



The Lifeboat

Journal of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Winter 1983/4 30p



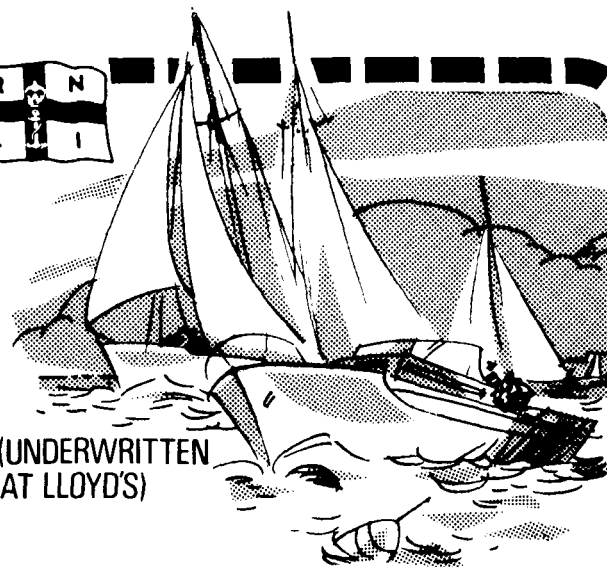


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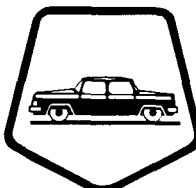
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THE LIFEBOAT

Winter 1983/84

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Volume XLVIII
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Chairman:
THE DUKE OF ATHOLL

Director and Secretary:
REAR ADMIRAL W. J. GRAHAM, CB MNI

Editor:
JOAN DAVIES

Headquarters:
Royal National Lifeboat Institution,
West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15
1HZ (Telephone Poole (0202) 671133).
Telex: 41328.

London Offices:
Royal National Lifeboat Institution,
202 Lambeth Road, London SE1 7JW
(Telephone 01-928 4236).

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COVER PICTURE

Sennen's Cove 37ft 6in Rother lifeboat Diana White launched in a strong and squally north-north-westerly gale and very rough seas on February 6, 1983, to go to the help of the Irish passenger ferry St Killian II which had lost all power and steerage some six miles south west of Longships Lighthouse, Land's End; she had more than 200 people on board. Coxswain/Mechanic Maurice Hutchens took Diana White out through the Tribbens, a passage to the west of the cove usable at high water. Almost as soon as she reached the open sea, however, a message came that the ferry had recovered her power, so Diana White and St Mary's lifeboat, which had also launched, returned to station. The photograph was taken by Crew Member Peter Puddiphatt, one of Sennen Cove shore helpers for this launch.

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 (0202) 671133). Photographs intended for return should be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope.

Next issue: the Spring issue of THE LIFEBOAT will appear in April and news items should be sent by the end of January. News items for the Summer issue should be sent in by the end of April.

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NOTES OF THE QUARTER

ON MARCH 4, 1984, the RNLI will celebrate the 160th anniversary of its foundation in 1824. The event in itself is perhaps of minor importance—just another milestone—but what it represents is of far greater significance: the unbroken record of lifesaving at sea around our coasts for 160 years achieved by the dedication and commitment of thousands of individual volunteers. Over these years lifeboat people, all giving of their best in service or in money or in kind, have welded together an Institution which is not only far greater than any one, or any group, of them, but which has had the strength to continue and extend its work from generation to generation. The result is a body which is held in the highest regard both nationally and internationally.

It may seem remarkable that such a body should depend entirely on volunteers for its existence. For 160 years, however, voluntary crewing has brought forward the most able seafarers

backed up by tireless, skilled shore-helpers; voluntary financing has given them the best boats and equipment available at any one time in the Institution's history; and voluntary management committees, both locally and nationally, have kept the service at peak efficiency. These are facts endorsed from time to time by various management consultancy and governmental surveys on the Institution.

Most important of all is the result of all this effort. The RNLI exists for one purpose alone, and the record books show the magnitude of its achievement: more than 110,000 lives rescued from certain death at sea.

In 160 years a great deal has changed but the RNLI's rôle and the way in which lifeboat people—crews, shore-helpers, fund raisers and committee members—ensure that this rôle is fulfilled remains constant. Remembering our predecessors and looking to those who will follow after us, we have every reason to celebrate March 4, 1984.

AGM 1984

The RNLI's annual meetings for 1984 will take place on Tuesday May 15 at the Royal Festival Hall, South Bank, London. The annual general meeting of the governors of the Institution will be held at 11.30 am in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, and the annual presentation of awards will take place at 3 pm in the main auditorium.

As for the meetings in 1983, application forms are being sent out to all governors with the journal, in order to save the cost of envelopes and postage for a separate circular. All governors, therefore, will receive an application form for both the morning and afternoon meetings with this winter journal. If you are a governor wishing to attend the AGM and if by any chance the form is not tucked into your journal, please write to the Director, RNLI, West

Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ, stating your requirements.

Branches and guilds will receive information about how to apply for tickets for the annual presentation of awards on the afternoon of May 15 from their regional offices in the usual way. If any other supporters of the lifeboat service would like to attend the afternoon presentation of awards meeting, they should write to the Director at the address given above.

Three lifeboat people

It is with deep regret that we report the death of three men who, in differing ways, gave great service over many years to the lifeboat service: Air Vice-Marshall Sir Geoffrey R. Bromet, KBE CB DSO DL, Grahame E. Farr and David H. Roff.

Air Vice-Marshall Sir Geoffrey Bromet, a life vice-president, died on November 16. After serving in the Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps in the 1914-1918 war he became an officer in the Royal Air Force, returning in 1939 from retirement to serve as one of the key men in the campaign against U-boats in the Second World War. From 1945 to 1952 he was Lieutenant Governor of the Isle of Man. Sir Geoffrey, who joined the Committee of Management of the Institution in 1952, was elected a vice-president in 1962 and a life vice-president in 1972. He was a deputy chairman of the RNLI for four years, from 1964 to 1968, and at one time or another served on all the standing committees. Sir Geoffrey, an outstandingly fair man, took keen interest in all aspects of the Institution's work. He was chairman of New Romney and Romney Marsh branch from the time it was formed in 1953 until 1978, since which time, until his death, he was patron of the branch; even when well into his eighties, together with Lady Bromet, he still collected regularly for the lifeboats at the terminus of the little Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch railway.

Grahame Farr, who died on November 22, had supported the lifeboat service for more than 50 years. A marine historian of distinction and authority, he wrote a number of books on wrecks and rescue in the West Country as well as compiling papers on early classes of lifeboats and amassing detailed aids to lifeboat history. His meticulous work provided invaluable sources of reference for other researchers, his contribution to the understanding of lifeboat history being both unique and generous. Grahame Farr was the archivist of the Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society and honorary editor for a number of years of the *International Lifeboat Journal*. A good friend of the lifeboat service, he was a man very much liked for himself and very much respected for the quality of his work.

David Roff, who died on November 30, came from the Admiralty to join the permanent staff of the RNLI in 1919



Padstow lifeboathouse, at Trevoze Head on the north coast of Cornwall, is at the foot of steep cliffs. On Sunday September 18, 1983, a new lift up these cliffs was formally opened by Captain P. K. C. Harris, HM Coastguard regional controller at Falmouth. In the photograph Captain Harris is seen with (l) Coxswain Trevor Evans and (r) Captain F. T. Sluman, station honorary secretary, taking a ceremonial ride in the lift after its opening. When unveiling a commemorative plaque, Captain Harris spoke of the essential interdependence of the lifeboat service and the Coastguard; he also congratulated the branch on the substantial contribution it had made, some £19,000, towards funding the lift, which can take two people and a stretcher, and the RNLI on thus increasing its efficiency.

photograph by courtesy of B. S. White

and served for 43 years. When he retired, in 1962, he was assistant secretary of the Institution. Throughout his career he had been deeply concerned with the technical work of the RNLI, latterly, giving personal assistance to the chief inspector of lifeboats.

On station

The following lifeboats took up station duties during the period from mid August to the end of November 1983:

Poole: 33ft Brede class lifeboat 33-07, RNLB *Inner Wheel*, October 16.

Aberdovey: Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat B599 *Long Life III*, November 3.

Selsey: 47ft Tyne class lifeboat 47-001, RNLB *City of London*, November 21.

St Paul's Cathedral

At the Annual National Service for Seafarers, attended by HM The Queen at St Paul's Cathedral on October 19, 1983, Coxswain John Horton of Calshot lifeboat was the RNLI's colour bearer; he was escorted by Emergency Mechanic Christopher Smith and Crew Member John Street. The flags of six maritime organisations were ceremoniously paraded during a service at which the Bishop of London gave the sermon.

The Committee of Management was represented by Mr Michael Vernon, a deputy chairman, and Captain John Leworthy, a vice-president. Lt-Cdr Brian Miles, deputy director, was also present.

Centenary

Arranmore lifeboat station was presented with its centenary vellum by Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur Hezlet, a vice-president of the Institution, on Saturday October 8, 1983. The presentation was

OPEN DAYS

RNLI HQ and Depot, Poole

July 19, 20 and 21

Details in spring journal

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

THE LONG SERVICE BADGE for crew members and shore helpers who have given active service for 20 years or more has been awarded to:

Clacton-on-Sea

Crew Member D. Stammers

Hoylake

Coxswain J. G. McDermott
Second Coxswain D. A. Dodd
Assistant Mechanic P. J. Jones
Crew Member R. Beech
Crew Member G. J. Bird
Crew Member R. Lydiate
Crew Member G. Ormrod
Shore Helper J. S. Bird
Shore Helper E. Eccles
Shore Helper T. M. Grisdale

Newhaven

Crew Member J. Shinn

Poole: Coxswain Frank Ide at the wheel of Poole's new 33ft Brede, *Inner Wheel*. The autumn journal reported services by Exmouth's new Brede while on trials and on passage to station. While on a familiarisation run last September, even before her builder's acceptance trials, *Inner Wheel* towed in a yacht she encountered off Rye in difficulties with a fouled propeller in a strong breeze and rough sea. The Brede's crew were Lochin Marine's coxswain, Vervan Gray, Coxswain Ide and Harry Atrill, RNLI hull overseer.

photograph by courtesy of Bournemouth Evening Echo



made at a special Mass at St Crone's Church during which the lifeboat station was blessed and re-dedicated to the task of saving life at sea. Since its establishment 100 years ago on Arranmore Island, off the west coast of Donegal, the station's lifeboats have been launched 273 times rescuing 156 people. Coxswains and crews of Arranmore lifeboats have been awarded one gold, three silver and six bronze medals.

Centenary vellums have recently been awarded to the three lifeboat stations established in 1884: Walton and Frinton, Essex, St Helier, Jersey, and Dunmore East, Co Waterford.

New telephone number

As reported in the autumn journal, the address of the RNLI in the City of London is now: RNLI Office, Baltic Exchange Chambers, 14-20 St Mary Axe, London EC3A 8BU. The new telephone number is 01-283 3696.

The provision of this new city of London office by The Baltic Exchange represents, in fact, a donation in kind to the RNLI, because the accommodation is given to the Institution free of charge. It is just one of the many ways in which, over nearly 90 years, The Baltic Exchange has given most marvellous support to the lifeboat service. This

Selsey

Crew Member D. E. Lawrence
Crew Member P. G. Smeaton

Stromess

Crew Member R. Scott

Tenby

Crew Member P. Richards

Tynemouth

Motor Mechanic J. J. Watson
Assistant Mechanic F. Arkley
Crew Member M. Brown
Crew Member T. Fryer
Crew Member D. Lisle
Crew Member J. S. Norris
Shore Helper J. Richardson

We apologise that in reporting the long service award to Motor Mechanic Griffin of Fleetwood in the autumn journal his initial was erroneously given as M.; his correct name is Motor Mechanic A. Griffin.

association is, for instance, the donor of the 47ft Watson lifeboat *The Baltic Exchange*, stationed at Salcombe since 1962 (see page 294).

Staff retirements

The end of each year sees the retirement of a number of long-serving members of staff well known to lifeboat supporters. Those who retired at the end of 1983 had between them given well over 300 years service to the Institution.

Michael Porcher, CMG OBE, retired as secretary (operations division) after 19 years service; Robbie Roberts retired as chief printer after 44 years service; Douglas Brown retired as trading manager, and Mrs May McMaster, MBE, retired as regional organiser (Northern Ireland), both after 43 years of service; Tony Watson retired as deputy chief technical officer after 36 years service; Arthur King retired as office manager (Cowes) after 30 years service; Gordon Parsons retired as a fleet mechanic after 23 years service; Ken Morgan retired as senior draughtsman (machinery drawing office) after 21 years service; Niven McVicar retired as district surveyor of lifeboats (South Scotland) after 20 years service; Peter Berry retired as assistant surveyor of lifeboats after 13 years service; Lt Ernie Gough, RN, retired as staff officer (communications), and Lt-Cdr Don Weeks, RN, retired as senior machinery overseer, both after 11 years service; Mrs Jessie Fisher retired as office supervisor (Midlands office), and Mrs Rose Richards retired as appeals office clerk, both after ten years service. Gifford Rosling, area organiser (Southern) also retired, because, unfortunately, of ill health, after ten years service.

In Northern Ireland the regional organiser is now Mrs Beth Duffin. Following the appointment taking effect from February 1 of Ian Wallington as assistant appeals secretary, Michael Ashley, formerly regional organiser (South London), will be the new regional organiser (South East) while Captain Geoffrey Garrick has moved from the North East, where he was an area organiser, to take up the post of regional organiser (South London).

LIFEBOAT SERVICES

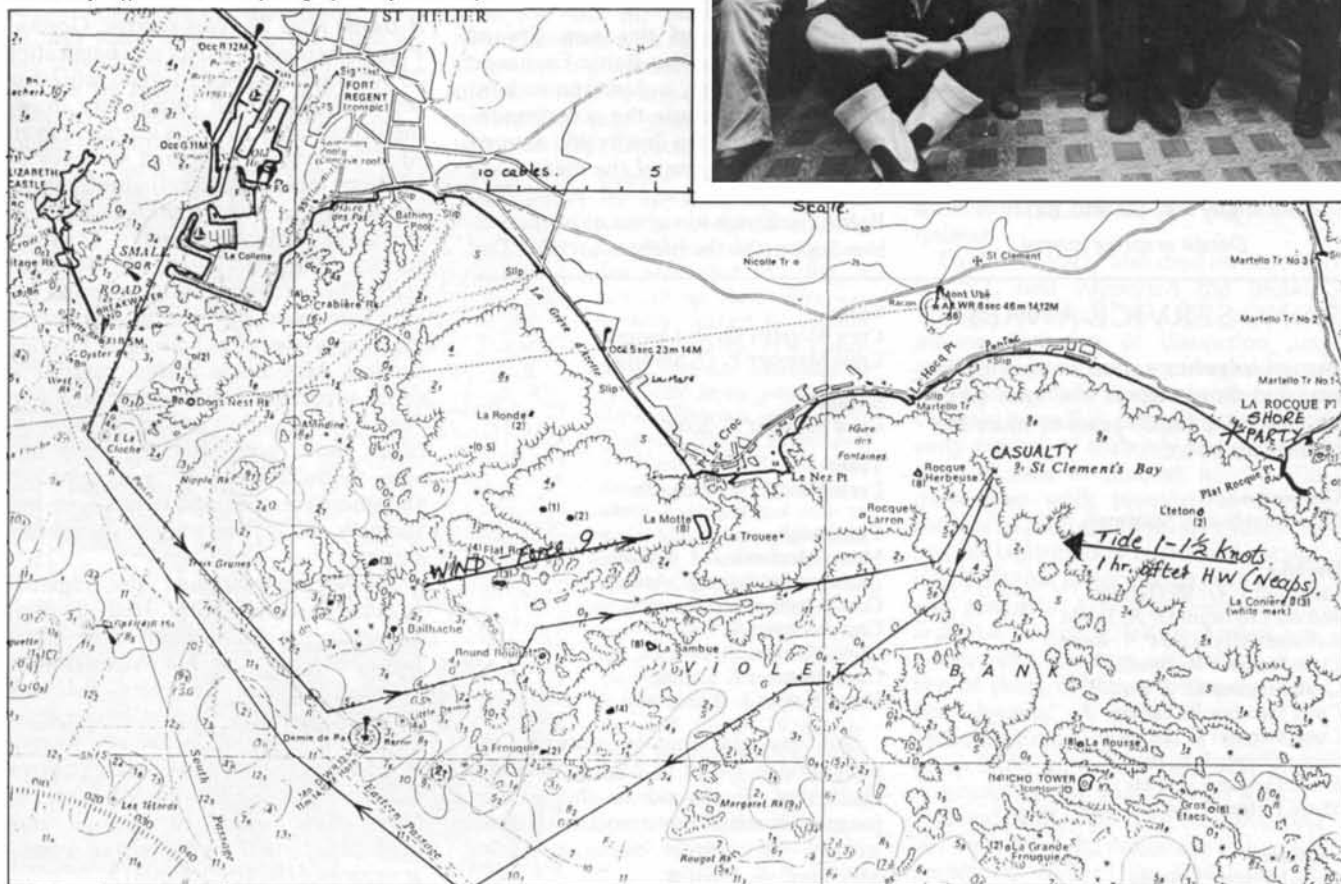
South West Division

Among rocks

A YACHT firing red flares near Green Island was reported by Police HQ at 0326 on Saturday September 3, 1983, to the deputy assistant harbour master at St Helier, who is also deputy launching authority of St Helier lifeboat station. The lifeboat crew were immediately alerted and at 0339 St Helier's 44ft Waveney lifeboat, *Thomas James King*, slipped her mooring and set out on service at full speed under the command of Coxswain Michael Berry.

St Helier: (right) The crew of the 44ft Waveney lifeboat *Thomas James King* for the service on September 3, 1983, to the French yacht *Cythara*: (l to r) Crew Members William Hibbs and John Gray, Coxswain Michael Berry, who was awarded a bar to his silver medal, Acting Assistant Mechanic David Mills, Acting Second Coxswain David Aubert and (foreground) Acting Motor Mechanic Patrick Attenborough.

(Below) The route taken by *Thomas James King*: produced from a portion of BA Chart No 1137 with the sanction of the Controller HM Stationery Office and the Hydrographer of the Navy.



An intense low, centred in the Bristol Channel, had created a strengthening south-westerly wind during the previous 18 hours. At St Helier Harbour entrance the wind was now west south west gale force 8 gusting to strong gale force 9. Visibility of lights was estimated at four miles but the night was pitch black, with wind-driven drizzle. It was half an hour after high water neaps. A 'Wave Rider' buoy positioned clear of the entrance channel was registering 21 feet between crests and troughs.

Full speed was maintained through Small Road and then, when clear of East Rock Buoy, on a course of 145°M. Confirmation of the yacht's position in St Clement's Bay was received and at 0347, from a position one cable north west of Demie de Pas light tower, course was altered to 080°M. Coxswain Berry asked that a shore party be assembled at Plat Rocque Point to give the position of the casualty, possibly to illuminate the scene and to receive any people washed ashore.

Approaching Round Rouget Islet Coxswain Berry reduced to half speed so that, as he detoured northwards to avoid rocks, he could place a man forward with a searchlight in some

degree of safety. Passing 800 feet north of La Sambue, he further reduced speed to 6 knots, feeling his way by the light of the searchlight and flares into waters unknown to him or his crew. The casualty had not been sighted.

When south east of the Le Nez Point, a flare was seen behind a rock, bearing north east. Coxswain Berry maintained his course of about 080°M so that when the yacht came into sight there would be open water between her and the lifeboat. He was faced with the dilemma of going slow enough to avoid damage if the lifeboat struck the rocks, but fast enough to overtake the yacht, which, the shore party informed him, was drifting quickly. A speed of 6 knots was maintained.

By the time the casualty was plainly seen the lifeboat was running short of illuminating flares. With the remains of her mainsail and jib still hoisted the French yacht *Cythara* lay on an easterly heading, rolling and pitching heavily in the west-south-west gale, now strong force 9; her keel was probably aground on rock. Three people could be seen on deck.

At this time, 0400, the 'Wave Rider' buoy off St Helier was still registering

21 feet. The sea within the rock strewn area was of less height, but still high, confused and breaking. Coxswain Mike Berry, with the complete silent assent of his crew, had steamed almost three miles between rocks, in the dark, on a falling tide in high following seas.

The lifeboat was turned hard to starboard to bring her port side to the yacht, now heading south east. The lifeboatmen grabbed *Cythara's* crew, two men and a woman, pulled them aboard and took them down into the after cabin. As soon as they were safely aboard Coxswain Berry started to manoeuvre clear of the yacht. The lifeboat, however, having lain across the wind, had been carried into shallow water and she struck a rock amidships. Ahead movements of the engines carried her clear on a wave crest.

At a speed of four to five knots, Coxswain Berry steamed south west, intending to pick his way between La Sambue and La Motte. The radar was working well but rocks could not be identified in the considerable sea clutter. In the prevailing conditions reference to any chart was impossible. The lifeboat had, in fact, been set further to the east than had been realised and she struck bottom again at 0421. Both ahead and astern movements of the engines were needed to bring her clear, as she was stuck fast and her propellers were not continuously covered by water.

Having cleared this rock, Coxswain Berry, unable to establish his exact position and concerned about further damage to the lifeboat, cast around for some relatively deep water. With 35 feet showing on the echo sounder the anchor was let go, the intention being to await daylight. Only 15 fathoms of anchor line were paid out when the crew reported rocks to port and astern. The motion was most uncomfortable, across wind and tide, and the tide was falling fast. While at anchor the opportunity was taken to check on the survivors in the after cabin. The two men were still strapped in, on the starboard side. The woman, who had injured her mouth coming aboard, was lying along the port side bench being held in position by Crew Member John Gray.

A careful study of the radar while the lifeboat was relatively stationary at anchor had indicated there was a route seaward. At 0440 the anchor was cut clear and after heading west for a short way, a west-south-west course was steered at slow speed. When seven cables south south east of Demie de Pas, clearing bearings were obtained. The time was 0451. Acting Motor Mechanic Patrick Attenborough checked the principal compartments of the boat and reported all was well. Coxswain Berry thanked the shore party and invited them to stand down.

Course was set for harbour at about ten knots. At 0510 the lifeboat entered harbour and headed straight for her mooring, where the yacht's crew were

transferred to an ambulance. The lifeboat was placed off service pending an inspection of her hull for damage. The yacht *Cythara* was eventually washed ashore on the beach.

For this service a bar to his silver medal was awarded to Coxswain Michael E. Berry. The thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Crew Member David Aubert, acting second coxswain, Emergency Mechanic Patrick S. Attenborough, acting motor mechanic, Emergency Mechanic David G. Mills, acting assistant mechanic, and Crew Members William Hibbs and John C. Gray.

Scotland South Division

Girl trapped

RED FLARES off Fairhaven, on the east side of Great Cumbrae Island, were sighted from *Largs* lifeboathouse at 1938 on Sunday July 24, 1983. Maroons were fired; an attempt was made to ring the honorary secretary's telephone number but the line was engaged as Clyde Coastguard was at that moment requesting the lifeboat be launched to the same incident following a 999 call from a member of the public.

At 1944 *Largs Atlantic 21* rigid inflatable lifeboat *Independent Forester Liberty* was launched down the slipway and set out on service manned by Helmsman John Strachan and Crew Members Arthur Hill and David Hewitt. Once clear of the slipway VHF radio contact was established with Clyde Coastguard. The wind was variable force 1 and the sea slight. It was 1½ hours after low water and visibility was good.

A direct course was set to the casualty which could be seen surrounded by several other boats about 1½ miles away. Full speed was maintained and by 1947 the lifeboat was approaching the casualty. The crew could see that a motor cruiser had capsized; only her bow was showing above the water. A yacht was close to the upturned hull and a man could be seen knocking on the outside of the hull. Two motor boats and several inflatable dinghies were also standing by.

One of the men in the yacht, *Silver Wing*, told Helmsman Strachan that they had picked up two men from the water, while another man, who was unconscious, had been recovered by the motor boat *Atina*. However, a young girl was still trapped in the cabin of the capsized boat.

Realising that there was no hope of righting the boat, which was about 14ft long and well down by the stern, Helmsman Strachan asked Crew Member Hill to enter the water and investigate the hull. Arthur Hill, who was wearing a dry suit, removed his lifejacket and bump cap. It was decided not to use a lifeline, which might have caught on an obstruction and which could not have

been used to pull him back once he was under the hull. While Crew Member Hill was getting ready, Helmsman Strachan considered putting Crew Member Hewitt aboard the motor boat to help with the resuscitation of the unconscious man. He was told, however, by a doctor aboard one of the attending boats that the man was dead.

