



Lifeboats

# the lifeboat

For everyone who helps save lives at sea

Winter  
2003/04

SAP code: LBM035

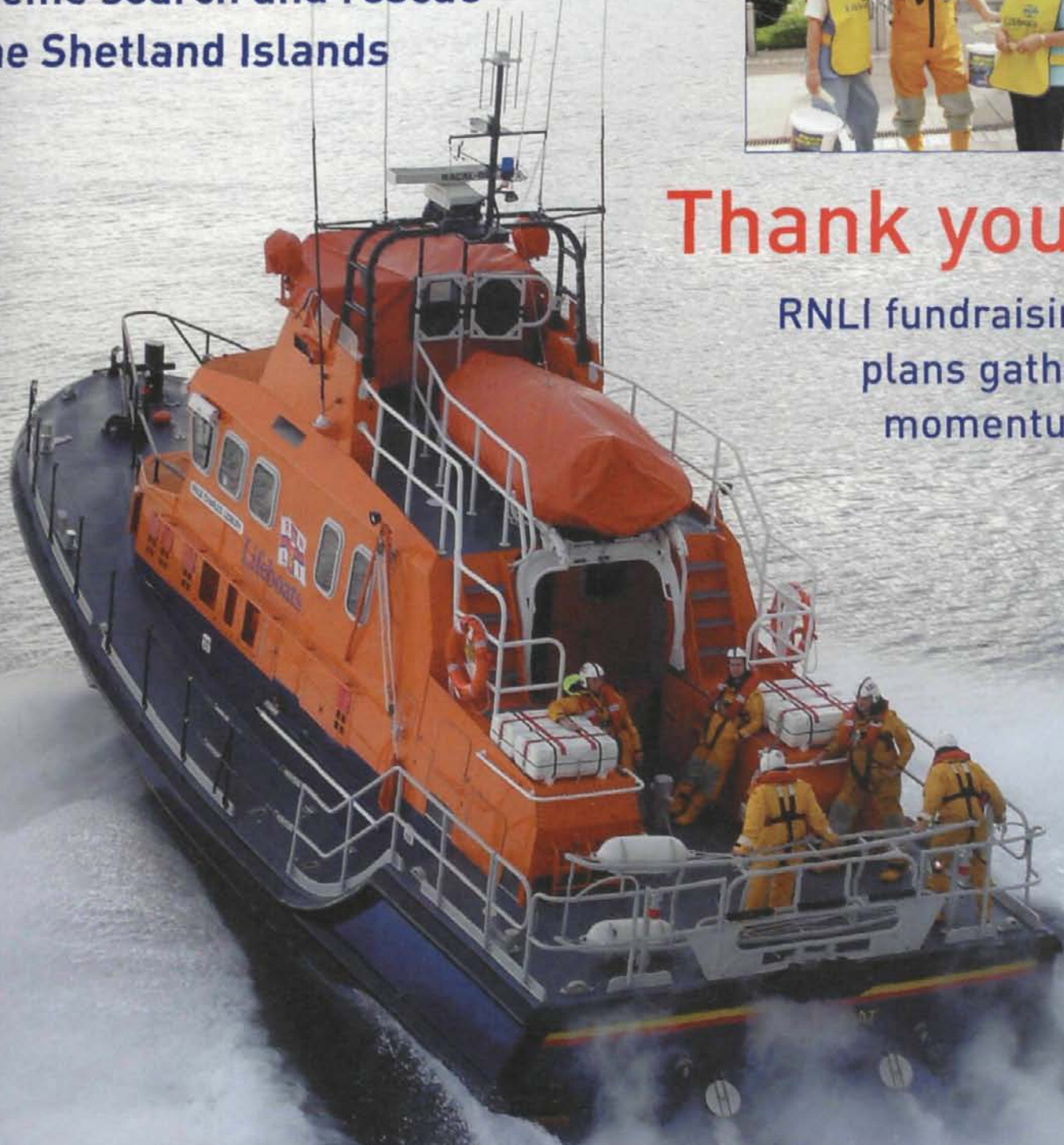
## Working together

Extreme search and rescue  
in the Shetland Islands



## Thank you!

RNLI fundraising  
plans gather  
momentum



**"If I thanked the lifeboatmen every day  
for the rest of my life, it would  
still not be enough for  
bringing him back."**

*Mrs Rose McRoy, whose  
husband Jim was  
rescued by Sunderland  
inshore lifeboat*



## **There *is* a way that says it all.**

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution depends entirely on voluntary donations and legacies to run the lifeboats that save lives at sea. With more than 220 lifeboat stations around the shores of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, it costs around £274,000 a day to keep the lifeboat service running.

### **Six out of ten lifeboat launches are only possible thanks to legacies.**

Volunteer lifeboat crews give their time to save others in danger. They ask for no reward other than the satisfaction of a 'good job well done'. They deserve the best boats, equipment and training. You can help make sure they continue to receive them, with a legacy gift in your Will.

If you would like to remember the lifeboat crews in your Will, please send for our legacy information pack today. You'll receive useful and practical advice about making or updating your Will.

### **Send now for your free information pack and discover how a gift in your Will can help volunteer lifeboat crews.**

**Please send me your legacy information pack.**

Please return this form to: John Marshall, Legacy Enquiries Officer, RNLI, FREEPOST (BH173), West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1XF. Thank you.

Title  Forename

Surname

Address

Postcode

Your details will be used by the RNLI and passed to RNLI trading companies only. If you do not want to receive information about other ways to support the RNLI, please tick here.  DPA



**Lifeboats**

LBJ03/12

Registered Charity No. 209603

# the lifeboat



## Lifeboats

The magazine of the  
Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Registered Charity Number 209603

### Issue 566

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**The Editor, the Lifeboat, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.**

Photographs intended for return should be accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope. Contributions may be held for subsequent issues.

For further information on how to join the RNLI as a member or governor contact:  
Membership, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ. Tel: 0800 543210.

**Front cover:**  
Aith's Severn class lifeboat *Charles Lidbury* is put through her paces. See our feature on page 33 to find out more about the work of Shetland lifeboats  
Photo: Nicholas Leach/*Ships Monthly*, by courtesy of Shetland MRSC  
Inset: Branch volunteers help support the Lifeboats. See page 4

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# The RNLI thanks you

The Christmas break may already seem like a distant memory but readers will know that, while they were tucking into their turkey, many volunteer lifeboat crews had given up the comfort and safety of home to save the lives of others in cold and stormy weather. This was made possible by your generosity



Severn class lifeboat *Spirit of Guernsey* tackles rough seas off St Peter Port. Photo: Brian Green



One hot August weekend lifeboats launched around 200 times. With the average launch cost for an all weather boat being £5,800 and £2,200 for an inflatable, the two days cost the RNLI almost £700,000 for launches alone

It's not just the bad weather that keeps lifeboat crews busy – last year lifeboat crews and lifeguards had the busiest summer in the RNLI's 180-year history. Lifeguards dealt with 7,226 incidents, saving 27 lives in the process. One especially hot August weekend saw lifeboats tackling some 200 shouts in just two days. Of course, in order for crews to carry out this vital lifesaving work they need the right tools for the job: cutting edge lifeboats and equipment, high quality boathouse and crew facilities, and the finest training. But what does this all cost?

Last year it cost around £107M to run the lifeboat service – that's £290,000 a day. This is a huge amount but it actually represents excellent value for money. For every £1 spent, 81 pence goes direct to maintaining and replacing the existing fleet, purchasing new equipment or shore facilities, Beach Lifeguards and Sea Safety. Sixteen pence is used for fundraising and only three pence goes on administration. Any surplus is held in a reserve fund and used to guarantee the RNLI's boat building programme and other capital projects.

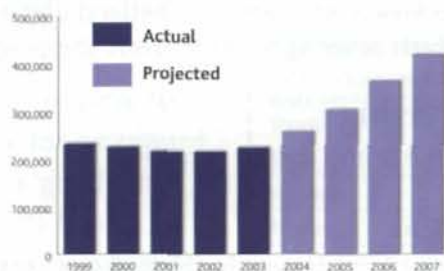
Until recently these reserves were looking healthy, thanks to your generosity and support. But as a result of a continued weakness in the stock markets, especially since 11 September 2001, RNLI investments fell dramatically, leaving reserves at the lowest level allowable by the trustees. This

time last year the RNLI also reported a worrying downturn in legacies and membership numbers, and a significant drop in public awareness of the RNLI and what it does.

## Membership

So what can be done about this? The good news is that work has already begun to turn this around. The RNLI has set itself an ambitious target to double membership over the next five years. This is no pipedream but a carefully planned strategy.

### RNLI members and regular supporters



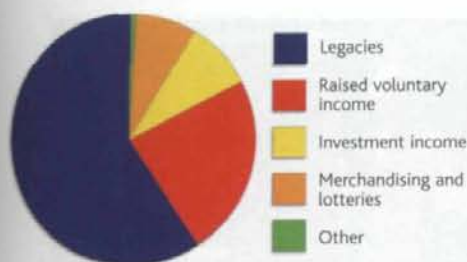
Head of Central Fundraising and Communications, Chris Rhodes says: "We have been looking at new and innovative ways to raise funds. Short-term fundraising is absolutely vital to the service but we are

also concentrating on building long-term relationships with the public to assure the future of the lifeboat service. We want to re-awaken people to the breadth of the RNLI's work. The service is relevant to far more people than just 'boaties' and we want to bring peace of mind to anyone who finds themselves at sea – whether they are on a cross channel ferry or enjoying a dip at the beach.'

The renewed membership drive has already produced some fantastic results in the last year. Shoreline and Offshore inserts in boating and general interest magazines, together with mailing campaigns to non-members, led to the recruitment of 26,000 new members in 2003 – that's 86% up on the number recruited in 2002. There was a further push in October and December and the RNLI hopes this will recruit an additional 30,000 new members and donors. But this is just the beginning.

'Reaching new and younger audiences is also very important and we need to capitalise on Beach Lifeguards and new technology to excite the new generation' says Chris. In a bid to get these audiences onside, RNLI fundraising branched out to the beaches last summer with a scheme to encourage regular support for its lifeguards. Around 350 new supporters have been recruited so far, each paying a minimum of £2 a month.

### Sources of RNLI income 2002



### Appeals

The RNLI has always been honest with its supporters and has never asked for money that it hasn't needed. That's why, when it was in a strong financial position four years ago, the RNLI shut down its regional appeals programme. Today it's all systems go again. First off the mark was the Whitby lifeboat appeal in North Yorkshire that hit its target within months of launch. Close behind is the Lifeboats of the Clyde appeal in Scotland, which is currently concentrating in Strathclyde and Glasgow to fund a new lifeboat for Troon. This is a new concept in appeal fundraising and is being led by two Area Fundraising Managers. One of them, Marie Cowan, says: 'This appeal seems in line with the work of the crews themselves – a coordinated search and rescue with seven lifeboat stations and 30 branches!'

You may have seen the first round of the Christmas appeal in October, which encouraged members to buy membership for a friend or relative as a Christmas present. Another mailing at the end of November reminded 'lapsed' supporters that the Lifeboats still need their support and encouraged a festive donation.

### Legacies

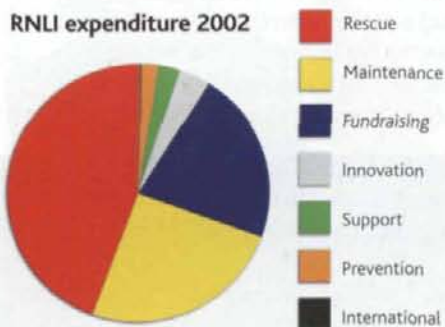
The RNLI got together with a number of other UK charities in 2001 to form the Legacy Promotion Campaign (LPC). There was real concern about a drop in legacies across the whole charity sector and the LPC's aim is to encourage people to leave something in their will to deserving causes. Since the LPC launched its awareness campaign 'Remember a charity' in 2002, research shows that more people are planning to leave charity money in their

will. If this intention translates into action it will be good news for the RNLI as seven out of ten lifeboat launches are already funded from legacies.

### Spending

Until this all comes to fruition, the RNLI has had to tighten its belt to sustain free reserves at 12 month's worth of expenditure. Be assured that the RNLI's core business of saving lives at sea is not affected by these measures – it just means cutbacks on non-critical projects and reprioritising spending to keep essential developments. Some lifeboat station shoreworks projects have been postponed and certain support costs have had a financial cap imposed. The visitor centre has been challenged with bringing in 'substantial new money' to enable it to stay on the 2007 build programme and various other measures have also been taken to curb expenditure.

### RNLI expenditure 2002



**Innovation** denotes lifeboat research and development and real estate developments  
**Support** represents management and administration  
**International** represents the RNLI's work in assisting in lifesaving on water worldwide

An ongoing procedures project is looking at ways of reducing administration costs and, at the time of writing, good headway had already been made towards a 3% efficiency saving in 2003. A further 1.5% saving for each of the next five years is planned. The RNLI will continue to spend on developing and maintaining new lifeboats and equipment, developing Beach Lifeguards and promoting Sea Safety. The Lifeboat College and Survival Centre are still on target to open later this year. As ever, the RNLI is rising to the challenge and, with your continued support, it can secure the future of the lifeboat service.

### Lifeboat crew gear

It costs more than £400 to kit out a lifeboat crew member in protective gear (the equivalent of 26 new Shoreline members).



#### All weather lifeboat crew

• Gloves	£3
• Boots	£22
• Trousers	£63
• Jacket	£72
• Safety helmet	£91
• Lifejacket	£184



#### Inshore lifeboat crew

• Gloves	£8
• Drysuit (boots attached)	£208
• Safety helmet	£91
• Lifejacket	£210

# Tell your friends

## Join up

Please help the RNLI reach its target to double membership. If you are already a member why not spread the word and encourage your friends and family to join. There are various levels of membership providing a range of member benefits. See below for details of grades and subscription rates.



## Shoreline



## Offshore



## Governor

## Thinking of a legacy?

Almost seven out of ten people in the UK support charities but fewer than one in 20 include a charitable donation in their will. Yet it's a very easy way to give. Legacies are vital to keep the lifeboats afloat, accounting for around 68% of income. So, when you make your will, please remember the RNLI. For further information visit [www.rememberacharity.org.uk](http://www.rememberacharity.org.uk).

## Join an event

Fancy taking part in something a bit more physically demanding and raising sponsorship money for the RNLI in the process? How about jumping out of an aeroplane, white water rafting or running in the London marathon with the RNLI on hand to support you? These are just a few of the fun and action-packed events the RNLI is involved in throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland.

For further information contact Claire Kavanagh on 01202 663205, email [adventure@rnli.org.uk](mailto:adventure@rnli.org.uk) or visit [www.rnli.org.uk/events](http://www.rnli.org.uk/events), the website especially dedicated to these events. Also see the running calendar on page 12.

## Helping the fundraisers



Local branch members helped raise over £2,400 at a 'Bolton-by-the-sea' event in August 2003

Fundraising is a vital element of the activities that support the lifeboat service. By joining one of the 1,500 volunteer branches you will be able to meet like-minded people while having fun for a good cause. If you don't fancy joining a branch, why not organise your own fundraising event? See pages 37-43 of this issue to see some examples of how money is raised in this way. To find out where your nearest branch or guild is call the regional fundraising department at headquarters on 01202 663472 who will put you in touch with members local to you.



Fancy a challenge? How about parachuting out of an aeroplane and raising sponsorship for the RNLI in the process?

Grade	Rates	
Shoreline	£20	€28
Joint Shoreline	£33	€46
Offshore	£54	€75
Joint Offshore	£94	€130
Governor	£66	€92
Joint Governor	£116	€162
Life Governor	£1,500	€2,100

## Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer, Gift Aid is one of the simplest and most effective ways of giving to charity. Using Gift Aid means that for every pound you give, the RNLI receives an extra 28 pence from the Inland Revenue. This means that a £10 Gift Aid donation is worth £12.80 to the Lifeboats at no extra cost to you. On top of this, higher rate taxpayers are eligible to reclaim as much as £23 from the taxman for every £100 donated, by including details of their Gift Aid donations on their Self Assessment form. You can donate this rebate too via the Inland Revenue (see Self Assessment donations below). Gift Aid also applies if you are sponsored by a UK taxpayer for a fundraising event. Look out for the Gift Aid logo and a box for donors to tick on your sponsorship form.

*giftaid it*

To find out more contact The Giving Campaign (an independent, national campaign established to increase the amount of money given to UK charities) on 020 7930 3154 or visit [www.givingcampaign.org.uk](http://www.givingcampaign.org.uk).

## Payroll giving

Payroll giving is a simple, tax effective way to give from your pay packet if you are UK taxpayer. When you donate money in the normal way you are giving out of your taxed income. When you choose payroll giving, your donation is taken from your pay before tax is deducted. Simply put, the RNLI gets a bigger donation at no extra cost to you. For further information contact Tizzy Perkins on 01202 663295 or email [corporate@rnli.org.uk](mailto:corporate@rnli.org.uk).

## Buy RNLI gifts

The RNLI has an extensive range of gifts that are sold by volunteers at fundraising events and lifeboat stations. In addition, a range of quality gifts are available through the award winning 'Lifeboats' mail order catalogue or online at

[www.rnli.org.uk](http://www.rnli.org.uk). For more information call 01202 663333.

## Buy books

The RNLI has also set up a partnership in association with Amazon, the international online book retailer, to help raise funds. Buy your books via the link on the RNLI website and 5% of the value of all orders will be donated to the RNLI.



## Help us through your workplace

Support from companies can be very useful to the RNLI. Often, fundraising events can only get off the ground if the basic startup costs or prizes are funded by company sponsorship. However, it's not all one sided as companies can benefit from the profile and exposure created by supporting the lifeboats. For further information contact Tizzy Perkins (see under Payroll giving).

## Self Assessment donations

From April 2004 anyone who completes a Self Assessment tax return will be able to nominate a charity to receive all or part of any repayment due to them. The RNLI has registered with the Inland Revenue, and all you will need is to enter the code

HAB39GG on the appropriate section of your tax return to ensure that the RNLI receives your rebate.

## Share giving

This scheme allows the RNLI to accept certain donations of shares. The RNLI then sells these shares, through a designated broker, and receives income from the sale. For further information contact Tizzy Perkins (see under Payroll giving).

## Make a special gift

Large, one-off donations fund a number of special projects each year. We are working on a new crew training campaign to be called Train A Hero with the aim to raise £10M over the next five years through high-level donors.



The RNLI's first hovercraft was funded thanks to the generosity of supporter Kay Hurley of Oxfordshire

For further information on all the above (except where given) please call the RNLI helpdesk on 01202 663234.

