

ISSUE 580
SUMMER 2007



the lifeboat

SAVING LIVES FROM THE BEACH TO THE OPEN SEA

Somebody
call a doctor!

EPIC MISSION TO
SWAMPED TANKER

Hi-octane
passion

BY MURRAY WALKER

FUELLED BY
ADRENALINE **PAGE 20**

HOW TO WIN A SPORTY
HATCHBACK **PAGE 35**

WIND POWER TO
THE RESCUE? **PAGE 26**

SUMMER HOLS – ARE YOU
BEACHWISE? **PAGE 7**



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Days 3-5 ♦ Brig

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Day 6 ♦ The Glacier Express

We leave Brig on the famous *Glacier Express* narrow-gauge train, probably the slowest 'express' in the world. The train climbs up the Rhône Valley to and then snakes and spirals its way towards the Oberalp Pass before descending through snowy fields and woodland to the Rhine. We continue along the broad valley to Chur for three nights.

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Our stay in historic Chur includes a fabulous journey on the *Bernina Express* across viaducts and bridges, past frozen waterfalls and deep ravines, over the Bernina Pass to Poschiavo. You have a free day to explore Chur and the medieval alleyways of its Old Town or perhaps make the short train ride to the mountain resort of Arosa.

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JOURNEYS AS GREAT AS THE DESTINATIONS

THE RNLI

A charity registered in England, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution was founded in 1824 as the National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck. Today, it provides the 24-hour on-call search and rescue service out to 100 nautical miles from the coast of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland; on the tidal reaches of the River Thames; and on selected inland waterways plus a seasonal lifeguard service on appropriate beaches in the south, south west and east of England. The RNLI is independent from Government and continues to rely on voluntary contributions and legacies for its income. **Chairman:** Sir Jock Slater CCB LVO DL; **Chief Executive:** Andrew Freemantle MBE

SUPPORTING THE RNLI

You can help save lives from the beach to the open sea by becoming a regular supporter of the RNLI. There are three adult grades of support: Shoreline, Offshore (for those who use the sea themselves) and Governor. Storm Force is the RNLI's membership club for children.

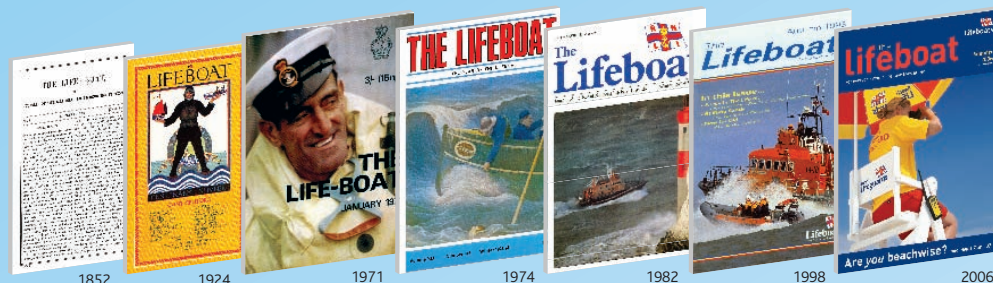
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- Supporter Care team, for membership, donations, Lifeboat Lottery: telephone 0845 121 4999, email supporter_care@rnli.org.uk or write c/o Headquarters address above
- Legacies team, for finding out about gifts in Wills: telephone 01202 663032, email jmarshall@rnli.org.uk or write to John Marshall c/o Headquarters address
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rnli.org.uk



Cover picture: Two lifeboat volunteer crew members on the slipway at Sennen Cove
Photo: Steve Bicknell/Icarus



A searchable digital archive of *the Lifeboat* from 1852–2007 is currently in development. See future issues for more details

Dear Reader

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to the 580th issue of *the Lifeboat* magazine and the first issue of *RNLI Compass*, your new regional guide.

The Lifeboat brings you an informative behind-the-scenes picture of the extraordinary organisation that is the RNLI. *RNLI Compass* translates that grand story to the more local level so you know what's happening nearer to home and can maybe even get involved yourself. Regular readers will notice some changes to *the Lifeboat* but do not be alarmed! You will find your favourite sections – and more.

The magazine continues a tradition that began with the first *Life-boat* journal of 1852. Over the following decades, its format, frequency and style evolved. At first, every penny raised and spent, and every lifeboat launched was meticulously, individually reported. As the RNLI gained strength and complexity, so did its journal.

New techniques for launching, the changing face of those rescued, personal thoughts on the crews' bravery – all were described even 100 years ago. Illustrations taken from engravings eventually gave way to photography, and during the 1990s black and white finally gave way to colour. Today, we can benefit from images caught in that moment otherwise only seen by the rescuers themselves – a rare privilege.

It's now time to bring on a fresh look and feel to the magazine once more, so that we can accurately represent the RNLI of today to the charity's supporters of today.

