



The

Lifeboat

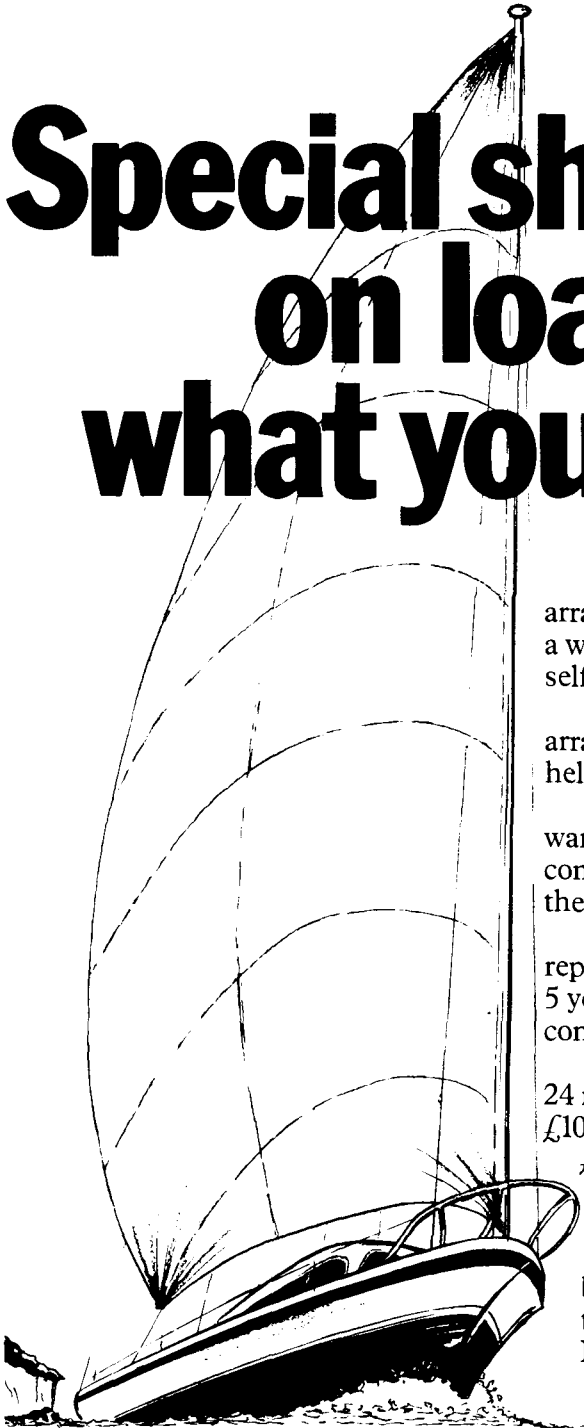
Journal of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Summer 1982 25p



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THE LIFEBOAT

Summer 1982

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Volume XLVIII
Number 480

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COVER PICTURE

The crew of St Peter Port, Guernsey, 52ft Arun class lifeboat Sir William Arnold who, on December 13, 1981, in winds gusting to hurricane force rescued 29 people from the Ecuadorian motor vessel Bonita (see page 77). It was a service for which a gold medal was awarded to the coxswain and the bronze medal to each of his crew. (Back row, l to r): Crew Member Richard Hamon, Coxswain Michael Scales, Second Coxswain Peter Bougourd, Crew Member John Bougourd and Crew Member Peter Bisson. (Front row, l to r): Crew Member John Webster, Assistant Mechanic Alan Martel and Motor Mechanic Robert Vowles. The photograph was taken by Margaret Murray on South Bank, London, before the 1982 presentation of awards.

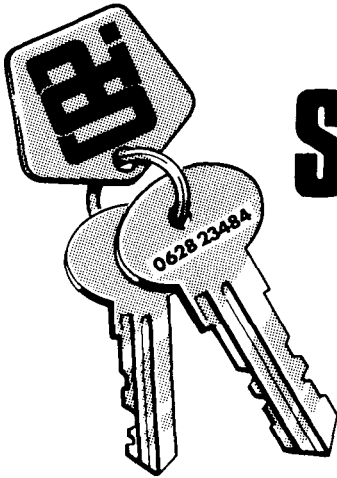
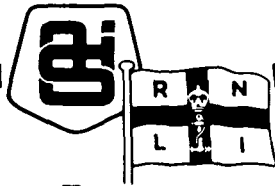
Editorial: All material submitted for consideration with a view to publication in the journal should be addressed to the editor, THE LIFEBOAT, Royal National Lifeboat Institution, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ (Telephone Poole 671133). Photographs intended for return should be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope.

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

Advertisements: All advertising enquiries should be addressed to Dyson Advertising Services, PO Box 9, Godalming, Surrey (Telephone Godalming (04868) 23675).

Subscription: A year's subscription of four issues costs £1.40, including postage, but those who are entitled to receive THE LIFEBOAT free of charge will continue to do so. Overseas subscriptions depend on the cost of postage to the country concerned. Write to RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

Printers: The Friary Press, Grove Trading Estate, Dorchester, Dorset.



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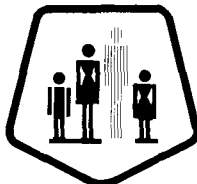
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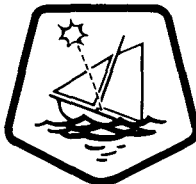
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NOTES OF THE QUARTER

THE DUKE OF ATHOLL, chairman of the RNLI, praised the courage of the Penlee lifeboat crew lost last December and of their families at the annual general meeting of the governors of the RNLI held in London on Tuesday morning May 11. The Duke described the crew of *Solomon Browne* as . . .

... fine, well-trained lifeboatmen' who, when the call came 'in the finest traditions of the lifeboat service . . . did not hesitate to set out to help other seafarers in distress.'

Of the families, who attended the afternoon meeting to receive medals for gallantry awarded to the men, he said:

'They have been an example to the whole country. In the midst of great sorrow and harrowing publicity they have remained dignified and calm. They have earned our respect, admiration and support.'

The Duke announced that a public enquiry into the disaster at Penlee had

First slipway launching and recovery trials for the prototype 47ft Tyne class fast slipway lifeboat City of London were successfully completed at Selsey lifeboat station in the spring. Selsey's own 48ft 6in Oakley lifeboat Charles Henry is at moorings in background.



been ordered by the Department of Trade.

Speaking of the Institution's financial position, the Duke of Atholl reported that the RNLI's income increased by 17.4 per cent in 1981 to reach almost £14 million, the target figure for the year. He praised the fund raisers and said:

'It shows that our voluntary system is strong enough to weather economic storms and to continue to provide the money to build and maintain a first class fleet of lifeboats, giving the nation unrivalled value for money.'

At the afternoon meeting HRH Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, presented the gold medal for gallantry awarded posthumously to Coxswain Trevelyan Richards to his mother, Mrs Mary Richards, and the bronze medals awarded to the seven members of his crew to members of their families. The Princess also presented the gold medal to Coxswain Michael Scales of St Peter Port for the rescue of 29 people from the cargo vessel *Bonita* in hurricane force winds last December; the bronze medal was presented to each of his seven crew.

A full report of the annual meetings begins on page 88.

New Penlee lifeboat

The new lifeboat for Penlee will be a 52ft Arun which will lie afloat in Newlyn Harbour. The lifeboat is being paid for by the Robinson Charitable Trust and will be named *Mabel Alice* after Mr David Robinson's wife. The boat is under construction at Fairey Allday Marine in Cowes and is expected to arrive at Newlyn next spring. Meanwhile Penlee lifeboat station is operating the 46ft 9in Watson class lifeboat *Guy and Clare Hunter* which was formerly stationed at St Mary's, Isles of Scilly.

Princess of Wales lifeboat

Her Majesty The Queen has given permission for the new 37ft 6in Rother lifeboat at Barmouth to be named *Princess of Wales*. The lifeboat was partly funded by an appeal throughout Wales to celebrate the Royal Wedding last year and more than £50,000 was raised. A cheque for this amount was presented by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Councillor Ronald F. Watkiss, to the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, who thanked the people of Wales for supporting the appeal so generously and described the cheque as *'... a splendid result and a most welcome boost to our funds'*.

Royal luncheon party

Superintendent Coxswain Brian Bevan of Humber lifeboat station was invited by HM The Queen to a private luncheon party at Buckingham Palace on May 18. Coxswain Bevan, who holds the gold, silver and bronze medals for gallantry, received a bar to his bronze medal at the recent annual presentation of awards.

US Navy League dinner

HRH Princess Anne was guest of honour at the dinner organised by the United Kingdom Council of the Navy League of the United States on April 2 at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich. The dinner was in aid of the RNLI. It was one of the largest social events organised by the US Navy League in London in recent years and one of the major fund-raising items on the programme was a grand auction. The dinner strengthened links between the RNLI and US citizens both in this country and in the United States, who have already provided the money for two Atlantic 21 class lifeboats.

Tyne class lifeboats

The RNLI's 47ft fast slipway lifeboats will be known as the Tyne class in line with the Institution's policy of using names of rivers for lifeboat classes. Tyne was chosen to reflect the close connection of Mr P. Denham Christie, chairman of the Boat Committee, with the fast slipway boat project; Mr Denham Christie comes from Newcastle and he served as coxswain of Tyne-mouth lifeboat from 1953 to 1963.

The first of the Tyne class lifeboats, *City of London*, has started trials which will include extensive sea passages around the coast. The second Tyne class lifeboat is building at Fairey Allday Marine, Cowes, and is due to be launched during the summer.

Design Council Awards 1982

The RNLI has received a Design Council Award for the Arun class lifeboat. Certificates were presented by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, to Mr P. Denham Christie, chairman of the Boat Committee, and Lt-Cdr H. E. Over, chief technical officer, at a special



Mr P. Denham Christie, chairman of the Boat Committee, on behalf of the Institution receives from HRH The Duke of Edinburgh a Design Council Award certificate for the Arun class lifeboat. Facsimiles of the certificate have been sent to each of the 17 stations which operate Arun lifeboats. Arun hulls are moulded by Halmatic of Havant and the lifeboats are fitted out by Halmatic, William Osborne of Littlehampton, Fairey Marine of Cowes or Souters of Cowes.

photograph by courtesy of Derek Rowe (Photos) Ltd

luncheon in the Barbican Centre on April 28. In all, awards were made to 34 different products, in six different classes, between them forming a cross section of fine British design and craftsmanship.

In presenting its entry, the RNLI gave as the essential principle of the Arun that the hull, machinery and equipment is so arranged that a whole host of operations can be carried out in a comparatively small but highly complex vehicle without overdue interference by one operation with another;

and that all operations can be performed, when necessary, in extreme conditions of wind and sea.

At the time the entry was made, at the end of the summer 1981, Arun lifeboats had been at sea on service for more than 3,000 hours, rescuing 455 people and landing 256, all of which figures have, of course, since increased. Although rescues have been performed in winds up to hurricane force and tremendous seas, no Arun has capsized and no crew member has been lost or seriously disabled. In the past few

years, three services for which gold medals have been awarded have been carried out in Arun class lifeboats.

The Design Council judges studied all aspects of the lifeboat's design and fitting out and visited the Arun at Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, where they were taken for a demonstration run, before making the award '... for the excellence of the design'.

After the award ceremony, the Duke of Edinburgh inspected the Arun lifeboat *Duchess of Kent* which had been named in London by the Duchess the previous day (see page 85).

Surf Life Saving anniversary

The Surf Life Saving Association of Australia celebrates its seventy-fifth anniversary this year and Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director RNLI, sent the following telegram to Sydney:

'On behalf of the chairman and Committee of Management of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, our crews, staff and supporters, may I convey to all at Surf Life Saving Association of Australia our heartiest congratulations on this your seventy-fifth anniversary and our best wishes for a prosperous and safe future.'

Arthur Lowe

It was with great sorrow that the Institution heard the news of the death on April 15 of Arthur Lowe.

Mr Lowe, who will always be affectionately remembered as 'Captain Mainwaring', had been a loyal and greatly valued supporter of the lifeboat service for many years. To members of Twickenham and District branch, which he served as vice-president from 1970 and then, from 1977, as president, he was a personal friend upon whose unstinted help reliance could always be placed. There have been many lifeboat

functions both at Twickenham and elsewhere in the country to which Arthur Lowe gave his support, either on his own or, as Captain Mainwaring, at the head of 'Dad's Army'; if his professional life would allow, he would never refuse to use the little spare time he had for the good of the men he considered to be second to none, the lifeboat crews.

In 1977, at the London Boat Show, the RNLI public relations award was presented to Arthur Lowe and other members of that staunch band of lifeboat supporters, the cast of 'Dad's Army'.

Maundy Money

Ernest Pavey, who had worked for the RNLI for 42 years, first on the coast and finally as machinery examiner, Boreham Wood depot, has presented to the Institution the Maundy Money which he received from HM The Queen in 1981.

RNLI AGM and presentation of awards meeting 1982: Tuesday May 17.

XIV International Lifeboat Conference: Gothenburg, Sweden, June 5 to 9, 1983.

33ft Brede class

A 33FT BREDE class lifeboat, 33-02, is now at Oban undergoing station evaluation trials.

The Brede is a new type of lifeboat

based on a commercial GRP hull. As a result of initial development work her wheelhouse has been extended to provide the buoyancy necessary to give her an inherent self-righting capability; it also allows good access to her engines as

virtually the whole of the wheelhouse floor, formed of hatches, can be lifted up. The coxswain's position is on the centreline, with good all-round vision. Her twin Caterpillar 3208 NA diesel engines, developing 210 bhp at 2,800 rpm, give the lifeboat a maximum speed of more than 19 knots and a range of 125 nautical miles. On her early trials she has shown herself to be a seakindly boat. She was built by Lochin Marine of Rye and normally carries a crew of four.

33-02 will be named *Ann Ritchie* and is the gift of Mrs J. B. Ritchie who has already donated the 37ft Oakley *James Ball Ritchie* stationed at Ramsey and the 54ft Arun *The Gough Ritchie* stationed at Port St Mary, Isle of Man.

The Brede class lifeboat was introduced to meet an operational requirement for a boat between the rigid inflatable Atlantic 21 class and the larger lifeboats. During her evaluation period at Oban she will operate with arbitrary limitations on launches in severe weather while her capabilities are being assessed.



LIFEBOAT SERVICES

South West Division

Twenty-nine rescued

A MAYDAY RELAY message from the Danish motor vessel *Charlottenburg* was heard by St Peter Port Signal Station at 1323 on Sunday December 13, 1981. *Charlottenburg* was going to the assistance of *Bonita*, an Ecuadorian motor vessel in distress in the English Channel in position 50°00'N, 02°54'W. *Bonita* had developed a list of 40 degrees to starboard. She had 36 people on board including women and children.

St Peter Port crew had assembled aboard the 52ft Arun lifeboat *Sir William Arnold* some time earlier because a vessel was adrift in the harbour and was in danger of fouling the lifeboat. A message was radioed to her by the station honorary secretary and, while she was carefully checked for a prolonged service in heavy weather, the honorary secretary gathered further information regarding the casualty. He could not contact Brixham Coastguards, who were suffering a temporary power failure caused by the storm, but learned from Portland Coastguard that helicopters were not available at Portland and that *Torbay* lifeboat was already going to the help of a yacht. The honorary secretary immediately instructed St Peter Port lifeboat to launch on service; *Sir William Arnold* slipped her moorings at 1400 under the command of Coxswain Michael Scales and set out at full speed.

The wind from the south was blowing a storm force 10 and gusting to hurricane force 12. Driving snow and sea spray had reduced visibility to 200 yards. The sea was extremely rough and confused with overfalls. Low water, spring tide, coincided with the lifeboat's departure.

Course was set north through Little Russel Channel, but the radar was blanked out by heavy snow showers and the boat was navigated by Decca. Near Brehon Tower *Sir William Arnold* broached for the first time but full speed was resumed immediately. On clearing Little Russel Channel, abeam of Platte Fougère Lighthouse, a course of 310°M was set, allowing 20 degrees for leeway. Approaching the traffic separation zone about threequarters of an hour later,

the lifeboat broached again; she was to broach six more times on passage to the casualty but full speed was maintained throughout.

At about 1553 St Peter Port lifeboat passed within two miles to the east of Channel Lightvessel, adjusted her course to 305°M and confirmed her expected time of arrival as 1620. From information received by radio, it was apparent to Coxswain Scales that *Bonita* was drifting 280°R at 2.5 knots. At 1621 he had five targets on his radar and had 3½ miles to go.

At 1630 the lifeboat arrived on scene. It was dusk. The wind, from south south east, was still blowing at force 11 and this violent storm had created a sea of 15 metres. Visibility had improved and Coxswain Scales was able to see two helicopters and also four large vessels round the casualty, all well lit by deck lights. He knew that four people had been lifted off by a Sea King helicopter from RNAS Culdrose in daylight and flown to RNAS Portland, but all subsequent attempts at rescue had failed.

Bonita was lying on a heading of 250°R, listing 45 degrees to starboard, presenting her high side to the wind and rolling heavily. Her lee rails and stanchions were well in the water, as was the starboard wing of her bridge, and some seas were sweeping right over her decks. Several mooring ropes, drums and large pieces of timber were floating, trapped on her lee side.

St Peter Port lifeboat approached the starboard midship area of the casualty and saw a man at the wheelhouse window. She then manoeuvred round the stern and found the crew of *Bonita* assembled on the high side of the ship, beneath the bridge. A pilot ladder was rigged near the crew. Coxswain Scales recognised that he could not effect a rescue from either side of the vessel and so indicated to the crew that they must make their way to the stern.

One man attempted to move aft inboard of the rails. He fell, breaking his leg. His companions could do no more than lash him to the hatch to prevent his being swept overboard. The remainder moved aft clambering along the outboard, high side of the rails.

At the stern Coxswain Scales found that his lifeboat was rising level with *Bonita's* after deck on each crest and falling below the bottom edge of her rudder in the troughs, a distance of 50 feet. He could not lie alongside the transom because the rudder projected beyond it and so he ran in, presenting his port side to the transom. Three men jumped to the lifeboat but their timing was poor and they fell some 25 feet to the deck. One man struck the lifeboat's stanchions and deckhouse and was badly injured. The lifeboat was swept round the stern into the debris but, by using his outboard, starboard, engine only, Coxswain Scales was able to come clear without fouling his propellers and lie off down wind of the casualty.

Coxswain Scales now approached

head-on to the transom. Second Coxswain Peter Bougourd was stationed forward and the crew were stationed down the port side, all secured by their lifelines. While the lifeboat was held under helm and engines, some four to six feet from the transom, Second Coxswain Bougourd threw the heaving line aboard *Bonita*; the wind prevented the line being passed from a greater distance. The run of the swell was trying to carry the stern of the lifeboat round the stern of the ship into the debris and the surge was trying to sweep her on to the deck of the casualty. Two women attached the heaving line around themselves. As they jumped into the sea, the lifeboat came gently astern on her engines until she was two boat lengths from *Bonita*. The survivors were then pulled to the lifeboat and recovered from the lower side deck aft. They were taken to the deckhouse where Motor Mechanic Robert Wowles attended to them. From a distance of five boat lengths the next approach was made.

Five people were rescued in this way. Twice survivors let go of the line when they were in the water and then swam clear of the casualty. The lifeboat crew picked them up from the water when they came clear of the debris.

At this time, about 1715, the wind shifted to the north west and increased slightly. This further confused the sea at the stern of the casualty. One man, without a lifejacket, fell from the stern of *Bonita* while the lifeboat was recovering the next survivor. He was swept into the debris and down the starboard side of the motor vessel. Having recovered the survivor in hand, the lifeboat made off to search for the man who had fallen but *Charlottenburg* reported that she could see him and he appeared to be dead. Coxswain Scales returned to the casualty to take off more survivors.

In the confused sea at the stern of the casualty the lifeboat continued to rescue survivors using the heaving line method. It was now imperative that the lifeboat was held with her bow at right angles to the centre of the transom, otherwise the wind or swell would have carried her round on to *Bonita's* quarters. Some runs in had to be abandoned in order to avoid severe damage to the lifeboat and during one violent astern manoeuvre first one engine, then the other, failed. Although both were restarted quickly, the bow of the lifeboat was trapped under the chine of *Bonita's* transom until the lifeboat's engines pulled her astern. Second Coxswain Bougourd remained in his very dangerous position forward.

From an estimated total of 50 runs in to the transom, ten runs had to be made to take off one man. He sat without a lifejacket and with his legs over the side. Each time he caught the heaving line, but could not hold on to it. The second coxswain finally persuaded him to wrap the line around his hands and then pulled him into the sea.

Having recovered 16 survivors, Coxswain Scales took his lifeboat upwind of *Bonita* while he gave his crew a respite for a few minutes, in good view of the casualty. In the freezing temperature and constant heavy spray, circulation was restored, aching muscles were eased and lifelines were adjusted. Then the lifeboat once again approached *Bonita's* transom. During the respite, a helicopter made several attempted rescues and succeeded in lifting off one man.

Using the heaving line method, the lifeboat crew continued to recover survivors, although frequently engulfed by seas coming aboard. One man was not breathing when he was lifted aboard. Crew Member John Webster took instant action to expel water from his mouth before passing him into the wheelhouse. In the wheelhouse Motor Mechanic Vowles was helping the survivors out of wet clothes and then helping them down into the forward and after cabins, where the heaters were full on.

The captain of *Bonita* was the last man to be recovered by the lifeboat. He confirmed that only one man remained on board. As he had a broken leg, he could not be moved to the transom. Royal Fleet Auxiliary *Olna*, which had accepted the duties of on scene commander on her arrival at 1706, told Coxswain Scales that a helicopter was returning, having refuelled, and would try to lift off the one remaining man. Coxswain Scales asked Brixham Coastguard that Torbay lifeboat, already nearing the scene, should continue coming to give the helicopter help. In view of the serious condition of his severely-injured survivor, Coxswain Scales then set course for Brixham.

