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the **Lifeboat**

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Autumn
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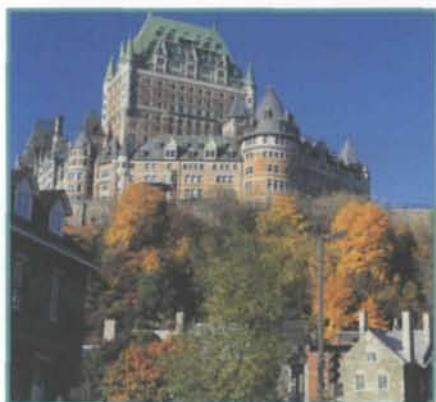
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Days 11-13 ♦ Montreal and Quebec

We join the *Corridor* train to Montreal and take a tour of this city before continuing to Quebec for two nights at the prestigious Chateau Frontenac. Our stay includes city sightseeing and plenty of free time to explore. In the evening of Day 13 we board *The Ocean* train for the overnight journey across New Brunswick to Nova Scotia.

Days 14-18 ♦ The Ocean to Nova Scotia

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The magazine of the
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The Lifeboat is published four times a year and is sent free to RNLI supporters, members and Governors. The next issue will be Winter 2006/07 and will appear in January 2007.

For advertising and full details of whom to contact about *the Lifeboat*, membership and any other RNLI matters, see page 16.

Front cover: Ballyglass Severn class lifeboat *Bryan and Gordon*. Photo: Steve Bicknell, Icarus
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Train one, save many



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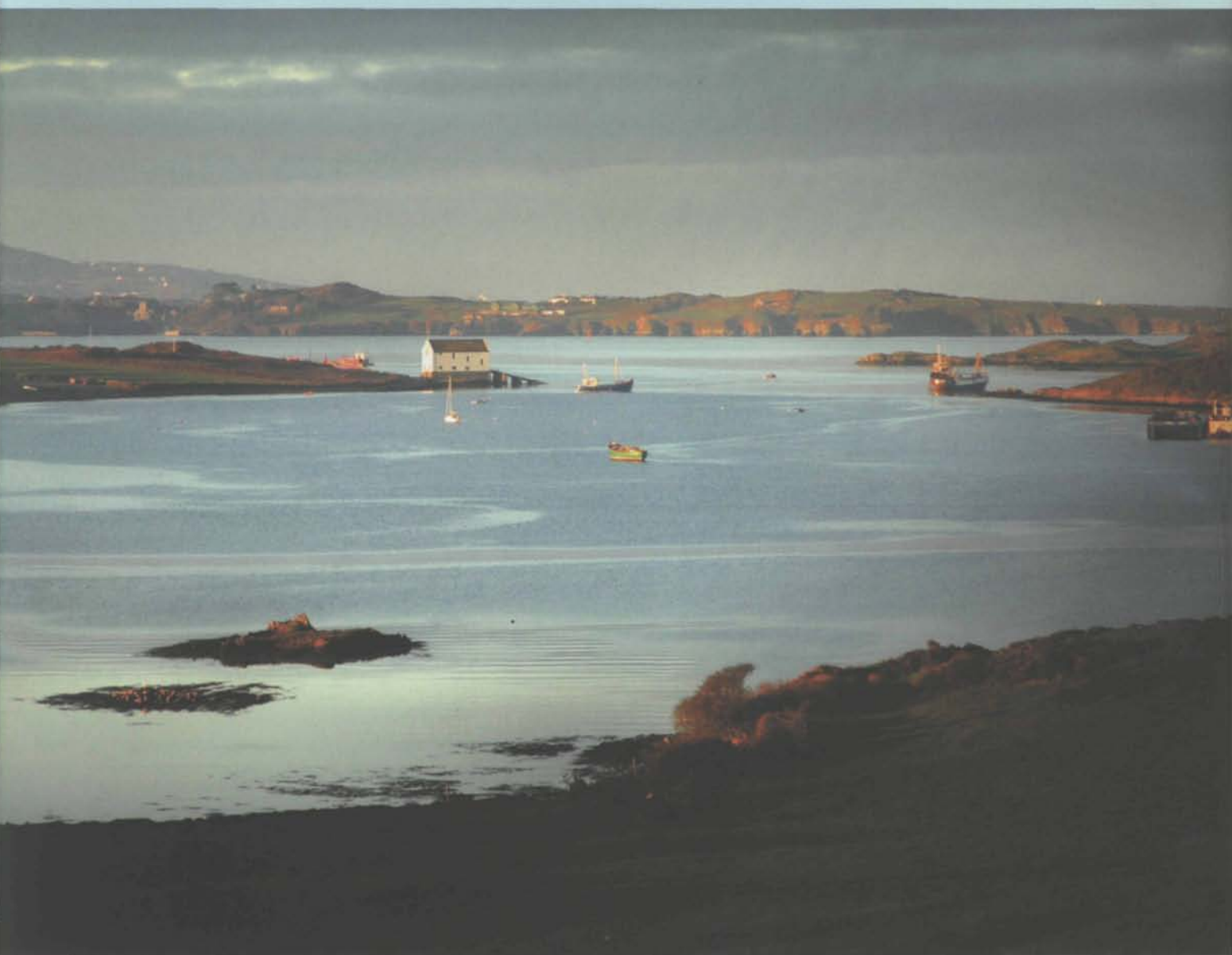
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It's a family affair on Ireland's inland waterways



Swords of honour

Phenomenal, unselfish, generous – just some of the words used by Irish President Mary McAleese on her recent visit to the RNLI

The RNLI has 43 lifeboat stations in the island of Ireland to support, from Lough Swilly in Northern Ireland to Baltimore in the Republic of Ireland. This complex operation involves 1,500 station personnel and 2,000 fundraisers – and some far less visible support staff.

Lifeboat crews rightly get praise for their spirit of courage and selflessness, while the commitment and dedication of fundraisers are entirely worthy of the many mentions they receive. But behind the scenes is a band of hard-working paid workers who provide the back up that these loyal and steadfast

volunteers so justly deserve. In June 2006, Mrs McAleese opened RNLI Ireland's first state-of-the-art facility for these support staff.

Divisions and regions

For many years, support for the RNLI's six operational divisions and nine fundraising regions operated from separate buildings in their respective areas. More recently, the pair of RNLI offices in each of Scotland, north England and south west England have combined to operate from single units. Now, two more have merged forces in a purpose-built base at Swords, Dublin.

All the necessary teams are located under one roof. The first floor is shared by Operations (for both Northern Ireland and the Republic) and Fundraising (for the Republic – currency differences mean an office in the north is maintained. See page 38.) On the ground floor are stores and workshops, with a large meeting room capable of accommodating over 150 delegates. In addition, video conferencing facilities will reduce the need for travel to and from RNLI Headquarters in Poole, saving substantially on transport and accommodation costs.

In a moving speech to the assembled media and RNLI staff and volunteers, President McAleese recognised that this day marked the culmination of much ambitious and intensive work. She declared it: 'A day of pride, relief and gratitude that is proof positive of the remarkable capabilities of the RNLI and its preparedness for what lies ahead.' She further remarked that the RNLI is:

'A classic example of the phenomenal, unselfish, generous voluntary endeavour ... that goes on in Ireland around the clock, week in and week out, year in and year out, without thought of thanks or recognition. Here you will find men and women who are prepared to risk their lives at any moment for people who may be complete strangers and, even occasionally, complete fools.'

Speaking directly to the lifesavers in her audience, she continued:

'If there is fear you don't look for an easy out, if there is discomfort you do not complain, if there is danger you face it. And by some miracle you get a deep personal fulfilment from all this giving which keeps you involved, keeps you faithful to the RNLI, often over a lifetime.'

In declaring the new RNLI Ireland Headquarters officially open, Mary McAleese said a heartfelt 'thank you' from the Irish people to: 'the past and

present crews of our lifeboats, to those who worked in the past and who work today in so many different but essential roles in the background, providing support, training, public education and much needed resources.'

Quoting Irish poet Seamus Heaney, President McAleese concluded:

'"You have won renown: you are known to all men far and near, now and forever. Your sway is wide as the wind's home, as the sea around cliffs."'

Left: Baltimore, just one of Ireland's 43 lifeboat stations

Photo: Steve Bicknell, Icarus

Below: RNLI Ireland now boasts a new support building in Swords, Dublin, opened by President Mary McAleese



Dear Reader

Returning from my Summer holiday in North Yorkshire, I was amazed to find that Autumn had arrived in Dorset. Tightly angled sunlight and long shadows met me en route to work and many was the spider's web I had to apologetically break.

The diversity of our islands' climates and habitats, not to mention accents and food, is such that I could have been abroad. But one of the pleasures of being part of the RNLI is the unity of understanding and purpose it brings across borders. I hope *the Lifeboat* brings some of this to life for you as we focus on the RNLI's service across the island of Ireland.

The twilight of a year can bring mixed emotions: we remember those who lost their lives in war and in more peaceable acts of bravery (page 14) and then begin to plan for Christmas. The RNLI is providing a range of help: its classic 'livesaving shopping' catalogue (including Ray and Susannah Kipling's latest lifeboating book *Never turn back* ref 131172) and now a 'virtual' gifts catalogue too. Meanwhile, the season's blockbuster is *The guardian*, starring Kevin Costner as a US Coast Guard rescue swimmer. Look out for RNLI publicity focused around this film's release.

Liz Cook
Editor

A global perspective

RNLI International Development Manager Gerry Keeling has been named as the first Chief Executive of the new International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF).

The IMRF has evolved from the International Lifeboat Federation (ILF), whose secretariat the RNLI has hosted since 1924. In recent years the 90 or so ILF members have expressed a desire to widen the federation's role and sought greater independence.

By its 2007 conference in Gothenburg, Sweden, the federation will have financial and constitutional independence from the RNLI, although its secretariat will probably continue to be based in Poole.

Veronica Zhao, a secondee from the China Rescue and Salvage Bureau, is providing the administration.



A Swedish Sea Rescue Society (SSRS) 20m rescue boat

Ready for 2007 yet?



The *Lifeboat* is pleased to announce that the third RNLI SOS day will be on Friday 26 January 2007. Will your school, youth organisation, office or factory colleagues wear their trainers for the day in exchange for a £1/£2 donation? It's all in support of the RNLI's Train one, **save many** campaign. Contact your area's fundraising office (see page 38) or visit rnli.org.uk/sos to find out how you can get involved.

Above: Sam, Anna and William from Kington St Michael school in Wiltshire getting into the SOS day spirit

RNLISOS

Call answered



Readers of *the Lifeboat* may have received a letter or phone call from the RNLI in June 2006. Its theme was the need to increase income to meet increased demand on the RNLI's services and to ask supporters to set up direct debits to reduce costs. *The Lifeboat* can now report that the response to this appeal was huge.

RNLI Fundraising and Communications Director David Brann comments: 'We are extremely grateful to all supporters who responded so generously to my letter earlier this year. Along with the efficiency savings the RNLI has managed to make, I am confident that we are well on the way to balancing the RNLI's income and expenditure.'



Surf hire safety

There are around 500,000 regular surfers in the UK and, in 2005, 37% of RNLI lifeguard activity was in response to surfboard and bodyboard incidents. With this in mind, the RNLI's Beach Safety team has begun working with the surfing industry to adopt and promote safer practices, focusing primarily on the surfing hire sector.

One pilot scheme is a joint initiative from RNLI Lifeguards and the British Surfing Association. Initially concentrating on surf hire outlets in Polzeath, Cornwall, the scheme encourages surfers and would-be surfers to look out for the Surf Hire Safety logo. Surf hire outlets displaying the logo will have agreed to only rent equipment suitable to the surfers' ability, and to provide safety information to all customers, check equipment regularly for damage and provide adequate insurance.

RNLI Senior Lifeguard Tony Clarke says: 'It's so easy to hire or buy surfing equipment these days but it's important that you get it from a recognised provider who can offer advice suitable to your ability.' (See page 26 for an example of a surfing rescue.)

Outlets and hirers taking part will both get a range of benefits, including promotional material to advertise the scheme in their area, discounted hire equipment and discounted insurance rates. If the pilot is successful the project may be rolled out nationally. For more details visit surfhiresafety.co.uk.

A marathon challenge

In 2006 the RNLI raised its highest fundraising total ever for the London Marathon – over £150,000 raised in sponsorship from 122 runners. Following this huge success, the RNLI has decided to go international, and for the first time ever is offering a number of overseas marathon places in 2007.

The RNLI has secured 60 guaranteed charity places in the ING New York Marathon, as well as a limited number of guaranteed places in the Chicago, Berlin, Boston and London Marathons.

For more information on how to run one of these marathons as a member of TEAM RNLI, please contact Heidi Shrimpton on 020 7839 3369 or email events_gl@mli.org.uk or visit the official marathon partner Realbuzz website at www.realbuzz.com.

One supporter who went the extra mile for the RNLI is Brian Love (63) from Padstow, Cornwall. Brian ran the London Marathon 2006 for the RNLI as a 'thank you' to the crews who saved his life



London Marathon runner Brian Love meets his rescuers at Padstow

in 2004. He said: 'I owe my life to the professionalism and training of the RNLI crew at Rock.' Brian's sponsorship has been split between Rock lifeboat station and the Padstow lifeboat station appeal (see page 9).

Three more beaches

Woolacombe, Croyde and Blackpool Sands beaches in Devon have been added this Summer to the 59 others already patrolled by RNLI lifeguards. Visitors to these beaches have already benefited

from the eagle-eyed vigilance and professional lifesaving skills of both paid and volunteer lifeguards, all trained to the RNLI's exacting standards (see pages 20 and 26).



Photo: Nigel Millard

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A toast to the RNLI



Why not enjoy some Christmas spirit this year and support the RNLI?

Old Pulteney Single Malt Scotch Whisky, the 'Genuine Maritime Malt,' will be sold in special RNLI promotional tubes and £2 from each sale will be donated to the charity.

This Christmas campaign, and donations of their product for fundraising competition prizes, should bring Old Pulteney's total contribution to the RNLI to an impressive £30,000. Iain Baxter of Old Pulteney comments: 'Our company has both a rich maritime past and present – we're involved in sailing sponsorship nowadays – so we are delighted to add our support to the RNLI. I hope we can help raise the profile of their fantastic lifesaving work and look forward to a long and productive relationship with the charity.'

Look out for the special packs of Old Pulteney in major stores including Waitrose, Sainsbury's, ASDA and Ooddbins over the Christmas period.

