

Journal of the
Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Volume 52 Number 515

The Lifeboat



Spring 1991

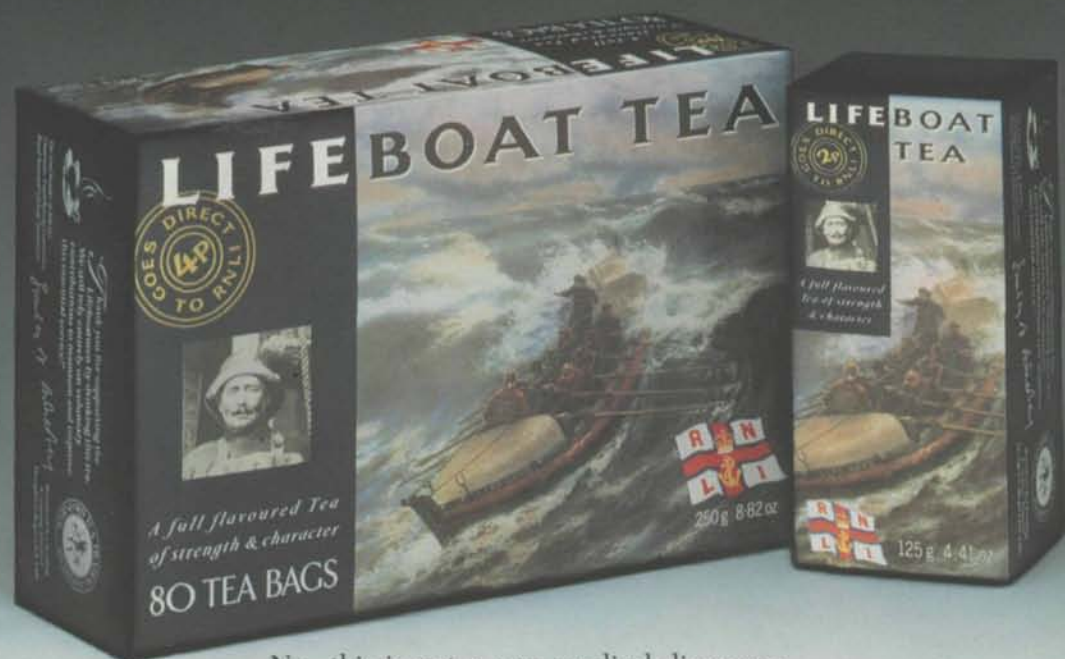
Bronze medal and Vellum services

Lifeboat Saturdays centenary

On passage in a Mersey



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The Lifeboat

Spring 1991



Royal National
Lifeboat
Institution

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Number 515

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COVER PICTURE

by Mike Floyd

Salcombe's Tyne class lifeboat *The Baltic Exchange II* crosses Salcombe bar while on exercise with the new St Ives' Mersey class. The Mersey was on passage to her station, and the exercise part of the working-up routine. See 'On Passage', page 48 of this issue.

Next Issue: The Summer issue of THE LIFEBOAT will appear in July 1991, and news items should be received by Friday, 24 May 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.

Subscription: A year's subscription for four issues costs £5.00, including postage, but those who are entitled to receive THE LIFEBOAT free of charge will continue to do so.

Overseas subscriptions depend on the cost of postage to the country concerned. Write to the RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

Printed by the Friary Press, Bridport Road,
Dorchester, Dorset



Open Days

The Open Days at the RNLI's Poole Headquarters and Depot, which were postponed from last year due to building work, have been scheduled for August.

Both sites, including the new building, will be open on Friday 2 August and Saturday 3 August from 1000 to 1800, and arrangements are in hand to make the event even more interesting than in the past.

As usual all aspects of the Open Days, including limited parking, will be free, providing all supporters and their families with the opportunity of an inexpensive day out.

Individuals and family groups will not need to make any previous arrangements, but larger organised parties may like to make contact in advance to ensure smooth running.

Newspoint

Moving on

Times change, and any organisation which offers an efficient service must move with them. In the latest two issues of the journal alone we have reported the opening of new lifeboat stations, the extension of the RNLI's coverage to 50 miles from the coast, the development of two new fast lifeboats and the introduction of Inshore lifeboats at additional stations. Now, as the last of the traditional lifeboats near the end of their service lives we are looking still further into the future.

There may be those who regret the pace of change and who regret the passing of so much history. But, while the Institution is very conscious of its traditions it must always be even more aware of its future, and be ready to offer the service required today and in the future. It is a sobering thought that even now our firm plans take us well into the next century – and our thoughts extend still further.

Society changes and technology marches on. But while some cherished aspects of the RNLI may disappear, its spirit and its effectiveness will always remain.

New members of the Committee of Management

Three new members were co-opted on to the Institution's Committee of Management at its meeting on 22 November 1990, Ron Neil, Richard Burrows and Eric Freeman.

Ron Neil, the BBC's Managing Director of Regional Broadcasting has a long association with the RNLI, dating back to his time as a television reporter in Aberdeen, where he covered the Longhope disaster in 1969. Mr Neil joined the RNLI's Public Relations Committee in 1988.

Richard Burrows of Dublin combines his chief executive post at Irish Distillers with chairmanship of Edward Dillon and Co, wine

and spirit merchants and is also chairman of the National Development Corporation, Ireland's public venture capital company. He became a member of the Institution's Establishment Committee in 1989.

Eric Freeman, who lives in Christchurch, Dorset, was chairman of Galbraiths until retiring in 1987 and was also director of the Baltic Exchange from 1981 to 1986. He is a member of Lloyds a Freeman of the City of London and a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights. He has been a member of the RNLI Search and Rescue Committee since 1987.

Open Days provide an excellent opportunity for branches and guilds and lifeboat stations to organise a trip to Poole. Why not hire a coach and bring a large party of supporters, or come by train to Poole station, just three minutes walk from the RNLI buildings?

STOP PRESS

Subject to operational requirements it is hoped to have a Mersey and at least one other All-weather lifeboat on show. An Atlantic 21 capsized/righting display is planned and the training centre will be open for the first time.

The indefatigable Chelsea Pensioners collected a staggering £12,000 at the London Boat Show. From left to right: Robert Moy, Bert Spurdin, George Woolf, Dave Law and Doug Young.

Behind them are John Race (left) and John Ovans (right) from the Teesmouth station during their 'watch' at the show. Peter Holness (centre) the RNLI's Corporate Fund Raising Manager was celebrating his last boat show with the RNLI, he retires this year after attending 21 London shows.

Showtime success

The RNLI's presence at the London International Boat Show in January proved to be very successful

National Boat Shows donated the space and the Institution was able to present a stand which celebrated the 100th anniversary of street collections and looked forward to the boat house modernisation programme – with the dummy boathouse split into two to represent 1891 and 1991.

More than £57,000 was banked during the ten days, and although souvenirs sales were slightly down on 1990 the collecting boxes brought in almost double the previous year's total – no less than £15,291.07. Of this a staggering £12,000 was collected by the five indefatigable Chelsea Pensioners.

In addition 903 new members and 110 Storm Force members

were signed up, both figures a little down on 1990 but still impressive in an uncertain economic climate.

As usual there were several presentations to the Institution, on the pool and on the stand.

Among these were the Royal Bank of Scotland, which added £113,000 to the proceeds of its Access promotion (and there is an application form inserted in this journal for those who do not already have an 'affinity' Access card), Barclaycard with a further £50,000 from its Profiles scheme, and the Bingo Association with a splendid £237,541.

The RNLI also made use of the occasion to make its own presentations. A large crowd watched PR committee chairman and well-known broadcaster Raymond Baxter present the Institution's Public Relations Awards to four people or organisations which have helped the RNLI: Border TV for a half-hour documentary on the RNLI, Volvo for their sponsorship of the RNLI's latest film, Beckett Newspapers for their support of the Shoreham Lifeboat Appeal and Ken Griffin who provided a five-minute promotional video for the Institution at no cost.

Champagne de Courcy chipped-in with bottles of Mary Rose champagne to add to these awards and on other occasions.





FAB progress

The hull and deck assembly of the prototype 14m Fast Afloat Boat (FAB 4) was lifted into William Osborne's yard at Littlehampton, Sussex, on 1 February for fitting out.

The prototype lifeboat should be launched in late 1991 and begin trials at the end of the year or early in 1992.

The 17m Fast Afloat Boat (FAB 3) prototype is now well advanced and was due to be launched as this issue went to press in early March. Trials should begin in April.

FAB 3 should be a striking and impressive lifeboat, for quite apart from her 17m length (over 55ft) her superstructure has been painted in high-visibility yellow. The Institution is using this colour as a trial, both for its effectiveness at sea and also to distinguish lifeboats from a proliferation of blue-hull, orange-upperwork work and safety boats.

As with all prototype lifeboats FAB 3 will have a grey hull initially, the tradi-



The hull and deck assembly of the prototype FAB 4 is hoisted into William Osborne's yard at Littlehampton for fitting out.

tional blue not being applied to the hull until the class has been extensively trialled and accepted as a production lifeboat.

We hope to be able to publish a photo-feature on the FAB 3 prototype in the next issue of THE LIFEBOAT.

Shoreworks campaign

Volvo Concessionaires announced an ambitious fund raising scheme during the London Boat Show in January, aimed at providing £1m to help the Institution's modernisation scheme for lifeboat houses.

The RNLi intends to have fast lifeboats, with a speed of at least 15 knots, at all stations by 1993 and this will mean the rebuilding or adaptation of a number of boat houses – many built in the Victorian era – to accommodate the new lifeboats.

As well as more spacious accommodation and better protection against the elements the new structures will provide improved facilities for the crews, launchers and shore-helpers. Among additional facilities to be provided (in some cases for the first time) will be changing and drying rooms, crew meeting rooms, mechanic's workshops, fuel stores, toilets, display areas and souvenir shops.

During the last few years of the extremely successful partnership between the RNLi and Volvo some £1.25m has been raised, helping to fund two new All-weather lifeboats.

Ian Ventham, the RNLi's head of fundraising and marketing, said at the launch:

'the Institution is delighted that Volvo has decided to continue their support activities, which have proved so successful in the past. If the lifeboat service is to continue to operate efficiently it will be essential for us to have this kind of support from industry.'



Taking a shine to lifeboats...

The immaculate appearance of lifeboats is no accident, and reflects the pride of a lifeboat station in its boat.

However that glossy finish on the hull has to be put there in the first place, and this is another instance of the latest technology putting a shine on even the older lifeboats.

The relief Oakley *Fairlight* is seen here between stints at St Ives and New Quay

glistening in a new coat of paint applied at Marine and Port Services at Pembroke Dock.

John Smith, seen with his handiwork, used to be a brush-and-roller man, but now sprays coat after coat until the boat gleams.

'Near enough is not good enough,' he says, 'it doesn't go out of our workshop until its immaculate.'

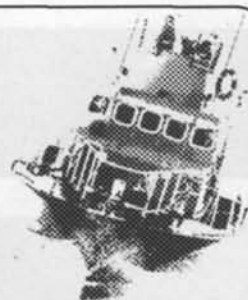
AGM Guest of Honour announced

The guest of honour at the Institution's 1991 annual presentation of awards will be His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent, President of the RNLi.

The ceremony takes place on Tuesday 14 May at the Festival Hall London, starting at 1430, where The Duke of Kent will present bravery awards to lifeboatmen and other awards to long-serving voluntary workers.

The presentation is preceded by the Institution's Annual General Meeting for the Governors, held in the nearby Queen Elizabeth Hall and starting at 1130.

Lifeboat Services



DIFFICULT CONDITIONS OVER BAR

Crew member leaps aboard casualty from C class inflatable

Helmsman Peter Heading and Crew Member Robert Gorman of Aberystwyth lifeboat station have been awarded the RNLI's Bronze medal for Gallantry following the rescue of a lone yachtsman in September last year, a rescue which involved towing the man's 18ft boat across the bar to safety in very dangerous conditions.

Lifeboat crew member Michael Harris has been accorded the Thanks of the Institution inscribed on Vellum for his part in the service.

Lifeboat crew members David Davies and Martin Porter, and Alan Blair, Brian Slack, Bryan Pugh-Jones and Sandro James, all members of the crew of a fishing boat which also played a major part in the rescue, have received framed letters of thanks signed by the RNLI Chairman.

George Rawlinson, deputy inspector of lifeboats for the western division, paid tribute in his official report to the crews' 'skills in seamanship, communication and boat handling and the way in which they coped with a dangerous situation in a calm and well-disciplined manner'.

Wind-over-tide

The incident began at 1655 on 18 September 1990 when Milford Haven coastguard informed the station's deputy launching authority that the 18ft yacht *Otter*, with one man aboard, was in difficulties some three-quarters of a mile north-west of Castle Point.

The crew's pagers were activated and, at 1705, the station's C class lifeboat was launched with Peter Heading at the helm.



The kind of conditions in which Aberystwyth's C class lifeboat operates – and this is a relatively quiet day.



Bronze Medals

'with the yacht tending to broach in a following sea, crew member Mike Harris fashioned a drogue from a Calor Gas cylinder'

The wind was SW Force 5, with 5ft to 6ft seas running outside the shelter of the harbour. The flow from the two rivers which enter the sea at Aberystwyth was causing hazardous 'wind-over-tide' conditions on the bar following some heavy rain, but Helmsman Heading took the 17ft 6in inflatable skilfully through the seas to arrive alongside the casualty at 1710. Once there he discovered that the yacht's engine had failed and, although she was still sailing, the man aboard was tired, cold and concerned.

Helmsman Heading decided that the best course of action would be to tow the casualty back to harbour and so he brought the lifeboat against the yacht's starboard side, avoiding lines trailing in the water, and Crew Member Mike Harris leapt aboard with a towline. When safely aboard Mike Harris took charge of the yacht and made fast the line, lowered the sails and stood by the helm. The weather was worsening and DLA Alan Blair became concerned that the lifeboat, with the yacht in tow,



would encounter difficulties in the dangerous conditions on the bar.

Another member of the lifeboat crew, Robert Gorman, agreed to use his own 32ft fast fishing boat *Seren-y-Mor*, to stand by and offer assistance. Four men volunteered to act as crew: Sandro James (a lifeboat helmsman), Brian Slack (a lifeboat crew man), Bryan Pugh-Jones (a former lifeboat crew man) and DLA Alan Blair (a former lifeboat senior helmsman and RNLI bronze medal holder).

The fishing boat put to sea at 1745 and while crossing the bar, was hit by a 9ft wave, which fortunately caused no damage. With the wind now SW Force 6 to 7 and with 6ft to 8ft seas *Seren-y-Mor* arrived at the casualty at 1755. On hearing of the conditions encountered crossing the bar, Helmsman Heading decided to pass the tow to the fishing boat, which proved to be an extremely difficult task due to the violent motion. The three craft were manoeuvred to lie in the same wave trough and with expert seamanship, communication and boathandling, the tow line was successfully passed across to *Seren-y-Mor*.

Steering difficult

With the yacht tending to broach in the following seas Mike Harris found steering difficult, so he fashioned an effective drogue from a Calor Gas cylinder. Despite the success of the impromptu drogue great care was still required to strike a balance between avoiding a broach and breaking the tiller.

Approaching the bar the towline was shortened, but a particularly large wave picked up the yacht and bore her down on the stern of *Seren-y-Mor*. Mike Harris read the situation well and steered the yacht clear, but the same wave broke over the after-deck of the fishing boat, knocking Bryan Pugh-Jones off his feet but fortunately not into the sea.

Using all his concentration and skill Richard Gorman brought *Seren-y-Mor* and her tow safely across the bar and all three craft entered harbour without mishap.

The lifeboat was refuelled and ready for service again at 1900.

FISHING COBLE AND YACHT IN DIFFICULTIES

Six saved from two separate vessels in hurricane-force conditions

Thanks
on
Vellum

The rescue of four fishermen and two yachtsmen, in separate incidents and in hurricane force winds, has earned Second Coxswain Rodney Burge of Amble lifeboat station the Thanks of the RNLi inscribed on Vellum.

In his official report on the service Tom Nutman, inspector of lifeboats for the eastern division, said that: 'Second Coxswain Burge showed great seamanship and awareness in handling his craft in appalling conditions'.

It was at 1633 on Saturday 6 October 1990, that Amble lifeboat station honorary secretary Malcolm St Pritchard heard from Tyne Tees Coastguard that the fishing coble *Treasure* was in difficulties three miles north east of the station. An immediate launch was authorised and by 1640 the 44ft Waveney class lifeboat *Thomas James King*, which was on relief duty at Amble, slipped her moorings and put to sea on service under the command of Second Coxswain Rodney Burge.

Hurricane Force

Once clear of the harbour, the lifeboat headed at full speed towards the anticipated position of the casualty, with the wind WNW Storm Force 10, gusting to Hurricane Force 11 and heavy overcast with rain squalls. The lifeboat pitched heavily in the steep breaking seas, almost lifting out of the water on occasion, and visibility was badly affected. An RAF Sea King helicopter had also been called to the casualty and hovered over the coble as a marker, but as the lifeboat approached the helicopter was diverted to another incident.

The casualty, an open boat with no shelter, was pitching violently and the four crew were trying to bail out water with buckets. A particularly heavy swell sheered the coble violently towards the lifeboat, striking her on the starboard quarter. The coble's engine stopped and Second Coxswain Burge immediately cleared the casualty, circled and then approached along the starboard side.

All four of *Treasure's* crew immediately scrambled aboard the lifeboat while lifeboat crew member James Henderson boarded the coble to see whether she could be towed to harbour. Damage to strakes and stem showed this to be impossible so at 1730, with crew member Henderson back aboard the lifeboat, course was set for Amble Harbour with the survivors.