Crew Member Hill, having been briefed by Helmsman Strachan, entered the water at 1953. After three attempts he managed to duck down about three feet and get under the cabin top of the upturned boat. Entering the hull he found the young girl trapped forward in a small airpocket. She was wearing a lifejacket and was up to her neck in the water. There was enough light coming through the glass fibre hull to be able to see quite well, but it was difficult to breathe because of fuel fumes; the air was very stale.

Arthur Hill talked to the girl, who was obviously frightened, reassured her and coaxed her aft, explaining that he was going to try to push her down under the coaming to get her clear of the boat. Meanwhile, Helmsman Strachan was getting concerned for Arthur Hill's safety. After allowing him 90 seconds to investigate the hull, he handed over command of the lifeboat to Crew Member Hewitt and dived into the water and under the hull himself.

Coming up under the hull, Helmsman Strachan could see Arthur Hill's back and hear him talking calmly to the girl, but there was not enough room for him to surface with them. He ducked back outside the hull and, satisfied that Crew Member Hill was all right, got back aboard the Atlantic.

On his first attempt to push the girl down and under the coaming, Arthur Hill did not manage to push her deep enough. She resurfaced inside the hull and she was very disorientated. Arthur Hill calmed her and, deciding that it was probably her lifejacket which had prevented him from getting her deep enough to clear the coaming the first time, he tried to take it off. The knots were too tight, however, and there was too little space for movement.

At about this time, Arthur Hill sensed that the hull was being turned and a change of trim made it necessary for him and the girl to angle their heads to keep their mouths out of the water. What was left of the air was very stale and he realised that his next attempt had to be successful. Helmsman Strachan had re-entered the water and managed to push up on one side of the hull. He could see the girl's legs hanging below the coaming and as Arthur Hill pushed her down he grabbed her legs and managed to pull her clear. She was taken aboard the lifeboat by Crew Member Hewitt.

Arthur Hill managed to get out from under the hull unaided but he was now very white and suffering from lack of oxygen. He was helped into the Atlantic where he quickly recovered his colour

and alertness. By this time, the other two survivors had been transferred from *Silver Wing* to the Atlantic.

Helmsman Strachan asked that an ambulance should meet the lifeboat and then made a quick passage back to the station, arriving shortly after 2000. The girl was landed into the care of a waiting doctor and ambulance and taken to hospital; she was later released. The other two men were also seen by the doctor.

The Atlantic was recovered, refuelled and once again ready for service at 2020.

For this service the silver medal was awarded to Crew Member Arthur Maclean Hill who had shown great courage and remarkable determination and coolness in a very difficult situation. The thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Helmsman John W. Strachan and a medal service certificate was presented to Crew Member David Hewitt. Letters of appreciation signed by Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution, were sent to Mr D. Fraser, owner of the 28ft yacht *Silver Wing*, who had arrived on scene before the lifeboat, fired flares to attract attention, recovered two men from the water and given the lifeboatmen information and help; to Mr L. Hughes, owner of the 26ft motor boat *Atina*, who recovered the dead man from the water before the lifeboat arrived, later taking the body to Largs Pier, well away from the lifeboat station where the girl, who was his daughter, was being landed, and who had given what other help he could; and to Mr H. Maclean, chief instructor at Inverclyde Water Sports Centre, who had reported the capsized to the Coastguards and then sent out an Avon Searider from the centre to help and, later, a workboat to tow in the upturned motor boat.

Ireland Division

Overdue

BELFAST COASTGUARD informed the honorary secretary of **Portaferry** lifeboat station at 1815 on Sunday December 19, 1982, that the yacht *Frieda*, on passage in Strangford Lough between Killyleagh and Ringshaddy, had been reported overdue. The lifeboat was asked to stand by and several crew members assembled at the boathouse while local enquiries were made. The station honorary secretary and senior helmsman discussed the matter and decided to launch. The weather was considered and a search route planned northwards from Killyleagh which would make use of all available shelter. Meanwhile it was learnt that a yacht from Ringshaddy was searching southwards towards Killyleagh.

The weather was poor with a strong breeze, force 6, blowing from the south west and a moderate sea running. It was, of course, dark but visibility was good. Low water was at 2140.

After informing Belfast Coastguard of the situation, Portaferry's 17ft 6in Zodiac Mk IV D class inflatable lifeboat launched on service at 1841 manned by Helmsman John Rogers and Crew Members William Ellison and Francis Rogers.

On clearing the slipway Helmsman Rogers first headed along the southern shore, to keep in the lee, before making for Killyleagh to search the mooring and confirm that *Frieda* had not returned. He then headed north to search Holm Bay. Dunnynell Island and, continuing northwards, the pladdies, or shoals, by Island Taggart, Brown Rock and Pawle Island were searched using a searchlight and firing an occasional white parachute flare. All this time the south west breeze was freshening, with gusts up to gale force.

At about 1950 the lifeboat's searchlight picked up the 35ft yacht *Frieda* on the west side of Janes Rock, at the north end. She was wedged upright with her keel between two rocks, stranded by the falling tide.

Helmsman Rogers reported to Belfast Coastguard by VHF radio and at 1954 a helicopter arrived overhead to provide illumination. By now a force 8 gale was blowing from the south west with gusts up to storm force; visibility was becoming affected by spray. As it was too dangerous to land near the yacht, Helmsman Rogers turned back to a more sheltered gully on the east side of the pladdy and landed. Crew Member Francis Rogers was sent to investigate.

Frieda's owner was found aboard but he reported that his uncle had been swept away in the dinghy after trying to lay a kedge anchor. After reporting to the Coastguard the lifeboat laid an anchor from the yacht. At 2030 the helicopter was withdrawn because of the severe weather. The Coastguard was asked to arrange a relief crew for the lifeboat at Ringshaddy, on the west shore of the lough, but, concerned for the missing yachtsman, the duty coastguard asked the lifeboat to search downwind towards Kircubbin on the east shore of the lough, where a relief crew would be arranged. The yacht's owner was helped into a lifejacket and taken aboard. The crew pushed off and Helmsman Rogers cleared Janes Rock at 2115, setting course for Bird Island Passage.

The wind was now almost continuous storm force 10 and the seas so high that the lifeboat was both hidden and sheltered in the troughs. Visibility was severely affected and Helmsman Rogers had to navigate with extreme caution using his extensive local knowledge of the area, his experience and his wits to make safe progress; the lifeboat was continuously awash. The crew kept lookout and used parachute flares to find Bird Island Passage and help the helmsman to negotiate it.

The lifeboat arrived off Kircubbin at 2145 but, as it was found too dangerous

to make a landing at the harbour, the relief crew were asked to illuminate Kircubbin Sailing Club slipway. The lifeboat stood off to await their arrival at the club.

The shore party, including a Coastguard mobile, reached the slip and illuminated it at about 2200, when the lifeboat was landed and recovered. The yachtsman was landed into the care of the Coastguard.

The missing man was recovered safely the next morning from Dunsy Island, on which he had managed to land; he had sheltered under his dinghy through the night.

The lifeboat was taken back to Portaferry by road and was refuelled and made ready for further service at 2300.

For this service the bronze medal was awarded to Helmsman John D. Rogers and the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Crew Members William Ellison and Francis Rogers.

South West Division

Salcombe lifeboat

THE HONORARY SECRETARY of **Salcombe** lifeboat station was informed by Brixham Coastguard at 1313 on Sunday April 10, 1983, that an inflatable dinghy had capsized on the Skerries Bank at the southern end of Start Bay: two divers were hanging on to the upturned boat and possibly two more divers were missing. Maroons were fired and Salcombe lifeboat, the 47ft Watson *The Baltic Exchange*, slipped her moorings at 1327 and set out under the command of Coxswain John Griffiths. **Torbay** lifeboat was also alerted.

A strong gale, force 9, was blowing from the south directly up Salcombe Harbour and very rough seas were breaking on the harbour bar. The sky was cloudy but visibility was good. It was 3½ hours ebb and the flooding tide was streaming westward at about one knot.

Heading down harbour at full speed, Coxswain Griffiths kept in the deeper water on the western side of the bar, but even there the seas were so rough that solid water was breaking over the lifeboat. The bar was cleared at 1340 and a south-easterly course set to pass half a mile south of Prawle Point. Once in open water the lifeboat started to roll heavily in the very rough seas and she was shipping water continuously. The force 9 southerly wind was gusting up to violent storm, force 11, at times.

Prawle Point was abeam at 1357 and course was altered to east north east, towards the Black Stone and Start Point. Two minutes later Prawle Point Coastguard mobile reported that a diver had been sighted half a mile south of the Black Stone. At 1404, when the lifeboat was one mile abeam of Lannacombe Bay, the CG mobile told her that the last known position of the capsized inflatable dinghy was half a mile south



Salcombe: The crew who were on board the 47ft Watson lifeboat *The Baltic Exchange* when she was capsized and righted on service on April 10, 1983, with Salcombe branch chairman and honorary secretary: (standing, l to r) Mr W. P. Budgett, chairman and honorary secretary, Crew Members David Lamble, Michael Hicks, Stanley Turns and Roger Evans. (Sitting, l to r) Motor Mechanic Frank Smith, Coxswain John Griffiths and Acting Second Coxswain Brian Cater.

west of Black Stone and that there was another inflatable dinghy further to the east; it was later learned that this second diving boat had put to sea in an attempt to rescue the divers from the capsized dinghy. At 1408 the position of the second dinghy was given by the Coastguard mobile, up on the cliffs, as half a mile south of the Black Stone, and within minutes this information had been confirmed by Prawle Auxiliary Coastguard, who added that the dinghy was heading east.

At 1414, when the lifeboat was one mile south of Peartree Rock, information came from Prawle Point mobile that the second inflatable dinghy, with four people on board, was 1½ miles south east of Start Point. A few minutes later the mobile sighted the lifeboat and told her to 'keep going eastwards. You are on course. Casualty 1½ to two miles ahead'. At this time, visibility was estimated to be about three miles.

Hearing from Prawle Point mobile, at 1428, that the casualty was inshore of the lifeboat's track, Coxswain Griffiths brought *The Baltic Exchange* round to a north-westerly heading. He spotted a black dinghy about 1½ miles ahead, apparently under way and heading west towards Hallsands, and at 1430 he told the Coastguard mobile that the casualty was within sight.

At this time the lifeboat was approaching the southern end of the Skerries Bank at full speed. Acting Second Coxswain Brian Cater was making his way aft towards the starboard wheelhouse door when suddenly he saw a huge wall of water, about 50 feet high and breaking at the top, about three to four boat lengths away, coming in on the port quarter. He shouted, 'Look out—big one coming!' and entered the wheelhouse just before the lifeboat was caught by two exceptionally large seas, one after the other. The first rogue wave rolled the lifeboat heavily to starboard, lifting Crew Member Michael Hicks, who was on the starboard sidedeck, holding on but not

attached by a lifeline, over the guardrail and into the water; the lifeboat came upright again from this knockdown but then the second enormous wave capsized her.

Acting Second Coxswain Cater saw Crew Member Hicks in the water and shouted, 'Man overboard!' just before the capsize. For the four men in the wheelhouse, Coxswain Griffiths, Motor Mechanic Frank Smith, Acting Second Coxswain Cater and Crew Member Stan Turns, everything went black. Water filled the wheelhouse and they clung on to whatever they could as they were washed around by its turbulence; the motor mechanic remembers suddenly seeing the coxswain's face underwater. Then a glow of daylight appeared, growing bigger and bigger as the boat righted herself and the water drained quickly away.

As designed, the emergency air bag, which is fitted to starboard on this 47ft Watson's after cabin top, had inflated as the lifeboat heeled over beyond the point of no return and had initiated her righting: all according to the book.*

Crew Member Roger Evans and

**The air bag system is simple in theory. If the lifeboat rolls past the point of no return, about 120-degree heel, a weighted lever, responding to the force of gravity, falls. A valve is opened. Compressed air is released and, so quickly that it is almost instantaneous, inflates a large fore and aft cylindrical bag secured asymmetrically to the after cabin top. This 'lopsided' buoyancy, by making the capsized boat unstable in her unaccustomed inverted position and by exerting a positive upward push, initiates righting. Once the upward roll begins, the reducing negative righting lever of the boat adds to the momentum and at about the 120-degree point the positive righting lever takes over and the boat returns to her normal trim.*

It takes about 30 seconds to read that last paragraph. It takes only half that time, or less, from the moment the gravity lever falls to the time the boat lifts her submerged deck, shaking herself free of the sea. Some 10 to 15 seconds.

Crew Member David Lamble had been standing to port and starboard in the bows, on lookout, each with his lifeline clipped on to the guardrail. Both were wearing lifejackets the buoyancy of which pressed them up on to the inverted deck of the lifeboat as she came upside down. Both managed to unclip their lines to try to get clear, but by that time the boat was already coming up again. As she righted, Crew Member Evans found himself clinging to the starboard guardrail. Crew Member Lamble had been trying to pull himself down under the inverted rail to clear the boat when he was struck in the chest by an object on to which he held; as the boat righted he found himself clinging to the top of the mast, near the radar reflector, and slid down safely on to the deck. David Lamble heard Roger Evans say, 'All is OK in the wheelhouse', and then he saw, and pointed to, Michael Hicks to give a bearing of the man in the water to the coxswain.

Michael Hicks had clung to the guardrail for a very brief time before he was forced to let go and went under the water. He swam to the surface and saw the lifeboat upside down in the sea . . .

'I could see the starboard screw turning high in the air. The vessel was bow under and turning to starboard. I could not believe what I was seeing. The lifeboat came upright, flopped around low in the water, lifted and assumed a normal attitude and proceeded away from me . . .'

No more than a minute had elapsed from the time of the lifeboat's last message to the Coastguard mobile. It was still only 1431 when Coxswain Griffiths found that his lifeboat was heading about north north west at full speed having rolled through 360 degrees; the engine controls had been at full ahead throughout the capsize and righting. Satisfying himself that those on board were all right, he turned the lifeboat to starboard and headed back to the south towards Crew Member Hicks. On the first approach the man in the water was slightly too far off, the attempt failing probably due to the staysail effect of the inflated air bag, so Coxswain Griffiths circled round again to starboard, making a successful recovery on the starboard side.

Immediately Michael Hicks was back on the lifeboat a report was passed to Prawle Point Coastguard mobile to say that all the crew were safely on board. The time was 1437.

Although Brixham Coastguard told Salcombe lifeboat to abandon the search and that Torbay lifeboat was being launched, Coxswain Griffiths directed his course towards the last known position of the casualty. Ten minutes later, however, at 1447, he told Prawle Point mobile that he was heading for Hallsands, under the lee of Start Point, so that water which could be seen in the engine room up to the level of the propeller shafts could be pumped out; he considered it would have been too dangerous in the circumstances to have

opened the engine room door to get to the pump controls out in the rough seas clear of the land. He knew that an RNAS helicopter had already been scrambled, but the lifeboat continued to search for the capsized dinghy on her way to Hallsands.

Torbay's 54ft Arun lifeboat *Edward Bridges (Civil Service No 37)* had slipped her moorings at 1444 and was already on her way under the command of Coxswain Arthur Curnow.

By about 1450 Salcombe lifeboat was within about half a mile of Hallsands, in relative shelter, where she remained for about 15 minutes while the engine room was pumped out. While this operation was in progress, the motor fishing vessel *Harm Johannes* came alongside but was reassured that all was well.

At about this time it was learned that the second inflatable dinghy had got safely ashore with the two missing divers. The helicopter found the remaining two divers clinging to their capsized dinghy 1½ miles north north east of Start Point at 1458, lifted them from the sea and landed them at Start Point. At 1510 it was confirmed that all the divers were accounted for and safely ashore.

Once the water had been pumped out of the engine room, Coxswain Griffiths decided to make for Brixham. He set out at full speed for Berry Head, keeping about 1½ miles off the coast. The wind was still southerly, force 9, and the seas very rough.

At 1528 Brixham Coastguard received a message from M/V *Harm Johannes* saying that she was following Salcombe lifeboat two miles astern. A minute later Torbay lifeboat approached Salcombe lifeboat; they were about 1½ miles south of Stoke Fleming Tower. After a brief exchange to ascertain that all was well, Torbay lifeboat turned to escort Salcombe lifeboat. However, at 1540, just off the Mew Stone, Torbay lifeboat was asked by Brixham Coastguard to search for a dory about 400 yards east of Slapton Sands; *Harm Johannes* told the Coastguard she would escort Salcombe lifeboat into Brixham.

The Baltic Exchange rounded Berry Head and entered Torbay at 1613 and 17 minutes later, at 1630, she picked up a mooring in Brixham Harbour. Her crew were taken ashore in a pilot vessel and landed at the lifeboat station into the care of local lifeboat officers; each member of the crew was examined by Torbay honorary medical adviser and found to be in good health. A party of Salcombe branch officials, led by the station honorary secretary, arrived with changes of clothing and the seven men eventually arrived back at Salcombe at about 1840.

Torbay lifeboat and the helicopter continued the search for a dory off Slapton Sands until 1715 when, nothing having been found, the search was called off. Torbay lifeboat was back on her mooring in Brixham Harbour and

once again ready for service at 1805.

Following the capsizing, the coxswain and crew of Salcombe lifeboat had displayed a remarkable degree of fortitude and determination, in the highest traditions of the Institution. As soon as *The Baltic Exchange* had righted and drained, they had pressed on with the next most important task of recovering the man in the water. Having made the recovery, Coxswain Griffiths had headed north west once more in the general direction of where the capsized inflatable dinghy had last been sighted. The righting bag equipment on *The Baltic Exchange* had operated as it was designed to do. The lifeboat herself, a very well maintained boat on which all equipment was properly stowed and secured, had suffered only minimal damage, mainly to electric or electronic equipment; her engines, steering gear, compass and both clocks were all working and communication by radio was still possible. She was, nevertheless, taken off service for a complete survey and overhaul, for which, in fact, she was almost due in the natural order of events. The relief 52ft Barnett lifeboat *St Cybi (Civil Service No 9)* was placed on temporary duty at Salcombe.

For this service a framed letter of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, was presented to Coxswain John G. Griffiths and his crew: Assistant Mechanic Brian Cater, acting second coxswain, Motor Mechanic Frank Y. Smith and Crew Members Stanley Turns, Roger Evans, Michael Hicks and David Lambie.

Ireland Division

Shore boat rescue

THE FISHING BOAT *Ard Croine* was out in Killala Bay, on the west coast of Ireland, on Wednesday February 17, 1982, when, at about 1730, she saw another fishing boat, *White Rose*, aground on St Patrick Rocks and in danger of sinking.

The evening was fresh with a strong south-easterly breeze, force 6, gusting to near gale, force 7. It was five hours after high water and a rough sea was running. Visibility was moderate in slight haze.

Patrick O'Donnell, skipper and owner of *Ard Croine*, consulted with several other boats standing off the reef and learnt that their attempts to float or pass a line to the casualty had all failed. He immediately decided to anchor and veer down close to windward of *White Rose*. After several attempts the correct anchorage was found and the skipper veered his boat close enough to the casualty to be able to float a line to her down wind so that *Ard Croine's* crew were then able to pass their inflated liferaft to *White Rose*.

The first group of survivors were hauled across in the liferaft and helped to safety aboard *Ard Croine* at about 1800 and the second party were recovered shortly afterwards. All five fisher-

men were landed safely at Killala.

For this service the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Patrick O'Donnell, skipper of *Ard Croine*, and vellum service certificates were presented to his crew: Anthony O'Donnell, brother of the skipper, Anthony Gallagher, Lawrence Gallagher and Anthony O'Donnell, unrelated to the two brothers.

West Division

Cut off by tide

TENBY COASTGUARD informed the deputy launching authority of Tenby lifeboat station at 1945 on Sunday May 15, 1983, that two people were cut off by the tide at Freshwater East, westward along the coast. Five minutes later the relief D class inflatable lifeboat temporarily on duty at Tenby launched on service manned by Coxswain Alan Thomas as helmsman and Motor Mechanic Charles Crockford as his crew.

A gentle breeze, force 3, gusting to moderate, force 4, was blowing from the south west and once outside the harbour area the sea was moderate. It was an hour before high water.

The lifeboat maintained full speed for Freshwater East Bay, some eight miles west of Caldy Island. On arrival, at 2015, two young boys were seen sheltering in a gully at the foot of high cliffs. By now the wind had backed to the south east and freshened to a moderate breeze, force 4, while a moderate south-westerly swell was building up a five to six foot surge at the foot of the cliffs and into the gully. The two boys had retreated back up the gully where there was a small shingle beach.

There were several large, flat rocks to seaward of the shingle beach and, realising that it would be impossible to take the inflatable lifeboat round them, Coxswain Thomas decided to run her up against the outermost rock and try to hold her there while Motor Mechanic Crockford scrambled over the rocks to bring the boys back to the boat.

On leaping ashore Charles Crockford missed his footing and fell into the sea, but he climbed back up and by leaping from rock to rock reached the boys at the head of the gully. Alan Thomas, meanwhile, jumped ashore on to the outer rock to fend off the inflatable lifeboat; there was the ever-present danger that the boat might be swept over the top as the water surged in and out of the gully.

Charles Crockford escorted and helped the boys, one at a time, from the shingle out across the rocks to Alan Thomas, who managed to get them into the lifeboat. The rise and fall of the surge was increasing all the time and the second boy was just safely in the boat when the lifeboatmen saw a very large wave, which would certainly have swept the crew and the boys over the rocks and probably have damaged the boat, building up out to sea. Both lifeboat-

men leapt into the inflatable boat and they succeeded in clearing the gully before it was too late.

The two boys were landed into the care of the Coastguard at Freshwater East beach and the lifeboat then headed back to station. With the wind, which had continued to rise, now a fresh breeze, force 5, and the sea rough, the return trip took nearly an hour. It was 2125 when the inflatable lifeboat arrived; by 2130 she was refuelled and once again ready for service.

For this service the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Coxswain W. Alan Thomas and Motor Mechanic Charles H. Crockford. Both the boys rescued wrote to Coxswain Thomas, each boy sending his pocket money for ten weeks, £5, for the lifeboat service.

South East Division

Capsized dinghy

ON THE AFTERNOON of Wednesday May 11, 1983, both lifeboats stationed at **Eastbourne** were launched to help the fishing vessel *Dawn Anne*, in difficulties with a broken fuel line 1½ miles east of the lifeboat station; she had two people on board. A message came from Eastbourne Coastguard to the honorary secretary at 1550.

A fresh breeze, force 5, gusting to strong breeze, force 6, was blowing from the south west, with a moderate to rough sea causing a steady surf on the beach edge. High water had passed at 1058 and there was negligible tidal stream.

The relief D class inflatable lifeboat temporarily stationed at Eastbourne was called out first; she was launched from the beach, out through the surf, at 1600 manned by Helmsman Paul Metcalfe and Crew Members John Cooper and Ian Stringer. Eastbourne's 37ft 6in Rother lifeboat *Duke of Kent* launched at 1701 under the command of Coxswain/Mechanic Ronald Wheeler.

After passing a towline from *Dawn Anne* to *Duke of Kent*, the D class inflatable lifeboat remained in the area, being later asked by Coxswain Wheeler to check a number of small boats and sailboards about half a mile further east.

Returning at about 1800 to *Dawn Anne*, now under tow of the Rother, the inflatable lifeboat helmsman and crew kept a weather eye open for any other small boats. The wind had by now increased to strong breeze, force 6, gusting to near gale, force 7, and the four to five feet seas were breaking. At about 1825 Helmsman Metcalfe sighted a *small capsized dinghy* to westward, about half a mile off Eastbourne Pier. Leaving the tow, the inflatable dinghy headed into the sea at best speed.

On arrival near the capsized dinghy, the lifeboatmen saw a woman and a child, aged 12, clinging to the keel; the woman was holding a second child,

aged 10. Crew Member Cooper entered the water, at the helmsman's request, righted the dinghy without difficulty and helped the three people back on board. The dinghy was waterlogged, however, and immediately capsized again, throwing the woman and one child back into the water; the second child went over with the dinghy but did not emerge, having become entangled in the halyards beneath the sail. Crew Member Cooper immediately swam under the sail and released the child.

Helmsman Metcalfe then drove the inflatable lifeboat against the dinghy and he and Crew Member Stringer recovered the woman and two children from the water, wrapping one child in a survivor's sheet. Crew Member Cooper was then helped back aboard. All three dinghy sailors were now very cold, the woman was exhausted and the children frightened. They were safely landed at the lifeboat slipway to a waiting ambulance. They were taken to hospital where they were found to be suffering mild hypothermia, but they were discharged the next day.

