, the first man was able to explain to the rest of the crew how to use the breeches buoy and five more were successfully pulled to the boarding boat as she and the lifeboat were pitched and

tossed in the backwash of surf from the cliffs. Bronze medals for seamanship and courage were awarded to Coxswain Patrick 'Billy' Power, Second Coxswain Stephen Whittle and Assistant Mechanic John Power.

The most difficult service Stephen can remember was in November 1970, when he had been coxswain for four years:

'That was a really vicious night. We damaged the lifeboat just driving into the sea, not by hitting the rocks, even though she was a good boat. It wasn't just an ordinary sea. It was really violent, with cross seas coming out of nowhere. I heard that a boat was about to drive on to Hook Head and I didn't hesitate. I came over to the harbour, went down aboard one of the boats, told the pilot station on RT, dropped the receiver and got away. We even went short-handed that night, taking a young lad to fill in the gap. He had been fishing all day and part of the night but we took him anyway. When we were on the way out the situation was getting so desperate that I said to the lads, "I'm going to turn sharp at the Hook. Hold on." At that particular moment we got a jolt from a sea and we fell sideways into it. We didn't realise at the time but we had damaged the bilge keel on the boat. As she toppled down and put her shoulder into the sea, she locked the air between the bilge keel and the hull and bent part of the bilge keel over. We didn't put out the drogue for the simple reason that we would have lost time. We actually ran half a mile on one sea that night, which, without the drogue, was a bit frightening because we could have tipped over.'

James Bates, coxswain of Kilmore lifeboat, was skipper of the fishing boat, *Glenmalure*, and when the fishermen saw the lifeboat's blue flashing light they fired three flares to give their position. *Glenmalure* was only about 50 yards from the rocks and the crew had taken to their liferaft. The danger now was that trailing ropes and nets could foul the lifeboat's propellers and there was no room to go in around the boat to pick the men up while heading out to sea again, into the weather. Stephen had to go in head to the shore using only one engine; that way, if one propeller was fouled the other would still be free and the second engine, in reserve, could be brought into use. The lifeboat came alongside the liferaft and had snatched two men off before a sea swept the raft away. Quickly coming astern, the lifeboat chased the raft and the third man was saved.

Another fisherman had been swept away and the lifeboat searched for two hours, but without success. Shortly after the survivors were landed a message was received that a man had been spotted. Another search was made but nothing was found.

Stephen Whittle was awarded the silver medal for this rescue.

The photograph of Coxswain Stephen Whittle at the head of the page was taken by Peter Hadfield. In the background is Dunmore East Harbour with the 44ft Waveney lifeboat St Patrick at her moorings.

'I reckon that was the worst service that anybody in Dunmore has been out on. There were really crazy seas that night. We wouldn't like to see them again, even in the new boat.'

The new boat is a 44ft Waveney, *St Patrick*, which was paid for by a special appeal in Ireland and sent to Dunmore East in 1975. Previously, the station had Watson and Barnett class lifeboats which gave a maximum speed of 8 to 9 knots and the idea of a change to a totally different, faster boat was treated with caution.

'A few of the lads said it would not do at all. They couldn't get used to a boat like that. They thought she was so unstable at low speed. It is only when you get the hang of what a high-powered boat, like a Waveney, is capable of doing, and the way she can run ahead of the seas, that you suddenly change your mind. It is big step from the old lifeboats. If you see a big following sea, you can go ahead on one engine and astern on the other and actually turn to look right into the sea, which you didn't have a hope of doing in the old boats. The old ones sit there and just bear the brunt of it.'

The increased speed of the Waveney changed the pattern of services at Dunmore and the lifeboat now receives calls to casualties much further out than before. The crew are more comfortable with more shelter.

'In the old boats you perished alive when you were wet, with the oilskins round your throat. When you get soaked now you can go below and get dried down. You can have a hot drink, which was practically impossible in the old boat. You had a primus, which was put in a bucket and you lit it and hoped for the best. If it capsized you dumped the bucket and primus stove all over the side; it was the only safe thing to do. Today we have an electric geysers.'

The type of casualty is changing, too, for there are now more yachts making the crossing from Land's End to Ireland. One problem is that yachtsmen are worried that the lifeboat, coming alongside, will damage their boat. With skilful handling this can be avoided but, as the lifeboat rolls towards the yacht's top rail, the concern is quite understandable. Another difficulty is the anxiety of parents about their children. They often ask for them to be taken off when they might be better left on board while the lifeboat escorts the yacht to safety. Dunmore lifeboat gets her share of calls to the inexperienced and foolish, like the man who set off down the Waterford River in a dinghy in thick fog and capsized at the harbour entrance. She also, on occasion, has been called out to help very competent yachtsmen caught out in extreme weather, as, for example, during the 1979 Fastnet Race. Stephen was on leave at the time of the Fastnet storm, but his second coxswain, John Murphy, took the lifeboat to sea for over 16 hours, rescuing eight people, saving one yacht and escorting three others to safety.

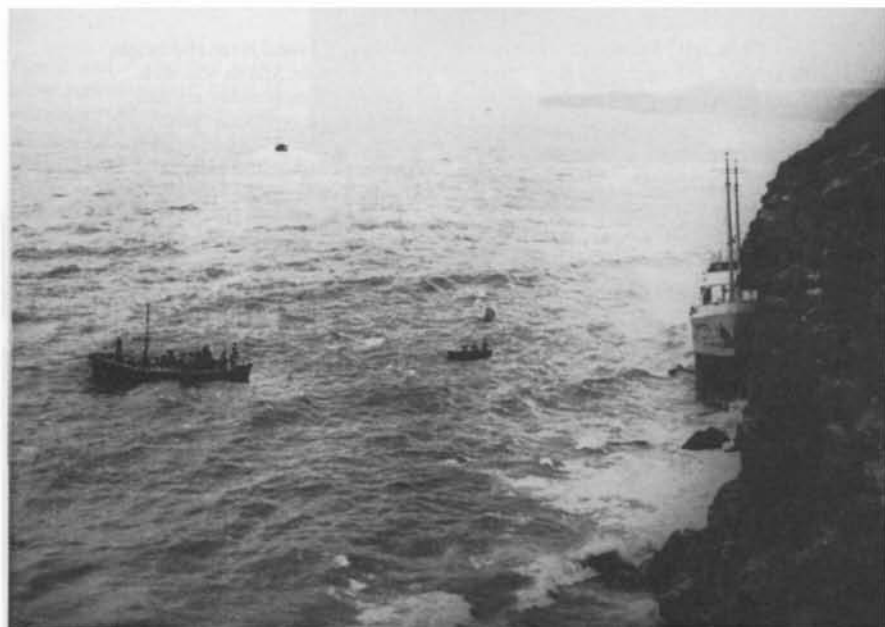
One characteristic which pervades Stephen's stories is a wry sense of humour. He was awarded the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum for the rescue of the crew of the motor vessel *Michael* on January 13, 1975. *Michael's* engines had broken down and she was drifting towards the shore. She was rolling too heavily for the lifeboat to go alongside so her crew abandoned ship and got into the liferaft, but they did not cast off. As Stephen said,

'Shouting is not much good when it's blowing a force 11.'

The problem aboard the liferaft, the lifeboat crew discovered later, was that the men had nothing with which to cut the painter; eventually they used a pair of nail scissors to hack through the rope, the liferaft drifted free and they were picked up by the lifeboat. Stephen recounts with great verve the tale of the nail scissors and tells how the rescued captain dried out rolls of foreign notes on radiators, but he fails to mention the appalling weather conditions and waves of up to 20 feet.

Many of Dunmore East crew are fishermen, or used to fish but now work on shore. On July 9, 1976, two local boys went out fishing in an 18ft open boat which was driven on to rocks at the base of 100-foot cliffs, right in the area of lobster pots and salmon nets. One boy was clinging to his boat and eventually, using parachute flares and searchlights and helped by directions shouted by people on the cliff, the lifeboat spotted him. The rescue could hardly have been more difficult. The lifeboat's unprotected propellers were especially vulnerable because of the nets and pots and the only narrow passage was through shallow water strewn with large boulders. To make matters worse, the lifeboat was stern to sea and

Six men were rescued by breeches buoy from the Dutch coaster Jan Brons which ran aground on Ardnamult Head in south-westerly gales on March 11, 1964. Stephen Whittle, then second coxswain, and Assistant Mechanic John Power volunteered to man the boarding boat which was positioned between the lifeboat and the cargo vessel to keep the veering lines spread out. Both men and Coxswain Patrick Power were awarded the bronze medal.



if a wave picked her up she could surf right into the rocks. The crew were lined up on the bows of the lifeboat and threw the boy a lifebuoy. He grabbed the ring and was quickly hauled to the lifeboat. As soon as he was safe the lifeboat, now only 20 feet from the rocks, immediately went astern. A six-hour search was carried out for the second lad but he had already been swept away and drowned.