# We ask the questions

## Making RNLI history work for the future



Joanna Archibald

Heritage is very important to the RNLI. It's not just about having a collection of lifeboats and equipment from yesteryear, it is also about social history. Over the years the RNLI has amassed a vast collection of art, objects and archives that would interest the most cynical of observers while raising awareness and encouraging future support. To preserve the collections and its museums the RNLI is setting up a heritage trust as a separate charity. *The Lifeboat* speaks to Heritage Manager Joanna Archibald to find out more

### Why does the RNLI need a separate trust?

The RNLI's mission, by Royal Charter, is to 'save lives at sea' and this prevents us from spending substantial sums of money on heritage. A separate charitable trust will be able to apply for funding from heritage and other grant giving bodies.

### How exactly will it get funding?

As well as a limited annual grant from the RNLI, the trust will look to raise funds from special events and sponsorship at its five core museums and, eventually, through a range of heritage shop items. I must stress that fundraising for museums and collections will be kept distinct – it is not trying to compete with the RNLI's own fundraising. Heritage grants will be sought from national and regional trust funds, particularly towards conservation and education work. We are awaiting the outcome of a £1M heritage lottery fund bid to completely redisplay the Grace Darling Museum at Bamburgh. We are also rebuilding the Henry Blogg Museum at Cromer as part of the town's regeneration scheme. If people want to make a donation specifically for RNLI heritage or a museum project, we would be delighted.

### What sort of items do you have in the collection?

There is everything from complete historic lifeboats to a brass doorknocker in the shape of a lifeboatman. There is a fine collection of paintings and prints, medals and certificates, memorabilia, commemorative items, collection boxes, ornaments, clothing, charts, models and technical equipment. Our current estimate is 2,600 objects plus some 20,000

historic photographs and 100 historic films. There is also a research archive that holds a wealth of historical RNLI information as well as some more obscure items such as 1930s knitting patterns for crew clothing and sheet music literally singing the praises of famous rescues.

### What preservation work needs doing?

Many items are fragile and have not always been displayed or stored as they should have been in the past. Delicate objects are prone to fading, weakening and structural damage unless we intervene and, depending on the object, conservation work can be expensive and time consuming. Our current priorities are the collections at the Grace Darling Museum and the Henry Blogg Museum and we are forming a policy about the best way to care for our historic lifeboats. If our collections are kept in the best possible conditions, they will still be around for future generations to enjoy.

### How do I go about donating an item to the collection?

Write to me at: RNLI Headquarters, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ. If possible, enclose a picture of the object. Due to the volume of objects we already have, we are not looking for duplicates. But if it's something that we don't already have, we may be interested in acquiring it. We are only looking to collect RNLI related-material and the more background history you can supply the better. We would especially welcome any items that fill gaps in the existing collection.

### How will this all encourage future support?

The redeveloped museums will be able to tell their stories in the way they deserve. I would defy anyone not to be moved by the histories of Grace Darling or Coxswain Henry Blogg. The museums are regional ambassadors for the RNLI and will be engaging, educational and enjoyable – a great way to encourage long-term support for the future.



A great example of how a picture can paint a thousand words – Sheringham lifeboatmen share a cup of tea with the rescued crew of the Canadian steamer *Eaglescliffe Hall*.  
Photo: *News Chronicle*, 30 October 1941





GREAT RAIL JOURNEYS



### 2004 Departure Dates and Costs

31 May	£2250	2, 11 Aug	£2150
9 Jun	£2250	29 Aug	£2150
27 Jun	£2250		



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Explore the contrasting landscapes of Scandinavia on this wonderful 13-day tour with the UK's leading specialist in holidays by rail. One of our friendly and professional Tour Managers will be with you throughout your journey so sit back, relax and enjoy the delights of Copenhagen, Stockholm and Gothenburg, followed by a scenic cruise through the tranquil inland waterways of Sweden.

### Day 1 ♦ By train to Germany

Departure from London Waterloo to Brussels by Eurostar with a meal served on board, continuing to Cologne for an overnight stay.

### Day 2 ♦ Across Germany to Denmark

The onward journey to Copenhagen includes a train ferry ride across the border.

### Day 3 ♦ Free in Copenhagen

Morning sightseeing includes the Amalindborg Palace and Little Mermaid. Just across the road from the hotel is the world famous Tivoli Gardens.

### Day 4 ♦ By tilting train to Sweden

Leave Copenhagen on the X2000 tilting train, travel across the new fixed link with Sweden then relax during the journey past lakes and forests to Stockholm.

### Day 5 ♦ Sightseeing in Stockholm

A morning tour followed by a boat trip through the many islands forming the Stockholm archipelago.

### Day 6 ♦ Free time in Stockholm

A chance to visit the Nordic Museum, the Skansen Museum, or the Wasa, a royal flagship which sank in the harbour on her maiden voyage in 1628.



### Day 7 ♦ The Göta Canal cruise

From the harbour MS Juno sails for Gothenburg. This historic vessel was built in 1874 and has been maintained in a superb condition. Accommodation is in 2-berth cabins. The route offers scenic variety ranging from the sheltered waters of the Baltic to narrow canals linking the lakes of central Sweden. Many stops will be made and excursions included to view castles, convents, historic towns and rural retreats. Sixty-five locks are negotiated on the way to Gothenburg as the ship heads south through Södertölje to Trosa.

### Day 8 ♦ Ascending the Berg locks

After a pause in Söderköping MS Juno continues to Berg to ascend the 'lock staircase'. Visit Sweden's oldest abbey.

### Day 9 ♦ Crossing Lake Vättern

The cruise continues, crossing Lake Vättern then climbing to 300ft above sea level before descending to Lake Vänern.

### Day 10 ♦ The descent into Gothenburg

From Trollhätten MS Juno descends to the River Göta before arrival in Gothenburg for an overnight stay.

### Day 11 ♦ Free time in Gothenburg

Free until evening departure on the Stena Line sailing to Kiel.

### Day 12 ♦ By train through Germany

Travel by InterCity train to Cologne, via Hamburg and Bremen, for an overnight stay.

### Day 13 ♦ To London

By InterCity to Brussels then Eurostar to London, with lunch served on board, arriving mid-afternoon.

### What's Included

- First Class rail travel throughout with meals and drinks on Eurostar.
- Three-night cruise on MS Juno in 2-berth cabins including all meals and excursions.
- Sailing from Gothenburg to Kiel in 2-berth cabins with shower/WC including dinner and breakfast.
- Eight nights dinner, bed and breakfast hotel accommodation.
- Full programme of excursions.
- Services of a Tour Manager throughout.

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# International rescue

Each quarter, *the Lifeboat* recounts rescue stories from around the UK. Through your membership of the RNLI, you also have a link with the International Lifeboat Federation (ILF), for which 2003 was an eventful year



Sweden  
Mike Elliot

In 1924, the RNLI celebrated its 100th birthday. It was not alone in the world as a lifeboat service, and foreign friends came to the UK to join the festivities. This gathering was so successful that it was made a regular event, with a meeting every four years, hosted by a different country each time. What was at first a loose assembly of national services was formalised in 1951 with the RNLI as secretariat but it was not until the 1960s that the ILF proper formed.

In the 1970s the International Maritime Organisation gave the ILF observer status, recognising its ability to faithfully represent rescue services. The relatively fledgling Federation's work was rewarded further with the International Maritime Prize in 1998.

The ILF's aim is to reduce life-threatening incidents at sea through safety promotion. To do this it wants to enable member organisations to share their experience, in particular to find best practice in search and rescue and the latest technologies available to support this. For maximum effect it wishes to continue recruitment of members and then to have the means to help them become more securely established.

A major step forward was taken in 1999, the 175th year of the RNLI. The 18th conference was held in Bournemouth and members set themselves challenging targets: to modernise, professionalise and become altogether more purposeful, and to double organisation membership by the time of the next conference in 2003.

Membership has indeed risen since 1999, from 42 to 89 organisations in 62 countries (some countries have both a state and voluntary service) but increased membership and a new vision do not mean the money is automatically available to achieve all of the ILF's objectives. The decision was made at the 2003 conference in South Africa, therefore, to develop the ILF to full independence from the RNLI by 2007 and to work for both company and charitable status.

The RNLI will continue to fund the Federation until it reaches independence and from then on will remain a member, for there is always something to learn from its colleagues. For example, Sweden has developed a new personal watercraft (jet ski) that may be of use to RNLI lifeguards.

New Zealand



Japan



South Africa



# News

## Alderney crew at Number 10



PM Tony Blair and wife Cherie host a reception at No.10 Downing Street for the *Daily Express* Vodafone Life Savers Awardees

Inset: The Alderney trio receive their award certificate from Fern Britton and Philip Schofield

Three Alderney lifeboat volunteers received top honours at the *Daily Express* Vodafone Life Savers Awards in October for their rescue of three people swept out to sea



Lifeboat Operations Manager David McAllister and Lifeboatmen Phil Murray and Mark Gaudion joined a Downing Street reception hosted by Tony and Cherie Blair. They then went on to the ceremony at The Savoy Hotel where they received their award before a star-studded audience.

The awards recognise Britain's unsung heroes and the distinguished panel of judges, including Falklands veteran Simon Weston and Major General Christopher Tyler of the Royal Humane Society, received hundreds of nominations.

The Alderney trio was recognised for

saving the lives of two teenage girls and a man in dark, gale force conditions in August 2002. A 13-year-old girl was knocked off her feet and swept away when playing on the causeway at Fort Clonque on Alderney. Her 16-year-old friend and a passer-by also got washed away trying to save her. Despite the horrendous weather and a damaged propeller Phil, the D class's helmsman, battled through the rocks and saved the man who was suffering from shock and hypothermia. Meanwhile, David and Mark had waded out from the shore using a lifeline and hoisted one of the girls to

safety, while the other was pulled to safety nearby.

Gavin Darby, UK Chief Executive Officer for Vodafone said: 'This incredible rescue is a fitting reminder that there are men and women who are prepared to risk their lives every day to save the life of another.'

There was a great deal of media interest in the award and David, Phil and Mark were interviewed live on national TV for *This Morning*, hosted by Fern Britton and Philip Schofield. A full account of the rescue and the subsequent award of Bronze Medals to the three, was featured in the spring 2003 issue of *the Lifeboat*.

# News

## MOELFRE TO HONOUR BRAVE HERO

The late Dic Evans MBE, winner of two RNLI Gold Medals, is to be commemorated with a statue outside Moelfre lifeboat station. As Chairman of the Dic Evans Memorial Sculpture Appeal, Lord Stanley of Alderley is helping to raise funds for a statue of the local hero to celebrate his life and achievements.

Lord Stanley emphasises that the statue will commemorate all lifeboatmen and women, not only Dic Evans. He describes him as: 'A wonderful representative of the 'best' of the human spirit – bravery, devotion to duty and self sacrifice.'

The sculpture by local artist Sam Holland will depict Dic Evans at the wheel of a lifeboat and will be erected outside Moelfre station, overlooking the sea. The estimated cost of the larger-than-life statue is £40,000 and it is hoped that it will be unveiled in the summer this year.

The appeal committee is well aware that the constitution of the RNLI does not allow its funds to be used for this purpose. Lord Stanley comments: 'The cost of the sculpture cannot be taken, indeed should not be taken out of RNLI funds, but we are hoping that all who realise the debt we owe to lifeboatmen, wherever they serve, might help.'

For more information or to make a contribution to the appeal, please contact:

Alun Gruffydd,  
Secretary:  
Dic Evans Memorial  
Sculpture Appeal,  
Oriol Ynys Môn,  
Llangefni,  
Anglesey,  
North Wales,  
LL77 7TQ.

Dic Evans

[www.rnli.org.uk](http://www.rnli.org.uk)

## Mary Stanford disaster remembered



Lifeboats from Rye Harbour, Dungeness and Hastings scattered rose petals

In 1928 all 17 crew members of the *Mary Stanford* lifeboat were drowned when trying to rescue the Latvian steamer *Alice* in a gale. Disaster struck when the lifeboat capsized in the heavy seas. The lifeboat crew were tragically unaware that she had been recalled – the casualty having already been rescued by another boat.

The effects of the 1928 tragedy on the small Rye Harbour community are still felt deeply today. On 15 November 2003, 75 years to the day after the disaster, the village hosted a private service of remembrance at the old lifeboat house at Rye Harbour. Eight close relatives of those that were lost attended the service. Lifeboats from Rye Harbour, Dungeness and Hastings scattered rose petals near the old boathouse, paying tribute to the men who gave their lives to save others. Relatives and their guests watched from the shore.

During the Annual Service of Remembrance on 16 November, 17 direct family members each lit a candle at the altar in memory of their relative and read out their name. The service was followed by a wreath-laying ceremony, where 17 lifeboat crew members from the local stations laid individual posies on each name tablet of the crew that were lost.

*The Lifeboat* in November 1928 told the story of the tragedy at Rye Harbour, where 17 crew were lost

### THE LIFEBOAT.

The Journal of the Royal National Life-boat Institution.

Vol. XXVII.—No. 296.] NOVEMBER, 1928. [PART 64.

#### Disaster to the Rye Life-boat. The Whole Crew Drowned.

The worst disaster which has fallen on the Life-boat Service for many years occurred on 15th November. It fell with crushing weight on the gallant Life-boat Crew of the little village of Rye Harbour, where 17 crew were lost. The Journal, according to its invariable practice, will permit the widows, dependent children and other dependent relatives of the Crew, according to

## National Memorial Arboretum



The sculpture overlooking the National Memorial Arboretum  
Inset: RNLI Chief Executive Andrew Freemantle planting a commemorative tree at the arboretum  
Photos: Nicholas Leach/Ships Monthly

Philip Theaker has been a regular contributor to the letters page of *the Lifeboat* magazine. In December 2002 he wrote to us about the new National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, north of Birmingham. The Arboretum commemorates the 80 million people who were killed in wars during the twentieth century and those who gave their lives in service to others. South Staffordshire branches had felt that RNLI crew members who had given their lives should be represented with a plot but Mr Theaker was aware that the RNLI's constitution does not allow for funds to be used for this purpose. His letter therefore told of the local branches' plans to raise funds for a plot at the site and asked for support to raise £5,000.

Through Mr Theaker's updates we were delighted to hear that the appeal was a success.

On 17 September 2003 a service at

the Arboretum chapel was followed by a dedication and tree planting ceremony at the site. Mr Theaker dedicated the memorial plot to the RNLI, officially handing it over to RNLI Chairman Peter Nicholson. Chief Executive Andrew Freemantle planted the commemorative tree. The event was attended by over 100 guests representing the branches and guilds that had made generous donations to the funding of the memorial.

Sculptor Andrew Fitchett of Burton-on-Trent donated his time in the creation of the lifeboatman who looks out to the river.

More than the original target of £5,000 was collected. Additional funds raised were used for wooden benches, plaques and a flagpole. Remaining funds will be used for ongoing maintenance undertaken by Arboretum staff and RNLI branch volunteers.

## Ab Fab star presents RNLI with top award

Actress Joanna Lumley presented the RNLI with a special accolade at the National Training Awards in London on 18 November 2003. The award is in recognition of the high quality of training given to lifeboat crew members.

The RNLI's new competence-based training strategy ensured success at an earlier national final in Plymouth, making it one of only 43 national winners to attend the winners' gala ceremony. The judges were so impressed that they gave the RNLI an additional award for its invaluable contribution to training in the voluntary sector and for training 4,500 crew members to such high standards.

Sue Hennessy, the RNLI's Head of Training, said: 'I was extremely proud that the RNLI won at the national finals. So to be singled out with just 14 other organisations for a special award is thrilling. Winning at this year's awards is a culmination of all the hard work by everyone in the RNLI operations training team.'

Joanna Lumley presents the special training award to (left to right) Simulator Manager Billy Bean, Head of Training Sue Hennessy and Exmouth Coxswain Tim Mock



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18 January  
Cotswold Canter – 10K  
Burford, Oxfordshire

1 February  
Roundhay Romp – 5K and 10K  
Roundhay Park, Leeds

8 February  
Fab Feb 5K  
Mile End/Hackney, London

29 February  
Goodwood Gallop – 10 miles  
Goodwood Motor Racing Circuit,  
near Chichester

14 March  
Stanley Park – 10K  
Blackpool

28 March  
Lymington – 10K  
Lymington lifeboat station,  
near Southampton

4 April  
Hatfield House – 7.5 miles  
Hatfield House, Herts

18 April  
Flora London Marathon  
London

23 May  
Leg it for Lifeboats – 10K and 5K  
Wimbledon Common, London

30 May  
Dunfermline City Half Marathon  
Dunfermline

31 May (tbc)  
The Great Manchester Run – 10K  
Manchester

13 June  
Syntegra Edinburgh Marathon –  
full marathon/four person  
marathon relay  
Edinburgh

20 June  
The Asics Blackpool Fylde Coast  
Marathon and Half Marathon  
Blackpool

26 June  
UK & Ireland Corporate Games –  
4x1600m relay, 10K and 5K  
Gateshead International Stadium

11 July  
RNLI Filey and Hunmanby  
Triathlon – 400m swim,  
13-mile bike ride, 4-mile run  
Filey and Hunmanby

31 July and 1 August  
London Triathlon  
ExCel Centre, Docklands, London

5 September  
Great Scottish Run –  
half marathon & 10K  
Glasgow

12 September  
Experian Robin Hood Marathon  
Nottingham

14 September  
Flora Light Challenge  
for Women – 5K  
Hyde Park, London

26 September  
BUPA Great North Run – 21K  
Newcastle, Gateshead

3 October  
Baxters Loch Ness Marathon –  
marathon and 10K  
Inverness

10 October  
Liverpool International Half  
Marathon and 10K  
Liverpool

10 October (tbc)  
Henley Half Marathon  
Henley

21 November (tbc)  
Solent Saunter – 5K  
Royal Victoria Country Park,  
near Netley, Southampton

28 November (tbc)  
RNLI Run up to Christmas – 10K  
Ashley Heath, Dorset

5 December  
RNLI Reindeer Run – 10K  
Port Talbot, South Wales

Please send me more information on running with the RNLI

TB4/51/F2

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Lifeboats

# News

## A dangerous career

Recent research suggests that British fishermen remain 50 times more likely to have a fatal accident at work than the average worker. As a lifesaving organisation, the RNLI believes that as well as providing a first-class lifeboat service, it should be doing all it can to help reduce the 300 deaths that occur at sea every year. Fishermen feature more highly in this list of casualties than any other group of sea user.

As a result of the significant hazards faced by fishermen, RNLI Sea Safety now includes a dedicated team of fishing safety coordinators, who give regular safety advice and practical demonstrations around the country's main fishing ports, primarily in Scotland and the South West.