Reader offer

For a limited time, Virgin is offering all readers of *the Lifeboat* a 'Diamond' balloon flight voucher (rrp £270) for just £135. What's more, they will pay the RNLI £5 for every booking made as a result of this promotion. The Diamond flight standard is certainly

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Paws for thought



Lifeboat crews are sometimes called into action to rescue animals – not least, to keep their human owners safe.

One such incident occurred in the Spring in Broughty Ferry, Forfarshire, when Harry, a chocolate-coloured labrador, decided to see what was on the other side of the sea wall. His owner reluctantly called the lifeboat after he realised that he wasn't able to rescue the dog safely himself. For the lifeboat crew, there were training advantages from the rescue, similar to those they would have gained from locating and rescuing a human casualty.

Later two cocker spaniels, Charlie and Archie, astonishingly survived a 30m fall from cliffs when out walking with their owners near Exmouth,

Devon. The local lifeboat crew had no trouble persuading them to sit in the lifeboat, but in Newquay, Cornwall, Lifeguard Summa Calaghan realised that another dog, Jasper, hated water and was reluctant to be rescued after he fell from an 18m cliff. Summa paddled her rescue board to the base of the cliff and managed to coax Jasper into her arms. Summa, who is on an RNLI exchange from the lifeguard service in Australia, says it was her first dog rescue, although she has saved a few turtles back home!

RNLI advice is that all dog walkers should keep their animals on leads and parents of young children should supervise them closely near cliff tops and paths.



Looking glorious in Padstow

September 2006 saw the completion of a brand new boathouse and slipway at Trevoze Head, Padstow, Cornwall ready for the latest Tamar class all-weather lifeboat.

Building a new lifeboat station raises huge logistical and technical difficulties. In Padstow's case the roads nearby were unsuitable for HGV transportation, so 90% of the building materials had to arrive by sea.

The resultant design, architecture and construction of the distinctively shaped boathouse and slipway took only 14 months to complete but is intended to have a lifespan of more than 50 years. RNLI Shoreworks Manager Howard Richings says: 'Construction of any building with its feet in the sea, and exposure to the forces of wind and wave, is a challenging and high-risk enterprise. Design standards have to be top class and inevitably this costs money.'

An appeal to raise the £5.5M needed to cover the cost of the new station is still underway and donations are welcome. Supporters of the appeal include Gloria Hunniford, who visited the station in July. Gloria explained: 'I have always had a deep

fondness for Cornwall and feel close to this very special corner of the country where RNLI volunteer crew members are an important part of the community. I have an immense admiration for their selfless courage and devotion to duty. Rescuing people from the sea and shore demands a very special kind of commitment. I am therefore more than happy to commit my support to this appeal.'

The crew at Padstow includes an hotelier, a restaurant owner, a boat builder, a painter and decorator, a sales representative, a digger driver and several fishermen. Some have over 30 years' experience while one prospective crew member is waiting to join on his 17th birthday.

The £2.5M Tamar class *Spirit of Padstow* was generously funded by the HB Allen Charitable Trust. A life-long supporter of the RNLI, Miss Heather 'Mickie' Allen also funded *James Burrough*, the previous Padstow lifeboat, a relief lifeboat, *Mariners Friend*, and three shoreworks projects in Padstow and the Isle of Wight. The lifeboats Mickie has funded have launched 436 times, rescuing 450 people.



Above: The new boathouse and slipway take shape beside the old
Top left: RNLI supporter Gloria Hunniford meets Padstow's Michael England and David Flide
Photo: Alan Williams

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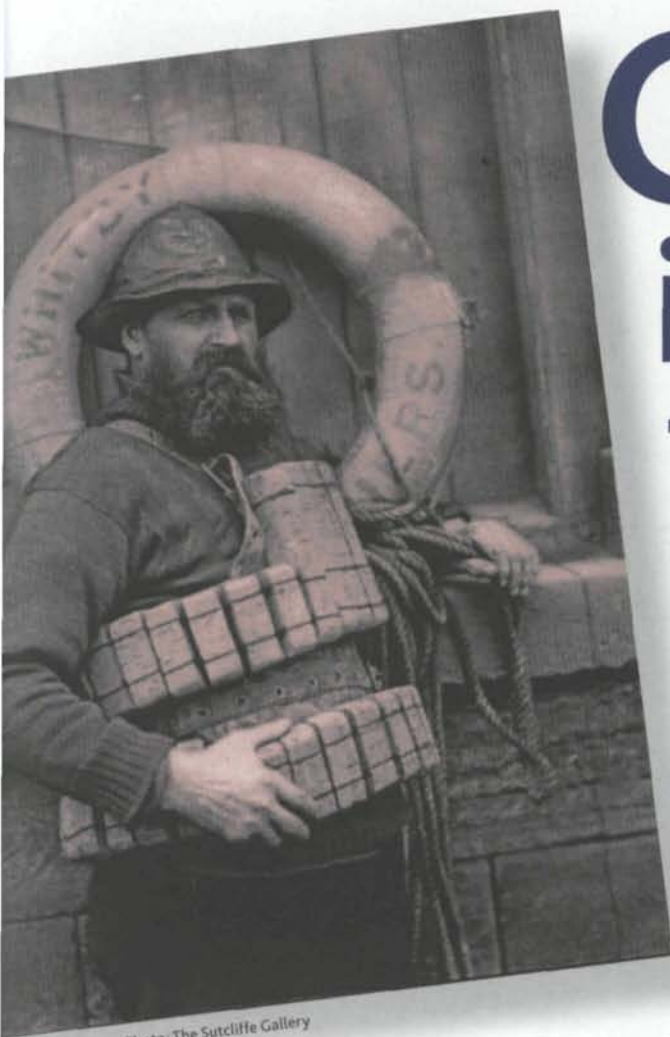


Photo: The Sutcliffe Gallery

TIME MARCHES ON. Society transforms faster than we can keep up with it. But the bravery of the RNLI's lifeboatmen and women has been steadfast for over 180 years. Thank goodness – because for all the advantages new technology brings, the sea remains a dangerous place. Conditions change in the blink of an eye and when sailors find themselves in trouble, the RNLI is there. Last year alone our lifeboats rescued over 8,100 people: but without the caring and responsible members of the public who support our work, we couldn't exist at all.

Celebrating our past

To celebrate and commemorate all that our crews have achieved we've put together a free booklet, *Courage is timeless* – you can request your copy simply by returning the coupon or calling the number below. Of course, all the acts of bravery by RNLI crew you'll read about are only possible because the public are kind enough to recognise the importance of our work, and support us in it.

Your part in our future

One of the best ways to support those courageous and selfless lifeboatmen and women, who volunteer to save others, is by remembering the RNLI in your Will. Six out of ten of all lifeboat launches are only possible because kind people had the foresight to leave us a gift. All it takes is a small change to your Will. And even a small gift will help us achieve so much. With your support, we'll always be here for those in peril on the sea.

If you would like to receive a legacy information pack which includes a copy of Courage is timeless please return the coupon below or alternatively visit our website, rnli.org.uk



Lifeboats

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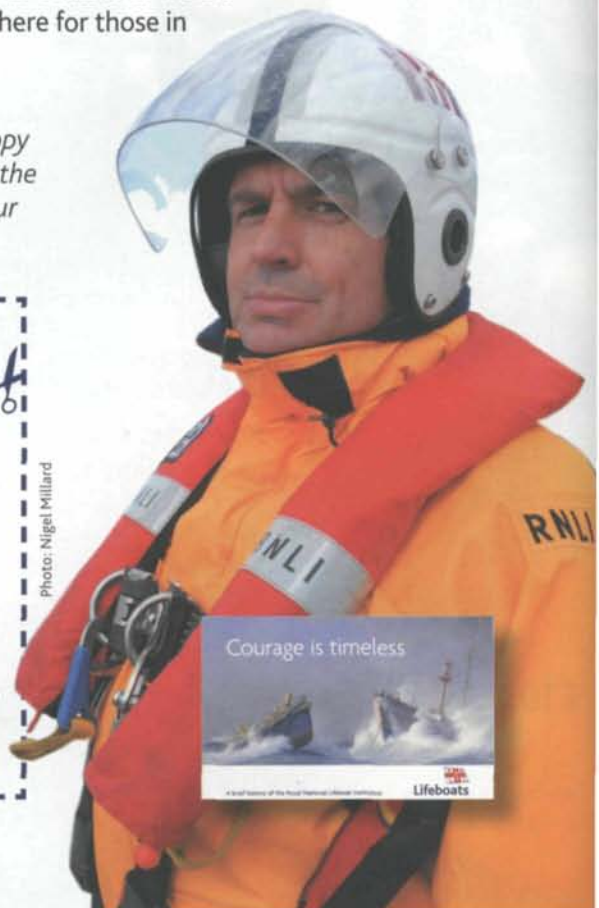


Photo: Nigel Millard

Courage is timeless



Lifeboats

Peep into the past

Fascinating excerpts from *the Lifeboat* archives

... 100 years ago

The Autumn 1906 *Life-boat Journal* congratulated female fundraisers for their hard work after another successful Lifeboat Saturday:

'They are less ready to take a refusal than the "sterner" sex, and, this being so, they less frequently get a refusal when asking for help ... if a man knows

he will ultimately have to say "Yes," he also knows it will save time to accede at once rather than discuss the matter.'

It was also reported how, on 19 March 1906, the Padstow lifeboat crew launched into rough seas and a strong north east wind to the aid of cargo vessel grounded on the notorious Doom Bar. The crew managed to get the damaged and leaking ketch off the bar and into the channel, but then had to deliberately beach her to prevent her sinking. (See pages 5 and 9 for current news from Padstow.)



... 50 years ago

In the section 'New ways of raising money', the September 1956 issue reported how a Mr Cyril Richards of Wolverhampton raised £1 11s 6d for the RNLI. He had collected the funds by imposing fines on people who 'talked shop' at a party.

A round-up of lifeboat shouts reported that, on 10 June 1956, the Bridlington lifeboat launched into rough seas to a yacht in distress. The yacht had suffered a ripped sail and fouled anchor but she and her three crew were safely towed back to harbour. (See page 27 for details of a recent Vellum service at Bridlington).

Hoylake lifeboat volunteers also received recognition in the journal after they carried a yacht's two-man crew on their backs to the lifeboat, before towing the vessel to safety (see picture).



... 25 years ago

The front cover of *The Lifeboat* featured the Margate Lifeboatman at sunset, a memorial to nine men who lost their lives in December 1897 when their lifeboat capsized on the way to the *Persian Empire*.

On a lighter note, a poem printed in the 'Here and there' section described the wedding of the Swanage Coxswain's daughter, Belinda Marsh. As she was setting off for the

church, the maroons were fired and the crew – including her father, Victor – rushed to the slipway complete with suits and carnations. They arrived back in time for the speeches at the wedding reception, only for someone to notice through the window that a boat was on fire out at sea. They launched again but a passing yacht arrived on scene first and took the passengers off. The poem concluded:

***'OK lads,' sang out the Coxswain,
And they turned towards the shore.
By this time, you will have guessed,
The bride and groom, toasted and blessed,
Had gone along their way.
But Belinda has a special place
In the hearts of the Swanage crew,
As the Coxswain's lass who married
'Twixt rescue 'one' and 'two'!***





Wrestling with the raging sea

The RNLI provides its volunteers with the best lifeboats, equipment and training for the job, and so it must. But sometimes, nothing is a match for the sheer ferocity of Nature

When a lifeboat crew launch to the rescue, their own safety is not uppermost in their minds. They trust in each other and their boat to get to the casualty in time and home again safely. The yearly total of lives saved is a testament to RNLI volunteers' skill and courage. However, there is also a tally of crew members who have risked and lost their lives at sea – a dreadful 438 in the RNLI's 182-year history.

As this year's festive lights in the Cornish village of Mousehole are once more switched off for an hour, first thoughts will be of the Penlee crew, so tragically lost just 25 years ago. Sadly, this is not the only lifeboat tragedy within living memory – thoughts will also turn to those lost from Rye Harbour in 1928, St Ives and Cullercoats in 1939, The Mumbles in 1947, Fraserburgh and Arbroath in 1953, Broughty Ferry in 1959, Longhope in 1969 and Fraserburgh in 1970. When we remember 'Penlee', we remember them all.

A proud history

Penlee lifeboat station was named after Penlee Point, a rocky tip to the south of Penzance, Cornwall, between the port of Newlyn and the village of Mousehole. The area has a strong lifesaving tradition stretching back more than 200 years: Penzance lifeboat station operated between 1803 and 1917, while Penlee has been open since 1913. Both are gilded with RNLI awards in recognition of outstanding rescues, not least an amazing 40 Medals for Gallantry. It was at Penlee Point that the crew of the Watson class lifeboat *Solomon Browne* launched down the slipway for the last time on the evening of 19 December 1981.

Courage and stamina

At 8pm the *Solomon Browne* met 15m waves and hurricane-force winds as she battled towards the *Union Star* coaster. The vessel

had suffered power failure and was drifting towards the rocky Cornish shore. By now neither the Navy helicopter nor the tug that had also come to her aid was able to get close enough in such conditions. Reaching the scene at around 8.45pm, Coxswain Trevelyan Richards made repeated attempts to get alongside and take people off the *Union Star*. Once, the lifeboat was thrown on top of the coaster only to slide off into the





next towering wave. Success came after 35 minutes with the transfer of four people.

A community gives its all

The night was to end in tragedy, however. Former RNLI Head of PR Edward Wake-Walker takes up the story:

'The helicopter crew could see that they [the lifeboat crew] had some survivors aboard but that there were two people still on the coaster and one, if not two, in the water. Then, moments later, at 9.21pm, they heard over the radio:

– Falmouth Coastguard, this is Penlee lifeboat, Penlee lifeboat calling Falmouth Coastguard.

– Falmouth Coastguard, Penlee lifeboat, go.
– We got four men off ... look, er hang on ... we got four off at the moment, er ... male and female. There's two left onboard ...

'The message ended abruptly [as so movingly conveyed in the recent BBC TV documentary.] But Lt Cdr Russell Smith, at the controls of the helicopter, could see the lifeboat, still apparently under control and heading out to sea. He took this as his cue finally to lift his aircraft out of the dangerous area where she had been hovering for so long and head back to Culdrose. He had assumed the lifeboat had made the same decision to turn for home.