The RNLI too has changed in so many ways throughout its history. Technological milestones include the motor lifeboat replacing the sailing and pulling (oar-driven) lifeboat, and the development of self-righting craft.

Human milestones include the opening of lifeboat crews to women and the introduction of a lifeguarding service. The wider community is changing, with shifts of population away from the coast for work and towards the coast for leisure: few volunteer crew members now have a professional maritime background.

Yet people remain at the core of the RNLI: those who volunteer and those who live and work with them, those who are protected from drowning by them and those who support them – including you. You will find personal stories from every angle in the pages of *the Lifeboat* and I hope you find it a refreshing, fascinating and inspiring read. Do let me know what you think!

Liz Cook, Editor



Photo: Laura Wiltshire



Photo: Nigel Millard

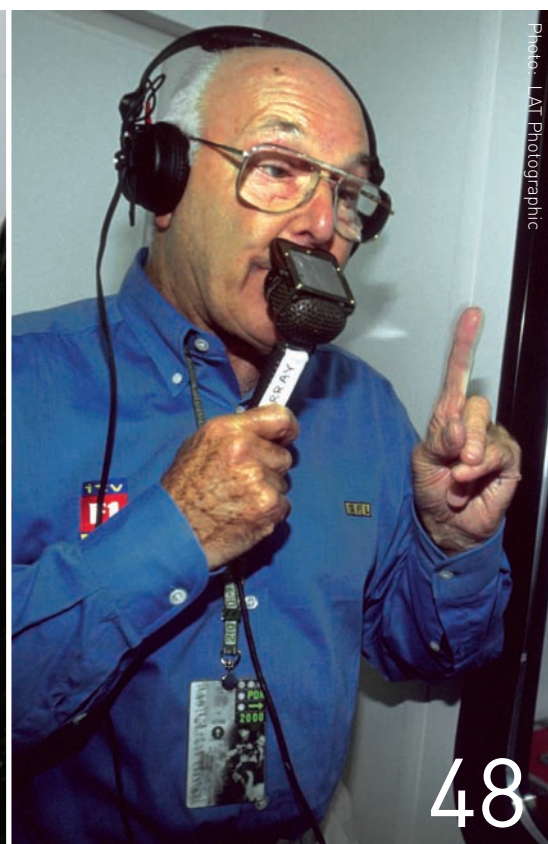


Photo: LAT Photographic

the Lifeboat

SUMMER 2007, ISSUE 580

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Blind and partially sighted readers can choose to receive an audio tape version as well as the magazine – this is a free service. All recipients of *the Lifeboat* also receive *RNLI Compass* for their region. News in other regions can be viewed at rnli.org.uk. Offshore members, and those Governors who opt to, receive *Offshore* too. Members of the children's club Storm Force receive *Storm Force News*. Occasional donors receive *Lifeline*.

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This magazine is printed on 50% recycled paper

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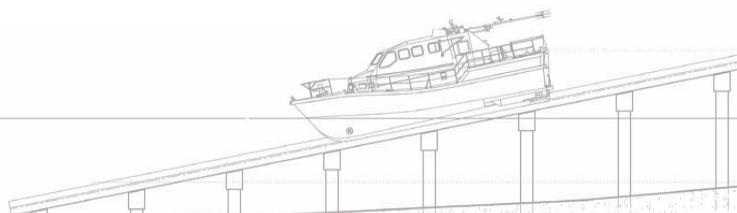




Photo: Rachel Millard

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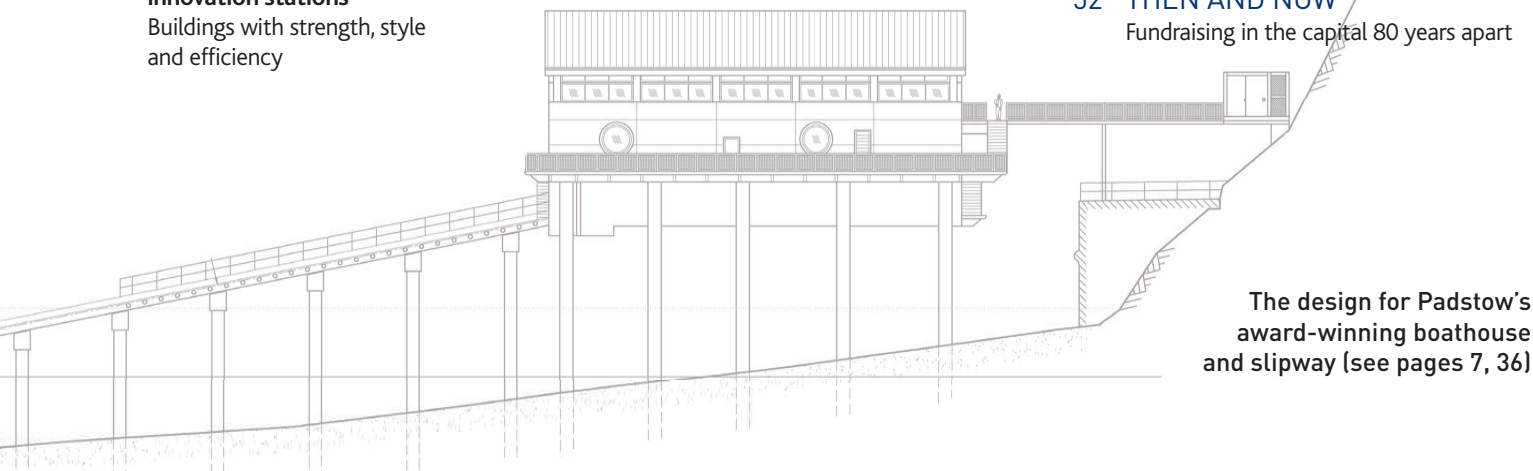
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The design for Padstow's award-winning boathouse and slipway (see pages 7, 36)

