



# The Lifeboat

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**Winter 1990/91** Training for lifeboatmen

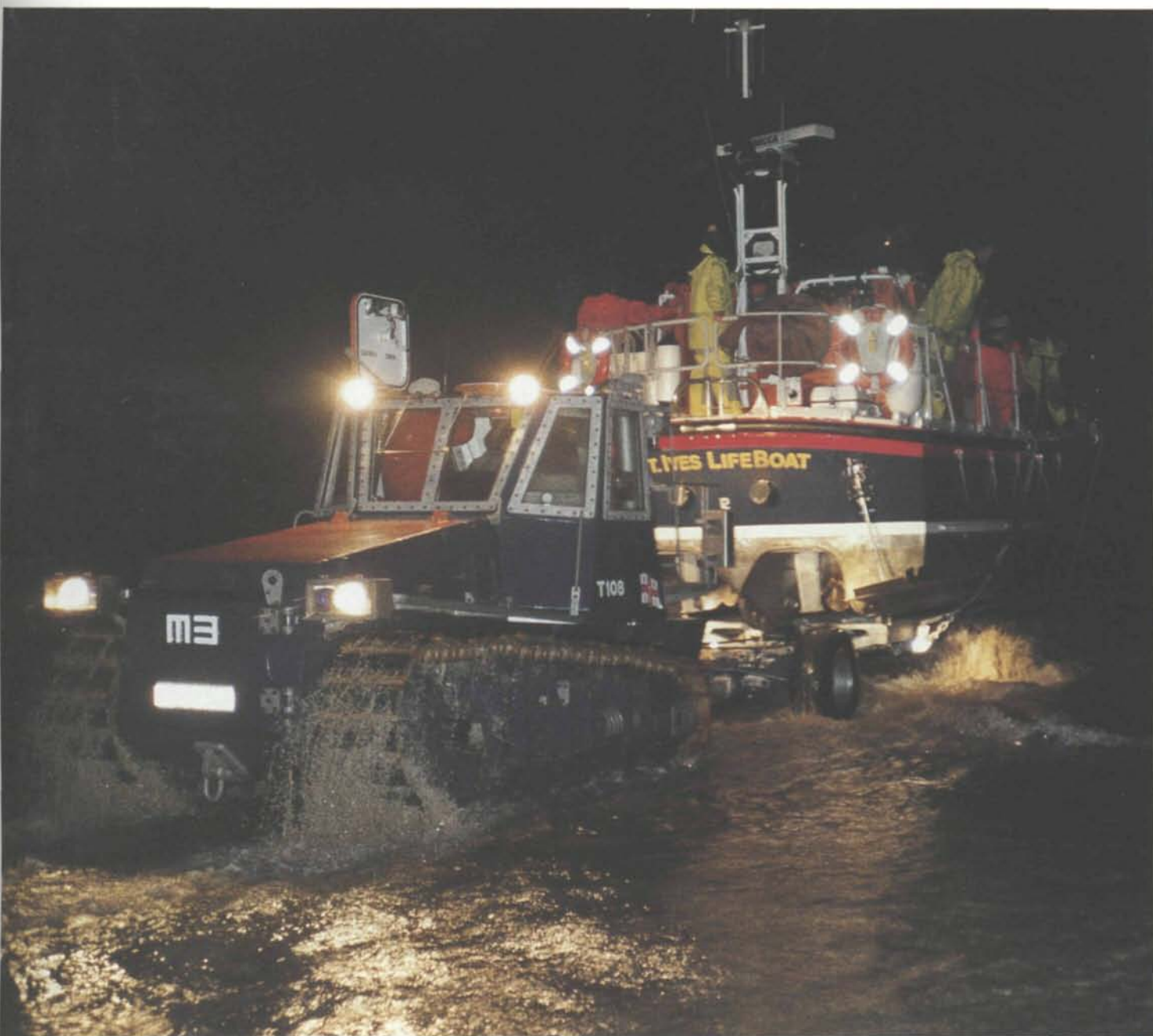
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Arun class lifeboat profile

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Launches around the coast

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# The Lifeboat

Winter 1990/91



Royal National  
**Lifeboat**  
Institution

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Volume 52

Number 514

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### COVER PICTURE by Mike Floyd

*The Princess Royal (Civil Service No. 41)* is launched for the first time at St Ives in Cornwall. The Mersey class lifeboat arrived at the station on 16 October and was recovered and immediately re-launched as part of her trials. (See 'Train of Thought', page 11)

**Next Issue:** The Spring issue of THE LIFEBOAT will appear in April 1991, and news items should be received by 14 February 1991.

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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## Hammering away...

The RNLI's appeal for autographed items which can be auctioned to raise funds has already attracted an enthusiastic response.

Several hundred autographs have been received at headquarters, ranging from those of lesser known personalities to those of Rudyard Kipling, Lord Byron and even a Christmas card sent by Queen Mary in 1929 and cricket bats signed by the MCC, West Indies and New Zealand teams in 1980.

A Nottinghamshire firm of Chartered Auctioneers will be selling the material on the RNLI's behalf and it is anticipated that the proceeds will already run into four figures.

Trevor Vennett-Smith of the auctioneers took a look at the collection recently and was impressed by the variety.

He said: 'There are so many autographs out there that people have just tucked away in a drawer, almost everyone has something. They may not think it is particularly valuable, and perhaps it isn't on its own, but if we can get enough together we can raise some useful money for the RNLI.'

Any autographed material can be sent to the Fund Raising Department, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ where it will be sorted and the proceeds used to help build and maintain the Institution's lifeboats.

## VAT and zero-rating

**Many supporters have written to the government and their member of parliament seeking support for the continuance of VAT zero rating for charities after European harmonisation in 1992, for which the Institution is most grateful.**

**However the answers received have not been entirely satisfactory. The government says it is seeking to retain its own freedom to zero-rate, and sees no reason for matters to change after 1992, but is unwilling to give specific assurances. The European Commission is basically opposed to zero rating and, as a compromise will have to be found, charities are right to be concerned and vigilant until the future position is secure. The Institution will continue its campaign and will be most grateful for any assistance lent by supporters and the media.**

## Round-the-world lifeboat returns

David Scott-Cowper brought the ex-lifeboat *Mabel E. Holland* back to his base on the Tyne in late September to complete a second round-the-world voyage.

Scott-Cowper's 26,000 mile trip had taken four years and included the first singlehanded navigation of the 2,000-mile North West Passage.

Of *Mabel E. Holland* he said: 'I have grown very fond of her. She has looked after me all these thousands of miles. There have been many times when the seas were extremely rough and she has proved its match.'

Although Scott-Cowper is planning another expedition it will almost certainly not include the lifeboat on which he has



*Mabel E. Holland* in the ice during her four-year round-the-world voyage.

now spent some six years. A home is being sought for her in a museum. 'I think she's done enough now,' he said, 'she deserves a rest.'  
(*Mabel E. Holland*, a 42ft Watson class lifeboat, was stationed

at Dungeness from 1957 until 1979 when she was transferred to the relief fleet. She was sold out of service in 1983, by which time she had launched 230 times and saved 74 lives.)

## More Inshore lifeboats at existing stations

*As part of a long-term strategy stations which operate only an All-weather lifeboat are being examined to see whether the addition of an Inshore lifeboat would lead to an improved response time for some services.*

*The examination will be part of the normal, and regular Coast Reviews, except where major shoreworks are planned and where an early decision could avoid later alterations.*

*Although there are some 75 stations operating only an All-weather lifeboat many would be unsuitable because of operating conditions, remote locations or proximity to existing Inshore lifeboats and it is estimated that*

*just over 50 stations will be considered for an additional Inshore lifeboat.*

*The first station to be allocated an Inshore lifeboat under this procedure is Ilfracombe, which will operate a D class inflatable for evaluation during the 1991 summer season in addition to its Mersey class. Following the construction of a new boat-house the previous tractor house is now empty, and is to be used to house the Inshore lifeboat.*

*Atlantic 21 class rigid inflatables are to replace C class inflatables over a period of time at stations where this is practical. The first C class station to receive an Atlantic 21 is St Catherine, Jersey, which took delivery of its rigid inflatable in October 1990. Crew members from the station had already attended an Atlantic 21 training course at Cowes.*

*Walmer has been established officially as an Atlantic 21 station, following successful trials after the Rother class was withdrawn in May 1990. The station's summer-only D class will remain for the 1991 season and be reviewed later.*

## Newspoint

### Voluntary – by choice

A recent survey carried out for the RNLI highlighted an interesting fact: 53% of people questioned said it was wrong that the RNLI should have to rely on voluntary contributions.

From this it would seem that the Institution's position on its voluntary status is not as well-recognised as may have been thought.

The RNLI is funded voluntarily and its boats manned by largely volunteer crews for the simple reason that it feels this is the best way to operate the lifeboat service. Government finance is not sought, nor wanted.

The RNLI is held in high esteem by lifeboat organisations world-wide, and many are modelled on it. The service it offers is second to none, and no satisfactory case can be made for change.

While it is important that the RNLI should be appreciated as a voluntary-funded service, it is also important to emphasise that this is entirely by choice.



## Silk Cut Awards

Coxswain Alan Thomas and the crew of the Tenby lifeboat were among those honoured at the Silk Cut Nautical Awards in London on 20 November.

Coxswain Thomas and his crew received the National Rescue Award from Dame Naomi James for their service to three fishing vessels in difficulty off Worms Head in September 1989. Alan Thomas has already received the RNLI's Silver medal for the rescue, which was reported in the Spring 1990 issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*.

There were links with the Institution in two further awards made at the same luncheon.

An award was presented to the Glasgow-based equipment manufacturers Simpson-



Coxswain Alan Thomas receives his award from Dame Naomi James

Lawrence for their stockless Delta anchor. The RNLI has been closely involved with trials of this anchor, and is at present conducting tests to see whether it can become standard equipment on lifeboats.

The Individual Rescue award was presented to merchant navy officer Tony Hogg from Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Tony's father John was the coxswain of the Tynemouth lifeboat crew which

won the Rescue award in 1986 but died before he could collect it.

Tony Hogg was the first mate aboard a 7,000-ton cargo vessel when her cargo shifted and she began to list badly. As preparations were being made to abandon ship the wife of the second engineer was swept overboard by a wave. Despite being injured by the same wave Tony jumped overboard and was able to save the woman, reaching a liferaft after battling for 30 minutes in the cold of the Atlantic.

The nine judges for the Nautical Awards included the RNLI's Lt Alan Tate, previously Staff Officer (Training) and Superintendent Cowes Base since 1 January 1990, and were chaired by Chay Blyth.

## Seafaring colours

Lifeboatmen from Teesmouth and Poole formed the RNLI's colour party at the Annual National Service for Seafarers at St Paul's Cathedral on 10 October.

Coxswain Peter Race from Teesmouth lifeboat station, the colour bearer, with Assistant Mechanic Tony Bebbington and crew member Geoffrey Barfoot from Poole lifeboat station as escorts, represented the 5,000 men and women who serve at the Institution's 200-plus stations around the coast.

The annual service at the Cathedral is attended by men and women from the Royal Navy, Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Merchant Navy, commercial shipping and fishing companies and sea-training schools.

## A good job

The producer and cameraman of the RNLI's latest film, 'A Good Job Well Done' has won a top award from the Royal Television Society.

Malory Maltby, from Freetime Television on the Isle of Wight, won the award for Best Regional Programme in the East of England for 'Sailaway', a sailing series for Anglia TV.

Malory, who has helped the RNLI in many ways in the past, was presented with a bronze statuette by the Society during October.

## Golden opportunity for the USA

The RNLI's Gold medal has been awarded to the United States Coastguard in its bicentennial year for its outstanding contribution to rescue at sea.

The Gold medal, the highest award the Institution can confer, was presented to Admiral J. William Kime, Commandant of the USCG by Michael Vernon, the Chairman of the RNLI, at a ceremony held at the Institution's London office in Lambeth on 21 November 1990. Admiral Kime was accompanied by Captain Dana Starkweather, the Commander of Coast Guard Activities, Europe.

The USCG was formed in 1915 when the Revenue Cutter Service (founded in 1790) and the Life Saving Service were amalgamated. Unlike the RNLI the Coast Guard is a government department and in addition to running a sea-rescue service is responsible for maritime law enforcement, marine environmental protection,

maintaining aids to navigation and has a commitment to national defence.

The USCG was also closely involved with the RNLI when the Institution's first fast lifeboats were developed in the mid 1960s. The USCG's 44ft boat became the RNLI's Waveney class after development and modification.

There is also a fund raising link between Britain and America. After the American bi-centenary celebrations in 1976 US citizens in Britain set about raising funds for a lifeboat. Thanks to the efforts of the American-based Association For Rescue at Sea (AFRAS) the US Navy League and the RNLI American Branch three Atlantic 21 rigid inflatables are now in service at Atlantic College in Wales, Hunstanton in Norfolk and the relief fleet. Their names reflect their donors being, respectively, *American Ambassador*, *Spirit of America* and *US Navy League*.

## The RNLI's 1991 Annual Meetings

The 1991 annual meetings of the RNLI will be held on Tuesday 14 May at the South Bank, London.

The meetings will follow the format of recent years, with the governors' annual general meeting taking place at 1130 in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, and the annual presentation of awards to lifeboatmen and honorary workers following in the afternoon. The presentation starts at 1430 in the nearby Royal Festival Hall.

All governors of the RNLI should find an application form for both meetings enclosed with this issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*, but any governor

not receiving a form should 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 meetings, or if you do not wish to receive a copy of 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 office.

Other supporters who would like to attend the presentation should write to the Director at the address given above.



## Important tax concessions on gifts

A tax concession which could be extremely valuable to the RNLI, and other charities, has been in operation since October 1990. From that date the RNLI has been able to reclaim tax from the Inland Revenue on single gifts of between £600 and £5m from individuals or companies. Previously tax could only be recovered on 'covenanted' gifts, which meant a commitment by the donor extending over at least four years.

Under the new scheme, known as 'Gift Aid', any £600 gift can be worth £800 to the RNLI with income tax at the current 25 per cent, provided certain simple conditions are met, and it is obviously in the best interests of the Institution that full benefit is taken of the concession.

Any individual, company or branch and guild that is involved with a single gift of more than £600 could increase substantially its value to the RNLI, and the regional offices and headquarters fund raising department will be happy to advise how the value of the gift can be maximised.

Full details can be obtained from the fund raising department at RNLI headquarters, but to simplify:

- The gift must be a single sum of more than £600
- It must be from taxed income
- The donor must be a UK resident
- The donor must complete a simple certificate (available from regional offices and headquarters)
- Higher-rate taxpayers can claim back the extra tax

## With the big guns...

The Imperial War Museum at Duxford near Cambridge, a former Battle of Britain Air Station which now houses an impressive collection of military aircraft and vehicles, may not seem the most obvious place to find a lifeboat.

However Jesse Lumb, a Watson class lifeboat built in 1939, is perfectly at home there and has been obtained by the museum because of her role in the Second World War. Like many of her sister ships Jesse Lumb rescued many shot-down airmen and other victims of enemy attack.

The lifeboat was stationed at Bembridge on the Isle of Wight from 1939 to 1970 and then served for a further 10 years in the relief fleet.

Now, after two years of painstaking research and restoration, Jesse Lumb has been returned to her original condition for display at the museum, thanks to the efforts of the museum



staff, sponsors Crescent Marine and the work of Royston's RNLI branch.

Appropriately Jesse Lumb was unveiled during September 1990, the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain with Fred Wills, her mechanic for 15 years, and Martin Woodward, second coxswain of the present lifeboat, in attendance.

## Lifeboat Heroes

A Thames TV dinner to mark the 500th anniversary of 'This is Your Life' brought together five past and present lifeboatmen who have all been subjects of the programme.

The men, who between them have saved 1,589 lives, won 21 medals and given nearly 200 years service, were Coxswain Brian Bevan of Humber lifeboat, and retired Coxswains Derek Scott, Mumbles lifeboat (1947-1987), Matt Lethridge, St Mary's, Isle of Scilly lifeboat (1946-1985), Alf Pavey, Weymouth lifeboat (1947-1976) and Henry 'Shrimp' Davies, Cromer lifeboat (1931-1976).



## On the technical front...

- The trials with a twin engine D class inflatable have been discontinued. Although maximum speed and acceleration were slightly improved over a single engine the manoeuvrability was compromised and the complexity of the installation in such a small boat was considered too great.
- The prototype 'Atlantic 22' is now afloat for preliminary trials. The new boat's rigid hull is 12in longer and 6in wider than the Atlantic 21 and the 'flat' at the keel has been reduced. This gives a finer entry at the expense of slightly deeper draft. The '22' weighs some 400lb to 500lb more than the smaller boat.
- The possibility of a high speed Inshore lifeboat is to be investigated. Preliminary enquiries have shown a number of commercial boats with potential as a basis for a 35-40 knot lifeboat. (The Atlantic 21 is the

fastest RNLI lifeboat at present, with a maximum speed of 29 knots.)

- Mersey class lifeboats are now being fitted with logs and fluxgate compasses, interfaced with the radar to extend the capabilities of the set.
- Electronic plotters are being installed for trials aboard the lifeboats at St Peter Port, St Helier, Plymouth and Troon.
- A GPS satellite navigation receiver is to be fitted to the Newhaven lifeboat for trials. The FAB 3 prototype will also be fitted with a GPS receiver.
- Trials are continuing with the stockless Delta anchor.
- An electronics workshop is being constructed at the Poole depot. The existing facility at Littlehampton will be transferred to the new workshop early in 1991.
- The hull of the 17m FAB 3 prototype has been completed and is now being fitted out.

# From the Director...

## Brian Miles, Director of the RNLI, looks back on 1990 – and forward into the new decade and beyond

The deadline for the Winter journal brought home to me that another year has elapsed, a year which I believe has been one of continuing and encouraging progress. It has certainly been another busy twelve months for everyone involved with the RNLI – not least our coxswains and crews as the number of lifeboat rescues continues to increase. As always our lifeboatmen have been ready and willing to deal with many different types of rescue – from saving 28 men from a Bulgarian fish factory ship to rescuing two roe deer!

The RNLI has never been able to relax its efforts to provide a lifeboat service capable of meeting all the demands placed upon it, and achieving the necessary high standards is a particular challenge today in an era when lifeboat technology and equipment are developed so rapidly.