Torbay lifeboat, the 54ft Arun *Edward Bridges* (Civil Service No. 37) had, in the meantime, launched on service to go to the help of the yacht *Talvez* and her crew of five. The first call came at 1347 when Coxswain Arthur Curnow heard the yacht calling Brixham Coastguard but getting no response. Discovering that this was due to the power failure, Coxswain Curnow went to the harbour and called *Talvez* on a local trawler's radio. *Talvez* was unsure of her position east of Berry Head in the terrible weather and needed help. Coxswain Curnow informed the Coastguard and Torbay station honorary secretary, who authorised an immediate launch, and *Edward Bridges* slipped her moorings at 1414. She headed for the area six miles east of Berry Head given by *Talvez*, but while on passage heard from Brixham Coastguard, whose power had been restored. The Coastguard were now able to give the yacht's bearing, so the lifeboat altered course to search a new area south south east of Berry Head. She eventually came up with *Talvez* at 1545. The yacht, which had lowered her sails, was motoring but running out of fuel; there were rock shoals 1½ miles to leeward. A heaving line was used to pass a tow, the towline was se-

cured to the yacht's mast and course was set for Brixham. Both vessels were surfing in the huge following swell and seas which made progress difficult and erratic and at one stage the tow had to be slipped, cleared and passed again.

When, at 1700, Torbay honorary secretary was informed of the plight of *Bonita*, and the help of Torbay lifeboat was requested, *Edward Bridges* and her tow still had some way to go to harbour. No other vessel was available to take over the tow, so *Edward Bridges* continued to Brixham with *Talvez*. The yacht was safely moored at 1745 and her crew landed. Torbay lifeboat then took on three additional crew, dry oilskins and provisions and at 1800 set out to help St Peter Port lifeboat.

It was 1954 when St Peter Port lifeboat set course for Brixham. Only minutes after leaving *Bonita*, the lifeboat fell into a deep trough while steaming into a force 10 to 11 head wind and head seas. Speed was reduced to make the best possible progress while preventing further injury to the survivors.

Torbay lifeboat continued on her way, but when about a mile from *Bonita* she heard that the one injured man remaining on board had been rescued by the French tug *Abeille Languedoc*, which had been standing by. At 2010, the injured man was seen to slip from his position on the stern hatch cover, regain a handhold, and finally fall into the sea. Captain Claude Jouin, master of *Abeille Languedoc*, waited until the man was clear of *Bonita's* masts and then moved in and rescued him from the water. As she was, therefore, no longer needed, Torbay lifeboat was released and started her return passage to her station.

St Peter Port lifeboat arrived at Brixham at 2313, where she was met by members of Torbay station; Coxswain Scales kept the survivors on board until blankets had been provided to ease the shock of emerging into the bitterly cold night air. The crew of St Peter Port lifeboat, by now exhausted, spent the night at Brixham; they sailed for their home port at 1030 the following day, with only minimal damage to their lifeboat. At 1430 that day, Monday December 14, *Sir William Arnold* was again on station and at 1500 she was ready for service.

Meanwhile, Torbay lifeboat had arrived back at Brixham at 0400 on December 14.

The injured survivor died two days later. *Bonita* was last seen at 0500 on December 14 and it was later confirmed that she had sunk in position 50°04.4N, 02°30.2'W.

For this service the gold medal for conspicuous gallantry was awarded to Coxswain Michael J. Scales of St Peter Port lifeboat and the bronze medal was awarded to each of his crew: Second Coxswain Peter N. Bougourd, Motor Mechanic Robert L. Vowles, Assistant Mechanic Alan F. Martel and Crew Members John Webster, John P. Bougourd, Peter J. Bisson and Richard

J. Hamon. A framed letter of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, was sent to Captain Claude Jouin, master of the French tug *Abeille Languedoc* and letters of appreciation signed by Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution, were sent to the commanding officers of Royal Naval Air Stations Portland and Culdrose and to the masters of RFA *Olna* and mv *Charlottenburg*. Letters signed by Rear Admiral Graham were also sent to Captain B. J. Anderson, Torbay station honorary secretary, expressing the Institution's appreciation to Coxswain Arthur Curnow and his crew for the service to *Talvez* and for the help given by members of the station to the crew of St Peter Port lifeboat and the survivors of *Bonita*, and to Inspector R. Willcox of Paignton, expressing appreciation for the support of the Police.

East Division

Listing coaster

HUMBER COASTGUARD informed Superintendent Coxswain Brian Bevan of Humber lifeboat station at 2256 on Sunday December 13, 1981, that the coaster *Harry Mitchell* was north of Humber Lightvessel with her cargo shifted and a list of 30 degrees. By 2304 the crew were mustered and at the same time the Coastguard told Coxswain Bevan that the coaster had five crew on board, her radar was not working and communications had been lost.

Humber lifeboat, the 54ft Arun *City of Bradford IV*, slipped her moorings at Spurn Point at 2318 and set out on service. It was a heavily overcast night with continuous snow; visibility was 1½ miles. A storm, force 10, was blowing from south east. It was 4½ hours after high water.

Within five minutes of leaving her moorings the lifeboat felt the full force of the south-easterly storm against the spring ebb. Speed had to be reduced to avoid excessive pounding in rolling head seas. Communications had been re-established between *Harry Mitchell* and the Coastguard, who reported her position as 4.4 miles north north east of Humber Lightvessel. A north-north-easterly course was set for this position, and now the weather was on the lifeboat's beam. Heavy breaking seas constantly knocked her down the swell side, but a speed of 14 knots was maintained.

Information came from the Coastguard that an RAF Wessex helicopter had been requested from Leonfield and an RAF Sea King helicopter from Boulmer. At 0020 the lifeboat made radio contact with *Harry Mitchell* and at 0039 she sighted the casualty.

The south-easterly storm was now gusting to violent storm, force 11, with heavy breaking seas and a 20ft swell, *Harry Mitchell* was trying to hold her head up into wind and sea but she was having great difficulty as her rudder and

Newhaven, Sunday December 13: Soon after midday two calls were received in quick succession. A gale, gusting above force 10, was blowing from south south east; the spring tide was in the first hour of the ebb and seas in the harbour and at the harbour entrance were mountainous when the 44ft Waveney relief lifeboat 44-001, on temporary duty at Newhaven, set out under the command of Coxswain/Mechanic Len Patten to go to the help of a yacht in trouble. When about two miles west of Newhaven a message came that the 25ft trawler Orlando had capsized 50 yards east of the harbour breakwater. The yacht reported that she was now safely under way, so the Waveney headed back for the trawler wreckage. Meanwhile, the 46ft 9in Watson relief lifeboat Tynesider, whose home port when not on relief station duty is Newhaven, was launched under the command of former Coxswain Edgar Moore. The Waveney picked up one fisherman from the wreckage of Orlando, but although the two lifeboats and an RN helicopter searched for some time nothing could be found of the other member of the trawler's crew. (Right) conditions inside the bight of Newhaven breakwater arm. (Below) Waveney lifeboat 44-001 entering



harbour with one survivor from Orlando on board. photographs by courtesy of G. Jones



congratulated the lifeboat and said he would return to base. The Sea King helicopter had by this time reached Flamborough Head, flying at 140 knots but only making 50 knots over the ground in the prevailing conditions; she also was released.

Harry Mitchell was now six miles north north east of Humber Lightvessel and her captain managed to turn her head to sea. Then, with the lifeboat as escort, she started to creep towards the Humber. At 0542, in moderating conditions in the River Humber, a pilot boarded and the lifeboat put the three men they had taken off back on the cargo vessel. The lifeboat returned to station at 0600 and by 0623 was re-moored and ready for service.

For this service a bar to his bronze medal was awarded to Superintendent Coxswain Brian W. Bevan, and medal service certificates were presented to Second Coxswain Dennis Bailey, Motor Mechanic Robert S. White, Assistant Mechanic Peter Thorpe and Crew Members Sydney Rollinson and Jack Essex.

West Division Angling launch

THE HONORARY SECRETARY of **Beumaris** lifeboat station was informed by Penmon Coastguard at 1220 on Sunday December 13, 1981, that the 35ft angling launch *Wygyr* was in difficulties and needed urgent assistance off Puffin Island in the approaches to the Menai Straits.

A strong gale, force 9, was blowing from south south east, there was driving snow and it was freezing. Conditions on land were severe. An exceptionally high tide combined with the gales had flooded a large proportion of the town. Seas were breaking freely over the sea wall.

Maroons were fired at 1230 and because the honorary secretary was cut off, the deputy launching authority

propeller were often clear of the water. She was listing 30 degrees to port with baulks of timber hanging over her port side and, as she rolled, her port side up to the middle of her deck hatches was at times submerged. Her captain asked for his crew to be taken off and, to make this possible, Coxswain Bevan asked him to turn to port and take up a north-westerly heading.

The Wessex helicopter, which had had to put down at Easington to clear snow from her engine intakes, arrived overhead at 0102. However, because of the ferocity of the weather and the violent movement of the cargo vessel, winching would have been hazardous.

In preparation for going alongside *Harry Mitchell's* starboard quarter, the lifeboat's port bow was fendered and three crew members took up positions on the starboard bow ready to grab survivors. Assistant Mechanic Peter Thorpe operated the searchlight.

The first approach was made at 0105, but it had to be broken off and the lifeboat's engines put full astern as a heavy breaking sea hit the casualty exposing her propeller and rudder.

Three men could be seen in the stern sheltering from the breaking seas. A second approach also had to be abandoned as a heavy sea pushed the lifeboat towards *Harry Mitchell's* stern. Then, as both vessels bottomed in a trough, the lifeboat was edged alongside and one survivor jumped; he landed on the lifeboat's stem and hung on to the stem fairlead, where he was grabbed by the lifeboatmen and dragged in-board. The lifeboat cleared astern.

On the next approach, as the two vessels came close together, a large sea lifted the lifeboat stern and *Harry Mitchell* started to fall down on to her; the lifeboat engines were put full astern and such was the angle of the two boats that the side of the casualty scraped paint off and slightly damaged the top of the lifeboat pulpit rail.

A second survivor was taken off successfully at the next attempt, but three more approaches had to be made before the third survivor was taken off, at 0114. *Harry Mitchell's* captain now said he and the mate would remain on board and try to take his vessel to the Humber. The Wessex helicopter pilot

went to the Atlantic 21 lifeboathouse and acted as launching authority throughout the service. A Land Rover belonging to one of the lifeboatmen took most of the crew to the station, sometimes ploughing through two feet of water. Motor Mechanic Eric Jones was helped by a Police patrol but their vehicle stalled in deep water and he finished the journey to the boathouse in a fire engine which had been engaged in pumping out flooded buildings.

Gaining access to the boathouse posed a further problem. The seas were breaking over the catwalk and spending themselves on the beach. Having passed this hazard and gained the comparative safety of the catwalk the crew found themselves facing the crests of seas which were rolling along the catwalk to a depth of some two to three feet on the lower section. By the time the crew gained the shelter of the boathouse they were all thoroughly drenched and bitterly cold.

Nevertheless, at 1245, the 46ft 9in Watson lifeboat *Greater London II (Civil Service No 30)* launched into the blizzard on service under the command of Coxswain David Gallichan. It was just after high water and the sea was very rough with breaking crests some three metres high. Because of the seas and the height of the tide it had been necessary to launch from the top of the slipway inside the boathouse, so that masts and aerials could not be raised until the lifeboat was afloat. With great difficulty the crew raised the mast but it proved too hazardous to attempt to raise the radar scanner or radio aerials. Shortly after launching the windscreen wiper failed, causing severe visibility problems for Coxswain Gallichan.

A course was set down the straits towards Puffin Sound, with lookouts posted not only to look for the casualty but to act as 'eyes' for the coxswain. Throughout this passage the lifeboat was pitching and rolling violently in a corkscrew motion. Eyewitnesses on shore soon lost sight of the lifeboat in the atrocious conditions, and although distress flares were fired from the casualty, they could not be seen by the lifeboat.

The VHF radio has a low profile emergency aerial, but a fault developed in the radio itself so that, until Puffin Sound was negotiated and Coxswain Gallichan could heave to in the comparative calm of the lee of the island to enable the crew to erect the aerials, communications were nil. Then, at 1320, once again in touch with Anglesey Radio on MF 2182 kHz, Coxswain Gallichan continued to search round the end of Puffin Island and to the south. Nothing was seen. The lifeboat was continually being swept by breaking seas and she was rolling heavily. The radar operator only had one fleeting echo from Puffin Island because of the sea clutter and snow.

From information relayed from Penmon Coastguard through Anglesey

Radio it was clear that *Wygyr* was being carried out through the Sound. The lifeboat returned back round the island and approached the sound from the north and, at 1353, the casualty was sighted near Perch Rock. At this time VHF communications were established with Penmon Coastguard.

The rising wind, now from the south east, was in excess of storm force and visibility remained poor. With the sea very rough and both boats pitching and rolling very heavily, Coxswain Gallichan considered it too dangerous to try to go alongside and take off *Wygyr's* crew. He therefore decided to try to tow the fishing boat to safety.

The lifeboat's windscreen was completely covered by a thick build up of snow and ice. Coxswain and crew, soaked before launching, were now feeling the effects of extreme cold.

Coxswain Gallichan took the lifeboat close alongside *Wygyr*, a heaving line was thrown and a tow line passed. The two anglers made fast the tow, but such was the rate of drift that both boats were by this time clear of Dinmor Buoy.

The tow began to the south, passing to the west of Dinmor Buoy and then east south east into the Sound. *Wygyr* was sailing heavily, placing considerably strain on the towing warp. It was decided to pass a second line and, after several attempts, this was finally achieved by floating the line down to the casualty. The tow was resumed and the lifeboat reported approaching the Sound at 1427. Very slow progress was being made as the effects of wind, sea and tide became more severe in the shallow water and constricted channel.

At 1517, when just past B2 Buoy, one of the tow lines chafed through and parted. Realising the serious risk of losing the tow altogether in the restricted sea room and very rough waters, Coxswain Gallichan decided that the two men must be taken off the casualty and that the only chance of achieving this end safely would be to head up into wind and sea and, with astern movements, gradually shorten in the tow bringing the boat up to the lifeboat's stern. This was an arduous manoeuvre calling for great skill and control from the coxswain and considerable efforts from the crew. *Wygyr* ranged alarmingly as the tow was taken in. At one time she ranged up alongside the lifeboat to starboard, rolling heavily so that the turn of her bilge guardrail and fender. Then she came clear astern and took a sheer, coming up on the lifeboat's port side, stern to. As she came close both anglers took the opportunity to jump aboard the lifeboat. It was now 1535.

Although Coxswain Gallichan tried to resume the tow up the straits, it was only two minutes before the remaining warp parted and the casualty was quickly blown ashore at Trwyn Du, where she started to break up.

The lifeboat continued up the straits

to Menai Bridge. Visibility was so poor that the manager of the *Gazelle* Hotel was asked to put the hotel's lights on to assist navigation. The lifeboat berthed at Menai to land the two men at 1640 and returned to her mooring at 1730. Because of the weather she was unable to rehouse until 1400 on Tuesday December 15.

For this service the bronze medal was awarded to Coxswain David W. Gallichan and medal service certificates were presented to Second Coxswain David Wynne Jones, Motor Mechanic Eric F. Jones, Emergency Mechanics David A. Cooke and John G. L. Parry and Crew Members Michael Witkowski, John Latchem, Brian J. Roberts and Joseph P. Kopyto. Letters of appreciation signed by Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution, were sent to Shore Helpers Stanley Zalot, John M. Stone, David E. Jones and Peter Dickie.

West Division

On a lee shore

INFORMATION from Ministry of Defence Police that a catamaran, *Helen M*, was anchored in a dangerous position off Pendine was received by Tenby Coastguard at 2110 on Wednesday October 7, 1981. Two of the catamaran's crew members had rowed ashore to obtain fuel, leaving the owner on board, and then conditions had become such that they were unable to return to the boat.

A message was passed to the honorary secretary of **Tenby** lifeboat station at 2128, maroons were fired and within minutes the 46ft 9in Watson lifeboat *Henry Comber Brown* was launched on service under the command of Coxswain Joshua Richards.

The south-westerly wind was gusting to strong gale, force 9, and the sea was very rough with a heavy swell. It was two hours after low water.

The lifeboat headed at full speed towards the position of *Helen M*, a quarter of a mile off the beach just inside Gilman Point, about half a mile from Pendine. Good time was made, running before the swells, and *Henry Comber Brown* arrived in the vicinity of *Helen M* at 2218.

The catamaran was seen to be at anchor in about seven feet of water. She was being swept by heavy breaking seas and she was pitching and shearing in an alarming manner. Conditions were deteriorating and it was clear that her position was critical. There was no sign of life on deck and it was assumed that the owner had sensibly stayed below to avoid the risk of being swept overboard.

Realising that any attempt to go alongside would incur the risk of damage to the casualty, perhaps resulting in her foundering and the loss of her skipper, and that to try to put a crew member on board would also be hazardous, Coxswain Richards anchored

ahead of *Helen M* and slightly to the east. Then, with skilful use of the engines, he veered the lifeboat down towards her in an attempt to pick up her anchor cable and then tow her clear of the shoal water. Great care was needed to make sure that the anchor cable did not foul the lifeboat's propellers.

While some of the lifeboatmen took hold of the anchor cable, Crew Members John John and Michael Wilson managed to scramble aboard *Helen M*. The crew aboard the lifeboat were just starting to recover the cable, before towing the catamaran clear, when the cable parted and the catamaran began to be driven towards the shore.

Coxswain Richards, knowing how little time there was, immediately ordered the lifeboat's own anchor cable to be slipped; to recover the anchor would have taken too long. Meanwhile, on board *Helen M*, Crew Members John and Wilson found a spare anchor, secured it to a nylon rope and threw it over the side, hoping to check the drift towards the beach. Fortunately, this anchor took hold and Coxswain Richards was able to take the lifeboat in a wide sweep round and close enough to the catamaran's port beam to pass a line to the crew on board. The line was secured and Coxswain Richards took up the strain with the lifeboat and began to tow the boat into deeper water.

Throughout these manoeuvres both boats, pitching and rolling heavily, had been continually swept by the seas which were estimated by eye witnesses to be 12 to 15 feet high.

The passage back to Tenby meant steaming into wind and sea and great care had to be taken to maintain the tow; despite the efforts of the two crew members on board, the casualty was yawing badly. Nevertheless, by 2330 the lifeboat and her tow had arrived back at Tenby. *Helen M* was safely secured to a mooring and her owner chose to remain on board.

After recovering his two crew members, Coxswain Richards returned to station, the lifeboat being rehoused and ready for service at 0130 on Thursday October 8.

For this service a bar to his bronze medal was awarded to Coxswain Joshua W. Richards and the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Crew Members John John and Michael Wilson. Medal service certificates were presented to Second Coxswain William A. Thomas, Assistant Mechanic Roy Young, Emergency Mechanic Denny R. Young and Crew Members Michael Crockford and Roger Crockford.

West Division

Tugs aground

ST ANNE'S COASTGUARD informed the honorary secretary of St David's lifeboat station at 2020 on Sunday October 18, 1981, that the tug *Vernicos Giorgos*, with two other tugs in tow, had a rope round her propeller and was dragging her anchors in the northern part of St Brides Bay. By 2134 the tugs were close to the rocks and the Coastguard requested the launch of St David's lifeboat. Maroons were fired and the 46ft 9in Watson relief lifeboat *Charles Henry Ashley*, on temporary service at St David's, launched at 2156 under the command of Coxswain/Mechanic Frederick John.

A south-westerly gale force 8 was blowing and the combined sea and swell was about seven feet high. It was slack water, 45 minutes before high water. Visibility was five miles.

After launching, Coxswain John set a southerly course through Ramsay Sound and then turned east into St Brides Bay. By 2254 the lifeboat was 4½ miles south west of Green Scar. The tug master was instructed by the Coast-

guard to fire a red flare and the exact position of the tugs was fixed as 51°52'N, 05°13'W.

The lifeboat arrived at this position at 2316. The two tugs being towed were already on the rocks, but the towing tug, *Vernicos Giorgos*, was still afloat. She was riding to two anchors which were slowly dragging, taking the tug remorselessly on to the rocks. The crews of all three tugs, eight men, were aboard *Vernicos Giorgos*. Waves were breaking over all three tugs and *Vernicos Giorgos*, at anchor, was entirely at the mercy of the sea.

The south-westerly gale was gusting up to force 9 and the seas were estimated from on shore to be 15 to 20 feet high. The water was so shallow that *Vernicos Giorgos* was hitting the bottom in every trough and every wave was breaking over her. The tide was now ebbing to the west at about 2 knots, making the confused seas worse, with wind against tide.

By 2316 the lifeboat had approached *Vernicos Giorgos*. To avoid the anchors lying out over the port bow of the tug, Coxswain John decided to come alongside her starboard bow, thus putting himself between the weather and the casualty. The position was further complicated by the tow rope from the tug; it was difficult in the darkness to see how it lay. The whole rescue took place using the searchlight to illuminate the scene.

Coxswain John made five approaches to the tug, on each occasion clearing her again by going astern into the sea, with waves breaking over the lifeboat. The first two and the fourth approaches had to be abandoned, but two men were taken off at the third approach and one more man was taken off at the fifth approach. Throughout this manoeuvre the lifeboat was pitching almost uncontrollably and great skill was needed to hold her in position.