The RNLI's Fishing Safety Manager, Ian Benham explains: 'As a lifesaving organisation, we have only one interest – the saving of lives – and the fact that we have no hidden agenda is recognised by fishermen. We offer the hand of assistance in the provision of safety advice, just as we offer the hand of assistance in a rescue situation.'



Fishing safety demonstrations



## Busiest summer ever

In 2003, the RNLI had the busiest summer in its history, with preliminary figures showing a record 3,667 launches in June, July and August, 418 more than in summer 2002.

Lifeboat crews faced thick fog and heavy storms in northern and eastern areas, but the hot sun on the south coast meant that they were kept busy with calls for help from swimmers, surfers and sailors. Michael Vlasto, Operations Director, said: 'This demonstrates the huge range of conditions that our lifeboat crews have to deal with. They can face storms and gale force winds one day, and blazing sunshine the next.'

The record-breaking temperatures also meant that beaches were jam-packed throughout the summer. RNLI lifeguards saved 27 lives and dealt with 7,226 incidents.



Photo: Myles New

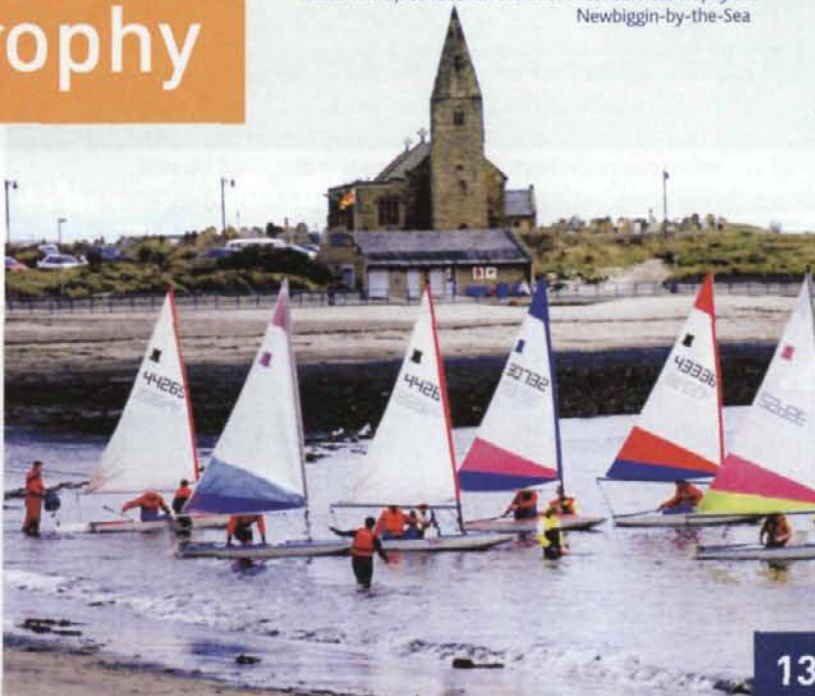
## Inter Services Trophy

Volunteers from Newbiggin lifeboat station worked with members of other local emergency services on 27 September 2003 to give youngsters an introduction into their work.

The Inter Services Trophy event was organised by Newbiggin-by-the-Sea sailing club, Northumberland, to give its youth squad an opportunity to work alongside members of local public services while taking part in a series of boat races.

Youngsters were assigned to RNLI, Police and Coastguard teams as 'pit crew' and trainers, as well as making up the numbers for the racing teams. It was a very successful first event (even though the Coastguard won!) and the club hope to develop the scheme further to give youngsters life skills and an insight into the opportunities available to them in the future. The event has already generated considerable public interest, resulting in enquiries from the Ambulance service and a local hospital who want to be included in this year's battle for the trophy.

Teams line up to race for the 2003 Inter Services Trophy at Newbiggin-by-the-Sea



# News

## Honour for Eastbourne Silver Medallist

Coxswain Mark Sawyer of Eastbourne lifeboat station received the Shipwrecked Mariners Association's Emile Robin Award during a glittering ceremony on 7 October 2003 at Fishmongers' Hall, London Bridge. The award, for an 'outstanding rescue by a British ship' was given to Mark for the attempted salvage and subsequent rescue of two crew members from the yacht

*Paperchase* in October 2002. As reported in the summer 2003 issue of *the Lifeboat* the Eastbourne coxswain and crew carried out the rescue in gale force onshore winds, in darkness at low tide, in the confined approach channel to the harbour.



Coxswain Mark Sawyer receiving the award from Admiral of the Fleet Sir Julian Oswald GCB, President of the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society

## STOP PRESS

*The Lifeboat* would like say a big 'thank you' to all who took part in our 2003 readership survey – we had a great response. We are planning to bring you the findings in the spring 2004 issue. This will allow us time to analyse the information fully but we couldn't resist letting you know some initial results...

The majority of readers are aged 45 and above, with over 60% saying that they read the magazine from cover to cover. A further 29% of readers said that they preferred to glance through for articles of interest. Most readers were happy with the content of *the Lifeboat* but some said that they would be also be interested in seeing articles on travel and reading. It was also clear from the survey that readers were very enthusiastic supporters, with nearly half saying that they already displayed an RNLI sticker in their car.

## A royal visitor

RNLI President The Duke of Kent visited Torbay lifeboat station in October 2003 to meet crew members and their families. He was greeted on the waterfront by Brixham Branch Chairman and former Coxswain Arthur Curnow, together with Torbay Mayor Nick Bye and Mayoress Christine Weston. Despite the cold day The Duke was given a warm reception from the whole team at the

station and was introduced to fundraisers from local branches in Torbay, Brixham, Paignton, Totnes and Newton Abbot.

The Duke then went aboard the station's Severn class lifeboat *Alec and Christina Dykes* and watched a rescue demonstration by the station's D class *Spirit of the RPC*, before unveiling a commemorative plaque of his visit.

The Duke of Kent meets Torbay lifeboat crew members  
Photo: Al Macphee @ Miracle



## Sorry!

Thank you to the eagle-eyed readers who spotted two errors in the autumn 2003 issue of *the Lifeboat*. On page 5 in the News section, we carried the story 'Saving more lives' about a new lifeboat station at Burnham-on-Sea. Please note that the new station is in Somerset, not Southend as stated. The station near Southend is at Burnham-on-Crouch.

Also, on page 9 in the Letters section we published two lifeboat rescue photographs from a reader under the headline 'Mayday, mayday... job well done!' The lifeboat involved in the rescue was from Swanage, not Poole as stated.



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# Letters

## Steadfast indeed

I hope my comments will not throw your administration into a whirl, but being an ex-member of the Boys' Brigade and a Governor of the RNLI for many years, I was surprised to see in the latest *Lifeboat* that the new Boys' Brigade lifeboat has been named *Sure and Steadfast*, when traditionally it is 'Sure and Stedfast'. If that has been changed, I apologise but I think the Boys' Brigade should have picked it up.

On a different tack, I recount the incident that held me in awe of RNLI crew members and the reason for my lifelong support.

During 1954-5 I was serving aboard *HMS Romola*, an ocean-going minesweeper. We called in at Harwich, after three months at sea, and tied up at a buoy in the harbour. Half the ship's company had already gone ashore when the ship received a signal to proceed immediately to the South Goodwin Sands. The South Goodwin Lightship had

been swept from her moorings, so we stood by to assist the rescue craft in the attempts to recover her crew.

I came off watch at 0800 and went up on deck just as a lifeboat – presumably Dover – came alongside and the coxswain said: 'My God, you haven't been out here all night in that have you?' He meant our 900-ton Naval ship. Of course, he too had been out all night in his lifeboat. What confidence he had in his boat!

How can one fail to admire the courage and spirit of RNLI crews? More power to your elbow.

**Mr KLC Miller**  
Abbeymead, Gloucester

*Editor's reply: This was not the only query on this subject. We checked with the Boys' Brigade and, sure enough, their motto has been updated to reflect the modern spelling.*

## Mixed memories



Longhope lifeboat working with Thurso lifeboat and a rescue helicopter attending freighter *Multitank Ascania* in 2000

On a recent trip to the Orkney Islands, my wife and I visited Longhope on Hoy. Looking across the windswept bay, I was instantly transported back to the summer of 1964 when I had a university holiday job with the Ordnance Survey and was staying in digs in Longhope for a few days. While we were there, a film was made depicting one of the many rescues carried out by the crew of the Longhope lifeboat. Since it was almost

flat calm that day, the lifeboat was racing back and forth to make the sea look choppy. Through our binoculars we could see a further touch of authenticity being added as someone threw buckets of water over the lifeboatmen as they worked on deck.

As I stood there, nearly 40 years later, I clearly remembered everyone laughing at the antics on the lifeboat. We were not to know that a few short months later, that same brave crew would perish in yet another rescue attempt. The waters around the Pentland Firth are some of the most dangerous in the world, but when sailors were in danger, the lifeboat went out.

**Jack Orr**  
Ellon, Aberdeenshire

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The R.N.L.I. is supported entirely by voluntary contributions. A donation from the sale of this box is made to the R.N.L.I. Headquarters, Poole, Dorset.

In addition to being an RNLI supporter, I am a phillumenist – a collector of matchbox labels. Some years ago the Britannia Match Company produced a series of matchboxes illustrating lifeboats, crews and stations. These were manufactured in West Germany and Belgium with average contents of 40 and 45 matches. I am trying to complete the sets and would like to ask if, through *the Lifeboat*, readers and supporters can help me in my quest.

**Mr GJ Corps,**  
Withington, Manchester

*Editor's note: If any reader can help Mr Corps, please write c/o the Lifeboat.*

All letters printed in the *Lifeboat* represent the personal opinions of the writer and do not reflect the views of the RNLI, nor are they endorsed by the RNLI in any way.

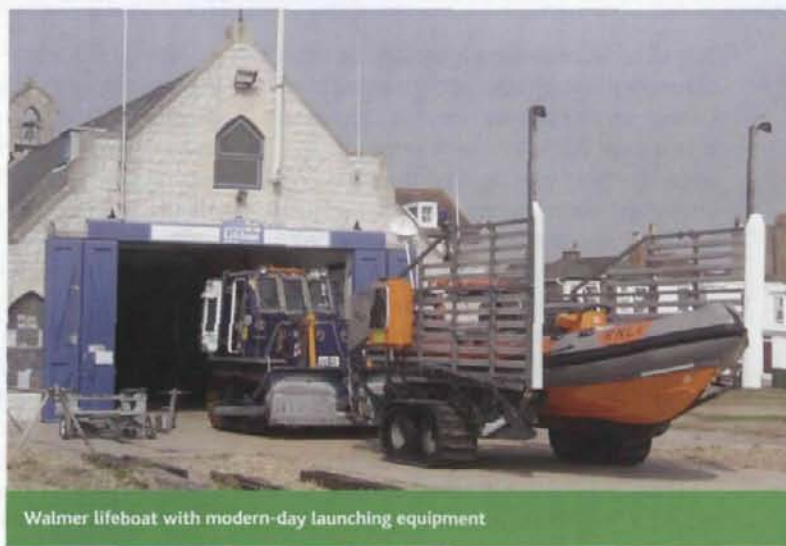
## Solihull-by-the-sea?

On receiving my autumn issue of *the Lifeboat*, I thought to myself: 'I can never remember having read anything about the Walmer lifeboat', so I was absolutely delighted to see the article about the three-man crew who rescued two yachtsmen.

My grandfather was a member when oars were a means of propulsion. In my teens in the 1930s I helped launch the lifeboat by putting greased planks under the hull. In those days there were three stations: Deal, Kingsdown and Walmer. Deal and Kingsdown were dispensed with and my father's brother, Joe Mercer, followed a Mr Pearson as coxswain. I also believe another brother, Dick, was also a member.

I now live in Solihull, which is as far from the sea as you can get in England, but my memories of living only a short distance from the lifeboat station can never be erased.

**Fred Mercer (of Fred Mercer Orchestras)**  
Solihull, West Midlands



Walmer lifeboat with modern-day launching equipment

## Tower comes top

Reading the autumn 2003 edition of *the Lifeboat*, I am amazed to see how many shouts there have been for the River Thames stations and, in particular, Tower. I can't help wondering how so many people manage to get themselves into difficulties: do they fall in off boats or from the embankment?

I would find it very interesting if you could at some time include an article on this subject, which goes to prove how very important this new branch of the RNLI is proving to be.

Whilst writing I would like to say that I find the magazine extremely interesting and read it from cover to cover.

**S Harding**  
Brixham, Devon

*Editor's reply: Look out for just such an article in a future issue and meanwhile see the centre Listings section for details of shouts in the last quarter too. The letter on page 20 may also be of interest...*

## Seaham – the personal side

The autumn 2003 edition of *the Lifeboat* included a mention of the commemoration of the lifeboat *George Elmy*, whose crew were lost off the coast of County Durham with five local fishermen in 1962.

In response, we had a call from a Mrs Matthews, the daughter of Oliver Smith, who was joint owner of a fishing boat with the father of sole survivor Donald 'Donny' Burrell.

She told us that her father was a coal miner but, like many others in the community, was also a part-time fisherman. Mrs Matthews remembers going out in her and Donny's fathers' boat frequently as a child, from as young as two or three years old, wrapped up warmly and placed in a sheltered position in the bow.

As she got older, she quickly learnt that the harbour entrance was particularly difficult to negotiate if ever conditions at sea were unfavourable. On the odd occasion when sea and weather caught them out, local fishermen would choose instead the easier approach into the next town further down the coast, and take the bus home from there. She remembers they relied heavily on advice from the

Coastguard as to whether it was safe enough to go out to sea and kept them informed of boat movements – much in the spirit of the RNLI's fish safety campaign today (see page 13).

Having been born and bred in Seaham, our member met her husband in the RAF during the Second World War and moved southwards to join him at Letchworth. In 1962 they were both shocked to see the news of the loss of life at Seaham when it was reported on national television. Mrs Matthews was upset to discover that she knew all of the lifeboat crew and fishermen who had died from her schooldays. Indeed, everyone in the small town would have known someone lost that night.

Her father saw the lifeboat capsize from the quayside and ran to where he guessed she would be washed in. It was there that he found that his friend's son Donny was the sole survivor.

This sad history has contributed to Mrs Matthews' lifelong commitment to the RNLI. We wish her many more years of reading *the Lifeboat*.

Editor

# Letters

## Airlift from Abigail

Two of us were making a passage to deliver our recently purchased yacht *Abigail* from Gillingham to her new home in Chichester in late June 2003. We were sailing in uncomfortable seas, against the wind and, after eight hours' sailing, the tide had just turned against us, in a sea area we didn't know, in the dark and rain. We had the notorious Margate sands to our starboard and the big shipping and Thames estuary to our port side. From the charts we knew we couldn't sail any closer to the land and our first port of call was to be Ramsgate, a further two hours away.

I had unfortunately been vomiting for the previous few hours. After one session I got a pain in my chest and felt dizzy and faint. I took an aspirin but the pain got stronger and I started to pass out.

We placed a VHF pan medico call with Dover Coastguard, who patched us through to a medical guy. The Coastguard decided that the best course of action would be to scramble the helicopter and Margate lifeboat and get me to the coronary care ward at Margate hospital.

After being administered various drugs and oxygen by the paramedic, I was expertly winched off the stern of the yacht. The oxygen woke me enough to see that my pulse was racing at over 180 beats per minute, my blood pressure was low, but the good news was I had not suffered a heart attack. I was diagnosed as having atrial fibrillation, possibly brought about by the retching (apparently the stomach muscles and heart can affect each other).

I must admit I felt a bit of a fraud at the time: the lifeboat and helicopter should only be used in emergencies, for people in imminent danger of losing their life. Surely I wasn't that ill? However, the medical staff told me that the decision to get me to hospital was absolutely correct. Without

immediate, effective treatment, my condition would have been more serious. Three days later I was discharged.

In 20 years of part-time sailing, although I have seen the Solent helicopter fly over a few times, I have never seen a real live rescue. I never, ever thought that I would be involved in one, particularly as the casualty. So, I offer my sincere thanks to all that responded to the VHF call. I understand that the helicopter crewman that administered the initial medical aid may have injured himself when he was landed on the lifeboat. I hope that he is fine now. Also the lifeboatman who was seasick during the crossing of the sandbanks en route to Margate. Everybody was very professional and a credit to the service. On behalf of all

sailors, the majority of whom will never require the RNLI's aid, may I say that if things go horribly wrong and we can't save ourselves, then knowing there is someone there who can and will is something that we really appreciate.

**Alan Jones  
Warwick**



Aerial view of Margate harbour  
Photo: © Hunting Aerofilms

## Improving reception

Congratulations on the excellent 'Quality training' article in the autumn 2003 edition. How different from the day in the 1970s when a collection of coxswains and divisional inspectors attended the RNR Training Centre in South Wales for the first VHF radio course – pre-cursor to the VHF mobile training units – under the tutelage of the late Lieutenant Commander Peter Fulton and Lieutenant Commander (now

Commodore) George Cooper.

I recall that we listened, with some amusement and embarrassment, to a taped fictional example of blatantly poor radio procedure, the simulated background 'static' having been provided by Mrs Cooper's vacuum cleaner. During the subsequent exercises, anyone trying to score points with his knowledge was brought down to size by Peter injecting

'faults' into the pupil's radio and being told to carry on with the scenario.

The concept was far sighted, although some of us were sceptical that lifeboatmen would take to formal training. Thankfully, we were so very wrong!

**Mike Pennell  
Chief Staff Officer (long retired)  
Truro, Cornwall**

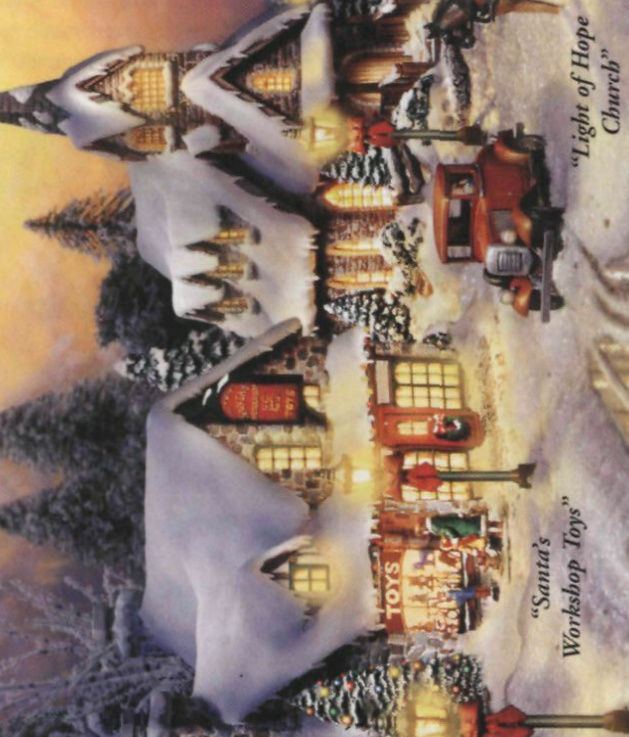
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# Letters

## Thumbing a lift

I have always been a supporter of the RNLI in general and at Exmouth in particular. I really enjoy 'doing my bit' when I can. However, little did I think that I would ever become one of your 'clients'.

