

Journal of the
Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Volume 51 Number 510

The

Lifeboat



Winter 1989/90 Mersey class design and development

Fund raising around the country

Lifeboat profile





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The Lifeboat

Winter 1989/90



Royal National

Lifeboat

Institution

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COVER PICTURE

courtesy of

The Hull Daily Mail

The Humber lifeboat *Kenneth Thelwall* is dwarfed by the blazing oil tanker *Phillips Oklahoma*. Sixteen seamen were taken off the tanker after a collision on 17 September 1989. Full details of the service on page 189.

Next Issue: The Spring issue of THE LIFEBOAT will appear in April 1990, and news items should be received by the end of January 1990.

All material submitted for consideration with a view to publication should be addressed to The Editor, THE LIFEBOAT, Royal National Lifeboat Institution, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

Photographs intended for return should be accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope.

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NEWS

Newspoint

A fine summer, but...

Although the final figures for 1989 were not available at the time of going to press the statistics for lifeboat services in 1989 are showing some interesting trends.

The number of services has been running slightly ahead of the 1988 figure for most of the year, and it is likely that 1989 will see as many, and possibly more, services than 1988 – itself an all-time record.

As might be expected the long, hot summer has produced a significant fall in the number of services carried out in strong winds, perhaps to as much as half of last year's number. However, despite, or perhaps because of, the good weather the lifeboats, and the Under-10m lifeboats in particular, have been very busy.

The number of lives saved by the inflatable or rigid inflatable C, D and Atlantic 21 class lifeboats at the end of November already exceeded those saved in the whole of the previous year.

There is no doubt that the trend is for the lifeboat fleet to be busier than ever, and saving an increasing number of lives, in good weather and bad.

'Lifeboat weather' is no longer confined to gales and storms, and the lifeboatmen's service is in great demand even through the best of summer weather.

Royal visitor to the depot and headquarters



HRH The Princess Royal examines a D class inflatable with the Superintendent of the RNLI Depot, Mick Wheeler (left) and Deputy Director Ray Kipling (right) during her visit on 30 November 1989.

HRH The Princess Royal visited the RNLI during a brief visit to Poole on 30 November 1989.

Despite a very tight schedule, which meant she could only spend some 45 minutes with the Institution, the Princess toured the depot and workshop buildings before seeing the operations room, the fund raising department and the hull drawing office at headquarters.

Her Royal Highness was greeted by the Chairman of the Institution, Mr Michael Vernon, and the Deputy Director, Mr Ray Kipling, who conducted her on her tour.

The Princess stopped to talk to several members of staff in both buildings and expressed a keen interest in the work of the RNLI. Before her departure Mr Vernon presented the Princess with a silk headscarf as a memento of her visit

The Institution's 1990 AGM

The 1990 annual meetings of the RNLI will be held on Tuesday, May 22 at the South Bank, London.

The governors' annual general meeting will take place in the Queen Elizabeth Hall at 1130, and the annual presentation of awards to lifeboatmen and honorary workers will be held at 1430 in the Royal Festival Hall.

All governors of the RNLI should find an application form for both meetings enclosed with this issue of THE LIFEBOAT. Should any governor who wishes to attend the meetings not receive a form please write to The Director, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

There is no need to return the form if you will *not* be attending the meeting or do not wish to receive the annual report and accounts.

Branches and guilds will receive details of how to apply for tickets to the presentation of awards from their regional offices, and other supporters who wish to attend the presentation should write to the Director at the above address.

Bequest funds new HQ building

The contract for the new building to provide additional space at RNLI headquarters in Poole has been awarded to John Laing, and the £2m cost is to be met entirely from the £3.5m bequest of the late Mr Kenneth Thelwall.

Mr Thelwall's bequest, the largest bequest ever received by the Institution, has already funded two lifeboats, an Arun class, *Kenneth Thelwall*, stationed at Spurn Point on the Humber and a Tyne class, *Kenneth Thelwall II* currently under construction and destined for the relief fleet.

The RNLI had always intended that the cost of the additional building would not be met from funds raised by volunteers and commenting on the decision to fund the building from Mr Thelwall's bequest the Director, Lt Cdr Brian Miles, said: 'I am very conscious of the need to spend the RNLI's money wisely. By providing this new building now, we will be able to meet the increasing needs of the service into the next century. Thanks to Mr Thelwall's be-

quest, we will not need to use for this project any of the money which our volunteer fund raisers work so hard to collect.'

Work began on the site on 6 November 1989 and is expected to continue until February 1991.

Due to the construction work car parking space at the Poole Headquarters is now very limited, and anyone planning a visit to Poole should ask about arrangements when they make an appointment to visit headquarters.

Open Days postponed

One effect of the extensive building work at Poole is the postponement of the bi-annual Open Days which would normally have been held in July 1990.

With minimal car parking available and major construction work under way it has been decided that it would be unwise to hold the Open Days until the new building is complete.

The dates for the deferred Open Days will be published in THE LIFEBOAT.

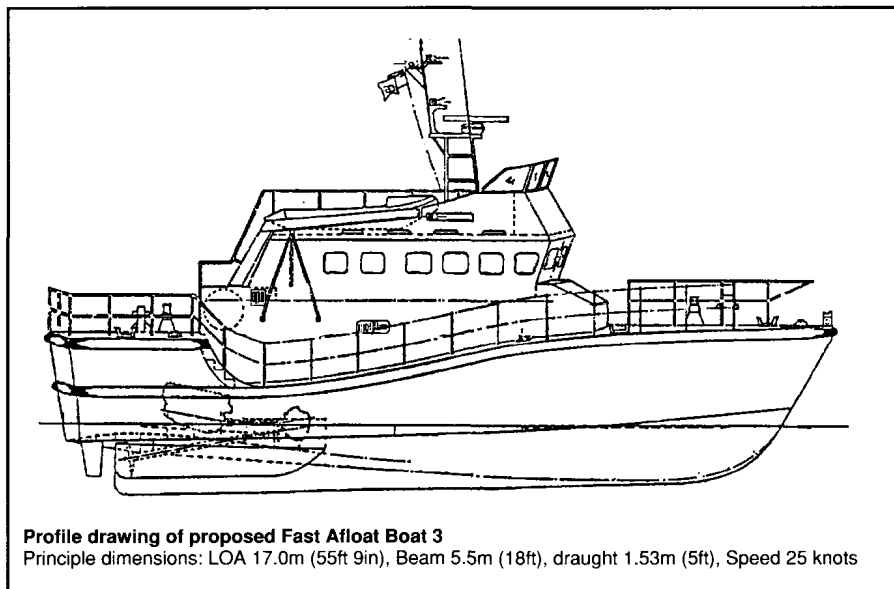
FAB progress

The RNLI has placed an order for the hull, deck and superstructure of a prototype new Fast Afloat Boat (FAB). The order is due for completion at the end of March 1990 and it is anticipated that the boat will be fitted out and ready for trials and evaluation by early 1991.

The design, known as FAB 3, is intended to be in service in 1993 as a replacement for some Arun class lifeboats.

Although superficially similar to the Arun in appearance the new design is in fact very different. At 17m (55ft 9in) she is longer than the 52ft and 54ft Aruns, has a design speed of 25 knots (7 knots faster than the Arun) and has a different hull shape with bilge keels providing protection for the propellers.

Other features of the design include aft-mounted engines with V-drives and an internal superstructure layout divided into two separate compartments – one for the crew and another for seated survivors. Construction



is a form of fibre reinforced composite.

Design work on a smaller, 14m (46ft) fast afloat lifeboat (FAB 4), also with a design speed of 25 knots, is progressing well with a

hull which is a 'geosim' (a naval architects acronym for 'geometrically similar') of FAB 3 – essentially a scaling-down of the larger boat's lines.

RNLI colours at Festival of Remembrance

The RNLI was asked to participate in this year's Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance in the Royal Albert Hall, London in recognition of the vital work carried out by lifeboats during the years of hostilities.

Nineteen lifeboats took part in the Dunkirk evacuation and throughout the Second World War lifeboats responded to 2,212 ships or aircraft in distress which had been damaged by hostile forces, and between 1939 and 1945 rescued 6,376 people.

Thirteen lifeboatmen lost their lives, with three fatalities as a direct result of enemy action.

Robert Fossett, the 37-year-old helmsman of the Southend-on-Sea Atlantic 21 lifeboat and a Sub-Officer with the Essex Fire and Rescue Service was chosen to carry the RNLI's colours at the ceremony on the evening of 11 November 1989.

● Three lifeboatmen from Oban carried the RNLI's colours at the Annual National Service for Seafarers at St Paul's Cathedral on 11 October. William Melville, Malcolm Robertson and Michael Robertson are all members of the crew of the Oban lifeboat, currently the 33ft Brede class *Nottinghamshire*.

When third is more than enough

The annual figures published by the Charities Aid Foundation place the RNLI third in its 1988 'league table' of voluntary income, behind Oxfam and The National Trust.

Although the Institution topped the list in 1987 slipping two positions in the table is of little relevance. As we said in the Winter 88/89 issue of *The Lifeboat* when putting the top-of-the-table position in perspective:

'what really counts is simply whether that money was sufficient to carry out the job the RNLI is required to do'.

Thanks to the magnificent efforts of the fund raisers the £37.75m which put the RNLI in third place was indeed sufficient for its needs, and in fact exceeded the Institution's target of £36m for the year. All are already working hard to meet the 1989 targets.

Honours for lifeboat crews at awards ceremonies

Lifeboat crews took two of the major awards at the Silk Cut Nautical Awards presentations at the Savoy Hotel, London on 23 November 1989.

An eight-man panel of judges, led by round-the-world yachtsman Chay Blyth and including Lt Alan Tate staff officer (training) for the RNLI, decided that the National Rescue award should go to the Hayling Island Atlantic 21 lifeboat crew for their service to the 32ft yacht *Dingaling* which had been knocked down in appalling conditions off the entrance to Chichester Harbour.

Helmsman Frank Dunster had manoeuvred the lifeboat close to one casualty and crew member Graham Raines jumped into the water to support him. Crew member Rod James had then been swept overboard while attempting to recover Raines and the casualty. Graham Raines was awarded the Institution's Bronze medal and five other lifeboatmen received Thanks on Vellum for their part in the service, which was covered in detail in the Spring 1989 issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*.

Some two weeks earlier Graham Raines had also received one of twelve Men of The Year awards at a lunch organised by the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR).

The Seamanship Award also went to an RNLI crew – Coxswain Tommy Ralston and the crew of Mallaij's Arun class *The Davina and Charles Matthews Hunter*.

The award was for a service on 27 October 1988 when, in horrendous conditions the lifeboat saved the fishing vessel *Galilean* and her crew of two from a lee shore surrounded by submerged rocks.

The lifeboat traced the casualty's course downwind through the rocks in winds gusting to 75 knots and, towing from the bow, brought her to safety.

A full description of the service, for which coxswain Tommy Ralston was awarded the Institution's Bronze medal, appeared in the Summer 1989 issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*.

The awards, gold and glass commemorative plaques, were presented by former Conservative party chairman Norman Tebbit.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- The RNLI played a part in the opening of the Southampton International Boat Show in September, when the Tyne class lifeboat *Sarah Emily Harrop* escorted the dignitaries to the ceremony and remained alongside for the weekend, open to the public.
- Following Padstow's success in persuading Cornwall County Council to waive the fee for explosive licences for stations throughout Cornwall the honorary secretary at Torbay, Antony Smith, has had a similar success in Devon. Stations in the county will now pay just a nominal 5p instead of £8.
- All stations operating outboard-engined lifeboats have been informed that they can use 'green' unleaded fuel and, where possible, most are now using the cleaner, cheaper fuel.

From the Director

Lt Cdr Brian Miles, Director of the RNLI, looks back on 1989 – and forward to a new decade



It is difficult to believe that a whole year has passed since my last message in the journal. The old adage of time passing ever more quickly as the years advance is proving to be true.

1989 has, not unexpectedly, proved to be another busy year for the RNLI, with some satisfying progress to report. Last year I mentioned the work involved in completing the evaluation trials of the Mersey class carriage lifeboats. Orders for 18 of these lifeboats have now been placed and at least a further 10 will be required to fulfill our commitment to have fast lifeboats in service at all stations by the end of 1993.

Contract

The cost of £455,000 for each Mersey class lifeboat has already been announced, but it is pleasing to confirm that we have been able to negotiate a contract which virtually guarantees the cost of the entire build programme. We have not been able to achieve this before, and it represents a significant step forward which will be of enormous help in future financial planning for the Institution.

It was a particular pleasure to be present to participate in the naming ceremonies of the first two Mersey class lifeboats to enter service, at Bridlington and Hastings. It was even more encouraging to receive confirmation from the coxswains and crew members at both stations that they are delighted with the performance and seakeeping qualities of their new lifeboats. It is impossible to emphasise sufficiently that for all of us this is the highest accolade that any new lifeboat can receive.

1989 was a marvellous year for naming ceremonies and obviously the long hot summer helped to guarantee some happy and memorable occasions. The naming ceremony and service of dedication of a new lifeboat is invariably a great day for the station concerned.

Details of all the ceremonies appear in the journal, but there are two which I recall for special reasons.

No one fortunate enough to be present will forget the day at Thurso in August when our Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother named the new Thurso Arun class lifeboat *The Queen Mother*. In welcoming Her Majesty the Chairman, Mr Michael Vernon, pointed out that Thurso was the seventh naming ceremony to be carried out by Her Majesty, and that this represented an outstanding record of support for the RNLI.

I also recall another lovely day at Salcombe in June when the station's new Tyne class lifeboat was named *Baltic Exchange II* by Mrs Joy Frame, the wife of the Chairman of the Baltic Exchange.

Before the ceremony a special certificate was awarded to lifeboat enthusiast Jim Wallbridge, who was attending his 100th offshore lifeboat ceremony. Mr Wallbridge attended his first naming ceremony in Sheerness on 18 May 1974, and only two other naming ceremonies had taken place that year. In 1989 there have been 36 naming ceremonies and I believe this illustrates perfectly the spectacular increase in our new lifeboat building programme in recent years.

Prototype

We have now almost completed the build programme of Arun and Tyne class lifeboats and the final boats of these two successful classes will enter service in 1990. Satisfactory progress continues to be made with the development of two, new fast lifeboat classes for the future. A prototype of the larger class will be completed early in 1990 and evaluation trials will commence on the coast. We have gained much experience in recent years with the devel-

opment of lifeboats to meet modern requirements, but it is only when we can try the boats in a coastal environment that we can be reassured they are in every respect fit for the future demands which will be placed on them.

Designing, building and equipping lifeboats for the future is a top priority but we must also be sure that the

boathouses, store-houses and other shore facilities match the requirements of the RNLI. We have been studying these in 1989 as some of our shore facilities are becoming outdated. In some cases, and St Ives, Skegness and Ramsey are examples, totally new boathouses are being built, reducing launching times and incorporating improved facilities for our crews.

Visits

During the last year I have been able to visit many lifeboat stations and a number of financial branches and ladies guilds. Although some of these visits have, I am afraid, been brief I am always grateful for the kind welcome I receive and I am aware that

a similar friendly welcome is extended to all those who manage to visit from the Committee of Management and from Head Office.

Finally, we have now entered a new decade and I believe that the RNLI faces an exciting and as challenging a future as at any time in its long history. I know

we are all confident we will achieve success in all our endeavours to improve our service still further in the future; nevertheless we have to recognise that along the way we will probably have to experience some disappointments.

Changes

These are often caused by decisions involving a change or regrading in lifeboat cover. I believe we owe it to ourselves and to the multitude of people who support the RNLI so generously to ensure that we always provide the very best level of cover around the coast to meet our declared commitment.

The RNLI needs to review this constantly. The availability of a new and improved class of lifeboat with greater speed and increased capability, a change in local conditions caused by the silting up of a harbour or plans to build a marina all have a bearing on these considerations.

I can only confirm that such changes are only contemplated after the most detailed thought by the staff and the Committee of Management and, most important of all, only after the station concerned has been fully consulted.

Thanks

I extend my renewed thanks to all the readers of *THE LIFEBOAT* for the support they give to the RNLI in such a wide variety of ways. I have been delighted to meet so many of you during the last year and I look forward to further opportunities of meeting you in the years ahead.

On behalf of all my colleagues at Headquarters I wish you all a Happy, Peaceful and Healthy New Year.

'We must be sure that the boathouses also match the requirements of the RNLI'

Lifeboat Services



TANKER FIRE VISIBLE FROM FIVE MILES AWAY

Sixteen seamen taken off blazing oil tanker

The collision which involved a tanker off the Humber estuary on 17 September 1989, and the subsequent fire, made front-page news throughout the country, and the actions of the Humber lifeboat crew in taking off many of the Filipino crew of the Liberian-registered vessel has earned them a letter of thanks from the Philippine Ambassador in the UK.

Writing to Brian Bevan, the Superintendent Coxswain at Humber lifeboat station, on behalf of his government, the Filipino people and the crew and their families he said: 'May I express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to you and your members for the brave and courageous rescue.'

The collision, which caused a major pollution alert, began at 0450 when Humber Coastguard informed the Superintendent Coxswain of Humber lifeboat that there had been a collision and subsequent Mayday broadcast from the *Fiona*, a 28,709 ton Maltese-registered bulk carrier, anchored near the Humber Light Buoy some 10 miles east of Spurn Point.

Fire

The vessel had a fire on board, was unable to identify the other vessel involved in the collision and required immediate assistance. The lifeboat crew were immediately summoned and the Arun class lifeboat *Kenneth Thelwall* slipped her moorings at 0500 to proceed.

While on passage it was learned that the other vessel involved was the *Phillips Oklahoma* which was on fire with 25 crew on board.

Helicopters and other ships in the area were on their way to the scene, and four minesweepers were also close at hand. One of them spotted and recovered one man from the water on the way to the burning tanker. The man, recovered safe and well, had been knocked overboard from the *Fiona* and was the only man unaccounted for.

Such was the intensity of the fire that while still five miles from the casualty, and in continuous moderate rain, the fire on the *Phillips Oklahoma* could be seen lighting up the surrounding sea.

At 0537 the lifeboat arrived on scene to find the *Phillips Oklahoma* burning fiercely from a ruptured tank on the starboard side with all of her starboard side accommoda-

Humber East Division

tion and bridge engulfed in flames and dense black smoke. The master of the *Phillips Oklahoma* was conducting his operations from a small secondary wheelhouse in the bows of the ship. Oil escaping from the tanker was blazing on the water for up to half a mile down-tide of the ship.

The master of the *Fiona* informed the Coastguard that the fire in the fore part of his ship had now been extinguished but there was considerable damage to her bows.

The minesweeper *HMS Middleton* was at the scene when the Arun arrived but could not get too close to the casualty as she was carrying explosives. Some men could be seen fighting the fire with hoses on the port after deck but the majority of the crew were assembled amidships in lifejackets. Three pilot ladders had been rigged on the port side ready for evacuation.

Some of the 16 rescued seamen shake the hand of Coxswain Brian Bevan as they go ashore from the Humber lifeboat *Kenneth Thelwall*. They had been taken off the blazing tanker *Phillips Oklahoma* in what Coxswain Bevan described as 'the worst fire I have seen at sea'.

(Photo Grimsby Evening Telegraph)

This service is also featured in colour on the front cover of this issue of THE LIFEBOAT, where *Kenneth Thelwall* is pictured dwarfed by the 27,000-ton tanker.



The rig supply vessel *Sterling Tern* was the first vessel to arrive with fire fighting cannons and closed in on the starboard side to train her two monitors on the fire. As the fire was getting worse, with constant eruptions of balls of fire, the master of the casualty agreed to evacuate all non-essential personnel, requesting that 16 crew members be taken off.

Kenneth Thelwall closed into a ladder on the port side of the casualty and by 0635 had safely taken off 16 of the crew, leaving nine people on board.

Helicopters were on the scene by now, along with several ships that had responded to the Mayday, and three fire-fighting tugs were on the way.