Stephen was awarded a bar to his bronze medal for this service but, even more important to him, the rescue had been a real team effort with lookouts in the bows advising him just how far he was from the rocks. Stephen, in common with all lifeboat coxswains, regards his crew as the best in the service:

'I have great respect for the lads. Without them you cannot carry on. When they are with you for a few years, they soon know what you are going to do without the need to put it over to them directly. You take it for granted they are going to do the right thing for you, without being told.'

His satisfaction is that of all coxswains and crews:

'If you know you have really saved them, that those lads were doomed to die and that there was no other choice for them, it is one good deed you have done. It is the actual saving and putting them on the quay. I don't know whether the man above is there to guide you, but there is certainly someone keeping an eye on you and telling you those fellows are out there - and if you don't do the right thing, you will be in the drink with them.'

As a true seaman, Stephen knows that, even with years of experience and the best equipment available, there is never room for arrogance or complacency:

'You always think that you are going to master the sea, but no, you must always respect it: it is always the mighty one.'

Here and There

A YACHT RACE which never finished because there was not enough wind has brought five krugerrands, with a value of over £1,000, for the RNLI. Peter de Savary, chairman of the British syndicate entering the yacht *Victory* in the 1983 America's Cup, challenged the Australian yacht *Apollo* to the race during Cowes Week and put up £10,000 of krugerrands as the stake. There was not enough wind to finish the race within the time limit, so the stake money could not be claimed by either team. Peter de Savary therefore decided to give the krugerrands to the RNLI, St John's Ambulance, Royal Burnham Yacht Club cadets, and the crew of *Victory*. The five RNLI krugerrands were presented to Burnham-on-Crouch branch on Sunday, August 30.

The 46ft Watson lifeboat *Jesse Lumb*, which has just finished 42 years' service, is to become a permanent exhibit at the Imperial War Museum's collection at Duxford Airfield, Cambridgeshire. *Jesse Lumb*, built in 1939, was stationed at Bembridge on the Isle of Wight until 1970 when she entered the RNLI's relief fleet. During her time at Bembridge she launched 294 times, saving 280 lives; 15 of these services were to casualties during World War II.

A local publican at Duxford, Bill Sawkins, will be delighted to see *Jesse Lumb* ending her days so near to him. He was once rescued by this very lifeboat and has been a keen supporter of the RNLI ever since.

Dr Nora Allen, who donated the 37ft Oakley lifeboat *The Doctors* to the RNLI in 1965 in memory of her father and brothers, celebrated her 100th birthday this summer. *The Doctors* is stationed at Anstruther and among the other presents Dr Allen received on her birthday was a photograph of the lifeboat signed by all her crew.

Another long standing lifeboat supporter to reach her centenary is Mrs A. E. Fakes of Hemsby, Great Yarmouth. She is the daughter of Skipper William 'Wilks' Larner who, a legend in his own lifetime, was known as the Fisher King of Yarmouth. After being a member of Winterton Company of Beachmen for many years, Wilks became second coxswain of Winterton lifeboat in 1898. He retired in 1906 because of ill health after spending five January days and nights trying to help a stranded steamer.

Lifeboat 'shouts' can come at any time; just before a naming ceremony, during a Christmas party—even (see *right*) during a wedding. On May 22 this year St Peter Port crew and their wives held a dinner party to mark the retirements of Captain H. L. Wolley as honorary secretary of the station branch



Troon lifeboat, the 44ft Waveney Connel Elizabeth Cargill, leaving Portpatrick in deteriorating weather one July morning. She had called in on passage to Holyhead for engine overhaul. photograph by courtesy of Mr T. G. Watson

and John Petit as coxswain and to show their appreciation for the many years service these two men had given to the RNLI. Soup had just been served when a call came; a yacht was in trouble. The crew rushed down to the harbour, went

and towed in the distressed yacht—and then returned to dinner.

Captain John Petit has taken over from Captain Wolley both as harbour master and as station honorary secretary.

With the help of Post Office Telephone engineers and landowners, some thousands of metres of underground cable have been laid to instal an emergency telephone on the popular but isolated Cocklawburn Beach, two miles south of Berwick-upon-Tweed. The telephone was inaugurated in early July by Dr Douglas McDonald, chairman of the branch. With him are Chris Pike, honorary treasurer, Inspector Peter Barella, Section Officer George Wood, HM Coastguard, Sergeant James Walker and Bewley Bainbridge, honorary secretary.



Wedding of the Coxswain's Daughter by One of the Guests

Saturday dawned clear and bright
When Belinda Marsh was wed.
'Twill be all right today my lass.'
Her dad, the coxswain, said.
But as the bride walked from the house
Another chap called Llew,
From up at Durlston, fired maroons
To summon up the crew.
Arriving at the boathouse
All 'toggled up' in their best,
Plus white carnation button-holes,
They graphically expressed
Their views on all cliff climbers,
of dinghy sailors, too,
Of divers, and all other 'stiffs'
Who haven't got a clue!
'OK for'ard, OK aft. KNOCK OUT!
And down the slip
The Rother sped for Peveril Ledge
On yet another trip.
'Twas getting on for five pm
The rescue was complete:
The rescued 'sorted'; Rother housed;
So crew went up High Street.
Back to the reception

To join in with the fun
For 'Toast the Bride' and speeches
had only just begun.
Smiling, all rose to their feet,
Their cup of happiness complete.
Then suddenly that chap called Llew
Who, through a window, had a view –
Saw with unbelieving eye
A boat on fire! He raised the cry
'MUSTER ALL OF YOU!
Down with glasses; out the door;
Through the town; along the shore –
To the Rother once again.
This time into Swanage Bay,
Each with an anxious heart.
But a passing yacht had reached her,
Men safely off the craft.
Silent, they watched her burn and sink.
A hazard then no more –
'OK lads,' sang out coxswain,
And they turned towards the shore.
By this time, as you will have guessed,
The bride and groom, toasted, and blessed,
Had gone upon their way.
But Belinda has a special place
In the hearts of Swanage crew,
As the coxswain's lass who married
'Twixt rescue 'one' and 'two'!

E.H.

Building the Fast Slipway Lifeboat

PART V: BEHIND THE SCENES

ABOVE AND BELOW DECKS, the first prototype of the fast slipway lifeboat (FSB) is gradually taking shape in Fairey Marine's yard at Cowes. With some of the work progress is obvious; other jobs involve perhaps weeks of 'behind the scenes' work by craftsmen of several different trades as each component of the boat, each system, each fitting is gradually put in place. The work must be dovetailed together and comply with a planned programme so that each job can be tackled in the right order and at the time when it can be done best and most easily.

Take the engines. Before they were put in place the stern gear, propellers and rudders were fitted. Then cranes lifted the twin General Motors 8V-71 marine diesels straight into position in the engine room and they were aligned. Exact alignment of each engine with the shaft which will transmit its power to the propeller's thrust is of the utmost importance and it is scrutinised by the RNLI overseers who maintain a continuous survey of all the work on the boat as it progresses.

The port engine can be seen in place in Figure 1. Each engine weighs 1.669 tons (1,700 kg) and is carried by fore and aft bearers made of fabricated T section mild steel. All fuel tanks had already been built in. The twin main fuel tanks, holding 510 gallons of diesel oil between them, are under the wheelhouse and there is a reserve tank, holding 102 gallons, between the engine bearers at the forward end of the engine room.

Now the engineers are at work in the engine room, in the tiller flat and in the wheelhouse, fitting the associated systems to the engines, the steering gear, the engine controls, the instrumentation, the cabin heating, the demisting system, the window washing system, the wave subduing system . . . and so it goes on . . .

One recent job which, visually, took

the FSB a noticeable step forward was the fitting of the after cabin superstructure (see Figs 2 and 3). Prefabricated of aluminium alloy, it was lifted on board and gently lowered into position by crane, fitted to the deck and finally rivetted in place to give a completely watertight joint.