At approximately 4.30pm on Wednesday, 15 October 2003 I fell into the water whilst I changed [water] taxis. I knew I was in trouble as I don't swim very well and the tide was running fairly strongly. After failing to get to the Warren, I fetched up at the *Sara Jane's* moorings and held on tight. I shouted for a long time, not knowing whether I had

been heard. I looked at my watch at 5.10pm and wondered if I could, or should, keep hanging on. Soon after I saw the most wonderful sight in the world: that lovely orange D class inshore lifeboat coming my way!

My grateful thanks to launcher Pete Thomas and a very special thanks to crew members Carey, Karl and Roy.

**Eddie Treeby**  
Exmouth, Devon



Left to right:  
Carey Wexford, Karl Stott and Roy Stott  
Carey and Roy photos: Haydn Jones

## Thames RNLI to the rescue

Having been a Governor for many years I never thought I would have to call on the RNLI. When we did need a lifeboat it was where we least expected.

We'd just bought a boat from Penton Hook (a Tremlett 46 Offshore), and now had to bring her down the Thames and home to Ramsgate. All went well to begin with: the boat behaved impeccably and we went through all the locks without a problem. We had done all our height calculations and planned to arrive in Hammersmith in daylight. Unfortunately Richmond lock was broken and we waited 1½ hours for the weir, so now we were in the dark.

Then came Hammersmith bridge, the one we were most worried about getting under. Having had our calculations wrecked by the hold up at Richmond we approached gingerly and passed with about 18 inches of air space.

Then it happened: the port engine stalled. I started it again, put it in reverse to clear whatever it was, but it stalled again. 'No matter,' we thought, 'we'll continue on

one.' No chance! Whatever we had picked up was acting like a rudder and we had no steerage, even with the bow thruster.

I dialled 999 and was put through to the central Coastguard control in Inverness. The lifeboat was with us within 5 minutes! It was one of the new Thames jet boats. They came alongside, put a short tow on us and took us down to Chelsea Harbour Pier, where they dropped us off. The Coastguard called us back to ensure we were OK. What service!

Next day a friend came down, with snorkel and mask, and at slack water went under and within 15 minutes had unravelled a barge hawser, which had knotted itself around the propeller.

So a big 'thank you!' to the Thames RNLI service. After 14 years of Hazel and I as Governors with both children Storm Force members too, I never expected to cash in on the membership!

**Dom Watson**  
Ramsgate, by email



RNLI lifeboats have operated on the Thames since January 2002

# Bookshelf

**The history of the Lerwick lifeboats**  
**The history of the New Quay lifeboats**  
**The history of Barrow lifeboats**

By Jeff Morris

Price: £3.50 each (including postage and packaging)

The honorary archivist of the Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society has done his usual excellent job in researching the history of lifeboats in three of his latest books covering New Quay (Cardiganshire), Barrow and Lerwick stations. Copies are available direct from the author at: 14 Medina Road, Coventry CV6 5JB. Please make cheques payable to Jeff Morris.



**40 years on Morecambe Bay**

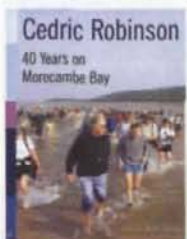
By Cedric Robertson

Published by Great Northern Books

ISBN 0-9544002-2-4

Price: £12.99

This book marks the 50th anniversary of Cedric's appointment as the Queen's guide to the Kent Sands of Morecambe. This unique post was originally established in 1536 when the services of a guide were essential to avoid the treacherous quicksands when cutting across the bay at low tide. The book includes chapters on Morecambe lifeboat and Bay Hovercraft Rescue, the predecessor to the RNLI Hovercraft service that now operates at Morecambe. Copies are available from all good bookshops or by calling 01943 604027.



The following books are available online from Amazon via the RNLI website at [www.lifeboats.org.uk](http://www.lifeboats.org.uk). Amazon will donate 5% of the value of all these orders to the RNLI

**Sennen Cove lifeboats – 150 years of lifesaving**

By Nicholas Leach

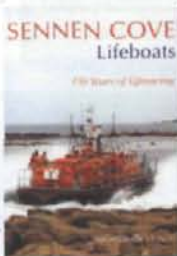
Published by Tempus Publishing Ltd

ISBN 0-7524-3111-0

Price: £16.99

Nicholas tells the story of Sennen's lifeboats and their volunteer crews in this first, comprehensive history of lifeboats and wrecks off the tip of Cornwall. The book includes a wealth of historical and modern photographs to help tell the tale.

Copies are available from Sennen Cove lifeboat shop or by calling Tempus on 01453 883300.



**The Greenwich effect – a companion to the home of GMT**

By Margaret Kaye

Published by Librario Publishing Limited

ISBN 1-904440-28-2

Price £9.99 (plus £1.50 postage and packaging)

Margaret Kaye looks back at the scholars that left their mark on Greenwich, famous for its maritime history and the part it played in the development of navigation and astronomy. A good read for anyone interested in the time of day. Copies are available online at [www.librario.com](http://www.librario.com) or by calling 01343 550245



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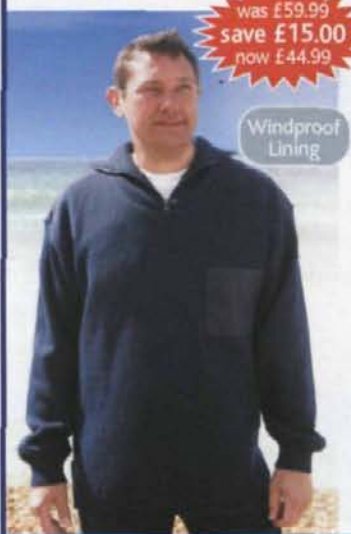
This navy cardigan is ideal as a smart alternative to a blazer or sports jacket, yet warm and comfortable enough for everyday wear. In a wool-rich mix for easy care, with a discreet cable pattern and patch pockets, it's a design classic sure to become a firm favourite! Hand washable. Sizes to fit M: 40/43", L: 44/46", XL: 47/50".

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# Lifeboats in action

## Brothers and stations unite



Left to right: Red Bay crew Tom McLaughlin, Jimmy Healy, Paddy McLaughlin and Gareth Shannon on *Dorothy Mary*

**When Red Bay lifeboat crew were paged, there was no immediate threat to life for the couple on the yacht, *Chloe*. Yet at Red Bay station brothers Tom and Paddy McLaughlin remember thinking: 'It was blowing a gale right up here... We knew we were going to something serious'**

Mr and Mrs Burston are experienced sailors and had lived on their sturdy yacht for nearly 20 years. They were heading for Portpatrick, Scotland when the conditions suddenly changed on 8 September 2002. The wind swung to the east and the impeller wouldn't work. When Mr Burston investigated, he could find nothing wrong with it, but by this time the conditions were rough. The couple decided to sail to shelter in Carnlough harbour, but they feared that even if they got through the entrance, they wouldn't be able to stop in time. Sound judgment made them alert the Coastguard to their situation at this point. The Coastguard requested the launch of the Red Bay lifeboat at midday.

It only took Red Bay five minutes to launch their Atlantic 75. Four crew members, not the standard three, manned the lifeboat. It was thought likely that one of them would have to transfer to the casualty and Crew Member Gareth Shannon's experience as a yachtsman made him perfect for the job. Tom stresses that it was a joint decision to take an extra man: 'We do things

collectively as a crew, so we discussed it and knew Gareth's sailing ability.' However, there was no seat for Gareth, so it was a rough ride. He held on tight as the lifeboat made 20 knots on the five-mile passage to the yacht.

When they reached the casualty, conditions had worsened and *Chloe* was pitching and rolling in a 2m swell and breaking seas. Mr Burston remembers: 'We were being thrown about something chronic ... getting a bit black and blue.' *Chloe* was nearing Garron Point, an area with a notorious tidal rip from the Irish Sea and the Atlantic.

Tom, the helmsman, recalls: 'We realised we were always going to have to transfer someone, but when we first got to them there was no way it could be done.' While escorting the yacht, keeping a close eye on her, Tom discussed other options with the crew and decided that Larne all weather lifeboat should be placed on standby.

In the conditions, the VHF radio of the yacht was out of reach below deck, so the

two boats could only communicate by shouting. Mrs Burston was fighting to keep a straight course at the helm. The yacht was now being battered by larger waves and the wind strength increased. Mrs Burston waved for help.

The Red Bay crew were quick to respond. Tom made an approach to transfer Gareth, and Paddy called Belfast Coastguard to request the assistance of Larne's Trent class lifeboat. The Larne lifeboat *Dr John McSparran* launched within 10 minutes with Jimmy Healy's brother Frank in command.

Meanwhile, Tom throttled the B class towards the yacht. In an extremely difficult manoeuvre, with *Chloe* surfing and broaching on the larger waves, Tom laid the port bow onto the yacht. Gareth quickly stepped onto the yacht and then Tom moved the lifeboat out of harm's way.

Gareth assessed the condition of the crew and took the helm on *Chloe*. With Gareth's handheld VHF radio, communication was easier, but the breaking swell had increased to 3m. Gareth fought to keep a steady course towards shelter at Larne. Red Bay lifeboat stood by. Paddy commented: 'After we transferred Gareth, for the next 15 minutes the conditions were bad. There were lots of breaking seas coming at him, getting him beam on.' Thankfully, the conditions eased as the two vessels passed Garron Point.

The Larne lifeboat was fast approaching from the south. By radio, Red Bay lifeboat requested that a crew member from the Trent be ready to transfer onto *Chloe* via the Atlantic 75. Tom explains: 'We always knew there would have to be some sail work done, so we would have to transfer another crew member.'

Larne lifeboat reached the casualty and the Atlantic 75 one mile south of Garron Point. Larne Crew Member Paul Johnston was successfully transferred onto the Atlantic 75 and then onto the yacht.

Under close escort of the two lifeboats, Gareth and Paul sailed southwest in improved conditions towards Glenarm



marina. Within two miles of Glenarm, they prepared *Chloe* for a tow by Larne lifeboat.

Tom and Frank discussed the dangers of getting through the narrow entrance of Glenarm marina with a heavy (approximately 9-tonne) boat in tow. They decided that both lifeboats would be needed to control, enter the harbour and berth the yacht safely. The Trent class towed the yacht into the marina while the Atlantic 75 attached a short tow to *Chloe's* stern, ready to act as a break and to help with steerage.

A large crowd of onlookers watched the manoeuvre as *Chloe* was berthed successfully over 2½ hours after the launch of Red Bay lifeboat. On shore, the couple thanked the lifeboatmen, who were relieved at the outcome of the service. Mr Burston later said of the lifeboat crew: 'They couldn't have been nicer or more helpful.' After a brief rest, both lifeboats set off back to their stations. Although the Red Bay crew had another rough ride, both lifeboats reached home safely.

Tom McLaughlin receives the Thanks of the Institution on Vellum for this service. Paddy McLaughlin, Jimmy Healy and Gareth Shannon receive a letter of appreciation. The actions of Larne lifeboat are also recognised by a joint letter of appreciation. Deputy Divisional Inspector for Ireland, Owen Medland, praised the teamwork of both crews and remarked that: 'A plethora of lifeboating skills were demonstrated by all on board.' Owen singled out Tom's actions, which prevented the rescue escalating into a more serious situation: 'Tom McLaughlin showed great foresight and command during the service.'



## THE RED BAY LIFEBOAT

Atlantic 75 lifeboat  
B-728

*Dorothy Mary*

Funding: Bequests of Miss Dorothy Mary Raine and Mr David Stanley Raine

## THE CREW

Helmsman Tom

McLaughlin

Paddy McLaughlin

Gareth Shannon

Jimmy Healy

## RED BAY LIFEBOAT STATION

Established: 1973

## THE LARNE LIFEBOAT

Trent class lifeboat  
14-30

*Dr John McSparran*

Funding: Bequests of

Miss Margaret

McSparran, Mrs Arabella

Frances Maud Cripps

and Miss Susan

Cochrane McCully with

other gifts

## THE CREW

Coxswain Frank Healy

Willie McCauley

Martin Agnew

Karen Black

Keith Leitch

Paul Johnston

Roy McMullen

## LARNE LIFEBOAT STATION

Established: 1994

## THE CASUALTY

Crew of two on 12m yacht *Chloe*

## THE CONDITIONS

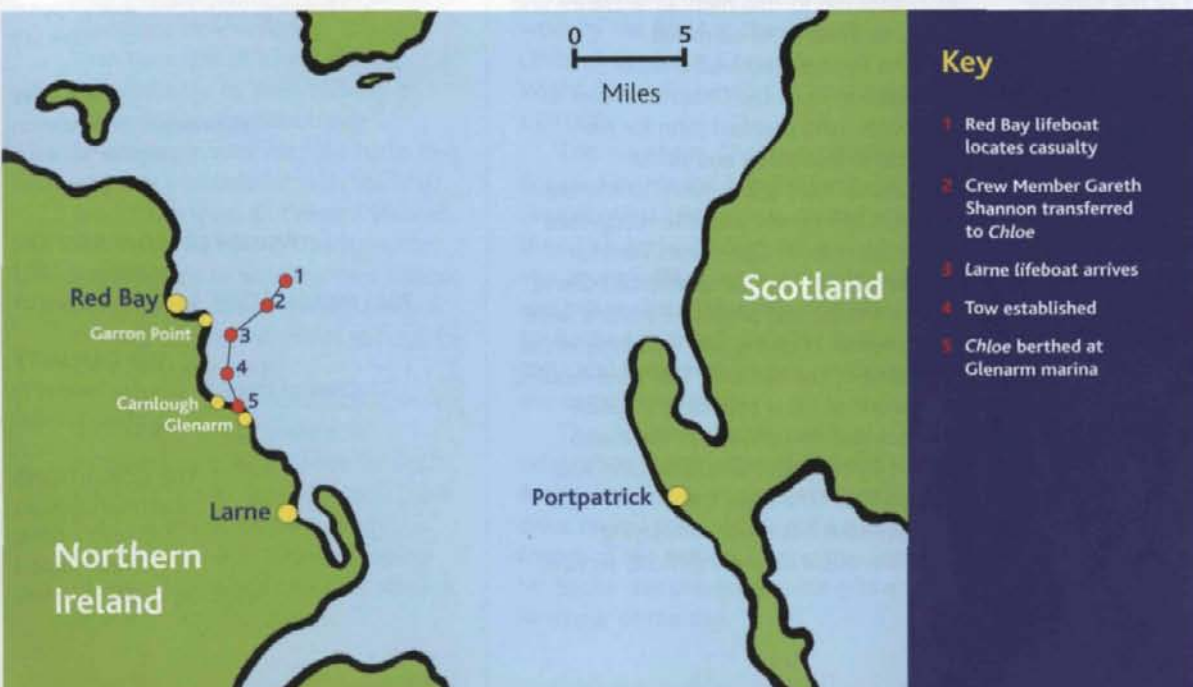
Weather: Dry

Visibility: Good

Wind: Force 6, gusting 7

Sea state: Rough,

2-3m swell



# Lifeboats in action

## Disaster averted at Whitby

When two lifeboatmen at Whitby station spotted a small boat heading seawards one afternoon in January 2003, they knew the crew of three were putting their lives at risk

Helmsman John Pearson and Mechanic Glenn Goodberry watched with concern as a small day boat with an outboard motor approached the harbour exit. The boat had only been bought 24 hours before and this was the three crewmen's first trip to sea. They were apparently unaware of the danger they would meet out of the harbour. Winds were only force 3 at the time, but high winds from previous days together with the meeting of fresh water from the river Esk and the incoming tide were resulting in a swell of up to 3m at the harbour entrance.

With fears for the safety of the men, John and Glenn left the boathouse to keep an eye on them. John recalls: 'We were hoping he would turn around.' But the boat kept going. Glenn used his mobile phone to alert Humber Coastguard. At 3pm the relief D class lifeboat, *Cetrek*, launched with John at the helm and Stephen Boocock and Philip Webster as crew.

The D class passed out of the harbour through breaking seas and, with the radio help of Glenn and the Coxswain on shore, they soon located the day boat. The crew had finally realised their mistake and were trying to turn back to the harbour. They were getting dangerously close to the surf line, so John told his crew to rig a tow ready for rapid deployment.

The situation worsened as the day boat was surfing down the waves, out of control and her outboard motor had failed. John

still remembers one particular moment: 'The casualty was picked up by an extremely large swell and broached to port. I was sure she would capsize.'

So John swiftly took the lifeboat alongside the day boat. Later, John commented: 'The inshore lifeboat handled exceptionally well in the conditions.' He turned both the vessels' bows to the sea and ordered the men into the lifeboat and they didn't need to be asked twice! John recalls: 'The three crew of the vessel responded immediately to my command to leave their vessel. They were very grateful.'

With three extra people on board, now it was the lifeboat that was at risk in the breaking seas. John remembers: 'With my crew as well there was a lot of weight on the boat to get back into harbour.' John was discussing their options with those ashore via VHF radio when he observed a lull in the breaking waves. With razor-sharp reactions he judged the moment well and made a successful run for the harbour entrance and safety, to great relief all round.

John Pearson received a letter of appreciation from the Chairman Peter Nicholson, who thanked John for his 'judgment, leadership and skilful seamanship' during this swift 10-minute service. Glenn's role was also recognised with a letter from Operations Director Michael Vlasto who complimented Glenn: 'Your alertness and proactive actions were instrumental in saving precious time in the launching of the lifeboat.' The 'level-headed teamwork' of Crew Members Stephen Boocock and Philip Webster were also praised by Michael Vlasto and John was pleased that: 'The crew carried out their tasks without hesitation, displaying professionalism during a difficult service.'