At 0715 the lifeboat transferred the 16 survivors to the car transporter *Autobahn* close by, for warm drinks and food, and continued to stand by the casualty in case of further need. Four fire teams from Immingham were on board by now, being brought on two fire-fighting tugs *Lady Susan* and *Lady Stephanie*, and a second rig supply vessel, *Sterling Esk*, was also on the scene fighting the fire.

At 0945, with the fire now out and the fire teams damping down and checking round, the lifeboat was released from standing by and picked up the 16 survivors from the *Autobahn* to transfer them ashore into the care of the ship's agents and representatives of the Mission to Seamen.

At 0949 the 16 crew were back on the lifeboat and she returned to Grimsby, landing them at the Royal Dock Basin in Grimsby at 1113.

Kenneth Thelwall arrived back at her station at 1143 and was removed and ready for service at 1224.



Lifeboat crew help in dinghy tragedy

Arranmore Ireland Division

Arranmore lifeboat station has received a letter congratulating everyone involved for their conduct in a tragic incident on 29 July 1989 in which four young people lost their lives. The crew was involved throughout a week of searching for the victims.

The Tyne class lifeboat *William Luckin* had launched at 0235 after one man from a party of six (4 men and 2 women) who had been aboard a small dinghy had swum ashore to raise the alarm that the other five were missing.

The man called at the home of Mrs Mary Conlon who immediately rang her brother, the station's mechanic. She also telephoned other crew members so that the boarding craft was afloat within 15 minutes of the alarm being raised.

On their way to board the lifeboat the crew heard someone shouting in the water, and picked up a girl from the missing dinghy. They brought her ashore to Mrs Conlon's house where both survivors were looked after.

The lifeboat crew then boarded *William Luckin* and illuminated the whole search area, accompanied by small local boats.

A thorough search was carried out all through the night, and the next day, until it became apparent that divers would be required.

The crew also manned the boarding boat to search shallow areas.

At about 0500 a local boat recovered the missing dinghy in a damaged condition about one-and-a-half miles from where the accident occurred, and at 0700 the Naval Service vessel *LE Orla* arrived and provided divers for a short period before going back to their ship. In all 56 divers from the *Garda* and from other voluntary diving clubs arrived.

The search continued until the last body was recovered on 5 August 1989, and as it was necessary to have a boat on scene during the time the divers were under the water the lifeboat crew manned the boarding boat on a voluntary basis all through the week.

The whole operation received widespread publicity and the parents of those lost and rescued later wrote letters of appreciation to the station and to the newspapers, as indeed did the British Ambassador, Sir Nicholas Fenn.

Arun at sea for 14 hours on three services to yachts in trouble

Weymouth's Arun class lifeboat *Tony Vandervell* was at sea for almost 14 hours in one 25-hour period when she received three separate calls from yachts in trouble on 9 September 1989.

After the hectic 25 hours Barney Morris, the honorary secretary, asked Coxswain/Mechanic Derek Sergeant never again to say 'It's been a quiet summer due to the good weather'!

The three calls and the efficient way in which they were handled earned the station a letter of appreciation from the RNLi's chief of operations.

The first of the calls came when Portland Coastguard called the station at 0140 with news of a yacht, *Tradewind*, some 26 miles SE of the station with engine and steering failure in the Force 6 NE wind and requesting assistance.

Injury

The lifeboat slipped her mooring at 0155 and on the passage to the casualty learned that one of the two crew had been thrown across the cockpit and suffered a neck injury.

The passage took an hour and 40 minutes and on arrival at the scene the yacht was found to be almost uncontrollable in a Force 7 NE wind and a sea state of 6 (up to 20ft). Two crew members were put aboard her with great difficulty, and not before the lifeboat had sustained some superficial damage to her starboard quarter.

The injured crew member was made comfortable, a tow line passed and the lifeboat started the long tow back. Although she had reached the casualty at 0335 it was not until 0830 that the lifeboat was back on station after securing the yacht in Weymouth harbour. The man and woman crew of the yacht were taken to hospital and later discharged after treatment.

Just two-and-a-half hours later the station received another call from Portland Coastguard. Another yacht, *Ariba*, was in trouble in much the same direction, but this time some 13 miles from the station. The wind was still NE Force 6 and her crew were

Weymouth South West Division

exhausted and had requested lifeboat assistance.

Leaving her mooring at 1108 *Tony Vandervell* was with the yacht by 1202. The wind had moderated slightly to NE Force 6 but the sea had not abated. Once again a crew member and line were put aboard and the lifeboat towed the yacht back into Weymouth with the two survivors still aboard.

By 1430 the lifeboat was back on her mooring and, having been on service for some 10 hours of the day, could reasonably have expected a respite.

The respite was relatively short. At 2235 Portland Coastguard called the station once again. A third yacht was in trouble, this time 12 miles SW of the station, off Portland Bill. The casualty was *Title Boxer* and her two-man crew were having trouble with her sails and engine. Leaving her mooring at 2245 the Arun reached the casualty at 2340 and yet again secured a tow line in the NE Force 6 wind with a sea still running at up to 20ft.

The two survivors remained aboard and were provided with hot drinks by the lifeboat crew during the tow back to Weymouth, which was directly upwind this time, and it was not until 0230 the following morning that the lifeboat was back on her mooring with the latest casualty also alongside in Weymouth harbour.

Ten minutes later she was ready for service again, but this time the respite was a little longer.

Weymouth's 54ft Arun class lifeboat *Tony Vandervell* shows her paces in quieter conditions than those experienced in the services to the three yachts.

Derek Sergeant retired as Coxswain/Mechanic during November 1989.



Lifeboat on passage saves eight

Lytham St Annes and Hoylake West Division

The Tyne class lifeboat *Voluntary Worker*, on evaluation trials at Lytham St Annes, was three-and-a-half hours into a passage from her home station to Holyhead for repairs when, at 0630, Liverpool Coastguard asked her to divert to a small coaster on fire some 15 miles from her position.

The casualty, *Nanna*, was located by radar at anchor and the lifeboat closed with her. Although the wind was only Force 5 from the WSW a heavy residual swell from the previous night's gales was running and the vessel was pitching and rolling heavily.



Hoylake's Rother class lifeboat *Mary Gabriel* stands by the coaster *Nanna* as a fire-tug fights the fire which led to the evacuation of her eight-man crew. (Photo Mercury Press Agency)

A request was made to take off the crew of eight, who were standing on the deck cargo to escape the fire, and the lifeboat came alongside three times to pick up the seamen.

In the heavy swell some damage was sustained to the lifeboat's stanchions and as one survivor made to step aboard a particularly

large wave began to push *Voluntary Worker's* bow away and the coxswain had to use full power to regain position, resulting in heavy contact and slight damage.

Hoylake's Rother class lifeboat *Mary Gabriel* had also been launched at 0740 to relieve the Lytham lifeboat. However, when it became obvious that the Tyne would not have time to continue her passage to Holyhead *Voluntary Worker* met an approaching fire tug and transferred the Captain and Mate to her for discussions before going on to land the eight survivors at Liverpool. She then returned to her station at 1300.

Mary Gabriel meanwhile stood by *Nanna* while a team of firemen and tugs extinguished the fire aboard the coaster.

She was finally stood-down at 1450 and did not reach her home station until 1700, after more than nine hours at sea.

Swimmer saved by lifeboat crew

A short but dramatic rescue in which three members of Hastings lifeboat station (one of them the coxswain of the station's Mersey class lifeboat) went into the water to save a young man in danger of being swept out to sea have earned the three men, and the helmsman of the station's D class inflatable which subsequently picked him up, the congratulations of the RNLI's chief of operations.

At 1223 on Tuesday 27 June a lifeboat shore helper saw a youth in difficulties approximately 75 yards from the shore inside the harbour arm. He had been swimming with a friend and had apparently become stuck in a mud hole.

It was a little after low water and at this state of tide the gently shelving beach was of soft mud.

He raised the alarm and crew members John Martin and David Curtis, who were close at hand, put on their drysuits.

The weather was fine and clear with a SW Force 5 to 6 wind, and although the harbour wall afforded some protection a 3ft to 4ft swell was sweeping into the harbour.

It was evident that the youth was in danger of being swept to seaward and John Martin entered the water and made his way towards the youth. John Martin carried his lifejacket, intending to use it to float the casualty out of the mud hole, but when he reached him the youth was already clear but could not manage to swim ashore. John Martin tried unsuccessfully to put the lifejacket on the youth and the pair were unable to make any progress.

Crew member David Curtis, wearing his lifejacket, arrived on the scene and helped

Hastings South East Division

support the youth while trying to make the shore.

Meanwhile Frederick White, coxswain of Hastings lifeboat, who had seen the difficulties, waded into the water dressed in his everyday clothes and tried to throw a line to the three men. John Martin swam to recover the seaward end of the line and Coxswain White was able to hold firm at the other, although gaining a foothold was difficult due to the depth of water and the swell.

At 1227 the D class lifeboat was launched, single-handed because of the urgency of service, with Helmsman Christopher Cooper on board. The casualties were by now inside the harbour arm and 50 yards off the shoreline.

The youth was helped out of the water by Helmsman Cooper; crew members Martin and Curtis then boarded the inflatable, and Coxswain White was helped ashore as the lifeboat returned to the beach at 1231.

The youth was examined by the station's honorary medical adviser and treated for shock.

Long distance launch...

Great Yarmouth and Gorleston's two lifeboats were launched on Saturday 16 September – from Ramsgate!

Neal Duffield, the honorary secretary for Great Yarmouth, was in Ramsgate to sail a yacht home (onewhich had, incidentally, been towed into the port by Ramsgate lifeboat) and was enjoying a meal in a harbourside restaurant when his portable telephone rang...

Flares had been sighted off the Norfolk coast and Neal gave the go-ahead for both the station's lifeboats to be launched.

'Normally I'm very close to the station,' he said later, 'it was the first time I have ever launched the boats from such a distance!'

The search, which also involved the Lowestoft lifeboat, found nothing – and the yacht was successfully sailed back to Great Yarmouth.



**WINDS GUSTING TO FORCE TEN, 100 YARDS
VISIBILITY IN HEAVY RAIN AND THE
LIFEBOAT FULL OF WATER...**

D class lifeboat rescues 36 people from canoes, yacht and rafts

Cleethorpes' D class inflatable liferaft was involved in three services on one day on 30 July 1989, rescuing no less than 36 people. The first service started as the crew were checking the lifeboat prior to an exercise. Humber coastguard was heard on the VHF radio, asking Humber lifeboat to check the river for five canoeists en route from Grimsby to Spurn Point.

Some minutes later the lifeboat was tasked to a yacht reported sinking, so the crew members informed the honorary secretary of the situation as the weather was deteriorating and they were concerned for the safety of the canoeists.

The honorary secretary immediately agreed to launch the lifeboat and as the boat was being towed across the beach Humber Coastguard, informed of the launch, reported the canoeists to be rafted together and believed to be in the Clee Ness area.

The lifeboat launched at 1023 into rough seas and rapidly deteriorating conditions. Making best speed down to the area of the casualties they encountered a wind now up to gale force, heavy rain reducing the visibility to some 100 yards and confused seas 8ft to 10ft high.

Squall

The lifeboat reached the search area at the worst of the squall, with the wind estimated at Force 10, and, with the D class constantly full of water, she began to search. There was no sign of the canoes but the lifeboat was in touch with them by radio and asked them to fire a flare – which was spotted some 200 yards downwind.

The casualties were at last spotted at 1042, at only 60 yards range, rafted together with one capsized and its occupant in the water.

All five people were taken aboard and with eight people now on board and the lifeboat

Cleethorpes East Division

still full of water progress was slow.

Humber Coastguard responded by asking the Pilot launch *Neptune* to assist and after three attempts the D class was able to transfer the casualties to the launch to be taken ashore at Grimsby docks.

The lifeboat returned to the canoes and towed them to Cleethorpes beach where they were recovered by the station's launchers at 1125.

Dragging

There was no time to go ashore though, as Humber CG immediately requested the lifeboat to go to Spurn Point, where a yacht with a broken mast was dragging its anchor.

Leaving Cleethorpes beach at 1125 the lifeboat arrived at Spurn Bight at 1153 to find the yacht aground in moderate surf kicked up by a Force 6 wind and the Pilot launch *Fox* standing by.

Two minutes later the D class was alongside – touching the bottom in the troughs – and found the two occupants to be safe.

She was able to secure a tow line and by 1205 had begun the slow process of taking the yacht to Grimsby, arriving there one-and-a-half hours later.

With the yacht and her two crew safely in

harbour the lifeboat made the passage back to Cleethorpes by 1405 and was ready for service again fifteen minutes later.

However the lifeboat was to be called on yet again that day, for at 1515 she launched again to stand by a charity raft race.

The weather conditions deteriorated sharply just over half-an-hour into the race, when the wind picked up from Force 4 to a squally Force 6 to 7 from the NNW.

Other boats escorting the rafts returned to the beach leaving the D class to cover 18 rafts, each with 4 to 6 people aboard.

The helmsman decided to take up position at the Haile Sand Fort, where the rafts would be turning into the worst of the weather.

The first two rounded at 1620 and made fair progress towards the finish but the third was swamped, throwing its four occupants into the water. They were recovered, but the lifeboat radioed Humber CG that more lifeboats or rescue craft would be needed as the situation was becoming very bad.

The CG alerted other vessels, including the fishing vessel *Eva* crewed by other RNLI personnel.

Hypothermia

Returning to the beach with the first four casualties the lifeboat found another overturned raft with four people, none with lifejackets, clinging to it. Two were showing signs of hypothermia and an ambulance was requested to meet the lifeboat at Humber Mouth Yacht Club, where all eight survivors were landed.

Returning to the casualty area the D class found another raft with four more people in the water. Three were taken aboard, but the fourth was in a bad way and one of the crew members had to enter the water to help him.

Other vessels had now arrived on the scene and when returning from landing the survivors the lifeboat found *Eva* picking up more casualties and indicating another casualty to the north. Three more people were recovered, only one of whom was wearing a lifejacket, and taken ashore.

Ebb

The next trip resulted in a raft with eight people on board, making no headway against the ebb, being towed to the beach and on the following one another raft with six people aboard was also towed ashore.

At 1750 Cleethorpes coastguard reported everyone safely ashore, but the lifeboat could not join them yet. For the next hour she searched the area with two boats from a local diving club and towed two more abandoned and drifting rafts ashore.

At 1845 she was finally able to return to the beach and at 1910 was ready for service again after her hectic day.

Cleethorpes' D class inflatable lifeboat crests a wave shortly after launching on exercise



Ten hour service to burning coaster

Yarmouth
South East Division

The coxswain and crew of Yarmouth's Arun class lifeboat *John and Joy Wade* have received a letter of thanks from the Director of the RNLI for their part in a 10-hour service to a West Indian-registered coaster which caught fire some six miles to the SSW of the Needles Fairway buoy on the night of 12/13 August 1989.

At 2319 the Coastguard reported that red flares had been spotted and the lifeboat launched immediately to investigate, leaving her moorings at 2330.

Although the flares were initially thought to be some 20 miles away information soon came through from a number of yachts which were in the vicinity and it was established that the flares had been launched by the coaster *Llanishen* which was 6.5 miles SSW of the Needles Fairway buoy. No fire-fighting activity was visible and the crew were assembled on the fo'c'sle.

The coastguard requested all vessels to keep clear pending the arrival of the lifeboat and a helicopter which had also been scrambled.

Three rescued in strong winds and poor visibility

The RNLI's chief of operations has congratulated the crew of Holyhead's Tyne class lifeboat *St Cybi II* following a service to the 52ft yacht *Espaniola*. In his letter he complimented the crew for the way in which the service 'was made to look routine' by the professional and efficient performance of their duties despite the unpleasant conditions.

The Coastguard alerted the honorary secretary to the yacht's plight at 1010 on 30 August 1989, when she was some 15 miles NNW of the station with engine failure and damage to her sails.

The wind was SW Force 7 with a swell running at 6m, heavy rain and visibility down to as little as a quarter of a mile.

Despite the very poor conditions the lifeboat was able to locate the yacht promptly by using her VHF radio direction finder and radar and was alongside her by 1140.

St Cybi II took her in tow with the three crew aboard and began a three-hour tow back to the safety of Holyhead, making the casualty fast to a mooring there at 1445 be-

Holyhead
West Division

fore returning to station at 1455. She was re-fuelled and ready for service again just 15 minutes later.

A simple report of a well executed rescue can often obscure the skill and dedication of the crews in poor weather, indeed in his report of this service the station honorary secretary added: 'This was an excellent service carried out in very trying conditions. The fact that it was carried out in such an efficient manner does not detract from, or depreciate the value of the service.'



Yarmouth's Arun class lifeboat *Joy and John Wade* is pictured during a service to the Maltese-registered Ro-Ro vessel *Al Kwather I* during the severe storms which swept the country on 28/29 October 1989. The photograph may not be of the highest technical quality, but does serve to show the severity of the conditions – much of the Arun's hull is clear of the water. The wind was reported as SW up to Force 11 and the sea state 9 ('Phenomenal' – waves more than 14m high). *Joy and John Wade* took off two of the crew from the stricken vessel.

The photograph was taken from the Swanage lifeboat, the 37ft *Rother J. Reginald Corah*, which was also on service to the casualty.

A full report of this arduous service for both lifeboats will appear in a subsequent issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*.

Before the lifeboat reached the scene a little over half-an-hour after launching a large explosion shook the casualty and fire enveloped the whole of the aft end of the ship – including the bridge.

The helicopter reached the vessel 14 min-

utes ahead of the Arun and lifted the five-man crew to safety – leaving the vessel unmanned, drifting and ablaze. Plans were made to bring a fire-fighting team to the casualty and to arrange for a tug, but in the meantime the lifeboat was asked to stand by.

Having established that the vessel's cargo was inert (raw materials for the manufacture of fire bricks) the coxswain decided to put a line aboard the casualty and tow her to the north, both to keep her head-to-wind and also to shorten the distance to the tug.

Despite hopes that the tug would be despatched with the minimum of delay it was nearly four hours before it reached the 464-ton casualty, by which time the 52ft Arun had managed to tow her to within three miles of the Fairway Buoy.

The fire crew were put aboard and soon requested a pump to remove the water which was being used on the fire. No pump had been brought by the tug, so the coxswain agreed to transfer the lifeboat's pump with a crew member in charge.

The tug took over the tow but as the casualty's rudder was first jammed hard to port and then hard to starboard progress was difficult and slow.

Joy and John Wade continued to render help as the tow continued, and only when off Yarmouth when the fire was considered to be out did she recover her crew man and pump and return to station.

She arrived at 0927 and was re-fuelled and ready for service again an hour later.



Designing for the future

At the time this issue of *THE LIFEBOAT* is published the Mersey, the RNLI's latest class of lifeboat, will be on show to the public at the London Boat Show in Earls Court.

In this article **Keith Thatcher**, one of the RNLI's Naval Architects, looks at the work involved in designing and developing a completely new boat within the stringent parameters needed for a lifeboat to take the Institution into the next century.

THE requirements of an organisation like the RNLI are constantly changing, and so the Institution periodically reviews its needs in the light of those changing circumstances.

One such review took into account the benefit of speed of response to a situation, and resulted in the move to the new generation of fast lifeboat typified by the Arun and the Tyne classes.

However while new designs were available to replace boats moored afloat and those launched from slipways the missing link was a design of fast lifeboat which could be launched from a carriage across a beach or foreshore and replace the ageing Oakley and Rother class boats.

The urgent need for this new lifeboat became apparent early in the 1980s when it was discovered that the wood-hull Oakley and Rother classes were deteriorating faster than previously realised. The Oakleys were introduced in 1958 and were, in any case, reaching the end of their useful life.

In the design of any new vessel the operators must decide the requirements upon which the design will be based, and in the case of the Fast Carriage Boat (FCB) these requirements were more restrictive than usual, since the new boat had to meet many of the principal characteristics of the Oakley and Rother classes.

