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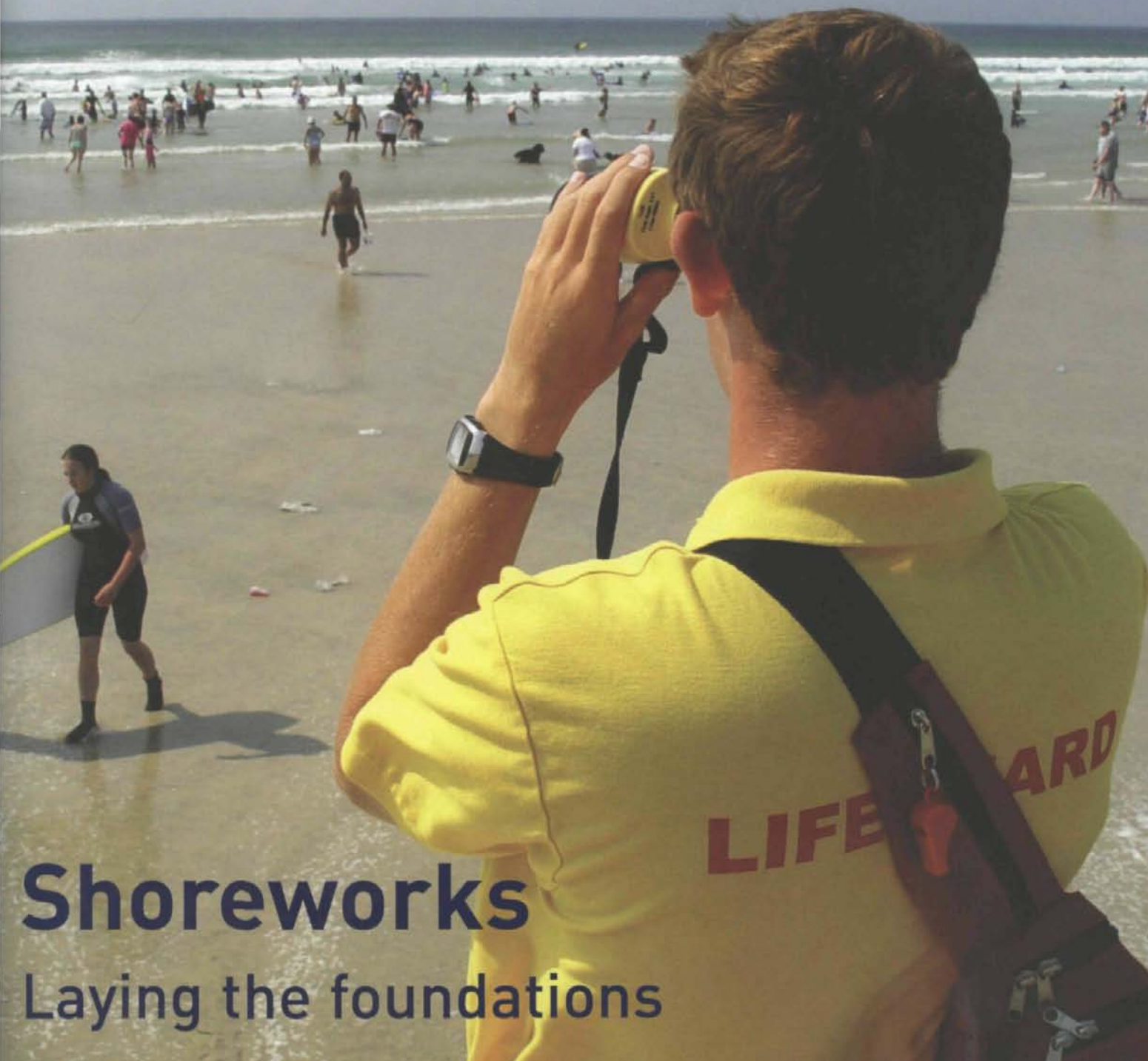
the lifeboat

Summer
2004

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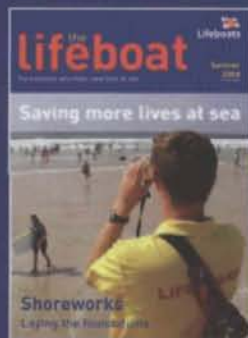
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the lifeboat



Lifeboats

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Chairman: Peter Nicholson
Chief Executive:
Andrew Freemantle MBE CCM

Publications Manager: Jane Smythson
Publications Editor: Liz Cook
Assistant Editors:
Jon Jones, Bethany Rawles
Editorial Assistant: Tracy Carey
Contributors: Gill Beaumont,
Anne Millman, Rory Stamp
Designer: Laura Wiltshire

Editorial:
Tel: 01202 662254
Fax: 01202 663240
email: thelifeboat@rnli.org.uk

Membership and subscriptions:
Tel: 0845 121 4999 (local rate)
email: amurphy@rnli.org.uk

Advertising:
Madison Bell Limited, Beau Nash House,
Union Passage, Bath BA1 1RD
Display:
Steve Hulbert Tel: 01225 465060
email: steve.hulbert@madisonbell.com
Classified:
Amanda Ronchetti Tel: 01225 465060
email: amanda.ronchetti@madisonbell.com

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Front cover: An RNLI beach lifeguard keeps a watchful eye on revellers at a Cornwall beach. Photo: Kirsten Prisk

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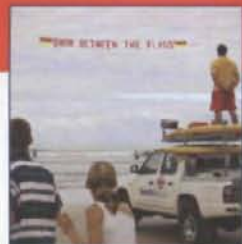
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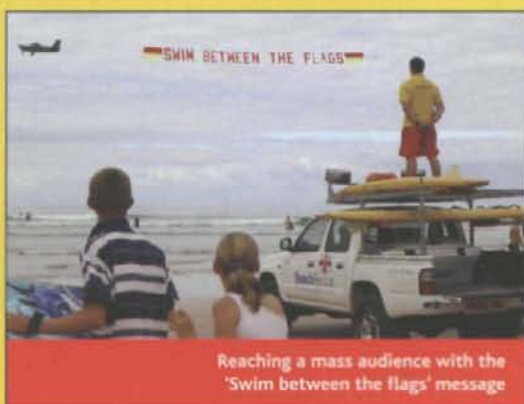
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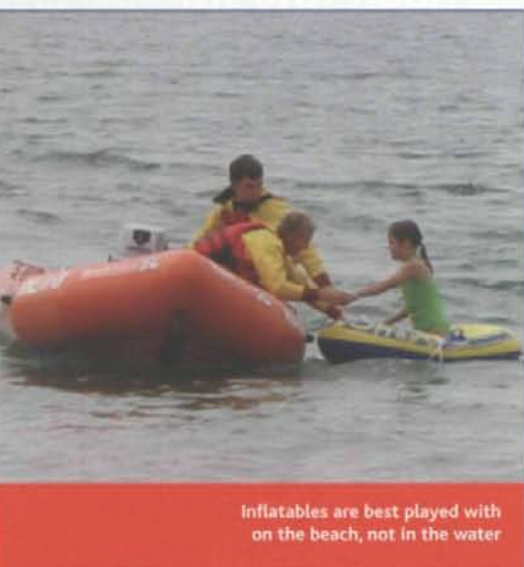
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Safety at the seaside



Reaching a mass audience with the 'Swim between the flags' message

Imagine you're on a beach in the summer sun. Nearby there's a family enjoying a day out. One child is building a huge sandcastle and another is playing in the water with friends. Their laughter and excited shouts are muted by the lapping waves. The parents are relaxed, enjoying the sunshine. Yet they are unaware that their children are swimming at a notoriously dangerous beach. They are near a rip current that could drag them out to sea within seconds. Like many beach goers, they don't even know what a rip current is



Inflatables are best played with on the beach, not in the water

Real-life accounts of the risks people take at the beach were highlighted in the recent TV series *Danger on the Beach*. In one episode, a mother, whose son had drowned at a beach in Dorset, courageously told the camera of her grief and guilt. She regretted that she hadn't been more aware of the risks involved at that particular beach and wished there had been signs to warn her. She didn't want the same tragedy to happen to other families. Nor does the RNLI.

RNLI beach lifeguards patrol on 57 beaches in the South West and local lifesaving clubs patrol many others around the coast. Lifeguards help reduce the number of losses significantly, but there are still around 7,000 serious accidents and 300

deaths on beaches in the UK and the Republic of Ireland each year. Most of these drownings are a direct result of a lack of understanding of key safety information or a lack of the information itself.

The RNLI aims to reduce deaths and serious accidents on the beaches through education and raising awareness. Its beach safety team look at different ways of reaching the public with their messages, so that families and individuals can enjoy the seaside more safely. They target the entire UK and Republic of Ireland, not just the current Beach Lifeguards territory of the South West.

The standardisation of beach safety signage and symbols has become a priority. Currently the various beach owners (from local authorities to private landowners) make decisions independently about safety signage on their beaches. Some don't put up signs at all and others create their own individual signs. The look and feel of the signs are inconsistent, making it hard for people to recognise them as essential points of information.

RNLI Beach Safety Manager Steve Wills is working alongside the British Standards Institute, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and other organisations to develop a national beach safety symbol, flag and buoy standard. The RNLI has developed standard signs to ensure that key beach safety information is simple to understand – by both adults and children. Beach goers will be able to make informed decisions about the risks involved. Steve stresses the importance of cooperating with other organisations: 'Joint and consistent messages are so much more effective and far reaching.'



Beach lifeguards patrol the beaches helping to prevent accidents

The intention is to reduce the level of less important information and concentrate on key factors such as the dangers associated with the beach, what the flags mean and where to get help. It is hoped that checking the signs will become second nature for beach goers in the future and that the signs will become as recognisable as motorway signage is today.

In supporting the RNLI's beach signage project, local authorities and beach owners are helping reduce deaths on their beaches. They are also helping themselves: in an increasingly litigious society, beach operators are often left open to blame when accidents occur. A lack of clear signage can be highlighted in the courts as a fault of the beach operator.

The RNLI is running trials of the new signage at Weymouth (Dorset) and South Hams (Devon) this year and is hoping to launch the standard signage UK wide in 2005.

The RNLI will only fund signs at a limited number of Beach Lifeguards areas, but is working with local authorities and other organisations to encourage them to install the signs on all beaches in the UK. West Dorset District Council has already arranged RNLI-designed signage for the beaches it owns that do not have lifeguards. It is also funding signage at beaches in the West Dorset area that are privately owned, for example by the National Trust or holiday parks.

'The striking and simple signs will warn beach goers of hazards such as strong currents or steeply shelving beaches and also give more general beach safety advice such as keeping children supervised. The public can only benefit from these safety messages and enjoy their beach visit more.'

Ted Rawles, Principal Engineer,
West Dorset District Council

Steve Wills is confident that the signage will save lives, as countries where standard signage is already in place have seen the number of drownings reduced.

Of course the signage alone cannot stop all potential accidents and deaths at the beach. The RNLI has many other strands to

its beach safety work. In the South West of England, only 42% of beach users understand what the red and yellow flags mean. This prompted an aerial banner campaign in 2003, taking the 'Swim between the flags' message to around 1 million people on the beaches. After the flyover, questionnaires were distributed. The research highlighted that 55% more beach users entered the water between the flags after the banner flew over. The banner will fly again in 2004 on busy days at the beach for maximum effect – at weekends, public holidays and at peak times during the day.

RNLI beach lifeguards also spread the beach safety



Trial RNLI beach safety signs

messages to beach goers. Active rescue is nearly always the last resort when all other attempts to prevent an incident have been exhausted. Part of the RNLI lifeguards' induction covers proactive beach safety skills. They are taught the importance of surveillance and preventing incidents before they happen. 'It's much easier to speak to a child with an inflatable before they go in the sea on a windy day, than it is to rescue the child when they are being blown away from shore,' says Steve Wills.

Dave Gorman, Beach Safety Supervisor, took the beach safety roadshow trailer to over





The roadshow promotes beach safety and attracts new supporters

Measuring success

How does the RNLI measure the success of its beach safety initiatives? How does it know it has altered the way people behave at the beach? To answer these questions the RNLI conducted research in 2003 using a specialist market research company called Prescient to establish benchmarks. For example, by measuring the percentage of people who knew what the red and yellow flags meant in 2003, further annual surveys can show if the key messages are getting through. Through annual key performance indicators, measuring incident trends and surveys, the RNLI can see if its preventative measures are working. This will also help the RNLI develop clear priorities for beach safety planning beyond 2004.

100 events in 2003. The roadshow, which will be even busier in 2004, comprises a mobile beach education vehicle, containing a plasma screen to present videos and DVDs, lifeguarding equipment for display and a wide selection of printed beach safety and RNLI information.

The roadshow's aim is to promote beach safety issues and the RNLI as an organisation. It is a perfect vehicle to communicate with a new and younger audience, creating RNLI supporters for now and the future. Recent research showed that only 4% of beach goers were concerned with safety features when choosing a beach to visit. The roadshow can help tackle this, reaching the general public, young and old, on beaches, at clubs and schools. If you are interested in inviting the roadshow to attend an event, you will need to contact the beach safety team (see the contact details below).

The RNLI addresses all beach users with its safety advice, but recognises that there are key beach users that are particularly at risk, including young males and families. RNLI regional education officers help spread beach safety messages to children and young

people across the UK and Republic of Ireland. They arrange for volunteers to provide educational services to schools, clubs and youth organisations, including talks and presentations.

All those delivering beach safety messages are armed with publications and resources including factcards, poster games, videos and localised safety leaflets. If you wish to have copies, contact the beach safety team. The website www.rnli.org.uk/beachlifeguards includes beach safety tips and an interactive beach safety game. The site was voted website of the month by leading internet magazine *Webuser* in 2003.

If you are going to the beach this summer, before you go please take the time to visit the website for a safer and fun day out at the beach and always remember FLAGS (see right).

For the beach safety team
freephone 0800 328 0600
or email: beachsafety@rnli.org.uk

For more on Beach Lifeguards see page 17.

Beach
Lifeguards

To stay safe at the beach
always remember F L A G S

F Find the red and yellow flags and swim between them

L Look at the safety signs

A Ask a lifeguard for advice

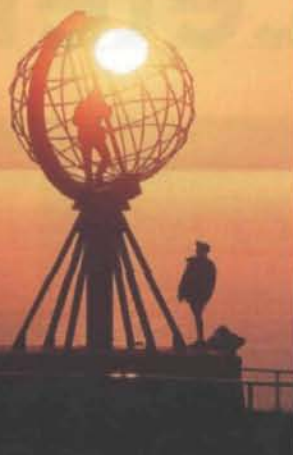
G Get a friend to swim with you

S Stick your hand up and shout for help if in difficulty



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Come celebrate

On the morning of Thursday 20 May a coach set off early from RNLI HQ in Poole, full of excited and ever-so-slightly nervous RNLI staff. They were destined for the Barbican Hall in London and a day of rare celebration. They were to literally set the stage for the players in two landmarks in the RNLI's year: its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the Annual Presentation of Awards (APA). A few hours later hundreds more coach, car and train passengers converged on the venue from all parts of the UK and Ireland

The four Gallantry Awardees met HRH Prince Charles the day before the APA



Not just a legal obligation, the AGM provides the opportunity to pause and review the past year, assess the current scene and look ahead to the future of the Institution. All RNLI Governors were invited to attend. On arrival, they were treated to two floors of informative RNLI-themed exhibits and then ushered into the auditorium for the morning's business. Suitably equipped with copies of the *Annual Review, Report and Accounts*, voting cards and other AGM paraphernalia, they were welcomed by the Chairman of the RNLI, Peter Nicholson, who introduced the Trustee Committee, seated with him on stage. After approval of the last minutes, adoption of the accounts and appointment of Council members and auditors, Mr Nicholson moved on to his address, excerpts of which are shown opposite. Questions were then taken from the floor, including:

- Q** *What future does the RNLI have in this increasingly risk-averse society?*
- A** *The RNLI is committed to both actively promoting safety and to enabling its crew and lifeguards to take appropriate risks to meet its purpose of saving lives.*
- Q** *Websites are now such powerful tools to inform and publicise but vary so much in quality – what is the RNLI doing in this area?*
- A** *The RNLI fundraising and communications department has recently formed a small e-media unit to develop this kind of work. In time, both the main RNLI website and those of stations round the coast will be significantly upgraded.*
- Q** *Could a future AGM be held outside of London, perhaps in Dublin?*
- A** *This is being actively considered.*

The Meeting ended with the showing of a short promotional film that dramatically demonstrated the work of the RNLI.

After a break for lunch, the auditorium was filled with the returning Governors and the friends and families of those who were to receive Awards. Prompt attendance was required, to allow for suitable security arrangements outside for the later arrival of the Guest of Honour, the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese.

After the playing of the British National Anthem, Chairman Peter Nicholson addressed the gathering and proposed a Resolution thanking all those whose contributions make the RNLI what it is, including crews, lifeguards, shore helpers, fundraisers, members and donors. This was unanimously carried, with a round of applause. Mr Nicholson then presented the first Awards of the day, to two

Showing off the new IB1 inshore lifeboat



The audience gathers
Photos: Jean Philippe Trenque



members of the media in recognition of their informed and supportive coverage of the RNLI: BBC TV South West and Longbow Productions, and the *Western Morning News*.

President McAleese then joined proceedings and the Irish National Anthem was played. She delivered an informed and amusing address, highlighting the pioneering cross-border work of the RNLI in the island of Ireland and mentioning her longstanding belief that there was a special place in heaven for fundraisers – and another for their families!

Next, RNLI Chief Executive Andrew Freemantle introduced the Honorary Life Governors, Bar to Gold Badge and Gold Badge recipients – an amazing 80 or so individuals. A Record of Thanks was also presented to the Communications and Public Service Lifeboat Fund for its 130 years of fundraising for the RNLI. Every awardee had a few moments with the President and she was notable for her attention to each.

Then followed the Gallantry Awards. Two short drama-documentary films were shown portraying the services at Filey, North Yorkshire, and St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, before the awardees came on stage. (Accounts of both these rescues can be found in *the Lifeboat* spring 2004.)

The pride of recipients and supporters was palpable at this ceremony, which closed with a vote of thanks – a real celebration of and by the people at the heart of the RNLI.

The President of Ireland, Mary McAleese



Chairman's address excerpts

'I am particularly pleased and proud to be here this morning; not only because this is my fourth and last annual report but this year the Institution celebrates its 180th anniversary...

'Looking back over the last few years, I am relieved, but also pleased, to be able to say that the RNLI has managed its financial affairs prudently during what can certainly be described as a stormy period, and has done so without any adverse impact on rescue cover...

'The most important new activities that we have undertaken include the introduction of beach lifeguards, hovercraft operations, the Thames lifeboats, and the development of both a new all weather craft (the Tamar) and a new D class inshore lifeboat (the IB1)...