Once the superstructures are in place the boatbuilders, followed by the joiners and the electricians, can begin fitting out the wheelhouse, forecabin and after cabin. First, there is the insulation to be fitted to the boat's side and all round the three cabins and the engine room; then work can begin on the electrics. So, enter the electricians . . .

Switchboards, distribution boards and junction boxes will all have been prepared in advance on workbenches away from the boat. Now they are put in place and the boat's wiring and the fixing of switches, plugs and light fittings can all go ahead.

Meanwhile, the joiners are at work on the furniture for the cabins. In the forecabin there will be bench seats for eight survivors with lockers under, a pyrotechnics and general store locker and a minute 'galley'. Platers have already put in the companionways and also the coxswain's instrument console in the wheelhouse (Fig 4). Now, for the

wheelhouse, joiners will be constructing the chart table, benches to carry the radios and the engine gauges, book-racks and stowages for essential equipment. In the after cabin there will be a wooden bench seat for survivors down both sides, and once again each will have a locker underneath.

Many of the hull and the majority of machinery and electrical items for the FSB are purchased and supplied by the RNLI through its depot organisation. There is regular liaison between the building yard and the RNLI's drawing office in Poole and all the work is carried out in conjunction with RNLI officials to ensure the highest standards in all respects in the finished boat.

(to be continued)

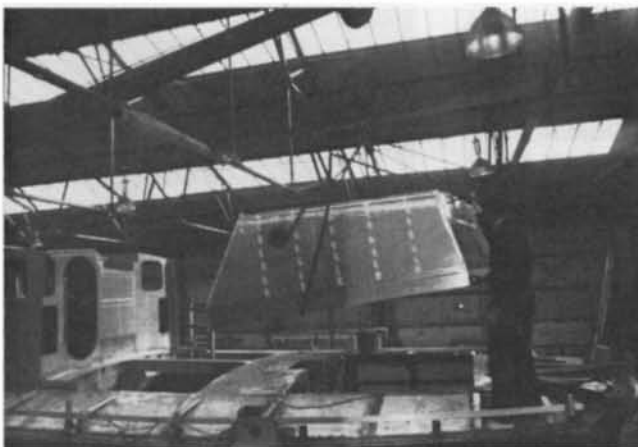


Fig 4: Coxswain's instrument console in place at forward end of wheelhouse ready to receive steering wheel and instruments (left) and radar display unit (right). Seats for coxswain and navigator will be fitted aft of the console in the lower part of which can be seen the foot rests.

Fig 1: Port engine has been lowered into place in engine room by crane.



Figs 2 and 3 (below): After cabin superstructure, made of aluminium alloy, is also lifted on board by crane and gently lowered into position.



Books . . .

● **Sailing Years**, an autobiography by K. Adlard Coles (Granada Publishing, £9.95) is fascinating reading because alongside the tales of this well-known sailor there emerges the story of the development of sailing and racing offshore. I also appreciated the candour with which the author, splendid seaman that he is, nevertheless relates his early mistakes; one learns from one's own mistakes but it is less painful to learn from those of others! Yachtsmen have always been a very generous race.

When reading the book, which I found hard to put down, it is inevitable that a sailor will compare his own experiences with those recounted, although few of us can go back to those really early days we read about and which so fire the imagination.—E.J.

● Determined that the long absences from home inevitable in the life of a nineteenth-century merchant seaman should not estrange him from his young children, Captain Robert Thomas, master of the iron sailing ship *Merioneth*, set himself the task of writing down all the main events of his life for his eldest daughter, Catherine Bruce. It was 1883 and his 'dear Brusey' was but five years old.

'It has often come to mind to give you a short history of my life, for as I am so little with you, you will know but little of my past life . . .'

It took Captain Thomas the five months of a voyage out of Penarth Roads to San Francisco to complete his 'diary' and this very human, but in no way condescending, document was followed by many letters both to Brusey and to his second daughter, Cecilia. There is something both deeply touching and reassuring when a father can bridge the distance, perhaps from the other side of the world, to teach such little girls the meaning of nautical terms and to tell them about the countries he visited, about the state of the sea, about how icebergs are formed or about the origin of the Gulf Stream; about loading ship . . . about, in fact, whatever formed a part of his life:

'My dear child perhaps it will be well for me to tell you something about quarantine . . .'

'Now you must know that to lose a rudder is indeed a sad thing for nothing can be done with a ship without a rudder . . .'

'My darling children, I am now in what we call the "doldrums", just between the two trade winds . . .'

'I suppose my little girl don't know what a log is so I must try and explain . . .'

'My little girl must know being such an old sailor that the way we talk at sea are by flags . . .'

Captain Thomas's love and persever-

ance were well rewarded; no father and daughter could ever have been closer than he and his darling Brusey. She crossed the world to be with him in his last illness and she kept and treasured all his letters and other papers. They were handed down to her nephew, Reginald Froom and it is on these writings that Aled Eames has based his book **Ship Master: the Life and Letters of Captain Robert Thomas of Llandwrog and Liverpool, 1843-1903** (Gwynedd Archives Service, price £2.95). Here, mostly in his own words, is a record of the experiences of a Victorian seaman, sailing in slate schooners, in the salt fish trade of Newfoundland and finally as master of full-rigged ships in the Cape Horn and Far East trades. A book that is good to read.—J.D.

● During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the ships of the Royal Navy were transformed from the creaking wood and rigging type of Nelson's day to the forerunners of today's sleek battleships, and they reigned supreme on the oceans. In his book **Rule Britannia—The Victorian and Edwardian Navy** (Routledge and Kegan Paul, £8.95), Peter Padfield explores the way of life in the navy during this time of change, telling how legends were made, of battles that were won and lost, and how the men lived and amused themselves, often letting the sailors tell the stories in their own words, using extracts from their diaries.—S.G.

● **Schoonerman** by Captain Richard England (Hollis and Carter, £8.95) is the personal account of the master/owner of the last fully-rigged merchant schooner to trade under sail around our coasts. It brings together in a most readable form both a factual account of the decline in the schooner trade and an insight into the dogged determination of a family devoted to sail and the sea to extract a living for themselves and their crews against insuperable odds.

Mention is made of a number of RNLI rescues, but alas there was no opportunity for such assistance to be available to *Nellie Bywater* when at Christmastide 1951 she was caught in the same gale as *Flying Enterprise*, with tragic consequences. One cannot help but be moved by the graphic and compelling reading which is well supported by photographs, plans and a good glossary for those who find it hard to differentiate between a catstopper and a bulldog grip.—R.M.S.P.

● Three new booklets each concentrating on a particular part of the coast have recently been published.

Jeff Morris and Dave Hendy have added to their collection of local station histories by recording Eastbourne's story from 1822 to the present day. **The Story of the Eastbourne Lifeboats**,

generously illustrated with old and up-to-date photographs, faithfully records the active lives of the 11 lifeboats that have been stationed at Eastbourne over the past 160 years. Both this and Gordon R. Zeller's **The Story of the 'Bolton' Lifeboats at Kessingland** are printed by Jeff Morris and generously sold in aid of the RNLI, each price 75p plus 25p postage and packing. **The Story of the Eastbourne Lifeboats** is available from Mr D. Huggett, c/o The Lifeboat Museum, Grand Parade, Eastbourne, East Sussex; **The Story of the 'Bolton' Lifeboats** is available from the author at 227 Longfield Road, Bolton, Lancashire BL3 3SY.

Generosity in fund raising explains the title of Gordon Zeller's booklet which gives an intriguing history of how the people of inland Bolton organised themselves into raising money for 'one or more lifeboats'. The unlikely link between the people of Bolton and the tiny Suffolk village of Kessingland was forged when their first lifeboat was stationed there in 1870. In 1893 a second 'Bolton' lifeboat replaced the first at Kessingland and with the help of some contemporary photographs the author describes the design of these two pulling and sailing lifeboats and relates their 31 services at this station.

Grahame Farr has produced the sixth in his most valuable series of papers on lifeboat history. His story of **The Lincolnshire Coast Shipwreck Association 1827-1864** records the activities of the independent organisation that ran seven lifeboat stations in the county before the RNLI took over in 1864. Thirty-nine services were rendered by the association's lifeboats during its history and a brief description is given of each of these. The booklet is available, price 60p, from Graham Farr, 98 Combe Avenue, Portishead, Bristol BS20 9JX; money should be sent with orders, please.—E.W.-W.