At 1905 the inflatable lifeboat relaunched to resume her original escort of *Dawn Anne*. The Rother lifeboat had towed the fishing vessel slowly westward towards the fishing beach, but arriving there had had to heave to off the shore to await enough water, with the rising tide, to beach the casualty. When it was possible to beach the fishing vessel safely, the inflatable lifeboat took the towline from the Rother and passed it to the shore party.

The D class inflatable lifeboat was rehoused, refuelled and once more ready for service at 1950. The 37ft 6in Rother *Duke of Kent* was rehoused and ready for service at 2017.

For this service the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Crew Member John D. Cooper. Framed letters of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, were presented to Helmsman Paul S. Metcalfe, and Crew Member Ian L. Stringer.

South West Division

Crashed helicopter

FALMOUTH COASTGUARD informed the deputy launching authority of **St Mary's** lifeboat station, Isles of Scilly, at 1250 on Saturday July 16, 1983, that the British Airways helicopter G-BEON was overdue at St Mary's airport with 26 people on board. Her last known position was two miles east of the airport. The DLA immediately telephoned Coxswain Matthew Lethbridge who, pausing only to ask his wife to telephone the crew, went as quickly as possible to the boathouse. The crew arrived immediately after the maroons were fired and, at 1300, just ten minutes after the original call, the 52ft Arun relief lifeboat *Sir Max Aitken*, on temporary duty at St Mary's, had slipped her moorings.

She set out on service at full speed. Helicopters had been called out from RNAS Culdrose.

With a light north-westerly breeze, force 2, the sea was calm in St Mary's Harbour, but dense fog had reduced visibility to between 20 to 40 yards. It was 2¼ hours after high water, some three days after spring tides.

Coxswain Lethbridge steered from the upper steering position, on the flying bridge, until Carn Morval Point was abeam. He then asked Second Coxswain Roy Guy to take over on the bridge while he himself went down into the wheelhouse to give his orders from the radar position. A large number of yachts and other boats were encountered in the narrow channel around Bar Point but full speed was maintained throughout. During the passage the crew prepared the Y class inflatable dinghy for launching.

Falmouth Coastguard asked the lifeboat to search an area three quarters of a mile south east of Porth Hellick, where a radar sighting had been reported. Steering south east from Bar Point towards the position given, Coxswain Lethbridge could see two targets on his radar and altered course towards the largest. At 1321 the lifeboat found a large yacht becalmed. The second target was found to be another yacht. The coxswain then set course for the original datum position, realising for the first time that the missing helicopter might not be on the surface.

On the 1½ mile radar range Coxswain Lethbridge detected what he could only describe as a 'shimmer' and altered course towards it, assuming that it could be wreckage. From the foredeck the lookouts reported, '*We can smell paraffin*'. Coxswain Lethbridge took over the upper steering position again in time to hear from the foredeck, '*We can hear shouting!*' Only then was speed reduced. Two boat lengths ahead people were seen in the water. The engines were stopped, then put astern, but the response was poor and Coxswain Lethbridge realised that the port engine had not engaged astern. He had to make another turn, to starboard, to get near the survivors.

Sir Max Aitken was stopped alongside a young girl and boy, and, while they were being helped aboard the Arun, the Y class inflatable dinghy was launched. The dinghy first picked up two women, one of whom had supported her friend until the two helicopter pilots had been able to come to her assistance and to that of the children. The dinghy then picked up the pilots themselves. The four adults were taken safely aboard the lifeboat and, with the two children, were cared for in the wheelhouse; questioned by the crew they said that, as far as they knew, they were the only survivors.

Meanwhile, Motor Mechanic William Burrow had been able to investigate the engine problem, and the lifeboat and her inflatable dinghy then continued to

search the immediate area in company.

Visibility was still only 40 yards at best when Coxswain Lethbridge guided in a Sea King helicopter by sound and radio. A doctor was lowered on to the lifeboat. After a brief examination he advised the coxswain that the survivors should go to hospital.

By now Coxswain Lethbridge felt that there were probably no other survivors to be found. Local boats had started to arrive and he arranged for *Swan Dancer* to drop a dan buoy in the position in which the survivors had been found, a little west south west of the original datum position. Falmouth Coastguard was informed that *Silver Cloud* would take over as co-ordinator of surface search.

At 1524 the relief Arun lifeboat *Sir Max Aitken* set off for St Mary's at full speed. A few minutes earlier, Penlee lifeboat had been asked to launch; Penlee crew had already been prepared for action and the station's 52ft Arun *Mabel Alice* launched at 1527 under the command of Coxswain Kenneth Thomas and headed for the search area.

Having landed six survivors and the doctor at St Mary's, *Sir Max Aitken* at once returned to the search area to resume her duties of co-ordinator of surface search. Visibility had now improved to a quarter of a mile. Coxswain Lethbridge called upon all the local boats to help in the search. Nine boats were drawn up in line abreast, a quarter of a mile apart so that visual contact was maintained with flanking boats. The boat with the least draught was on the inshore end of the line, within sight of the rocks and islands, and the boats fitted with radar were on the offshore end. A down-tide search was then made on an average course of 240°m. When Penlee's Arun arrived she was positioned to seaward of the other search vessels. In this manner the whole area from the datum position to Bishops Rock, south west of the Isles of Scilly, was very thoroughly searched. Nothing was found. The nine local boats were released and the two lifeboats returned to the datum position. On the arrival of the warship *HMS St David*, the lifeboats were instructed to return to harbour. *Sir Max Aitken* arrived back at St Mary's at 2007; after refuelling she was moored, ready for service, at 2115.

During the passage back to Newlyn, Penlee's Arun, *Mabel Alice* was diverted to help search for a 15ft speedboat believed lost in Mounts Bay. *Mabel Alice* had searched along the coastline as far as Penzance when, at 2035, she was informed that the casualty had been found and that she should return to station. She had refuelled and remoored and was once again ready for service at 2130.

For this service the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Coxswain Matthew Lethbridge, BEM. Vellum service certificates were presented to Second Coxswain E. Roy Guy, Motor Mechanic William R.

Burrow, Assistant Mechanic William Harry Lethbridge, Emergency Mechanics Rodney J. Terry and Ritchie C. Christopher, and Crew Member James C. Terry.

Among messages of congratulations received by Coxswain Lethbridge and his crew was one from HRH The Duchess of Kent, who had been present at the dedication of St Mary's own Arun lifeboat, *Robert Edgar*, in 1981; one from Lord and Lady Wilson, signed Mary and Harold Wilson, who have spent much time on the Isles of Scilly; and one from Captain P. K. C. Harris, RN (Rtd), HM Coastguard regional controller at Falmouth.

Ireland Division

Washed off rocks

VALENTIA COAST RADIO STATION made a general broadcast at 1119 on Thursday August 26, 1982, requesting assistance for an angler who had been washed off rocks at 1000 close by Culoo Head, westward along the north coast of Valentia Island; the man was in danger of drowning.

Joseph Houlihan, motor mechanic of Valentia lifeboat who was on leave, was demonstrating a local fishing boat to a prospective buyer off the Coastguard Patch, north of the island. He intercepted the call on VHF and offered his help.

A strong breeze, force 6, gusting to near gale, force 7, was blowing from the west; a very rough sea was running and there was a heavy north-westerly swell. High water was at 1040.

Joseph Houlihan drove his Fastworker boat, a 150hp flat bottom motor fishing vessel, at best speed to Culoo Head. Arriving at about 1140, he was directed by onlookers towards the angler who was swimming about 25 metres from the shore. The sea was very confused with considerable backwash and surge from the swell, estimated at five to six metres high.

The Fastworker was manoeuvred alongside the man in the water, who was recovered aboard by Michael O'Connor, a crew member, and John O'Connor, the client. After clearing the shoreline Joseph Houlihan stopped the boat, satisfied himself that all was well with the angler and found warm clothing for him.

While returning to Valentia Harbour, Mr Houlihan told the radio station and Valentia lifeboat, which had launched on service at 1130, that all was well, and asked that a doctor and ambulance should meet the boat as a precaution. The angler was landed into the care of a doctor at Reenard Point Quay at about 1215 and was taken to hospital for a check up.

For this service the thanks of the Institution inscribed on vellum were accorded to Motor Mechanic J. Joseph Houlihan and vellum service certificates

were presented to Michael O'Connor and John O'Connor.

East Division

Escort

THE DEPUTY LAUNCHING AUTHORITY of Southwold lifeboat station received a request at 1335 on Monday January 31, 1983, for the lifeboat to escort MFV *Ecstasy* and MFV *Broadside* to Lowestoft; the weather was too bad for the fishing vessels to enter Southwold and one of them, MFV *Broadside*, had a small leak. Maroons were fired and at 1355 Southwold's Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat *Sole Bay* launched on service manned by Helmsman Roger Trigg and Crew Members Jonathan Adnams and Nicholas Westwood.

The day was heavily overcast with occasional showers of rain and hail so that visibility was poor. The south-south-westerly wind was gusting to strong gale, force 9, and it was two hours after high water at very high springs.

The Atlantic 21 approached the harbour entrance where with wind against ebb tide, the seas were breaking. After a brief pause to find a suitable lull in the waves, she left harbour at 1358 by going close to the north pier, inside the Hale and then across the Inner Shoal. A north-north-easterly course was then set to rendezvous with the two fishing vessels which were 1½ miles south east of Covehithe Church heading for Lowestoft. As the Atlantic came up astern of the two boats she found that *Broadside* was further out to sea than *Ecstasy* and some three-quarters of a mile ahead. Both fishing vessels were making steady progress down sea.

Then, at 1415 when she was half a mile east of Benacre Ness, *Ecstasy's* engine failed. It would have been unsafe for *Broadside* to try to turn in the heavy following seas, so she continued to run towards Lowestoft via East Barnard Buoy and Pakefield Channel.

The wind, still south south west, had by now reached strong gale, force 9. The ebb was flowing north at three knots. Because of the shallow water around Benacre Ness the seas in that area were particularly steep, up to 15 to 20 feet high, and breaking. With waves often approaching at varying angles to the swell, the waters were confused. The afternoon was still heavily overcast with rain and hail squalls.

Southwold Atlantic 21 approached *Ecstasy* from the south; she went round her bow and circled to port intending to drive along the fishing vessel's port side to pass a tow and pull her clear of the very bad seas close to Benacre Ness. As the lifeboat was making her approach, however, *Ecstasy* radioed that she had restarted her engine. The Atlantic 21 then led *Ecstasy* out to sea, clear of Benacre Ness and towards East Barnard Buoy.

After passing 100 yards to the west of East Barnard Buoy, the Atlantic led *Ecstasy* into Pakefield Channel. *Broadside*, now in sight of Lowestoft Harbour entrance, asked the Atlantic to stand by when she entered harbour; on the lifeboat's suggestion, her skipper agreed to wait for the other two boats to catch up with her. At 1435, however, when the lifeboat and *Ecstasy* were still half a mile south of the harbour, *Broadside* radioed to say that she was only a quarter of a mile from the entrance and, if she delayed any longer, she would be swept past.

Southwold Atlantic 21 left MFV *Ecstasy* and headed for Lowestoft, but MFV *Broadside* entered Lowestoft Harbour at 1438, before the lifeboat could reach her. The Atlantic was returning to *Ecstasy*, now east of Claremont Pier, when the fishing vessel radioed to say that she had not entered Lowestoft before. The lifeboat passed to her information on tidal directions at the entrance and the best course to steer in the prevailing conditions, and then escorted the fishing vessel into harbour. *Ecstasy* was moored with *Broadside* in Waveney Dock before, at 1455, the Atlantic herself was secured alongside Lowestoft lifeboat.

As the wind was now gusting to storm force 10, the tide was at full ebb and darkness was approaching, it was decided that Southwold Atlantic 21 should remain at Lowestoft overnight. She made the passage back to station on Tuesday morning, February 1, arriving at 1150. During this passage, the wind was still force 9, but it had by now gone round to the west so that, under the lee of the land, the seas were moderate.

For this service a framed letter of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution was presented to Helmsman Roger Trigg.

East Division

Tug escorted

YARMOUTH COASTGUARD informed the honorary secretary of Wells lifeboat station at 1245 on Monday April 11, 1983, that *Dockman*, a 70ft ex-river tug which had been on passage from London to Newcastle but whose radar and compass were unserviceable, was being escorted to Wells by MFV *Isabelle Kathleen*. Skipper John Nudds had left Wells in *Isabelle Kathleen* on the morning tide for whelk fishing in the vicinity of Dudgeon Lightvessel. At that time the winds were gentle and the sea slight. The weather began to deteriorate rapidly, however, and he had just decided to return to harbour when he sighted *Dockman* in difficulties and offered to guide her to Wells.

At 1525 it was reported that *Isabelle Kathleen* had lost contact with *Dockman* in heavy rain squalls and lifeboat help was requested. Maroons were fired and at 1538 the 37ft Oakley relief

lifeboat, *Calouste Gulbenkian*, on temporary duty at Wells, was launched and set out on service under the command of Coxswain David Cox.

By now the north-easterly wind had risen to strong gale, force 9. There was very low cloud with constant drizzle and in some rain squalls visibility was reduced to 500 yards. It was three hours before high water, two days before spring tides.

The lifeboat made for the harbour mouth and stood by, inside the bar, while *Isabelle Kathleen* entered harbour, the weather having deteriorated to the point where it was unsafe for her to remain at sea. By 1607 *Isabelle Kathleen* was safely in harbour and the lifeboat put to sea.

The heavy north-easterly ground swell was producing high steep seas with broken water everywhere, so Coxswain Cox took the lifeboat out of harbour head to sea, passing directly over the bar, and then held a north-easterly course for 1½ miles before he considered it prudent to alter course to the north west to approach the tug *Dockman*, now in the vicinity of Bridgirdle Buoy. Because of the weather, the lifeboat was down to half speed and constantly had to turn head to sea.

The tug was sighted at 1638 but two minutes later the lifeboat was hit by a very large sea on the starboard bow which swamped her and filled the cockpit with water up to the necks of those sitting down. The radar failed and VHF radio communication became difficult. Nevertheless, at 1650 the lifeboat reached *Dockman*, which was slowly circling around Bridgirdle Buoy waiting for her.

The wind, still north east, had by now risen to storm force 10 and there was a strong flood tide flowing eastwards at 3½ knots. With wind against tide, in the shallow water in the vicinity of Bridgirdle Buoy the seas were about 20 feet high and very steep with the crests constantly breaking. With low cloud and drizzle, visibility was no more than 1½ miles.

Coxswain Cox immediately advised the tug to follow the lifeboat, with the intention of escorting her to King's Lynn because it was considered too dangerous to try to enter Wells in the prevailing weather. However, the tug replied that she was short of fuel and that her crew were suffering badly from seasickness. Coxswain Cox then altered course to the south west for Brancaster Roads, where the seas might be easier, to assess the position. During the course of communication, the tug told the lifeboat that she would be unable to put out an anchor, so Coxswain Cox asked that Brancaster fishermen should be consulted about the possibility of entering Brancaster Harbour. The tug continued to follow the lifeboat on a south-westerly course.

Cyril Southerland, skipper of the Brancaster MFV *Isabel Deborah*, volunteered to take his boat out to assess the

situation at the entrance to the harbour; Richard Southerland and James Petchey went out with him as crew. At 1754 he informed Wells lifeboat that there was adequate water for the tug to enter harbour and that he would stand by to act as guide. The lifeboat then told the tug to follow her into Brancaster and to listen out for *Isabel Deborah* who would guide them both in.

At 1805 the lifeboat was approaching harbour and at 1821 she crossed the bar closely followed by the tug. They then followed *Isabel Deborah* along the shore towards Brancaster Harbour in heavy beam seas and at 1842 they were in the harbour under the lee of Scolt Head. As the tug crew were exhausted and her engines, belching black smoke, were failing, the lifeboat went alongside and her crew helped the master to anchor his vessel. The lifeboat was then placed on a safe mooring for the night, it being imprudent to return to Wells through the storm with darkness falling.

Passage back to Wells was made on Tuesday April 12, the lifeboat arriving at 1830. Repairs having been made to her radar and VHF radio, she was once again on full service on April 13.

For this service a framed letter of thanks signed by the Duke of Atholl, chairman of the Institution, was presented to Coxswain David Cox, BEM. Letters of appreciation signed by Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director, were sent to John R. Nudds, skipper of MFV *Isabelle Kathleen* and Cyril A. R. Southerland, skipper of MFV *Isabel Deborah*.

Lifeboat Services, June and July, 1983

Services for August, 1983 will be reported in the spring 1984 journal.

Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire

D class inflatable: June 20, 26 and 30

Aberdovey, Gwynedd

Atlantic 21: July 16 and 27

Abersoch, Gwynedd

Atlantic 21: June 9, July 7, 19 and 27

Aberystwyth, Dyfed

D class inflatable: June 9, 13, 17, July 19 and 25

Aldeburgh, Suffolk

37ft 6in Rother: June 7

Amble, Northumberland

37ft 6in Rother: July 8 and 25 (twice)

Relief D class inflatable: June 25

Angle, Dyfed

46ft 9in Watson: June 12

Appledore, North Devon

Relief 46ft 9in Watson: June 9

Atlantic 21: June 2, 3, 5, 9, 12, 26, 28, July 10 (three times), 12 (twice), 14, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30 (twice) and 31

Arklow, Co Wicklow

42ft Watson: July 12

Arranmore, Co Donegal

52ft Barnett: June 4 (twice), 5 and 26

Atlantic College (St Donat's Castle), South Glamorgan

Atlantic 21: July 25

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Dr Sydney Peace

OF ORKNEY

By Joan Davies

LISTEN TO Dr Sydney Peace and, underlying all that he says, you will hear the ring of his abiding love of the sea. You will also hear the echoes of his deep respect of all seafaring people and in particular for the lifeboatmen of Orkney, whom he holds in great affection and to whom he has given his wholehearted support for more than a quarter of a century.

Dr Peace served as honorary secretary and honorary medical adviser (HMA) of Longhope lifeboat station from 1957 to 1962, when he handed over the responsibilities of honorary secretary to Jackie Groat. He continued in the office of HMA, however, for another year until, in 1963, he and his family moved to Kirkwall. A few years later he was instrumental in helping to set up a new lifeboat station at Kirkwall, for which he has been HMA since it was finally established in 1972. For his long and outstanding service, Dr Peace was awarded the Institution's gold badge in 1982.

That is a bare statement of fact behind which lies a record of strong, continuous and practical support. Whatever, within his power, needed to be done for the good of the Institution and its people in Orkney, be it administrative or operational, has been done as a matter of course, and it has not only been done efficiently but with real understanding. His interest has also extended to fund raising, although here his part has mostly been in a supporting rôle to his wife, Helen, who is Kirkwall convener for the Orkney ladies' guild.

Sydney Peace is himself an Orcadian . . .

'I have lived in Orkney all my life, apart from some seven years at University and working in a hospital in Aberdeen, a short period in Shetland as a trainee assistant in general practice and six months in Essex. We came back to Orkney in 1954 and took over the practice in North Ronaldsay, the most isolated island in the county. When we arrived, one of the first things I did was to buy a motor boat; something in which to get back to the sea. And a rather strange thing happened. The boatman who ran the mails and a few passengers between the island of North Ronaldsay and the island of Sanday suddenly gave up. At the time, I was chairman of the local district council and we had the task of nominating the successor. But in the meantime I used my motor boat to do this job myself. I had plenty of time. By Highlands and Islands standards my practice was small in area. I ran the mails for seven and a half weeks and the next year I did it again for a similar period because the boat we appointed broke down. It was simply picking up an interest in the sea that I had

since boyhood. I was brought up on a farm in Evie and used to spend a large part of my spare time lobster fishing and handline fishing; that sort of thing.'

So Sydney Peace had known something about fishing in Orcadian waters all his life and, as a young man, had accepted the discipline of running a regular service between two of the northernmost islands. Then, a few months before he moved to the island of Hoy, to take up practice at Longhope, two experiences, very different to each other, were to give him his initial interest in the RNLI . . .

'I had gone across from North Ronaldsay to Sanday with a patient, going to hospital, on an inter-island steamer from Sanday to Kirkwall. On our return, we capsized the dinghy at the motor boat's mooring. A friend and I spent some 40 minutes in the sea. We were wearing three-quarter length rubber boots and, although we were alongside the motor boat, no way could we get back into her. I realised for the first time in my life what it was to be in danger from the sea. It gave me a personal insight into hypothermia. It also gave me some feeling of what it is like to be rescued . . .

'About six weeks later, in my own boat, I was out off North Ronaldsay when a coaster ran on to the Reef Dyke, which runs north and south off the island's east coast. We went along, picked up the crew and took them ashore. This, for me, was a sort of redress for what had happened, really through my own carelessness. It gave me another view of the thing: the satisfaction, or whatever you care to call it, of rescuing someone.'

Before he went to Longhope, Dr Peace knew that he would be doing the HMA's work for the lifeboat station . . .

'I had my eye on getting afloat in the lifeboat as a member of the crew as well, but it was not to be; a month or two after we went there the then honorary secretary, Minnie Sutherland, moved south to the Clyde and I was asked to take her place. I maybe knew a little about the sea but I didn't know one end of a lifeboat from the other. Nor did I really know what the job of honorary secretary entailed. But it was very interesting and something that I was delighted to take on. The experience of having been in the sea, cold to the point of passing out, and the experience of having rescued a crew gave a little piquancy to the whole thing; having already become interested in the RNLI, one's commitment became stabilised, as it were. You realised that this was something that you enjoyed doing, and you got on with it.'

It was in 1963 that Dr Peace moved to a practice in Kirkwall. Some six years later, on March 17, 1969, Longhope's 47ft Watson lifeboat TGB, while on

service to the Liberian vessel *Irene*, was capsized by a tremendous sea with the tragic loss of her whole crew. The lifeboatmen and their families were all well known to Dr Peace . . .

'When the disaster happened I felt that I had never left Longhope. I was in Edinburgh that night. I came straight back to Orkney the next day and I went across to Scrabster Harbour on our lifeboat from Kirkwall to bring home the bodies of the lifeboatmen who had lost their lives. It was a terrible experience. You can read about such a thing happening at other stations, but unless you have lived through it as a member of the community, you cannot really realise what it means.'

One of the eight Longhope men who lost their lives was Coxswain Dan Kirkpatrick, a lifeboatman of great experience who had been awarded no less than three silver medals for gallantry. In Dan, Sydney Peace had lost a friend in whose company he took great pleasure and whom he held in the highest regard both as a man and as a seaman.

'Among my happiest memories of Dan Kirkpatrick are of Dan in his own house with his wife, Margaret. They were a very fine couple. Every New Year's Day they held open house and people came and went all day. And the sing songs that people used to have in that house on such a night! It was a very pleasant house to go into—a very happy home.'

'On the lifeboat, Dan was an excellent seaman, and a considerate man; the sort of man who on a service could put himself into the place of the people shipwrecked. Of course, he had worked as a seaman in his family's own sailing coasters. They used to carry coals from Blyth to Kirkwall and anything that a farmer needed taken from Orkney south, or from the south to Orkney. And they could never afford the best of boats. It wasn't much of a return that they got. He knew the problems with indifferent gear. He could relate to the person in trouble, and did.'

'Dan was a cool man. He never did anything hastily. He always went for the safest method of achieving a rescue, even if it took a little longer, to ensure that the lifeboat and his crew were safe. This is the thing that stood out about him as a seaman.'

But to go back, in the years after Dr Peace and his family had moved to Kirkwall, first the US Coast Guard 44ft lifeboat, forerunner of the RNLI's 44ft Waveney, and then the original 70ft Clyde lifeboat came to Orkney during their early operational trials round the coast of Britain. On each occasion Dr Peace was invited to go out and see what he thought of the new boat . . .

'Then, of course, the Institution was looking at the situation in the north isles of Orkney. There were slight problems in getting a crew at Stronsay and, apart from that, the plot of services indicated that a boat stationed at Kirkwall might be in a better position than a boat stationed at Stronsay. So 70-002, Grace Paterson Ritchie, came here on a prolonged assessment exercise. She had a staff coxswain, a mechanic, an assistant mechanic and two crew. For some time the boat was used partly as a cruising lifeboat and partly for crew training.'

Dr Peace was asked to help in finding volunteer crew members for the new lifeboat from Kirkwall; to represent, as it were, the RNLI in the days before a station branch was established. Once again he found himself totally involved, almost as though he were an honorary secretary. A keen sailor, now with his own little crushing boat, he knew the local sailing fraternity.