'In our core area of activity, 2003 proved to be our busiest year on record. Lifeboats around the British Isles launched an unprecedented 8,109 times, and rescued 7,987 people, an average of 22 every day...

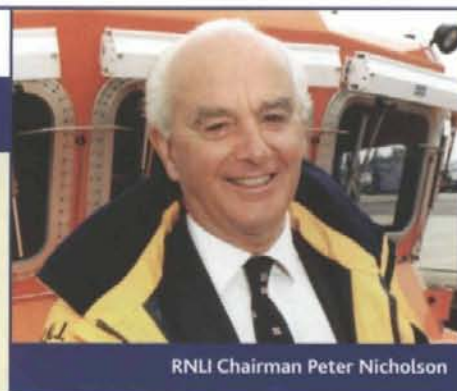
'I reported at last year's meeting our intention to launch the RNLI Family association for former and retired staff and lifeboat station volunteers.

'Although some legal complications have resulted in a slight delay, the first edition of the association's magazine *Lookout* has now been produced and invitations to join the association have been issued... enabling a growing number of those who have given service in the past to retain their relationship with the RNLI...

'Turning now to money; the total cost of the lifeboat service increased in 2003 to £119M. This was £8M more than the RNLI's income for the year.

'While we remain in a satisfactory financial position, we must not continue to run at a deficit. We are, therefore, concentrating all our efforts on raising income, both to cover all our essential running costs and to restore our free reserves to more robust levels.

'The main reason for the increase in expenditure was a £2M growth in rescue



RNLI Chairman Peter Nicholson

costs and an increase of just over £1M in fundraising and communications expenditure... Income fell by over £5M in the year, principally because of the decline in legacies. Raised voluntary income, however, did grow by over £1M, responding to the campaign to enlist more regular supporters... A concerted effort to increase the number of supporters signing up to Gift Aid provided over £2.7M of additional income from reclaimed tax in 2003.

'After three years of decline in the value of our investments, 2003 saw a welcome stock market recovery, which brought us £31M of investment gains for the year. This recouped some of the £65M by which our investments fell in value in 2002, and meant that our reserves actually rose slightly during the year despite the operating deficit.

'Capital expenditure increased by almost £7M in the year, mainly reflecting the substantial progress being made on the Poole construction projects. This development is not only a sound investment in the future of the lifeboat service but will also provide a very solid reserve of realisable value for our successors, should this be needed.

'The combined effect of these factors is, I am glad to say, a strengthening balance sheet, with fixed assets increasing and investments reducing, as a proportion of the total...

'Finally, as an independent lifesaving charity, we should not forget the absolutely central role of the general public. For in its 180th year, the RNLI continues to rely on voluntary donations and legacies to carry out its lifesaving work.

'In other words, the message in our purpose and vision can be extended to say: to save lives at sea, thanks to people like you.'

Whatever the weather, whatever the time of day or night they're ready.



Are you ready to thank them?

This lifeboat crew have been called out at all hours. They've had to put to sea in terrifying conditions and they're prepared to risk their lives for others. Yet they're ready to do it time and time again – and they would never, ever expect to be paid. Volunteer lifeboat crews willingly give their time and risk their lives to save people in danger – please help us thank them by making sure that they have the boats, training and equipment they need to do it safely.

Seven out of ten lifeboat launches are only possible thanks to legacies.

With more than 230 lifeboat stations around the shores of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, it costs £290,000 a day to keep the service running. As the RNLI depends entirely on voluntary donations and legacies to run the lifeboats, any gift you leave us in your Will

would make a valuable contribution to keeping our crews afloat. If you'd 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.

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Lifeboats

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Lifeboat Lottery

The spring 2004 Lifeboat Lottery was the highest earning RNLI lottery ever, raising over £381,000 – the equivalent of two inshore lifeboats, a hovercraft and the training of their crews. Congratulations go to first prize winners Mr and Mrs Fisher of Chester who scooped their dream holiday in the record-breaking draw

The couple won tickets for a luxurious trip to Venice on the *Orient Express*. The Coxswain of Hoylake lifeboat congratulated the couple and gave them a guided tour of the station's lifeboat. 'We're delighted,' said Mr Fisher, 'I've been a member for over 10 years and have been buying lottery tickets for almost as long. I've just celebrated turning 70 and this is the best present I could possibly have hoped for. It's especially nice as our wedding anniversary is coming and we'll be able to celebrate in style.'

RNLI Fundraising and Communications Director David Brann said: 'I'd like to add my personal congratulations to Mr and Mrs Fisher on their win. We have recently improved the lottery to make it easier for our members to take part and it seems to have generated a lot more interest.'

Congratulations also to cash prize winners:

Mr W Kirkness, Orkney – second prize £1,000; Mr RSJ Hele, Devon – third prize £500; and Mr S Pery-Knox-Gore – fourth prize £250. Mr N Rouse, West Yorkshire; Mrs CM McGinn, Kent; Mrs C Berry, Merseyside; Mr RJ Lenz, Cornwall; and Mr C Fletcher, Lancashire all won £100 each.

Special thanks to Thomson Cities and Short Breaks who worked with the RNLI to offer this fantastic prize and to all of you who gave support and bought tickets.

Win a Ford Ka

The star prize for the Autumn lottery is a Ford Ka 1.3i 3dr and tickets will be available from 19 July.



Supporters of the Autumn Lottery

If you do not currently receive tickets and would like to, please contact Pauline on 01202 663219 or pteivas-white@rnli.org.uk



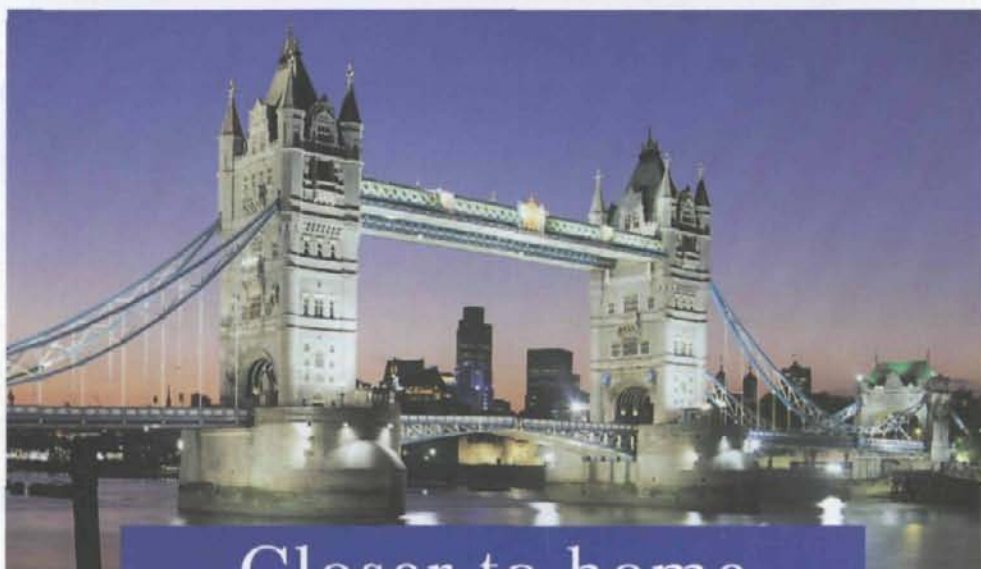
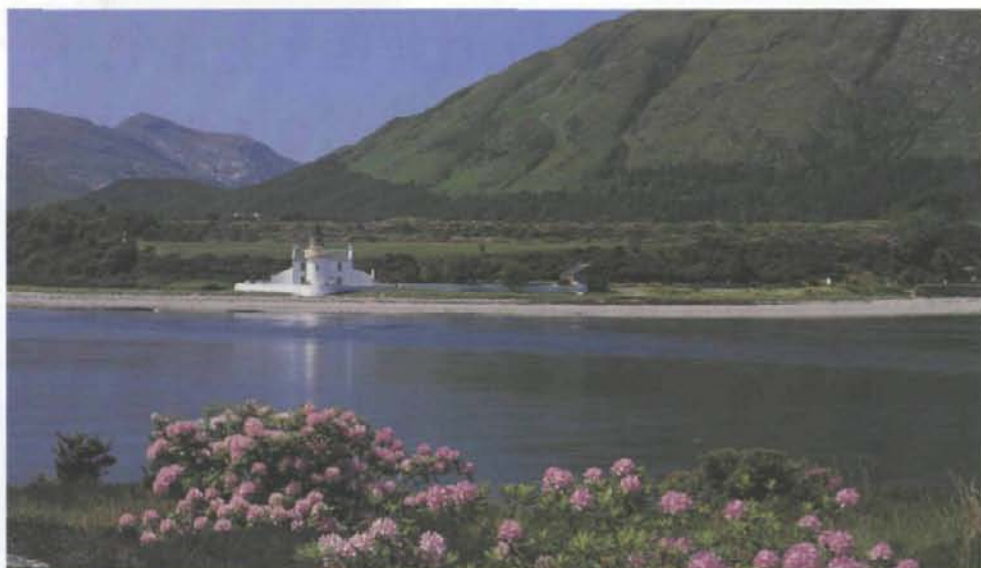
Lottery winners Mr and Mrs Fisher at the helm of Hoylake's Mersey class lifeboat

The RNLI scratchcard – a new way to win

Over the years the Lifeboat Lottery has raised the equivalent of 10 Trent class lifeboats, but the RNLI is always looking at new ways to reach more people. So the RNLI is launching a scratchcard. The scratchcards will raise even more funds and offer instant cash prizes, plus the chance to enter a free prize draw in January 2005 to win a holiday for two to the Maldives. The cards are available now and will be sold at RNLI events and shops around the country.

Can you help?

The RNLI is also looking to sell the scratchcards in shops and pubs. Do you know of any such venues that may wish to take them or perhaps you are holding an event at which you would like to sell them? If you feel you can help, please contact the RNLI helpdesk on 0845 121499 who will put you in touch with your regional office.



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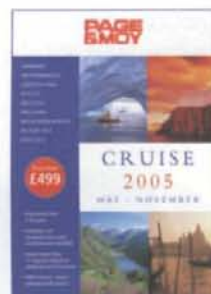
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Lifeboats in action

Testing tow at Port St Mary

When the Trent class *Gough Ritchie II* launched, all that the crew knew was that a fishing vessel was in trouble about 20 miles south east of Port St Mary in the Isle of Man. When they discovered that it was the large vessel *Paramount*, they knew from experience that they were in for a long and difficult service



Port St Mary crew (left to right): David Kneen, Michael Keggan, Michael Kneale, Mark Pendlebury, Mark Whitely and Morgan Guy
Photos: Alex Maddrell

Soon after launching at 4.52pm on 24 November 2003, the crew of *Gough Ritchie II* were told that a 30m fishing vessel, *Paramount*, had her rudder jammed. They would have to tow her to safety. The crew had experience of towing the large, heavy *Paramount* on a previous shout and it had been tough.

In command was Second Coxswain Michael Kneale, with the crew of Morgan Guy, Michael Keggan, David Kneen, Mark Pendlebury and Mark Whitely. Michael recalls the passage: 'Conditions were typical of the Irish Sea in a south west force 7, combined with spring tides, producing tumbly and confused seas of up to 3m.'

The lifeboat made good speed to the casualty, arriving on scene at 5.58pm. It was pitch dark but the crew spotted the lights of the *Paramount* quickly. Once the heaving line was passed successfully, Michael told the

fishermen to connect the tow rope on the vessel's port bow to counteract the effect of the rudder being jammed hard over to port.

As there was a danger of the tow rope parting, Michael instructed the casualty to place a large tyre in the tow, to act like a giant shock absorber. To help reduce the chance of the tow parting, the lifeboat crew let out 150m of their own tow rope. They also attached a large piece of matting to the rope, where it passed through the towing lead, to prevent chafing. They would ease it every 30 minutes.

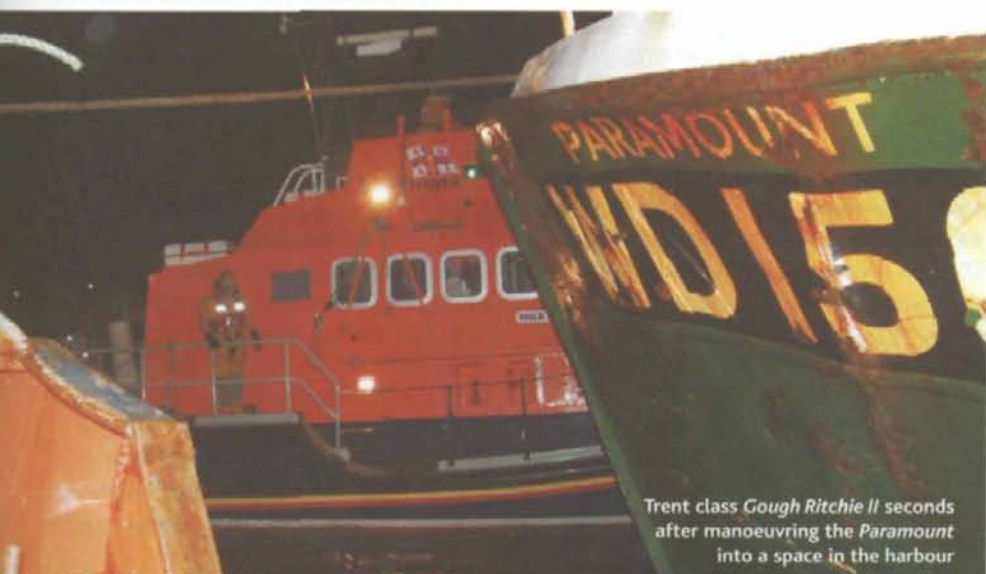
The long tow commenced at a speed of 1–3 knots. Michael remembers the uncomfortable passage: 'Half of us were seasick ... the cranky motion of towing a large vessel in tumbly seas caught us out.'

At 1am on 25 November, over 8 hours after launching, the lifeboat and casualty arrived off Port St Mary Harbour. The harbour

master had cleared a suitable space alongside the other vessels. The lifeboat crew then faced their biggest challenge. The *Paramount* would have to be towed right into the harbour, with little room for manoeuvre. To add to the difficulties, there was a swell of 3–4m outside the breakwater.

The crew shortened the tow as they approached. Michael then attempted to turn the fishing vessel to bring her alongside the other vessels in the harbour but the *Paramount* began to drift slowly towards the rocks north of the harbour. The lifeboat crew reacted quickly, transferring the tow onto the lifeboat's bow, a technically difficult tactic that gave Michael more control. The lifeboat then brought the *Paramount* successfully into the harbour. Michael advised the casualty to go astern on her engine and the fishing vessel stopped perfectly alongside another. The lifeboat returned safely to station.

Later, Michael was pleased to receive a letter of thanks from the RNLI Chairman Peter Nicholson in recognition of his leadership, initiative and seamanship skills and reflected that 'quiet, efficient seamanship' does not always receive the praise it ought to. He played down his role and complimented the crew: 'A very fast and efficient response to shifting the tow forward saved the day and reduced what might have been a drama to a show of slick seamanship.'



Trent class *Gough Ritchie II* seconds after manoeuvring the *Paramount* into a space in the harbour



Stuck between high cliffs and high seas



Left to right: Senior Helmsman Marcus Lewis with Crew Member Jimmy Hoddinott and Matthew Jane (inset)
 Right: Fowey all weather and inshore lifeboats
 Photo: Nicholas Leach

Fowey lifeboats launched no fewer than 73 times last year – but few shouts were as dramatic as the one that led to the rescue of a family stranded on a nearby beach, fearing for their lives

A camping trip to Silvermine Beach in St Austell Bay went badly wrong on the evening of Sunday 24 August 2003 when three adults and four children were trapped between cliffs and a rising tide breaking on the shore. The group had decided to camp at the small beach for the evening after a day of pleasant weather and were dropped off there by the eighth member of the party, who then went fishing in his boat.

Wind speeds had picked up by the evening though, and the sea became so rough that, when the fishing boat returned in the early hours of the morning, she could not get close enough to the beach to pick up the campers. They became seriously frightened that they would be washed away.

The small fishing boat anchored further east in the bay at Polkerris and alerted Brixham Coastguard. At 4.30am, Fowey lifeboat crew was paged and Senior Helmsman Marcus Lewis was one of the first to the station.

He remembers: 'It was a black night and the wind was rattling the windows when the pagers went off.'

Heading into the dark

Within eight minutes *Olive Herbert*, the Fowey D class inshore lifeboat (ILB), was launched with Marcus at the helm along with Crew Member James (Jimmy) Hoddinott and Probationer Matthew Jane. At the same time, the all weather Trent class lifeboat *Maurice and Joyce Hardy* also set off, commanded by Coxswain Keith Stuart and seven crew members. The two boats soon separated, the Trent class heading towards Polkerris to get more information from the man who had raised the alarm, while the inshore lifeboat headed across the darkness of St Austell Bay for Silvermine Beach.

Marcus said: 'I am fairly comfortable with the ILB in those conditions, but I would rather it was daylight. We knew what the beach was like as we have exercised there in

the past. It was probably the worst conditions I have anchored in though.'

When the ILB was about half a mile from the beach, a white light from a torch could be seen, and Marcus was sure it was the casualties. He knew that the tide was unlikely to advance much further, but there was only 3–4m of beach left and there was a real danger that the people on the beach would risk serious injury trying to climb the cliffs to get to safety.

Battling through the waves

After Matthew had dropped anchor, the ILB swung round towards the beach and Jimmy offered to go ashore and assess the situation. Climbing overboard and struggling with the breaking waves, he managed to take ashore some lifejackets and the hand-held VHF radio.

'Jimmy grew up on the water, dinghy sailing, water skiing, kite surfing and so on. He's a real terrier,' said Marcus. 'He went to

see what was happening and told us by radio that the people were cold, wet and extremely anxious, and needed to be taken off the beach.' The ILB then moved in towards the beach for its first attempt to collect some of the stranded group. As well as facing rough conditions with large waves, Marcus had to be mindful of a large rock jutting out of the water on the port side.

As they tried to get to the boat, Jimmy and the woman he was helping through the surf were hit by a large wave, which knocked them both over. But, determined to go on, Jimmy managed to get her onto the boat and then followed with her three-year-old son.

By this time Keith and his crew aboard the Trent class had arrived nearby and illuminated the scene with their onboard searchlight. Marcus decided the casualties should be put aboard the larger boat without delay and he weighed anchor. The woman and child were transferred safely to the Trent class, which was anchored about 50m offshore, and the *Olive Herbert* was taken towards the beach again.

This time there were problems getting the anchor to hold, but Matthew Jane's persistence won through. On his third attempt the anchor held and the ILB ventured into the surf again. With the swell driving the propeller against the sand, the engine stalled several times, but restarted again on each occasion as Marcus drew as close to the beach as possible.

A team effort

When he saw Marcus was ready, Jimmy brought out the first of three young girls, without incident. But just after the second girl had been pulled aboard a large wave loomed over them. 'I shouted for them to hold tight,' said Marcus. 'It broke over us and covered the poor girls. I said to them "this is better than Alton Towers, isn't it?"'