1 LIFEBOAT CREW SAVES EASTER BUNNY!



Tobermory lifeboat crew had an unusual, yet appropriate, casualty to rescue on Easter Sunday in the form of a pet rabbit. Four adults, two children, a dog and the rabbit were onboard the yacht *Blue Note* when she started taking on water. Two adults stayed onboard and helped the lifeboat crew pump out the water. The children, the other adults and the pets were transferred to the lifeboat, which towed the yacht back to Tobermory.

2 MAN IN BLACK



The **Lochinver** lifeboat crew, with Relief Coxswain Jim Hughs, saved a clam diver from a rock in driving rain, darkness and storm force 10 winds on 13 December 2006. After 2 hours of searching for the missing man, the Coastguard helicopter from Stornoway had to refuel, while the Severn class lifeboat resumed the search. Luckily for the diver, who was dressed all in black, the crew heard him shouting and picked him up safe and well.

7 HANGING ON FOR MARRIED LIFE

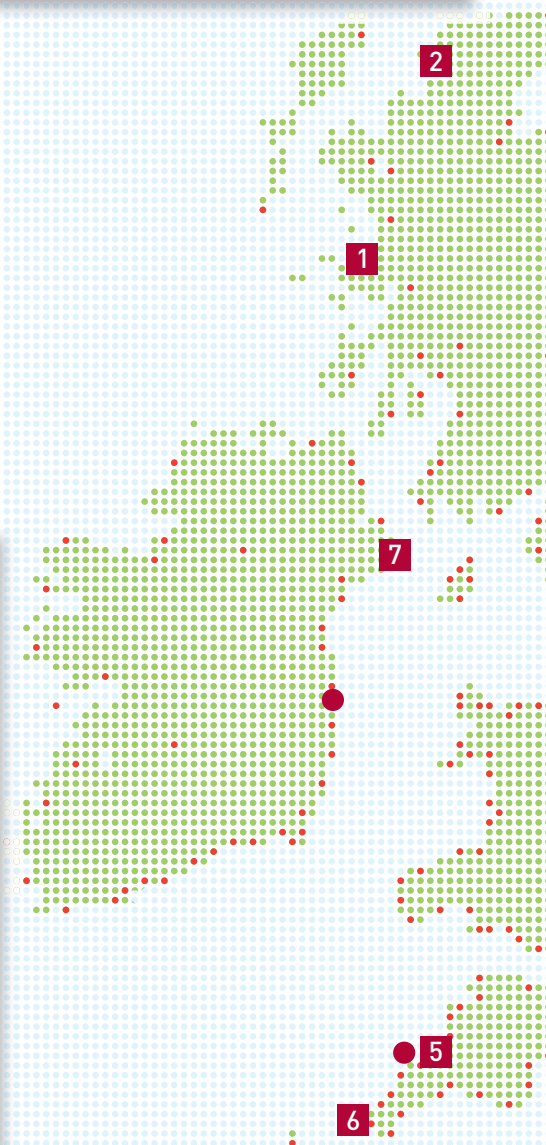


A couple whose canoe capsized in County Down's Strangford Lough were rescued by **Portaferry** lifeboat crew on 16 April 2007. They had managed to swim to a racing buoy and were clinging on for their lives when a passerby onshore raised the alarm. Within 20 minutes, they were being helped aboard the lifeboat. After landing at a local yacht club, husband and wife were taken

to hospital by ambulance. The man was suffering from hypothermia, but the crew had reached him in time.

6 PRECARIOUS 'LADDER'

Sennen Cove's all-weather lifeboat went to the aid of nine kayakers off Lands End on 27 December 2006. Wind and tide made the area, known locally as The Ladder, more perilous than usual. With waves 3m high and breaking, the kayakers were asked by radio to let off a flare so the lifeboat could find their small craft. Two of the group were in the water, being supported by their colleagues. The kayakers were helped onboard with a scrambling net. One was transferred to hospital by helicopter as it was suspected she was developing hypothermia. The rest of the group was brought to the lifeboat station, less than 90 minutes after the lifeboat's launch, and offered hot showers and tea before collecting their kayaks, which were recovered by RNLI volunteers from Penlee.