The tug master had decided to remain on board with the four remaining members of the crew, hoping that a salvage tug he had ordered from Milford Haven might still arrive in time to pull him clear. Coxswain John warned him by VHF that, as the tide was falling, before long the lifeboat would be unable to reach him. Just after midnight *Vernicos Giorgos* grounded and the tug master then requested that he and his crew be taken off. St David's lifeboat could not now approach because there was not enough water, so, while the lifeboat and the local cliff rescue company illuminated the scene a helicopter from RAF Brawdy carried out an extremely skilful rescue of the remaining five men. The lifeboat then returned to station; she was rehoused and ready for service at 0200 on Monday October 19.

For this service the bronze medal was awarded to Coxswain/Mechanic Frederick G. John and medal service certificates were presented to Acting Second Coxswain John H. Phillips, Acting Assistant Mechanic David J.

St David's, October 18, 1981: The tug Vernicos Giorgos, partially submerged, with one of the two tugs she had been towing. The photograph was taken the day after the eight crew of the three tugs had been taken off by lifeboat and helicopter (see above).



Bateman and Crew Members Michael J. Morris, Norman Rowley, Keith Jones and David J. O. Chant.

East Division

Engine room flooded

THE COXSWAIN of *Wells* lifeboat was informed by HM Coastguard at 1412 on Friday November 20, 1981, that there was a possible casualty 2½ miles north of Brancaster, and the coxswain immediately passed on to the station honorary secretary a request to anticipate a call. At 1425 the Coastguard confirmed that there was a definite sighting and asked that the lifeboat should launch. Maroons were fired and at 1439 *Wells* lifeboat, the 37ft *Oakley Ernest Tom Neathercoat*, launched from her carriage into the harbour under the command of Coxswain David Cox.

The afternoon was overcast and, in the rain, visibility was only moderate. A gale, force 8, was blowing from the north west. It was high water.

Ten minutes later the lifeboat cleared the bar and turned west, leaving the rough seas and heavy swell on her starboard bow as she set out at full speed, keeping inshore to reduce the effects of the adverse tide.

At 1510 an RAF Sea King helicopter reported that she was with the casualty, the motor fishing vessel *Sarah K*, whose engine room was flooded. The lifeboat continued on her course until she was off Scott Head, at 1530, when she headed west north west for the fishing vessel's position off Woolpack Buoy. *Sarah K* was sighted at 1542 and reached at 1613.

The wind was now north west, gale to strong gale, force 8 to 9, with rough short seas over the shoals. It was still raining with moderate visibility. *Sarah K* was lying bows south with her starboard quarter to the seas.

The lifeboat stood off as a second RAF Sea King helicopter lowered a pump on to *Sarah K*. At 1630, in the failing light, Coxswain Cox approached the fishing vessel to discuss the position with her skipper, who asked to be towed to King's Lynn. In the very rough weather, Coxswain Cox considered the casualty to be too large for the lifeboat to tow.

At 1724 *Sarah K*'s large foremast broke and fell to starboard. As the helicopters had withdrawn, Coxswain Cox decided to go in and take off the crew. An attempt was made to go alongside the fishing vessel's port bow but, close to, the bow sheer was seen to be too great and the lifeboat stood off. The next approach was made starboard side to the casualty's port midships, and it was made at a steep angle to avoid the trawl doors on the after port quarter. In the now total darkness two fishermen were snatched off as the boats rolled together and then the lifeboat cleared the casualty going full astern. Another

approach was made and a third man taken aboard. Again the lifeboat pulled astern and waited for the skipper to check the pumps. At 1737 the skipper signalled that he was ready and the lifeboat again went alongside and took him off.

As soon as the skipper was on board, Coxswain Cox informed the Coastguard that *Sarah K* was adrift, so that she was a possible danger to navigation.

At 1815, with the wind moderating to force 6, the skipper was put back aboard *Sarah K* to try to put down the anchor. By 1838 the crippled fishing vessel was anchored 1¾ miles west of Bridgirdle and her skipper back on board the lifeboat. About a quarter of an hour later *Sarah K*'s after mast split and the lifeboat decided to return to station.

Passage was made back to Holkham Bay but, on arrival at 1931, the launching tractor broke down. The lifeboat lay off until repairs had been made at 2113. By 2204 she was re-carried and by 2305 she was rehoused and once again ready for service.

For this service the bronze medal was awarded to Coxswain David J. Cox, BEM. Medal service certificates were presented to Second Coxswain Anthony T. Jordan, Motor Mechanic Albert Court, Assistant Mechanic Alan M. Cox and Crew Members Albert Warner, Graham B. Walker, John R. Nudds and John Betts.

South East Division

Four people landed

A SUDDEN DETERIORATION in the weather on the afternoon of Saturday September 19, 1981, caught out a fleet of Fireball sailing dinghies at a meeting off Felpham, and at 1730 HM Coastguard informed the honorary secretary of **Littlehampton** lifeboat station that the sailing club's safety boats needed help. Maroons were fired and at 1740 the station's Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat launched on service. Manned by Helmsman David Woollven and Crew Members Geoffrey Warminger and Michael McCartain, she set out at full speed for the harbour mouth.

The south-south-easterly wind, which had been force 4 to 5, had increased to gale force 8, with heavy rain restricting visibility. It was about two hours after high water.

Speed was reduced as heavy seas were met on the harbour bar and, once the bar was crossed, a variable course was steered to ease the effect of the beam sea. When the Atlantic 21 arrived in the search area, 2½ miles to the west of the harbour mouth and 1½ miles south of Middleton, her crew were told by the Coastguard mobile that, although all the sailing dinghies were accounted for, a safety boat was missing. Then, at 1805, it was reported that this boat also was safely ashore.

The Atlantic approached the committee boat, the 40ft trimaran *Lara of Bosham*, to check the situation and found that she had a Fireball dinghy in tow but was making little headway. In going alongside, a heavy sea drove the lifeboat against *Lara of Bosham*, holing her and damaging the lifeboat's bow sponson. Despite heavy seas, the dinghy's crew of two, who were suffering from exposure, were transferred to the lifeboat and placed in survivor bags. The dinghy was then cast adrift and the lifeboat set out for Littlehampton. She was 'driven' eastward, each heavy sea calling for special care with helm and engines because Crew Member McCartain was lying on the foredeck cradling the heads of the dinghy sailors to avoid injury in the pounding, particularly over the harbour bar.

After landing the dinghy sailors to a waiting ambulance, the Atlantic returned to the harbour entrance ready, at her skipper's request, to escort *Lara of Bosham* in over the bar. However, at 1850 the trimaran asked for immediate help as she was being driven on to a lee shore by the increasing gale force wind.

Helmsman Woollven took the Atlantic 21 over the bar, now covered by very heavy confused seas up to 12 feet high, and the trimaran was reached at 1900 just west of the harbour entrance. Two of her women crew, suffering severe seasickness, were safely taken off and placed in survivor bags; by 1915 the lifeboat had again returned in over the bar to land them.

In almost total darkness, Helmsman Woollven immediately took the Atlantic back to sea for a third time to stand by the trimaran. The wind had veered to south west, gusting up to storm force 10, and *Lara of Bosham* was able to make better headway. The falling tide made the passage over the bar extremely hazardous, but by 1940 the trimaran had been safely escorted into harbour and had been moored. The Atlantic 21 returned to her station and by 2015 she was refuelled and ready for service.

For this service the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Helmsman David W. Woollven. Framed letters of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, were presented to Crew Members Geoffrey J. Warminger and Michael B. W. McCartain.

South East Division

Injured crew

DURING THE AFTERNOON of Friday October 9, 1981, the 38,000 ton Danish container vessel *Dragør Maersk*, on passage from Hamburg to Port Said, told east coast radio stations that a crew member with a fractured hip needed to be taken ashore. South-westerly gales, force 8 to 9, and high seas ruled out a helicopter service in daylight and, while *Dragør Maersk* gave her expected time

of arrival off Dover as midnight, her exact position was not known. At 2102 Dover Coastguard telephoned Dover station honorary secretary, explaining earlier events and amending the container vessel's ETA off Dover to 0100 on Saturday October 10. After discussion with Coxswain Anthony Hawkins it was agreed that the injured man should be taken off by lifeboat and that the lifeboatmen, together with Dr Peter Welch, the honorary medical adviser, should muster to consider a plan of action for an evacuation from such a large vessel.

The crew assembled at 2300 and a full 'dry' exercise was carried out with a patient in the Neil Robertson stretcher, lashed into the rigid cot stretcher, to find the correct point of balance for lifting the combined unit.

At 0014 on Saturday October 10 Dover's 50ft Thames class lifeboat *Rotary Service* slipped her moorings and set out at full speed carrying a complement of ten; she was under the command of Coxswain Hawkins. The east pierhead was cleared and as course was set eastward to the agreed rendezvous 1½ miles south west of South Goodwin Lightship very heavy seas and a quartering swell were encountered.

Arriving at the rendezvous at 0200, the lifeboat was taken to *Dragør Maersk's* port side as she lay heading south east to provide a lee. Dr Welch, Second Coxswain/Mechanic Roy Couzens and Crew Member/First Aider Garth James, activated their lifejacket lights before preparing to go aboard the container vessel. Coxswain Hawkins placed the lifeboat's starboard bow alongside *Dragør Maersk* and Second Coxswain Couzens stepped on to her power assisted pilot ladder; after climbing the first six feet, the mechanical hoist lifted him the remaining 30 feet to deck level. Dr Welch and Crew Member James boarded separately in the same way. Despite the lee offered by the container vessel, Coxswain Hawkins had difficulty holding the lifeboat in position alongside in the heavy seas.

On reaching the deck the medical party were met by the chief engineer and, while Dr Welch and Crew Member James were taken by lift through the accommodation to the injured man, Second Coxswain Couzens supervised the lifting aboard of the first aid bags, stretchers and portable VHF radio by a stores derrick two decks above on the after deck; he decided that the derrick wire and hook were too heavy and uncontrollable for the lowering of the stretcher and arranged for a hand line to be rigged through the derrick head lead.

The lifeboat meanwhile was lying off and Coxswain Hawkins noticed that the container vessel was being driven up tide by the gale. He advised the master to re-position as *Dragør Maersk* was only one mile from South Goodwin Lightvessel.

By 0230 Dr Welch had examined the patient and had diagnosed a fractured

pelvis. The man was placed in a survivor's lifejacket and bump hat before being secured in the Neil Robertson stretcher, which in turn was then securely lashed within the cot stretcher. The medical party had great difficulty in moving the patient through the vessel's alleyways to the after deck, but at 0240 all was ready.

Dr Welch wished to be taken off first, to receive the patient on board the lifeboat. He was lowered on the pilot hoist and climbed down the fixed part of the ladder, waiting there, holding on, until Coxswain Hawkins could bring the lifeboat's foredeck under the hoist and he was told to jump. A crew member grabbed the doctor's lifejacket straps and held him safely on board.

After this transfer and one unsuccessful attempt to close the vessel again, Coxswain Hawkins asked the master to steam slowly ahead because *Dragør Maersk's* drift against the ebb tide was causing six foot seas, even on her lee side. At the second attempt the lifeboat was held firmly alongside, starboard bow to, and, with the lifeboat searchlight and the ship's deck lights illuminating the area well, the transfer of the stretcher began.

Five crew members stood by on the foredeck while Second Coxswain Couzens and Crew Member James lowered the stretcher the 45 feet by hand, with turns on the container vessel's rail. The derrick held the stretcher about five feet outboard and *Dragør Maersk's* crew tended two heaving lines to steady the load. As the stretcher reached the foredeck, the lifeboat crew held it and immediately cut all lines before the rise and fall of the two vessels could cause trouble. Second Coxswain Couzens and Crew Member James were then taken off by way of the pilot hoist.

At 0315 the lifeboat began her passage to Dover across very heavy seas. Many times Coxswain Hawkins had to use his throttles to reduce as far as possible the violent motion of the boat, and one crew member, thrown against the midships anchor stowage, injured his ankle. By 0345 the lifeboat had landed the patient to a waiting ambulance at the harbour steps, and by 0415 she was refuelled and once again ready for service.

A telegram was later received by the crew of Dover lifeboat from the master of *Dragør Maersk* which read:

'Please receive my heartfelt thanks for your brilliant assistance rendered my injured crew member. Well done folks. Best regards.'

For this service the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Coxswain/Assistant Mechanic Anthony G. Hawkins and a special doctor's vellum to Dr Peter S. Welch. Vellum service certificates were presented to Second Coxswain/Mechanic Roy W. Couzens, Second Assistant Mechanic Michael F. Abbot and Crew Members Geoffrey I. Buckland, Robert J. Bruce, Alan G. Barker, Alan K.

Perkins, Garth V. James and Kenneth W. Miles.

South East Division

Rising winds

RYE AUXILIARY COASTGUARD requested the launch of **Rye Harbour** lifeboat at 1350 on Saturday October 3 following reports that the 24ft ketch *Midley Belle* was heading out to sea. It was a squally afternoon with moderate confused seas over Rye Bar. At 1354 Rye Harbour's D class inflatable lifeboat was launched manned by Helmsman Richard Tollett and Crew Members Colin James and Jeffrey Robus. While the lifeboat was still within the river, however, she was recalled because the yacht cleared the bar safely.

The lifeboat was rehoused at 1420 but the deputy launching authority and auxiliary coastguard remained at the harbour mouth keeping watch. When, at 1516 as *Midley Belle* was trying to return to harbour, she was seen to lose her main sheet, the lifeboat was asked to launch again; the yacht had also suffered engine failure and was now in a dangerous position in the bar surf. The lifeboat launched on service at 1519 manned by Helmsman Keith Downey and Crew Members Richard Tollett and Philip Jones.

The wind, which had been westerly moderate to fresh, was rising and the seas over the bar were eight feet high; it was almost one hour after high water.

With great skill Helmsman Downey took the inflatable lifeboat safely through the 50 yard passage over the bar. The yacht had by now been carried a mile eastward towards Camber Sands and as the lifeboat reached her at 1525 her skipper indicated that three of the seven people on board needed to be taken off.

Three approaches were made, each run being timed to coincide with a wave trough. Each time the lifeboat drew alongside, one of the three people waiting, two women and a boy, jumped into the boat on the helmsman's order.

Up to this point *Midley Belle* had been in extremely shallow water but when, at 1530, Rye lifeboat cleared the yacht her skipper thought he could get his boat under command and steer off the land. The help of **Dungeness** lifeboat, the 37ft 6in Rother *Alice Upjohn*, was now requested by the Coastguard; she launched on service at 1538 under the command of Coxswain William Richardson and set out at full speed.

Helmsman Downey landed the two women and the boy immediately inside the harbour mouth, from where they were driven to an ambulance.

By 1550 Rye D class inflatable lifeboat was once again on her way out over the bar. The wind was still rising and twelve feet seas covered the area. Helmsman Downey cleared the bar and after some ten minutes in the open sea

sighted *Midley Belle* sailing on a safe course to the south south east, where Dungeness Rother lifeboat would meet her in some 40 minutes.

After two very heavy seas had filled the Rye inflatable lifeboat, Helmsman Downey decided it would be prudent to return to station. The wind was now gale force 8 gusting to strong gale force 9 against a full ebb tide and, with only three feet of water on the bar, the homeward passage was extremely hazardous; continual changes of course and speed had to be made to counter the seas. Rye Harbour lifeboat returned to station at 1605 and was once again ready for service at 1630.

Dungeness lifeboat came up with *Midley Belle* at 1705 and as the wind, now south westerly, was gusting to storm force 10 with heavy rain it was decided that it would be safer to take off her crew in the shelter of Dungeness. The yacht was therefore taken in tow to a safe anchorage 2½ miles north east by north of Dungeness Lighthouse. Her four remaining crew were transferred to the lifeboat and brought ashore. Dungeness lifeboat returned to station at 1845 and she was rehousing and once again ready for service at 1910.

For this service a framed letter of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, was presented to Helmsman Keith W. Downey. Letters of appreciation signed by Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director, were sent to Crew Members Richard Tollett and Philip A. Jones of Rye Harbour lifeboat station. A letter signed by Admiral Graham expressing the Institution's appreciation to Coxswain William Richardson and his crew was sent to Mr W. J. Oiller, Dungeness station honorary secretary.

East Division

Pounding on bank

GREAT YARMOUTH Coastguard informed the honorary secretary of **Lowestoft** lifeboat station at 0215 on Thursday April 16, 1981, that the Panamanian coaster *Avenir* was aground 1½ miles north east of Lowestoft and bouncing on the banks. Lowestoft lifeboat, the 47ft Watson *Frederick Edward Crick*, slipped her mooring at 0237 and, under the command of Second Coxswain John Catchpole, set out on service.

It was an overcast night with moderate visibility. A strong breeze, force 6, was blowing from the north east and the sea was very rough. It was half an hour after low water.

On clearing harbour full speed was made towards the casualty, which could be seen stranded on Holm Sand. As the lifeboat approached, *Avenir* could be seen pounding on the bottom in the heavy breaking seas being driven over the bank. The master asked that he and his four crew should be taken off.

Acting Coxswain Catchpole decided

to go straight in to the coaster's starboard side. A first attempt to get alongside was made at 0300 but there was not enough water; the lifeboat herself was pounding on the bank and she could not get close to the casualty. Pulling off astern, she tried two more approaches from other angles, hoping to find enough water, but each time she had to clear astern. On a fourth attempt, however, although still hitting bottom, the lifeboat was driven alongside and all five men were taken off before, at 0320, she pulled off again stern first.

Passage was made back to Lowestoft and the five men were landed at 0355. The lifeboat was refuelled, back on her mooring and ready for service at 0410.

For this service a framed letter of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, was presented to Second Coxswain John W. Catchpole.

Ireland Division

Two medical calls

BELFAST COASTGUARD informed the honorary secretary of **Portrush** lifeboat station at 1505 on Sunday November 15, 1981, that a seaman was critically ill aboard the fishing trawler *Junella*, nine miles north east of Portrush; he needed urgent medical attention. Ten minutes later Portrush lifeboat, the 52ft Arun *Richard Evans (Civil Service No 39)*, slipped her mooring and set out on service under the command of Coxswain James Stewart and with Dr William Hill, the honorary medical adviser, on board.

The south-easterly winds were up to gale force 8 and a moderate sea was running. Visibility was poor in almost continuous rain and the tide was in the first hour of flood.

On clearing harbour Coxswain Stewart headed north of the Skerries to rendezvous with *Junella*, which was steaming south west. At 1537 course was adjusted for an amended position five miles north of the Skerries. *Junella* was identified on radar shortly before 1600 and her skipper was asked to make a lee on his starboard side. At 1610 the lifeboat was made fast port side to the trawler and both boats steamed slowly south west to maintain steerage.

Dr Hill boarded *Junella* together with Crew Member Albert McQuilken, who is a first aider, and diagnosed a brain haemorrhage. At 1612 a Wessex helicopter arrived overhead and stood by, but the HMA decided that the patient should be taken ashore by lifeboat to save undue stress. At 1626 the helicopter was diverted to a second medical casualty.

Dr Hill and Crew Member McQuilken secured the unconscious patient into a Neil Robertson stretcher and at 1640 he was transferred to the medical cot aboard the lifeboat. Ten minutes

later the trawler was cleared and Coxswain Stewart headed for Portrush at half speed until, with moderating conditions approaching land, he was able to increase speed once more.

During the passage back to station another message came from Belfast Coastguard to say that a seaman aboard the fishing trawler *St Jasper* needed urgent medical attention. A Wessex helicopter was standing by but would be withdrawn at dusk.

Richard Evans was alongside at Portrush at 1727 and the first patient was taken to hospital by ambulance. Ten minutes later the lifeboat set out again, once more with the honorary medical adviser, Dr Hill, aboard.

By this time the wind had backed to north west and moderated to a fresh to strong breeze, force 5 to 6. A moderate sea continued to run and the evening was overcast with occasional rain.

On clearing harbour the lifeboat headed for Inishowen Head at full speed. *St Jasper* was sighted at 1807 and, following the same plan as before, Coxswain Stewart asked her skipper to make a lee on his starboard side. At 1816 the lifeboat made fast port side to the trawler and both vessels steamed slowly north east to maintain steerage. Dr Hill boarded with Crew Member McQuilken and another first aider to find the patient had recovered consciousness after accidentally inhaling fumes. A Sea King helicopter arrived overhead and stood by, but once again Dr Hill decided the patient should be taken ashore by lifeboat and the helicopter was released. The patient was helped aboard the lifeboat together with the medical party and the lifeboat cleared the trawler at 1830.

The weather continued to moderate, the wind now being north west force 5, but a moderate confused sea was still running. The lifeboat returned to Portrush at full speed and was made fast alongside at 1905. The patient was taken to hospital by the honorary secretary.

The lifeboat was refuelled and by 1930 she was back on her moorings and ready for service.

For this service a special doctor's vellum was accorded to Dr William J. C. Hill, the honorary medical adviser, and a framed letter of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, was presented to Crew Member Albert McQuilken.

Scotland South Division

Ebb tide

A GIRL was playing at the water's edge of Irvine Beach, near the mouth of the River Irvine, on Sunday evening August 30, 1981, when she realised that she was being washed away from the shore and out to sea. She tried to paddle back with her hands, but the ebb tide was too

continued on page 105



The naming of the 52ft Arun relief lifeboat

Duchess of Kent

SOUTH BANK
TUESDAY, APRIL 27

THE PERFECT SUNNY AFTERNOON of Tuesday April 27 seemed to take on extra brightness when Their Royal Highnesses, The Duke and Duchess of Kent arrived at the Jubilee Gardens, South Bank, to name the relief 52ft Arun lifeboat *Duchess of Kent*. With flags and bunting fluttering gaily in the strong breeze, and the rising waters of the River Thames slapping against the sides of the lifeboat, the ceremony could have been at any coastal port; only the noise of trains from the nearby Waterloo station and the roar of the traffic betrayed the fact that it was taking place in the heart of London.