● **The Ship**, a series of ten books representing an authoritative short history of ship development, has been published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office in conjunction with the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. The last three volumes, now in print, are: **Rafts, Boats and Ships from Prehistoric Times to the Medieval Era**, by Sean McGrail; **Tiller and Whipstaff, the Development of the Sailing Ship 1400-1700**, by Alan McGowan; and **The Revolution in Merchant Shipping 1950-1980**, by Ewan Corlett. Like the others, these three volumes are available, price £2.95 each, through booksellers, Government bookshops and the National Maritime Museum. Clearly written and ably illustrated, they trace the development of the ship from raft and sailing to the modern fleet of today.

The last volume, written by Ewan Corlett, is a most interesting description of the advance in ship design this century from the Blue Ribbon liners of the

North Atlantic to the container ship and modern car ferry. Those of us who still think of the simple propeller and the triple expansion steam engine as being the basic propulsion are in for a rude shock. Constant speed diesels developing 50,000 shaft horse power, variable pitch propellers and bow thrusters have transformed ship handling techniques. Anyone interested in the sea will find these volumes fascinating reading.—E.F.P.

● Next year's almanacs are coming out. **Reed's Nautical Almanac 1982** (Thomas Reed Publications Ltd) has a waterproof cover, bolder print and is improved in many other ways, including tidal predictions of high and low water. At £8.95 this must represent for the same size of book the usual good value.

Channel West and Solent: A Nautical Almanac for Yachtsmen (Channel Press, £7.95) has expanded its coverage and, as intended, presents in easy form information on tides and all aspects of

particular interest to yachtsmen. The search and rescue section, in keeping with the almanac itself, covers both sides of the English Channel west of Newhaven to Fécamp.—E.J.

● **Advanced Sailboat Cruising** (Nautical, £9.95) pools the considerable experience of three seamen of long standing to offer guidance to cruising yachtsmen who would like to undertake longer passages than average or who would like to be able to embark with confidence on short passages under more arduous conditions than they might previously have considered possible. It is written for the skipper who realises that if his cruising is to be enjoyable it must be well planned on a basis of sound knowledge.

The first part, concerned with choice of boat, is written by Colin Mudie, a naval architect and a seaman of unusually wide experience who explains clearly the effects of different design characteristics on a yacht's perform-

ance. Colin Mudie is one of those people who generously put their wisdom at the disposal of the RNLI by acting as a member of its Technical Consultative Committee.

Geoff Hales, a trans-ocean sailor, devotes his section of the book to 'a better cruising style', concentrating on equipment, seamanship and navigation, while Michael Handford, a former director of Cranfield Sails and a specialist on sails for long distance passage making, discusses the yacht's rig.—J.D.

● Just out is a new edition of **Brown's Pocket-Book for Seamen** compiled by Gerald Forsberg, OBE FNI, Master Mariner, and published by Brown, Son and Ferguson (£10). It will be of particular interest to professional seamen of all sorts. It would also certainly make a good present to a young man keen to improve his way of life at sea or to anybody wishing to have facts, figures, tips, wrinkles and a note of particular reference books readily available.—E.J.

Obituaries

Reigate and Redhill branch has suffered the loss of its president and both vice-presidents in less than a year: Cdr J. D. Walters, RN, was chairman during the 1939 to 1945 war and was subsequently president. George A. Hodgkins, a vice-president and for a short time president of the branch, donated to the RNLI a D class inflatable lifeboat which was stationed at Humbermouth for some years and also, with a generous gift, substantially defrayed the cost

of establishing an Atlantic 21 station at Brighton. The second vice-president was Joseph F. Winter, OBE, who, after working in the RNLI South East District office from 1954 to 1968, gave unstinted voluntary service to the branch.

It is also with deep regret that we report the following deaths.

May

Mrs R. G. Phillips, vice-president of Tynemouth guild since 1972, after serving as chairman from 1952. Mrs Phillips was awarded the silver badge in 1965 and the gold badge in 1972. In 1967 she

attended the reception and cocktail party given by Princess Marina to mark the Princess's 25 years as President of the RNLI.

July

George Lamey, coxswain of Clovelly lifeboat from 1935 to 1955, having previously served as a crew member from 1919 to 1929, as bowman from 1929 to 1932 and as second coxswain from 1932 to 1935. Mr Lamey was awarded the bronze medal in 1954. In recent years he has collected almost £12,000 for the RNLI.

Arthur Liddon, coxswain/mechanic of Dover lifeboat from 1967 to 1979, having previously served as a crew member from 1950 to 1952, as assistant mechanic from 1952 to 1966 and as second coxswain from 1966 to 1967. Mr Liddon was awarded the silver medal in 1975 and was accorded the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum in 1977.

William James Gould, coxswain of Pwllheli lifeboat from 1943 to 1960, having previously served as a crew member from 1918 to 1934, as bowman from 1934 to 1937 and as second coxswain from 1937 to 1942.

August

Joe Clark, president of Hakin Point branch. Mr Clark had been a most dedicated and active member of the branch from the time of its formation in 1974.

Leonard Rowland Stedman, vice-chairman of Farnham, Surrey, branch since 1975 before which he had given many years of very active support.

* * *

At the request of Mrs Sylvia Windle, gifts amounting to £513.74 in memory of her husband, the late Gordon Windle former North Sea Ferries manager for Belgium, were donated to the RNLI. Captain Wally Patch, master of mv *Norwave*, received the cheque on behalf of the Institution.

Fourteenth RNLI national lottery

THE RNLI was lucky to have 'two' well-known personalities at the draw of the fourteenth national lottery of July 21. Before an audience of American Branch committee members, representatives of Hilbourne Junior Guild and staff members from Barclays International, impressionist Janet Brown pulled out the winning tickets from the drum, and then 'Margaret Thatcher' made an impromptu speech and spoke



Fourteenth RNLI national lottery draw: as Janet Brown pulls out each winning ticket Joyce Pearce of the Appeals Department makes an immediate record of name and number.

of her many lifeboat friends in Flamborough, Bridlington and Scarborough. The draw was supervised by Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Compston, a deputy chairman of the RNLI, and Cdr Ted Pritchard, appeals secretary. The lottery raised more than £28,000 and the prize winners were:

£1,000: J. A. Looker, Wolverhampton, West Midlands.

£500: K. G. James, Alton, Hampshire.

£250: Mrs A. R. Wright, Fareham, Hampshire.

£25: B. D. Faunce, Sevenoaks, Kent; N. Gooch, Tunbridge Wells, Kent; Mrs J. Sherwood, Southwold, Suffolk; Barry Stemp, Bognor Regis, Sussex; D. Elliott, London EC2; Gillian Bricknall, Cowdenbeath, Fife; N. A. Davies, Weybridge, Surrey; A. C. Wilkins, Birmingham; J. P. Dodd, Preston, Lancashire; R. Downes, Bristol, Avon.

The draw for the fifteenth national lottery will be on October 30.

Miss Brown also drew the winning ticket for an American branch raffle, the prize being a cruise on the P and O liner *Canberra*, generously donated by the cruise line; it was won by Mrs Rogers of Pontefract, West Yorkshire.

Letters...

Lottery—win and share

This morning I had numerous bills in the first post and was wondering how to pay them when I opened your letter of July 21 notifying me of my tremendous luck in winning £1,000 in the RNLI national lottery. I thank you very much for your cheque and for your promptness. The draw was on July 21 and my prize was delivered to me first post on July 22. Well done.

As an old age pensioner this win, my first ever, will come in very useful. Being ex-RN (4½ years war service) I full understand the vagaries of the sea from calm to really great storms, and therefore appreciate the hazards and great risks undertaken by the RNLI; so I am enclosing a cheque for £30 which I donate to the RNLI . . . Again I say thank you very much.—J. A. LOOKER, *Wolverhampton*.

Many thanks for your letter of July 21 with the cheque for my lottery prize. Definitely my lucky day since I rarely win anything in such events.

I enclose herewith my cheque for £50 as a donation to help the good work and perhaps you would credit this to the Alton band of helpers to boost their efforts.—K. G. JAMES, *Alton, Hants*.

Thank you, Mr Looker and Mr James, for so generously sharing your good fortune with the lifeboat service.