In particular, the boat had to fit existing boathouses and be launched by the same method, placing severe limitations on the overall size and weight of the vessel.

It was also clear that the standard of crew and survivor accommodation in the new craft had to be improved, and the need for inherent self-righting and improved crew protection all pointed towards a watertight wheelhouse.

Although the design requirement specified a minimum speed of 15 knots, it was initially implied that 25 knots would be preferred as the maximum achieved in service conditions in calm water. With an overall length of only 38ft the best waterline length that

can be hoped for is about 34ft, and at 25 knots a craft of this length would be in the true 'planing' mode, where the boat is partially lifted by the effect of the water passing her hull and the length is not a limiting factor for speed. (*The speed of a 'displacement' hull form, as used on earlier lifeboats, is strictly limited by the waterline length, and no amount of extra power will enable it to exceed a speed some 1.3 times the square root of the waterline length in feet, approximately 8 knots for a 34ft waterline - Ed*)

'The choice was complicated by the need to provide a protected propulsion system'

At this speed the most efficient hull is the deep-V, hard-chine form, used by most fast racing and pleasure powerboats which can give savings of up to 25 per cent in engine power for a given speed compared to a planing, round bilge boat of the same

dimensions. The choice was complicated, however, by the need to provide a protected propulsion system for shallow water and on the beach. The alternatives available were to use a water-jet drive or recessed conventional propellers.

Traditional lifeboats have their propellers recessed in tunnels in the bottom of the boat, but at this stage in the design no one was sure whether a fully-planing tunnel hull could be made to work.

Water jets had been under evaluation by the RNLI for some time, but despite their obvious advantages - shallow draft and no projections to injure swimmers - their effectiveness was proving to be rather less than envisaged, mainly due to recurring problems when used on a beach. Particularly noticeable was the loss in performance resulting from damage to the impellers after rela-

tively short periods of use, and a marked lack of performance astern, particularly in shallow water.

After extensive trials, water jets were eliminated in their present form and propellers running in tunnels became the only viable option.

Once the decision to adopt conventional propellers had been made, the design could proceed, and lines were drawn up for a deep-V hull with two bilge sponsons, with the propellers recessed between the sponsons and the centre keel.

Because of the quite radical shape of the proposed new boat it was decided to carry out model tank tests to determine the resistance and power requirements, rather than relying on computer predictions.

The Wolfson Unit at Southampton University tested a 1.28m, 1:9 scale model in March 1984, and with a few minor adjustments to reduce spray and improve running trim the results proved encouraging.

On completion of the tests it became obvious that the weight of the boat was critical to achieving the desired speed, and a study of material options was carried out – the preferred option being a lightweight composite. However for well established operational and maintenance reasons steel was the preferred hull material.

To perform effectively, a deep-V hull must be kept light, and the use of steel imposed a severe weight penalty, to the extent that speed dropped and displacement increased above the level at which true planing could be achieved. This meant a complete re-appraisal of the design, and the hull was re-drawn with a round bilge, semi-displacement form.

As part of the development work associated with any new boat, the RNLI has lately been commissioning large-scale models for sea-keeping trials. These models are 8ft to 10ft long, self-propelled, radio controlled, and are run in scale sea conditions with instruments on board to measure the boat's responses and motion. The results are then compared with those from a known lifeboat of similar size.

With the FCB, now the Mersey class, there were two problems - first there was no comparable fast lifeboat of similar size, and second the models proposed would be almost one third full-size. The cost of the trials was also a large proportion of the cost of a full-size boat and this, together with the need to demonstrate the boat's ability to launch and recover successfully off a standard carriage - impossible with a model – prompted the decision to build a full-size 'model'.



The hull shape must also provide full protection for the propellers, be suitable for launching and recovery from a carriage and light enough to be handled when ashore. (Photo Jeff Morris)

It was estimated that a 38ft boat equipped to RNLI standards would weigh 14.25 tonnes. Since the Oakley and Rother classes average 12.5 and 13.25 tonnes respectively, the increase in weight was considered unacceptable.

To investigate this and other weight options the hull and superstructure were constructed from aluminium alloy, another 'first' for the RNLI.

The boat was built in late 1985 and, although initial speed trials proved disappointing, by August 1986 the boat had successfully self-righted

and, by careful choice of propellers and some changes to the stern geometry, speed had been increased to 18 knots. Trials with the carriage also proved satisfactory.

The penalty for the development work to achieve satisfactory performance was a boat much modified forward and aft – and unusable as a service lifeboat. To incorporate these changes the design was again re-assessed and the lines amended. The hull was then tank tested by the Wolfson Unit in its final form, accurate data on power and propeller wake produced and two pre-production prototypes ordered, again in aluminium alloy.

To speed the production of the programme, the order for the two hulls was placed while the first boat, ON 1119, was still completing trials. Some construction work was carried out on one of the pre-production boats, ON 1124, before the re-assessment of the design and she therefore required modifying before completion. The second boat, ON 1125, was built to the revised design from the start and as a result was completed slightly ahead of 1124.

Being the first boat afloat, ON 1125 was used as the trials craft and was subjected to an extensive programme of sea-keeping and performance trials, including self-righting verification, speed, steering and carriage launch and recovery.

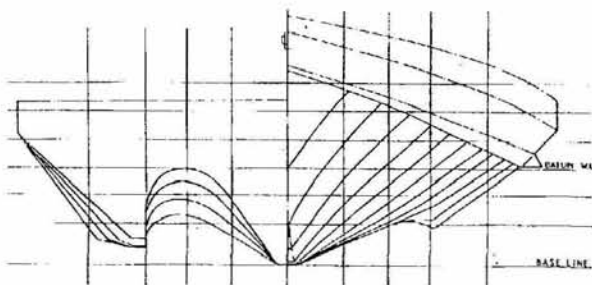
Finally, she was taken on a coast

evaluation to the North East and North West coasts and to the Isle of Man. At each station she visited the crew were encouraged to use her as much as possible, and much useful data was fed back to the design team so that changes could be incorporated in ON 1124.

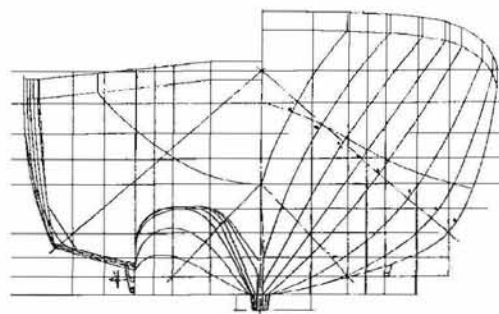
This development work enabled speedier completion of ON 1124, with the result that she effectively 'overtook' 1125 and was placed on station at Bridlington in November 1988.

After her extensive trials period ON 1125 needed a re-fit to bring her up to new lifeboat standard, but before doing so it was decided to gain further experience in a station environment. As a result ON1125 was placed on temporary station duty at Dungeness

'As there was no comparable fast lifeboat the decision was made to build a full-size model'



A fully planing deep-V hull form offers advantages for a high-speed boat, but its performance falls off sharply unless it is kept light. This early design for the fast carriage boat was rejected because the weight of a fully fitted out operational lifeboat was too great.



As a result the design was re-worked as a semi-planing form, with more buoyancy to carry the weight required without adverse effect on the performance. This section is very close to the form finally adopted for the Mersey class.



Designing for the future continued

during October 1988 for some four weeks, culminating in the French Lifeboat Service 'Manchex 88' exercise, during which ON 1125 'rescued' 15 survivors from a fictional Channel ferry disaster.

ON 1125 was at last re-fitted during the latter months of 1988 and placed on station at Hastings in January 1989.

At an early stage in the evaluation trials adverse reports had been received of the vessel's directional stability – constant rudder movements being needed to keep a straight course. In larger seas, and particularly when running before them, the boat could be made to hang on the face of a wave while the rudder was moved ineffectually from side to side.

On the plus side, the new hull was an exceptional sea boat, being far drier than expected, and having a very soft ride when pitching over large waves.

To solve the steering problem ballasting trials were carried out and it was found that with more weight moved to the extreme ends of the boat the steering was much improved. Further improvements resulted from changes in rudder design.

A modified tank-test model, free-running in waves in a tank, had confirmed that some adjustment of trim by ballasting was desirable, and also that handling was improved by reducing the length of the bilge keels. This change was tried full-size, but rejected as having little benefit and possibly creating problems when re-carrying the boat.

To quantify the results of the ballast experiments, and relate them to other classes of lifeboat an examination of several geometric parameters was carried out. The most meaningful was the evaluation of 'Radius of Gyration', which is a measure of the boat's resistance to change of direction, both horizontally or vertically.

Sailing yachts, which need to respond quickly to movements of the rudder, have a small Radius of Gyration and go to great lengths to keep weight centralised and away from the ends of the boat, but lifeboats have to be directionally stable and therefore need larger values, with the weight more evenly distributed.

Calculations for Radius of Gyration showed that the re-ballasted Mersey had the highest value, the Tyne class next lowest and the Arun lower still – results which are born out in practice. As confirmation the one-off steel Arun, which is often said to be a better sea boat, was found to have a higher value than the majority of the class, falling between the Tyne and the Mersey.

Once the correlation was seen, the theory became obvious. A small boat such as the Mersey is influenced strongly by sea conditions because of her lighter weight. Since in relative terms she is also travelling faster than the Arun or Tyne, the speed of response to these outside forces will be quicker, and hence require faster reactions by the coxswain.

To slow the speed of response weight is moved into the ends of the boat, creating greater momentum and increasing resistance to directional changes. As modified, ON 1125 became almost docile and could be run in quite large following seas with impunity.

The Mersey project calls for up to 40 boats to be in service

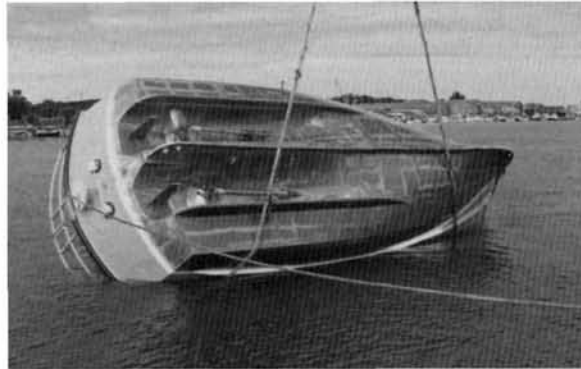
within four years. The most attractive way to achieve this, and one adopted by all quantity boat builders, is to use a moulded hull. The resulting standardisation of shape allows the use of pre-constructed fit-out modules and pre-assembled components to give a shorter building period. Since time is money the costs also reduce.

The Institution has experience of a GRP production run in the Arun and Brede classes, but it was felt that the Mersey's arduous service requirements called for a more sophisticated material. A survey of the market resulted in the decision to build a trial boat in FRC - fibre reinforced composite. The term can cover many different materials, and is the generic name for all composite materials, but in the Mersey it represents an epoxy resin matrix reinforced with glass and Kevlar fibres – see 'The Material Revolution' (The Lifeboat, Spring 1989).

Samples were tested for impact strength by dropping a 12kg steel projectile from a height of 8.5m on panels of wood, steel,

aluminium alloy and a number of different FRC laminates, each designed to the requirements of the Mersey hull. Wood offered no resistance, steel and aluminium alloy dented, but the FRC intended for the Mersey was undamaged, even by repeated impact.

The brief for the first FRC boat, ON 1148, was to build a boat similar to 1124 and 1125, but utilising the unique properties of FRC. The fit-out was kept to a minimum, since the purpose was to test the material, not the fit-out.



The final hull form of the Mersey, seen during the self-righting trials of ON 1125, a pre-production prototype. (Photo Downland Studios)

However full electronics were fitted, since one problem to be overcome would be electronic interference.

The basic hull laminate is a sandwich consisting of a main skin of 7-8mm, a 70mm core of medium density PVC foam and a thin inner skin of about 4mm. In each skin the properties of the various reinforcements are used to produce the strongest hull for a given weight. Deck, bulkheads and superstructure and all internals are also sandwich construction for strength, stiffness and light weight.

To minimise electronic interference, all wiring is screened and in steel conduit. The inside faces of the wheelhouse are sprayed with zinc, and all electrical items earthed to this coating, which is in turn earthed to the steel keel shoe.

The boat was delivered in March 1988 and subjected to extensive evaluation trials. She was run on and off Dungeness beach a total of 243 times, a test estimated to represent 20 years' launchings, and dragged for a mile over a surface of shingle, sand and mud.

After these trials there was little more damage than scuffing of the bottom paint. Impact strength was further tested by dropping the boat from a height of 12ft on to water, resulting in drenched spectators but no damage.

ON 1148 has now been fully fitted out as a lifeboat and is undergoing coastal evaluation and trials, she is also being used to test items of equipment being considered for future boats and will eventually serve in the relief fleet.

It was always intended that the first production boats should be of aluminium alloy construction in order to get the class building under way. Lessons from the pre-production prototypes had shown some small changes to be desirable and orders for eight boats with these incorporated were placed in June 1988.

In the meantime, the experiment with ON 1148's construction method having proved successful, a production run of FRC boats has been ordered, taking full advantage of the modular construction method made possible by the material.

'Lifeboats have to be directionally stable and need larger values for Radius of Gyration'

50 years ago

From the pages of THE LIFEBOAT, December 1940 issue

Four Months of War

The first four months of war, from 3rd September to the 31st December, have been the most crowded and hazardous in the whole history of the life-boat service.

Its crews have gone out to the rescue more often, and they have rescued more lives, than in any previous four months in war or in peace. Here are the figures:

Life-boats put out to the rescue 419 times. They rescued 1001 lives. In those four months they rescued more lives than in any four months of the last war, even during 1917 when the attack of the German submarines was most severe. In those four months they rescued more lives than in two years of peace.

59 Lives a Week

For the 116 years since the Institution was founded, the average of lives rescued is 11 a week.

For the years of the last war the average is 21 lives a week.

For the first four months of this war the average is 59 lives a week.

Those figures speak for themselves. They need no words to emphasise them. But it is interesting to see how many of those launches were to vessels in distress on account of the war, and how many to vessels in distress from the ordinary perils of the sea.

192 of those launches were to vessels in distress through the war and 596 lives were rescued from them. 227 launches were to vessels in distress from the ordinary perils of the sea, and 405 lives were rescued from them.

The Perils and Difficulties of the service

Whatever the cause of distress those 419 launches were made, and those 1001 lives were rescued, in face of all the dangers and difficulties of war. Life-boats, like other vessels, have been exposed to the dangers of attack by mines, by the torpedoes of submarines, by the bombs and machine guns of aeroplanes. By night they have not only had to navigate at sea without the help of coast lights, but they have had to launch without the help of the usual floodlights, in complete darkness. Even the maroons used for summoning the crews have had to be discontinued, as they might be mistaken for air raid warnings, and life-boatmen have had to be called out individually. Each station has made its own arrangements to do this as quickly as possible. At some stations special alarm parties have been organised, each member of which has the duty of calling out certain members of the crew.

The work of navigating and launching under the conditions of war, the dangers of attack while at sea, the great increase in the numbers of vessels in distress, the loss of life-boatmen who have joined the navy, all these have made new and severe demands on the Institution's crews.

In spite of these difficulties there has been no failure to launch, or to carry out any service that was needed, nor even any exceptional delay in launching. There has been no serious damage to life-boats, and no serious breakdown in machinery. During those four months in which 1001 lives were rescued, there was no loss of life among the life-boat crews.

Today's Lifeboatmen



Philip Denham, helmsman of one of Blackpool's two D class lifeboats, joined the crew in 1977.

He was awarded a bronze medal in 1988 for gallantry in recognition of the courage, skill and determination he displayed whilst helmsman of D300 which rescued the sole occupant of the motor boat *Dijon* in difficulties one and a quarter miles north-north-west of the lifeboat station. In 1989 he was awarded a long service badge.

Philip is married with three children and is employed as a beach patrolman. His hobby is lifeboating!

Facts and figures

Provisional statistics as at 16 November 1989, show that during 1989:

The RNLI's lifeboats were launched 3,695 times (an average of more than 12 launches a day)

More than 1,257 lives were saved (an average of 4 people rescued each day)

More than 31 per cent of all services carried out by lifeboats were in winds of Force 5 and above

More than 56 per cent of all services were to pleasure craft

There are 263 lifeboats on station, with a further 76 in the relief fleet

119,165 lives have been saved since the RNLI was founded in 1824

Costs

The cost of running the RNLI in 1988 was £34m. The approximate current cost of building a lifeboat is:

16ft D class inflatable – £9,500

21ft Atlantic rigid inflatable – £45,000

38ft 6in Mersey – £455,000

47ft Tync – £590,000

52ft Arun – £600,000

Naming and dedication

Ceremonies

Howth – Arun class *Hibernia*



The Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland, Mr Charles Haughey (right) with Mrs Maureen Haughey and RNLI Chairman Mr Michael Vernon at the naming ceremony of the Arun class lifeboat *Hibernia* at Howth. (Photo Paddy Whelan)

The naming ceremony of the RNLI's new relief 52ft Arun class lifeboat was held on Saturday 16 September at Howth Harbour. Mrs Maureen Haughey named the new lifeboat *Hibernia* and the lifeboat was handed over to the chairman of the RNLI, Mr Michael Vernon, by *An Taoiseach* (Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland) Mr Charles J. Haughey.

The blessing and dedication ceremony was conducted by The Most Reverend Donald Caird DD, the Right Reverend Monsignor Richard Maher, Reverend Paul Kingston

and Reverend Dr William O'Neill. The then newly-elected Chairman of the RNLI, Mr Michael Vernon, travelled from London to attend the event, as did the Director Lt Cdr Brian Miles.

A very large crowd attended the ceremony, including distinguished guests the Rt Hon The Lord Mayor Alderman Senator Sean Haughey, His Excellency Sir Nicholas Fenn, The Lord Killanin, Commodore Liam Brett, Director Naval Service, Brigadier General B. McMahon, Director Army Air Corps.

On handing over the new relief lifeboat *An Taoiseach* Mr Haughey praised the work of the RNLI in Ireland and thanked the lifeboatmen for their dedication saying: 'They give selflessly of their time and are totally committed, we owe them a great debt of thanks for the most valuable work they perform'.

Mr Michael Vernon, Chairman of the RNLI, accepted the new lifeboat for the Institution and expressed his gratitude to the trustees of the Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust. 'We have above all the trustees of the Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust to thank,' he said, 'whose hugely generous gift has covered her cost, and substantial extra funding towards the running of the lifeboats in Ireland'.

He also thanked the Lord Killanin, a life vice president of the Institution and a member of the trustees of the Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust. In thanking *An Taoiseach* and the Irish Government Mr Vernon added that the RNLI was: 'equally grateful to *An Taoiseach* and the Irish Government whose great help and support enabled the trust to benefit the RNLI'.

After the moving dedication and blessing ceremony conducted by The Most Reverend Donald Caird DD, the Right Reverend Monsignor Maher, Reverend Paul Kingston and Reverend Dr William O'Neill, Mrs Maureen Haughey named the new lifeboat *Hibernia* to the cheers and applause of the gathering.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr Rupert Jeffares, honorary secretary of Howth lifeboat station. Mr Clayton Love, a vice president of the RNLI and chairman of the event, brought the proceedings to a close by inviting the guests to tea in Howth Yacht Club.

Penarth – D class

John Cresswell

A new D class lifeboat provided by the generosity of the family and friends of Mr John Cresswell, in lieu of a present to mark his 60th birthday, was formally handed over to the RNLI by Mrs Roma Cresswell at a ceremony which took place at the lifeboat house in Penarth on 16 August 1989.

Mrs Fay Cori, a member of the RNLI's Public Relations Committee, accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the Institution and delivered it into the care of Penarth lifeboat station. Captain Graham Sommerfield, station honorary secretary, accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the station, and the service of dedication which followed was conducted by the Reverend Frederick Mudge, Vicar of All Saints Church, Penarth, assisted by local clergy representing other denominations.



