



Lifboats

the lifboat

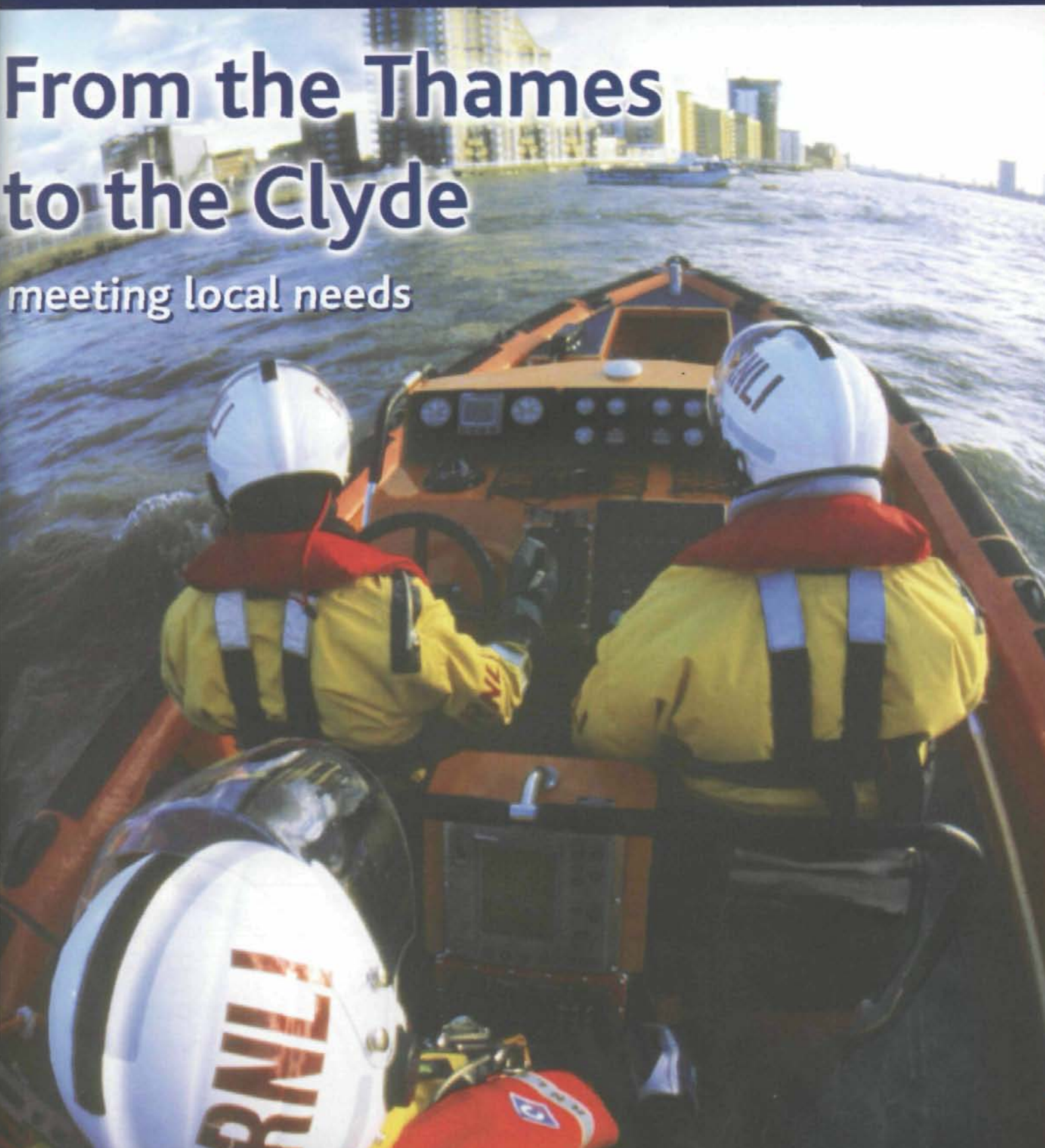
For everyone who helps save lives at sea

Spring
2004

SAP code: LBM567

From the Thames to the Clyde

meeting local needs



Time is of the essence



Volunteer lifeboat crews need your help to save lives at sea. Please remember the RNLI in your Will.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution depends entirely on voluntary donations and legacies to run the lifeboats that save lives at sea. With more than 227 lifeboat stations around the shores of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, it costs around £282,000 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 do not expect to be paid, or even thanked, but they do deserve the very best boats, training and equipment. You can help make sure they continue to receive them, with a legacy gift in your Will. If you would like to help in this way, please send for our information pack which gives you useful and practical advice about making or updating your Will.

Send now for your free legacy information pack and discover how a gift in your Will can help volunteer lifeboat crews save lives for years to come.

- I would like to know more about how I can remember the lifeboat crews by including a legacy to the RNLI in my Will.

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

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____

Address _____

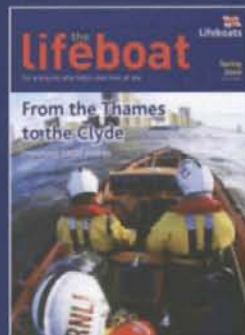
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Registered Charity No. 209603 LBJ04/4



Lifeboats



the Lifeboat



Lifeboats

The magazine of the
Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Registered Charity Number 209603

Issue 567

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

Front cover: Thames E class Public Servant Civil Service 44 by Canary Wharf
Photo: Jane Morgan

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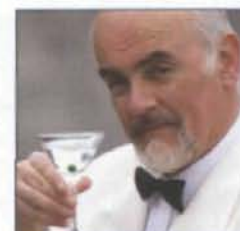
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Especially for you

You're our lifeline

LONDON LIFEBOAT WEEK

8-15 March



Lifeboats

Every lifeboat station and lifeguard beach is unique and each has different requirements if its volunteers are to successfully save lives at sea. Community fundraising and regional appeals can be tailored to meet these specific needs and provide a meaningful target for local support

Providing emergency rescue cover over some 8,850 miles of coastline, beaches and inland waterways is a massive feat. To do this the RNLI needs a fleet of over 460 lifeboats, of nine different classes, operating from 232 locations; as well as rescue hovercraft, Beach Lifeguard rescue craft, boathouses, launching and recovery equipment, crew facilities and all the associated equipment and crew gear.

The requirements of one location are quite different from another and a number of factors determine what search and rescue cover each station provides. Geography, current and predicted trends in water activity, marina and harbour developments, availability of crew members and proximity of neighbouring stations are all taken into account.

Whatever the requirements, there is a class of lifeboat to fit the bill. A remote lifeboat station covering inhospitable waters off the north of Scotland would need a large all weather lifeboat, such as a

Severn, that is capable of travelling miles offshore and tackling severe weather. A D class inflatable is ideal for rescues close to shore and among rocks in moderate conditions. Hovercraft are particularly useful at locations where the water is too shallow for an inshore lifeboat or ground conditions are too soft to support shore-based transport. And to save lives on the Thames the crews need fast, water jet-powered, response craft that are significantly different from the Atlantic 75s that are used on the coast.

The class and number of lifeboats required, together with the local environment, dictates what facilities and launching equipment are needed. To launch an all weather lifeboat across a long sandy beach would need a specialist launching tractor and carriage – to launch from a dockside requires a davit launch crane and gantry equipment.

All this, of course, is funded by your generous support.



RNLI volunteers, staff and supporters collected for London Lifeboat Week in 2003

Lifesaving in the city

Londoners have a long history of supporting the RNLI through donations and fundraising but, since the four stations were established on the Thames in 2002, the RNLI now has a physical presence in the city.

The Thames is a deep, cold and dangerous river and has strong currents that can pull people under in seconds. The types of incidents that occur here are different from those on the coast, with over 10,000 people using the river every day and huge crowds attending important events.

We need your donation now



The Thames lifeboats are under the spotlight all year round and call-outs range from full-scale rescues of people in the water to submerged cars, dogs and their owners in difficulty and people cut off by the tide. The crewing arrangements are unusual too: three of the stations are manned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide an immediate response. One crew member is even a Yeoman of the Guard.

As this issue of *the Lifeboat* goes to press the RNLI is confident of a bumper result from the 2004 London Lifeboat Week. This year, the event ran from 8–15 March with London Lifeboat Day itself held on 16 March, marking the end to the special week. This day brings the biggest single fundraising collection in the RNLI's calendar, raising around £300,000 every year. Hundreds of volunteer supporters, RNLI staff and lifeboat crew members took to the city streets and rail stations with their collecting buckets. No one could fail to notice that the RNLI was seeking funds in and around Greater London during lifeboat week.

This year BBC broadcaster Michael Buerk generously gave some of his time to record a radio advert for the appeal. The advert had primetime slots on Classic, Jazz and LBC radio stations.

There was also a carefully targeted

mailing campaign to support lifeboats on the Thames and around the coastline. Over 500,000 households in the capital received the appeal letter *You're our lifeline* (see above). A mailing also went out to supporters in Greater London postcode areas to remind them of the special week and asking them to make a donation.

New collecting materials were specially devised for schools, including substituting the old style flag day emblem with a temporary tattoo. This appeals to more children and encourages them to learn more about the RNLI.

Regional appeals

When the RNLI was in a better financial position a few years ago, it ran fewer regional appeals, as it wanted to remain honest with its supporters and not ask for money that was not needed. Now that things have changed financially the appeals programme is set to run full steam ahead in 2004 with the launch of 36 appeals, generating an income of some £2M.

'Community fundraising is becoming increasingly difficult for all charities but is still an important source of income for the RNLI,' says Fundraising and Communications Director David Brann.



St Peter Port lifeboat, *Spirit of Guernsey*, was funded by the highly successful Guernsey Severn Lifeboat Appeal, together with other gifts and legacies

Photo: Brian Green

'We have many opportunities to raise money through appeals for lifeboats, shoreworks and equipment but not every region has high profile and popular items on which to focus' David continues. 'This is why we are also planning to concentrate on fundraising for crew training, which will benefit lifeboat crews throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland.'

We plan to bring you more on this in a future issue of *the Lifeboat* but here are some examples of regional and targeted appeals that are ongoing or planned for later in the year:



Stormy Stan drums up interest for the Lifeboats of the Clyde appeal with a tempting supply of biscuits

Lifeboats of the Clyde

Blazing sunshine greeted the launch of the Lifeboats of the Clyde appeal at Glasgow's George Square in August 2003. This appeal is raising funds for all seven lifeboat stations based along the Firth of Clyde, namely: Campbeltown; Girvan; Helensburgh; Largs; Lamlash; Tighnabruich; and Troon.

The first phase of the appeal focused on Troon. The station's existing all weather lifeboat was due to be replaced by a Trent and so the first target was £1.3M.

Local volunteers from all the branches and guilds in the Clyde area are working together to support the appeal and are busy organising extra fundraising events.

Stormy Stan has been doing his bit for the appeal by making appearances all over

the Clyde area – from railway stations early in the morning to primary schools for birthday parties. He has proved very popular, especially when handing out Tunnock's Caramel Wafers as supplied by Appeal Chairman Boyd Tunnock.

The appeal has also seen the birth of its very own mascot: Sandy the Seadog. Sandy hails from the Channel Islands and is a small floppy dog who proudly wears a navy fleece bearing an embroidered lifeboat and the slogan 'Lifeboats of the Clyde'. Everyone loved Sandy so much that he is now available as an enamel badge.

The appeal reached its first target in just four months, thanks to some extremely generous donations from trusts, individual donors and legacies, and a lot of hard work by local volunteers. The new lifeboat went on station at Troon in February and will be officially named on 19 June 2004. The Lifeboats of the Clyde appeal is a fundraising effort everyone in the Clyde area can be proud of.

North West appeal

The North West region is looking into launching an appeal later in 2004 to build a station to house Morecambe's hovercraft. This appeal, with a snappy working title of 'Home for a Hover' should be very much in the public eye as it sadly follows the recent tragedy in which 19 people were lost while cockle picking in Morecambe Bay. Both Morecambe's inshore lifeboat and hovercraft, together with Fleetwood's all weather lifeboat, joined the search for the group of 30 cocklers who were cut off by the tide and stranded in the cold and dark (see our news report on page 27).



Jan Schaub of Cleveland, Ohio hopped on a plane and gave the Whitby appeal a surprise cash boost. Jan is pictured with Whitby Station Treasurer Geoff Cooling, Mechanic Glen Goodberry and Second Coxswain John Pearson

Operation Whitby Launch and Recovery

An appeal to raise £30,000 to fund the launch and recovery equipment for the inshore lifeboat at Whitby lifeboat station



Our lifeboat crews never refuse to help
Can you?



Registered Charity No. 209603

Publicity material for the Whitby launch and recovery appeal

Leeds Lifeboat Appeal

The North East region has launched a £20,000 appeal in the City of Leeds to fund a new D class lifeboat for the RNLI's relief fleet. This lifeboat, to be named *City of Leeds II*, will be available to go on station anywhere in the country at a moment's notice and will maintain the strong links between the City of Leeds and the RNLI.

Whitby appeals

The North East region has also launched two appeals for Whitby lifeboat station. The first, to fund new launch and recovery equipment needed for the inshore lifeboat, hit its target of £30,000 within a few months of its launch. Following the success of the first appeal, a second was launched for £80,000 to fund a new pontoon and fuel tank also needed at Whitby.

The fund had a surprise boost from overseas when Jan Schaub of Cleveland, Ohio, made contact with the station. Jan was thinking about leaving some money to the RNLI in her will but, when she read about the appeal in the online *Whitby Gazette*, she thought that a timely donation would be better. Jan wanted to hand over the money personally so she hopped on a plane and was given VIP treatment at Whitby lifeboat station. Following a guided tour and an impromptu presentation of one of the station's 200th anniversary prints, Jan presented a cheque for £5,000 towards the appeal.

Wales and West Mercia

Branches and guilds throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland have been working together to form Lifeboat Coordinating Groups (LCG), which have proved that combined efforts pay dividends. Every inland LCG in the Wales and West Mercia region is now linked to a lifeboat station in the western division and exchange visits are taking place. Members of Shropshire LCG have already visited their link at Barmouth and Birmingham took to the air to link up with the Isle of Man. The Flintshire group is well on its way to the £30,000 target for a new D class lifeboat and crew training.

Eastern region

In October 2003 Eastern region launched the Northamptonshire Appeal to fund a FIB1 (Fast Inshore Lifeboat) for Porthcawl lifeboat station. A number of events have raised nearly £6,000 so far. The region is currently planning the launch of the Clacton Appeal to fund a FIB1 for the station.

North East region Grace Darling Museum

It's not just lifeboats and equipment that the RNLI needs help funding – the Grace Darling Museum in Bamburgh, Northumberland, remains virtually unchanged since its opening in 1938. It is cramped and desperately needs improvement to protect its irreplaceable collection and to cater for visitors in the 21st century.



The memory of Grace Darling's bravery will be preserved for future generations thanks to the Grace Darling Museum Appeal

The museum commemorates the bravery of Grace Darling who, in 1838 at only 22 years of age, risked her life in an open boat to save the lives of others. Grace and her father rowed over a mile through raging seas to reach the survivors of *SS Forfarshire*. Tragically, Grace died of tuberculosis only four years after the heroic rescue.

A century later a national campaign helped fund a museum with money provided by the public and individual benefactors. The land was generously provided by the Armstrong Estate. The RNLI became guardian of the collection and has managed and funded the museum since 1938 with the help of the local volunteer committee. The unique collection includes many of Grace's personal belongings, and currently attracts 40,000 visitors a year.

The Grace Darling Museum Appeal for £150,000 will support a heritage lottery bid application and other trust funding to provide a new education centre in the museum. This will help visitors of all ages to learn and appreciate what Grace did and why this is still so relevant today.



An artist's impression of how the new gallery may look in the refurbished Grace Darling museum

The new education, resource and community room will be used for research, workshops, talks and events.

These targeted appeals show how the RNLI finds local solutions to local needs. See our Rescue Statistics feature on pages 24–25 to see how the RNLI uses local and national incident data to fine tune its lifesaving service.