INSIGHT

The RNLI's Vision is to be recognised as the most effective, innovative and dependable lifeboat and lifeguard service.

Here are just a handful of incidents from around the UK and RoI to give an insight into the thousands of rescues carried out each year in an effort to meet that Vision.

Three particularly noteworthy rescues that have just resulted in awards for those involved are described on pages 16–23 and marked on the map thus: ●. See pages 40–42 for 6 months' launches at a glance.

3 HYPOTHERMIC AND CONFUSED

Both **Redcar** lifeboats were launched at the end of March to help a man in his 40s who was trapped at the bottom of a 90m cliff by a rising tide. When the crew of the Atlantic 75 *Leicester Challenge II* found him, he was wet through, hypothermic and very confused. The smaller inshore lifeboat, *Peterborough Beer Festival I*, was driven over sharp rocks to reach him. He was fitted with a lifejacket and taken onboard, before being transferred to the Atlantic in safer waters. He was treated by the Lifeboat Medical Adviser before being taken home by the Coastguard.



4 A GROWING CROWD AND A RISING RIVER



In front of a large crowd, **Chiswick's** lifeboat crew saved a man who fell into the River Thames' mud from Brentford's Dock Road on 5 November 2006. The man, who had multiple injuries, was being held up by a friend, while the river rose 3cm every minute. With great care the man was transferred to the lifeboat, *Jean and Kenneth Bellamy*, which had to reverse into the shallow, confined area to recover him. On the way to Chiswick lifeboat station, he was given first aid including oxygen and an intravenous drip. He was handed over to the ambulance service on reaching the shore and taken to hospital.

5 LIFEGUARDS RETURN

RNLI lifeguards returned to action over the Easter weekend. On **Perranporth** beach in Cornwall they gave lifesaving first aid to a woman with a heart condition who had passed out and stopped breathing. She regained consciousness and was airlifted to hospital. The lifeguards were also called to a woman who suffered spinal injuries after falling from her horse; to help the Coastguard search for a body, and to assist a bodyboarder and a surfer who had drifted out to sea.



TOP RNLI AWARDS

The RNLI held its Annual Presentation of Awards in London's Barbican Centre on 17 May, and Bronze Medals for Gallantry were awarded by HRH The Duke of Kent to Dr Christine Bradshaw (see page 16), Lifeguard Sophie Grant-Crookston (see page 20) and Coxswain Donald MacLeod (see left and *the Lifeboat* Winter 2006–7).

People like Christine, Sophie and Donald would not be able to save lives at sea without the help of supporters around the UK and RoI. So supporter awards were also presented, as follows.

Portpatrick Coxswain Robert Erskine received the individual award. In addition to his lifeboating role, Robert organises a week of RNLI fundraising events and activities every year. Locals and visitors to the small town are inspired by Robert's enthusiasm, and the week brings in about £20,000 for the RNLI annually.

Children's television show *Blue Peter* was given a lifetime achievement award in recognition of its work to bring the RNLI to generations of young people since 1956. *Blue Peter* appeals have funded 25 lifeboats, which have been involved in saving more than 1,000 lives.

The group award went to the Portrush raft race committee. The race in question was first held in the County Antrim town in 1981 and has raised more than £500,000 in 26 years. Cluny Primary School in Banffshire and Manchester's Chetham's School of Music won the youth awards, while Tenby's new RNLI shop was top of the retailer category. Unilever, in the guise of Walls' ice cream, was named the corporate supporter of the year. BBC Radio Cornwall was given the media relations award. Dozens of grass-roots supporters were also honoured.



Photo: Jon Stokes

New for Norfolk

The RNLI plans to double the number of beaches for which it provides lifeguards by 2011. This year, RNLI lifeguards can be seen on nine new beaches.

Lifeguards in Norfolk form the service's first departure from the south west of England. Sea Palling, Mundesley, Cromer East and Sheringham beaches have all had lifeguards on patrol since May, while Cromer West's service starts on 7 July.

There are now patrols on West Bay,

Charmouth (pictured) and Lyme Regis beaches on Dorset's Jurassic Coast. This area has become very popular recently and the local council is working with the RNLI to improve safety. Safety signs have been introduced, risk assessments have been carried out and now the lifeguards are on hand for safety advice, first aid and, of course, beach rescue.

Sandy Bay beach in Exmouth will also benefit from the presence of RNLI lifeguards during the Summer.

Biggest ever lifeboat contract



DML are to build nine Tamar class lifeboats over the next 3 years, after being awarded the RNLI's largest ever single such contract.

The Plymouth-based company built the prototype Tamar and also the first four production boats, which are now on station.

Production of a new lifeboat will start every 3 months, with up to four in production at any given time. This near-assembly-line efficiency is a first and will make the deal excellent value for the charity.