Guests and crew members with Penarth's new D class lifeboat at the handing over ceremony on 16 August 1989. Mrs Roma Cresswell and her husband John are in the centre flanked by crew members, with station honorary secretary Captain Graham Sommerfield left and Mrs Fay Cori right

Relief Fleet – Mersey class *Lifetime Care*

The first Mersey class lifeboat to enter the relief fleet was officially named and dedicated at a ceremony held at the RNLI's Poole HQ and depot on Tuesday 21 October 1989. The lifeboat was also the first of the FRC (fibre reinforced composite) Mersey class to enter service with the Institution.

The new lifeboat was the second to be funded by the proceeds of a two-year promotion in conjunction with Volvo Concessionaires, and a break in a spell of unsettled weather provided a bright and breezy day for the occasion – thankfully less breezy than for the naming of Volvo's previous lifeboat, *Voluntary Worker*.

The RNLI's director, Lt Cdr Brian Miles opened the proceedings before Mr Charles Hunter-Pease, sales and marketing director of Volvo Concessionaires addressed the guests and officially handed the new lifeboat to the Institution.

Lord Stanley of Alderley, a Vice President of the RNLI and Chairman of the Fund Raising Committee, gratefully accepted the boat on the Institution's behalf and Cdr Michael Woodroffe, assistant chief of operations, described the new lifeboat and its future role in the RNLI.

A service of dedication was conducted by the Reverend Stanley Holbrooke-Jones, Rector of St James Church Poole, assisted by the Reverend John Hainsworth, Superintendent Methodist Minister Poole, before Mrs Susan Hunter-Pease officially bestowed the



lifeboat's name by releasing the champagne bottle against *Lifetime Care's* bow.

Volvo Concessionaires' additional gener-

(below) Mrs Susan Hunter-Pease, wife of Mr Charles Hunter-Pease, the Sales and Marketing Director of Volvo Concessionaires, names the new Mersey Class lifeboat *Lifetime Care* at a ceremony at the RNLI's Poole depot. The lifeboat is the second to be funded as a result of a two-year joint promotion with Volvo.

(left) The lifeboat, the first fibre reinforced composite boat to enter RNLI service, alongside the depot quay for the ceremony.

(photos courtesy Jeff Morris)

Three lifeboats from Splashdown project

As the result of the Splashdown safety project organised by the Esso Petroleum Supply & Transportation Department at Fawley, £29,000 has been donated to the RNLI to fund three D class lifeboats and three sets of protective clothing for each boat.

At the beginning of 1988 the company and employees set a target of working a full year without any serious injury or major incident. If the target was met three D class lifeboats were to be funded to celebrate the notable safety achievement.

The target was attained, and two of the lifeboats are now stationed at Stranraer and Porthcawl with the third in the relief fleet.

Part of the project involved a competition to choose a name for each lifeboat, and the three winners named their respective lifeboats.

Relief fleet – D class *Lifeline*

The first lifeboat to be named was *Lifeline*, chosen by Christine Hunt, secretary to the pipeline manager. The ceremony took place at the Institution's depot in Poole on 18 November 1988 and Christine formally presented the boat to Mr Anthony Oliver, head of fund raising. The name was chosen because it reflects the work of the boat as a lifeline to those in distress.

Stranraer – D class *Crusader*

On a damp and windy 7 October 1989 representatives of the Marine and Pipeline Divisions of Esso Petroleum arrived at the Stranraer boat-house where the D class lifeboat *Crusader* was to be formally handed over to the RNLI and officially named.

With some 60 people in attendance the proceedings were opened by Dr R.J. Scott, chairman of Stranraer branch. Mr J. Hughes, Esso's Fleet Operations Manager, addressed the gathering and handed the lifeboat over to Mr A. Cubie ws, vice chairman of the executive committee of the Scottish Lifeboat Council and a member of the Committee of Management. Acknowledging the gift he delivered the boat to Mr Andrew Murray, station honorary secretary.

The Reverend McGill led the dedication of the lifeboat, after which Mr L. Elrick, a sea-going senior engineer of Esso, christened the craft from a pewter quaich filled with the national beverage which had been presented to him.

The lifeboat launched and provided practical experience for the donors' representative before light refreshments, generously provided by Sealink, were served. **KT**

Porthcawl – D class *Tiger D*

Mr Robert Dukeson, a fleet marine engineer, chose the name *Tiger D* for the new lifeboat at Porthcawl and he was invited to name the boat at a ceremony which took place at the lifeboat station on 21 October 1989.

The proceedings were opened by Mr John Redmond, chairman of Porthcawl station branch. Mr John Hughes, fleet operations manager of Esso Petroleum Co then handed the lifeboat over to Mr Raymond Cory, deputy chairman of the RNLI, who in turn passed it into the safe-keeping of Mr John Williams, station honorary secretary.

The service of dedication was conducted by the Right Reverend Roy Davies, Bishop of Llandaff and after the service Mr Dukeson named the lifeboat.

osity in providing the marquee, lunch and other facilities at the ceremony were appreciated by the large number of guests, and particularly by members of the RNLI staff at Poole, an unusually large number of whom had been invited to witness the ceremony.

Aldeburgh – D Class

Almost 200 people gathered on the balmy evening of 21 June 1989 to witness the handing over and dedication of Aldeburgh's new D class lifeboat.

The lifeboat had been funded from a local appeal, organised by the Suffolk Cider Company, and the money came from various fund raising events, in particular a 'Cider Nouveau Run' to Beaujolais in 1987 and donations and special contributions in memory of departed relatives and friends.

Vice Admiral Sir Charles Mills, chairman of the Aldeburgh branch, opened the proceedings and Mike Hall, managing director of the Suffolk Cider Company, made a short but amusing speech, in which he thanked all those who had supported the appeal, before handing over the lifeboat to the RNLI.

Robin Sharp, RNLI assistant public relations officer, accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the Institution and, in turn, passed it into the care of Ken Brown, station honorary secretary.

A service of dedication followed, conducted by the Reverend Canon David Hutchinson, vicar of Aldeburgh. To end the ceremony Mrs Caroline Hall christened the new lifeboat by pouring apple juice over her bows.

There was an air of excitement as the lifeboat was pushed to the water's edge and launched into the surf, before being taken out to sea to give a fine demonstration of speed and manoeuvrability.

Refreshments were served on the lifeboat's return, prepared by the ladies' lifeboat guild – washed down with cider and apple juice.

Ceremonies

Continued

Tynemouth – D class

The new D class lifeboat for Tynemouth was officially handed over and dedicated at a ceremony which took place at the Fish Quay, North Shields on Sunday 1 October 1989.

Mr P. Denham Christie, a life vice-president of the RNLI, who had served as a crew member, coxswain and chairman at Tynemouth, received the D class lifeboat funded by the Derbyshire Association of Sub Aqua Clubs.

His successor as chairman, Mr Gordon Carr, welcomed a large contingent from Derbyshire, together with representatives of surrounding guilds. Mr Anthony Lewis told everyone of the many ways the money was raised by his association to fund the lifeboat and in receiving the lifeboat Mr Denham Christie assured Mr Lewis and his friends of the loving care the D class would receive from the crew.

Mr Ken Middlemiss, honorary secretary of the station, told of the work of the previous lifeboat as an illustration of what the new lifeboat had to cope with in its future. The local Salvation Army Band accompanied the hymn singing in the service of dedication led by Mr Geoffrey Chandler, the chaplain of the North Shields Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, who also extended a welcome to all for tea at the Mission following the ceremony. Mrs Shawcross, chairman of the Ladies' guild, gave a vote of thanks and the lifeboat demonstrated the various drills and exercises.

Relief Fleet – Tyne class *Mariners Friend* Cowes Base – The Allen Centre

The RNLI's Cowes Base was the setting for a double ceremony on Wednesday 20 September 1989 when Miss H. B. ('Mickie') Allen officially opened The Allen Centre, a new training centre for Atlantic 21 crews at the Base, and later named the new Tyne class lifeboat *Mariners Friend* which serves in the relief fleet. Miss Allen had funded both the new building at the base and the new lifeboat.

A bright but very breezy day greeted the many guests who had travelled to the Isle of Wight for the occasion, some from Padstow in Cornwall where another Tyne class lifeboat provided by Miss Allen, *James Burrough*, is stationed.

Cdr Peter Gladwin, the superintendent of Cowes Base, opened the proceedings in the Allen Centre by expressing the RNLI's gratitude to Mickie Allen for her generosity, and outlining the use to which the new facilities would be put. Atlantic 21 crews from stations nationwide attend courses at the Base and the new centre provides vastly improved facilities for their training and comfort.

Cdr Gladwin then invited Miss Allen to unveil a brass plaque to commemorate the occasion and she was presented with a magnificent carved crest produced by Steve Simmonds, a boatbuilder at the base, as a memento.

Later in the day guests re-assembled at the waterside for the naming and dedication ceremony of *Mariners Friend*.



Miss Heather ('Mickie') Allen with the carved shield presented to her on behalf of Cowes Base by boat builder Steve Simmonds at the opening of The Allen Centre.

Lt Cdr Brian Miles, director of the RNLI, opened the proceedings by outlining the important role of the lifeboat in the relief fleet before Miss Allen formally handed the lifeboat into the care of the Institution, rep-

Staithe and Runswick – Atlantic 21 *Ellis Sinclair*



Mrs Vera Morris, wife of the senior partner in Sinclair Roche and Temperley, the firm of solicitors which funded the new Atlantic 21 class lifeboat, christens her *Ellis Sinclair* after the founder of the firm at a ceremony held at Staithe on Saturday 23 September. (Photo Whitby Gazette)

On Saturday 23 September the lifeboat station at Staithe was decked with flags in glorious sunshine as a large crowd of guests arrived to watch the naming and dedication

of the new Atlantic 21 *Ellis Sinclair*.

The lifeboat was donated by Messrs Sinclair, Roche and Temperley, and was named in honour of the firm's founder. It is believed

to be the first time that a lifeboat has been funded by a firm of solicitors.

Mr Arnold Storm, deputising for the chairman of the branch, Mr Neil Anderson, who was recovering from an operation, welcomed the guests and Mr John Morris, senior partner of Sinclair, Roche and Temperley, then explained that what at first appears an unlikely connection between lifeboats and the law is not so remote, as the firm specialises in maritime law. He then handed the lifeboat over to Mr Gilbert Gray QC, a member of the Institution's Committee of Management who in turn handed over the new lifeboat to Mr Clem Jones, honorary secretary of Staithe and Runswick station.

The Reverend David Dermott, chaplain of the branch, assisted by the Reverend James Platten, then conducted a short service of dedication and Ms Olwyn Brunyee, chairwoman of the Staithe Ladies' guild, proposed a vote of thanks to all who had taken part.

Mrs Vera Norris poured champagne over the bow of the lifeboat, naming her *Ellis Sinclair*, before passing the remainder of the bottle to the crew.

After the ceremony the new lifeboat put to sea to show her paces and two of the donor's representatives were treated to a trip to sea in the Atlantic 21. The guests were then entertained to a traditional Staithe spread.

Music was provided by the North Skelton Teeside BSC Silver Band.

DGMCK



The Relief fleet Tyne class lifeboat *Mariners Friend* on the River Medina during the naming and dedication ceremony held at Cowes Base on Wednesday 20 September 1989. (Photo Jeff Morris)

resented on this occasion by its chairman, Mr Michael Vernon.

The service of dedication was conducted by the Reverend Stuart Cleaver, Priest in Charge Whippingham and East Cowes, assisted by the Reverend Michael Lewis, Methodist Minister East Cowes, Father Brian Coogan, Roman Catholic Minister East Cowes and Mr Lawrence Jay, Evangelical Minister East Cowes.

After the dedication Miss Allen released the traditional champagne bottle against the bows of *Mariners Friend*, with her wishes for her safety and that of her crews, before taking a short trip aboard the lifeboat on the waters of the River Medina.

Music for the naming and dedication ceremony was provided by the Band of Cowes High School.

MF

Peel – Atlantic 21

John Batstone

On Saturday 5 August, at Peel in the Isle of Man, the local lifeboat station named and dedicated its brand new Atlantic 21, B575 *John Batstone*, which had been funded by a record-breaking boardsailor who had circumnavigated England, Wales and Scotland to raise the money to buy the boat.

Tim Batstone, the young man who performed this record-breaking feat, was in Peel to be at the service and brought his mother, Mrs F.W. Batstone, to name the boat *John Batstone* after his late father.

The occasion was a very friendly gathering of the Manx lifeboat family, in which the hearty singing was accompanied by the band of The Kings Own Border Regiment. The service was taken by the Island's Bishop, The Right Reverend Noel Jones, a former chaplain to the Fleet and a good friend of the RNLI, assisted by local clergy.

A former shipmate of the Bishop, Rear Admiral W.J. McClune, deputy chairman of the RNLI's Boat Committee, accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the Institution.

The whole ceremony, so well planned by the local station chairman, Mr J.C. Hall and ably assisted by the station honorary secretary Mr A.C. Corlett, was a very moving and inspiring occasion.

Appropriately the first two lives saved by the *John Batstone* were boardsailors.

L

Selsey – D class

Mr Brian Murr, chairman of Selsey and District branch welcomed guests to the handing over and service of dedication of the new D class lifeboat at Selsey on 16 August 1989.

The lifeboat was presented to the Institution by Mr Denis Matkin, in memory of his brother, Geoffrey Matkin. Mr Anthony Oliver, head of fund raising, formally accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the RNLI and she was then placed into the care of the Selsey station branch committee and its honorary secretary, Clive Cockayne.

The service of dedication was conducted by the Reverend George Waddington, Chaplain of the Selsey lifeboats.

South Queensferry

New lifeboat house

Queensferry lifeboat station's new boathouse at Hawes Pier, South Queensferry, was officially opened on Saturday 16 September 1989 by Sir Charles McGrigor BT DL, Convener of the Scottish Lifeboat Council.

The cost of the boathouse was met from the legacy of the late Miss Margaret Melrose who lived in Fife.

The proceedings were opened by Councillor W. Hardie, chairman of Queensferry station branch. Sir Charles McGrigor opened the new building and Mr Andrew Gibb, the solicitor who administered the late Miss Melrose's estate, unveiled a commemorative plaque in the boathouse. Captain Jack Kersley, station honorary secretary, proposed a vote of thanks.

Music was provided before the ceremony by the South Queensferry Pipe Band.

Also in attendance were Major and Mrs MacNay who had generously provided the fitting out of the boathouse and part provision of the cost of a new tractor.

KT

Brighton – Atlantic 21 *Graham Hillier and Tony Cater*

Brighton's new Atlantic 21 was named and dedicated in a ceremony which took place at the Village Square, Brighton Marina on Friday 29 September 1989.

Accompanied by Mrs Jill Cater, Mrs Sylvia Hillier named the lifeboat in memory of their sons, Graham Hillier and Tony Cater, tragically drowned seven years ago. The boys' parents set up an appeal in the Chertsey, Weybridge and Woodham area of Surrey

and raised £10,000 towards the lifeboat, and the East Grinstead branch collected £15,000 from various fund raising events.

The proceedings were opened by Mr Charles Wilson, chairman of the Brighton station branch and Mr Colin Williams, deputy inspector of lifeboats for the South East division, then described the lifeboat.

Mrs Jill Cater, on behalf of the donors, handed the lifeboat to Captain Sir Miles

Wingate KCVO FNI, a member of the RNLI Committee of Management who in turn passed the lifeboat into the care of Mr Colin Maltby, honorary secretary of Brighton lifeboat station.

Following the service of dedication led by the Reverend Roger Robins, vicar of All Saints New Haw and Captain the Reverend Cuthbert Le M. Scott, Brighton lifeboat station chaplain, Mrs Hillier named the new lifeboat *Graham Hillier and Tony Cater*.

Commander John Watson, president of the East Grinstead branch, then unveiled a plaque recording the gift.



Mrs Jill Cater and Mrs Sylvia Hillier with Brighton's new Atlantic 21 class lifeboat *Graham Hillier and Tony Cater* at the naming ceremony on 29 September. (Photo courtesy Evening Argus, Brighton)

Ceremonies

Continued

North Sunderland – D class

Saturday 30 September 1989 saw 150 guests gathered at the lifeboat house on the coldest day of the month, with threatening clouds despite bright sunshine visible to the south.

Mr John Halliday, vice-president of the Textile Services Association, (involving the laundry, dry cleaners and linen hire trade) was welcomed, together with other guests, by Mr Bill Weeks, chairman of the North Sunderland lifeboat station.

Mr Halliday then handed the D class lifeboat to the RNLI and Mr P. Denham Christie, a life vice-president, accepted it with an interesting speech on the links between lifeboat stations on the north east coast before duly passing the lifeboat to the station.

Mr Bob Reay, honorary secretary, in receiving the lifeboat chronicled the work already undertaken since the lifeboat arrived on station. The Reverend David G. Rogerson, chaplain to the station, led the service assisted by other local clergy, with Miss Brenda Calderwood, chairman of the Ladies' guild bringing the proceedings to a close with a vote of thanks.

The lifeboat launched and demonstrated the speed and manoeuvrability of the D class, Mr Halliday and his family being suitably impressed.

BHS

Weston-Super-Mare – D class

Weston-Super-Mare's new D class lifeboat, funded by an appeal organised by the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust, was officially handed over and dedicated on Birnbeck Island on 14 October 1989.

The main funds for the appeal were raised from sponsorship during the annual Boto-X event hosted by Avon Inflatables at Caen Hill Lock, Devizes in 1987, when teams of eight people in inflatable boats carried the boats up and down the hill to the lock and paddled across the water.

Mr Geoffrey Flint, chairman of the Weston-Super-Mare station branch, opened the proceedings and Mr John Petty, chairman of the 1987 Boto-X committee, representing the donors, the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust, handed over the lifeboat to Mr Anthony Oliver, head of fund raising. He in turn passed it into the safe-keeping of Mr John Williams, honorary secretary of the Weston-Super-Mare lifeboat station.

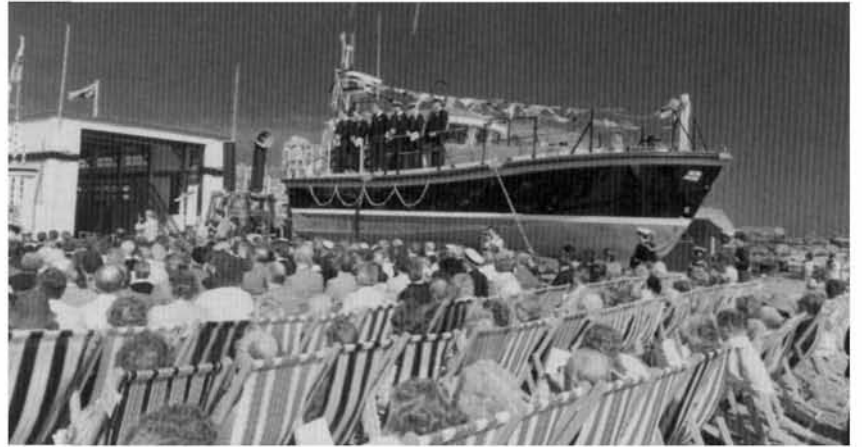
The service of dedication which followed was conducted by the Reverend Prebendary J.T. Hayward, honorary chaplain to the lifeboat station.

Weston-Super-Mare's new D class lifeboat is dedicated at a ceremony held at the station on 14 October 1989. The boat was largely funded from the proceeds of a Boto-X organised by the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust.

(photo Jeff Morris)



Hastings – Mersey class *Sealink Endeavour*



Deck chair weather for the guests at the naming of the Mersey class *Sealink Endeavour* by HRH The Duke of Kent at Hastings on 21 September. (Photo Tony Denton)

It was as if perfect weather had been pre-arranged for the naming ceremony of Hastings' new Mersey class lifeboat *Sealink Endeavour* on 21 September. The sun shone brightly and warmly in a brilliant blue sky, but a gentle breeze ensured that those who crowded around the lifeboat house at the Stade did not overheat.