'At this point, there was only one other witness left: the tug *Noord Holland*, standing off, about a mile out to sea. Her skipper, Guy Buurman, listening to the vain attempts by the Coastguard to regain radio contact with the lifeboat, could see *Union Star*, the casualty vessel, right up close to the cliff and, intermittently, the lights of the lifeboat. His last view of the lifeboat was when she appeared high on the crest of a wave, silhouetted against the coaster's lights. Minutes later, the ship suddenly went dark: possibly the moment she was at last tumbled over at the foot of the cliffs.

'By the time cliff rescue teams arrived at the scene, the *Union Star* was already wrecked at the foot of the cliffs and there was no sign of the lifeboat. When she was eventually found, the wreckage gave no real clues as to what happened other than that she was ultimately subjected to the most shattering and violent force imaginable. The largest portion of the lifeboat, including the heavy engine compartment, was found 300m to the east of the *Union Star*, which suggests she met her fate here. Some of the victims' bodies were never found.'

John Blewett, Nigel Brockman, Charlie Greenhaugh, Stephen Madron, Trevelyan Richards, Kevin Smith, Barrie Torrie and

Gary Wallis were the eight lifeboatmen to die.

There was an unprecedented outpouring of sympathy for the bereaved. National recognition came with a visit by the then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Locally, collection buckets overflowed as wallets and purses were literally emptied over them – the only practical help that could be offered by thousands of ordinary individuals to a shattered community.

A new generation of lifesavers

Just two days after the *Solomon Browne's* last service, a whole new crew of volunteers had come forward. This included the then 17-year-old Neil Brockman, son of the deceased Assistant Mechanic. Neil is now Coxswain at Penlee. Then, he and his new colleagues manned a relief Watson class *Guy and Clare Hunter*. In 1983, they received one of the new Arun class all weather lifeboats, the *Mabel Alice*. The yet larger and faster Severn class *Ivan Ellen* followed in 2003 alongside one of the new generation of inshore lifeboats, the Atlantic 75 *Paul Alexander* donated by Richard and Jo Archer in memory of a beloved son.

In 1995 Neil was awarded the RNLI Bronze Medal for his part in the rescue of five men from a trawler off Land's End. To quote Edward Wake-Walker again: 'It was a proud day for him, his family and the people of Mousehole, highlighting the indomitable spirit of Cornish seafaring blood, and reminding the world that triumph is as much a part of Penlee lifesaving as tragedy.'

Below L–R: The *Solomon Browne* in her heyday

Photo: Norman Fitkin

The *Mabel Alice* approaches Mousehole in 1983
The *Ivan Ellen*, Penlee's latest all-weather lifeboat

Photo: Nicholas Leach



Supporting the RNLI

Essential information for readers

Minimum subscription rates

	UK	Rol
Shoreline single	£24.00	€34.00
Shoreline joint	£42.00	€60.00
Offshore single	£60.00	€86.00
Offshore joint	£102.00	€146.00
Governor single	£72.00	€103.00
Governor joint	£120.00	€172.00
Life Governor (One-off payment)	£1,750.00	€2,512.00
Storm Force children's club	£7.50	€10.50

Introducing the RNLI

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution is a registered charity that saves lives at sea. It was founded in 1824 as the National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck.

Today, it provides the 24-hour on-call search and rescue service out to 100 nautical miles from the coast of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland; on the tidal reaches of the River Thames; and on selected inland waterways plus a seasonal lifeguard service on appropriate beaches in the south and south west of England. (See page 25 for a map of the service.)

The RNLI is independent from Government and continues to rely on voluntary contributions and legacies for its income.

Income and expenditure

The RNLI's running costs averaged at about £330,000 (€462,000) every day in 2005. For every £1 raised, 78p was spent on operations, 3p on support and 19p on fundraising.

Total expenditure in 2005:	£120.2M
Total income in 2005:	£117.5M
Expenditure in excess of income in 2005:	£2.7M

Saving lives at sea

The RNLI has saved more than 137,000 lives in its 182-year history and 2005 was its busiest year.

Lifeboat services in 2005		Lifeguard services in 2005	
Launches	Total people rescued	Incidents	People assisted
8,273	8,104	8,644	9,930
average 23 a day	average 22 a day	(during summer season)	

How to support the RNLI

You can help save lives by becoming a regular supporter of the RNLI. There are three adult grades of support: Shoreline, Offshore (for those who use the sea themselves) and Governor. Governors may vote at the RNLI's annual general meeting. Storm Force is the RNLI's membership club for children.

Contact the RNLI's Supporter Care team for more information: telephone 0845 121 4999, email supporter_care@rnli.org.uk or write to them at Headquarters (see below) quoting LBM0710.

The Lifeboat is the RNLI's supporter magazine and is published in January, April, July and October. Blind and partially sighted readers can choose to receive an audio-tape version as well – this is a free service. To advertise in *the Lifeboat*, contact Laura Gibb at Madison Bell Ltd on 01225 465060 or email laura.gibb@madisonbell.com.



Offshore members, and those Governors who opt to, receive *Offshore News* as well, in April, July and October.

Storm Force members receive *Storm Force News* quarterly.



Six out of 10 lifeboat launches are funded by legacies. If you would like to find out more about arranging a gift for the RNLI in your Will, whether large or small, cash or a gift in kind, contact Legacy Enquiry Officer John Marshall. Telephone him on 01202 663032, email jmarshall@rnli.org.uk or write to him at Headquarters.

For general enquiries contact Headquarters: telephone 0845 122 6999, email info@rnli.org.uk, or write to RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ.

Letters

To add your opinion, write to The Editor at RNLI Headquarters
or email thelifeboat@rnli.org.uk

Dear Editor

I read Nick Page's letter regarding inflatable toys [*the Lifeboat* Summer 2006] with much fellow feeling. Being both a harbour master and an RNLI deputy launching authority I dislike these things with something close to a passion in an offshore wind. But our local shops here at the harbour now ask us if it is safe to sell them if the wind is blowing at all hard. Strike one for local communication and goodwill! A possible way forward for those close to the action?

Best wishes,
Mike Poupard
Lyne Regis,
Dorset

RNLI Beach Safety Manager Steve Wills comments:

Well done, Mike! You are not alone. Skegness lifeboat station has convinced a major retailer to stop selling a particularly dangerous inflatable with a motor. I would strongly urge anyone considering using inflatables at the coast to use them at the pool instead. Indeed, we would like to see more restrictions on sales at the seaside – stations can contact me for more advice.
[Also see page 26.]

To: HM Coastguard; East Sussex Fire and Rescue; Sussex Air Ambulance; RNLI

We are writing to express our thanks and praise for your response to the emergency that arose from a fire in the starboard main engine of our vessel *MV The Calypso* in the early hours of 6 May 2006.

We would like to thank you for the prompt and professional way in which you reacted to and coordinated the comprehensive multiagency response via the Maritime Incident Response Group to the ship's Mayday call.

Both passengers and crew who were aboard at the time have expressed to us the considerable comfort received when we were able to advise them of the response from your organisations.

We would be grateful if you could pass our thanks to those concerned.

Yours faithfully,
Stelios Kiliaris
CEO Louis Cruise Lines
Nicosia, Cyprus

The Editor comments:

See page 26 for more on this incident, which was the Maritime Incident Response Group's (MIRG) first. MIRG is a new fire and rescue service specially trained to fight fire in the marine environment. The RNLI works alongside MIRG.

Dear Editor

I relocated from Northamptonshire to California just a few weeks ago. One of the first items I received in my redirected mail was my *Lifeboat* magazine. I flicked it open, thinking the contents would all seem a long way away. Imagine my pleasure when I spotted your feature about Hoylake – my home town.

I well remember, back in 1971–2, my father, Bill Whitehurst, was Chairman of the then-Hoylake Urban District Council. One of the official engagements that he and my mother undertook was at the Royal Festival Hall in London to see the Hoylake crew receive one of their gallantry awards from the Duke of Kent. My parents were so proud of the 'boys' and the crew was so delighted that their local 'dignitaries' were able to join the celebration. It was a real day to remember for all of them.

Regards, Jane Evans
Pasadena, California, US

Dear Editor

I thought I'd drop you a line to let you know that I have just enrolled my granddaughter, Grace, as a member of your children's club Storm Force. She is 12 hours old. Her cousin Emily is already a member, having joined at just 3½ hours back in 2004. Both mothers were once members too!

Your readers might like to consider doing something similar for a young person in their lives!

RNLI Life Governor Chris Clifford
Erdington, Birmingham

The Editor comments:

Congratulations to Grace and her family – the Editor of *Storm Force News* eagerly awaits Grace's first artwork contribution! (See opposite for details of all RNLI supporter categories.)



New and old(!) members of Stormforce. L-R: Helen, daughter Grace, Emily and mum Tracy

Lifeboat Lottery

1st
prize



Will you win in Winter?

Tickets for the Winter 2006 Lifeboat Lottery are available from 16 October–15 December 2006, with the draw taking place on 5 January 2007. If you don't already receive tickets regularly, please call 0845 121 4999 or email lottery@rnli.org.uk. (Unfortunately, because of varying tax and gaming laws, tickets are not available in either Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland.)

First prize is a Ford Ka and second prize is an 11-day Land of the Midnight Sun cruise for two onboard the MV *Athena*, sponsored by Travelscope Holidays Ltd. Third prize will be high street vouchers worth £500, with six further cash prizes ranging from £100 to £250.

2nd
prize



The Lifeboat Lottery has yet again seen astounding results, with the Summer 2006 draw raising £935,000. Thank you to everyone who has bought or sold tickets.

On hearing that she had won first prize of a Vauxhall Corsa Life, Miss M Jackson from Oxford explained why she supports the Lifeboat Lottery: 'The RNLI is such a good cause. I know someone who lost a brother in a boating accident and am so aware of the valuable work RNLI lifeboat crews do.' Miss Jackson donated her prize to her niece Harriet who told us: 'It was such a surprise! I've just finished university: it couldn't have come at a better time.' The second prize, a 10-day cruise of Italy and the Mediterranean, kindly sponsored by Page & Moy, was won by Mrs Jean Clarke of Essex.



Top: Summer winner Miss M Jackson and her niece Harriet
Above: Page & Moy present Mrs Clarke with her prize

Congratulations to the other Summer 2006 winners:

£500 cash	Mr CJ Bateson, Lancashire
£250 cash	Mrs ME Mundy, Hertfordshire
£100 cash	Mrs H Hunter, Fife
£100 cash	Mr RG Bailey, Wiltshire
£100 cash	Mr AE Neave, Devon
£100 cash	Mrs W Brazier, West Sussex
£100 cash	Mrs E Tadema, Somerset

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Hamper dimensions:
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Lifeboats

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Train one, save many



Fit and strong

When the call comes, how can the lifeguards of the RNLI be sure that they will cope with the extreme physical demands they will meet in an emergency?

One need only look at the cork-clad oarsmen of over 100 years ago or the 'lady launchers' of the 1950s to see just how much has changed over the decades in saving lives at sea. Today's crews and lifeguards have previously undreamt-of craft and kit to help keep them safe and to increase the chance of survival of those they go to rescue (see pages 9 and 33). However, as the technology advances rapidly, other things remain the same: the bravery and commitment of the volunteers – and the power of the sea.

Previous issues of *the Lifeboat* have described some of the competence-based training now available to lifeboat crews. Through training they gain the knowledge and the practical skills they need to use the new technology. Due to wider social changes, the vast majority of crew members now come from a non-maritime background so they also need suitable training to feel at home on the water and become expert boathandlers. Even the surf-loving lifeguards must learn how to survive in the worst of conditions. Now, a new set of competencies has been introduced to crew and lifeguard training: fitness.

Drawing its people from a broad selection of society, the RNLI is not immune to the shift to a generally more sedentary lifestyle. Without suitable preparation, the physical effects of being an active part of a rescue team could be almost literally shattering. Technology can help – the high-impact-absorbing crew seats in the new Tamar class lifeboats will significantly reduce the risk of back injury, for example. However, the lifeguards themselves must have a minimum level of strength, stamina and 'aerobic' fitness to be able to put their training into practice. But how can this be assured?

Scientific study

Working with the University of Portsmouth's Department of Sport and Exercise Science, the RNLI has devised a fitness standard each for crew and lifeguards. If a candidate meets the appropriate standard, they can be sure that they will be physically able to perform most tasks usually required in their role, both routine and more 'critical'. Specially designed tests simulate these tasks and can be objectively measured, bringing both peace of mind to the trainees themselves and confidence to their team.

Professor Michael Tipton and PhD student Tara Reilly of the University of Portsmouth explain further: 'Fitness standards contribute to the RNLI's duty of care to its staff and volunteers, helping to lessen their risk of injury. Based strictly on proven ability, they also make selection fairer and encourage continued training and development.'

Lifeguard fitness

Whilst accident prevention is a key part of the RNLI lifeguards' role, a high standard of fitness is paramount if they are to meet their target of reaching any casualty up to 200m from the shore within 3½ minutes.

The fitness tests designed for RNLI lifeguards are the result of a study published in December 2002 – until this point there were no scientifically based medical or fitness standards for lifeguards anywhere in the world.

Research found that the most demanding tasks for lifeguards are towing a casualty at sea, paddling with a casualty on a rescue board and casualty handling. The study concluded that, as well as holding a recognised lifesaving qualification from an organisation such as Surf Life Saving Association GB or the Royal Lifesaving Society UK, all RNLI lifeguards should be able to demonstrate the following:

Lifeguards' fitness tests

- 200m pool swim in 3 minutes 30 seconds
- 400m pool swim in 7 minutes 30 seconds
- 25m pool swim underwater and a 25m surface swim consecutively in under 50 seconds
- 200m beach run on soft sand in 40 seconds

These tests have been used for real since the RNLI began its lifeguard service in 2003. New lifeguards take the tests as part of their interview process whilst returning lifeguards re-take the fitness tests prior to starting



work. They are then all tested again every month throughout the lifeguarding season. The RNLI only takes on lifeguards who pass and if any recruited lifeguard fails an interim fitness test then they are immediately stood down from operational duties whilst another test is arranged, normally within a week.

Maintaining personal fitness is each lifeguard's own responsibility but the RNLI provides weekly swimming sessions and a structured self-coaching swimming fitness programme to support this. Anyone aspiring to become an RNLI lifeguard can join a fitness training programme while for those who cannot meet the standard or who wish to try a supporting role to the lifeguards, other volunteer shore-based opportunities are increasingly available.