Lifeboat Lottery

Every ticket counts

The Lifeboat Lottery has been raising essential funds for over 25 years. During this time it has raised in excess of £12M – so thank you to all those who have supported the RNLI in this way

Thanks to changes in government legislation the RNLI launched its first National Lottery in 1977. The grand event sold over 60,000 tickets at 25p each and offered a first prize of £1,000 – a considerable amount at the time. Following its initial success the lottery grew in popularity and became a quarterly event.

Since then it has seen more than 200 prize winners. Prizes have always been obtained at a reduction, but in recent years fantastic holidays and top of the range cars have been fully sponsored thanks to Britannia Rescue, Page & Moy, Peugeot, Guernsey Tourist Board and The Royal Bank of Scotland, issuers of the Lifeboats Mastercard.

The Lottery continues to evolve and those of you who received Spring 2004 Lottery tickets will have noticed some changes in their design. The majority of these changes have been a direct result from your feedback and all are aimed at making it easier for you to enter. You will now find personalised stickers to save you the tedious job of writing details on each ticket. If you wish to buy all your tickets, you don't have to fill out any counterfoils: just complete and return the reply slip and your numbers will be entered in the draw.



Win a Caribbean cruise

The grand prize for the Summer 2004 Lottery is a 13-night Caribbean cruise for two, aboard the *Brilliance of the Seas*, kindly sponsored by the Lifeboats Mastercard. The holiday begins with a flight from London to Miami, with one night spent in Miami before embarking on your cruise to San Juan, St Thomas, Antigua, St Lucia, St Maarten and Labadee.

Summer 2004 Lottery tickets will be available from 19 April. If you do not currently receive tickets and would like to, please contact Pauline on 01202 663219 or email pteivas-white@rnli.org.uk.



Back in the 70s – TV stars Simon Ward and Paula Wilcox pick the winners in the RNLI's lottery for a brand new mini

Previous winners

Congratulations to Mr Wooster, from Kent, who won first prize in the Winter 2003 Lottery – a fantastic holiday for two at Les Rocquettes Hotel in Guernsey, kindly sponsored by the Guernsey Tourist Board. The draw sold over 194,000 tickets and, together with lottery donations, raised £247,730 for the RNLI.

Congratulations also go to the following cash prize winners:

- 2nd prize of £1,000 – Mr Dickens, Gloucestershire
- 3rd prize of £500 – Mr Williams, Plymouth
- 4th prize of £250 – Mrs Ward, Hertfordshire
- Five 5th prizes of £100 – Mrs Reynolds, Ms Tedds, Mr Llewellyn, Mr Wheeler and Mrs Goudal



Autumn 2003 Lottery winners Mr and Mrs Higgs received their Peugeot 307 S 1.4 from Stormy Stan

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Our volunteers
need courage,
commitment
and selflessness
to save lives.

All you need
is a pen.



We're not asking you to risk your life in Force 9 gales. Or to be on call, day and night. Or even to devote time to training. We are asking for something equally important, though: put pen to paper, below, and take out a Lifeboats MasterCard. The Royal Bank of Scotland will contribute £10 to the RNLI automatically, plus another £5 if you use the card 10 times or more in the first month. After that, they'll donate 25p for every £100 you spend.

You will receive a 4.9% introductory rate for purchases and balance transfers for the first six months from the date of opening the account (**15.9% APR** thereafter). Do the write thing; complete and return the coupon today. Or call free on **0800 444 201** and quote LBP4.



Lifeboats

Registered Charity No. 209603

Yes, I'm interested in the Lifeboats MasterCard. Please send me an application pack.
Or call free on 0800 444 201, quoting LBP4.

Name _____ Address _____

Post Code _____

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Stratford-upon-Avon
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CV37 9BR

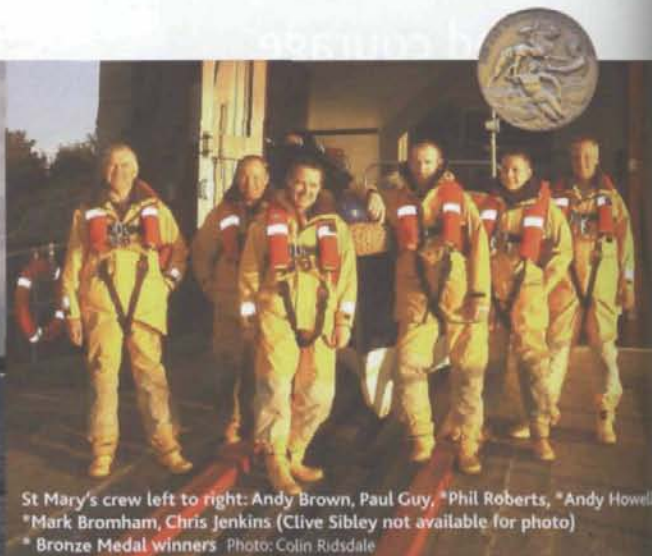
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 The Royal Bank
of Scotland

Lifeboats in action



St Mary's Severn class lifeboat *The Whiteheads*



St Mary's crew left to right: Andy Brown, Paul Guy, *Phil Roberts, *Andy Howells, *Mark Bromham, Chris Jenkins (Clive Sibley not available for photo)
* Bronze Medal winners Photo: Colin Ridsdale

Injured yachtsman saved from certain death

A mayday call from an injured sailor who had lost control of a yacht was relayed to Falmouth Coastguard on 29 October 2003. The Royal Navy (RN) search and rescue helicopter from Culdrose and the Severn class lifeboat *The Whiteheads* from St Mary's, in the Isles of Scilly, were tasked to help. The helicopter had an estimated time of arrival of 4pm. With 40 miles to cover in gale force conditions, the lifeboat crew knew there was a chance that the helicopter would save the yachtsman before they got there.

During the passage the lifeboat encountered constant force 8 northwesterly winds and seas of 8–10m on the starboard side of lifeboat. Coxswain Andy Howells steered around larger waves, making a best speed of 20 knots

Winched to yacht

Meanwhile the helicopter did indeed reach the casualty first and lowered a winchman, Leading Air Crewman Graham Hatch, to the deck of the 10.4m yacht. Graham found the man conscious, but in considerable pain, in the saloon of the yacht. He had head, neck

and back injuries, was bleeding from a cut to his right hand and was unable to move. The yacht too was in a bad condition: beam to the seas, no sails set, and the engine not running.

Soon after 5pm the crew of the helicopter lowered Petty Officer Air Crewman David Rigg onto the yacht with a spinal board and first aid equipment. In severe gale force 9 winds, and waves reaching 13m, Dave was totally submerged twice on his descent. Graham and Dave carefully placed the injured sailor on the spinal board, but soon realised they were unable to get him safely on deck in the dreadful sea conditions. So the pilot on the helicopter, Lieutenant Claire Donegan, asked St Mary's lifeboat for assistance. The lifeboat would have a major role to play in the rescue after all.

Lifeboat ahoy!

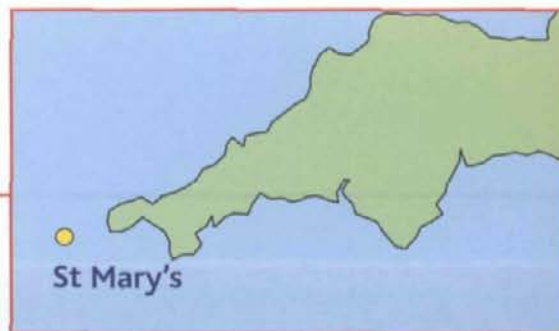
Claire asked if the approaching lifeboat would transfer some of its crew to the yacht to help evacuate the casualty. Coxswain Andy Howells agreed to place two crew members onto the

yacht. They planned to then transfer the man onto the aft deck of the lifeboat and air lift him from there with more room to manoeuvre.

Claire also requested the support of the search and rescue helicopter from RAF Chivenor, as she was aware that the fuel level on the RN helicopter was getting low, and feared they would have to return to base.

The lifeboat arrived on scene just as daylight was fading. Andy commented: 'It was useful to have a bit of light on arrival so as to see the sea state at scene and feel what it was like when stopped and at slow speed.' Andy asked for the help of a 250m tanker *Okeanis* that was close by and ready to shield the yacht and lifeboat from the gale force winds. While the *Okeanis* was manoeuvring into this position, Andy briefed the crew and decided Mark Bromham and Phil Roberts would be placed on board the yacht: 'I tried to pick the younger and more agile to get aboard,' he said.

During a practice run to judge the conditions, a large wave hit the lifeboat and knocked her onto her port beam. The wave pushed her 30m sideways and broke across



the bow. None of the crew was hurt, but they were in no doubt as to the danger of what they were about to try. Andy reflected: 'It was a good reminder of what to watch out for if we chose to go alongside.'

A perilous transfer

Andy went ahead and repositioned the lifeboat, and Mark and Phil stood on the port shoulder ready to jump. As the lifeboat reached the yacht, the pair leapt. Phil landed safely, but the strap at the back of Mark's lifejacket snagged on the lifeboat rail. Mark was hanging precariously between two vessels. With lightning reflexes Andy swiftly engaged full port bow thrusters and came astern on the starboard engine to stop the boats from crushing Mark. Crew Member Paul Guy grabbed Mark and both air crewmen dashed from the yacht's cockpit to help. They pulled him up and clear, on to the yacht.

Andy approached the yacht once again with great manoeuvring skill and successfully passed some more equipment. The yacht was now in danger of capsizing, as waves filled the cockpit. In an attempt to reduce the motion of the yacht, Mark set up a sea anchor while the others prepared the injured sailor for the transfer.

Abandon yacht

At 6.20pm all was ready to be transferred. *Okeanis*, 100m from the yacht, once again provided a lee from the winds, now gusting up to 55 knots, but Andy became concerned that the tanker was itself being blown towards the yacht. 'I was always aware of the ship's position, hence I was keen to get the crew off at that moment,' he said.

Without hesitation he approached the yacht and placed the lifeboat alongside just as the swell put the two vessels' decks level. The crew on the yacht slid the stretcher over the guardrails into the hands of the crew on the lifeboat. All four men on the yacht now saw their own opportunity and jumped for the lifeboat. When all landed safely, Andy quickly manoeuvred full astern, clear of the yacht and the encroaching *Okeanis*. As he was clearing, the yacht was hit by the tanker. Within two minutes, the abandoned yacht disappeared beneath the ship's bow. The damaged and dismantled yacht was spotted a few days later and was towed into Newlyn Harbour by the Penlee lifeboat.

Back to shore

On board the lifeboat the injured sailor was taken into the wheelhouse. The crew decided that they should not risk an air lift in such severe conditions, and the two airmen also elected to stay on board the lifeboat. They headed back to St Mary's for quayside transfer. The RN helicopter returned to the Isles of Scilly and the RAF helicopter was recalled to base.

In case of spinal injury, Andy Howells kept his speed to 15 knots on the homeward journey and they arrived back at St Mary's pier at 9.24pm. An awaiting ambulance took the casualty to the airport. He was transported by the RN helicopter to Treliske hospital in Truro, Cornwall, where he made a full recovery.

Combined rescue praised

In recognition of their actions in saving the sailor from certain death, Coxswain Andy Howells, Phil Roberts and Mark Bromham are to be awarded Bronze Medals for Gallantry. The rest of the lifeboat crew will each receive a framed letter of thanks from the RNLI Chairman.

Petty Officer Air Crewman David Rigg and Leading Crewman Graham Hatch will be awarded the Thanks of the Institution on Vellum for their determination, courage, skill and the vital part they played in the success of this service.

A letter of thanks from Chief Executive will also be sent to Lieutenant Claire Donegan and the remaining crew on board the RN helicopter; and to the Master of the *Okeanis* for the support provided.

Summary of service

- 3.20pm** Launch of St Mary's lifeboat to help lone sailor 40 miles away
- 3.55pm** Royal Naval helicopter arrives on scene and lowers a winchman onto the yacht
- 5.07pm** Second helicopter crewman lowered onto yacht. Waves estimated at 13m
- 5.55pm** St Mary's lifeboat arrives on scene
- 6.00pm** Lifeboat crew Mark Bromham and Phil Roberts leap to yacht
- 6.25pm** Transfer of injured sailor in stretcher from yacht to lifeboat. Leap by two helicopter crew and two lifeboat crew onto lifeboat. Yacht abandoned
- 6.27pm** Yacht hit by tanker
- 9.24pm** Lifeboat arrives at St Mary's pier. Casualty is taken to Treliske hospital in Truro

THE LIFEBOAT

Severn class lifeboat
ON-1229

The Whiteheads

Funding:

Bequest of Olive Elsie Whitehead

THE CREW

Coxswain:

Andy Howells

Crew

Members:

Phil Roberts

Mark Bromham

Andy Brown

Clive Sibley

Paul Guy

Chris Jenkins

ST MARY'S

LIFEBOAT STATION

Established:

1837 (lapsed 1855 and re-opened 1874)

Previous RNLI

Medals: One Gold, nine Silver and 13 Bronze

THE CASUALTY

Lone sailor on 10.4m yacht

THE CONDITIONS

Weather:

Cloudy

Visibility:

Very good, but fading light

Wind:

Force 8

Sea state:

Rough, waves up to 13m

Bronze for selfless bravery



On the same day as the Redcar incident (see page 12) volunteers at Filey too were called upon to save lives. Particular tidal and weather conditions combined with the local geology to create hidden dangers in the bay

THE FILEY INSHORE LIFEBOAT

D class lifeboat D-563
Rotary District 1120
Funding: Rotary District 1120

THE CREW

Helmsman Michael 'Pip' Farline
Stuart Lane, Francis Speak Jnr

THE FILEY ALL WEATHER LIFEBOAT

Carriage-launched Mersey class lifeboat ON-1170 (12-13) *Keep Fit Association*

Funding: The Keep Fit Association Appeal, Filey Lifeboat Appeal, with other gifts and legacies

THE CREW

Coxswain:

Barry Robson

Crew members:

Neil Cammish, Peter Macauley
Mark Johnson, Frances Wilkins
Christopher Vernon,
Philip Birchall

FILEY LIFEBOAT STATION

Established: 1823

Previous RNLI Medals:

One Silver and two Bronze

THE CASUALTIES

A 12-year-old girl and a woman

THE CONDITIONS

Weather: Clear skies

Visibility: Good

Wind: Force 4 northerly

Sea state: Slight at shore, rough with 3-4m swell around banks

Despite facing the North Sea, Filey's beaches are remarkably sheltered, lying between Filey Brig and Flamborough Head, so they and their caravan parks are a popular holiday destination. On 15 August 2003, a 12-year-old girl ventured into the apparently calm water at one of these beaches, Reighton Sands, and quickly got into trouble. The ground underfoot was being rapidly scooped away by the waves and she was washed off her feet and out to sea. A woman watching from the beach used a neighbour's mobile phone to call the Coastguard and at 1.28pm the D class *Rotary District 1120* was launched, with Helmsman Michael 'Pip' Farline and Crew Members Stuart Lane and Francis Speak Jnr on board.

At the launch site of Coble Landing, the sea was slight. Pip warned his crew that conditions would worsen dramatically as soon as the lifeboat was out of the shelter of the Brig so they

prepared themselves for a buffeting. Meanwhile, another bystander on the beach had gone into the water to try to rescue the girl and had got into difficulties herself in the tidal currents.