The happy holiday atmosphere was sustained by the spectators taking their ease for the ceremony in gaily striped deck chairs, as they waited for the Institution's President, HRH The Duke of Kent. He arrived shortly before 2.30pm to cheers, applause and the madly-waving flags of school children.

The ceremony began with a welcome from the station chairman, Joe Adams, who referred to the heroic rescues carried out since the naming of the town's previous lifeboat *Fairlight*, 25 years before.

On behalf of British Sealink Ferries and the other donors, the Passenger Services Director, Mr Michael Aiken, spoke of the pleasure all at Sealink had derived from being associated with the special promotion which had provided the bulk of the funding for the new Mersey. He recommended that other businesses and companies should become involved in similar schemes, before handing the lifeboat over to Mr Michael Vernon, Chairman of the RNLI.

In turn, Mr Vernon delivered her into the

safe-keeping of Mr John Heyes, Hastings' honorary secretary, who spoke of the station's pride in receiving the second lifeboat of the new class to be commissioned.

A service of dedication followed, led by the Reverend David Grant, lifeboat chaplain and rector of the Old Town parish of St Clement and All Saints, assisted by local clergy of other denominations.

Before naming the lifeboat, the Duke of Kent paid tribute to the town's ancient fishing community, out of which had grown a courageous lifeboating fraternity. 'We are all here to celebrate the fact that we have at Hastings the men and the means to save life at sea. Both are of the highest calibre', he said.

His Royal Highness then activated the bottle-breaker to send champagne gushing over the bows, before taking up the station's offer to inspect the lifeboat and go afloat.

The Duke and the crew boarded the lifeboat and were hauled to the sea by tractor, followed by an excited throng of onlookers. At sea, *Sealink Endeavour* was put through her paces by Coxswain Fred White. The Duke took the helm on the journey back to shore and was, the coxswain reported, 'Quite good at it!'

After re-housing, the Duke of Kent took tea with invited guests before leaving for his next appointment, bringing to an end a memorable occasion and a perfect day.

Isle of Arran – C class *Prince of Arran*

With storm force winds forecast, the naming and handing over ceremony at Lamash was successfully undertaken in the presence of a good attendance of friends and supporters from both the Isle of Arran and the mainland, who all defied the steady downpour of rain.

The proceedings were capably controlled by the branch chairman, Mr James Macgill, who introduced Mr Mike Wood, the North Shields-based sales manager for the Fred Olsen Lines, as representatives of both the company and the passengers of the ferry *Black Prince* whose generosity had funded the new C class lifeboat.

In accepting the lifeboat on behalf of the RNLI, the director, Lt Cdr Miles, expressed gratitude for the gift and most suitably endorsed the high

profile value of the smaller lifeboats within the fleet, which each year contribute a tremendous service and record of saving lives.

The boat having been accepted by the honorary secretary, Mr Geoff Norris, the Reverend Fulton conducted a brief service of dedication whereafter Mrs Wood was invited to name the lifeboat *Prince of Arran*. She duly accepted the porringer of whisky from the senior helmsman and suitably christened the boat to resounding cheers.

With the formalities concluded, the boat was launched and Mr Wood enjoyed the experience of its capabilities in choppy seas before joining crew and guests in the neighbouring golf club for refreshments provided and served by the guild and wives of the crew.



The Fund Raisers

Yankie Doodle Dandy

Children attending Lakenheath American Elementary school at RAF Lakenheath ran laps for four days in support of the RNLI.

Nearly 1,300 children took part in the event and raised £4,353 in sponsorship money.

The Institution supported the event by providing a half-scale model of a lifeboat and videos to show the work of the lifeboat service.

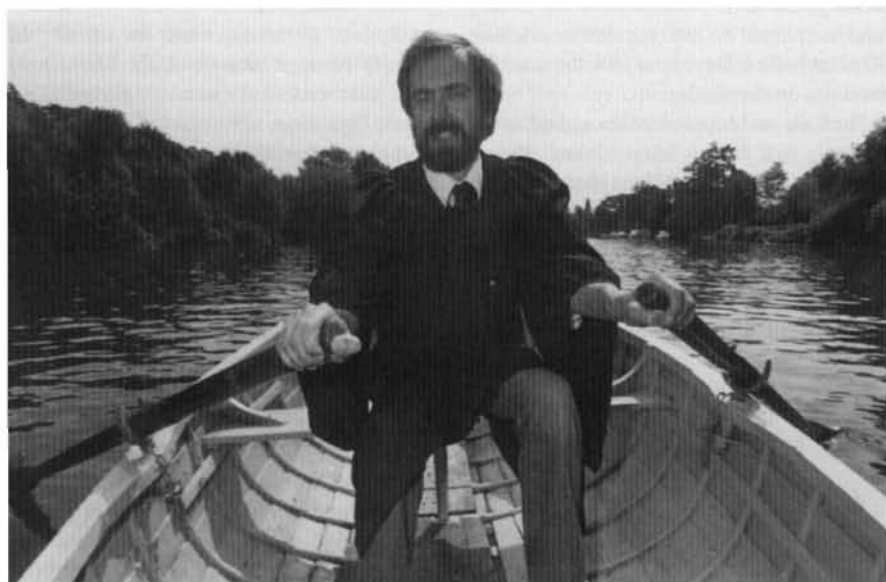
Taurean and Ryan were the top money earners and presented a cheque to Robin Burlingham of the Bury St Edmunds branch.

Famous names

Some of the most famous names in the country, from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and HRH The Prince of Wales, to Spike Milligan and Bobby Charlton, were among those who donated lots to the Padstow lifeboat's Famous Names Auction held on 8 August last year, at the Royal Cornwall Showground, Wadebridge.

Two hundred and one lots came under the hammer and brought in £5,500. Lot 72, a kiss from Padstow coxswain Trevor England, and only available to ladies, went for an undisclosed sum!

The rowing Rabbi of Maidenhead



A race with a difference took place in Berkshire in aid of the RNLI. When the minister of Maidenhead Synagogue, Rabbi Jonathan Romain, heard that the ancient Cookham regatta was to be revived he proposed that one of the races be entitled the 'Clerics Challenge' and challenged other churches to put up teams for a friendly inter-faith contest.

Plain sailing

The SS Balmoral provided a memorable evening for 500 supporters of Caernarvon branch when, on an evening cruise in July last year she sailed through the Menai Straits, passed Beaumaris, through Puffin Sound and on towards Moelfre.

The Caernarvon Male Voice Choir gave their services free of charge and their harmonies could be heard on either side of the Straits. With perfect weather and sea conditions the evening could be nothing but a success, and £1,100 was raised for the Institution.

Magnificent Max

Landlord of the Railway Hotel Alton, Max Reitzler, outgrew his RNLI collecting box in his first year of collecting, so he and his supporters have found more ingenious ways of parting customers with from their money.

For 1988/89 a mock fruit machine was constructed for the collection of loose change and when the final 'pay out' was made the jackpot was £557.01.

Since 1980, when Max began collecting at the Railway Hotel, more than £4,000 has been raised.

The public were entertained by a variety of ministers, priests and vicars heaving at the oars in boats with suitably religious names such as *Noah's Ark*, *Jonah*, and *St Andrew the Fisherman*. Sponsorship and donations led to £120 being raised.

The Rabbi is an active fund raiser for the Institution, having raised over £2,000 through previous events.

Summer Evening

The ninth of a series of ten annual Summer Evenings held 'in the manner of Glyndebourne' at Hazlewood Castle in North Yorkshire under the patronage of the Marquis of Normanby, a vice-president of the RNLI and president of Whitby station branch, raised £7,700.

Stephen Wood of Leeds branch has organised all the evenings and this year's recital by Opera North was held in the presence of Sir Marcus Worsley, Bart, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant.

The musical evenings, together with two substantial donations, have now raised a magnificent £42,685 for the Institution.

Young models

Young models helped to raise money for Filey Ladies' guild with a junior fashion show.

The show, which raised £185, involved 20 local children aged between 18 months and 13, who modelled clothes supplied by Nursery Rhymes of Filey, and Debenhams, Impulse, Rumours and Tammy Girl of Scarborough. The music for the programme was arranged by 14-year-old James MacKenzie.

In brief

SIXTY 'get up and go' grannies took part in a five mile sponsored walk from the Westbury White Horse in Wiltshire and raised £2,800.

THE FIRST winner of the Dave Bayfield Memorial Yacht Race, run by Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club, was David White and his crewman Nigel Squirell. The race, in memory of Mr Bayfield who died last year, was a two hour pursuit race sponsored by The Famous Grouse Whisky. Twenty-eight entries from all classes took part and in all the day raised £1,400, all of which was donated to the Institution.

BREAKER, breaker. St Austell branch were delighted to receive £1,600 from a series of fund raising events organised by the South Coast Breakers, a local CB Radio group. Members took part in a CB marathon, a snooker marathon and six ladies organised a street collection in St Dennis, Nanpean, Fox-hole and St Stephens.

Mrs BARBARA Ramsey took part in the 1989 London Marathon, and Ipswich and district branch benefited by £503.35 through sponsorship.

THE LONG, hot summer of 1989 helped the Salcombe lifeboat crew raise over £2,000 which they presented to the acting chairman of their local branch. The coxswain and crew organised weekly barbecues throughout the summer to which all members of the public were invited.

IN JULY last year a summer party was held at the home of Mr and Mrs Richards, Birmingham branch chairman and his wife. Nearly 200 people enjoyed a beautiful day and donated over £1,000 to the RNLI.

Gardeners question time

An RNLI weekend was organised by Worcester Ladies' guild at Clack's Farm, the home of Central Television gardening expert Mr Arthur Billitt and his wife Riet. Despite the inclement weather £1,403 was raised.

In a large marquee, sponsored by PBI, a panel of TV gardeners, Geoff Amos, Howard Drury, Arthur Billitt and Jim McIntosh held question-time sessions throughout the two days and their comments, wit and knowledge was much appreciated by the audience.

Other money raising attractions were tombola and a treasure hunt and souvenirs were also on sale. Local lifeboat enthusiast, John Sanders, displayed several of his model lifeboats, including 'Lizzie the Lifeboat', on a portable pool and caused as much interest with parents as with children.

Flying Penguins

Penguins do not often grow pumpkins but in the Falkland Islands strange things happen.

The eighteen members of the Flying Penguin Club, based at Mount Pleasant in the Falklands, took part in a pumpkin growing competition.

Despite the fact that most of the plants died before bearing their fruit, the club were still able to raise a marvellous £540.

Sowing Seeds

A bet between two gardeners, Peter Wilkinson and Richard Podmore, over who could grow the largest sunflower, grew out of all proportions when they sold sunflower seeds to local residents in Preston to take part in a sunflower growing contest.

Twenty eight contestants took part, with more than £520 being raised. The winner was deemed to be Mr Bob Newlands, whose plant was 11ft tall.

A racing certainty

During the summer of 1988 Peter Earle, landlord of The Kings Arms public house in Wandsworth, took up sailing for the first time. In less than a year Peter, with his son Richard, took part in the Fastnet Race.

But there was more than the race for Peter to get involved in. Four months before the race took place he decided to organise a grand raffle for the benefit of the RNLI. Thousands of tickets were printed with all the prizes being donated by local businesses, the pub's darts teams and the local branch.

Books of raffle tickets were sent to all the pubs in the district and in August the lucky tickets were drawn, the first prize being conveyancy fees for moving house during the next two years!

A splendid £3,203 was raised – and Peter completed the Fastnet Race successfully without having to call for help from the beneficiaries of his fund raising efforts!

Ken Chaplin, treasurer of Clapham, Battersea and Wandsworth branch, presented a commemorative plaque to Peter.

Family affair

Carluke branch is largely made up of families with children of school age and when they take on a fund raising event it is always great fun and everyone gets involved. So in the spring of 1989 the branch set out, with the assistance of their area organiser, on a schools initiative.

The aim was purely educational, not fund raising, and all ten primary schools in the area were approached and offered a film and talk on the work of the RNLI. All the schools accepted and an estimated 1,800 children became involved.

This was followed up by all the schools being invited to take part in an art competition on the subject 'Rescue at Sea'. Hundreds of entries were received, all of very high quality, and stories, paintings, poems and collages were judged and each age group within a school received a small prize.

The eldest class winner in each school received a special prize, an invitation for a day at Troon lifeboat station and a trip to sea on its lifeboat. On the day itself the relief Arun class *Sir Max Aitken* was on station.

From this initiative spontaneous donations of over £600 have been received by Carluke branch.

Disco memories

A disco organised by friends of Lee Whitaker, who was tragically killed in a car accident early in 1989, was held at Club Ifor Bach and raised £450 in her memory.

Lee was a keen amateur sailor and had sailed the Atlantic.

A suitable Case for treatment at Filey

An extra attraction helped Filey Lifeboat Day to raise more than £3,000 for the RNLI this summer.

A 1938 Case Roadless launching tractor, which has been restored to its original condition by owner Dave Pugh made a triumphant return to Filey on Saturday 12 August 1989, 25 years after its departure from the station.

The tractor was of particular interest to long serving Filey tractor driver Dave Baker

who had passed his test on a similar machine 20 years before. Dave later took the machine for a run on the sands.

The Case was coupled to the carriage of the station's 37ft Oakley class lifeboat *Robert and Dorothy Hardcastle* for a photo-call, but as the tractors had been phased out with the introduction of this heavier class of lifeboat the chocks stayed firmly under the wheels and no attempt was made to pull her.

However T29 was able to perform a useful

duty later in the day when she towed the empty carriage back out to the lifeboat as she returned from a special trip carrying the civic dignitaries of Filey and Scarborough.

Other attractions on Lifeboat Day included the band of the York Railway Institute, an aerobatic display and a combined exercise involving the Oakley, the station's D class lifeboat and a Sea King helicopter which was watched by crowds thronging every vantage point.

The Case tractor, T29, was the third type L to be converted for use by the RNLI by the Roadless Traction Co and had been stationed at Redcar from 1938 to 1957 and then at Filey until 1964. It was sold to a York farmer who used it for pulling down trees and then passed to a scrapyard owner and found itself pulling down buildings on a former RAF base.

Rough use had twisted the front draw bar and the gearbox was allowed to run out of oil, so the tractor was abandoned and lay virtually undisturbed for six years, with parts scattered around it in the grass and the gearbox steadily filling with water.



In 1976 a tractor enthusiast bought the Case and returned it to running order, although retaining some post-RNLI modifications, and after a few appearances at rallies it was put in store.

Two years ago Dave Pugh acquired T29 and was so intrigued by the unusual machine that he carried out considerable research into its history and the type in general. After much hard work, and the inevitable disappointments along the way, ex-RNLI

T29 has now been restored to original, and exhibition, standard.

Not content with one restoration Dave Pugh is now also restoring T63, the former Scarborough station tractor.

Quick on the draws

As the result of a two-year promotion in conjunction with Volvo Concessionaires Ltd, £600,000 was raised from the sale of two million raffle tickets in 1987 and 1988.

Sixteen Volvo 340 cars were offered as prizes, the tickets being sold by RNLI volunteers throughout various regions in the country.

The proceeds from the first year went towards a Tyne class lifeboat named *Voluntary Worker*, which entered the relief fleet in September 1988.

A second lifeboat, *Lifetime Care*, (see naming ceremony in this issue), has entered the relief fleet.

The promotion finished at the end of 1988 but through the kind generosity of Volvo Concessionaires Ltd four more cars were made available to be raffled in four of our regions during 1989, resulting in a further £154,483.50 being raised.

The first draw was for the **Welsh** region with the winning ticket being drawn on 29 September by the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Councillor Beti Jones JP. The winner was Mr J. Hill of St Clears, Dyfed.



Mr Charles Hunter-Pease, sales and marketing director of Volvo Concessionaires helps the Mayor of Torbay, Councillor Mrs Eileen Salloway draw the winning ticket for the South West Region at the Regional Conference on 10 October 1989.

(Photo Woodman Photography)

The draw for the **Scottish** region took place on 30 September at the Edinburgh Sheraton and the winning ticket was drawn by Mr Hugh Reid, operations manager of Volvo Concessionaires Ltd. The ticket had been sold by Newburgh-on-Ythan branch and belonged to Mr W. Mathers of Boddam.

On 6 October Lt Cdr Brian Miles picked the winning ticket for the **North East** region at the regional office at Glasshouses. Mr P. Wall of Cottingham, Hull was the winner.

The final draw took place in the **South West** region on 10 October. The Worshipful Mayor of Torbay, Councillor Mrs Eileen Salloway, assisted by Mr Charles Hunter-Pease, sales and marketing director for Volvo Concessionaires Ltd., picked the ticket of Mrs M. Lomax of Huddersfield.

It is hoped that further draws will

take place in various regions in 1990.

The amounts raised in the four participating regions were:

South West £63,433.50; Scotland £37,062; Wales £23,000; North East £30,988.

Cycling diver says thank you

A Yorkshire man picked up by the Porthdinllaen lifeboat while diving off Lleyan two years ago cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats to raise funds for his rescuers, and collected a magnificent £1,500 in sponsorship.

While on holiday in Aberdaron, Alan Wright, his 18-year-old son Philip and a friend, Keith Walker, went diving off Bardsey Island. Philip was left to look after the boat, and everything went well until they resurfaced – when to their horror they saw that strong currents had swept them away from their boat.

Despite waving and whistling they failed to draw Philip's attention and eventually drifted about three miles to the Irish Sea.

Philip and other divers began searching for Alan and Keith – who could see them giving up the search and also watched helplessly as a rescue helicopter from RAF Valley passed about 400 yards from the friends but also failed to see them.

As dusk was closing in on Bardsey Sound, Alan and Keith decided to keep close together so they could spend the night floating. However, out of the blue the Porthdinllaen lifeboat arrived, one of the crew spotted them when they were about 200 yards away and they were picked up after five hours in the water.

Alan says he owes his life to Coxswain Griff Jones and the crew of the Porthdinllaen lifeboat and it was for that reason that he decided to raise money for the lifeboat service.

Centenary celebrations

To mark the centenary of the rescue of the *St George* by Peel lifeboat in 1889, Peel Ladies' guild organised a sparkling buffet dance, produced a commemorative booklet and invited Mrs Karen Nordli (daughter of the baby girl rescued from the *St George*) to join in the celebrations. The buffet dance raised well over £1,000.

In addition, the branch have also produced some first day covers which are available from the branch secretary Mrs J Gerrard, 1 Cowley Terrace, Peel, Isle of Man, price £2 for a standard, unsigned cover, and £3 for covers signed by Karen Bache Nordli, His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, The Right Reverend Noel D Jones, CB QHG BA, Lord Bishop of Sodor and Man or by the present Peel lifeboat crew.

Drumming up support

For the past 12 years Brian Barnes of the Old Drum Inn, Petersfield and his regulars have collected money for the Institution.

At a small ceremony held at the pub in July 1989, Mr Barnes handed over a cheque for £1,000 to Captain Tom Fanshawe, president of the Petersfield branch, who in turn presented Mr Barnes with a token of the branch's appreciation. The £1,000 brings the total raised by the pub in recent years to £4,000.

That evening saw the start of another burst of fund raising; Teachers Whisky and Beefeater gin was sold for half price, and 18 gallons of Friary Meux bitter was also sold at half price. A total of £143 was collected.

In brief

BOYS' BRIGADE companies from within the West Lowland District (Scotland) have made a concerted fund raising effort to fund the anchor and cable for the new Portpatrick lifeboat which went on station in April. The anchor and cable are the emblems of the Boys' Brigade and the boys have a close association with Portpatrick. At a ceremony last October a cheque for £1,500 was presented to the Institution by the Rt Hon Viscount Thurso of Ulster JP, chairman of the Boys' Brigade.