The lifeboat was the gift of the Freemasons United Grand Lodge of England, and the large audience of Freemasons and RNLI branch and guild members, together with the music provided by members of the Royal Marines Band, attracted many casual walkers in the park to the site of the ceremony.

After being greeted by the Mayor and Mayoress of Lambeth, Councillor and Mrs Johnny Johnson, and the chairman of the Greater London Council, John Ward, JP, the Duchess of Kent was presented with a posy by eight-year-old Katie Higham, daughter of Cdr Michael Higham, Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England. In return, after having a short talk with the little girl, the Duchess picked a rose from the

Her naming ceremony held by the River Thames, the new relief 52ft lifeboat gave her demonstration run with the Houses of Parliament as her background.



photographs above and left by courtesy of Jeff Morris

The Duchess of Kent was there to name the new lifeboat RNLI Duchess of Kent.

(Below) Katie Higham presented a bouquet to her Royal Highness, who took from it a rose to give back to Katie.



centre of the posy and gave it to Katie, along with a box of chocolates. Katie was obviously delighted with the gifts.

In his welcoming speech, the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the RNLI said:

'It is unusual for a lifeboat naming ceremony to take place in our capital city but in this Maritime England Year, most appropriate, for we are here today on the banks of The Thames—a river which has

flowed for all time through the maritime history of our nation.'

Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director, then described the lifeboat and the rôle she would play in the Institution's relief fleet:

'The RNLI's relief fleet is not a fleet of lifeboats in mothballs, to be called out only when a crisis occurs, but consists of fully-operational lifeboats ready to take over from a station lifeboat when repairs are required, or when she is on refit or survey.' Admiral Graham went on to say that, *'the Arun is an outstanding success story; three of the last four gold medal awards have been for services carried out in Arun class lifeboats and I can reveal that the Arun class has been awarded a 1982 Design Council Award which will be presented tomorrow by His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh.'*

The Duke of Kent then formally delivered the lifeboat into the care of the RNLI saying that the audience were witnessing a unique occasion . . .

'... not because a lifeboat is being named in London, that has been done on several occasions; but because I, as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, am in effect giving myself a lifeboat, as I am also President of the RNLI. There have been ten lifeboats gifted to the RNLI by the Masons and I am very pleased to be able to continue this tradition. Freemasonry today is outward looking and able to give practical help to many organisations. This lifeboat represents such practical help which because it is a lifeboat will in its turn serve anybody in trouble at sea.'

The Right Reverend George Reindorp, Honorary Assistant Bishop of London, then conducted the service of dedication, assisted by the Right Reverend Principal Martin Cressey, Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, and Father Gerald Burke, Director of the Ministry to Priests Programme in the Diocese of Westminster. Rabbi M. Berman was also in attendance representing the Chief Rabbi.

The Duke of Atholl then called upon the Duchess of Kent to name the lifeboat. After saying that she could well understand the necessity with a modern lifeboat fleet for the relief fleet to be composed of similar craft, capable of covering the same area at the same speed as the station boats they replace temporarily, the Duchess expressed her deep appreciation of the singular honour of having a lifeboat bear her name, and also of being able to name her personally. With the breaking of a bottle of champagne, the Duchess named the lifeboat *Duchess of Kent*.

Following the now famous Royal walkabout, the Duke and Duchess boarded the lifeboat for a short demonstration on The Thames.

The Institution was most grateful to the Greater London Council, the Port of London Authority and the English Tourist Board for their help in arranging this naming ceremony, a most successful occasion.—S.J.G.

Grim but Glorious

THE DAYS OF OAR AND SAIL

by Ray Kipling

WRITING ABOUT LIFEBOATS is never easy. To many people, every lifeboat rescue is an act of heroism, carried out in a tortuous battle against the elements; to lifeboatmen, even the worst conditions are modestly played down and real acts of heroism are shrugged off with genuine embarrassment. Striking a balance between these extremes is even more difficult when dealing with history, for there are less first-hand accounts and more temptations to romanticise and exaggerate. So the story of pulling and sailing lifeboats, an easy one to imagine, is a difficult one to research accurately. Fortunately there are just enough men and records still in existence to bring a reasonable perspective to the subject.

The lifeboatmen

The most striking feature of any lifeboat story is the lifeboatmen. The crews of pulling and sailing boats were tough, weatherbeaten fishermen who spent all their working lives at sea, building up the muscles, skill and intimate knowledge of local waters needed for rescues. Calls were infrequent and were almost exclusively to merchant vessels and fishing boats. In the small

fishing villages, there were strong family traditions, verging almost on obligations to join the lifeboat crew. There was also the very practical point of mutual self protection among the fishermen, the lifeboat being the best means of ensuring safety for the men of the local fleet.

In the last century money was an important feature of lifeboating. The pay for a service was 10 shillings by day and £1 by night, with 4 shillings for an exercise launch. This was a substantial amount in relation to the small wage earned from fishing when times were hard. Salvage was not uncommon and though the RNLI had strict rules about salvage being secondary to lifesaving, in the early days the Institution used to take a portion of salvage money to cover the risk of damage to the lifeboat. Today, of course, salvage is virtually unknown and the Institution has no part in any salvage claim.

The launchers

Launchers were hard to come by in small villages and often women would launch the lifeboats while their husbands and sons formed the crews. In larger communities there were some-

times too many eager helpers and at Whitby brass discs were issued to identify launchers. There was once such a scramble for the discs that three men crashed through a plate-glass window trying to get one. It was arduous work at the best of times, by no means without danger, and phenomenal efforts were sometimes made to haul the boats overland to the best place to launch to reach a vessel in distress.

The lifeboats were sturdy but offered little protection to the men. Already hardened by their work they found normal services and exercises routine, but long winter services took their toll. In October 1927 the Moelfre lifeboat sailed right over a ketch to rescue her crew but the lifeboat was damaged. She spent a total of 17 hours in fierce gales and one lifeboatman died from exhaustion. The coxswain, who had been at the tiller the whole time, was completely blind for several hours after landing, though he later recovered.

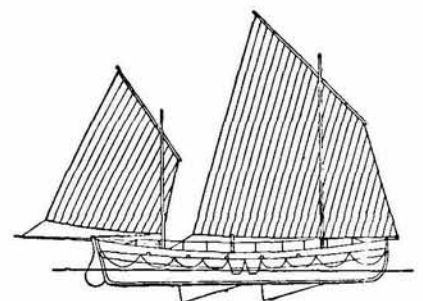
Apparently some lifeboatmen used to drink hot soup out of their oilskin sou'westers, the heat freeing the linseed oil to mix with the soup. Their provisions were basic: some chocolate, a flask of rum and whatever else they could grab on the way, including on one occasion, raw potatoes.

The lifeboats

Right from the beginning the RNLI took lifeboat design very seriously and was constantly striving to improve all aspects of the boats. Competitions brought forward a great many designs, ranging from the practical to the whimsical. In different areas, the men had different preferences. In Norfolk and Suffolk, for instance, the lifeboats were big, heavy non self-righters, relying on large sails. Elsewhere, the RNLI began by discouraging the use of sail as, in very high winds and squally weather, it could cause capsize unless skilfully handled. Controversy raged over the relative merits of self-righting and non self-righting boats. The Institution produced figures to show that less men were lost from self-righters but, even so, many crews still preferred the non self-righters which were less lively at sea and, they thought, less likely to capsize.

Experiments with oars were as important then as trials with engines now and

On instruction from the coxswain and second coxswain, the crew of Southsea lifeboat launch by pulling on the haul-off warp. This was a rope which was attached to an anchor offshore, allowing the lifeboat to be hauled out through the surf until there was enough water to set the sails or start rowing.



Sail plan of Norfolk and Suffolk lifeboats, big, heavy non self-righters which relied on large sails.

a series of tests were held in 1866 to find the best woods for the job.

Comparative trials of different classes of lifeboats were held in 1892 but the results, which showed the Institution's preferred Watson and self-righting boats to be best, failed to convince crews of Norfolk and Suffolk or the crews of tubular boats. The tubular boats, first proposed in the Duke of Northumberland's 1851 design competition, were chiefly used in North Wales and the Mersey and the last was in service at Rhyl until 1939.

The services

The services of the pulling and sailing lifeboats were, like lifeboat services today, largely routine with the spectacular minority attracting attention. Routine for lifeboatmen meant standing by a grounded merchantman for ten hours until she floated off on the next tide or escorting a dimasted ketch to the safety of harbour in a gale, but the tales that have been handed down from the 100-year span of oar and sail recount the most hazardous rescues which won medals for coxswains such as Charles Fish of Ramsgate, James Cable of Aldeburgh and Robert Smith of Tynemouth.

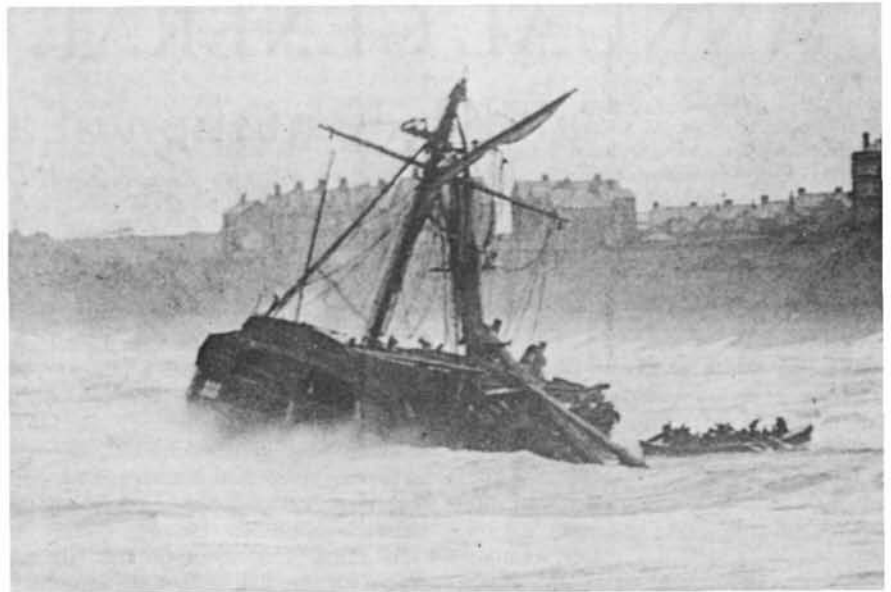
Some rescues were more unusual: at Whitby the rowing lifeboat once went two miles inland by road and launched into a river to rescue people from their roofs after the river flooded. Some rescues even had their humorous side: in the Isle of Wight a lifeboatman was admonished by a rescued mother for allowing her baby to get wet.

If some rescues were marked with humour, a few were tinged with tragedy. Shoal water near the shore was the greatest danger, making launching and getting under way a perilous task. Sometimes the conditions proved too much for the boats and they were overwhelmed and flung back on to the beach. Over the years the losses of lifeboatmen mounted, 250 in the first hundred years. But in that time 40,000 people were saved and crews kept up their struggle against the elements.

The end of the era of oars and sails came gradually as steam power was introduced, later to be rapidly overtaken by petrol engines and then diesel. By the 1920s engines had made a big impact on the RNLI fleet and by the beginning of the second world war, pulling and sailing boats were few and far between. The last sailing boat left New Quay, Cardiganshire, in 1948 and although there was a pulling lifeboat at Whitby until 1957, she was mainly used inside the harbour while the town's motor lifeboat was at sea.

The days of oar and sail were grim but glorious and rescues then, as now, brought their own reward.

Ray Kipling, public relations officer of the RNLI, is the author of Rescue by Sail and Oar, reviewed on page 107.



The end of HMS Foudroyant, one of Nelson's flagships which in her last years was used as a training ship for boys. While anchored off Blackpool on June 16, 1897, a gale blew up and she dragged aground. The lifeboat Samuel Fletcher of Manchester was able to rescue 28 people before Foudroyant was completely wrecked.



The women of Cresswell, Northumberland, help with the recovery of the lifeboat Martha.

(Below) Selsey lifeboat John and Henry Skynner was built in 1885 and took part in the London Lord Mayor's Show of that year before going on station. She was 35ft long, 7ft 6in beam, pulled ten oars and was fitted with water ballast tanks.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

and presentation of awards

SOUTH BANK, LONDON, TUESDAY MAY 11

1981: 1,051 people rescued; nearly £14 million raised

SUNSHINE greeted lifeboat people from all parts of the country who began to gather on South Bank, by the River Thames, early on Tuesday May 11 for what was to be a most moving and memorable day.

It was a day which remembered the work of the lifeboatmen all round our islands who, in 1981, had launched on service 2,947 times, the highest number of services in any one year; and which remembered the work of the fund raisers who in the same year had backed up the lifeboat crews by achieving the highest total yet, nearly £14 million. It was a day when there would be a standing ovation following the presentation to their relatives of the gold medal awarded to the late Coxswain Trevelyan Richards of Penlee and the bronze medals awarded to each of his crew for the service to *Union Star* on December 19; and a second standing ovation following the presentation of the gold medal to Coxswain Michael Scales of St Peter Port and the bronze medal to each of his crew for the service to *Bonita* on December 13.

It was a day when appreciation of the fine quality of our young people was reflected in the prolonged applause for 14-year-old Daniel Norman who, by prompt, courageous and expert action had saved the life of a little girl. It was also a day when the loyalty of the Institution's voluntary crew members, fund raisers and committee members, often stretching back through several generations of the same family, would be remembered with pride and with gratitude.

On such a day, lifeboat people were most happy to have with them as their guest of honour for the presentation of awards meeting in the afternoon such an old and valued friend as Her Royal Highness Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester.

* * *

The day began with a very well attended annual general meeting of the Institution's governors held during the morning in the National Film Theatre. After the Chairman, the Duke of Atholl, had welcomed the many governors present, and also the new members who had joined the Committee of Management since the previous year, the minutes of the meeting held on May 12, 1981, were agreed.

Before beginning his report, the Duke of Atholl invited the governors to

rise in silent tribute to the lifeboatmen of Penlee who had died on December 19 – that was the event which was, he said, uppermost in everyone's mind.

After this silent tribute, the Duke spoke of the Penlee lifeboat, *Solomon Browne*, which had launched in appalling weather to go to the help of the coaster *Union Star*. He recalled how, in the finest traditions of the lifeboat service, there had been more volunteers at the boathouse than were needed to form a crew, and how, despite the tremendous seas, the lifeboat had managed to rescue four people from *Union Star* before she herself was lost. It was not possible to go into detail about the disaster because a public inquiry had been ordered by the Department of Trade, but more would be heard about the rescue during the afternoon when gallantry medals would be presented to members of the families of *Solomon Browne's* crew.

'I think I can safely say that no-one witnessed the very last moments of the lifeboat Solomon Browne, but we do know that close under the cliffs she was overwhelmed by the seas, and smashed to pieces on the rocks. The crew of Solomon Browne were experienced seamen and fine, well-trained lifeboatmen, who had confidence in their boat and knew their local waters totally. When the call came, they did not hesitate to set out to help other seafarers in distress. Within hours of the disaster, the men of the Penlee asked for another lifeboat. The new coxswain and crew are now manning a replacement Watson lifeboat, and next year will receive a new Arun class lifeboat which will lie afloat in Newlyn Harbour. I am very pleased to say that the Institution has been given all the money that this Arun class lifeboat will cost by Mr David Robinson.'

The Duke of Atholl told of the search which had begun as soon as it was known that *Solomon Browne* had been lost; of the RNLI welfare officer who went straight to Penlee to help with immediate problems, give cash grants and to inform the dependants that the RNLI would be paying pensions; and of the disaster fund which had been launched locally and independently of the RNLI by Penwith District Council. This fund had, unfortunately, run into legal problems and there had been considerable controversy, but, happily, with advice from the Charity Commissioners and the Attorney General, the problems had been satisfactorily resolved. The Attorney General had since issued guidelines for disaster funds which the Institution was studying. Advice for any future lifeboat disaster fund would be

prepared, although, of course, everyone hoped that it would never be needed.

'It is our duty, and our pride, to build our lifeboats to the highest standards possible, and to fit them with the finest equipment. Between the loss of the Fraserburgh lifeboat in January 1970 and the loss of the Penlee lifeboat in December 1981, only one lifeboatman lost his life on service. In that period lifeboats had been launched on service well over 30,000 times. However, we must recognise that the sea does not change, and it will always be a formidable adversary.'

'The final point I should like to make about Penlee is that the families of the lost lifeboatmen have been an example to the whole country. In the midst of great sorrow and harrowing publicity they have remained dignified and calm. They have earned our respect, admiration and support and they will be with us this afternoon to receive the medals which have been awarded posthumously to the crew of the Penlee lifeboat.'

The Duke then turned to the activities of 1981. The RNLI's lifeboats had launched on service a record number of times, 2,947. By their efforts 1,051 people had been rescued, many of these rescues, particularly in the latter part of the year, being made in severe gales and storms. Often the lifeboats had worked with helicopters; sometimes they carried out rescues which even the sophisticated Sea King helicopters found impossible.

During 1981, four new Arun class lifeboats, a Rother, an Atlantic 21 and a number of D class inflatable lifeboats had begun their operational lives, while orders had been placed for a further 11 lifeboats. Development work continued on three new types of boat: the Brede, the RNLI Medina and the fast slipway lifeboat which had been given the class name 'Tyne'. A Brede lifeboat would soon be sent to Oban for preliminary station trials, while there were plans to develop a water jet driven version of the Medina. The Tyne class was at the beginning of a lengthy trials programme, which would include extensive sea passages and calls at a number of lifeboat stations around the coast;

'It is worth remembering that lifeboats have a unique task. Their development is a special responsibility of the Institution, and it cannot be hurried. Each new class that we introduce takes many months, perhaps years, to perfect, and we cannot send a lifeboat built to a new design to a station until we are satisfied in every way with her performance. This is our policy, and I believe that it has been vindicated in practice. In recent years, for instance,

both the Arun and Atlantic 21 lifeboats were the subject of long and careful development. Indeed, the Arun prototype was sent on sea passages totalling 12,000 miles before the first boat went on station. However, each of these two classes, in its own sphere, has since proved its worth operationally time and time again in the most arduous and difficult conditions.

'We are, with the fast slipway Tyne class lifeboat, pushing forward new technology, and must be patient until we achieve the right results.'

Speaking of the high regard in which the RNLI is held throughout the world, the Duke told the governors of the silver medals awarded by the Icelandic Government and presented by the President of Iceland herself to the crews of Sennen Cove lifeboat and a Royal Naval helicopter from RNAS Culdrose for the rescue of the crew of an Icelandic coaster last September; the coxswain of the lifeboat would receive the RNLI's silver medal for this service later in the day. The Duke continued:

'During the last year, delegates from Algeria, Bermuda, Iceland, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan and the United States of America have visited the RNLI. An Atlantic 21 lifeboat was sold to the Royal South Holland Lifeboat Society, and the Portuguese and Spanish societies are also now using Atlantic 21s. The two Dutch lifeboat societies, which were founded in 1824, just a few months after the RNLI, are both operated on voluntary principles, and they are very old friends of ours. They are both interested in the concept of a large rigid inflatable lifeboat like the Medina, on which we are working. While the Royal North and South Holland Society is joining the RNLI in its project to develop a jet-driven Medina, the Royal South Holland Society is working on its own design for a large rigid inflatable lifeboat . . .

'Advances in marine technology are providing more sophisticated equipment for lifeboatmen, and we have introduced training courses to make sure that crew members are completely familiar with its use. I believe that it has been in no small measure due to our crew training that none of our men were lost when the Lyme Regis and Berwick on Tweed Atlantic 21s capsized earlier this year. It is most heartening to see young men coming forward into the crews to provide continuity in the service in an age when youth is so frequently criticised. The simple values of helping others without thought of reward have not been diluted or diminished throughout the RNLI's long history. Often, these are values which are handed

on from one generation of the same family to the next. The sad death last year of Mr Lawrence Cave, a Life Vice-President of the Institution, brought to an end a period of more than 100 years of unbroken service on the Committee of Management by successive members of the Cave family.

The Duke also reported with deep regret the death in January of another Life Vice-President, Mr William Bishop who, as chairman of the Poole Project Working Party, did so much to ensure the successful establishment of the RNLI headquarters and depot at Poole.

Yet another aspect of the RNLI which did not change, said the Duke, was the enthusiasm and enterprise of the fund raisers . . .

'During 1981, there have been major appeals and large gifts, bringing valued support and encouragement, but it is the untiring work of the branches and guilds which provides the solid financial basis from which we operate. You will have seen from the accounts that the income last year was 17.4 per cent up on the previous year, and reached almost £14 million. That was the target figure which I announced at this meeting last year, and it is to the great credit of the fund raisers that the target was effectively met. It shows that our voluntary system is strong enough to weather economic storms, and to continue to provide the money to build and maintain a first-class fleet of lifeboats, giving the nation unrivalled value for money.'

For the sixth successive year, a small surplus of income over expenditure had been achieved, but this fact had to be put in its proper context . . .

'In 1981, the surplus was £489,000, which represented less than two weeks' running costs. This surplus has enabled the free reserves to be maintained at a level of 14 weeks of the forthcoming year's expenditure, and this is the same as last year. As, in these days of inflation, our expenditure increases, so we must keep increasing the reserves to maintain their real value. There is no fat in our accounts, and we continue to spend the bulk of our money on the lifeboat service, while keeping some in reserve to safeguard our future.