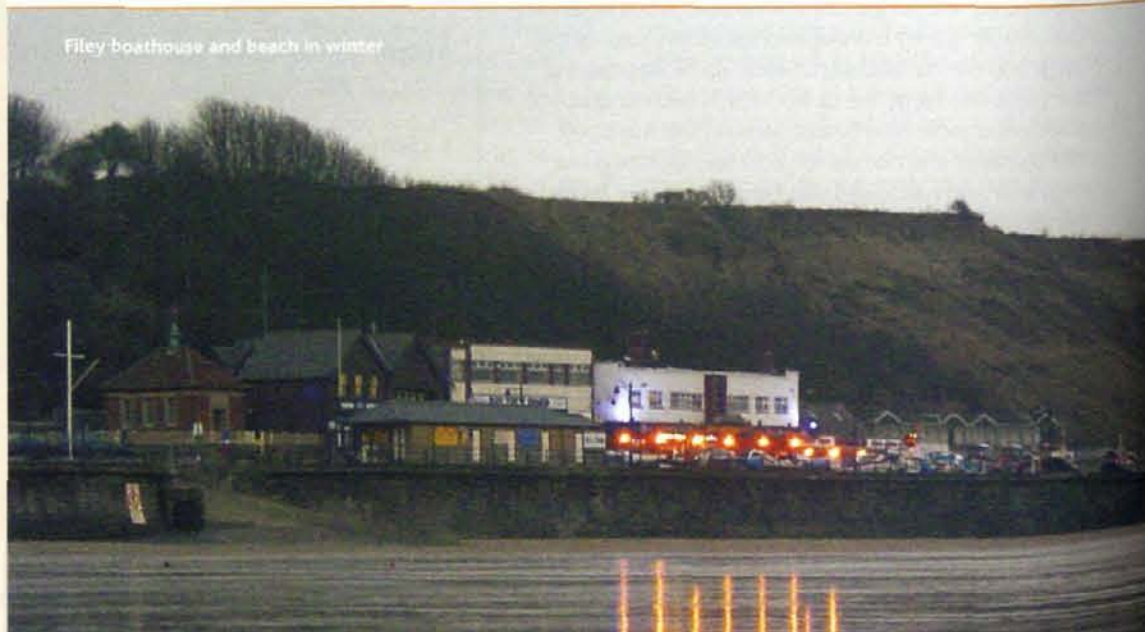
With a mile to go, the casualties were still not visible, the swell having reached 3-4m. An additional hazard now presented itself: the waves had scoured deep troughs in the underlying gravel and sand, throwing up the debris into leys or banks just below the surface of the water.

From the crest of one wave the crew suddenly saw the woman, about 200m away on a bodyboard just inside one bank, and the girl, on the far south eastern end of the same bank, being knocked about by heavy dumping waves – Pip decided that she was the priority for rescue.



L-R: Pip (40), Stuart (20) and Francis (20)

Filey boathouse and beach in winter



Pip took the boat in and behind the bank and, at the right moment, turned smartly round, head to sea. Unfortunately, he had to use so much power against the breaking waves that he overshot the casualty. He powered backwards until both he and Francis could grab the floundering girl over the starboard side.

Now it was the boat that was vulnerable. Water was pouring in and the nose was lifting violently. Pip said afterwards that this moment took them all beyond their experience.

'Our training would never include this: it would be too risky. This was the worst situation I've been in in 20 years.'

Stuart took over holding on to the girl from Francis who, as the heavier man, moved to the bow and leaned over to try to stabilise the boat. The girl was imploring her rescuers not to let her go and, at last, Stuart and Pip were able to lift her in. By this time the water was up to the sponsons.

With the helm having been briefly unattended, the boat became grounded on the bank. Five or six more waves hit the boat directly and Stuart had difficulty keeping hold of the girl, despite wrapping his legs around her and wedging himself up against the anchor box.

In a brief lull, the boat floated free and Pip regained control, turning and manoeuvring towards the second casualty. The boat was sluggish with the extra weight of water but the woman was eventually reached and successfully hauled in over the port side with her (broken) board.

For a clear run into the beach, Pip wanted to go back out a short distance, turn and catch a wave but, with five people and water on board, they couldn't complete the spin and instead broached on the seaward side of the bank. The boat was pushed shoreward, side on but, once back within the bank, the quieter sea allowed Pip to regain control once more and he did make a successful landing at 1.55pm. The casualties were both shocked but otherwise uninjured and were able to walk up to the waiting Coastguard unit.

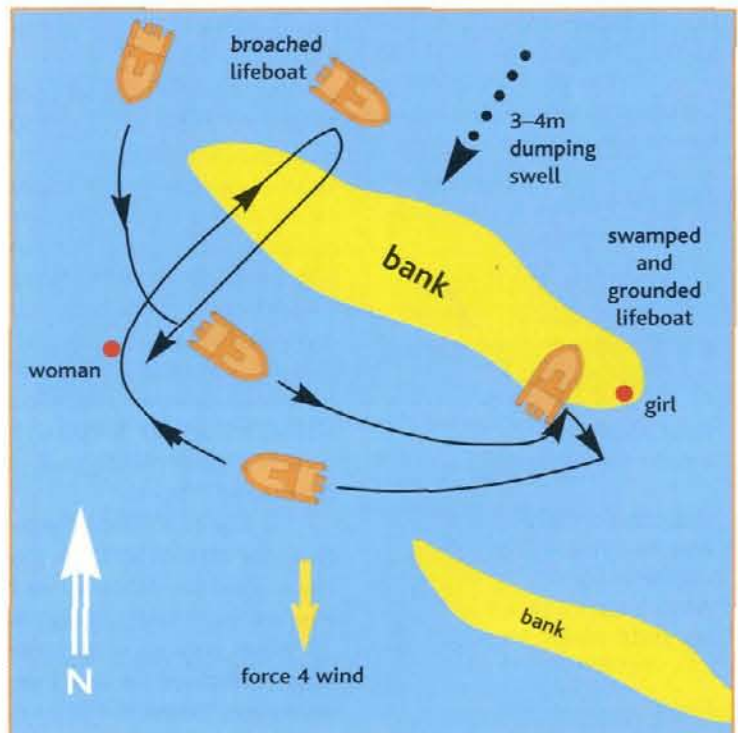
Almost as soon as they were ashore, the lifeboatmen were informed that a search was underway for the woman who had originally raised the alarm. She had last been seen running towards the sea, having returned the phone she had borrowed.

Stuart said afterwards that: 'The worst thing was looking back to what we'd just come through and knowing that we would now have to go back into it.'

The station's Mersey class *Keep Fit Association* joined the relaunched ILB and an RAF Sea King helicopter to search beyond the banks. On the way out, the D class was repeatedly stood on end as it crossed the surf line but all returned safely after 2.42pm when it was confirmed that the missing woman had been found on land.

Back at the station *Rotary District 1120* was checked for damage but all was in good working order, hull, electrical systems and engine, and the crew had sustained only bruises.

On recommending a Bronze Medal for Pip and Medal Service Certificates for Stuart and Francis, Training Divisional Inspector Robin Warrington said: 'Helmsman Farline's philosophy is selfless. He believes entirely that he should put his own life in danger if the need arises, based on the fact that it could be him in need of help one day. Both crew members commented on his leadership and their confidence in him. All three showed great determination in extreme circumstances – a service for all concerned to be proud of.'



Power against the surf



When a lifeguard went to the rescue of a young female surfer near Saltburn Pier, they both ended up in trouble in the heavy surf. A local man saved the surfer and Redcar lifeboats were tasked to find and rescue the lifeguard who had disappeared in the waves

THE LIFEBOATS

Atlantic 75 B-580

Leicester Challenge II

Funding: Leicester branch of the RNLI

D class D-523

Peterborough Beer Festival I

Funding: Visitors to the Peterborough Camra Beer Festivals in 1995 and 1996

ATLANTIC 75 CREW

Helmsman:

Mark Reeves

Crew Members:

Thomas McNamara

Jonathan Danks

D CLASS CREW

Helmsman:

Mark Greaves

Crew Member:

David Bourne

REDCAR LIFEBOAT STATION

Established: 1802

RNLI Medals: One Gold, one Silver and one Bronze

THE CASUALTY

A surfer and a lifeguard

THE CONDITIONS

Weather: Cloudy

Visibility: Good

Wind: Westerly force 4

Sea state: Rough, 3m swell

On 15 August 2003 a Royal Life Saving Society lifeguard spotted a surfer in difficulty at Saltburn Beach and paddled out to her on his board through the breaking waves. He reached the surfer and managed to get her onto the rescue board but, as they headed back to shore, a huge wave hit them and the board was lost. A second lifeguard couldn't reach the pair, so she ran to call the Coastguard for help. On her way she passed local surf shop manager Nick Noble and told him what was happening.

The Atlantic 75 lifeboat *Leicester Challenge II* launched from the beach at 2.50pm with Helmsman Mark Reeves in command. The D class *Peterborough Beer Festival I* launched shortly after. Heavy seas hampered the progress of the lifeboats to Saltburn, 3.5 miles to the south east of Redcar, with a heavy 3-4m swell running from the north.

Back at the beach, Nick, a qualified lifeguard and experienced surfer, saw that the surfer and lifeguard were both in trouble. Without a thought for his own safety he paddled out to them. He reached the woman quickly on his surfboard, but could not rescue the lifeguard – he had disappeared in the surf.

The Atlantic 75 lifeboat arrived on scene as Nick took the woman to the shore on his board. This enabled the lifeboat to search for the missing lifeguard immediately, saving valuable time.

Waves in excess of 3m breaking from 200m offshore obscured the crew's view of the area. Mark remembers: 'I knew, due to the heavy ground swell, that locating anybody in the water was going to be very difficult, especially if they were in the surf.'

The short distance between the sets of breaking waves meant that he couldn't steer a route through clear water, so Mark briefed his crew before entering the surf to search for the missing lifeguard. He told them: 'to keep a sharp look out and be prepared to hang on.' He chose his wave and ran into the heavy surf. Mark knew the lifeboat

was near her limits, but trusted that she could cope: 'The lifeboat was outstanding despite the very heavy ground swell and broken water she was in. There is no better boat for the job in those conditions.'

Crew Member Jonathan Danks spotted the yellow T-shirt of the lifeguard about 30m away. The lifeguard was being thrown around violently in the surf. He was under water most of the time, exhausted after 20 minutes in the water: it was vital that the crew recover him at the first attempt. Had a second attempt been necessary, the crew believe that the lifeguard would have been lost.

Mark turned the lifeboat towards the casualty and, balancing the need for power against the surf, effectively glided the lifeboat towards the casualty. The lifeboat took on around six broken waves before getting close enough to the casualty to reach out to him. Crew Member Thomas McNamara grabbed one hand, Jonathan caught the other and they pulled the man aboard. They placed him on the bench seat and kept him secure despite constant broken water washing through the lifeboat. Mark took the lifeboat seaward, vertical at times. After taking on another five waves they cleared the surf and reached the relative calm of the clean swell.

On board the lifeboat, the casualty was responsive but shivering. Mark remembers: 'I will never forget the look on the casualty's face when he realised he was in safe hands: he looked me in the eyes and said "I thought I was going to die".' He was suffering from the onset of hypothermia so the crew put him in a survival bag and fitted him with a lifejacket. Mark judged that they needed to get him back to shore straight away for professional medical care.

With the D class now on scene the casualty was transferred to her from the Atlantic. Mark explains: 'This was the safest way of getting the casualty ashore quickly to the waiting



Redcar



Redcar crew (left to right): Thomas McNamara, Jonathan Danks, Mark Reeves and Mark Greaves. Inset David Bourne

Photo: The Northern Echo



Redcar's Atlantic 75 Leicester Challenge II and D class Peterborough Beer Festival I

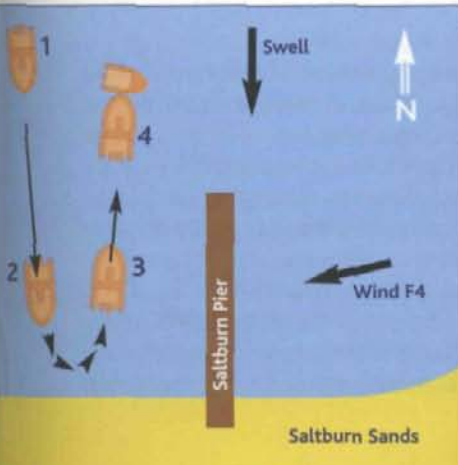
Photo: Ian Readman

ambulance. It's much easier to manhandle the D class than the Atlantic on the shore edge and get her back to sea again.' Jonathan too was transferred with the casualty to the D class. Four people on board made for an uncomfortable passage, but the D class reached the beach safely.

After taking the casualty to shore, the D class picked its way back through the surf. Through the last six large waves Helmsman Mark Greaves had to balance power against speed. An ambulance crew treated the lifeguard and the female surfer on the beach and they were then taken to hospital for observation.

'It is not often you can put your hand on your heart and know a person's life was saved; without question we saved this one.'

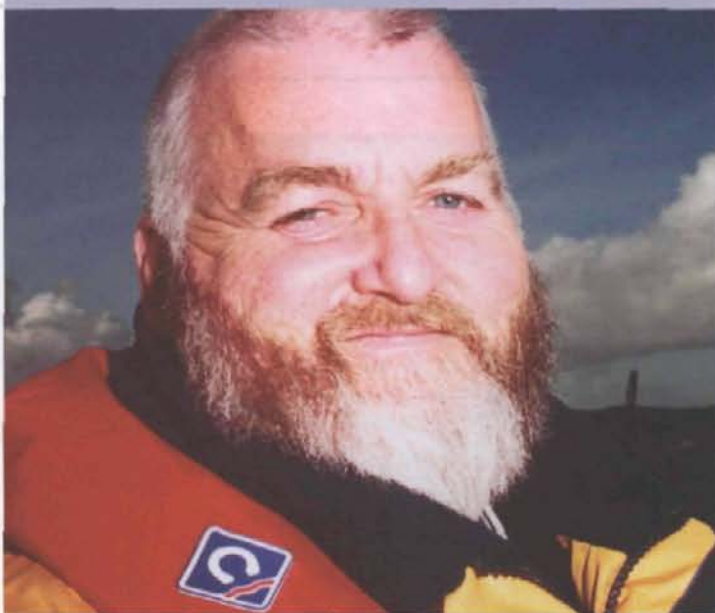
Mark Reeves is to be presented with the Thanks of the Institution on Vellum for his role in the rescue. He's proud of the award: 'It's nice to receive a pat on the back for any job you have done, but this one will be for all the family to see.' Mark Greaves, Thomas McNamara, Jonathan Danks and David Bourne will each receive a letter of appreciation from the Chief Executive of the RNLI. Mark Reeves praised his Atlantic 75 crew and the good teamwork of both inshore lifeboat crews, the shore helpers and tractor drivers: 'Being part of a lifeboat crew is like having an extended family. The nice part is knowing that all the training, hard work and dedication is worth every minute and everyone at the station can be proud of that.'



1. Atlantic 75 arrives on scene and runs into the heavy surf, looking for the lifeguard
2. Crew spot casualty and 'glide' towards him
3. Crew pull casualty onto lifeboat
4. Crew transfer casualty to D class lifeboat for swift transport to awaiting ambulance on beach



Lifeboats



'What is it like saving lives in 30-foot seas? ...

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Thank you for your continued support

Kitesurfers hit by sudden squall

Kitesurfers caught in the sudden squall are brought back to shore on the D class lifeboat *Marjorie*
Eddie Mitchell



Members of the Littlehampton inshore lifeboat crew were called into action in September 2003 when a group of kitesurfers were suddenly swept across the beach and out to sea by strong offshore winds

The alarm was raised by Bev Miller, a local teacher and seasoned windsurfer, at West Worthing. She had finished windsurfing for the day herself and had come ashore just before the wind shifted direction and increased dramatically. Mindful of the kitesurfers whom she had seen earlier on the water she returned to the water's edge for a closer look to make sure everyone had made it back to the shore in time.

Visibility by then was poor but through the gloom she spotted two kites down on the water about 300m off shore. There was also a lone windsurfer unable to deal with the impossible conditions. Bev had no hesitation in dialing 999 and asking for the Coastguard. By then the air temperature had also dropped from 21 to 12.5°C and conditions showed no sign of improving. Huddled against the wind in the shelter of a beach hut she rang a second time. 'I wanted to be sure the Coastguard was under no doubt that I thought life was in danger and I felt relieved that they confirmed the lifeboat would be launched following information from my first call,' she said.

In choppy seas and unsettled weather conditions, two RNLI inshore lifeboats were launched just after 6pm to search for the

missing kitesurfers: the Atlantic 75 *Blue Peter I* and the relief D class *Marjorie*. Several of the casualties spent more than an hour in the water trying to struggle back to the shore. After an extended search, the Atlantic 75 crew picked up the first casualty, Kenny Gray, approximately 300m from the shore. The lifeboat found a second kitesurfer, Wayne Mortiboys, over 700m away. The two casualties were transferred to the D class and taken ashore.

Representatives of the Coastguard and

'I must have been carried 30m up in the air and thought I was going to die. I just fell out of the sky and hit the water.'