'We have a very nice club here, to which all the local sailing people belong and which is open to visiting yachtsmen. This club provided the nucleus from which the first volunteers came to form the Kirkwall crew. Our second coxswain, Dan Grieve, is without question the doyen of dinghy sailors in Orkney—and quite a bit out of it! He has been with the boat ever since the first batch of volunteers, and there are one or two others of the same sort.'

'We like to keep a close tie between the sailing club and the lifeboat. I think it is good for the RNLI to keep in touch with yachtsmen because we cannot get crews from professional inshore fishermen now in the same way we once could—at least that it true here. The fishermen who once upon a time would be handling an inshore boat, perhaps with a set of lobster creels, is now in a much larger boat. He is possibly a seine net fisherman and the chances are that he is at sea when you need the lifeboat. So a sailing club provides a good nucleus of people ashore to help spread into other groups of the community to recruit crews. They would not be sailing club men if they were not interested in the sea and boats. They take to lifeboat work. The self discipline demanded, for instance, in racing dinghies is in itself useful when it comes to lifeboat work. Then, again, people who race dinghies are usually fairly agile!'

It was during this period of assessment of the 70ft Clyde lifeboat that the Longhope disaster occurred, and Grace Paterson Ritchie was also at sea that night. I spoke with the second coxswain. The gales had been blowing from the south east for some ten days, and the lifeboatmen who were aboard remember the regular 60 foot seas which had built up and how, when they were in the troughs, they could not see a lighthouse standing 259 feet high. Then they met a tremendous rogue wave of about 120 feet. Grace Paterson Ritchie went up, and up, and up, before breaking right through that wave. And it took nine seconds for her to come back down again.

In 1972 Stronsay lifeboat station was closed and Kirkwall station was established. Because of his professional commitments, Dr Peace could not take on the work of honorary secretary but he has been HMA for the station ever since. The present honorary secretary of Kirkwall station branch is Captain Magnus Work.

As honorary medical adviser, both at Longhope and Kirkwall, Dr Peace has been out with the lifeboat on a number of occasions, mostly to trawlers fishing in the area. Usually medical trips have been to deal with minor injuries or to take off a sick man when, in bad weather, a trawler would have had

'The RNLI is a trusting organisation . . . it has something you could call a civilising influence about it . . . if we did not need an RNLI, I think that we should need to invent something like it . . .'

DR SYDNEY PEACE

In addition to receiving the gold badge for his services to the RNLI in 1982, Dr Sydney Peace (r) was further honoured at a gathering of his friends and colleagues in Orkney by the presentation of a pipe tune composed for him by Pipe Major Sim, formerly of the Gordon Highlanders. The presentation of the framed pipe tune was made by Col R. A. A. S. Macrae, the Lord Lieutenant.

photograph by courtesy of D. B. Peace (Pictures) Ltd



difficulty in getting into Kirkwall; sometimes, however, the call has been to a major injury. Dr Peace would have dearly loved to have been a regular crew member, had his work allowed—and he would have been welcome. As it is, he likes to go to sea in the lifeboat as often as possible because he thinks that, just as an industrial doctor should know about the workings of the business with which he is concerned, so a lifeboat doctor should know at first hand about the sea and lifeboats.

There are two occasions when he went out on the lifeboat, both while he was at Longhope, which Dr Peace remembers in particular. The first because of the violent weather . . .

'A trawler, George Robb, had run ashore near The Stacks of Duncansby. When we launched a strong gale was blowing from the south east and the wind was rising. It was flood tide. We got there a little after midnight and by then the wind was up to hurricane force. We never saw that trawler. We came in on the actual position right enough. We put up parachute flares. But all we saw landwards was a whiteout of spray. Duncansby Head Light is 205 feet high and has a 17-mile range, but it could not be seen until the lifeboat was within five miles of it. As we came in, you could see sheets of water going right up over the lighthouse. Nothing was found of the George Robb. Next day at low water she was seen half submerged with her back broken. At one point, south of Duncansby and in complete darkness, a strong tidal eddy carried the lifeboat to within a boat's length of the northern-most stack . . .'

The second service, on August 4, 1961, Dr Peace remembers because of its consequences on search and rescue in northern waters:

'Daisy, a Peterhead herring trawler on passage from Lerwick to Peterhead, sprang a leak in her engine room and sank. Her crew took to the liferaft. The weather was not really bad—a force 7 or 8 gale, something like that. Stronsay lifeboat was called out initially. She launched at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon and we launched to assist her at about midnight,

reaching the search area at about 0830 the next morning. At just about that time a Danish vessel, Nella Dan, picked up the ten fishermen, much further out. We rendezvoused with Nella Dan 104 miles out at about 1130 and the men were transferred to the lifeboat.

'That was a very interesting service in that, to my knowledge, it was the first time that a crew had been saved in these waters by means of a modern type liferaft. It showed that, if you were searching for a crew that could get into a modern liferaft, with the increased chance of survival it gave, the search should be extended much longer than before, even up to the best part of a week.'

From his own experience, Dr Peace has come to respect the way in which the RNLI is run. He has, in particular, one fond memory:

'During the first winter that I was honorary secretary at Longhope we had about four or five sightings of red flares in our "parish". On one occasion Dan Kirkpatrick himself had seen these flares. No radio messages. On each occasion we had launched the boat and gone to the area and searched and searched. Nothing found. It being my first winter as honorary secretary I got a bit concerned because I thought the boys at HQ in London are going to say, "What is he launching the boat for when there is nothing there? Why all the fuss?" So I wrote a letter saying what had happened and that I was sorry that there was nothing to be seen. I got the most charming letter back saying, "We are not going to interfere. You are the man on the spot, working with the crew. This is a decision that is made on the spot". I think that sold me the RNLI from an administrative point of view. People are given a job to do and left to get on with it. It is this trust of crews and branch officials which is one of the best lubricants in the whole organisation. It is so much better than a totally parental structure that sends out dictates from on high. Of course we get a bit of this—must have—but the RNLI is a trusting organisation and I think that is one of its greatest strengths. You will work for something voluntarily where you are given trust, and maybe a little praise here and there . . .'

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15ft 6in D class inflatable . . .

SMALLEST LIFEBOAT IN THE RNLI FLEET

AT THE ANNUAL presentation of awards meeting at the Royal Festival Hall on May 17, 1983, three D class lifeboat helmsmen were presented with awards for gallantry: Keith Willacy of Morecambe received the silver medal (he had previously been awarded a bronze medal in 1973), Eric Ward of St Ives received the bronze medal and also a bar to his bronze medal, and Alan Forrester of Flint received the bronze medal (the services are reported briefly on page 303). On the previous afternoon, these three helmsmen met to discuss matters related to lifesaving in inflatable lifeboats with Lt David Stogdon, former superintendent of depot (Cowes), who had been one of the people instrumental in introducing the D class into the Institution's fleet, and Trevor Evans, overseer, ILB (Cowes), who with Lt Stogdon has been concerned with its development, fitting out and maintenance from the very beginning. In the chair was Cdr Michael Woodroffe, staff officer operations (1) with particular responsibility for lifeboats under 10 metres, who pointed out how auspicious was the choice of date for this discussion:

Cdr Michael Woodroffe, staff officer operations (1): It is especially fitting that we are gathered here this afternoon because tomorrow, the day of the AGM, is, by coincidence, exactly to the very day 20 years after the first inflatable lifeboat went on service at Aberystwyth. A lot of water has passed under the RNLI bridge since then, and the twin 40hp engined Mk IV Zodiac being placed on service at Aberystwyth next week is a far cry from the early inflatable with a single 25hp outboard en-

gine. In the intervening 20 years, up to the end of April this year (1983), D class inflatables have performed 19,397 services, and rescued 8,704 lives with, sadly but nevertheless amazingly, only one crew member losing his life. Five silver medals and 28 bronze medals, two of which were bars, have been awarded to D class crew members; five of those medals have been awarded to you, Keith, Eric and Alan.

Twenty years ago D class inflatable lifeboats performed 20 per cent of the total lifeboat services: last year (1982) the figure was 34 per cent. Also last year, 40 per cent of the total lives rescued by RNLI lifeboats were by D class inflatables. This clearly shows the increasing importance in rôle of the inshore fleet. David, you were one of the founding fathers of the RNLI inflatable fleet. How did it all start?

Lt David Stogdon: I thought the figures you gave very interesting. When the idea of inflatable boats was first introduced it was received reluctantly by the Institution. The boat herself was tried out with considerable reserve, and I would probably add caution, by the crews.

The idea of going to sea in an air filled tube started in Jersey in the Channel Islands. Joint exercises between the Fire Brigade with their inflatable boat and the lifeboat were so successful that I decided to carry out trials on the coast in England. Captain D. G. Wicksteed, who was deputy chief inspector at that time, spent many days at sea with me in all conditions. With this experience and his enthusiasm, he was able to make a good case at head office for official trials. The proposal of

a light, small boat, so different to the conventional lifeboat, being used for rescue at sea was at that time so novel that it was almost impossible to get anyone in the lifeboat service to take the idea seriously. The rescue service in Brittany had been using inflatable boats successfully since the war and in fact some of you may remember that Professor Bombard crossed the Atlantic in one of these boats. The RNLI was indebted to Monsieur Renault and the *Hospitatiers Sauveteurs Bretons* who took Captain Wicksteed and myself round their lifeboat stations to show us their methods and who gave us sound advice.

It was not easy to get our crew members to accept the inflatable boat because in larger conventional lifeboats they were brought up with the idea of slowing down when running before a sea, and putting a drogue out for safety. The inflatable was the first kind of boat where it was her power, and so her speed, which gave a safety factor when running before unstable seas in shallow water. So it was very difficult, at first, to get a coxswain to open the throttle when he saw a sea coming up over his shoulder; he usually tried to close it down.

The first boat we had was silver in colour, with an outboard engine lent to us by Alfred Schermuly, the rocket manufacturer, who was doing all he could to help us. I was out at sea off Littlehampton on a windy day, demonstrating this boat for the approval of the chief inspector. The throttle control became disengaged, so that the engine would only tick over for a minute before stopping. In fact, we were carried towards the fairly heavy surf, several hundred yards of it, out of control. With no control the first breaking sea caught us and my crew was thrown out. I remember he had spectacles on and I wondered what would happen to them! I managed to stay with the boat, which filled with sea. After that, all the way to the beach, the other seas didn't matter. The boat was already full of water. The seas broke over the boat and through it and all I had to do was hang on. I realised then that the boat was stable and safe when full of water, in fact, if out of control, far safer than when she was light and empty. So I learnt a lot that day.

Luckily somebody else, unconnected with the Institution, was also out in a rubber boat showing off her paces, so that in spite of our failure, the chief inspector saw how well she worked. But it is no bad thing to be full of water if your engine fails.

You mentioned Aberystwyth in your opening remarks, Michael. This station was opened by Lt-Cdr Harold Harvey, divisional inspector for the North West, who, you may remember was awarded the gold medal a few years later for his part in the service to *Nafsiporos*. To my horror, Harold Harvey telephoned me shortly after he had launched the

In the early days of evaluation of inflatable boats as lifeboats Captain D. G. Wicksteed, deputy chief inspector (with camera), and Lt David Stogdon (far right) were much helped by the Hospitatiers Sauveteurs Bretons.



Aberystwyth D class inflatable lifeboat to say that she had capsized on her first trip to sea. Word of this capsize got through to head office, just when the Committee of Management was in session. Capsize is a dreadful word in the lifeboat service, and that one happening was very nearly the end of the inflatable lifeboat. But for one thing. After the shock, a member of the Committee of Management asked, '*How many lives were lost?*' This, I think, was one of the first capsizes we had had with no lives lost at all. Both the crew members got ashore quite happily and were ready to go to sea again. It was only because of that question and the answer, '*None,*' that the inflatable boats were allowed to go on.

Woodroffe: I do not think we ever really expected the D class inflatable boats would be on service as long as they have. Some station boats currently being replaced are now 16 years old. That they have lasted so long is a tremendous tribute to Trevor Evans and the Cowes base team. The skill and knowledge of rubber work in Cowes is

probably second to none, worldwide. Trevor, what are the latest developments?

Trevor Evans, overseer, ILB (Cowes): We are constantly trying to improve the boats, looking into everything we can. The greatest improvement in the past few years has been to the bow sections. The latest RFD boat, which, as you know, is fitted with inner tubes, now has the bow section divided down through the centre, with two separate inner tubes. If one half of the bow is punctured, the other half will keep the boat's shape so that she can still continue on service. The latest Zodiac boat has special long sock type baffles in the bow, blown aft so that if the bow gets punctured, the baffles travel forward and fill up the bow section allowing the boat to continue on service. These are the most recent changes. Of course, in place of the original 25hp outboard engine we now have a 40hp Mariner engine giving 20 knots. We have watertight radios, and much better protective clothing for the crews: bump caps and Typhoon dry suits. It is a continuous

process, and we shall go on looking for alternatives guided by you and your requirements.

Woodroffe: There is no doubt that the inflatable lifeboat has evolved into a very important member of the RNLI family and one of the most successful. We now have 63 summer and 20 winter D class inflatables, with 38 in the relief fleet. Eric, you have operated a D class inflatable during the summer season, March to October, on a surf coast for many years, during which time you have been awarded two bronze medals. What are your views on the boat and her performance, particularly in surf and in beam seas?

Helmsman Eric Ward, St Ives: In surf our D class boat is fantastic. I do not think it could be improved on—and it's full of gear from end to end! As for beam seas, the best thing is to keep away from them, and you have got the speed to do it. If the surf is big, then it is either straight in or straight out; there is no beam sea work in it. Once you have started coming in through the surf you

Morecambe: On the evening of August 4, 1973, when a gale was blowing from the south south west, two men were reported to be adrift off the oil jetty. Heysham Harbour, in a 7ft dinghy. Morecambe's D class inflatable lifeboat, a Trinity House pilot boat and Morecambe's fishermen's lifeboat all set out to help. Conditions off the oil jetty were extremely bad; the six foot seas were short and steep and, in the spray, visibility was down to a quarter of a mile. The pilot boat sighted the two men on a sandbank near the *Western Valleys* wreck, but her draught was too great for her to make an approach. Helmsman Keith Willacy anchored the D class lifeboat and veered down through the surf, which was very confused in the shallow water. On the first attempt, however, the inflatable lifeboat could not get closer than 30 feet and, even though Keith Willacy went over the side on a lifeline, he could not reach the two men. The anchor was recovered, the lifeboat anchored again, this time right in the surf, and she was then successfully veered down to bring the men safely on board. For this service the bronze medal was awarded to Helmsman Keith Willacy (*full report THE LIFEBOAT winter 1973/74*).

St Ives: During the afternoon of April 8, 1982, St Ives D class inflatable lifeboat rescued the four crew of a sailing dinghy which had capsized in the surf on Hayle Bar. An onshore fresh to strong northerly breeze was blowing, there was a heavy swell and the seas were seven to eight feet high. While approaching the dinghy through the surf the lifeboat was taking on more water than her selfbailers could clear. Choosing his moment between heavy waves, Helmsman Eric Ward turned the lifeboat and brought her alongside the upturned dinghy. The four men were quickly hauled aboard but by now the water was level with the top of the lifeboat's sponsons. As the helmsman started to drive clear, the lifeboat's propeller was fouled by a halyard from the dinghy. One crew member jumped overboard to hold the boat's bow into the wind while the other tried to keep her head up with an oar and the helmsman

worked to clear the propeller. Eventually the rope was cut and freed and while the crew threw their weight forward the helmsman headed into the breaking waves and out to sea to clear the surf. For this service Helmsman Eric Ward was awarded the bronze medal (*full report THE LIFEBOAT autumn 1982*).

St Ives: On the morning of July 15, 1982, St Ives D class inflatable lifeboat searched through heavy breaking surf for the single-handed skipper of the yacht *Ladybird* aground off Whicker Point; with ground swell there was a ten foot rise and fall over the shallow rock-strewn area around the yacht and constant white water. The yacht was found to have no one on board but it was thought that someone might be in her liferaft, close inshore nearby. To reach the yacht and liferaft the helmsman anchored the lifeboat and veered her astern under her engine into very broken water and among dangerous rocks. Three times during this operation the lifeboat was lifted on to a rock; on the second occasion the boat was heeled right over and on the third the propeller was damaged so that it had to be changed. When a helicopter had established that the liferaft was empty and when St Ives 37ft Oakley lifeboat had arrived to continue the search for the missing man, the D class inflatable went back to station to fit a spare outboard engine. She then returned to the search, but despite all efforts no one was found. For this service Helmsman Eric Ward was awarded a bar to his bronze medal (*full report THE LIFEBOAT spring 1983*).

Morecambe: On the afternoon of October 17, 1982, Morecambe's D class inflatable lifeboat was launched to help a board sailor in difficulties in Half Moon Bay, off Heysham. A near gale was blowing from south by east and the sea was rough. To reach Half Moon Bay, Helmsman Keith Willacy steered through a narrow lead in the skeers, rocky outcrops leading out from the shore. The waves were breaking violently; as the boat filled with water the crew had to move

forward as far as possible to counteract its weight. Once in the open bay, the lifeboat started to search, keeping head to sea as much as possible. The seas, rough and confused, were eight to nine feet high with breaking crests. The board sailor was sighted 40 feet up on an old pier concrete dolphin, a quarter of a mile out to sea. Helmsman Willacy took the lifeboat close inshore to find enough shelter to turn and he then approached the dolphin crabwise, balancing the engine throttle against the force of the waves and keeping head to sea. On reaching the dolphin it was found that the sailboard, made fast to the access ladder on a falling tide, was obstructing the way down or up; the man was told to jump and was picked up from the sea. For this service the silver medal was awarded to Helmsman Keith Willacy (*full report THE LIFEBOAT summer 1983*).

Flint: On the evening of February 26, 1983, a cabin cruiser, *Heron II*, was reported to be in difficulty one mile south east of Mostyn Dock in the estuary of the River Dee. Flint's D class inflatable lifeboat was taken to Mostyn by road and launched into the dock. It was cold and dark with a fresh to strong north-westerly breeze and the tide was flooding into the estuary at about four knots. As the lifeboat left the dock entrance she had to cross heavy, breaking and confused seas to round a groyne before heading up river (but down wind and tide). The cruiser, her anchor out, was aground with waves six to seven feet high breaking over her. Helmsman Alan Forrester brought the lifeboat alongside and, as one of the two yachtsmen had collapsed, the lifeboat's two crew boarded the boat to carry him off; with the two boats rising and falling awkwardly and the waves breaking over them, it took ten minutes to take off the two survivors. The return passage was made down river, first heading into the wind and the rough seas and then, after rounding the groyne, crossing them to enter Mostyn Dock; it took ten minutes to cover this last 300 yards. For this service the bronze medal was awarded to Helmsman R. Alan Forrester (*full report, THE LIFEBOAT summer 1983*).

obviously run ahead of the sea, as long as it does not catch you up. You do not let the sea roll in on your beam otherwise it is going to roll you over. It is the same with the sea over the stern; if you get a big ground sea over the stern, it is going to get you end for end. It has happened, but not frequently.

If you are coming off a surf beach, where you have got just pure ground swell with no wind, with the seas end to end, we try to get out through it without getting in the curl of the surf; even if you have to wait for a sea to break and then go over that one and try to get out before the next one breaks.

Stogdon: Did you ever take bags of shingle to sea with you as temporary ballast to keep the bow down through the surf, which could then be jettisoned to lighten the boat?

Ward: Not to my knowledge. But if you do break down in the surf you have got to row and try to keep your bow out otherwise the boat is just going to roll over on the crew. Stern out or side on is just no good at all.

Evans: We try to keep as much weight in the bow as we can now. The radio is in the bow and the fuel tanks are further forward than they used to be.

Ward: We always carry three crew, so if you are just running with the crew aboard, you have really got mobile ballast. If you are coming in through the surf the crew will tend to come down amidships to keep the bow up. If you are going out through surf they tend to go up by the canopy to keep the bow down, with the heaviest man up on the port side to balance the helmsman, who is to starboard. The balance is a bit critical. If the two guys in the bow are the same weight, then the helmsman tries to keep in the middle of the boat. But the basic thing is to try to keep out of the curl of the surf. Our boat does everything we want her to do and everyone is satisfied with her.

Woodroffe: Keith, you, too, have been a dedicated D class helmsman for many years. It is ten years since your bronze medal, and now you have chalked up a silver. Your boat covers Morecambe Bay all the year round from the river entrance seaward; a rather different coastline from Eric's. How does your D boat perform in your seas?

Helmsman Keith Willacy, Morecambe: For the size of boat we have got, working within the limitations of that design, there is nothing else that can touch it. I think everyone who has crewed a D class inflatable long enough will agree that we ask more of her than you gentlemen originally envisaged she would do. The boat will keep going longer than the men. If you really do come a cropper, to me it is helmsman error virtually every time. If you play

the game with the boat, nine times out of ten the boat will stay the right way up. We frequently fill ours up completely. But if you do fill her up, you have got to be very careful how you accelerate to clear her because you get a free surge of water that comes aft. If you can bring her up gently and let the water come aft gently to go over the transom it is not too bad.

Woodroffe: Alan, your inflatable lifeboat also operates all the year round at Flint, covering the River Dee Estuary and Liverpool Bay. You have been awarded the bronze medal for a service last winter. What are your thoughts on the D class lifeboat.

Helmsman Alan Forrester, Flint: We could not operate with any other sort of boat of her size. There are a lot of sandbanks in the River Dee and a great deal of the time we are working in shallow water. She only draws about 20 inches, at rest, doesn't she? So she is ideal for us. With the shallow water, it doesn't take much of a wind, say force 4, and the waves are up to about four or five feet. She handles very well.

Woodroffe: In your medal services you all met something between six and nine foot seas. How do you feel she performs in these kinds of seas?

Willacy: Again, if you treat the boat right, very well indeed. You have got the power, and it is only when you are actually coming in to pick the guy up that you do not have much choice as to where you will go. Like Eric, as soon as we start pushing into the sea I use my mobile ballast. We run either two or three up, depending on the weather; if you move the guys about a little bit and use the throttle sensibly it would take a heck of a lot to push her over.

Woodroffe: I have always thought that one of the most important things for a helmsman to understand is that the ride he is getting right aft is very different from the ride the crew up forward are experiencing. In fact, if you like, it is the mark of a good helmsman to remember that his 'ballast', particularly if he is carrying two, is getting a fair old slamming.

Ward: You only put the young ones up there!

Woodroffe: In all your medal services your D boats filled, and although it may have been of little consolation at the time, it was probably no bad thing. Eric, Keith has touched on the question of clearing the water. Do you think the trouser drains that are now fitted at the base of the transom clear the water fast enough?

Ward: First of all I should like to say that I much prefer the boat empty to full, because once she is full you lose all

your speed and all your manoeuvrability. When you start to get her on the move, the bulk of the water goes out over the top of the transom anyway. I cannot honestly say that I have had any problems with the rush of water. We always try to get her clear as quickly as we can. The bulk of it goes over the back, doesn't it? What is left just goes out through the drains.

Willacy: We have these draining trousers now and they are a vast improvement on the old plug. You could guarantee that if you had so much water in the boat that you had to drain it, the mattress would have come back aft with you, so that you were trying to get the mattress forward, get the plug out, drain her . . . Nine times out of ten you lost the rubber grommet . . . The only thing I do not like about these trousers is the fastenings holding them up, the jamming cleats. The trouser drains just seem to flop out of the cleats and then down they go. On a quiet day, you find that if you stop anywhere for a while you flood the boat through the drain holes. So if it could be something a little more secure?

Woodroffe: That is something we could perhaps look at. With cold hands a jamming cleat is quite difficult to operate.

Forrester: If we know we are going into a rough sea, we open ours before we go out. If you are under way you do not get any water in do you?

Willacy: Could a Velcro strip be used perhaps?

Evans: In fact the trouser drains collapse, so that the water can only seep back through them slowly. We did try making them fairly flat on the end but then they did not drain rapidly enough.

Woodroffe: Do you think they are large enough?

Evans: Oh, yes. Larger holes would weaken the transom.

Willacy: The only thing is . . . the last service I did where I filled the boat, we could not get enough speed on her because the seas were very short and steep. So I was stuck with the water I had got, apart from what flopped out over the top of the transom. The first time she filled I took her under a lee and ran her downwind to get the water out of the boat. I turned her back head to wind again, and she filled. So we had to do the entire service virtually full of water. The casualty was suffering quite badly from hypothermia and he was sheltering up by the canopy. Both my crew had to hold his head up because every time the bow went down the water flooded into that canopy.