After the third girl was helped aboard Jimmy returned to the beach and the girls were transferred to the Trent class.

To speed up the recovery of the two remaining adults, it was decided to make the ILB anchor line fast to the stern bollard of the Trent – that would prevent time being taken up trying to drop anchor amid the waves.

Veering towards the beach once more, this time there were no problems and the two remaining adult casualties and Jimmy were brought safely aboard. The casualties

were transferred to the Trent class and the relieved group was taken to a waiting ambulance at Charlestown. Aside from suffering from the cold and shock, the rescued people were in good health. The lifeboats headed for home, now in daylight. Both lifeboats were back on station, refuelled and ready for service by 6.50am.

Praise for the crew

In recognition of the skills used in the rescue effort, Marcus Lewis receives a framed letter of thanks signed by RNLI Chairman Peter Nicholson, while Crew Members James Hoddinott and Matthew Jane receive letters of appreciation from Chief Executive Andrew Freemantle. Marcus said: 'Afterwards, I thought "thank God that's over." Keith and the crew said "well done" to me. The main thing was that the people were off the beach and onto dry land. It is nice to be recognised though.'

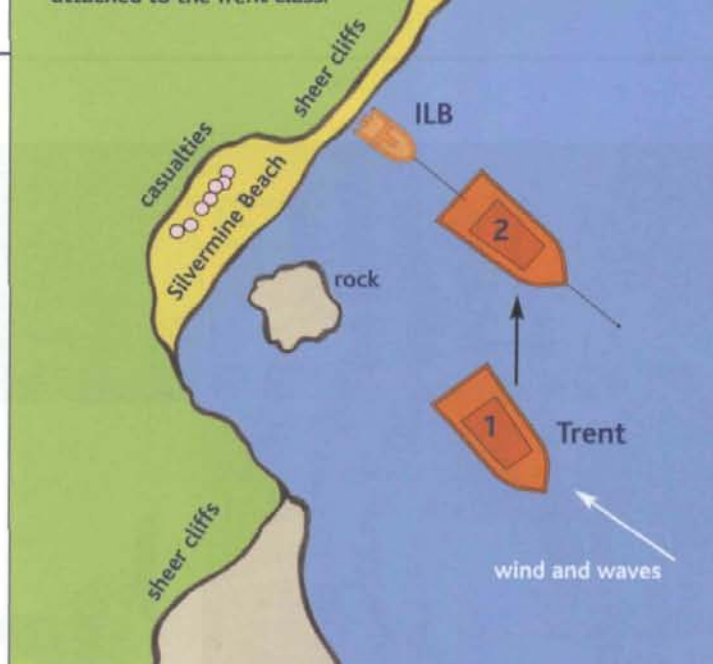
The recognition was also a welcome surprise for Matthew, who, as a probationer, was on his first major rescue. He said: 'It was my first big shout and it is very nice to get a letter. I was in good hands though – Marcus did a fantastic job, and so did Jimmy. I remember the large waves hitting Jimmy – he is not a tall man but he did very well.'

Marcus added: 'The ILB did exactly what it was designed to do, and did it brilliantly, but it was all the crew on both boats that made the rescue possible.'

Mr Nicholson wrote in his letter to Marcus: 'You demonstrated first-class seamanship and leadership skills in carrying out this difficult service in surf conditions. The teamwork and cooperation exhibited by our crew and between the two lifeboats reflects well on all at Fowey lifeboat station.'

The rescued family sent a card of thanks and a donation to the Fowey crew.

1. On the first two approaches, the ILB anchored near the shore while the Trent class illuminated the scene.
2. On the third approach, the ILB was attached to the Trent class.



THE INSHORE LIFEBOAT

D class *Olive Herbert* D-526

Funding: Olive Herbert Charitable Trust

THE CREW

Helmsman Marcus Lewis,
James Hoddinott, Matthew Jane

THE ALL WEATHER LIFEBOAT

Trent class lifeboat ON-1222 (14-18)

Maurice and Joyce Hardy

Funding: Bequest of Maurice G Hardy

THE CREW

Coxswain: Keith Stuart
Crew Members: John Barker, Nick Beard,
Wayne Farr, Paul Gamble, Ronnie Johnson,
Jonathan Pritchard, Paul Thomas

FOWEY LIFEBOAT STATION

Established: 1859

Previous RNLI Medals: Six Silver and
one Bronze

THE CASUALTIES

Three adults and four children

THE CONDITIONS

Weather: Overcast
Visibility: Dark
Wind: Force 4-5
Sea state: Rough, 1-2m swell



Boys stranded at base of cliff

When reports came through of two people trapped by the tide south of Tynemouth Harbour, Mechanic Kevin Mole knew a quick launch was vital

Kevin Mole was at Tynemouth station when he heard that two boys were stranded at the bottom of a cliff at Frenchman's Bay, to the south of the Harbour. Balanced on some rocks, they could be in danger of being swept into the sea with the rising tide. Kevin realised immediately the urgency of the situation and prepared the inshore lifeboat for launch. As soon as experienced Crew Member Jimmy Scott arrived at the station, they set off.

The Tynemouth D class *The Cromer Smuggler* launched at 4.07pm on 14 August 2003 with Kevin as helmsman. The inshore lifeboat made good speed in moderate seas, force 4 winds and swell of up to 1.5m. The crew soon spotted the local beach lifeguard vehicle on the cliffs and made for the area directly below.

Two boys were on a large rock, 3–4m from the base of the cliff. The swell height was now up to 2.5m. They were occasionally being covered in spray from breaking waves. Although in a precarious position, the boys were currently in little danger of being washed off. High water was not until 6.06pm.

Jimmy told the boys to stay put while Kevin considered the options. Through his local knowledge Kevin knew that the Bay was strewn with large and small rocks, which could damage the lifeboat's propeller.

Suddenly the boys started to make their way down the rock, into danger. Kevin acted immediately: 'I hoped we would be able to go in, bow first, grab them and get out of there.' As the D class closed on the boys a large wave came through. Kevin avoided capsizing by punching the lifeboat, stern first, through the face of the breaking wave out into deeper water.

Mechanic Kevin Mole



Crew Member Jimmy Scott



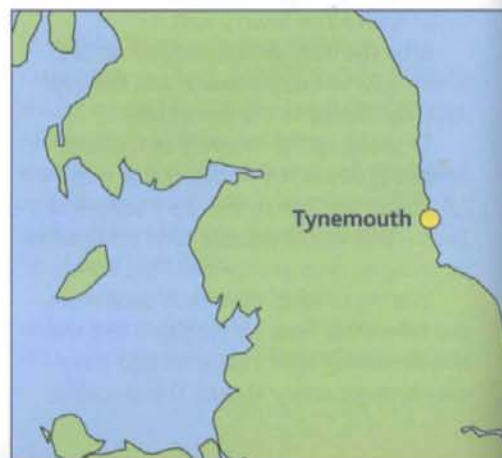
Kevin and Jimmy decided to veer down and they anchored the lifeboat successfully. Despite having been told to wait, one youth jumped for the lifeboat just as the D class fell into a trough. He hit the sponson and bounced into the water. Jimmy was struggling to keep the anchor line taut with one arm but still managed to grab hold of the boy's hand. Kevin helped pull the boy aboard.

With both lifeboatmen busy saving the boys, communications with the Coastguard lapsed. The South Shields beach lifeguards could see from the top of the cliff that the crew of two had their hands full, so they kept the Coastguard informed of progress. Kevin described the lifeguards' communications assistance as 'a Godsend'.

Kevin and Jimmy prepared to go alongside the rock to rescue the second youth. Kevin remembers the moment: 'The rocks were looming up, the seas were coming towards us and we had to judge when to tell the lad to jump.' When the time was right, the remaining boy was instructed to step into the D class and was soon safely aboard.

Kevin landed the youths at Little Haven, where South Tyneside beach lifeguards gave the boys a check up before they went home. The D class arrived back at the lifeboat station at 5.12pm, with Kevin and Jimmy satisfied that they had done a good job.

For their sound judgement, excellent seamanship and boathandling skills and teamwork, Kevin received a framed Chairman's letter of thanks and Jimmy received a Chief Executive's letter of appreciation.



Speedy rescue saves diver

Helmsman David Fordy and Crew Member Michael Hoyle were both standing at the front door of the Seahouses boathouse when the call came. An exhausted diver was in difficulty in confused seas near a cliff face. He needed urgent help as his life was in danger

The crew of two had recently returned from a shout in the early afternoon of 26 October 2003. They had only just informed Humber Coastguard that the D class lifeboat *Sea Ranger* was refuelled and ready for service but within minutes of the call they launched again. It was 3.23pm: the Mersey class lifeboat *Grace Darling* also launched, a minute later.

From the previous shout, the pair knew what to expect of the conditions: clear and bright with winds a northerly force 4–5. But there was a heavy residual swell from the strong north easterly wind of previous days. A member of the public had called 999 and told Humber Coastguard that they had spotted a diver in severe difficulty between Beadnall and Seahouses harbour. The man had been diving from the shore with a friend. The friend had experienced difficulty with his equipment but returned safely to the shore. The crew knew there was a real urgency with the diver near the cliff face and rocks: 'He stood every chance of being hurled into them by the seas.'

On passage, David negotiated the heavy residual swell of 2m while maintaining full speed and reached the scene within 7 minutes. The seas were very confused around the cliff face with the swell and reflected swell meeting. In the 2–5m swell the crew could not locate the diver. But they stayed calm. David remembers: 'Once we were on scene our training started to pay off!' So David positioned the lifeboat on top of a wave and was able to spot the diver, 20m away.

He was only 20m from the sheer rock face and was being severely buffeted by the waves. He had been in the water for about an hour and a half and was exhausted from trying to swim against the wind and tide.

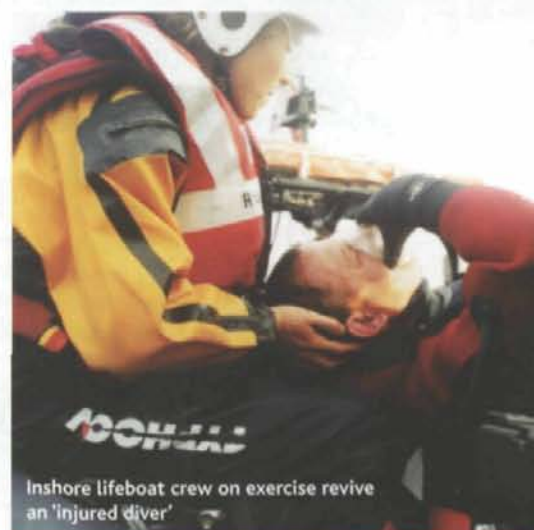
The helmsman powered the lifeboat towards the man, stopping with him on the lifeboat's port shoulder. It took all the strength of David and Michael to haul the heavily weighted and equipped diver aboard. At the same time David was concerned about the next breaking sea that was closing rapidly. There would be a real danger of capsize or swamping if they didn't get away in time. 'We got the diver aboard and got out as quickly as we could. It was hellish there.' He powered the lifeboat away to calmer, deeper waters.

The pair quickly removed the diver's equipment and checked his condition before the Mersey class lifeboat arrived. At 3.40pm the diver was transferred to the all weather lifeboat where he was warmed through in the comfort of the wheelhouse. Both lifeboats returned to Seahouses station. The diver required no further medical assistance but was given a warm drink at the station. Reunited with his dive 'buddy' safe on land, he thanked his rescuers profusely.

David received a letter of appreciation from the Chief Executive in recognition of his skill and bravery in this speedy service. He reflects: 'I suppose it was a tricky rescue. It's only when you get back ashore and think about the job that you realise the dangers that we faced.'



Helmsman David Fordy
Photo: Ian Clayton



Inshore lifeboat crew on exercise revive an 'injured diver'

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A day in the life of...

Ask a few lifeboat crew what beach lifeguards do all day and someone might mention 'lounging around posing in sunglasses'. To find out what they *really* do, *the Lifeboat* asked Mark Evans, Senior Lifeguard at Perran Sands in Cornwall to describe a typical day

10am I get to the lifeguard base at Perran Sands and prepare for the day ahead. My job is to manage the beach, keep the public safe, keep the team together and maintain a good lookout. I've surfed on Carrick beaches since I was 12, so I know the area well. This helps me judge when and where it's safest for people to swim and where to place the red and yellow flags each day.

I organise the patrols: two lifeguards at the water's edge between the flags; two at the lifeguard base; and one on a quad bike doing regular trips to Penhale, about a mile away. The patrols rotate every half an hour – this keeps the lifeguards fresh and alert. Two of the lifeguards working with us today are volunteers. I fill in a daily log every hour, which records the lifeguards' general activities, the weather conditions, wave height, tide times, the state of the equipment and any incidents.

11am By mid-morning there are about 100 swimmers and 250 people on the beach. We spend most of our time doing surveillance and giving advice. I approach a family in a secluded area of the beach and advise them to consider swimming only between the flags, where the lifeguards can keep an eye on them. We try to warn people before they get into trouble and need rescuing.

12pm At midday some anxious parents approach the lifeguard base to tell us their seven-year-old son is missing. We are all radioed and within 20 minutes we locate the boy, who is safe and well.

2pm After lunch I hear about a serious incident 150m from the base. On my way, I check that there's still at least one lifeguard patrolling between the flags. I arrive to find a four-year-old girl, Lucy, unconscious by the side of a shallow pool. A fellow lifeguard is trying to clear her airway and give rescue breaths. We know what to do as we've had high-level first aid training for those who are first on the scene of an incident.

I roll Lucy onto her side, slap her back firmly five times and then try two more rescue breaths. The first aid works: Lucy shows signs of life. After placing her in the recovery position and giving her oxygen, I hold her hand and try to comfort her.



Senior Lifeguard Mark Evans

Soon, Cornwall Air Ambulance takes Lucy to Treliske hospital, where she makes a full recovery. *[For more information on this lifesaving incident see the autumn 2003 issue of the Lifeboat.]*

4pm The day isn't over, although it's becoming overcast and less busy. We still have to keep a sharp lookout. At 4.40pm, Simon on the quad bike spots two bodyboarders who look like they might get into trouble near Penhale Corner. They are assisted by the Arancia rescue boat and warned about the rip current there.

6pm It feels like a long day and my team are proud of what they have achieved. We pack away and finish for the day. We all need a rest, and have to be ready and alert for whatever might happen tomorrow.

Supporting volunteer lifeguards

Volunteer lifeguards dressed for their day jobs...



Photos throughout: Kirstin Prisk and Myles New

...and dressed for lifesaving

RNLI Beach Lifeguards currently operates only in the South West of England, but the RNLI is working hard to ensure the development of lifeguarding all around the coast

The RNLI is committed to maintaining its volunteer ethos. This does not only apply to its lifeboat crews. The RNLI recognises that the future of lifeguarding in the UK and Republic of Ireland depends on the continuing development of volunteer lifeguard clubs. By working with and supporting the Royal Life Saving Society, United Kingdom (RLSS UK) and the Surf Life Saving Association of Great Britain (SLSA GB), the RNLI will help develop a high-quality lifeguard service that will save lives at sea for years to come.



Tony Clare, Volunteer Development Officer

In 2003 the RNLI appointed Tony Clare as Volunteer Development Officer. His job is to help the volunteer lifesaving clubs and RNLI Beach Lifeguards work and develop together.

Tony was helmsman at New Brighton lifeboat station for 22 years and he is also a qualified and experienced lifeguard, so he is

perfect for the job. Tony comments: 'I came to the RNLI as crew 30 years ago and I was one of the first to come from lifeguarding. I still patrol as a lifeguard and this experience gives me an appreciation of the great demands we make on our lifeguards.' Many of the skills are transferable from lifeguards to lifeboat crew and several lifeguards in Cornwall also crew for the RNLI.

To develop stronger links between the RNLI and volunteer lifeguard clubs, Tony made visiting the clubs in person a priority. He reflects: 'It's very much face-to-face contact that helps build the relationships and opens up channels of communication.' As an experienced lifeguard, Tony sometimes actually gets in the water with them during training sessions, which gives him instant credibility with often fiercely independent clubs. 'I make it clear to the clubs that the RNLI values what they're doing and that it's a two-way thing: we have a lot to learn from each other,' enthuses Tony.

The finest method of training lifeguards is through the club system. The RNLI encourages club volunteers who are registered with the RNLI to gain experience by patrolling alongside the highly trained,

well-equipped RNLI beach lifeguards.

A successful scheme the RNLI set up in 2003 is the distribution of used local authority lifeguard equipment to clubs working alongside the RNLI. The second-hand equipment ranges from rescue boards and tubes to boats, VHF radios and first aid equipment. It is used in training volunteer lifeguards, not for rescue operations. About 20 clubs have benefited from this so far and Tony will be making contact with five more clubs in North Cornwall soon.

The RNLI knows that it is vital for all lifeguards to have quality training. Tony comments, 'The RNLI already has a justly fine reputation for the training offered to our lifeboat crews and it is essential that this is carried through and maintained at the highest possible standard for beach lifeguards.' From 2005 the volunteers who register with the RNLI will be eligible for the RNLI's competence-based training scheme. The skills of the lifeguards will be officially recognised by a respected qualification. The training will also highlight the wide variety of skills that are needed in lifeguarding, as Tony explains: 'It's not all about being able to swim 400m in less than 7 minutes 30 seconds.'

Lifeguards will also be recognised for other skills such as surveillance and communication with the public. It's a great development for lifeguarding.'

The RNLI is also keen to help clubs grow outside of the RNLI Beach Lifeguards operational areas. The RNLI uses its reputation and contacts to help with promotion of events and sponsorship for local clubs.

The RNLI helps club members to achieve the full lifeguard qualification. With an additional 15 beaches to patrol and as many as 70 lifeguards joining the RNLI in 2004 in North Cornwall, those with training are in increasingly high demand. In 2003 a bursary scheme with the RLSS UK and SLSA GB helped with the cost of training around 500 volunteer lifeguards at clubs all around the coast.

In 2004 each club can make a bid for funding for individual items such as a training board or first aid equipment. This will give the clubs control and ownership of the help they request from the RNLI.

It isn't just the adult volunteer lifeguards that Tony has been working with. He has also built up a relationship with many of the

'nipper' and 'junior' sections of the clubs. In five or ten years' time there should be a large pool of lifeguards to choose from.

By opening up the communication channels with the clubs, there are many advantages for the RNLI. For example, Tony has sent out a survey to all clubs asking about their resources. Results will show how many clubs are well resourced with lifeguards and rescue boats, and also show where the gaps are. This information is vital for long-term RNLI lifeboat and lifeguard operational planning.

'Many volunteer lifeguards see their work as an opportunity to put something back into the community. In this way they're a lot like lifeboat crews.'