However while she was returning Amble Coastguard reported that the 25ft yacht *Fair Beagle* was anchored just north of the pier and Second Coxswain Burge agreed to check on her condition. Speaking by radio to the skipper it was learned that there were doubts whether the anchor would hold and whether the engine would cope if the anchor did drag. The best course of action was to tow the yacht into the safety of Amble and so Second Coxswain Burge brought the lifeboat in towards the yacht, stern first and in only 6ft to 8ft of water. The force of the wind was heeling the yacht over, but despite the difficult conditions a towline was successfully passed.

The two craft and six survivors were then brought safely into harbour and the lifeboat was moored, refuelled and ready for service again by 1820.

Mechanic Gordon Easton and crew members James Henderson, John Connell Jnr, John Sim and Gary Little were awarded Vellum Service Certificates for their part in the service.

Very much an Inshore Lifeboat...

West Kirby's D class inflatable took the term Inshore Lifeboat literally on 14 January 1991, when the crew took her 14 miles by road and through the Mersey Tunnel to rescue a boy and his dog from a park lake in Liverpool.

13-year-old Fred Allen and his dog Buster has fallen through ice on the lake, said to be up to 50ft deep, during the cold spell which swept the country.

Although they had struggled ashore on an island, police and firemen could not reach them as the temperature plunged to -4°C.

The police contacted the coastguard, who contacted West Kirby's hon sec, who set off the pagers to initiate one of the station's more unusual services.

At 2045, with police escort and blue lights flashing, the lifeboat started her 'passage' to the middle of Liverpool – where it took eight lifeboatmen to lift the D class over the park railings. With two of the crew using their 'wellies' over the bow as ice-breakers the inflatable finally reached the lad and his dog and ten minutes later had handed them over to the police and ambulance crews.

Although taken to hospital suffering from hypothermia Fred was later allowed home, and with the lifeboat safely back on station at 2148 hon sec Bob Jones told a newspaper: 'This was an unusual call, we're not called an inshore lifeboat for nothing!'

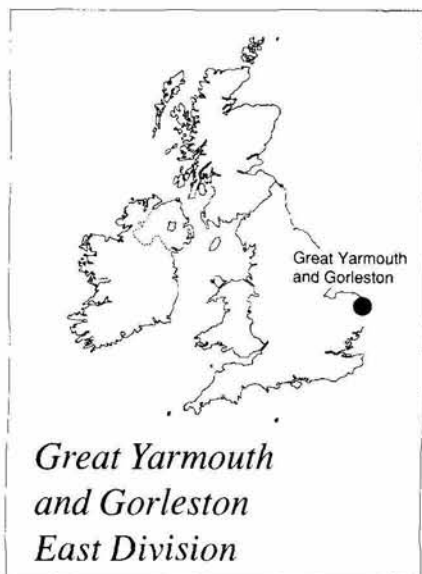


Fred and Buster, safe after their ordeal on the frozen lake behind them. (Photo Mercury Press)

SIX APPROACHES TO STRICKEN YACHT

Lifeboatman put aboard yacht in gale force winds after skipper is taken ill

The night-time rescue of two people aboard a yacht in gale force winds has earned Richard Hawkins, Coxswain/Mechanic of the Great Yarmouth and Gorleston lifeboat, the Thanks of the RNLI inscribed on Vellum. In his official report of the service Tom Nutman, inspector of lifeboats for the east division, paid tribute to Coxswain Mechanic Hawkins' 'exemplary manner, great awareness and considerable handling skills.'



Great Yarmouth
and Gorleston
East Division

The rescue began at 2328 on Sunday 19 August 1990, when Neal Duffield, the honorary secretary of Great Yarmouth and Gorleston lifeboat station, heard from Yarmouth Coastguard that the skipper of the yacht *Southern Cross* was suffering severe chest pains and that the only other crew member aboard was too inexperienced to cope. The rig support vessel *Promoter* was already heading for the scene and Mr Duffield agreed to an immediate launch of the lifeboat, the 44ft Waveney class lifeboat *Khami*, which slipped her moorings at 2335 and proceeded on service with Coxswain/Mechanic Richard Hawkins at the helm.

Once clear of the harbour the lifeboat set course for the Cross Sands Buoy in a westerly Force 7 and a sea which was increasing in height. Using the lifeboat's VHF direction finder, the yacht's position was pin-



pointed 6 miles from the Smiths Knoll light vessel.

A little over an hour-and-a-half later, at 0110 on 20 August, the lifeboat reached the yacht to find her under sail and making 5 knots through the water, but pitching and rolling heavily in seas up to 10ft high. The wind was now WNW gale Force 8, with rough, short seas and a heavy northerly swell. It was heavily overcast with rain squalls and moderate visibility due to rain and spray. A helicopter from RAF Coltishall arrived at the scene but could not close with the yacht in the poor conditions, preferring instead to lift the skipper from the lifeboat.

The Coxswain made two attempts at coming alongside the yacht which were thwarted by the yawing and veering of the casualty, forcing him to move the lifeboat clear each time. On the third attempt, Second Coxswain David Mason managed to leap aboard the yacht to assess the situation. He found the 22-stone skipper weak and unsteady, and decided that he would have to be transferred to the lifeboat amidships rather than from the bow. It took four attempts before the lifeboat was in a position to receive the skipper, but at the vital moment his legs gave way and the lifeboat had to be moved away once more. On the sixth approach the survivor jumped and was hauled aboard by the lifeboat crew.

The second coxswain took control of the yacht and set a course for Great Yarmouth while the helicopter was recalled to evacuate the survivor to hospital. Conditions were such that it took five attempts before a winchman and stretcher could be landed on the lifeboat's deck and the yacht's skipper winched aboard the helicopter. This was finally achieved at 0150.

Having transferred the casualty to the helicopter the lifeboat set off in pursuit of the yacht and the Second Coxswain, catching up with them at 0217 and passing a tow line. A long and slow journey was completed without incident and the two vessels entered Great Yarmouth Harbour safely at 0515, after nearly six hours at sea, and the lifeboat was re-fueled and ready for service once more at 0555.

For their part in the service, Second Coxswain David Mason was awarded a framed letter of thanks signed by the Chairman of the RNLI and crew members Michael Brown, Patrick Lee, Brian Baldwin and David Grief have been awarded *Vellum Service Certificates*.

Richard Hawkins has already been awarded the RNLI's Bronze medal for Gallantry (in 1979) and three *Vellums*, in 1975, 1982 and 1986.

Baby alerts lifeboat – twice!

Most people have their first taste of a lifeboat a little later in life than tiny Francesca Richey, who found herself aboard Oban's Brede *Nottinghamshire* when only a few hours old – having already put her on alert once before!

Francesca's appearance had not been expected for another week when it became obvious that she was in a hurry to get into the world at her parents' home on the Isle of Mull.

Oban lifeboat was put on alert to transfer mother and baby to hospital on the mainland, and launched at 0302 on 14 October 1990. But it was not to be – just one minute into the passage to the island the lifeboat was recalled with the message 'Baby is not for waiting'!

Francesca was born at 0530, but

mother Gillian needed an urgent operation, so once again the lifeboat was called...

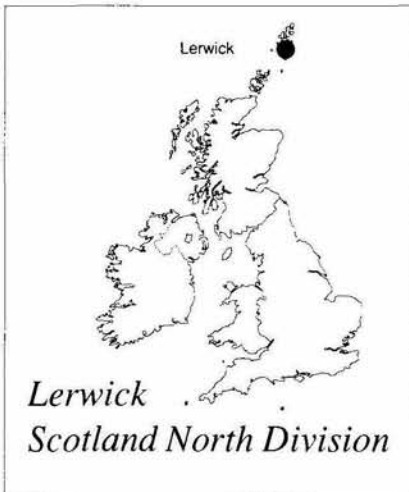
She launched again at 0700 into a southerly Force 7 wind, with a doctor and midwife aboard, and less than an hour-and-a-half later was back to hand mother and baby over to an ambulance for transfer to hospital.

Gillian and Francesca were reported to be doing well, and were due to return home later in the week.



Oban
Scotland South
Division

FRUITLESS SEARCH FOR CREW OF FISHING VESSEL CAPSIZED OFF SHETLAND



Eight-hour service for Lerwick's Arun in appalling conditions

Lerwick's Arun class lifeboat *Soldian* spent nearly eight hours at sea in hurricane-force winds and huge seas on 12 December 1990 in what proved to be a tragically fruitless search for the six crew of a large fishing vessel.

The weather and sea conditions experienced on this service were the worst experienced by Coxswain Hewitt Clark, and both he and the crew later expressed their great confidence in the Arun, never doubting her abilities in the appalling conditions experienced up to 40 miles off Shetland.

Lerwick's Arun class lifeboat *Soldian* pictured attempting to tow the empty liferaft from the fishing vessel *Premier*. The wind at the time was Force 11 and the sea state the worst ever experienced by the lifeboat's coxswain. The photograph was taken from helicopter Resue 117, also involved in the long search.



Two lifeboats from Moelfre save fishing boat and crew

A service by Moelfre's two lifeboats has led to framed letters of appreciation signed by the chairman of the RNLI for Helmsman Rodney Pace and crew member Anthony Barclay of the D class inshore lifeboat.

At 0630 on 22 July 1990 the station learned that the fishing vessel *Steel Venture* was aground on rocks just north of Benllech, and the D class, with Helmsman Rodney Pace and Anthony Barclay aboard, was launched into breaking waves and a Force 5 wind.

Reaching the casualty some 20 minutes later the lifeboat crew found the fishing vessel *With Integrity* standing by and after

assessing the situation requested the services of the all-weather lifeboat. The casualty asked to be towed off the rocks, so a messenger line was taken from *With Integrity* and the lifeboat veered stern-first towards *Steel Venture*. Although a large wave struck the lifeboat, driving her into *Steel Venture*, crew member Anthony Barclay successfully passed the messenger line and Helmsman Pace moved away from the casualty to establish a tow with *With Integrity*.

She was able to pull *Steel Venture* clear of the rocks and towards the Menai Straits, escorted by the all-weather lifeboat.

The honorary secretary had been monitoring a VHF radio message from Shetland coastguard after a ship's distress beacon had begun transmitting, and twenty minutes later, at 0825, he was paged by the coastguard. A rescue helicopter despatched to the scene had spotted an upturned vessel and *Soldian* was asked to launch – which she did at 0840.

The reported position was some 40 miles just south of east of the station, the wind N, Force 11 and the sea state at the casualty '9', the highest category and indicating seas higher than 45ft.

Soldian was able to make 15 knots despite the weather to arrive at the casualty at 1115, to find her capsized with no sign of survivors. As a wave lifted the hull the crew could make out her name, *Premier*.

Liferaft

The rescue helicopter, which had led the Arun to the casualty as visibility was poor in the huge seas, reported a drifting liferaft about 5 miles downwind and *Soldian* moved off to check it. Thirty minutes later, at 1145 the lifeboat came alongside the raft only to discover it was empty. It was too dangerous to take it aboard so an attempt was made to tow it. This failed and the raft was cut free to allow the lifeboat to return to the upturned hull.

A lifebelt was recovered some 45 minutes later but there were still no signs of survivors and at 1310 the crew could only report that the casualty had sunk.

With darkness gathering in these high latitudes it was decided to release the lifeboat and allow her to return to Lerwick while a Nimrod and helicopters searched downwind in the failing light. The search was called off at 1500.

Soldian battled back to station, arriving safely at 1555.

Tragically no trace was found of the six members of *Premier's* crew.

Five lifeboats in long search for lost fishermen

Newcastle, Co. Down's, Oakley class lifeboat *Jane Hay* and Portaferry's Atlantic 21 *Blue Peter V* took part in long searches for the two crewmen from a fishing boat *Silver Quest* which disappeared on 7 September 1990. Other lifeboats from Kilkeel, Clogher Head and Port St Mary also took part in the search, as did seven fishing vessel, two helicopters and a Nimrod aircraft.

The Newcastle lifeboat searched for more than 25 hours over a two-day period, with food and fuel being ferried out in fishing vessels to extend the lifeboat's duration.

The Oakley first launched at 2145 having been informed by Belfast coastguard that *Silver Quest* was overdue after attending to creels in Dundrum Bay.

At 2235 the Portaferry Atlantic 21 lifeboat *Blue Peter V* launched to join the search and, with no accurate position to work from, a large-scale air and sea search was instigated. Coxswain Morgan acted as 'on-scene commander' and co-ordinated the search from the Newcastle lifeboat until an Irish naval vessel joined the search at 0300 the following day and assumed the role.

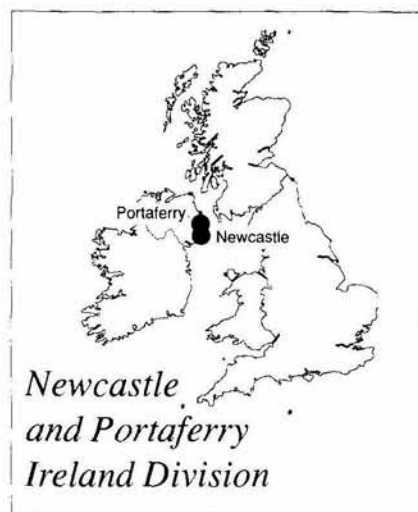
The search was eventually called off at

'fuel and meals were ferried out to the Newcastle lifeboat and Portaferry's crews were changed regularly'

1400 on 8 September, the fishing vessel *Valcon* having ferried out fuel and meals prepared by helpers ashore to the Newcastle lifeboat and the Portaferry Atlantic having changed crews every two to three hours.

By the time the lifeboats returned to their stations the Newcastle boat had been searching for more than 16 hours and the Portaferry Atlantic had been at sea for more than 16 hours.

On 14 September the body of one of the crew of the fishing boat was recovered and



three days later local fishermen organised a search for the second. As the sea was rough they requested the Newcastle lifeboat's assistance and for more than nine hours the search was resumed, although nothing was found. On this second occasion the crew and helpers did not even claim the small allowance usually paid to them by the RNLI.

The Institution's chief of operations has written to both the stations in appreciation of their long hours at sea and the efforts of all concerned.

NO DAMAGE TO TYNE CLASS AFTER WIND AND TIDE TEAR HER FROM MOORING

The irresistible force...

A salutary reminder of the forces generated by the elements was given at Lytham St Annes in January, when hurricane-force winds battered the north west.

On the night of 5-6 January 1991 westerly storms reached Force 11 and drove the tide to levels far above the predicted heights.

Frank Kilroy, honorary secretary at Lytham St Annes takes up the tale: 'At 0845 on Sunday 6 January I was telephoned by crew member David Morrison who informed me that the lifeboat had gone - whereabouts unknown! Before I could organise a search party the police rang to tell me that a local farmer at Freckleton had a large blue and orange boat at the bottom of his garden. Was it anything to do with me?'

The relief Tyne class *Mariner's Friend* was found sitting high and dry in the marshes, completely undamaged and with part of her mooring still hanging over her bow. The force of the wind, combined with an exceptionally high tide, had parted the mooring at a forged link. The link is tested to eight tons, which gives a considerable safety margin, and the breaking strain is some twice the tested load. Somehow the mooring had been subjected to a load of more than 15 tons!

The following day the Tyne class *William Street* from nearby Fleetwood attempted a tow, but despite a tide predicted to be higher than the one on which she grounded the storms had abated and the lifeboat did not even float.



The Relief Tyne class lifeboat *Mariner's Friend* about to be hauled along a newly-dug channel by a tug. Storms tore the lifeboat from her mooring, but she suffered no damage. (Photo *Evening Gazette*)

With cover being provided by another relief lifeboat, brought from Dumbarton through near-gale and a blizzard, on the reserve mooring a salvage company was employed to retrieve *Mariner's Friend* from her perch in the marsh.

An amphibious digger was used to form a channel, a barge employed to lay anchors and, with a final pull from a tug, the Tyne was extri-

cated on the next spring tides on 18 January.

She was towed to Preston Dock, hauled out and after a thorough inspection found to be completely undamaged by her adventures and sojourn in the grass.

Mariner's Friend was returned to her new mooring the following day and placed on service again.

Seven seamen safely ashore

Two incidents on opposite sides of the English Channel during January resulted in seven seamen being landed from leaking commercial vessels.

Safely ashore – one. The four crew from the coaster *Mattias* are pictured (right) being landed from the St Peter Port (CI) Arun class lifeboat *Sir William Arnold* on 7 January. The lifeboat spent over four hours in squally weather and 15ft seas bringing the men ashore after their Limassol-registered vessel had begun to take in water. The coaster was towed to Cherbourg by a French tug.



Safely ashore – two. Three weeks after the St Peter Port incident the 60ft fishing vessel *Avalon II* was in collision with a large tanker on 28 January, sinking while the Torbay lifeboat was on her way to the scene.

Her three crew took to a liferaft and were taken aboard the Arun class *Edward Bridges* (Civil Service No.37), and are pictured (left) landing at Brixham, where the MFV had been based. Although all three men had been able to step into the liferaft without getting wet two of them appeared to be in a state of shock and were taken to hospital. (Photo Torquay Herald Express)

YACHT WITH INJURED SKIPPER CLOSE TO SHOAL

Lifeboatmen transferred to Belgian yacht in gale and heavy seas

A joint service by Southwold's Atlantic 21 class lifeboat *Quiver* and Lowestoft's Tyne *Spirit of Lowestoft* has won two lifeboatmen framed letters of thanks from the Institution's chairman.

The Atlantic 21 was the first lifeboat to launch, following a report that a yacht had 'capsized', leaving her station at 1458.

Although nothing was found a helicopter which had been scrambled at the same time located the 34ft Belgian yacht *Haura* in distress close to the Newcombe Sand off Kessingland. The skipper had been injured and his wife was at the helm, close hauled under reefed mains'l.

The Atlantic made full speed towards the casualty in a wind which was now Force 7 from the south and in rough seas.