The boat building programme had been accelerated in 1981, both with existing designs and the new developments. Capital expenditure rose from £2.79 million in 1980 to £3.64 million in 1981, and further expansion to £4 million was planned for 1982. Over £6 million was spent on recurrent expenditure for the service, covering the cost of

surveys and overhauls, and running the 200 stations . . .

'Although this is a large sum of money, it is the minimum needed to keep the boats and the stations up to our high standards. The immense amount of time and effort given free by local station committees, crews and shore helpers helps to keep this expenditure down . . .

'One small part of the £6 million is the pensions we pay to dependants of lifeboatmen who lose their lives on service. We are currently paying pensions for 53 widows and 14 children and some other dependants, and in 1982 the cost will be £120,000. The RNLI fully recognises its obligation to look after the lifeboatmen's widows, and upgrades its pensions to keep them in line with those paid to the dependants of Royal Naval chief petty officers who lose their lives on active service.'

Value Added Tax continued to drain the Institution's income of over £290,000 a year, almost enough to provide a new lifeboat, and the RNLI, in common with other charities, was still seeking ways of minimising the effects of VAT.

The Duke of Atholl once again emphasised how greatly the RNLI benefited if subscriptions or gifts were covenanted . . .

'At this year's London Boat Show, 86 per cent of new Shoreline members signed covenants, increasing the value of their subscriptions by £3,000. Each year, covenants bring us more than £80,000 extra in tax recovered from the Treasury.'

In 1982 the Institution would need £16 million . . .

'It is a formidable sum to raise, but already there are encouraging signs that it can be achieved. Although the final figures for London Lifeboat Day are still being worked out, some areas were up by as much as 30 per cent on last year. With hard work, the target will be reached, and we will continue to give our crews what they ask of us: the tools to do their job.'

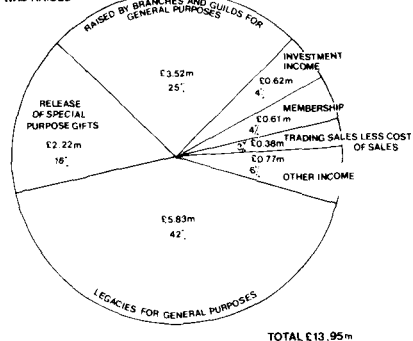
'I should like to finish by thanking you all for your active interest and support over the past year. The RNLI's great strength lies in its composition of thousands of individuals spread throughout England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and indeed, the world. It is an Institution of which we can all be proud to be a part.'

Before moving that the report and accounts be agreed, the Chairman invited questions and Mr P. J. Buonacorsi-How (Islington) asked whether it was necessary or desirable that the Committee of Management should be so large. Thanking Mr Buonacorsi for his question, the Duke of Atholl replied that the Institution's Charter laid down that the Committee of Management 'shall consist of the President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer and not more than 40 and not less than 15 other governors of the said society'. At present there were 24 Vice-Presidents, one of whom was also Treasurer and there were 40 other governors who were members of the Committee of Management.

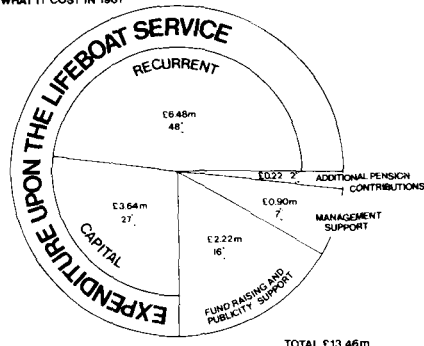
There were two main reasons why the numbers of members was kept up to

A visual summary of the accounts for 1981.

HOW THE MONEY WAS RAISED



WHAT IT COST IN 1981



maximum strength, the Duke explained. The first was geographical: it was thought desirable to have people in every part of the country, and local fund raisers in particular appreciated having a Committee of Management member who lived fairly near them and took an interest in what they did. The second reason was that it was thought desirable to have a broad cross-section of all the professions or services the Institution required represented on the Committee, for example, a chartered surveyor and a naval architect; the Institution also liked having Members of Parliament on its Committee of Management. Moreover, it was thought helpful that at least some of the members of the ten specialist sub-committees which deal with various facets of the Institution's operations should be on the Committee of Management.

While, the Duke continued, 64 sounded a large governing body, in practice the Committee of Management had delegated all its powers to the Executive Committee, a body, 14 strong, probably better able to run the Institution on a day-to-day basis. It was right that its powers should be delegated in this way, although the importance and usefulness of having a very large Committee of Management were not diminished.

Mr P. R. Threlfall (Wellington, Somerset) commented that he thought the new method of advising governors of the AGM by means of a notice published in THE LIFEBOAT had worked well. He went on to welcome the introduction in January this year of long service awards for lifeboatmen and shore helpers, but said that, although the long service badge had been beautifully designed, he thought a long service medal would have been preferable. The Duke of Atholl replied that to award long service medals would be contrary to the Institution's Royal Charter which states that medals can only be awarded for gallantry. He reported that 69 long service badges had already been approved and a further 87 recommendations were under consideration.

There being no other questions, the report and accounts for the year ended December 31, 1981, were agreed.

Elections followed of the President, HRH the Duke of Kent; the Vice-Presidents; the Treasurer, the Duke of Northumberland, and the Deputy Treasurer, Mr David Acland; and members and ex-officio members of the Committee of Management. These elections were each agreed unanimously with a show of hands. Price Waterhouse and Company were then appointed auditors for the coming year.

Coming to any other business, Major J. F. Showell-Rogers (Poole) raised a number of questions regarding the Institution's Green Book of regulations published in 1979. The Chairman replied that it was hoped to revise and republish parts of the Green Book before the end of the year, and Rear-

Admiral W. J. Graham, the Director, suggested that the points raised should be discussed in detail at Poole HQ.

When Lady Tollemache (Petersfield) expressed concern that there was no mention in the new Church of England service books of seafarers or the Royal Navy, the Duke said that the matter would be raised with the Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the Institution's Vice-Presidents.

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

* * *

As there is a long gap between the end of the AGM in the morning and the start of the annual presentation of awards meeting in the afternoon, an experiment was introduced this year. Governors were invited to remain in the National Film Theatre at the end of the AGM for a showing of the two RNLI films.

* * *

The auditorium of the Royal Festival Hall was filled almost to capacity when, in the afternoon, the Duke of Atholl, Chairman of the RNLI, rose at the beginning of the presentation of awards meeting at which the guest of honour was HRH Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester:

'Your Royal Highness, my lords, ladies and gentlemen, in welcoming you all this afternoon I know that I am addressing people from all sections of the lifeboat service: governors, fund raisers, station officials, staff and of course coxswains, crew members and their families. The efforts of you all are vital to make the service work; normally I should not pick out any group of people for special mention. But this year our thoughts must be with lifeboat families and in particular with the families whom we welcome here this afternoon. Lifeboatmen depend greatly on the support of wives, girlfriends, mothers and fathers and in the face of great sadness the courage and fortitude of the families of Penlee have been a magnificent example to us all.

'The Penlee disaster stunned everybody in the lifeboat service but it also made manifest the finest qualities which exist in the traditions of the RNLI. The storms off Cornwall on December 19 were horrendous, yet there were more men available in Penlee boathouse than were needed to form a crew. The lifeboatmen did not hesitate in putting to sea and when fears for their safety grew, the lifeboatmen from neighbouring stations set out into the storm to try to help. Within hours of the disaster, the people of Penlee asked for a replacement lifeboat and set about the task of forming a new crew. You will hear more about the rescue which the Penlee lifeboat attempted when Admiral Graham reads the medal citations, and I am sure that I speak for everyone in this great hall this afternoon when I say that the bravery of the men of Penlee will never be forgotten.

'The storms which overwhelmed the Penlee lifeboat characterised the weather around our coasts at the end of last year. Of the 30 medals awarded for services during 1981, 25 were for services in the three months between September 19 and

December 19. At the start of this period, 31 lifeboats were launched on service during the gales of September 19 and 20, a weekend when 28 people were rescued and two silver medals and one bronze were awarded. A number of lifeboats were called out on December 13, a day of hurricane force winds, tremendous seas and blizzards when, for the rescue of 29 people from the vessel Bonita, the gold medal was awarded to Coxswain Michael Scales of St Peter Port, Guernsey. Bronze medals were awarded to each of his crew and two bronze medals were also awarded for other services that day.'

Talking of the work of lifeboat crews throughout the year, the Duke of Atholl said:

'When, later, you listen to the accounts of rescues for which medals for gallantry have been awarded, I would ask you to remember that there were thousands of services last year which, in lifeboatmen's terms, were routine; but these, too, were services which I, and I suspect most of you, would regard with some trepidation, perhaps entailing long hard searches in the hours of darkness, or cold uncomfortable passages in rough seas, sometimes, at their end, without even the "thank you" which is the lifeboatman's greatest reward. Each of our lifeboat crews is prepared to put to sea when asked, regardless of the conditions, and in honouring the medallists today let us remember their hundreds of colleagues, some of whom may be out on a rescue mission even at this moment.'

Going on to speak of the development of new lifeboats to help the crews with their work, the Duke announced that the Institution had been honoured to receive an award from the Design Council for the Arun class lifeboat. The judges for the award had looked carefully at every detail of the boat and had come to the conclusion that each aspect of her design had been so well thought out that the sum total represented a first class tool for the job she had to do. The Design Council Awards were presented by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, who then went to look over the new Arun lifeboat generously donated by the Freemasons of England and named *Duchess of Kent* by Her Royal Highness the previous day (see page 85).

Thanking the members of the RNLI's branches and guild for all their hard work, the Duke said that he had been able to report to the governors that in 1981 almost £14 million had been reached with a small surplus for transfer to reserves . . .

'However, I pointed out that we have to add more to the reserves each year if they are to maintain their real value. The free reserves currently stand at 14 weeks running expenditure, a satisfactory, though by no means luxurious, amount.

The challenge for 1982 was even greater as the target was £16 million. The Institution was always trying to keep administrative costs to an absolute minimum, and the percentage spent on administration, fund raising and publicity altered very little from year to year. There would be an opportunity to see how administrative support was given when the headquarters and depot at



HRH Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, presents an inscribed wristwatch to Daniel Norman. With them are the Duke of Atholl, Chairman of the Institution, and Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, Director.

photograph by courtesy of David Trotter

Poole were opened to the public in July. The Lifeboat Open Days, from July 22 to 24, were part of Maritime England celebrations and members of branches, guilds and stations would be particularly welcome.

The Duke then announced two administrative changes. The boundaries of the operational divisions in England and Wales had been enlarged; their number had been reduced from six to four and each was now run by a divisional inspector who had a deputy. In the fund-raising field, district organising secretaries were now being known as regional organisers, a title which described their appointments more accurately.

Speaking of the BBC's 'Ennal's Point', the Duke of Atholl said that it was the first time a dramatised television series had been based around a lifeboat community; its reception in lifeboat circles had been mixed, but the programme had brought the work of the RNLI in front of three million viewers:

'The sea scenes were carefully filmed with the actors learning from the real lifeboatmen and I understand that the actors became so keen that once, when there was a genuine emergency during the filming, they all ran to the boathouse as soon as they heard the maroons, together with the real crew!'

The Duke of Atholl concluded:

'Looking back over 1981, the year started quietly, with unusually mild weather. By the autumn, ferocious gales brought dramatic rescues, culminating in the St Port gold medal rescue in December. Six days later, another gold medal rescue by the Penlee lifeboat ended in tragedy and the whole country was deeply saddened. Now in Penlee and throughout the RNLI, the lifeboat service goes on, in good heart and strengthened by the resolve to help others.'

Coming to the end of his speech, the Duke of Atholl said:

'It is now a particular pleasure to introduce as our distinguished guest somebody who has spent many years helping others. HRH Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, is no stranger to the RNLI

and was our guest at the 1959 annual general meeting here in London. She also named the lifeboats at Ramsgate in 1954, at Cromarty in 1956 and at Anstruther in 1965, which was, incidentally, one of the first naming ceremonies I ever attended, and, to help us in our fund raising, has twice attended the lifeboat ball in the Dorchester Hotel as guest of honour. Princess Alice has, therefore, seen many aspects of the RNLI and I am delighted to welcome her to our annual presentation of awards today.'

Princess Alice then rose to speak amid prolonged applause:

'Thank you all very much for such a warm welcome. Many years have gone by since I was with you at your annual presentation of awards. On that occasion I came representing Princess Marina, and now, today, I am glad to be able to represent her son who succeeded her as your President. He is sorry to be unable to be with you as he is out of the country, but I am most happy that it should enable me to come in his stead, and to hear that the Royal National Lifeboat Institution is faring as well as ever. Your organisation is held in high esteem in recognition of the humane work carried out by lifeboat crews. This noble work needs the dedicated support of your fund raisers, many of whom devote years of effort to the cause. When I attended the RNLI meeting in 1959 one of the presentations I made was a gold badge to Mrs Pearce of St Ives and this afternoon, 23 years later, I will be presenting her with honorary life governorship of the Institution. Her service is an example which typifies the spirit running through the RNLI both inland and around the coast.'

'The citations for gallantry medals which you will shortly be hearing show the variety of different situations lifeboat crews face today. The common thread running through all the rescues is the unhesitating willingness to answer the call for help, wherever it may come from, whatever the time and conditions. I would also like to pay tribute to the families of lifeboatmen who so bravely and willingly wait for news of the lifeboat's mission, for without their support there could be no lifeboat service.'

'Here today are representatives from all parts of the RNLI. Each of you is essential in its running. I and so many other well-wishers congratulate you for your work which results in the saving of so many lives at sea. I hope that you will leave this meeting with renewed vigour and enthusiasm and I wish you every success for the year ahead.'

'Finally I have great pleasure in moving the resolution that this meeting, fully recognising the important services of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution in its national work of lifesaving, desires to record its hearty appreciation of the gallantry of the coxswains and crews of the Institution's lifeboats, and its deep obligation to the local committees, honorary secretaries and honorary treasurers of all station branches; to all other voluntary committees and supporters and to the honorary officers and thousands of voluntary members of the financial branches and the ladies' lifeboat guilds in the work of raising funds to maintain the service.'

'They,' Her Royal Highness concluded, 'have my deepest admiration and that of thousands of others.'

The resolution was agreed by general applause before the Duke of Atholl invited Princess Alice to present the medals for gallantry. As Helmsman Frank Dunster was unable to be at the Royal Festival Hall, the presentation of his award was postponed:

Coxswain Trevelyan Richards, Penlee: gold medal, received by his mother, Mrs Mary Richards

Second Coxswain/Mechanic Stephen Madron: bronze medal, received by his wife, Mrs Janet Madron

Assistant Mechanic Nigel Brockman: bronze medal, received by his wife, Mrs Jacqueline Brockman

Emergency Mechanic John Blewett: bronze medal, received by his wife, Mrs Caroline Blewett

Crew Member Charles Greenhaugh: bronze medal, received by his wife, Mrs Mary Greenhaugh

Crew Member Kevin Smith: bronze medal, received by his mother, Mrs Patricia Smith

Crew Member Barrie Torrie: bronze medal, received by his father, Mr Cyril Torrie, on behalf of Barrie's wife, Mrs Lynn Torrie

Crew Member Gary Wallis: bronze medal, received by his mother, Mrs Maureen Wallis

On the night of December 19, 1981, Penlee's 47ft Watson lifeboat *Solomon Browne* launched to the aid of the coaster *Union Star* which had reported engine failure eight miles east of Wolf Rock Lighthouse. The wind, south by east, was hurricane force 12, gusting to 90 knots. There were mountainous seas, a heavy ground swell, driving rain and very poor visibility. Penlee lifeboat made a number of approaches to the coaster and eventually succeeded in taking off four people. She was then seen to turn, only about 50 yards off the steep-to rocky shore, possibly in preparation for another approach, before all visual and radio contact was lost. Despite many hours search by other lifeboats, by RN helicopters, by Coastguard rescue teams and by local fishing vessels, no survivors were recovered from either *Solomon Browne* or *Union Star*. In spite of this tragic end to their efforts the late coxswain and crew of Penlee lifeboat were awarded medals for their heroic rescue of four people.

Acting Coxswain Michael Massarelli, Porthdinllaen: bronze medal

On April 25, 1981, Porthdinllaen's 47ft Watson lifeboat *Kathleen Mary* was launched to go to the help of two people thrown into the water when their inflatable dinghy capsized. The sea was very rough with the tide ebbing almost directly into a north-easterly gale. The dinghy was 120 yards from the beach, near submerged rocks; there were breaking waves up to 15 feet high, heavy surf and only 10 feet depth of water. A line was thrown to one man on top of the dinghy and he was hauled to safety. Two more approaches were

made, with seas breaking over the lifeboat; on the second approach a man clinging to the dinghy lost his grip and was washed down towards the lifeboat where he was pulled aboard.

Helmsman Clive Rayment, Cromer: bronze medal

On May 1, 1981, Cromer's D class inflatable lifeboat was launched to help the crew of the crab boat *George William* which had been swamped and sunk off East Runton. A fresh to strong breeze was blowing from the north north east, creating a rough sea and a heavy onshore swell. Helmsman Rayment had to bring the lifeboat down over shallows where waves were breaking and manoeuvre round the capsized boat and floating debris before turning back into the breaking seas towards the two men in the water. One man was hanging on to a lifebuoy and the other was clinging to a crab pot marker buoy. Both were safely recovered.

Coxswain Arthur Wignall, Lytham-St Anne's: bronze medal

Assistant Mechanic Brian Pearson: bronze medal

On June 6, 1981, Lytham-St Anne's 46ft 9in Watson lifeboat *City of Bradford III* slipped her moorings to help a yacht sighted in difficulty close inshore. A gale was blowing from south west by west. There was a strong ebb tide and on passage over shallow waters the sea was very rough with waves continuously breaking over the lifeboat. The yacht *Morag* was heading into more dangerous waters and rolling heavily. As Coxswain Wignall brought the lifeboat alongside a man was seen in the water apparently clinging to the yacht's stern. Assistant Mechanic Pearson leaped into the inflatable dinghy being towed behind the yacht but the man's lifeline, still attached, was entangled. Brian Pearson jumped into the sea and dragged the man clear of immediate danger of being crushed, then boarded the yacht to try to secure a topline. Meanwhile another lifeboatman leaped on to the yacht, cut the lifeline and pulled the survivor on board. Brian Pearson was taken back aboard the lifeboat. A line had fouled one of the lifeboat's propellers, but with great skill Coxswain Wignall drove the lifeboat, using one engine only, up to the casualty, now being driven rapidly towards the shore, to take off the survivor and the other lifeboatman.

Coxswain Joshua Richards, Tenby: bar to his bronze medal

On the night of October 7, 1981, Tenby's 46ft 9in Watson lifeboat *Henry Comber Brown* launched into a south-westerly gale gusting to force 9 with a very rough sea and heavy swell to go to the help of the catamaran *Helen M* anchored in a dangerous position with only one man on board. The lifeboat was anchored and veered down in an attempt to pick up the casualty's anchor

and tow her clear of the shoal water. Two lifeboatmen scrambled aboard the catamaran but her anchor cable parted. A second anchor was let go, a topline swiftly passed and she was brought to safety. (*Full report, page 80*).

Coxswain Frederick John, St David's: bronze medal

On the night of October 18, 1981, the relief 46ft 9in Watson lifeboat *Charles Henry Ashley* on temporary duty at St David's launched after the tug *Vernicos Giorgos*, towing two tugs, was reported to have a rope around her propeller and to be dragging her anchor close to rocks in St Brides Bay in a strong south-westerly gale and very rough seas. When the lifeboat arrived, the two tugs being towed were already on the rocks and the crews of all three tugs, eight men, were aboard *Vernicos Giorgos*. With great skill, Coxswain John brought his lifeboat alongside five times and took off three men. The remaining five men decided to stay on board *Vernicos Giorgos*, hoping for a salvage tug. However, after midnight their tug grounded and an RAF helicopter lifted them off while the lifeboat together with the local cliff rescue company illuminated the scene. (*Full report, page 81*).

Coxswain David Cox, BEM, Wells: bronze medal

On November 20, 1981, the Wells 37ft Oakley lifeboat *Ernest Tom Neathercoat* was launched to go to the help of the fishing vessel *Sarah K* in difficulties, her engine room flooded, 2½ miles north of Brancaster. A gale to strong gale was blowing from the north west making the seas very rough and giving a heavy swell. The lifeboat first stood by while an RAF helicopter lowered a pump to the fishing boat, but when, as light was failing, the vessel's large foremast broke Coxswain Cox made four approaches to the heavily rolling boat to take off her four crew. (*Full report, page 82*).

Coxswain David Gallichan, Beaumaris: bronze medal

On December 13, 1981, the Beaumaris 46ft 9in Watson lifeboat *Greater London II (Civil Service No. 30)* was launched to go to the help of the 35ft angling launch *Wygyr* in difficulties in the Menai Straits. A strong gale, rising to more than storm force, was blowing from the south south east with very rough seas and a blizzard which was causing flooding on land. The windscreen iced up almost immediately and Coxswain Gallichan had to post lookouts. After a search, the launch was found and taken in tow, the topline doubled up. One line parted, however, and with the possibility of the other tow line parting in restricted waters Coxswain Gallichan, with great skill, took off the two men by hauling in the tow. (*Full report, page 79*).

Superintendent Coxswain Brian Bevan, Humber: bar to his bronze medal

On the night of December 13, 1981, Humber's 54ft Arun class lifeboat *City of Bradford IV* slipped her moorings to go to the help of the coaster *Harry Mitchell* whose cargo had shifted, giving her a list of 30 degrees. A storm was blowing from the south east, the seas were very rough and there was heavy snow. In winds gusting to force 11, Coxswain Bevan took the lifeboat alongside eight times to take off three men. The captain and mate decided to stay with their vessel and the lifeboat escorted her as she very slowly made her way to the Humber estuary. (*Full report, page 78*).