It has also always been important for the RNLI to plan for the future but it is now essential we look as far into the future as practicable, to anticipate what kind of lifeboat service will be required in the early years of the 21st century and even beyond.

During 1990 there was a detailed review of the RNLI's search and rescue policy, with the main purpose of assessing future casualty potential around the coast of the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. This has enabled us to determine more effectively what future lifeboat requirements will be, looking ahead into the next century to ensure that the potential can be met.

As part of the review detailed discussions were held with authorities which represent commercial shipping, the fishing industry and the ever-growing marine pleasure industry. Many interesting points emerged which have been helpful in ensuring that the RNLI is planning for the future on the right lines.

### Enhanced cover

One point deserves special emphasis. The RNLI is now able to provide effective lifeboat cover out to fifty miles from the coast and furthermore, as an indication of our speed of reaction in fair weather, lifeboats are now able to reach virtually any point thirty miles from the coast within two hours and remain on scene for at least four hours. In severe weather any point thirty miles from the coast can be reached within three hours.

This represents our declared facility to the governments concerned, and is a considerable enhancement on previous commitments. It confirms that the RNLI continues to play a most significant part in ensuring that national commitments to international conventions for efficient maritime Search and Rescue systems are being fully met.

### Lifeboat development

This time last year I reported that the final boats of the successful Arun and Tyne classes were 'in build'. These were duly completed during the year and are now in service. The final Arun was named at Dundee last May, in honour of our former Chairman, His Grace the Duke of Atholl, at what proved to be a memorable day for the RNLI – particularly as His Grace was supported at the ceremony by his private army, the famous Atholl Highlanders!

We had hoped to have the prototype of the Arun's successor, FAB 3, launched and undertaking trials by the end of 1990, but we now look forward to seeing this boat on the water in the spring of 1991. The prototype FAB 4, the smaller of the two fast lifeboats for the future, will be launched later in the year, and as soon as possible these two lifeboats will be evaluated on the coast, so that we can benefit from the experience and wise counsel of lifeboat crews nationwide.

I cannot emphasise enough our determination always to ensure that coxswains and crew members are consulted as fully as possible at all stages of the development of a new lifeboat design, as we appreciate all too well that it is they who must use the boat in the future, often in the worst imaginable conditions.

The Mersey class lifeboat building programme continues, and eight boats of this class entered service during 1990. Delays have occurred, due mainly to practical difficulties in completing these complex lifeboats to a very tight schedule, but we remain confident that the programme will be completed to ensure that the target of having only fast lifeboats in service by 1993 will be met.

### Major events in 1991

Although it is still many months ahead I would urge our friends and supporters to note the dates of Friday 2 and Saturday 3 August, our next Open Days. Visitors are welcome in Poole at any time, but the Open Days have proved very popular as they have enabled us to lay on a programme of special interest and demonstrate at first hand what we try to do at Poole in support of those who work so hard for the RNLI all over the country.

Another highlight of 1991 will be the 16th International Lifeboat Conference at Oslo in June. Our colleagues in the Norwegian Sea Rescue Service are working hard to prepare for the conference, and in our capacity as Permanent Secretariat for the International Lifeboat Federation the RNLI is providing some assistance. We plan to send two lifeboats and will also be submitting a number of papers.

Over the years many firm friendships have been established between lifeboat organisations worldwide as a result of these conferences and the exchange of information leads to great benefits all round.

The International Lifeboat Conference and Open Days are but two of the potentially exciting events which will guarantee another busy year for everyone involved with the RNLI. New fund raising ideas are being considered, but again we will not hesitate to draw on the practical and hard-earned experience of our fund raisers from guild and financial branches before they are implemented.

### Raising the funds

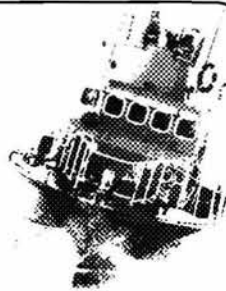
As I write we have heard that the RNLI retains third place in the top ten of fund raising charities. That in itself represents a tribute to all who work so hard for the RNLI but the main challenge lies in ensuring that we raise enough to finance the lifeboat service of the future to the same standards as in the past. I am absolutely confident that challenge will be met.

In conclusion I extend thanks to you all for your support and for your personal involvement with the RNLI, whatever that may be.

The enthusiasm I encounter everywhere for the RNLI is a tremendous encouragement, not only to me but to all my colleagues. On behalf of us all I wish you and your families the best possible New Year and we are all looking forward to welcoming many of you here in August.



# Lifeboat Services



## LIFEBOAT BUMPS OVER SAND TO STRANDED YACHT

### Four saved from yacht aground in heavy sea and swell

A service by the Walton and Frinton lifeboat to a yacht aground with four people on board has earned the coxswain a letter of thanks from the Institution's chairman. The other members of the crew have received a letter from the director expressing his thanks for their part in the service, as have the station's honorary secretary and his wife, who provided comfort for the yacht's crew after their ordeal.

At 0119 on Saturday 14 July 1990 Philip Oxley, the honorary secretary of Walton and Frinton lifeboat station, heard from Thames Coastguard that the 32ft yacht *Minstrel Boy* was aground on the Gunfleet Sand and bumping heavily.

An immediate launch was authorised and at 0139 the Solent class lifeboat *Lady MacRobert*, on relief duty at the station, slipped her mooring under the command of Coxswain Robert Kemp in an ENE wind of Force 5 to 6 and 8 mile visibility. VHF communication was established with the casualty, and at 0157 a VHF DF bearing was obtained.

#### Pounding

The Harwich pilot boat *Progress* was standing by but was unable to close the casualty because of the shoal water.

At 0221 the coxswain reported that *Lady MacRobert* was on scene and that *Minstrel Boy*, with four people on board, had been driven on to the sands and was pounding heavily in a steep, breaking sea and heavy ground swell. The wind was ENE Force 5 to 6, gusting 7.

Flares fired by the lifeboat allowed the coxswain to see that the yacht was in very shallow water, and he was forced to bump the lifeboat across the sand for some one-and-a-half cables.

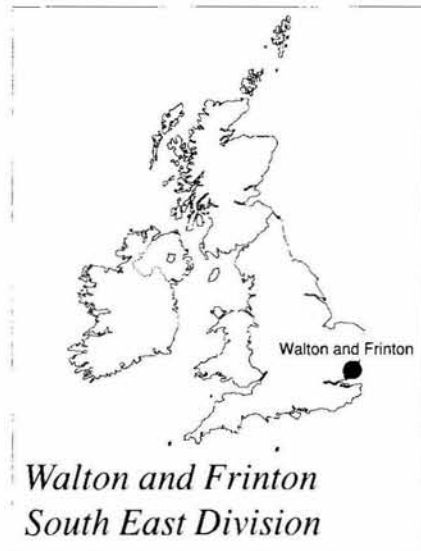
Without enough depth of water to manoeuvre the coxswain ran the lifeboat in close to the yacht's starboard side, taking several attempts as the lifeboat bumped heavily in the broken water. The lifeboat was brought close, only to be knocked away by the swell. On the second attempt the second

#### 'Pounding heavily in a steep and breaking sea...'

coxswain hooked a grapnel on a dinghy on the yacht's foredeck and the boats were secured together.

The four people aboard the yacht appeared to be in a state of shock, and had to be persuaded and then virtually manhandled aboard the lifeboat. At one point the yacht was lifted by the seas and struck *Lady MacRobert's* forward cabin with her stem.

The yacht's skipper was very reluctant to leave, and when he did his lifeline was still attached to a shroud. The lifeboat crew pushed him back aboard to prevent him being crushed between the boats and he was



brought aboard at the second attempt.

At 0227 the lifeboat was able to report that all survivors were on board, and as conditions were not suitable for towing the grapnel was cut away and the coxswain came astern into deeper water before turning to clear the sandbank.

At 0234 course was set for Tichmarsh marina and the survivors, who were suffering from cold, shock and seasickness, were tended. The lifeboat was met by the station honorary secretary, and by 0355 the lifeboat was alongside and the survivors taken to his home where they were given hot baths, food and drinks.

*Lady MacRobert* was made ready for sea, but it was decided to remain at the marina because of stress of weather, and to check a minor fault on the radar, caused by the heavy bumping on the sands.

At 0716 the Coastguard reported the yacht was adrift and the lifeboat towed her to the marina before returning to her pier mooring at 1100.



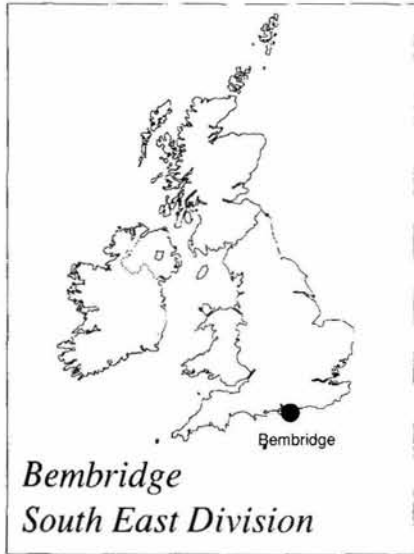


## LONG TOW IN HEAVY WEATHER

# Crew transferred to casualty in near-gale conditions

The chief of operations has written to Bembridge lifeboat station commending the coxswain and crew for their efforts during a five-hour service in rough conditions on 14 July 1990.

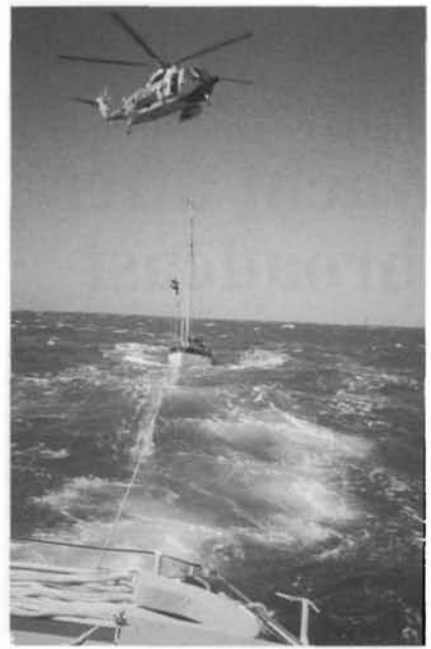
The Coastguard had informed the station at 0950 that a 30ft ketch, *Jenny Wren*, was meeting adverse conditions 23 miles south of the Nab Tower. The two people aboard were seasick and exhausted after 24 hours at sea.



As a result the Tyne class lifeboat *Max Aitken III* was launched at 1000 into a strong easterly breeze and rough seas, reaching the casualty at 1107.

The crew of the yacht were too exhausted to lower the sails or heave-to and in the difficult sea conditions, with the Force 6 to 7 wind over the tide, the second coxswain decided not to risk damage or injury by going alongside and asked a helicopter which was on the scene to lift two members of the lifeboat crew on to the casualty.

The two men, Colin Smith and Alan Attrill, suffered heavy bruising as they boarded the yacht in the rough conditions, but once aboard they were able to lower the sails and bring the yacht under control ready to establish a tow. The owner of the yacht and his crew asked to be taken off, and the helicopter lifted them aboard and transferred them both



This dramatic photograph taken from the Bembridge lifeboat shows the Coastguard helicopter making a transfer from *Jenny Wren* south of the Isle of Wight. The rough sea conditions are very evident.

to the shore.

A towline was passed to the yacht and she was taken to Bembridge Harbour, a passage of almost three hours in very rough conditions. The casualty was secured alongside at 1445, but the sea conditions precluded rehousing the lifeboat, so she remained in the harbour until early the following morning.

The owner of the yacht made a generous donation to branch funds and to the crew in appreciation of this service.

## Three swimmers rescued

The rescue of a swimmer and two lifeguards who had gone to his aid has earned the helmsman and crew of Sunderland's D class lifeboat and two shore helpers a letter of thanks from the RNLI's chief of operations.

The incident began at 1301 on 14 July 1990 when the Coastguard informed the honorary secretary that a swimmer was in difficulties three-quarters of a mile north of the station, off the Cat and Dog Steps.

The lifeboat immediately launched in a strong SSE breeze and rough seas, arriving on the scene at 1306 to find a lifeguard who had swam after the swimmer. Crew member Ian Brown went into the water to support the man while the lifeboat moved on to the swimmer, who had been seen close by. Crew member John Walls entered the water to help the exhausted swimmer into the lifeboat, which then returned to collect crew member Brown and the lifeguard. An ambulance was requested as both casualties were suffering from exposure.

As the lifeboat was returning to station the

Coastguard reported a third person in the water, but kept losing sight of him. The lifeboat immediately went to the area and sighted another lifeguard almost completely submerged in heavy surf.

Crew member Walls again entered the water to help this man, who was showing little sign of life, into the lifeboat. Resuscitation commenced and helmsman William Young made best possible speed to the beach.

Shore helpers Gerard McGill and Martin Cox ran to meet the lifeboat and lifted the unconscious lifeguard on to the beach. He was not breathing and no pulse was evident but Mr McGill and Mr Cox, assisted by two beach helpers, continued resuscitation and heart massage until the ambulance arrived, by which time a weak pulse was detected. All three casualties were taken to hospital and the lifeboat returned to station at 1415.



Walton and Frinton's lifeboat in action on a service to another yacht on 21 October 1990 near sands to the south of the service on the opposite page.

The lifeboat had been launched at 0413 to join the Sheerness lifeboat, a helicopter and other craft which had been searching for the yacht *Louisa*, which had reported she was in difficulties some five hours before.

Reaching the scene at first light the lifeboat carried out a pattern search for some four hours before locating the yacht and her two elderly occupants near the Maplin Sands. She was taken in tow to nearby Bradwell, but shortly after leaving to return to her station the lifeboat was diverted to the motor boat *Broadland Warrior* which had suffered engine failure. The casualty was towed into Tichmarsh marina almost 15 hours after the lifeboat was first launched.

**CONFUSION OVER CASUALTY'S POSITION**

# Five hour search for yacht after Mayday broadcast

The chief of operations has written to the Commissioners of Irish Lights thanking the keeper and crew of the Kish Bank lighthouse for their assistance during a five-hour search for a yacht in difficulties. Without their help it might have been difficult to have brought the search to a successful conclusion, as all radio messages had to be relayed via the lighthouse.

It was at 0010 on 6 August 1990 that the honorary secretary at Dun Laoghaire station was first informed that a yacht called *Splash* had transmitted a 'Pan-Pan' message that she had engine failure and was drifting northwards in very rough seas three miles from Dun Laoghaire and required assistance. The wind was Force 5 to 6 from the north-west.

The station's Waveney class *Lady of Lanchashire* was launched but could find no sign of the yacht. From then on communication with her proved impossible, or at best very difficult, and could only be carried out via the Kish Bank lighthouse, about 6 miles offshore to the east of the station.

**Conflicting**

The yacht continued to give conflicting information as to which 'lights' she could see, and her bearing and distance. Furthermore, the Kish lighthouse keepers could see the lights of the lifeboat as she searched, but not the yacht's.

A passing yacht managed to raise *Splash*, with very poor reception, but by 0122 neither Kish lighthouse nor the second yacht could receive her. However, ten minutes



later the Irish Lights vessel *Granuaile* anchored off the Skerries, more than 15 miles to the north of the search area, picked up *Splash's* transmissions, and the lifeboat crew began to think that the crew of *Splash* may have misunderstood her position and the lights which she could see. Perhaps she was

to the north and not, as she thought, south and east of the station.

Howth lifeboat was launched to search the area to the north, but as soon as she was afloat she too could not receive *Splash*.

At 0232 a phone number was obtained from *Splash*, with some difficulty, and when this proved negative the call-out began to look like a very elaborate hoax.

However, the coxswain continued the search, keeping in touch with the yacht via the Kish Bank light. White flares were fired to see if *Splash* could see them, but to no avail.

A call from Holyhead coastguard, on the far side of the Irish sea, then suggested that the yacht was on a bearing which would put her further north, but a further telephone number was then obtained. This connected with the owner's wife and family, who were expecting the yacht at 2300 that evening from Holyhead, to which she had sailed the previous day.

**Bearing**

Using what information the coxswain could get via the Kish, and asking for continual transmissions on VHF, he finally managed to obtain a bearing with the radio direction finder. At 0452 the yacht's skipper said he was near the East Codling Light, some ten miles SE of the original search area, but unfortunately this did not accord with the coxswain's radio bearing...

Finally, at 0503 visual contact was made, one mile NW of the West Codling Light, five miles inshore of the East Codling light and some ten miles to the south of the original reported position. The yacht was eventually taken in tow at 0514, more than five hours after the original alert, and the lifeboat and casualty returned to Dun Laoghaire, the tow taking nearly two and a half hours, to make fast at 0740.

# Six fishermen saved by crew member in open fishing boat

*Thanks on Vellum*

Eamonn O'Leary, a member of Dun Laoghaire's All-weather lifeboat crew, has been awarded the Institution's Thanks inscribed on Vellum for a rescue which he carried out singlehanded in his own 18ft open boat.

In his official report the divisional inspector of lifeboats for Ireland, Peter Bradley, said: 'Mr O'Leary picked up six survivors from the waters of the Dalkey Sound, which are well known for strong currents and confused seas with wind over tide such as experienced here. His assessment of the situation and his subsequent actions to rescue the survivors, particularly his skill in handling

*Dun Laoghaire Ireland Division*

his boat and his first aid treatment of the survivors, is worthy of note.'

At about 1930 on 7 August 1990 Eamonn O'Leary was fishing from his boat just inside the southern edge of Dalkey Sound, south

east of Dun Laoghaire lifeboat station, when he noticed that a smaller boat which had been about three-quarters of a mile away, was no longer to be seen.

Although the wind was only SW Force the sea was choppy, with the wind across the sea and creating confused waves about 3ft high.

Sensing that something was wrong, he made for the position to find a capsized 15ft open boat still made fast to her anchor. Two

## FOUR HOUR TOW IN HEAVY WEATHER

# Casualty taken in tow half-a-mile from rocks in on-shore gale

The RNLI's chief of operations has written to the secretary of the Sennen Cove lifeboat station commending the coxswain and crew for their actions during a service to a disabled yacht in gale force winds.

At 1130 on 5 July 1990 the Coastguard notified the station of a Swiss-registered yacht which had lost her steering about a mile north of Pendeen. With the wind from the NNW at Force 7 to 8 and a high sea with a 10ft to 12ft swell the yacht, *Koo-She*, was off a very dangerous lee shore.