Tony Clare

Throughout 2004 the RNLI will be working to increase awareness of volunteer lifeguarding. The aim of this is two fold: firstly it will help with lifeguard recruitment and secondly it will make the public more

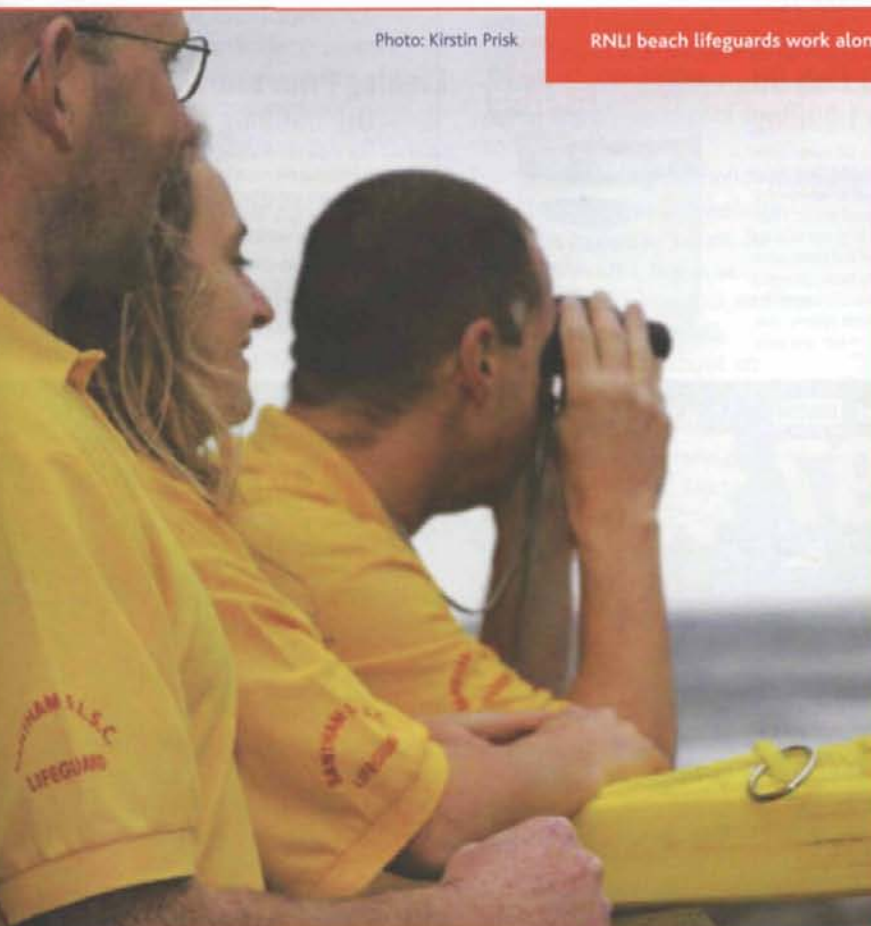
aware of how the RNLI is supporting volunteers at the beaches around the UK and Republic of Ireland. For example, early in 2004 Tony attended the London International Boatshow with a team of RNLI volunteer lifeguards. These volunteers stood alongside the lifeboat crew, fundraising and Sea Safety volunteers. Tony was delighted with the impression they made on the crowds: 'They were a credit to the RNLI and proved the benefits of working together for the common good.'

Originally on a 12-month secondment within the RNLI from the Sea Safety team to Beach Lifeguards, Tony was due to return to his position of Sea Safety Coordinator in the north of England on 1 July 2004. It is in recognition of the importance of the volunteer scheme that this secondment is being extended by six more months to enable Tony to attend feedback meetings once the lifeguarding season is over and to help to fine tune strategies. Then he'll work with the clubs to produce a policy to help RNLI Beach Lifeguards and the clubs maintain their highly beneficial links in the long term.

Photo: Kirstin Prisk

RNLI beach lifeguards work alongside local volunteer lifeguards

Photo: Myles New



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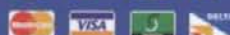
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Fundraising

Corporate fundraising

When would you think of all these things together: a car, a train, a cruise ship, a bank and a shop? Are they perhaps all the items you need for a perfect holiday? In fact they are all things that the RNLI corporate fundraising team deals with day-to-day as it continually develops partnerships with companies throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland. Aiming to position the RNLI alongside well-known brands and to raise awareness among different audiences, corporate fundraising helps raise funds by donations. These may be money, such as donations made when credit cards are used, or goods, such as cars or holidays donated for RNLI lottery prizes. Corporate sponsorship is also sought for particular projects or activities, an example of this being the 2004 sponsorship of *Offshore News* by Admiralty Charts & Publications.

The corporate fundraising team is always looking for new opportunities, so if you or one of your friends or family are a national company director and would like to help in some way, then please contact Tizzy Perkins, Corporate Fundraising Manager, on 01202 663295 or email tperkins@rnli.org.uk.

End of the road

Britannia Rescue and the RNLI would like to announce that the RNLI/Britannia Rescue road rescue scheme has been discontinued as from the end of May 2004.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this scheme.

Current RNLI/Britannia Rescue policyholders will continue to receive their 15% discount on renewal of their policy each year.

The RNLI would also like to thank Britannia Rescue for their support over the past few years and for generously sponsoring Lifeboat Lottery prizes, providing three Suzuki Ignis cars.



Support the RNLI on holiday

Holidaying in Italy, the Egyptian Riviera, Budapest or Tallinn has never been so easy. The RNLI now has an agreement with the Italian travel company Domina to offer wonderful hotels to all our members at really favourable prices and to make a donation to the RNLI. For every booking you make, 5% of the cost of the holiday will go to the RNLI.

The full range of holidays on offer can be found on the website www.dominadirect.com. To access this site, log in as rnli@dominadirect.com and use the password 'lifeboat'.

Domina is all about an individual style of travel. Book your accommodation via Domina and then take advantage of low cost flights. Domina tells

you which airport you should fly to and how to book your flights. Just send your holiday request or enquiry via the electronic booking form on the website or email direct@domina.it.

Culture, history, shopping, spaghetti, wine, pizzas or ice creams; it's all easily available through Domina – and you'll be helping the RNLI as well.



Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines – to the rescue

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines turned the tables by coming to the rescue of the RNLI in April. The second prize winner of the regional Grand Prize Draw mentioned in the spring issue of *the Lifeboat* was very disappointed when it looked as though her holiday was lost. Mrs Sheldon had won a seven-day Mediterranean cruise, but unfortunately the cruise was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

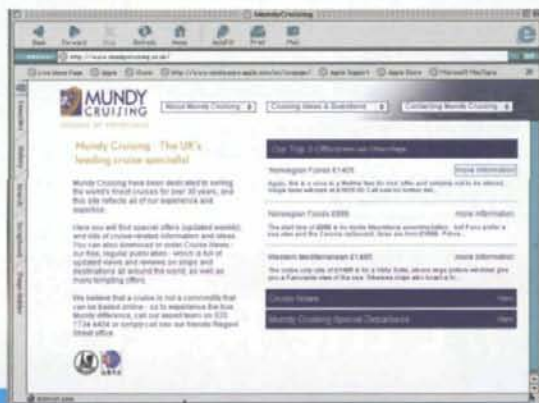
Fred. Olsen is a long-time supporter of the RNLI, with passengers and crews raising thousands of pounds every year. The latest project, a First Aid Mobile Training Unit, went on service in January this year. On hearing of Mrs Sheldon's plight, Fred. Olsen immediately offered an eight-day Scandinavian cruise on its liner *Black Watch*. The RNLI is very grateful to Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines for its very generous and timely support.

Oceans apart

What would you pay for the opportunity to have a week on a floating country house, cruising around Scotland's beautiful Western Isles, seeing some of the unique sights of the Hebrides, with world-class luxury, impeccable service and the warmth of a Hebridean welcome?

Well, this was the 'lot' on offer at an auction at the Central London Committee's Lifeboat Banquet at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich.

Mundy Cruising (www.mundycruising.co.uk), a leading arranger of luxury cruises, teamed up with Hebridean Island Cruises (www.hebridean.co.uk) to offer this wonderful cruise. And the winners? Definitely the RNLI with a magnificent £5,800 raised. Thank you for such a luxurious amount.



Captain Croc gets snappy



Pontin's staff and mascot on the new launching trolley with the Burnham-on-Sea crew
Photo: Ian Beech Images

Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo come to the rescue

Students at Dover College collected a record breaking £6,000 recently. A performance of *Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo* certainly helped to raise this wonderful amount. Excellent ticket sales at a concert by the junior department, together with a group of singers called the Beachcombers, boosted the amount raised. Further money was collected when both the junior and senior school pupils took part in a 15-mile sponsored walk from Sandwich to Dover. Headmaster Howard Blackett said: 'The pupils, parents and teachers have worked really hard to make this contribution to such an important charity.'

With safety being their number one priority, and knowing that the RNLI volunteer crews are out there keeping people safe, Pontin's holiday company had no hesitation in donating £4,000 for a new launching trolley to the recently opened lifeboat station at Burnham-on-Sea. This was the latest in a series of large gifts donated by Pontin's staff and guests from their eight centres throughout the UK, the closest to Burnham-on-Sea lifeboat station being the Brean Sands centre. Special guest on the day was Captain Croc, the Pontin's mascot, who saw some jaw-dropping action when the lifeboat crew headed out to sea on exercise after being launched from their new trolley.

Christie's legs it to the Isle of Man



A very successful Antiques Valuation Day, organised by the Peel ladies lifeboat guild, was recently held by a group of five experts from Christie's, South Kensington. They gave up their time and travelled at their own expense to the Corrin Hall in Peel, where they gave their opinions on the hundreds of items brought in. The value of the items ranged from

just a few pounds to around £9,000 for a painting and the amount raised on the day for the RNLI was just over £2,000. Well done ladies and grateful thanks to Christie's.

CHRISTIE'S

'Order, order!'

Girvan lifeboat station had a very special visitor when the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Rt Hon Michael Martin MP, arrived to donate a cheque for £1,181 to the station. This was the second time that the Speaker had decided to donate the proceeds from the MPs' official Christmas cards to the RNLI.

Dressed to impress in his Speaker's attire, Mr Martin said: 'The work done by the RNLI is much appreciated and I hope that my visit makes others aware of how important it is to support them and of how hard it is to fundraise.' MP George Foulkes also attended and said: 'I would like to join the Speaker in praising the work of the volunteers of the RNLI. They do a professional, courageous and dangerous job and this is a superb opportunity to thank them for all their hard work.'

Mr Martin visits his brother in Girvan and often takes a look at the lifeboat while he is there. This time he was able to look around the station as well. Coxswain Roddy Leitch commented: 'A great time was had by all and I'm delighted that he presented this cheque to us. It's a good job there's a reinforced floor in the boathouse as I lost count of how many people were in there!'

The Speaker's cheque was certainly the order of the day!



Left to right: Girvan Lifeboat Operations Manager Colin McKechnie, Speaker of the House of Commons Michael Martin MP and Coxswain Roddy Leitch
Photo: Carrick Gazette

Yak Paddling Challenge

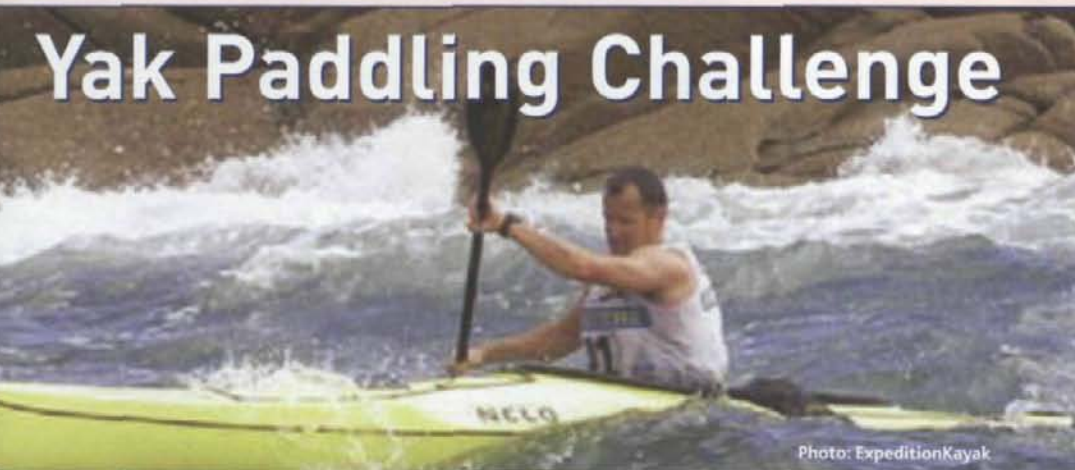


Photo: ExpeditionKayak

Another challenge – another environment – another first. This challenge is to be the first to solo circumnavigate the UK and Ireland by sea kayak. In total it will be over 4,950 miles, taking around 26 weeks to complete. The ambitious project is Sean Morley's biggest challenge yet. Sean is a serving police sergeant and is no stranger to challenges as he has already completed several record-breaking paddles.

Alongside the physical challenge of the circumnavigation, Sean has set himself another challenge: to raise money both for the RNLI's Lifeboats 200 crew training appeal and for The Marine Conservation Society, the UK charity dedicated to the protection of the marine environment and its wildlife.

Every day's paddle is risk assessed, taking into consideration the weather forecast, sea states, tidal movements and Sean's own physical

and mental condition, always erring on the side of caution. The Coastguard is kept fully informed of his intentions each day and he carries essential safety, navigation and communication equipment. With the help of the RNLI, he has also deposited food and equipment at strategic points along the route, allowing him to restock the supplies he can carry in the kayak's watertight compartments.

Sean started his challenge in Falmouth, Cornwall, on 3 April and has since continued clockwise around the coast. Updates about his progress can be found at www.expeditionkayak.com.

A special 'thank you' to all the sponsors who have made this expedition possible. Their generosity will ensure that Sean's two chosen charities receive the maximum amount possible.

Good luck with the rest of the trip Sean!

Every little helps

Once again, RNLI fundraising teams were given the chance to collect at Tesco stores nationwide. Branches and guilds around the country planned their collections to make the most of the opportunity. With only one two-day collection occurring at the stores each month, the RNLI is extremely grateful that, for over 10 years, Tesco has provided this wonderful opportunity. Due to the fantastic generosity of Tesco staff and customers, the RNLI raised a superb £336,573.53 this year, far exceeding the amounts raised in previous years. Tesco says that 'Every little helps' and this is certainly true as the 'little' amounts raised at Tesco stores over the years have all added up to more than £1M. A huge thank you to all the Tesco staff and customers and for all the hard work put in by RNLI fundraisers in stores around the country.

Marathon spirit

Thousands of people braved driving rain and unseasonably cold temperatures to take part in the 24th London Marathon in April. Crowds lined the 26.2 mile course to cheer on over 32,000 competitors, including almost 100 runners raising money for the RNLI. These ranged in age from 23 to 73 years old, the latter being the Chairman of Canvey Island branch. Crew members from Calshot, Hayling Island and Youghal lifeboat stations joined in, braving the wind and rain, which is something they're more familiar with when out on a shout.

Someone else involved was Richard Mills, an RNLI member who works for the company that marks the course of the London Marathon each year. A huge amount of organisation goes on behind the scenes to make sure that everything is in place before the race, including marking out the treble blue lines that the racers follow.



Richard Mills (front row far left) and his colleagues

On the day of the marathon, Richard's job is to follow them around the course and *remove* all the blue lines. No time records were broken that day – his team finished nearly ten hours after the first starter, but while he was going around the course he saw someone in an RNLI running vest and decided to donate his pay for the day and round it up to £150. Richard commented: 'I've long been a supporter of RNLI – probably for over 40 years! As a small child my parents used to take me to RNLI stations whenever we went on holiday and I've continued that tradition with my two children ever since.' Thank you, Richard, for your generous donation.

The money raised from the marathon is still rolling in and it is hoped that it will reach over £100,000. Many thanks to everyone who took part for your marathon effort.

The name's Bond... Peter Bond

When you think of Bond, most of you will think of James Bond – 007 with shaken, not stirred, vodka–martini cocktails. But the RNLI's real Bond is *Peter Bond*, Morecambe's D class lifeboat. Instead of a car with machine guns hidden behind the radiator grill, the one that springs to mind in this connection is a Nissan Micra, squeezed into a garage and surrounded by items to sell at car boot sales.

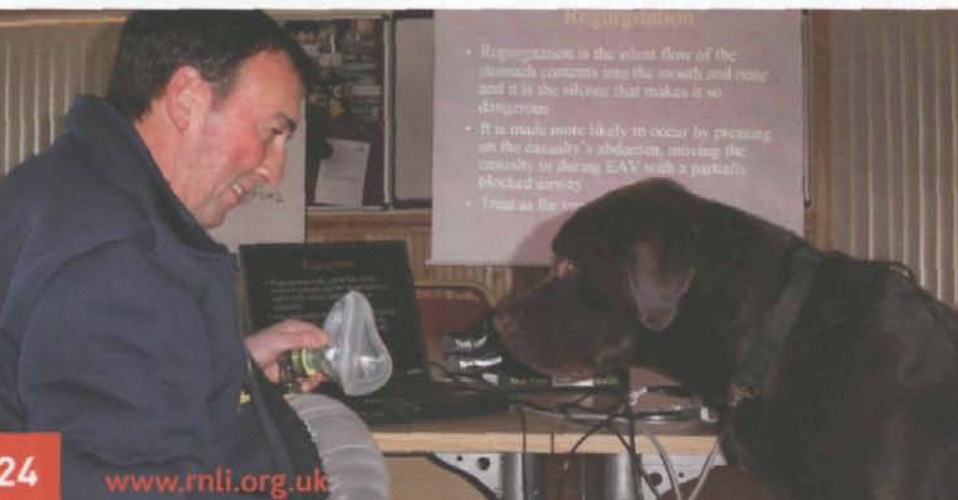
Partial house clearances, rooting around in sheds and garages for unwanted items and even, with a bit of stealth (now this is more like James Bond), finding discarded garden tools and a gent's bike in a skip are all part of the efforts that Anne Bond and her 'wonderful circle of friends and the bric-a-brac network' go to in order to raise money for the RNLI. Anne has also done several talks about her work and has written short articles for a local magazine. These have led to further publicity, which in turn has led to even more money being raised. Over time, Anne and her many friends and helpers have



collected enough money to provide the inshore lifeboat named after her late husband.

As Anne, her friends and the bric-a-brac network continue to work through this year's car boot season, they will be able to reflect on the lifesaving role that *Peter Bond* and her crew are playing in the waters around Morecambe and they can certainly smile when they know that, for the RNLI, the name's Bond... Peter Bond.

If you're inspired by this story, please contact the RNLI's personal donations team to talk about the best target for your fundraising efforts.



It's a dog's life...

Hjalti is the newest crew member to benefit from the crew training appeal, undertaking first aid training with one of the mobile training unit trainers, Steve Ford. Hjalti's showing great interest!