By the time she reached the casualty the wind had increased to full gale, with seas that had reached 6ft to 8ft, and great skill was needed to bring the lifeboat close enough for crew member Marcus Gladwell to jump aboard.

'Great skill was required to bring the lifeboat close enough for a crew member to jump aboard'

At this point *Spirit of Lowestoft* arrived on the scene, having launched just over 10 minutes before at 1603, and the Atlantic then transferred Second Coxswain Shane Coleman to the yacht to assist crew member Gladwell.

With the yacht's sails stowed warps were streamed aft and the Tyne took up the tow while the Atlantic 21 stood-by off the casu-



alty's quarter. Conditions were now very rough, with particularly heavy seas off the South Newcombe Buoy lifting the Atlantic to within 10° of the vertical, and the yacht being laid over onto her beam ends as they entered the main channel to Lowestoft.

Both lifeboats entered Lowestoft with the casualty at 1725.

In addition to the two letters from the chairman the director of the RNLI has also written to Coxswain John Catchpole of Lowestoft in appreciation of the skill he displayed in assessing the situation and establishing a tow in difficult conditions before the yacht struck the sand.



Membership News

Governors • Shoreline • Storm Force

Moving with the Times

The Institution's membership scheme continues to flourish, with a total of almost 177,000 members at the end of 1990 giving an increase of more than 15% on the figure for the end of 1989.

Breaking the figures down shows that single annual members account for more than 106,000 of the total, joint members for another 40,000 and Governors and Life Governors accounting for some 30,000.

The total income from subscriptions during the twelve month period amounted to more than £1.7m, a very impressive contribution to the Institution's income. But, just as income from the membership scheme grows so too does the cost of the lifeboat service.

In order to carry out tasks in the very worst of conditions and to safeguard the volunteers who crew them the key factors in lifeboat design and construction are quality and efficiency, neither of which can be compromised. Inevitably, excellence is not cheap. Modern lifeboats are sophisticated, and when the new 17m Fast Afloat Boat (codenamed FAB 3) enters service in a few years time the cost of each boat is likely to be more than £1m.

Perhaps, therefore, it is time to consider how the membership scheme can grow and evolve alongside the changing face of the lifeboats and the lifeboat service which it supports. Could this be

the time to move forward along lines which we should even now be discussing?

The basic subscription is an obvious starting point. It has been fixed at £6 for some years now, and merely taking inflation into account we should at least be examining it.

But, to increase subscriptions across the board may well not be the whole answer. There are dedicated supporters to whom the £6 subscription is a financial sacrifice, and others to whom it is but a drop in the ocean. Should this be reflected in the membership structure?

Exerting Influence

Equally we have some 30,000 Governors or Life Governors, each entitled to attend and speak at the Annual General Meeting and to exert influence on the way in which the Institution conducts itself. This is a powerful and influential position and there could be a case for reflecting this in the financial contribution which the Governors make to the organisation over which they have sway.

One line of thought leads to a more stratified approach to the membership scheme and another point of view is to have a very few basic minimum rates, and then encourage members to give at levels appropriate to their means. Members' views on these approaches would be appreciated.

So, let us fly some kites, and hope that members respond with ideas and suggestions. A selection can be included in the letters page of the journal in future issues to fuel discussion.

What if the £6 membership fee was retained, as a base level for pensioners or those not at work who wish to show their support for the lifeboat service but who are genuinely unable to contribute more? To this could be added another category, perhaps with a *minimum* subscription of, let us say, £20. Those more closely involved with the sea, boat owners or yacht club members perhaps, might feel that £30 is such a tiny percentage of the cost of *running their boats each year that it could become their minimum* contribution.

The Journal

One could also reflect the level of membership in the benefits received. Although this journal is extremely cost-effective and costs far less to produce than might be supposed would members object to being asked for an additional £5 a year to receive it? Frankly, £5 for four issues of the journal would more than cover the direct costs and would leave membership fees as a clear contribution to the lifeboat service.

We have already remarked on the considerable influence which can be exerted by Governors and Life Governors, so perhaps there is a case for recognising this with a substantial increase in the minimum donation required. One has to accept that this might deny some supporters the opportunity to become Governors, but looked at in the harsh light of the real world the current £200, a once-only payment for Life Governorship, would not buy a large voting share in a respected commercial organisation with a £44m turnover, and £20 per year is a comparatively small sum for annual Governorship. Should we consider moving Governor rates to, say, £50 for annual Governorship, and bringing Life Governorship into line with the provisions of Gift Aid by setting it at £600, thus enabling the Institution to reclaim tax and receive £800 gross?

The membership scheme has to move with the times, and as it is *your* scheme, it is your views which should be canvassed. The letters page in the journal awaits your comments.



**Train to be
named
after
Storm
Force!**

CORNER

The big news for Storm Force members at the moment is the naming of one of British Rail's new InterCity 125 trains 'Storm Force' – and the chance for one Storm Force member actually to name the train at Poole station. 170 members will be able to travel on its inaugural run from Poole (or other stations en route) to a Storm Force Rally at the Birmingham National Exhibition Centre and then return to their station on the same train.

The InterCity 125 will be named at Poole station on Saturday 27 April and 85 Storm Force members, each accompanied by an adult, will board it for the trip to Birmingham International – stopping twelve times en route to pick up more members and their adult companions.

As only 170 members can travel on the train applications were invited in the latest issue of Storm Force News and the names of the 338 people who applied were put into a hat.

The winner, who will name the train, and the others with places on it will have been drawn from the hat and notified by the time this issue of THE LIFEBOAT is published.

PAST · AND · PRESENT

100 years ago

From the pages of THE LIFEBOAT February 1891

CIVIL SERVICE LIFEBOAT FUND

At the annual meeting of the committee of this fund, held on the 16th January last, and presided over by Mr. Charles G. Turner, Controller General of the Inland Revenue, Mr Charles Dibdin, the honorary secretary, reported that during the past year the fund had contributed to the National Institution the sum of £800 to complete the purchase and endowment funds of the lifeboat *Civil Service No.6*...

(Editor's note - The Civil Service has continued as a strong supporter of the RNLI, this issue contains an account of a passage in the latest Civil Service lifeboat The Princess Royal (Civil Service No.41), which cost some £450,000!

ADDITIONAL STATIONS AND NEW LIFEBOATS

ATHERFIELD, ISLE OF WIGHT. - It having been considered that a Life-boat placed at Atherfield, on the south-west shore of the Isle of Wight, would be the means of affording material assistance to vessels which are not unfrequently driven on to the ledges of rocks off that dangerous part of the coast, the Royal National Life-boat Institution decided last year to form a Life-boat Station there.

Accordingly a corrugated boat-house has been erected on the top of the cliff - here about 76 feet high - to the face of which a series of flat skids or sleepers have been securely fastened; over these the Life-boat is lowered by ropes, the incline being 1 in 3, and the distance to the beach about 240 feet.

When returning to the boat-house the Lifeboat is hauled up by means of a powerful winch...

...The slipway was found to work perfectly, while not the least difficulty was experienced in hauling the boat up the steep incline and placing it in the house. A launch can be effected in about a quarter of an hour; and altogether this lifeboat station is likely to prove a very efficient one.

(Editor's note - Despite the confidence expressed in hauling a lifeboat up and down a 76ft cliff, the station had a relatively short life. It was closed in 1915 due to 'launching difficulties'.)



Swanage will soon be receiving a new Mersey class lifeboat.

One hundred years ago this charming engraving, from THE LIFEBOAT of 1891, accompanied the report of the naming ceremony of the second boat to be placed there - the 37ft pulling and sailing lifeboat *William Erle*.

Today's Lifeboatmen

Coxswain Fred Walkington of Bridlington joined the crew in 1965 and was appointed coxswain in 1975. He was also a member of the station's inshore lifeboat crew from 1982 to 1990.

Fred was awarded a bronze medal in 1979 in recognition of the courage, leadership and initiative he displayed when the lifeboat was launched on 15 February to the assistance of the West German cargo vessel *Sunnanhav* which had broken down eight miles NE of Flamborough Head. Weather conditions were very severe, with a violent NE storm, extremely poor visibility in heavy snow, sub-zero temperatures and a very heavy sea.

Fred has been awarded three Thanks of the Institution on Vellum. On 4/5 February 1969 he was among crew members awarded a vellum for standing by the motor vessel *Maria F* and rescuing the female cook. The vessel was dragging onto a lee shore off Bridlington Harbour in a SE gale and very rough sea. The coxswain at the time, *John King*, was awarded a bronze medal for the service.

The second was on 13 September 1970 for a service to the cabin cruiser *Tiger Moth II* when he jumped from the lifeboat onto the cruiser to secure a tow line.

The third vellum was awarded in 1980 when the lifeboat rescued three crew of a fishing coble *Three Fevers II*, which sank off the Canch sandbank, and assisted other cobbles into harbour in a strong NE gale and very rough sea on 31 January.

Fred is married with two sons - Craig joined the crew in 1989 and is now in the Royal Navy, his younger brother *Grant* enrolled this year. Fred's hobbies are photography and local history.

Facts and Figures

Provisional statistics as at 29 January 1991 show that during 1990:

The RNLI's lifeboats were launched 4,733 times (an average of more than 12 launches a day)

More than 1,534 lives were saved (an average of nearly 4 people rescued each day)

Nearly 7 per cent of all services carried out by lifeboats were in winds of Force 8 and above

Almost 56 per cent of all services were to pleasure craft

There are 266 lifeboats on station, with some 120 additional boats in the relief fleet

120,980 lives have been saved since the RNLI was founded in 1824.

Costs

The cost of running the RNLI in 1990 was £37m.

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

Homeward Bound

There was an air of anticipation, excitement even, when the engine note of our Mersey class lifeboat changed from a gentle burble to a harder, more insistent tone. The low, shrill whistle from the turbochargers overlaid the powerful throb of the engines as *The Princess Royal's* bow lifted and she accelerated to her 17-knot operational speed.

There is always a tingle in the air when starting any passage, but as the ferry across the entrance to Poole Harbour faded astern in the last glimmers of an October Friday there was a very special feeling aboard this lifeboat.



Above. Homeward bound... Coxswain Eric Ward eases the Mersey under Poole bridge for the last time.

Below. Another little surprise. Mechanic Tommy Cocking changes the engine inlet strainer after DI John Unwin decides that it is 'blocked' during a towing exercise.



Below. Chartwork in the early hours of Saturday morning, roughly half-way between Portland and Brixham. Practice is bringing our theory to life as DI John Unwin (left) and crew member Tommy Bassett check our position and course to steer.



Now at last, after a week spent ashore in the RNLI's training centre and exercising in and around Poole Bay, this was the beginning of the real thing – the St Ives' crew were on the way home with their new lifeboat.

She was becoming more *their* lifeboat with every mile that slipped by, the crew beginning to fall into that special relationship which comes with confidence and familiarity with the boat, and with others in the crew. Friendly banter and harmless insults began to fly as the team settled down.

They had learned much about the boat, and become familiar with her capabilities and personality, during a week of tuition, exercises and simulated emergencies at Poole, and although only a real-life 'shout' in bad weather would cement the relationship the next four days at sea would be a good start.

John Unwin, Divisional Inspector of Lifeboats for the South West, is in charge for the passage and District Engineer Barry Wagstaff is also aboard to help the St Ives' Mechanic Tommy Cocking keep an eye on those two big Caterpillar diesels. The rest of the crew are the same as for the week of training – Coxswain Eric Ward and crew members Tommy Bassett, Charlie Hodson and Alan Woods.

The object of this passage is to continue the training and to familiarise all of us with the lifeboat at sea, as well as taking her to the station. This is not going to be just a flat-out

blast of a delivery trip, so our first stop is just around the corner, a passage of about 30 miles to Weymouth. We navigate from Decca waypoint to Decca waypoint around the bulk of St Aldhelm's Head and its tidal race, and then move on into Weymouth Bay. The chalk cliffs of the Dorset coast are invisible in the darkness to starboard and the rocky bulk of Portland is ahead, visible only from its lights

Mike Floyd continues his look at the training of today's lifeboatmen and joins a new Mersey class lifeboat on passage from Poole to her new station

and distinctive profile on the glowing radar screen.

We move around the boat, taking turns to push buttons on the magic box which converts the Decca transmissions into navigational info and to peer at the colour screen of the daylight-viewing radar. Here we plot the course and speed of other ships, turn the display around to show 'north up' and then put it back

to show 'ship's head' up. The week of tuition is coming to life in our hands.

Almost too soon we are slipping into Weymouth on a warm, quiet October night and securing alongside the station's Arun.

I'm soon aware of the camaraderie which thrives in the lifeboat service. The honorary secretary, coxswain/mechanic and others

from the crew are there to take our lines, despite the lateness of the hour, and before many minutes have passed the fuel line is run out and *Princess Royal* has been refueled. Golden rule of passage-making number one, refuel the boat whenever there is an opportunity, has been observed. Now it's time to apply the second golden rule: refuel the crew with the same frequency.

If the harbourside chippie is surprised by an order for eleven enormous meals late on a winter's night the staff doesn't show it, and much too soon we troop back along the deserted quayside and the diesels rumble into life again. Rule three, get some kip whenever there's half a chance, will have to wait as John has decided that we should spend most of this night at sea as our mandatory night passage.

Our next hop takes us round Portland Bill, with its often vicious 'race', and out across Lyme Bay to Brixham. Taking it in turns at various tasks around the boat the time flies by and the 50-odd miles disappear in our slightly phosphorescent wake. There's time for a few contemplative moments at the upper steering position, watching the wake hiss by, feeling the surge of the boat and listening to the comforting throb of the engines. Red glows in the dark give away the presence of others who are 'off-watch' and have come on deck to have a 'puff' and savour being at sea on such a beautiful night.

'She was becoming more *their* lifeboat with every mile that slipped by...'



It's cold, and you're tired and hungry – but the boat comes first. Crew members from Salcombe lend a willing hand as *Princess Royal* takes fuel soon after first light on a grey and chilly morning in Salcombe, after her overnight passage from Poole via Weymouth and Brixham.



Charlie Hodson observes rule of passage-making number three, grab some sleep when you can, as *The Princess Royal* makes 17 knots in a seaway.

The Princess Royal hurries along beneath us. The sea is as calm as Lyme Bay can ever be, with just a long swell running under the almost glassy surface to give the boat life and induce a long, easy pitching motion. The crew grow used to her motion, the way she behaves at speed and reflect on other, very different, weather conditions which they have experienced, and will be experiencing again – and I note that it's never as smooth as this when I sail across in a small boat...

Berry Head guards the entrance to Brixham and its distinctive shape is picked up by the radar at a distance. It soon looms large on the screen on the shorter ranges – the landfall is spot-on, as well it should be after our stints with Decca, radar, charts and pencil – and soon the powerful searchlight is rigged so that we can see to ease our way through the moorings and into a vacant berth in the marina.

It's about 0300, but there waiting for us on the pontoon is the mechanic of the Torbay lifeboat... Rule one can wait till Salcombe, our next stop, where there's a convenient fuel barge and rule two is hardly relevant so soon after its last observance, but the coffee in the boathouse is very welcome.

Rule three however is embraced wholeheartedly, and soon the crew room resounds to some serious snoring. Sleeping on the floor in damp oilskins, surrounded by men who could snore for England and who periodically kick a pile of magazines off a bench on to your legs may not sound idyllic, but everything is relative and the chance of a rest is more than welcome.

We don't need an alarm and just before 0600 on a very chilly morning the tea urn is coaxed into life and then we grope our way along a dark, cold and damp pontoon to fire up those diesels again for another short hop of around 25 miles.

More Decca waypoints and more radar work and we soon find ourselves groping our way over Salcombe Bar in poor visibility and just before first light. We're thankful for the electronic aids which pinpoint our position and the practice which has made their operation almost second nature. The engine note rumbles back at us from the high ground around the still-sleeping estuary as daylight creeps in to sweep away the night. The pale light reveals figures on the pontoon – Salcombe lifeboat's coxswain Frank Smith and other members of

‘The crew grows used to her motion, the way she behaves at speed and reflect on other, very different, weather conditions...’

the crew – wrapped up against the chill of a winter dawn and ready to look after us during our stay.

Rule number one is applied at the nearby fuel barge and soon we are tumbling into a tiny quayside cafe for the biggest breakfast we can decently order. The cafe has opened its doors as we approach, and I have a strong suspicion that our arrival time was carefully arranged to coincide with this happy event. Or perhaps the proprietor recognised the shuffling gait of ravenous lifeboatmen, we need never know.

More members of Salcombe lifeboat crew join us as we apply rule two with a vengeance and pack away eggs, bacon and beans in large quantities.

Rule three of passage-making can now be applied properly, and as our baggage has already been whisked magically away by car to a convenient little hotel we toil up the short, steep slope to join it and switch off like lights...

The next day is disjointed. Going to bed at 1000, waking in time for lunch at the Salcombe crew's local, taking a short stroll and then dozing again sees us through to the evening. Then it's back to the local for a good meal and jar or two. Or three perhaps. The talk is of lifeboats. Other lifeboat people join us, and we talk about lifeboat stations, lifeboat coxswains, our new Mersey, Salcombe's still-new Tyne – the RNLI family atmosphere is very evident.

‘Whatever happened to, er, Saturday wasn't it?’ someone says as we make our weary, and late, way back up the hill and the Salcombe lads melt into the darkness of their own town.

The alarm is raucous, but serves its purpose. The tired brain staggers reluctantly into life and I stumble into action, knowing that today is scheduled for an exercise with Salcombe's Tyne.

Conditions are only moderate as we head out over Salcombe's infamous bar, but the ebb running over it kicks up enough sea for us to try out the Mersey in steep head seas and breaking following ones. Part of the exercise is to pass a line to the Tyne and tow her for a short distance, a task performed with skill and no hitches, bar the starboard water inlet strainer blockage which was a nice little touch thought up by DI John Unwin to keep the mechanic on his toes.