Sennen Cove's Rother class *Diana White* launched just nine minutes later for the passage to the reported position, a little over five miles to the north of the station, and a helicopter was also scrambled.

### Tow

Although the helicopter arrived at the scene shortly before the lifeboat it did not take off any of the yacht's crew as the lifeboat was just minutes away, arriving on scene at 1205.

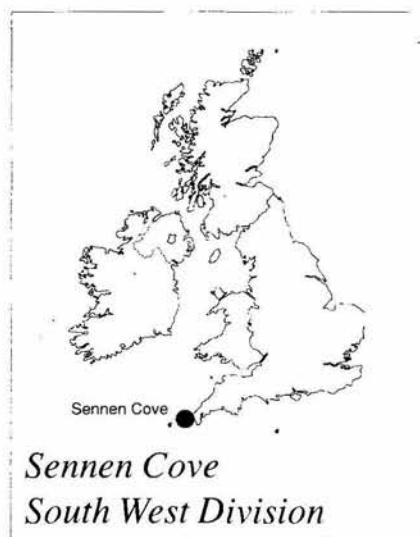
With the yacht now little more than a quarter-of-a-mile off the rocks a tow was quickly passed, and the lifeboat began to ease the casualty away to seaward. Because of the weather conditions it was necessary to head offshore to clear Land's End and the Runnel Stone and to pass Sennen Cove to find shelter from the westerly seas behind the land.

The only possible port of refuge in the conditions was Newlyn, and so *Diana White* towed *Koo-She*, with the four crew aboard, for four hours to the safety of the harbour



there before returning immediately to Sennen.

Although conditions were very bad, with seas breaking over the harbour wall, the lifeboat was successfully recovered and was ready for service again by 1805.



Sennen Cove's Rother class lifeboat *Diana White* tows *Koo-She* and her four-man crew to safety. The size of the sea can be gauged from the yacht – a sizeable 44ft ketch – as can the difficulty of towing a casualty without steering (inset) as *Koo-She* takes a sheer on a large wave and slackens the tow.

(Photos lifeboat crew member Phil Shannon)

people were clinging to the boat, and one of them indicated that four other people had become separated from the boat, among them a young boy.

### Exhausted

The two clinging to the boat were in no immediate danger so O'Leary headed for the four others who could be seen in the water.

Two of them seemed to be supporting each other in the water and he moved on to the other pair, one of which was the young boy who was in some difficulty. O'Leary manoeuvred alongside the boy and lifted him into the boat and then picked up the second man, who was exhausted from keeping himself afloat – as none of the casualties were wearing lifejackets.

Returning to the other couple in the water

he found one now unconscious and incapable of supporting himself. His companion shouted that the other had suffered a heart attack, and O'Leary quickly went alongside to lift the unconscious man aboard. The fourth man was then recovered, also very exhausted from supporting his friend.

The unconscious man had a very weak pulse and was breathing weakly so O'Leary made him as comfortable as possible in the bottom of his boat and returned in the direction of the capsized boat. On the way the engine stalled when the propeller fouled a leather jacket in the water, but this was quickly cleared by cutting it away.

When he reached the capsized dinghy O'Leary hauled the final two survivors aboard. By now the boat had only a few

inches of freeboard and it took three attempts to get the last one on board, the boat shipping water as she listed heavily.

### Alarm

With all six now on board O'Leary checked their condition and concluded that all were exhausted and cold, and that one had probably suffered a heart attack.

With the flood tide behind him O'Leary headed for the nearest land, where he knew he would be able to raise the alarm.

Reaching Coliemoore harbour at about 2030 he sent the strongest survivor to the public telephone to call an ambulance, which arrived some minutes later to take all six survivors to hospital in Dun Laoghaire, and then returned to harbour to report the rescue to the station honorary secretary.

## INSHORE LIFEBOAT CAPSIZED IN HEAVY SURF

# Two lifeboats in search for car in tragic cliff-fall

The RNLI's chairman, Michael Vernon, has written to the coxswain of Eastbourne's All-weather lifeboat commending him on his actions during a service on 23 June 1990. The helmsman of the station's Inshore lifeboat has received a letter of thanks from the chief of operations for his part in the same service.

The operation began at 1316 on Saturday 23 June 1990 when Dover Coastguard alerted Eastbourne lifeboat station that a car had been seen at the bottom of a cliff one cable east of Beachy Head lighthouse, to the south west of the station.

The coastguard asked that the inshore lifeboat be launched to investigate whether the occupants, believed to be a woman and two children, had survived. At 1320 Eastbourne's D class lifeboat was launched on service, and three minutes later the Rother class lifeboat *Duke of Kent* was also launched in support. The wind at the launch site was SSW Force 4 to 5, with a moderate swell.

The D class arrived at the scene some 12 minutes after launching, giving Beachy Head Ledge a wide berth in the heavy swell.

### Surf

An approach was made from the west, to run down-sea to the position of the car and veer in using the anchor, as the breaking surf was too rough for a beach landing.

After anchoring at the second attempt the lifeboat veered in to the shore towards the car, which was now awash.

Crew member Malcolm Hollobone swam ashore through the breaking surf to reconnoitre, and crew member John Hemingway followed, with a line to the stern of the D class to steady her in the surf, and was washed off his feet – allowing the slack line to foul the propeller.

The boat was hauled into deeper water to clear it, but a series of heavy waves broke into her and she swung beam-on to the surf and capsized in chest-deep water at about 1345.

Crew member Tony Hyland was under the boat as she capsized, but quickly extracted himself and was swept clear. Helmsman Tucker tried unsuccessfully to right the boat alone, so Crew member Malcolm Hollobone swam out to assist, despite being knocked back several times. Their joint attempts to right the boat were also unsuccessful.

The Rother class lifeboat *Duke of Kent* arrived off Beachy Head Ledge at 1345, just as the inshore lifeboat capsized, and Coxswain/Mechanic Graham Cole immediately



Eastbourne  
South East Division

decided to position the lifeboat where a rescue attempt could be made.

*Duke of Kent* was taken into 2.5m of water, some half-a-cable from the inshore lifeboat, and anchored by the stern to keep the propellers in deeper water, away from the rocks. The warp was led forward to the bow so she could be swung round to clear the area if necessary. A rocket line was also prepared.

While Coxswain Cole was waiting for the inshore lifeboat crew to reach the shore *Duke of Kent* touched the rocks, and he moved her into deeper water. The tide was ebbing quickly and the lifeboat's motion was severe, in winds now gusting to Force 7 with a heavy SSW swell and rough sea.

### Damaged

At approximately 1515 the inshore lifeboat was ready for recovery by the Rother, having been righted by her crew with the help of the Coastguard Cliff Rescue Team. The outboard motor had been damaged on rocks and was unserviceable.

The Rother anchored again one-and-a-half cables from the shore in 2.5m of water and a rocket line fired to pass a line ashore.

Helmsman Tucker had prepared the D class for recovery from the beach and the line from the Rother was secured to her and, with Helmsman Tucker aboard, she was hauled

## Dangerous gas on blazing fishing vessel



Tynemouth's Arun class lifeboat *George and Olive Turner* was called to the aid of the fishing vessel *Kalisto* which caught fire on 15 September 1990.

The two crew had jumped overboard and been airlifted ashore, but reported there were gas and air bottles aboard which could explode. Lifeboat crew members Jimmy Griffiths and Stewart Brown, who went aboard the blazing vessel to extinguish the fire, later said it was one of the most dangerous calls they had been on.

They jettisoned the cylinders, which were recovered by Cullercoats inshore lifeboat, and brought the fire under control after about 20 minutes.

*Kalisto* was later towed back to port.



seaward by the Rother and secured alongside. Both lifeboats then returned to station, with the remainder of the inshore lifeboat crew returning by road, and recovered at 1603.

One of *Duke of Kent's* shafts and propeller were found to be slightly damaged, and the inshore lifeboat had suffered damage to her hull and bow boards. The engine had been severely damaged and a number of items of equipment were missing so a replacement was requested immediately.

The actions of Coxswain Cole in placing *Duke of Kent* into such shallow water in rough conditions were praised by all who witnessed the incident. His actions displayed an exemplary knowledge of local shoal waters, and by anchoring the lifeboat by the stern he minimised the likely damage in the heavy swell.

Sadly, the occupants of the car did not survive the fall.

## Mike Floyd, Editor of THE LIFEBOAT, joins a crew preparing to take delivery of their new Mersey

The lifeboat crew were about to haul a survivor aboard when an unmistakable siren broke into their ordered efforts.

'Fire! Fire! That's the fire alarm!'

Tumbling back into the wheelhouse one of the crew glanced instinctively up at the control panel, where a fierce red warning light blazed – the engine room fire alarm had triggered. Next to it another warning light sat cold and lifeless, then seconds later sprang into life. The automatic fire extinguisher had operated.

In the wheelhouse the coxswain took control of a well-rehearsed routine:

'OK. We're in a safe position, stopping the engines now.'

The two turbocharged diesel engines fell silent as the coxswain's hand found the 'kill' buttons.

'Close the engine room fire flaps'

Quickly the on-deck engine air inlet and exhaust vent flaps were pinned shut, so that the fire-extinguishing gas would not be lost to the atmosphere.

'Check the inspection panel.'

The cover plate in the watertight door to the engine room was swung aside.

'Thick smoke. Can't see any flames!'

The massive flow of air for ventilation and engine combustion may have dispersed the inert gas before the fire was extinguished. With all vents closed, the ventilation fans switched off and the engines stopped the gas would now stay in the engine room. It was time to play the next card.

'Fire the secondary extinguisher.'

The manual control for the back-up fire extinguisher was pulled up to its full extent, and a third red light sprang into life as the pressure was released in the second bottle and more halon gas flooded into the engine room.

Two men could not be accounted for. Searchers had reported that the tiller flat and forecabin were empty, so the conclusions were inescapable – the men were in the smoke-filled engine room, and someone would have to go in and get them.

Satisfied that the fire was now out, but very aware of the smoke and halon gas which filled the engine room, a crew member was quickly but calmly kitted out in a smoke-hood and asbestos gloves, the end of his air hose led to the windward deck to ensure a supply of clean air.

**Right** When you are busy with one task – retrieving a survivor for example – is the worst time to suffer an emergency. Coxswain Eric Ward (front) and Mechanic Tommy Cocking from St Ives get to grips with an un-cooperative dummy, unaware that an engine room fire waits in the wings. **Top** Crew member Alan Woods wears the lifeboat's smoke hood in the engine room.



### 'The men were in the smoke filled engine room'



The lifeboat now lay silent and lifeless in the swell, and with two men lying in the thick smoke down below urgent action was necessary. But there was no panic, and every action had still to be considered carefully. The danger of a flash-back into the wheelhouse, the nerve centre of the lifeboat, meant that the door into the engine room could not be used, so the only other way in was through the forward cabin.

Shielding himself with the door as he slowly opened it, the hooded figure stepped into the impenetrable smoke, the air hose paying-out behind him.

'Two men in there... alive but unconscious!' reported a crewman on the windward deck, head bent to the hose and translating the muffled voice issuing from it. 'He's bringing them out.'

Working carefully in the confined space of the forecabin, smoke still billowing from the engine room and swirling around them, the crew handed the two men carefully up into the fresh air. The lifeboat's first-aider made a preliminary examination, pronouncing them not in need of emergency attention and recovering already.

The emergency was over, handled coolly and correctly by the coxswain and crew, and despite the unexpected emergency the survivor had been safely recovered.

But shouldn't there be cause for concern over the incident? This same lifeboat, brand-new and fresh from her builder's yard, had suffered numerous other emergencies during the past few days. A complete failure of the hydraulic steering had meant the rapid rigging of the emergency system, several men had gone overboard and the Decca navigation system had mysteriously failed. Yet no one seemed at all concerned, and in fact the boat was deemed ready to go to her home station in just a few days time.

However the lack of concern did not stem from a complacent attitude, far from it. The fire, the steering failure and the men overboard were all exercises, skilfully staged by training staff at the

Continued →

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RNLI's Poole headquarters, and intended to put into practice routines explained at classroom sessions spread through a week of intensive training. All of the incidents had been geared to readying the crew for their new lifeboat, putting them through situations which everyone fervently hoped would never occur in practise.

A week of classroom work and practice drills may seem excessive for men who have already spent the best part of their lives at sea, some already the recipient of awards for their bravery and boat handling, but the crew were unanimous in their appreciation of the value of the sessions.

Today's lifeboatman still needs all the attributes of his forebears, but as well as being a consummate seaman he must now be something of an engineer, an electronics technician and a communications specialist in order to make the best use of the new generation of highly sophisticated and fully-equipped lifeboats.

Wheelhouses in modern lifeboats are now more like an aircraft flight deck than a fishing boat bridge, the two turbocharged V8 diesels turn out 285hp apiece rather than the 50hp or so of their predecessors, and when operating 50 miles out at sea at speeds of up to 17 knots precise and rapid navigation is essential.

It is to familiarise crews with these attributes that any station which is to take delivery of a new lifeboat now sends some of its crew to Poole for a week's 'conversion course' – just one of the many courses now run by the RNLI to keep lifeboatmen at the leading edge of search and rescue techniques.

And it was to learn how lifeboatmen are coached when making the technological leap from conventional 8-knot lifeboats to state-of-the-art fast lifeboats that I had joined the St Ives' crew aboard *The Princess Royal*, the latest Mersey class lifeboat to arrive from her builders, and as a result found myself in-

An eerie sensation. With canvas screens over all her wheelhouse windows *The Princess Royal* makes her way out to sea from Poole Harbour for blind pilotage exercises. Every aid to navigation is brought into use in the drill.



Simple really... Assistant Training Officer Edward Mallinson (right) runs through the radar controls with crew member Charlie Hodson.

## 'Today's lifeboatman must be an engineer, an electronics technician and communications specialist'

involved in fires at sea, men overboard and steering failures.

In that same week my chartwork had been honed and the intricacies of modern radar explained. One minute I had been sitting comfortably at a desk prodding the keys of a Decca navigation receiver, and the next I was being dangled over the side of a lifeboat help-

ing to recover a 12-stone dummy which steadfastly refused to help itself.

I had been plucked from the lifeboat's foredeck by a helicopter and been schooled in the operation of the VHF and MF radio, and in the use of direction finders on both frequencies. There was little about the operation of a lifeboat or its equipment which had not been crammed into that hectic week of shuttling between classroom, quayside and Poole Bay.

With volunteer crews giving up their own time to attend the programme is intense, and there is much ground to be covered. The week-long training courses are hard work, of that there is no doubt, but they are effective, rewarding and, thanks to the camaraderie in a lifeboat crew, they are also enjoyable.

The St Ives' contingent of Coxswain Eric Ward, Station Mechanic Tommy Cocking and crew members Tommy Bassett, Charlie Hodson and Alan Woods had arrived in Poole on the Sunday afternoon after their long trek up from Cornwall, and by 0900 on the Monday morning were gathered in the modern training centre on the depot quay, as we all waited with a mixture of anticipation and apprehension. Below the window their new Mersey class lifeboat lay alongside the quay – at the end of the week they would be taking her home, and by the middle of the following week she would be their station lifeboat, ready to launch at a moment's notice into whatever conditions the north Cornish coast could throw

The training of lifeboatmen has come a long way in the fifteen or so years since the Institution started its courses.

It was in the mid-1970s that the need for formal training was first recognised. Lifeboats, and the way they were operating, were changing rapidly and as a result the first tentative steps were taken along a path which has led to today's purpose-built centres at Poole and Cowes.

### Humble

The All-weather lifeboat training started from humble beginnings, when a mobile training unit was brought into use, visiting various lifeboat stations. This was an ordinary caravan, converted and fitted out by an honorary worker at home for 'Voice Procedure' training.

At about the same time training courses for the high-speed Atlantic 21 rigid inflatables began, first at Yarmouth (IoW) and then at the RNLI's Cowes base, beginning at a fairly basic level as an introduction to these specialised boats and to demonstrate righting procedures after a capsizing.

As the new types of fast lifeboat began to come into service in greater numbers it became obvious that some sort of conversion course was necessary, and in the late 1970s pre-commissioning courses began – lasting some three days and held almost entirely aboard the lifeboat.

The benefits of these training courses soon became apparent and at the beginning of 1982 the training section began to take its current form. One of the Institution's Divisional

Inspectors moved to headquarters as Staff Officer Operations (Training) and was soon joined by a staff coxswain who became Staff Coxswain (Training), and who is now Assistant Training Officer.

### Nucleus

With a nucleus of staff the training programme began in earnest – although still operating from part of an office and using the RNLI's library when it was available.

Radar training began, in nautical colleges at first until another mobile unit joined the strength. Rediffusion had offered to donate a radar simulation system, which had been in use in a German nautical college, and staff at the company offered to install it if the RNLI could provide a suitable caravan. This time a commercial caravan was obtained and converted for its new role by the RNLI depot.

Training manuals for the various boats and equipment, now an important aid, came on to the scene when an honorary helper applied himself to the task. With no training as a seaman he was able to penetrate the jargon and write clear and concise manuals – which are to this day being used, up-dated and extended. This task, despite being honorary, now keeps him busy almost full-time.

### Professional

Training videos are also an important training tool, and these are produced in-house by the training centre. Starting with domestic equipment and a tiny 'editing suite' in the corner of an office, the Institution's videos have become more wide ranging and are now

at them. There was a lot to find out about!

Deputy Training Officer John Caldwell soon brings us down to earth with a resume of the course. Day one is to be a 'dry' day, taken up with an introduction to the lifeboat and her systems. The Mersey is such a far cry from the traditional Oakley that it would be understandable if crews were wary of such a new-fangled device, but if there is such a feeling it quickly falls by the wayside as Research and Development Officer Stuart Welford runs through the design of the Mersey and the way she had been developed. With videos of test tank trials, explanations of her specialised shape and construction and illustrations of the immense safety factors built into such things as the wheelhouse windows the years of development are condensed into an hour, an hour which leaves no-one in any doubt as to the ability of a Mersey class lifeboat.

A hurried cup of coffee and we are off again in more detail with Machinery Training Instructor Gareth Thomas at the top table. The engines, the fuel systems, the complex bilge pumping and fire fighting arrangement and the steering systems all coming in for attention. The mechanic may be primarily responsible for the machinery, but every crew man must have a working knowledge for emergencies. Already we are up to our ears in facts, figures and procedures, skilfully presented and backed-up by a comprehensive manual. Some inter-

**'The Mersey is such a far cry from an Oakley that it would be understandable if crews were wary of such a new-fangled device'**

esting facts stick in the mind—two 10 litre V8s with turbochargers, 285hp at each flywheel, turbo impellers could spin for up to 5 minutes after the engine is stopped...