Lifeboat crew fitness

The standard for lifeboat crew members is underpinned by University of Portsmouth research into the relationship

between the ageing process and back injuries, as well as an analysis of the most physically challenging tasks undertaken onboard all-weather and inshore lifeboats. Research found that the most demanding tasks for all-weather lifeboat crew members are man overboard recovery, salvage pump handling and casualty handling, whilst inshore lifeboat crew members' toughest jobs are man overboard recovery, re-entering the boat from the water and anchor recovery.

These strenuous activities require various strengths (notably back and grip) as well as cardiovascular fitness. The research team worked with RNLI operational staff and volunteers at a selection of pilot lifeboat stations to create an ingenious set of simple gadgets to test these abilities, creating a portable 'fit box'.

These tests are new to the RNLI this year and are yet to reach most

lifeboat stations. Unlike the lifeguard tests, the crew tests will allow a range of results from fail through borderline and pass to good pass. It is expected that most crew members will reach at least a pass. A borderline result will bring the chance to develop physical capabilities before a re-test.

Flexible retirement

An added benefit of the fitness standard and tests for crew members is that a 'one size fits all' fixed retirement age is no longer necessary or appropriate. Existing retirement ages are 55 for all-weather lifeboat crews and 45 for inshore. If someone can



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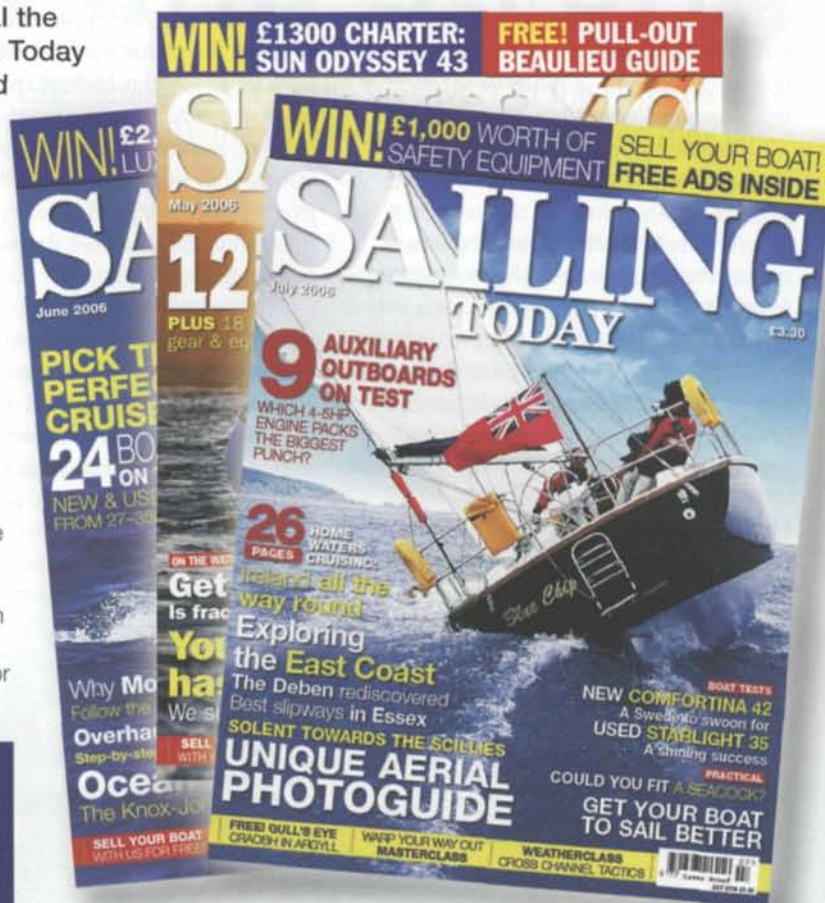
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lifeboat helms and hovercraft commanders and, finally, all-weather, inshore and hovercraft crew members. In this introductory stage of the scheme the RNLI and University of Portsmouth will be closely monitoring how the tests work in practice.

First pass

The first person ever to take the new lifeboat crew fitness tests was Staff Coxswain Mike Storey, pictured left after successfully completing the tasks. Mike's role takes him to every corner of the lifeboat service, delivering all-weather lifeboats anywhere around the UK and RoI coasts or acting as Relief Coxswain. He is himself 'of a certain age' so, by passing the test, he can continue his challenging role.

demonstrate the necessary fitness levels and other competencies beyond these ages, they will now be able to remain in post for up to five more years. The option of retaining highly trained and experienced crew members for longer has to be good news, not least for their less-experienced colleagues who can continue to learn from them.

'The tests really are nothing to worry about, so when your turn comes around, just relax and take it in your stride!'

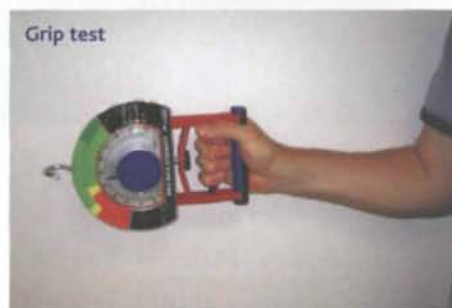
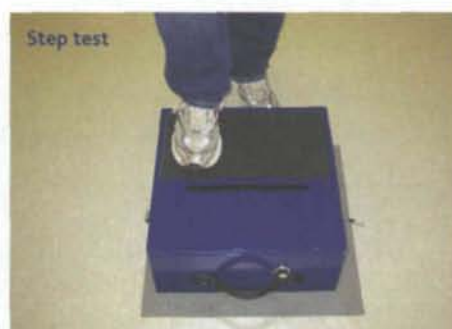
Under the new system, crew members below the current retirement age will be tested every five years, whilst those who have extended their service beyond normal retirement will be tested every two years. The tests will take place at the individual's own lifeboat station and will be supervised by their Divisional Training Assessor, with an emphasis on testing those who will be extending their service beyond the usual retirement age first. Testing new recruits will be the next priority, taking place as soon as possible after their medical examination, followed by tests for boat officers, inshore

Mike reassures his colleagues that the tests take only half an hour to complete and are well within the capability of the average crew member: 'The tests are fair and certainly won't be catching people out. They'll help set a common standard – if you can't do this, you really shouldn't be doing the job.' He adds: 'You can never fully simulate the conditions onboard a lifeboat but the tests offer a good starting position, which can be built on through ongoing training.'

Mike is interested to see how many crew members choose to take up the option of extending their service beyond the normal retirement age. His only concern would be that such extensions might prevent others from progressing to more responsible roles. Overall, however, Mike has this message for all crews in the UK and RoI: 'The tests really are nothing to worry about, so when your turn comes around, just relax and take it in your stride!'

As the RNLI's saying goes, having been trained to the new standards, lifeguards and crew really can go on to 'save many'.

Pages 20–21: A complex training exercise underway, calling on the skills and fitness of all the crew Photo: Mark Passmore
L-R: Staff Coxswain Mike Storey is congratulated by Staff Officer Chris Price on being the first to pass the new tests



Inshore lifeboat crew members' fitness tests:

- three-minute step test for aerobic fitness
- rescue a 35kg 'dummy' (equivalent to sharing the recovery of a person) over the side of the lifeboat
- pull a rope, with a resistance of 15kg, 50m in 45 seconds (simulating raising an anchor)
- re-board the lifeboat via the stern
- grip strength tests
- back strength tests

All-weather lifeboat crew members' fitness tests:

- three-minute step test
- lift a weight of 35kg to a height of 1.5m using lifeline strops
- carry a weight of 20kg for 10m, repeated using other hand
- carry a stretcher with a 35kg resultant load for 10m
- grip strength tests
- back strength tests

What is *your* opinion of the RNLI lifeguard and crew fitness standards? Perhaps you're a crew member or lifeguard who's already taken the tests – *the Lifeboat* would be very interested to hear from you.

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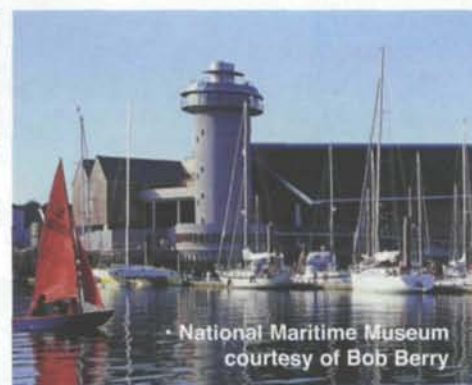


The Falmouth Hotel

Castle Beach, Falmouth

Freephone: 0800 019 3121

email: info@falmouthhotel.com



National Maritime Museum
courtesy of Bob Berry



The Idle Rocks Hotel

Harbourside, St. Mawes, Cornwall

Freephone: 0800 243 020

email: reception@idlerocks.co.uk



The Metropole

Padstow, Cornwall

Freephone: 0800 197 0198

email: info@the-metropole.co.uk

This exclusive RNLi offer applies anytime between October 1, 2006 - March 31, 2007 excluding Christmas, New Year and Bank Holidays. Offer is for £50 off per room, per night B&B and is not applicable against any other special offers. Minimum 2 night stay.

Listings

ABERDEEN

ON-1248(17-24):Feb 9,16,19,20,
Mar 29
D-536:Feb 20,Mar 28,Apr 20

ABERDOVEY

B-758:Feb 19,Mar 2,Apr 21

ABERSOCH

B-790:Apr 13,20,27,28

ABERYSTWYTH

B-704:Feb 26
B-754:Apr 16,28

ACHILL ISLAND

ON-1240(14-28):Mar 21
ON-1245(14-29):Feb 19,20

ALDEBURGH

ON-1193(12-34):Apr 14,29
D-520:Feb 13,Apr 28,29

ALDERNEY

ON-1199(14-04):Mar 4,Apr 3,4,8,22
D-551:Mar 4

AMBLE

ON-1176(12-19):Feb 2,18,Mar 26,
Apr 17,20
D-479:Apr 20
D-569:Feb 18,Mar 26,Apr 17

ANGLE

ON-1114(47-011):Mar 7
D-638:Mar 13

ANSTRUTHER

ON-1174(12-17):Feb 5,Mar 25

APPLEDORE

ON-1140(47-027):Apr 10
B-742:Feb 10,Mar 19(x2),30,Apr 14,17

ARAN ISLANDS

ON-1217(17-06):Feb 1,2,16,
Mar 26,Apr 14

ARBROATH

ON-1194(12-35):Apr 1,8
D-625:Apr 1,8

ARRAN (LAMLASH)

B-770:Feb 21

ARRANMORE

ON-1244(17-22):Mar 19,Apr 16,24,30
ON-1269(17-38):Feb 16

BALLYCOTTON

ON-1233(14-25):Feb 11,21,Mar 8,
Apr 18,21

BALLYGLASS

ON-1235(17-15):Mar 5,19

BALTIMORE

ON-1137(47-024):Feb 24

BANGOR

B-584:Feb 19,Mar 3,4,14,20,
Apr 1,8,12,15,30

BARMOUTH

ON-1185(12-26):Mar 31,Apr 19
D-524:Feb 19,Mar 15,31,
Apr 9,19,23,25,29

BARRA ISLAND

ON-1230(17-12):Feb 25,26,27

BARROW

ON-1109(47-007):Feb 19
D-477:Apr 8,16
D-567:Feb 19,Mar 14

BARRY DOCK

ON-1213(14-15):Feb 18,26,
Apr 2(x2),9,28

BEAUMARIS

B-768:Feb 5,17,Mar 11(x2),
Apr 11,14,16(x2),18,22,29

BEMBRIDGE

ON-1126(47-018):Feb 20(x2),
Mar 12,Apr 5,14,29

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED

ON-1191(12-32):Mar 27,Apr 10,24
D-639:Mar 30,Apr 19,24,25(x2)

BLACKPOOL

D-558:Apr 1,3
D-566:Apr 1,3

BLYTH

D-606:Mar 17

BORTH

D-622:Feb 26,Mar 5,26

BRIDLINGTON

ON-1169(12-12):Feb 8,16,18,Mar 20
D-557:Feb 16,Apr 17,20

BRIGHTON

B-753:Feb 1,Mar 8,10(x2),25,29,
Apr 2,9,16,29

BROUGHTY FERRY

ON-1252(14-31):Feb 4,6,26,
Mar 21,22,Apr 26
D-494:Apr 15,26
D-539:Feb 4,6,9,26,Mar 21,22,26

BUCKIE

ON-1263(17-34):Mar 29
ON-1268(17-37):Feb 15,23,Apr 24

BUNDORAN

B-711:Apr 17(x2)

BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH

B-722:Feb 24
B-733:Apr 29

BURNHAM-ON-SEA

B-795:Feb 19
D-552:Feb 19

BURRY PORT

D-611:Feb 3,Apr 15,23

CALSHOT

ON-1159(52-45):Feb 5,10(x2),13,
Mar 20,30,Apr 14,16
D-609:Feb 13,Mar 20,30,Apr 16

CAMPBELTOWN

ON-1241(17-19):Feb 6,Apr 3

CARDIGAN

B-752:Mar 1,22,Apr 19
D-547:Feb 7,20,Mar 25(x2),Apr 2,16

CHISWICK

E-003:Feb 6,11,27,28,
Mar 27,31(x2),Apr 1,2,8(x3),9,11,12,14,
16(x3),21,24,25,29
E-005:Mar 9
E-006:Feb 15,18,20,21,Mar 4,5(x2),
6,13,18,25,Apr 2,25,26,28

CLACTON-ON-SEA

B-744:Apr 15,19
D-559:Feb 10,17

CLEETHORPES

D-618:Feb 8(x2),18,Mar 5,12,22,28,
Apr 8,17

CLOGHER HEAD

ON-1190(12-31):Mar 7,Apr 18

CONWY

D-627:Mar 10,12,Apr 17,29

COURTMACSHERRY HARBOUR

ON-1205(14-07):Feb 21,Apr 20

COURTOWN

D-491:Apr 29
D-548:Feb 12

CRASTER

D-542:Mar 20,Apr 16

CRICCIETH

B-707:Feb 11,Apr 18,22,29(x2)

CROMER

ON-1097(47-006):Feb 18
D-568:Mar 29

CROSSHAVEN

B-718:Mar 19,Apr 2,4
B-782:Apr 7

CULLERCOATS

B-590:Apr 2,14,16(x2),26
B-591:Feb 5

DONAGHADEE

ON-1267(14-36):Mar 12

DOUGLAS

ON-1147(47-032):Feb 19,Mar 29,
Apr 30

DOVER

ON-1220(17-09):Feb 8,10,28,
Mar 2,3,Apr 5

DUN LAOGHAIRE

ON-1200(14-05):Feb 9,25
D-565:Mar 19,30

DUNBAR

ON-1207(14-09):Mar 3,31,
Apr 4,15,28,29
D-544:Feb 11,Mar 9,
Apr 1,28(x2),29(x2)