THE 1989 Southern Region car draw raised a magnificent £53,614. The first prize of a Peugeot 309 GE car, generously supplied by Olds Motor Group, Dorchester was won by a visitor from Swansea. Second prize was a magnificent patchwork quilt made by the Cottage Quilters of Milton Abbas, Dorset, which depicted Grace Darling's famous rescue together with old and modern lifeboats. The quilt was won by a lady in Reading, Berkshire. Five other prizes were generously donated by Brittany Ferries, P & O Ferries, Sealink Ferries and British Channel Island Ferries.

SHROPSHIRE'S Wem branch received a most unusual donation when a local supporter provided the branch with two lengths of very high quality gentlemen's suiting material, worth some £80 per length. As there are few tailors in the branch's rural area they would be pleased to hear from anybody who would like to turn this generous donation into cash. All enquiries to the branch chairman, Mr B Reader, telephone Wem 32393.

Here we go

The generous donation of six tickets, valued at IR£10 each, for the international soccer match between the Republic of Ireland and West Germany, ended with the Arklow branch being IR£350 the richer.

The tickets were sold to the highest bidder. Jimmy Tyrrell, honorary secretary of Arklow lifeboat station, who was the recipient of the original six tickets, scored again by selling six more IR£8 tickets for the Republic of Ireland versus Northern Ireland game last October. This time IR£700 was raised.

Stockton summer

Stockton (Norton) Ladies' guild had a busy summer of fund raising events, centred on the River Tees.

In May, during the Stockton Regatta, the ladies were invited to run a souvenir stall; in August the town and arts centre organised a River Festival which was a two-day family event on the river bank. Many and varied were the events, which were rounded off by a sail-past of colourfully decorated boats from the Riverside Boat Club.

Many of the Boat Club's members also belong to the Malleable Working Men's Club which had been collecting money in a whisky bottle - £300 worth!

In all the amount raised during the various events in the summer came to £1,250.

Mystery lady

A lady known to members of Yarmouth and Gorleston ladies' guild as 'Mrs Pooh' has been making anonymous donations to the guild for the last five years.

Dubbed 'Mrs Pooh' because all the donations have arrived in treacle tins, the lady and her husband donate an average of £30 a year, but the guild have no idea who she is.

Concerted fund raising

The Buckie Ladies' guild, under its president Mrs Irene Davidson, have formed a 15-strong concert party who are in great demand all over the area at all kinds of functions with their combination of traditional Scots music, original comedy songs and sketches.

Judging by their success to date, the entertainment world had better keep an eye over its shoulder at the antics of the Ladies Lifeboat Concert Party.

Starting early

Five young supporters from Preston, Lancashire, Michael and Steven Bolton, Dawn and Michael Burke and Owen Ralph organised a garage sale last August and raised £20.

Bear-faced support



When Woodley branch held its flag day in the local shopping precinct this year, they borrowed a model lifeboat from Windsor branch which created a great deal of interest, especially from the children.

On the same day Rupert Bear was doing a project with the local bookshop. The branch was delighted when Rupert asked if he could have his photo taken alongside the lifeboat as this drew yet more attention and helped to boost collections, which over the week raised a total of £1,744.37.

Honesty box

Visitors sailing the Caledonian Canal via Loch Ness from Inverness to Fort William can make a half-way halt at Temple Pier, Drumnadrochit.

If the owner Mr Gordon Menzies is at home, berthing dues can be paid at his nearby bungalow. A notice at the head of the jetty goes on to explain that the berth is private but if there is no one at the bungalow donations for the RNLi placed in the pedestal box provided would be accepted in lieu!

Mr Menzie is the local village electrician, plus an auxiliary coastguard on Loch Ness, thus spending a great deal of time away from home - which in turn makes the pedestal box a lucrative source of income for Inverness branch.

To keep the RNLi in the forefront of the cruising public on Loch Ness a shield was presented to Mr Menzies by Mr George Mansell, chairman of the Inverness branch, as a 'thank you' for £650 collected since August 1988.

Mighty music

Extra seats had to be provided to accommodate queuing people at the Victory Hall in Lytham for a concert by organist Peter Jebson. His two-hour show on the mighty Wurlitzer organ raised £590 for Lytham Ladies' guild.

Mr Jebson is the deputy head teacher at Lytham Hall Park School, choirmaster at St Cuthbert's Church and resident organist at the Cliffs Hotel, Blackpool.

A happy anniversary

The 21st anniversary of Usk and Raglan branch in Gwent was celebrated by raising a record sum of £3,300 during the year. As well as flag days, house to house collections and souvenir sales the branch organised a sherry morning, a shanty evening with a fish and chip supper and a fashion show. The high point of the summer was a fork supper, with fresh salmon from the River Usk held on a perfect summer evening and which alone raised almost £1,200.

In brief

HIS GRACE the Duke of Atholl attended the Blairgowrie branch Cheese and Wine Garden Party at Altamount House Hotel and received a cheque for £1,000.

FOURTEEN year old Mark Russell and fellow Montrose Academy pupil Martin Oliver set off from Montrose lifeboat station on 1 October and cycled to Arbroath lifeboat station, where they were met and shown round the lifeboat by Crew Members John Blues and Clayton Jarrett. Having been suitably refreshed the two boys cycled back to Montrose. A successful trip for the boys, and the RNLi as they raised £250 in sponsorship.

A MEMBER of Erdington Branch, Birmingham, Mrs Clifford, bravely faced an abseil down the rock face at Symonds Yat, raising over £200 for her branch.

A COFFEE morning and an afternoon tea, both great successes, helped Hitchin branch to send £1,800 to Hadleigh depot, the largest single sum the branch has been able to donate and rounded off their financial year in style.

A TWO minute dash around William Low's Blairgowrie supermarket was first prize in a duck race held on the River Erich on Braemar Night and organised by Blairgowrie branch. The dash was sponsored by British Alcan and a consolation prize of a bottle of whisky was donated by the Angus Hotel. The duck race raised £375 for the branch and the winner of the dash filled two trolleys with goods to the value of £153.04.

THE MERSEY Lifeboat Appeal to raise funds for the new Hoylake lifeboat received a boost when, on 11 September 1989, a cheque for £129,225.97 was presented to Anthony Oliver, RNLi head of fund raising, by the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside - monies raised at the time of the official launch of the appeal.

IN OCTOBER 1989 Halesworth and District branch held a shipwreck party making a profit of £265 on the event and selling £233 of Christmas items and souvenirs.

IN ITS first year of activity the Rame Peninsula branch has raised the marvellous amount of £8,500. Their first house to house collection and flag day brought in over £1,868 and Torpoint flag week brought in a further £1,203.

THE 'ANCHOR' of Girvan Ladies' guild's collecting box holders is the Anchor pub whose regulars contribute more money year by year. In the last financial year their donations amounted to £350 out of a total from the boxes of £1,659.

Accept no substitute...

Radios, helicopters, MRCCs – they have all altered the face of modern Search and Rescue. But there are things for which the lifeboat is still best, as two friends of yachting writer and television broadcaster **Malcolm McKeag** will testify.

Irv and Woody are two chaps very much in what many think of as the traditional mould of the yachtsman – urbane, witty, difficult to rattle. This story is about them really, my own part merely peripheral.

It all began at one of the less glossy Cowes Week parties. 'We could do with a couple more for the Fastnet' said a somewhat out-of-place Irv, in a noticeably cultured accent...

'There is,' I told the girlfriend a little while later, while throwing gear into a bag, 'absolutely nothing to worry about. I'm going on the biggest, fastest boat in the fleet, she's 85ft long, has ten tons of lead in her keel and is as safe as a house. I shall be back in Plymouth long before most of them have reached Land's End on the way out.'

That bit, at least, turned out to be true.

Forty-eight hours later, *Drum* was doing what she was built to do best, taking the long seas off the Cornish coast with swooping grace, throwing the spray aside with casual ease, sending the foam hissing and sizzling along her lee rail. The breeze, which had been up to gale force in the night, had eased to the top end of Force 6, tough enough on the smaller boats but for a 'maxi' (the largest boats possible under the rule which governs ocean racing – Ed) next to perfect conditions.

It would have been utterly enjoyable had one been not quite so close to exhausted collapse. A maxi is no place for a casual pier-jumper, they are disgustingly hard work. Changing a headsail can be a ten-man job, and reefing reminds you of those old movies of work aloft in the Roaring Forties – ten of you strung along the boom, clinging on with fingernails and needing only the ghost of Alan Villiers to start the commentary.

There are but two one-man jobs aboard a maxi, cook and helmsman. They had a cook, thanks, and as for steering there was evidently a long list of individuals with noticeably cultured accents waiting their turn – and I was at the end of it.

So the principal task of yours truly was 'grinding', toiling at the huge winches. I am here to tell you that grinding a maxi is no job for the faint-hearted. It is much less a job for a not entirely fit yachting writer more accustomed to hanging on the backstay proffering well-meant advice to the afterguard. It should come as no surprise to learn, therefore, that between tacks yours truly was doing some well-earned cat-napping up close to the weather rail.

The first reaction to the big bang was that someone rather further up the hierarchy could investigate it. The second reaction was that one really ought to take an interest oneself. It sounded like a big shackle falling from aloft – but a glance there showed nothing amiss.

It sounded as if we might have run aground, but a quick glance showed us too far from the coast for rock hopping, and the waves too regular for an offshore shoal.

It sounded as if we might have thumped something in the water, and I was just poking my head out over the rail to look for railway sleepers or a waterlogged container when the second bang came. Realisation was instant. The sound was as unmistakable as it was unthinkable.

'Good God, the keel's fallen off!'

The stunned thought was immediately followed by another, more rational piece of inner self-advice. *'Well for heaven's sake don't tell anyone, you'll never live it down.'*

('I say,' I could already hear them whispering 'wouldn't go sailing with that McKeag fellow if I were you, positive scaremonger. Do you know, he once told us the keel had fallen off. Can you believe it?')

Aft, Phil Holland, brother of the designer (now there's a happy coincidence for you) was frantically heaving on the wheel.

'What's happening?' he yelled at Woody. 'What's happening?' Woody yelled at me.

'The keel's fallen off,' I said to Woody. 'The keel's fallen off,' Woody said to Phil.

'Well, aren't you going to check, or something?' I thought. *'I mean, don't just take my word for it...'*

But there was no need to check. The big yacht rolled on her side and lay there, like a giant Laser capsized on a giant gravel pit. She rolled on, turning turtle. Pausing to help the lad beside me unclip his safety harness, I missed the chance to scramble up the revolving hull and had to jump for it. The water wasn't that cold.

Woody, crafty blighter, went out under the guardrails like a fox through a fence then trod the rotating hull like a lumberjack rolling a log. He finished up atop the upturned great white whale, king of the castle. He didn't even get his feet wet.

Most of us had joined him by the time the chopper appeared, swooping low off the top of the Cornish cliffs and clattering towards us like a big yellow crow. An off-duty coastguard, Mark One Eyeball glued to Mark One Binocular, had been idly watching us at the time and, eyebrows rocketing, had seen us capsize. Fortunately, he had a phone in his Land Rover. Fortunately, the keel had chosen to leave us at a spot just 13 minutes flying time from Culdrose.

The Falmouth lifeboat arrived just as the last of those who had been trapped below in the air-filled hull had been brought to safety, and soon there were 22 of us lined up along the hull, like seagulls waiting for dinner.

An orderly queue began to form, as the chopper hovered overhead, its sling dangling near the front of the queue and the lifeboatman, his voice hoarse against the clatter of the rotors, urged those at the back to get a move on.

The lifeboat, standing off, had sent in its rubber dinghy to ferry survivors.

Funny, isn't it, how little things bother you when all you should be worrying about is avoiding death by drowning. Most of us had been in a boat, but not many had had a ride in a helicopter. Now that the danger was past, this looked like too good an opportunity to pass up, so the poor lifeboatman was having a hard time getting takers.

'Come on then, I can take two more this run.'

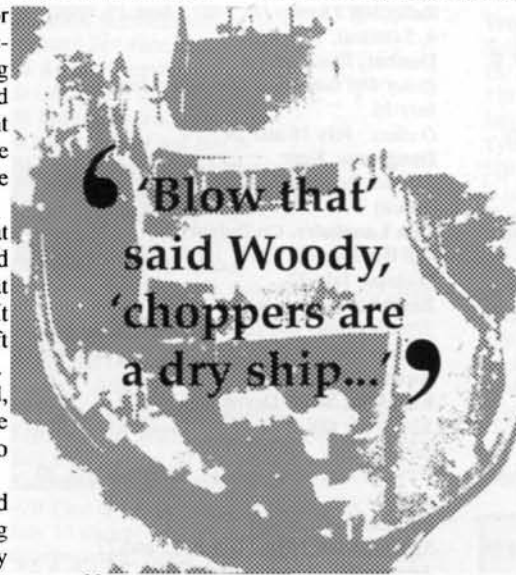
Only Irv was behind me, with Woody and Phil in front – we were the last four and the chopper could take two, the lifeboat two. Looked like I

wasn't going to get my ride in a chopper after all.

'You going in the chopper Woody?' said Irv.

'Blow that,' said Woody, 'dry ship, those darned things. Doesn't the RNLI still carry brandy? I'm a survivor you know. I'm entitled.'

I looked round for Irv, but it was too late. He was already sliding down the hull into the waiting dinghy...



Lifeboat Services

June and July 1989

Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire
54ft Arun ON 1050: July 30

Aberdovey, Gwynedd
Atlantic 21: June 2, 10, 25 (three times) and July 27

Abersoch, Gwynedd
Atlantic 21: June 7, July 5, 19, 25, 28 and 30

Aberystwyth, Dyfed
C class: June 1, 2, 12, July 1, 15, 16 and 23

Aith, Shetland
52ft Arun ON 1100: June 13, 29 and July 2

Aldeburgh, Suffolk
Relief 37ft 6in Rother ON 1064: July 1 and 22
D class: July 1 (twice) and 22

Alderney, Channel Islands
44ft Waveney ON 1045: June 3, July 4, 8 (four times), 9, 15, 21 and 22

Amble, Northumberland
D class: June 25

Angle, Dyfed
Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1115: June 3

Appledore, North Devon
Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1133: June 4, 20, 21 (twice), 23, July 15 and 21
Atlantic 21: June 18 (twice), 23, July 6, 10, 15 and 21 (twice)

Arbroath, Angus
D class: July 15

Arran (Lamlash), Buteshire
C class: June 3, 8, 28 and July 5 (twice)

Arranmore, Co Donegal
47ft Tyne ON 1111: June 1, 19, 20, July 1, 6, 26, 28 and 30

Atlantic College (St Donat's Castle), South Glamorgan
Atlantic 21: July 2, 5, 6, 15 and 16

Ballycotton, Co Cork
52ft Arun ON 1067: June 6

Baltimore, Co Cork
47ft Tyne ON 1137: June 12 (twice), 24, July 16 and 23

Bangor, Co Down
Atlantic 21: June 19, 20, 25, 26, 29, July 3, 7, 9, 11 (twice), 12, 15, 19, 24, 26 and 28

Barmouth, Gwynedd
Relief 37ft 6in Rother ON 1022: June 3, 9, 19 and 25
D class: June 11 and 19 (twice)

Barra Island, Inverness-shire
52ft Arun ON 1143: June 3, 25 (four times), July 15 and 16

Barrow, Cumbria
47ft Tyne ON 1117: June 1
D class: June 27, July 13, 23 and 26

Barry Dock, South Glamorgan
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1077: June 23 and July 25

Beaumaris, Gwynedd
Atlantic 21: June 11, 17, 25 (twice) and July 2

Bembridge, Isle of Wight
47ft Tyne ON 1126: June 13 and July 16
D class: July 10, 23, 28 and 29

Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland
Atlantic 21: June 16, July 9, 16, 18, 20, 21 and 25

Blackpool, Lancashire
D class: June 16

Blyth, Northumberland
44ft Waveney ON 1079: July 9
D class: July 19

Borth, Dyfed
D class: June 10, July 8 and 25 (twice)

Bridlington, Humberside
12m Mersey ON 1124: June 8, 27, July 22 and 30 (twice)

D class: June 4, 11, 22, July 1, 19, and 30 (seven times)

Brighton, East Sussex
Atlantic 21: June 10, 18 (three times), 28, July 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 12
 13 (twice), 15, 16 (three times), 21, 26, 27 and 30

Buckie, Banffshire
52ft Arun ON 1093: June 17 and July 1

Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex
D class: July 9

Burry Port, Dyfed
D class: June 23, July 16 and 22

Calshot, Hampshire
Relief 33ft Brede ON 1101: June 2 and 25

Campbeltown, Argyllshire
52ft Arun ON 1059: June 13 and July 6

Cardigan, Dyfed
C class: June 21 and July 16

Clacton-on-Sea, Essex
Atlantic 21: June 3 and July 5

Cleethorpes, Humberside
D class: June 11, 20, 25 and July 11

Clogher Head, Co Louth
Relief 37ft Oakley: July 11

Criccieth, Gwynedd
C class: June 19, July 2, 5 and 26

Crimdon Dene, Co Durham
D class: June 14

Cromer, Norfolk
47ft Tyne ON 1097: July 30 (twice)
D class: June 21 (twice), July 12 and 28

Cullercoats, Tyne and Wear
C class: July 2, 6, 12 (twice), 16, 19 and 30 (twice)

Donaghadee, Co Down
52ft Arun ON 1107: June 9, 28, 29, July 6, 9 and 13

Douglas, Isle of Man
47ft Tyne ON 1147: June 6, 17, July 6, 15 and 22

Dover, Kent
Relief 50ft Thames ON 1081: June 19, July 1, 2, 4, 5 (twice), 11 and 27

Dunbar, East Lothian
Relief 48ft 6in Solent ON 1020: June 6 and July 16
D class: July 16 and 29

Dungeness, Kent
37ft 6in Rother ON 1048: June 11 and July 16 (twice)

Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin
44ft Waveney ON 1001: July 4, 25 (twice) and 29
D class: July 22

Eastbourne, East Sussex
37ft 6in Rother ON 1055: June 4, 16 and July 23
D class: June 4 (twice), 16, 20, July 2, 8, 13, 18 (twice), 23, 27 and 29

Exmouth, South Devon
33ft Brede ON 1088: June 18, 23, 24, 25 and July 3
D class: June 4 (twice), 11, 13, 23, July 3, 20 and 24

Falmouth, Cornwall
52ft Arun ON 1058: July 5, 12 and 27
Atlantic 21: June 2 (twice), 19, 25, 26, July 9, 12, 16 (twice), 22 (twice) and 27

Filey, North Yorkshire
37ft Oakley ON 966: June 7, 8, 25, July 8 and 10
D class: June 3, 25 and July 5

Flamborough, Humberside
37ft Oakley ON 972: June 7, July 4, 8, 13 and 16

Fleetwood, Lancashire
44ft Waveney ON 1036: July 14, 23 and 31
D class: June 21, July 7 and 30

Fowey, Cornwall
44ft Waveney ON 1028: June 4, 8, 18, 21, July 17, 20 (twice) and 25 (twice)

Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire
47ft Tyne ON 1109: July 15, 22 and 25

Galway Bay, Co Galway
52ft Arun ON 1118: June 2, 4, 14, 20, 26, July 9, 17, 25 and 27

Girvan, Ayrshire
Relief 33ft Brede ON 1105: June 10, 25, July 3 and 19 (twice)

Great Yarmouth and Gorleston, Norfolk
Relief 44ft Waveney ON 1002: July 6
Atlantic 21: June 4, 7, 12 (twice), 16, 26, 27, July 1, 2, 5 (twice), 8 (three times), 9 (twice), 10, 23 and 27

Happisburgh, Norfolk
D class: June 30

Hartlepool, Cleveland
44ft Waveney ON 1044: June 11, 25, 26, July 1 and 23
Atlantic 21: June 25, July 11 and 23