Jez Jones, kitesurfer

ambulance crews stood by on the beach to help coordinate the rescue operations and attend to the casualties being recovered from the sea.

The sudden squall triggered similar kitesurfing incidents along the coast from Hampshire to Sussex involving further rescues by RNLI crews from Shoreham and Brighton. According to one of the kitesurfers, the winds dramatically switched direction



Kitesurfer thankful to be back on shore
Eddie Mitchell

without warning from a southwesterly onshore breeze to an offshore gale. Another local commented: 'You simply

'We saw a black cloud coming in and all of a sudden it started to howl.'

Wayne Mortiboys, kitesurfer

cannot predict offshore gales of this kind. It was not forecast and caught us all by surprise.' Thanks to a quick-thinking member of the public and the Littlehampton crew, no lives were lost in this unpredictable incident.

In 2003 the RNLI launched 282 times to rescues involving windsurfers, kitesurfers and surf kayakers, saving 34 lives. As part of the RNLI's purpose to save lives at sea, the Sea Safety team offers free safety advice to all windsurfers, kitesurfers and surf kayakers, raising awareness of how they can greatly reduce the risk of life-threatening accidents. A new interactive Sea Safety DVD aimed at those sports is now available. For more details call 0800 3280600 (1800 789589 in Ireland) or email seasafety@rnli.org.uk.

Stranded horses towed to safety

Four horses were spotted without riders on the East Winner Bank just off the west end of Hayling Island, Hampshire in July 2003. With dusk approaching and a rising tide, there was concern for the safety of both the riders and horses, so the Hayling Island lifeboats were called to assist

The horse riders had stayed out on the sand bank for too long following low water on 16 July. As the Atlantic 75 *Betty Battle* neared the East Winner Bank the crew were pleased to hear from the Coastguard that all the riders were safely ashore. However, the four thoroughbred horses were still in danger, stranded on the sand bank. The Hayling Island relief D class lifeboat *John Edmunds* launched to assist.

One of the horses was spotted quickly, standing calmly on the bank. In the fading light Helmsman Paul Lewis entered the water, took the bridle, and walked and swam the horse ashore in the slight sea state to the awaiting Coastguard, fire service and vet.

The lifeboat crew used flares and torches to find two more horses. The Atlantic 75 concentrated on getting one at a time to safety. When it became too shallow for the lifeboat, Crew Member Colin Parke entered knee-deep water to try to guide the horse to shore.

The D class arrived to take over from the *Betty Battle* in the shallows while she searched for the third horse. Every time the D class got close to the second horse to herd it to shore, the animal turned sharply away. So in a daring manoeuvre – one that definitely hadn't been practised in training sessions – the helmsman drove the D class up onto the horse's rump, which was awash. Paul Lewis leapt onto the horse's back and Crew Member Anthony Green grabbed the horse's reins and led it to shore from on board the D class.

The D class then went back to search for the third horse, which was spotted about a mile offshore on the bank. Three crew members made valiant attempts to catch the

horse on foot on the mile-long bank. After some time, the skittish horse was herded into deeper water where it stood still long enough for the helmsman to manoeuvre the D class onto the horse's rump. Paul climbed onto the horse, attached a rope and bridle and the lifeboat towed the horse towards the shore, stern-first, to keep the propeller as far away as possible from the horse.

In the deeper water between the sand bank and shore, the horse was in danger of drowning, so Paul dismounted, inflated his lifejacket and supported the horse's head. The slight sea state and the sheer weight of the horse's neck and head meant that Paul swallowed a lot of water. He also suffered considerable bruising to his legs from the scared horse but he held on tight to save the animal.

The Atlantic 75 borrowed the fire service's thermal imaging equipment to search for the last horse. Sadly, the horse was found dead and the body was towed ashore. The lifeboats and the shore helpers returned to station after a three-hour service, pleased that they had saved three horses from this fate.

Their courage has since been recognised by the RSPCA. They were all presented with the RSPCA's Certificate of Merit at a ceremony at the station on 8 February 2004. Lifeboat Operations Manager Nigel Roper praised the effective teamwork of the two lifeboats and the 'selfless actions' of Paul Lewis in particular. Sue Simms, one of the owners, said: 'The crew are complete heroes. They saved three of our horses. We are absolutely delighted that their heroism has been recognised in this way and we will be eternally grateful for what they did on that night.'



Two of the horses and their owners are reunited with their rescuers



Hayling Island crew receive the RSPCA Certificate of Merit. Left to right: Kieran Kinsella, Paul Lewis, Colin Parke, Jayne Carter, Robert Briggs, Paul Williams (back) Chief Inspector RSPCA, Tony Green, Graham Raines
Photo: Mr Lewis (Snr)



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Fundraising

An event for every taste

Lifeboats
Welcome to RNLI Events. Take part, have fun and help save lives at sea.

EVENTS HOME | DONATE | JOIN RNLI | CONTACT EVENTS TEAM | EVENT SEARCH | LEGAL

Browse through our huge range of events using these five buttons. When you see one you like, simply sign-up on-line.

FEATURED EVENT
18th Oct - Flora London Marathon 2004
The ultimate and most beautiful of all UK annual running events - and you could be there. Having to raise £1000 is one, if you have a place, why not run for the RNLI, if you would like to apply for one of our limited Gold Day places, click the link below.
Find out more / Sign up

EVENTS AND THE RNLI
The RNLI is a registered charity and raises funds at sea - last year raised more than £700,000 around the UK and Republic of Ireland. This was only thanks to you, to people like you who take part in our fundraising events.
RNLI Events last between a couple of hours and a few days and they cost from only a few pounds. And one you like and sign-up online. We look forward to seeing you.

WHAT'S COMING UP?
These are our next five RNLI Events. If you like the sound of one of them, click on it to find out more and to sign-up online. And to see all of our events, use the five search buttons at the top of this page.
19.02.05 Goodwood (Sat) 10 M and 2.5 M - 14.00
14.03.05 Slieve Donard 10.00
28.03.05 Lymington 10.00
04.04.05 Heddon House RNLI Run 2004

YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE
"I took part in the whitewater rafting party to have a laugh with some friends, and party in support of my cousin, who is one of the Fishouth-Whitewaterers. The Secretary of Peace Quays is awesome."
JANIE H. 18th Oct 2004 (Whitewater, Dorset)

HOW CAN YOU HELP?
Come and take part in one of our events - and make a difference. We'll help you every step of the way with both your fundraising and any training you may need to do. Simply find an event and sign-up online. And if you can't wait, part right now, find out how to:
• Be a volunteer helper
• Make an online donation
• Join the RNLI

FACT
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Join the RNLI

Raising money for the RNLI doesn't mean that you have to organise your own event. Maybe you fancy something a little different or physically demanding?

The new events website at www.rnli.org.uk/events tells you about forthcoming events and how you can get involved

The RNLI is involved in hundreds of fun and action-packed fundraising events throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland. There are themed cocktail and dinner parties, sponsored walks, parachute jumps and many running events for people of all ages and abilities. To find out more about these kinds of events in your region log on to our new events website at www.rnli.org.uk/events.

The new site is easy to navigate and allows users to sign up for a variety of events. By clicking on one of the four event categories – running, water, adrenaline and fun – users can browse and sign up straight away. The RNLI will help you every step of the way with your fundraising and any training you may need for the event.

With the RNLI's aim of doubling membership and the need for greater fundraising, users can also make credit card donations or join as a member on the events website. Users can be assured that all transactions are within a secure payment area. The website also enables the Regional Event Organisers to email those signed up for a particular event –

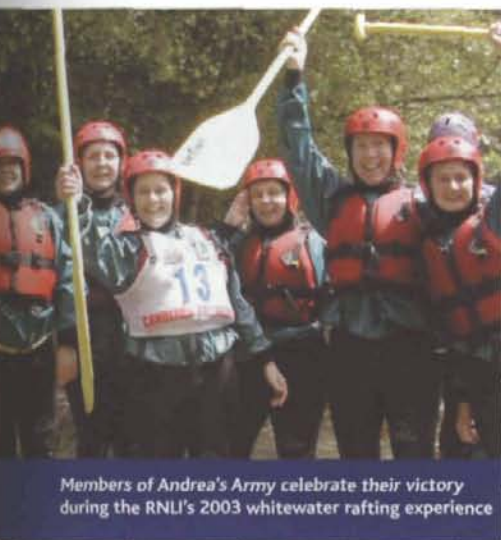
information and facts about event training and fundraising can be sent at the touch of a button.

Once you have taken part in an event, you'll be able to go back to the site to see photos from the day and information about the money raised from the event. The following examples are just two of the many events you will be able to see on the website.



RNLI whitewater rafting experience

This year sees the fifth anniversary of this event in the Wales and West Mercia region. Over 750 people have taken part so far and the event has raised over £60,000 for the RNLI – as well as gaining a great reputation and considerable coverage in the local and national press.



Members of Andrea's Army celebrate their victory during the RNLI's 2003 whitewater rafting experience

Teams of between four and seven people compete in the experience, with each entrant promising to raise at least £100 to take part. Teams have three attempts to battle the course of rapids at the world-famous Canolfan Tryweryn National Whitewater Centre in Bala, North Wales. It is a popular method of team building and employee socialising for local and corporate companies. The fastest team at the end of the day wins the champion's trophy to take back with them for a year. The rafts are skippered by professional instructors from the centre who join the teams on their session and brief them on safety and rafting techniques before they hit the water. Most people taking part have never done anything like it before but get increasingly competitive with each attempt, as they tackle rapids including 'the graveyard' and 'the ski slope'.

This exciting event attracts people from all over the British Isles and teams include people from all walks of life including the Forces, teams of friends and family, firefighters, community groups, work colleagues and sports teams. Teams have even come from as far afield as Essex and Edinburgh. Many of the teams stay in the beautiful Bala area for the whole weekend and come back year after year to take part. It's also a very sociable event – many people bring friends and family to cheer them on and make firm friends among the other competing teams.

This year's event takes place on 6 June and places are already filling fast. If you

are interested in taking part, please contact Event Organiser Tamsin Davies on 029 2045 6999 or email tdavies@rnli.org.uk. Information and online sign up is also available from the Events website at www.rnli.org.uk/events. Due to the success of this event, a second whitewater rafting event, in conjunction with ASDA, is to be held in Stockton-on-Tees on 23 May. Contact Lisa Cowen for further information (contact details below).

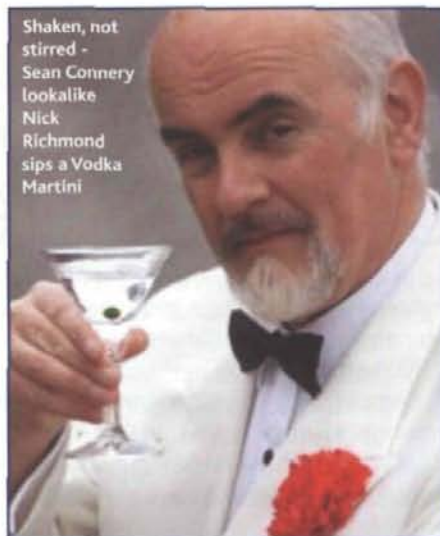
James Bond Christmas party

Secret agent 007 arrived at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool for a special mission on 5 December 2003. He was assigned to help the North West region raise money towards the cost of training lifeboat crew members at Blackpool, Fleetwood and Lytham St Annes stations, as part of the Fylde Crew Training Appeal. This was the first time such an event had been held in the North West region. Not only did the 400 paying guests help to raise £6,500 but the party gave the RNLI a great opportunity to promote its work to an audience that may not be currently giving support.

The evening included a shaken, not stirred vodka-martini cocktail on arrival and a four-course black-tie dinner. This was followed by an auction, with prizes donated by national and local companies; a fun-money casino and dancing into the small hours. To complement the theme, an Aston Martin car was on show along with wax works of Bond characters and volunteer Bond dancers.

Event Organiser Lisa Cowen was thrilled with the success of the first party and is now planning for this year's Christmas Viva Las Vegas party. When the show girls and entertainment have been organised for what is going to be a highly glamorous event the details will be posted on the events website at www.rnli.org.uk/events.

For information about this and future events in the North West region, contact Lisa Cowen on 0161 787 8779 or email lcowen@rnli.org.uk.



Shaken, not stirred - Sean Connery lookalike Nick Richmond sips a Vodka Martini



Blackpool lifeboat crew members join 007 for publicity photo



Guests try their luck in the fun-money casino

Double challenge

Brighton fundraisers like a good challenge and two rather different initiatives recently raised £1,600 between them.

Gemma Sharp from Brighton raised £1,000 in sponsorship by running in three marathons. She said: 'I've always wanted to run marathons since the age of 18 and it just seemed right to raise money for the local lifeboat.' Gemma trained hard for a year and achieved a best running time of 3 hours and 25 minutes. She handed over her hard-earned cheque during a visit to the station where she and her mum enjoyed a guided tour from the crew and Senior Helmsman Mark Smith.

Customers at The White Horse at Rottingdean in Brighton took part in slightly less strenuous challenge that raised £655. John Ellis, manager of the pub, invited customers to balance a coin on a lemon that was floating in a bowl of water. If the coin fell into the water, the money went to the RNLI – if the coin stayed on, the customer won. It can be done but, fortunately, many coins fell off. Members of the lifeboat crew turned up in force to express their thanks to John and his customers when the cheque was handed over.

Lifeboat Operations Manager Alan Young said: 'These two sums are fantastic.

Between them, these two local initiatives have raised enough money to cover our lifeboat's fuel costs for a year. The volunteer crew and everyone at the station wishes to thank the people who gave money to help save lives at sea.'



Superfit Gemma Sharp raised £1,000 for the RNLI by running in three marathons
Photo: Aaron St Clair – *The Argus*, Brighton

Follow the bear

As with many inland branches without their 'own' lifeboats, the Dumfries branch has been finding it difficult to stay afloat. However, the branch recently welcomed new recruit Mr Fletcher Christian to the ranks (below).

Mr Christian proved that bears have huge amounts of stamina when it comes to fundraising. The local Tesco superstore kindly allowed the branch to hold a collection day at the end of 2003 and the little bear stood for hours, with

five branch members working in shifts, and helped collect £450.

'This could have been more if we had had more collectors, said branch Chair Margaret Irving, 'Bears never seem to get sore feet. Human collectors, not in their first flush of youth, do not have the same staying power.'

So, is there anyone out there in the Dumfries area willing to give the branch a hand? If so please follow Mr Christian's example and contact Margaret on 01387 254130.



Dumfries branch latest recruit, Mr Fletcher Christian

Anyone for an Arun?

The new fleet of Severn and Trent class lifeboats have gradually been replacing Arun class lifeboats as and when they reach the end of their operational life. Aruns have been offered for sale for several years now and the RNLI currently has four available at a price of £150,000 each, subject to survey.

It is RNLI policy to offer these boats to other lifeboat or search and rescue organisations first so that they can continue to be used as lifeboats for the purpose of saving lives. If there is no requirement from such organisations the boats are offered for sale to the



general public. The RNLI vessel sale agreement has strict guidelines over colour, names and use; and the boats are sold with the superstructure painted grey to a workboat standard. It is a condition of sale that the RNLI colours are not reinstated and that the boat does not operate in a way in which it could be mistaken for an operational lifeboat.

If you would like further information on the boats available, please contact Disposals Coordinator Eileen Taber on 01202 663442 or email etaber@rnli.org.uk.

Water way to raise funds

The RNLI is set to profit from an open day at Longstock Water Gardens in Stockbridge, Hampshire on Sunday 18 July. The gardens are part of the Leckford Estates owned by The John Lewis Partnership. The company grants 12 open days to charity each year and the RNLI should benefit by over £3,500 from gate receipts.

The Chairman and fundraisers of Bassett branch are hoping for fine weather on the day and look forward to working in such beautiful and tranquil surroundings. Area Fundraising Manager Fiona Heath said: 'It is a privilege to be granted an open day at Longstock Water Gardens and I look forward to working with Bassett branch Chairman Stuart Thompson, who was instrumental in the successful bid, and the staff of the gardens to ensure we maximise the opportunity granted to us.'