Memorial

A committee of the Burrow Residents Association, Rosslare, has decided to erect a suitable memorial to 11 brave lifeboatmen from the little hamlet who performed deeds of outstanding heroism over the four days, February 20 to 23, 1914, in the Wexford No. 1 sta-

tion lifeboat *James Stevens No. 15* at the wreck of the schooner *Mexico* on Keeragh Rocks.

Although decorated by the King of Norway and awarded RNLI medals, the local people were too poor to commemorate these lifeboatmen at home. Now we have collected £1,500 of the £3,500 necessary to do them honour, and we are raffling a scale model of Erskine Childers' *Asgard II*, now a training vessel for Irish sailors, to help the fund. The memorial will consist of a limestone column surmounted by the bronze head of a lifeboatman to represent all the brave men of the service.—W. I. MURPHY, *organiser, Drimagh, Rosslare, Co. Wexford*.

On February 20, 1914, the Norwegian schooner Mexico, bound from South America to Liverpool with a cargo of mahogany logs, was driven ashore by gales on South Keeragh Island. Fethard lifeboat was launched but capsized, nine of her crew of 14 being drowned. The remaining five gained the island from where they helped eight of the crew of Mexico to get ashore. Despite efforts by Kilmore, Dunmore East and Wexford lifeboats, it was impossible to reach the castaway men until, on February 23, two men were rescued by Dunmore East lifeboat and ten by Wexford. One man died on the island. Among medals awarded, Edward Wickham, coxswain of Wexford lifeboat, received a bar to his silver medal, and silver medals were awarded to Crew Members James Wickham and William Duggan, two men who put off from Wexford lifeboat in a punt veered down to save the men on South Keeragh Island.—EDITOR.

Great great . . .

I am enclosing a cheque (£1) for you that my friends and I collected. We made it by getting a badge collection and letting people have a look. They

One aspect of the visit which took me totally by surprise was the effort made by my English host, wearing his journalist's hat, to trace for me various Pennell namesakes around the small settlement of Pennellville, Maine. Americans seem to place far more importance on lineage than do we, and I was rather embarrassed by my own lack of knowledge. Thankfully my distant ancestors were shipbuilders in the eighteenth century, which at least implied a natural descent.

The week was an experience I shall not forget and the hospitality overwhelming—more than seven days would require a full fitness training programme. My suits spent eight days unworn and I was all but forbidden to wear a tie—thank goodness for the 'woolly pully'!

I hope that the many formal and informal discussions in which I was in-

could also buy biscuits, drinks and sweets. We chose to give the money to you because my great great grandfather was a lifeboat coxswain and he was awarded the RNLI gold medal for bravery and skill. He was Coxswain Owen of Holyhead lifeboat.

My friends are Robert Kelly, Nathan Spencer, Stephen Osmotherly, Daren Pickles and Richard Duncan. I hope the money helps to save a life; we all think you are very brave.—ANTHONY OSMOTHERLEY, *5 Hollin Crescent, Leeds*.

Coxswain William Owen was awarded the gold medal and each of the other ten members of his crew the silver medal for the service on February 22, 1908, to the Liverpool steamer ss Harold. The steam lifeboat Duke of Northumberland went out in a whole gale. She found Harold anchored not far from the shore close to the rocks between the headlands known as the North and South Stacks. A terrible sea was running and it was only after two hours of the most skilful and hazardous manoeuvring by Coxswain Owen that the lifeboat was able to get close enough to the steamer for ropes to be thrown and the steamer's crew of nine to be hauled on board. The lifeboat herself was in great danger of being flung against the steamer and destroyed.—EDITOR.

HMS Captain

I just wanted to say 'thank you' for publishing my letter about HMS Captain (THE LIFEBOAT, *Spring 1981*). I have had so many letters from readers, all of them giving information and anecdotes about relatives who were involved, either in Captain herself or who were in other ships of the line when the tragedy occurred.

The 'scroll' about which I enquired originally would appear to be in all probability a press cutting from a magazine or newspaper of September, 1870, which my grandmother had framed.

Again very many thanks to you and to the readers who wrote to me. I seem to have made many new friends!—EMMELINE HARDY, *Pollards, 9 Durlston Road, Swanage, Dorset*.

Involved will eventually lead to a more active voluntary lifesaving organisation on the New England Coast, but money and many more dedicated men will be needed. The most surprising thing to learn was that most of the rural fire brigades in existence in the United States already operate in a manner very similar to the average RNLI station branch, with fund-raising events augmenting the locally levied rates, which fund the operational unit, yet few people had considered equating this organisation with marine search and rescue or a lifeboat fleet.

One last impression of the visit, much of which was spent 'on the road': the cleanliness and cheerful service at all the roadside cafés and restaurants. As a DI shortly returning to the coast, I found this aspect of American life particularly pleasing; I hope that I may find the like when travelling in the UK!

Hyannis to Rockland

from page 233

were asked regarding the operation of a voluntary lifeboat service outside Government control. The predominantly shore based rôle of HM Coastguard was a fact which many of the audience found hard to understand.

Since the forum was not a trade show, as at Hyannis, various commercial interests had established individual trade displays in their hotel rooms; it is apparently a feature of this annual event that after conference hours everyone tours the hotels and samples the hospitality offered by each firm.

The evening culminated in a dinner and dance and I was glad that the following day was spent visiting my host's family on the journey south to Boston Airport for the return flight to England.

Shoreline Section

THE COMPETITION for the Renault 5TL car is still progressing well. The draw will be made at the Motor Fair at Earls Court on October 28 and the lucky winner will be published in the next issue of THE LIFEBOAT. Your response has been most encouraging, particularly because it has helped us to continue our upward growth despite the difficult times in which we live. The next peak to be scaled, 100,000 members, is now within our sights, but there is still a hard climb ahead. Only with your help can this magic figure be reached—and passed; we are confident that, as always, that help will be forthcoming.

Shoreline is just what it says: support from the shore for the lifeboat crews at sea. In effect, each Shoreline member reaches out a hand to the lifeboatman who is reaching out to grasp the hand in the water. And about 1,000 people are rescued from the sea each year because the lifeboatman is there to grasp that hand. Many people help the RNLI in many different ways, but the particular value of Shoreline's financial support is that, through subscription, it provides a regular and growing source of income on which the Institution can count when planning for the future.

As it was announced in the last journal, for the first time since the scheme was introduced in 1969, membership subscriptions will increase on November 1, 1981: the annual subscription for a member will rise from £3 to £5 and for family membership from £5 to £7.50. It was thought that the new rates would be generally regarded as reasonable. Here is the response of one member:

'I would say the changes are more than reasonable, they are very small. At present I am paying £3 under a deed of covenant—would you please release me from that contract and replace it with a new deed of covenant for £15 . . .'

Welcome, to a new governor!

Of course, if a subscription is covenanted, the income it brings to the lifeboat service is considerably increased without extra cost to the subscriber; we are only too pleased to send information about the way covenants work and how they can be entered into to those people who would like to make their help even more effective in this way.

Shoreline has only grown as it has because of the personal support of you, its members. It is your enthusiasm which has carried the day when friends, neighbours and relatives have been considering adding their weight to the line. We know that you will continue to give your

own support and to encourage others to join you.

* * *

Mrs Nora Neill has been collecting Green Shield stamps for Shoreline for some years. This year alone she has already sent us £650 raised in this way. If anyone has odd stamps or books tucked away they would be a welcome boost to the campaign; so please send any you can spare to Mrs Neill, 95 Fitzroy Avenue, Harborne, Birmingham B17 8RG.

* * *

While Shoreline is essentially an individual approach to lifeboat support, in six areas around the country Shoreline members have formed clubs so that people with mutual interest in the lifeboat service can meet together and enjoy each other's society. Regular club meetings are arranged and a list of the clubs is given below together with some notes about their activities and the name and address of each honorary secretary. New members are always made most welcome:

Portsmouth, Shoreline Club No 1: Meets every fourth Wednesday in the month, except in July and August, at the Tudor Sailing Club, Eastern Road, Portsmouth. Information from Ray Doran, 5 The Close, Cosham. Tel. Cosham 374300.

Southampton, Shoreline Club No 2: Meets every third Thursday in the month, at 8 pm, at the Golf Pavilion, Golf Course Road, Southampton. Information from John Davies, 88 Kingsway, Hiltingbury, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire. Future events include: October 15, talk, 'Flying with 609 Squadron'. November 19, talk, 'Royal Naval Reserve'. December 17, American supper and films. January 21, 1982, AGM and films.