Crew of *Cetrek* (left to right): Philip Webster, John Pearson and Stephen Boocock

### THE WHITBY LIFEBOAT

Relief D class lifeboat D-491

*Cetrek*

Funding: 25th Anniversary Appeal of *Cetrek* Ltd

### THE CREW

Helmsman John Pearson

Stephen Boocock

Philip Webster

### WHITBY LIFEBOAT STATION

Established: 1861

RNLI Medals: 5 Gold, 14 Silver, 16 Bronze

### THE CASUALTY

Crew of three on 6m day boat with outboard motor

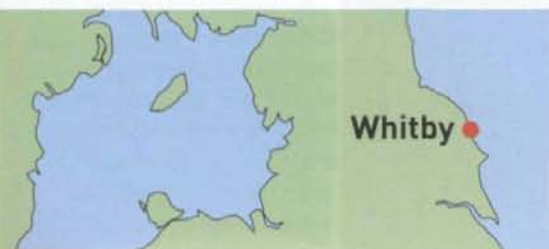
### THE CONDITIONS

Weather: Overcast

Visibility: Good

Wind: Force 4

Sea state: Rough, 3m swell



# Lifeguards in action



Perranporth beach

## Extended lifeguard season saves the day

Beach lifeguards at Perranporth were surprised to see a horse and rider galloping up to them on the afternoon of 26 October 2003

Two horse riders had been enjoying a sunny autumn day on Perran Sands beach when one fell off and was badly injured. Her friend phoned the Coastguard on 999 and raced on her horse to get help.

The lifeguards at Perranporth base, under the instruction of Carrick Supervisor Andy Thomas, reacted quickly. Drustan Ward and Darren Earl collected medical equipment with Andy and ran to the scene, accompanied by Tom Rees, a surf life saving club volunteer. The incoming tide meant there was no vehicle access but they ran the 2km in good time, reaching the injured woman in just over 10 minutes.

The four lifeguards found the casualty lying on her side near the water's edge. She was clearly in a lot of pain. The lifeguards worked together to treat and reassure her. As part of their training, they had learnt to look out for possible spinal injuries and had practised treating this throughout the season. Afterwards, Andy commented that this training, along with the combined experience of the three lifeguards, was vital. They carefully adjusted the woman's position so she was lying on her back, took her riding helmet off, covered her in their jackets to keep her warm and monitored her 'ABC' – her airway, breathing and circulation. Tom ran back for more first aid equipment.

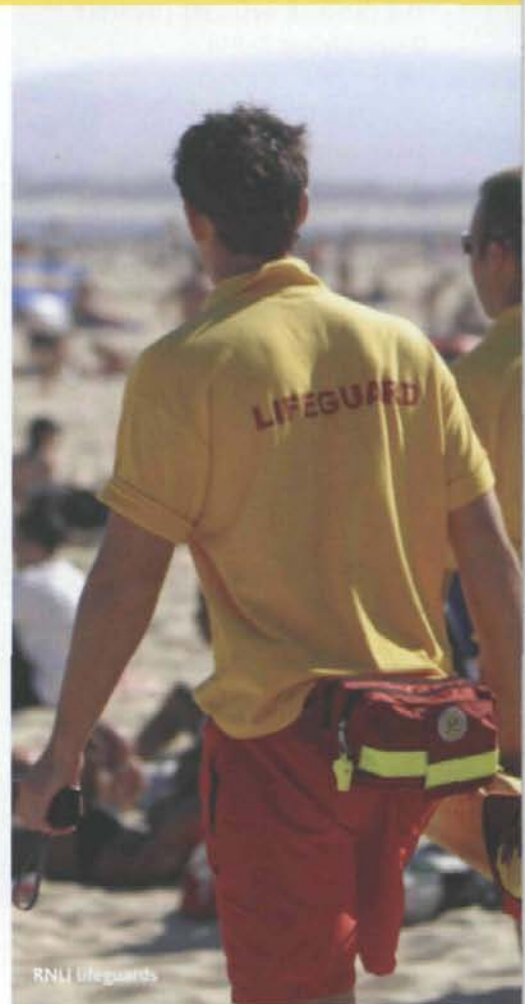
Andy soon realised that the lifeguards would have to move the casualty onto a spinal board and up the beach because of the fast incoming spring tide. This manoeuvre was done with great care and expertise, to avoid causing the woman any more pain or further damage.

The lifeguards kept the casualty as comfortable as possible while they waited for help. They also cleared a landing area for the Royal Navy Sea King helicopter, keeping the horses and people at a safe distance.

The helicopter arrived about 20 minutes after the lifeguards and took the casualty to Treliske hospital. Although the lifeguards haven't heard from the casualty since, they were delighted to discover that she had been discharged from hospital. Andy was grateful for the presence of two volunteer lifeguards, Tom Rees, the 'runner' during the incident, and Gavin Wells, who monitored the water's edge near Perranporth base while the other lifeguards were at the scene of the accident.

It was thanks to Perranzabuloe Parish Council and Perran Sands Holiday Park that the lifeguards were on duty throughout October. They requested extended lifeguard cover at Perranporth beach when they realised that good October weather was likely to attract more crowds than usual. The increasing popularity of surfing and kite surfing also meant that the beach would be busy. The lifeguard season was originally due to end on 30 September but the additional donations from the Parish Council and Holiday Park enabled the RNLI to extend the service throughout October.

Greg Spray, RNLI Area Lifeguard Manager, praised the involvement of the Parish Council and Perran Sands Holiday Park: 'They are acting in an extremely responsible manner by ensuring that lifeguard cover reflects the changing safety needs at the beach.'



RNLI lifeguards



# Listings



Blue Peter presenter Konnie Huq takes a trip on Blue Peter 1 with the Littlehampton crew

## Blue Peter 1 at Littlehampton

Littlehampton's new Blue Peter-funded lifeboat *Blue Peter 1* has been named and welcomed into the RNLi fleet at a special ceremony of dedication in October. This was a double celebration, as the new £550,000 boathouse was officially opened at the same ceremony.

The new Atlantic 75 inshore lifeboat was provided – at a cost of £100,000 – by generous donations from CBBC's *Blue Peter* viewers. The show's presenter, Konnie Huq, handed over the boat to the RNLi on behalf of *Blue Peter* viewers saying: 'This has been the result of a long-running appeal started in 1966. Millions of viewers have organised many fundraising events. We have had a long and happy association with the RNLi since the original *Blue Peter 1* lifeboat was stationed here in Littlehampton. I'm delighted to hand this new lifeboat over into the care of the RNLi, where I'm sure she will help them to continue their lifesaving work.'

The new boathouse took 10 months to complete and incorporates enough space for the station's two inshore lifeboats. There is also a dedicated crew room, modern shower facilities, an up-to-date workshop and space for storage of equipment and spares.

## The Young Watsons at Burry Port

Saturday, 20 September 2003 saw the handing over and dedication of a new inshore lifeboat at Burry Port. The IB1 is the second generation of the D class lifeboat and the first major design change since its introduction in 1963. This is the fourth lifeboat to be on service at Burry Port since the station was re-opened in 1973.

All IB1s are built for the RNLi by a local Welsh company, Avon Inflatables at Llanelli, and fitted out for lifeboat work by the RNLi at the Inshore Lifeboat Centre at Cowes, Isle of Wight. The fully kitted out boat costs £20,000.

This new boat, *The Young Watsons*, donated by Mr and Mrs Bill Bache of Walsall, West Midlands, is named after their four grandchildren. Mr and Mrs Bache's daughters married brothers and hence share the name Watson. Mr Bache presented the boat to the RNLi and the grandchildren performed the naming ceremony.

The day's event ended with a celebration dinner attended by the Bache family together with committee, crew, retired crew, ladies' guild and friends of the station. During the dinner Mr Bache was presented with gifts as a reminder of the day.

## Miss Sally Anne (Baggy) for the relief fleet

The last ever Atlantic 75 lifeboat to be built for RNLi service was named on 5 November at Cowes on the Isle of Wight. The lifeboat is named *Miss Sally Anne (Baggy)* after the donor who has generously funded the craft. Miss Sally Odell expressed a wish to make a substantial gift to the RNLi several years ago and was offered the opportunity to purchase the last of the Atlantic 75s.

Miss Odell said: 'I went over to the Isle of Wight in August to see the boat being built – she looked like a fine craft that would serve her crew well. I was very impressed by the set up at the RNLi's boat building facility at Cowes. Everyone was so friendly and it was a very enjoyable day. The RNLi does such a good job in helping people in difficulty and saving lives at sea – it's easy to forget sometimes that they rely on donations from the public to continue their work. It's good to know that I've been able to contribute to such a vitally important cause and long may they continue.'

Following the naming ceremony, *Miss Sally Anne (Baggy)* will join the relief fleet and will commence her first relief duty at Kinsale, Co. Cork, in the Republic of Ireland, shortly afterwards. Kinsale lifeboat station has only been in existence since late May 2003 and is currently under evaluation to determine the need for a permanent facility in the area. Should that need be established, *Miss Sally Anne (Baggy)* will be allocated permanently to Kinsale as their station lifeboat.

## Saxon at Donaghadee

Donaghadee's new Trent class lifeboat was named at a ceremony in September. The lifeboat was funded by the generous legacy of Ms Freda Rivers and was named in memory of her late husband, who was a keen fisherman.

# Listings

## ABERDEEN

ON-1248(17-24): Apr 1, 29  
ON-1257(17-30): Jun 23  
D-428: Apr 19; May 21; Jun 8(x2),  
15, 19

## ABERDOVEY

B-758: Apr 18, 20; Jun 1(x2), 4, 14,  
25, 29

## ABERSOCH

B-790: May 18, 24

## ABERYSTWYTH

B-704: May 29; Jun 11, 23, 27, 29  
B-774: Apr 1, 13, 15, 23, 24, 29;  
May 4(x2), 11

## ACHILL ISLAND

ON-1240(14-28): May 7, 9

## AITH

ON-1232(17-14): Jun 16

## ALDEBURGH

ON-1193(12-34): Apr 8; Jun 13  
D-520: Apr 13; Jun 13(x2)

## ALDERNEY

ON-1199(14-04): May 27, 28,  
30(x2), 31; Jun 21, 30  
D-551: May 24

## AMBLE

ON-1176(12-19): Apr 27; May 17, 23  
D-422: Apr 27; May 23

## ANGLE

ON-1114(47-011): Apr 13, 25;  
May 18(x3), 24, 26;  
Jun 10(x2), 21(x2)

## ANSTRUTHER

ON-1174(12-17): May 4, 14, 18;  
Jun 25(x2)  
D-552: May 14, 18; Jun 8, 25

## APPLEDORE

ON-1140(47-027): Apr 18; Jun 11,  
14, 30  
B-742: Apr 18(x3); May 3, 4(x3),  
5(x2); Jun 13, 15, 17, 28

## ARAN ISLANDS

ON-1217(17-06): Apr 18(x3), 27;  
May 18, 24; Jun 17, 19, 24

## ARBROATH

ON-1194(12-35): Apr 13; May 25, 28  
D-471: Apr 13; May 11, 22, 25, 28;  
Jun 18

## ARKLOW

ON-1223(14-19): May 26; Jun 7, 25

## ARRAN (LAMLASH)

B-770: Apr 17, 26; May 7, 30;  
Jun 4(x2), 14, 16, 24, 30

## ARRANMORE

ON-1244(17-22): Jun 13  
ON-1254(17-27): Apr 1, 8, 12, 18,  
20(x2), 23; May 21

## BALLYCOTTON

ON-1233(14-25): Apr 10, 15;  
Jun 9, 13, 22(x4), 24, 29

## BALLYGLASS

D-492: May 2

## BANGOR

B-584: Apr 6, 13, 15, 19; May 4, 9,  
14; Jun 8, 14, 17, 29

## BARMOUTH

ON-1185(12-26): Jun 27  
D-414: Jun 27(x2), 28(x2), 29(x2)  
D-480: Apr 18(x3), 20; May 18, 21

## BARRA ISLAND

ON-1230(17-12): Apr 1

## BARROW

ON-1117(47-014): May 31; Jun 16  
D-456: Apr 12; May 8(x2)

## BARRY DOCK

ON-1082(52-23): Apr 20;  
Jun 4(x2), 8

## BEAUMARIS

B-768: Apr 5, 13, 18(x3), 19, 24, 28;  
May 5(x2), 18, 26(x2), 27, 29, 31;  
Jun 2, 4, 7, 8(x3), 14, 22, 27, 28(x2)

## BEMBRIDGE

ON-1126(47-018): May 17; Jun 8,  
12, 18, 21(x2)  
D-503: Apr 18(x2), 26; May 4, 7,  
29, 30; Jun 11, 21(x2), 29

## BERWICK-UPON-TWEED

ON-1191(12-32): Apr 20; May 1;  
Jun 13  
D-494: Apr 20  
BLACKPOOL  
B-732: Apr 18; May 15  
B-748: May 28, 29; Jun 26  
D-451: Apr 18; May 11, 28(x2)  
D-558: Apr 18; May 11, 15, 28(x2);  
Jun 8, 9, 22  
D-566: Jun 9, 22, 26

## BLTYTH

ON-1204(14-06): May 18, 26; Jun 17  
D-464: Apr 6, 21, 22; Jun 3, 14

## BORTH

D-479: Apr 3  
D-483: Apr 18(x2), 24; May 11, 15;  
Jun 1(x2), 29(x3)

## BRIDLINGTON

ON-1169(12-12): Apr 5; May 24;  
Jun 15  
D-469: May 5; Jun 13, 16(x2),  
22(x3), 29  
D-557: Apr 10, 23, 26, 30

## BRIGHTON

B-737: Apr 18; May 28, 31; Jun 1, 3,  
5, 8(x2), 12(x2), 14, 15, 22, 24, 29

## BROUGHY FERRY

ON-1252(14-31): Apr 13(x2); Jun 14  
D-457: Apr 13(x2); Jun 14

## BUCKIE

ON-1268(17-37): Jun 18

## BUNDORAN

B-753: Jun 12(x2), 13, 20, 29(x4)  
BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH

B-733: Apr 15; May 28; Jun 8(x2),  
25(x2)  
D-519: Jun 21

## BURRY PORT

D-461: Jun 21(x2), 22(x2)  
D-491: Apr 8, 15; May 9, 11, 28;  
Jun 5, 15(x2)

## CALSHOT

ON-1108(52-34): Apr 17, 27(x2), 30;  
May 13, 17, 25; Jun 2, 8(x2), 15, 22, 29  
D-407: Apr 16, 27(x2); May 17;  
Jun 14, 22

## CAMPBELLTOWN

ON-1241(17-19): May 30; Jun 4,  
12, 17  
D-500: May 10, 30

## CARDIGAN

B-752: Apr 13, 18; May 15, 17(x2),  
18; Jun 18, 30  
D-547: Apr 13; May 17(x2); Jun 20, 24

## CASTLETOWNBERE

ON-1118(52-36): May 22, 24; Jun 5

## CHISWICK

B-734: Apr 12, 22; Jun 13  
E-003: Apr 27(x3)  
E-004: May 29(x2)  
E-005: Apr 16(x2), 17(x2), 18(x3),  
19(x2), 20(x3), 21(x2), 22(x3), 25  
E-006: Apr 5(x2), 6, 8, 9, 10, 11(x3),  
13, 29(x2); May 2(x2), 3, 4(x3), 5,  
8(x2), 10, 11(x2), 26, 27(x2),  
30(x2); Jun 2, 8(x5), 13(x2), 14,  
15(x2), 17(x2), 18, 20(x3), 21, 23,  
26, 28(x2), 29

## CLACTON-ON-SEA

B-744: Apr 13, 27; May 19, 21, 24,  
29(x2); Jun 16, 19, 22(x3)  
D-559: Apr 12, 13, 18

## CLEETHORPES

D-454: Apr 20, 21(x2), 30; May  
6(x2), 18, 21, 30(x2); Jun 1, 2, 5, 19,  
23, 24  
CLIFDEN  
B-792: Apr 19; Jun 1, 2  
D-431: Apr 19; Jun 1, 2

## CLOGHER HEAD

ON-1178(12-21): May 31; Jun 2,  
5, 14  
CONWY  
D-482: Apr 18, 19, 24; May 10,  
31(x2); Jun 28

## COURTMACSHERRY HARBOUR

ON-1205(14-07): May 21, 24; Jun 29  
COURTOWN  
D-548: Apr 21; Jun 16  
COWES  
B-706: Jun 25(x2)  
CRASTER  
D-542: Jun 21  
CRICCIETH  
B-700: Apr 17(x2), 18; May 3(x2),  
10(x2); Jun 17  
B-707: Jun 22, 29

## CROMER

ON-1097(47-006): May 7, 24  
D-568: May 11, 29, 31

## CROSSHAVEN

B-782: Apr 17, 22; May 10, 25(x2);  
Jun 2, 17(x2), 24, 29

## CULLERCOATS

B-591: Apr 5, 6, 19(x2); May 25,  
22(x3), 29  
DONAGHADEE  
ON-1267(14-36): Apr 19, 22(x2)

## DOUGLAS

ON-1147(47-032): Apr 19; Jun 1, 5

## DOVER

ON-1220(17-09): Apr 23; May 10,  
19; Jun 2, 5, 7

## DUN LAOGHAIRE

ON-1200(14-05): Apr 11, 18, 27;  
May 3, 28; Jun 19

## D-458

Apr 6, 11, 13(x2), 27; May  
15, 28(x2); Jun 8, 26(x2)  
D-565: Apr 5

## DUNBAR

ON-1207(14-09): May 2, 14, 23;  
Jun 14, 29  
D-544: May 2, 10, 23; Jun 14, 22, 29

## DUNGENESS

ON-1186(12-27): Apr 3, 24;  
May 7, 22; Jun 1, 8

## DUNMORE EAST

ON-1253(14-32): Apr 7, 24;  
May 21(x2); Jun 8, 14, 16, 26

## EASTBOURNE

ON-1195(12-36): Apr 4, 9, 17,  
18(x2), 22(x2), 23(x2); May 4,  
11(x2), 12, 21, 26(x2); Jun 14,  
18(x3), 21  
D-436: Jun 18(x2)  
D-474: Apr 18(x3), 22, 23;  
May 26, 28

## ENNISKILLEN

B-525: May 29; Jun 29  
B-549: Apr 17, 19; May 3, 24, 29;  
Jun 7  
B-592: Jun 28

## EXMOUTH

ON-1210(14-12): Jun 21, 23  
ON-1245(14-29): Apr 18(x2);  
May 3; Jun 10  
D-516: Apr 18, 23, 24; May 3, 10,  
12, 14, 15, 17, 25(x2), 26(x2);  
Jun 7(x2), 9, 10, 14, 17, 21, 25