Stogdon: What is the greatest number of

people that any of you have rescued?

Forrester: The greatest number we have had is four, plus the crew of three.

Willacy: Six, and a dog, plus the crew.

Ward: Four.

Stogdon: The boat would seem to be just big enough for the job? However, do you think she ought to be a little bigger or would you suffer too much handling the extra weight over a beach?

Willacy: Weight is a problem.

Forrester: We couldn't have a bigger boat. Sometimes we have to get out of the boat and take her over sandbanks. That is why we always have a crew of three.

Stogdon: I was thinking of the 17ft 6in Zodiac Mk IV, but of course she has twin engines and she needs ballast. Eric, are you able to launch with twin engines in your kind of surf?

Ward: We had the Mark IV for about a fortnight. I thought she was great. We launch either in the harbour or just outside, and it is only if the wind is north easterly that we get any heavy surf there. If that happens, we get a couple of launchers to help hold her, as well as the crew. If you are wearing a waterproof outfit you push her out, just as if you were getting her on and off the truck. I thought she was fantastic.

Woodroffe: She is certainly a fine boat, but, getting back to the 15ft 6in D class, Keith, in your 1973 medal service you anchored and veered down. Would you like to say something about this technique in D class boats?

Willacy: Without the anchor we would be lost. I'll be quite honest about that. We do quite a fair bit of anchor work. At Morecombe, we have a lot of shallows and not an awful lot of deep water. And at the back of your mind you know you have only got one engine. So I drop an anchor for two reasons. One, it is easier to control the boat dropping back into the surf; and two, if you wipe that motor out, you have got a chance of getting yourself back out, at least half way towards your anchor. I like to think that half way back towards my anchor I am not quite as deep in 'shtuck' as I was where I was picking up the casualties. Basically it is standard routine. We pay the anchor out, get the chain link, joining shackle and warp clear, then put the warp in the bow fairlead. As soon as it is in the fairlead she bottoms up and we take a turn round the grab handles, to get more of a hold.

Ward: The most important piece of kit to go with the anchor is the anchor box. The box is essential, then you can just throw the anchor out, put the warp through the bow fairlead and take a



(l to r) **Helmsman Eric T. Ward**, St Ives, has been a member of the 35ft 6in Liverpool and then the 37ft Oakley lifeboat crew since 1964, serving as an emergency mechanic since 1980, and a member of the D class inflatable lifeboat crew since 1966; he was awarded both the bronze medal and a bar to his bronze medal in 1982. **Helmsman Keith Willacy** has been a member of Morecambe D class inflatable lifeboat crew since 1967; he was awarded the bronze medal in 1973 and the silver medal in 1982. **Helmsman R. Alan Forrester** has been a member of Flint D class inflatable lifeboat crew since 1971; he was awarded the bronze medal in 1983.



(Left) **Cdr Michael Woodroffe**, staff officer operations (1), who has particular responsibility for lifeboats under 10 metres.



(Right) **Trevor Evans**, overseer ILB (Cowes) who has been concerned with the development, fitting out and maintenance of the D class inflatable lifeboat from the very beginning.

turn on the grab handle one side of the other, depending on who is working it. We do not veer down a great deal at St Ives. We have got about four or five miles of sand. If the service is on the sand, the anchor is practically never used. You just go in through the surf and come bow out. If something happens when you are in surf off the beach, with any luck you will just be washed up. But if the service is up against cliffs, and you get into trouble, you are going to get washed up on the cliffs. Another thing, you are more likely to damage the propeller on rock than you are on the beach. So if a casualty is on the cliff, the anchor is always used.

Forrester: Although we have never had occasion to use the anchor on service at Flint I can see the need for one. We have, of course, practised with the anchor on exercise with the divisional inspector.

Woodroffe: Over the years we have had a number of D boats capsize, usually in the surf line during launch or recovery. Last year, at Cowes, we developed a drill for righting a 15ft 6in inflatable lifeboat. Earlier this year, when a D class boat capsized, the crew used the drill for the first time in anger, as it were; they righted the boat and, with typical RNLI fortitude promptly rowed safely ashore. We have not watertightened the 40hp engines, but a D boat, the right way up, offers a safe container with access to radio and flares, both of which are designed to operate after inversion and immersion. It is better than struggling on an upturned boat.

Evans: It's a job to hold on, isn't it?

Stogdon: I was asked to devise a method of righting an inflatable boat, but I did not find a way of doing it. We could not devise a mechanism, which weighed little, was not in the way for boat operation but was always available for use. So I think the only thing is to parbuckle the boat over, as you do in your drill.

Ward: I don't think you can put anything else in the boat. Our chaps all feel that the D class inflatable is developed as far as she can be. If you are going to capsize her, it is probably going to be within 200 or 300 yards of the shore, depending on how much surf there is. I won't say you cannot capsize away from the shore, in deep water, but I think you would be unlucky to do so. If you are in the surf and the engine stops you are up the creek unless you can row pretty quickly; but by the time the boat has turned over and the surf has got hold of her, I think she is probably going to be ashore before you can do anything about it.

Forrester: We have never capsized, but I can see how easy it might be and I think everyone should go through the capsize drill and learn the way to right the boat again. All our crew know the capsize drill.

Willacy: Our problems are pretty similar to Alan's. We are not just working in surf on a coastline; we can be working in surf four miles off. There are so many banks and braes and hollows. I was



A righting drill, for use after capsize, has now been established for the D class inflatable lifeboat. Briefly, the crew climb on to the upturned boat, secure the painter to the lifting handles on the weather side, then stand on the lee side and, use their weight to parbuckle the boat over.



thus bringing her the right way up. The crew can then climb back into the boat, which at least acts as a safe container. This drill has already been used to right three D class boats which have capsized on exercise, all on different parts of the coast.

quite delighted to see that a capsize drill had been worked out. We have never capsized yet, but we have been close to it once or twice. Again, we're contending with an awful lot of tide, particularly at springs. We have the possibility of capsizing on an ebb tide, when we could be carried away from the shore quite easily. If we cannot right the boat, we have got to sit on top of her and we could be away out in the Irish Sea. Unless we have got a flood tide or a good north-north-westerly blow we have got no guarantee that we are going to come ashore.

Woodroffe: We have talked about capsizing and righting and about boats filling with water, and sooner or later on service crew members have to go over the side to help a casualty. In my view the most outstanding advance that has been made in D class equipment has been the introduction of Typhoon dry suits. These suits keep crew members warm and dry, even if they have to enter the water.

Willacy: Typhoon suits are superb. You need warm clothing underneath, of course.

Ward: We have got dry suits but they are not always used on service. It depends on the kind of job we are going out to and what the weather is like. Perhaps in summer we are only going half a mile to pick up a kid, but he might start to panic and we do not want to spend the extra time getting into the suit.

Forrester: We always use our Typhoon dry suits because we often have to get out of the boat to go tramping over sandbanks. With the old suits and waders, when we jumped overboard the waders filled with water. And you could be out like that for a couple of hours.

Willacy: As a winter station, we have got to get our guys out there, capable of doing the job. If they are wet and cold and they are miserable, their effort has been zeroed down a bit. I would rather take that brief time to put the suits on.

We have got it down to a reasonably fine art now. The last thing we do before we leave the boathouse is to powder the suits and hang them up so that they are ready for jumping into next time.

Forrester: We have got a 25-mile stretch of river and we can launch anywhere along it from Chester to Talacre. Nine times out of ten we don't launch from the station. We are on the road and we get changed into the suits in the back of the Landrover on the way to the launching site. There is no delay at all.

Ward: To go back to what you said earlier, though, Keith, I think you put your finger right on it when you said that the D class inflatable will take a lot more than you think she will. Our boat is taken away every winter. Now personally I should like to see her left there, to use in conjunction with our 37ft Oakley lifeboat.

Woodroffe: It is not our policy to put single-engined inflatables on station throughout the winter unless there is a definite operational need, and we prefer that they are co-located with an offshore lifeboat. Do you feel that is being unduly cautious, Keith?

Willacy: Yes, for one basic reason. As I said earlier, we are a twelve-month station and we build round that fact. I have a very good crew, a very tight-knit crew. All our work, everything, is completely voluntary. The lads will turn out anytime to do anything, and I think it is because we are a twelve-month station. It must be much more difficult to hold together as a group if you only have the boat for the summer season.

Forrester: I agree entirely. We are a very tight-knit crew. We have got the boat there all the year round. The lads are down every Sunday. We check round the boat, have a good natter and get to know each other really well. The lads get to know new crew members and they get to know the boat.

Stogdon: Tell me, have any of you ever

had any damage to the boat's fabric through operational use, tears in the buoyancy tube, or anything like that?

Forrester: We ripped the side once on some very sharp rocks taking people off a big groyne. Two compartments were ripped but she handled very well. We got her out from the groyne and back into the harbour. It was quite choppy at the time but she rode it beautifully. We were very surprised.

Stogdon: Had all the air gone out of the side?

Forrester: Yes, it was just flopping about. One lad stretched along the side, using his body to try to keep the water out. We were going into a force 3 to 4 head wind but she rode the waves very well.

Stogdon: Well that is cheering news.

Ward: I think the D class would handle even with the tubes down, ripped or whatever. They will always get you home, you can always roll the bow up and tie it up.

Willacy: We have done that. You just pull the painter as tight as ever you can. You throw a lot of water about, mind, but at least she will come back.

Stogdon: Would you agree with me that Cowes Base, Cdr Gladwin, Mike Brinton and Trevor Evans particularly with their staff, have done a very good job keeping these boats going? They are not easy. Without a back up like Cowes Base, it would be impossible, wouldn't it?

Ward: Well everyone has a moan sometimes—they must have—but the back up really is first class. If you damage an engine or something, you just pick up the phone and tomorrow a replacement is there.

Forrester: That day we ripped the side out, we had another boat there by 9 o'clock the following morning. A week or two ago an engine seized up on us. It

was half past four in the afternoon. By midnight we had an engine on the boat in the boathouse, and the boat was back on service. I thought that was fantastic. The fellow from the RNLI depot at Poole came up in an estate car.

Willacy: We have had the same thing.

Woodroffe: What do you think about the age limit for D class crews? Forty-five is the normal retiring age, but with the possibility, subject to local operational needs at the station, of remaining in the crew to the age of 50, if recommended by the divisional inspector or honorary secretary and provided you pass the annual medical examination. Alan, Father Time has been kinder to you than to the rest of us. What are your views?

Forrester: I agree with finishing at 50. You take a lot of pounding in those boats; it can't do the spine of an older man any good.

Ward: I have got a few less years to go than you, Alan, but I think the age limit is a good thing, too. I am sure, even now, I feel the pounding more than the younger blokes do.

Willacy: I have got three years to go to 50. Nice, summer weather . . . reasonable, grand . . . you know? I am just like a little old man doing a bit of yachting. Again I am lucky because I am an outdoor worker, I do a lot of boat work in my normal occupation. I am champion during a service. I can more than pull my weight and I can walk away from the boat. But, the following morning, then I'm seized up. But when someone retires from the boat at 50, I think it is important that he should still have some involvement. The lifeboatman coming out of the boat after, perhaps, 15 or 20 years has a lot of knowledge to pass on. You must try to retain that experience ashore to give to the lads.

Ward: It's interesting, getting older. When you were 18, somebody else was driving the boat and you were up the sharp end. It didn't matter what the weather was like. It didn't matter what the sea was like. You never had a qualm about the boat capsizing or that you might be injured. Never gave it a thought. Didn't matter if the sea was 20 feet high. But when you get older and you are sitting down the other end you think, *'Hullo? I don't like the look of this very much.'* The responsibility is yours. You become more cautious. Not necessarily in your actions, but in your mind. You start to think a bit more.

Stogdon: Have any of you had experience of towing a casualty with a D class?

Forrester: We find it better towing alongside than towing with a line. The only method we have devised for tow-

ing with a rope is threading it through the handlines and making a complete rope all the way round the sponsons and tying it up at the stern so that the rope keeps off the engine and clears the prop.

Stogdon: How big a boat have you towed in moderate weather?

Forrester: We towed a speedboat once, slightly longer than us. She must have been about 16ft. In the end we had to get her alongside and she towed a lot better that way.

Willacy: I like to tow alongside, just using my power. If he has got a rudder then I let him do the steering. We have shifted a 35ft trawler drawing 4ft 6in of water. It was only about force 2, very slight sea, but we were pushing about a three to four knot tide. It was painfully slow and we didn't take him where he wanted to go, but we were able to shift him away from rocks and beach him on a safe beach. Towing ahead, you cannot get enough way on a heavy boat. Once she pays off, you are in 'shtuck', because he just pays away round and you come up alongside. Small yachts, any very light boats, OK we tow aft. But boats with any weight in them we lash as tight alongside as we can and just give them our power.

Ward: I seem to be the odd man out here. I have never towed anything alongside. If the casualty is, say, 14 to 15 feet, a speedboat type of thing, we get the people out, assuming that we can, and then tow the boat on a very, very short towline so that our engine wash is tending to lift the other boat's bow. If you can get their boat right up behind your engine, and crack it on a little bit, the casualty will tow beautifully. If the casualty is a little bit bigger or heavier, we fix up a bridle through the grab handles in the middle of the boat.

Woodroffe: What about getting people out of the water?

Willacy: If the casualty is pretty lively, we always turn him back to the sponson to stop his legs going under the boat. If possible, we put him to windward, once again to counteract the tendency for him to be drawn under the boat. But if somebody is pretty hypothermic I do not think that lifting him vertically does him a lot of good. In the old days we had an issue of light cotton blankets which you could fasten on the inboard side to an oar. All you did was get the casualty alongside, pass the blanket under him, grab two handles on the outboard side and roll the guy up on the sponson, parbuckle him in. We had one nine-stone lad who could roll a 14-stone guy aboard.

Woodroffe: We have recently obtained from the manufacturer a specially strengthened ambulance pouch which

we are to evaluate as a piece of equipment that will allow crews of inflatable or rigid inflatable lifeboats to parbuckle people from the water into the boat. This useful item of equipment already acts as an excellent fold-up stretcher for the injured or body warmer for the hypothermic and we are hopeful of success in this third rôle.

Stogdon: The French always used to stop their engines when they were coming up to somebody in the water, sending out one of their crew on a line to bring him in. Presumably you leave your engine running?

Willacy: Yes, but you put it out of gear, obviously. The last thing to do before you leave the tiller is to turn the engine so that its skeg is on the casualty's side. Again, I always like to get the casualty to windward. But I am from the old school: I don't like stopping the engine.

Ward: It is not often that you have a completely unconscious person who is alive to get out of the water. Mostly people are able to help themselves, even if they are cold. In deep water, with two crew to help, you can probably get them out of the water with no difficulty at all. If there are people in the water in surf, we just go alongside and scruff them aboard as quickly as we can—they help themselves and we scruff them in. I can never remember afterwards what we actually did. Each time is different.

Forrester: Since we have had the Typhoon dry suits, we do a lot of man overboard exercises and it is natural instinct to us now when we have got a casualty in the water to turn him back on. The only thing is, pulling him in that way, you have got to be careful he doesn't hurt his back on the oars.

Willacy: The main thing is, get him in! We had an incident a few years ago where the guy had been in the water a fair while with no buoyancy aid on him at all. There was a good wind and quite a lot of tide. And I misjudged him. I had got him inside my turning circle. I had to pull the boat off and come in again quickly. But you could see the despair on that man's face. The boat was coming at him and then, in his mind, she was just as far away as ever. Finesse is all right when you have got the time, but when you haven't, get that boat over the top of him, grab him and then sort him out. As you say, Eric, if necessary just scruff him aboard.

Woodroffe: Keith, you speak of a look of despair, but how much more often for you three, and for all lifeboatmen, is it joy that you see on the face in the water at your approach! That is what it is all about. Thank you, gentlemen, for all that you have told us of your experience with the RNLI's smallest lifeboat, the D class inflatable.

Naming Ceremonies

September and October 1983

TWO STATION LIFEBOATS, AT BLYTH AND VALENTIA, AND TWO RELIEF LIFEBOATS

Relief Arun, at Newhaven, September 7

A weekend of severe gales and storms was followed by a glorious sunny day on Wednesday September 7, 1983, the day on which 52-25, a new 52ft Arun relief lifeboat provided by the trustees of the late L. G. Uridge, was named at Newhaven. Newhaven had been chosen for the ceremony because it was the nearest lifeboat station to the home at Lewes of Miss C. G. Uridge who was to name the new boat *A. J. R. and L. G. Uridge* in memory of her father and brother.

It was a real family occasion. The Uridge family has been associated with lifeboats for many years. Mr A. J. R. Uridge founded Lewes branch in 1924 and acted as honorary secretary and treasurer until 1937; in recognition of his work for the Institution, he was awarded the gold badge in 1931. His son, and Miss Uridge's brother, Lionel, carried on the family tradition in Lewes, acting as branch honorary secretary and treasurer from 1948 to 1964 and in appreciation of his work he was awarded a statuette in 1954; from the time of his retirement from office in 1964 until his death he served as vice-president of the branch.

When Miss Uridge, members of her

family and their friends gathered with other lifeboat people at Newhaven on September 7, the weather was perfect. On her arrival, Miss Uridge was presented with a bouquet by Alison Ashdown, the 8-year-old daughter of Crew Member Brian Ashdown, and then Lt-Cdr Brian Miles, deputy director of the Institution, opened the proceedings by welcoming all the guests.

The new lifeboat, formally presented to the RNLI by Mr W. W. Kenward for the trustees of the L. G. Uridge Estate, was gratefully accepted on behalf of the Institution by Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Compston, a deputy chairman. The service of dedication which followed was conducted by the Reverend J. G. P. Habgood, also of Lewes and a family friend. Miss Uridge was then invited to name the lifeboat.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr G. W. Sargeant, chairman of Newhaven lifeboat station, who has for many years been a close friend of the Uridge family, thus forming a natural link between the two towns of Lewes and Newhaven.

After a demonstration of the manoeuvrability of RNLB *A. J. R. and L. G. Uridge* within the harbour limits, with

Relief Arun: (Left) Miss C. G. Uridge, who named the 52ft Arun relief lifeboat RNLB *A. J. R. and L. G. Uridge* in memory of her father and brother, receives a bouquet from Alison Ashdown, daughter of Crew Member Brian Ashdown, and . . .



. . . (below) after her naming, at Newhaven on September 7, 1983, the new Arun lifeboat demonstrates her manoeuvrability.

photographs by courtesy of Jeff Morris



Miss Uridge occasionally taking the wheel, everyone made their way to the Marina Yacht Club for a buffet luncheon. At the end of the day Miss Uridge said:

'In my wildest dreams little did I expect to have the honour and privilege of being able to name a lifeboat or even drive one; this day has been the most memorable in my lifetime and one I will never forget.'

—S.E.G

Blyth, September 17

After a week of incessant rain, the weather cleared on Saturday September 17, 1983, to give a day of overcast skies, threatening clouds, but no rain for the naming of Blyth's new 44ft Waveney lifeboat. The Dun Cow Quay was a hive of activity as, from early morning, decorations were being put up and chairs set out ready for the guests; then at one o'clock the new Waveney, decorated overall and gleaming, as always, was eased into her berth. Nearly 1,000 people gathered to admire both the Waveney and Tynemouth's 52ft Arun lifeboat *George and Olive Turner* which was present for the ceremony.

At 2pm the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland and the other principal guests made their way to the platform, preceded by the choir of St Cuthbert's, Blyth; music was provided throughout by the Bedlington Salvation Army Band.

After Mr D. G. E. Kent, chairman of Blyth station branch, had welcomed everyone present, the new lifeboat was handed over to the RNLI by Mr W. L. Hewson on behalf of all the donors and in particular his late sister, Miss Mabel Hewson; he spoke of his delight that the boat was to be named *William and Jane* after their parents. Mr P. Denham Christie, a vice-president of the Institution, accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the RNLI and, in turn, gave her into the care of Blyth lifeboat station; she was received by the honorary secretary, Dr R. Carr.

The service of dedication which followed was conducted by the Reverend John Stanley Monks, Chaplain of Blyth lifeboat, assisted by the Reverend Alan Williamson, Minister of Blyth United Reformed Church.

After the presentation of a bouquet by Isobel Taylor, daughter of one of the lifeboat crew, the Duchess of Northumberland presented a vellum recording the award of a bronze medal to Coxswain Charles Hatcher and medal service certificates to Second Coxswain Thomas Moss, Motor Mechanic John Scott, Assistant Mechanic Dallas Taylor, Emergency Mechanic Keith Barnard and Crew Member Ian Woodhouse; they were for the rescue of the crew of three of the fishing vessel *Castle Cove* on December 7, 1982, not many days after the Waveney lifeboat had arrived at the station.

In naming the lifeboat *William and Jane*, the Duchess asked for God's blessing on her and her crew. The Duke



Valentia: (Above) The 52ft Arun lifeboat RNLB Margaret Frances Love takes the principal guests for a short trip to sea after her naming on September 17, 1983, and . . . (below) a bouquet for Lady Killanin, who named the lifeboat, is presented by Rosemary Quigley, daughter of the deputy launching authority; with them is Mr Clayton Love, a vice-president of the RNLI.

photographs by courtesy of
Cork Examiner



of Northumberland, who is the RNLI's Treasurer, and the Duchess, with the other principal guests, then boarded the lifeboat to the playing of the Northumbrian pipes by the Duke's personal piper, Richard Butler.

Throughout the ceremony, yachts of the Royal Northumberland Yacht Club had made a picturesque background, sailing back and forth. Now they, together with Tynemouth lifeboat, escorted RNLB William and Jane on a short trip to the River Blyth entrance. On their return, everyone enjoyed a welcome cup of tea.—B.H.S.

Valentia, September 17

The morning sunshine over Valentia Island on Saturday September 17, 1983, gave hope that perhaps the blustery weather of the previous days had cleared up. However, local fishermen and lifeboatmen prophesied rain for the afternoon and sure enough, shortly before the opening of the naming ceremony of Valentia's new 52ft Arun

lifeboat, the wind picked up and rain came down. The hundreds of guests and islanders huddled together behind the pier's short wall.

At precisely 2pm the platform party began to arrive. Lady Killanin, who was to name the new lifeboat, was presented with a bouquet of flowers by Rosemary Quigley, the young daughter of the deputy launching authority. Having been introduced to the youthful crew of the lifeboat, the party moved on to the platform and the proceedings were opened by Father Denis Costello, the branch chairman. Father Costello thanked all the guests who had come from far and wide for braving the elements and in particular extended a warm welcome to Lt-Cdr Brian Miles, a past divisional inspector of lifeboats in Ireland and now deputy director of the Institution.

The cost of the lifeboat was met from legacies from Mr Frank Love and Lady Frances Murphy and other gifts and bequests. The Arun was handed into the care of the station by Mr Clayton Love, a vice-president of the RNLI. Mr P. J. Gallagher, the station branch honorary secretary, proudly accepting the first Arun class lifeboat to be stationed in the Republic of Ireland, noted with some sadness the passing of RNLB Rowland Watts which had been stationed on Valentia Island since 1957.

To the accompaniment of the local choir, the Most Reverend Dr Kevin McNamara, Bishop of Kerry, and the Rector of Killarney, the Reverend Brian Loughheed, blessed and dedicated the lifeboat. Then the chairman called on Lady Killanin to name the lifeboat *Margaret Frances Love*. With the breaking of the bottle of champagne, and the choir singing 'Sing to the mountains, sing to the sea . . .' RNLB Margaret Frances Love slipped her moorings.

Coxswain Sean Murphy invited the

Blyth: (Right) The bottle of champagne breaks as the Duchess of Northumberland names the 44ft Waveney lifeboat RNLB William and Jane on September 17, 1983, and . . .

. . . (below) the Duchess is welcomed aboard the Waveney lifeboat by Coxswain Charles Hatcher. Standing behind the coxswain, arm raised, is Motor Mechanic John Scott.



DR SYDNEY PEACE

from page 301

There has been great pleasure, too, for Sydney Peace in the people with whom he has worked in the lifeboat service, and the people he has met . . .

'The Institution is a very fine coastal club to which to belong, throughout the whole country. You meet somebody from another part of the coast doing a similar job to yourself and you can get inside his shoes right away. You meet people from all walks of life and you work more closely than you might otherwise do with all kinds of different people. There is something I think you could call a civilising influence about the RNLI. It mixes people from different sections of the community. It gives people something to do that stretches them a bit, whether it is fund raising or lifesaving. It keeps them on their toes. It gives them a lot of fun and it gives them a great deal of satisfaction. If we did not need an RNLI, I think that we should need to invent something like it.'