Southend-on-Sea, Shoreline Club No. 3: Meets every second Wednesday in the month at T.E.A.C., 111 Eastern Esplanade, Southend-on-Sea. Information from Mr M. A. Holland, 83 Walsingham Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex. Tel. 0702 68794.

Milton Keynes, Shoreline Club No. 4: Meets every second Wednesday in the month at the Wolverton Park Sports Association Club House, directly behind Wolverton station. Information from Denis J. Horgan, 172 Bradwell Common Boulevard, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. Tel. 0908 674900.

Leeds, Shoreline Club No. 5: Meets every first Tuesday in the month, at 7.45 pm, at the Victoria Hotel. Information from Ian Moses, Park House, Harehills Park, 92 Coldcotes Avenue, Harehills, Leeds, West Yorkshire. Tel. Leeds. 654274.

Basildon, Shoreline Club No. 6: Meets every second Thursday in the month, at 8 pm, at St Martin's Church Hall, Town Centre, Basildon. Information from the honorary treasurer, Mrs Searle, 16 Lampit Hill, Corringham, Essex. Tel. Stanford-Le-Hope 74592.

* * *

There are several commercial offers from which Shoreline members can benefit. We have special arrangements with the following three organisations:

Fred Olsen Lines are offering four special holidays to our members and their families:

1. A week's holiday at the Hotel Pre-luna, Malta, from Sunday December 6 to Sunday December 13, 1981. Price £177 per person.
2. A weekend coach tour of the Dutch bulb fields, April 1982. Price about £90 to £100 per person.
3. Two weeks tour of Canada, flying to Vancouver, June 1982. Price about £650 per person.
4. A week's cruise on the River Rhine in luxurious vessels. September and October 1982. Price £230 per person.

I can assure you, you will be given a very good time and the accommodation will be first class. If you are interested information can be obtained from Mr D. Cooper, Travel Time, 1 Hanover Street, London, W1R 8AP. Tel. 01-408 1886.

Mercantile Credit offers special rates on all loans to our members. Information from Mercantile Credit Co., Ltd., PO Box No. 75, Elizabethan House, Great Queen Street, London, WC2B 5DP. Tel. 01-242 1234.

Aegis Insurance offers special rates and advice on all insurances to our members. Information from Aegis Insurance Group Ltd., Aegis House, Castle Hill, Maidenhead, Berkshire. Tel. 0628 23484.

Remember, if you support any of these enterprises you are not only getting a good deal yourself but the RNLI also benefits considerably.—PETER HOLLNESS, membership secretary, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ.

To: The Director, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

I enclose subscription to join Shoreline as an:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Annual Member | £5.00 (minimum) <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Annual Family Membership | £7.50 (minimum) <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Annual 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 106,500 people would have been lost without the lifeboat service.



Two teams of 16 rowers took turns to achieve a 24-hour sponsored row in Plymouth Sound. They came from the Plymouth School of Maritime Studies and organised the strenuous event themselves under the guidance of the school's head, Captain T. G. Nelson. Their efforts in this 32ft cutter brought in £1,300. Photograph by courtesy of 'Western Morning News'

Some Ways of Raising Money

Lt E. Gough, the RNLI's staff officer (Communications), sent the message Uniform Whisky One (UW1) to the Boys' Brigade at Aigburth, Liverpool, after they had raised £36 by mounting a display about the sea, doing figure marching dressed as sailors, playing games and singing songs and finally performing a mime in costume of Jonah and the Whale. Earlier in the year Ernie Gough had advised the boys about signal flags to be used in a display. His final signal to them—UW1—translated read: 'Thank you very much for your co-operation. I wish you a pleasant voyage'.

Wyboston Sailing Club, St Neots, Cambridge, organised its twelfth sponsored sail for the RNLI on June 20. Over £10,000 had already been raised in previous years and this year some £1,500 was amassed for the lifeboats. Competitors sailed 453.1 sponsored miles and the winners, 'Rank Optimists' of Welwyn Garden City SC, covered 41.4 miles in the allotted ten hours. BAC Stevenage, the team who presented a paddle as the booby prize for the race, found that they got it back when their boat finished last.

The children at Weston All Saints' Junior School, Bath, gave a concert in May with the theme of a Victorian Night Out. Suitably dressed up they sang and danced their way to raising £37 for the RNLI.

Petersfield branch held a cocktail party at Sheet House, the home of Major General Sir Humphry and Lady Tolle-mache, on June 6. A great many people contributed to the success of the evening, which raised £1,150 for the lifeboats, and particular thanks were given to the Sheet Guides who had helped in many ways.

Dunstable branch has raised £5,000 since it was re-formed in 1978 through bonfire parties, barbecues, flag days and cheese and wine evenings. In June a barbecue and country evening brought in £620. Ickniel Wayfarers Folk Group provided music and entertainment, and there was also a disco for the energetic. Branch chairman, Dr John Clark, and his vice-president, Mike Press, spent much of the time grilling steaks, while vast quantities of strawberries and cream added to everyone's enjoyment of the evening.

If the circumference of the Bewl Bridge Reservoir on the borders of Kent and Sussex is 17 miles and if 145 sponsored walkers complete this distance, what is the sum of money they raised for the RNLI? Answer: over £1,000 thanks to the efforts of Cranbrook, Wadhurst and Tenterden branches who organised the event at the instigation of Mrs Audrey Reading. Joe Martin, coxswain of Hastings lifeboat, started the walk officially, needless to say in pouring rain.

So far Mr Rowson, husband of Wainfleet guild secretary, has made £150 for the lifeboats by making and selling very attractive solitaire games. They are proving so popular throughout Lincolnshire that he is still working hard at them.

In addition to the magnificent £300,000 gift from the Freemasons United Grand Lodge of England earlier this year, the RNLI still receives generous support from individual lodges. Brother A. Gow, Worshipful Master of Tracery Lodge No. 4719, is a shoreline member and he arranged for £72 raised by a raffle at his ladies' evening to be sent to the lifeboats. Earlier in the year the lodge was able to forward £20 to the Port of Liverpool and District branch of the RNLI.

Mrs Ann Williams, a member of Moelfre ladies' guild, gave a demonstration of flower arranging at the local community centre in April. The numerous guests were served with coffee and biscuits which brought in £51.50 and a further £18.00 was raised when Mrs Williams kindly donated the flowers and arrangements for raffle prizes.

Tiverton branch not only raises money by street and house-to-house collections and cheese and wine parties; it has been very successful in selling old newspapers and especially in selling windfall apples to the local cider factory, which this year brought in £120. Other windfalls for the branch were donations from the Ladies Licenced Victuallers, the Women's Institute and the Scouts.

At the garden fête and disco held at the home of Mr and Mrs R. Haszard of Chapel Leasowe, Milford, Stafford branch was lent free of charge a mobile generator by Bowmaker Plant for the lighting and power supply; £249.40 was raised at this function. A dance was held a month later making £119 and during the branch's flag week a total of £1,091.23 was collected.

A very successful coffee morning organised by Mrs S. Hill of Tonbridge branch and held at the home of Mr and Mrs H. Veall, Gonerils Farm, Five Oak Green, raised an impressive £280.02.



There was no way of mistaking for which cause this Brighton sponsored walk was organised. A scaled-down replica of a pulling lifeboat was hauled along the route by some of the walkers. Their long, hard pull brought a haul in sponsorship of over £1,100.



Despite force 8 gales which made their stock difficult to keep on the table, the ladies of Ramsey's, Isle of Man, lifeboat guild made £90 at their street fair stall of souvenirs. Many people were attracted towards them by the Viking boat Odin's Raven just behind the stand. A few days before the ladies had raised over £600 at their coffee morning. photograph by courtesy of Don Wilkinson

Hazlewood Castle, Tadcaster, the home of the Carmelite Friars, was kindly lent in July for a Glyndebourne-style evening of musical entertainment under the patronage of the Marquis of Normanby, a member of the Committee of Management. Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Compston, a deputy chairman of the Institution, and Lady Compston attended this 'Summer Evening' organised by Stephen Wood of Leeds and his friends. A wind octet drawn from the English Northern Philharmonia performed a serenade. During the interval the 200 guests were given a picnic dinner on the lawns and in the orangery. A remarkable £2,000 was raised for the RNLI as a result.