Crew Member Roderick James, Hayling Island: silver medal

Helmsman Frank Dunster: bar to his bronze medal

On September 19, 1981, Hayling Island's Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat was launched following reports of red flares in Hayling Bay. A south-easterly near gale rising to gale force was blowing against the tide creating rough, confused seas. The lifeboat went to help two windsurfers, a dinghy and a yacht and was then informed that someone had been seen clinging to a breakwater off Sandy Point. The wind had increased to force 9 and driving rain reduced visibility. A teenage boy was found clinging to the post of a groyne, some 20 yards out to sea. Two shore helpers had tried to reach him but had been swept back to land by the breakers. After Helmsman Dunster had made four attempts to bring the lifeboat through the surf to the boy, each time being defeated by the seas, he brought the lifeboat to within 30 feet and Crew Member James entered the water. The exhausted youth finally let go of the post and disappeared beneath the waves. Crew Member James grabbed him and made for the shore. The boy was taken to hospital and, as the lifeboat set out to deal with yet more casualties, Roderick James rejoined the boat to help.

Coxswain/Mechanic Maurice Hutchens, Sennen Cove: silver medal

On the night of September 19, 1981, Sennen Cove's 37ft 6in Rother lifeboat *Diana White* was launched to go to the help of the Icelandic coaster *Tungufoss*, heeled over four miles south of Longships Lighthouse. Force 8 to 9 gales were blowing from the west south west and there were heavy rain squalls and a very rough sea. When the lifeboat reached the casualty she found that three of the 11 crew had been rescued by an RN helicopter, but the winchman had been injured. After two attempted approaches, the lifeboat was manoeuvred as close as possible to the casualty's stern and, one at a time, three men were transferred from the coaster to liferafts attached to her stern and floated towards the lifeboat where

they were snatched aboard. Two more men tried to jump into the rafts which were filling with water but missed their footing and fell into the sea; they were spotted with the help of the helicopter's searchlight and pulled aboard the lifeboat. The coaster's list was increasing all the time, but with great skill the lifeboat was taken close in, avoiding the ship's rudder, so that two more men could leap aboard. With the coaster almost on her beam ends and apparently about to founder, the lifeboat began a final approach but the last man on board, the captain, managed to grab a lifting strop flown within his grasp by the helicopter and was lifted to safety.

Coxswain/Mechanic Alexander Gilchrist, Campbeltown: silver medal

On October 2, Campbeltown's 52ft Arun Walter and Margaret Couper slipped her moorings after information had been received that the trawler *Erlo Hills* was ashore on the west side of the Mull of Kintyre. After more than two hours search, the casualty was eventually found ashore off Rathlin Island off the North Irish coast. A strong gale was blowing from the north, giving short steep breaking waves. The coaster *Ceol Mor* was standing by. The lifeboat passed a towline between the trawler and the coaster which pulled the casualty off the rocks. The tow was slipped when the trawler's skipper reported that all was well with his vessel and the coaster departed. It was later found that the trawler's steering gear was jammed, then her main engine broke down and she began to drift towards the shore. The skipper refused to let the lifeboat take his crew off, so Coxswain Gilchrist, only 200 yards from the shore, secured a tow. Both boats were constantly being struck by 15ft waves and the lifeboat could hardly make headway. Eventually, with the risk of a capsized and with wind and tide now keeping the trawler from drifting back on shore, the tow was slipped. *Ceol Mor* returned and took up the tow again. The tow parted four times, each time being repassed by the lifeboat. Finally the coaster had to depart as she was extremely low on fuel. The trawler was being carried into Macdonnell Race and her skipper eventually agreed to abandon ship. The wind had strengthened to force 10 as the lifeboat approached six times through 30ft waves to take off the 14 men.

Daniel Norman, Watchet: inscribed wristwatch

On the evening of September 12, 1981, while playing near the water's edge, a girl was swept into the sea by a heavy wave. She could not swim. Her friend Lorna Webber swam to her but could not bring her back to shore. Lorna therefore swam ashore to get help. Meanwhile, anglers who had seen the incident shouted to 14-year-old Daniel Norman, aboard his father's fishing boat inside the harbour. Daniel steered the boat towards the girl, now

floating face downwards. As the water was not deep enough to take the boat alongside, Daniel swam to her with a lifebelt, brought her back to the boat and, with great difficulty, got her aboard. He immediately started mouth to mouth resuscitation. By now Daniel's father and another man had arrived to help and the girl was landed and taken to hospital. For this service Daniel Norman was accorded the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum.

Coxswain Michael Scales, St Peter Port: gold medal

Second Coxswain Peter Bougourd: bronze medal

Motor Mechanic Robert Vowles: bronze medal

Assistant Mechanic Alan Martel: bronze medal

Crew Member John Webster: bronze medal

Crew Member John Bougourd: bronze medal

Crew Member Peter Bisson: bronze medal

Crew Member Richard Hamon: bronze medal

On the afternoon of December 13, 1981, St Peter Port's 52ft Arun lifeboat *Sir William Arnold* slipped her moorings to go to the help of the Ecuadorian vessel *Bonita*, listing heavily in the middle of the English Channel. A storm gusting to hurricane force was blowing from the south and the sea was very rough. Driving snow and sea spray reduced visibility to 200 yards. The lifeboat maintained full speed despite broaching eight times and arrived on scene at dusk. The wind was now south south east force 11, whipping up waves of 45 to 50 feet. *Bonita* was listing 45 degrees and rolling heavily, with seas breaking right over her decks. Ropes, drums and large pieces of timber were



floating, trapped on her lee side so that the lifeboat had to be taken in to her transom stern. During 3½ hours, in darkness and bitter cold, 50 approaches were made and 29 people taken off. Five more people were rescued by RN helicopters, one by a French tug and one man was lost. (Full report, page 77).

The Duke of Atholl then invited Princess Alice to make the presentations to voluntary workers. Since the last annual presentations of awards meeting the Committee of Management has awarded six honorary life governorships, five bars to the gold badge and 22 gold badges to voluntary workers for long and distinguished service. All but six of the recipients, The Right Honourable The Dowager Countess of Airlie, Mr J. S. Rae, Miss V. Hooper, Mr T. C. Hart, Mrs N. C. Bell and The Dowager Viscountess Colville of Culross were present to receive their awards:

Honorary Life Governors

Mrs M. T. R. Pearce, JP

Honorary secretary of St Ives ladies' guild from 1932 to 1937 and again from 1945 to 1967, and chairman since 1967; awarded gold badge 1958 and bar to the gold badge 1970.

Lady Cunninghame Graham

President of Rosyth ladies' guild from 1946 to 1952 and president of Helensburgh ladies' guild since 1952; awarded gold badge in 1966.

The Right Honourable The Dowager Countess of Airlie

President of Montrose ladies' guild from 1935 to 1982; awarded gold badge 1965.

Mrs P. Montague Kavanagh

Chairman of Dublin Sale Committee since 1967, a member of the RNLI Fund Raising Committee since 1972 and Dublin Shop Organiser since 1972; awarded gold badge 1972.

Mr B. G. Blampied, OBE

Committee member of Guernsey branch since 1938, vice-chairman from 1956 to 1959 and chairman since 1959. Mr Blampied, who has been a deputy launching authority of St Peter Port station branch since 1977 also maintains a strong liaison with lifeboat stations in France; awarded gold badge 1972.

Mr J. S. Rae

Committee member of Stromness station branch since 1928 and chairman since 1944, giving full support to both operational and fund-raising matters; awarded silver badge 1957 and gold badge 1968.

Bar to Gold Badge

Mrs W. Sowden

Honorary secretary of Southampton ladies' guild from 1936 to 1961 and chairman of Hedge End ladies' guild since 1960; awarded record of thanks 1948 and gold badge 1962.

Miss J. A. James

Honorary secretary of Paignton branch since 1938; awarded statuette in 1949, silver badge 1961 and gold badge 1970.

Mr W. L. Barber

Member of Stockport auxiliary crew since 1936 and honorary secretary from 1957 to 1979; honorary treasurer of Stockport branch from 1953 to 1955, honorary secretary from 1956 to 1957 and chairman from 1957 to 1963. Mr Barber has been a member of Manchester Executive Committee since 1976. Awarded silver badge 1962 and gold badge 1972.

Mr J. H. Stockley

Member of Stockport auxiliary crew since 1948 and honorary treasurer from 1957 to 1974; a member of Stockport branch since 1938 and chairman and honorary secretary from 1946 to 1953. Mr Stockley has been a member of Manchester Executive Committee since 1976. Awarded statuette 1964 and gold badge 1972.

Miss V. Hooper

Member of Barmouth ladies' guild committee since 1948, assistant honorary secretary from 1952 to 1955, honorary secretary from 1955 to 1968 and president since 1972; awarded silver badge 1963 and gold badge 1976.

Gold Badge

Mrs J. Vincent

Honorary flag week organiser of Sheperton branch from 1949 and honorary

secretary from 1975; awarded Chairman's letter of thanks 1961 and silver badge 1967.

Mr G. H. Brewer

Honorary treasurer of Stanmore branch since 1952; awarded silver badge 1969.

Mrs R. H. Maurice, ARRC

Honorary secretary of Marlborough branch from 1960 to 1982; awarded silver badge 1972.

Mr F. C. Seager, MBE

Chairman of Reigate and Redhill branch from 1957 to 1981 and president since 1981; awarded statuette 1968 and silver badge 1973.

Mr T. C. Hart

Member of The Lizard-Cadgwith station branch committee since 1948, vice-chairman from 1955 to 1976, honorary treasurer from 1957 to 1982, chairman from 1976 to 1980 and president since 1982; awarded silver badge 1967.

Miss A. E. Armitage

Chairman and president of Brixham ladies' guild from 1955 to 1978 and president since 1978.

Mr G. T. Flint

Assistant treasurer of Weston-super-Mare station branch from 1949 to 1958 and chairman since 1976; member of Weston-super-Mare financial branch committee from 1953 to 1958, honorary treasurer from 1965 to 1971 and chairman since 1971. Member of Midsomer Norton branch committee from 1958 to 1965.

Mrs N. Clarke

Member of Harwich branch committee 1954 to 1960. Honorary organiser of Woolston District (Southampton branch), 1960 to 1964. Honorary secretary of Colchester ladies' guild 1966 to 1973 and honorary secretary of Colchester branch since 1973. Awarded Chairman's letter of thanks 1970 and silver badge 1975.

Mrs M. Ackerman

Honorary secretary of Nantwich branch 1955 to 1968 and chairman since 1968; awarded silver badge 1966.

Mrs D. Lamont

Member of Lerwick ladies' guild 1932 to 1953 and president from 1947 to 1953. Chairman of Grimsby ladies' guild since 1964. Awarded silver badge 1974.

Mrs V. Robinson, MBE

Member of Redcar ladies' guild committee since 1932, during which time, as a tireless, dedicated fund raiser, she has held various offices; awarded silver badge 1972.

Mrs S. B. Whatley

Honorary secretary of Tynemouth ladies' guild from 1957 to 1977, chairman from 1977 to 1981 and vice-presi-

dent since 1981; awarded silver badge 1972.

Mrs M. Campini

A collector since 1939. Member of Rhyl ladies' guild committee since 1955, vice-president from 1961 to 1966 and president since 1966; awarded silver badge 1973.

Mrs N. C. Bell

Member of Dunoon ladies' guild since 1964 and president since 1975. Mrs Bell has been a fund raiser for more than 50 years, at first in Glasgow where, during the war, she helped raise money for the first Girl Guide lifeboat.

The Dowager Viscountess Colville of Culross

President of Inverbervie ladies' guild since 1972, after serving as President of Kinneff and Catterline ladies' guild.

Mrs F. B. Smart

Honorary secretary and treasurer of Montrose ladies' guild from 1953 to 1961, vice-president from 1968 to 1979 and chairman from 1979 to 1981; awarded statuette 1974.

Mrs D. G. Gall

Honorary treasurer of Wick ladies' guild from 1953 to 1980 and assistant honorary treasurer since 1980; awarded silver badge 1967.

Mrs C. Campbell

Honorary secretary of Wick ladies' guild since 1956; awarded silver badge 1967.

Mr J. S. Churchill, JP FRCS

Member of Torbay station branch committee 1950 to 1981 and chairman 1953 to 1981; awarded silver badge 1972.

Mrs M. C. Hoy

Honorary secretary of Clogher Head station branch from 1961 to 1981; awarded binoculars 1972. Mrs Hoy has always given encouragement to fund raising efforts.

Dr S. Peace, MB ChB

Honorary secretary of Longhope station branch from 1957 to 1962 and honorary medical adviser from 1962 to 1963. Honorary medical adviser of Kirkwall station branch since 1972. Dr Peace has taken a very active interest both in operational matters and in fund raising.

Dr D. W. L. Leslie, MA MB BCH MRCS LRCP DTMSH

Member of Penlee station branch committee since 1950, honorary medical adviser since 1950, vice-chairman from 1969 to 1973 and chairman since 1973; awarded silver badge 1972. A tireless worker, Dr Leslie has devoted a great deal of time to fund raising.

After receiving his gold badge from Princess Alice, Dr Leslie turned to address the assembled company of lifeboat people:

'It is very unusual for a station branch chairman to appear in a gathering such as this, at the end of such a memorable afternoon. I expect you can imagine why I am here. You know what happened to us last December. You have seen these wonderful ladies here today and you gave them a marvellous reception. I should like just to tell you how grateful we all are in the Penlee branch, in Mousehole, in Penzance, for the absolute warmth of sympathy, love and support which has come to us from all over the world . . . thank you all so much.'

To bring the afternoon to a close, Mr Graham Newman, a member of the Committee of Management moved a resolution of thanks to HRH Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester. In his speech he said:

'The RNLI seeks to protect those at sea around our islands. In these islands, and as a past chairman of the Baltic Exchange I know it only too well, we still depend on the sea for the movements of our essential supplies from abroad. We have heard today of rescues from British, Irish, Ecuadorian, Icelandic and Greek merchant and fishing vessels. These rescues, all carried out in severe weather, remind us of the words of that great statesman, Sir Winston Churchill, who, at the RNLI's centenary dinner in 1924 said:

"One feels that the lifeboatman may plead that he represents the cause of humanity, and not that of any single nation, or any single cause."

'Over 50 years later the constancy of the lifeboat cause remains unaltered. The devotion of individuals to the cause, as

mentioned by Her Royal Highness, is still unwavered. The RNLI is still one of the greatest and most vital voluntary organisations in the world.'

Earlier in the afternoon, during the presentations of awards for gallantry, the whole company filling the Royal Festival Hall had risen first to honour the memory of the gallant crew of *Solomon Browne* and salute the courage of their families; it had risen a second time to honour Coxswain Michael Scales, gold medallist from St Peter Port, and his crew. Now everyone rose for a third time to support with warm affection the hearty vote of thanks to Princess Alice, a great lady who had given her support to the lifeboat service for so many years.

Letters...

Memorial

Rosslare Lifeboatmen's Memorial Committee would like to thank you for the very nice article you published in THE LIFEBOAT (*Letters, autumn 1981*) concerning its project of erecting a suitable memorial to the 11 great men of the Rosslare Fort lifeboat *James Stevens No. 15*, officially known as Wexford No. 1, for their part in the brilliant rescue of the crew of the Norwegian schooner *Mexico* from the Keeragh Rocks between February 20 and 23, 1914.

We are very happy to say that the memorial is now a reality. It is in limestone surmounted by the bronze head of a lifeboatman, to represent all lifeboatmen, situated in a lovely little alcove beside the sea in the little hamlet of Burrow, near Rosslare, where most of the crew were born, lived and died. The whole project cost just under £5,000 and subscriptions came from all parts of the British Isles.

The unveiling took place on February 21, 1982. There was a church service first in which descendants of the crew members took part, before a parade to the memorial. Among those present were His Excellency J. H. Guinness, Royal Norwegian Consul General, representing the King of Norway, and also lifeboat coxswains and an ex-coxswain from the south east.

The unveiling ceremony was performed by Edward Wickham, from Dublin, last surviving son of Coxswain Edward Wickham of the *James Stevens*. Afterwards our chairman, Nick Doyle, whose grandfather and father, Christopher and Andrew Doyle, were in the *James Stevens* at the *Mexico* rescue, presented a cheque for £250 to Cecil Miller, Rosslare station honorary secretary.

We are all very proud that the names and deeds of these brave men will be remembered in the years to come.—IBAR MURPHY, *Rosslare Lifeboatmen's*

Memorial Committee, Drimagh, Rosslare, County Cork, Republic of Ireland.

CB or VHF?

I read with interest the article on CB or VHF in the spring issue of THE LIFEBOAT.

I would suggest that boat owners should stick to the marine VHF or, if they feel that has limitations, put some consideration into obtaining an amateur radio licence. This does mean passing a simple technical examination and, for all wave bands, a morse test. However, the technical examination pass makes available a number of useful VHF and UHF wave bands which have considerable range. These bands are also extended by repeater stations all round the country which are often located on very high sites. Secondly, the amateur service has run an emergency service called 'Raynet' which has an excellent record. Amateur equipment is manned by technically competent individuals well versed in two-way communications.

Anyone interested in amateur radio can obtain information by writing to the Radio Society of Great Britain, 35 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2AE.—R. J. NASH, *Dr, 135 Farren Road, Wyken, Coventry.*

Multiplication

The fish and chip shop at Wendover, Buckinghamshire, owned by Mr and Mrs Blackman, has raised over £220 since having an RNLI collecting box on the counter from April 1978. If there are about 10,000 fish and chip shops in the country, this performance from each would produce an income of £2,200,000 towards the lifeboat service!—JAN NORMAN, *Mrs, Coombe Hill Farm, Butlers Cross, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.*

Hats

I have been connected with the RNLI

for over 60 years. My father, an ex-Royal Navy PO stoker, was a member of the old Weymouth lifeboat crew when the boat was propelled by oars.

I am now 74 and up to five years ago I was out selling emblems on Lifeboat Day. Now I organise box collections.

When I retired from the Post Office after 46 years service, my wife and I went on a world cruise in ss *Northern Star*. The cruise took us 78 days and the journey was 25,835 miles. During the voyage my wife collected stamps and native dolls in their costumes and I collected coins and hats. I have a collection of 31 hats and I give talks to WIs and clubs. I do not charge a fee but ask for a donation for the RNLI . . . I feel proud to think the Institution is a voluntary organisation.—A. G. GORDON-RATTI, *Barnwood Road, Park Barn, Guildford, Surrey.*

Wanted

Has anyone, please, a gold coloured RNLI mug illustrating the D class inflatable lifeboat which was featured in the Institution's souvenir and gift range in 1976? I require one of these mugs to complete a collection.—L. DUDFIELD, *78 Glyn Rhosyn, Pentwyn, Cardiff CF2 7DS (Tel: Cardiff 735362).*

I am a collector of Merchant Shipping cap badges. In return for a badge sent to me by one company I am, at its request, sending a cheque to the RNLI by way of a 'thank you'. If any of your readers have spare cap badges tucked away, which they would let me have, I should be delighted to donate £3 to the RNLI for each badge received, provided they are company badges and not standard MN.—DEREK BLACKHURST, *34 Barwell Road, Sale, Cheshire.*

A **Maritime England map** has been published by the Ordnance Survey in conjunction with the English Tourist Board. Roughly 10 miles to 1in, it includes a wealth of maritime information including museums with maritime connections. Price £1.50 from Ordnance Survey agents or direct from: English Tourist Board, Department D, 4 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DU, price £1.50 plus 20p post and packing.

An Epilogue

to the loss of *Solomon Browne*

from Dr D. W. L. Leslie

Chairman, Penlee Station branch

MOUSEHOLE VILLAGE and harbour just west of Penzance is famous for its display of Christmas lights—an enterprise supported by the whole village and particularly by the Penlee lifeboat crew. Last year Charles Greenhaugh, as chairman of the local Licensed Victuallers Association, switched on the lights just a couple of nights before losing his life.

Come back with me, if you will, to that wild grey Sunday morning in December—the force 10 storm gusting to force 12 of the past night having moderated to perhaps force 8, still with heavy rain, and at just about nine in the morning a completely shattered group of men and women are making their way towards the local Shipping Agents, the office of our honorary secretary, Del Johnson. As many as possible of the Penlee branch committee had been contacted during the small hours—that is those who had not already been up all night visiting families, or searching the coastline west of Mousehole.

I called the meeting with an utter sense of being alone. Coming into the office, in a daze really, I noticed that the room was almost uncomfortably full, and the sudden appreciation began to grow that we were not so alone: I first spotted Les Vipond, the divisional inspector of lifeboats, who had driven from Plymouth with John Chadwick, the district surveyor; and Peter Sturdee, DOS(SW), with his assistant Jan Liddicoat. George Cooper, deputy chief of operations, was there from Poole together with Norman Ford, deputy secretary of the operations department, Ron Turner, surveyor of lifeboats (maintenance), and Selwyn Ewart, superintendent engineer. Peter Sturdee had also brought with him Daphne, his wife; she did not come to that first meeting but did sterling work later. All had hurried down to us through the night driving through atrocious storm conditions. I have lived in Penzance since 1920 and I cannot recall a worse night.

As the loneliness began to evaporate there came the realisation that the whole weight of the RNLI secretariat and inspectorate had come to help us, and our endeavours were strengthened by the news that Rear Admiral Graham, the director, had been extracted from a foreign bound aircraft and was on his way.