The mythical blockage removed we head back and plot a little mischief. We persuade Coxswain Frank Smith that my pictures of his Tyne being towed are part of a feature on disabled lifeboats and will be splashed all

A Sunday exercise during the passage involves the Mersey taking Salcombe's Tyne class, *The Baltic Exchange II*, in tow.



Homeward Bound continued

over the front cover of *The Lifeboat*. Such is a lifeboat station's pride that he's not at all keen on *his* lifeboat being the disabled one, and buys us all a pint when we admit to the wind-up. A nice ploy which is worth remembering...

The evening is a replay of the previous one, except that our numbers are swelled by half of District Engineer Barry Wagstaff's family, who have come from a Christening still in their finery, and a rousing performance by the local rugby club's choir which seems to have become part of our group. The lifeboat 'family' seems not only to encompass those directly involved but to take in almost everyone in a 'lifeboat town' like Salcombe.

It's a shame to leave, but early next morning we're at sea again surging westward towards *The Lizard* in a freshening breeze and a steadily building sea. More navigational practice, more experience of the boat in a seaway, and more experience with the VHF radio when a naval vessel wants us to alter course to avoid a firing exercise.

Off *The Lizard* there's an interesting sea running and we begin to appreciate the sea-kindly hull form of the *Mersey*. Even at speed she doesn't slam, in this size of sea at least, but she's certainly lively. We climb sea after sea, lifting gracefully up its face, feeling weightless for a split second as we crest it in a scatter of spray and she begins to fall, and then bracing against the higher *G* force as she drops into the trough. Once or twice we encounter a 'big one'. The climb is faster, but the give-away is the long, long drop on the other side. Still she doesn't slam, but it's best to hold on tight and have your knees bent when she does finally reach the bottom of the trough...

Spray splatters across the windscreen in a continual stream as *The Princess Royal* slices off the crests and shoulders them aside and the wipers and washers are busy adding their hypnotic rhythm to the pulsing roar of the engines and the sounds of the sea outside. In the wheelhouse we brace ourselves against the constant movement and grow accustomed to the noise, the faint smell of diesel fuel, lubricating oil and the other indefinable and unique aromas of a boat at sea.

Unlike the older types of lifeboat the *Mersey* has kept us bone-dry for more than 50 miles in indifferent weather, and the crew are threatening to buy the coxswain a pair of carpet slippers. We give *The Lizard* a reasonable berth to starboard and as we shape a course for Newlyn the seas come further astern. Eventually we're almost running before them and I surface for some fresh air on the aft deck. Charlie joins me and as we chat whoever is at the helm picks up a nice sea. The engine note changes and *The Princess Royal* starts to surf merrily down it while we enjoy the sensation of speed and controlled power. Then she takes a slight sheer to starboard, one of the stanchion bases dips into the sea and a jet of water streams aft like a fire-hose. It hits Charlie fair and square and he deflects a good part of it onto me – dry for 50-odd miles and now we're soaking wet within sight of our destination!

Newlyn, with its busy fishing atmosphere may not be the most picturesque of Cornish harbours, but it's a welcome sight to our crew. Although still about 30 miles by sea from St Ives it is only some 10 miles by road across the narrow Cornish peninsula and is very much home territory.

It's our first port in Cornwall and wives, families and cars are waiting nearby. We fuel up again, rule one, and are whisked back across to St Ives for some food, rule two, and then make our way down to the pub run by one of the crew. Rule three is postponed for a while, the crew is home, the boat is nearly home and there's some celebrating to do...

Home at last...

It's chilly in the small hotel the next morning but it's a great day nonetheless. Today at around 1200 *The Princess Royal* will make a triumphant entry into her home port for the first time and there's already an air of expectancy.

This is a very special day for the crew, so I decide to stay ashore and meet them on their arrival. I take them back to the boat in the District Engineer's car, which has been delivered by a plan so complicated that I don't pretend to understand it, and then go back to St Ives where the excitement can already be felt. The boathouse is already a hive of activ-

ity as souvenirs are laid out for sale and refreshments made ready. No-one knows how many people will come to see the arrival, but everyone seems to know about it. Even the waitress in a small cafe had quizzed us about it the previous night...

The station's *Oakley* is launched to escort the new lifeboat home in traditional style and the crowds begin to gather. By 1200 there is precious little space left with a view of the bay and harbour and when *The Princess Royal* makes her spectacular arrival around the headland, escorted by a helicopter and chased by the *Oakley*, there is a spontaneous cheer. Before *The Princess Royal* comes alongside for the first time the West Pier outside the lifeboat station is a solid mass of humanity.

The rest of the day flies by. The crew are mobbed by the local press, we talk to everyone in the town who is interested in lifeboats, and then eat some of the delicious titbits prepared by the local ladies. But the day is far from over – when the celebrations are finished the *Mersey* has to be recovered and then launched again to double-check that all is well with the launching carriage, which has been brought down by road, assembled and trundled through the streets of the town.

A sequence of events dictates the timing. *The Princess Royal's* arrival was timed for high water so that she could enter the harbour and lie alongside to meet her public. Although the lifeboat can be launched at any time recovery is tricky near high water, so we must wait for the tide to fall. Before the *Mersey* can be recovered the *Oakley* must be brought ashore and housed, and this is the process which begins at 1900 in pitch darkness and a steady drizzle.

With the *Oakley* safely put to bed the *Mersey* can then be recovered, and being the first time for the shorehelpers it is undertaken cautiously and particularly carefully. Once safely ashore it is time to practice the launching procedure... it's even darker now and the drizzle is a little more penetrating.

The Princess Royal is trundled seaward in pursuit of the retreating tide and just outside the harbour walls we find enough water to launch her into the darkness.

All that remains now is to recover her again...

The tide has retreated still further and we are some hundreds of yards outside the harbour mouth and in total darkness when the *Mersey's* navigation lights come in to view and she beaches in the small surf. Now we just have to drag her clear of the water, winch all 17 tons of her on to the carriage, collect all the equipment, trundle her back inside the harbour walls, across the sandy harbour bed and up to the top of the slipway. The job is over, except of course for tidying up, washing down and stowing away...

It is a tired but contented gathering that squelches back to the boathouse just before midnight, and it's obvious that they are all proud and pleased with their new station lifeboat.

Of course she isn't quite their station lifeboat yet. There's a few more days of trials, practice and training before John Unwin officially hands her over to the station and the faithful *Oakley* finally steams away to the north for a stint of relief work, leaving her modern successor in sole charge at St Ives.

It's late, it's dark and it's raining, but the *Oakley* is ashore and *The Princess Royal* is on her carriage for the first time. So all we have to do now is launch her again and then retrieve her before we go home to bed...



Your LETTERS



The casualty's view of a rescue ... and thanks to the crew

Having read the discussion 'Men behind the medals' in the Autumn issue of *The Lifeboat*, I wanted to comment on some of the points as seen through the eyes of a 'casualty'. I also wanted a chance to thank the crews who came out on the night of 9 November 1990 to tow my friend's yacht, with detached rudder, off the silt near Selsey Bill.

Although it was fairly calm at the time, the swell was lifting us off the bottom and crashing us back down with some force. In view of this and the forecast, southerly Force 4 or 5, it seemed sensible to seek assistance sooner rather than later. Because Selsey's Tyne class lifeboat was unable to reach us, the D class inflatable was called to bring us a tow line.

Although Peter Race states that lifeboat crews never lecture, it was with some embarrassment that we awaited the opening comment of the lifeboat crew as they approached with instructions. 'Good evening' said a voice cheerfully out of the dark. I half expected him to continue 'are you waiting for a lifeboat?' in the way one might expect a taxi driver to phrase a question to a group of people waiting outside a restaurant in the rain.

On the matter of towing, I agree with Alan Thomas and would add that a disabled, abandoned yacht could be a danger to other vessels. As for the tow itself, my only experience of this tricky business was watching one of the RNLI's earlier series of videos in which a rudderless yacht was being towed during the race round the Isle of Wight. The yacht in the video was swaying from side to side and heeling as though tripping over its own keel.

We experienced no such discomfort and, despite the swell, remained fairly well 'pointed' all the way into Chichester.

Long memories

On reading the Letters page in the Winter 1990/91 edition of the journal I see that Lew Hardy has memories of the longship *The Hugin*.

It may be of interest to him and your other readers to know that *The Hugin* is on public display at Pegwell Bay near Ramsgate and has been for many years from the time when she first arrived in this country.

Chris Sandwell
Crew member
Margate lifeboat
Margate, Kent.

Credit where it's due!

I recently travelled to London by rail and wanted to pay by cheque. I handed the cheque and my cheque card over to the booking clerk, but was embarrassed when I realised that the fare was £56 and my cheque card is only surety for £50! 'Have you any other means of identification, madam?' he enquired.

I don't drive and seemed to have nothing useful with me when, in my purse, I found my RNLI membership card. The clerk took it away and returned, beaming, to hand me my ticket.

The RNLI card was obviously very credit-worthy and I was deeply impressed!

Even in landlocked counties the RNLI comes to the rescue. There's a thought for the day - and the next membership campaign?

Mrs F.A. Titley
Leicester

On arrival we marvelled at the helmsman's boathandling as we were tied alongside the lifeboat, manoeuvred through the moored boats and deposited alongside the pontoon. Whatever lifeboat crews think about engine noise, I found the steady drone of the Tyne's powerful engines very reassuring whilst we were under tow.

Finally, on the aftermath and the question of money, I agree with what was said. A service as skillful and as sophisticated as the RNLI, supported and provided on an entirely voluntary basis, must surely be among the most remarkable things to exist in a world of budgetary prudence and commercialism. People must take time to reflect on this, on the dangers they escaped and on what was salvaged for them. Hopefully, many will, like the canoeists mentioned in the article, make some effort on the Institution's behalf.

My sincere good wishes and thanks to the crews of the Selsey lifeboat station for their good-humoured efficiency.

Liam J. Corr
Wandsworth
London.

Ryde's Ark

In 1909 a Miss Emily Madelina Du Pre, the daughter of Caledon George Du Pre of Wilton Park, Buckinghamshire, had a beautiful Italian style villa built in Ryde, Isle of Wight.

On an adjoining piece of land she had several outbuildings erected, including a large one 42ft long by 19ft wide. It had doors 14ft wide which opened onto the street and it is said that this building contained a fully-equipped lifeboat.

One version of the local story is that Miss Due Pre was eccentric and wanted people to be trained in lifeboat work. Another version is that the lady had a dread of a repeat of Noah's flood and wished to be ready for it!

If any reader could supply any information about the story and as to what happened to the lifeboat, I would be very pleased to hear from them.

R.E. Brinton
Curator, Carisbrooke
Castle Museum
Newport, Isle of
Wight PO30 1XY

An even break

May I appeal for the help of readers of *The Lifeboat*?

Unfortunately, my copy of 'Off the Slipway', the first plate in the 'Heroes of the Sea' collection produced some years ago, and sponsored by the RNLI, has recently been broken.

I wondered, therefore, if there was a

Naming Ceremonies

New lifeboats named and dedicated

Mudford – Atlantic 21 *Ken Derham*

Saturday, 2 February will long be remembered in Mudford as the day when the station's new Atlantic 21 lifeboat was named *Ken Derham*, by her namesake. The day was cold and crisp, but sunny as the audience gathered outside the Avonmouth Hotel, where the lifeboat was to be named, and were entertained by the Homefield School Swing Band.

At the beginning of the ceremony Victor Derham, station honorary secretary welcomed the invited guests and recounted how the crew, being determined to be allocated an Atlantic 21 despite concerns about launching the boat at low tide, were to be seen the night before trials were to begin digging a channel through the bar so that they could easily cross it – thus taking away the fears of the visiting RNLI staff officers.

Mr Derham then introduced Colin Williams, deputy divisional inspector of lifeboats (south east) who described the lifeboat. He in turn asked Mr John Batchelor,

driving force behind the appeal to fund the lifeboat to hand it into the care of the RNLI.

Lt Cdr Brian Miles, director, accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the Institution and paid tribute to Ken Derham, founder of the lifeboat station after whom the lifeboat was to be named.

From 1936 Mr Derham operated a single-handed rescue service from Avon Beach with an 11ft clinker-built rowing dinghy and was awarded the RNLI's silver medal for a shoreboat service in March 1959.

When the RNLI took over the running of the station in 1963 he became its first honor-

ary secretary, a post he held until 1976, when he became branch chairman.

Having formally accepted the lifeboat, Cdr Miles then placed it into the care of Mudford station, and after receiving the lifeboat on behalf of the station Mr Victor Derham (son of Ken Derham) asked the Reverend Canon Basil D. T. Trevor-Morgan, vicar of Christchurch and the Reverend Michael Clayton, priest in charge of All Saints Church, Mudford, to conduct the service of dedication.

Mr Ken Derham was then invited to name the lifeboat, which he did with great enthusiasm, dousing the crew with champagne in the process. **SW** *Photo on facing page* ➤

Y class inflatables

Four Y class inflatables – which are carried aboard Arun and Thames class lifeboats – were handed over at ceremonies in the RNLI's depot at Poole.

On 16 January three of the inflatables were handed over by Mr Nigel Bishop, Area Sales

Manager for BP Oil which had provided the funds to purchase them, and on 31 January another Y class was handed over by Mr David Jackson of the Belsize Charitable Trust No.1.

Mr Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fund raising and marketing for the RNLI presided over both of the ceremonies.



Your LETTERS

Continued from previous page

member who had possibly suffered a similar accident to another plate, or plates, in the series and so had a copy of 'Off the Slipway' they would be willing to sell to me.

Alternatively, if anyone knows where I could buy a replacement, I would be pleased to hear from them.

G. Whitehead
Chatsworth
Copt Hewick
Nr. Ripon HG4 5DB

Yours, in limbo...

I thought I awoke this morning a happy man – alas, it was all a fantasy. There it was clearly stated in your magazine 'the will of the late Jeffery Burr'. (*People and Places* – 'For that very special occasion' – Ed)

Under the terms of my will I seem to have omitted any reference to the RNLI, clearly a matter, which had I been alive, I would have to have had rectified. Perhaps, like Scrooge, I was going through a dream and would be able to put that matter right.

I checked the obituaries in both The Times, which is normally read in this household, as well as The Telegraph, which is not. Not a sign. Perhaps it was an omission on my widow's part?

I checked with St Peter, who in turn had

a word with Gabriel. No-one of the name given had passed through the Pearly Gates.

As a precaution, and as St Peter knew of the alleged deceased's connection with the law, checked in fluent Bellsybabble, the current devilish language, of which he was a master, with his opposite name in Lucifer's realm.

There was no joy there either.

Saint Peter, of course, had a record of the late William Spurr, of his late widow, and also of Mary Sennett – but of 'Jeffery Burr' as yet, none.

Finally I checked my own properties. I appeared to be all present and correct. Everything seemed to be in its right place and in reasonable working order.

I hope my wife will

be pleased. It would be difficult for her to man, woman or perhaps 'person' the RNLI stand at Porthcurno in the summer with a shade. It could put people off.

Possibly there may have been a little bit of an error in the magazine. If there has, and I am right, you might care to 'put it right' and print this letter to assure my friends that I am still here, albeit only for a little while longer.

If, of course, I am wrong, I must just be in limbo. How does one get out of that condition?

Jeffery C. Burr
St. Levan, Cornwall

Editor's note – Our sincere apologies to the very much alive Mr Burr, a slip of the sub-editor's pencil can have such dire consequences...

Naming Ceremonies



Ken Derham names Mudeford's new Atlantic 21 with enthusiasm – and drenches the crew in the process. (Photo Jeff Morris)

Relief Fleet D class

Taipan

David Corben, the Chairman and Chief Executive of Jardine Reinsurance (Holdings), handed over a new D class inflatable lifeboat at a ceremony held at the RNL's Poole Depot on 30 November 1990.

The Jardine Insurance Brokers Group had held a series of 'video horse-race evenings' for the insurance community in London, raising £18,000. With a D class now costing £9,500 the balance will be used for future maintenance and up-keep of the lifeboat.

Mr Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fundraising and marketing at the RNL had opened the proceedings before handing over to Mr Corben who presented the boat to the Institution, represented by the deputy director Ray Kipling.

RNL staff officer Richard Perks described the lifeboat and its role and the Reverend Stanley Holbrooke-Jones, Rec-

tor of Poole, conducted a service of dedication before Mr Martin Wakeley the Chief executive of Jardine Insurance brokers, officially named the lifeboat *Taipan*.

City of Derby

Councillor Mrs Nancy Wawman, a previous mayor of Derby, handed over a new D class inflatable for use in the relief fleet at a similar ceremony held at the RNL's Poole Depot on 3 December 1990.

Mr Anthony Oliver again opened the proceedings before introducing Mrs Wawman, and the RNL was represented by the director, Cdr Brian Miles. RNL staff officer Richard Perks described the lifeboat and its role.

The service of dedication was conducted by the Reverend Stanley Holbrooke-Jones, before His Worship the Mayor of Derby, Cllr B. Chadwick, officially named the lifeboat *City of Derby*.

Southend-on-Sea New boathouse

There may have been few casual visitors to the seafront and the world's longest pier at Southend on Thursday 24 January, but a mile from shore at the end of the pier there was intense activity as preparations were made for the visit of the Princess Royal to open the new lifeboat house.

After a short trip along the pier on an electric train, the Princess alighted to be greeted by Raymond Baxter, representing the RNL's Committee of Management, Commodore George Cooper, RNL chief of operations, and C. J. Morehouse (chairman) and Colin Sedgwick (honorary secretary) of the Southend station branch. Her Royal Highness was escorted to the new lifeboat house on the pier's Prince George extension and was 'piped aboard' by members of the 3rd Chalkwell Bay Sea Scout Group, flanked by station launchers.