Another quick gulp of coffee and we are off to the quayside—the first chance for many of us to see the boat in the flesh.

Assistant Training Officer Edward Mallinson takes us round for a quick look at the equipment we will be using later. Stowages, air intakes, anchor arrangements, breathing apparatus, hatches for clearing fouled propellers, lowering and raising the mast, all new to us now, but to become very familiar over the next few days.

Lunch, a buffet with staff members and heads of department from headquarters, passes quickly and soon we are back aboard. Gareth brings the morning's machinery talk to life as we each reach under pipes to operate the various valves, feel in obscure corners for the bleed nipples on the fuel system and learn to differentiate between the various warning sirens.

It may be 1630, but there's still some more theory to be absorbed as RNLI Naval Architect Keith Thatcher takes centre stage back in the classroom. With drawings of the Mersey spread across the desks we delve into the finer points of welded aluminium construction, and then peer at the overhead projector to absorb the importance to stability of CG, CB and metacentres. The stability calculations are reassuring, but by now the brain cells are crying 'enough!'

'So when we send the survivors down below, do we tell them that it's to keep M over G?' someone mutters as we disperse into the twilight.

You still have to be tough to be a lifeboatman, a fact borne out the next morning when the crew assemble again. They've managed to eat, read their manuals, go out for a jar or two, and still arrive looking alert. I've driven home, fallen into bed with Gs and Ms whirling in my head and arrived looking slightly second-hand.

Day two sees us in the classroom and aboard the lifeboat with electronics instructor Ian Benham explaining the intricacies of communications. There's MF and VHF radios to operate, with their frequencies, keypads, modes and channels; each has a means of direction finding, with flashing LEDs and selected channels. Then there's the echosounder with its multiple ranges and paper speeds to consider, and these are all explained clearly and concisely. There's the intercom with its multitude of switches, jack-plugs and modes of operation - one of which will transmit your muttered aside over the VHF to a startled world, if you don't know your switches from your jack-plugs...

Relief comes at 1100, when we put to sea, out under the lifting bridge and into the busy expanse of Poole Harbour. It's a temporary respite for soon we are putting the theory into practice, prodding keyboards, peering into



The many aspects of training courses. **Top** Classroom sessions prepare the crews for their practical work afloat.

Assistant Training Officer Edward Mallinson (standing) runs through a chartwork refresher with some of the St Ives' crew, (left to right) Alan Woods, Tommy Bassett and Coxswain Eric Ward.

**Above** At sea aboard the lifeboat Mechanic Tommy Cocking concentrates as he manoeuvres the Mersey alongside a 'casualty'.

**Below** Wet and windswept after retrieving the dummy the crew (left to right) Alan Woods, Tommy Cocking, Eric Ward and Charlie Hodson find time for a debrief as the lifeboat heads back to the training centre.



of 'broadcast quality', appearing on both ITV and BBC.

The professional equipment needed to produce these videos came with a major step forward in August 1986, when the purpose-built training centre came into use at Poole.

The cost of the entire fitting out, equipment and the first year's courses at the centre were all met by a generous donation from BP, improving facilities beyond all recognition and setting the Institution's whole training schedule on course for the future.

From humble beginnings the training centre has developed into a facility which can offer a wide variety of training courses. It now provides pre-commissioning training for the crews of every new All-weather lifeboat, courses for Honorary Secretaries of lifeboat stations, courses for Station Mechanics and advanced courses for Coxswains and Second Coxswains. Some 575 lifeboatmen have attended the 'conversion courses' alone.

The centre also runs no less than five mobile units. These cover Voice Procedure (and chartwork and basic navigation), Radar (with courses at three levels) and First Aid. The mobile training units (MTUs) have evolved from domestic caravans to tough articulated units which are expected to have a much longer life.

Courses at Cowes cover the Atlantic 21 lifeboats, now making use of a purpose-built centre which opened in 1988 and was funded by Mrs 'Mickie' Allen. Some 700 Atlantic 21 crew have passed through these courses.

CONTINUED

the eery glow of the radar's video screen and wandering around in head-set equipped crash-hats, plugging into various sockets. Dis-jointed voices fill my ears.

'Tommy? Is that you? Well what happens if I swi...' Click. '...not on the VHF am I? Don't yell! So how do I speak to the engine room you silly...' Click.

Fish and chips from a quayside chippie interrupt the proceedings for a while, and then we're off to sea again with Edward Mallinson on hand to run through the anchor tackle as we drop the hook off Swanage. We lift the access hatches to the propellers, and find it a little trickier in a seaway than alongside the quay, then test the bilge pump by pumping Swanage Bay up through the trunking and back over the side. The tide is falling and when the pump springs into life someone remarks that it must be working well. 'Look what it's doing to the level on the rocks over there...' It must be time to go home.

And so it is, but as we relax a little on the return passage, huddled around an intriguing aspect of the radar, the man overboard alarm brings us up all-standing.

We burst out of the wheelhouse to find an empty deck and a figure in the water astern. We might have suspected an exercise, but the adrenalin flows and it seems very real. To be honest we haven't seen Edward Mallinson since he went on deck and can't be certain that it isn't him in the water astern.

Eric puts the helm over at 17 knots and the boat begins to spin round – until the wheel goes lifeless in his hands.

'Steering failure! Rig the manual system'

There is some relief when we find Edward hiding in the tiller flat, where he has deliberately thrown a valve to cause our predicament. Blocks and tackles are soon rigged and the dummy retrieved. There is just enough time for some manoeuvring practice around a tyre-festooned dolphin near the ferry terminal before we are back through the lifting bridge and alongside by 1800.

You have to be tough to be a lifeboatman. The next morning the crew are fresh as a daisy again, despite going to a nearby water park, joining the five-year-olds on the water slides and tubes and then going off for a jar or two. I'm still a bit secondhand.

Day three begins in the classroom again, brushing up on chartwork. No matter how many electronic aids there are aboard a boat a chart, a pencil and the skill to put the point in the right place are still essential. We shuffle our parallel rulers around the Bristol Channel and the Western Approaches, working out tides, true courses, magnetic courses, compass courses and courses to steer until we move on to the magic black box which converts the ethereal Decca transmissions into tangible numbers. Waypoints, sailplans, position finding, shift modes and Decca chains slip easily by until lunch looms on the horizon, and we turn our attention to the radar with its 'north up' or 'head up' displays, 'clutter' and ranges.

By afternoon we are putting to sea again to try our new-found skills. The lifting bridge is an old friend by now, and we are used to holding position in the tidal stream until it



Working with a helicopter demands precision, and overcoming the racket and spray from the rotor's downwash. Plugged in to the lifeboat's intercom Charlie Hodson gives the chopper the green flag to come in (left), and the winchman descends (centre) ready to lift the 'casualty' off the deck (right). Helmets are essential – the chopper is hard.

eases open and we trundle through to practise the finer arts of Decca navigating. Today we also look at ways of recovering people from the water, one of which involves standing on a spray rail below the waterline, attached by a safety harness but with the lifeboat still under way. A dry-suit keeps out the wet, and some of the cold, but the 12-stone dummy is heavy and obstinate and I'm glad to clamber back aboard.

We each take a turn at bringing the lifeboat up to the 'casualty', and it's at the final attempt that Edward decides we ought to have

savage a passing yacht

A day wouldn't be complete without losing a man overboard, so once again the long-suffering dummy is hurled overboard and fished out again. This time he has to be stretched back into the special stowage in the wheelhouse. We realise that the sidedeck is quite narrow – and that 'Fred' is as heavy as we thought he was. By 1900 we're back alongside again and disperse into the gathering gloom.

You have to be tough to be a lifeboatman. For their final fling they've been back to the water park to terrorise the five-year-olds. As if they hadn't spent enough time in and around the water. Still they're remarkably fresh for Friday, the final day at Poole.

We're out bright and early for a helicopter exercise. Green and red signal flags at the ready we rendezvous with the chopper, flown in a style straight out of a Francis Ford Coppola movie. We're plucked one at a time from the deck, flown round in a swooping circle and then put back where we belong, dropped limply like a sack of potatoes into waiting arms on the foredeck of the fast-moving lifeboat.

The chopper roars low overhead in a farewell salute that has us wondering if the radar scanner is still up there, and we turn for home, ready to watch a video on pyrotechnics and hold a useful de-briefing session with all of the training staff.

The verdict is that the course has been valuable, and a useful dialogue develops. With experienced seamen it's a two-way exchange and the instructors glean some more information which will help them hone the sessions to an even finer edge.

But that's not the end of the course by any means. The lifeboat is officially handed over by the training centre, but she is now the responsibility of the Divisional Inspector for the South West.

The DI, John Unwin, is to take charge for the four-day passage back to St Ives, which is very much a part of the training schedule. We have still more to learn about *The Princess Royal* as we make our way out of Poole, bound to the west, late on a glorious October Friday. But that, as they say, is another story.

● To be concluded in the Spring issue

### 'Eric puts the helm over at 17 knots and the boat begins to spin round – until the wheel goes lifeless in his hands'

that fire in the engine room... It's 1900 by the time we're ashore in the half-dark.

You have to be tough to be a lifeboatman. This time they've been to a nightclub, and some don't look quite as fresh as they might. They tell me I'm missing out on the best parts of the course, and not to mention it. I agree not to say a word.

Thursday morning sees us in the classroom again examining the theory of radar, its effects and errors, plotting interceptions and using the device as an aid to navigation. A useful video refreshes our memories of the cardinal buoyage system and then we move on to search patterns and the way the Coastguard computes the probable drift of a casualty. I sense that practical seamen don't really trust computers...

After lunch it's back into the yellow oilskins and lifejackets, back under the bridge and out to sea again. The marine inhabitants of Poole are no doubt used to seeing a lifeboat with all of its windows blanked out with orange sheeting, but we're not. Inside it is disconcerting at first as we feel our way along in 'zero visibility' using every navigational aid at our disposal. Still, at least we're warm and dry, which is more than can be said of Gareth stuck on watch at the outer steering position in case we should take it into our heads to tear off in the wrong direction or



# Naming Ceremonies

## New lifeboats named and dedicated

### Relief fleet – D Class

#### City of Peterborough

A new D class lifeboat funded by money raised from a special appeal in the Peterborough area, and organised by the local Peterborough branch, was officially handed over and dedicated in a ceremony that took place at the Queensgate Centre on 5 October 1990.

Mr Malcolm Smith, chairman of Peterborough branch, welcomed those present and Mr Charles Amor, former chairman of the branch handed the lifeboat into the care of the RNLI. She was accepted by Mr Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fund raising and marketing, for use in the relief fleet.

A service of dedication followed, conducted by the Very Reverend Randolph Wise, Dean of Peterborough, and Mr Edward Jinks of Norwich Union Real Estates Management then named the lifeboat *City of Peterborough*.

The ceremony closed with Mr Robert Edwards of Peterborough Regional College presenting the City of Peterborough coat of arms to the RNLI.

### Ramsgate – Tyne class

#### Kenneth Thelwall II

The naming ceremony of Ramsgate's new Tyne class lifeboat took place in brilliant sunshine following a night of strong winds and heavy rain. There were over 300 invited guests, all seated, with a good number of other people, mainly locals and passers-by, also in attendance.

The new lifeboat is named in memory of Mr Kenneth Thelwall of Walkington, East Yorkshire and is the second lifeboat to be provided from his bequest.

Mr Richard Taylor, chairman of the station branch opened proceedings before introducing Mr Christopher Hobson, executor to Mr Thelwall, who formally handed over the lifeboat to the RNLI, represented on this occasion by Mr Michael Vernon, the Institution's Chairman.

Mr Vernon in turn handed the new lifeboat into the care of the station, on whose behalf it was accepted by Captain Philip Toghill, the station honorary secretary.

The service of dedication which followed was conducted by the Reverend Ronald Meredith and Mrs Lucia Hobson was then invited to name the lifeboat *Kenneth Thelwall II*.

**Right** The new Tyne class lifeboat at Ramsgate, *Kenneth Thelwall II*, pictured leaving Ramsgate after her naming ceremony.

(Photo Jeff Morris)

### Ilfracombe – Mersey class *Spirit of Derbyshire*



Ilfracombe's new Mersey class lifeboat *Spirit of Derbyshire* on the slipway ready for her naming ceremony on 29 September 1990 (Photo Jeff Morris)

A week-long spell of fine weather held until Saturday 29 September, the day Ilfracombe's new Mersey class lifeboat was officially named and dedicated. However, the rain did hold off for the many invited guests and local people who had gathered to watch the ceremony.

The lifeboat has been funded from special appeals to the people of Derbyshire, by the Ilfracombe station branch and other gifts and legacies. A contingent from Derbyshire travelled to Devon specially for the occasion.

Before the ceremony began, Gemma Louise Evans, grand-daughter of the Ilfracombe coxswain, David Clemence, presented a bouquet to Mrs Winifred Hilton, chairman of the *Spirit of Derbyshire* lifeboat appeal, who was to name the lifeboat. Mrs Hilton

was also presented with a leather-bound copy of the programme.

Mr Leonard Coleman, chairman of Ilfracombe station branch then welcomed those present and introduced the patron of the appeal, Colonel Peter Hilton, Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire, who officially handed over the lifeboat to the RNLI. The Institution was represented on this occasion by Lt Cdr Jeremy Tetley, a vice president.

He in turn passed the lifeboat into the care of the Ilfracombe station, represented by the honorary secretary Mr Colin Knill.

The service of dedication was conducted by the Reverend Cyril Tennant, honorary lifeboat chaplain for Ilfracombe with the music provided by the Ilfracombe and District Youth Band.



## Naming Ceremonies



Rain could not dampen the enthusiasm of the guests and spectators who had come to see the naming ceremony of Skegness' new Mersey class lifeboat *Lincolnshire Poacher*, and the opening of the station's new boathouse. (Photo Jeff Morris)

## Relief fleet – D class *British Diver III*, C class *British Diver IV*



Two new inshore lifeboats funded by the British Sub Aqua club were named and dedicated at a special ceremony on 24 October. This is believed to be the first 'double ceremony' for inshore lifeboats.

Two new inshore lifeboats were named at a special ceremony at the RNLI's Cowes Base on 24 October 1990.

Both the lifeboats were funded by the British Sub Aqua Club who originally launched a successful appeal in 1981 to fund an Atlantic 21 lifeboat. The appeal has continued, going on to raise over £85,000, with money still coming in. Two Atlantic 21 lifeboats have now been funded by the Club and these are stationed at Whitstable in Kent and Harwich in Essex.

Commander Peter Gladwin, then Superintendent Cowes Base, opened the proceedings and introduced Mr Deric Ellerby, chairman of the British Sub Aqua Club, who handed over the lifeboats to the RNLI represented on this occasion by Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fund raising and marketing.

Mr Richard Perks, RNLI staff officer, then described the lifeboats and their future role in the relief fleet and after a short service of dedication led by the Reverend Stuart Cleaver, Priest in Charge of Whippingham and East Cowes, Mrs Daphne Ellerby named the D class lifeboat *British Diver III* and Mrs Cherry Painter, wife of the treasurer of the Club, named the C class *British Diver IV*.

## Skegness – Mersey class *Lincolnshire Poacher*

Summer seemed to end at Skegness on 30 September with heavy showers hampering the preparations for the official opening of the lifeboat house and the naming of *Lincolnshire Poacher*.

In welcoming everyone, the chairman of the station, Mr Basil Major, expressed regret that Mr John Van Geest was not able to be with his good lady, Mrs Lucille Van Geest, for the ceremony and asked that the best wishes from all at Skegness be conveyed to him.

Mr Jack Roughton, chairman of the Lincolnshire lifeboat appeal, then gave a resumé of the appeal work, and invited Mr Michael Vernon, Chairman of the RNLI, officially to open the lifeboat house.

On returning to the platform Mr Vernon received the lifeboat on behalf of the RNLI from Mrs Van Geest. In accepting, Mr Vernon paid tribute to the appeal committee, but particularly to Mr and Mrs Van Geest whose generosity had funded the lifeboat and allowed the crew to choose the name. He commented that with the gift of the D class lifeboat a few years ago by a Lincoln family, today saw the complete modernisation of the Skegness station, all provided by Lincolnshire people.

Mr Terry Smart, in receiving the lifeboat on behalf of the station, described a recent service call which could not have been undertaken by the previous lifeboat, a point expanded upon by Mr Tom Nutman, divisional inspector of lifeboats for the east division, in his description of the Mersey class lifeboat.

A moving service was conducted by Reverend Stuart Ridley, assisted by Reverend Norman Walker, Reverend Stephen Holmes and Reverend Father Joseph Finneran. Mrs Margaret Walter, chairman of Skegness Ladies' guild, then thanked the Skegness Town Youth Silver Band, the GNCS Choir, the Council and many others for their support.

Mrs Lucille Van Geest then named the lifeboat *Lincolnshire Poacher* before boarding the lifeboat for a short trip to sea where to her delight she took command under the watchful eye of Coxswain Paul Martin.

BHS

## Skerries – D class *Helen Mitchell Scrimgeour*

A special ceremony to name the new lifeboat at Skerries, Co Dublin, was held on 23 September 1990.

The D class inshore lifeboat has been funded by a bequest to the RNLI by Miss

Helen Mitchell Scrimgeour and the boat was officially named *Helen Mitchell Scrimgeour* by Mrs Pauline Carthy, wife of Sgt Brian Carthy, chairman of Skerries branch.

### Wicklow – Tyne class

#### *Annie Blaker*

An historic and proud event took place in Wicklow on 19 May when Irish and international dignitaries arrived in the town for the naming of the new lifeboat *Annie Blaker* by the President of the Republic of Ireland, Dr Patrick Hillery.

The lifeboat was handed over to the Chairman of the RNLI, Mr Michael Vernon, by Mr Neville West, executor of the estate of Miss A.L. Blaker whose bequest had provided a substantial proportion of the cost of the new lifeboat. Mr Michael Jones, honorary secretary, accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the branch.

The service of dedication and blessing was conducted by The Most Reverend Desmond Connell DD, Archbishop of Dublin, The Most Reverend Donald Caird DD, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, and The Reverend Christopher Walpole.