DUNMORE EAST

ON-1266(14-35):Mar 29,30(x2),
31(x2),Apr 1(x2),2

EASTBOURNE

ON-1184(12-25):Feb 4,19,Mar 3,5,14
ON-1195(12-36):Apr 16(x2)
D-605:Feb 19,Apr 16

ENNISKILLEN

B-581:Apr 16
B-592:Feb 9,19,Mar 25,Apr 9

EXMOUTH

ON-1180(14-01):Mar 31,Apr 14,15
D-516:Feb 14,Mar 12,18,
Apr 9,15(x3),16

EYEMOUTH

ON-1209(14-11):Feb 5(x2),Mar 11,
Apr 10,28,29

FALMOUTH

ON-1256(17-29):Feb 11,19,
Mar 31,Apr 29
B-595:Feb 11,Mar 26,Apr 17,18,29

FENIT

ON-1239(14-27):Mar 9,Apr 5,14,17,19
D-473:Apr 5

FETHARD

D-528:Mar 12,30,31,Apr 2,6,8,9

FILEY

ON-1170(12-13):Feb 27
D-474:Feb 19,27,Apr 16,26

FISHGUARD

ON-1198(14-03):Feb 19,Mar 24,Apr 8
D-505:Feb 19,Apr 8
D-652:Apr 28

FLAMBOROUGH

B-703:Feb 23,Mar 26

FLEETWOOD

ON-1095(47-004):Mar 4,5,26,Apr 1,6
D-556:Feb 11,Mar 5,24,25,26,
Apr 1(x2),6(x2),10,30

FLINT

D-483:Feb 5(x2)

FOWEY

ON-1222(14-18):Apr 15
D-526:Mar 5,Apr 15,29

FRASERBURGH

ON-1259(14-34):Feb 6,12,Mar 31

GALWAY

B-767:Apr 21,29

GIRVAN

ON-1196(12-37):Apr 28

GRAVESEND

E-002:Feb 12(x2),19,25,
Mar 18,25,26,27,28,
Apr 5,17,22,23,25,27,29,30(x2)

GT YARMOUTH AND GORLESTON

B-786:Feb 16,Mar 2

HAPPISBURGH

D-607:Apr 30

HARTLEPOOL

ON-1274(14-37):Feb 16,20,
Mar 6,13,18,Apr 8
B-766:Feb 18,20,Mar 2,29

Inshore lifeboats

B-### B class lifeboat (Atlantic 21, Atlantic 75 or Atlantic 85)
D-### D class lifeboat
E-### E class lifeboat

H-### Inshore rescue hovercraft
XP-### X boat; small powered inflatable lifeboat
BB-### Boarding boat

See the map on page 25 for more information

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA

B-776:Apr 16
D-502:Apr 16
D-527:Apr 29
D-603:Apr 2
D-633:Apr 28(x2)
H-006:Apr 17,28,29

SOUTHWOLD

B-750:Mar 26

ST ABBS

B-783:Feb 5(x2),22,Apr 16,17,29

ST AGNES

D-615:Mar 11,29

ST BEES

B-719:Apr 6,18

ST DAVIDS

ON-1139(47-026):Feb 19,Mar 4,19,
Apr 2
D-543:Feb 19,Mar 3

ST HELIER

ON-1157(47-039):Apr 4
B-756:Mar 19

ST IVES

ON-1167(12-009):Mar 30,Apr 3
D-515:Mar 30
D-530:Apr 10,26

ST MARY'S

ON-1229(17-11):Feb 18,21,Apr 17
ON-1257(17-30):Mar 27

ST PETER PORT

ON-1203(17-04):Feb 17,22,14,16,
Apr 15,29

STAITHES AND RUNSWICK

B-788:Mar 27,29,Apr 8

STORNOWAY

ON-1238(17-18):Mar 9,10,15,21,23

STROMNESS

ON-1236(17-16):Mar 6,Apr 16

SUNDERLAND

B-762:Feb 5,12,28,Mar 7,11,12,
Apr 7,10,14(x2),16,17
D-608:Feb 12,Mar 4,19,Apr 10,14

SWANAGE

ON-1182(12-23):Mar 17,Apr 10,14,15
ON-1187(12-28):Feb 15,19,26
D-604:Apr 10,14
D-613:Feb 15,19(x3),26

TEDDINGTON

D-576:Mar 31
D-648:Feb 2,13,Mar 29

TEESMOUTH

ON-1110(47-008):Feb 18

TEIGNMOUTH

B-588:Feb 19,Mar 18,Apr 1(x3),17

TENBY

ON-1112(47-010):Apr 18
ON-1281(16-02):Apr 15(x2)
D-510:Apr 14,16

THE MUMBLES

ON-1096(47-005):Mar 11,Apr 30
D-601:Mar 13
D-623:Apr 16,22, 23, 27, 29, 30(x3)

TIGHNABRUAICH

B-743:Apr 22, 25

TOBERMORY

ON-1270(17-39):Mar 10(x3),27

TORBAY

ON-1255(17-28):Feb 19,26,27,
Mar 26,31,Apr 9,11,15,17,18,23,29(x2)
D-651:Feb 17,27,Mar 26,Apr 1,5,10,14,
5,17,19,20,26,28(x2),29(x2)

TOWER

E-001:Apr 8,9,10
E-004:Feb 1,2(x3),4,5,6(x2),8,17(x2),18,
19,21,22,24,26 Mar 4(x2),5,6,8,11(x2),
12,14(x2),15(x3),16,19,22(x3),23(x2),24,
26,28, Apr 13,16,18,24,25(x2),29(x2),30
E-005:Feb 12,Apr 1,2(x2),4,5,6

TRAMORE

D-643:Apr 4,11

TREARDUR BAY

B-731:Mar 9,30,Apr 10,18,20
D-614:Apr 18

TROON

ON-1275(14-38):Feb 10,18,26,
Mar 6,Apr 16,25,27
D-467:Apr 27

TYNEMOUTH

ON-1237(17-17):Feb 2,5,Mar 27,Apr 3
D-535:Feb 5,15,Apr 2,4,9,23

VALENTIA

ON-1218(17-07):Mar 21,Apr 2
ON-1254(17-27):Mar 31,Apr 1

WALMER

D-514:Apr 15,28,30

WALTON AND FRINTON

ON-1154(47-036):Feb 18(x2),24,
Mar 14,Apr 15

WELLS

ON-1161(12-003):Mar 30,Apr 13,15
D-512:Feb 10,Apr 13

WEST KIRBY

D-612:Apr 1

WEST MERSEA

B-755:Feb 25
B-761:Apr 24,29(x2)

WESTON-SUPER-MARE

B-701:Feb 1,Mar 21,Apr 26,30(x2)
D-537:Mar 21,Apr 30

WEXFORD

D-644:Feb 10,12,Apr 29

WEYMOUTH

ON-1261(17-32):Feb 11,15,19,
Mar 18,Apr 5,8,15,17,25
B-746:Feb 4,12,19,Apr 2,5,6,15

WHITBY

ON-1212(14-14):Mar 27,30,31,
Apr 1,19,28
D-503:Feb 3
D-511:Mar 30
D-521:Apr 19,28

WHITSTABLE

B-764:Feb 12,18,Mar 23,
Apr 1,16(x2),29

WICK

ON-1225(14-21):Feb 16

WICKLOW

ON-1153(47-035):Apr 6,24

WITHERNSEA

D-541:Mar 10,Apr 3

WORKINGTON

ON-1141(47-028):Apr 6,11,21
D-635:Mar 27,Apr 6,7

YARMOUTH

ON-1249(17-25):Feb 12,22,27,
Mar 11,17,Apr 1,6,22,25,29,30

YOUGHAL

B-780:Feb 9,Mar 5

The services listed here are those for which returns had been received at RNLI headquarters by 8 June and processed by 15 June 2006.

On station

ON-1127(47-019) *Babs and Agnes Robertson*, The Mumbles, 15 July 2006. ON-1096(47-005) *Ethel Anne Measures* withdrawn

ON-1281(16-02) *Haydn Miller*, Tenby, 28 April 2006.
ON-1112(47-010) *RFA Sir Galahad* withdrawn to the relief fleet

ON-1110(47-008) *Phil Mead* withdrawn to the relief fleet and Teesmouth lifeboat station closed on 29 April 2006.

ON-1283(16-04) *Spirit of Padstow*, Padstow, 17 July 2006.
(See page 9) ON-1094(47-003) *James Burrough* withdrawn

ON-1282(16-03) *The Misses Robertson of Kintail*, Peterhead, 28 April 2006. ON-1127(47-019) *Babs and Agnes Robertson*, withdrawn to the relief fleet, but see above

B-804 *Lydia Macdonald*, Macduff, 7 June 2006.
B-578 *The Rotary Club of Glasgow* withdrawn to ILC, Cowes

Naming ceremonies

D-654 *Angel of Holyhead*, Holyhead, 22 April 2006
D-647 *Barry Lazell*, Shoreham Harbour, 29 May 2006
ON-1281(16-02) *Haydn Miller*, Tenby, 25 June 2006
D-653 *William Hadley*, Mablethorpe, 17 June 2006

Station anniversary

Walmer lifeboat station is celebrating 150 years of saving lives at sea and has been awarded an RNLI Vellum to mark the event. Lifeboat crews at Walmer have been presented with a total of 27 RNLI awards for Gallantry. Their lifeboat *Charles Dibdin* was one of the 19 that took part in the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk in 1940. Today, the station operates the B class Atlantic 21 *James Burgess* and the D class *Lord Kitchener*.

Appointments

Philip Lay – Penarth lifeboat station Lifeboat Operations Manager
Nicholas Redding – Burnham-on-Sea Deputy Launching Authority

Long service awards

Richard Hambly – Port Isaac lifeboat station Senior Helmsman completed 20 year's service on 27 January 2006
Mike McErlane – Kinghorn lifeboat station Helmsman completed 20 year's service in July 2006



Seamus Mason at the helm of *Coventry and Warwickshire* in April 2006, a few days before his retirement
Photo: Nick Leach

Retirements

Alasdair Barker – Islay lifeboat station Coxswain
Malcolm Gray – St David's lifeboat station Coxswain
Seamus Mason – Youghal lifeboat station Mechanic and Senior Helmsman (pictured)
Phil Moran – St Ives lifeboat station Lifeboat Operations Manager
John Murray – Buckie lifeboat station Coxswain
Steve Postles – Lyme Regis lifeboat station Crew Member
Thomas Summers – Fraserburgh lifeboat station Mechanic
Rab Thompson – Kirkcudbright Lifeboat Operations Manager
Henry West BEM – after 21 years of diligent service to Sheringham fundraising branch
Thomas Summers – Fraserburgh lifeboat station Mechanic

Deaths

Michael Abbott – former Dover lifeboat station Crew Member
Dr Tom Andrews – former Cromer lifeboat station Honorary Medical Adviser
Dr Paul Barclay – former Cromer lifeboat station Honorary Secretary
Giles Battock – Kinsale lifeboat station Deputy Launch Authority
Peter Brown – former Salcombe lifeboat station Assistant Mechanic
Vera Brown – Cowes fundraising guild Treasurer
Paul Chapman – divisional base West Station Mechanic/Divisional Technician
Hadrien Dean – Bridlington lifeboat station Assistant Tractor Driver
John De Courcy Ireland – Dun Laoghaire lifeboat branch President
Simon Doherty – former Craster lifeboat station Crew Member
Dr Donald Duck – former Mallaig lifeboat station Honorary Medical Adviser
Michael Fagan – Exmouth lifeboat station Deputy Launch Authority
Elaine Fisher – former Havant fundraising branch Minutes Secretary
Stan Frith – Hoylake and West Kirkby Lifeboat Management Group Chairman
David Green – former Penarth lifeboat station Crew Member
Lewis 'Tuner/Tuna' Harrison – Cromer, further to last issue's notice, also former Second Coxswain (twice) and Coxswain
Bill Hurrell – former Hope Cove lifeboat station Crew Member
John Macrae – former Kyle of Lochalsh lifeboat station Honorary Secretary
Archie McLellan – Mallaig Lifeboat Management Group Chairman
John Morgan – former divisional base West Fleet Mechanic
David Munro – Dunbar lifeboat station Lifeboat Operations Manager
Tim Osborne – former Penlee lifeboat station Crew Member
Patrick Sherwin MBE – former Ryde fundraising branch Chairman
Stuart Swallow – former North East Area Organiser
Stan Turns – former Salcombe lifeboat station Second Coxswain and Deputy Launching Authority
Arthur Wignall – former Lytham St Annes Coxswain
Les William (Les Marine) – former Burry Port lifeboat station Helmsman and Lifeboat Operations Manager
Magnus Work – former Kirkwall lifeboat station Honorary Secretary



1 Severn



2 Arun



7 E class



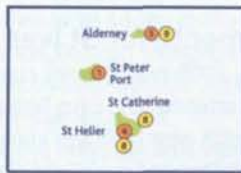
8 B class (Atlantic 21, 75, 85)



9 D class



H Hovercraft



3 Tamar



4 Tyne



5 Trent



6 Mersey



Lifeguard Inshore rescue boat



Lifeguard Rescue watercraft

RNLI in action

This quarters' highlights of the many hundreds of lifeboat launches and lifeguard incidents around the UK and Republic of Ireland



Cruise liner in crisis

Six lifeboats launched on 6 May 2006 to the help of *The Calypso* (pictured). The 135m liner and 708 passengers were 15 miles south of Beachy Head, East Sussex, when fire broke out. Tyne classes *Max Aitken III* from Bembridge, *Voluntary Worker* from Selsey and *Hermione Lady Colwyn* from Shoreham Harbour; Mersey classes from Eastbourne *The Royal Thames* and Hastings *Sealink Endeavour*, and Newhaven's Severn class *David* and *Elizabeth Acland* joined Government agencies to ensure the fire was extinguished and evacuation was avoided pending a tow to Southampton. (Also see Letters page 17.)