Listings

New lifeboat and station in Burnham-on-Sea

It was a sunny day of double celebration in Burnham-on-Sea when a new lifeboat station was opened and a new lifeboat handed over.

The Atlantic 75 lifeboat serving the Somerset town was officially named at a service of dedication on Saturday 15 May. More than 73 years after the town's original station was closed down, Jonathon Whitfield donated the *Staines Whitfield* in memory of his parents.

RNLI Council Member John Drake accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the charity before officially delivering her into the care of the lifeboat station.

The station, which was completed last year, was then declared open by Sir Benjamin Bathurst GCB DL, before Rev Graham Witts of Burnham's St Andrew's Church conducted a service of dedication.

The town's sea rescue service had been previously provided by the Burnham Area Rescue Boat (BARB), which raised enough funds to buy a lifeboat in 1994.

RNLI Training Divisional Inspector Howard Ramm said: 'This event marks the successful end to four years of planning and extensive trials. Burnham-on-Sea lifeboat station is a welcome asset to the RNLI and is good news for the town. I thank everyone for their hard work and determination so far, in particular the members of BARB, and wish the volunteer team now on station the best of luck in the future.'

The original station was closed in 1930 when motor lifeboats were placed at Minehead and Weston-Super-Mare.

Crew Members Phil Cowie, Jason Coombes and Nick Prout watch from the lifeboat while Jonathon Whitfield and his sister, Julie White, pour champagne over the bows during the naming ceremony
Photo: Mike Lang



New Holyhead lifeboat – Christopher Pearce

Guests included the RNLI's President, His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent and the charity's Chairman Peter Nicholson on 6 May at a naming ceremony for the new Holyhead lifeboat.

The £1.9M Severn class was named *Christopher Pearce* after the man whose bequest provided the principal funding for the lifeboat. His mother, Mrs Diana Jean Pearce, officially handed the lifeboat over to Mr Nicholson at the ceremony. Christopher's brother, Andrew, has also sadly passed away, and his generous legacy funded the lifeboat *Andy Pearce* at nearby Llandudno.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mrs Pearce said: 'I would like to thank the RNLI for the opportunity which allowed both my sons' lifeboats to be so close together.'

After the naming ceremony, the Duke of Kent joined Mrs Pearce, Coxswain Brian Thomson and the crew on board the new lifeboat for a trip around Holyhead harbour.

Since a lifeboat station was first established in Holyhead in 1828, more than 1,500 people have been saved and 49 medals for gallantry have been awarded.

Pictured on board the newly-named *Christopher Pearce* are crew members, Mrs Diana Jean Pearce, Coxswain Brian Thomson and HRH The Duke of Kent
Photo: Ray Steadman



New lifeboat and facilities at Salcombe

Salcombe has a new inshore lifeboat, lifeboat house and improved launching facilities thanks to the generosity of RNLI supporters.

On 17 April, a naming and dedication ceremony saw the handing over of the Atlantic 75 *Joan Bate* – the second of four lifeboats funded by Miss Joan Bate.

Generous gifts including the bequests of Mrs JE Ward and Mr KJ Lucas have also paid for the inshore lifeboat house and new launching and mooring facilities for Salcombe's existing Tyne class *The Baltic Exchange II*.

Dr Maurice Jackson handed over the lifeboat on behalf of the donor at the ceremony, where almost 200 people were in attendance. Simon Ward, on behalf of those whose support helped pay for the boathouse, cut the ribbon and the new facility was declared open.

Lifeboat Operations Manager Peter Hodges said: 'Our crew are delighted with the new ILB and the excellent facilities, so a big thank you from me on their behalf for the support received from the RNLI and for the tremendous generosity of our donors.'

Also see page 28.

Listings

- ABERDEEN**
ON-1248(17-24): Oct 3
D-536: Oct 3
- ABERDOVEY**
B-754: Dec 5
B-758: Sep 12; Nov 28
- ABERYSTWYTH**
ON-1240(14-28): Sep 30;
Oct 12,24,25
- ACHILL ISLAND**
ON-1240(14-28): Sep 30;
Oct 12,24,25
- AITH**
ON-1232(17-14): Sep 20
- ALDEBURGH**
ON-1184(12-25) Dec 16
D-520: Nov 15; Dec 10,16
- ALDERNEY**
ON-1199(12-34): Oct 1,2; Nov 13;
Dec 14
D-551: Oct 2
- AMBLE**
ON-1176(12-19): Sep 13,14; Oct 26;
Nov 5,6
D-569: Sep 13,14; Oct 26; Nov 5,17,30
- ANGLE**
ON-1114(47-011): Sep 6; Oct 12,28;
Nov 6, 8; Dec 1
D-457: Dec 7
- ANSTRUTHER**
ON-1148(12-11): Nov 23
ON-1174(12-17): Oct 31; Dec 28
D-552: Oct 31; Nov 23; Dec 28
- APPLEDORE**
ON-1140(47-027): Sep 8
ON-1142(47-029): Dec 12
B-742: Oct 13; Nov 16; Dec 12
- ARAN ISLANDS**
ON-1150(52-44): Dec 15,16,26
ON-1217(17-06): Sep 1,13,18; Nov 20
ON-1263(17-34): Nov 8,9,30; Dec 5,9
- ARBROATH**
ON-1194(12-35): Sep 9,13
D-471: Sep 13
- ARKLOW**
ON-1223(14-19): Sep 17; Oct 17
ON-1228(14-24): Nov 7
- ARRAN (LAMBLASH)**
B-770: Nov 1,29
- ARRANMORE**
ON-1244(17-22): Sep 3,15,25;
Oct 15; Dec 7,14,26
- ATLANTIC COLLEGE**
B-767: Sep 3; Oct 4
- BALLYCOTTON**
ON-1233(14-25): Sep 3; Dec 20
- BALLYGLASS**
ON-1235(17-15): Oct 24
D-492: Sep 4,20
- BALTIMORE**
ON-1137(47-024): Sep 16,18;
Oct 19,27; Nov 13; Dec 19
- BANGOR**
B-571: Nov 11,27
B-584: Sep 1,16,20; Oct 4,19,26,27;
Nov 5,23
- BARMOUTH**
ON-1185(12-26): Sep 27; Dec 27
D-414: Sep 16
- BARRA ISLAND**
ON-1230(17-12): Sep 11(x3),16,17
- BARROW**
ON-1117(47-014): Nov 8
D-567: Sep 1,27; Oct 25; Dec 15
- BARRY DOCK**
ON-1135(52-39): Sep 6,14,18,28,29;
Oct 12
- BEAUMARIS**
B-768: Sep 3,8,13,21,23,25,
26(x2),27,28; Oct 8,11,12; Nov 23;
Dec 7(x2),28
B-773: Oct 23,24; Nov 3
- BEMBRIDGE**
ON-1075(47-002): Dec 27,31
ON-1126(47-018): Sep 1; Nov 29,30
D-503: Oct 2,12
- BERWICK-UPON-TWEED**
ON-1191(12-32): Sep 16; Nov 28
D-451: Sep 16; Nov 28(x2)
- BLACKPOOL**
B-748: Sep 1,17,29 (x2); Oct 2 (x2);
Nov 21; Dec 7
D-449: Dec 7
D-558: Sep 1, 17(x2); Oct 2 (x2); Nov 8
D-566: Sep 1, 17; Nov 8,21
- BLYTH**
ON-1204(14-06): Sep 7,14; Dec 1
D-464: Sep 17
- BRIDLINGTON**
ON-1169(12-12): Oct 4; Dec 7
ON-1184(12-25): Nov 20,28
D-557: Sep 26,28; Dec 5,6,7,8,13
- BRIGHTON**
B-737: Sep 3,6(x2),11,14,22,23;
Oct 3,5,9,12,16,29,31; Nov 15
B-767: Nov 22,23; Dec 10,14,24
- BROUGHY FERRY**
ON-1252(14-31): Sep 6;
Oct 23,24,28; Dec 3
D-539: Sep 6,21; Oct 23,24;
Dec 3(x2),24(x2)
- BUCKIE**
ON-1237(17-17): Oct 24
ON-1268(17-37): Sep 2,9,13; Oct 12;
Nov 1,3
- BUNDORAN**
B-711: Nov 16
- BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH**
B-733: Sep 30; Oct 4,9; Nov 23(x3),29;
Dec 1,10,24
D-428: Dec 1
D-519: Sep 30
- BURRY PORT**
D-461: Sep 4
D-611: Oct 26; Nov 6; Dec 16
- CALSHOT**
ON-1103(52-31): Nov 1,2
ON-1108(52-34): Sep 28(x2);
Oct 5,10,12(x2); Nov 23,27,30;
Dec 1,6,13
D-407: Oct 3,5,10; Nov 27
- CAMPBELTOWN**
ON-1241(17-19): Sep 8,13
- CARDIGAN**
B-752: Sep 13,17,27; Oct 4,10
D-547: Sep 13,25; Oct 30
- CASTLETOWNBERE**
ON-1118(52-36): Oct 20; Nov 8,10
- CHISWICK**
B-734: Sep 25
E-002: Sep 4(x2),6,12
E-003: Sep 10,13,14,15; Dec 14,21,23
E-005: Sep 23,24; Oct 26,28
E-006: Sep 2,3,20(x4),27;
Oct 1,5,6,7,10,12,24; Nov 7(x2),
8,9,15(x2),16,18,20,24,26,27,28
(x2), 29; Dec 24,26, 27
- CLACTON-ON-SEA**
B-744: Sep 6,22,24; Oct 11; Dec 3
D-439: Sep 29; Oct 18
D-559: Nov 8
- CLEETHORPES**
D-454: Sep 8,19,20,25,26; Oct 1,12,19;
Nov 6,7,22; Dec 7(x2),18,21,31
- CLIFDEN**
B-751: Sep 19; Oct 17
- CLOGHER HEAD**
ON-1190(12-31): Sep 22; Oct 18;
Dec 31
- CLOVELLY**
B-759: Sep 2
B-775: Dec 18
- CONWY**
D-425: Dec 26
D-482: Oct 12,28; Nov 5; Dec 7
- COURTMACSHERRY HARBOUR**
ON-1205(14-07): Nov 6; Dec 18,26
- COWES**
B-795: Sep 24(x2)
- CRICCIETH**
B-707: Sep 4; Dec 27
- CROMER**
ON-1097(47-006): Sep 7
D-568: Sep 6
- CROSSHAVEN**
B-774: Sep 1,15
B-782: Oct 3,23,31; Nov 9; Dec 4,20
- CULLERCOATS**
B-591: Sep 10,17; Oct 11; Nov 7; Dec 5
- DONAGHADEE**
ON-1267 (14-36): Nov 5
- DOUGLAS**
ON-1147(47-032): Dec 4,6,24
- DOVER**
ON-1220(17-09): Sep 1,10; Oct 4,11;
Nov 16(x2)
ON-1262(17-33): Dec 30
- DUN LAOGHAIRE**
ON-1200(14-05): Sep 8,23;
Oct 4,8(x2),26; Nov 9(x2); Dec 27
D-565: Sep 15,18,23; Oct 7,27
- DUNBAR**
ON-1207(14-09): Sep 15; Oct 11;
Nov 7; Dec 28,30
D-469: Nov 7; Dec 28(x2),30
D-544: Oct 12
- DUNGENESS**
ON-1186(12-27): Sep 6,23; Nov 14
- DUNMORE EAST**
ON-1215(14-17): Oct 13;
Nov 2,5,7,16,18,27; Dec 4,11,14(x4),15
- EASTBOURNE**
ON-1184(12-25): Sep 6(x2)
ON-1195(12-36): Sep 14,18,24,27;
Oct 3,5; Nov 11; Dec 3,31
D-436: Sep 6,10,14(x2),18,28; Oct 3
D-601: Nov 19; Dec 14,31
- ENNISKILLEN**
B-525: Sep 24
B-592: Sep 13,27; Oct 18
- EXMOUTH**
ON-1210(14-12): Sep 16; Oct 11;
Nov 8,27
ON-1266(14-35): Nov 2,19
D-429: Nov 8(x2),11,19; Dec 17
D-516: Sep 12,13,22;
Oct 4,5,12,15,16,19,28
- EYEMOUTH**
ON-1209(14-11): Sep 6; Dec 9,25
- FALMOUTH**
ON-1256(17-29): Sep 11,21;
Oct 10,21; Nov 8,16
B-595: Sep 6,11,21,25,26,27(x2);
Oct 10(x2),11,21; Nov 5,7,8
- FENIT**
ON-1239(14-27): Sep 6,7,9,12,23;
Oct 29,30; Nov 2,8(x2),17
D-561: Sep 14,23,26; Nov 2
- FETHARD**
D-414: Dec 12,27
D-528: Oct 29
- FILEY**
ON-1170(12-13): Sep 17; Oct 1; Dec 6
D-563: Sep 15,19; Oct 1,2,27
- FISHGUARD**
ON-1198(14-03): Sep 16
- FLAMBOROUGH**
B-703: Sep 17; Oct 4,13
B-792: Oct 23; Nov 10; Dec 7,8,18
- FLEETWOOD**
ON-1156(47-038): Sep 1; Oct 2,23;
Dec 10
D-458: Dec 10(x2),13
D-556: Sep 1,2; Oct 2,8,15,17,23,25
- FLINT**
D-510: Sep 11,13,27; Oct 15,26;
Nov 29; Dec 27,31
- FOWEY**
ON-1222(14-18): Sep 24
ON-1274(14-37): Oct 18;
Nov 11,16,23,29
D-526: Oct 3
D-534: Sep 14
- FRASERBURGH**
ON-1259(14-34): Sep 1; Nov 9;
Dec 7,28
- GALWAY**
B-738: Sep 11; Oct 5; Nov 10,23,30;
Dec 26(x2)
- GIRVAN**
ON-1196(12-37): Sep 1,6; Nov 22
- GRAVESEND**
E-002: Sep 30; Oct 5(x2); Nov 7,27(x2);
Dec 9,16,17,20
E-003: Nov 17
E-004: Sep 13(x2)
E-005: Sep 4
- GT YARMOUTH & GORLESTON**
ON-1208(14-10): Oct 6
ON-1266(14-35): Sep 7,24
B-786: Sep 1(x2); Oct 6,14; Dec 2,20
- HARTLEPOOL**
ON-1160(52-46): Oct 12,19;
Nov 10(x2); Dec 18
B-766: Sep 14; Dec 21
- HARWICH**
ON-1201(17-02): Dec 20
ON-1202(17-03): Oct 2,23
B-789: Sep 4,16,18,24,26,29;
Oct 8(x2),11,12(x2),14,23; Nov 22,28;
Dec 18,20(x3),21,22,29
- HASTINGS**
ON-1125(12-002): Sep 4,5,20,30
D-437: Sep 7,15; Oct 22
D-540: Oct 10
- HAYLING ISLAND**
B-712: Sep 4,6,11,14,19,26;
Oct 16,24; Nov 5; Dec 2,14,31(x2)
D-496: Sep 14; Oct 24; Dec 14,31
- HELENSBURGH**
B-791: Sep 2,13(x3); Oct 3,18,26,31;
Nov 22; Dec 9,21,22,28
- HELVICK HEAD**
B-760: Sep 3(x2)
B-774: Nov 1
- HOLYHEAD**
ON-1123(52-37): Sep 7,14;
Oct 15,24; Dec 14
D-507: Sep 7,14; Oct 24(x2); Nov 6
- HORTON & PORT EYNON**
D-498: Sep 14; Oct 10,15,24,25
- HOWTH**
ON-1258(14-33): Sep 10,18,19;
Oct 3,12(x2),24; Nov 17
D-530: Sep 13,21,24; Oct 3; Nov 22
- HOYLAKE**
ON-1163(12-005): Sep 20; Oct 28;
Nov 22,24(x2),27; Dec 7
- HUMBER**
ON-1216(17-05): Sep 11,13,15,29;
Oct 10,13,27; Nov 13,15; Dec 21
- HUNSTANTON**
B-749: Sep 13,21; Oct 3,4(x2),14,
21(x2); Dec 27
H-003: Sep 17; Oct 12(x2)
- ILFRACOMBE**
ON-1165(12-007): Sep 6,8,13,28
D-480: Sep 6,8,12,13,16,19; Oct 9
- INVERGORDON**
ON-1093(52-27): Sep 12; Oct 12
ON-1206(14-08): Oct 3,13,18
- ISLAY**
ON-1219(17-08): Sep 9; Oct 11
- KESSOCK**
B-771: Sep 17
- KILKEEL**
B-593: Sep 10; Nov 6
- KILMORE QUAY**
ON-1187(12-28): Sep 22,25,28;
Oct 4,11; Nov 20; Dec 17(x2)
- KILRUSH**
B-729: Sep 4,27; Dec 1
- KINGHORN**
B-720: Sep 9,26; Oct 4(x2),8,9(x2),29;
Nov 5,14; Dec 1,2,7,28(x3),29
- KINSALE**
B-705: Sep 15; Oct 13,15; Nov 8,29;
Dec 1,2
- KIRKCUDBRIGHT**
B-585: Sep 1,28; Oct 5
B-590: Oct 19
- KIRKWALL**
ON-1231(17-13): Dec 22
- KYLE OF LOCHALSH**
B-740: Sep 6,21
- LARGS**
B-739: Sep 10,17,20; Oct 5(x2),17,
19,30; Nov 9; Dec 13
- LARNE**
D-499: Oct 14
- LERWICK**
ON-1221(17-10): Sep 18(x2);
Oct 1,12(x2); Nov 7,16,23
- LITTLE & BROAD HAVEN**
D-484: Sep 2,23,29; Oct 26;
Dec 19(x2)
- LITTLEHAMPTON**
B-779: Sep 4,6(x2),11,22; Oct 15;
Nov 15,16,30; Dec 18,24
D-431: Oct 15; Nov 15,30; Dec 24
D-433: Sep 6(x3),10,22; Oct 4
- LITTLESTONE-ON-SEA**
B-785: Sep 1; Oct 12; Nov 12,14
- LLANDUDNO**
ON-1164(12-006): Nov 20; Dec 7,20
D-508: Sep 3,6,8; Oct 2; Dec 4,5
- LOCHINVER**
ON-1144(52-42): Nov 6
ON-1271(17-40): Dec 19,26
- LONGHOPE**
ON-1098(52-28): Sep 4
- LOOE**
B-793: Oct 4,18; Dec 12
D-574: Oct 4,5,18; Dec 12
- LOUGH SWILLY**
ON-1111(47-009): Sep 1,26; Oct 3,7;
Dec 21
B-717: Sep 1; Nov 1
- LOWESTOFT**
ON-1075(47-002): Sep 22; Oct 11
ON-1132: Dec 26
- LYME REGIS**
B-741: Oct 19; Nov 23,28; Dec 13
- LYMINGTON**
B-784: Sep 1,22,26; Oct 16; Nov 23,28;
Dec 13
- LYTHAM ST ANNES**
D-509: Sep 1,4,11(x2),12,27,30; Dec 11