Having officially opened the newly-extended lifeboat house, Dr Hillery was introduced to the lifeboat crew. In his address he praised the voluntary nature of the work they do so willingly, often in extreme conditions. He also spoke of the continuing modernisation of the lifeboat fleet in Ireland and the continuing upgrading of lifeboat stations. At Wicklow alone the RNLI had invested close



Dr Patrick Hillery, President of the Republic of Ireland, names Wicklow's new Tyne class lifeboat *Annie Blaker* on 19 May 1990. (Photo Robert Doyle)

to £1m to provide the new Tyne class lifeboat and the extended lifeboat house and slipway. He welcomed and thanked the Chairman of the Institution, Mr Michael Vernon, who had travelled from London for the occasion as had the Director, Lt Cdr Brian Miles.

After the service of dedication and bless-

ing Dr Hillery and the platform party boarded the new lifeboat. He officially named the new lifeboat *Annie Blaker* in the time honoured way 'May God bless her and all who sail in her...'

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs Louise Tyner, president of Wicklow Ladies' guild.

## The Lifeboat Prayer

The need for a special 'lifeboat prayer' has become evident in recent years, and in response to a number of requests it has now been possible to formulate and approve a prayer which is suitable for many RNLI occasions.

Many other bodies and organisations have prayers specifically tailored for them, and the Institution considered that many crews and sup-

porters would appreciate a similar prayer for the RNLI.

The prayer, which has been approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury (a member of the RNLI's Committee of Management) and other church leaders, can be used at naming ceremonies and other suitable Institution occasions.

The prayer is as follows:

**'Merciful Father, all things in heaven and earth are held within your loving care, look with favour upon the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.**

**'Protect and bless the crews of all their lifeboats and all who risk their own safety to bring help to others.**

**'Guide all who work for the Institution that they may be faithful to the vision of its founders, so that it may always be seen as a beacon of hope and light to those who find themselves in peril on the seas.**

**'Through the same Jesus Christ, to whom with You and the Holy Spirit be honour and glory, now and forever. Amen.'**

### Relief Fleet – D Class

#### *Ann Speed*

Miss Linda Stroud of the John Lewis Partnership named a new D class inshore lifeboat *Ann Speed* at a ceremony held at the RNLI's Poole Depot on 9 August 1990

The ceremony was attended by several members of the John Lewis Partnership Sailing Club, representing their colleagues who between them over the last three years had subscribed through various charity functions towards the cost of the lifeboat.

The JLPSC has five yachts which sail in the Solent and Poole Bay and they are particularly conscious of the valuable service provided by the RNLI.

The proceedings were opened by the Institution's Deputy Director, Ray Kipling, who introduced the Commodore of the JLPSC, Martin Sands who was to formally hand over the new lifeboat to the RNLI.

Mr Kipling then accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the RNLI and Mike Pennell, a staff officer of the Institution described the boat and her future lifesaving role.

The Reverend Stanley Holbrooke-Jones, Rector of Poole then conducted a service of dedication before Mrs Linda Stroud officially named the lifeboat *Ann Speed*.

# Looking at lifeboats the **ARUN** class

Continuing a series of  
profiles of  
lifeboat classes

The RNLI's experiment with an entirely different concept of lifeboat in the Waveney class proved to be an unqualified success, and the Institution turned its attention to a larger, faster boat capable of extended service offshore.

The Waveney had not been considered a true All-weather lifeboat, although time proved this to be an incorrect assumption, and the Committees felt there was a need for a boat of at least 50ft long capable of speeds in excess of 18 knots.

In common with many previous boats, Messrs G.L. Watson was commissioned to prepare the hull design, and they drew a 52ft, transom stern, semi-displacement hull with soft bilges and multiple spray rails at the waterline.

## Re-drawn

Model tests indicated the need for changes to improve sea-keeping and performance, and the RNLI's staff re-drew the lines to incorporate extra beam and tunnels to allow larger propellers. The multiple spray rails were also removed as they produced, rather than suppressed, the spray.

The prototype boat, *Arun*, was commissioned from Wm. Osborne of Littlehampton, a company which has a long history of RNLI prototype work, and launched in 1971. She was given the official number ON1018 and the operational number 52-01.

The material chosen for the first of

By  
**Keith Thatcher**  
RNLI Naval Architect

the class was laminated wood, three skins of agba on laminated frames, a conventional boat building method. A period of extensive evaluation then followed during which *Arun* travelled the length and breadth of the country.

Many coxswains tried her and all were highly enthusiastic about her sea-keeping and handling. A few old hands were initially sceptical about the drastic change of shape when compared with the old 'traditional' lifeboat and expressed concern about the exposed screws and rudders. A short trip soon removed any doubts however.

With the success of *Arun* a second boat was commissioned, incorporating significant changes above the waterline. On 52-02 the sheerline was cut down to give barely 3ft of freeboard amidships and a re-designed wheelhouse gave two separate cabins above deck. An inflat-

Almost twenty years of Arun development. The prototype *Arun* (1971) shows the high freeboard and original wheelhouse while the final boat *Duke of Atholl* (inset, 1990) has the cut-away topsides and standard wheelhouse of the later boats.



The hull form of the Arun class is shown clearly in this self-righting trial. Note the flat sections aft to promote planing and the small tunnels to allow larger propellers.

able shallow water rescue boat, the Y class, was carried on a gantry over the after deck with its own launching crane. The engines were also uprated to give enhanced performance. The second boat in class, ON1025 *Sir William Arnold*, was launched in 1973 and, after initial trials, stationed at St Peter Port, Guernsey.

## Lengthened

The third boat, ON1037 *Edward Bridges* (Civil Service No. 37), was then built incorporating a further change to the hull. She was lengthened to 54ft and the transom corners radiused to produce an elliptical stern which, it was felt, would give better handling in following seas and also make the corners of the transom less vulnerable. The construction material was again laminated timber, identical to ON1018 and 1025. She was launched in 1975 as 54-03 and stationed at Brixham as the Torbay lifeboat.

With the launch of the third wooden boat, thoughts turned to production. It had always been the RNLI's intention to build the bulk of the Arun class from glass reinforced plastic (GRP) and a mould was now constructed, based on the hull of the latest boat ON1037, slightly modified to suit the new material.

Since the users of the boats could still not decide which stern configuration was best the mould was given a removable stern section to allow 52ft and 54ft boats to be built as required. This mould

has been used for every Arun hull built since, with a single exception which we will come to shortly. All mouldings have been produced by Halmatic at Havant, near Portsmouth.

The first GRP-hulled boat, 54-04 *Tony Vandervell* ON1049, was launched in 1976.

To complement the GRP hull Halmatic developed a GRP superstructure which was almost identical in shape to the aluminium alloy house fitted to ON 1037. In general the change was successful, but the GRP structure proved slightly heavier and there were problems with radio interference, as GRP has little or no 'shielding' effect. A decision was therefore taken to revert to an aluminium house for boat number 9 (52-09, *Spirit of Tayside* ON1056) and the shape has remained constant since.

With boat number 8 (52-08 *Joy and John Wade* ON1053) the 52ft hull with transom stern was re-introduced, and the hull shape then remained unchanged through to the final boat, 52-46 *The Duke of Atholl* ON1160, which was completed in 1990.

All Aruns except for the three wood prototypes and one other mentioned

The second prototype Arun, *Sir William Arnold* (1973), was built of wood. She has the cutaway topsides but an early wheelhouse design later superseded.



*Tony Vandervell*, the fourth Arun to be built (1976) was the first in GRP and the second to feature the extended stern which increased the length to 54ft overall. The wheelhouse is also GRP, although later boats reverted to aluminium.

briefly above, have been built in GRP. The exception is ON1100 *Snolda*, which has a steel hull with aluminium alloy decks – her operational number of 52-030 carrying the extra zero to denote steel or aluminium construction. This boat was built by Fairey Marine in 1985 as part of an investigation into a serious consideration for building the remaining boats from this material.

The experiment proved a complete success and many coxswains consider ON1100 to be the best Arun for comfort and handling. However, cost defeated any chance of more steel Aruns; future boats would have cost almost half as much again as a GRP-hulled boat.

Arun construction has now ceased and work is progressing on her replacement, still known as FAB 3 (Fast Afloat Boat 3).

The thirtieth Arun, *Snolda* (1985), looks identical to modern boats, but she is the only steel boat in the class. Steel construction proved too expensive.



## ARUN CLASS

**1971** – 52-01, ON 1018, first of class, wood, high sheerline  
**1973** – 52-02, ON 1025, wood, low sheerline  
**1975** – 54-03, ON 1037, wood, round transom, 54ft  
**1976** – 54-04, ON 1049, first GRP boat, GRP hull and wheelhouse, round stern  
**1977** – 52-08, ON 1053, transom stern reintroduced  
**1978** – 52-09, ON 1056, aluminium alloy wheelhouse reintroduced  
**1979** – 52-11, ON 1058, wheelhouse layout redesigned – open plan  
**1980** – 52-15, ON 1067, engines changed from D343 (6 cylinder) to D3408 (8 cylinder) and updated to 485hp  
**1985** – 52-030, ON 1100, only steel-built hull, standard wheelhouse  
**1988** – 52-43, ON 1149, hull laminate changed, epacryn resin  
**1990** – 52-46, ON 1160, last Arun launched

**Introduced:** 1971  
**Designed by:** G. L. Watson/RNLI (see text)  
**Number built:** 46  
**Number in service** at November 1990: 46  
**Launching method:** Lies afloat  
**Number of crew:** 6/7 (later boats)  
**Length overall:** 52ft/54ft  
**Beam:** 17ft  
**Displacement:** 25.25 tons (prototype) to 32.25 tons (steel)  
 Standard GRP boats approx 31 tons  
**Engine type:** 52-01 two Caterpillar 336 (375hp), 52-02 to 52-14 Caterpillar D343 (460hp), 52-15 to 52-46 Caterpillar 3408TA (52-15 to 52-41 485hp, 52-42 to 52-46 500hp)  
**Maximum speed:** 18 knots  
**Radius of action:** 115 nautical miles  
 (Total range is twice the radius of action)

# YOUR LETTERS



## Model register

Thank you for printing my letter in the Summer issue of THE LIFEBOAT under the heading of Model Register.

The response to my letter has meant that we now have sufficient numbers to form a group of lifeboat modellers which has been called the Southern Model Lifeboat Society.

The aim of the Society is to promote model lifeboat making and to encourage members to display their models at RNLI fund raising events.

If you are a model maker and would like to join us, please contact me at the address given below.

Likewise, if you are an event organiser and would like us to display our models, please let me have details as soon as possible. We are taking bookings for 1991 now.

All our models are electrically powered and pollution free so we can operate in swimming pools without causing any harm.

**Tony Olliff**  
2 Elderfield Close  
Emsworth, Hants PO10 7QW

## Teddy Bears

As a result of 'Bear necessities' in the Fund Raisers pages of the Summer 1989 issue of the journal and my letter in the Spring 1990 issue (A bear thank you), I have received over one hundred requests for personalized Teddy Bears, as well as many very nice thank you letters from pleased recipients.

The Teddy Bears are still available and cost £5 each, to include postage and packing. I can knit you a teddy with the name of your boat on his jersey. For non-boat owners the letters RNLI can be worked on the front of the jumper.

**Mrs M. Woods**  
14 Broad Way, Hamble, Southampton, Hants. SO3 5HT

## Union Flag

A few years ago I intended to write to you complaining that you published pictures of vessels wearing flags (usually the Union Flag) to which they were not legally entitled, without any accompanying comment that they were breaking the law. I am not sure if my letter ever got as far as a typewriter or if it remained in my head!

In either case I would like to congratulate you on the comment in the caption to the picture of *African Queen* (page 286, Summer 1990 issue).

Coincidentally this issue arrived as I was typing a letter to the harbour master of a famous south coast yachting harbour on the same subject.

**A G Merriman**  
Rake, Hants

## Thank you

Many thanks for your magazine THE LIFEBOAT. I enjoy the reports of your activities.

As I am 87 years old it is good to know there are people who give their time and help to the unfortunate folk who get into difficulties.

**Mrs N Greenaway**  
Badminton, Avon

## Viking longship

On seeing the report of the towing of the Viking longship *Dyflin* by the Moelfre lifeboat in the Autumn issue, I was reminded that lifeboatmen have rowed a Viking longship.

In 1949 *The Hugin*, a replica Viking longship, had crossed the North Sea under sail and oars. She was exhibited at several lifeboat stations along the South coast, being towed from one station to the next by lifeboat and raising funds for the RNLI.

The first recorded naval battle was fought off Swanage in 877AD by King Alfred's ships and Viking longships. It was claimed a victory, though King Alfred's ships were greatly assisted by bad weather and the fierce tide rip off Peverill Ledge where 120 Viking longships are said to have foundered.

On this special occasion of a peaceful visit by a longship, the lifeboat crew, assisted by members of the sailing club and others, rowed *The Hugin* into the bay. Coxswain Bob Brown was at the steering oar. As second coxswain I pulled the steerboard stroke oar and 'Bimbo' Chinchin, the motor mechanic, took the larboard stroke oar. Quite an experience. I wonder how many lifeboatmen are still able to claim they rowed a Viking longship?

The mention of Moelfre lifeboat also has a connection with Swanage and Poole. In 1927 the Moelfre lifeboat carried out a Gold medal service to the ketch *Excel*, which was built at Poole for my great uncle Captain Thomas Hardy in 1877 for the Swanage stone trade, and sold in 1885 to Irish owners, I believe.

**Lew Hardy**  
Swanage, Dorset

## A maritime nation

I have been commissioned by Simon and Shuster to write a book on the decline of Britain as a maritime nation, publication to be some time in 1991.

I am anxious to talk to present and past members of the lifeboat service who are full or part-time fishermen about their experiences of that industry and its present state.

I would be most grateful if I could use your columns to appeal to any of your readers who are, or have been, professional fishermen willing to be interviewed on or off the record, to contact me at the following address.

**Dr Tim Madge**  
The Village House  
Latimer, Bucks, HP5 1TY

## On parade!

How proud and honoured I felt to have been selected to represent the fund raisers at the 90th birthday tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

I always feel that the RNLI is one big happy family and from the minute I arrived at the meeting place, I was made to feel welcome. The other fund raiser, John Cox, chairman of the St Albans branch, arrived and we were soon chatting like old friends. The staff from Head Office looked after us so well all through the day.

We met at 9.15am on what promised to be a long day, but which in fact passed surprisingly quickly, and it was super to meet some of those gallant men from the lifeboat crews. They are all so unassuming, yet so brave when needed.

The morning was taken up with a run-through of the parade, and after lunch we formed up opposite Wellington Barracks in Birdcage Walk for the dress rehearsal.

We were instructed by a genial Welsh guardsman, and although there was a lot of waiting about the time passed very quickly with the lifeboatmen for company, and I did not feel at all odd being the only woman on parade with them.

6.15pm saw us forming up for the final and most exciting time. It was a wonderful feeling when we started off and it seemed that the crowd gave a special cheer when the RNLI went by, which encouraged and pleased the crews no end. When we finally arrived on Horse Guards Parade it was a great thrill to see all those people cheering and to be able to give our own special salute to Her Majesty.

After we had dispersed we were invited to a 'get together' and buffet supper by the RNLI which, for me, proved to be the perfect end to a very happy and unforgettable day.

I may say that my husband had a seat in a stand and saw and heard a lot more than those of us in the parade, but I certainly would not have changed places with him for anything.

**Mrs Dru Dennis**

Godstone & District Branch

## Past and Present

I just had to write after reading Past and Present in the Autumn issue. How well I remember those sad days of Dunkirk when the lifeboat *Viscountess Wakefield* was lost.

I lived in Hythe in those days and my father, after 21 years in the Royal Navy, joined the lifeboat crew in 1919 until 1927 when we moved too far from the station to attend the calls.

Brother George, who lives in Witham, Essex, and I are Shoreline members and both work at helping the service by selling souvenirs and flags on flag day. George, who is 81, was treasurer for Witham branch until an illness last year.

My grandson, Leon, has been a Storm Force member for two years.

**Mrs S Wiglesworth**  
Ashford, Kent.

## Surf class

I am trying to undertake some research of the RNLI's 32ft Surf class lifeboats introduced in 1936. In particular, I am anxious to obtain information about this class of lifeboat's unusual form of propulsion, namely the Hotchkiss Internal Cone.

If any reader has any information, I shall be pleased to hear from them.

**A. R. Pari Huws**  
4 Finstall Road  
Spital,  
Bebington

## Family affair

Regarding 'A Family Affair' in the Autumn edition of *THE LIFEBOAT*, I wish to tell you about the family connection of the Fraserburgh lifeboat station.

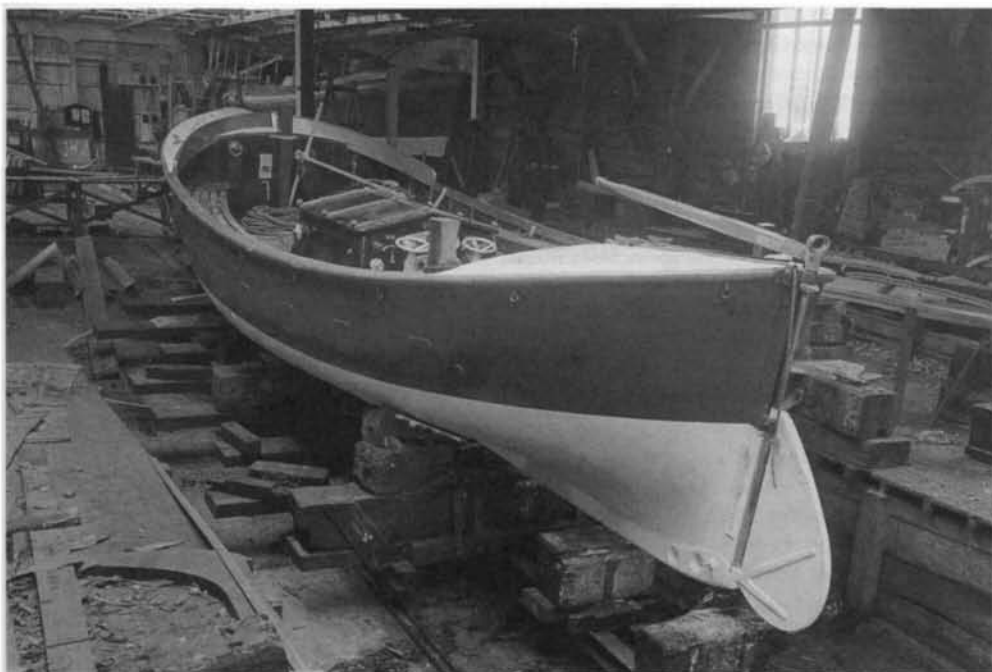
My name is James Sutherland and I am second coxswain of the lifeboat.