Harwich, Essex
44ft Waveney ON 1060: June 17, 27, July 1, 16 and 17
Atlantic 21: June 4 (five times), 8, 18, July 3, 8, 9, 16, 17, 21, 22, 26 (twice) and 30

Hastings, East Sussex
12m Mersey ON 1125: June 8 and 18
Relief 37ft Oakley ON 973: July 23 and 31
D class: June 8, 16, 18 (twice), 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, July 3, 11, 20, 23 (three times) and 29

Hayling Island, Hampshire
Atlantic 21: June 4, 25 (five times), 29, July 1 (twice), 8, 14, 15, 19, 20, 22, 29 (twice) and 30 (three times)

Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire
Atlantic 21: June 8 (twice), 11, 18, 27, July 1, 12, 16 and 18

Holyhead, Gwynedd
47ft Tyne ON 1095: June 21 (twice), 24, July 13, 16 (twice), 19, and 20
D class: July 16 and 22

Horton and Port Eynon, West Glamorgan
D class: June 4, 20, July 9, 15, 17 and 22

Howth, Co Dublin
52ft Arun ON 1113: June 5 and 25
D class: June 9 (twice), 22, 25, July 6, 11, 19 and 24

Hoylake, Merseyside
37ft 6in Rother ON 1000: June 28, July 20, 23 and 30

Humber, Humberside
52ft Arun ON 1123: June 1, 4, 5, 6, July 2, 4, 6, 16 (twice) and 30 (three times)

Hunstanton, Norfolk
Atlantic 21: June 8, 9, 28, July 15 and 25

Ifracombe, North Devon
37ft Oakley ON 986: June 18, July 9 and 27

Invergordon, Ross-shire
Relief 44ft Waveney ON 1033: June 24 and July 15

Islay, Argyllshire
50ft Thames ON 1032: June 25
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1071: July 19, 20 and 25

Kilkeel, Co Down
D class: July 9

Kilmore, Co Wexford
Relief 37ft Oakley ON 994: July 17

Kinghorn, Fife
C class: June 19, 20, 24 and July 2

Kippford, Kirkcudbrightshire
D class: June 26

Kirkcudbright, Kirkcudbrightshire
Atlantic 21: June 4 and July 23

Largs, Ayrshire
Atlantic 21: June 1, 4, 7, 8, 20, 30, July 15 and 29

Lerwick, Shetland
52ft Arun ON 1057: June 1, 24, July 5 and 15

Little and Broad Haven, Dyfed
D class: June 11, 23, 25, 27, 30, July 4, 5, 6, 16 and 27

Littlehampton, West Sussex
Atlantic 21: June 3, 6, 11, 21, 25, July 13, 16 and July 30 (three times)
Littlestone-on-Sea, Kent
Atlantic 21: June 4, 18, 25, July 1, 4, 16, 23 (twice), 26 and 28
The Lizard, Cornwall
47ft Tyne ON 1145: July 31
Llandudno (Orme's Head), Gwynedd
Relief 37ft Oakley ON 961: June 21
D class: June 3, 5, July 11, 15 and 21
Lochinver, Sutherland
48ft 6in Solent ON 1007: June 3 and July 14
Longhope, Orkney
47ft Tyne ON 1138: June 2
Lowestoft, Suffolk
47ft Tyne ON 1132: July 5
Lyme Regis, Dorset
Atlantic 21: June 1, 4, 25, July 8, 16, 22, 26 and 27
Lymington, Hampshire
Atlantic 21: June 4, 25, July 1, 13 and 15
Lytham St Annes, Lancashire
Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1146: July 20
D class: July 1
Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire
D class: June 2, 18, 25 (twice), July 2, 9, 13, 22 (twice), 27, 28 and 29
Macduff, Banffshire
Atlantic 21: June 25, July 8 and 17
Mallaig, Inverness-shire
52ft Arun ON 1078: June 29, July 5 and 11
Margate, Kent
D class: June 4, 11, July 2, 12, 15 (twice) and 25
Minehead, Somerset
Atlantic 21: June 11, 24 (twice), 26, July 4 and 30
Moelfre, Gwynedd
D class: June 28
Montrose, Angus
47ft Tyne ON 1152: June 3
Morecambe, Lancashire
D class: June 6, 25 (twice), July 2, 5 and 31
Mudford, Dorset
Atlantic 21: June 16, 20, 23, 25 (four times), 27 and July 14
The Mumbles, West Glamorgan
47ft Tyne ON 1096: June 3 and 24
D class: June 7, 17, 24 (twice), July 25 and 28
New Brighton, Merseyside
Atlantic 21: June 10, 22, 25 and July 1
Newcastle, Co Down
37ft Oakley ON 974: June 25, 30, July 18, 22 and 28
Newhaven, East Sussex
52ft Arun ON 1106: June 4, 18 (twice), July 1 (twice), 3, 6, 16 and 25
Newquay, Cornwall
D class: June 2
C class: June 18, 20, July 2, 27 and 30
New Quay, Dyfed
37ft Oakley ON 996: June 26
D class: June 11 (twice), 14 and 26
North Berwick, East Lothian
D class: June 6, 19 (twice), July 10 and 11
Oban, Argyllshire
33ft Brede ON 1102: June 5, 10, 11 (twice), July 2, 4, 5, 6 and 30
Padstow, Cornwall
47ft Tyne ON 1094: June 4 and July 26
Peel, Isle of Man
Atlantic 21: July 23
Penarth, South Glamorgan
D class: June 8, 24, July 3, 4, 5 (twice), 19 (twice), 21, 23 (three times) and 30
Penlee, Cornwall
52ft Arun ON 1085: July 11 (twice)
Peterhead, Aberdeenshire
47ft Tyne ON 1127: June 8, 20 and July 31
Plymouth, South Devon
52ft Arun ON 1136: June 3, 11, 27, 28, July 2, 4, 12, 16, 19, 23, 24, 26 and 31
Poole, Dorset
Relief 44ft Waveney ON 44-001: June 11, 17, 25, 28, July 1 and 5

Boston Whaler: June 11, 13, 17, 28, July 25 and 26
Portaferry, Co Down
Atlantic 21: June 17, 26, 28, 29 (twice), July 26 and 29 (three times)
Porthcawl, Mid Glamorgan
D class: June 1, 5, 20, 22, 25, July 1 (twice), 5, 9 and 25
Porthdinllaen, Gwynedd
47ft Tyne ON 1120: June 21, 25, July 6 and 29
Relief 44ft Waveney ON 1029: July 21
Port Isaac, Cornwall
D class: June 18, 24, July 4, 18, 25 and 26
Portpatrick, Wigtownshire
47ft Tyne ON 1151: June 4, 6, 18 and July 9
Portrush, Co Antrim
52ft Arun ON 1070: June 21, 23, July 5, 6, 12 (three times), 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24 and 30
Portsmouth (Langstone Harbour), Hampshire
Atlantic 21: June 15, 24, 25 (three times), July 11 and 30
D class: June 17, 24, July 16 and 30 (twice)
Port St Mary, Isle of Man
54ft Arun ON 1051: July 2 (twice), 6, 11 and 13
Pwllheli, Gwynedd
37ft Oakley ON 978: June 3
D class: June 18
Queensferry, West Lothian
Atlantic 21: June 4, 14, 20 (twice), 23, July 7 and 9 (twice)
Ramsey, Isle of Man
37ft Oakley ON 995: June 6, July 3, 6, 10 (twice), 15 (twice) and 20
Ramsgate, Kent
44ft Waveney ON 1042: June 4, 5, 6, 17 and July 4
Atlantic 21: June 4 (twice), 17, 24, July 3, 20 and 23 (three times)
Red Bay, Co Antrim
C class: July 2, 13 and 22
Redcar, Cleveland
D class: June 13, 25 (twice), July 16, 22, 26 and 27
Atlantic 21: June 22, 25 (twice), July 16, 18, 22 and 26
Rhyl, Clwyd
D class: June 11, 25, July 2 and 29
Rosslare Harbour, Co Wexford
52ft Arun ON 1092: June 13, 17, 18 and July 29
Rye Harbour, East Sussex
C class: June 10, July 3 and 5
St Abbs, Berwickshire
Atlantic 21: June 24 and July 16
St Agnes, Cornwall
D class: July 23
St Bees, Cumbria
C class: June 9 and July 4
St Catherine, Channel Islands
C class: June 25, July 14, 27 and 31
St Davids, Dyfed
47ft Tyne ON 1139: July 11
St Helier, Channel Islands
44ft Waveney ON 1034: June 6, 11, 12, 25, July 4, 7, 16, 26, 28, 30 and 31
St Ives, Cornwall
Relief 37ft Oakley ON 984: July 23
C class: July 13
St Peter Port, Channel Islands
52ft Arun ON 1025: June 3, 11 (twice), 25 and July 24
Salcombe, South Devon
47ft Tyne ON 1130: June 24 (twice), 25, 27 and July 13 (twice)
Scarborough, North Yorkshire
37ft Oakley ON 979: July 10
D class: June 20 (twice), 30 (twice) and July 18
Selsey, West Sussex
47ft Tyne ON 1074: June 18, 25 (three times), 27, July 13, 22 and 28
D class: June 24, 25 (twice), July 2, 7, 16 and 23
Sennen Cove, Cornwall
37ft 6in Rother ON 999: June 28 and July 23
Sheerness, Kent
44ft Waveney ON 1027: June 23, 28, July 20, 31

D class: June 11, 21 (twice), 22 (three times) and July 30
Sheringham, Norfolk
37ft Oakley ON 960: June 21 (twice), 29 and July 30 (six times)
Shoreham Harbour, West Sussex
Relief 47ft Watson ON 971: June 1 and July 30
D class: June 19, 25, 27, July 16 and 28
Silloth, Cumbria
Atlantic 21: July 23, 24 and 30
Skegness, Lincolnshire
37ft Oakley ON 977: July 15
D class: July 15, 24, 26 (twice), 27 (three times) and 28
Skerries, Co Dublin
D class: June 25, July 2, 10 and 12
Southend-on-Sea, Essex
Atlantic 21: June 4
D class: June 7
Southwold, Suffolk
Atlantic 21: June 25, July 10, 17, 27 and 30
Staites and Runswick, North Yorkshire
Atlantic 21: July 15 and 28
Stornoway (Lewis), Ross-shire
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1103: June 29
Stranraer, Wigtownshire
D class: June 11, July 12, 27 and 31
Sunderland, Tyne and Wear
47ft Watson ON 969: June 17, July 11 (twice), 23 (three times) and 25
D class: July 1, 12 and 25
Swanage, Dorset
Relief 37ft 6in Rother ON 1047: June 27
Teesmouth, Cleveland
Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1122: June 25 (twice), July 7, 12, 15, 22, 23 and 26
Tenby, Dyfed
47ft Tyne ON 1112: June 11, 24, 28, July 16, 17, 27 and 30
D class: June 10, 18, 25, 28, July 11, 15, 17 (twice), 19 and 27
Thurso, Caithness
Relief 54ft Arun ON 1062: June 29 and July 25
Tighnabruich, Argyllshire
D class: June 20
Torbay, South Devon
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1086: June 4, 23, 24, 27, 28, July 14, 20 (twice), 21 and 28
D class: June 4, 7, 15 and July 21
Trearddur Bay, Gwynedd
D class: June 11, 21, July 8 (twice) and 16
Troon, Ayrshire
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1071: June 10 (twice), 17, 18, 23 and 28
52ft Arun ON 1134: July 2 (twice) and July 22 (twice)
Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear
52ft Arun ON 1061: July 2, 11, 21 and 31
D class: July 2 (twice)
Walmer, Kent
D class: June 4, 18 (twice), 25 (twice) and July 17
Walton and Frinton, Essex
48ft 6in Solent ON 1012: June 25, July 5 and 30
Wells, Norfolk
37ft Oakley ON 982: July 30 (six times)
D class: June 26, July 20 and 23
West Kirby, Merseyside
D class: July 20 and 23

Continued on following page

Lifeboat Services

The services listed are those for which returns had been received at headquarters by 1 November 1989.

There may be additional services for which no returns had been received by this date

Books ...

Some recent
publications
reviewed

The Little Ships of Dunkirk
by Christian Brann, published
by Collectors' Books at £24.50
ISBN 0 946604 02 9

In late May and early June 1939 the name of a small Flanders port became a household word, a name which even now, almost exactly 50 years later, still evokes memories and stirs pride.

At that time some 700 small boats were formally chartered, or less formally commandeered, to take part in Operation Dynamo, the evacuation of 385,000 troops from the shallow waters on the French-Belgian border near the town of Dunkirk, a task which was achieved under heavy fire.

Around 100 of these gallant small boats perished during the evacuation and others have fallen by the wayside in the ensuing years. Yet a remarkable number survive to this day, many of them linked by the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships, founded in the mid-1960s.

Raymond Baxter, now Chairman of the RNLI's Public Relations Committee, played a major part in founding this Association and, in addition to being largely responsible for the first Return to Dunkirk in 1965 to



celebrate the 25th anniversary of the evacuation, is Honorary Admiral and owns one of the surviving 'Little Ships'.

With the 50th anniversary of Operation Dynamo upon us Christian Brann, with the aid of two tenacious researchers, has produced a splendid volume to mark the occasion. In his beautifully produced and profusely illustrated book he has traced the

history of many of the Little Ships which survived, and of those which did not.

Photographs of the boats as they are today and as they were at various times throughout their lives amplify the text to make The Little Ships of Dunkirk fascinating reading for anyone with an interest in old boats or this famous chapter in British history.

Of particular interest to many will be the involvement of RNLI lifeboats in Operation Dynamo, no less than 19 being described in some detail, with contemporary photographs and up-to-date ones of many survivors.

The RNLI Celebrity Cook Book
Compiled and published for the RNLI by
the AA at £3.95

ISBN 0-86145-883-4

Not only does the RNLI Celebrity Cook Book provide some interesting thought for food, it also benefits the Institution's funds to the tune of some 15 per cent of the cover price of every copy sold.

Among its 160 pages food-lovers will find the favourite recipes of a wide variety of personalities, ranging from boxers ('Enry Cooper and Frank Bruno for example) through TV presenters (Terry Wogan and Anne Diamond), professional gourmets (Keith Floyd) and RNLI coxswains and helmsmen to President Bush.

The recipes themselves vary as much as their contributors and range from All American Clam Chowder (from the President, of course), through Chinese Chicken (from the well-travelled Alan Whicker) and Un Piot et des Pois au Fou (from the fluent French of John 'Bergerac' Nettles) to the Chip Buttie (from Terry Wogan, who else?).

All contributed their recipes to help the RNLI, so what better way to pass the long evenings of winter than working through the book from beginning to end?

The Cook Book is available from book-sellers, AA shops and from RNLI Sales.

Also received...

GENERAL INTEREST

Drama In The Air

by John Beattie, published by Robson Books
at £10.95

ISBN 0 86051 564 8

Previous books by this author include Lifeboats to the Rescue, and although this volume is concerned with aviation there are several mentions of the RNLI as a result of joint operations with helicopters.

Written in a very readable style and including many marine-orientated adventures.

A History of Selsey

by Frances Mee, published by Phillimore at
£8.95

ISBN 0 85033 672 4

Fascinating and well illustrated local history. Many RNLI references throughout and potted history of the station in one chapter on the emergency services.

FOR THE YACHTSMAN

Children Afloat

by Pippa Driscoll, published by Fernhurst
Books at £7.95

ISBN 0-906754-42-9

Practical advice on interesting children in sailing, safety and amusement on board, and even first aid

and hygiene from the wife of the Royal Yachting Association's National Sailing Coach.

Generously illustrated and obviously based on long experience.

Day Skipper

by William Barnes, published by Stanford
Maritime at £8.95

ISBN 0-540-07433-0

Practical guide to the shore-based course of instruction leading to the Royal Yachting Association's Day Skipper qualification. Step by step

instruction in navigation and seamanship with test questions. A good grounding for anyone going afloat in small boats.

Yachtmaster

by Pat Langley Price and Philip Ouvry, published by Adlard Coles at £12.95

ISBN 0-229-11662-0

Revised and up-dated edition of popular handbook for shore-based section of RYA Yachtmaster Offshore, Coastal Skipper and Day Skipper certificates. Includes exercises and also useful extra-curricula material.

Lifeboat Services

June and July 1989

Continued from previous page

West Mersea, Essex

Atlantic 21: June 23 (twice), 27, July 3, 6, 26, 28, 29 and 30 (twice)

Weston-super-Mare, Avon

Atlantic 21: June 18 and July 24

D class: June 18 and July 24

Weymouth, Dorset

54ft Arun ON 1049: July 1, 6 and 11 (twice)

Whitby, North Yorkshire

47ft Tyne ON 1131: June 1, 21 (three times), 29, July 1, 9, 15, 19, 22 (twice) and 31 (twice)

D class: June 4, 18 (twice), July 16, 22, 25, 31

Wick, Caithness

47ft Tyne ON 1121: July 9

Wicklow, Co Wicklow

Relief 48ft 6in Solent ON 1009: July 7 and 16

(twice)

Withernsea, Humberside

D class: July 22

Yarmouth, Isle of Wight

52ft Arun ON 1053: June 13, 27, July 28, 30

Youghal, Co Cork

Atlantic 21: June 27 and July 23

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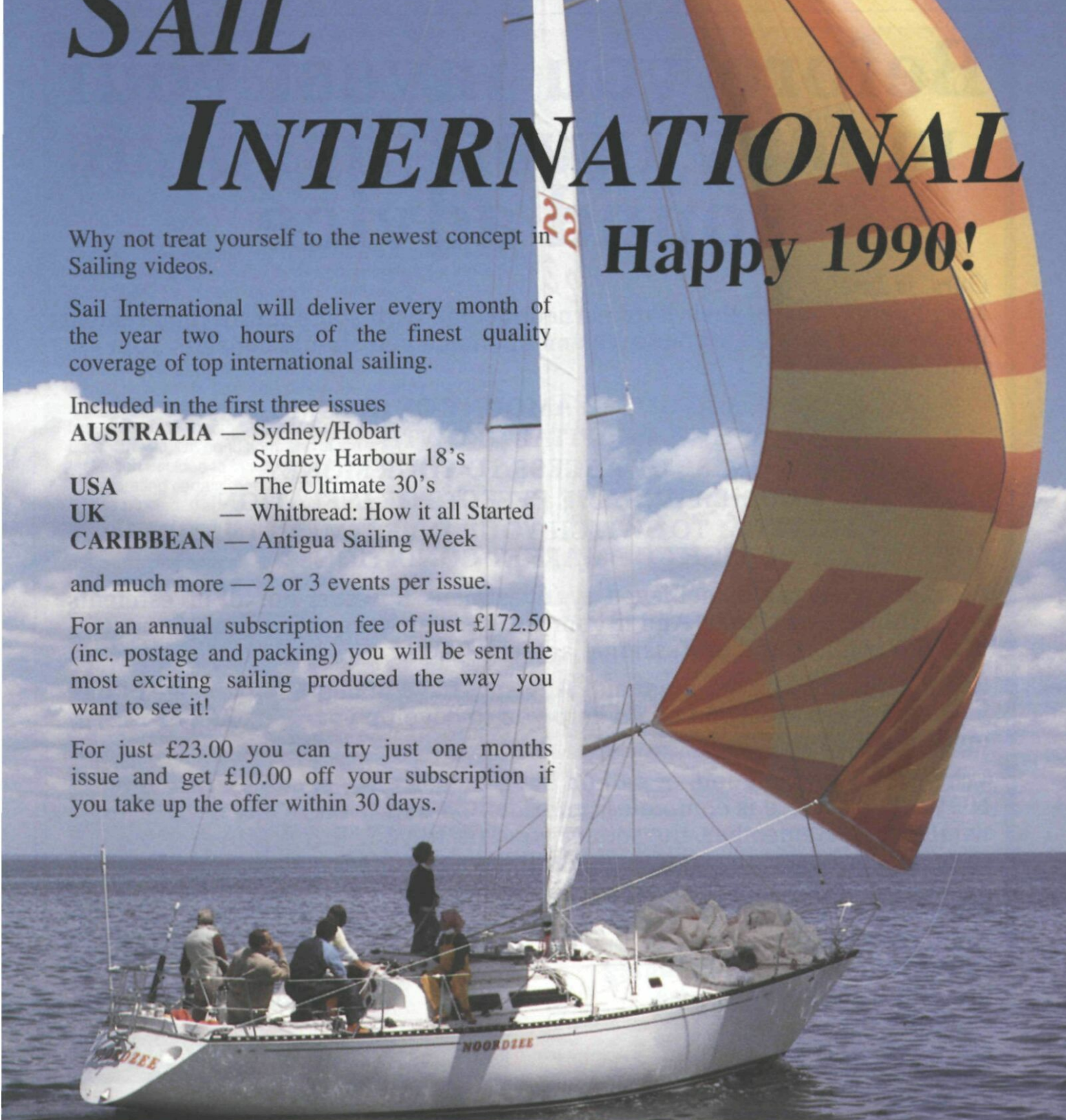
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Looking at lifeboats... the **WAVENEY** class

The first in a series
of profiles of
lifeboat classes

The Waveney was the first of the RNLI's classes of 'fast lifeboat' and originated as a design operated by the US Coastguard for general purpose inshore work.