The new boathouse has been built as a replacement for the one badly damaged when the coaster *Kingsabbey* ploughed into the pier in June 1986, a matter of weeks after Princess Anne had named Southend's new lifeboat *Percy Garon II*.

The cost of the new boathouse and launching facilities, some £115,000, has been met from RNL funds and will provide greater protection from the elements for the lifeboat and essential equipment, improved facilities for the crew, a viewing platform and a shop for the sale of souvenirs.

Inside the boathouse the Princess was presented with a posy of flowers by Julia and Joanna Gilson, aged 8 and 11, daughters of



Her Royal Highness The Princess Anne speaks to members of Southend-on-Sea's Atlantic 21 crew (from left to right, John Foster, David Goodbourn and Paul Henshaw), watched by station honorary secretary Colin Sedgwick (extreme right). (Photo Southend Evening Echo)

the senior helmsman. Princess Anne was conducted round the boathouse, meeting crew and branch and station officials. She particularly took her time discussing the davit launch and recovery procedure with duty crew members John Foster, David Goodbourn and Paul Hanshaw.

The Princess Royal signed the station visitors' book and then pulled aside an RNL flag to reveal a plaque commemorating the occasion. In response, Raymond Baxter made a short and amusing speech to thank the Princess Royal for her time and support,

before presenting her with a special photograph album recording her visit to the old lifeboat house in 1986.

As the royal party walked back to the pier-head station to board the train, the Atlantic 21 was launched and put through her paces, while the Sheerness lifeboat and crew stood by. Overhead, a Sea King helicopter from 202 Squadron, RAF Manston paid its own tribute, flying the RNL flag.

On a chilly, crisp January afternoon, the Princess had brought warmth to a special day for the Southend-on-Sea station. **RNS**

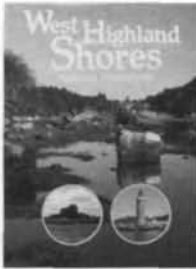
Booksheif

some recent publications reviewed

WEST HIGHLAND SHORES

by Maldwin Drummond
Published by Nautical Books
at £19.95

ISBN 0 7136 5860 6
Maldwin Drummond is not only a Vice President on the RNLI's Committee of Management he is also an experienced yachtsman and an authority on maritime and Scottish history – qualifications which have enabled him to produce this excellent profile of a part of the coast which he knows well and so obviously loves.



More than a guide book, more than a Pilot book for the yachtsman, more than a history book – West Highland Shores rolls all three into an absorbing image of a rugged and beautiful coastline.

The approach is thematic, with chapters on castles, gardens, churches and ships for example, and a tabulated guide locates the detailed description in the text.

Pilotage notes for yachtsmen are included, but anyone exploring this wild coast would find the contents of interest.

HERZOGIN CECILIE The life and Times of a Four-masted Barque

by Basil Greenhill and John Hackman
Published by Conway Maritime Press
at £25

ISBN 0 85177 556 X
Besides being one of the last vessels to trade under sail *Herzogin Cecilie* had another claim to fame – coming to a very spectacular, public and tragic end on the South Devon Coast in 1936. Fortunately there were no casualties, but the Salcombe lifeboat of the time makes several appearance in both text and photographs.

One aspect of this volume which lifts it above many other works on the life-history of ships is that the authors' research has brought to life not only the vessel, but also the social, economic and political circumstances which led to her building, and seemingly inevitably to her fateful appearance out of the fog off South Devon.

New light is thrown on several mysterious aspects of her stranding, some of which were not made public at the time.

Profusely illustrated, well researched, very detailed yet immensely readable *Herzogin Cecilie* is a fascinating account of a ship and her place in world events.

FAST BOAT NAVIGATION

by Dag Pike
Published by Adlard Coles at £17.95
ISBN 0-229-11859-3

In more leisurely, pre-electronics days a navigator presented with a position read-out with the accuracy possible with Decca or Loran may have felt that he was in seventh Heaven, add a clear radar picture in thick weather and he may have become ecstatic. But today even this may not prevent navigational problems, because the navigator of old had one thing on his side – time. Time to plot his position, to check tide tables and to think, while his vessel eased along at speeds in single figures.

With many power boats now capable of 20 or 30 knots – perhaps even more – the goal-posts have been moved and a new approach to navigation is becoming necessary.

Dag Pike is well qualified to write on the subject of Fast Boat Navigation (the latest addition to Motorboats Monthly's series) for it was he who sat at the chart table during both *Virgin Atlantic Challenger's* Atlantic runs and he also navigates a champion off-shore racing powerboat. As an ex-Divisional Inspector of lifeboats he also knows what can result from faulty navigation...

While the choice and quality of the photographs may disappoint slightly the many clear diagrams add to the understanding of the techniques and the book is to be recommended to any owner or navigator of fast power boats.

THIS IS PRACTICAL WEATHER FORECASTING

by Dieter Karnetzki,
Published by Nautical Books at £16.95
ISBN 0 7136 5701 4

Hurricane-force winds, low temperatures and hot, dry summers seem to have sharpened interest in the weather. Although Dieter Karnetzki's book is primarily aimed at the yachtsman, and is interesting enough in its general sections, it does suffer from a significant disadvantage for many UK readers.

The continental origin of the book (which is translated from a German edition) is reflected in the geographical areas which come in for detailed analysis, and these do not extend far enough westward to permit general recommendation for British and Irish readers.

Having said that, the general sections are clear and readable, the East Coast and North Sea are well covered and those sailing the Baltic or Mediterranean will find much to interest them.

THE STORY OF THE CRICCIETH LIFEBOATS 1853/1990

by Peter L. Williams

A new edition of a booklet by Criccieth's honorary secretary which brings the history of the station's lifeboats up to date.

Although simple in its format and production the volume packs a great deal of information and some interesting illustrations between its covers, taking the reader from the earliest days before the establishment of an RNLI lifeboat through to the modern high-speed inflatable now on service.

A must for anyone with an interest in the history of Criccieth Lifeboat Station.

The booklet is available at £2.30 (including p&p) from Lt Cdr P. L. Williams, Moranedd, Tanygrisiau Terrace, Criccieth, Gwnedd or at £1.95 from the boathouse during the summer.

THE GREY WIDOW-MAKER

by Bernard Edwards
Published by Robert Hale at £13.95
ISBN 0-7090-4191-8

The purpose and content of Bernard Edwards book is aptly summed-up in his preface.

'This book,' he writes, 'follows the changing patterns of man's fortunes at sea... It tells of triumphs and disasters, some recent, some long forgotten...'

As with any account of the trials and tribulations of life at sea the lifeboat service makes an appearance, not frequently in this book, but often enough to add specific interest to the more general flavour of the tales – which stretch from the exploits of Captain Cook in 1770 to an attack on a tanker in Gulf in the mid-1980s.

Interesting and absorbing fireside reading, told in a lively narrative fashion.

Also received...

ACROSS THE IRISH SEA Belfast-Liverpool Shipping Since 1819
by Robert C. Sinclair, published by Conway Maritime Press at £20

ISBN 0 85177 524 1
Comprehensive, well illustrated review of ships on this sea route.

THE HYBRID WARSHIP The Amalgamation of Big Guns and Aircraft
by R. D. Layman and S. McLaughlin, published by Conway Maritime Press at £25. ISBN 0 85177 555 1

The story of an elusive, 70-year quest for a ship more potent than the separate battleship and aircraft carrier.

Frank Kilroy, honorary secretary of Lytham St Annes lifeboat station, goes

Round the houses

with Sir Charles Macara, who instigated Lifeboat Saturdays in 1891

Of all of the shipwrecks and disasters which have afflicted seafarers around these islands there is one which had such a long-term effect that its results are still felt today. This single shipwreck, which took place nearly 105 years ago, began a chain of events which has shaped the way in which the RNLI is funded, and led to the fund-raising flag days which are the mainstay of almost every charity.

It was on 10 December 1886 that the inhabitants of St Annes-on-Sea in Lancashire were told that their lifeboat, *Laura Janet*, had been lost with all 13 of her crew and it fell to Charles Macara, a member of the St Annes lifeboat committee, to break the news to the anxious relatives.

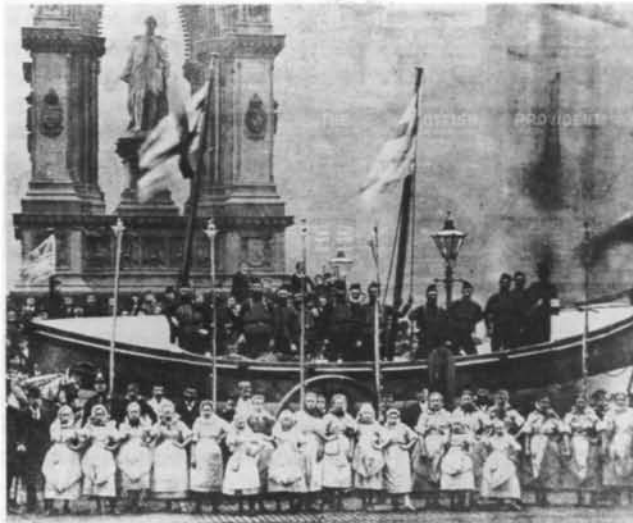
The lifeboat, along with two others, had been launched late the previous night to the German barque *Mexico*, wrecked in a severe westerly gale with a crew of 12 on the notorious Horse Bank off Southport. The lifeboats at Southport, on the opposite shore of the Ribble estuary, and from neighbouring Lytham had also launched to the same wreck and 44 men in all had set out in terrible conditions to rescue 12.

The Lytham boat managed to rescue the *Mexico's* crew and return safely, but the Southport lifeboat was also lost and only two out of her crew of 16 survived. Altogether 27 lifeboatmen did not return alive.

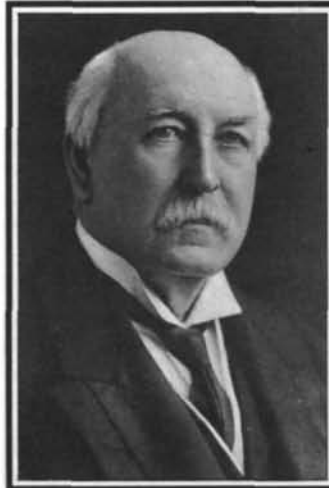
At this time the Institution had been in existence for 62 years and such a catastrophe had never occurred before. A Disaster Fund was soon set up to help the 16 widows and 50 orphans and Charles Macara served on its committee. Within six weeks the fund had reached £30,000, with donations coming not only from the wealthy but from people in all walks of life.

The Mexico Disaster, as it became known, had drawn the nation's attention to the lifeboat service, but when Charles Macara started to look into the financial position of this life-saving service he found that the situation was far from satisfactory.

The first Lifeboat Saturday, showing the Southport lifeboat *Mary Anna* in Albert Square Manchester. The two lifeboatmen standing in the boat to the left of the carriage wheel are John Jackson and Henry Robinson – the two crew members who survived the *Mexico* disaster



One hundred years ago this year an event was held which changed the face of charity fund raising...



When he examined the annual accounts for 1890 he was astonished to find that two-thirds of the Institution's income had come from about 100 people who had left bequests or paid for boats. The remainder of the income was contributed by only about 25,000 of the many millions of people who made up the maritime nation of Great Britain.

Macara was appalled by this state of affairs and resolved to change the Institution's methods of fund raising with a special appeal of his own devising. So started what was to become a nationwide campaign for 'the lifeboats'.

He started his campaign by appealing to the public through the press, which had supported the Disaster Fund magnificently. On 23 July 1891 he wrote that the response to the relief fund had 'emboldened him to appeal once more to the public on behalf of this great National Institution, which is sorely in need of funds'.

Several Northern newspapers published editorials backing him and money started to flow into the Institution, but Macara noted that the majority of donations were still from the wealthy few and not from the nation as a whole.

Still seeking to reach a wider audience he organised the first ever 'Lifeboat Saturday' on 17 October 1891 in the streets of Manchester.

Included in this Saturday cavalcade were two lifeboats and their crews, the *Nora Royds* from St Annes-on-Sea and the *Mary Anna* from Southport, both new boats after the Mexico Disaster and manned by new volunteers. The procession formed up in Albert Square and besides the two lifeboats included three bands, detachments from the fire brigade, the ambulance corps, the rocket life-line brigade and boys from the training ship *Indefatigable*.

The procession was led by a mounted detachment of the city police force followed by an open carriage carrying Mr Macara and other members of the organising committee.

Round the Houses

Continued

As the cavalcade made its way through the crowded streets people threw coins into special carts placed throughout the procession or into the lifeboats themselves. To ensure that no-one escaped giving Macara had also arranged for purses on long poles to be carried by several burly lifeboatmen and these were thrust at those watching from upstairs windows or the tops of tramcars.

The procession eventually terminated at Belle Vue Gardens where the two lifeboats were launched into the ornamental lake for a demonstration, watched by an estimated 30,000 people.

At the end of the day it was found that £600, mainly in coppers, had been taken on the streets, and that a grand total of £5,500 had been raised, chiefly in small sums. More than that the day had achieved Macara's aim, bringing the lifeboat service to the notice of the 'man in the street' and soliciting his support.

Other northern towns followed Manchester's example, although not on such a grand scale, and by the end of 1891 the contributions from Lancashire and Yorkshire had reached £21,000 compared to only £3,000 for the previous year.

Charles Macara's wife Marion supported him whole-heartedly in his cause and for the first Lifeboat Saturday she organised the ladies of Manchester to help with the collections. On 1 August 1892 she made her own appeal in the press for 'the wives and daughters of England to do their share towards the maintenance of this noble voluntary force'. The response was so great that a national movement was born – the Ladies Auxiliary Committees. The ladies not only helped with organising fund raising events but started the first collections in private houses, the foundation of today's house-to-house collecting.

The Lifeboat Saturday movement spread rapidly, and the Ladies Auxiliary Committees could usually be found co-operating with the main organisers. By the end of 1893 the Lifeboat Saturday had become an established annual feature in towns and cities the length and breadth of the country.

Royal patronage from HRH the Prince of Wales lent even more support to the cause, and soon Macara had become so heavily involved in the project that he was asked by the RNLI to formulate a national plan to share the burden more evenly.

As a result Great Britain was split into six districts, each with its own committee, and a secretary was appointed from the main town in each area. Charles Macara was elected as chairman for the north of England district committee.

Horses pull a fully manned pulling and sailing lifeboat through the streets during an early Lifeboat Saturday parade. The exact location is unknown.



Sir Charles Macara (with walking stick) and a Clayton tractor on trials at Lytham St Annes. (Photo Lytham Lifeboat Museum)

An article entitled 'The Lifeboat Saturday rapidly developing' appeared in *THE LIFEBOAT* for August 1894. It heaped praise on the originators of the movement, the Macaras, and concluded 'they have done wonders in developing the Lifeboat Saturday and Ladies Committee movements, of which they were respectively the originators'.

The Board of the Institution then approached Charles Macara and asked him to attend a meeting in London, with the idea of asking him to join their ranks. Macara attended the meeting but opened his remarks by asking for a sight of the salary list. He proceeded to pick out certain expenses, made a few cutting remarks and declined the Board's offer.

This action unfortunately led to criticism of the Lifeboat Saturday movement and of the way the money had been used by the Institution. The final result of the dispute was the appointment of a Select Committee which sat for four months in 1897 and examined 50 witnesses under oath, including Charles Macara.

The findings at the end of the long enquiry entirely vindicated the Institution and the handling of its affairs and the Committee concluded, rather sadly, that Macara's view was rather coloured by the taking over of what had been his brain-child.

However, the Lifeboat Saturday movement continued, and Macara was still very much involved, until in 1910 the RNLI assumed full control of its organisation and moved its central office from Manchester to London. Charles Macara then ceased his association with the organisation as all his business interests were in the north and he had little time to go to London.

Lifeboat Saturdays continued until the First World War intervened and, as a number of war charities were set up, so the lifeboat collections dropped. The expense of hauling boats through the streets and a shortage of horses, many having been sent to France, also contributed towards its demise.

In 1915 the Institution decided to introduce in its stead a Lifeboat Flag Day, reproducing its house flag in miniature and selling it to the public. The Ladies Auxiliary Committees were the mainstay of these collections.

At the Institution's 1921 annual general meeting the Prince of Wales announced that the committee of management had decided to set up the Ladies Lifeboat Guild to appeal to women in all walks of life. In recognition of their sterling efforts in the past, members of the ladies Auxiliaries automatically became official members. A special brooch, of a design still in use today, was issued and each member received an official membership card. Soon all the Ladies Auxiliary Committees had changed their titles to Ladies Guilds and the new movement caught the imagination of ladies everywhere.

Besides annual flag days, these guilds started to

Mabel's return

At the London Boat Show in January 1991, David Cowper was named Yachtsman of the Year. The award recognised a number of sailing achievements, including four circumnavigations – two of which were in a 41ft yacht and two in an ex-RNLI Watson class lifeboat *Mabel E. Holland*.

After the sailing efforts David thought it 'might be a good idea' to do a similar project in a motor cruiser! He would have liked to have afforded a purpose-built vessel, but had to finance his efforts himself and work on a fairly tight budget.

After careful consideration he bought *Mabel E. Holland* for £10,500, and with very little structural alterations, apart from additional fuel tanks, galley and chart table, he prepared for his first effort.

The lifeboat had been built at Osbornes in 1956 as a 42ft beach boat and was stationed at Dungeness until 1979 and as a relief boat at Aldeburgh.

Tribute

The first circumnavigation, westabout, was completed in 1985, and *Mabel E. Holland* proved herself an excellent sea boat with an easy motion – a great tribute to her designers and builders.