Albert Sutherland is coxswain and his twin brother Victor Sutherland, a crew member, are my younger brothers.

Charles Duthie, assistant mechanic, is my brother-in-law. He has a son, Billy Duthie, and a son-in-law, Zander Ritchie, both crew members, who are my nephews.

Charles also has a nephew on board, emergency mechanic Brian Ross. Our mechanic, Tommy Summers, has a son, Michael Summers on board, and his brother-in-law, Kenneth McLennan, is a member of the shed crew.

**James Sutherland**  
Fraserburgh



A. R. Pari Huws is researching the history of the 32ft Surf Lifeboat class (see letter above) and is particularly interested in details of the unusual Hotchkiss Internal Cone propulsion system used on many of the class.

The 32ft surf lifeboat illustrated here is the second to be built, *Silver Jubilee 1910-1935*, seen under construction in Groves and Guttridge's yard during 1935. She entered service in 1936 and was stationed at Wells until 1945, when she was sold to the Dutch lifeboat service.

# PAST · AND · PRESENT

## 25 years ago

From the pages of *THE LIFEBOAT*  
December 1965

### Scottish Station Closed

The life-boat station at Newburgh, Aberdeenshire, was closed on 30th September. The life-boat had not been called out on service for nearly four years, and it is more than eight years since a life-saving service was carried out by the Newburgh boat. The life-boat was a small 32-foot surf boat.

A life-boat station was established at Newburgh as early as 1828. Earlier records are incomplete, but the station appears to have been closed down for a number of years. It was re-opened by the Institution in 1877, and since that date Newburgh life-boats have had a fine record and saved no fewer than 155 lives, but with changed conditions there is no evident need for a life-boat today.

### Rescue by Hovercraft

On 5 August, a young girl was rescued by the hovercraft operating between Ryde and Gosport. This appears to have been the first rescue carried out at sea by a hovercraft off the coast of this country. There is a certain division of opinion over the question whether a hovercraft should be regarded as a ship or an aircraft. The view taken by the Institution is that the hovercraft is essentially a marine craft, and future rescues by hovercraft can come within the same category as rescues by shore boats.

### New Steel 70-foot lifeboat

A steel life-boat, which is the first of her kind to be built for the Institution, was completed in the yards of Messrs. Yarrow & Co. Ltd. of Scotstoun, Glasgow, in September. She is the first vessel to be built for the RNLI in steel, apart from some steam life-boats built around the turn of the century.

The vessel was built to the design of the RNLI's Naval Architect, Mr. R. A. Oakley, M.B.E., as a cruising rescue craft which can operate in bad weather. With a maximum speed of 11.4 knots, and a range at this speed of 650 nautical miles, the new vessel is faster and has a wider range than any of the RNLI's standard life-boats.

The vessel carries two additional rescue craft on board. One is an inflatable inshore rescue boat which is stowed on the engine casing forward of the wheel-house and powered by a 33 h.p. outboard motor. Derricks are arranged for handling this craft. A smaller boat of similar type with an 18 h.p. engine is stowed in the forward cabin.

Unlike the standard RNLI life-boats, the 70-footer has facilities for the crew to sleep aboard. The crew's quarters are arranged aft below deck, with four berths, lockers and lavatory.

*(Editor's note: The last of the 70ft lifeboats, later named the Clyde class, was withdrawn in August 1988)*

## Today's Lifeboatmen



Coxswain Eric Ward of St Ives joined the All-weather lifeboat crew in 1973, and has been a crew member of the inshore lifeboat since 1966. He served as second coxswain from 1988 until his appointment as coxswain in 1989.

Eric was awarded a bronze medal in 1982 in recognition of the courage and skill displayed by him as helmsman when the D class inshore lifeboat rescued the four crew of a sailing dinghy which had capsized on the Hayle Bar in a strong northerly wind and a rough sea.

In the same year Eric was awarded a bronze second-service clasp in recognition of the courage, tenacity and seamanship he displayed when the D class lifeboat carried out a search close inshore amongst rocks for the sole occupant of the yacht *Ladybird*, which was aground just west of Wicker Point in breaking surf.

Eric is a family man with two sons and although by day he is the port's harbourmaster in his spare time he is an accomplished artist.

Although he has been painting for only a few years an exhibition of his work was held at a London gallery in May 1989, and by way of a contrast with our usual 'Today's Lifeboatmen' photographs he is pictured at that exhibition with one of his canvases.

## Facts and Figures

Provisional statistics as at 2 November show that so far during 1990:

The RNLI's lifeboats were launched 3,594 times (an average of more than 9 launches a day)

More than 1,190 lives were saved (an average of nearly 3 people rescued each day)

Nearly 6 per cent of all services carried out by lifeboats were in winds of Force 8 and above

Almost 57 per cent of all services were to pleasure craft

There are 265 lifeboats on station, with a further 121 in the relief fleet

120,633 lives have been saved since the RNLI was founded in 1824.

## Costs

The cost of running the RNLI in 1989 was £36m.

The approximate current cost of building a lifeboat is:

16ft D class inflatable – £9,500

21ft Atlantic rigid inflatable – £45,000

12m Mersey £455,000



# Booksheif

some recent publications reviewed

## SHIPWRECK!

by Ian Dear

Published by Batsford at £17.95

ISBN 0 7134 5953 0

Ian Dear has collected an interesting, if chilling, collection of photographs to illustrate his theme of shipwreck through the ages.

Most of the illustrations are reproduced over at least one page

of the book's large format, and many of them occupy a double page spread, all with an extended caption detailing the circumstances surrounding the incident.

While the geographical spread of the photographs has been deliberately confined to UK and nearby continental waters (with the exception of a Spanish tanker blazing furiously off the South African coast) the period covered is as wide as can be managed photographically. The earliest dated illustration takes the reader back more than 120 years to a Dutch brigantine ashore at Redcar in 1869, while the most recent incidents will be fresh in everyone's mind - who can forget the vivid images of the overturned *Herald of Free Enterprise* off Zeebrugge or the battered hulk of the *Marchioness* in the Thames?

Although not specifically about the part played by lifeboats in the shipwrecks illustrated there are, inevitably, mentions of the Institution's activities in the text. There is also a poignant link in the photograph of the remains of the *Union Star*, the casualty to which the Penlee lifeboat had been launched when she was lost with her entire crew in 1981.

In addition to being a fascinating addition to the bookshelves of anyone interested in our maritime history 'Shipwreck!' also serves as a vivid reminder that although ships and their equipment have changed over the years, the weather, the coastline and the chance of tragedy have not.



## THE ISLAND FROM WITHIN

edited by Roger Sawyer

published by Robooks at £14.95

ISBN 0 9516614 0 X

The RNLI is one of three charities which will benefit from this intriguing glimpse of the Isle of Wight as it was and how it is today.

Each of the contributors is an expert on his or her subject and either live in or work at the house or institution whose story they tell, adding to the very real sense of 'belonging' which runs through the volume.

Chapters in the book encompass a wide variety of Island subjects, ranging from the sailing and yachting scene, literary connections, the history of the railways, Victorian fortifications, painters past and present to some of the best known landmarks such as Carisbrooke Castle.

An interesting insight into Island life for anyone with an interest in the area, or who plans to visit it.

With 26 companies sponsoring the book's production and all contributors donating their time and efforts the book is set to add to the fund's of its three chosen charities, all of which share the common aim of saving life.

## THE LIFEBOATS OF PEEL

by Lesley Quilliam

published by Cashtal Books at £8.50

The RNLI's close connection with the Isle of Man is well-known, and this compact book by local author Leslie Quilliam is a useful addition to the published works on the island's lifeboat history.

With the station soon to receive a new Mersey class lifeboat and the boathouse being rebuilt to house her, the book's 50p per copy contribution to the rebuilding fund will be a timely one.

Tracing the history of Peel's lifeboat's from the station's foundation in 1828 - and the even earlier lifesaving boats in the area - the author recounts many of the more notable services by the various lifeboats which served the port and also takes in the personalities

whose story is interwoven with that of the boats which they manned.

The other side of the coin, as it were, is not forgotten, and readers will learn of the fundraising work at the station and also of the ceremonial occasions such as the naming of new lifeboats.

Well illustrated with modern as well as vintage photographs 'The Lifeboats of Peel' makes interesting reading for those whose interests lie with lifeboats, or with the island which was the home of the Institution's founder.

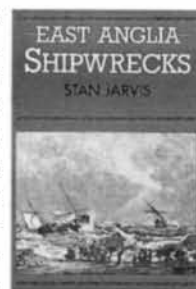
## EAST ANGLIA SHIPWRECKS

by Stan Jarvis

published by Countryside Books at £4.95

ISBN 1 85306 111 5

A companion volume to 'Sussex Shipwrecks' (previously reviewed in these pages) 'East Anglia Shipwrecks' tells a similar tale about the shallow and dangerous waters off England's eastern seaboard.



Twenty seven chapters chronicle the wide variety of ships which have come to grief in the area, beginning with the brig *Ann* and her fate in the Swin channel in 1739 and ending with the collision between the *Speedlink Vanguard* and the ferry *European Gateway* in the mid 1980s. In between one hears of the rescue of the crew of a pirate radio station by the Sheerness lifeboat *Helen Turnbull* (unfortunately consistently mis-spelt) and how a tide of oranges washed ashore at Yarmouth from wrecks offshore - twice in a period of 50 years.

Lifeboats figure quite frequently in the author's lively tales, and being a local man (a retired librarian from Chelmsford in Essex) he obviously knows the area and its offshore intricacies well.

## SAILING OFF THE BEACH

by Alan Watts

published by Adlard Coles at £7.99

ISBN 0 229 11865 8

Alan Watt's paperback guide to wind and weather is excellent reading for the increasing number of windsurfers and others 'Sailing Off the Beach'. The author's credentials for writing such a book are impeccable, and an understanding of its contents will give better sailing - and improved safety.

## BARNACLE TIDE TABLES

published by Barnacle Marine

A series of six pocket-size booklets covering Harwich and the South East Coast, London Bridge and the Thames Estuary, Dover, Portsmouth and the South Coast, Plymouth and the South West and Swansea and the Bristol Channel.

The 16-page publications show high and

low water and tidal ranges and have tidal corrections for other ports in the area which they cover.

Handy and cheap enough at 80p from chandlers or direct from Barnacle Marine at Blomfield Place, 25 St Botolph's Street, Colchester, Essex.





**St Bees, Cumbria**  
*C class:* June 29 and July 26  
**St Catherine, Channel Islands**  
*C class:* June 23 and July 21  
**St Helier, Channel Islands**  
*47ft Tyne ON 1157:* June 23, July 17, 19, 22, 25, 27 and 28  
**St Ives, Cornwall**  
*37ft Oakley ON 973:* July 7, 14, 18 and 23  
*C class:* June 4, July 7, 14, 16, 18 (twice), 21, 24 and 27  
**St Mary's, Isles of Scilly**  
*52ft Arun ON 1073:* June 10, 28, July 7, 22 and 29  
**St Peter Port, Channel Islands**  
*52ft Arun ON 1025:* June 30 (three times), July 8 (twice), 14 and 26  
**Salcombe, South Devon**  
*47ft Tyne ON 1130:* June 1, 2, 7, 12, 18, July 13 and 14 (twice)  
**Selsey, West Sussex**  
*Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1075:* July 6, 8, 14 and 28  
*D class:* June 1, 14, July 6, 8, 12, 16 and 28 (twice)  
**Sennen Cove, Cornwall**  
*37ft 6in Rother ON 999:* June 14, July 5, 19, 20 and 30  
**Sheerness, Kent**  
*44ft Waveney ON 1027:* June 30, July 1, 13, 21 and 25  
*D class:* June 16, 23, 24 (twice), 30 (twice), July 1 (three times), 8, 15 (twice), 20, 27 and 31  
**Sheringham, Norfolk**  
*37ft Oakley ON 960:* June 20 and July 15  
**Shoreham Harbour, West Sussex**  
*47ft Watson ON 971:* June 16  
*D class:* July 15 and 22 (seven times)  
**Silloth, Cumbria**  
*Atlantic 21:* June 16  
**Skegness, Lincolnshire**  
*37ft Oakley ON 977:* July 1  
*D class:* June 19, 25, July 19, 28, 29 and 30  
**Skerries, Co Dublin**  
*D class:* June 13  
**Southend-on-Sea, Essex**  
*Atlantic 21:* June 1, 3 (twice), 16, 17, 21, 24 (four times), July 1 (twice), 8, 14 (twice), 15, 17, 22 (twice) and 25  
*D class:* June 3 (three times), 24, July 1 (three times), 8, 13, 15 (twice), 16, 17 and 26  
**Southwold, Suffolk**  
*Atlantic 21:* June 25, July 8 (twice), 14, 16, 18, 22 (twice) and 23  
**Staithes and Runswick, North Yorkshire**  
*Atlantic 21:* June 3, July 3, 15, 16 and 29 (twice)  
**Stornoway (Lewis), Ross-shire**  
*52ft Arun ON 1098:* June 27  
**Stranraer, Wigtownshire**  
*D class:* June 8 and 14  
**Stromness, Orkney**  
*52ft Arun ON 1099:* July 5  
**Sunderland, Tyne and Wear**  
*44ft Waveney ON 1043:* June 22, July 18 and 27

*D class:* June 5, 22, 23, 24, July 14 (twice), 18 and 24 (three times)  
**Swanage, Dorset**  
*37ft 6in Rother ON 1023:* June 16, July 13, 14, 19, 21 (twice), 22 (twice) and 26 (twice)  
**Teesmouth, Cleveland**  
*47ft Tyne ON 1110:* July 1, 4 and 8  
**Tenby, Dyfed**  
*47ft Tyne ON 1112:* July 22 (twice) and 27  
*D class:* June 2, 9 (twice), 10 (three times), 23, 27, July 1, 6, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22 (twice), 24, 27, 29, 30 and 31  
**Thurso, Caithness**  
*52ft Arun ON 1149:* July 22, 23 and 31  
**Tighnabruich, Argyllshire**  
*D class:* June 24 and July 22  
**Torbay, South Devon**  
*54ft Arun ON 1037:* June 1, 3, 11, 23, 28, July 14 (twice) and 27  
*D class:* June 1 (three times), 19, 28 and July 21  
**Trearddur Bay, Gwynedd**  
*D class:* June 3, 9, 14 and 20  
**Troon, Ayrshire**  
*52ft Arun ON 1134:* July 9, 17, 22, 26 (twice) and 29  
**Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear**  
*52ft Arun ON 1061:* June 1 (twice), 3, 19, 23, 24, July 3, 18 and 20  
*D class:* June 27 and July 8  
**Walmer, Kent**  
*D class:* June 2 and 24  
*Atlantic 21:* June 2  
**Walton and Frinton, Essex**  
*Relief 48ft 6in Solent ON 1019:* June 21, 23, 24, 30, July 1, 14 (twice), 21 and 23  
**Wells, Norfolk**  
*12m Mersey ON 1161:* July 14  
*D class:* July 12  
**West Kirby, Merseyside**  
*D class:* June 10, 24, July 4, 14 (twice), 15, 23 and 26

The services listed are those for which returns had been received at headquarters by 31 October 1990. There may be additional services for which no returns have been received.

**West Mersea, Essex**  
*Atlantic 21:* June 2, 7, 10, 22, 27, 30 (twice), July 13, 14, 22 (four times), 26 (twice) and 29  
**Weston-super-Mare, Avon**  
*Atlantic 21:* June 8, 30, July 21 and 26  
*D class:* June 8, July 13 and 31  
**Weymouth, Dorset**  
*Relief 52ft Arun ON 1108:* June 4, 28, July 8, 14 and 26  
**Whitby, North Yorkshire**  
*Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1122:* June 1, 7, 12, July 3 and 15  
*47ft Tyne ON 1131:* July 23, 25 and 31  
*D class:* June 28  
**Whitstable, Kent**  
*Atlantic 21:* June 23 (four times), 24, 27, July 8, 9, 13, 15 (twice), 17, 21, 22, 25 and 29 (three times)  
**Wick, Caithness**  
*47ft Tyne ON 1121:* July 8 and 23  
**Wicklow, Co Wicklow**  
*47ft Tyne ON 1153:* June 3, 10, 17 (twice), July 21 and 24  
**Withernsea, Humberside**  
*D class:* June 1, 10, 17, 24, 26, July 17 and 18  
**Workington, Cumbria**  
*47ft Watson ON 940:* June 1  
**Yarmouth, Isle of Wight**  
*52ft Arun ON 1053:* June 2, 4, 9, 21, 23, July 8, 14 (twice), 16 (twice) and 21  
**Youghal, Co Cork**  
*Atlantic 21:* July 7 (twice)

There are many facets to the running of a nation-wide lifeboat service, and transport is a vital, if usually inconspicuous, aspect.

The latest addition to the RNLI's road fleet is this 17 ton Mercedes roadster 1726, a 260hp, V8 diesel-powered truck with the latest in close-coupled trailers, itself with a gross weight of 13 tons.

The vehicle replaces a smaller Mercedes and, with its trailer, has a much greater capacity. Loaded aboard in the photograph are every one of the Irish Inshore lifeboats on their way back for the winter, eleven outboard engines, stores and an Arun fuel tank - a cargo which would have required at least two long trips in its predecessor.

With its built-in three-ton hydraulic crane and great manoeuvrability the combination can reach isolated stations and be loaded and unloaded single-handed.

Just as lifeboats have developed to their present pitch, so has the truck - this Mercedes has 12 forward gears, exhaust back-pressure braking and an automatic greasing system which has halved



the service intervals. It is also equipped with a special tow bar at the front, to enable the special trailer to be pushed into particularly tight spots.

RNLI senior driver George Dadson is in charge, often spending up to three weeks away from base on long-haul trips to far-flung stations.

George's previous vehicle covered 216,000 miles in four years - averaging 54,000 miles a year compared with the average private motorist's 10,000 or so - and yet his trucks always gleam, being cleaned, polished and maintained to the high standards of the lifeboats and stations he serves.