The 44ft boat was designed with a 'semi-planing' hull form. This allows the hull to lift at speed, reducing drag and enabling speeds far greater than the 8 or 9 knots achieved by conventional 'displacement' hull lifeboats of the time.

The first boat (44-001, not named) was built by the USCG and bought by the RNLI in 1964 for evaluation trials which lasted some 18 months. It was decided that the boat could cope well with UK conditions and at the end of the trials the Institution decided to build further boats to the design, but incorporating certain modifications.

These included extra fuel tanks, a double bottom, extended wheelhouse and raised fore-and aft cabin tops to improve her self-righting ability. These modifications were not carried out retrospectively on 44-001 which therefore differs from other members of the class. She is still in service in the relief fleet.



The original American-built Waveney, 44-001, during trials in December 1964.

The first Waveneys to be built by the RNLI (44-002 to 44-007) were constructed in 1967 and 1968 by Brooke Marine on the River Waveney in Norfolk, that river giving the class its name. Subsequent boats were built by Groves and Gutteridge (44-008 to 44-015), Bideford Shipyard (44-016 to 44-019) and Fairey Marine (44-020 to 44-022), the last in 1982.

At first some crews were disconcerted by the relatively low initial stability, a function of



Waveney 44-020, John Fison stationed at Harwich, was built in 1980 and incorporates the RNLI's modifications to the original design.

her hull shape and the need for self-righting, but her general behaviour and high power which enabled her to 'climb out of anything' soon endeared her to lifeboatmen and the boats are universally liked by their crews.

The first seven of the class (including 44-001) were built with two Cummins diesel engines, giving a speed of 13 knots, but the remainder were built with two GM (44-008 to 44-015), Ford Mermaid (44-016 to 44-019) or Caterpillar (44-020 to 44-022) diesel engines giving a maximum speed of 16 knots. Earlier boats have since been re-engined with Caterpillar diesels, although power and speed remain unchanged.

The coxswain is seated in an open, but protected wheelhouse, with seats for the remainder of the crew in the cabin. Two cabins, forward and aft, have space for survivors.

Due to the hull form and the exposed propellers the Waveney is operated only at stations where the lifeboat can remain afloat.

No further Waveney class lifeboats will be built and the first boat of the class is due for replacement in 1993.

WAVENEY CLASS

Introduced:	1964/67 (see text)
Designed by:	US Coastguard/RNLI modifications
Number built:	22
Number in service at November 1989:	22
Launching method:	Lies afloat
Number of crew:	5
Length overall:	44ft 10in (13.4m)
Beam:	12ft 8in (3.7m)
Displacement:	19 tons (approx)
Engine type:	See text
Maximum speed:	16 knots (see text)
Radius of action:	95 nautical miles

(Total range is twice the radius of action)

The hull form of the Waveney is shown clearly as the first UK-built boat (44-002) undergoes her righting trial in October 1966.

Note the flat sections aft to promote planing.



People and Places

Around and about the RNLI

Youngest crew member?

Jonathan Foster achieved a long-held ambition when he joined the crew of Staithes lifeboat – the Atlantic 21 *Ellis Sinclair* – on his 17th birthday.

Clem James, station honorary secretary, is quite sure that he has the ability, dedication and physical strength to make a good lifeboatman. 'Jonathan came to every practice and crew night for many months and has worked hard to acquire the skills needed to be a crewman of an Atlantic 21,' he said

Jonathan is believed to be the youngest crew member aboard a lifeboat and is the first in his family to be a lifeboatman. He is a student at St Mary's Sixth Form College in Middlesbrough studying sport, and hopes to become a physical training instructor in the RAF when he completes his education.



Jonathan Foster (*Middlesborough Evening Gazette*)

Just the ticket...

Following the naming of the Tyne class lifeboat *Lifetime Care* at a ceremony held at the RNLI depot in Poole on 31 October 1989, Mr Charles Hunter-Pease, sales and marketing director of Volvo Concessionaires Limited, drew the winning tickets for the 47th national lottery.

The Lord Stanley of Alderley, chairman of the fund raising committee, and Anthony Oliver, head of fund raising, supervised the draw, which raised nearly £63,000. The prize winners were:
£2,000 – Mrs M. Kirkman, Steyning, West Sussex.

£1,000 – F. Wilson, Egremont, Cumbria.

£500 – M.J. Moore, Coventry.

£250 – Mrs M.F. Monckton, Troon, Scotland.

£100 – Mrs H. Child, Oswestry, Shropshire; Mrs D. Howells, Penn, Wolverhampton; Dr H.C. Miller, Edinburgh, Scotland; Mr B.S. Johal, Coventry; Mr R. Jewell, Lymington, Hants; Mrs M. Rowe, Bristol; Mrs B.A. Cooper, Roydon, Essex; Miss E. Pettersson, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

£50 – Mr & Mrs E. Mottershead, Didcot, Oxon; Miss Ashley, Margate, Kent; Mrs A.P. Noble Wood, Harrogate, North Yorkshire; Mrs E. How, Lymington, Hants; Miss E.M. Tyler, Halstead, Essex; Major J. Perrins, Weymouth, Dorset; Mr & Mrs Spilsbury, Brocton, Stafford; Mr R.C. Thomas, Handsworth, Birmingham.

Obituaries

With deep regret we record the following deaths:

MARCH 1989:

Mrs 'Flossie' Argent, vice-chairman of Dover Ladies' guild from 1976 until her death. She was awarded a statuette in 1985.
SEPTEMBER 1989:

Mrs Christine Campbell, founder member and president of the Ardrossan Ladies' guild from 1955 to 1970. She was a committee member of the guild until her death and was awarded a silver badge in 1971.

William Bulpitt, chairman of Birmingham branch since 1988 and vice-president from 1974 to 1988. He and his wife were awarded a joint statuette in 1983.

Mrs W.M. Gibson, president of Moffat and Beattock Ladies' guild from 1976 to 1989. She was vice-president from 1966 to 1976 and was awarded a statuette in 1981.

Mrs Marie Wood, honorary secretary of Caterham branch since 1957. She was awarded a silver badge in 1968 and a gold badge in 1981.

OCTOBER 1989:

Robert Snowie, chairman of Mortimer and District branch from 1981 to 1985. He was president from 1976 to 1979, president and chairman for a year in 1979, and chairman from 1979 to 1980 when he was elected honorary secretary. Mr Snowie was awarded a statuette in 1985.

NOVEMBER 1989:

Mrs Jane McCaull, a member of Troon Ladies' guild for over 25 years. Her late husband, John McCaull, had joined the Troon lifeboat crew in 1916 and was second coxswain from 1942 until his death in 1949.

Long Service Awards

The Long Service Badge for crew members and shore helpers who have given active service for 20 years or more has been awarded to:

Skegness – Second Coxswain Mechanic P.D. Martin

Torbay – Crew Member S. Bower

Tenby – Crew Member R. Crockford

Whitstable – Shore Helper D. Holmes

All-year cover

Two Under 10m lifeboat stations, Macduff, Banffshire and Little and Broad Haven, Dyfed, have been redesignated as all-year-round stations.

A D class lifeboat was first stationed at Little and Broad Haven in 1967 and previously operated only during the summer months, from March to October.

Macduff, which received a new Atlantic 21 lifeboat in August, funded by the Rotary Club of Glasgow to commemorate its 75th anniversary in 1987, also operated only during the summer months.

With the increase in overall casualties, including leisure activities, throughout the winter months the Institution has decided that these under 10m lifeboats should remain on station permanently. The decision has met with the full co-operation of lifeboat crew members and station officials.

On Station

The following lifeboats have taken up station and relief fleet duties:

OVER 10 METRES

Wicklow – Tyne 47-035 (ON 1153)

Annie Blaker on 8 October 1989.

Fleetwood – Tyne 47-038 (ON 1156)

William Street on 15 October 1989.

Ballyglass – Arun 54-07 (ON 1053)

City of Bradford IV on 17 October 1989.

UNDER 10 METRES

Porthcawl – D390 on 16 August 1989.

Relief – D391 on 14 September 1989.

Broughty Ferry – D389 on 20 September 1989.

Aberdeen – D386 on 26 September 1989.

Clacton – B579 on 4 October 1989.

Hastings – D392 on 12 October 1989.

Beyond the call of duty...

Bridegroom Bryn Jones and his new bride Karen were in the middle of their wedding reception at Llandudno, with the champagne on ice waiting to be poured for the toasts, when Bryn suddenly leapt from his chair and ran from the room.

He was followed by two other men in wedding finery and, as the other guests stared open-mouthed, all three of them sprinted towards the promenade – leaving the bride to be comforted by friends.

But it wasn't a dire case of wedding day nerves. Bryn, a member of the crew of Llandudno's Oakley class lifeboat *Lily Wainwright* for several years, had just acted instinctively when he heard the maroons!

'It was an instant reaction on Bryn's part,' said Coxswain Meurig Davies, 'I don't think he really realised what he had done until he was at the boat...'

Meurig, who was one of the other guests to leave the wedding so suddenly, then ordered Bryn off the boat.

'We had a full crew and I thought it better that he went back to make peace with his wife,' remarked Meurig.

So a somewhat crest-fallen Bryn was sent back to the reception where his bride was waiting.

The moral of the story? Perhaps it could be: 'if you're a lifeboatman don't hold your wedding reception 100 yards from the station!'

Lucky for some...

John Chadwick, the district surveyor of lifeboats in the South West Division for 26 years retired on 30 September 1989 through ill health.

His colleagues and friends in the division organised a retirement party for him and, as John is superstitious, they decided that Friday 13 October was an auspicious day for the gathering.

Also appropriate was the decision to include a magician in the entertainment at the party, held at the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club, as John is a keen amateur magician. Among the gifts for John and his wife Audrey were a tidal clock and traditional barometer mounted on a timber section from one of the old St Ives' lifeboats, and another special treat...

John and Audrey have always been on holiday to Tenerife, but in view of John's retirement they had thought they would not be able to afford it this year. Their friends and colleagues thought otherwise – and at the gathering they were presented with two tickets for their usual holiday!

Many people were involved in organising the gathering, including the coxswains of Salcombe, Padstow and Plymouth lifeboats – all of whom would like to thank those who contributed to the success of the party.

We apologise for the late delivery of some copies of the Autumn issue of THE LIFEBOAT which was due to circumstances beyond our control.

Jim Hunter

Principal Staff Coxswain James Hunter died on 2 September 1989 after taking early retirement due to ill health. He became a Staff Coxswain on 1 June 1966, Senior Staff Coxswain on 12 April 1973 and then Superintendent/Principle Staff Coxswain from 7 October 1978 until his retirement on 9 June 1989.

Shortly after his retirement a number of colleagues provided him with a windvane in the shape of a detailed model of his first lifeboat, the 70ft Clyde class, 70-001.

The windvane was made by two of the crew of the Wells lifeboat and was erected by them and the ex-coxswain of Sheringham lifeboat, Brian Pegg, who were all involved in the development of the Mersey class.

A card, with a photograph of the Mersey pre-production prototype and the names of some 40 of his colleagues involved in the windvane project was also delivered.

A few weeks before the vane was erected, and while still in hospital, Jim had been presented with a cheque by the Director of the RNLI, Lt Cdr Brian Miles,

Firemen say thank you

An August night when Yarmouth's Arun class lifeboat *John and Joy Wade* battled with a burning coaster was remembered during October, when firemen from Hampshire Fire Brigade visited the Island town to present a special plaque to the coxswain and crew.

The firemen, from Fawley and Southampton called to say 'thank you' to the crew, who had first towed the coaster then stood by while the firefighters were put aboard from a tug. The ten-hour service is covered in more detail on page 193 of this issue.

Presenting the plaque to Dave Kennet, coxswain of the lifeboat, the deputy commander of Southampton's divisional headquarters, Terry Pattison, said: 'We are very grateful to the lifeboat crew,' and, referring to an incident off Fort Victoria when the lifeboat had to re-establish the tow, added 'when I saw we were being driven towards the shore it frightened the life out of me. We all stopped to put lifejackets on.'

David Kennett later presented Terry Pattison with an RNLI plaque.

which was the Institution's countrywide response to the news that he had been forced to retire some two years early.

Regional Fund Raising Offices

The RNLI's fund raising activities are divided into 13 geographical areas, each with a regional office. The offices can help with any fund raising queries, provide advice and support and put people in touch with their local branch or guild.

The Regional Officers and their office addresses are:

Scotland: Kenneth Thirlwell, RNLI, Bellevue House, Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh EH7 4ND.

Telephone 031-229 2206.

North West: David Jones, RNLI, 131 Royal Exchange, Manchester M2 7BY.

Telephone 061-834 6978.

North East: Brian Stevenson, RNLI, The Mill, Glasshouses, Nr Harrogate, N. Yorkshire HG3 5QH.

Telephone (0423) 711667.

Wales: Miss Anne Williams, RNLI, Caerwys House, Windsor Lane, Cardiff, S. Glamorgan CF1 3DE.

Telephone (0222) 394546.

Central England: Richard Mann, RNLI, 102 Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 0DF.

Telephone (0527) 575017

Eastern: George Price, RNLI, Spooners Lane, Hadleigh, Suffolk IP7 5EZ.

Telephone (0473) 822837.

South West: Andrew Young, RNLI, Princes Wharf, Wapping Road, Bristol BS1 1RN. Telephone (0272) 291939.

Southern: Mrs Wendy Nelson, RNLI, 25 East Street, Wimborne Minster, Dorset BH21 1DU. Telephone (0202) 888835.

South East: Michael Ashley, RNLI, River House, Bell Lane, Uckfield, Sussex TN22 1AE.

Telephone (0825) 61466.

North London: Miss Susan Steer, RNLI, 202 Lambeth Road, London SE1 7JW. Telephone 01-928 5742.

South London: Miss Ann Wilkins, RNLI, 202 Lambeth Road, London SE1 7JW. Telephone 01-928 5742.

Northern Ireland: Mrs Beth Duffin, RNLI, 33 Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 4AF. Telephone (0232) 645645.

Irish Republic: Jimmy Kavanagh, RNLI, 3 Clare Street, Dublin. Telephone (0001) 762217.



Membership News

Governors ... Shoreline... Storm Force...

Apologies!

You may have been one of several members who experienced strange happenings which coincided with the delivery of your Autumn journal, and unreserved apologies are due to all concerned.

At the centre of it all was our computer software conversion programme, which has not gone according to plan. Despite all our attempts to keep things running smoothly some titles, names and addresses became corrupt on transfer, and the associated problems also led to distribution delays.

Re-member Campaign 1989

At the time of writing the campaign has another six or seven weeks to run but it has to be said that the cost of a Mersey is way beyond our reach and alternatives are now being considered which will equally identify the support of members during the past year.

We will be reporting more fully on our recruitment campaign in the Spring journal, but to all who recruited a new member a very big 'thank you'.



Prize support

Storm Force received a generous boost earlier this year, thanks to the interest and support of an adult RNLI member who read about Storm Force in these pages.

The anonymous benefactor wrote to say that, not only did he think it was an excellent idea to encourage young people in the work of the RNLI, but that he wanted to contribute in some way.

As a result he decided to covenant £80 a year to fund the prizes for competitions in Storm Force News.

Since Storm Force is non profit making the gift is a very practical means of helping, and members respond enthusiastically to the drawing, painting or quiz-type competitions.

Stormy visit!

When the Princess Royal visited the RNLI depot and headquarters in November (see RNLI News, this issue) she was also visiting Storm Force Headquarters. Two years ago her son, Peter Phillips, then nine years old, accompanied the Princess Royal when she visited Lymington and went out on the station's Atlantic 21 lifeboat.

Later, the Princess graciously gave permission for Peter to be made Leading Hand of Storm Force (a naval term meaning Leading Seaman). He was given his own bump cap to mark the occasion.

Peter now heads 8,523 members and we hope he looks forward to receiving his copy of Storm Force News each quarter.

Storm Force costs £3 a year for individual members, £1 each for groups of ten or more. If you would like further details please contact Storm Force HQ, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

The Princess Royal at the helm of Lymington's Atlantic 21 class lifeboat with Storm Force's Leading Hand Peter Phillips in his custom-made bump cap seated behind her.

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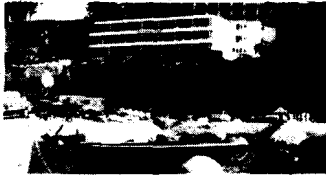
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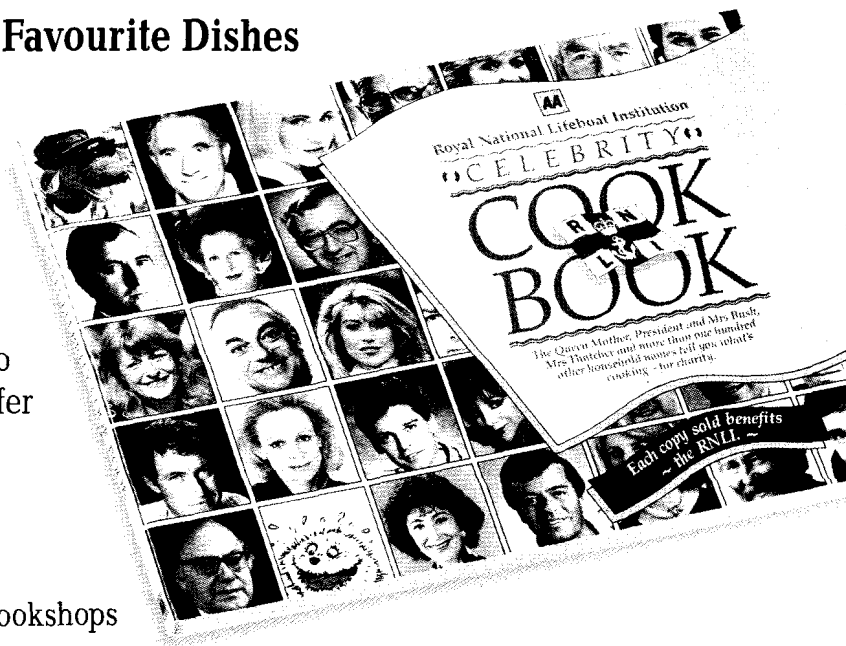
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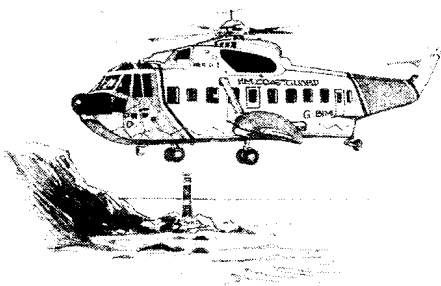
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