Each lifeboat will take around 11 months to build. The competitively tendered contract is worth £12.6M.





After record figures for lifeguard activity in 2006, and with even greater visitor numbers expected on beaches in 2007, the RNLI is running its new Beachwise campaign.

Beachwise messages are to choose a lifeguarded beach and to swim between the red and yellow flags. This is where lifeguards will be actively patrolling and

For a safe day at the beach, remember FLAGS:

- F**ind the red and yellow flags and swim between them.
- L**ook at the safety signs.
- A**sk a lifeguard for advice.
- G**et a friend to swim with you.
- S**tick your hand up and shout for help if in difficulty.

will be able to respond quickly if people get into difficulty.

Readers in the south west of England can look out for billboards, bus stop posters and other promotional activity. If the campaign is successful this year, it will be launched in other areas to complement the expansion of the RNLI

Lifeguards service. Meanwhile, beach-lovers around the UK will be kept informed through magazines, newspapers and television programmes.

Figures from RoSPA show that visitors are 500 times less likely to drown at a beach that has a lifeguarding service. The Marine Conservation Society has compiled a list of lifeguard-patrolled beaches in the UK and Rol at www.goodbeachguide.co.uk.



Busiest year yet

At the RNLI's AGM on 17 May, Chairman Admiral Sir Jock Slater gave an overview of 2006, the charity's busiest year ever.

Lifeboat crews launched 8,377 times in 2006, an average of 23 times a day, rescuing 8,015 people. Lifeguards assisted 10,448 people in 9,411 incidents. Together, the RNLI's lifeboat crews and lifeguards saved 299 lives.

The rollout of the B class Atlantic 85 lifeboat continued in 2006. There are now 10 on station and 6 in the relief fleet. Tamar class all-weather lifeboats went on service at Padstow, Peterhead, Tenby and Longhope. Three more Tamars are due on service this year, while trials of the Fast carriage boat 2, which will start replacing the Mersey class in 2010, continue.

The exceptionally generous response of supporters to the RNLI's request for help in 2006 brought in a record amount: £126.8M.

Of this, £13M was volunteer-led and £83.5M from legacies. This increased income enabled previously delayed projects to be taken up again, notably lifeboat building (see opposite) and shoreworks (see page 36).

Contact Supporter Care for your copy of the *Annual Review*, *Annual Report and Accounts* and 5-year *RNLI Plan* or see rnli.org.uk



PADSTOW AWARDS

Padstow's new Tamar class slipway boathouse has won two prestigious awards. In February it was named the winner of the new building category at the Cornish Building Group Awards. In May it won the Local Authority Building Control Award in the best public/community project category for the south west of England. The boathouse now goes forward to the national finals, where The Lifeboat College in Poole won its category in 2005. (Also see page 36.)

VELLUM SERVICES

On page 23 we highlight a rescue in Dun Laoghaire for which Thanks of the Institution Inscribed on Vellum was awarded. Other Vellums awarded recently include Portrush, for the rescue of two children and their father, and Lough Swilly after the crew saved six people from a drifting crabber. Humber crew were thanked for an 11-hour service to a yacht in gale force conditions, while Hastings crew were acknowledged after doing everything possible to save a swimmer in difficulty.



PRESIDENT VISITS

RNLI President HRH The Duke of Kent has been busy. Before presenting awards at the Barbican in May (see opposite), he attended the anniversary service in April for The Mumbles lifeboat crew members who lost their lives in service in 1947. The Duke toured the lifeboat stations of Kirkwall, Stromness and Longhope in June, and attended the naming ceremony for Longhope's Tamar class lifeboat (also see page 16). He also named Mudeford's new inshore Atlantic 85 lifeboat.

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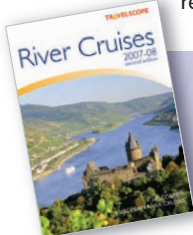
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LIF Summer '07



LIFEBOAT ON SHOW FOR 100 YEARS

Redcar's *Zetland* museum, the home of the world's oldest surviving lifeboat, celebrated its centenary on 1 May.

The *Zetland* lifeboat arrived at Redcar in 1802, predating the foundation of the RNLI by 22 years, and saved more than 500 lives in her 78 years of service. After being retired, she was put in storage before going on display to the public in 1907.

Current Redcar Senior Helmsman Mike Picknett, whose great great uncle was Coxswain of the *Zetland* and lived above the old boathouse (now the museum), was among the guests at the

anniversary ceremony.

The museum's honorary curator Eddie Ransom says: 'Everyone who sees the *Zetland* is amazed by how courageous the early lifeboatmen must have been. They put to sea rowing an open boat without any of the specialist equipment today's crews have, and saved hundreds of lives.'

The museum is open every day from 11am–4pm, except Mondays, until the end of September. Entry is free but donations from visitors will help the crews of the *Zetland*'s successors continue her lifesaving tradition.