Listings

New appointments

Turner Kirkpatrick – Girvan Lifeboat Operations Manager

Ivor McPhillips – Dunbar Branch Honorary President

Captain P Mitchell BSc MM – Sunderland Lifeboat Operations Manager

Dave Steenvoorden – Humber Coxswain

Paul Vince – Portsmouth Deputy Launching Authority

Retirements

Mr William John Aldridge – Padstow Mechanic

Christopher Barnes – Humber Second Mechanic

John Devereux – Kilmore Quay Coxswain

Jim Dougal – Eyemouth Coxswain

Neil McCabe – Arbroath Mechanic

Colin McKechnie – Girvan Lifeboat Operations Manager

Colin Pavey – Weymouth Mechanic

Deaths

Keith Allday – Barmouth Coxswain

Rear Admiral John Anthony Bell – Former President of Wellington branch

Gladys Bridge – Macclesfield Branch Committee Member

Dorothy MacDonald – Wells-Next-The-Sea Life Vice President

Alan Massey – Barmouth Helmsman

Craig Morris – Port Talbot Crew Member

Captain Dennis Proudfoot – Former St Ives Honorary Secretary

Robert Russell – Former Whitby Crew Member

John Scott MBE – Former Portrush Chairman and Honorary Secretary

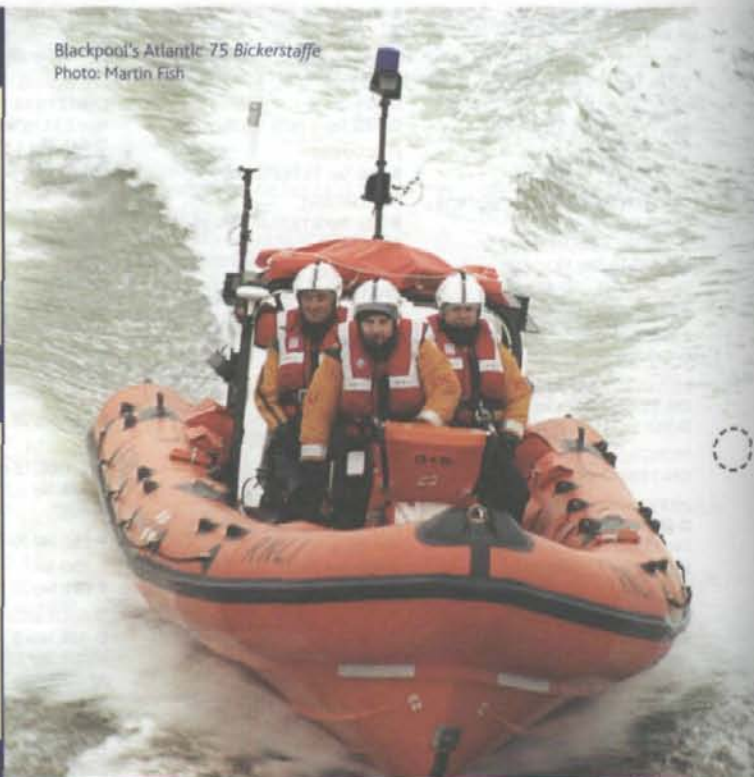
George Skevington – Former Framlingham Branch Chairman and Treasurer

Awards for Hastings lifeboat station members

Four lifeboatmen from Hastings have received long service badges. Administration Officer Andrew Backway and Shore Helper David Morley both joined in 1982. Deputy Head Launcher Richard Read joined in 1970, and Michael Payne, who is the longest serving member, joined back in 1958. Michael is still an active member of the launch and recovery team.

Pictured left to right: David Morley, Richard Read, Allen Head (Deputy Divisional Inspector), Andrew Backway and Michael Payne

Blackpool's Atlantic 75 Bickerstaffe
Photo: Martin Fish



On station

ALL WEATHER

Thurso

ON-1273 Severn class 17-42 *The Taylors* 7 April 2004

Kilmore Quay

ON-1133 Tyne class 47-021 *The Famous Grouse* 7 April 2004

INSHORE

Bude

D-617 *Henry Philip* 11 May 2004

Borth

D-622 *May II* 13 May 2004



Clare Kavanagh and Philippa Thompson brave the arctic cold



The Polar Challenge

a gruelling team race to the magnetic North Pole

The start 76°37'N 101°45'W –
Polaris Mine

The finish 78°35.7'N
104°11.9'W –
Magnetic North Pole

Distance 290 miles

Equipment Ranging from 90kg sled and skis, thermal top, pants, socks, gloves – in fact thermal everything – to tent, stove, fuel bottles, snow shovel, medical kit, communication system and firearm.

Scenery, weather and wildlife

Beauty and extremes of an icy wilderness, ice fields, temperatures down to -40°C and risk of attacks from polar bears.

Qualities required

Self discipline, team discipline, physical and mental fitness. Fitness requirements for polar travel are described as 30% physical and 70% mental.

The teams Mad people! Well, competitors taken from *Tough Guy* and *Iron Man 2003* at least. Oh, and three girls who thought it would be fun!

RNLI staff members Clare Kavanagh and Philippa Thompson, along with friend Jocie Robertson, have become the first all-female team to take on the Polar Challenge. The intrepid trio, dubbed the eg arctic angels, set off on their challenge, not just to complete the 290-mile trek to the magnetic North Pole, but also to raise £10,000 in sponsorship for the RNLI in the process. Sponsor eg solutions stepped in to fund the entire cost of the race, including the equipment and training needed to survive the sub-zero conditions.

With weekly gym training and weekend outdoor race training leading up to the real thing, the women had to think about building their calorie intake as well. Being likely to lose about 10% of their body weight during the Polar Challenge, it was useful to carry a few extra pounds before they started the race so that their bodies would use up fat reserves rather than muscle during the Challenge.

Having completed their training, the day finally came when they set off. The following excerpts from Clare's diary provide some indication of the tough challenge ahead of them.

'How did I get myself into this? Woke up this morning trapped in my sleeping bag: the zip was frozen solid and I had a dusting of hoar frost round my face. Once I'd managed to unfreeze the zip, the unpleasant task of getting up and dressed in temperatures of -35°C started. First task of the day is to light the stove. No bacon and eggs today for breakfast – just porridge. At least we've figured out how to cook it without burning it now! I'll spare you the details about how we go to the loo – suffice to say, it takes practice...

'There are only eight of us left now, from a starting number of 21. Most have left due to joint and frost injuries. Unfortunately Jocie was struggling to cope with the extreme conditions and had to return home. Luckily, Phil and I are still feeling fit and well (if you ignore the nasty rash that's developing on our legs)...

'We've had a great day today. The ice conditions were perfect, the sun is shining and it actually feels warm. We have managed to eat and drink enough due to the fact that we haven't had to wear our big mittens all day so we can actually get at our food easily.

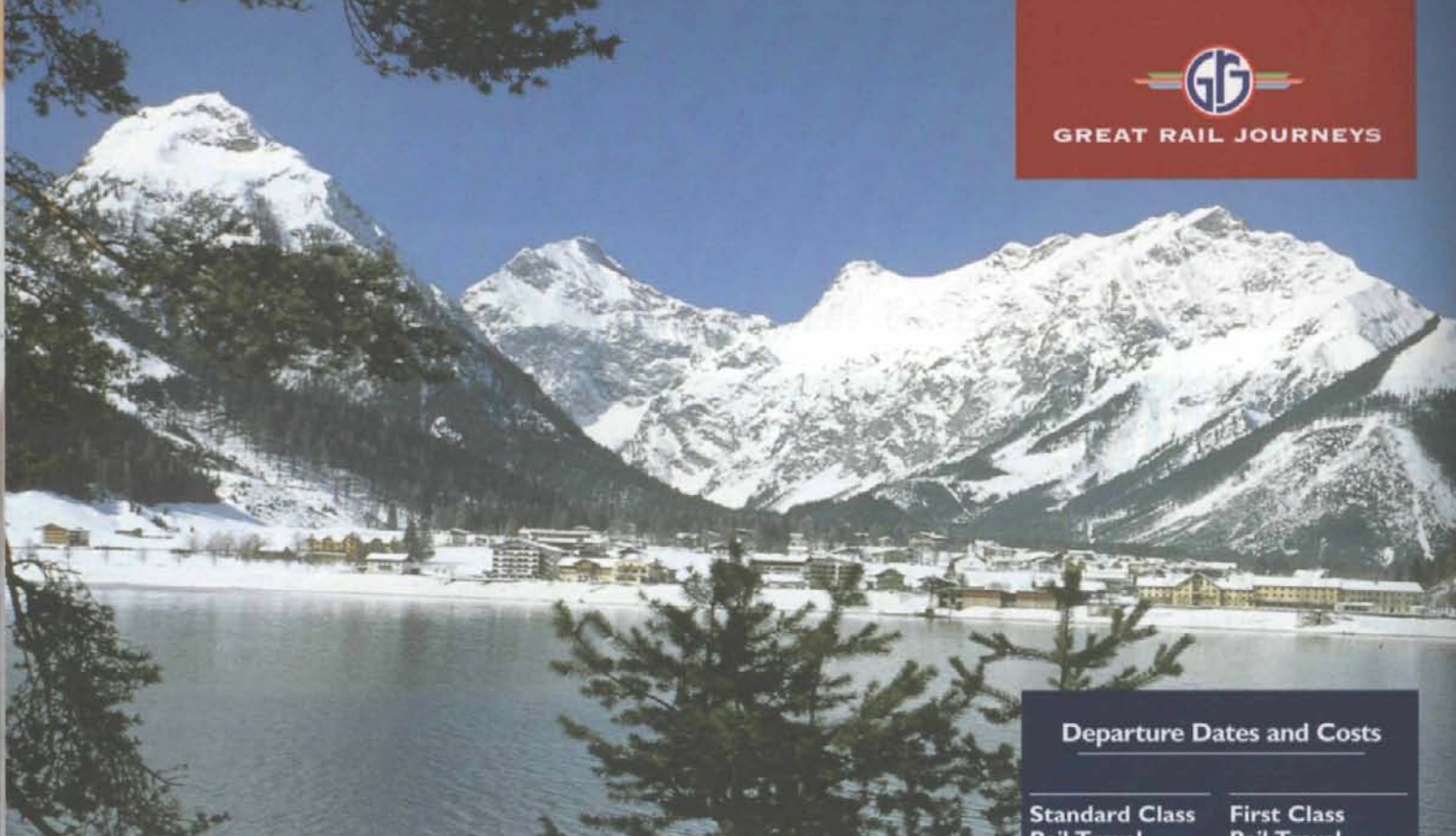
The only thing that has dampened our spirits is the knowledge that due to the gap between us and the lead team now being four days, we are being pulled off the race. It's an empty feeling, after all the work we've put in...

'The past few weeks have been fantastic. We have overcome extreme discomfort, cold temperatures and emotions – all of which has made us stronger. There have been moments when I have been scared and I know the others were too, but we pulled through together. Being pulled off the race due to a series of events beyond our control has left us all with a feeling of disappointment and sadness at not being able to achieve our original goal. However, it has been an experience I will never forget and one that I am sure will have a profound effect on me. Thinking about it, apart from not reaching the finish, we have succeeded on so many levels – physical training, planning and teamwork, giving our best in extreme circumstances and adapting to new challenges every moment of every day. And all that on a diet of burnt porridge and rehydrated soya... not bad.'

It was certainly a victory for the eg arctic angels to have taken part and for the RNLI to have benefited from yet another marathon challenge.



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Travel with the UK's leading specialist in holidays by rail on this sensational 10-day holiday to the snow covered mountains of the Austrian Tyrol. A friendly and professional Tour Manager accompanies all departures so sit back, relax and enjoy the magnificent scenery as you travel through Germany to Jenbach, a small historical town and an ideal base for excursions into the beautiful Austrian countryside.

Day 1 ♦ By train to Germany

Your holiday starts the moment we leave London Waterloo on **Eurostar** for Brussels, continuing to Cologne for a stay close to the Rhine and the Cathedral.

Day 2 ♦ The Rhine Gorge and Bavaria

We leave Cologne by **InterCity** train for Austria. Enjoy the breathtaking scenery as you travel down the Rhine Gorge with its many castles and vineyards and through the beautiful Bavarian countryside to Munich, before continuing south into Austria. On arrival in Jenbach, we stay seven nights at the Hotel Jenbacherhof.

Day 3 ♦ Mountain villages and medieval towns

Our coach excursion takes you to the picturesque mountain village of Alpbach and the border town of Kufstein, with its imposing fortress. Your final stop today is medieval Rattenburg, famous for locally produced crystal.

Day 4 ♦ Mountain railway and lake cruise

Our coach excursion up into the mountains to Achensee Lake and resort of Pertisau includes plenty of time for you to enjoy a magical horse-drawn sleigh ride into the woods.

Day 5 ♦ Steam train to Mayrhofen

Today we take you on a narrow-gauge rail

excursion on the ZillertalBahn, along the beautiful Ziller Valley. The journey, in wonderfully restored carriages hauled by a steam engine, takes you past pretty villages built in the traditional Tyrolean style to the resort of Mayrhofen, where you have the opportunity to take a cable car into the mountains.

Day 6 ♦ Sightseeing in Innsbruck

The historic city of Innsbruck is just a short train journey away. Spend your time seeing the sights and doing some shopping, or if you are feeling more adventurous, make the excursion by tram to Igls, or take a trip up to the Stubaital, high above the Brenner Pass.

Day 7 ♦ Salzburg

Travel by coach to the beautiful city of Salzburg, setting for the film 'The Sound of Music', for a guided walking tour and plenty of free time for you to explore.

Day 8 ♦ Free day

Perhaps you would like to visit the ski resort of Kitzbühl, make the short train journey to historic Hall or take a walk through the beautiful snow-covered countryside.

Day 9 ♦ Train to Cologne

Leave Jenbach by train to Cologne.

Day 10 ♦ To London

Depart Cologne for Brussels, to connect with **Eurostar** to London Waterloo.



Hotel Jenbacherhof

The Hotel Jenbacherhof (3 star) is situated in the centre of Jenbach, about 10 minutes walk from the station. This modern family-run hotel has a wide range of facilities including an attractive restaurant, lounge and bar, indoor rooftop swimming pool and sauna. Most rooms have mountain views and a balcony.

Departure Dates and Costs

Standard Class Rail Travel	First Class Rail Travel
3 Feb 05 £720	27 Dec 04 £990
17 Feb 05 £720	27 Jan 05 £910
	10 Feb 05 £910
	24 Feb 05 £910

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- Meals and drinks on **Eurostar** for those travelling on First Class departures.
- Nine nights dinner, bed and breakfast hotel accommodation.
- All excursions and transfers as detailed in the itinerary.
- Services of a Tour Manager throughout.

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JOURNEYS AS GREAT AS THE DESTINATIONS

Shoreworks

We ask the questions

Providing lifeboats is an essential part of the RNLI, but making sure the facilities are in place to launch them is equally important. The building and upkeep of lifeboat stations and facilities is down to the shoreworks section of the estates office, which carries out £12M-worth of development and maintenance each year. Overseeing the huge range of projects taking place is Estates Manager Howard Richings, and *the Lifeboat* spoke to him to find out more



Howard Richings

Is shoreworks sometimes the forgotten side of the RNLI?

It is not an area that always springs to mind with people, but having said that, people have left some generous legacies in the past for shoreworks. It is not just about building lifeboat stations. There are 60–70 projects a year dedicated to upkeep and maintenance and we spend between £1.5M and £2M per year on that side. Launching facilities can suffer a lot of wear and tear. There is one project nearing completion at the moment at Rosslare

Harbour, where we have had to replace and strengthen the berth because a 36,000 tonne ferry reversed over the lifeboat and flattened the berth.

How do people respond when the RNLI announces it wants to build or alter a lifeboat station on their seafront?

Most people are very understanding when it comes to building in their town. If there is a problem or confusion over a plan we have public meetings, which can range from a handful of interested people to more than 100 trying to have their say. Generally the community will come out on the side of the RNLI.

What about the authorities?

Getting planning permission can sometimes be tricky. Because of people's changing views of planning over the last 15 years, local authorities do not give us consent just because it is a lifeboat station. You have to use different materials in different locations

that are sympathetic to the buildings around them. Architects design our stations individually.

What have been your best and most difficult experiences with shoreworks?

We are very pleased with Looe. We built a £750,000 new B and D class boathouse and slipway there. It is always a nice outcome when things go smoothly and everyone is happy. Bude was the most difficult. It took 16 years to get it up and running. Everyone wanted a new lifeboat station but not next door to them. In some way those projects are all the more satisfying though, once you overcome the obstacles and it is finally finished. Then the crew can get on with saving lives.

Any particularly strange tales to tell?

There was one chap who thought a new station we wanted to build would spoil his view. He put up protest banners and everything. He was also quite eccentric, and one evening he went to the end of the harbour dressed up in flowing robes, staff in hand and tried to summon the elements against us. When the elements did get up that night, they came in the form of a storm, which ripped off the protest banners from his balcony.



The new lifeboat station at Looe in Cornwall was constructed using traditional materials, in keeping with the surrounding area

Shoreworks around the UK

The look and location of lifeboat stations can pose many challenges but every building and improvement project is an investment. That investment, whether it speeds up launches, improves crew safety, or houses a vital new lifeboat, helps the RNLI better achieve its aim to save lives at sea. *The Lifeboat* took a closer look at some of the shoreworks team's latest schemes

Salcombe

The new £750,000 lifeboat station at Salcombe in Devon, was opened in April 2004 along with a berth for the all weather lifeboat and facilities for the new inshore lifeboat. The improvements, which have delighted the crew, are designed to improve response times and crew safety. It will also be easier to maintain the lifeboats at Salcombe, cutting costs now and in the future.

See the Listings section of this issue for more on the opening.

Looe

Residents and local authority leaders alike have praised the new lifeboat station at Looe in Cornwall. Traditional materials such as local stone, granite and slate were used so that the building is in keeping with the area. The new station was needed to house a D class lifeboat and a tractor unit alongside the existing B class. As well as the crew room, shower and toilet facilities, souvenir sales and stores on the ground floor, the first floor offers a meeting room, office and lookout.



Mudeford

Mudeford

It was decided to build a new station at Mudeford, Dorset, after the Atlantic 21 inshore lifeboat was replaced with the heavier Atlantic 75. The greater weight of the new ILB meant the manual winch-assisted launch and recovery procedure was no longer acceptable on health and safety grounds and a fully coupled tractor and 'Do-Do' rig were needed – and a new station.

Coming up with a design that met with approval proved a challenge. But several public meetings and amended plans later, a modern and practical solution was found that was in harmony with surrounding buildings. As well as improving facilities for housing the inshore lifeboat, the £590,000 building includes changing and training areas and improved public access. It was completed last year and is currently under consideration for a design award.