David then decided that she would be the right boat for his next venture – a further circumnavigation but this time attempting to sail the notorious North West Passage.

Various modifications were carried out by Whistocks Yard at Woodbridge, a builder with strong RNLI connections, and David worked hard alongside the professionals. The boat was

Tony Purnell talks to David Cowper following his two circumnavigations in an ex-RNLI lifeboat

completely overhauled and her wood hull was given an extra outer skin, giving a total thickness of 1in, to stand up to the ice. Her props were changed for larger and stronger ones and her decks and cabin insulated against the cold.

She was re-launched in June 1986, and soon she was at Aberdeen, then on to Thurso through the Pentland Firth and to Cape Farewell in Greenland. The recitation of the 'stopovers' and description of the passages sound prosaic as recounted by David, but his determination, courage and trust in *Mabel*, as he calls her, are obvious.

Compass

As the voyage continued he came somewhere near 76°N, and due to the proximity of the Pole David's magnetic compass became almost useless. The weather grew extremely cold, with fog and pack ice, and when eventually he made Resolute Bay he became iced in - with temperatures in the region of -20°. There were times when he

thought he might not be able to continue, and even a Canadian ice-breaker was unable to help.

Eventually he decided to leave *Mabel* in the ice until conditions became suitable for another effort and returned home. But he was determined to return and conquer the Passage as soon as conditions allowed.

In August 1987 he took a two-mile trek across ice and snow from the nearest base to visit her by land, and found she had taken a great deal of water and was partly submerged. To 'make things easier' David lived in a tent near the boat and worked on her in extreme conditions. Temperatures were down to -50°, with frequent gales.

Beach

The engines were started, having cleared some water from a fuel tank, but unfortunately the ice did not clear as expected, with even the Canadian ice-breaker having difficulties. David was forced to beach *Mabel* at Fort Ross, and leave her until he had another opportunity.

In June 1988 David returned again, this time accompanied by his wife Caroline. Again it was a question of very hard work for both of them, with Caroline making a close acquaintance with a curious Polar bear. Caroline returned home and there was further delay caused by the non-arrival of important spares. The re-launch was also difficult and a persistent leak continued.

Despite these set-backs David sailed on, making 1,500 miles in just over three weeks, in spite of ice and often thick fog. Finally he reached Inuvik where *Mabel* was

laid up ashore, ironically just 500 miles from the Pacific Ocean, and David came back to the UK once again.

In June 1989, after five weeks of repairs and re-painting below the waterline, he was ready to go – with the good news that Newcastle house builders Barratt had agreed to assist him.

First

He sailed through the Behring Strait and in so doing became the first ever Englishman to transit the North West Passage on a solo voyage. *Mabel* sailed on to Darwin via Midway Island, the scorching temperatures contrasting sharply with the Arctic. There was another 'lay-up' at Port Darwin and in May 1990 David returned to the UK, with stops at Christmas Island, Mombasa, Dubai and St Helena, among others.

Finally, on 24 September 1990, *Mabel* motored into St Peter's Yacht Basin on the Tyne.

David is now looking for a home for *Mabel E. Holland* and hopes that she will go into a museum, preferably on the East coast, as a permanent reminder not just of his voyages but of a class of lifeboat that is now out of service.

Adventure

David has bought another ex-RNLI lifeboat *Three Sisters*, a steel 48ft 6in Solent class, formerly at Aith. She also lies in St Peter's Yacht Basin and David is to use her to study Arctic conditions before embarking on another adventure.

That an ex-lifeboat, although strengthened, has withstood two circumnavigations and is still capable of coastal cruising, and for David to buy another must surely speak for itself.

organise bazaars, coffee mornings, tea dances and so on, and soon they became the mainstay of the RNLI's voluntary fund raising efforts.

The story continues to this day, although some of the fund raising ideas have become a little more exotic, taking in such things as sponsored parachute jumps and marathons.

But what became of the person who, from witnessing a tragedy, had started this great fund raising idea? In 1911 Charles Macara was made a Baronet for his work in the cotton industry, a suitable reward for a man who had laboured so long and hard for the benefit of others. Many foreign countries also honoured him, but perhaps the best commendation for his voluntary work was given by his biographer, W. Haslam Mills – 'He brought charity into the streets and the streets into charity'.

Sir Charles Macara continued as chairman of the St Annes branch committee and on 13 May 1924 he achieved another first when he made a radio appeal from the 2ZY Manchester station for funds to provide motor lifeboats for the Institution. But in 1926 due to silting in the Ribble Estuary the St Annes-on-Sea lifeboat station was closed. Shortly afterwards Sir Charles moved to

Cheshire and died there on 2 January 1929, nine days before his 84th birthday.

At his own request he was buried in a simple grave in the churchyard at St Annes, alongside the grave which contained the bodies of five of his lifeboatmen friends lost going to the wreck of the *Mexico*.

1991 is the centenary of the first Lifeboat Saturday, and will be marked in a number of ways. The north west regional office is planning a celebration week in October and both the St Annes-on-Sea and Lytham Ladies lifeboat guilds are organising suitable events.

The Lytham lifeboat museum houses a comprehensive display on the wreck of the *Mexico* and this year it will be complemented by a special exhibit on Lifeboat Saturday and the Ladies Guilds. The museum is on the promenade next to the windmill, and will be open from 25 May to 21 September on Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1030 to 1630, and Wednesdays in July and August from 1330 to 1630.

There may be commemorative events elsewhere in the country and if so details will be provided in subsequent issues of *The Lifeboat*.

LIFEBOAT SERVICES AUGUST SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 1990

Queensferry, Lothian

Atlantic 21: August 2 (three times), 4, 9, 24 and October 14

Ramsey, Isle of Man

Oakley ON 995: August 5, 26 and October 1

Ramsgate, Kent

Tyne ON 1154: August 11, 18, 19, September 2, 3 and 4

Atlantic 21: August 3, 23 and September 2

Red Bay, Co Antrim

C class: August 10 (twice), 15, September 30, October 20 and 22

Redcar, Cleveland

D class: August 4

Atlantic 21: August 5 and 14

Rhyl, Clwyd

Oakley ON 993: August 9, 12 and September 28

D class: August 1 (twice), 2 (five times), 3, 12 and September 28

Rosslare Harbour, Co Wexford

Arun ON 1092: August 19, 26, October 6 and 13

Rye Harbour, East Sussex

C class: August 3 (twice) and September 12

St Abbs, Borders

Atlantic 21: August 7, 28 and 31

St Agnes, Cornwall

D class: August 14

St Bees, Cumbria

C class: August 1 and 4

St Catherine, Channel Islands

C class: August 3 (twice), October 13 and 14

St Davids, Dyfed

Tyne ON 1139: October 5

St Helier, Channel Islands

Tyne ON 1157: August 1, 2, 4, 14, 16, 19, 23, 29 and October 13

St Ives, Cornwall

Oakley ON 973: August 6, 7, 9, September 5, 14 and October 5

C class: August 4 (twice), 5, 6, 9, 11, 16 (twice), 30, 31, September 3, 5, 10, 14 and 15 (twice)

St Mary's, Isles of Scilly

Arun ON 1073: August 4, 9, 16, 20, 22, September 25 and October 17

St Peter Port, Channel Islands

Arun ON 1025: August 14, 17, 22, September 1, 5, 12, 15, October 23, 25 and 28

Salcombe, South Devon

Tyne ON 1130: August 12, 17, 24, September 15, 23 (twice), 29 and October 22

Scarborough, North Yorkshire

Oakley ON 977: October 21

Selsey, West Sussex

Relief Tyne ON 1075: August 11, 17, 18, 19 (twice), 26 (three times), September 18 and 29
D class: August 4, 5, 26, September 15, 25 and 29

Sennen Cove, Cornwall

Rother ON 999: August 2 and October 21

Sheerness, Kent

Waveney ON 1027: August 4, 26, 31, September 10, 29 (twice), October 6, 15, 20 and 21

D class: August 4 (twice), 11, September 23, September 5, 6 and 24

Sheringham, Norfolk

Oakley ON 960: August 19 (twice), 20, September 19, 28 and 30

Shoreham Harbour, West Sussex

Watson ON 971: August 12, 17, 19 and 21
D class: August 5, 18 (twice), 21 (twice), September 1, 2 and 11

Silloth, Cumbria

Atlantic 21: August 10 and September 12

Skegness, Lincolnshire

Mersey ON 1166: August 17 and September 19

D class: August 3, 4, 5, 8, 15, 29 and September 9

Skerries, Co Dublin

D class: August 3 and 10

Southend-on-Sea, Essex

D class: August 4, 8, 12 (five times), 13, 15, 25 (twice), 27, 28, September 28, October 5 and 13

Atlantic 21: August 5, 12 (five times), 13, 22, September 7, 19, 30, October 6 (twice), 7, 13, 14, 21 (twice) and 31

Southwold, Suffolk

Atlantic 21: August 7, 10 (twice), 13, 19, 26, October 9, 10 and 27

Staithe and Runswick, North Yorkshire

Atlantic 21: August 3, 16 (twice) and 25 (twice)

Stornoway (Lewis), Western Isles

Arun ON 1098: August 3, 10, 19, September 7 and 21

Stranraer, Dumfries and Galloway

D class: August 5 and 26

Sunderland, Tyne and Wear

Waveney ON 1043: August 9, 29, September 13 and 24

D class: August 2, 5 (three times), 9, 18, 22 (twice), 25, September 15 and 30

Swanage, Dorset

Rother ON 1023: August 5, 15, 22, September 8 and October 21 (twice)

Teesmouth, Cleveland

Tyne ON 1110: August 17, September 13, October 4 and 25

Teignmouth, South Devon

Atlantic 21: October 25

Tenby, Dyfed

Tyne ON 1112: August 22 and September 1
D class: August 2 (three times), 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16, 19, 20, 23, 30, September 5 and October 4

Thurso, Highland

Arun ON 1149: August 31, September 9 and October 15

Tighnabruaich, Strathclyde

D class: August 2 (twice) and 15

Tobermory, Strathclyde

Waveney ON 1042: August 17, 23, 28, September 6, 16, 20, 27 and October 3

Torbay, South Devon

Arun ON 1037: August 6 (twice), 7, 9, 11, 12, 25, 30, 31, September 15 (twice), 19, 29, October 5 (twice), 10, 13 and 21

D class: August 4, 20, September 17 and 29

Tramore, Co Waterford

D class: August 25

Trearddur Bay, Gwynedd

D class: August 2, 14, 19 (twice), 25, 26 (four times), 27, September 29 and 30

Troon, Strathclyde

Arun ON 1134: August 2, 5, 9, September 2, 7 and 18

Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear

Arun ON 1061: August 23, 26, 30, September 15 and 23

D class: August 5 and 19

Walmer, Kent

D class: August 22, September 1, October 6, 7 and 13

Atlantic 21: September 1, 2, October 6, 13 and 28

Walton and Frinton, Essex

Solent ON 1012: August 16, 17, 21, 27, September 15, October 5, 10, 21 (twice) and 23

Wells, Norfolk

Mersey ON 1161: August 15 and 23

D class: August 18, 26, September 8 (twice), 19, October 7 and 14

West Kirby, Merseyside

D class: August 9 (twice), 14, 16 and October 7

West Mersea, Essex

Atlantic 21: August 11, 25 (three times), 29, September 4, 15, October 6 (twice), 8, 20, 21 and 28 (twice)

Weston-super-Mare, Avon

Atlantic 21: August 4, 5, 13, September 16, 18 and October 27

D class: August 7, 13, September 21 and October 27

Weymouth, Dorset

Relief Arun ON 1108: August 6, 11, 19 (twice), 28, 30, September 23, October 6 and 21 (twice)

Whitby, North Yorkshire

Tyne ON 1131: August 28, September 6, 8, October 6 and 26

D class: August 5, 9, 11, 13, 29 and 31

Whitstable, Kent

Atlantic 21: August 4, 7, 8, 13 (four times), 15, 16, 27, 28, September 3, 10, October 6 (three times) and 7

Wick, Highland

Tyne ON 1121: August 19, 28, September 14, October 10, 11 and 15

Wicklow, Co Wicklow

Tyne ON 1153: August 22 and September 20

Withernsea, Humberside

D class: August 3, 28, 29, September 2 (twice) and 30

Workington, Cumbria

Watson ON 940: August 4, 6 and 19

Yarmouth, Isle of Wight

Arun ON 1053: August 17, 20, 24, September 1, 18, 24, October 8 and 21

Youghal, Co Cork

Atlantic 21: August 4 (twice), 8, 15, 26 and September 9

Lifeboats on Passage

Rother On 1064: September 1

Mersey ON 1162: September 16

Arun ON 1103: September 23

Oakley ON 986: October 7

Atlantic 21: August 9

Lifeboat Services August, September and October 1990

The services listed are those for which returns had been received at headquarters by 29 January 1991.

There may be additional services for which returns had not been received by that date.

Awards to Coxswains, crews and shore helpers

The following coxswains, members of lifeboat crews and shore helpers were awarded certificates of service on their retirement. Those entitled to them by the Institution's regulations were also awarded an annuity, gratuity or pension. (Service in Inshore Lifeboats is shown by *)

- Aberdeen:** I.B. Jack (Mechanic 24 years, Crew Member* 8 years): *Silver Medal 1974.*
- Aith:** K.H. Henry (Coxswain 19 years, Second Coxswain 1 year, Crew Member 9 years).
- Arklow:** W. Lynch (Crew Member 28 years, Emergency Mechanic 7 years, Bowman 9 years).
- Arran (Lamlash):** E. McConnell (Crew Member 13 years).
- Barmouth:** E.L. Vaughan (Crew Member 15 years, Second Coxswain 6 years, Crew Member* 7 years).
- Barrow:** F. Keenan (Mechanic 9 years, Emergency Mechanic 6 years, Crew Member 6 years).
- Brighton:** M.J. Harvey (Crew Member 14 years).
- Conwy:** T. Jones (Crew Member 24 years).
- Criccieth:** G.D. Owen (Crew Member 17 years).
- Eastbourne:** E. Buckland (Shore Helper 15 years, Crew Member 8 years, Winchman 12 years).
- Exmouth:** J. Walpole (Crew Member 5 years, Crew Member* 13 years).
- Filey:** D.F. Cammish (Crew Member 6 years, Crew Member* 21 years).
- Fleetwood:** W. Rawcliffe (Crew Member 8 years, Second Coxswain 3 years).
- Girvan:** C.M. McKechnie (Coxswain/Assistant Mechanic 4 years, Second Coxswain/Assistant Mechanic 2 years, Assistant Mechanic 1 year, Crew Member 4 years).
- Hartlepool:** D.T. Wilson (Second Coxswain 14 years).
- Harwich:** R.A. Ramplin (Assistant Mechanic 4 years, Crew Member 16 years, Crew Member* 15 years); C.W. Moll (Crew Member 9 years, Assistant Mechanic 6 years, Crew Member* 17 years).
- Hastings:** P.D. Thorpe (Crew Member* 15 years, Shore Helper 14 years).
- Hoylake:** R.A. (Tank) Whitely (Crew Member 41 years, Crew Member at West Kirby 5 years).
- Humber:** I. Firman (Second Coxswain 3 years, Crew Member 6 months, Coxswain at Scarborough 4 years, Second Coxswain at Scarborough 3 months, Crew Member at Scarborough 5 years).
- Kircudbright:** S. Unsworth (Coxswain Mechanic 4 years, Second Coxswain/Mechanic 2 years, Crew Member at Douglas 5 years).
- Largs:** D. Hewitt (Crew Member 19 years); S.C. Smith (Crew Member 20 years, Shore Helper 4 years); H. Crawford (Crew Member 17 years, Shore Helper 1 year).
- Little & Broad Haven:** R. Lewis (Crew Member 10 years).
- Littlestone-on-Sea:** P. Leigh (Crew Member 24 years).
- Longhope:** W.S. Mowat (Second Coxswain 20 years, Crew Member 1 year).
- Llandudno:** H. Hughes (Crew Member 22 years, Crew Member* 9 years, Shore Helper 4 years); G. Jones (Tractor Driver 3 months, Head Launcher 13 years, Crew Member 9 years, Shore Helper 11 years).
- Lymington:** J.R. Redon (Crew Member 11 years 6 months); J. P. Pope (Crew Member 23 years).
- Lytham St Annes:** D. Topping (Crew Member 23 years, Launcher 4 years).
- Mablethorpe:** F.E. Anderson (Crew Member 13 years).
- Macduff:** J.G. Allan (Second Coxswain 5 years, Crew Member 5 years).
- Margate:** N. Cowell (Launcher 4 years, Head Launcher 4 years).
- Minehead:** P. Leech (Crew Member 15 years 6 months); C.J. Rundle (Crew Member 20 years, Shore Helper 3 years).
- Morecambe:** M. Baxter (Crew Member 13 years).
- Mudford:** J.M. Batchelor (Crew Member 27 years); W.R. Foster (Crew Member 27 years).
- Mumbles:** V.D. Evans (Emergency Mechanic 17 years, Crew Member 7 years, Crew Member* 22 years).
- New Brighton:** P. Hockey (Crew Member 21 years); P.W. Edwards (Crew Member 4 years, Crew Member at Penarth 6 years).
- Poole:** J.A. Clark (Second Coxswain/Assistant Mechanic 15 years, Crew Member 4 years, Crew Member* 7 years).
- Porthcawl:** A. Owen (Crew Member 25 years); D. Campbell-Ace (Crew Member 10 years); A. Redmond (Crew Member 20 years).
- Pwllheli:** W.D. McGill (Coxswain 17 years, Acting Coxswain 11 months, Second Coxswain 11 years, Crew Member 10 years, Crew Member* 14 years); R. Morris (Crew Member 24 years).
- Queensferry:** M.J. Davis (Crew Member 12 years 6 months).
- St Abbs:** R. Dalgleish (Crew Member 10 years).
- St Catharines:** C.R. Fritot (Crew Member 13 years).
- St Helier:** F.A. Lawrence (Second Coxswain 19 years, Shore Attendant 1 year); M.E. Berry (Coxswain 20 years): *Silver Medal 1974, Bronze Medal 1983, Silver Second-Service Clasp 1984.*
- St Ives:** D.L. Smith (Second Coxswain 2 years, Assistant Mechanic 20 years, Crew Member 9 years, Crew Member* 8 years).
- Salcombe:** P.A. Brown (Assistant Mechanic 5 years, Crew Member 9 years).
- Scarborough:** S.W. Firman (Head Launcher 1 year, Assistant Tractor Driver 12 years).
- Sennen Cove:** M. Hutchens (Coxswain Mechanic 12 years, Second Coxswain/Assistant Mechanic 5 years, Assistant Mechanic 9 years, Crew Member 7 years): *Silver Medal 1981.*
- Sheringham:** R. Little (Crew Member 34 years).
- Shoreham Harbour:** K.L.R. Everard (Coxswain 9 years, Second Coxswain 5 years, Assistant Mechanic 8 years, Crew Member 8 years, Crew Member* 11 years, Shore Helper 3 years).
- Skegness:** R.P. Chapman (Coxswain 7 months, Second Coxswain 4 years, Bowman 20 years, Crew Member 13 years, Shore Helper 3 years, Crew Member* 18 years); C.R. Limb (Assistant Tractor Driver 6 years, Shore Helper 4 years).
- Staithe and Runswick:** J. Baxter (Tractor Driver 13 years).
- Stromness:** W.G. Sinclair (Coxswain 7 years, Assistant Mechanic 22 years, Crew Member 12 years).
- Tenby:** A.J. Eagles (Crew Member 18 years, Crew Member* 10 years).
- Thurso:** N.M. Farquhar (Crew Member 21 years).
- Tighnabruich:** A.J. Sim (Crew Member 22 years).
- Torbay:** E.C. Fradd (Second Coxswain 10 years, Crew Member 9 years, Shore Helper 1 year); B.J. Caunter (Assistant Mechanic 6 years, Crew Member 10 years, Crew Member* 9 years).
- Tynemouth:** M. Brown (Emergency Mechanic 15 years, Crew Member 2 years, Crew Member* 5 years, Crew Member at Cullercoats 3 years, Shore Helper 6 years, Assistant Winchman 4 years).
- Walmer:** I.D. Packman (Crew Member 6 years, Crew Member* 0 years, Shore Helper 4 years).
- Wells:** J.W. Betts (Crew Member 24 years).
- West Mersea:** J.A. Clarke (Crew Member 27 years).
- Whitby:** M.R. Coates (Second Coxswain/Second Assistant Mechanic 6 years, Second Coxswain/Assistant Mechanic 4 years, Second Assistant Mechanic 1 year, Crew Member 4 years, Crew Member* 9 years, Shore Helper 1 year): *Bronze medal 1976.* B.W. Hodgson (Crew Member 12 years, Crew Member* 20 years).
- Wick:** A.D. Anderson (Assistant Mechanic 6 years, Second Assistant Mechanic 3 years, Crew Member 11 years, Crew Member at Fraserburgh 9 years).
- Wicklow:** M.N. Short (Crew Member 11 years).