Folk fundraiser



Award-winning folk songstress Kate Rusby performed a gig in aid of the RNLI at Whitby Pavilion on 21 April. A total of £8,000 was raised, with the raffle alone taking £1,040. Fundraiser Graham Holmes, who organised the event with his wife, said of the 3-hour set: 'It was an absolutely stunning performance and

everyone was gobsmacked by how good she was.' Kate is pictured in Whitby's Trent class lifeboat before the show.

New, improved RWC

As the retail market moves towards bigger, more powerful machines, Yamaha has supplied the RNLI with a new model of rescue watercraft (RWC): the VX700.

Developed for the Asian market, the VX700 has the same engine as the RWC that RNLI lifeguards currently use, but in a new hull.

Trials showed that it handles very well in surf and is easier to manoeuvre. The reverse mechanism is improved and there is more space on the aft deck. Overall its design is less cumbersome than the new UK models.

There is one unit in operation now, with its own trailer and sled. As the older RWCs are no longer in production, the new models will replace those taken out of service in the coming years.

Bristol Channel trial

The RNLI carried out a 3-day feasibility trial of an inshore rescue hovercraft at Weston-super-Mare in April.

Hovercraft Operations Manager Andrew Woods says: 'The RNLI is aware of the problems that can occur in the Bristol Channel, and we want to gather data. There are no immediate plans to station a hovercraft in the area but this information will prove extremely useful should we establish a need for such a vessel in the future.'

The trial incorporated launching and recovery tests, as well as an exercise with the local Coastguard team using mud rescue techniques.

Rescue hovercraft were introduced to the RNLI fleet in 2002 and are in operation at New Brighton, Morecambe, Southend-on-Sea and Hunstanton.



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Lady launcher passes away



It is with sadness that *the Lifeboat* reports the passing away of Dungeness 'lady launcher' Doris Tart (pictured above, front) on 30 April at Ashford's William Harvey Hospital, aged 85.

Doris lived for most of her life in a fisherman's cottage close to the present lifeboat station. The constantly moving shingle at Dungeness often made lifeboat launch and recovery difficult. Before a tractor was sent to the station in 1979, the Tart and Oiller families formed the backbone of a group of women who launched the lifeboat as most of the local men were on the crew.

Doris served the RNLI as a launcher for 44 years and was awarded a Gold Badge on

her retirement. Doris's mother-in-law Ellen and her aunt, Madge, were both awarded the RNLI's Gold Badge in 1954 for helping launch the lifeboat every time it put to sea for more than 50 years. Doris's father, Douglas Oiller, was Coxswain from 1916 to 1947 and received a Bronze Medal for Gallantry, while her grandfather, cousin and husband all received gallantry awards as crew members.

When Doris had to move out of her home due to poor health she gave her collection of lifeboat artefacts and awards to the lifeboat gallery at the Historic Dockyard in Chatham. She was proud to view the resulting exhibition when it opened in June 2006.

DIRECTOR CHANGE



David Brook joined the RNLI as Engineering and Supply Director on 12 June. Mr Brook has more than 20 years' experience in

a number of engineering and operations roles with the RAF. Former Director David Morgan retired on 30 June, allowing a handover and familiarisation period. The Engineering and Supply department is crucial to the RNLI, managing the design, manufacture, procurement, storage, delivery, refit, repair, overhaul and disposal of everything from boats to boots.

CRUISE FORUM

The Seatrade UK Cruise Forum, held in April, brought in about £5,600 for saving lives at sea. The forum gives representatives from UK ports the chance to meet cruise line executives from companies like Fred. Olsen, a major corporate supporter of the RNLI. Poole's Economic Development Department won the right to host the forum and decided to do so at The Lifeboat College in Poole, where top-class, waterfront conferencing facilities can be enjoyed while hire costs go straight to the RNLI.

FUTURE TRIBUTE

The RNLI is planning a tribute to all the crew members and fundraisers who have

served the Institution over the past 180-plus years. A sculpture and garden at RNLI Headquarters in Poole are hoped to be completed in 2008-9, subject to planning permission and finding suitable funding. RNLI Chief Executive Andrew Freemantle is planning a sponsored cycle to Rome later this year as part of the fundraising for this project. See rnli.org.uk/memorial.



WELCOME TO MARRIED LIFESAVING

Getting married? Already have a toaster? Why not set up a wedding list with a difference at weddinglistgiving.com? The RNLI is one of a number of charities you can support by asking your guests to make a donation rather than spending hours trawling for the 'perfect' gift.

Simply register on the site, let your family and friends know about it and you can make your big day special for all those who benefit from your alternative list. Log in to your personal page whenever you like to read messages from your loved ones and see how much has been raised on your behalf. Donors in the UK can increase the value of their gifts with Gift Aid.

Wedding List Giving's sister sites offer the same service for civil partnerships and anniversaries.