Newhaven

After their old boathouse was demolished as part of a wider riverside development scheme, the Newhaven crew moved into temporary accommodation. A new station was needed that could provide a building and berth with easy access, and fit in with the area – the designers did not disappoint. The new lifeboat station is able to resist extreme weather conditions and is at the same time visually attractive. It provides training accommodation and public access.



Lytham St Annes

Photo: Graham Gaunt, Tel 01736 799412

Lytham St Annes

This £1.6M lifeboat house and slipway was completed in the summer of 2003 and uses a modern design with a nautical theme. Features at the station – which is at a prominent seafront location – include its curved boat-like form and circular windows, which are similar to the new college building at Poole. Materials such as engineering brick and copper roofing were chosen for their low maintenance properties.

Waterloo Pier

One of the most fascinating projects being undertaken by shoreworks is the conversion of a 135-year-old floating pier on the Thames. Waterloo Pier, a former police station, was bought by the RNLI with the aim of providing a lifeboat station. The facilities will include training space, changing rooms and sleeping quarters, a workshop, office and storage. It will involve applying a new superstructure, and repairing and strengthening the existing hull. First, permission from English Heritage has to be secured as the pier, which is attached to the Embankment, is counted as being part of a listed building. Working drawings are being prepared and the plan is to take the floating pier away to refurbish it further down the Thames. Then it will be taken back to its berth for final fitting and commissioning.

Huge project taking shape at Tenby

Getting on well with the neighbours is a high priority for most people when they move, and so it was when plans were announced for a new state-of-the-art lifeboat station at Tenby

Local support was vital and, as with many communities with lifeboat stations, a strong bond exists between the people of the popular Pembrokeshire town and the RNLI. Therefore little fuss was made when work started on the new £5M slipway and lifeboat station, despite the inevitable disruption.

The current lifeboat station was the busiest in Wales last year. This exciting project will mean the Tenby crew will be the first to try out the new Tamar class lifeboat. Works are due to be completed at the end of the year, with the Tamar due for trials early in 2005.

'There is a lot of cooperation in the town,' said Bob James, Deputy Launching Authority and Training Coordinator at the existing lifeboat station. 'We have had a public meeting about it, and it was explained there may be a bit of noise or lorry traffic. But people are fascinated by the job and the crew is very excited about getting the whole package – we're getting a new station and will be the first to try out the Tamar.'

Historic step

With the station being built next to the site of a castle, the scheme has also had to negotiate restrictions placed on ancient monuments. But the new lifeboat facilities will also become part of Tenby's history, replacing the existing station which will be 100 years old in 2005. This small, old building has no room for the Tenby crew to take part in training. There are also no toilet facilities, the shop is no bigger than a sales counter, and the building occasionally gets damp, causing problems with drying the crew's kit.

The current slipway is also problematic. Progressive siltation at the toe of the slipway means that regular dredging is required. On spring tides the lifeboat has to be kept on moorings in the bay if it is not to be stranded in the boathouse for an hour or so each side of low tide. That can leave the boat exposed to strong winds, meaning crew members have to then take her to a nearby island for shelter.

All that will change soon and the opening of the new station is expected to attract visitors of all ages, with the facilities to include a viewing gallery and RNLI shop. Bob, who is also the press officer at the Tenby boathouse, added: 'We are expecting school visits to double.'



Tenby's new lifeboat station under construction

A unique project

The new building will sit on a 800mm-thick concrete slab, approximately 25m long by 15m wide. The designers for the project are consulting engineers Posford Haskoning who have over 100 years of experience of designing lifeboat stations for the RNLI. To meet high environmental standards, the boathouse will be clad in cedar, finished block work and large glazing panels. The Tamar lifeboat will be housed in the horizontal position, so a tipping cradle will be incorporated into the structure to allow the boat to be launched and recovered in the traditional fashion. With access to the project site very limited by road, main contractor Dean & Dyball has had to have materials delivered by boat or amphibious vehicle. A key phase of the construction was the driving of huge steel piles into beds of rock below the sand, to create a supporting structure. More recently, a pipeline has been pumping concrete to create the main deck which will support the boathouse, and now the project is really starting to take shape.

Bob enthused: 'They are a young crew here and it is a great project. It can't happen soon enough.'

See page 32 for the latest on the new Tamar class lifeboat.

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News

A picture paints a thousand words

Getting timely and dramatic images of the lifeboat service to the media is crucial to raising awareness. The RNLI is now investing in new cameras at selected lifeboat stations to bring the heroic work of the crews into front rooms and onto everybody's television sets. Some of the cameras are fixed in position on the lifeboat and others are attached to the side of the crew's helmets. Spencer Gammond, the RNLI's Head of Media Relations, says: 'Getting the RNLI's key messages in the national media will pay great dividends.'



Keep your kit on

Earlier this year GMTV set up a nationwide search for the 'sexiest man in uniform'. Thousands of applications were received and the panel of judges had the tough task of whittling down the entrants to a final 12. One of the 12 was hunky Coxswain Martyn Phillips from Hastings lifeboat station who then appeared on the morning TV programme *LK Today*.

Working Lunch

Earlier in the year, Rob Pittam, the business correspondent for the BBC programme *Working Lunch*, spent a night with the Fleetwood lifeboat crew and a day with one of the town's biggest employers, Lofthouse, the producers of Fisherman's Friend, the famous throat lozenge.

Tony Lofthouse, who runs the company that Fleetwood crew member Barry Wilson works for, is happy for Barry to serve with the crew. In fact the company is so keen on the RNLI that they have already donated money to provide a lifeboat. Tony explained to *Working Lunch* that allowing Barry to join the crew actually makes good business sense. 'We want people in the town to work for us and so we want to be thought of as a good employer. Letting Barry do something like this underlines the message. And the thing is, like the lifeboat, we have a good team here.'

Rob Pittam summed up his experience on Fleetwood lifeboat: 'Just by being on the boat you get an idea of the team spirit and camaraderie built up by the crew. There's also the exhilaration of being out at sea and the incalculable feeling of helping save lives.'



BBC Working Lunch presenter Rob Pittam talking to crew members at Fleetwood

See Hear

The last issue of *the Lifeboat* reported on the BBC TV series *Danger on the Beach* being shown during a prime-time early evening slot. The series achieved viewing figures of 4-5M, enabling many people to see the work of the RNLI and other rescue organisations. Another superb opportunity to see *Danger on the Beach*, this time as a British Sign Language signed programme, was provided by *See Hear*.

For those of you who missed it, a new series is currently being filmed with more RNLI involvement and will be shown on BBC early next year.

Comedy drama role for Port Isaac lifeboat

Truculent, tactless, and causing mayhem. No, not the lifeboat crew but Martin Clunes starring as Doc Martin, a GP who arrives in the small, sleepy Cornish hamlet of Port Wenn (better known to locals as Port Isaac). The six-part series stars Martin Clunes, Stephanie Cole and some lesser known 'extras' - 16 RNLI volunteers.

The scenes involving the RNLI take place at the lifeboat station during their lifeboat open day. Local press officer Bob Bulgin says: 'It's an exciting project to be involved in and it is also really good publicity for the RNLI and Port Isaac lifeboat station. A lot of filming has been done in and around the lifeboat station so the lifeboat itself is featured. We made sure you couldn't move for RNLI flags!'

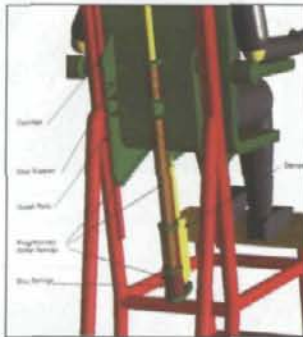
Doc Martin is due to be screened in the autumn on ITV1.



Designer seats

Underpinning all of the design and technology that is key to the RNLI's work of saving lives is the RNLI's programme of research and development. The aim of this work is to provide the most appropriate boats and equipment for the crews so that they can work safely, efficiently and in comfort.

One way this is done is to analyse the results of the extensive boat and equipment trials carried out over the years. Another way is to undertake specific new programmes, such as the current 'crew seat' study. This is looking into minimising the stresses on a crew member's spine as experienced when sitting in an all weather lifeboat. Sea conditions and the movement of the boat can be extreme and spinal injury is a real risk. The target is to design the most ergonomically sound, comfortable and safe seat for the purpose.



Tamar – the birth of a lifeboat

The latest stage of development for the RNLI's new Tamar class lifeboat is now well underway. In February the hull and wheelhouse structure of the pre-production boat was towed on a barge from builders Green Marine in Lymington to DML in Plymouth to be fitted out. The pre-production boat gives the engineers and designers a final opportunity to test and refine the structure and on-board equipment before production lifeboats are built.

Neil Chaplin, RNLI Principal Naval Architect and Tamar project manager, said of the latest developments: 'The basic structure of the new lifeboat is being fitted out as we speak and it's a real thrill to see her coming to life. The engines and gearbox are being aligned, the internal compartments have been painted and the first of the multitude of cables that will connect up the integrated management system are being run. This is a critical stage of the build and we are learning a lot that will help in the future build programme.'

'There's also a lot happening away from the boat itself in the special "mock ups" that have been constructed nearby. These allow engineers and fitters to create pipe work modules that will be transferred, whole, to the Tamar once she reaches a certain stage of development.'

Work at DML is going to plan and the RNLI expects to conduct the first trials later this year.

See page 29 for more on the Tamar's first home, Tenby.



The RNLI's new Tamar class lifeboat being fitted out

Softrak

A new type of launch and recovery vehicle, known as Softrak, has been successfully trialled at a number of lifeboat stations around the country.

Softrak is a multi-purpose all-terrain vehicle with the capability of carrying a lifeboat crew plus a casualty stretcher. The vehicle is able to travel in water up to 1m deep without leaking.

The vehicle is equipped with tank-like tracks that enable it to tackle various ground conditions without loss of traction. The special rubber used on the tracks means the vehicle produces very low ground pressure

and is far less likely to get stuck in the mud than wheeled vehicles.

Engineering Designer Dave Sargeant explains: 'The trial was a great success and we have now placed an order for a Softrak for Cleethorpes station, which should be delivered later in the year. We have also ordered one for Burry Port and have been operating one successfully at Burnham-on-Sea for the past six months. The project is the culmination of a lot of hard work by the RNLI's engineering office and the vehicle supplier. We are pleased the design is working so well.'



ANNOUNCING

THE FOOTPRINTS WATCH

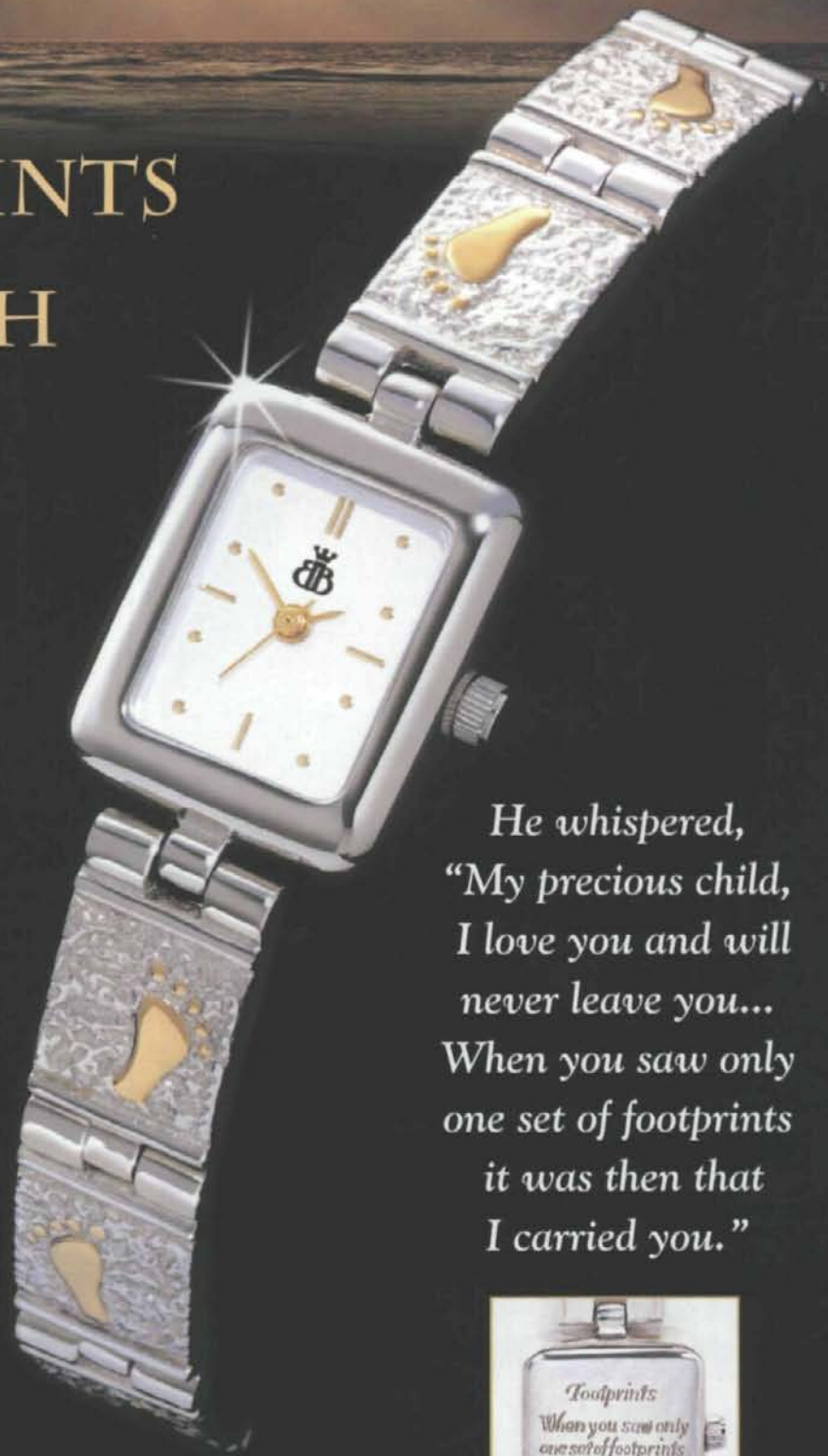
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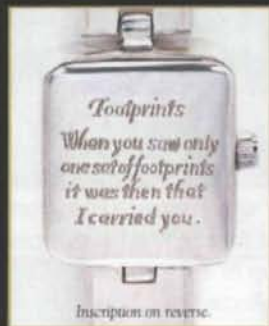
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it was then that
I carried you."*

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Humber lifeboat alongside *Iron Duke*

Life's a beach!

So which would you choose? A bustling quay, one of the best beaches in England and a stunning natural harbour or a cosmopolitan, sophisticated city with a youthful, 'can do' attitude?

The first describes Poole in Dorset and the second Brisbane in Queensland, Australia. This was the choice open to Brett Shepherd, the RNLI's Divisional Lifeguard Manager (Devon and Dorset) when he was given an opportunity to work on a 12-month contract as a development officer for Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ). The decision he made means that he is now living and working in Brisbane.



Brett's job with the RNLI involved operational responsibility for the Beach Lifeguards services in Devon and Dorset but his new role will not be operational. He will be based at headquarters where it is 'the first time a "pom" has been recruited at state centre level'. He feels this reflects the respect that overseas lifesaving organisations have for the RNLI.

His experience and skills gained with the RNLI will help in his new role of cataloguing, maintaining and updating all operating procedures, analysing incident statistics and making recommendations for new equipment and systems of training. Similar safety issues to those in the UK arise in the management of jet skiers but something that will be very different for Brett will be coming to terms with the Shark Control System!

Brett fully intends to come back to the RNLI at the end of his year and make use of the extra experience he gains to help the RNLI become the best lifeguard service provider in the world.

'Virtutis Fortuna Comes'

On her way to visit her home town of Kingston upon Hull, *HMS Iron Duke*, a Royal Navy Type 23 frigate, met the Humber lifeboat. *HMS Iron Duke's* motto is 'Virtutis Fortuna Comes' which translates as 'fortune is the companion of valour'. This was particularly relevant for the RNLI in this case as the *HMS Iron Duke's* crew had collected a 'fortune' made up of 25kg of foreign change during their time away from home. The Humber crew duly collected this, later converting it into useable cash for the RNLI.

Readers may have heard an interview with this crew on BBC Radio 4's programme *Home Truths* earlier this year. Humber is the rare exception to the rule: due to the remote location of the station at Spurn Point the crew are full-time, paid staff of the RNLI, living in tied accommodation with their families.

Coxswain Dave Steenvoorden said: 'Chief Petty Officer John Davies contacted the station back in December to offer the change. We could not resist going out and meeting the *Iron Duke* as she made her way up to Hull for a courtesy call. We at Humber thought it a fantastic opportunity to make new friends within the Royal Navy.'

Double take

Earlier this year the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) ship *RFA Sir Galahad* visited Tenby and met the RNLI's *RFA Sir Galahad*, the lifeboat stationed at Tenby.

After the Falklands War, the RFA launched an appeal and raised money to provide a lifeboat. The lifeboat was named *RFA Sir Galahad* in memory of the original *RFA Sir Galahad*, which was bombed and destroyed during the war. Many of those who died were members of the Welsh Guard, which is why the lifeboat went to a station in Wales.

The RFA ship was anchored off Tenby for a few hours, during which time many of the lifeboat crew and local people with connections to the ship had the chance to go aboard.

See pages 29 and 32 to find out about the next generation of lifeboat to arrive at Tenby lifeboat station.



The Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship *RFA Sir Galahad* with the Tenby lifeboat *RFA Sir Galahad*
Photo: Gareth Davies Photography

Barmouth tragedy

It was with great sadness that the RNLI learnt of the tragic loss of Keith Allday, Harbour Master and RNLI volunteer Coxswain, and Alan Massey, Assistant Harbour Master and RNLI volunteer Helmsman, at Barmouth in April this year. They were both experienced and highly respected members of the Gwynedd Council's Maritime Unit, the lifeboat service and the local and wider communities.

During the search and rescue operation for the two men, Andrew Freemantle, Chief Executive at the RNLI said: 'As with all search and rescue operations of this nature, the RNLI's volunteer crews and everyone involved with the search, have acted with dedication and professionalism and we would like to pay tribute to their selflessness and courage.'

Dafydd Whittall, Strategic Director at Gwynedd Council also paid tribute: 'Both Alan and Keith were totally committed to their work; looking after the harbour at Barmouth was a way of life rather than a duty for both. They were helpful and friendly people and worked together so well.'

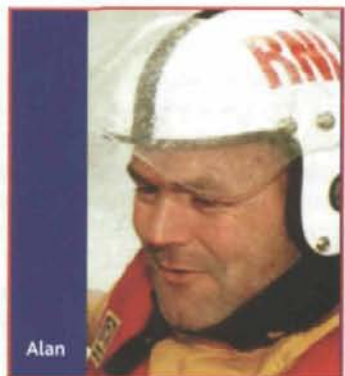
The town of Barmouth, with a population of just 2,000, showed their great respect for the two men as hundreds of people gathered in Barmouth to pay their final respects. The town came to a standstill and crowds lined the streets around St John's Church as the traditional seafarers' hymn *For those in peril on the sea* was sung.