An appreciable amount of money comes in each year from people who regularly collect for the lifeboats. Mr A. Lemar of the Bull Hotel, Abergele, has sent in two cheques already this year for the proceeds of collections and raffles, both, strangely enough, coming to £31. Mrs J. MacFie keeps a collecting box on the counter at Polegate Fisheries; her most recent cheque was for £15.

Disc jockey Paul Kay of the Bisquit Club of Selsey survived a 12-hour non-stop marathon road show during which he played 673 records and raised over £300. A number of Selsey's lifeboat crew put in an appearance during the show including Coxswain Mike Grant; the honorary secretary, Des Cockayne was also present. Racing driver Derek Bell, fresh from his victory at the 24-hour race at Le Mans, also made an appearance. Paul Kay hopes to raise £3,000 by the end of the holiday season.

Bexhill-on-Sea branch sent £8,000 to headquarters at the end of last year and among many sources that made up this sum were: £536.80 from Bexhill Sailing Club, which has supported the RNLI for many years, £13 being from the club's younger members' carol singing; £63.60 as the proceeds of a fashion show held at Cooden Beach Hotel; £45 from a tournament held at Highwoods Golf Club; and £47.30 from committee member Mrs Lawrence who makes and sells peg dolls. The branch has also made a great deal of money out of souvenir sales at various events.



Coming from as far afield as Ireland and Humberside, 116 entries made the third Great Tweed Raft Race a huge crowd puller with 15,000 people lining the river bank. There were two categories: fancy dress rafts and speedsters, all of which had to complete a seven-mile course from Kelso to Carham. The winner of the fancy dress section was a remarkable one-tenth scale model of HMS Cossack, a 1936 destroyer (above). The famous Hercules the bear was a special guest on the day and Liberal Party leader David Steel started the race. The whole massive occasion was organised by Round Tables in the Borders and was sponsored by Matthew Gloag and Son Ltd, makers of Famous Grouse whisky. A staggering £4,250 was eventually handed to the RNLI as a result. photograph by courtesy of Tweeddale Press Group



Oban ladies' guild organised its first raft race on May 23. Although it was a chilly Saturday, a large crowd turned out to watch and about £2,500 was raised in sponsorship and other contributions. First place went to—but, of course!—First Plaiice, entered by Golden Seafood Produce.

photograph by courtesy of 'The Oban Times'

Plymouth Barbershop Singers very kindly performed at Wembury Peninsula branch's recent ball, which raised £77.

As a 'thank you' for generous gifts of used stamps to help the lifeboat, Newport, Isle of Wight, branch arranged a special evening for three Brownie packs on June 24. Mr G. H. Baker, the branch publicity officer, gave a talk on the work of the RNLI illustrated with slides and Cdr David Webb, chairman of Bembridge lifeboat guild, answered the many questions asked. The Brownies had come armed with another large gift of used stamps, with a promise of more to come; they also made an on-the-spot collection of £11.48 for the lifeboats.

The High Level Ranters played the music at a barn dance held at Mr and Mrs John Moor's Glebe Farm, Whitburn. The evening was a great success both socially and financially with a total take of £1,500. Mrs Joyce Dixon is chairman of Whitburn ladies' guild, the event organisers who provided a



An auspicious start for Nottingham's flag day when the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs John Arnold, are the first two to buy a flag. On the left is Colin Westland-Garnett, chairman of the flag day committee, with Mrs Phyl Westland-Garnett, and on the far right William Loxton. Total takings for the day were over £1,300. photograph by courtesy of 'Nottingham Evening Post'



A profitable partnership (for the lifeboats) was entered into when Esher branch joined forces with a local smallholder to sell fruit and vegetables as well as RNLI souvenirs at Esher Fair. The entire profit of over £100 went to the local branch.



On Great Yarmouth and Gorleston flag day, July 15, Danny La Rue, then appearing in his summer show at Great Yarmouth, came to the market place lifeboat stall and signed photographs of himself, which he donated, and also lifeboat cards. In little more than an hour he had added nearly £50 to the funds. In all, £244 was taken on the souvenir stall.

photograph by courtesy of Great Yarmouth Press Agency



It takes a bit of will power to give up your daily bag of crisps at school during Lent but Robert Crumbie, aged six, decided this would be his sacrifice for his school's Lenten collection. The money not spent on crisps he donated to the RNLI and here he is seen handing over a sum of nearly £4 to the director, Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, outside the London office in Lambeth.

ploughman's supper for the 560 guests. Les Brown won the top raffle prize, a portable television, and immediately handed it back to be auctioned. At this function Bill Ayton, past president of Seaburn Rotary Club, handed over £250, part of the proceeds from a Swim '80 competition.

The town hall at Airdrie was packed with 850 people when the local lifeboat branch celebrated its golden jubilee. The occasion, compered by the Reverend James Currie, was a Fiddlers' Rally when Ayr and Prestwick Strathspey and Reel Society performed a wide variety of musical pieces. The convenor of the Scottish Lifeboat Council, Sir Charles McGrigor, was present with Lady McGrigor and during the evening he presented Airdrie branch with a certificate to mark its 50 years of fund raising for the lifeboats. Six-year-old Wendy Anderson had previously won a competition for the design of the cover of the programme and was a special guest for the evening, which itself raised £1,617.

Carlisle branch has shown how the tried and trusted fund-raising methods are still very profitable. Its house-to-house collection this year produced £3,769, an increase of £580 over the previous collection. Throughout the whole of 1980 the branch brought in £7,390.

Maybe Geoffrey Cox's house guests were not very pleased when an outsider won the British Open Golf Championship at Sandwich this year, but the RNLI did all right. Geoffrey Cox is an ardent supporter of Walmer lifeboat and his guests who were staying for the championship decided to guess the name of the winner at £5 a time. No one got it right so Walmer lifeboat took the winnings—£60. A week earlier, at the mining village of Aylesham, Kent, children from the junior school collected £100 for Walmer prior to a visit to the lifeboat station.



For a change, the endurance of Second Coxswain Peter Leith of Lerwick is being tested other than by hours spent at sea in bad conditions. Here he is seen on the station's open day during an eight-hour non-stop sponsored organ playing for which he raised £2,100. Standing beside him is Captain Mitchell of Bristow Helicopters who landed his helicopter alongside the lifeboat and opened it to the public.

During their week of fund raising for the RNLI, customers and staff of the Blue Anchor, Byfleet, gave themselves the opportunity to behave badly when they dressed up as St Trinian's pupils. £411 was raised throughout the week.

In appreciation of an enjoyable instructional cruise two Bristol University students, Brenda and Chris Romans, presented a woolly kangaroo to RRS Challenger, Research Vessel Services. Rather than keep the kangaroo at sea, the ship's officers decided to raffle it at their main base in Barry and £30 was raised for the RNLI.

Mr and Mrs John Cooke of Brereton Park Farm, Huxley, Cheshire, kindly lent their farm for a disco supper organised by Christleton branch, and John Cooke's generosity was rewarded by winning first prize in the raffle—a Dufor Wing sailboard kindly supplied at cost by Chester Sailboard Centre. The party, which took place in a beautifully decorated marquee, altogether raised £1,050 for the lifeboat service.

Port Talbot lifeboatmen were invited to an evening in the Rose and Crown, Briton Ferry, West Glamorgan, on the occasion of the smashing of a gallon whisky bottle full of money collected on their behalf. Thanks to hosts Frank and Shirley Clarke and Bells Whisky Ltd, the food and drinks were free and, thanks to the pub's regulars, £184 was in the bottle.

Used stamps collected in bulk can be turned into money for the lifeboats. A class of six to seven year olds know this at Malvern Link Infants School and between September 1980 and July 1981 they collected (and counted) 61,055 stamps.

A Victorian Evening staged in the village of Kilmacolm raised £800 for the RNLI. Both the concert performers and the audience wore clothes from the last century and the occasion was acclaimed a great success.

Mr M. N. Cowlin was 50 recently and decided to ask friends and relations who were going to give him a present to give a donation to the lifeboats instead. Everyone's generosity led to a cheque for £155 going to the RNLI.

Lifeboat week in Angmering followed soon after the sad deaths of both the branch's chairman, Mrs Nell King, in April and the honorary secretary, Miss Frances Ramshaw, in May. The community was able to show its appreciation of these two ladies' services by increasing the annual contribution from £167 to £242.

