

# LIFE-BOAT WAR BULLETIN No. 15.

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## **FOUR AND A HALF YEARS OF WAR.**

In four and a half years of war our life-boatmen have rescued 5536 lives, and have won 200 medals for gallantry. They have rescued twenty-four lives every week since war began.

## **THE SERVICE IN 1943.**

In 1943 life-boats rescued 469 lives and helped to save 47 boats and vessels from destruction. Of their 411 launches, 249, or nearly two-thirds, were to ships and aeroplanes in distress on account of the war. Life-boatmen won 30 medals for gallantry.

## **GALLANTRY AT NEWHAVEN.**

The Institution has awarded its silver medal to Coxswain Leonard Peddlesden, of Newhaven, Sussex, and its bronze medal to each of the seven members of his crew, for standing by one of H.M trawlers in a rough sea, and seeing her to a safe anchorage, after the life-boat herself had been rammed by the trawler, a hole smashed in her side, one of her crew washed overboard and drowned, and the coxswain and half the crew injured.

## **THE LOST MAN: THE DAMAGED BOAT.**

The man who was lost was Benjamin Clark, the bowman and signalman. He had served in the life-boat for 25 years, and his father and brother had each been coxswain. His widow has been pensioned by the Institution as if her husband had been a sailor, soldier, or airman killed in action. The trawler's bow had driven two feet deep into the life-boat and had cut her open from deck to bilge keel. The hole was five feet from top to bottom and two and a half feet across at the top. In this state the life-boat carried on for an hour and a half, and then came back to harbour.

## **73 TAKES COMMAND.**

When an American aeroplane came down in the sea near Caister the coxswain and other regular members of the crew were away, but ex-Coxswain Charles Lacock, aged 73, took command, three soldiers helped to make up the crew, and the life-boat was away twenty minutes after the call came.

## **IN MEMORY OF DUNKIRK.**

At the request of the vicar of St. George's Church, Ramsgate, the flag of the Ramsgate life-boat, which brought off 2,800 men of the B.E.F. from Dunkirk, has been presented to the church. It has been consecrated and it will hang in the church for all time.

## **FROM THE FIGHTING SERVICES.**

Last year the three fighting services, with their women's services, gave the Life-boat Service more than ever before, £25,508. That is £6,123 more than in 1942.

## **ANOTHER LIFE-BOAT M.B.E.**

In the New Year's Honours Mr. H. M. Smardon, who has been honorary

of the Order of the British Empire for his many public services in Brixham.

### **LADIES' LIFE-BOAT GUILD.**

The Duchess of Sutherland, who had been the President of the Ladies' Life-boat Guild since 1926, died last August. She has been succeeded as President by Lady Louis Mountbatten, who has been a vice-president of the guild since 1926.

### **THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN BRANCH.**

The Southern African branch has completed its gift of £11,000 to provide a motor life-boat to be named "Field-Marshal and Mrs. Smuts", and has sent £4,000 towards another £11,000 to provide a second life-boat, "Southern Africa". In 1943 the branch contributed £10,000. That is more than any other branch except Birmingham.

### **THE FISHWIVES OF CULLERCOATS.**

Last year the fishwives of Cullercoats collected over £528, a record sum. One fishwife, Mrs. Mattison, herself collected £214. In 22 years they have collected over £3,900.

### **£1,617 FROM THE AUSTIN MOTOR COMPANY.**

Since March 1942 the Austin Motor Company has given the Life-boat Service £1617. 6s. It gives one shilling for each horse power of every engine which it builds for ships' life-boats, and so far these engines have brought the Institution £603. 16s. The Austin Company also held a life-boat week in its works in Birmingham last July and the collections made during this week raised £1013. 10s.

### **£301 FROM GOLF CLUBS.**

Seventy-one golf clubs held life-boat competitions in 1943 and they raised £301.

### **TWELVE TIMES AS MUCH.**

The branch in Newport, Shropshire, which in 1942 raised £12, and has never before raised more than £17, last year raised £205.

### **FROM SICILY.**

Over five pounds has come from an army chaplain in the field. "It was collected", he said, "at the services held in the English Church - somewhere in Sicily, one Sunday last January."

### **PRAM INSTEAD OF CAR.**

On life-boat day in Manchester and Salford one of the members of the Ladies' Life-boat Guild, a city councillor of Manchester, delivered her collecting boxes, and took her money to the bank, in a baby's pram.

### **LEMONS AND THE LIFE-BOATS.**

The Institution has received £5 4s. from two lemons. One was raffled in Birmingham. The other was handed round at a dance in Cheam, to be smelt at a penny a head, and was then auctioned.