What more could be said of the Institution? So perhaps a last word about the sea? Dr Peace finds the Pentland Firth, with its many tidal streams, a fascination piece of water, and some years ago, he along with other members of Orkney Sailing Club worked with the editor of the Clyde Cruising Club in producing its first sailing directions for Orkney:

'The Pentland Firth is a fascinating piece of hydrodynamics, if you care to think of a mass of water going through a narrow tube and of the things that happen to it on the way. It is like a Scottish burn. Just sit and watch a burn and see how rocks and pools divert the water and cause ripples. That will give you some idea. If you know the Pentland Firth, like the local people do, and allow for the possible dangers, you can make use of those tidal streams. It is knowing the differences in the changing tide times, and when it will be slack water in this place or that, which enables people to fish. All the men in Longhope know it in far better detail than I ever will.'

'Before I knew anything about the firth, when I went out with the lifeboat crew it amazed me how they could set out on the darkest night, without chart or tide table. No position finding apparatus. Nothing more than a compass. And they would be there. Nowhere, I think, in the British Isles could local knowledge be of more importance to the lifeboat crew. These men not only know the local waters, but what they can get out of their boat at any given point on the sea. It is just long years of experience. Any competent navigator will get his boat round the Pentland Firth without any problems, but the local man can do it with a finesse, a panache if you like, which makes it all look so easy.'

'When I lived at Longhope, in idle moments on bad days in winter, I used sometimes to take the car and go up and sit on the hill above the lifeboat station and look with binoculars at the firth. You could tell by the sea appearances what was happening. It was just a study. Well, some people take up bird watching; I used to take up Pentland Firth watching in bad weather.' ■



Relief Brede: Champagne breaks over the bow of the 33ft Brede relief lifeboat named RNLB Merchant Navy to mark the generous support given to the lifeboat service over many years by merchant seamen. The ceremony took place in St Katharine Docks on the River Thames on Wednesday October 19, 1983.

platform party on board for a short demonstration run. Joining them on the lifeboat was former Valentia Coxswain Dermot Walsh, who was presented with a framed certificate marking his retirement after 32 years service by Lord Killanin, who is a vice-president of the Institution.

Representatives of ten Irish lifeboat stations had been present for the ceremony, and one member of the huge gathering who must have mused at the changing times was the 90-year-old former coxswain of Valentia lifeboat, Jeremiah O'Connell. He took charge of the lifeboat while at sea between 1946 and 1958.

With the business of the day drawn to a close and a full gale now blowing, the guests were pleased to adjourn to a hot cup of tea and a salmon buffet in a nearby hall, organised by the ladies of the Island.—J.O'C.

Relief Brede, London, October 19

Merchant seamen are among the most generous supporters of the RNLI and to mark their contributions over many years a new 33ft Brede class lifeboat was named RNLB Merchant Navy on October 19, 1983, in St Katharine Docks, London. As the lifeboat is allocated to the Relief Fleet, there were no station personnel or committee members to organise the ceremony and, as the donors were hundreds of seamen, there was no formal donor. It was, however, a very special occasion because of the presence of people from all parts of the merchant service and their maritime colleagues: seamen, officers, ship owners, Trinity House personnel, coastguards, and lifeboatmen made up the crowd on the quayside.

Mr Michael Vernon, a deputy chairman of the RNLI, welcomed the guests.

Captain G. W. S Miskin, Master of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners, outlined some of the many ways in which seamen help the RNLI and said that he was particularly honoured, on their behalf, to present the lifeboat to the Institution. Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director RNLI, accepted the lifeboat and then described her characteristics.

The Reverend Glyn Jones, Auxiliary Ministries Secretary of The Missions to Seamen, led a service of dedication assisted by the Reverend David Harries, RN, Superintendent Chaplain and Deputy General Secretary British Sailors Society, and the Reverend Anthony Stringfellow, National Director Apostleship of the Sea. Dr Ronald Hope, Director of the Marine Society, was then invited to name the lifeboat. He reminded the guests that serving in the Merchant Navy was a dangerous occupation, and accidents and deaths were the highest in any industry. Seamen were therefore well aware of the RNLI's pioneering rôle in lifesaving; they were confident that the Institution had always put lifeboats in the right place at the right time and they, for their part, had always willingly put their hands in their pockets to raise the equivalent of a lifeboat every three years. Although the British Merchant Service was in a state of sad decline, the naming of this lifeboat, Dr Hope felt, could give merchant seamen some cheer and something of which they could be proud.

After the naming Mrs Hope was invited to cut a splendid cake, decorated by the chef of the London School of Nautical Cookery with an icing model of the Brede lifeboat, complete in every detail including crew members in the wheelhouse.—R.K.

Around the coast—and inland

Porthcawl

On Saturday September 3, 1983, Porthcawl lifeboat station held the handing over ceremony and service of dedication for its new D class inflatable lifeboat, provided by Mrs Joan Middleton in memory of her husband, Donald Rigley Middleton. Mr Raymond Cory, a vice-president of the RNLI, accepted the lifeboat from Mrs Middleton on behalf of the Institution and placed it in the care of the station honorary secretary, Councillor David Howell-Jones, for use at Porthcawl lifeboat station.

The service of dedication which followed was conducted by the Bishop of Llanduff, the Right Reverend John Poole-Hughes, assisted by local clergy, the Reverend Hector Evans, the Reverend Father Thomas Nulty and the Reverend Colin Richards.

Dunbar

Six representatives of the Castle House Sports and Social Club, Ealing, visited Dunbar lifeboat station on Friday October 28, 1983, to take part in an informal handing over of the D class inflatable lifeboat provided from funds raised by their club.

Arriving in Dunbar off the London sleeper, the visitors were entertained during the morning and to lunch by the branch before being welcomed to the boathouse by Lt-Cdr Robertson, Dunbar station branch chairman. The boat was handed over by Mr Hidelmasi, Castle House Club's chairman. The D class lifeboat was then launched and the visitors taken afloat in the station's 47ft Watson lifeboat *Margaret* to watch a short combined exercise.

Interdenominational Service

An interdenominational Service was held in Buckfast Abbey on Sunday October 16, 1983, by kind permission of the Lord Abbot. The service was conducted by the Reverend Alex M. Roberts, Minister of the Methodist Church at Exmouth, while the address was given by the Right Reverend Kenneth Newing, the Bishop of Plymouth, and the benediction was given by the Lord Abbot. Readings were by Admiral Sir James Eberle, president of Buckfastleigh branch, and Andrew Young, regional organiser (South West).

Among the 200 representatives from local branches and guilds who attended were Rear-Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution, and Mrs Graham, with Mr R. Couch, Town Mayor, and Mrs Couch. Also present were members of Torbay lifeboat crew and their wives. The collection, for the RNLI, amounted to £126.27.

After the service all those taking part were entertained to tea at the Abbey Farm Tea Rooms by the honorary secretary and committee of Buckfastleigh branch.



Broughty Ferry (Dundee): After the handing over on Saturday, October 1, 1983, of the second D class inflatable lifeboat funded by a promotion jointly undertaken in Scotland by Ind Coope and the Co-op, the new inflatable lifeboat took part in a combined exercise with a relief 52ft Arun lifeboat temporarily on duty at Broughty Ferry and a Royal Air Force Wessex helicopter.

photograph by courtesy of Chris Bonar, station administrative officer, Broughty Ferry

Triple Christening, Swanage

Three grandsons of Victor Marsh, coxswain/mechanic of Swanage 37ft 6in Rother lifeboat *J. Reginald Corah* were christened on board the lifeboat on Sunday August 28, 1983. The babies were Gary Marsh, whose three-year-old brother Alan was also christened on board the lifeboat and whose father is a member of Swanage crew; Matthew Steeden, whose father is another member of the crew; and James Chadwick, whose parents were home on two weeks holiday from Germany. Belinda, James's mother, was no doubt remembering her wedding in October 1980 when the lifeboat was called out twice, once during the ceremony and again during the reception.

Hundredth birthday

When Mrs Doris Longley of Saltburn-on-Sea celebrated her hundredth birthday on November 2, 1983, she not only received telegrams from HM The Queen and the Secretary of State, but

also greetings and congratulations from Humber, Bridlington, Filey, Scarborough, Whitby, Staithes and Runswick, Redcar, Teesmouth and Hartlepool lifeboat stations, from many ladies' guilds along the north-east coast and from the RNLI regional office.

Mrs Longley was founder member of Saltburn ladies' guild and before that supported Saltburn lifeboat. She has helped seafaring charities for 80 years—and still gives them her support. She was awarded the RNLI statuette in 1952 and an inscribed clock/barometer from the Shipwrecked Mariners Society in 1980.

In lieu of flowers

The ashes of the late Lionel St Clare Byrne of Lymington, a well-known yachtsman and lifelong supporter of the RNLI, were scattered in Alum Bay from Yarmouth lifeboat one glorious Sunday morning last October. Donations to the RNLI in his memory amounted to £120.



Minehead: A new D class inflatable lifeboat, provided from funds raised by Beaconsfield Round Table in memory of Keith R. Drysdale, was handed over to the RNLI on Saturday September 17, 1983, by Beaconsfield chairman, Mr Keith Favell. She was received on behalf of the Institution by Captain A. G. McCrum, a member of the Committee of Management, and then handed into the care of Minehead lifeboat station. After she had been accepted by Minehead station honorary secretary, Mr G. N. Durman, seen addressing the gathering, a service of dedication was conducted by the Reverend Michael Thayer, Assistant Curate of the Parish of Minehead.

Books . . .

● A leading maritime historian, Dr John de Courcy Ireland has lectured on maritime history in more than 20 countries in four continents; he is research officer of both the Irish Commission on Maritime History, which he established, and the Maritime Institute of Ireland, of which he has been a council member for 37 years. Dr de Courcy Ireland has recently retired after 26 years service from the position of honorary secretary of Dun Laoghaire, one of Ireland's busiest lifeboat stations guarding the southern approaches to the Port of Dublin. He received a PhD at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1950 for a thesis on *The Sea in Education* and is also the recipient of several honorary awards: the Asguard Award; A Person of the Year Award, in 1979, for his contribution to Irish maritime affairs; and an Honorary Doctorate of Law from University College, Dublin, in 1982.

It was natural, almost inevitable, that Dr John de Courcy Ireland should write **Wreck and Rescue on the East Coast of Ireland** (The Glendale Press, available in the Republic of Ireland from Hodges Figgis and Co Ltd, 56 Dawson Street, Dublin 2, price £E16.50, and in the UK from Mainmast Books, Saxmundham, Suffolk, price £13.25 plus £1.25 postage). The book traces the history of wreck and rescue from the earliest days of consciousness of those in peril on the sea. It sets the scene by describing in great detail the East Coast of Ireland, its weather patterns and its seamen. It is generously illustrated with a great many photographs, charts and maps old and new. Among the very useful appendices can be found records of all existing as well as closed lifeboat stations of the area. On glancing at the bibliography one realises the exhaustive research undertaken in the preparation and writing of this book.

For all who have a keen interest in the saving of life from shipwreck I feel certain this book will find an honoured place on their bookshelves. For those involved in the study of history of the sea **Wreck and Rescue on the East Coast of Ireland** is a must; it will, in my view, fill a major gap in the maritime history of Ireland.—J.L.K.

● For the yachtsman who is uncertain about the correct procedure for amending his portfolio of charts, **Reed's Chart Correction** by M. R. Nelms (Thomas Reed Publications, £3.25) explains with clear text and illustrations the right and wrong away of carrying out this task. Amendments can be made using parallel rules and dividers or tracings; details are given using both means. An explanation is also given as to how to obtain *Notices to Mariners*, the Admir-

alty publication printed weekly that contains the information the mariner needs to keep his charts up to date.

Other useful chapters contain details on the chart catalogue, foreign charts and chart preparation for passage. An appendix includes a list of equipment required for making corrections—in all a useful guide for the mariner in this important task.—E.D.M.

● It was a distressing shock when Rob James died, due to going overboard off Salcombe early last year and, as is shown by his book **Multihulls Offshore** (Nautical Books, Macmillan, £14.95), we have lost a good writer on the sea and especially on multihulls.

The first part of the book tells of his multihull experience in trimarans from 31ft LOA to 80ft LOA, from the Observer Single-handed Transatlantic Race (OSTAR) to Round Britain races; the latter part deals with multihull design and construction.

As Rob James had raced twice round the world in large monohulls, he had considerable ocean racing experience; it was through his close connection with Chay Blyth that he came to multihull racing, because Chay had decided that he must have a tri to stand a chance of winning such races as the OSTAR and Round Britain. The interesting accounts of his races are well and concisely written but his last race, Round Britain with his wife Dame Naomi, is fascinating. This was in the 60ft *Colt Cars GB* designed by Ron Holland, incorporating Rob's ideas. He describes the building of this craft, using the latest exotic materials to save weight, in considerable detail.

The chapters on design and rigging of trimarans cover a wide range from simplified stability aspects to sail trimming and include the deductions from his experience. The numerous illustrations and line drawings are excellent: a splendid book.—R.H.F.

● A collection of sea stories and anecdotes, many contributed by such well-known people as Clare Francis, Alistair Cooke, Mike Yarwood and Sir Peter Parker, has been published in **Worse Things Happen at Sea** to raise funds for the National Lifeboat Museum, Bristol. Some of the stories are amusing, others recall wartime experiences or ill-fated leisure trips and some of the 85 pages carry illustrations of the lifeboats currently on display in the museum.

In his foreword to the book, HRH The Prince Philip writes:

'The proceeds of this book go to the National Lifeboat Museum, itself a memorial and tribute to the generations of volunteer lifeboatmen who have gone to the help of those in peril on the sea.'

For this reason alone, many people may like to have a copy of this book. It is available from bookshops at £2.75 or from Abson Books, Abson, Wick, Bristol BS15 5TT at £2.90, including postage.—H.D.

● As might be expected of Debrett's Peerage, **Debrett's Register of Yachts 1983** (hardback £40, paperback £25) is a magnificent tome of reference. There is a shift of emphasis from the old Lloyd's *Register of Yachts* with more boats included but not quite so much detail about each. In addition there are some 16 interesting articles on marine subjects, three by RNLi committee members or staff: 'A view over the harbour wall—the changing face of yachting' by Maldwin Drummond, a vice-president of the Institution and chairman of the Boat Committee, 'The development of the modern yacht' by Colin Mudie, a member of the Boat and Technical Consultative Committees; and 'The Lifeboats' by Cdr Bruce Cairns, chief of operations.

The price of this book must be a drawback to its wide purchase for use afloat, especially in small yachts where the safe stowage of its A4 bulk may well present problems. Damage, too, by water and damp, especially to the glossy pages, must be highly likely. Nevertheless, it is a volume every yacht owner should endeavour to purchase, if only 'once in a blue moon'.—A.P.M.W.

● **Crabs and Shannocks** (Poppyland Publishing, 4a Chesterfield Villas, West Street, Cromer, Norfolk NR27 9ED, £3.45 plus 45p postage and packing) is a small but fascinating book on the fishing communities of Cromer and Sheringham. The book is written by Peter Stibbons, Martin Warren, curator of Cromer Museum, and Katherine Lee, a fisherman's daughter and wife. It looks into the traditions and superstitions of the two communities; the boats and equipment used; the fishermen's home life, how they dressed and ate; and there are also recipes for the renowned Cromer crab.

For me, however, the most moving and interesting chapter is that entitled *Tuesday 22nd September 1982*. On that day Katherine Lee's husband took his sturdy fishing boat to sea as normal, but due to a change in wind direction and the prevailing weather conditions it was necessary to launch Cromer lifeboat when his return was overdue. In her writing you feel the sudden panic Mrs Lee experiences, then the equally sudden calmness as rational thinking takes over and as she prepares for her husband to return, which, thankfully he does.—S.J.G.

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

July 1983: William Reuben Parr, coxswain of Blackpool lifeboat from 1935 to 1954 after first joining the crew in 1920; he was awarded the silver medal in 1940.

August 1983: Horace Bernard Murt, coxswain of Padstow No 2 lifeboat from 1948 to 1962 after serving as her second coxswain from 1944 to 1948. His son is Padstow's motor mechanic and his grandson has recently joined the crew.

Shoreline Section

ANOTHER YEAR has come to the end, and a very successful one it was for Shoreline. Membership is well in excess of 97,000, and although we did not reach our target of 100,000 we were not all that far off. I doubt whether we shall be many months into 1984 before this milestone is passed.

News about the activities of our Shoreline Clubs is always good to hear. Shoreline Club No 4, at Milton Keynes, helps at many fund-raising functions in its area. Just recently Mrs Martin kindly gave two Christmas cakes to be raffled; they were beautifully decorated, and much admired, and they raised £46 for the lifeboats. This club also takes part in the local Soap Box Derby. In 1982 its 8ft model lifeboat (*see right*) won first prize in the novelty class and last year it was asked to run a special lap of honour. Well done, Milton Keynes.

Up till now I have been able to tell you fairly regularly of new Shoreline clubs being founded—and clubs may well be inaugurated early in the year at Broadstairs, Rochford, Sheffield and Dover: more about that another time. Sadly, however, this year I have to tell you of the disbanding for the time being of our first Shoreline Club, at Portsmouth. At the recent AGM of Shoreline Club No 1 it was unanimously agreed to suspend activities temporarily because of lack of support; let us hope that I shall soon have the pleasure of reporting that this club is again under way.

The response to the 'Give a Shoreline Membership for Christmas' appeal which went out with the autumn journal has been most heartening. So far more than 275 new members have been recorded, and requests are still coming in. Thank you for this Christmas support.

As you know, over the years we try to find ways and means by which our supporters can benefit together with the RNLI. Fred Olsen Travel has made a number of special offers which have resulted in some very enjoyable holidays for lifeboat people and welcome contributions to lifeboat funds. In 1984 and 1985 Fred Olsen is offering holidays in Egypt of either nine or 12 nights duration. The short holiday will consist of a four-night Sheriton Nile Cruise and the longer of a seven-night Sheriton Nile Cruise, each combined with a five-night stay in Cairo. Prices start from £749 for nine nights and £860 for 12 nights, including all air travel, half board in Cairo, and full board and comprehensive sightseeing while on board the Nile cruise ship. Also included is a full day tour to the Pyramids, Memphis and Saqqara.

For each holiday booked through their company, Fred Olsen will make a substantial contribution to RNLI funds.



Shoreline Club No. 4, Milton Keynes: the prize-winning 8ft model lifeboat entered for a local Soap Box Derby.



To raise money for the Nottinghamshire appeal, Andrew Foss, a young Shoreline member, had the idea of painting an outline 33ft Brede lifeboat on a piece of hardboard. He and his friend Adrian Hall (they are both 12 years old) set up their board outside East Bridford village newsagents one Saturday in July. People happily put their small change on the board and £44 was collected for the appeal.

Full information can be obtained from Fred Olsen Travel, 11 Conduit Street, London W1, or telephone 01-491 3760. I hope some of our members will be able to take advantage of this offer—and perhaps meet other lifeboat supporters on the Nile? I can assure you that you will be well looked after and be given a holiday to remember for many years to come.

And now we are already well into the new year. It is my pleasure to send every one of you the good wishes of all members of Shoreline staff here at Poole for a very happy and peaceful 1984—PETER HOLNESS, membership secretary, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

LIFEBOAT ROSE

TO COMMEMORATE the 160th anniversary of the RNLI, the rose specialists James Cocker and Sons of Aberdeen have produced a hybrid tea rose which will become available to supporters and friends of the RNLI for autumn planting in 1984. To be named 'The Coxswain' this sweetly-scented hybrid tea rose has an overall peach pink colour impression and, with large full blooms containing about 48 petals, the growth is vigorous, bushy and of medium height. With a parentage of ('Super Star' x 'Ballet') x 'Silver Jubilee', 'The Coxswain' has been awarded the RNRS Trial Ground Certificate and will undoubtedly be a rose which will give great pleasure.

For each bush, supplied direct from Cockers of Aberdeen at a cost of £3 plus p and p, a £1 donation will be made to the RNLI. Should demand exceed supply, orders will be carried over into the spring planting time in 1985. Information about placing orders from Ken Thirlwell, organising secretary (Scotland), RNLI, 26 Rutland Square, Edinburgh EH1 2RL, or the appeals 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) | ☐ |
| Annual Family Membership | £7.50 | (minimum) | ☐ |
| Annual Member and Governor | £15.00 | (minimum) | ☐ |
| Life Member and Governor | £150.00 | (minimum) | ☐ |
| Send me details of how I can help with a Legacy | | | ☐ |

Please send me the following insignia, for which I enclose cheque/PO*:

- | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------------------|
| Cuff links | £5.00 | ☐ |
| Members' tie (blue, green, brown, maroon)* | £3.00 | ☐ |
| Ladies' brooch/gents' lapel badge* | £1.00 | ☐ |
| Tie tack/stick pin* | £1.00 | ☐ |
| Car badge | £4.00 | ☐ |
| Dinghy burgee | £3.50 | ☐ |
| 8in hoist flag | £2.65 | ☐ |
| 12in hoist flag | £3.25 | ☐ |
| Anorak badge | £0.60 | ☐ |
| Ladies' silver brooch | £15.00 | ☐ |
| Sweat shirt (XL, L, M, S, please state size) | £7.00+50p p&p | ☐ |
| V neck sweater (size 32in to 44in, please state size) | £8.50+50p p&p | ☐ |

*Delete as necessary.

Name _____

Address _____

Over 110,000 people would have been lost without the lifeboat service.



To mark more than £10,000 raised by Devenish Brewery for the RNLI a special presentation was made by Chay Blyth, the round the world yachtsman, on behalf of the company to Rear-Admiral W. J. Graham, director RNLI, at Weymouth lifeboat station last November. In 1982 money was collected from the sale of a series of postcards depicting lifeboats through the ages. In 1983, in conjunction with Grünhülle Lager International, Devenish collected £8,780; 1p for every pint of Grünhülle Lager consumed in their Cornish pubs. Cheques for £1,000 were presented at each of the following lifeboat stations: Newquay (the photograph shows the presentation by Tony Wharmby, head brewer for Devenish in Cornwall, to John Kennedy, Newquay branch chairman, with Mike Morris, branch honorary secretary front right), Falmouth, Penlee, Padstow, St Agnes, The Lizard/Cadgwith, St Ives and Sennen Cove; there was also a cheque for Redruth ladies' guild.

Round Britain Windsurf

Tim Batstone is planning to windsurf round the entire 2,000 mile coastline of Britain in 1984, sailing in a clockwise direction starting and finishing at Tower Bridge. His aims include being the first person to achieve this feat, raising money through sponsorship for the RNLI and promoting windsurfing safety at sea. Departure will be early May, sailing by day and spending the nights on land. Tim will be accompanied throughout by a support boat for safety, food and navigation. Depending on the weather an average daily distance of 40 miles is anticipated.

Great support is promised by commercial firms and expected from the

Here and There

windsurfing community (up to 60,000 strong at the last count!) but Tim Batstone would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to offer practical help or local advice; his address is 44 Cathcart Road, London SW10 9JQ (tel: 01-352 8606).

Safeway

Safeway has chosen the RNLI to benefit from its charity month in April 1984.

Lifeboat Tea

Nearly £4,500 was received by the RNLI in 1983 as a result of the sale of Lifeboat Tea.

RNLI national lottery

THIRTEEN PRIZES were drawn in the RNLI's twenty-third national lottery on October 28, 1983, by 13 special guests to Poole HQ, all of whom had been involved in the National Soap Box Grand Prix, which, held at Blakesley, Northamptonshire, had raised £8,000 for the RNLI; each guest drew one ticket. The name of the first prizewinner was plucked out of the drum by Tony Hackett, chairman of the organising committee of the Soap Box Grand Prix. Also drawing out tickets were Tony Richardson of the Civil Service Motoring Association who organised a lottery at the Grand Prix, and Howard Paine of the Frizzell Group Ltd, sponsors of that lottery. The remaining ten tickets were drawn by members of the organising committee. Supervising the draw were Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Compston, chairman of the Fund Raising Committee, and Anthony Oliver, appeals secretary, who told the gathered audience that this lottery had raised over £35,000. The prizewinners were:

- £1,000: Mrs L. Rubidge, Brighton, Sussex.
- £500: Mr J. Bryan, Broadoak, East Sussex.
- £250: A. B. Jefferys, St Peter Port, Guernsey.
- £50: Mr J. Buchan, Eyemouth, Berwickshire; Mrs J. K. Vowles, Rayne, Essex; Mr David Fanning, Penarth, South Glamorgan; Mr Douglas Carey, Lymington, Hampshire; P. A. Davies, Port Talbot, West Glamorgan; J. G. Hosegood, Dauntsey, Wiltshire; Mr K. F. Mawson, Wakefield, West Yorkshire; Mr J. Turner, Chirnside, Berwickshire; J. R. Twaddle, Alloway, Ayrshire; E. Tinsley, Holbeach, Lincolnshire.