Entry fees are £4 per adult and 50p for children under 14. The gardens are open from 2-5pm and the nursery, which is the home of the national collection of buddleia, contains a wide selection of fine plants for sale. Visitors can also enjoy refreshments in the nursery tearooms.

For further information contact Fiona Heath on 023 9259 4126.



The beautiful setting of Longstock Water Gardens is set to raise funds for the RNLI

Grand draw winners

Recently retired Head of National Fundraising and Communications Richard Mann found himself in a lifeboat full of tickets when he drew the winners of the RNLI's regional Grand Prize Draw 2003 on 10 December 2003 in Poole.

Mrs Penny Edwards from the Wales and West Mercia region snapped up first prize of a Land Rover Freelander with sports body kit. Susan Sheldon from the North West won second prize of a seven-day Mediterranean cruise and third prize, of a Fortnum and Mason hamper, went to Liz Munday from the South West.

Ten runner-up prizes of a RNLI fleece went to: Mrs J Childs, Greater London; Christine Ingham, North East; Martyn Law, Scotland; STE Milton, North West; B Peters, North; MA Popper, North West; Miss H Potts, South East; T Welford, East; Mr E Williams, Wales and West Mercia; and Owen Woodward, Wales and West Mercia.



Richard Mann picks the winners of the RNLI Grand Draw 2003 from a D class crammed full of tickets

Jewellery saves lives



Your unwanted or broken jewellery and collectables can help save lives at sea thanks to the RNLI's 2004 Jewellery Appeal. Last year's appeal raised nearly £32,600 and, since the appeal began in 1986, the sale of unwanted jewellery and medals has brought in a total of £494,317.

Jewellery Appeal Organiser Roy Norgrove said: 'We would be delighted to receive any good quality items of jewellery including rings of all kinds, small objets d'art, brooches, bracelets, chains and watches that are no longer required. Gold and silver articles would be very much appreciated, as would war medals and memorabilia, which are very collectible at present.'

If you can help, please send any unwanted jewellery and collectables to Roy Norgrove, Jewellery Appeal Organiser, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ. Thank you.



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MasterCard returns

You may have noticed that the advert for the Lifeboats MasterCard has been missing from the last few issues of *the Lifeboat*. However, we are pleased to announce that it is being relaunched. The Lifeboats MasterCard, issued by The Royal Bank of Scotland, now has improved terms and conditions for cardholders. It is a valuable source of income for the RNLI and helped raise nearly £80,000 last year. So if you are not a cardholder, please turn to the advertisement on page 7 and return the

coupon or call freephone 0800 444201 to apply for the only card that helps save lives at sea. If you already have a Lifeboats MasterCard please remember that every time you use it, you are supporting the RNLI.



We are also pleased to announce that Travelscope, who regularly advertise their cruise holidays in *the Lifeboat*, are now making a donation to the RNLI on every holiday booked through their advert on page 28 of this issue. So why not start planning your next holiday and help fundraise at the same time?

Recycle your mobile

Ever wondered what to do with your old mobile phone? The RNLI events team has come up with the answer: a new scheme to raise money from recycling old mobiles. The RNLI is contacting companies to ask if they will join the scheme and encourage their employees to contribute old phones. For every mobile that can be reused, the RNLI receives up to



£5. We supply the company with collection boxes and posters and even arrange to collect the boxes when they are full. As well as raising around £125 per box, the scheme is environmentally friendly. If you can help by placing mobile phone recycling boxes at work or in your local community, please contact the events team on games@rnli.org.uk or phone 01738 642999.

Megger to the rescue

When lifeboat technicians in the east division needed new test meters for fault finding on lifeboats they spoke to Tony Hawkins at the Dover lifeboat station. Tony works at Megger Ltd, who produce a wide range of electric test and measurement equipment. A few calls later, Megger kindly agreed to donate five test meters for the technicians to use. Divisional Technician Gwyn Pritchard said: 'We are really pleased with these new meters – they are robust and very accurate which will be a great asset to us in our work. Many thanks to Megger Ltd and Tony Hawkins.'



Divisional Technician Gwyn Pritchard and Dover Coxswain Duncan McKie receive five free electrical test meters from Nick Hilditch of Megger Ltd

Busking for brass

Ten-year-old James Buckle raised over £300 for the RNLI before Christmas by playing festive favourites on his trombone in the foyer of his local Co-op. James, son of Swanage lifeboat Deputy Launching Authority Charles Buckle, busked three morning sessions of one and a half hours – raising just over a pound a minute.

It takes a great deal of stamina to blow a trombone for that length of time and James, who passed grade four with distinction at the tender age of nine, put in extra practice for his fundraising feat. He was supported by his parents who collected the cash and cleared it with the supermarket manager and local council.

As well as supporting the Swanage lifeboats, the budding musician is a dinghy sailor and a member of Storm Force, the RNLI's membership for young people. Well done James!



James Buckle busks for the Lifeboats
Photo: Bournemouth Daily Echo

Rescue statistics

Saving lives with data

Peter Bradley, Staff Officer (Special Projects) in the RNLI Operations department, reveals how complex 'number crunching' underpins a successful lifesaving service

Each issue of *the Lifeboat* includes detailed coverage of a handful of rescues, but what of the wider picture? Launching lifeboats over 7,000 times each year and attending more than 3,000 beach incidents with lifeguards is no easy task and each incident must be carefully recorded to help with planning for the next.

Every service call out, whether lifeboat or lifeguard attended, is entered on the RNLI headquarters databases and the *Listings* section of this magazine reveals the tip of this iceberg. The sort of data recorded includes the type of casualty, what difficulties they were in, their geographical position and what the outcome was.

The story does not end there – since 1997 the RNLI has hosted a national database that collects information from *all* the rescue providers in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland. From this database, each rescue agency can see the full picture of incidents up to 100 miles off the coast.

We also have an interest in water safety and prevention campaigns generally through

membership of the National Water Safety Committee of the Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). Through a joint project with RoSPA, a new database has been created to record incidents on inland waters. Again, this is a national multi-agency database that will inform the RNLI, RoSPA and inland rescue services such as Fire, Police and Ambulance of the overall trends of accidents happening on inland waters and the responses to them.

It is my job to review and integrate our existing databases so that we can gain the most benefit from them. So what happens with all of the information that is collected? It is a key tool for strategic planning, all in the aid of saving life. It helps to identify 'hot spots' of activity and thus inform decisions as to what type of boat is needed at each lifeboat station.

Information is also used to proactively target those sea users who show the most potential for accidents. For example, there have already been highly successful campaigns to reduce machinery failure, a new Fish Safety campaign has started in earnest and many

shore-based safety presentations and demonstrations have been instigated, all designed to stem developing patterns and trends highlighted by the incident database.

The RNLI's media relations, supporter marketing, and publications teams also make great use of incident data, to assist in raising awareness of the service and to generate support for us now and into the future.

The summer 2004 issue of *the Lifeboat* will feature statistics for 2003 for the whole of the RNLI's operations but I can give a preview here of one area of our work. The pie chart shows what activities people were engaged in prior to needing RNLI Beach Lifeguard help. A selection of related facts, some derived from combining this with other types of data, are noted alongside.

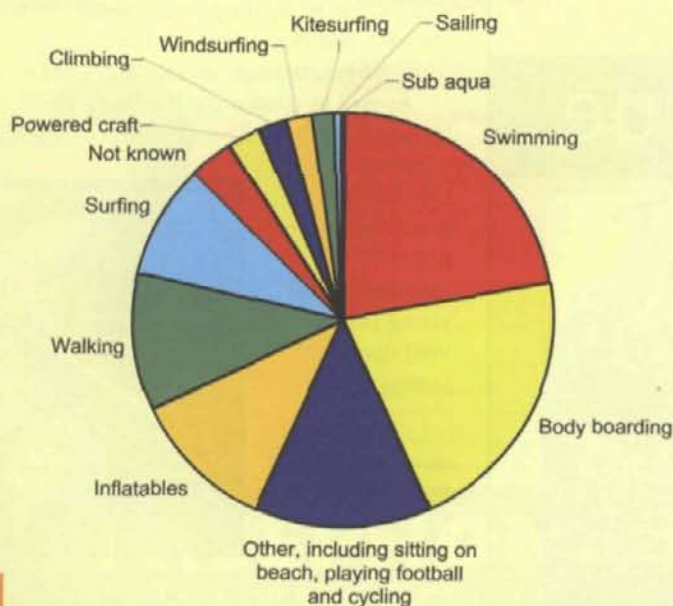
All that remains to be said to everyone reading this article is: try not to become a casualty statistic yourself, by following the advice of our Sea Safety department and our colleagues in other rescue and safety agencies.

Beach Lifeguarding statistics

What were people doing when they needed assistance?

- 63% of the surfing incidents occurred in Carrick
- 39% of inflatable users assisted were blown out to sea by offshore winds
- 33% of swimming incidents also involved groynes on Bournemouth and Poole beaches
- 51% of the swimmers involved were caught in rip currents compared with 54% of the body boarders

Also see pages 31 and 33



Listings

New D class at Trearddur Bay

Flo & Dick Smith is launched. In the background is the Trearddur Bay lifeboat station and the crowd who attended the ceremony



Saturday 24 January 2004 saw the handing over and dedication of the new D class lifeboat at Trearddur Bay. This is only the second of the new generation of inflatable lifeboats to be placed in service in Wales. The new IB1 is an evolution of the 5m D class lifeboat that has seen successful service with the RNLI over the past 40 years; in Trearddur Bay's case, since 1967.



The crew have their photograph taken with Mrs Flo Smith and her family

The crew of the Trearddur Bay lifeboat have already undergone intensive training on the new lifeboat. On average the station's lifeboat is launched over 50 times a year, many of these rescues taking place near rocky cliffs and shallow sandy bays. The extra speed and manoeuvrability of the new

lifeboat will be invaluable in these rescues.

The new boat named *Flo & Dick Smith* was donated by Mrs Flo Smith from Chester, in memory of her late husband Dick. Mr Dick Smith was brought up near the sea in Kent and always retained a great love for the sea.

Mrs Smith herself has been a long-standing member of the RNLI. It was Mrs Smith's dream to fund a lifeboat to carry the name of her late husband, and her daughter Mrs Joan Tomlinson persuaded her to include her own name alongside her husband's, so they could sail the seas together.

Listings

Retirements

Richard Cracknell – Wells Lifeboat Operations Manager
Timothy Julian – Falmouth Station Mechanic
David Mason – Great Yarmouth and Gorleston Coxswain

Deaths

Mrs Mary Barker – Stokesley and Ayton District Guild President
George Cole – Former Eastbourne Crew Member
Tom Cozens – Calshot Deputy Launching Authority
Mrs Hazel George – Plymouth Guild Honorary Secretary
Sir John Grady – Life Vice President
Rueben Hirst – Salisbury Branch Chairman
Mrs Hussey-Freke – Highworth and District Branch Committee President
Frank Ide – Former Poole Coxswain/Mechanic
Mr Alfred Knowles – Retired Stromness Coxswain
Commandant Vonla McBride CB BA – Life Vice President
Mr Dennis Phipps – Burry Port Station Committee Member
Harry Sabiston – Former Dunbar Mechanic
Professor Sir George Smart BSc MD FRCP – Life Vice President
Mrs Belle Wilson – South Shields Guild Souvenir Secretary

Appointments

John Bentley – Calshot Deputy Launching Authority

Community Service Award

Chris Clubbley from Filey has recently received an award from the local Rotary Club of Filey; this is their community service award to a local person who they feel does a great deal with little recognition.

Chris has been helping the RNLI for some 25 years assisting in the souvenir shop, dealing with the many boxes of lifeboat goods that arrive regularly throughout the summer. Chris works many hours a week and is always enthusiastic about his work. He also helps the ladies guild members with their boxes at functions, and whenever the all weather lifeboat goes out he helps with the sketting operations.

Corrections

Burry Port's new lifeboat is *The Young Watsons* not *The Four Watsons* as stated in the winter issue of *the Lifeboat*.

Arranmore celebrates 120 years of saving lives

Arranmore lifeboat station celebrated 120 years of saving lives last November. The first lifeboat under the auspices of the RNLI came to Arranmore in 1883. The *Vandeleur* was an open boat powered by sails and oars. Depending on the strength of crew and weather conditions, it was capable of speeds of up to 5 knots. By contrast today's 17m state-of-the-art lifeboat can reach a speed of 25 knots: the crew of *Vandeleur* would literally be all at sea.

Arranmore has a proud history of 120 years of unbroken service to the seafarers of the north west coast of Ireland. The lifeboat had to service an area between Red Bay in Northern Ireland down to Connemara in the west without the benefits of modern engines, foul weather gear or enclosed wheel houses, which were open to horrendous weather conditions, and sometimes lack of food.

A party was held for the people of Arranmore to pay their tributes to all the brave men and women who gave up their time when the call went out to those in peril on the sea.

On station

ALL WEATHER

Lochinver

Trent class ON-1271 *Julian Maynard Leonard* 25 November 2003

Holyhead

Severn class ON-1272 *Christopher Pearce* 21 December 2003

Troon

Trent class ON-1275 *Jim Moffat* 25 February 2004

INSHORE

Sunderland

D-608 *Helen & Ian Tytler* 24 November 2003

Blyth

D-606 *Jennie B* 25 November 2003

Kinsale

B-796 *Miss Sally Anne (Baggy)* 6 December 2003

West Kirby

D-612 *Dave & Trevor Jones* 9 December 2003

Calshot

D-609 248 *Squadron RAF* 17 December 2003

Burnham-on-Sea

New lifeboat station 23 December 2003

B-795 *Staines Whitfield* 7 January 2004

Trearddur Bay

D-614 *Flo & Dick Smith* 16 January 2004

New Quay (Cardiganshire)

D-616 *Amy Lea* 7 February 2004

The data collected through the year represents literally thousands of individual incidents such as the ones shown here

Both Portsmouth's D class and Atlantic 75, and two fire crews from Southsea, attend a boat fire in Langstone harbour



The Beach Lifeguard Arancia rescue boat and the Exmouth D class *Spirit of the Exe* rescue the yacht *Channel Dancer*
Photo: Rodney Mackintosh

The Arun class *Margaret Russell Fraser* and D class *Z48 Squadron RAF* from Calshot assist a capsized trimaran whilst the new QM2 looms in the background, herself a recent recipient of RNLI assistance
Photo: David Le Clercq





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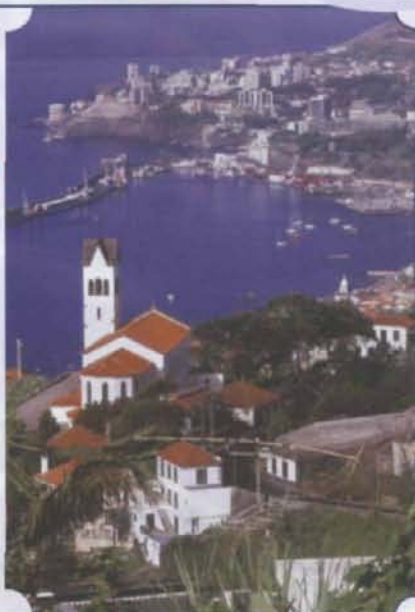
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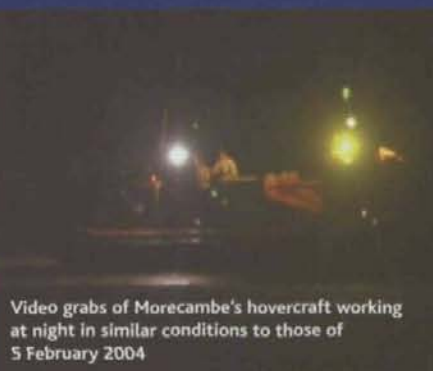
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News

Huge rescue effort at Morecambe



Morecambe Hovercraft Commander Harry Roberts (right) and the crew of *The Hurley Flyer*



Video grabs of Morecambe's hovercraft working at night in similar conditions to those of 5 February 2004



Readers will have heard about the recent tragedy at Lancashire's Morecambe Bay when 20 cockle pickers died after becoming trapped by rising tides

Morecambe's inshore lifeboat and hovercraft, together with Fleetwood's all weather lifeboat, launched on the evening of 5 February to help in the frantic search for over 30 cocklers who were stranded in the cold and dark. Search and rescue helicopters, Coastguard teams and private rescue organisations joined the search for the missing Chinese immigrant workers.