The teleprinter began to chatter bringing immediate messages of con-

cern from Her Majesty The Queen, HRH The Duke of Kent, our President, HRH The Duke of Cornwall (you know him as the Prince of Wales), the Prime Minister and others and the impression began to grow that enormous waves of good wishes, sympathy and friendship were sweeping towards us.

There were helicopters overhead and a glance out to sea showed a fair proportion of the local mid water and inshore fishing fleets searching in seas which were still being thrown 30 feet or so into the air against Penzance promenade. Among them were two of our three flank lifeboats, from the Lizard and Scilly. Maurice Hutchens from Senen Cove managed to get his relief 37ft Oakley lifeboat to sea—and how, dead into the teeth of that storm and against the tide, I do not know—but he just could not get around the corner of Land's End. All of 200 souls at sea still in very nasty weather searching for their friends and for wreckage, and they stuck it out until dark, only returning to harbour for fuel. Peter Mitchell's Barnett from Lizard-Cadgwith suffered hull damage from a succession of solid walls of sea; Matt Lethbridge from Scilly, in his Arun, was loath to go home to St Mary's when darkness came after 20 hours of searching.

Later in the same morning I met our indefatigable branch chaplain with our new diocesan Bishop on the sea front at Penzance and afterwards again in Mousehole village.

Of course an event of this nature produces a press corps of formidable proportions, but mostly they were a cheerful, respectful and helpful bunch of men and women with a job to do and a tactful restrained approach.

And then the mass of letters of sympathy to the branch—nothing to do with the Penwith disaster fund which was handled separately with prodigious energy by the local authority and Barclays Bank. The local sorting office worked wonders, and remember this was in addition to their normal pre-Christmas rush, to a degree that our branch office, now occupying most of the Shipping Agents' office and fully staffed up to 16 hours a day, had to ask the Post Office to hold over mail bags from midday on December 23. A number of local employers seemed happy enough to lose their secretaries to us, full-time, for up to a couple of weeks.

Letters from the length and breadth of the land: from old age pensioners,

children, religious orders, service units, two from prisons, and so it went on . . . Of course there were letters from other members of the lifeboat family—nearly 1,000 of these private and branch letters, with letters from Shoreline Members, Enthusiasts, RNLI staff and pensioners, and particularly we were touched to have letters from Longhope, Fraserburgh, Broughty Ferry, The Mumbles, St Ives and Rye Harbour, lifeboat stations which had suffered a similar experience in the past.

And from worldwide messages poured in by mail and telex: a full list would read like the index of an atlas: I think messages came from every country in Europe including USSR and Czechoslovakia; they came from the North American continent, including newly-formed Canadian lifeboat branches, from lifeboat people in New Zealand and South Africa, and from Ascension Island whose English staff have a great affinity with West Cornwall. Diego Garcia and The Falklands harbour Cornish expatriates, as do Malaysia and the Pacific Islands.

The Penlee branch committee is large and active comprising members of very varied interests and jobs and in the event I think a chairman in like circumstances can never have had greater support than I have enjoyed over the past six months or so. My own secretary wrote about 300 letters for me, but many friends have had what must have seemed a rather short and even perfunctory formal acknowledgement. We may unhappily have missed some out. But we should like to acknowledge publicly the help, sympathy and support we received from local seafarers, the Police, Post Office, press, professional RNLI staff and in very full measure its Committee of Management, often in person, and supporters and friends worldwide. On behalf of Penlee branch I am more than proud to send our very sincere and heartfelt thanks to you all for your loving support and encouragement throughout this time.

The spirit of Mousehole and Penlee is exemplified by Charlie's widow. Three nights after the disaster she asked that the lights, unlit since the previous Saturday, should be repaired and relit—and this was promptly done. This is what lifeboating is all about.

Thank you all so much.—DENIS LESLIE.

Tarbert Recipe Book: A second edition has been produced of the very popular *Tarbert Recipe Book* compiled by Dr F. Severne Mackenna, an honorary life governor of the Institution and member of the Scottish Executive Committee. Copies are available from the RNLI Scottish Office, 45 Queen Street, Edinburgh. Price: for branches and guilds, in bulk, 50p per copy; individual copies, 75p plus 25p postage and packing.

Lifeboat People

DR NORA ACHESON who died in Aldeburgh in 1981, in her eightieth year, had always been connected with the local lifeboat. It was thought that she was the first lady doctor ever to have gone to sea in an RNLI lifeboat on service when she stood in for her husband Dr Robin Acheson during the early part of the second world war.

Robin and Nora Acheson began practice in Aldeburgh in 1931, coming from Northamptonshire; Doctor Robin becoming doctor to Aldeburgh branch 15 years before the post of honorary medical adviser was formalised, and a member of the branch committee in 1938. He was branch chairman at the time of his death in 1959. Doctor Nora continued the practice up to a week before her death. She was made an Honoured Citizen of Aldeburgh in 1980 and was president of the local St John Ambulance Brigade; and it was she who founded the present Aldeburgh Cottage Hospital during the war following the complete destruction by enemy bombs of the original hospital in Aldeburgh High Street. She made many trips in Aldeburgh lifeboat during her lifetime and performed much valuable lifesaving work at sea, particularly during the war, when calls were frequent to ditched airmen.

* * *

Mrs Dorothy Jenkins, of Hemel Hempstead branch, and Mrs Doris Lamb, of Sandown, Isle of Wight, both received presentations from their branches recently for their long service. Mrs Jenkins first sold flags 60 years ago, outside Buckingham Palace; Mrs Lamb first helped with fund raising in London 47 years ago and she was a founder member of Sandown and District branch ten years ago.



Lady Olwen Carey Evans, DBE, an honorary life governor of the Institution and president and chairman of South Caernarvonshire ladies' guild, surrounded by her family on the occasion of her ninetieth birthday; the card she is holding is one received from the RNLI in Wales signed by all those who had been present at the North Wales Conference two days before. Lady Olwen's ninetieth birthday coincides with the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of South Caernarvonshire ladies' guild. The guild was formed by her mother, Dame Margaret Lloyd George, who Lady Olwen succeeded as president and chairman.



Arbroath lifeboat crew welcome to their boathouse lifeboatmen from The Netherlands Royal North and South Lifeboat Society (front row) who attended a course at the Robert Gordons Institute of Technology Offshore Marine Rescue Training Centre in Stonehaven last February. After an exercise there was, of course, much discussion on subjects of mutual interest. Arbroath crew and RGIT instructors, standing (l to r): Second Mechanic Bruce Gregory, Motor Mechanic David Cargill, Crew Members Finlay Fraser, Allan Gillies, David Gerrard and John Blues, RGIT instructor, Crew Member The Reverend Bill Ward, and the second RGIT instructor. Coxswain Douglas Matthewson and Second Coxswain Brian Bruce were present, but not in the photograph. The Dutchmen also visited Aberdeen lifeboat station.

Photograph by courtesy of Jim Ratcliffe

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

March

J. E. Roberts, MBE JP, Porthdinllaen station honorary secretary from 1937 to 1978. He was awarded binoculars in 1949, the gold badge in 1964, the bar to the gold badge in 1973, and honorary life governorship in 1978.

Henry O. Thomas, coxswain of Torbay lifeboat from 1951 to 1960 after serving an assistant mechanic from 1941

to 1951. He was awarded the bronze medal in 1952 and the silver medal in 1959.

April

Ronnie Aim, composer of 'The Heroes of Longhope', a tribute to the men who died in the Orkney lifeboat disaster played everywhere Scottish fiddlers got together. Mr Aim was involved in a road accident and died in hospital in Kirkwall.

John W. Sales, BEM, coxswain of Lerwick lifeboat from 1947 to 1969, after joining the crew in 1943 and serving as assistant mechanic from 1944 to 1947. He was awarded the bronze medal in 1956, the silver medal in 1958 and a framed letter of thanks signed by the chairman of the Institution in 1969.

May

Robert Anderson, DSM, coxswain of Aith lifeboat from 1948 to 1965, after serving as bowman from 1946 to 1948.

Lady T. Ferens, president of Driffield ladies' guild for about 16 years.

* * *

Saltash branch has received £70 in memorial tributes from the family of the late Geoffrey Smith of St Germans, Saltash.

Mrs Phyllis Carpenter, for seven years an enthusiastic collector during London lifeboat week for West Drayton and Uxbridge branch, was knocked down in a hit and run car accident just before lifeboat week last March and died shortly afterwards. At the wish of her family, instead of floral tributes, donations amounting to £150 were given to the RNLI.



Tulip Lifeboat

IN SPALDING FLOWER PARADE

by Theo Stibbons

Chairman, Spalding and District Branch

SINCE THE FORMATION of Spalding and District branch five years ago we have always spent the second weekend in May working very hard raising money for the RNLI at various stalls dotted around the route of the spectacular Spalding Flower Parade.

We had often thought of entering a float in the parade but it was not until the theme of 'Maritime England' was chosen for 1982 that we decided to go all out to see that our branch represented the Royal National Lifeboat Institution in the parade.

The parade itself consists of about 20 floats decorated with millions of different coloured tulip heads with several marching bands interspersed between the floats. The local bulb growers remove the tulip heads as soon as they come into bloom in order to prevent the bulbs being drained of strength by the flowers. The discarded heads are then used to produce this glorious Flower Parade.

The steelwork for the floats is built

The straw matting which covers the steel frames, showing detail of bow pudding and fairlead.



around existing frames which bolt on to unseen tractors which provide the motive power. The tractor for our float was lent by a farmer friend, Charles Ostler, a keen lifeboat supporter. Straw mats, specially imported from the Continent, are used to cover the steel frames. This is an extremely skilled task as the 'strawers' must ensure that the correct proportions and shapes are retained.

Work on design begins as early as the September before the parade in May. We are able to work closely with the designer in planning our tulip lifeboat. As I have close connections with Cromer branch, I suggested a half scale model of Cromer's 48ft 6in Oakley lifeboat *Ruby and Arthur Reed* as our design. We were very impressed with the resulting float and particularly the attention to detail.

Once the 'strawers' have finished, the tens of thousands of tulip heads have to be pinned on. This arduous and sometime tedious task begins on the Thursday morning, two days before the

Local schoolboys help pin on yellow/red mixed tulip heads for the orange superstructure.



parade. As much help as possible is needed to ensure the mammoth task is finished in time, and committee members, relations, friends and supporters of our branch were drafted in to help. In addition to the 'heading' we also had our usual five RNLI stalls to set up, stock up and man, so understandably life became very hectic towards the Friday evening!

Nameboards for the float were hand painted by committee member Ian Walker and gave credit to local branches of the Leicester Building Society who, thanks to the persuasive powers of Long Sutton branch manager Jeff Sutherland-Kaye, kindly contributed towards the cost of the float.

The local Police lent us a blue flashing light which was wired to the tractor battery. There were also mock radar and radio aerials.

We were very pleased to have our good friends Motor Mechanic Donny Abbs and Crew Member Eric Love with us from Cromer, adding authenticity to our float.

More than half a million people visit Spalding to see the tulip floats and not only do we feel we attracted much publicity for the RNLI (including regular spontaneous applause and the throwing of coins on to the lifeboat) but our overall takings for the weekend at our stalls and static collecting boxes were boosted from around £1,000 to over £3,250. That was a result which obviously made us feel all our efforts were worth while.



Chairman and honorary secretary's four-year-old daughter Zannah Stibbons 'testing' one of the seats.

Shoreline Section

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS from many thousands of people, all, as it were, like threads being twisted together to form one rope of great strength, form the basis of Shoreline support for the lifeboat service. Year by year the sum of these subscriptions provides a regular, known and growing income upon which reliance can be placed. That is the foundation on which the membership scheme is built, where it all starts; but it is most heartening that so many of you, our Shoreline members, are not prepared just to leave it at that. Not only do you give your subscriptions, you give much more in many different ways.

There are those who each year subscribe amounts over and above the minimum for their class of membership; those who covenant their subscriptions, thus increasing their value to the RNLI:



A Shoreline display has been designed for Tenby lifeboathouse by Claude A. Page of Pumpsaint, near Llandeilo, the brother-in-law of Eric Bancroft, the station honorary secretary. With this encouragement, and a good supply of Shoreline leaflets, Tenby hopes to enrol many new members this summer.

those who send extra donations; and those who individually or as teams help to enrol new members. Then there are members who organise events on our behalf, and it is most encouraging to read the letters telling us of these special efforts; through these letters, many of you, whom we in the Membership Office have never met, become old friends—like Geoff Threadgold of The Horns at Gnosall, Staffordshire, and his customers, who have helped Shoreline for many years—and I know that any supporter of the RNLI will always be made very welcome at this hostelry. You will have to buy your own drinks of course! Cheers!!

Extra help has come over the past two years from the staff and children of Billingshurst County Junior School, West Sussex. In that time, keeping up their efforts on our behalf, they have raised the magnificent sum of £1,332 for RNLI funds.

So often it is the children themselves who, without any prompting from adults, make up their minds they want to help the lifeboats, and then think up their own ways of doing it. We heard the other day of a group of seven young children from the village of Brereton, Cheshire, who braved the snow and cold to go carol singing; the amount they raised, £22, was sent to Shoreline to be passed on to the Penlee disaster fund. That was just one of many, many gifts which were sent by our members towards the disaster fund; there were far too many to report in detail, but our deep thanks go out to you all.

It is not only children who have good ideas! Recently we heard of two of our members who celebrated their silver wedding by organising a barn dance and charging all their friends and relations a nominal 'entrance fee'; the amount raised was given to the RNLI. I understand it was a most enjoyable evening and one that will long be remembered. Congratulations on your silver wedding, Mr and Mrs Ibberson, and thank you for your support.

* * *

Two Shoreline members, Martin Bave of Coven, near Wolverhampton, and Peter Crooke of Walsall embarked on a fantastic journey from the Anchor Inn, Coven, by canal and river to Humber lifeboat station. Sponsored by Goodyears and an associated company, Tyre Services Great Britain, by rela-

tives and by friends the two set off in one-man canoes along the Staffs and Worcester Canal, the Rivers Penk, Trent and Humber, negotiating Trent Falls on the way, to arrive at Spurn Point on Saturday April 17; there, after a journey of 204 miles, they were given a royal welcome by Coxswain Brian Bevan and the crew of Humber lifeboat to whom they delivered plaques from Wolverhampton branch. With additional help from the Anchor Inn, Coven, and the Rock Inn, Tettenhall, £470 was raised for the lifeboats.

* * *

These have all been individual efforts but of course many of our members are also either members of the RNLI's fund raising branches and guilds themselves or give their support to events organised by their local branches and guilds. The attendance of Shoreline members is always much appreciated—you will find a warm welcome. Practical help is also much appreciated, particularly on flag days, and our regional organisers will be only too pleased, if asked, to put Shoreline members in touch with the fund-raisers in their own area. Here is a list of their names and addresses:

Scotland: Ken Thirlwell, RNLI, 45 Queen Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3NN. Tel: 031-225 4014.

North East: Brian Stevenson, RNLI, The Mill, Glasshouses, Nr Harrogate, North Yorkshire. Tel: 0423 711667.

Midlands: Richard Mann, RNLI, 16 Harborne Road, Birmingham, B15 3AA. Tel: 021-454 3009.

East: George Price, RNLI, Aldham Road, Hadleigh, Suffolk. Tel: 0473 822837.

London North: Miss Susan Steer, RNLI, 10-12 St Albans Road, Barnet, Hertfordshire, EN5 4JX. Tel: 01-441 0997.

London South: Michael Ashley, RNLI, 6 Bell Parade, Glebe Way, West Wickham, Kent, BR4 0RH. Tel: 01-777 1776.

London City: Raymond Pope, RNLI, Borneo House, 62-63 Mark Lane, London, EC3. Tel: 01-481 1219.

South East: Ian Wallington, RNLI, 9 Union Square, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 8HU. Tel: 0892 35000.

Southern: Mrs Wendy Nelson, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ. Tel: 0202 671133.

South West: Andrew Young, RNLI, Princes Wharf, Wapping Road, Bristol, BS1 1RN. Tel: 0272 29139.

Wales: Glyn Williams, RNLI, Aberdare House, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff. Tel: 0222 31831.

North West: David Jones, RNLI, Princes Chambers, 26 Pall Mall, Manchester 2. Tel: 061-834 6978.

Ireland: Lt-Col Brian Clark, **Dublin Office**, 3 Clare Street, Dublin 2. Tel: 0001 762217. **Belfast Office**, 33 Saintfield Road, Belfast. Tel: 0232 645645.

* * *

A ninth Shoreline Club has just been formed—at Coventry. Any Shoreline members in that area who would like to join should write to the honorary secretary, Mr M. Simms, 25 Moor Street, Earlsdon, Coventry. We send our best wishes to Club No. 9 and, of course, to you all—PETER HOLNESS, 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 107,800 people would have been lost without the lifeboat service.

Some Ways of Raising Money

Mike Smith, a Tunbridge Wells teacher and a member of the Long Distance Walkers Association, 'pushed out the boat' for the RNLI when the Mayor set him off on a 170-mile sponsored walk from Tunbridge Wells to Weymouth. Mike was pushing a pram disguised as a boat. He was born and educated in Weymouth and it had long been his ambition to walk home—it was a walk which raised £1,460 in sponsorship for Tunbridge Wells branch.

Fund raisers in Dublin raised £59,000 for the lifeboats in 1981. Of that amount, £24,814 was taken in the lifeboat shop and nearly £10,000 at the Dublin spring sale in the Royal Dublin Society.

Last March, Harrogate ladies' guild organised a Marks and Spencer Fashion Spectacular at the New Conference Centre, Harrogate. So great was the response, with other lifeboat guilds in the area also helping to sell tickets, that the 1,850 seats were sold out within three weeks. Marks and Spencer very kindly offered to put on an extra matinee performance—and that was almost another sell out. Lady Norton, a member of the Committee of Management, present at both performances, expressed in her short address the thanks of the Institution. After all expenses had been paid, the event realised a wonderful £11,027, of which £2,898 came from a raffle. In addition, souvenirs to the value of £331 were sold.

This year, Fowey School chose the RNLI to benefit from its annual Lent appeal for charity. Every one of the 960 pupils as well as staff members contributed in one way or another to the fund raising, which was all done in 30 days. A cycle marathon, sponsored shoe-shines and a day when, if payment was made for the privilege, the children were allowed to come to school in any clothes they wished instead of school uniform—these were just some of the ideas pursued with such enthusiasm that a wonderful £3,000 and more was raised. It was an all time record.

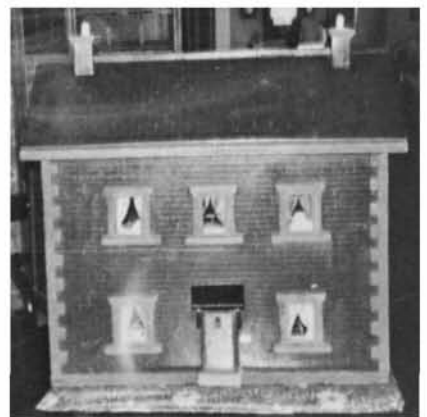


Twelve members of Lloyds Bank branches all over the City were among the many hundreds of RNLI supporters who were out selling flags on London Lifeboat Day last March; the Lloyds contingent collected £536.66. The total sum collected on that day throughout the whole of Greater London including the City was more than £180,000, a remarkable 26 per cent and more increase on the 1981 amount.

photograph by courtesy of 'Lloyds Bank News'

Central London Committee arranged an Antique Roadshow, with buffet and wine, at Fishmongers Hall in April by courtesy of the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers. The evening included demonstrations of embroidery by the Royal School of Needlework, of clock restoring and of glass engraving, and displays of apothecaries jars and instruments by the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, of antique dolls and of antique fans by the Fan Circle International. More than £2,000 was raised for the RNLI.

Last year, Broadstairs branch and guild raised £7,409 by their flag day and other fund-raising efforts; these included two successful coffee mornings, a hat show and a fortnight's 'stand' in a vacant shop kindly lent to the guild and put to excellent use for the sale of goods by enthusiastic helpers.



Lee Johnson, the owner of a hairdressing salon in Lymington, raised £180 for the lifeboats with a raffle for a doll's house. He sold £90 worth of tickets himself and Lymington ladies' guild sold the rest.



RNLB William and Laura, late of Newcastle, Northern Ireland, was taken out of retirement in Ulster Transport Museum, Cultra, to help Bangor branch in a fund-raising effort last April. Over the ten days she was at Clondeboye Shopping Centre £630 was raised. The Earl of Roden (c), for many years honorary secretary of Newcastle lifeboat station, Bangor branch chairman Mr J. R. McDowell (l) and honorary secretary George Ralston were there to greet her.

photograph by courtesy of Century Newspapers



At Yeovil Air Day last August, John King (r) chairman of Yeovil branch, put on display the working scale model which he had made himself of Poole's 44ft Waveney lifeboat Augustine Courtauld. The model, used for fund raising, had that day accounted for £26 of the £250 taken on the RNLI stand.

photograph by courtesy of HMS Heron



Lymington branch had another very successful day at Beaulieu Boat Jumble on Sunday April 4, with a total turnover of £1,886. This year, one section of the stall was devoted to 'Bits from Famous Boats', which included a waterline model of the 1980 British challenger for the America's Cup Lionheart (shown above), donated by Anthony Boyden. Donors of other items included Edward Heath, Dame Naomi James, Clare Francis, Adlard Coles and Lord Montagu of Beaulieu; among the famous boats from which the 'bits' came were the yachts Jolie Brise, Cohoe, Jester, Gipsy Moth V, Morning Cloud and the sail training ships Royalist, Sir Winston Churchill and Malcolm Miller. RNLI souvenirs were also sold on the stall by Lymington ladies' guild.

photograph by courtesy of Max Mudie

Three Harwich lifeboat crew members, Dave Gilders, John Tetheridge and Peter Brand, all completed the Harwich half marathon fun run on Sunday April 4, by which means Dave Gilders raised £72.73 for RNLI funds. Four members of Leeds Athletic Institute Sub Aqua Club, John, Tim (a Shoreline member), Andy and Paul, ran in a mini marathon on April 30 to raise £67.50 for the Sub Aqua appeal for the lifeboats.