The draw for the twenty-fourth lottery will be made at Poole on January 31, 1984. For this lottery the first prize will be increased to £2,000 and there will be seven additional prizes of £100 each, so that the number of prizes in all will be 20 instead of 13 as at present.



Derby branch commissioned Roderick Lovesey, the Derbyshire artist, to paint a lifeboat scene. A raffle for the original oil painting, *The Rescue*, is just ending, but a limited edition of 250 full colour prints (19½in x 26in) each signed by the artist are available, price £20 each, from Derby RNLI (Ltd Ed Prints), c/o Midland Bank plc, 1 St Peter's Street, Derby, DE1 2AE. Cheques payable to Derby RNLI (your name and address written on back, please).



Southern region grand draw 1983 raised a magnificent £25,300. The draw was made at Poole HQ on October 25 by BBC TV reporter Anne Dawson, and the first prize, a Ford Fiesta Popular car, was won by Rupert Thomas of Burghfield Common, near Reading; the keys were later handed to him by Southern regional organiser Mrs Wendy Nelson. Other prizes generously donated included air and ferry tickets, and a cruise on the River Thames.

Some Ways of Raising Money

More than £12,000 was raised by **Bristol ladies' guild** at its summer ball, held last July at the home of Mr and Mrs Cullum McAlpine, near Bath. On arrival, every lady was presented with a red rose, and when the 350 guests sat down to dinner in a splendid marquee, the centre of each table sprouted balloons from a small basket. The evening's events included a tombola and an auction by George Tricks assisted by Diana Moran, the 'Green Goddess' of television fame. Dancing continued to well after midnight at this ball which has become one of the most enjoyed events in the Bristol social calendar.



Wraysbury Lake Sailing Club has traditionally held a series of three days of dinghy racing in aid of the RNLI, but last year, getting more ambitious, it staged a regatta during the whole of August Bank Holiday weekend. There were 60 competing craft. As well as the usual serious racing events there was a great deal of fun, including a treasure hunt race in boats or on boards. Hall Aggregates (Thames Valley) Ltd, the club's landlords, donated a beautifully hand-carved wooden trophy for the serious dinghy races; it was won by Phil Jackson. Russell Evans won the Sailboard Trophy. A barbecue, a disco, a pig roast and a hoe down were all on the programme of a weekend which raised more than £300 for the lifeboats, and which was so much enjoyed that it is to become an annual event.

photograph by courtesy of
Slough, Eton and Windsor
Observer



The organisers of **Hartlepool Harbour Day** really know how to pull a crowd. This was the start last summer of the raft race as the numerous strangely clad contestants paddled past Teesmouth lifeboat. Also taking place that day was the now famous birdman contest, not to mention a kipper eating contest. Hartlepool Harbour Day 1983 raised about £3,500 for the RNLI.

photograph by courtesy of Dirk Van Der Werff, Hartlepool Mail

A small enamel box, donated to the RNLI by its President, HRH The Duke of Kent, was balloted at a champagne reception held at **Hillsborough Castle**, Northern Ireland, last June, and raised £325. The demand for tickets for this event, organised by Mrs Maxine Phoenix and Stanley Scott, far outran the numbers available and a most enjoyable evening took an overall £1,100.

So many people wished to attend **Bromborough and Eastham branch's** Marks and Spencer fashion show one morning last autumn that an additional show was put on in the afternoon at no extra cost. In all, more than 1,300 saw a superb show and £2,500 was raised.

A fine total of £7,771.56 was taken on the RNLI stand at **Southampton Boat Show** last September—an increase of £800 over last year. The sale of souvenirs brought in £4,614.56, the sale of

continued on page 317



The splendid 81 lb sturgeon who let himself be caught to raise money for the RNLI at **Billingsgate Market's** open day last year. Portered here by Bill Ruth, the sturgeon was bought by London wholesaler, Leslie Steadman, for £26 a pound. The profit he made on its resale went to the RNLI. The open day was a great success and raised £1,595 for the lifeboats.

photograph by courtesy of
The Times



How could anyone refuse to buy an apple or an orange from these irresistible sellers? Gabrielle Blunden and Tammy Skan were helping **Mudford ladies' guild** to raise more than £500 at its 1983 annual fête, which included many stalls and sideshows. You could also throw a wet sponge at a brave instructor from the nearby Coastguard Training School or visit an exhibition in the School itself or listen to the Christchurch Lifesaving Club and district Scout band. On into October, and in that month alone Mudford with various events, including a silent auction, raised a further £1,200.

photograph by courtesy of
Bournemouth Evening Echo



Sir Geoffrey and Lady Howe, and of course Budget, were among the visitors at **Caterham and District branch's** first dog show, held at Warlingham School Green last August Bank Holiday. Seen here with them are (l to r) Mrs Jeffcoate, branch chairman, Mrs Winterbotham and Mrs Critchelow and (far right) Mrs M. Wood, branch honorary secretary. Entered for the show were 192 dogs and the event raised £226.40 for the lifeboats. Later in the summer the branch raised more than £600 with its annual supper, for which the tickets are usually all sold out before they are printed!



This is what to do with your lifeboat after she has come out of service for the winter: push her for 12 miles along the road between **Burry Port**, Dyfed, and Loughor, pass a few pubs on the way and with the sponsorship collected in each pub and the money that is thrown into the lifeboat en route, hand over a grand total of £1,300 to your station branch treasurer. The picture shows Burry Port crew during the sponsored push for which the local Paragon Laundry presented a trophy to the Joiners Arms, Llwynhendy, for gathering the most sponsorship. photograph by courtesy of Ifor Jacob



During a visit to Derbyshire branches last September Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution, was entertained to lunch by **Buxton branch** at the home of its chairman Mrs Helen Garrioch (fourth from left, front row). Also present were members of **Whaley Bridge, Chinley and Chapel-en-le-Frith branches** with (centre back) David Jones, regional organiser (NW) and (far right) Derek Hallworth, area organiser (NW). These four Derbyshire branches between them raised nearly £4,000 last year.



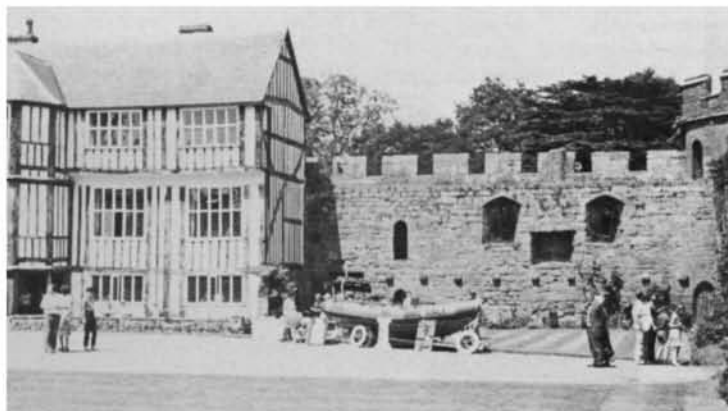
The skipper and one of the crew of the yacht **Duet**, competing in this year's Three Peaks Yacht Race, presented £1,255 raised in sponsorship to **The Mumbles lifeboat station**. (l to r) Second Coxswain Alan Jones, Coxswain Derek Scott, BEM, Captain K. Carstens, The Mumbles station honorary secretary, Cliff Brown, Duet's skipper, Douglas Scott, founder president of Port Talbot station branch and president of Andrew Scott (Civil Engineers) Ltd, one of the principal sponsors, and Nat Eynon, one of Duet's crew. As well as sailing from Barmouth to Fort William, two crew members of each yacht competing in the Three Peaks race have to run up Snowdon, Scafell Pike and Ben Nevis. photograph by courtesy of Swansea Evening Post



Some £19,000 was raised this year to fund **Padstow lifeboat station's** new lift (see page 290). Of that amount, £9,850 was raised by a summer raffle of a tablecloth hand embroidered by Mrs Mary Taylor, seen here with Rear Admiral W. J. Graham, director of the Institution. This amazing sum was collected largely from holidaymakers who bought tickets throughout the season from Mary and a band of helpers. The tablecloth was won by Mr R. Hill of Paignton.



There is nothing you might not be called upon to do as honorary secretary of an RNLI fund-raising branch. Bob Proudlock, honorary secretary of **Wolverhampton branch**, proved this point when **West Midlands Police Sub-Aqua Club**, having swum five underwater miles along the River Severn and having raised £200 in the process, insisted the cheque be handed over in an environment natural to them: several feet below the surface of Stirchley swimming baths. The picture shows the game Bob Proudlock (l) with Police Constable Ian Suthers. photograph by courtesy of Birmingham Post and Mail



Maxstoke Castle, near Colehill, is open to the public on only two days of the year, each time in aid of a charity. The turn of the RNLI (above) was a huge success when on a beautiful afternoon last July £1,795 was raised.

photograph by courtesy of Jeff Morris

regional draw tickets another £2,294 and £256.90 came from collecting boxes. Donations included £500 from Turbo Diesels, who also collected £16.84 in RNLI boxes on their stand, and £50 from Mr J. S. W. Locke, an amount which he contributes regularly every year. Mercantile Credit staged an art exhibition on their stand and £42, a percentage of the sales made, was given to the RNLI.

Mrs Grace Chant of **Canvey Island** is a prolifically generous jam maker for the RNLI. For six years she has been supplying produce and last year alone she gave her local branch 393 pounds of jam and marmalade and 32 pounds of chutney which is worth about £130 to the RNLI. Her husband picks all the fruit and no charge is made for any of the ingredients.

Solihull ladies' guild last summer sent a cheque for £5,800 to RNLI HQ. It was made up from a series of fund raising events including bring and buy sales, flag day, a Christmas fayre and bridge drives.



So many people walking up **The Path in Appledore** last summer stopped to enjoy the beautiful window boxes and hanging baskets of flowers in front of Peter Longridge's house that he decided to put a jar for collecting money for the RNLI in front of the display. He told admirers it cost £20 for every maroon that was fired and in less than three weeks £20 had been collected in his jar.

On her retirement, Mrs Gwen Stapleton of **Hurstpierpoint branch** committee undertook to walk the length of the Southdown Way. She made sure she was sponsored and at the end of the walk was able to hand over £400 to her branch.

Members of **Woking branch** and their friends were treated to a cooking demonstration staged at the famous Tante Marie School of Cookery. A delicious three course meal was expertly prepared and then given to the lucky winners of the raffle. All proceeds from the afternoon, totalling £245, were handed over to the RNLI.

West Berliners had never seen anything quite like it and one German TV station introduced it as 'the way the British celebrate their bank holiday' and played film of it to Handel's Water Music and sound effects of a naval battle. The event was Berlin Infantry Brigade's first ever raft race on the River Havel; there were 18 different rafts in as many different guises and they brought in £559.17 in sponsorship for the RNLI.

It seems a little sad that **Bembridge Snooker Club** had to sell its only snooker table because it could not find any suitable meeting place. Still, it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good and the RNLI and four other charities each received a cheque for £300, being the proceeds from the sale.

On a day last July when almost all the lifeboats between Eastbourne and Selsey were called out to help yachts and boats caught in thundery storms, Percy and Elizabeth Blunden of **Lindfield**, West Sussex, were also doing their bit. They had thrown their garden open to the public. It is only just over half an acre, but with 4,000 bedding plants, roses, clematis, fuchsias and prize-winning vegetables people flock to admire its attractive prospects. Percy spends all his spare time in the garden—he is not retired—and despite the very stormy weather, with the sale of plants, tomatoes and home-made teas, £352.70 was raised for the lifeboats.



Members of **Stanmore branch** profited well from outdoor souvenir sales last summer. Here they are in Victorian dress to comply with the requirements of a garden party staged at the Grims Dyke Hotel, the former home of librettist W. S. Gilbert. They raised just short of £100 on that occasion and two weeks later, at a school fête, a further £80 was taken.



Triumphant Julie Davidson receives her crown from **Filey's** Coxswain Frank Jenkinson. Her title, **Filey Lifeboat Queen 1983-4**, is contested each year in aid of the station. Gordon Warley, of Primrose Valley Holiday Camp Theatre, organises the event with sponsorship by local tradesmen and prize money donated by Yorkshire Bank, Barclays Bank and Websters Brewery. Around £400 is raised annually for the RNLI and the branch automatically has a beauty to enhance all its fund-raising events for a year.

photograph by courtesy of Scarborough and District Newspapers

Last July Cambridge Footlights once again staged a performance of their revue at Nottingham Theatre Royal, giving all their services free of charge. A remarkable £2,850 was made on the night and **Nottingham and District branch** is particularly grateful to the Chetwode Foundation for a substantial donation and to the Trustee Savings Bank for its assistance.

In a draw organised by **Ipswich** wholesalers F. W. Pawsey and Sons, Paul Chalfont was the lucky winner of the first prize, a sailboard donated by Biro BiC Ltd. The draw was the idea of Bob and Geoff Pawsey, both enthusiastic small boat sailors, and it was supported by Pawsey's traders and their customers and friends; 2,500 tickets were sold altogether and £500 raised for the RNLI.

The foundation of a new branch took place at an inaugural meeting on July 1, 1983. It is **Beeston and Chilwell branch** and already it has 60 members. For the first fund-raising event one of the new committee, Mrs Joyce Powell, orga-



Fleet Chief Petty Officer Charlie Haydon at HMS Raleigh, Plymouth, has pushed back the frontiers of sponsored fund raising yet one stage further. This is a sponsored whaler smash. Two teams of new recruits to the Navy, armed with sledge hammers and mauls, one day last July set about smashing two condemned 27ft three-in-one whalers into pieces small enough to pass through a hole the size of a lavatory seat. Sponsorship was paid for the number of pieces and one team produced 1,500 fragments. The result after 1½ smashing hours was a cheque for £376.20 for the RNLI.

photograph by courtesy of HMS Drake, Plymouth



Four local athletes from Cumbernauld Athletics and Shettleston Harriers, including a father and son, offered themselves for sponsorship in the Scottish People's Marathon, run in Glasgow on September 11, 1983. Between them they raised about £500 for Cumbernauld branch. They are seen here with (c) Harry Wilcockson, the branch chairman: (l to r) Harvey McGillivray, Jnr, John Togneri, Harvey McGillivray, Snr, and Alistair Reid.

photograph by courtesy of Cumbernauld News

nised a coffee morning which raised £100 and other events planned include a wine tasting, a jumble sale, a cheese and wine party and a coach outing to London. New members are welcome. Please ring Peter d'Auvergne, Nottingham 257093, or Mike and Julia Powell, Nottingham 256940.

White Hart Sea Angling Club held a sponsored fishing match last June. Nine members took part in a ten hour trip off Whitby with the final result of a cheque for £211 being presented to Superintendent Coxswain Brian Bevan of Humber. At the same time a giant bar bottle containing £115 in cash was handed

over to Mrs Frances Sadler, secretary of Skidby and Little Weighton branch, by the White Hart Inn together with £46, the proceeds from the weekly competition held at the inn.

Flag day at Broadstairs continued its upward trend this year with a new record total of £1,455.21. Round Table members were responsible for £224 of this sum, a record for them too. Broadstairs ladies' guild took no more than two hours to raise a further £570 at their May fair; a successful event by any standards.

The sea was the theme for the Harvest Thanksgiving services at Brucefield Church on Sunday October 9. A sale of all perishables donated was held in the Church Halls on the following Monday and non-perishables were sold the next Saturday at a coffee morning, at which there was also an RNLI stall. All gifts and proceeds, amounting to £350, were donated to the lifeboat service.



Spooner Row Football Club was the winner of a knockout football tournament held at Hethersett, near Norwich, which raised £57.29 for the lifeboats. The other teams which took part in the competition were Bunwell United, Ellingham United and Hethersett.



Standing in Harwich's Atlantic 21 lifeboat are (l to r) Captain Richard Coolen, honorary secretary of Harwich and Dovercourt station branch, Eric Darvill, chairman of High Wycombe Round Table, with Geoff Rysdale, the immediate past chairman, Howard Bell, chairman of Harwich station branch, Richard Bowen, High Wycombe Round Table secretary, and Bob Oxley, immediate past chairman of Area 25 Round Table. In front, with Coxswain/Mechanic Peter Burwood in the centre, are Harwich lifeboat crew whose station has just been presented with two mammoth cheques by High Wycombe Round Table: one for £2,525.50 and the other for £1,474.50.



These men are about to undertake an eight mile underwater snorkel swim along the Tees between Yarm Bridge and the river road, Stockton. They are (l to r) Ian Turner, Bob Dodds, Richard Linton and Derek Saunders. Of the 50 participants, all from Teesside branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club, 47 completed the gruelling course, including three 12-year-old swimmers. About £500 was raised for the lifeboats.

photograph by courtesy of Middlesbrough Evening Gazette

This is how **Margate ladies' guild** made £1,100 in a remarkably busy ten days. First, they opened a nearly a new shop which brought in £800, then during the same week they held their annual strawberry tea which raised a further £100 and finally Mrs Sudds of Birchington held a sherry and swim morning round her pool, followed by a buffet lunch; with ticket sales, a raffle, bring and buy and souvenir sales, £293 was raised for the guild.

Sir, is this a record? Or is this? First, the King's Head at **Roehampton** wants to know if any standard lifeboat collecting box has been found to contain more than the £115.50 which was counted from its bar box recently. Secondly, **Brighton branch** wants to know if ever one person during a single lifeboat day has ever collected more than £357. Fred Ellison achieved this phenomenal record, dressed in oilskins during one of the hottest days of last summer, when he filled no fewer than 15 collecting boxes; altogether Brighton raised £2,394 during its lifeboat week.

Fleetwood's lifeboat week raised £7,500 last summer. It is organised by a joint committee from the crew, the station branch and the ladies' guild and is co-ordinated each year by a crew member. This year it was the turn of Bill Rawcliffe, a former second coxswain. Apart from a rescue display using breeches buoy between the lifeboat and Fleetwood auxiliary coastguards on the beach, there was a rowing race between Fleetwood and Lytham-St Anne's lifeboat crews. Fleetwood won for the second year running.

The RNLI got a half share of £1,200 raised for the lifeboats and Leukaemia Research by a Highland Games which took place near Ipswich in East Anglia! Philip Gibson, publican of The Case is Altered pub at **Bentley**, organised the event which included caber tossing, haggis hurling and wrestling. A large number of spectators, many of whom joined in the games, thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

For a branch like **Stourbridge** which could hardly be farther from the sea, it is no mean achievement to raise £5,200 in just over half a year. This is the branch's thirtieth year and its annual dinner in May, for which Harry Jones, former Hoylake coxswain, was guest speaker, raised £260.75. Later, in July, a strawberry and cream tea was organised in the garden of one of the branch committee members for the second year running when £462.60 was brought in. This was partly thanks to a local grower who gave 80 lb of strawberries.

The formation of a new **Barnet ladies' guild** was heralded with a sherry and mince pie morning last January, when a staggering 75 names were collected of ladies wishing to help. A committee of

Rescue demonstrations, sports, a barbecue and a sandcastle competition, first prize for which went to a Cornish pasty, all added to the success of **Wadebridge branch's** beach fête held last August at Rock, on the Camel Estuary. That was just one of the events which helped the branch, which since its foundation in 1974 has been going from strength to strength, to reach a total for the year of nearly £9,000.

photograph by courtesy of Ray Bishop



This caravan has generously been lent permanently by the Ingham family of Nacton to **Ipswich branch** to help with souvenir sales. Here Mrs R. Ingham (l) hands over the keys to Mrs P. Olsen, chairman of the branch, with Mr M. Ingham looking on. At its first assignment, the East Coast Boat Show, the caravan helped the branch to raise £400.



Men of **Bumpstead and District branch** are not afraid to grab an oar and jump into their pulling lifeboat Sir William Hilary. Guiding her through the streets of Steeple Bumpstead as part of the local carnival can be a profitable task for this gallant crew. The day, early last summer, raised more than £100 for the RNLI, mainly from souvenir sales—and the lifeboat exhibit was given a special 'mention in despatches'.



Edward Mockett, Coventry branch honorary secretary, receives a collecting box back from pupils of one of the 21 **Coventry** junior and infant schools which between them collected £160 for the RNLI.

photograph by courtesy of Jeff Morris



Members of **Golden Lane Youth Club**, from London EC1, visited **Hastings** last August proudly to present a cheque to Coxswain Joe Martin for £247.50, the sum they had raised with a sponsored swim. The 10 to 16 year olds got together with the station and Robin Piper, a Shoreline member and governor of Orpington, to raise the money which came in over a period of 18 months.





The mob cap mob, alias helpers at Seaton, Beer and District branch's 1983 country fair; it was part of a very successful lifeboat week which raised more than £1,000. The fair, held appropriately in the Mariners Hall, attracted customers with cream teas, apple pies and cream, a bingo session, a draw and a grand slippery pole pillow fight.

photograph by courtesy of Pulman's Weekly News



Mrs Doreen Rash, better known as Doreen Wallace the author, is also a painter. Last July Mrs Rash, now in her 87th year, staged an exhibition of her unframed sketches at her home in Norfolk and by their sale raised £140 for Diss branch.

photograph by courtesy of P. R. Lange

eight was formed with a representative to attend **Barnet branch** committee meetings. As well as giving substantial help during Barnet flag week in March, when £2,232.55 was raised, the new guild members have already brought in more than £1,000 by organising a number of events in their own homes and gardens.

While on holiday last summer, four young members of the Prosser family of **Tiverton** formed themselves into a company to paint and sell sea shells. Tim, aged ten, was the manager; Nicola, aged eight, the painter; Jonathan, aged five, the salesman; and Caroline, aged three, sometimes a seller. The result of their enterprise was a splendid £18.81 to send to Coxswain Matt Lethbridge for **St Mary's lifeboat station**, Isles of Scilly.

Christchurch branch raised nearly £5,000 with a sponsored slim early in 1983. So outstandingly successful was the exercise, in fact, that it is to be repeated this year.

Three men and a boy set out to walk the 22 miles from Birmingham to Bewdley in aid of the lifeboats. Chris Clifford and his two friends, Geoff Barnsley and Ted Griffiths, completed the whole course, while his nine-year-old son David managed a triumphant 11 miles. In all, £270 was raised in sponsorship for **Erdington branch**.

Surbiton branch was allowed to set up a souvenir stall on two Saturdays last year at Chessington Zoo, selling both RNLI souvenirs and donated goods. The overall result was £600.

Huyton and Roby branch's flag day, which raised over £350, was helped by a small display in Huyton of a dinghy, donated by Mr and Mrs H. Colling and restored and painted in RNLI colours by the work creation scheme. Mr J. Barker also lent two of the lifeboat models he has made for the display. The local Sea Scouts and Air Cadets also gave their support. Later, for Mr and Mrs Kenwright's annual barbecue, all 250 tickets were sold and with more stalls than ever before, a remarkable total of £624.09 was made for branch funds.