Hovercraft Commander Harry Roberts said: 'The RNLI volunteer crew worked with the search and rescue helicopter on scene and, after the helicopter found one of those missing, the inshore lifeboat was able to quickly get to the same area and found one person alive. The hovercraft went out to meet the lifeboat and brought that person directly to shore to a waiting ambulance.'

'The rest of the rescue was very difficult as we went on to recover 10 bodies from the water, some of which were young people. They didn't have any safety gear and some of them were naked because they had taken their clothes off to help them swim. It was very distressing for all involved and our hearts go out to their families.'

The search continued the following day and the incident was widely reported in the media. Later reports suggested that another five people were still missing.

It is thought that the cocklers were under the direction of illegal gang masters who were compelling them to work in these dangerous conditions, for little pay, with no regard for their safety. So far, seven people have been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter and have been released on police bail, pending further enquiries. The full story will not be known for a while yet.

Why a hovercraft?

Morecambe Bay is notoriously dangerous, with fast rising tides and quicksands. During the rescue Morecambe's hovercraft operated ashore, in shallow water and over sandbanks, demonstrating its versatility and suitability in such an environment. The craft was developed in conjunction with manufacturers Griffon and the RNLI's technical department, and has proved that it can operate in certain areas that conventional lifeboats cannot reach.

Morecambe's hovercraft, *The Hurley Flyer*, went into service at the end of 2002 and was funded by the generous donation of Mrs Kay Hurley of Oxfordshire. A hovercraft also operates at Hunstanton in Norfolk and Southend-on-Sea has recently had the go ahead to have a craft of its own by this summer. At the time of going to press the RNLI was also starting hovercraft trials at New Brighton, Merseyside.

News

Come visit us

Lifeboat stations throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland will be throwing their doors open to the public this summer on dedicated open days. These events will give visitors a chance to see inside a station, chat to the crews, get close to the lifeboats and absorb the atmosphere that surrounds any lifeboat station.

As this issue of *the Lifeboat* goes to press, the RNLI is relaunching *Come Visit Us*, its range of regional guides to RNLI stations and museums. Each guide has a comprehensive listing of all your local lifeboat stations, which are graded under the categories explore, discover and observe, to help you get the most from

your visit. Each entry includes contact numbers, details of lifeboats, directions, opening times and the facilities offered.

The guides also include details of six special RNLI museums and a list of independent museums that contain RNLI related exhibits. There are six regions to choose from: Scotland; North East and North West; Wales and Isle of Man; East and South East; South West and Ireland. Armed with a *Come Visit Us* guide, visitors to lifeboat station open days can also take time to explore the interesting areas around the station.

Details of a station open day near you will be advertised locally but to find out

where your nearest lifeboat station is take a look at the map

at www.rnli.org.uk or obtain your copy of the guide from: *Come Visit Us*, RNLI Headquarters, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ. Please send an SAE (DL size – 220mm x 110mm) stating which guide you would like. If more than one guide is required, please send a C4 envelope 324mm x 229mm). The following postal rates will apply: one guide – 27p, two guides – 72p, three guides – £1.09).

Lifeboats

Wales and
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Come visit us

Stations and museums guide



2004

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According to plan

Every year the RNLI produces a detailed business plan for the forthcoming five years and a summary of this, called *The RNLI Plan* (pictured). This informative little document sets out what the RNLI intends to achieve over the next five years and how it is going to do so.

If you would like a copy please send an A5 stamped addressed envelope to:

Valerie Latham, Corporate Services Department, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ. An electronic version of the document is also downloadable from www.rnli.org.uk/brief.asp.

2004-2008

The RNLI Plan

Edition 5
January 2004



AGM and APA 2004

The Lifeboat is pleased to announce that the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, will be guest of honour at the RNLI's Annual Presentation of Awards on 20 May 2004 at the Barbican Centre, London. The President will address the Annual General Meeting of Governors in the morning and present the Gallantry Medals and awards to voluntary workers in the afternoon.



With the DML workforce in the background, the charter is signed by (left to right): Roger Bridgeman, Chairman of the RNLI Technical Committee; Tony Pryor, Chairman of DML Devonport; Peter Nicholson, RNLI Chairman and Dr Dennis Gilbert, Chief Executive of DML Devonport.

Charter for excellence

In December 2003 RNLI Chairman Peter Nicholson signed an historic partnering agreement at the DML dockyard in Devonport, where the pre-production Tamar class lifeboat is being fitted out. The charter promotes open

communication between the two organisations, during the build of the pre-production boat and the first four production boats. This should lead to production cost savings by combining purchasing power and pooling expertise.

SEA Check recommended

SEA Check now features in Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) reports. Some recent tragedies involving small open craft have highlighted the poor level of safety awareness and equipment carried.

A recent report recommended that SEA Check should be further advertised and investigators have shown a keen interest in the RNLI's prevention activities as a way of preventing unnecessary loss of life among recreational boat users.

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News

Salcombe remembers

Salcombe lifeboat was kept busy in 2003 with 33 services – but one particular trip, which was not a rescue, stood out from the others. The lifeboat crew were greatly honoured when they were asked to take out the ashes of Iraq war casualty Major Jason Ward and scatter them at sea.

Jason (pictured) was one of the war's very first casualties and was Officer Commanding 240 Special Forces, Royal Marines when he was killed in action on



the 21 March 2003. Before serving in Iraq he served in Cambodia, Bosnia and twice in Northern Ireland. Jason spent most of his leisure time sailing in the Salcombe estuary with his brother Elliot and, more recently, took to spending his leave sailing further afield including northern Europe and Scandinavia.

Later in the year, Jason's colleagues at the Royal Marine barracks, Stonehouse raised nearly £1,000 for Salcombe's new lifeboat fund.

The late Major Jason Ward

Preventing tragedies: lessons learned

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) recently revealed that the 2003 summer heatwave led to a big increase in drownings. This was just one of the many topics discussed at the RoSPA Water Safety Congress at the Hilton Brighton West Pier Hotel on 29–30 March 2004.

The conference, entitled *Preventing Tragedies: Lessons Learned*, was officially opened by Transport Minister David Jamieson. RNLI Operations Director and Chairman of the National Water Safety Committee Michael Vlasto chaired the second day of the event. Delegates discussed developing water safety campaigns, safety on school trips, standardising water safety information, targeting 'at risk' groups, setting up dedicated water safety sections in local authorities, beach zoning, managing water sports centres and swimming pool safety.

The INREM database, a joint project of the RNLI and RoSPA that records incidents on inland waters, was introduced at the event. This is a multi-agency database that will inform lifesaving organisations of the overall trends of accidents happening on inland waters and the responses to them.

For further information on how the RNLI uses statistics to save lives see our feature on pages 24–25.

Offshore goes gold

Larry and Phyllis Green became 'golden' Offshore members when they signed up at the Schrodgers London Boat Show at ExCeL in January.

The joint 50,000th members were congratulated by Eastbourne lifeboat medallists Coxswain Mark Sawyer and Mechanic Daniel Guy – plus Peter Landon, a yachtsman whose life they saved and whose story *the Lifeboat* covered in summer 2003. Fundraising and Communications Director David Brann was also at the ceremony to offer his thanks and present the couple with a small memento and a special certificate to mark the occasion.

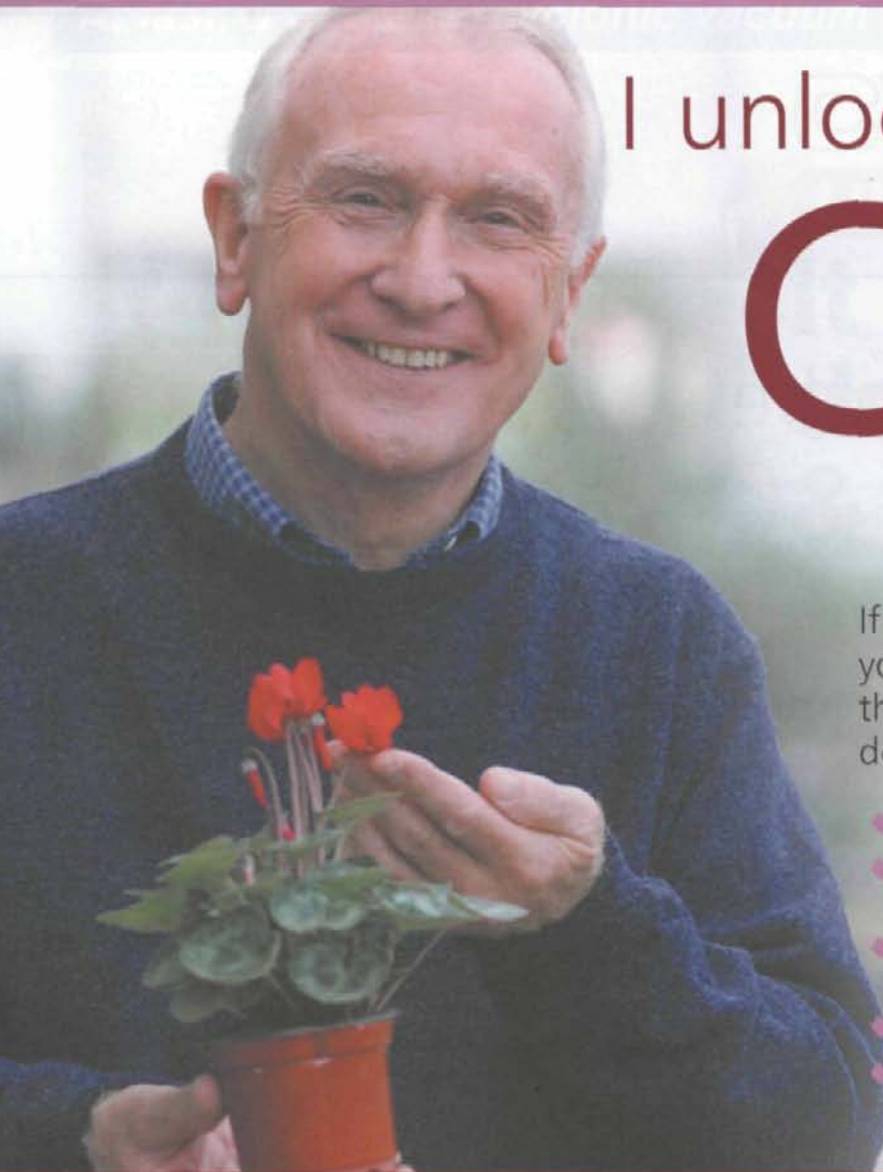
Phyllis and Larry Green, who have been sailors for six years, said: 'We've been meaning to join Offshore for ages – its important to make a commitment to you – as you make a commitment to us.'

David Brann said: 'At the London Boat Show we used both paid and voluntary face-to-face recruiters, who have worked together incredibly hard to sign-up boat show visitors to Offshore membership. People like Phyllis and Larry appreciate why they are there.'



Golden Offshore members Larry and Phyllis Green received an Admiralty RYA chart plotter from Admiralty Leisure and a special RNLI memento from survivor Peter Landon (left) and David Brann

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News

Busiest year ever for RNLI crews

Latest rescue statistics reveal that 2003 was the RNLI's busiest year on record. Lifeboats around the British Isles launched a record total of 8,047 times (7% up on 2002), rescuing 7,815 people – an average of 21 people every day. The busiest coastal station was Poole, in Dorset, with 175 launches between its two lifeboats, resulting in the rescue of 190 people. Beach Lifeguards also had their busiest season for far, attending 7,226 incidents and saving 27 lives.

RNLI Operations Director Michael Vlasto, says: 'The total number of lifeboat launches has increased year on year since 1986, making the 2003 figure more than double the 1986 total of 3,724. We believe this trend is due to a number of factors, such as the changing patterns of

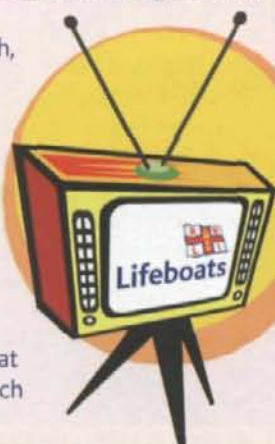
sea use by the public, improved search and rescue techniques and the dramatic growth in the use of mobile telephones among the public – and particularly for 2003, the long, hot summer.'

The steady increase in the number of rescues is a cause for concern and, as such, the RNLI is actively pursuing preventative initiatives to reduce the number of potentially life threatening incidents that occur. Michael continues: 'Launching lifeboats is expensive and carries with it risks to our volunteer crews, which is why the RNLI is committed to preventative work, encouraging all sea users to be as safe as they can at sea.'

See the article on page 24 to see how the RNLI uses statistics to save lives.

RNLI on national TV

Look out for an eight-week national BBC TV series, *Danger on the Beach*, featuring the RNLI. Due to air from Wednesday 17 March, it sensitively demonstrates what can and does go wrong for beachgoers and portrays the work of the Brixham Coastguard, the SAR helicopter at Portland, RNLI lifeboat crews, and RNLI Beach Lifeguards.



Thanks, Pindar

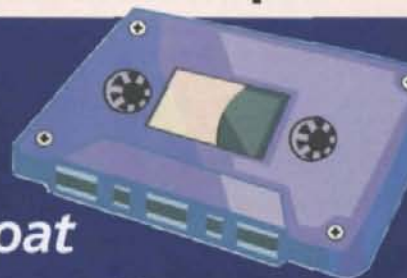


Andrew Pindar, Chairman of the Pindar Group that prints *the Lifeboat*, is a keen supporter of the RNLI and his company sponsors yachtswoman Emma Richards. Emma made sailing history in 2003 when she became the first woman, and youngest ever competitor, to complete the world's longest and toughest solo yacht race, Around Alone.

Andrew donated an auction prize of a day's sailing for two with Emma for the London Lifeboat banquet which was held at Greenwich in December 2003. The lucky winner was given the chance to take the helm of Emma's Open 60 racing yacht and witness, first hand, one of the world's top sailors in action.

Round-the-world yachtswoman
Emma Richards
Photo: Thierry Martinez

the *Lifeboat* on cassette



An abridged version of *the Lifeboat* is available on audio tape, exclusively for visually impaired members. The cassette version, produced by Sound Talking, is free of charge although recipients may wish to make a small donation to cover the additional costs involved. Those who sign up to receive *the Lifeboat* on cassette are also able to opt out of receiving the printed publication to save the RNLI costs.

To receive your copy of *the Lifeboat* on a C90 tape please write to:

The Editor, *the Lifeboat*, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ or email thelifeboat@mli.org.uk

Please note: the tapes are recycled to save costs and, therefore, back issues are not available. The cassette mailings are every quarter, following the distribution of the printed version.

Reader survey

The Lifeboat is the RNLI's main contact with you, our supporters, so we are keen to ensure that it is doing its job well. To help us understand your needs better, we sent out 25,000 questionnaires with the autumn 2003 magazine. Thank you to all the readers who took the time to complete and return their questionnaire – your responses will help to shape *the Lifeboat* magazine in the future. But what did you tell us?

We were delighted to find that, in general, you are enthusiastic fans of *the Lifeboat*. Over 60% of respondents read the magazine from cover to cover, and 95% make sure that they read it on a regular basis. We asked you whether you liked getting your magazine four times a year and 91% of you said yes. It is important for us to get this balance right: keeping you informed about RNLI activities while making sure that we keep costs to a minimum.

Many of you are also supporters of other charities, with the National Trust, RSPB and Cancer Research UK being the most popular. Reassuringly for us, almost half of you thought *the Lifeboat* magazine was equally as good as other charity magazines and 45% thought it was better or much better. We are naturally delighted with this, but we would still like to hear from you if you have any comments or suggestions on how we can make *the Lifeboat* even better.

When we redesigned the magazine to reflect the RNLI's new branding about a year ago, we received a large number of letters commenting on the new design, both good and bad, so we were particularly interested in the general view of our readers. We were pleased to find that a resounding 92% of readers agreed that articles are easy to find and over 85% agreed or strongly agreed that the new scheme was fun and vibrant, with just 6% disagreeing. We are taking note of some specific, more negative, comments about the design and making slight adjustments, in particular to make page layouts clearer.