Floating away

Arbroath's all-weather crew were assisting a local boat on 8 April 2006 when they noticed an inflatable dinghy being swept out to sea by tide and wind. D class *John Charles Raybould* and crew launched at 3pm to investigate. They found three 11–13-year-old boys wearing only shorts and T-shirts and no lifejackets. Cold and wet, they were highly vulnerable and would certainly have perished quickly had they entered the water. Onshore,

they were checked by paramedics and taken home by the police. The inflatable dinghy was destroyed.

Dangerously dehydrated

On 25 April 2006, three lifeboats worked together to save a 14m yacht and her crew sinking off Ardlamont Point, Loch Fyne. Launching at 1.05pm Tighnabruaich's B class *Alec* and *Maimie Preston* was first to reach *Shantico* and towed her to shelter south of Inchmarnock. At 2.33pm Troon's Trent class *Jim Moffat* arrived with a salvage pump. The yacht's crew were transferred in return, three by helicopter and four by inshore lifeboat. The *Jim Moffat* set up a tow towards Largs marina but two of the yacht's crew became seriously ill, one suffering severe dehydration. Largs's B class *Peggy Keith Learmond* launched at 5.20pm to meet them en route and get them to shore quickly.

A busy month for St Ives

On 21 May 2006, relief Mersey class *Royal Shipwright* attended the 21m *Testerossa*, 27 miles north west of St Ives in near-gale-force winds. Sennen Cove's Tyne class *Norman Salvesen* joined in to achieve 5 knots

to St Ives Bay. The service lasted from 10pm–7.15am. The following day, *Royal Shipwright* launched to a person fallen from the cliff at Hell's Mouth. All weather and inshore lifeboats were called to separate incidents at the same time on 14 June. The Mersey class assisted a 10m fishing boat 17 miles north of St Ives while the D class *Marguerite Joan Harris* launched to a 34-year-old woman who had reacted badly to a weever fish sting. Lastly, the inshore lifeboat launched on 19 June to help a pregnant woman and her friend cut off by the tide on rocks at Porthminster Point.

First season success

Glorious sunshine brought many to Croyde and Woolacombe beaches, North Devon, on 11 June 2006, but high surf and strong rip currents combined to make a busy day for RNLI lifeguards. They used their rescue watercraft to pluck seven swimmers from a rip current and their rescue boards to rescue 13 closer to shore. Their first aid training came to the fore for a casualty with a broken ankle and several more suffering cuts and head injuries having been struck by surfboards. (Also see page 5.)



Bare knuckle fight

When Adrian, Duncan and Craig decided to enter a stretch of notoriously treacherous water, they knew they were risking their own lives

It was 3am on Sunday 16 October 2005 when the Coastguard called Bridlington lifeboat station to search for two swimmers, missing off the north promenade. Benign as it sounded, Helmsman Adrian Trower knew that the area known as the Knuckle was not to be entered lightly. The combined effect of the promenade and the north pier is a maelstrom of reflected waves so hazardous that lifeboats are only to enter in the event of a real threat to life. 'It's nasty in there',

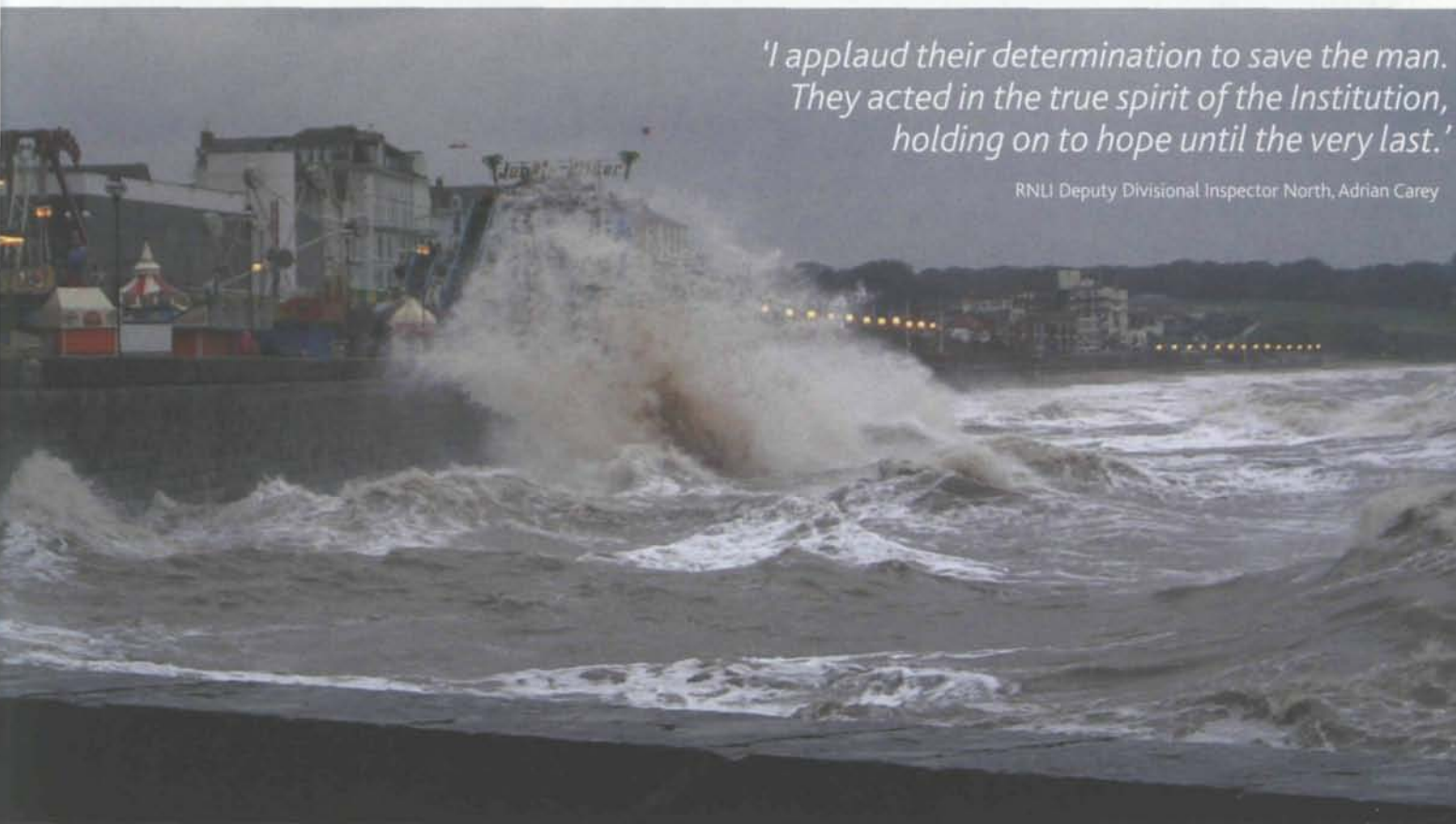
explains Adrian. 'An inshore lifeboat actually capsized there a few years ago.'

Now, the conditions were, in Adrian's word, 'horrific' even at the water's edge. The D class *Lord Feoffees III* launched into crashing waves with Adrian at the helm and Crew Members Duncan Stewart and relative newcomer Craig Akid. All were aware of the danger ahead.

Despite the hour, the area was well lit by the pier's amusement park and the Moon. Adrian rounded the end of the north

pier sounding the lifeboat's horn to warn the many night anglers to raise their lines. Then he headed in toward the promenade – and the Knuckle. He and his crew scanned the water for signs of the swimmers.

Seeing nothing, they made the run from the corner of the pier to the Knuckle and back four or five times. Throughout, they battled steep and unpredictable waves. The three volunteers worked together to ensure the lifeboat's stability, each of them maintaining constant



'I applaud their determination to save the man. They acted in the true spirit of the Institution holding on to hope until the very last.'

RNLI Deputy Divisional Inspector North, Adrian Carey

vigilance. At the same time, the Coastguard shore team and the police were searching the promenade and pier.

Adrian reluctantly decided to take the lifeboat back beyond the worst of the confused seas so he could assess the situation in relative calm. The extra sea room also allowed him to increase speed and clear the lifeboat of some of the water that had filled her. With breaking waves coming from two directions at once the risk of capsizing had been high. 'Without a positive sighting, I didn't want to put my life and those of my crew in danger any longer.'

On shore, the police found the first casualty, safe and well but concerned for his companion. A pile of clothes on the promenade indicated a likely position and a whistle soon came from a fisherman ashore to confirm a sighting – along the wall, right in the Knuckle. Adrian made a couple of short runs in and back in an attempt to get a sighting himself. The lifeboat required skilful handling between the random wave peaks and he felt that capsizing was possible at any time. Suddenly, close to the wall, there was the swimmer.

But he was barely visible – only the top of his head was above water.

Adrian somehow slid the boat between the wall and the casualty to keep him from being smashed against it and Duncan grabbed the man's arm. At that moment, a wave swept into them, caught the man and pushed him under the lifeboat. Showing remarkable presence of mind, Adrian immediately lifted the engine to save running the casualty over with the propeller.

Astonishingly, Duncan followed the man into the heaving water – an act of enormous courage. He had lost sight of him, however, and he and his colleagues were now in extreme danger. Back wash was once again filling the lifeboat with water and Adrian knew they only had seconds before they would have to retreat.

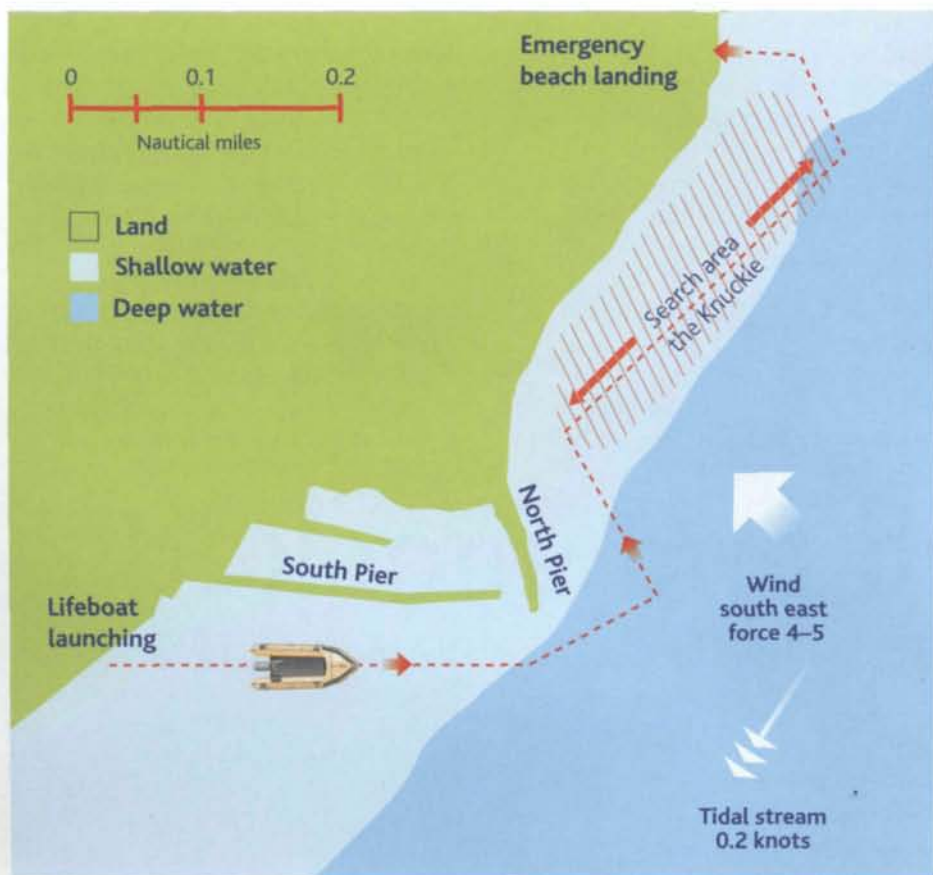
As Duncan struggled back onboard, the casualty reappeared 2m from the lifeboat. Adrian dropped the engine and manoeuvred hard. As soon as they were alongside, Duncan and Craig hauled the casualty onboard. He was unconscious and clearly in need of emergency medical attention. How long had he been in the

water? All they could do for now was keep his head above the water in the boat and his airway clear.

Drawing on every ounce of his training, experience and local knowledge, Adrian charged *Lord Feoffees III* out of the danger area, clearing her of water in the process. Running to a small area of clear beach, he made an emergency landing. Craig stayed with the lifeboat while Adrian and Duncan rushed the casualty up the beach and started to attempt resuscitation. The Coastguard and police arrived with the news that no ambulance would be able to attend for up to 30 minutes. The two crew members persevered in their arduous task until an ambulance did arrive.

Later, it was with enormous sadness and disappointment that the crew heard of the man's death. RNLI Deputy Divisional Inspector for the North Adrian Carey says: 'I applaud their determination to save the man. They acted in the true spirit of the Institution, holding on to hope until the very last.'

The gruelling night was not over, however. Back on the beach, the conditions for relaunch were appalling. Craig had



fought to keep the lifeboat safe and his Helmsman commends him on a difficult job well done. Adrian Trower recalls: 'When we got back to her at the water's edge, the lifeboat was being thrown about like a rag doll.' With the arrival of the station's tractor and trailer, an attempt was made to recover the lifeboat there and then but this proved impossible in the soft sand. There was no choice but to head back out to sea. Even with expert support from the station's shorehelpers to hold the lifeboat head to sea, it took several attempts to launch successfully. Despite all that had happened, the crew made it back to the lifeboat station just over an hour after their initial launch.

Following what was such a demanding incident and Craig's first serious shout, Adrian admits: 'There was no sleep for anyone that night so, the following day, we all met at my house for a debriefing.' It was only later that Adrian realised he knew the casualty's family.

Helmsman Adrian Trower is awarded the Thanks of the Institution Inscribed on Vellum for his leadership and determination in dangerous and difficult

circumstances. For their part in the service, Crew Members Duncan Stewart and Craig Akid each receive a Letter of Appreciation signed by the RNLI's Chief Executive along with Vellum Service Certificates.

Asked about his award, Adrian Trower says: 'I was shocked and over the moon. I had to come to the station to see what a Vellum looks like in the flesh! I never expect to receive anything but it's great – a real achievement. It's for the whole station, we're all in the same team.'

Adrian Carey comments: 'Although this was a relatively short service, it was carried out in dark and demanding conditions, and in an area known to be hazardous for inshore lifeboats. Adrian showed great judgement and leadership in trying to ensure the three could do their utmost to save the swimmer.'