A Community Families Fund has been set up in Barmouth, with the help and guidance of local councillor, Trevor Roberts, so that anyone wishing to make a donation to Keith and Alan's families can do so. The RNLI fully supports this community-based appeal.

The fund has been set up under the care of Barclays Bank in Barmouth. Anyone wishing to contribute to The Community Families Fund can send a cheque payable to: 'The Community Families Fund' care of Barclays Bank, High Street, Barmouth, Gwynedd, Wales. Alternatively take a cheque into any branch of Barclays Bank, again making it payable to: 'The Community Families Fund'. The account number is 00528331 and the sort code is 20-35-47.



Keith



Alan

Royal honours

We are delighted to announce that the following people have been honoured by Her Majesty The Queen in the New Year Honours and have received an MBE for services to the RNLI.

Congratulations to:

David Harrison, Lifeboat Operations Manager, Hunstanton lifeboat station

Alan Thomas, Coxswain, Tenby lifeboat station

Brian Thompson, Treasurer, Farnworth, Kearsley and Bolton branch

Martin Woodward, former Coxswain, Bembridge lifeboat station

United States Coast Guard Exchange Programme

The first two-year United States Coast Guard (USCG)/RNLI exchange, reported in previous issues of *the Lifeboat*, is now coming to an end and a new opportunity is being taken up by Bernie Mannings, currently a training coxswain at Poole. Andy Whyte will return to the UK whilst Bernie will work as a Response Boat Trainer at the USCG Training Centre in Yorktown, Virginia. Bernie and his family are all very excited about the opportunities that lie ahead of them in the USA.

The RNLI says goodbye and thank you to Bosuns Mate Chief Kevin Speer and his family as they return to the USA, and welcomes Bosuns Mate Chief Joe Mains.

World Cup travels in style

The Webb Ellis Cup, England's trophy for winning the Rugby World Cup in 2003, was recently seen on the south coast as part of a four-month nationwide tour. Various forms of transport have been used to take it around the country and, when Weymouth Rugby Club needed a way of getting the cup to them from Poole, the coxswain and crew of Weymouth lifeboat didn't need to think twice before agreeing to the callout. Poole's all weather lifeboat and inshore lifeboat escorted Weymouth's *Earnest and Mabel* out of the harbour. At the end of the passage the crew were greeted by hundreds of fans, all eager to catch a glimpse of the Cup. It was agreed by all on the Weymouth lifeboat that it had been a service to be remembered for many years to come.



Concorde noses down the Thames for its last journey

One of the RNLI Thames lifeboats turned out to see Concorde making her final journey during April. It was an unusual event because instead of flying at an altitude of 11 miles, Concorde was 'sailing' along the Thames aboard a barge. The sedate pace was rather a change too from the usual 1,350 mph. After sailing along the river, she continued her journey up to Scotland before finally coming to rest at the Museum of Flight in East Lothian being sighted by more RNLI crews on the way.



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Letters



Why do I support the RNLI?

Two accounts follow of contrasting, unusual experiences on a lifeboat in answer to this question

During the Second World War I served for a time in an RNLI boat *The Sir William Hillary*, ex Dover station. I was 19 then; now I am 80 and my wife and I celebrate our diamond wedding in August.

Built in 1929 by John Thornycrofts, His Majesty's Vessel BO18 was the largest and fastest in the RNLI fleet and named after the founder of the RNLI. It was stationed at Dover as a fast rescue vessel, partly in case any of the old Imperial Airways planes came down in the Channel. The boat was 70ft long, with the inside of the hull lined with buoyancy tanks. It was also the only boat where the engines were controlled by telegraph from the wheelhouse to the two mechanics battened down in the engine room.

The RNLI coxswain was Sid Hills and the 1st mechanic Kitchener Pegg. There was a crew of nine: one leading seaman, one seaman gunner, and four seamen, the coxswain and Kitch, with me as second mechanic, rated then Stoker 1st class. We had a lot of RNLI kit, including their bulky cork-filled lifejackets – impossible to wear in the engine room. The boat was based at the end of the pier, together with an RAF rescue launch. They were faster than us in fine weather but couldn't cope with the rough seas that we could.

When I joined, the decks were painted orange! A big mistake, the wrong people spotted us, so back to Pompey, the deck painted grey and we were armed – well sort of! The cox had a revolver, then there was a strip Lewis, twin Lewis for'ard and an old Vickers aft. This sufficed until things hotted up a bit. So back to Pompey

and fitted with two pairs of twin Brownings, complete with shields! (Wow!!)

As a rescue vessel we were on call 24 hours a day. 'Third degree' meant that we were at a state of readiness; 'second degree' we cruised around the Needles; 'first degree' there was a big air raid crossing to France and we hung around in the Channel awaiting any SOS. Once, we were in the cinema at Newport, Isle of Wight, when a message was flashed onto the screen that we were to report to the foyer. There the manager gave us free tickets for another time and a Wren driver was there to drive us back to base. We all arrived with trembling legs!

Kitch Pegg left the boat in 1944 and was commissioned as an Engineer Lieutenant, winning the DSO during the invasion. The last time I saw him, he was conducting the Salvation Army Band at Sheringham.

I left the boat in 1944 for advancement and a trip to warmer climes, but was happier saving lives than taking them. After the war I joined Shoreline and am still with this, at present in Governor grade. I cannot speak highly enough of the two RNLI men I served under. I do know that what they taught me stood me in good stead all of my life.

Denis Tite
Wigston Harcourt, Leicestershire

I have long admired the RNLI and the commitment and bravery of the volunteer lifeboat crews.

In August 1997 the value of the RNLI touched our family. Our elder daughter was living on the Isle of Mull and her first baby was due. She was taken by the *Mora Edith MacDonald* lifeboat from Craigmore to Oban... and our first grandchild was born on the lifeboat. A treasured memory and her name is inscribed on the lifeboat bell. Thanks to the various medical services involved, and gratitude to the RNLI.

In June 1999 the RNLI touched the lives of our family yet again. Whilst visiting the Isle of Mull our younger daughter was taken seriously ill. Thanks to the accurate diagnosis by the Ross of Mull GP, a speedy transfer to the Scottish mainland by the same Oban lifeboat and the skill of medical services in Glasgow, our daughter's life was saved.

How could I not become a Shoreline member of the RNLI?!

I also sponsor our two Scottish grandchildren in Storm Force and I would encourage all of us to remember the RNLI in our wills.

The lives of three of our family are indebted to the service of the RNLI. Thank you all.

Patricia McBeth
Mansfield, Nottinghamshire

And some words of admiration from the armchair...

Thank you for sending me the guff for a new Shoreline membership; also for the Storm Force package subsequently received with joy by my seven-year-old grandson. With the immediate cooperation of Accutecc, some of my acquaintances are now supplied with little bags for recycling toner cartridges, all in the cause – and gentlemen, what a cause!

The effect of your winter 2003/2004 magazine, please believe, on someone who had known little about lifeboats was profound. He laid it down, thinking, 'so long as this quality survives, the nation will be safe'...

Mr MV Murphy
Stevenage,
Hertfordshire



And finally...

We live in a society where the words 'hero' and 'bravery' have been so devalued by inappropriate usage as to make them virtually meaningless. Footballers are described as heroes for kicking a ball around a field in return for vast sums of money; people are described as brave for being in a situation that they had no option to avoid, when 'fortitude', 'stoicism' or 'dignity' would be better words. I wonder that such people can go through life with these undeserved tags so proudly displayed about their demeanour, rather than the acute embarrassment they should feel by trying to gatecrash the positions rightly occupied by the true heroes that this nation has produced.

The lifeboatmen and women of the RNLI perform their services unpaid and without any desire for publicity. They

have no need to be in the situations that they put themselves in in the first place. Whilst performing a service, they could be more cautious, thinking of their own safety, of their families, even deciding not to attempt a rescue due to the risk.

Despite all, lifeboatmen and women continue to put to sea and rescue people whilst putting themselves in extreme danger. They seem to do so without hesitation and perform incredible feats of bravery in the process; feats rightly described as brave as there is usually time to assess the risk, experience available to recognise the danger and always the option to stand off.

Assessing these acts in comparison with thousands of others along the years is an experienced panel who fully appreciate the risks taken. Medals for services are rare – they are not thrown

around like confetti and so are not devalued. A medal holder can rightly wear theirs with extreme pride.

Those are the reasons why I support the RNLI. In a world where there are so few people worth looking up to, so few examples worth taking on board, the words 'hero' and 'bravery' sit rightly with the Institution and its crews. You would do well to champion it more in your search for a new generation of supporters as you are often too modest about this, your defining feature amongst the clamour of charities vying for the public's attention.

Best wishes

Andy Overton,
by email
Doncaster, South Yorkshire

An invitation



I am the director of the Prince of Wales Sea Training School Society. We represent the Merchant Navy Seamen who were trained at the sea school throughout its history. The PWSTS was founded in 1920 at Limehouse in London and was used to train boys for service as deck ratings in the Merchant Navy and was operated by the British Sailors Society. The school moved to Stalham in 1940 and eventually transferred to Dover in 1953 until its closure in 1976. Our aim is to reunite Merchant Navy seamen and to establish a museum to commemorate the school, its staff and those who died during the Second World War.

As such we will be holding a reunion sometime in 2005. I would therefore be most grateful if I could please appeal through your magazine for 'old Prince of Wales boys' to come forward and register with us at www.pwsts.org.uk or via email at info@pwsts.org.uk. Alternatively please contact us at the address/telephone numbers below.

I thank you for your time in reading this request.

Yours sincerely

Andy Gale
 Director
 PWSTS Society
 6 Coniston Close
 Boscombe Down
 Amesbury
 Wiltshire
 SP4 7QJ

Telephone: 01980 624248 or 07789 865678



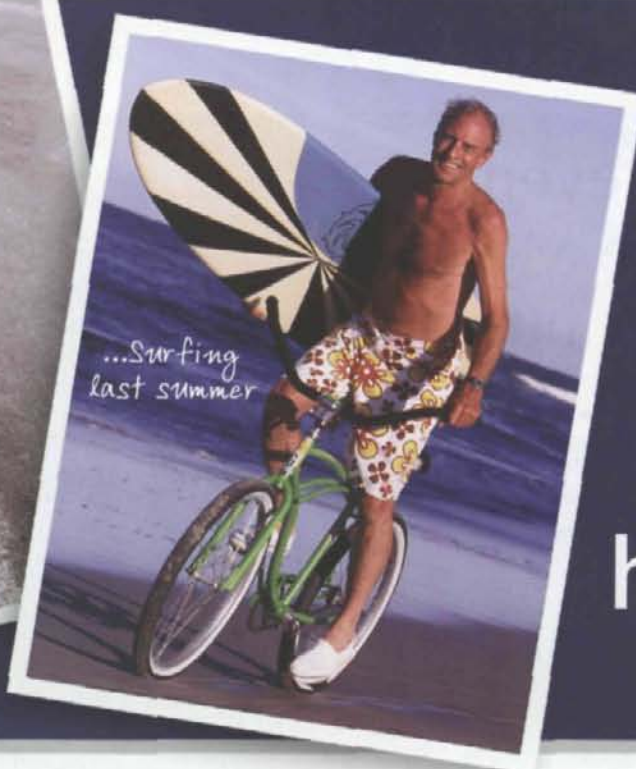
Collectors please!

Thank you for my recent copy of *the Lifeboat* magazine. I have seen the second appeal for members to help other members and their collections and I was wondering if you could help me and my Lledo lifeboat model collection. I would make a donation to the RNLI for models received that I have not got in my collection of 54 boats.

The models I am looking for are: Sheringham (Red Hull), Wick, Amble, Great Yarmouth, Lytham St Annes (White Hull), Poole (Red and White Hulls) London Boat Show 1995. Thank you.

Mr MJ Holmes
 Chepstow, Monmouthshire

If any readers can help Mr Holmes, please write c/o the Lifeboat. See page 1 for contact details.



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Bookshelf

RESCUE 177

By Dr James A. Begg
Published by Mercat Press
ISBN 1841830542
Price: £12.99

Dr James A Begg dedicated this real-life account of dramatic search and rescue operations to 'all those engaged in search and rescue by air, land and sea'.

James, an RNLI member, is no stranger to the sacrifices made by lifeboat volunteers, but his book is written from the view of a Royal Navy helicopter.

Named after the call sign of the Sea King helicopter based at HMS Gannet, *RESCUE 177* follows James' time as a search and rescue doctor from 1986-1997 at Prestwick, Scotland.

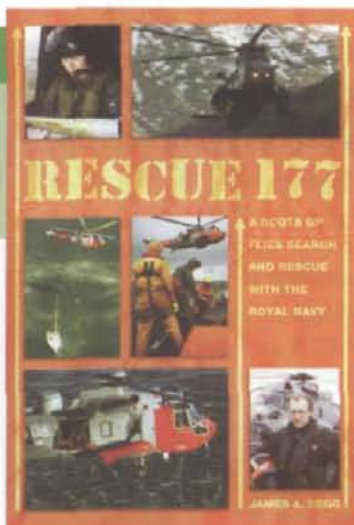
The book is split up neatly into the fascinating range of incidents and situations the doctor had to face, from false alarms and amusing anecdotes to saving lives and the trauma of the Lockerbie crash.

As someone with a passion for writing poetry, James has no problem in bringing out the emotions – the book is genuinely funny, sad, tense and heartening in places.

Succeeding in being a 'fly on the bulkhead' account, it charts the development of the HMS Gannet search and rescue service from a minor secondary role to one of the busiest such services in the UK.

As well as entertaining the reader, *RESCUE 177* is a salute to naval and civilian crews who answer emergency calls on any day, at any hour.

Copies are available from all good bookshops or by calling 08702 402182.



The Lighthouses of Trinity House

By Richard Woodman and Jane Wilson
Published by Thomas Reed Publications
ISBN 190405000X
Price: £27.50

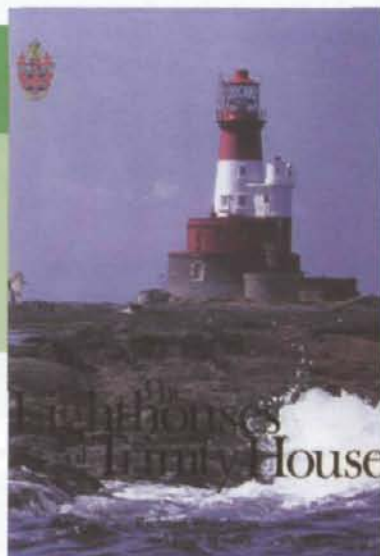
Lighthouses are a welcome sight for sailors and sightseers alike and this hardback book is equally pleasing to the eye with 256 pages full of photographs and illustrations.

Readers will soon find that the histories and people associated with the lighthouses dotted around the coastline of England and Wales are as fascinating as the magnificent structures themselves.

Most of them were built by The Corporation of Trinity House, which was formed by Henry VIII and has played a key part in maritime history. It has an ongoing role as a charitable organisation and now operates lighthouses from Berwick-upon-Tweed to the Solway Firth and Gibraltar – the days of keepers left alone for weeks at a time have departed.

The Lighthouses of Trinity House sheds light on the lives of these keepers, the construction of the buildings, and the variety of lighthouses throughout England and Wales. There is also a chapter devoted to the history of Trinity House, which is enlightening in itself.

Copies of the book are available through the *Lifeboats Gift Catalogue*, through the RNLI website at www.rnliishop.co.uk and by phoning the orderline number on 0870 600 1824. Please quote code 02468. (All orders are subject to postage and packaging charges.)



Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society Handbook 2004

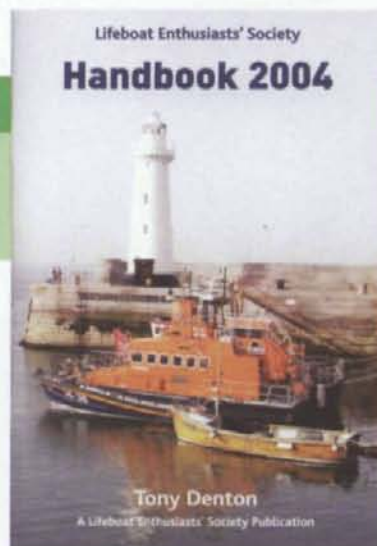
By Tony Denton
Published by the Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society
Price: £5 or free to members of the Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society

This is an indispensable guide for anyone who enjoys scratching beneath the surface of the world of lifeboats. The Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society offers events, contacts and a wealth of information to those who are interested in lifeboats past and present, and the *Handbook 2004* is awash with updated facts and figures.

It includes names, classes, sizes and station details of ex-lifeboats and the current fleet, including inshore lifeboats. There is also an exhaustive list of equipment at each station, including carriage and launching vehicle details as well as the lifeboats themselves.

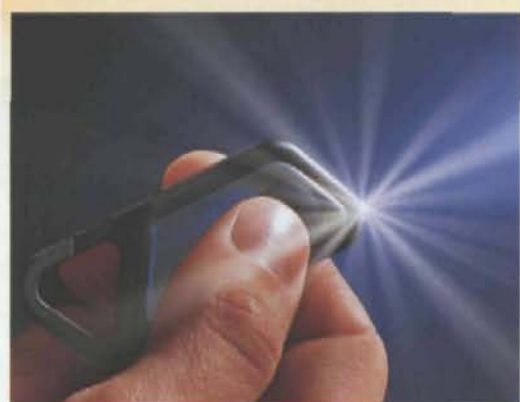
With such a great deal of information packed neatly into the 68-page book, it is bound to be used again and again up and down the coastlines of the UK and Ireland.

Copies are free to members of the Lifeboat Enthusiasts' Society, or £5 for non-members, and are available from Tony Denton, Dawn, Upper Battlefield, Shrewsbury, SY4 4AA.



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▼ RNLI handbook

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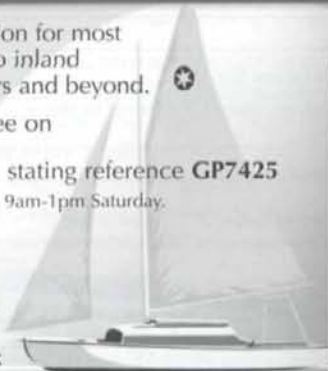
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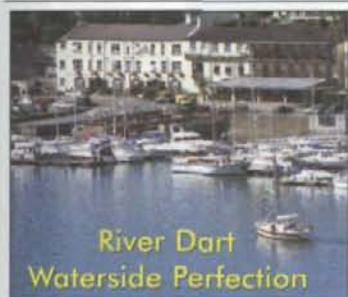
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