Some ways of filling the coffers...

A clean sweep!

The Royal Burgh of Cullen ladies lifeboat guild, established in May 1990, recently held a tombola evening which raised £700. The village of Cullen in north east Scotland has a population of only 2,000 but already has many ardent RNLI supporters.

On the evening of the event, Steven Findlay the local road sweeper, presented secretary Mrs Karen Wilson with a further donation of £130, gleaned from the sale of returnable bottles and monies found in the streets!

This wonderful gesture on Mr Findlay's part truly illustrates the wide spectrum of support for the RNLI.

Steven Findlay is pictured right with the tools of his trade, with which he collected £130-worth of bottles and coins!



Greens for go

Dougie Donnelly, a well known Scottish sports commentator, recently presented a cheque for £7,500 to Mr Coates-Walker, honorary secretary of the North Berwick lifeboat station.

The cheque represented the proceeds from the Dougie Donnelly Golf Classic held on the West Links Championship Course, North Berwick, on Sunday 7 October 1990 and organised by the North Berwick Round Table in aid of the North Berwick Boathouse Appeal.

In spite of gale force conditions, Scottish sporting personalities including Billy McNeil, Bill McLaren, Craig Chalmers and Scott Hastings had a very enjoyable day concluded by a prize-giving dinner in the Marine Hotel, North Berwick.

The French connection...

Hounslow branch raised £2,200 for the RNLI last May at a fun day at Brentford Dock Marina, on the Thames. In July Mr Danny Malone, a member of Hounslow branch arranged a cheque presentation when Gordon Kaye, star of BBC television's 'Allo 'Allo handed over a cheque to the RNLI.

That's the Spirit

The Ashbourne branch has had a highly successful year, raising over £9,000 towards the Spirit of Derbyshire Appeal. One of the more unusual events among the wide variety of activities organised by the committee was a clay pigeon shoot and lamb roast which raised over £750.

Santa's Grotto

A team of seven members and their helpers from Rugeley and District Branch, suitably disguised as Father Christmas and circus clowns, manned a Christmas Grotto supplied to them courtesy of Cramphornes Garden Centre at Wolseley Bridge, Rugeley.

Father Christmas was welcoming children for four weekends during the build-up to the Christmas holiday and by giving lifeboat souvenirs as gifts, patiently wrapped by branch members. £556 was raised for branch funds.

This was the second event that Cramphornes Garden Centre have allowed the branch to hold on their premises and there are promises of further combined events during 1991 - culminating with Father Christmas making a welcome comeback in time for next Christmas.

Christmas in the courtyard

A seasonal courtyard Christmas Fair was held by the Colwyn Bay branch before Christmas at the home of Mr and Mrs Allan Rae of Bryn Dulas House, Llanddulas.

The courtyard of the house and buildings was floodlit and lit by coloured lights, making a welcome prospect on a cold winter's evening. The many stalls overflowed into the house.

On arrival guests were greeted with mince pies and a glass of warm and welcoming mulled wine by their hosts, Mr and Mrs Rae, after which the abundance of goods on the various stalls resulted in more than £1,000 being raised for RNLI funds.

Twelve days in June

The Reading Branch held a lifeboat exhibition in the Broad Street Mall Shopping Centre, Reading, from 11 to 23 June 1990. The exhibition was manned throughout the period by local branches in the area.

A competition ran throughout and entrants had to guess the number of lives saved since 1824 until the end of May 1990. The winner, Michael Woodhouse, was presented with his prizes by Reading branch president Mr Tony Durant MP.

The exhibition raised £1,716.69 from souvenirs, donations and car draw tickets.

Words work well

The regulars at The White Horse at Northwick near Bristol will readily engage you in conversation, but beware of using the wrong word or you will find yourself launching the lifeboat with a contribution in the RNLI collecting box!

When landlord and ex-seafarer Eddie Phillips took on an RNLI collecting box he was determined that his pub would keep it well filled on a regular basis, not just the passing copper or two.

He realised that the word 'work' cropped up with monotonous regularity in conversations at the bar - and who wants to hear about *that* while relaxing over a pint and a game of darts?

So 'that word', or any extension of it, is now banned - under penalty of a 10p fine to the RNLI every time it is used.

Everyone in the pub is equally vigilant, and even the honorary secretary of Thorn-

bury branch was caught for 40p when he called to present letters of thanks!

However everyone is equally forgetful, which produces a steady income and keeps local box secretary Ken Keepin busy emptying the two boxes. Since they started just over a year ago the boxes have produced £623.81.

To add to that Eddie organises jazz evenings with a local band to boost funds, and just before Christmas six volunteers, including Eddie and his wife Liz, went on a sponsored slim. Many pounds (weight) were lost and many pounds (sterling) were gained, and thanks to the willpower of participants and the generosity of the sponsors another £450 was raised.

This has brought the total so far to £973.87 - easily the best return from the 40 pubs which keep boxes for Thornbury and district branch.

Crackers at Christmas



Royal Mail employee Jenny Davison went crackers at Christmas, dressing up as one and doing the rounds of the Royal Mail at Guildford.

Jenny managed to pull £166.24 in a stunt which went with a bang...

In brief

LAST Summer **Ryde** branch raised £2,100 for the Swanage lifeboat appeal by selling souvenirs at Warners Holiday Centres at St Clare and Puckpool.

A RECORD £7,362 was raised by **Hitchin and District** branch during 1990. To round off the year the branch held a Punch, Pies and Carols event, which raised more than £250. Over 150 prizes had been donated for the tombola stand, which was responsible for £211 of the final figure.

A BRIDGE afternoon held by **Bournemouth** ladies guild raised £600 for the RNLI. An annual donation from a charitable foundation added a further £2,000.

THE association for the owners of *Jaguar Alacrity* and *Vivacity* class yachts (JAVA) has donated £250 to the RNLI.

A CHEQUE for £500 from Mobil North Sea Ltd was handed over aboard the *Fraserburgh* lifeboat.

LANDLORDS of the *Railway Hotel*, Ringwood, Mr and Mrs Edwards raised £425 from various events held in the bar during 1990.

AFTER more than 20 years active fund raising the committee of **Sudbury** branch decided to step down in December and make way for a new committee. In those twenty years more than £56,000 has been raised with some £6,000 per annum being forwarded to head office in recent years. The new secretary is Peter Barrett, telephone (0787) 74946.

STAN Lloyd, a stalwart supporter from Porthleven in Cornwall appeared on *Esther Rantzen's Heart of Gold* television show last October. Stan is still an active fund raiser at the age of 80.

SEVERAL months' fund raising efforts at the Kings Head public house in Clapham, London, resulted in landlord Jim Millanthy and his wife Mary handing over a cheque for £1,035.03 to Ken Chaplin, treasurer of **Clapham Battersea and Wandsworth** branch.

Eastbourne variety

The fund raising activities of Eastbourne branch brought in a grand total of more than £90,000 during 1990.

Among the many events which contributed to the magnificent total was the annual flag week, organised by Joan Woollven, which broke the £10,000 target for the second year running, adding £10,113.49 to the branch funds to be precise.

During the course of the year the sale of souvenirs at the very successful Eastbourne lifeboat museum added £72,700, manning the nearby Bluebell Walk for four days netted £7,340 in the collecting boxes, and being the beneficiary of the Eastbourne Fun Run added a further £4,240.

Fashionable help

Fifteen top models donated half of their fees to a fashion gala organised by Guildford branch last October, helping to bring the total raised to just over £30,000.

Some £25,000-worth of clothes were lent to the organisers by top fashion designers and three local boutiques. Hannah Gordon was hostess for the evening, Michael Buerk amused the audience with a lively auction during the interval and the raffle prizes were announced by the Countess of Onslow helped by branch chairman Mrs David Graham-Wood.

As a finale the models were joined by some lifeboatmen in well-cut foul weather gear – although the faces under the sou'westers looked suspiciously like RNLI regional organiser Michael Ashley and area organiser Dennis Walker...

The crew at your service

Dover ladies guild held its first fashion show in the Dover Harbour Board Hall two days after their annual meeting, and raised £280 for guild funds.

The evening was organised by Edwina Hoskins, owner of a local boutique, and was attended by the town's mayor, Mrs Lynn Young, and her husband. The crew of the Dover lifeboat found themselves carrying out a rather different kind of service when they served cheese and wine to round off the evening!

Lunch with Sir Cyril

The large-as-life figure of Sir Cyril Smith kept members of the Ramsbottom branch entertained during their annual luncheon last September.

Some 120 people attended the event to hear Sir Cyril reminiscing about his many years as an MP and recounting some amusing episodes from his time as mayor of Rochdale.

The event raised £600 for the branch funds.

Tipped to succeed

The five motor cruisers which comprise the 'Cruise Loch Lomond' fleet are chartered by visitors from all over the world, keen to see the beauties of the loch, but the skippers and crews of the boats do not accept tips from their passengers. Instead, they ask them to put their money into strategically-placed RNLI collecting boxes, and the generosity of the visitors – and the vessel's crews – results in a handsome collection for the Institution.

At the end of each season the fleet's owner Stuart Cordner takes the proceeds to the RNLI's Scottish office in Glasgow, recently presenting them with no less than £1,125.

Efficient donation

More efficient ship repairing has led to the ministry of defence sending the RNLI a cheque for £1,000... The unusual donation came about as the result of the management and staff of the Bath-based Director General Ship Refitting's participation in a government efficiency programme over the past two years.

As a result of improved efficiency significant reductions were achieved in the cost of ship repairs, while maintaining operating standards, and part of the saving was made available for donation to charitable causes.

The RNLI was nominated as a suitable beneficiary, and as a result a cheque for £1,000 arrived at headquarters.

Making the news

A raffle, an auction and other personal contributions at the British Association of Industrial Editors Scarborough Conference resulted in £1,055 for the RNLI. Robin Sharp, the Institution's assistant public relations officer, was at the BAIE London Group Christmas party to receive the cheque.

The contribution will be used to offset the 1991 running costs of the Arun class lifeboat *Newsbuoy* which is in the RNLI relief fleet.

Newsbuoy was named by His Grace the Duke of Atholl, (then Chairman of the RNLI and the Chairman of Westminster Press) in September 1984. The lifeboat was part-funded from the proceeds of an appeal run by the Newspaper Society in which newspaper publishers and staff, newsagents, advertisers and newsboys and newsgirls participated.

Knit one, sell one

A chimney sweep, a gypsy, a Welsh Lady, a butcher and a lifeboatman joined forces to help Cherry Soloman raise more than £170 for branch funds at Portishead in December.

The characters were all knitted figures which Cherry produces for sale at branch events, giving her time and the materials free and also turning out to help sell them.

Pulling in the funds

The Newport (Dyfed) Junior Rowing Team won the Junior cup in the Great River Race from Richmond to Greenwich, and promptly donated £150 to the RNLI. The crew of the boat were Wayne Jones (cox), Joe Thomas (stroke), Mark Griffiths, Barry James and G. Morris.

Shopping spree

'Raids' on local supermarkets in North Cheam raised more than £4,000 for Sutton, Cheam and Worcester Park branch.

Two collectors at Sainsburys managed to corner a touch under £1,300 between Thursday evening and Saturday evening and on a later weekend shoppers at Safeway donated more than £2,700 in a similar period.

Reporting the branch's successful supermarket days Edward Trevor praised the results obtained at Safeway, when buckets were used for collecting. It speeds up the process, he says, and also led to a threefold increase in the number of £5 notes compared with the previous year!

Flying High

Hazel Gaskin raised £461 for lifeboat funds in August last year when she parascended high above the Medway River.

Although scared of heights and of the water, Hazel was strapped into a parachute and hoisted 200ft into the air by a power boat. Hazel is a member of the Kent Boat and Ski Club, based at Cuxton near Rochester, which also helps the local branch to raise funds throughout the year.

Easy as having a ball...

Raising money is as easy as having a ball, writes yachting writer and broadcaster Malcolm McKeag following his involvement with the Keel Haul Ball. As a result of the ball four Lymington sailors will hand the RNLI a cheque for more than £1,500.

Crawford McKeon, Jane Howe, Malcolm McKeon and Jill McKeon put together the Keel Haul Ball, a low-cost black tie affair which gave 250 people a great time for relatively little outlay, and brought the RNLI a tidy sum.

In contrast to some Balls, with a capital B, held in a swish hotel in the capital where tickets can cost £100 and up before adding in the drinks, the McKeon team ran the keel Haul Ball at Elmer's Court Country Club for just £22 a ticket.

The Country Club club itself was a major contributor, donating the venue for free and leaving only the staff wages and buffet food to come out of the ticket price

Fete accompli!

The Shoreham Harbour Lifeboat Appeal benefitted to the tune of £4,650 as a result of Hartley and District branch's co-operation with the Hartley Village Fete committee. The fete was held last July and the cheque for the proceeds was handed over in November to Ken Everard, the recently retired coxswain of the Shoreham lifeboat.

The branch raised an additional £4,572 at various fund raising events during the course of 1990.

Fundraising with a bang

A firework party last November at the home of Brian Lodge of Farnborough, raised £1,476 for the Swanage Lifeboat Appeal. The party was attended by colleagues of Brian's from Apex Printing and the money was raised in a variety of ways including individual donations, auctions and raffles.

All those attending came in fancy dress, mainly pearly kings and queens, and a guest dressed as a flower seller helped with the fundraising by selling posies at £1 each.

In 1989 Brian Lodge raised over £1,000 for the same appeal with a sponsored drive across Australia.

... and the next patient please

Dunstable branch's barbeque last summer raised £550, due in part no doubt to the very professional duo cooking the steaks.

With a doctor and a dentist behind the grill (in the person of committee members Mike Day and Mike O'Donovan) few could doubt the quality of the fare!

before the RNLI benefited from what was left.

On top of that the raffle – at a posh 'do' it would be called tombola – raised over £600, thanks to good prizes and moderately priced tickets.

Among the prizes were a year's free membership of the Country Club donated by Elmer's Court, a Methusalam of champagne donated by Champagne Mumm (sponsors of the Admiral's Cup), and a day's charter for six people aboard a classic 40ft motor yacht donated by James Waldrock's DMG Yacht Charters.

Potential sponsors of events such as the Keel Haul Ball can take heart from the response to Elmer's Courts' generosity – seven people were so impressed that they joined up on the evening. The Club now offers 'Keel Haul Corporate Membership', donating £40 from a specially reduced fee straight to the RNLI.

Off their trolley!



