

# LIFE-BOAT BULLETIN No. 25.

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## 514 LIVES IN EIGHT MONTHS

In the first eight months of 1946 life-boats have rescued 514 lives, an average of 64 lives a month.

## BEGINNING OF THE NEW FLEET

When the war in Europe ended sixteen months ago, six life-boats were in the yard waiting to be finished. Four of them have since gone to the coast. Of the 29 life-boats which the Institution had planned to build as soon as possible after the return of peace, to make up for the losses and delays of war (to be followed by a second programme of 50 boats) fourteen have now been laid down.

## LIFE-BOATMEN IN THE VICTORY MARCH

Twenty-four life-boatmen, from Walton-on-the-Naze, Clacton, Margate, Ramsgate, Walmer and Hastings, marched with the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy in the Victory March on June 8th. The life-boats of these six stations rescued 839 lives during the war and Ramsgate and Margate helped to bring off over 3,000 men from Dunkirk.

## SILVER MEDAL FOR WHITBY LIFE-BOATMAN

The King has awarded the Silver Medal for Gallantry in Saving Life at Sea to John Robert Harland, of the Whitby life-boat crew, for diving overboard to the rescue of a fisherman in a heavy sea. As announced in the last issue, the Institution awarded Harland its silver medal and the Carnegie Hero Trust Fund an honorary certificate and £15.

## NEW BRIGHTON MECHANIC'S GALLANTRY

Last June the district engineer, district surveyor and the motor mechanic were in the boarding boat at New Brighton when she was hanging in the davits on the landing-stage. One of the davit-chains gave way, the stern dropped, and all three men were thrown into the water. The motor mechanic, J. W. Bray, seized a rope and, at great risk to himself, rescued the other two. The Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society has awarded him its silver medal.

## FRENCH MEDALS FOR SWANAGE

On the 31st. December, 1943, the Swanage life-boat rescued three lives from the French naval launch "Chasseur 5", which had capsized in a heavy sea when escorting a submarine. The men were clinging to her keel. On July 17th. last at Swanage an officer of the French Navy presented medals awarded by the French Government to Coxswain R. C. Brown and each of the five members of his crew, the silver-gilt medal of the French Life-boat Society to Coxswain Brown, and the Society's bronze medals to the bowman and motor mechanic. He also presented to Sir Godfrey Baring, Bt., chairman of the Institution, the cross of commander of the French Merite Maritime, and a plaque from the French Life-boat Society.

## TO THE HELP OF BIRDS

On May 31st the Selsey life-boat travelled three miles in a choppy sea

and heavy rain to the rescue of eight men seen drifting on a raft. The life-boat found that the raft was a R.A.F. target, and as she approached it the men flew away. They were cormorants.

### **BELGIUM LIFE-BOAT RETURNS**

On April 4th. the Institution returned the Belgian motor life-boat "Ministere Ansele" which was picked up derelict in the English Channel in September 1940, and placed at the Institution's disposal by the Belgian Government free of charge. She has served at Douglas, Isle of Man, Donaghadee, in Northern Ireland, Pwllheli, Holyhead, Appledore and Plymouth.

### **NORTHERN DISTRICT INSPECTOR**

Lieut.-Commander S. C. Dickinson, R.N.V.R., who was district inspector in Ireland before the war, was appointed to the Northern District last April on returning from the Navy. During the war he took part in the evacuation from Dunkirk, was in command of a mine-sweeper and was mentioned in despatches for sweeping, took part in the landing in North Africa in 1942, was engaged in escort duty in the English Channel from 1943 to 1945, and was then in command of a fleet-sweeper.

### **NEW FOOD FOR LIFE-BOATS**

All life-boats carry chocolate, biscuits and rum, as emergency rations. The life-boats with cabins, which may have long distances to travel, also carry corned-beef. To their rations have now been added cocoa-milk and oxtail soup in self-heating tins. A cap on top of the tin covers a small wick, and when this wick is lighted chemicals inside the tin heat the contents in five minutes.

### **DUCHESS OF KENT AT WESTON-SUPER-MARE**

The Duchess of Kent, President of the Institution, visited the Weston-super-Mare life-boat station on June 26th. The crew, the officials of the branch and members of the Ladies' Life-boat Guild were presented to her, and she saw the life-boat launched.

### **£30 FROM A SEAL**

A fisherman at Saltcoats, Ayrshire, rescued a baby seal which was helpless among the rocks in a rough sea, fed him with milk and cod liver oil, and decided to keep him until he was big enough to swim away. Meanwhile he made £30 by exhibiting him. This money he has given to the Life-boat Service.

### **FROM GOLF CLUBS**

In 1945 thirty-nine golf clubs held competitions to help the Life-boat Service. They contributed £197. From these competitions during the past five years the Service has received over £1400.

### **LAGOS INTERESTED**

The Institution has had a letter from Lagos in Nigeria, signed by Bob Reuben Taiwo, asking for its "free book", as he has heard that the Institution is "one of the best Royal National Life-boat Institutions in Herts."