Pages 27–8: Adrian and Duncan returned to the pier the next day to take photographs of the conditions at the Knuckle
Top right L–R: Craig Akid, Adrian Trower and Duncan Stewart



THE DETAIL

THE DATE AND TIME

Sunday 16 October 2005, 3.05–4.10am

THE CASUALTIES

Two swimmers

THE CONDITIONS

Dark **Weather:** Part cloudy
Visibility: Fair **Wind:** South east, force 4–5
Sea state: Steep and unpredictable waves reaching 2m

THE CREW

Helmsman: Adrian 'AD' Trower (35, self-employed roofer, 8 years on crew)

Crew Members: Duncan Stewart (41, café manager in summer, groundworker and doorman in winter, 14 years on crew); Craig Akid (27, butcher, newly completed probationary year on crew)

THE LIFEBOAT

D-557 D class inshore *Lord Feoffees III*

On station: September 2000

Funding: £14,110 The Lords Feoffees and Assistant of the Mayor of Bridlington, their third lifeboat

THE LIFEBOAT STATION

Bridlington **Established:** 1805 **Other lifeboats:** Seven various lifeboats 1805–71, three self-righter pulling and sailing (1885–99), a self-righter single motor (1931), a self-righter twin motor (1947), a Liverpool class (1953), an Oakley class (1967), two Mersey class (1988, the current all-weather lifeboat *Marine Engineer* 1995), five D class from 1966 including *Lord Feoffees* (1984), *Lord Feoffees II* (1992) and the current inshore lifeboat *Lord Feoffees III* (2000) [With thanks to Fred Walkington for station history information] **Previous gallantry awards:** Silver Medal to: John Usher (1828); George Gray (1834); Thomas Frankish (1865); James Harrington (1867); Henry Hutchinson (1890); Christopher Brown, Fred Brown, Thomas Clark, Richard Purvis and John Usher (1893); Coxswain John E King (1972). Bronze Medal to: Coxswain John E King (1968; second service clasp 1972); Coxswain Fred Walkington (1979; second service clasp 2000); Assistant Mechanic Andrew Brompton (2000). Thanks of the Institution Inscribed on Vellum to: Coxswain John E King (1967, 1969); HT Wood (1967); Crew Member, then Coxswain, Fred Walkington (1970, 1973, 1980, 1985); Crew Members George William Traves, Denis Atkin, Roderick William Stott, Anthony John Ayre and Kenneth Bently (1973); Helmsman Andrew Brompton (1986). **Honours from Her Majesty The Queen to:** Retired Coxswain Fred Walkington OBE (2001) and Retired Coxswain Roland Stork MBE (2004).

On Sunday 11 June 2006, a man launched his flat-topped kayak at Perranporth in Cornwall in anticipation of an afternoon's fun. Soon however he was overwhelmed by 2m surf. It washed him, out of control, round into a rocky cove and threw him into the water. Trapped at the foot of 20m cliffs, with no companion or radio to raise the alarm and out of sight of the beach, he was very vulnerable. But someone up on the cliff spotted him and alerted RNLI lifeguards just in time. It was 5.55pm – five minutes before the planned end of their day's patrols.

Lifeguards Ben Gardener and Kris O'Neil immediately launched their inshore rescue boat. They sped to the cove, where, on their second run, they sighted the man just 2m out from the cliff. Ben explains: 'He couldn't have paddled out by himself in the conditions. He would have had to hold on for three hours until the tide dropped to allow him to walk round on the sand.'

The man was clinging onto his kayak and paddle to keep him afloat but was surrounded by rocks. The rescue boat wouldn't be able to reach him so Kris dived into the water and swam over to the man:

'He was very happy to see me. He was stuck where he was, clumsy from exhaustion and the cold.'

Ben returned to the beach to pick up a third lifeguard, Simon Crayford, to help in handling the boat, maintaining balance in the swell.

In the meantime, Kris persuaded the kayaker to abandon his craft so he could be helped to swim out to safer water. Ben and Simon pulled the casualty into the boat and took him to shore. Returning one last time for Kris, they found he was already

Exhausted and shocked

A sea kayaker was in danger of drowning – would help reach him in time?



feeling the cold even though the whole rescue had taken no more than six minutes.

Once the kayaker had received some minor first aid and recovered from the initial shock, he was able to make his own way home.

Ben warns of the potential dangers for inexperienced watercraft users in this area: 'People kayaking or using surf skis around this part of the north Cornish coast really do need to be experienced because of the conditions that can build very suddenly. There was a big surf running this evening and it washed this man in before he had time to react and get out of trouble.'

Kris is an RNLI exchange lifeguard from New Zealand and says: 'This was the most serious water-based incident I'd experienced at that point in my UK season. I'm loving my time with the RNLI – there are a few key differences between the services in my home country and here. For example, smaller surf in the UK means that RNLI lifeguards use their rescue boards to a far greater extent, and there are more beach-based incidents here, with people falling off cliffs or needing help with cuts and bruises.'

Top right: L-R Lifeguards Ben, Simon and Kris

Right: A sea kayaker on a calm day

Below: A lifeguard rescue boat in action

Photo: Nigel Millard





All in a season's work

RNLI Divisional Inspector Colin Williams gives a round up of all things operational this Spring in the island of Ireland

Our crews experience everything that the Irish Sea and Atlantic Ocean can muster, as demonstrated here.

On Sunday 12 March, the 1,500 tonne *Sesam* was drifting helplessly towards the Co. Down coastline in force 9 south easterly winds and rough seas. The Irish Lights vessel *Granuaille* was deployed from Dublin but it was some hours away. As the casualty drifted to within 5 miles of the coastline, Donaghadee and Larne lifeboats were launched at 2.30am to assist if the drift became too great. At 9am *Granuaille* arrived on scene. The lifeboats helped rig towlines and then escorted both vessels into Belfast Lough.

A similar incident occurred on 26 March when the 1,500 tonne coastal tanker *Breaksea*, loaded with a cargo of kerosene, suffered machinery failure and drifted towards the south east corner of Wexford in force 8 southerly winds and rough seas. Kilmore Quay and Rosslare Harbour lifeboats assisted through the night, holding *Breaksea* off from the coast until she could be towed

by Irish Naval Service vessel *LE Aoife*.

Going north again, the fishing vessel *Margaret Ann* was in difficulty on Wednesday 19 April east of Ardglass and her crew took to their liferaft. Newcastle lifeboat came to their aid. A fortnight later the *Bountiful* snagged her net and Newcastle and Portaferry lifeboats were called. After some hours, the fishing vessel was released and towed to Ardglass.

In early May, an 11m yacht sailing from the Isle of Man to Howth was 17 miles east of Clogher Head, Co. Louth, in a southerly force 7 with a moderate-rough sea. Dublin Coast Guard received information that the yacht was taking in water and possibly sinking. Clogher Head lifeboat arrived on scene to see the five crew being airlifted onto an Irish Coast Guard helicopter. The yacht had been set on a south westerly course at 7 knots towards Lambay Island and the lifeboat followed her for a while to assess her movement. She did not appear to be sinking any deeper.

Eventually Coxswain Noel Sharkey placed Crew Members Michael Briggs and Jimmy Kirwan aboard (pictured) and they turned the yacht about and headed under sail towards Clogher Head, eventually berthing the yacht at Port Oriel. This illustrates the principle of only abandoning a vessel if a problem is truly insurmountable and was a demonstration of good seamanship and risk assessment by a lifeboat crew.

These services would not be possible without RNLI Ireland having a strategic network of lifeboats and lifeboat stations, and all the necessary equipment and buildings to maintain their condition, around our coastline. Thanks to our team at Swords and the Shoreworks department at Poole we need have no worries.

THE LIFEBOATS

Donaghadee: ON-1267 *Saxon* (Trent class)
Larne: ON-1246 *Dr John McSparran* (Trent class)
Kilmore Quay: ON-1133 *The Famous Grouse* (Tyne class)
Rosslare Harbour: ON-1276 *Donald & Barbara Broadhead* (Severn class)
Newcastle: ON-1188 *Eleanor & Bryant Girling* (Mersey class)
Portaferry: B-706 *Blue Peter V* (Atlantic 75)
Clogher Head: ON-1190 *Doris Bleasdale* (Mersey class)

Exceptional first aid

For the first time in decades, the RNLI has a new award for lifeboat crew members and lifeguards

Sitting alongside the traditional Gallantry Medals, Thanks on Vellum and Framed Letters of Thanks is now the Framed Certificate for First Aid. This recognises outstanding medical assistance for life-threatening injuries administered in difficult circumstances. The Certificate was created after an incident on 4 May 2004 when Tower crew in London administered major first aid in full view of a crowd that included the casualty's family.

So far just four Certificates have been awarded, the latest being to Achill Island volunteers for the rescue described below.

Achill Island lifeboat *Sam and Ada Moody* launched in the early hours of 9 April 2005 to assist a woman who had had a serious cliff fall. Second Coxswain Mattie Stafford was at the helm with Mechanic Stephen McNulty and four crew members plus the station's Medical Adviser Dr Paddy Lineen.

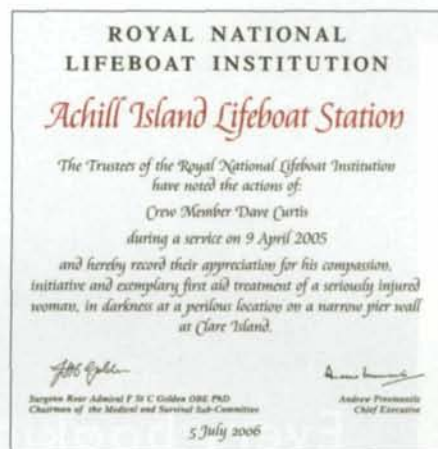
The casualty was on the north side of Clare Island, Co. Mayo, in a remote part of the old harbour known as the Cove. Mattie took the lifeboat to within 15m of the shore then Crew Members Arthur Knipe and Dave Curtis took to the XP boat (a small powered inflatable) with a portable VHF radio, first aid kit, oxygen equipment and torches.

The lifeboat's searchlight picked up three people on top of the derelict eastern pier wall. At 4m high and just over 1m wide, the

wall was a challenge to negotiate. The casualty's head and shoulders were badly injured and Arthur and Dave ensured she was not in danger of another fall, fitted a neck collar, administered oxygen and called Dr Lineen ashore.

An airlift was planned, so the casualty had to be moved. Crew Members Alan Geilty and Michael Molloy joined their colleagues to transfer the injured woman to a stretcher – a hazardous procedure on such a narrow structure. They then embarked on a perilous and physically demanding 430m climb up a rough, narrow track. Beyond the lifeboat's searchlight, their torches began to fade too – before long, they were walking in virtual darkness. Meanwhile the casualty was deteriorating. At last, she was transferred to the Irish Coast Guard helicopter. The five volunteers made their way back along the track with all their equipment and returned to the lifeboat by the XP boat at approximately 5am.

Crew Members Dave Curtis and Arthur Knipe and Lifeboat Medical Adviser Dr Paddy Lineen all receive the RNLI's Framed Certificate for First Aid.



PREVIOUS FIRST AID AWARDS

7 June 2004

Tower Helmsman Mike Sinicola, Mechanic Michael Nield, Crew Member Will Lawrie

For first aid rendered to a seriously injured woman and the care taken over shocked crowd of onlookers.

31 March 2005

Lytham St Annes Second Mechanic Gary Bird

For first aid rendered to a seriously injured fisherman in the confined space of a cabin on a trawler in rough seas.

30 November 2005

Tighnabruaich Crew Member Craig Allen

For compassion and professionalism of first aid rendered to two seriously injured persons recovered by a yacht, following a fatal speedboat collision with a rock.

Photo: Mark Atherton

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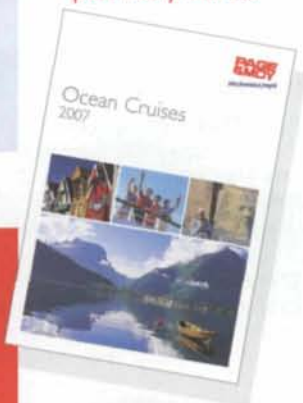
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THE LIFEBOAT COLLEGE

Books

RMS Queen Mary: 101 questions and answers about the great transatlantic liner

By David Ellery, published by Conway
ISBN 1844860337
Price: £9.99 (plus p&p) hardback

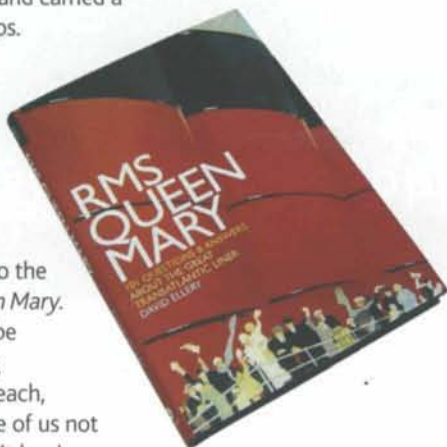
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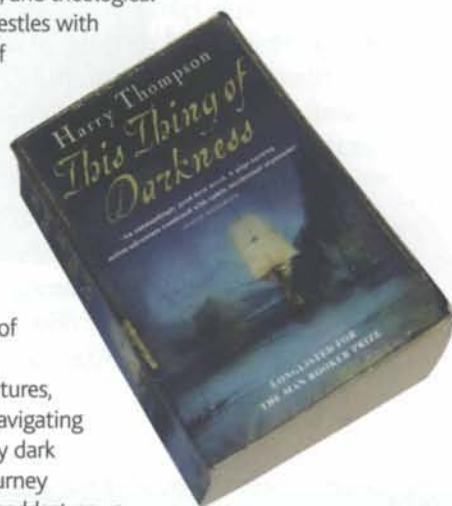
This thing of darkness

By Harry Thompson
Published by Headline Review
ISBN 0780755302818
Price: £7.99 paperback

This astounding account of the crew of the *Beagle*, the 19th century surveying brig, goes much further than describe an historic episode. In his story of Admiral Robert Fitzroy – inventor of the weather forecast, charter of coastlines and pioneer of the use of the Beaufort scale – and Charles Darwin, author of *Origin of the Species*, the late Harry Thompson has produced an entertaining and thought-provoking novel.

Readers will enjoy the bracing nautical adventures, but the book is more than a tale of the high seas. There's humour, sadness, a touch of Dickensian coincidence, and theological argument as Fitzroy wrestles with possible explanations of his discoveries and experiences: was there really a Great Flood? His comradeship and debate with the young Charles Darwin is sometimes stormy.