A 'trolley dash' in the Co-op at St Mary's, Isle of Scilly raised £300 for the RNLI last December. Miss Vikki Nicholls collected approximately £80-worth of goods during her one-and-a-half minute dash round the store before being presented with a bouquet and a bottle of champagne by manager Bob Gilmour.

A round-about way

Each year a member of the Hoo Ness Yacht Club provides a Junior Award, and in 1990 it was decided that this would go to the child who raised the largest amount for the RNLI.

Very soon after the challenge was announced 13-year-old Mark Rowe was busy approaching club members to sponsor him and his 9-year-old brother Matthew on a 28-mile circumnavigation of the Isle of Sheppey in their 10ft 'Mirror' class dinghy.

The brothers made their voyage one weekend in August last year, with their parent's yacht in attendance as safety boat.

Having sailed down to the lower part of the Medway they found themselves having to row most of the way from Garrison Point along the north coast of the island due to a lack of wind, and then having to drop their sails because there was too much wind!

After a night aboard their mother ship in the Swale (which divides the island from the mainland) they finally completed the circumnavigation in about 13½ hours of sailing and rowing.

Mark and Matthew raised £330 for the Institution, winning the Junior Award in the process, and handed over their cheque to the Medway branch at a club event in October. The club also made a donation and to their delight the brothers have now been invited to visit Sheerness lifeboat station.

Welling's black box

On New Years Eve 1990, the Welling Branch held a Buffet and Disco Dance at the Lord Kitchener public house, Welling.

A superb time was had by the 240 people who attended the event which, together with a raffle, raised £1,302.50 for the Welling Branch.

An RNLI plaque was presented to Kevin Jarvis of The Black Box Disco to thank him for the dances at which he has played for the Welling Branch. Thanks are extended to Mr John Godden of Charringtons for allowing the rent-free use of the Dance Hall.

On the carpet

Jim Pearson of Honley Car Parts in West Yorkshire spotted an adjacent carpet company dumping hundreds of carpet squares into a skip. Quick-thinking Jim asked if he could have them, and then retrieved the doomed floor covering along with a large pile of similar samples and stacked them in his garage.

Having sorted the enormous pile into matching sets of colour and size he put up a notice outside his shop: 'Quality Car Mats 25p - all proceeds to the lifeboats'.

Jim now does a steady trade in car mats, and with his carpet-selling neighbour regularly topping up his stock, Jim has so far netted £242 for the RNLI. It has become almost a full-time job for Honley and Brockholes branch to empty his collecting box, and this is all from a man who is not even a branch member in a small village about as far from the sea as you can get!

Mass production!

The Minehead Lifeboat Guild shop is open daily from March until October, from 10.30 am until dusk, and since Easter 1990 ladies of the guild and friends have made and sold no less than 262 gingham aprons, 250 knitted lifeboatmen dolls, 220 other dolls, numerous oven gloves, peg bags, knitwear and greeting cards! The guild raised £1,770 in that time - and since 1981 they have made and sold an amazing 1,839 gingham aprons.

Pounds lost, pounds gained!

Mrs Veronica Harrison (Vron to her friends) decided to hold a sponsored slim last Summer, and members of the Medway Branch Committee later attended a function put on by the Rochester Cruising Club, where she is a member, to be presented with the proceeds.

Veronica raised the sum of £400 from friends and members of the Cruising Club. Vron looked very pleased with herself and happy to be presented with an RNLI Certificate for her efforts by Medway branch chairman John Allison who had no idea of, and tactfully did not ask, her previous weight.

Little ships, big contribution

The Maldon Little Ship Club held a sponsored row in January and raised more than £4,000 for the Institution. Some 43 boats and 150 people took part in the event, some of them in fancy dress.

Clear winners of the Panther trophy for the largest single sponsorship and the Fancy Dress prize were 'The Basin Oars', five lovely ladies from Heybridge Basin.

Trained and supervised by their husbands the girls were in fine form, rowing like the wind and raising £1,300 from their efforts.

Pictured from left to right are the members of the team, Jill Doubtfire, Eva Nutbeam, Viv Hannant-Smith, Jane Fox and Julia Franklin.



(Photo Maldon & Burnham Standard)

Tyre-ing carnival day!



Eight-year-old Heather Lean took to the boats to help Newquay lifeboat station last summer. She joined Newquay's carnival parade in a new design of 'inshore lifeboat' - specially made for her by

her grandfather Jack Parkin, president of the Newquay branch, using an old tractor inner tube. There are no plans to replace existing inshore lifeboats with the new design!

Drawn into a new car

Buying a 25p draw ticket in Yorkshire last year has given Miss Daphne Knights of Purley in Surrey quite a problem – but one she can quite happily live with.

Daphne's ticket won her a brand new Volvo 440 in the North East region's Volvo draw, and after picking up the gleaming new white car from her local dealership in Croydon she now has to grapple with a pleasant problem.

The problem? Well, Daphne has owned her present car, a 1958 Austin A35, for many, many years and was just about to decide whether to keep it in regular use or buy something a little newer when she heard of her good luck in the draw. The 33-year-old Austin is in fine fettle and Daphne is now determined to find it a caring home to live out a gentle retirement. Daphne is a member of the A35's owners club and it may find a home with a fellow enthusiast, but THE LIFEBOAT will forward letters from readers who would like to take the little grey car under his or her wing.



Car Draw winner Miss Daphne Knights (left) is pictured with Anne Wilkins, the RNLI's regional organiser for Greater London collecting her new Volvo from Tamplins Volvo dealership in Croydon. Miss Knights current car is pictured right, a 1958 Austin A35 which is now looking for a caring home.



They swear by it...

Liverpool licensee Jim Parry wants his customers to keep on swearing, because it means more money to buy equipment for the New Brighton lifeboat station! So far Jim has raised £2,400 by fining regulars for swearing at his pub, the Carnarvon Castle.

Members of the lifeboat crew visited the popular Higsons local recently to receive equipment which included a VHF and a transportable radio, dry and foul-weather suits for the crew, torches and gloves.

Said Jim, 'Regulars are fined 10p each time they sing, swear or think 'naughty' thoughts!'

Skegness success

The Lincolnshire Lifeboat Appeal has recently reached its target of £600,000 and Skegness Coxswain/Mechanic Paul Martin felt this was a suitable time to give Skegness man Alvis Blanchard a 'mention in despatches' for his particular contributions to the appeal during 1990.

As well as some £900 from beach collections during launches Alvis organised a sky-dive parachuting event and a 'buy-a-brick' campaign which brought in £11,000. In the previous three years Alvis, who was once a launcher at the station before travelling the world, has undertaken sponsored parachute

jumps and organised others to add some £5,000 to RNLI funds.

Work is underway on the 1991 project – Skegness lifeboat teddy bears – one of which has already been auctioned for more than £200, despite selling for £5.95 normally!

The Fund Raisers

The final date for copy in this section of the Summer 1991 issue of THE LIFEBOAT is Friday 24 May.

Excuse me sir, is that your lifeboat...

Workington didn't miss a trick when a Mersey class lifeboat visited the station for trials. One very wet and windy day during the Christmas period they trolleyed her along to their local Safeway supermarket and parked her in the car park.

Astonished West Cumbrians responded magnificently to the provision of safety cover on the car park puddles and put no less than £1,025 in the collecting boxes!



People and Places

around and about the RNLI

King of the draw

The names of the 20 lucky prize winners in the RNLI's 52nd national lottery were plucked from the drum on 31 January by Desmond Carrington, well-known actor and Radio 2 presenter.

Desmond, whose acting career includes leading roles in 'Emergency Ward 10' and other television, radio and theatre productions, was appearing at Poole Arts Centre in the one-man play 'I was King'.

Supervising the proceedings were Ray Kipling, deputy director of the Institution, and Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fund raising and marketing.

The 52nd lottery raised over £80,000 and the prize winners were:-

£2,000: C.R. Humphries, Crewe, Cheshire.

£1,000: Mrs G.P. Massiter, Farnborough, Hampshire.

£500: M.L. Greenhalgh, Bolton, Lancashire.

£250: Mrs D. Dowdeswell, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

£100: M. Barefield, Reading, Berkshire; D. Cowie, (White Horse Distillers) Clarkston, Glasgow; J. Scragg, Liverpool; Mrs D. Liddell, Perthshire; J. Croft, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria; Mrs. M. Gibson, Southampton, Hampshire; Ms A. Parker, Bradford, West Yorkshire; V.



Desmond Carrington (right) digs deep in the drum for the winning ticket in the RNLI's 52nd national lottery draw. With him are Anthony Oliver (centre) deputy head of fund raising and marketing and Peter Holness, corporate fund raising manager. (Photo Bournemouth Evening Echo)

Woodward, Banstead, Surrey.

£50: E.H. Allum, Redbridge, Essex; Mrs H.E. Robertson, Glasgow; Miss P.J. Harvey, Bromley Kent; Mrs M. Edwards, Gwynedd; Mrs F.J. Ball, Shrewsbury, Shropshire; Miss R.J. Powell, London; Mrs F. Eden-Smith, Bridlington, North Humberside; S.A. Mellor, Stevenage, Hertfordshire.

On Station

The following lifeboats have taken up station duties:

ALL-WEATHER

Pwllheli – Mersey 12-010 (ON 1168) *Lilly and Vincent Anthony* on 25 January 1991.

INSHORE

Bangor – B584 on 21 November 1990.

Mudford – B583 on 24 November 1990.

Obituaries

With deep regret we record the following deaths:
OCTOBER 1990

Mrs H. Parker, president of Bolton Ladies' guild from 1974 until her death. She was chairman of the guild from 1958 to 1968 and vice-president from 1968 to 1974.

NOVEMBER 1990

Mrs N. Rathbone, chairman of Arnside branch from 1962 to 1984. She was awarded a silver badge in 1980.

Mrs M. Butterfield, president of Lytham guild from 1984. She was chairman from 1967 to 1982 and was awarded a silver badge in 1990.

Mrs H. Cawwood, souvenir secretary of Coventry Ladies' guild from 1973 to 1984 and committee member from 1965. She was awarded a silver badge in 1980.

Mrs Inge Humphreys, box secretary of Leicester branch for many years.

Mrs Jean Wild, box secretary of Chatham branch for many years.

DECEMBER 1990

Mrs Valerie Jenkins, a founder committee member of Brecon branch which was formed in 1971.

Doctor James Corbett, committee member of Harwich branch since 1968 when he also served

as the station's assistant honorary medical adviser until his appointment as honorary medical adviser in 1976. He served in this capacity until his retirement in 1985. Doctor Corbett has been posthumously awarded a silver badge.

Charles Bowry, staff coxswain from 1984 to 1986. He joined Sheerness lifeboat crew in 1969 as station mechanic and in 1970 was appointed Coxswain/Mechanic. In 1981 he was appointed Coxswain/Mechanic of Portpatrick lifeboat. 'Charlie' was awarded a bronze medal in 1975, a clasp to the bronze medal in 1978 and a silver medal in 1980.

Mrs E. Pemberton, honorary treasurer of Wallasey Ladies' guild from 1950 to 1990. She was awarded a silver badge in 1962, a gold badge in 1977 and a bar to the gold badge in 1987.

George Hackett, chairman of Oldbury branch since it was formed in 1968. He was awarded a framed letter of thanks in 1976 and a silver badge in 1989.

JANUARY 1991

Tony Guy, president of Wolverhampton branch from 1972 to 1991. He was awarded a framed certificate of thanks in 1978, silver badge in 1981 and a gold badge in 1991.

Sir Alec Rose

Sir Alec Rose KT, an honorary life governor of the RNLI died on 11 January at the age of 82 after a short illness.

Sir Alec was a tireless supporter of the Institution's work and launched the Yachtmen's Lifeboat Supporters Association (YLA) at the 1969 London Boat Show and became its first member. The YLA was the forerunner of today's Membership Scheme.

In 1974 Sir Alec chaired the Hampshire Rose Appeal, which funded the lifeboat *Hampshire Rose*, and he also launched the appeal to fund the lifeboat *Shoreline*.

For his tireless fund raising efforts and his tremendous support of the lifeboat service Sir Alec was made an honorary life governor of the RNLI in 1975.

The funeral was held at Portsmouth Cathedral on 22 January, attended by some 1,000 people, including representatives of RNLI headquarters, lifeboat crews, supporters and the appeals with which he had been involved.

People and Places

around and about the RNLI

New Year Honours

Two awards for services to the RNLI were made in the Queen's New Year Honours list.

Robert Reay, MBE, honorary secretary of North Sunderland lifeboat station was awarded the MBE and **Kenneth Henry** BEM, lately coxswain of the Aith lifeboat was awarded the BEM.

Other awards with RNLI connections, but not for services to the Institution, were made to:

Knighthood

Sir James Anderton, chief constable, Greater Manchester Police, who is involved with the Police Appeal.

Sir Jeffrey Bowman, senior partner, Price Waterhouse, the RNLI's accountants.

CBE

Miles Walker CBE, chief minister, Isle of Man Government, which works closely with the Institution.

OBE

Tom Norreys, OBE, managing director Avon Inflatables.

Anthony Raggett, OBE, technical director Marine and Aviation, RFD. Both companies work with the RNLI for inflatable Inshore lifeboats.

MBE

Martin Broom, MBE, chairman and managing director, Broom Boats, formerly chairman of National Boat Show. NBS have donated space to the RNLI at many boat shows.

Leighton Kent, MBE, district controller, Swansea coastguard MRCC.

BEM

Robin Sunley, BEM, assistant mechanic of the Flamborough lifeboat.

Muriel Rossiter, BEM, lately librarian of the Marine Society.

Third generation



Three generations of the Cannon family aboard the Ramsgate lifeboat. The youngest, Ian (right) joined the crew on his 17th birthday, while father Roy (centre) has been coxswain for 18 years, and grandfather Bob (left) was previously the station mechanic. (Photo Michael Pett)

The third generation of the Cannon family took his place in the Ramsgate lifeboat crew on the first available day – his 17th birthday. Ian Cannon joined in February, having taken his medical and sight tests early in readiness, to become the youngest ever member of the Ramsgate crew.

His father, Roy Cannon, has been coxswain for 18 years and his grandfather Bob is now shorehelper having retired as lifeboat mechanic.

Safety at sea runs in the family and Ian's mother Julia is an Auxiliary Coastguard. Bob says that he has come home from a service at 3am only to discover that his wife is not there because she has been called out too!

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:

Eastbourne – Second Coxswain/Assistant Mechanic D. Corke

Moelfre – Mechanic E. Jones

Salcombe – Coxswain Mechanic F.Y. Smith

(In the Winter 1990/91 issue of *The Lifeboat* Frank Lawrence of St Helier was listed as 'shorehelper' when receiving his Long Service Award. Although a shore-helper at the time Frank had been Second Coxswain for 19 years. See Awards to Coxswains and Crews, page 61, this issue)

Returning the compliment

Staff from the RNLI's depot and headquarters gave a helping hand to the Children in Need Appeal on 1 December last year when they made a 'double circumnavigation' of Poole. The D class inflatable stayed firmly ashore, being trundled right around the town twice to the sound of an on-board accordionist.

The team raised some £1,000 for the appeal – collecting £600 to add to their £400 sponsorship



Fragments of History

Two small fragments of Formby's lifeboat house, believed have been the first lifeboat station in Britain, now have a place in a history collection in the town's library.

The small fragments, one stone the other metal, were spotted in the sand by 83-year-old Brother Christopher Barton who inscribed and mounted them before presenting them to the library's display.

Formby's lifeboat station was established in 1776, taken over by the RNLI in 1894 and ceased operation in 1916 when few men and no horses were available. It was closed officially in 1919.

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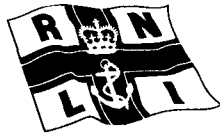
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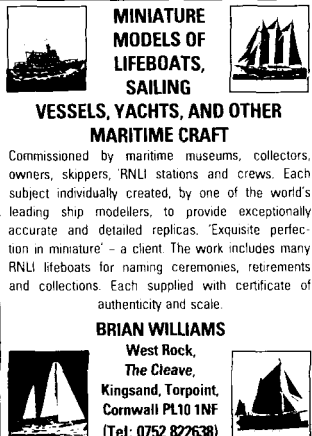
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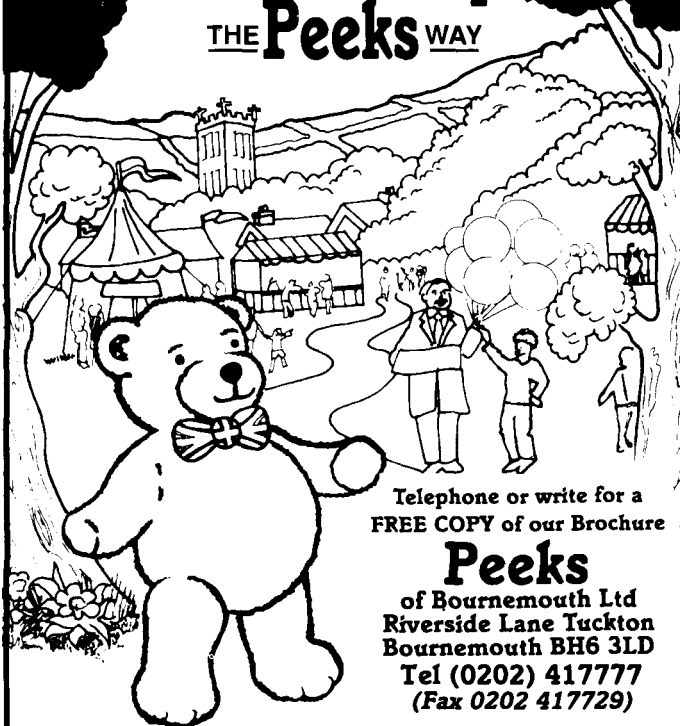
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