Some ways of filling the coffers...

**Around the world**

More than 200 invited guests supported the annual autumn party organised by Woodbridge and District branch which was held at Woodbridge School on Saturday 24 November.

After enjoying refreshments they bought souvenirs and viewed the excellent lifeboat models on the Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society stall.

As the main item of the evening they listened, enthralled, to a splendid talk and slide show presentation by famous local sailor, David Cowper, who circumnavigated the world – including the North West Passage – in the ex-RNLI lifeboat *Mabel E. Holland*.

Generous support from the guests meant that ticket and souvenir sales, plus a raffle and flower auction, resulted in more than £1,200 being raised.

**In brief**

ANOTHER successful Skittle Evening was held at the Farmhouse Inn, Brixington. A raffle and a cuddly toy auction added to the jollifications and £105 was raised for **Exmouth and Budleigh Salterton Ladies'** guild.

A CHEESE and Wine party held at The Jockey Club raised a splendid £1,150 for **Newmarket** branch.

A DRAW for three bottles of Martell cognac, kindly donated by Martell, and held by **Wolverhampton** branch raised £1,672.

A PLOUGHMAN'S Lunch and Garden Party held on 4 August at the home of Norman Patchton, a member of **Broadstone** branch, raised more than £300 for the Swanage lifeboat appeal. Members also took the opportunity to celebrate the Queen Mother's 90th birthday.

A SOUVENIR stall run by **Hucknall** branch in Hucknall High Street raised £215 by way of donations and sales.

FOR THE past 15 years the chairman of **Norwich Ladies'** guild has allowed her home to be used for the annual general meeting. However, this year Mrs Warren and her husband kindly held a money making event, a Wine and Canape evening. This event, much enjoyed by members, friends and supporters, resulted in £775.55 being raised.

TO CELEBRATE the 25th anniversary of **Marske Ladies'** guild, a dinner was held at The Ship, Marske, Cleveland. The guild organise many varied activities and continue to enjoy success in the small seaside town.

THE **Holyhead and District Ladies'** guild had a busy and successful 1990, raising £11,500. One of the varied fund raising events the guild organised was an open day at the **Penrhos Nature Reserve** in May which realised over £1,000, despite the excitement of a burst water main and a lifeboat flare setting fire to grass.

**Pulling their weight for the lifeboat**



Many local organisations and clubs in Filey have arranged special fund raising events throughout the year to help fund Filey's new Mersey class lifeboat, due on station early in 1991. But none can have been more spectacular than the sponsored lifeboat pull by members of the Filey Brig Angling Society, ably assisted by patrons of the Grapes Hotel.

The pull took place on August Bank Holiday Sunday and dozens of volunteers armed with collecting boxes mingled with the crowds who lined the promenade, filled the beach or watched from vantage points on the cliffs.

The Oakley class lifeboat *Robert and Dorothy Hardcastle*, which together with

her carriage weighs nearly 17 tons, was set at one end of the 200m course and at the sound of a maroon fired by the coxswain, followed by the command 'pull', the team began to haul.

The first 160m were covered in four-and-a-half minutes, and the remaining 40m were completed at an agonisingly slow crawl, the now-exhausted men being urged on by the crowds.

The jubilant team then enjoyed a well-earned beer, courtesy of Brian and Joan at The Grapes, and thanks to their fine efforts an incredible £2,726 was presented to the station.

(photo Scarborough Evening News)

**A grand show**

The annual Havering August Bank Holiday Show attracted crowds of more than 30,000 people over two days, and Hornchurch and Rainham branch had a prime site selling souvenirs and Christmas cards.

Branch members also ran four games of fun and chance, sold Volvo raffle tickets and manned a pictorial display about the work of the lifeboats.

This display took the form of a 16ft mobile caravan complete with TV and video and was kindly provided with the help of Beadles Motors of Dartford, Kent, who also loaned the branch a brand new Land Rover to tow the vehicle to and from the show ground.

A short distance from the stand was an exhibition marking the 50th anniversary of

the Battle of Britain and here there was also an important connection with the RNLI. Mr Chris Butcher, chairman of the branch, had on display information and photographs relating to the rescue by Margate lifeboat of Pilot Officer Richard Hillary (a descendant of Sir William Hillary), a story told in the Autumn issue of THE LIFEBOAT, and this, together with an RAF Spitfire bearing the exact markings as Richard Hillary had on his plane, proved fascinating to many people at the show.

A very successful two days for the branch, raising £1,605 for lifeboat funds.

Last date for copy for the Spring 1991 issue is 11 February 1991.

## Why p-pick on a p-penguin?



The connection between heavyweight boxer Frank Bruno, a penguin, 'District Nurse' Nerys Hughes and Humber lifeboat coxswain Brian Bevan was explained at London Zoo on 17 September, when they were all involved in the launch of the Bingo Association of Great Britain's charity week.

Frank Bruno and Nerys Hughes were adding their support to the appeal and Brian Bevan was representing the RNLI, but why a penguin? The answer is simple. Every year a mascot is chosen for the BAGB's charity week, with soft toys offered as prizes in the special charity bingo games played at participating clubs, and the mascot for 1990 is

Bertie Bingo - the penguin.

During the charity week licensed bingo clubs throughout Britain aimed to raise £250,000 towards the cost of a Mersey class lifeboat which will be named *Bingo Lifeline*. More than a million special bingo tickets were produced and supplied free to the 56 participating clubs by W.S. Cowell Ltd, and £230,000 has so far been raised with more to come!

A cheque will be presented to the RNLI by Mike Gilligan, chairman of BAGB, at the London Boat Show in January.

Frank, Brian and Nerys are pictured with a baby penguin held by his keeper at the zoo.

## The long in the shorts

In September John Cook, honorary secretary of Claygate branch, and Dave Avey from Brighton, undertook a long, 72-mile sponsored walk around the island of Malta.

Sponsored by Monarch Airlines the two friends raised £2,700, including sponsorship of £1 per mile from TV personality Michael Aspel.

Walking 12 miles a day for six days, the couple wore Union flag shorts, and were initially upset when the locals hooted and gave them the thumbs down sign... until they met a Scotsman who asked if they were football supporters and explained that Glasgow Rangers were playing the local side. The locals mistook John and Dave for Rangers fans!

The heat and bad signposting were the main problems. The back-up car, provided free of charge by Festa Car Hire of Malta, was driven by the wives and when the

going got tough they drove ahead to find the roads. On one occasion the road no longer existed - a housing estate had been built on it!

John and Dave normally undertake their sponsored walks in England, this was their fourth, and they have raised £6,369 for the RNLI so far.



## Model societies

The Southern Model Lifeboat Society was formed in July 1990, and has already presented its first donation to the RNLI.

As one of the society's models is of the new Tyne class lifeboat *Hermione Lady Colwyn* it was fitting that the first appeal to be supported was Shoreham. Tony Olliff from the society was pleased to be able to hand over a cheque for £200 to Dave Wainwright at Shoreham lifeboat station. (See also *Letters page this issue*)

Another model society, the Coventry Model Boat Club, has also been busy displaying its boats at various venues and raising money. Great fun was had at the Town and Country Festival at Stoneleigh during the summer where the club displayed 60 scale lifeboats on a static site and on an outdoor pool. Several fun races and games took place on the pool and the public were given the chance to steer two of the radio-controlled boats.

A cheque for £123.61 was presented to Brenda Dudley, honorary secretary of Coventry branch, bringing the total raised by the club last year to £300.

## Chuting stars

Two brave lifeboat supporters floated gently down to earth after jumping 2,000ft from an aircraft, hoping that their parachutes would open as intended!

David Beck, who works at Wandsworth Town Hall and had to lose a great deal of weight in order to reach the maximum allowed of 12st 7lb, made his descent safely - albeit into the wrong field - and raised an impressive £1,100.

Joanne Walton from Wigan also completed her jump successfully and with enthusiastic support from her family and friends, at home and abroad, raised a splendid £308.

## Busy ladies

The Skegness Ladies' guild has not rested on its laurels since the arrival of *The Lincolnshire Poacher* (see naming ceremony report, this issue) and the end of the Lincolnshire lifeboat appeal.

During the first five weeks of the financial year they have raised £1,282, starting with a completely new venture in October - a modern sequence and old time dance at the Embassy Centre in Skegness.

This proved a financial and social success and made a profit of £680. When they paused for breath the dancers were also able to do their Christmas shopping at the souvenir stall.

Treasure Trove, a sale of new and nearly new household goods brought in £230 and a coffee morning raised a further £372.

Altogether an excellent start to the new fund raising year.

### Starting at the top

Lt Cdr Brian Miles, director of the Institution, recently threw himself off the top of a building – not because of the pressures of running the RNLI but to raise funds for it!

Cdr Miles and his wife Anne were taking part in a sponsored 24-hour abseil, organised by the Reed Business Publishing Group, and through the good offices of Frank Harrison, honorary secretary of Bexhill on Sea branch, the RNLI had been chosen as one of four charities to benefit from the event.

Cdr and Mrs Miles were among the first to descend the 110ft from the top of Quadrant House in Sutton, Surrey, headquarters of the company, closely followed by Michael Ashley and Ann Wilkins, respective regional organisers for the south east of England and Greater London.

All the participants agreed it was a 'never to be forgotten experience' especially when it resulted in around £7,000 being raised for the Shoreham Harbour lifeboat appeal.

### Young at heart

For the last two summers 91-year-old Mrs Olga Noble-Mathews has been busy boosting funds for Shaldon branch.

Seated in her wheelchair and dressed in period costume as part of the 1785 celebrations of the village, Mrs Noble-Mathews has sold thousands of Volvo raffle tickets to holidaymakers.

The active senior citizen, who lives in London and teaches etiquette to foreign diplomats, spends every summer in Shaldon and has so far sold £2,000-worth of tickets.

### In Brief

DESPITE driving wind and rain **Tonbridge** branch managed to set up a stand and awning on a free pitch in the town's open-air market. Costume jewellery and Volvo draw tickets were sold and over £100 was netted for lifeboat funds.

THE GOOSE Island Syncopators were the entertainers at Jazz on the Quay, which took place at Ryde on the Isle of Wight. Two hundred people, including members of Bembridge lifeboat crew and visiting yachtsmen, enjoyed the music and barbecue and £350 was raised for the **Seaview and St Helens** branch. In addition the sale of souvenirs amounted to £222.

CARAVANNERS at Borthwen caravan site held their own Three Peaks race last summer. Entrants, who included young children and senior citizens, had to propel their craft, whatever size or shape, under their own power on a course from the site to Fairbourne Beach, a distance of two-and-a-half miles. En route they had to beach and scale three 'peaks'. Nineteen craft took part and apart from being hilarious entertainment for competitors and spectators the event raised £238 for **Barmouth** branch. The caravanners hope to make it an annual event.

### What a lot of bottle!



Scarborough man Len Dale caught 'lifeboatmania' some months ago and started fund raising for Scarborough lifeboat. Over that period he and his committee have raised several thousand pounds which is to be devoted to alterations to the boathouse to accommodate the new Mersey class lifeboat due at the station next year.

Mr Dale's most ambitious venture took place on 12 November when he organised a 1,000-mile round trip Beaujolais Nouveau run from Scarborough. Five crew members were among the eight-strong party who towed an inshore boat to Beaujolais country to pick up 100 bottles of the wine, with a further 600 bottles being transported to the town by lorry

Len, who went with the party, had also arranged the loan of two vehicles, ferry passage, accommodation and two receptions in France, as well as fuel for the trip. The *coup de grace* was an arrangement with the Beaujolais people to print a special appeal label for the wine, and practically every bottle had been spoken for before the party left the town.

On their return to Scarborough a bottle of wine was presented to deputy mayor, Councillor Lucy Haycock, and a further four bottles to St Catherine's Hospice. Mr Dale said he was well pleased with the trip, which raised approximately £1,000 for the appeal fund.

(Photo Scarborough Evening News)

### All at sea for AGM

Last year Backwell and District branch travelled abroad to hold their annual general meeting (at their own expense) and raised over £250 in the process.

Several committee members sailed in three yachts to Cherbourg where they were joined by the rest of the branch who arrived by P&O ferry.

Thanks to the wholehearted support of the ferry company, members were able to sell Volvo raffle tickets to passengers and explain the role of the lifeboat service.

During their stay in Cherbourg, many British yachts were visited and tickets sold to very willing crew members. The AGM was held in the Cherbourg yacht club.

The branch are planning to make this the forerunner of an annual Yachtsmen's Lifeboat Supporters' rally, to be held in September each year.

### Young enterprise

Thanks to the efforts of three Southampton children the Southampton Lifeboat Board was able to send an extra £11.69 to headquarters.

Peter Calvert, Ben Roberts and Andrew Long, all aged nine and from Highfield Middle School, decided to enter the Hampshire Technology Fair and thereby also help the RNLI.

Peter's own description of the entry is as follows – 'My friends Ben, Andrew and me decided to enter the Hampshire Technology fair. We entered a robot and made it point to a lifeboat money box. It took us about a month to make it. You could make it raise its arm to point to the money box and flash its eyes. We used the lifeboat because we wanted to help save more people's lives at sea.'

Although the entry did not win, the RNLI benefited from such enterprising youngsters.

## Pounds from puds

On Driffield Show Day, Tryton Foods were cooking frozen Yorkshire puddings with onion gravy – and more than 900 visitors sampled these for a donation of 20p to a charity.

To the surprise of the two Driffield Ladies' guild members manning the souvenir stall the sum of £192.75 was presented to them at the request of Mr Hilditch, managing director of Tryton Foods.

## Fishy goings-on

The children of St Laurence's Church of England Infants School in Ludlow decided to devote their harvest festival to the sea.

Each class had a large cardboard cut-out fish and the children brought coins to make the scales. They also paid 10p a time to 'fish' for tins (of fish, of course!) donated by parents.

As a result of their efforts a total of £98.74 was presented to Ludlow branch.

## In memory

Mr and Mrs Peter Lobb of Crafthole, Cornwall, have donated £500 to the RNLI in memory of their young son Christopher, who was tragically killed in a car accident. The donation was on their behalf and of the relatives and friends of Christopher, who had such a love of the sea.

On a fine summer's evening in August the Plymouth lifeboat sailed across to Cawsand and secured alongside the waterside steps in Garrett Street where many had gathered for the occasion.

On board the lifeboat Mr and Mrs Lobb presented the cheque to Martin Giles, chairman of the Rame Peninsula branch, who in turn gave them an RNLI shield with an engraved plate donated by Lidstone and Dolton, the Plymouth engravers.

At the request of Mr and Mrs Lobb the branch has arranged for the money to go to a Cornish lifeboat and, as a result, the Falmouth lifeboat now has a new VHF radio telephone.

It was also fitting that the branch presented a special certificate of thanks to young Jonjo Fowle of Torpoint, one of Chris's friends, who generously donated a large portion of his pocket money in memory of his friend.

The evening will long be remembered by the family and friends of Christopher, and by his brother who had been badly injured in the accident and who was brought from the hospital where he had just come out of five weeks intensive care.

## The Latvian connection

In 1936 the Latvian ship *Helena Faulbaums* was wrecked on the island of Belnahua, off Luing on the west coast of Scotland. Four survivors were rescued by the Islay lifeboat and Coxswain Peter MacPhee was awarded the Latvian Order of the Three Stars.

Last year Mr and Mrs Hilary King, who live on Luing, were invited to Riga to attend the premiere of a film of the shipwreck made by a Latvian film director. Much of the footage for the film was taken by members of the Latvian yacht *Bravo* which sailed to Luing for the purpose last August.

One of the survivors of the 1936 wreck is still alive and the Kings were able to meet him at the film premiere.

On their return home Mr King gave a slide-show of the trip to Riga in the village hall at Cullipool and the gross takings of £36.21 were donated to the RNLI.

The film producers are planning an English language version of the film which they hope might be of interest to UK television companies.

## A ferry good idea

When the Sealink ferry *MV Felicity* went into service on the Rosslare to Fishguard route in the Spring of 1990, John Boyce, a second steward on the ferry and also a crew member of Rosslare Harbour lifeboat, obtained permission to install collecting boxes throughout the ship.

Every fortnight he organises the emptying of the boxes and staggers home to the family with the bags of cash. It takes his family, wife Bridget, daughter Patricia aged 11 and son Sean aged 7, at least two evenings to count and bag the money and hand it over to a delighted local honorary treasurer for banking.

Over the six month period from May to October the boxes have yielded a resounding £2,520.

## Ferry interesting!

British Channel Island Ferries Captain Neil Vardy (right) presents Peter Holness, the RNLI's corporate fund raising manager, with a cheque for £845.50 watched by Chief Purser Eddie Wilkinson.

The money was raised by a promotion on the company's ferries during the summer of 1990 when a percentage of the sale of duty-free on some brands was donated to the RNLI.



## In Brief

THE SOUVENIR shop at Aldeburgh continues to thrive and realised a splendid £25,000 from sales last year for **Aldeburgh and District Ladies'** guild.

A SPONSORED slim by Mrs Elaine Mann raised £170 for the **Southwold and Dunwich** fund raising branch when she lost two-and-a-half stone in four months.

STAFF at Gateway superstore in Bridgend undertook a sponsored walk from Bridgend to Southerndown, a journey of about ten miles, resulting in £1,500 being raised from sponsorship and a collection in the store organised by local branches of **Bridgend and Porthcawl Ladies'** guild.

THE **Stokesley and Ayton District Ladies'** guild have been presented with a £500 donation from Brent Walker Brewing and Trading and Steve Mongan of the Francis Hotel Group to mark the Dunkirk anniversary trip made by Mr Mongan Senior, who had been rescued by lifeboat from Dunkirk in 1940.

BRIAN Cane from Minehead, who has won the Gardener of the Year title in a national competition held by Gardening News, has been opening his garden to the public for the last three summers, inviting donations in aid of the RNLI. This year's total came to a splendid £496 which was presented to **Minehead** station branch.

## Naval boost

The Royal Naval Supply and Transport Service celebrated the 25th anniversary of its formation as a single supply organisation last year. Fund raising events were held at all 40 of its establishments throughout the UK and abroad with proceeds being donated to local charities.

The money raised in aid of the RNLI was the result of a grand prize draw on board *RFA Argus* and a cheque for £4,805 was presented to Peter Holness, corporate fund raising manager, by John Baugh, director general of RNSTS at their headquarters at Ennsleigh in Bath.