Raising the *Titanic*, or at least raising the subject of the *Titanic* disaster, is Miss Eva Hart's special way of raising money for the RNLI. She is one of the few people to survive the notorious incident and because of current public interest in the possibility of raising the wreck from the seabed, she is in hot demand as a speaker to various organisations. She does not charge a fee but asks that donations go to the lifeboats. Her first cheque to head office was for £50.

Brede in Sussex only has a population of about 1,500, but when Rye and Winchelsea branch held a coffee morning at this small village it managed to raise £258. The branch is also a very successful seller of RNLI lottery tickets and expects to bring in some £50 in this way each draw.

When Petts Wood branch gave a spring luncheon in the garden of its chairman, Michael Reynolds, it invited branch officers and crew members from Hastings and Dover, to both of which stations a donation was made. The £537 raised included £156 in Shoreline subscriptions; one life governor and one member.

Six friends of Childwall (Liverpool) branch raised £140 for the RNLI by means of a sponsored climb, taking part in the Spring Bank Holiday Welsh Three Thousands. They climbed all 14 peaks of the course, each more than 3,000 feet high, from Snowdon to Foel Fras. The climbers: (back row, l. to r.) Peter Beckett, Don Williams and Les George, (front row) Stephen Brown, Andrew Williams and Doug Brown.



Not only does the lifeboat box in the hairdressing salon of Michael James of Gillingham, Kent, do very well indeed, but Mr James, a keen fisherman, takes another box with him on his fishing trips and passes it around when the 'catch' is being weighed. After the last fishing trip there was £19.79½ in the box—so it must have been a good 'catch'.

Bristol ladies' guild raised more than £4,500 at its summer ball. Held at the home of Mr and Mrs Michael Kent at Chew Magna, it was a splendid evening in every way. Even the weather was good!

Saturday June 20 was Family Funday for Wolverhampton branch, when a garden fête was held at the home of its president, Tony Guy. More than £2,000 was raised from numerous attractions, ranging from a football wheel which raised £4.15 to a raffle for Martell brandy which brought in almost £1,000.

Kent Schoolboy Scramble Club held its first two-day charity meeting at Lydd-on-Sea, Romney Marsh, on July 11 and 12 and raised the magnificent sum of £625 for Dungeness lifeboat station. More than 120 members, all under the age of 18, took part in the motorcycle scrambling.

Flares were lit to illuminate a barbecue held at Boverton House by Llantwit Major ladies' lifeboat guild. Over 150 people were there to enjoy a skittle alley, hoop-la and disco which were just some of the attractions. £600 was the profit from the evening.

Joan and Margaret Collings of Camberley branch held their sixth annual garden party in June, and by laying on tea and organising stalls selling cakes, white elephant items and RNLI souvenirs, raised an impressive £425. The Mayor of Surrey Heath, Councillor Mrs Joy Reid, was guest of honour. In the same month 70 people from Camberley walked a 3½ mile course which happened to take in a grand total of 11 pubs on the route. With suitable refreshment at each, they completed the course and raised £750 as a result.



Dr Fergus McKenna visited Skye in the spring to give ten different talks about the RNLI to different audiences on the Island. Thus encouraged, Skye branch held an open day at Talisker House which made £450. In front of Talisker House, with Preshal Mhor in the background, stand (l. to r.) Laurie Burton, whose idea sparked off the open day, Mr and Mrs Mark Wathen, who kindly allowed the event to take place at their house, Captain Darby George, chairman of the branch, and the musically equipped Vice-Admiral Sir Roderick Macdonald.



Going, going, gone. A bottle full of coins and notes for the lifeboats comes under the hammer at the Lord Burleigh, Victoria, London. Landlord Fred Bright (r.) is a keen supporter of the RNLI who always has a giant bottle filling up. The man with the hammer is Paul Heiney of BBC TV's 'That's Life', himself a Shoreline member, and on his left is Suzanne Knapp, secretary of the Central London Committee. This bottle contained £118.25.

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47ft Watson: May 5

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Relief 44ft Waveney: April 17 and May 25

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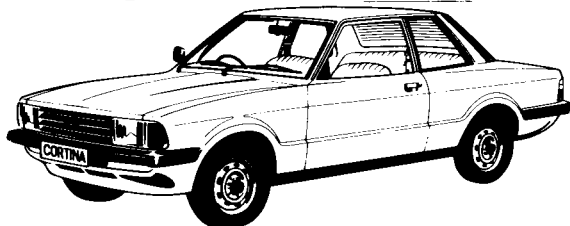
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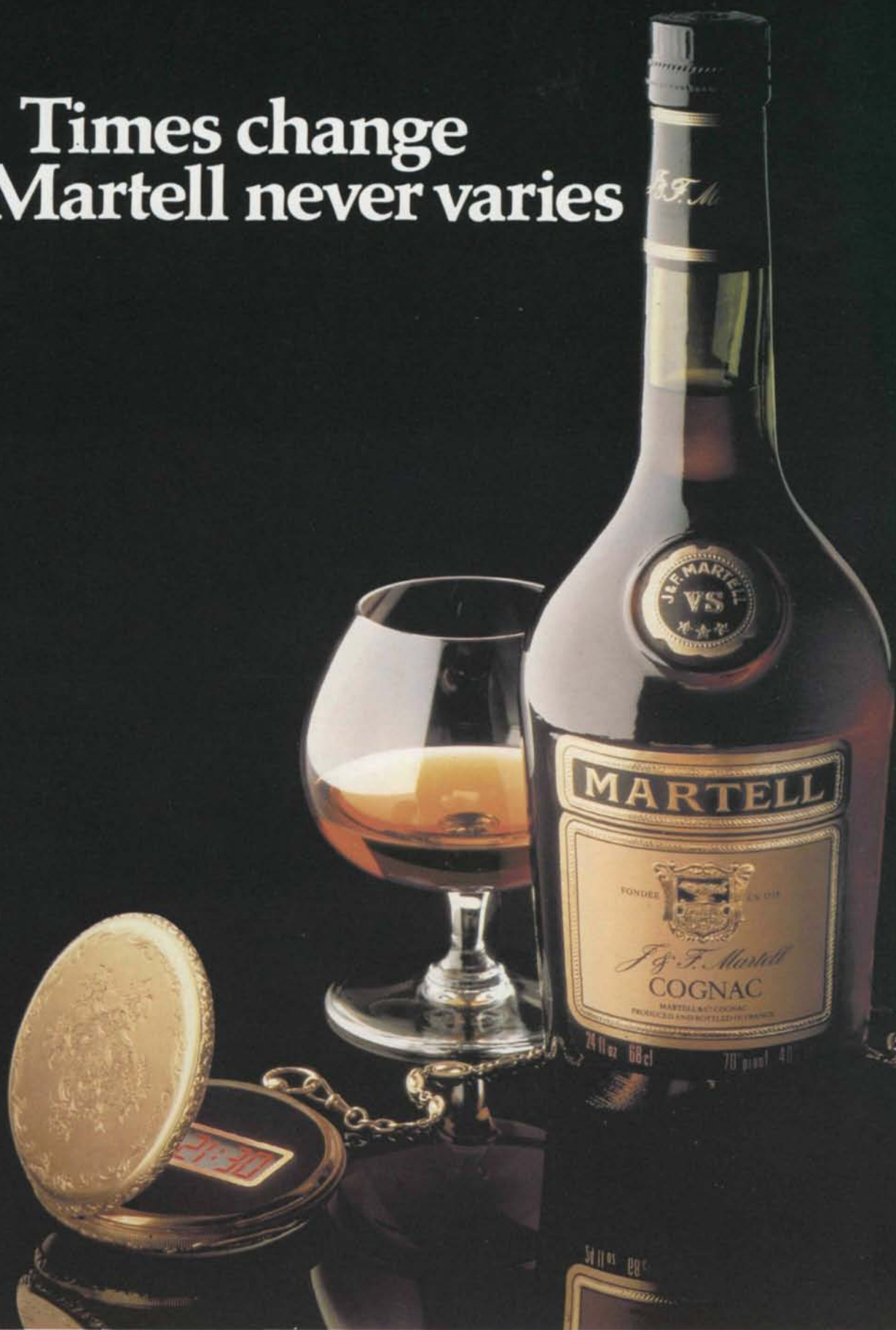
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