## EYEMOUTH

ON-1209(14-11): Apr 6; Jun 10

## FALMOUTH

ON-1262(17-33): Apr 15  
B-595: Apr 4, 18, 19, 23; May 14,  
26; Jun 1, 15

## FENIT

ON-1239(14-27): May 22; Jun 19

## FILEY

ON-1170(12-13): Apr 8; May 8  
D-563: May 13, 25(x3); Jun 15, 18,  
25, 27

## FISHGUARD

ON-1198(14-03): May 15; Jun 8,  
24(x2)  
D-465: Jun 8, 27  
D-505: May 10, 26  
FLAMBOROUGH  
B-703: May 26; Jun 7, 13, 28

## FLEETWOOD

ON-1122(47-017): Apr 17(x2), 19;  
May 25; Jun 1, 14(x2), 29  
D-556: Apr 17, 19, 25; May 4, 21,  
25, 26, 27, 28; Jun 14, 26, 29  
FLINT  
D-510: Jun 2, 29(x2)  
FOWEY  
ON-1222(14-18): Apr 1, 6(x2), 18;  
May 10, 18, 22, 28; Jun 19  
D-439: Apr 18; May 10, 17, 18, 30;  
Jun 14  
D-526: Apr 6

## FRASERBURGH

ON-1259(14-34): May 10, 22;  
Jun 6, 8, 21

## GALWAY

B-738: Apr 4, 18, 20; Jun 22

## GIRVAN

ON-1196(12-37): Apr 29; May 3;  
Jun 16  
GRAVESEND  
B-736: May 10  
E-004: Apr 16, 25, 28; May 1, 3;  
Jun 2, 5, 7, 11(x2), 12, 13(x2), 15,  
17, 18  
E-005: Apr 4(x2); May 8, 11, 14, 15,  
27, 28, 29

## GREAT YARMOUTH & GORLESTON

ON-1208(14-10): May 23, 28  
B-786: Apr 6, 13, 26, 27, 28; May  
4(x2), 8, 10, 11, 19, 30

## HARTLEPOOL

ON-1106(52-32): May 12, 13, 24;  
Jun 28, 30  
ON-1109(47-007): Apr 23  
B-766: Apr 6; May 12, 13, 24; Jun 1,  
23, 28

## HARWICH

ON-1202(17-03): Apr 14; May 8;  
Jun 3, 5  
B-789: Apr 8, 9, 18, 19, 20, 26(x2),  
27, 28; May 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 29;  
Jun 3, 6, 7, 8(x2), 14, 15, 18, 22

## HASTINGS

ON-1162(12-004): Apr 4  
D-540: Apr 17, 18, 26; May 5, 29,  
31; Jun 20

## HAYLING ISLAND

B-712: Apr 3, 5, 27; May 18,  
19(x2), 29; Jun 8(x4), 13, 14, 21,  
29(x2)  
B-757: Apr 12, 18; May 3, 4(x2),  
5(x2), 6(x2)  
D-465: Apr 13, 14(x2); May 4(x2), 6  
D-496: Apr 27; May 29; Jun 14

## HELENSBURGH

B-791: Apr 7, 13, 19, 21(x2);  
May 18(x2), 23, 29, 31; Jun 1, 9,  
14(x3), 15, 26, 27

## HELWICK HEAD

B-760: Apr 17; May 9, 23; Jun 10,  
19, 24

## HOLYHEAD

ON-1123(52-37): Apr 27; May 3, 11  
D-507: Apr 13, 17; Jun 21, 27

## HORTON AND PORT EYNON

D-498: Apr 13, 18; May 9, 27;  
Jun 9, 15, 21, 22, 28

## HOWTH

ON-1258(14-33): Apr 1, 18, 19,  
20(x2), 21; Jun 1, 13, 16(x2)  
D-443: Apr 20, 21; May 5, 10  
D-530: Jun 9, 20, 28

## HOYLAKE

ON-1163(12-005): Apr 8, 21;  
May 2, 15

## HUMBER

ON-1201(17-02): May 28, 29, 31;  
Jun 1, 6  
ON-1216(17-05): Apr 27;  
May 16(x2); Jun 19, 22, 23  
HUNSTANTON  
B-749: Apr 6, 16, 17, 18, 19; May 3,  
9, 26, 30, 31; Jun 6, 13, 22, 24, 29  
H-003: May 3, 5, 30; Jun 22, 24

## ILFRACOMBE

ON-1165(12-007): May 13, 29,  
30; Jun 11, 29(x2)  
D-555: Apr 20, 23, 30; May 5;  
Jun 1, 15, 22(x2), 28, 29(x2)  
INVERGORDON  
ON-1206(14-08): Apr 21, 26;  
May 10, 22; Jun 12, 14, 18, 20, 22

## ISLAY

ON-1219(17-08): May 28; Jun 1  
ON-1257(17-30): Apr 10

## KESSOCK

B-771: Apr 21(x2); Jun 6, 8  
KILKEEL  
B-593: Jun 2, 14

## KILMORE QUAY

ON-1187(12-28): Apr 13; May 21;  
Jun 16, 20(x2), 21(x2), 29

## KILRUSH

B-729: Apr 3; Jun 2  
KINGHORN  
B-720: Apr 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 19,



# Listings

## A busy year for Penlee station

2003 was a very special year for the Penlee station. Not only has the station celebrated its bicentenary, it has also seen the naming of two new lifeboats, the construction of a new berth for its Severn class lifeboat, plus two of its fundraisers have received Gold awards at the APA at the Barbican in London.

The 200 year celebrations culminated in a three-day festival, held on and around the seafront in Penzance at the end of July. The celebrations continued into August with a Lifeboat Day and an evening quayside service at which the station was presented with a bicentenary vellum by the RNLI.

The station's new Atlantic 75 lifeboat *Paul Alexander* was named on Saturday 10 May at a ceremony attended by over 300 guests. The lifeboat was generously provided by Mr and Mrs Archer, in memory of their late son Paul.

The Severn class lifeboat *Ivan Ellen* was officially named on the 29 September at a ceremony attended by over 500 people. The lifeboat was funded by the generous bequest of Mr Ivan Leech, whose son John served as an RNLI boat mechanic in the south west for many years. The guest list read like a who's who of the RNLI over the last 30 years, with people travelling from as far away as Wales to be at this special occasion.

The final event on 21 October was a simple service of dedication of the new berthing facility, which was provided from the legacy of Mr Harold Cox.

## St Peter Port celebrates 200 years of lifesaving

The celebrations began on 2 May 2003 with the award of a bicentenary vellum. In June, the station was fortunate enough to enjoy fine sunny weather for its anniversary weekend. Visitors to the event included two French lifeboats; Alderney's Trent class lifeboat *Roy Barker I*; the prototype Tamar class lifeboat; and several former lifeboats including the *Michael Stephens*, which was involved in the rescue of 92 troops from Dunkerque. Events included a flypast by a Sea King helicopter from RNAS Culdrose and the Channel Islands Air Search aeroplane *Lions Pride*. The next morning featured a service of thanksgiving held on the pierheads.

## Retirements

The following person has retired from duty

**Martin Woodward**  
Coxswain, Bembridge

## Deaths

It is with regret that we report the following deaths

**Mrs Thelma Dowding** MBE

Honorary Life Governor

**David Francis Aubrey**

Retired Station Honorary Secretary, Port Talbot

**Doreen Smith**

Treasurer, Beverley guild

## New £600,000 lifeboat station unveiled in Mudeford

Mudeford's new RNLI lifeboat station was officially opened at a special ceremony of dedication on Saturday, 25 October. The station, built to house an inshore lifeboat plus launching vehicle, became operational at the end of September.

The building work was possible thanks to a combination of fundraising by crew and local supporters and the generosity of four local people: Mrs Mary Avis Bowman of Swanage, Miss Eva Molly Brown of Bournemouth, Mrs Elizabeth Popplestone of Christchurch and Mr Dudley Roy Tranfield of Ferndown. The legacy of Mr Tranfield came via his son, Craig, who represented the donors at the ceremony. The four legators will be honoured with a special memorial plaque, which will be given pride of place at the station.

Victor Derham, lifeboat operations manager at Mudeford station, said: 'I am really over the moon with the new station. The crew are particularly pleased to have somewhere warm and dry to change and there's even a dedicated training room.'

## Lytham St Annes boathouse opening

On Saturday, 16 August, in glorious sunny weather, Helen Vlasto, wife of RNLI Operations Director Michael Vlasto, officially opened the new Lytham St Annes all weather lifeboat house. She was presented at the start with a bouquet by Simone Grogan (aged 8), daughter of crew member Toby Grogan.

Branch Chairman Allan Williams opened the proceedings and introduced Mr Vlasto, who accepted the station on behalf of the RNLI. He then handed the boathouse into the care of Lifeboat Operations Manager Frank Kilroy.

This is the first time the station has had an all weather lifeboat in a boathouse. The boats were moored afloat from 1931 to 1999 in an exposed estuary and for the last four years have been parked on a wind-swept car park totally in the open. Following a vote of thanks and service of dedication, Mrs Vlasto unveiled a plaque and declared the boathouse officially open.

## On station

### ALL WEATHER

#### Relief fleet

Trent class ON-1274 *Betty Huntbatch* on 16 September

### INSHORE

#### Burry Port

D-611 *The Four Watsons* on 17 September 2003

#### Looe

B-793 *Alan & Margaret* on 2 October 2003

#### Happisburgh

D-607 *Spirit of Berkhamstead* on 21 October 2003

#### Salcombe

B-794 *Joan Bate* on 7 November 2003

# Lifeboats in action

## A narrow escape for Dutch couple at Dunbar

### THE DUNBAR INSHORE LIFEBOAT

D class lifeboat D-544  
*The Hastings*  
Funding: David Hastings and brothers

### THE INSHORE LIFEBOAT CREW

Helmsman Stuart Pirie  
Duncan MacKay (landed after 2 hours)  
David Thomson (landed after 2 hours)  
Paul MacMullen (boarded from shore)  
Alan Blair (boarded from shore)

### ASSISTED BY DUNBAR ALL WEATHER LIFEBOAT

Trent class lifeboat 14-09  
*Sir Ronald Pechell Bt*  
Funding: Bequest of Dora, Lady Pechell, Dunbar Lifeboat Appeal with other gifts and legacies

### THE ALL WEATHER LIFEBOAT CREW

Coxswain Gary Fairbairn  
Kenneth Peters  
Douglas Gillan  
Brian Cleator  
Martin Keillor  
Erich Schonwalder  
Denholm Horsburgh

### DUNBAR LIFEBOAT STATION

Established: 1808  
RNLI Medals: Four Silver, one Bronze

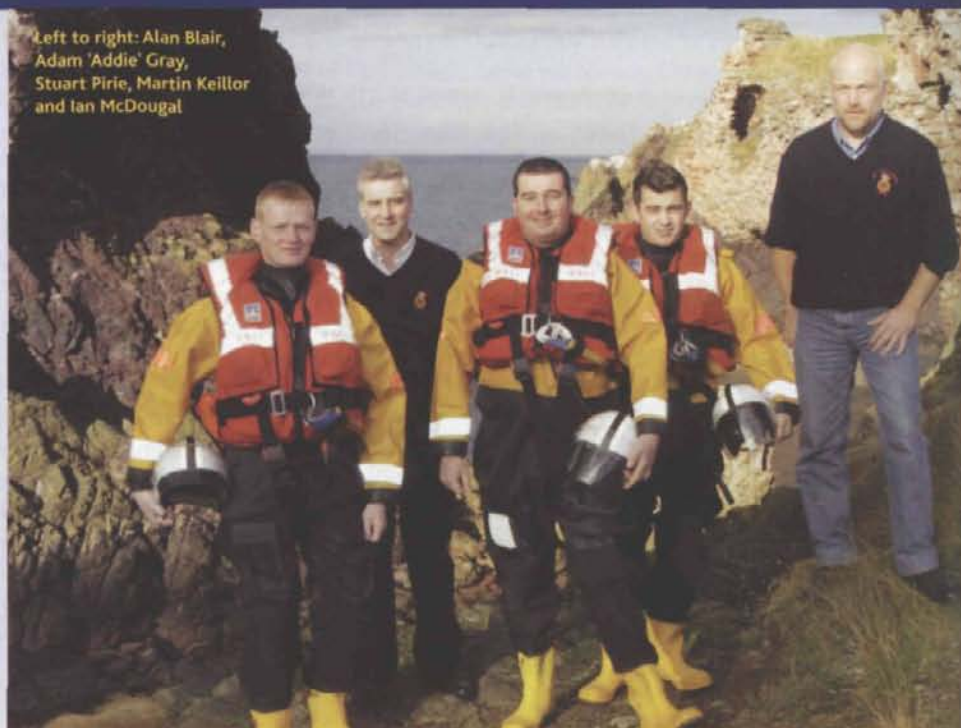
### THE CASUALTY

Crew of two on 13m yacht *Noblesse*

### THE CONDITIONS

Weather: Part cloudy  
Visibility: Good  
Wind: Force 2  
Sea state: Moderate or choppy, 3m swell, breaking at harbour entrance

Left to right: Alan Blair, Adam 'Addie' Gray, Stuart Pirie, Martin Keillor and Ian McDougal



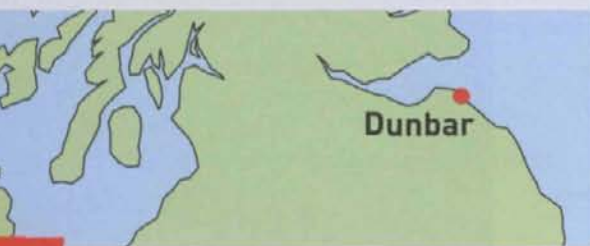
Lifeboatmen and Coastguards hauled a crew of two to safety from a grounded yacht, seconds before falling rocks destroyed the vessel

A state-of-the-art £100,000 yacht, *Noblesse*, was entering Dunbar Harbour on the afternoon of 5 July 2003 when she was caught on its approach at low tide by a northerly 3m breaking swell. The vessel was swept up onto rocks on the north west side of Dunbar Castle cliffs and the top of the mast was caught on the walls of the castle itself, 18m up.

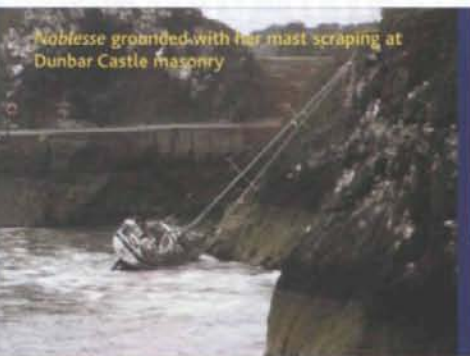
The Dunbar inshore lifeboat was quickly on the scene, but Helmsman Stuart Pirie had concerns about getting through the surf at the harbour entrance, with the low tide. The

approach to the casualty was extremely dangerous with seaweed, underlying rocks and a choppy sea. The lifeboat got to within 300m when Duncan MacKay swam over to the yacht with the tow rope and then returned to the lifeboat. In full lifeboat kit, with the swell pushing him one way and the backwash pulling him another, this was no easy task.

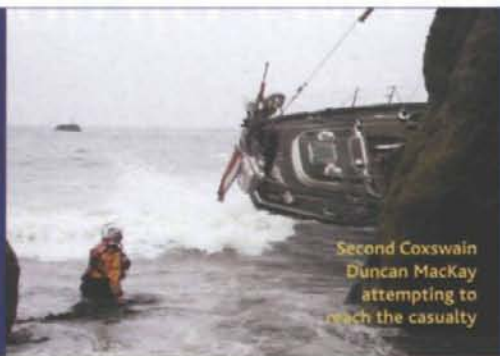
At this point the Dunbar Trent class lifeboat *Sir Ronald Pechell Bt* arrived on the scene and the tow rope was transferred to her. But they were unable to refloat *Noblesse*.



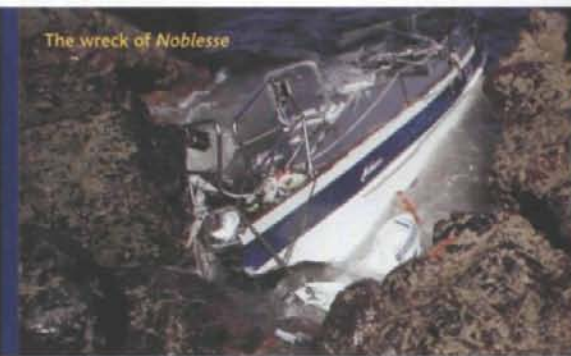




*Noblesse grounded with her mast scraping at Dunbar Castle masonry*



*Second Coxswain Duncan Mackay attempting to reach the casualty*



*The wreck of Noblesse*

Stuart swam from the inshore lifeboat to *Noblesse*, boarding the vessel via the tow rope. He explained to the Dutch couple that they were in a dangerous position and needed to be taken off their yacht. Stuart recalls the conversation: 'The main difficulty in this shout was the language difference. Attempting to convince the casualties to leave the vessel proved frustrating.' However, once the initial shock was over, the Dutch couple realised the potential danger of their situation.

Meanwhile the Coastguard mobile cliff rescue team was setting up on top of the castle. Four RNLI crew members assisted the team and Coastguard Addie Grey was lowered to the bow of *Noblesse*. The situation worsened as the vessel was pivoting on its keel with the top mast scraping back and forth 1–2m, dislodging rocks and masonry of the castle. Windows were broken on the spray deck and large rocks crashed through the forward hatch.

Everyone knew they had to act quickly. With great professionalism, lifeboat crew and Coastguard worked together. Stuart guided the woman to the bow of the yacht. Addie helped her and both were hauled up the cliff face to safety. Stuart then assisted the yacht's owner to the bow, where he too was hauled to safety with Addie.

Stuart later commented: 'I'll never forget the image of Addie Grey climbing down the cliff to remove the casualties with masonry falling about him.' With the Dutch couple off the yacht, Stuart quickly made his way to the stern of the vessel away from the falling rocks and jumped into the sea to swim back. Seconds later, larger sections of the castle descended from above and smashed onto the vessel.

To save *Noblesse* from further damage, the lifeboat crews attempted to tow the yacht away from the base of the cliff but the tow rope snapped in the process. Numerous further attempts were made to pass a line to the vessel. The inshore lifeboat crew swam with difficulty to try and reach *Noblesse* but were hampered by the swell. A crew change was now required on the inshore lifeboat as crew members became exhausted trying to swim lines to the vessel after nearly 2 hours at the scene.