If you know someone who is getting married but isn't registered with the site, you can still make a donation on their behalf. Call RNLI Supporter Care on 0845 121 4999 to find out how.





Train one, save many

The Lloyd's Register Educational Trust has just announced it is to fund sea survival courses at The Lifeboat College over the next 3 years. This is the largest donation to the Train one, save many campaign so far. Part of the Trust's work is to support activities that enhance the safety of life throughout the world. RNLI crew training proved a good fit, with the Trust agreeing to give £625,000 towards these essential courses.

Lloyd's Register Educational Trust

HBOS CHALLENGE

The Family Holiday Association (FHA) and the RNLI are now beginning to receive the proceeds of a huge fundraising drive by staff of the Halifax and Bank of Scotland (HBOS).



Last issue, *the Lifeboat* reported that a joint application by the two charities was runner up in the HBOS Million £ Challenge 2007. Once the fundraising target of £1M for the winner, the British Heart Foundation, was met, further funds would come to the FHA and RNLI. Amazingly, this has already begun and thousands of disadvantaged families will benefit from the chance to go on their first seaside holiday – and keep safe.

Readers can support the initiative by buying Paddington Bear toys from HBOS branches throughout the UK during August. The bears come in three fun outfits and cost £2.50 each. HBOS will match the money raised, meaning that £5 is received for every bear sold. Paddington Bear will be replaced in November with characters from the 80s children's TV show *Fraggle Rock*.

Corrections

The Spring 2007 centre-spread picture of the rescue team at Tenby included representatives of the local Police, Ambulance, Fire and Coastguard services, though these were omitted from the caption. Sincere apologies to all concerned.

In the same issue, the panel on Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs) on page 27 advised that small craft carry an EPIRB if they sail more than 60 miles from the coast. This should have read 30 miles.



USELESS UNLESS WORN

This is the key safety message that the RNLI is promoting amongst boat owners this Summer, regarding lifejackets.

Many seagoers carry a lifejacket onboard but few actually wear one all the time they're at sea. A lifejacket can buy a casualty valuable time for rescuers to reach them in the water and even save their life.

Readers of the RNLI's *Offshore* supplement can find out much more in the accompanying issue. Articles include personal accounts from survivors – and doubters – and the results of a lifejacket trial amongst fishermen.

Also see rnli.org.uk/seasafety. (Contact RNLI Supporter Care for details of how to become an Offshore member or to subscribe to *Offshore* if you are a Governor.)



Bring on the sun!

Visitors to the RNLI Headquarters open days later

this month will now be able to keep safe from the sun while enjoying the exhibits and demonstrations (see picture below).

Boots has generously agreed to donate 16,000 sachets of their Soltan suncream to the RNLI for the weekend of 21–22 July.

That should be enough for everyone in the expected crowds to benefit – but don't forget to bring a hat and sunglasses!

Entry to The Lifeboat College and neighbouring RNLI depot in Poole will be on a first-come first-served basis and costs £1 for anyone aged 5 or over.

See rnli.org.uk/opendays and your copy of *RNLI Compass* for more Headquarters and station open day information.



Courage is timeless

TIME MARCHES ON. Society transforms faster than we can keep up with it. But the bravery of the RNLI's lifeboatmen and women has been steadfast for over 180 years. Thank goodness – because for all the advantages new technology brings, the sea remains a dangerous place. Conditions change in the blink of an eye and when sailors find themselves in trouble, the RNLI is there. Last year alone our lifeboats rescued over 8,100 people: but without the caring and responsible members of the public who support our work, we couldn't exist at all.

Celebrating our past

To celebrate and commemorate all that our crews have achieved we've put together a free booklet, *Courage is timeless* – you can request your copy simply by returning the coupon or calling the number below. Of course, all the acts of bravery by RNLI crew you'll read about are only possible because the public are kind enough to recognise the importance of our work, and support us in it.

Your part in our future

One of the best ways to support those courageous and selfless lifeboatmen and women, who volunteer to save others, is by remembering the RNLI in your Will. Six out of ten of all lifeboat launches are only possible because kind people had the foresight to leave us a gift. All it takes is a small change to your Will. And even a small gift will help us achieve so much. With your support, we'll always be here for those in peril on the sea.



Photo: The Sutcliffe Gallery



Lifeboats

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Photo: Nigel Millard

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Thank you

Storyteller, boatman and hero

Anglesey has seen more than its fair share of difficult rescues. Carol Waterkeyn hears how Margaret O'Leary's grandfather played a pivotal role



Margaret's grandfather and Acting Coxswain William Roberts (left) with Captain Owen Jones, both RNLI Gold Medallists

This year marks the 80th anniversary of an outstanding rescue by Moelfre's pulling and sailing lifeboat, the *Charles and Eliza Laura*. She was launched in violent gales at around 3pm on 28 October 1927 to go to the aid of the struggling ketch, *Excel*.