As regards the content itself, 13% of you feel that there is not enough information in the articles. This is not a high proportion but it concerns us all the same. We are carefully considering how we can ensure our supporters are fully aware of the RNLI's activities, how it spends your money and what it is doing to save more lives.

Overall, you are most interested in articles about lifeboats, with slightly less interest in articles covering Sea Safety and

Beach Lifeguards. This is perhaps because these areas are newer to the RNLI and have been, until recently, less well developed. We will keep this in mind in planning future *Lifeboat* content, better integrating these topics and showing their growing impact.

Lifeboats in action is your favourite section of the magazine, scoring 4.5 out of 5 in popularity. This

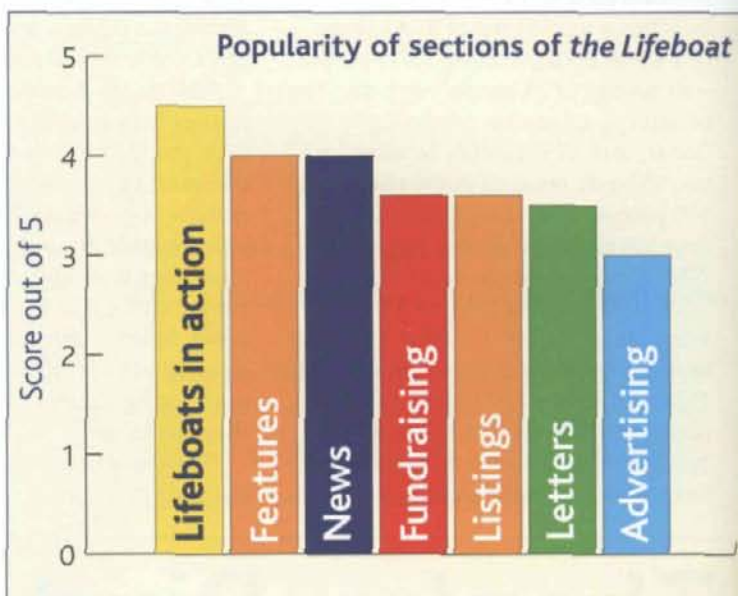
reflects the heart of the RNLI's activities and it is not at all surprising that this is what our readers really enjoy. The tales of courage and endurance are extraordinary and we endeavour to do them justice in the pages of a magazine. Should we report the services in a formal, technical, understated manner, or write in a more evocative, narrative style, helping readers understand more fully what our crews experience? The popularity of this section suggests we have chosen a suitable style: vivid and emotive without being melodramatic.

Finally, we asked what one aspect of the magazine you would change if you had the chance. Many readers were concerned about the amount of advertising, both within the magazine and in loose-leaf inserts, although there was recognition that it is important for us to offset our costs in this way. This revenue is indeed vitally important to us and allows us to produce a far higher quality, more detailed magazine than we could justify if the RNLI were to cover all the costs itself but we are conscious of the downside of this. We have a strict editorial policy about the amount and type of advertising allowed

and will continue to ensure that the advertisements we include are of use and interest to our readers and are not in conflict with the aims and spirit of the organisation.

One reader asked: 'Why do all the ads seem to target the over 50s?' The answer is that our advertisers know that over three quarters of our readers identify themselves as aged 55 or over and so the advertisements reflect this. But we are actively looking to expand the range of advertising we carry, realising that what is appropriate for a 55-year old person will be very different from that for an 85-year old, let alone the younger supporters who are now being recruited.

Other requests for change included more information on the design and construction of lifeboats, more 'real life' stories, more regional coverage, more on crew and family life and more reminders on safety. We are looking into all these ideas and many more, so please keep on reading *the Lifeboat* – thanks to your feedback, we will be able to make it even more interesting, enjoyable and inspiring, reflecting the unique service provided by the RNLI.



Letters

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. See page 1 for how to contact us.

Abigail revisited

Readers of the Winter 2003/04 edition of *the Lifeboat* may remember a letter from Alan Jones recounting his airlift from the yacht *Abigail* with a suspected heart attack. He wrote with some embarrassment at eventually being diagnosed 'merely' with atrial fibrillation and was thankful to his many rescuers. He received the following reply, which we reproduce with permission.

Your letter regarding your mishap off here certainly made interesting reading. Such feedback is always welcome, to hopefully learn points for next time. Your incident was an interesting and rewarding one for us (if not so for you!) as quite a number of individual drills that we practise were put to the test that night. (By the way, you

mention the Coastguard helicopter – it was in fact an RAF Sea King from Wattisham. The Coastguard do have helicopters but we have the RAF in our patch.)

You were certainly not a fraud – far from it, your situation was very much an emergency. Even after you had been lifted off, the escort to Margate was a normal precaution given that your colleague was now single-handed. Leaving him to sail on to Ramsgate, given the conditions, was not a good idea. The well-executed procedure that you followed was the correct one. It is for such incidents that we are here.

Peter Barker
Coxswain/Mechanic
Margate lifeboat



RAF Sea King helicopter
Photo: AE Turner

Racing squall

Reading through the *Listings* of launches in the Winter 2003/04 issue, I spotted the entry for the Southend-on-Sea station. I was surprised that no comment appeared in the magazine. In *one* day on 22 June the three boats achieved *seventeen* launches between them. Surely there has to be a worthwhile story behind the listing of such a busy day! The crews must have been exhausted, if nothing else, and what a testament to their dedication.

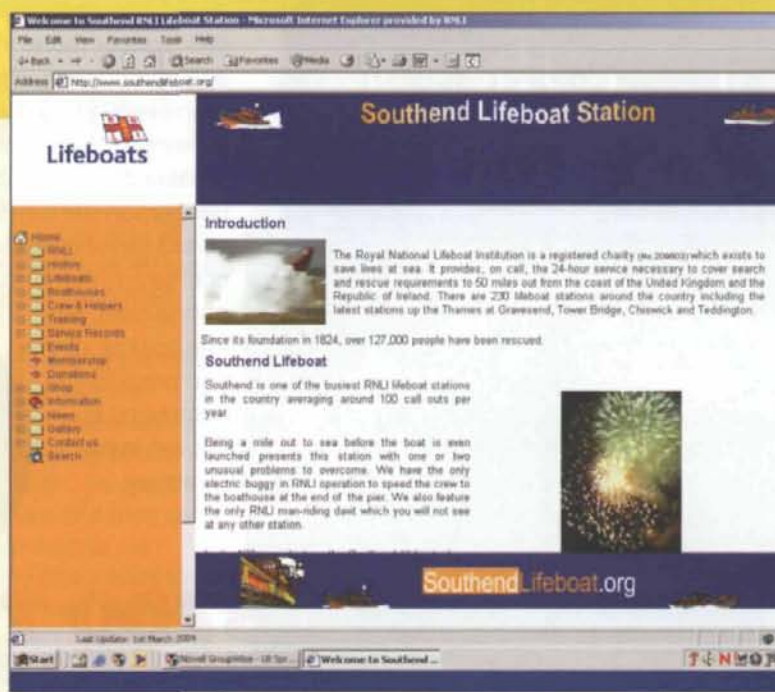
One wonders if this is some kind of record for the lifeboat service by a coastal station. (In offering this comment I am excluding Thames stations serving London as they operate to a different demand and climate pattern on an inland waterway, so are not strictly comparable in this context.) I am sure other readers would also be very interested to hear of more details.

David Butcher
Taunton, Somerset

Jon Jones, Assistant Editor, replies

The launches were the result of the local Nore Race that involved several classes of sail craft using a long course down the Thames Estuary. Shortly after the race began, a sudden squall hit the area seeing winds of up to force 8 and heavy rain. As a result many of the craft got into trouble and needed the assistance of the lifeboats. If you have access to the internet and would like to find out more about the day, log on to the station's website at: www.southendlifeboat.org. Although this is not an everyday

occurrence, I understand from our operations department that these situations do happen from time to time at various lifeboat stations. We were unable to report on it in the Winter 2003/04 issue of *the Lifeboat* as no further details were available at the time of going to press.



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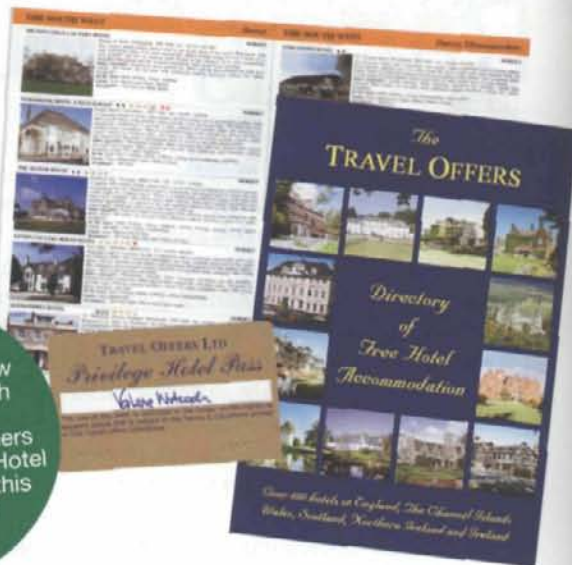
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News from the Netherlands

British members Anne and Roy McClenan encouraged their friends from Lelystad to share their experiences of last summer as mentioned in their Christmas card to the McClenans. Here's what they told us.

We had a marvellous sailing season with all that beautiful weather and so much sun! We sailed in July and August along the Belgian and French coast to Deauville. At that point our eldest son arrived with his partner. They had cycled on a tandem from Utrecht to Rome and were on their way back. They were tired after 3,500km cycling and because of the heat they decided to

continue their journey on board.

We sailed to Newhaven and had a nice trip with calm weather. The next stop was Dover and that day the sea became rough and the wind stronger. We did not mind but Helma, my son's partner, became very, very seasick. She started to hyperventilate and almost lost consciousness. We contacted Dover Coastguard and they decided to launch the lifeboat. Helma was taken on board and then to an ambulance ashore in Folkestone. She got a complete medical check up and we were very happy when we were informed that all was well with her. When we arrived in Dover she was waiting

for us on the quay.

What very skilled men and women you have on your lifeboats! And so friendly and considerate. We decided to become a member of your RNLI and I have a nice Offshore sticker on my car now. It was quite an adventure, though we were a little embarrassed that after more than 40 years of sailing we now needed the help of a lifeboat. Again, we want to thank your organisation and the Dover lifeboat crew for taking care of our daughter-in-law.

**Sjouke Altena and Wil Hansen
Lelystad, The Netherlands**

Chloe in calmer waters

Red Bay in Northern Island was featured in last edition's *Lifeboats in action*. Another member writes:

You can imagine my surprise when, on reading my *Lifeboat*, I came across an article about *Chloe*, when at the moment I have a photograph of the boat as the screensaver on my computer.

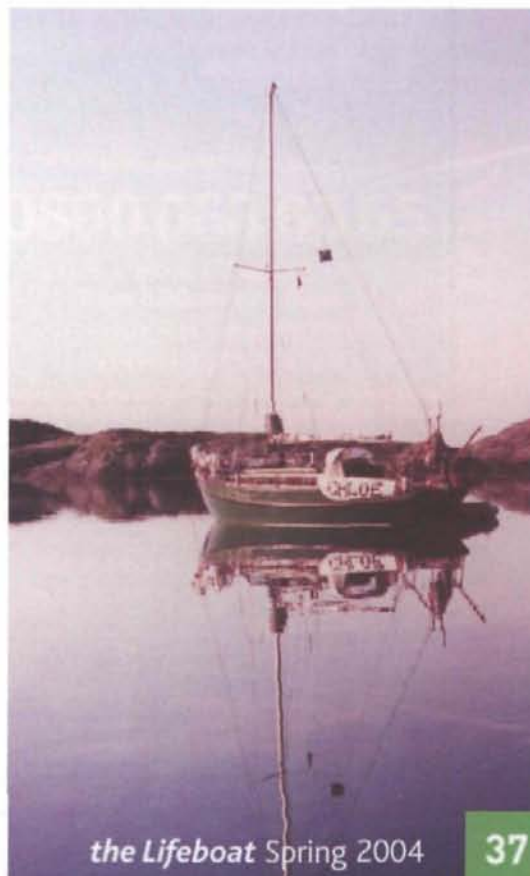
I enclose the photo, which I think was taken in Canna or perhaps in Gometra Bay, on Ulva. What attracted me was the still water, how tidy she was and, having seen her about in the Hebrides, what a dedicated couple the owners were to the seafaring life.

Their experience brought to mind a time when I was bringing a Sadler 34 back from Oban after the Three Peaks Race with a crew that was new to me. I knew there was a heavy wind forecast but the crew came on board saying they hadn't got as much time as they thought and could I get the boat and them back to Abersoch asap. Foolishly, instead of hiding in Port Ellen on

Islay or going into Ardfern in Loch Craignish, I decided to press on, only to find us in the North Channel with 40 knot winds gusting 45 (or so our hand-held anemometer said).

Things went well until one of the crew, an old man who must have had the constitution of an ox, went below saying he'd 'just get himself something to eat before the wind came'. Well... he fried some bacon for a sandwich and then came on deck, lit a fag and sat next to me blowing the smoke in my face. I have to admit I just died. I had to hand the boat over to one of the crew so I could go below to do so. The wind was from the west so he did the sensible thing and headed for Red Bay where we dropped anchor and waited until the gale abated, then upped anchor for a night in Bangor, in Belfast Lough.

**Christopher Dale
Kidderminster**



Why do I support the RNLI?

What would you answer to this question? Here are a couple of members' thoughts to start the ball rolling.

I very much enjoy reading *the Lifeboat*, especially the articles on particular rescues, and it reminded me of an episode in my childhood that has influenced me ever since and I have been an RNLI supporter now for many years.

At the end of the 1920s, when I was seven, I travelled back to England with my mother and babysitter on a troopship with the families of an infantry battalion whose men had disembarked at Port Sudan.

As we entered the Bay of Biscay a great storm blew up – not unusual in those parts – and immediately almost all grown-ups disappeared below, including mine. This did not seem to bother the children, who reported for meals as usual, eating everything.

The armchairs in the saloon were all tied up and we soon devised a grand game with them. As many children as possible climbed into the chair then the tie was loosed and at the next lurch of the ship we slid across the saloon, to land with a crash on the other side.

Needless to say, the crew soon stopped that activity and various members were set to keep their eye on us. We got to know them well and, when we noticed there was much activity out on deck, we demanded to know what was up.

They explained that a ship was in trouble in the storm and we had been told to turn aside and go to its rescue. Already sailors were coming up on deck in lifejackets and we all became very excited. We were going to see a shipwreck!

Alas in another few minutes it was all over. Apparently no troopship was ever called on to go to a rescue unless no other craft was anywhere near and there was one that could do this duty. We resumed our course and the men took off their impressive gear. We were desolate. No fun.

But one of our sailors took the trouble to explain to us just what a shipwreck would

mean to those on board and to those who must risk their lives to save them and I never forgot it.

That is why I support the RNLI.

**Mrs DM Burrell
Cheltenham**

I'm now 44 and have been a Shoreline member for many years. Now, I'm not a huge fundraiser, but always buy all the raffle tickets and put a few quid into collection boxes when I see them (as well as my membership). Probably profiled as TW on the computer (that's right, tight wad)...

My defining moment was when as a teenager (I know what you're thinking... an odd teenager – should have been lying listlessly on the sofa) I was moved by a documentary about a crew in the north of Scotland. I seem to recall it was a tiny village on the north east coast and half the men of that village crewed the lifeboat. There was a horrendous disaster and most of the crew were lost at sea. The effect on the local community was enormous: in a few hours many children became fatherless and many wives became widows.

They had to replace the crew (it was a treacherous sea and coastline) and within a very short time the remaining men from the village had stepped forward to take the places of their drowned comrades.

It was 25 years ago and I suspect that some details are confused, but I recall being very moved by this and I have been a member ever since. Keep up the good work. Very best wishes,

Mark Manson
by email

The disaster Mr Manson refers to could be either Longhope in 1969 or Fraserburgh in 1970, incidents that both involved the loss of entire lifeboat crews in the north east of Scotland in quick succession.