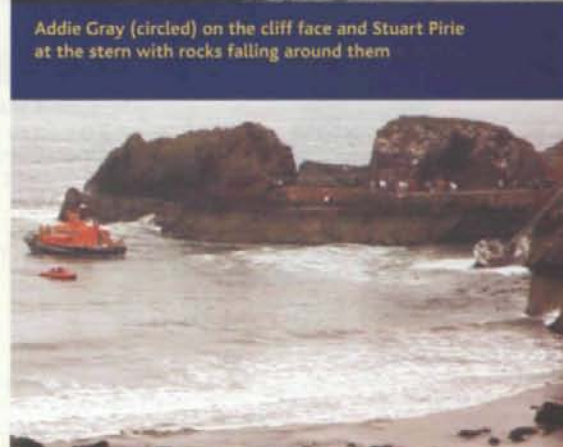
Martin Keiller from the Trent was transferred to the inshore lifeboat and attempted to swim to *Noblesse*. Several crew members also tried to swim/wade out to her from the shore to no avail.

On a final attempt Crewman Douglas Gillan from the Trent class lifeboat swam out but he too was unable to reach *Noblesse*. He signalled for help and was swiftly pulled aboard the Trent class. The Trent class tried to get closer to her bow, but the Lifeboat Operations Manager judged that this was too dangerous and advised the lifeboat crews to abandon any further attempt to rescue the vessel.

The precaution proved wise as the mast soon collapsed, crashing down on the *Noblesse*, damaging her hull. *Noblesse* was wrecked, but her crew suffered only minor cuts and bruises during their narrow escape. Thanks to the great teamwork of the RNLI and HM Coastguard, the lives of the Dutch couple were saved. Stuart recalls that after the service he: 'felt elated and reflective. Elated that everyone was safe, but also reflective of what could have happened if the response from everyone hadn't been as quick.' He praised all the crew involved: 'They acted professionally and cohesively even though they were a young crew.'



*Addie Gray (circled) on the cliff face and Stuart Pirie at the stern with rocks falling around them*



*Dunbar lifeboatmen trying to reach Noblesse  
Photos: Alistair Punton*

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# Lifeboats in action

## Eleven lifeboats in biggest ever Cardigan Bay search

Crew from nine lifeboat stations were united in a search for a missing power boat at Cardigan Bay. The Coastguard coordinated an extensive search involving 11 lifeboats, a rescue helicopter from RAF Chivenor and four Coastguard rescue teams

Fifty lifeboatmen and women looked for the 5.5m power boat, *Teymar*, and her crew of two on a shout that spanned 19 and 20 July 2003. *Teymar* was last seen leaving New Quay at 11am and when there was still no sign of her by 7.30pm, the Harbour Master reported the vessel missing, prompting the wide-scale search.

The operation was coordinated by Milford Haven Coastguard. Four lifeboats from New Quay and Cardigan were the first to launch. It was to be a long night for one of them, the New Quay Mersey class lifeboat *Frank and Lena Clifford of Stourbridge*. Coxswain Dan Potter and crew were out for over 12 hours.

The sea state was moderate with force 4 winds throughout the search, and rain made visibility poor. The conditions hampered radar effectiveness during the search and as darkness fell, there was no sign of *Teymar*.

Just before midnight, Aberystwyth's Atlantic 75 *Enid Mary* commenced a challenging 4½ hour search and Barmouth's Mersey class *Moira Barry* joined in at 12.30am the following day.

By daybreak 11 lifeboats had been involved in the hunt for *Teymar*. The search area was recalculated and expanded because of overnight southerly winds. The crews that had been out for hours were feeling the strain. Keith Allday, Coxswain at Barmouth recalls: 'It was a fairly difficult service ... due to maintaining a high level of awareness over a long period and dealing with fatigue.'

The lifeboatmen had to stay alert to maintain a sharp lookout. Morale had to be kept up on board the lifeboats. It was Olly Downing's first night service on Barmouth lifeboat: 'Lots of good humour kept us going on a long shout.' At one point, Mechanic Glyn Soves helped lighten the mood by

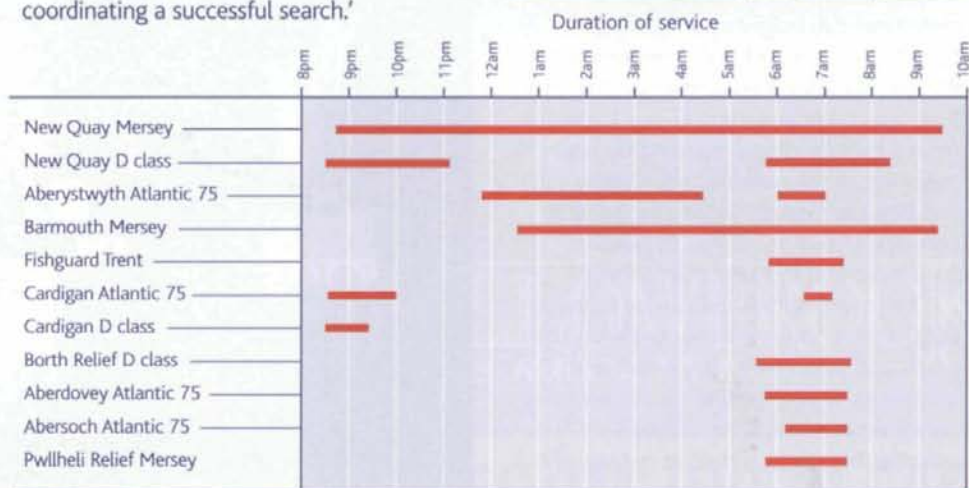
cheekily asking Holyhead Coastguard for a steak dinner on their return!

It was Barmouth lifeboat that finally spotted the cabin cruiser at 7am drifting 9 miles off Aberystwyth, over 17 miles from New Quay. As the lifeboat neared *Teymar* they feared for the couple as no-one could be seen. They got to within 10m before the pair emerged from the cabin. Both of *Teymar*'s engines had failed, but the crew were alright. The lifeboatmen recall that the couple appeared to be 'relieved' to see the lifeboat and then 'embarrassed'. They had no radio, distress flares or any way of indicating position aboard *Teymar*.

Barmouth lifeboat quickly set up the tow and headed towards New Quay. The tow was then handed over to the New Quay Mersey lifeboat. All the other lifeboats returned to station. Keith remembers that after the service he: '... felt elated: having accomplished a worthwhile job – proud of the professional and dedicated crew.' He also praised the Coastguard: 'Compliments to HMCG on devising an effective search formula and coordinating a successful search.'



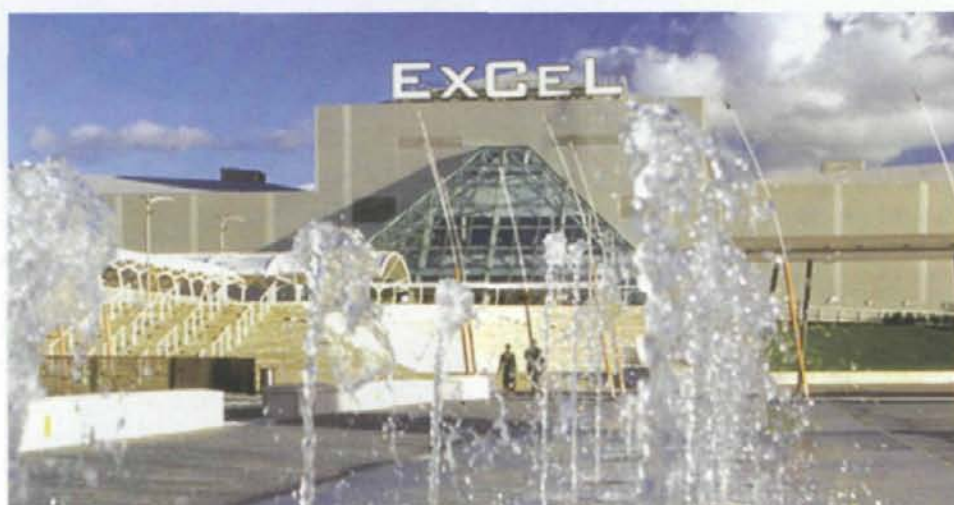
Above and below: Two of the 11 lifeboats involved in the rescue: Aberystwyth Atlantic 75 *Enid Mary* and New Quay Mersey class lifeboat *Frank and Lena Clifford of Stourbridge*  
Mersey photo: Rick Tomlinson



# Come see the show

By the time this issue of *the Lifeboat* reaches you, the Schrodgers London International Boat Show 2004 will already be in full swing. This year's event, which runs from 8-18 January, is special for several reasons.

Not only is the show celebrating its 50th anniversary, it is also taking place at ExCel in Docklands for the first time. The RNLI has taken full advantage of the new venue's facilities so that visitors can see an all weather lifeboat moored afloat - another first for the show.



Visitors exploring the half a mile of dockside tall ships, historic London boats and naval craft will find the relief Severn class lifeboat *Daniel L Gibson* berthed at D1. The lifeboat is open to the public throughout the show and their guides are lifeboat crew members who are able to relate their lifesaving experiences. As a result, it is hoped that visitors will stop off at the main stand where they can help break the RNLI boat show recruitment record by becoming a member.

Sharon New, RNLI supporter recruitment manager said: 'Last year at London we recruited 600 members, with 695 people joining us at the Southampton boat show. We're aiming to top these figures by recruiting around 1,000 new members at this year's London show. Bringing the *Daniel L Gibson* to ExCel is part of our new campaign to raise awareness and increase membership.'

The main RNLI stand can be found at B600, in the boulevard area between the north and south halls. Here staff and volunteers are concentrating on recruiting Offshore members. The Offshore membership grade, aimed at people who

regularly use the sea for pleasure, is particularly relevant to the majority of show visitors. As an additional incentive, all visitors who sign up there and then will receive a free Offshore bear.

The RNLI also has a second, smaller stand in the East Hall at E3094, where windsurfing and canoeing activities are

based. In this area staff and volunteers are giving out free Sea Safety advice and conducting daily lifejacket demonstrations in the pool. These demonstrations proved such a hit at the Southampton Boat Show that some chandlery exhibitors sold out of lifejackets as a result.

The London Boat Show is a great day out, with plenty to see and do for all the family. Why not drop by and see the RNLI?



Visitors to this year's London Boat Show can take a tour of Severn class lifeboat *Daniel L Gibson*  
Photo: Gilbert Hampton



Artist's impression of the RNLI's main stand at this year's show

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LB/RC 5/1

# Extreme search and rescue



The emergency towing vessel *Englishman* in Bressay Sound during a routine patrol  
Photo: Nicholas Leach/Ships Monthly

In the treacherous seas off northern Scotland the RNLI and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency work together to ensure the safety of vessels large and small. Nicholas Leach reports on how the search and rescue network operates in the busy shipping lanes of the Northern Isles

The seas off the north of Scotland and around Orkney and Shetland can be unforgiving and, in the worst of weathers, will catch out even the largest of ships. The safety of mariners and sea users in the area is overseen by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). The primary role of the Coastguard is initiating and coordinating search and rescue (SAR) missions. Their Maritime Rescue Sub Centre (MRSC) at Lerwick, Shetland's capital, coordinates rescue units operating in the often treacherous seas around the Northern Isles. This centre, one of 19 run by the MCA, maintains a round-the-clock monitoring service of shipping and sea activity and coordinates search and rescue incidents by tasking units as needed. An emergency planning room at the Rescue Coordination Centre in Lerwick facilitates the handling of

major incidents so that rescue units work together effectively and efficiently.

The MRSC operations room is staffed 24 hours a day throughout the year from a watch-keeping complement of 20 personnel. They can call on the Coastguard helicopter, the five lifeboats based in Orkney and Shetland, 33 auxiliary Coastguard teams, made up entirely of volunteers who undertake cliff rescue and coastal searches, as well as the purpose-built emergency towing vessel (ETV).

ETVs are large anchor-handling tugs similar in design to those employed in the oil industry for rig support duties. The stationing of ETVs at various locations around the British Isles came about as a result of a disaster off Shetland. On 5 January 1993, the oil tanker *Braer* ran aground off Sumburgh Head at the

southern tip of the Shetland Islands. Emergency rescue services were called out, the 34 crew were airlifted off and two tugs began trying to pull the tanker away from the rocky coastline. But the tanker, with 619,300 barrels of oil on board, ran aground and began leaking its cargo. Attempts to disperse the slick were mostly ineffective. However, as the light crude oil was easily broken up by the large waves, 70 per cent either evaporated or dispersed naturally.

The subsequent inquiry into the *Braer* disaster recommended that ETVs should be stationed in the major shipping lanes ready to assist large vessels should they get into difficulty. The MCA was given the responsibility of managing the ETVs that were based initially in the Dover Strait and the Minches, with a third vessel to provide



Coastguard helicopter *Oscar Charlie* during a routine winching exercise with the ETV *Englishman*  
 Photo: Nicholas Leach/Ships Monthly

cover for the Western Approaches followed by a fourth for the Fair Isle Channel near Shetland.

The latest Coastguard ETV is *Anglian Sovereign*, which arrived in Shetland in September 2003 to take up duties on the Fair Isle station. She operates under the jurisdiction of the area's Coastguard controller Neville Davis and covers a nominal area of 100 nautical miles radius centred on Fair Isle. This includes the Fair Isle Channel, the Pentland Firth and the waters around Orkney and Shetland, but she can of course go further afield if

required. The ETV operates with a crew of 11 who live on board for a month, followed by a month off. During the winter, while awaiting a call, the ETV is anchored in sheltered waters such as the bays off the northern end of the Orkney archipelago, as near to the centre of her operational area as possible. In the harsh winter weather, exposing the crews unnecessarily to severe sea conditions would be foolhardy.

Two of the ETV's primary roles are counter-pollution work and pollution prevention. With basic heavy towing equipment, she is able to tow tankers like

the *Braer* away from the rocky shore. This prevents such tankers grounding and polluting the coastline, avoiding a threat to human life and the environment.

The ETV also performs standby duties, provides passive escort to tankers and works with Shetland's lifeboats in search and rescue operations. The vessel's programme of activity in the summer, a time when fewer large vessels require assistance, includes surveying the shipping traffic going through the channel.

Another essential element in the operation of the Coastguard's rescue service is the Sikorsky SK-61N helicopter, affectionately known as *Oscar Charlie*. Chartered to the MCA from Bristow Helicopters, she is staffed round-the-clock by a crew of four with different crews who work 24-hour shifts. In action, the helicopter is usually in the air for about an hour and a half in good weather. The main exercises undertaken involve lifting and dropping people onto all kinds of vessels, as this is the task which they perform most often when called out for real. One of the most essential pieces of equipment fitted to the aircraft is the dual hoist system. One hoist is used for the majority of lifts with another as back up. To help when searching for persons in the water, a forward-looking infrared camera provides broadcast-quality infrared images and an extensive range of medical equipment is also carried.

The RNLI's Severn class lifeboats at Aith and Lerwick form another vital piece of the SAR jigsaw in Shetland. Aith lifeboat *Charles Lidbury*, which operates at the RNLI's most northerly station, covers a huge area in some of the most treacherous waters in the United Kingdom. Just to reach the open sea involves a journey of five miles and most services last at least 10 hours. The *Charles Lidbury* can potentially reach higher speeds than the station's previous lifeboat, but in the heavy swells of the North Sea the lifeboat often has to be throttled back from her top speed of 25 knots, particularly when encountering 15m waves, a not uncommon occurrence.

To support the lifeboat, the station has a modern new crew facility, which was formally opened in May 2003.



Lerwick's Severn class lifeboat  
*Michael and Jane Vernon*  
 Photo: Johnnie Simpson

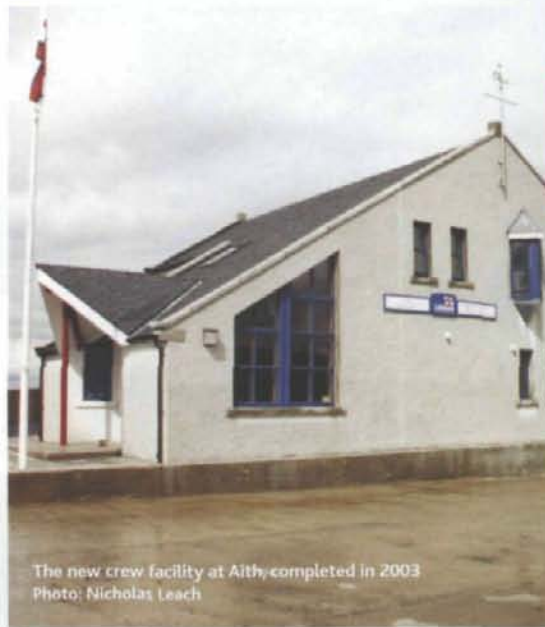


The £320,000 purpose-built facility, designed around the ideas and needs of the lifeboat crew, provides dedicated training rooms together with changing areas and more space for the crew and support personnel. It also has an exhibition area with TV and video, details of the rescues performed since the station was established in 1933 and a history of the station, so it has become part of the *Shetland tourist trail*.

Lerwick lifeboat station, established in 1930, is perhaps best known for the exploits of Coxswain Hewitt Clark, who was awarded the Gold Medal for the service to the cargo vessel *Green Lily* on 19 November 1997. The lifeboat crew in the Severn class *Michael and Jane Vernon* battled to reach the vessel in atrocious weather as tugs tried to stop it going aground. When the last tow failed, all hopes rested with the lifeboat. Hewitt manoeuvred the lifeboat towards the casualty in limited sea room, which was reduced with each passing minute. Numerous attempts were made to put the lifeboat in a position where the survivors could be evacuated. Many attempts had to be aborted due to the violent motion of the seas, but whenever possible a survivor would be grabbed by the lifeboat's crew and hauled aboard. Each time an approach was made, the lifeboat was slammed

against the hull of the casualty in 15m breaking seas and violent force 11 winds. As the lifeboat came clear, with five survivors on board, a tug had managed to grapple the casualty's starboard anchor cable, and pulled her head round to sea so that the helicopter could lift the other 10 crew members off the ship. During this part of the rescue, helicopter winchman Bill Deacon was tragically lost as he tried to help those on the casualty. Later in the day, after the survivors had been landed, the lifeboat was taken as close as was considered prudent in the conditions. They found no sign of the winchman and had to abort the search due to growing darkness and floating debris being tossed around in the huge seas.

The dramatic service to the *Green Lily* sums up rescue work in the Northern Isles. The terrible conditions that can often be encountered by lifeboat and helicopter crews are not uncommon in these waters, and the teamwork of all involved when called into action has to be of the highest order. Vessels large and small use these busy waters and all come under the watchful eye of the Coastguard controllers. With ferries, cruise ships, tankers using nearby Sullom Voe, large fishing vessels, workboats and the numerous pleasure crafts are all potential users of the search and rescue network of the Northern Isles.