After the children of Bishop Goodwin Junior School, Carlisle, had worked for two weeks to raise a princely £372.03, it was only natural that Grace Dent, a distant relation of Grace Darling, should hand over the cheque. Receiving the cheque is Wilson Matear, a crew member of Workington lifeboat; with them are (l to r) the Reverend John Bell, Mr D. J. Thomas, headmaster, Dr John Southern, honorary secretary of Carlisle and District branch, and Jim Stables, chairman.

photograph by courtesy of Cumberland Newspapers



(Above) At Twickenham and District branch's annual RNLI ball, held at York House, Twickenham, on January 23, over £1,000 was raised by the tombola and raffle, for which more than 500 items were donated by local tradesmen. Among the principal guests, seen here surrounded by this impressive array of prizes are Lt-Cdr Brian Miles, deputy director RNLI (fifth from left) with his wife Anne (fourth from left) and the Mayor and Mayoress of Richmond-on-Thames, Councillor and Mrs J. Lambeth (centre).

photograph by courtesy of Roy Cook



After cracking their way through 1½ inches of ice, members of the Dolphin Sub Aqua Club in Cirencester took part in a sponsored dive at South Cerney Lakes on Boxing Day in 1981. Eight divers took part and as a result £202.50 was sent to Poole headquarters as part of the British Sub Aqua Club's lifeboat appeal. A further £150 was sent to a local school for handicapped children

photograph by courtesy of Wiltshire Newspapers

Mrs Irene Craig, founder chairman of Lowestoft ladies' guild 21 years ago, with the lead crystal bowl presented to her by Lowestoft branch at her retirement. With her are Coxswain Peter Gibbons and Michael Chapman, honorary secretary. The presentation together with a presentation from the guild, took place in February at the annual lifeboat ball in Lowestoft which raised more than £1,800. During her time as chairman the guild has brought in over £70,000.



A £338 cheque is handed to Cullercoats honorary secretary, Mr R. J. Taylor, by Mr E. Armstrong manager of the Bay Hotel. Between them stand Crew Members Raymond Taylor, David Blackman and Geoffrey Nugent who had helped raised some of the amount. Another crew member, Ean David Nash, and a friend took part in the Great North Run to raise £147 in sponsorship.

photograph by courtesy of 'Whitley Bay Guardian'



Dunmore East, Co Waterford
44ft Waveney: January 18, 28 and February 21

Eastbourne, East Sussex
37ft 6in Rother: February 6 and 27

Exmouth, South Devon
48ft 6in Solent: February 14

Eyemouth, Berwickshire
44ft Waveney: January 7

Falmouth, Cornwall
52ft Arun: December 13

Filey, North Yorkshire
37ft Oakley: December 4 and January 5

Fishguard, Dyfed
52ft Arun: December 9, 14 and February 15

Fleetwood, Lancashire
44ft Waveney: December 4, January 1 (twice), 12 and February 20

Flint, Clwyd
D class inflatable: January 31

Fowey, Cornwall
Relief 46ft Watson: February 15

Galway, Co Galway
52ft Barnett: December 6, 10, 12, January 10, 14, 22, 28, 29, February 5, 7 and 25

Girvan, Ayrshire
42ft Watson: February 19 and 20

Great Yarmouth and Gorleston, Norfolk
Relief 44ft Waveney: January 13

Hartlepool, Cleveland
Atlantic 21: December 5, 22 and January 4

Harwich, Essex
44ft Waveney: December 2 and January 22
Relief Atlantic 21: January 3

Hastings, East Sussex
37ft Oakley: December 13, January 9 and February 7
D class inflatable: December 9, February 7 and 8

Hayling Island, Hampshire
Atlantic 21: January 2, 24, February 7 and 11

Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire
Atlantic 21: December 13, January 26, February 22 (twice) and February 24

Howth, Co Dublin
47ft Watson: February 13

Hoylake, Merseyside
37ft 6in Rother: February 1

Humber, Humberside
54ft Arun: December 5, 8 (twice), 9, 13, 19, January 12, 17, 20, 28, 29, 30, February 4, 6, 20 and 28

Islay, Argyllshire
50ft Thames: February 14

Kilmore, Co Wexford
37ft Oakley: December 15

Littlestone-on-Sea, Kent
Atlantic 21: February 22

Lizard-Cadgwith, Cornwall
52ft Barnett: December 20

Llandudno (Orme's Head), Gwynedd
37ft Oakley: December 30
Relief D class inflatable: December 30

Lochinver, Sutherland
52ft Barnett: December 18

Lytham St Anne's, Lancashire
46ft 9in Watson: January 1 and February 20
D class inflatable: December 6

Macduff, Banffshire
48ft 6in Solent: February 6

Mallaig, Inverness-shire
52ft Barnett: February 7

Margate, Kent
37ft 6in Rother: January 29 and 31
D class inflatable: December 20

Minehead, Somerset
Atlantic 21: February 21

Mudford, Dorset
D class inflatable: January 24, February 4 and 21

Newbiggin, Newfoundland
Atlantic 21: January 30 and February 7

Newcastle, Co Down
37ft Oakley: February 20

Newhaven, East Sussex
Relief 46ft 9in Watson: December 13
Relief 44ft Waveney: December 13, January 22, February 5, 7, 17 and 19

New Quay, Dyfed
37ft Oakley: January 10, 11, 12 and 13

North Sunderland, Northumberland
37ft Oakley: February 18

Oban, Argyllshire
42ft Watson: January 11, February 21, 22 and 26

Padstow, Cornwall
48ft 6in Oakley: January 5 and 26

Penarth, South Glamorgan
D class inflatable: January 6, February 7 and 8

Penlee, Cornwall
47ft Watson: December 8 and 19
Relief 70ft Clyde: December 28 and January 6

Peterhead, Aberdeenshire
48ft 6in Solent: December 20

Plymouth, South Devon
44ft Waveney: December 3, 13, February 15 and 16

Poole, Dorset
44ft Waveney: December 13, January 3 and 8
Dell Quay Dory: December 13, 19 (twice), February 13 (twice) and 25

Porthcawl, Mid Glamorgan
D class inflatable: December 12, January 12 and February 13

Porthdinllaen, Gwynedd
47ft Watson: January 7

Portpatrick, Wigtownshire
46ft 9in Watson: February 26

Portsmouth (Langstone Harbour), Hampshire
Atlantic 21: December 13 (five times), January 26 and February 25
D class inflatable: January 3 and February 25

Queensferry, West Lothian
Atlantic 21: January 31 and February 13

Ramsey, Isle of Man
37ft Oakley: January 5

Redcar, Cleveland
37ft Oakley: January 4

Rosslare Harbour, Co Wexford
48ft 6in Solent: December 14

St Helier, Channel Islands
44ft Waveney: February 19

St Ives, Cornwall
37ft Oakley: December 7, January 4 and February 10

St Mary's, Scilly Isles
52ft Arun: December 20, 24 and January 6

St Peter Port, Channel Islands
52ft Arun: December 4, 13, January 5, 8, 17, 18, February 15 and 20

Salcombe, South Devon
47ft Watson: December 29

Scarborough, North Yorkshire
37ft Oakley: December 18 and January 10

Selsey, West Sussex
48ft 6in Oakley: December 13 and February 14

Sennen Cove, Cornwall
Relief 37ft 6in Rother: December 20, 21 and 28

Sheerness, Kent
44ft Waveney: December 12, 14 (three times), January 23, February 14 and 15
D class inflatable: December 26, January 19 and February 14

Shoreham Harbour, West Sussex
37ft 6in Rother: December 19, February 19 and 24

Southend-on-Sea, Essex
Relief Atlantic 21: December 16
Atlantic 21: January 23
D class inflatable: December 6

Silloth, Cumbria
Atlantic 21: February 1 and 11

Skegness, Lincolnshire
37ft Oakley: February 28

Staithes and Runswick, North Yorkshire
Relief Atlantic 21: January 18 and February 12 (twice)

Stornoway (Lewis), Ross-shire
48ft 6in Solent: January 7

Stromness, Orkney
Relief 52ft Barnett: January 26

Sunderland, Tyne and Wear
47ft Watson: December 4, 14, 17, January 4 and 8

Swanage, Dorset
37ft 6in Rother: January 8

Tenby, Dyfed
46ft 9in Watson: December 9

Thurso, Caithness
48ft 6in Solent: February 27

Torbay, South Devon
54ft Arun: December 10, 13 (twice), 26 and February 28

Troon, Ayrshire
Relief 44ft Waveney: December 5, January 26, February 19 and 25

Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear
52ft Arun: December 17
D class inflatable: January 14 and 25

Walmer, Kent
Relief 42ft Beach: January 16 and 21

Walton and Frinton, Essex
Relief 47ft Watson: December 6, 10, 19, January 3 and 28

Wells, Norfolk
37ft Oakley: December 10

West Kirby, Merseyside
D Class inflatable: January 23 and 31

West Mersea, Essex
Atlantic 21: December 22

Weston-super-Mare, Avon
D class inflatable: February 5 and 13

Whitby, North Yorkshire
44ft Waveney: December 18, January 18, February 12 and 18

Whitstable, Kent
Atlantic 21: January 29 and February 7

Wicklow, Co Wicklow
42ft Watson: December 25

Workington, Cumbria
46ft 9in Watson: January 3 and February 4
47ft Watson: February 4

Yarmouth, Isle of Wight
52ft Arun: December 18, January 8, 24, February 7 and 21

Youghal, Co Cork
35ft 6in Liverpool: January 18

SERVICES AND LIVES RESCUED BY THE RNLI'S LIFEBOATS

January 1, 1982, to April 30, 1982: Services 518; lives saved 160

THE STATION FLEET

(as at 30/4/82)

259 lifeboats, of which one Atlantic 21, four 18ft 6in McLachlan and 64 D class inflatable lifeboats operate in summer only

LIVES RESCUED 107,801

from the Institution's foundation in 1824 to 30/4/82, including shoreboat services

When you have read your copy of
THE LIFEBOAT

please pass it on.

Books . . .

● In his latest book, **Rescue by Sail and Oar** (Tops'l Books, £2.50), Ray Kipling, the RNLI's public relations officer, has written an absorbing account of the long period during which lifeboats were driven by muscle and windpower alone. There is no doubt that this modest volume will remain an essential reference book for years to come. Apart from its historical value the book gives thrilling accounts of many services under oars and sail and tells of the price some exacted in men's lives.

Details of design and development are necessarily brief but adequate technically for all purposes but research in depth. Enough history is included to provide an interesting framework for the whole story of pulling and sailing lifeboats. Indeed there are almost certainly details in this book which will come fresh to many lifeboat experts—the only likely exception being the encyclopaedic Grahame Farr!

The illustrations are splendid and sometimes breath-taking, adding visual evidence to the unvarnished realism of the text.

Sailing and sailing craft have almost certainly produced as many differences of opinion as any subject and it would be strange if a book covering such a wide spectrum did not trigger off an argument or two. If this were so it might be well to remember the old sailing ships adage: '*Different ships, different long splines*'.

Over the years, lifeboats have altered considerably: in spirit and their knowledge of the sea the crews have altered little, if at all, from the tough-looking heroes so expressively portrayed in this book. The finest lifeboat in the world would be useless flotsam without a good crew.

Rescue by Sail and Oar will give immediate pleasure and much food for thought to enthusiasts and casual readers alike. All royalties from its sale will go to the RNLI and copies are available from the RNLI London office, 202 Lambeth Road, London SE1 7JW, price £2.50 plus 35p packing and posting.—E.W.M.

● Jeff Morris has recently written and produced two more in his series on lifeboat stations.

The Story of the Weston-super-Mare Lifeboats has been well timed to coincide with the centenary of the station and it contains a good selection of photographs illustrating the different types of lifeboats which have been stationed at Weston. There is also an interesting photograph showing the original boathouse, built in 1888 and now raising considerable funds for the RNLI in its rôle as gift shop, and the present lifeboathouse, built in 1903. The station

has been particularly busy since it began operating a D class inflatable lifeboat in 1966 and an 18ft 6in McLachlan lifeboat in 1970, typifying the changing pattern of lifeboat services the RNLI has experienced since introducing lifeboats under 10m into its fleet in the mid-sixties. This booklet is available from Mrs J. Allam, 22 Ashcomb Road, Weston-super-Mare, Avon, price £1 including postage and packing.

The Story of the Whitby Lifeboats also contains 30 photographs, spanning almost a century, with details of a great many services carried out by lifeboats at Whitby since as far back as 1802, including many rescues by Whitby's rowing lifeboats. The station, which now operates a 44ft Waveney class lifeboat and a 16ft D class inflatable lifeboat, operated the last rowing lifeboat in the RNLI's fleet and she is now on display in the town's Lifeboat Museum. This booklet is available from Mr E. Thomson, Whitby Lifeboat Museum, Pier Road, Whitby, North Yorkshire, price 75p plus 25p postage and packing. Like all others in the series, proceeds from the sale of these booklets go to the RNLI.—H.D.

● It seems a shame that **England by the Sea** by Elizabeth Gundrey (Severn House, £8.95) does not also cover Wales, Scotland and Ireland, for here is a fascinating book packed with information and ideas for coastal visits. The book is published in association with the English Tourist Board in connection with Maritime England Year, hence its coverage of England only, and it makes good reading even for the armchair traveller.

Historic sites, ships, customs, modern resorts, beaches, ports and docks are a few of the subjects covered and each short chapter is followed by a list of places to visit and practical information. The book shows that every area has its individual attractions, and though to see them all would take many months, reading of them certainly whets the appetite for exploration.—R.K.

● A delight in itself, **The Past Afloat** by Anthony Burton (André Deutsch, British Broadcasting Corporation, £12.95) was produced to accompany an eight-part BBC television series of the same title. Both are intended as an introduction to Britain's maritime history and, for the author, their main purpose will have been achieved if they encourage more people to go to see the museums and the boats and ships described for themselves.

The book is generously illustrated with excellent photographs, many of them taken by Clive Coote, evocative of centuries of seafaring right from the time of the Saxons and Vikings. There are pictures of wooden-walled and iron-clad battleships, of luggers, drifters, clippers, paddle steamers, sailing barges, steam launches—and among this noble company, the oldest surviving

lifeboat, *Zetland*, built by Greathead in 1800 and now housed in her own museum at Redcar.

One picture I found myself turning to again and again was of a sailmaker plying his traditional craft in the sail loft of the Dolphin Yard Sailing Barge Museum at Sittingbourne, Kent. Dolpin Yard is a working museum where the techniques of yesterday can still be seen in use today.—J.D.

● **The Care and Repair of Small Marine Diesels** by Chris Thomson (Adlard Coles, Granada Publishing, £7.50) is a very good book full of practical common sense which should be compulsory for all who venture to sea propelled by a series of controlled explosions in confined spaces. With the appropriate engine maker's service or workshop manual and the help of this book an enthusiast should be able to do most of his own maintenance and repairs. If the recommendations for spares are followed, then on most occasions the owner could get home under his own power. The fault finding chart in appendix D should prove particularly helpful to yachtsmen.—S.E.

● Two recent publications of interest to seafarers:

· **Seaway Code**, published by HM Stationery Office, and full of information of value to the most seasoned mariner, is now available through bookshops and newsagents, price 75p.

Guide to Helicopter/Ship Operations, published by the International Chamber of Shipping, has been revised and is now available, price £5, from Witherby and Co Ltd, 32 Aylesbury Street, London EC1R 0ET. The guide has been prepared primarily for the use of ships' masters, officers and crew but it also provides guidance for helicopter pilots with a view to introducing, on a world wide basis, standardised procedures for helicopter/shop operations.—J.D.

● The prospective boat owner who is in the fortunate position of being able to brief his designer and boat builder on the subject of rigging, sail plan, steering gear, fittings, equipment and even the cabin layout and ensuring that everything is of the finest quality available will find **Under Sail**, edited by Tony Meisel (Macmillan, £11.95), invaluable.

The relative merits of all the latest developments are discussed and details are given of suppliers on both sides of the Atlantic. With the exception of the final chapter on maintenance and repairs, the book is primarily for the professional designer, or for the enthusiast with unlimited budget. For the lesser mortals who are obliged to buy a boat out of the catalogue, all the decisions and selections will have already been made for him, and he will only read this book with regret that it has arrived on the scene too late for him.—K.M.

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With illustration: £12 per single column centimetre (minimum charge £36).

ALL CLASSIFIEDS MUST BE PRE-PAID.

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

MOUNT LODGE HOTEL is just a few minutes from the centre of Poole and Bournemouth in the delightful surroundings of Alum Chine. If you are looking for value for money, we think we are one of the best. Please allow us the opportunity to prove it. Beaulieu Road, Bournemouth. Tel: 0202 761173.

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DORSET. Close to Poole with its harbour, miles of safe sandy beaches, dunes and cliffs. Golf 250 yards. Ride, walk or just relax in small licensed hotel with fireside comfort and good fresh food. Open all year and special weekend rates. Fairlight Hotel, Broadstone BH18 8BE. Tel: 0202 694316.

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FISHERMENS' SOCKS, 100% navy cotton drill; all sizes £8.95. Corduroy Socks, navy, rust or khaki; all sizes £11.95. All prices inclusive of postage. Rockall Wear, 17 Fairfield Drive, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 9PJ.

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BOOKS

MARITIME ENGLAND. Second-hand and antiquarian books about the sea, including maritime history, voyages, shipwrecks and rescues, smugglers, pirates, natural history, islands, harbours and coasts. See for lists. We also purchase books and pamphlets on these subjects. Seafarer Books, Rosemarket, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire.

PAINTINGS

LIFEBOAT OIL PAINTINGS on canvas 36" x 28". £52.00 post paid. Arun, Watson, Waveney, Oakley, etc, by well-known Lifeboat artist John Lee. Storm and rescue situations a speciality. Ideal for retirement presentations or Lifeboat Fund raffles. Satisfaction guaranteed. Send s.a.e. to 9 Esplanade, Weymouth, Dorset. Tel: (0305) 785960.

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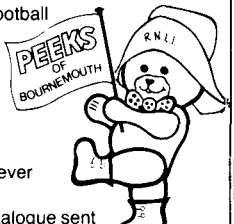
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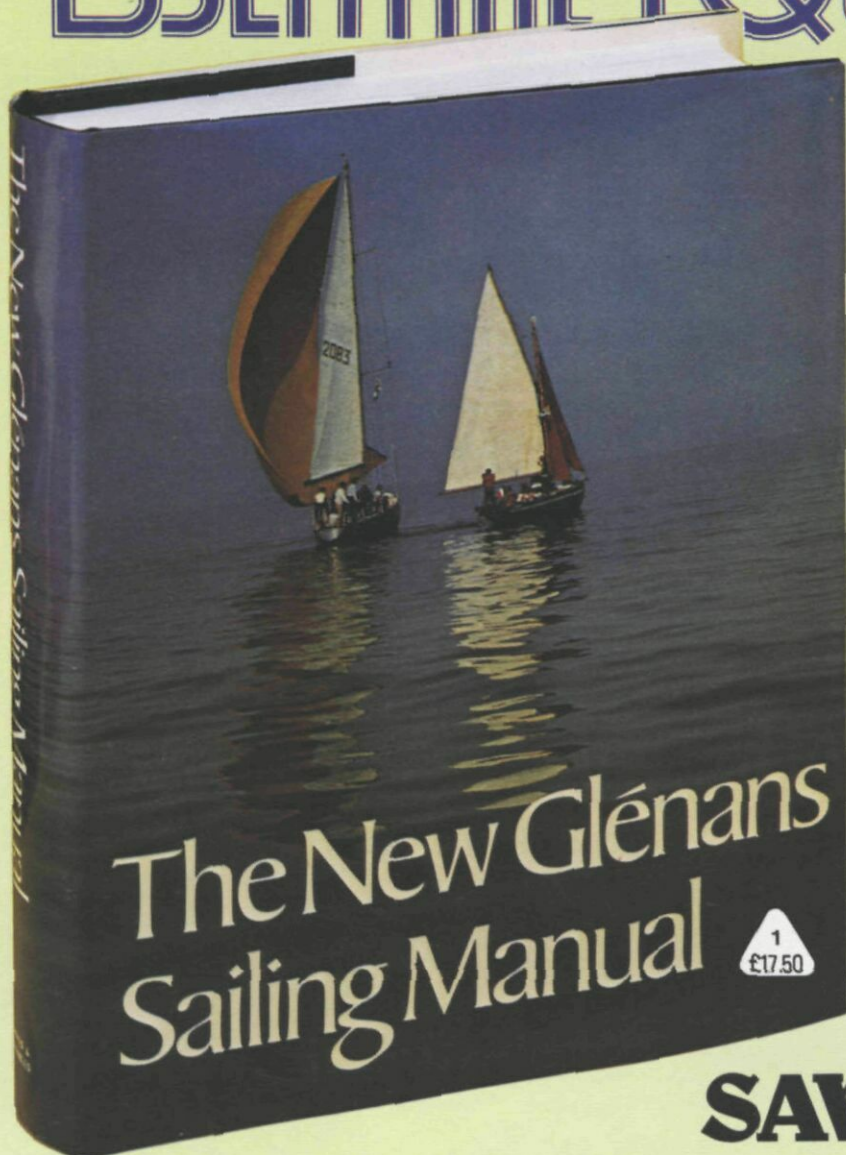
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