Longhope Watson class lifeboat T.G.B.



And finally

Thank you on behalf of last issue's correspondent, Mr Corps, who has kindly been sent many a spare RNLI matchbox and/or details of where to find them by readers of *the Lifeboat*!

Liz Cook, Editor

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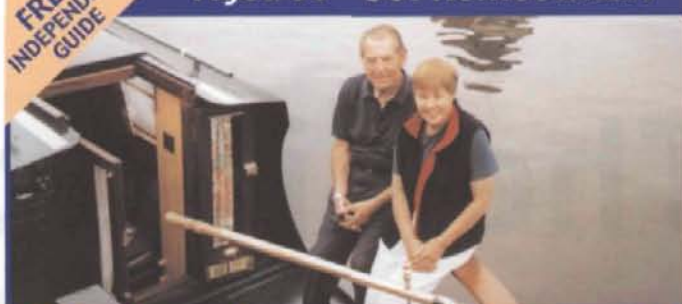
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The Lifeboat College

Shaping the future

It feels like a long time since the RNLI announced it intended to build a training college in Poole. Construction started in 2002 and since then hundreds of men and women have laboured to make The Lifeboat College vision a reality



The Lifeboat College opens in July 2004 – artist's impression

The Lifeboat College will open its doors soon, with the preparatory work now in its final stages. The college will host its first training course in early July 2004 and the official opening will take place later that month. Sue Hennessy, College Principal, is delighted that the college will be ready for action in the summer: 'We are a very special organisation and I personally want everyone who comes here to feel a warm welcome and benefit from the excellent training we'll provide.'

Education and training have always been integral to the work of the RNLI and the major investment in The Lifeboat College reflects the Institution's commitment to its crews. The RNLI was recognised in 2003 by the National Training Awards for the high-quality, innovative approach it takes to training its 4,500 crew members and the Institution is keen to maintain this high standard. Sue Hennessy comments: 'This recognition of the absolute quality of our training clearly demonstrates the importance that the RNLI attaches to training its crews to cope in the extraordinary circumstances they are called to – circumstances in which training can literally mean the difference between life and death.'

With crews increasingly coming from backgrounds other than fishing and sea-faring,

expansion in training is timely. The RNLI is aware that the facilities currently provided in Cowes and headquarters are somewhat overstretched. With the growth in requirements to train crews more thoroughly in areas such as health and safety, plus new competence-based training, the RNLI needs to expand its facilities.

'This new college will enable us to improve greatly the specialist facilities needed to provide our crews with all aspects of the training they should have to prepare them for the demands of saving lives at sea.'

College Principal Sue Hennessy

This new purpose-built centre will bring together the full spectrum of the RNLI's training delivery under one roof for the very first time. The college will also gather educational training resources to distribute to the RNLI's regional centres and lifeboat stations providing back-up advice and information too. This will ensure everyone

has the learning support they need to reach their own potential – wherever they are in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

As well as being an operational training establishment, the College will serve the training needs of other volunteers and staff.

The Lifeboat College has been designed to reflect the high standards for which the RNLI is renowned. It will have the facilities one would expect to find in a first-class residential training environment. It will be a centre where colleagues and friends can train, learn and exchange experiences with each other. Sue hopes visitors will quickly realise that The Lifeboat College is much more than a training centre: 'It is, without question, a very special "home" for all committed RNLI people.'

The Lifeboat College has been made possible through the continuing generosity of RNLI supporters, who have provided the funds to meet the costs of the building. Every effort has been taken to ensure that this money has been spent well so as to provide a training environment fit for the purpose of preparing crews to save lives at sea.

The RNLI purchased the land for the college at a fortuitous time, when land prices were lower, and it was paid for by legacies specifically designed for this purpose.

The RNLI is confident of realising a substantial saving over the present arrangements: all in all the college will save the RNLI well over £1M a year – money that is currently spent on hotel accommodation and training rooms.

From 1 July 2004 it will be expected that all 'internal' visitors to headquarters will no longer use costly hotels in the Poole area and instead use the bedroom facilities in The Lifeboat College. There are 60 single-occupancy en-suite bedrooms, which can be booked separately from the training/meeting facilities. The bedrooms are equipped with all the features of a modern hotel, as well as workstations and modem connections. The college also boasts the 100-seat Riggers Restaurant with fabulous views across the harbour, the Slipway bar and a fitness suite.

Lifeboat crews and their families can make personal bookings at a reduced rate, perhaps for an extended stay before or after a training course, or for a weekend break at another time during the year. There are three pairs of bedrooms with adjoining doors, suitable for family use, and three bedrooms accessible to wheel chair users. Coast and other volunteers, RNLI staff and RNLI Family association members will also be able to stay at the college at the rates shown below.

In the new college building there are conference facilities, all with the very latest audio-visual equipment. The main auditorium seats up to 120 people, making it ideal for RNLI big events. For smaller meetings and training sessions, there are four seminar rooms.

'Our hope is that delegates will enjoy the best possible service at the College and leave with an appreciation of the voluntary emergency service we provide.'

Sue Hennessy

On occasions when there is spare capacity, the RNLI will be able to hire the space out to our clients and partners as a way of helping to raise vital funds. Preferred clients will be other organisations with lifesaving missions, both national and international; charities; government agencies; organisations and companies within the Poole area. For all these, special rates will apply. The RNLI hopes to attract other organisations and companies who will be welcomed into the RNLI home.



College Principal
Sue Hennessy

The Lifeboat College takes shape from 2002 to the present day

Winter 2002



Spring 2003



Winter 2003/04



Internal bedroom rates for 2004

i.e. for crew and families, coast and other volunteers, RNLI staff and RNLI Family association

Mid week (Sun–Thurs):	£45	Bed and breakfast
	£57.50	Dinner, bed and breakfast
Weekend (Fri–Sat)	£30	Bed and breakfast
	£40	Dinner, bed and breakfast

No charge for children if staying in the same room as parent(s).

Meal charges for children as selected from menu.

Only breakfast will be charged for spouses/partners staying before or after a course.

Please telephone 0870 833 2000 or email thelifeboatcollege@mli.org.uk for more information or to make a booking.

If you are part of an organisation or company that is interested in using this new training and conferencing facility, please contact the RNLI for a brochure with more details and rates. Please telephone 0870 833 2000 or email thelifeboatcollege@rnli.org.uk for more information. The RNLI is taking external bookings from 1 September 2004.

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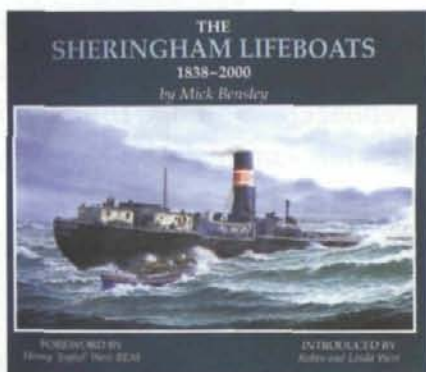
The Sheringham Lifeboats 1838–2000

By Mick Bensley
Price: £35
Published by Bengunn
ISBN 0953399818

Internationally acclaimed marine artist Mick Bensley brings alive the most notable and daring rescues of Sheringham lifeboats in this superb collection of watercolours and pencil drawings. Over 40

illustrations depict rescues from the first lifeboat in 1838, through the 'pulling and sailing' era, to the dramatic rescues by the motor lifeboats of recent times.

Mick has gathered information from records and lifeboat crew members to ensure that each painting is authentic in every detail. As a result, this book provides a unique testimony to the exploits of *Sheringham lifeboats and their crews over the last two centuries*. Copies are available from the RNLI souvenir shop at 39 High Street, Sheringham; all good Norfolk bookshops; or direct from Mick Bensley on 01273 390062. Copies will also be available through the RNLI's gift catalogue from July 2004.

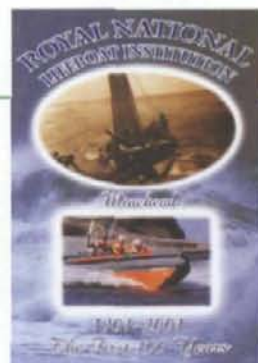


Minehead 1901–2001 The first 100 years

By Jack Greaves
Price: £5 (plus £1 p&p)

Jack Greaves brings readers a fascinating insight into the exploits of Minehead lifeboats and their crews over the past century. Illustrated with over 70 photographs, this book also contains information about the history of the RNLI and the evolution of the lifeboats themselves.

Copies are available from the RNLI souvenir shop at Minehead lifeboat station or from Barrie Lanham, 16 Higher Park Road, Minehead TA24 8AP.



Why not upgrade to Offshore?

The following review is typical of those featured in *Offshore News*, the RNLI's publication exclusively for Offshore members. *Offshore News* also covers books on navigation, sea safety, survival techniques and technical know-how and includes features and news relevant to water users. To find out more about joining Offshore contact the RNLI supporter helpdesk on 0845 121 4999

Rough and Tumble

By Bob Roberts
Price £9.95
Published by Seafarer Books
ISBN 0953818098

Leaving London in March 1934, Bob Roberts and Arthur (Bully) Bull broke the bonds holding them to 'drudgery and convention' to sail 'around the waters of the Earth in a haphazard and entirely irresponsible way'.

Rough and Tumble, first published in the UK in 1935, is the delightful account of two friends who, 'over a pint of foaming ale', decide to embark on a long cruise on *Thelma*, a 8m west country smack. The great adventure took Bob and Bully to Poole Harbour, Lisbon, Gibraltar and Tangier, across the Atlantic and through the Panama Canal to the Pacific and Cocos Islands.

When wind and tide failed, Bully resorted to the sweep to propel *Thelma* seven miles in seven hours, rewarding himself only with a bowl of porridge. Sometimes the pair were forced to navigate 'by guess and by God'. Days of sunshine, flying fish and porpoises were followed by a hurricane. *With everything lashed down, Bob and Bully saw out the storm playing cards on the cabin floor. Bob lost four and sixpence, a pair of seaboots and a canvas shirt and, if the hurricane had lasted one more day, he would have lost everything to Bully.*

The pair sailed from Panama into disaster; a situation they faced with the same grit, sangfroid and humour. Ever survivors, they went on, undaunted, to yet more amazing adventures.

Rough and Tumble is essential reading for anyone who has dreamed of leaving the comforts of everyday life and sailing over the horizon to 'take things rough and tumble and let tomorrow look after itself.'

Christina Scott, Divisional Base Assistant, RNLI Scotland



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M137 **£15.99**

► RNLI handbook

Now in it's fourth year, and it has been brought right up to date for 2004 with lots of extra information and new pages. The RNLI Handbook is an indispensable reference source for anyone going to sea. The advice it gives could help you make the right decision in an emergency situation and significantly improve your chances of surviving. The A5 sized ring binder is split into six updateable sections.

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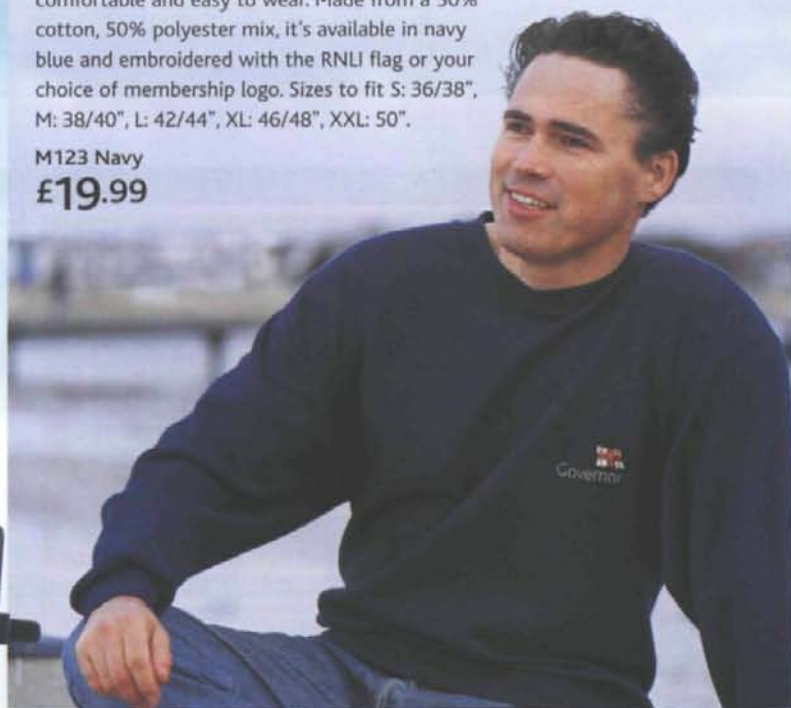
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► Sweatshirt

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M123 Navy
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► Flag brooch

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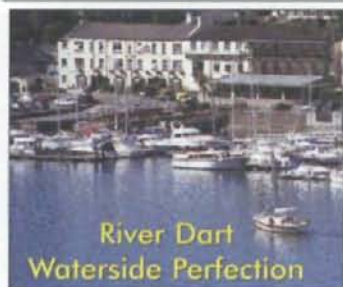
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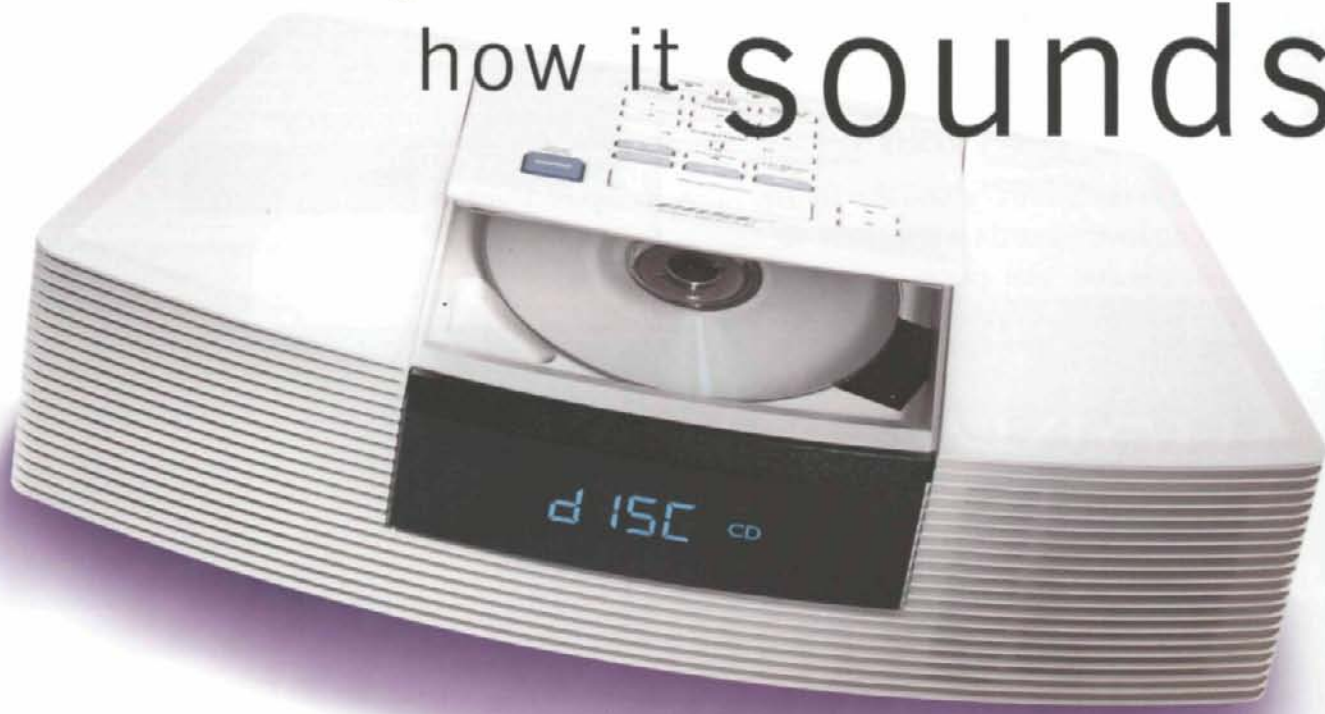
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