## Record booty

Henley-on-Thames branch held its 10th annual car boot sale last September and surpassed all previous totals to achieve a record one-day take of £6,597.64.

This record-breaking amount was achieved by parking 371 boots (attached to their relevant cars), collecting 50p each from at least 2,000 buyers' cars and by the several thousand pedestrians who converged on the site giving generously to the RNLI in a wide variety of collecting boxes, buckets, tins and anything else which would hold money.

The ladies of the committee and their friends (including some very useful men!), manned the refreshment marquee and produced sandwiches from some 40 loaves, with 200 filled rolls and innumerable cakes, buns, pies, etc. Tea, coffee and soft drinks flowed all day and 1,000 hot dogs were prepared by two New Zealand visitors who were roped in to help on the day. Christmas cards, souvenirs and car raffle tickets helped the grand total.

## Pumps to the rescue

Eastbourne lifeboat station have been presented with a cheque for £600 by Ken Smith, managing director of PDP Pumps.

The local engineering company is a member of the Alfa Laval Group, recent winner of the NatWest engineering marketing awards and the prize money was distributed to companies within the group. PDP Pumps decided to donate their share to a worthwhile local cause.

Captain Shearer, station honorary secretary, and Graham Cole, coxswain of Eastbourne lifeboat, accepted the generous donation which it is hoped will go towards the purchase of a bulldozer needed to keep the end of the slipway clear of silt and gravel.

## Supping up

During his seagoing days, Richard Allen's party trick was to stand on his head and drink half-a-pint of beer!

Over the years Richard, who is editor of the magazine *Safety at Sea*, has very occasionally repeated the trick, the last time two years ago in Hamburg just prior to his 50th birthday.

Whilst on another visit to Hamburg last year his friends and colleagues were adamant that it could not be done, one said it could, bets were placed and then the person concerned withdrew to the cries of the disbelievers' 'we told you so'.

Seeing the money on the table Richard said that if it was doubled and donated to the RNLI he would come out of 'retirement' and prove that it *could* be done.

With that it was down with his head, up with his feet and the beer was upped, resulting in £115 being donated to lifeboat funds.

## Drawing to a close



A total of £312, 228 has been raised so far from the 1990 promotion in conjunction with Volvo Concessionaires Ltd.

Eight Volvo 340 cars were offered as prizes in raffles throughout the various fund raising regions. The prizewinners and amounts raised in the regions were:

**Scotland:** (£50,044) T. Peacock, Whithorn.

**North West:** (£46,000) Mrs Slater, Gt. Harwood, Lanes.

**North East:** (£39,387) Miss D. Knights, Purley, Surrey.

**Wales:** (£39,925) Mrs Paton, Swindon, Wilts.

**East:** (£10,988) Mrs Bodfish, Dyfed.

**South:** (£55,335) Mr Adamson, Blandford Forum.

**South West:** (£70,549) J. Watson, Uxbridge, Middx.

**South East:** To be drawn on 13 January 1991 at the London Boat Show

Mr Pearson, managing director of Linn Volvo Edinburgh is pictured holding the winning ticket for the Scottish region watched by area organisers (left to right) Dick Richardson, Colin Lawson and Gerry McNally.

(Photo Capital Press)

## On their bikes

Three young people set off on their motor cycles to visit 55 lifeboat stations from Berwick on Tweed to Newhaven in Sussex.

Graham Wade from Cambridge, Stewart Abrey and his sister Diana from Melbourn Royston, covered 1,600 miles and raised a grand total of £3,400 for lifeboat funds.

Their reception at each stop was marvellous and they received a great deal of help and hospitality from all the honorary secretaries and crew members at the stations they visited.

## Open for business

Record crowds flocked to Hoylake lifeboat station on its open day and a record sum of £10,000 was raised for the Hoylake lifeboat appeal.

Television sports commentator Elton Welsby opened proceedings with his children Christopher, aged 12, and Laura.

The appeal was also boosted by a generous donation of £5,000 by the Hoylake and West Kirby Round Table.

An estimated 20,000 people enjoyed traditional events such as Punch and Judy and rides on a model steam train on the promenade but the star event was the local lifeboat staging an air-sea rescue with a Wessex helicopter from RAF Valley, Anglesey.

It was the last open day for *Mary Gabriel*, as she has now been replaced by the new Mersey class lifeboat *Lady of Hilbre*.

## Fourth time lucky

A fourth donation of £10,000 has been presented to the RNLI by Western Geophysical/Shell UK.

The money was raised during a safety campaign involving crew members of the research vessel *Discovery*, and will be used to cover the cost of the davit for the boarding boat at Humber lifeboat station.

Copy for the Fund Raisers section of the Spring issue must be received by Monday 11 February 1991.



# Membership News

Governors • Shoreline • Storm Force

## Hitting the target

In the summer edition of *THE LIFEBOAT* we asked whether it was possible to set our sights on obtaining that 200,000th active member by the end of 1991. We have progressed a little towards that target, and at the latest count had just over 170,000 members.

30,000 members in a year is a tall order – a target which is possible, but only with your help. As this issue of the journal is published we shall be recruiting hard at the London Boat Show, but can we count on your help throughout the year?

Enrolment forms and dispensers are readily available for yacht clubs, social clubs and any other suitable premises. Can we again encourage all members to recruit at least one new member each during 1991.

## Variable Help

Members will be aware that a concerted effort has been made throughout 1990 to encourage members to pay their annual subscription by direct debit and under deed of covenant – and furthermore to sign the appropriate form so that both methods can be under the 'variable' scheme. Covenanted payments enable the RNLI to reclaim tax and increase the value of the subscription.

By the end of January all members will have received the necessary forms. Response has been very encouraging but

it is not too late to sign the form, and ensure an even better use of your valued subscription.

## Gift Aid

Whilst on the subject of making better use of members subscriptions there is of course another tax efficient method of giving. This is the new Gift Aid Scheme introduced by the Government in its most recent budget and which took effect from 1 October 1990.

For single cash gifts between £600 and £5m made to charity by UK residents, that charity is able to reclaim the tax already paid on it – thus a contribution of £600 becomes £800 to the RNLI without any extra cost to the subscriber, in effect the exchequer contributes the extra £200. With gifts of greater value the amounts which the Institution can reclaim are, of course, proportionally greater.

Simple Gift Aid forms are available from both head office and our regional offices and more details of the scheme can be found in the news pages of this issue.

## Regional Office

In the previous edition of the journal we published the addresses of the regional offices. Please note that the incorrect telephone number was given for the Southern office following its recent move.

The address is correct as shown but the telephone number is now Ferndown (0202) 861166.



**Storm Force membership is open to anyone under 16 years of age, and costs just £3 per year.**

**Members receive a quarterly magazine and are welcome at the Storm Force Rallies around the country.**

There is no shortage of good design ideas for future lifeboats from Storm Force members. Entries in the 'Design a lifeboat of the Future' competition brought in masses of entries and gave chief of operations, Commodore George Cooper and chief technical officer, David Hudson, a hard task choosing the winners.

Prizes for this competition were Karisma colour display boxes donated by Berol.

Storm Force rallies continue to be the most popular attractions and even inland members had an opportunity to see a new lifeboat recently on the River Severn at Worcester!

*Royal Shipwright*, a new Mersey class lifeboat, sailed up the river to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Worcester Ladies' lifeboat guild and a Storm Force rally was one of many events organised



A Storm Force Rally was part of the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of the Worcester Ladies' Lifeboat Guild. The Mersey Class *Royal Shipwright* made her way inland to the Worcester Rowing Club quay for the occasion.

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# People and Places

around and about the RNLI

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## A fifty-first occasion for lottery draw

To mark the RNLI's 51st national lottery, Brigadier Mike Wingate-Gray OBE MC and Bar, who served with the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch in the 51st Highland Division, was asked to draw the winning tickets.

The draw, which took place on 31 October and raised over £70,000, was supervised by Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fund raising and marketing.

Since their launch in 1987 the quarterly lotteries have raised more than £2m and are an important source of RNLI income. The prize winners were:

**£2,000** – Mrs L.A. Dye, Norwich, Norfolk.

**£1,000** – Mr & Mrs D.W.J. Brownhill, Edinburgh, Scotland.

**£500** – Mr & Mrs N. Wilson, Denton, Nr Manchester.

**£250** – N. Johnston, Milnthorpe, Cumbria.

**£100** – S. Ellison, Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd; J. Halifax, Eastbourne, Sussex; A.D.G. Lloyd, Sketty, Swansea; P. Pottinger, Penrith, Cumbria; Mrs M. Davis, Northwood, Middx; Mr & Mrs Dacombe, Maidenhead, Berkshire; D. Birks, Ledbury, Herefordshire; Mr & Mrs K.M. Heywood, Thaxted, Essex.

**£50** – Mrs K.M. Seager, Louth, Lincs; Mrs R. Slater, Harrow, Middx; Mrs B. Bevan, Cannock, Staffs; W.J. Lane, Chelsey, Oxon; A. Wildash, Wareham, Dorset; H.V. Cockburn, Camberley, Surrey; I.M.F. Porch, Trowbridge, Wiltshire; H. Burton, Forest Hill, London.

## Maiden's voyages

Yachtswoman of the Year, Tracey Edwards, dropped in on Selsey during the station's lifeboat week during the summer.

Arriving by helicopter, after the station's Tyne class *Sam and Joan Woods* and the D class inflatable had demonstrated their prowess at rescuing a variety of 'casualties', Tracey was lowered first on to the Tyne and then on to the inshore lifeboat in a demonstration of manoeuvrability and co-ordination.

To complete the pageant for the watching crowds Bowman Martin Rudwick then took a lead from a well-known television commercial and impersonated the famous man-in-black to deliver a box of chocolates to Tracey! Cadburys had entered into the spirit of the day by donating the chocolates specially for the occasion.

Tracey was made a member of Selsey's 'family' when she was presented with a station plaque, and has since agreed to become a vice president of the branch to seal her links with the town's lifeboats.

Plymouth and in addition there were many other gifts including a watch, and a video and CD player from his friends and colleagues in the lifeboat crew.

Tracey Edwards, Yachtswoman of the Year, aboard Selsey's Tyne class lifeboat during the station's lifeboat week. Tracey has since become a vice president of the branch. (Photo Jeanne Hambleton)

## Plymouth coxswain is put in the picture

Plymouth lifeboat coxswain John Dare was reminded of one of the memorable rescues during his 31 year service with the Institution when he retired on 10 November 1990.

Among the many gifts he received at a surprise party thrown by some 400 people from the south west was a painting of the Arun class *City of Plymouth*, with a Sea King helicopter, during the rescue of the crew of a yacht at Wembury Rocks. During the service the Arun's inflatable Y boat was capsized in appalling conditions and its crew thrown on to the rocks.

The painting was presented to John by the Rame Peninsula Branch and had been painted by marine artist Chris Southcombe, who is the branch Treasurer.

Local marine modeller Brian Williams had been commissioned by friends and colleagues to produce a miniature of the Barnet class lifeboat previously at



The painting presented to John Dare on his retirement as coxswain after 31 years service depicts the Arun *City of Plymouth* during a service to a yacht at Wembury Rocks.

## 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:

**Angle** – Shore Helper B.J. Brown

**Bridlington** – Crew Member P.A. Staveley

**Filey** – Crew Member D.F. Cammish (posthumous)

**Flint** – Crew Member D.L. Roberts

**Mudford** – Crew Member J. Garton

**Porthcawl** – Shore Helper A. St John Redmond

**Redcar** – Tractor Driver R.J. O'Neill, Crew Member E.F. Bennett

**St Helier** – Coxswain M.E. Berry, Shore Helper F.A. Lawrence

**Swanage** – Crew Member D.G. Corben

**Teesmouth** – Shore Helper H. Aspland

**Wells** – Crew Member A. Smith, Head Launcher B.G. Scoles

# People and Places

around and about the RNLI

Continued from  
previous page

## For that very special occasion...

A safe at the RNLI now holds a particularly valuable item, and one which will have to stay there for the next 24 years!

The will of the late Mr Jeffrey Burr from Cornwall stipulated that a bottle of 1914 brandy, held by Mr Burr in trust for the RNLI and the WWF from the estate of Mary Sennett, should be retained until the year 2014.

The 100-year-old bottle is then to be sold, and the proceeds distributed between the two charities.

## Birthday Honours

Bob McLoughlin BEM vice president of Whitehaven branch, has been awarded the British Empire Medal in Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday Honours list for his services as Auxiliary Coastguard.

He was a founder crew member of the St Bees lifeboat when the station was opened in 1970 and served as honorary secretary of Whitehaven branch from 1978 to 1982, being elected vice president of the branch in October 1990.

## On Station

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

### ALL-WEATHER

**North Sunderland** – Oakley 37-15 (ON 982) *Ernest Tom Neathercoat* on 15 August 1990 as temporary station lifeboat.

**Ballyglass** – Arun 52-45 (ON 1159)

*Mabel Williams* on 29 August 1990.

**Workington** – Solent 48-016 (ON 1021)

*Douglas Currie* on 23 September 1990.

**Shoreham** – Tyne 47-040 (ON 1158)

*Hermione Lady Colwyn* on 30 September 1990.

**Sheringham** – Oakley 37-19 (ON 986)

*Lloyds II* on 8 October 1990 as temporary station lifeboat.

**Hoylake** – Mersey 12-005 (ON 1163)

*Lady of Hilbre* on 12 October 1990.

**St Ives** – Mersey 12-009 (ON 1167) *The Princess Royal* on 23 October 1990.

**Llandudno** – Mersey 12-006 (ON 1164)

*Andy Pearce* on 23 November 1990.

### INSHORE

**Relief** – D408 on 22 August 1990.

**Relief** – D409 on 29 August 1990.

**St Catherine** – B539 on 20 October 1990.

**Teignmouth** – B538 on 3 November 1990.

## RNLI represented in Battle of Britain Parade

Coxswain Robert Kemp of Walton and Frinton lifeboat, Tony Evans, helmsman of Walmer's Atlantic 21 inshore lifeboat and Coxswain/Mechanic Graham Cole of Eastbourne lifeboat were the three lifeboatmen who represented the RNLI in the Royal Air Force Battle of Britain Parade in front of Buckingham Palace on 15 September 1990.

Lifeboat crews from stations as far apart as Weymouth in Dorset and Skegness in Lincolnshire were kept busy during the Battle of Britain, launching or downing airmen of both the RAF and the Luftwaffe

as well as the many shipping casualties.

The three lifeboatmen who formed the RNLI party were representing all the lifeboat stations who during the Battle of Britain in 1940 launched 100 times and saved the lives of 18 airmen.

During the Battle of Britain Margate lifeboat launched after a parachute was spotted coming down into the sea. The airman was badly burned and near collapse but lived to tell the tale of his rescue. He was Pilot Officer Richard Hope Hillary, great-great-great-great nephew of the RNLI's founder, Sir William Hillary.

## Obituaries

With deep regret we record the following deaths:  
FEBRUARY 1990

**Miss Betty Dennis**, committee member of Barnstaple branch from 1960 to 1972, when she was elected president until her death. Mrs Dennis was awarded a silver badge in 1986.

APRIL 1990

**Norman Collett**, committee member of Seaton, Beer and District branch from 1972 until his death. Prior to moving to Devon he had worked with the West Bromwich branch where he was awarded a framed letter of thanks. Mr Collett was awarded a joint statuette with his wife in 1984.

JUNE 1990

**Mrs Betty Hendry**, founder member and first honorary secretary of the Edgbaston and Harborne Ladies' guild, holding office as chairman 1976/77 and president 1978/79. Mrs Hendry was awarded a silver badge in 1978.

**Ken Quinney**, honorary secretary of Dungeness lifeboat station from 1987 until his death. Mr Quinney was chairman of the station branch committee from 1981 to 1987 when he relinquished the chair, being appointed chairman again in January 1990.

JULY 1990

**Philip Preston**, founder chairman of the Wincanton branch from 1970 until his death.

AUGUST 1990

**Mrs J. Privett**, chairman of Portsmouth and Southsea Ladies' guild from 1965 to 1975 having joined the committee in 1956.

**Mrs Gloris Baxter**, treasurer of Staithes Ladies guild since 1984 and secretary from 1973 to 1984.

SEPTEMBER 1990

**Mrs Elizabeth Snow**, chairman and founder chairman of the Derwent Valley branch since 1967. Mrs Snow was awarded a silver badge in 1979 and a gold badge in 1989.

**Miss Ursula Upjohn**, donor of the Dungeness lifeboat *RNLB Alice Upjohn*.

**Peter Gosheron**, chairman of Bognor Regis branch from 1968 to 1989 during which time he was awarded a statuette in 1981 and a silver badge in 1985. On his retirement in 1989 due to ill-health Mr Gosheron was appointed vice-president and awarded a special certificate of thanks.

**Dick Baxendale**, tireless worker for the Institution in South Caernarfonshire and previously in North West England.

OCTOBER 1990

**Rear Admiral Sir Edmund Irving KBE CB**, elected to the Committee of Management in 1965 (having previously served as an ex-officio member from 1960 to 1966 when Hydrographer of the Navy). Admiral Irving was appointed a Vice-President in 1972 and a Life Vice-President in 1985. He gave long and distinguished service to the RNLI, mainly on the Boat Committee which he joined in 1960 and of which he was chairman from 1969 to 1978. Admiral Irving also served on various other committees.

**Les Coyde**, founder member and first honorary secretary of the Port Talbot station branch from 1966 to 1971.

**Lady Tollemache**, joint donor with her late husband, Major General Sir Humphry Tollemache, of the Eastbourne D class lifeboat *The Humphry and Nora Tollemache*.

**Mrs Betty Harker**, member of Stanmore branch for 15 years and organiser of the branch jumble sales and other activities.

**Peter McLoughlin**, coxswain of Howth lifeboat from 1965 to 1967. Mr McLoughlin served as second coxswain from 1962 until his appointment as coxswain.

NOVEMBER 1990

**Lt Cdr P.E.C. Pickles MBE JP RNRV**, elected to the Committee of Management in 1968 and appointed a Vice-President in 1975 and a Life Vice-President in 1986. Cdr Pickles served on various committees and was Deputy Chairman of the Institution from 1975 to 1980. He had lived in Canada since 1980.

# LIFEBOAT SMALL ADS

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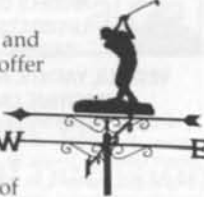
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