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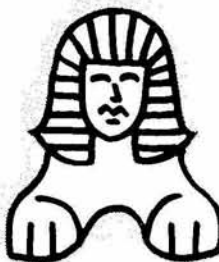
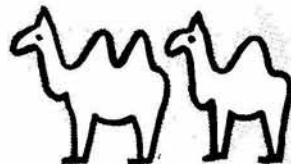
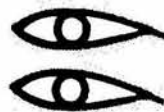
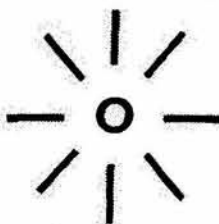
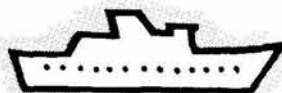
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Lifeboat Services

from page 299

Ballycotton, Co Cork

52ft Barnett: June 25, 26, 29, 30, July 2 and 14

Baltimore, Co Cork

47ft Watson: July 8 and 24

Bangor, Co Down

D class inflatable: June 2, 6 and July 2

Barmouth, Gwynedd

37ft 6in Rother: July 5

D class inflatable: July 10 (twice), 22 (twice) and 27 (twice)

Barrow, Cumbria

D class inflatable: June 20, 26, July 4, 9 and 10

Barry Dock, South Glamorgan

52ft Arun: July 25 and 30

Beaumaris, Gwynedd

Atlantic 21: June 3, July 21 and 22

Bembridge, Isle of Wight

48ft 6in Solent: June 29

D class inflatable: June 5, 12, 13, 15, 19 (twice), July 9, 15 and 26

Blackpool, Lancashire

D class inflatable: June 6 (twice), 9, July 7 (twice), 9, 12, 16 (three times), 22, 26 and 27 (four times)

Blyth, Northumberland

44ft Waveney: July 8 and 20

Borth, Dyfed

D class inflatable: June 25, 27 and July 27

Bridlington, Humberside

37ft Oakley: June 8, July 7 and 9

D class inflatable: June 2, July 13, 17 (twice) and 30

Brighton, East Sussex

Atlantic 21: June 19 (twice), 20, 23, July 3 (twice), 4 (twice), 7 (twice), 10, 22 (three times) and 31 (three times)

Buckie, Banffshire

47ft Watson: July 18

Bude, Cornwall

D class inflatable: July 9 and 15

Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex

D class inflatable: June 26

Burry Port, Dyfed

D class inflatable: July 1, 10 (twice) and 11

Calshot, Hampshire

40ft Keith Nelson: June 5 and 27

Campbeltown, Argyllshire

52ft Arun: July 6, 26 (twice) and 28

Cardigan, Dyfed

D class inflatable: July 15 and 31

Clacton-on-Sea, Essex

37ft Oakley: June 5 and July 3

D class inflatable: June 5, 11, 12, July 1, 2, 7, 13 (twice), 15, 16 (twice) and 31

Clovelly, North Devon

71ft Clyde: June 19, 27, July 3 (twice), 14, 15, 16, 18, 21, 25 (three times), 27, 28 and 29

Conwy, Gwynedd

Relief D class inflatable: June 18

D class inflatable: June 23, July 5 and 7

Craster, Northumberland

D class inflatable: June 7

Criccieth, Gwynedd

Relief D class inflatable: June 27, July 4, 27 and 29

Cromer, Norfolk

48ft 6in Oakley: June 25 and July 12

D class inflatable: June 5 and July 27

Cullercoats, Tyne and Wear

D class inflatable: June 26, July 2, 7 (twice), 8, 16 and 17

Donaghadee, Co Down

44ft Waveney: July 11, 13, 18, 21, 23 and 30

Douglas, Isle of Man

46ft 9in Watson: July 31

Dover, Kent

Relief 44ft Waveney: June 27

50ft Thames: July 7 and 9

Dunbar, East Lothian

47ft Watson: July 24

D class inflatable: June 18 and July 24 (twice)

Dungeness, Kent

37ft 6in Rother: July 10, 20 and 30

Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin

Relief 44ft Waveney: June 6, 28, July 2 and 10

Dunmore East, Co Waterford

44ft Waveney: June 28

Eastbourne, East Sussex

37ft 6in Rother: June 26 and 28

Relief 42ft Beach: July 5 and 30

Relief D class inflatable: June 2 (twice), 19 (three times), 24 and 28 (twice)

D class inflatable: July 29 and 30

Exmouth, South Devon

D class inflatable: June 5, 11, 12, 19, 26, 29, July 10, 12, 18, 21 and 24

Falmouth, Cornwall

52ft Arun: June 5, 29 (twice), July 15,

16 (twice), 21 and 27

18ft 6in McLachlan: June 2 (twice), 8, July 3, 24, 27, 28 (twice), 29, 30 and 31

Filey, North Yorkshire

37ft Oakley: July 20

D class inflatable: June 4 (twice), 9, 19, 27, July 3, 4 (twice), 9, 14, 17 and 28

Fishguard, Dyfed

52ft Arun: July 31

Flamborough, Humberside

37ft Oakley: June 9, July 10 and 27

Fleetwood, Lancashire

D class inflatable: June 11, 12, July 4 and 17

Flint, Clwyd

Relief D class inflatable: July 17

Fowey, Cornwall

33ft Brede: July 9, 13, 15 (twice) and 19

Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire

48ft 6in Solent: July 5, 22 and 29

Galway Bay, Co Galway

Relief 52ft Barnett: June 3, 15 and July 2

52ft Barnett: July 20 and 31

Great Yarmouth and Gorleston, Norfolk

44ft Waveney: June 5, 6, 8 and 19

Atlantic 21: June 8 (twice), 29, July 6, 8, 12, 14, 16 and 17

Hartlepool, Cleveland

44ft Waveney: June 5, July 12 and 24

Relief Atlantic 21: June 5, July 6 and 29

Harwich, Essex

44ft Waveney: June 30 and July 5

Relief Atlantic 21: June 5, 18, 20 and 24

Atlantic 21: July 5, 17, 21, 24 (twice),

26 and 30

Hastings, East Sussex

37ft Oakley: July 9 (twice) and 27

D class inflatable: June 4 (three times), 18, 19 (four times), July 16, 17, 18, 22, 25 and 26 (twice)

Hayling Island, Hampshire

Atlantic 21: June 5 (six times), 8 (twice), 11, 18 (three times), 19 (four times), July 4, 10,

16, 17 (twice), 27 (twice), 30 and

31 (three times)

Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire

Atlantic 21: June 12 (twice), July 1, 9 and 29

Holyhead, Gwynedd

52ft Arun: June 29, July 1 and 16 (twice)

D class inflatable: July 1, 12 and 31

Howth, Co Dublin

D class inflatable: June 9, 19, 25, July 3 and 6 (twice)

Hoylelake, Merseyside

37ft 6in Rother: June 5 and July 26

Humber, Humberside

54ft Arun: June 1 (twice), 15, 16, 19, July 8,

13, 27, 29 and 31

Hunstanton, Norfolk

Atlantic 21: June 5, 6, 15, 26,

July 16 (twice), 22 (twice), 28 and 31 (twice)

Ilfracombe, North Devon

37ft Oakley: July 14 and 28

Islay, Argyllshire

50ft Thames: July 5, 6, 13, 14, 23 and 26 (twice)

Kinghorn, Fife

D class inflatable: July 12 and 16

Kippford, Kirkcudbrightshire

D class inflatable: June 15, 26, July 5 and 13

Kirkwall, Orkney

Relief 71ft Clyde: June 14 and July 8

Largs, Ayrshire

Atlantic 21: June 1, 10, 11 (twice), July 1, 17, 18, 23 (twice) and 24

Lerwick, Shetland

52ft Arun: June 14 and 30

Little and Broad Haven, Dyfed

D class inflatable: July 9, 12, 25, 29, 30 (twice) and 31

Littlehampton, West Sussex

Relief Atlantic 21: June 5 (twice), 12 (four times), 19 (four times), July 1, 2,

3 (four times), 6, 10 (twice), 26, 28, 29,

30 (twice) and 31 (four times)

Littlestone-on-Sea, Kent

Atlantic 21: June 5, 7, 20, 26, July 2, 4, 10, 15, 20 and 30

The Lizard-Cadgwith, Cornwall

52ft Barnett: July 16, 27 and 28 (twice)

Llandudno (Orme's Head), Gwynedd

37ft Oakley: July 25

D class inflatable: June 8, 26, July 3 (twice), 19, 23 and 28

Lochinver, Sutherland

52ft Barnett: June 16 and 17

Lyme Regis, Dorset

Atlantic 21: June 5 (twice), 7, 19, 27, July 6, 17, 24, 27 (twice) and 28 (four times)

Lymington, Hampshire

Relief Atlantic 21: June 5 and 14

Atlantic 21: July 13

Lytham-St Anne's, Lancashire

46ft 9in Watson: June 10 and July 31

D class inflatable: July 10, 11 and 28

Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire

D class inflatable: June 7, July 3, 12, 15, 17, 21 (twice), 25 and 29 (twice)

Macduff, Banffshire

48ft 6in Solent: June 12 and July 28

Mallaig, Inverness-shire

52ft Arun: June 4, 22, 29, July 20 and 22

Margate, Kent

37ft 6in Rother: July 3, 8 and 28

D class inflatable: June 12, 17, 18, 29,

July 2 (twice) and 3

Relief D class inflatable: July 13 and

17 (nine times)

Minehead, Somerset

Atlantic 21: July 30

D class inflatable: July 30

Moelfre, Gwynedd

D class inflatable: July 15, 27 and 28

Montrose, Angus

48ft 6in Solent: June 14, 26, 27 and July 26

Morecambe, Lancashire

D class inflatable: June 10, 12, July 22 and 30

Mudford, Dorset

D class inflatable: June 11, 17, 19, July 8, 11, 17 and 19

The Mumbles, West Glamorgan

Relief 46ft 9in Watson: June 9

D class inflatable: June 9, July 4, 13,

16 and 27

Newbiggin, Northumberland

Atlantic 21: June 5 (twice) and 25

New Brighton, Merseyside

Atlantic 21: June 6 and 8

Newcastle, Co Down

37ft Oakley: June 3

Newhaven, East Sussex

44ft Waveney: June 5 (twice), 23, 27 (twice), 28, 30, July 7, 8, 27, 28 (three times) and

31 (three times)

Newquay, Cornwall

D class inflatable: June 10, 11, 19 and 25

Relief D class inflatable: July 17, 19, 21,

24 (twice), 28 and 30 (three times)

New Quay, Dyfed

D class inflatable: June 8, July 10 (twice), 20, 27 and 31

North Berwick, East Lothian

D class inflatable: July 20

Oban, Argyllshire

33ft Brede: June 14 (twice), July 10 (twice), 12, 15, 17, 18 and 26 (twice)

Peel, Isle of Man

Atlantic 21: June 7, 9, 10, July 1 and 31

Penarth, South Glamorgan

D class inflatable: June 5 and 12

Relief D class inflatable: July 2, 17, 22, 24, 26, 27 and 30

Penlee, Cornwall

52ft Arun: June 7 (twice), July 16 (three times) and 19 (twice)

Peterhead, Aberdeenshire

48ft 6in Solent: July 9 (twice) and 25

Plymouth, South Devon

44ft Waveney: June 3, 12, 20, July 13, 15 (twice), 16 and 17

18ft 6in McLachlan: July 28

Poole, Dorset

Relief 44ft Waveney: June 4, 19, July 9, 15 and 27

Dell Quay Dory: June 3, 5 (twice), 6, July 3, 7 (twice), 10, 16, 17, 22, 27 and 30

Portaferry, Co Down

D class inflatable: June 3

Porthcawl, Mid Glamorgan

D class inflatable: June 19 (twice)

Porthdinllaen, Gwynedd

47ft Watson: June 13, 15 and 28

Port Isaac, Cornwall

Relief D class inflatable: June 15

D class inflatable: July 25, 26 and 28

Portpatrick, Wigtownshire

47ft Watson: June 26

Portrush, Co Antrim

Relief 52ft Arun: July 18 and 27

Portsmouth (Langstone Harbour), Hampshire

Atlantic 21: June 5 (eight times), 9, 17, 19 (five times), July 10, 14, 17, 24 (twice), 26 and 31 (twice)

D class inflatable: June 5, 12, 19 (twice), 26, 29, July 14, 17, 24 and 31

Port St Mary, Isle of Man

54ft Arun: June 3 and July 4

D class inflatable: June 22

Port Talbot, West Glamorgan

D class inflatable: June 9 and July 23

Pwllheli, Gwynedd

D class inflatable: June 17 and July 27

Queensferry, West Lothian

Atlantic 21: June 10, 11 and 26

Ramsey, Isle of Man

37ft Oakley: June 7

Red Bay, Co Antrim

D class inflatable: June 12, 20, July 18, 19 and 24

Redcar, Cleveland

37ft Oakley: July 21, 24 and 27

D class inflatable: July 17, 21 and 31

Rhyl, Clwyd

37ft Oakley: June 8 and July 26

D class inflatable: June 8, 9, July 12 and 24

Rye Harbour, East Sussex

D class inflatable: June 19, July 7, 11 (four times), 13 (twice), 17, 20 (twice), 21, 27, 28 (three times), 30 and 31 (three times)

St Abbs, Berwickshire

D class inflatable: July 3

St Agnes, Cornwall

D class inflatable: June 2, 16, 19 (three times), July 8, 16, 27 and 30

St Bees, Cumbria

D class inflatable: June 29 and July 10

St Catherines, Channel Islands

D class inflatable: June 5 (twice)

St David's, Dyfed

47ft Watson: July 14 (twice)

St Helier, Channels Islands

44ft Waveney: June 5 (twice), July 9 (twice), 10, 12, 14 and 15

St Ives, Cornwall

37ft Oakley: June 1

Relief 37ft Oakley: July 9 and 29

D class inflatable: June 8, 12 (twice), 29, July 13, 19, 30 and 31

St Mary's, Scilly Isles

52ft Arun: June 7, July 1, 10 and 16

St Peter Port, Channel Islands

Relief 52ft Arun: June 6, July 20 and 21

Salcombe, South Devon

Relief 52ft Barnett: July 9

Scarborough, North Yorkshire

D class inflatable: June 4, July 17, 20, 28 and 30

Selsey, West Sussex

48ft 6in Oakley: July 1 and 31 (twice)

Relief D class inflatable: June 5, July 1, 5, 10 and 31 (three times)

D class inflatable: June 12 and 13

Sennen Cove, Cornwall

37ft 6in Rother: June 7, July 10, 12 and 13

Sheerness, Kent

44ft Waveney: June 19, July 9 (four times), 17, 27 and 31

Relief D class inflatable: June 2 (twice), 5, 11, 13, July 9, 12, 17 (five times), 24 and 30

Shoreham Harbour, West Sussex

37ft 6in Rother: June 5 (twice), 23, 26, July 5, 8 (twice), 22 and 31

D class inflatable: June 5 (twice), 19 (six times), 20 (twice), July 3, 7, 10 and 31 (four times)

Silloth, Cumbria

Relief Atlantic 21: July 10 and 30

Skegness, Lincolnshire

37ft Oakley: June 26

Relief 37ft Oakley: July 27

D class inflatable: June 11, 12, 26, 27, 29, July 3, 7, 17, 21, 24, 27 (twice) and 29 (three times)

Skerries, Co Dublin

D class inflatable: July 8 and 23

Southend-on-Sea, Essex

Atlantic 21: June 5 (three times), 7, 26, July 4 (twice), 15, 16, 17 (twice) and 31

D class inflatable: June 14, 15, 19, 20, 26 and 29

Southwold, Suffolk

Atlantic 21: June 5, 18, July 19, 28 and 31

Staithes and Runswick, North Yorkshire

Atlantic 21: June 6, July 9 and 24

Stonehaven, Kincardineshire

D class inflatable: July 29

Stornoway (Lewis), Ross-shire

Relief 48ft 6in Solent: June 25

Stranraer, Wigtownshire

D class inflatable: June 10, 26 and July 22

Stromness, Orkney

52ft Barnett: July 10

Sunderland, Tyne and Wear

47ft Watson: July 3 and 11

D class inflatable: June 12, July 3, 11, 15, 18, 21 and 28 (twice)

Swanage, Dorset

37ft 6in Rother: June 1, 5, July 3, 24 (three times) and 28

Teemouth, Cleveland

47ft Watson: June 8

Tenby, Dyfed

46ft 9in Watson: July 28

Relief D class inflatable: June 9, 14, 30, July 10, 12 (three times), 16, 17 and 18

D class inflatable: July 26 (twice), 28 and 29

Thurso, Caithness

48ft 6in Solent: June 26 (twice) and July 14

Tighnabruaich, Argyllshire

D class inflatable: July 3, 15, 16 and 17

Torbay, South Devon

54ft Arun: June 5, 26, July 15 (three times), 16 and 27

18ft 6in McLachlan: June 2, 6, 25, July 15, 17, 18 and 28

Trearddur Bay, Gwynedd

D class inflatable: June 25, July 1 and 29

Troon, Ayrshire

44ft Waveney: June 4, 6, 9, 13, 21 (twice), 25, 30 and July 23 (three times)

Tramore, Co Waterford

D class inflatable: June 24 and July 12

Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear

Relief 52ft Arun: June 14

52ft Arun: July 8, 11, 26 and 28

D class inflatable: June 5

Walmer, Kent

Relief 42ft Beach: June 16 and 24

37ft 6in Rother: July 14, 17 and 30 (twice)

D class inflatable: June 23, July 15, 17 (twice) and 30

Walton and Frinton, Kent

48ft 6in Oakley: June 20

Relief 47ft Watson: July 23, 27 and 31

Wells, Norfolk

Relief 37ft Oakley: June 12 and 25

D class inflatable: June 25 and July 8

West Kirby, Merseyside

D class inflatable: June 8 and July 25

West Mersea, Essex

Atlantic 21: June 5 (three times), 6 (twice), 18, 19, July 15 (twice) and 23

Weston-super-Mare, Avon

Atlantic 21: June 19, July 9, 13, 16 (twice), 24 (twice), 27, 28 and 30

Relief D class inflatable: June 19

D class inflatable: July 2, 24 (twice), 27, 28 and 30

Weymouth, Dorset

54ft Arun: June 3, 5, 22, July 14 and 23

Whitby, North Yorkshire

44ft Waveney: June 23

Relief 44ft Waveney: July 5, 9 and 28

D class inflatable: June 8, July 5, 22 (twice) and 23

Whitstable, Kent

Atlantic 21: June 1, 4, 5 (four times), 8, 11 (three times), 13, 18 (twice), July 2, 5, 12, 15, 17 (six times) and 18 (twice)

Wick, Caithness

48ft 6in Oakley: July 12

Wicklow, Co Wicklow

42ft Watson: July 10 and 26

Withernsea, Humberside

D class inflatable: June 4, 18, 19, July 2, 3 (twice), 9, 12 (twice) and 29

Relief D class inflatable: July 24

Yarmouth, Isle of Wight

52ft Arun: June 5 (three times), 14, 29, July 3, 10, 17, 24 and 30

Youghal, Co Cork

35ft 6in Liverpool: June 13

On Trials

33ft Brede ON 1088: June 5

D class inflatable D508: June 24

On Passage

50ft Thames ON 1031: July 1

33ft Brede ON 1088: June 18

SERVICES AND LIVES RESCUED BY THE RNLI'S LIFEBOATS

January 1, 1983, to September 30, 1983: Services 3,027; lives rescued 1,046

THE STATION FLEET

(as at 30/9/83)

257 lifeboats, of which two 18ft 6in McLachlan and 63 D class inflatable lifeboats operate in summer only

LIVES RESCUED 110,110

from the Institution's foundation in 1824 to 30/9/83, including shoreboat services

Letters...

Fraserburgh lifeboat

My son Jim and I were two of the people rescued by Fraserburgh lifeboat last summer when the yacht *Blanche* got into trouble in a force 8 gale. We were most impressed by both the efficiency and humanity of the coxswain and crew.

Our first thoughts as the lifeboat appeared were how extremely smart and well turned out she looked. All the paint was so clean and shining and the name and even the ropes matched perfectly. We had no doubt that this meant a first-rate crew and we felt sure that what we could not see, the engine and gear, were equally maintained in first rate condition.

So, many thanks to Fraserburgh lifeboat. We wish her long and illustrious service.—ROBIN MINNEY, *Horn's House, Witton Gilbert, Durham.*

This letter was first published in the Aberdeen Press and Journal.

A friend in need . . .

During the freak hurricane of July 31, 1983, my small yacht, *Ella Trout V*, was knocked down and capsized just outside St Peter Port Harbour, Guernsey. Before going off with kind helpers to get dry clothes, supplied by the RWVS, I supervised the pumping out and hoisting on the jetty of my salvaged yacht. On my return I found that Captain John Petit, States harbour master and honorary secretary of St Peter Port lifeboat station, had placed a store at my disposal and three young Shoreline members, Peter Leadbeater, John Le Page and Tim Gentle, with one or two of their friends, had almost completed the task of removing the contents of the yacht to the store: mattresses, clothing, books, instruments, indeed all the paraphernalia of a well-equipped yacht. Charts, some 60 odd, were spread out on improvised racks to dry and all the gear was draped neatly about the store, including my shoregoing reefer on a coathanger.

Peter and his colleagues continued to work for hours sorting out the chaos, in spite of this being their free Sunday, and appeared thereafter at frequent intervals to see how we were getting on. I was proud of Shoreline and thankful that I, too, am a member.

May I congratulate these boys, who I understand are always ready to help at the lifeboat station, and at the same time express my thanks to John Cross, in his private launch, and Ron Munson, skipper of the Herm ferry *Typhoon*, who picked my crew and myself out of the sea, and to all at St Peter Port, especially Captain Petit, who rallied round during this distressing incident.—JEFFREY DOUGLAS, *Lt-Col (Rtd), Patchetts Green Saddlery, Aldenham, Hertfordshire.*

To save life

Recently I was a witness to a tragic inshore drowning incident and the cheque for £24 I enclose is the amount I received for travelling expenses to attend the inquest which followed. I hope that the money will help to save someone's life.—ANONYMOUS DONOR.

Northern lights

While reading the summer issue of THE LIFEBOAT, I noticed in the article on the naming of RNLB *Ann Ritchie* that there was a Trinity House vessel mentioned as being in Oban Bay at the time. I reckon that the vessel was the Northern Lighthouse Board tender *Fingal*. The Northern Lighthouse Board is the Scottish equivalent of Trinity House and tends and maintains all lighthouses and navigational aids in Scotland and the Isle of Man. *Fingal* is based in Oban and would have been alongside the lighthouse depot pier.

We also have *Pole Star* based in Stromness in Orkney and *Pharos* based in Leith. Although equivalent to Trinity House the Northern Lighthouse Board is a separately run body with its head office in Edinburgh.—ALAN PROVAN, *second officer, mv Pharos.*

We apologise to the Northern Lighthouse Board for what was a complete slip of the pen. The RNLI is well aware of the essential work done by the Board, which is one of the bodies to whom particular thanks are extended each year in the Institution's annual report.—EDITOR.

'Eleven years on'

I very much enjoyed the discussion 'Eleven years on' published in the spring issue of THE LIFEBOAT. As leader of and launching authority for Rescue 15, Prince Rupert's Volunteer Search and Rescue Group, and one of the founding members of the infant British Columbia Lifeboat Society, I found the information gained on handling and operation of the Atlantic 21 rigid inflatable lifeboat will greatly help us in crew training. On Christmas Eve 1982, following an extensive fund-raising drive, we were able to put on station a 20ft 6in Lucas Hurricane 600 rigid inflatable lifeboat, which joins the two 15ft 6in Zodiac inflatable inshore rescue boats that we have operated since 1978.

We have fabricated a small wind-shield that gives excellent protection to the helmsman against hail, freezing spray, snow and rain (Prince Rupert's world-famous rain can really sting at 35 knots), even though it is set just below eye level.

For towing we have found that an alongside push with the stern of the lifeboat four feet astern of the casualty is best, but when necessary we use a 50ft bridle. For quick release a sharp knife is kept on hand.

All our vessels are fully equipped for night operations as threequarters of our calls are after dark. Good night visibility is essential in this area because of the many periods of inclement weather and the inherent British Columbia coast's problem of floating and partially submerged debris. During fishing seasons we must also be on a constant lookout for the nets and floats of our salmon and herring gillnetters.—BILL TROWELL, *chief of SAR, Rescue 15, member British Columbia Lifeboat Society, Prince Rupert, BC, Canada.*

Evening cruise

I greatly enjoyed Captain R. W. Shaw's account of the evening cruise from Harwich, published in the autumn issue of THE LIFEBOAT. It put me in mind of a story told me by an old lady who was my housekeeper for many years.

Her nephew was captain of the local fire brigade in a small country town. One day there was a party in the fire station to celebrate the arrival of a new fire engine. All the fire brigade members were there with their wives and families; there was champagne and speeches, rudely interrupted by a small boy who burst in shouting that there was a fire just down the road.

Of course they did not believe him at first, but it was quite true. It was the captain's house that was on fire.—W. A. TAYLOR, *Dr, Banwell, Somerset.*

A COMPASS for a new lifeboat has been given to the RNLI by GEC. The compass, which costs £112.45, was presented by Mr W. Wadkin, a retired employee of GEC living at Poole, to Anthony Oliver, the appeals secretary, last October.

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if you join

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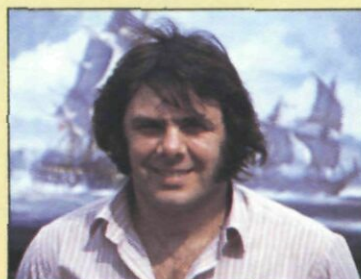


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