The new crew facility at Aith, completed in 2003  
 Photo: Nicholas Leach

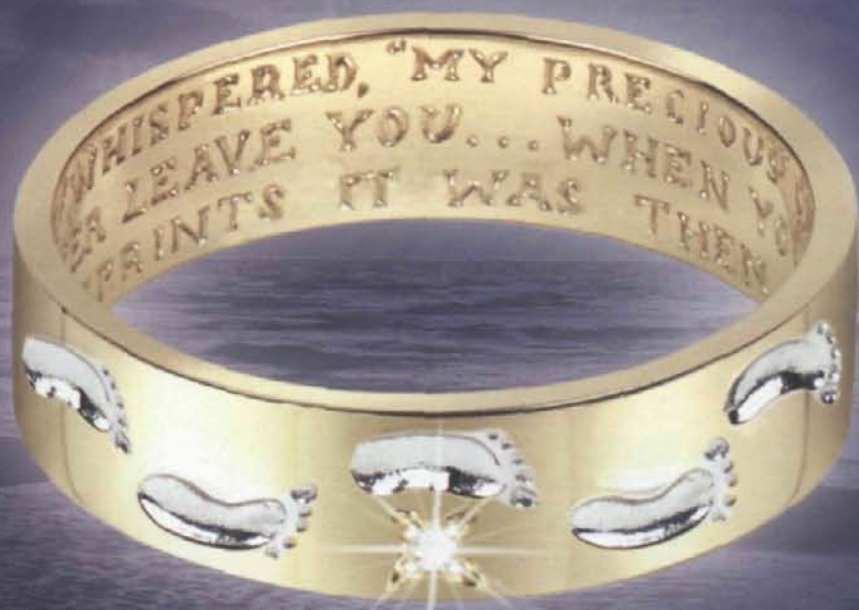


Aith's Severn class lifeboat  
*Charles Lidbury*  
 Photo: Nicholas Leach/Ships Monthly

Nicholas Leach is Deputy Editor of the international shipping magazine *Ships Monthly*. The feature upon which this article is based, 'Shetland sea guardians', appeared in the December 2003 issue and is adapted here by kind permission of that magazine. Thanks to Neville Davis, Kieran Murray, Peter Leask, the crew of *Oscar Charlie* and Mark Clark.

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# Fundraising

## Alan chips in

Kind-hearted chip shop owner Alan Smith threw a lifeline to Kessock lifeboat in October when he donated an entire day's takings from his branch of Harry Ramsden's in Inverness. Alan hasn't forgotten that he owes much of his livelihood to fishermen and the lifeboat crews that go to their rescue. He netted over £2,000 from sales one Sunday and donated the lot to the station as a big thank you. He even threw in fish suppers for the crew.

He said: 'I discussed it with the crew

and offered them the proceeds from the sale of fish and chips. We sold 600 fish suppers and giving them the cash is a gesture of my gratitude and respect. I hope this will encourage other businesses to back these men and women who give their time and effort every week for a cause that can sometimes be taken for granted.' Kessock Branch Chairman Campbell Ross said: 'We approached Harry Ramsden's for a small donation but were overwhelmed at their response. It gives us a real lift when we receive this kind of recognition.'



Alan Smith from Harry Ramsden's serves up a feast to Kessock lifeboat crew members (l to r): Norman MacRae, Donnie MacRae, Campbell Ross and Jacky MacLeod

## My hero!

Children's favourite Stormy Stan touched the hearts of these two little girls during a branch collection at South Mimms services on a sunny August weekend. Stan and the Sea Safety roadshow joined volunteers from Potters Bar, Enfield, Hampstead Garden Suburb, Finchley, Stanmore and North Chingford branches, who collected a whopping £3,400. RNLI Greater London region would like to thank Patrick Newton, Deputy Manager of Welcome Break Services at South Mimms, for allowing the RNLI to collect there, as well as our volunteers who did sterling work over the bank holiday weekend.



## Three of the best

Fundraising stepped up a gear in Berwick and the Borders one October weekend with a trio of money-spinning events.

Activities kicked off with a Virgin Vie make-up party at the Black Bull in Ayton that raised over £360. The event was hosted and organised by Kirsti Avril, wife of Berwick crew member Michael Avril.

Crew wives helped with the raffle and lifeboatmen Kevin Knox and John Swan found themselves volunteering for a very different role to help raise funds. There was an excellent make-up demonstration that did leave one poor chap wishing he hadn't bought a raffle ticket. However, he

took it in good fun and even used a straw for his pint so he didn't smudge his lippy!

The following morning was a more traditional affair when the local ladies guild held a busy coffee morning in the Guildhall. The weekend's grand finale saw two rather unusual cabaret evenings held in the cellar of a local car showroom. The show, *After Dark*, was written especially for the Mayoress's charity in support of the Berwick and Seahouses lifeboat stations and proved to be a tremendous success. Berwick lifeboat launcher Martin Warner joined the cast that included nurses from the local hospitals, members



The Rubbish Band bang out the beats during the *After Dark* cabaret show in aid of the Lifeboats

of the local emergency services and *The Rubbish Band*.



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# Fundraising

## A brush with good fortune



A chance sighting of a treasured family boat spurred Anthony Sayer, Chairman of the St Helen's branch, into raising funds for the Lifeboats. Anthony grew up with the boat, *Confide*, in his family until she was sold in 1974. He had never expected to see her again but, following a lucky sighting in 1995, he decided to commission marine artist Adrian Thompson to paint her picture as a retirement treat.

He was so delighted with the result that he looked into selling prints in aid of the RNLI. Thanks to the generosity of Poplar Services Printers Ltd, 500 signed and numbered limited edition prints were

produced. Over £900 has been raised from sales so far and orders are still coming in. There are 426 prints remaining, which will raise a further £5,325 if all are sold, so why not indulge yourself or a friend and help save lives at sea?

The prints are priced at £12.50 each plus £2.50 for postage and packaging. There is a maximum of four prints per order and cheques and postal orders should be made payable to RNLI. Please send your order to:

Mr P Boyle, 2A Park Avenue, Eccleston Park, Prescot, Merseyside. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

## For all the family

Queensferry's lifeboat open day in August 2003 was blessed with good weather, helping to raise £1,300 for the RNLI.

Entertainment on the day included a rescue demonstration by Queensferry's Atlantic 75 *The Duncan and Ethel MacRae*, a pipe band, various dancing troupes, shows for the kids and face painting. There were also plenty of interesting stalls to enjoy, one of the most popular being Evie's catering corner that gave visitors stunning panoramic views of the Forth Bridge as they tucked into refreshments.



Clockwise from top right: Highland dancers, RNLI supporter Pat 'Pirate' Mulroney and children's entertainer Scott Lovatt all helped to make the open day a roaring success  
Photos: Hamish Campbell



## Carol remembered

On a somewhat sadder note, Queensferry crew members also received £810 in August from the family of Carol Anne Douglas. Carol tragically died from deep vein thrombosis following an aeroplane flight abroad. She was an enthusiastic lifeboat supporter so her family decided to have a collection for the station at her memorial service.

Left: Paul Douglas and daughters Sarah, Carra and Norma (with family pet Jake) are pictured presenting their cheque to Queensferry lifeboat crew members in memory of wife and mum Carol Anne Douglas  
Photo: Hamish Campbell

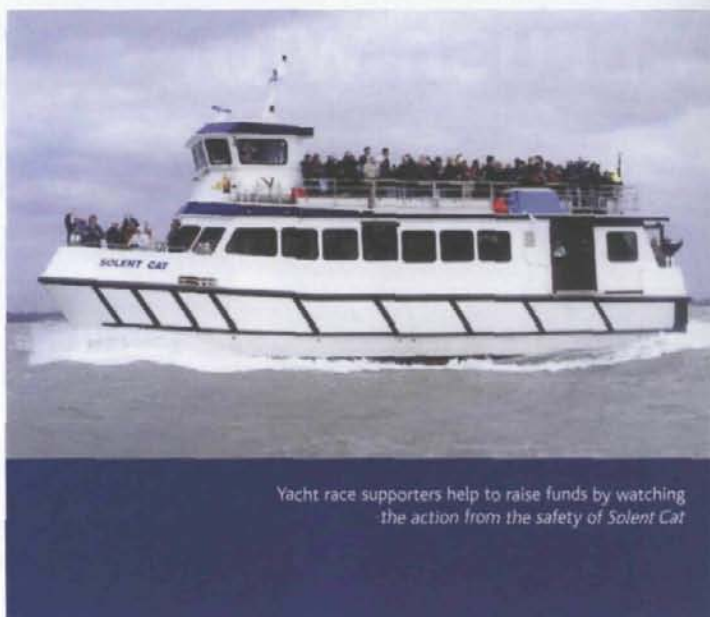
# Fundraising

## Ferry good idea

Chris Carter and wife Marissa hit on a great fundraising idea in April when Chris took part in a non-stop race around Great Britain, aboard the ex BT Global Challenge yacht *Spirit of Southampton*.

Chris and Marissa decided to organise three passenger ferries to allow supporters to watch the race start at Cowes and follow the fleet down the Solent.

A donation to the RNLI was pledged from ticket sales and interest was so good that Chris and Marissa were able to later hand a £500 cheque to Colin Singer, Chairman of RNLI Warminster and Westbury branch. Congratulations go to Chris and the team of *Spirit of Southampton* who also finished the race in second place – another excellent result!



Yacht race supporters help to raise funds by watching the action from the safety of Solent Cat



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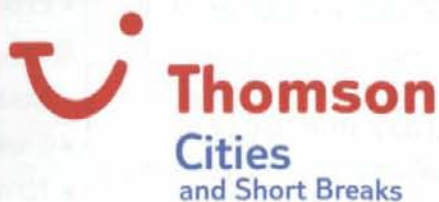
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## Win a trip for two on the Orient-Express



Photos: Venice Simplon Orient-Express

First prize supported by



### Autumn lottery winner

Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Higgs, from Dorset, who won first prize in the autumn lottery – a brand new Peugeot 307 S 1.4, kindly donated by Peugeot. Congratulations also go to the following cash prize winners:

£1,000 – Mrs EH Lee, Surrey  
£500 – Mrs C Drucker, Essex  
£250 – Mr CJB Gillion, Devon  
£100 – Mrs B Marvin, Surrey;  
Mrs J Howard, West Sussex; Mr R Meller, Nottingham; Mr LA Pyatt, Hertfordshire; and Miss E Spencer, London.

The grand prize for the spring 2003 lifeboat lottery is a trip on the world's most celebrated train, the *Venice Simplon Orient-Express*. The glamorous carriages, sumptuous cuisine and personal service will make your journey unforgettable. But this is not all – the trip also includes a three-night stay in Venice, allowing you time to leisurely explore this unique city before catching your flight back to London. This superb prize is kindly supported by Thomson Cities and Short Breaks. The winner will also enjoy a VIP tour of a London lifeboat station (operations permitting).

As well as a chance to win this great prize, you could also win one of eight cash prizes ranging from £100 to £1,000. Spring lottery tickets are available from 19 January. If you would like to receive tickets please contact Pauline on 01202 663219 or [pteivas-white@rnli.org.uk](mailto:pteivas-white@rnli.org.uk)

Winners of the Autumn lottery  
Mr and Mrs Higgs



## Dinner with a difference



Pam Rhodes entertains guests during the gala dinner at Keele University

Journalist and broadcaster Pam Rhodes entertained over 100 lifeboat supporters during a gala dinner at Keele University, North Staffordshire in October 2003. Guests enjoyed a delicious three-course meal. Their dinner reservations and a raffle helped to raise over £2,000 on the night.

Longstanding lifeboat supporter Pam, who was married in August 2003, was accompanied by husband Richard and told many interesting and amusing anecdotes about her life as a broadcaster. The evening was a great success and guests gave their congratulations and best wishes to the happy couple.

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# Fundraising

## We skied Everest!

Forty skiers and snowboarders managed to 'ski Everest' in September 2003 to raise sponsorship money for Llandudno lifeboat. Don't worry: it wasn't as dangerous as it sounds. Participants actually skied or snowboarded down the open-air ski slope in Llandudno 47 times – a distance equal to the height of Mount Everest.

The three-day event saw skiers and boarders of all ages come from as far away as Anglesey, the Midlands and north west England. Lifeboat crew members and the

RNLI Area Fundraising Manager attended each evening and one crew member was especially popular with the youngsters as he skied in his crew gear. The event, which commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the first ascent of Everest, was the brainchild of guild member Bill Wright who was also instrumental in instigating the building of the ski centre. Llandudno guild and crew would like to thank Ski Llandudno for the use of their facilities and hope that the event will become regular.



Crew Member Richard Jones joins youngsters Timothy and Daniel Cunningham who both completed 47 runs

## Winning fundraising friends

An excellent way for branches and guilds to raise money within their community is to encourage other clubs, businesses and individuals to do a fundraising event for their branch or guild. Here is an example of how teamwork between two organisations can pay dividends

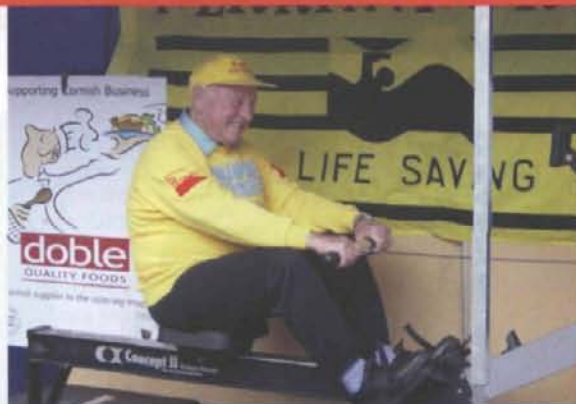
### Perranporth rowathon

RNLI lifeguards and Perranporth Surf Life Saving Club worked together to hold a sponsored rowathon with a difference. The non-stop, 48-hour event was a virtual tour of the Cornish coastline, raising more than £1,000 to be shared equally between the RNLI and the club.

Club members, together with other willing volunteers, embarked on the 268 mile row – the same distance as a tour around the Cornish coastline. In total they actually achieved over 373 miles but they didn't even have to get their feet wet as the row took place in a local hotel using ultra-modern rowing machines. The club's oldest member Trevor Miners (76) started

the row on 17 May 2003, with the last leg of the event completed on the following day by the club's youngest member, eight-year-old Andrea Pearson.

Perranporth is one of many beaches covered by RNLI lifeguards. Perranporth Surf Life Saving Club, which is itself a charity, works closely with the RNLI to promote beach safety. RNLI Beach Lifeguards Communications Manager Steve Instance said: 'We work very closely with Perranporth Surf Life Saving Club in our operations on the beach and this was a fantastic way for us to work together to help raise much needed funds.'



The club's oldest and youngest members in action



### Thanks, Leeds

In the autumn 2003 issue we ran an article about a one-third scale model of a Mersey class lifeboat that has helped

raise over £300,000 in collections over the years. What we didn't mention was that Leeds branch Chairman Neville Strothard and Secretary Richard Whincup, with the support of their

branch, have been instrumental in the care and loaning of this unique model since 1995. Thanks to their efforts the lifeboat will live on to raise more funds for the RNLI.

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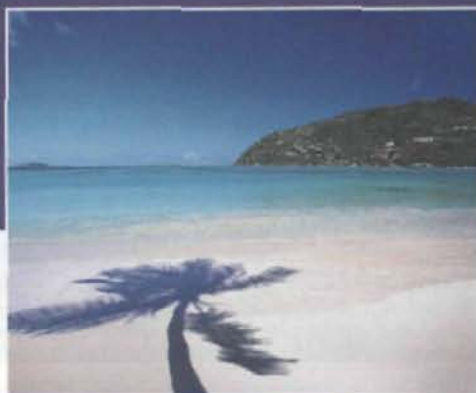
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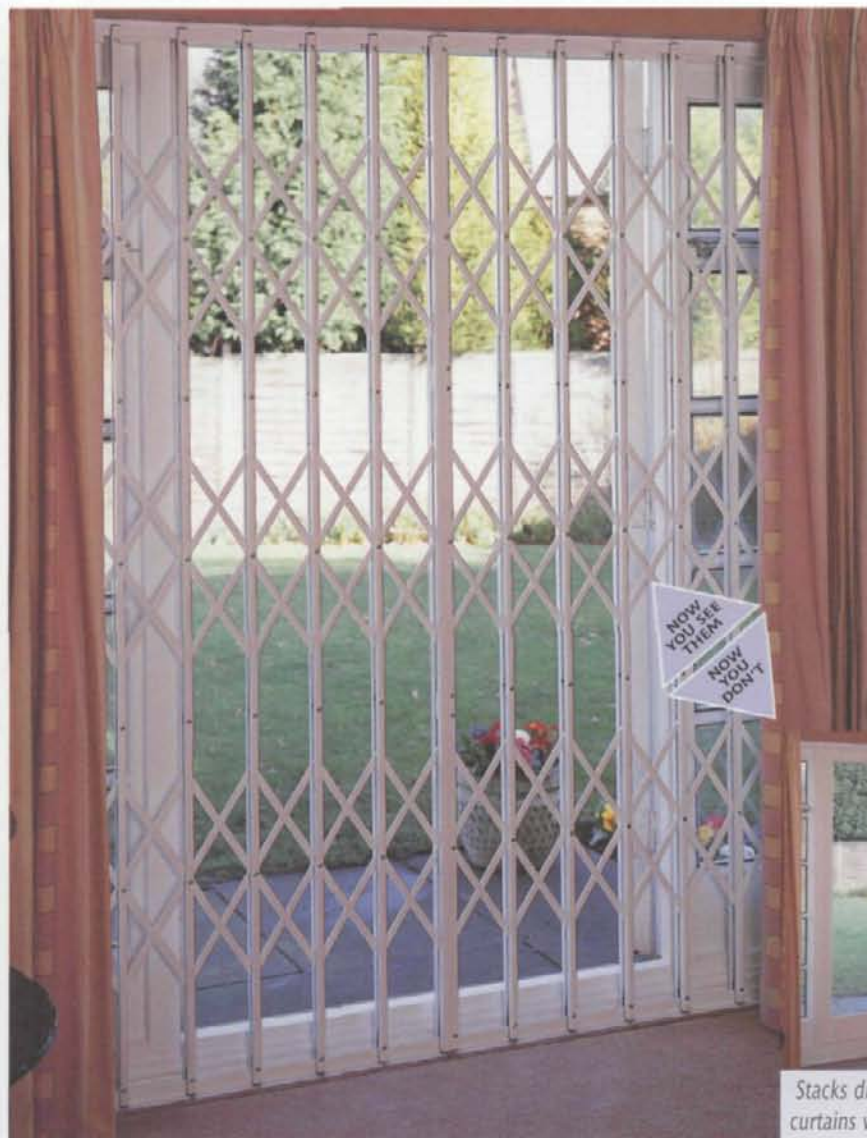
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