Like the wild coast of Tierra del Fuego, where Fitzroy began his adventures, this book takes some navigating and there are some very dark moments. But it is a journey worth making and the saddest news of all is that it was the author's first and last novel.



The biggest boat I could afford

by Lee Hughes
Published by Seafarer Boats
ISBN 0954275047
Price: £12.95 paperback

This book tells of the writer's ordeals in a 4.5m sailing dinghy after he decided he would use it to explore the east coast of the US – minus his wife and any sailing experience. Hughes, petrified of the sea since he was a young boy, recounts his perilous wanderings, during which he was beaten up by the elements more than once.

Despite some of the grim situations described, this is a funny book. It is entertaining to discover what Hughes gets up to and whom he meets on this journey of spiritual recognition and surprises. It should also serve to put anyone else off making such a crazy journey themselves.



Stop press ...




Look out for Ray and Susannah Kipling's *Never turn back* just out and available from the RNLI catalogue. See page 3

Unless other ordering details are stated, all books reviewed in *the Lifeboat* are available from all good bookshops and online from Amazon via the RNLI website at rnli.org.uk/amazon. Amazon will donate a minimum of 5% of the value of all such orders to the RNLI. (For the RNLI to benefit in this way you must access Amazon via the RNLI website and not go direct to Amazon.)



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A Tobermory story

Side by side, a husband and wife team keeps the lifeboat at the ready and the funds rolling in

In Tobermory, Strathclyde, a row of neatly painted houses leads down to the harbour and a gift shop, where Eilidh Wilshire is selling souvenirs to tourists. In an office next door, her husband John tends to some paperwork. Both are RNLI volunteers and, while they are not crew members, they play an important part in saving lives at sea. Eilidh is the Souvenir Secretary of the RNLI shop, which raised £10,500 in 2005 alone – enough to train an average of 10 lifeboat crew members for a year. As Lifeboat Operations Manager, John runs the adjacent lifeboat station and musters the crew members for lifesaving rescues.

John and Eilidh's voluntary roles are very different from their trades. Eilidh runs bed and breakfast accommodation at their home on the hill overlooking the harbour. John is the green keeper at the local golf course and a wedding

photographer. The pair were keen to help in any way they could, though, when the lifeboat station opened in 1990. 'The RNLI has always been one of my favourite charities, even before the station opened. I like seeing the funds go towards saving lives,' says Eilidh, who began by helping out in the shop and now runs it. John, a former fisherman, has always shared his wife's admiration for the Institution and began volunteering at the same time as her, initially as the Deputy Launching Authority. 'The lifeboat is part of the community and, although many boat users think they will never need it, they are glad of it,' he says.

Summer is a busy time for the pair in all parts of their lives. For John, the grass grows faster, there are more weddings to attend and, sadly, more requests from the Coastguard to launch the lifeboat. 'The summer brings out

Photos: Nigel Millard



best-selling items. 'The same people come back every summer and buy them,' says Eilidh. 'It's a tradition. They are very organised!' Tourists who are short of something to read usually leave happy too. Eilidh has turned a small, disused building nearby into a secondhand bookshop. People can pick out a book from the unattended display and make a donation in return: last year's total alone was about £500.

In contrast to their paid jobs, which carry no staff responsibilities, both Eilidh and John coordinate a team of volunteers in their RNLI lives. Eilidh organises a rota so that the shop is covered throughout the day and John ensures enough people are available to crew the lifeboat day and night, should they be needed.

The Wilshires aren't alone in Tobermory in having jobs that differ markedly from their RNLI roles. The town's lifeboat crew members include a gravedigger, a school teacher and a joiner. 'In a small community like this, everyone has to pitch in to keep things going,' says John, who is originally from Buckinghamshire. He moved to Tobermory 45 years ago to work as a fisherman, and met Eilidh, who has lived in the town all her life, at a dance.

The pair still love living on the Isle of Mull. 'We are happy here,' says Eilidh who, after another successful day at the shop,

is about to head back to the bed and breakfast for some new arrivals. 'It's a safe place to live. We are both busy with our own thing but the RNLI is something nice to have in common.'

As she locks the shop door, John joins her. Although he's finished the station paperwork, he may be called upon to authorise a lifeboat launch at any time. Eilidh hasn't completely left the fundraising behind her for the day, either: back at the house, a lifeboat collection box takes pride of place in the residents' lounge. For the Wilshires, charity really does begin at home.

more leisure boaters around the Isle of Mull and some of them get into difficulty around these parts,' he explains. Tourists, too, flock to Tobermory in the warmer months, from as far afield as Germany and even the US. This influx of visitors means that both Eilidh's bed and breakfast and the RNLI shop enjoy a boost. 'People from abroad are always interested in the lifeboat and they find it amazing that we're a charity,' says Eilidh. 'It takes quite some explaining to them that we are not Government funded, but then their hands go deeper into their pockets.'

Some visitors are also surprised to see packs of Christmas cards on sale during the summer, but they are actually one of the





L-R: Fabio, Hanna and Annalisa

From east to west

There has been a lifeboat station at New Quay in Ceredigion, west Wales, since 1864 when the town had a thriving ship-building industry. This beautiful area attracts visitors from all over the world and three international visitors loved New Quay so much that they decided to stay – they signed up as volunteers at the lifeboat station. They are: Hanna Nuutila from Helsinki, Finland; Annalisa Biaanchessi from Luxembourg; and Fabio Fattoruso from Pompeii, Italy.

Hanna and Annalisa both have close connections to the sea, Hanna having completed a Marine Mammal Science degree and Annalisa an Ecological and Environmental Sciences degree with Communication and Media. Hanna works for the Sea Watch Foundation, monitoring the sightings of the marine mammals while Annalisa coordinates the management of Cardigan Bay's Special

Area of Conservation. Fabio is a local youth worker who has just started a teacher-training course. He has a diploma in Art, a degree in History and a Communication and Media degree from the University of Florence, where he and Annalisa first met.

All three, with Paul Shaw, a local building worker who joined the crew at the same time, are thoroughly enjoying being part of the team at the station. Annalisa comments: 'The seafaring and life skills I've acquired are a real bonus – and compensation for the cold hands and feet that are a feature of winter training exercises!'

When onboard the lifeboat Hanna, Annalisa and Fabio treble the crew's linguistic abilities. Between them they can speak Italian, Dutch, German, French and Finnish as well as English – perhaps their next skill will be to master Welsh!

Pirates of the ... Solent!

Thousands of visitors flocked to the Southampton Boat Show in September, which, this year, had a pirate theme. The RNLI displays included Severn class and Atlantic 85 lifeboats and plenty of opportunities to discover more about crew training, sea safety and MOB Guardian (the RNLI accident alerting technology pictured below). One of the Boat Show's sponsor's, Meridian TV, has also generously featured the RNLI and its Train one, *save many* campaign in its news programmes.



Helmsman Gary Stanbury (centre) and crew
Photo: North Devon Journal

Atlantic helmsman honoured

An RNLI helmsman who put his own life on the line to rescue two men and a teenager from the motorboat *Kasam* on 22 January 2005, is to receive national recognition for his bravery.

Appledore Helmsman Gary Stanbury has been chosen for the Walter and Elizabeth Groombridge Award 2005 for the most outstanding service performed by the crew of an

Atlantic lifeboat. (The Award was established in 1988 in honour of Walter Groombridge, Station Administration Officer at Brighton 1970–80, and his widow Elizabeth's name was included after she too had passed away.) Gary has already received the RNLI Bronze Medal for Gallantry for this rescue (see *the Lifeboat* Autumn 2005 for full details).

'Cruise' training

The RNLI has received outstanding support over the years from two respected cruise companies, and 2006 has been no exception.

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has supported the RNLI for over 40 years. Their latest donation to the RNLI is a £60,000 mobile training unit, pictured, which will be used to deliver training to crews all around the coast. Wendy Hooper-Greenhill, PR Manager at Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, comments: 'We're absolutely delighted that we are now directly contributing to the vital training of volunteer lifeboat crews.'

Thanks to the generosity of its passengers and crew, **Page & Moy** has collected over £50,000 for the RNLI since 1988. It has also donated holidays for Lifeboat Lottery prizes (see page 18.) Recently it has gone a step further, with the RNLI now receiving 10% from any holiday sold through Page & Moy advertisements in *the Lifeboat* – see page 34.



Queen's birthday honours

Congratulations to the following members of the RNLI family honoured by HM The Queen in her (80th) Birthday Honours:

For service to the RNLI

Member, Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Mr John Govier – Sidmouth and district branch Chairman

Mr John Race – Former Teesmouth Coxswain

Mrs Pauline Thompson – Penarth branch President

For service to the shipping industry

Commander, Order of the British Empire (CBE)

Mr William Everard – RNLI Council and Operations Committee member

For service to the community

Member, Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Mrs Anne Cowan – Great Yarmouth and Gorleston ladies guild Vice President

Miss Margaret Harcus – Papa Westray guild President

Oh deer!

Good-quality, up-to-date pictures of rescues are vital in increasing awareness of and encouraging support for the RNLI but they are notoriously difficult to come by. The RNLI's Image Resource Unit has completed work with Pentax to provide a waterproof digital camera to every lifeboat station and some lifeguard units. Some of the resulting shots have already caught the headlines.

In June 2006, a 'deer' little story came out of Arbroath when Helmsman Allan Russell spotted a roe deer struggling in the harbour and launched the lifeboat to save it from drowning. The SSPCA helped transport the deer to East Seaton, where she was released back into the wild. The resulting pictures were snapped up by the media, including Grampian TV.

(There is still time for crew members to enter the first RNLI crew member photographer of the year competition. Full details are available from lifeboat operations managers.)



At the turn of the Millennium the RNLI began to look at new ways to save lives, in addition to its core service of launching lifeboats to sea rescues. As well as deciding to place hovercraft at intertidal areas, lifeguards on beaches and lifeboats on the Thames, the charity investigated saving lives on selected inland waterways. Operations Director Michael Vlasto explains: 'We felt that if we could save more lives by spending a sensible amount of money on an inland lifeboat station we would try to do so.'

This led to an historic occasion in May 2001, when the RNLI opened its first inland lifeboat station at Enniskillen in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, which serves Lough Erne. In July of the same year, the charity established a lifeboat station at Oulton Broad, Suffolk, to serve the busy Norfolk and Suffolk Broads. Then, in 2003, the Irish Coast Guard began to take responsibility for inland search and

rescue in the Republic of Ireland and requested that the RNLI provide rescue cover on Lough Derg, the largest lake on the River Shannon.

At almost 25 miles in length and with depths of up to 30m, Lough Derg resembles an inland sea and attracts thousands of pleasure craft each year, from cruisers and yachts to speedboats and canoes. Although there are no tides to cope with, there are still challenging conditions on the lake. Winds pick up very quickly and steep waves can come from two directions at once. People occasionally fall into the chilly, choppy water from their craft or run aground in hidden shallows.

Following the Irish Coast Guard's request, the RNLI investigated the feasibility of setting up a lifeboat station at Dromineer, County Tipperary, about half way up the east side of Lough Derg. 'We got a great response from the community,' recalls Colin Williams, Divisional Inspector

for Ireland. 'There were several willing volunteers and Dromineer was strategically well placed – in terms of both rescues and a local population that could reach the station quickly.'

Charles Stanley-Smith, now Lifeboat Operations Manager, was delighted at the RNLI's decision: 'Fellow lake user Teddy Knight and I had previously considered starting a rescue service ourselves but realised we needed the training and the professionalism if it was going to work. That's just what the RNLI brought. Since then we've been determined to keep the station going. We don't want to return to the dark old days when we carried out ad hoc rescues on the lake, some of which were frankly dangerous.'

Among the willing potential crew members was Dromineer resident John Hoare, now Helmsman. 'I'd been to sea before with a sub aqua club and felt I had to give something back in return for

The lough of the Irish

With half of its crew women, seven of its volunteers from the same family and not a drop of salt water in sight, Lough Derg is a unique lifeboat station



knowing there is help at hand,' says John, who, for his 'day job', runs an electrical store. In the Winter of 2003–04, John and his fellow volunteers gave up much of their time to train as RNLI crew members. Their preparation included inshore lifeboat training at Cowes, Isle of Wight (now provided at The Lifeboat College in Poole) and a visit to Enniskillen lifeboat station whose inland rescue service had now been active for more than two years. Lough Derg also took delivery of an Atlantic 21 lifeboat *Clothworker*. The lifeboat station was finally declared operational on 25 May 2004.

Another member of the crew who has been involved from the beginning is Valerie Knight, who works at Shannon Sailing Marina in Dromineer. Valerie has been part of several rescues, but one of her most memorable services was also one of the saddest: the crew's first search for a drowned person. 'We all knew that the prospect of that sort of callout was always

there and we were apprehensive about it, but our training came into its own,' she says. 'I think we managed the situation professionally and maintained respect and dignity for all involved.' Valerie is one of seven Knights on the Lough Derg crew. Her sisters Edel, Edwina and Lian are crew members, her brother Colin is Helmsman and Mechanic, her mother Pauline is a shorehelper and her father, Teddy, is a deputy launching authority.

There are other family ties at Lough Derg too. The station's Lifeboat Medical Adviser, Dr Peter Hooker, is married to Crew Member Eleanor – one of seven women on the 15-strong crew. Eleanor, a student, is proud that so many of her colleagues are women. 'On our first all-female shout in 2004, myself, Valerie and Edel were on a rescue to a grounded cruiser in force 6 conditions,' remembers Eleanor. 'As we approached, a young man shouted to his dad in relief that it was the RNLI. However,

as we neared, he shouted again, this time with a greater sense of panic, "Dad, Dad, oh Dad, they're all girls!" Still, we did a good job, towed them to safety and never lost our sense of humour!'

The Lough Derg crew rescued 33 people in 2005, launching from a temporary lifeboat station at the Lough Derg yacht club at Dromineer. Now the RNLI is keen to secure planning permission for a permanent base for the crew, who are experiencing another busy year in 2006.

For more information on Irish inland waterways see www.waterwaysireland.org.

Enniskillen on Lough Erne was the RNLI's first inland waterway lifeboat station. Lough Derg has swiftly followed

Photo: Colin Watson





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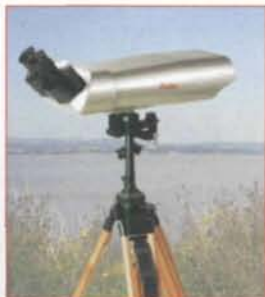
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