Margaret O'Leary's grandfather, Captain William Roberts, was Acting Coxswain that night and he is no mythical hero from the past. She remembers him fondly from when she was a little girl. Margaret says: 'He was a great storyteller. He used to sit on the beach with his boat, and people would take the trouble to come to meet him and to shake his hand and he would speak of the lifeboat's rescues and tell tales of the sea.' He would take his grandchildren fishing and Margaret and her brother John would hear these fascinating stories too.

Memories

William Roberts lived his whole life in the village of Moelfre, Anglesey. When not on the lifeboat, he sailed his own ketch, *The Frances*, which he worked along the coast of Wales and across to Ireland, carrying coal, wheat and other cargoes. Later, he worked as a coastguard. He and his wife Elizabeth had two children, Elsie (Margaret and John's mother) and Thomas, and lived in the cottage that William had built.

William's descendants still own that cottage and it holds many reminders of William's years as a lifeboat crew member, including his Gold, Silver and Bronze Medal certificates. Nor has the community forgotten: the nearby lifeboat station houses replicas of William's and other crew members' medals and many historical photos. When Margaret makes the journey from her present home of landlocked Warrington, memories come flooding back of their happy times together and she and all the family are immensely proud of what her grandfather did. But what exactly did he do?

The rescue

The weather was extremely cold and the sea menacing as William Roberts took the helm of the Moelfre lifeboat in 1927. He was joined by Captain Owen Jones as Acting Second Coxswain and 13 crew, one of whom by coincidence also named William Roberts.

The *Life-boat* journal of that time states: '[Captain Roberts] took charge, having with him Captain Jones, who, although not a regular member of the Life-boat Crew, as he is otherwise occupied, goes out when

he can, and is always ready to put his local knowledge and experience at the service of the Life-boat.' William Roberts must have been relieved to have his sterling support during this fateful service.

The lifeboat had received a message from Point Lynas that a vessel was in distress about 3½ miles from their lighthouse. After getting a more exact location from pilot vessels sheltering under the Point, Roberts made haste and, after 2½ hours of sailing, reached the *Excel* around 5.30pm. She was in a helpless state and tethered to a German steamer, which itself was in trouble and unable to help the ketch or her crew. As soon as the lifeboat arrived, the steamer cut the *Excel* free with the crew of three still onboard. The ketch pitched to leeward and the lifeboat attempted to get alongside.

This first attempt failed. Conditions were so bad and the ketch so waterlogged that it was obvious the vessel and its crew could not last much longer. Drastic action was needed and the Captains Roberts and Jones made the difficult decision to take the *Charles and Eliza Laura*, under full sail, right over the sinking craft. There was a huge risk of wrecking the lifeboat; but the brave gamble paid off and heavy seas carried them right onto the *Excel*'s upper deck. The three casualties were hauled aboard and the lifeboat was swept back by another wave. Shortly afterwards the ketch sank.

Stamina

But this was no rousing triumph: one of the rescued seamen died in the lifeboat of injuries he received during the transfer. Later, such were the horrendous conditions that Crew Member William Roberts collapsed and died of exposure. The lifeboat too had been badly damaged; she was holed, full of water and her jib badly torn, making sailing almost impossible. She struggled towards the Menai Straits beating against the gale and arrived at Puffin Island about 2am, some 11 hours after she had set out from Moelfre. On land, the telephone and telegraph had failed several hours earlier so, although the Beaumaris lifeboat launched to look for them, the moored craft was thought not to be in difficulty, and their potential rescuers returned to station.

The exhausted and now apparently helpless crew remained at anchor until daylight when they were finally recovered by the motor lifeboat from Beaumaris, reaching safety at 8.30am.



Margaret treasures her lifeboating inheritance

Margaret comments: 'It is incredible to think that during the whole rescue, my grandfather remained at the tiller.' She continues: 'For some hours after the ordeal, he was completely blind from saltwater spray, the wind and the strain of watching all night. In fact the whole crew are recorded as suffering from exhaustion and needing medical attention.'

Captains Roberts and Jones both received the RNLI's highest accolade, the Gold Medal, for their courage and leadership in the face of very grave danger. Their crew received Bronze Medals (Crew Member Roberts posthumously) and a Letter of Thanks went to Mr and Mrs Musgrave of the Bulkeley Arms Hotel, Beaumaris, who took in the crew while they recovered from their ordeal.

A tale of three William Roberts

The William Roberts who so sadly died during the rescue will never be forgotten. His devotion to duty cost him his life yet his legacy lives on through his great grandson, William. This third William Roberts was Coxswain of the Moelfre lifeboat in the 1970s and 80s and received the MBE. Margaret has met more of her lifeboating relations in later life and has found out more about the crew who served in 1927. She is thrilled that, in true Moelfre, Roberts and indeed RNLI spirit, villagers are to hold a commemorative service for them all on 28 October this year. (For more information, contact Margaret on 07817 083084. Readers of *Offshore* can find out more about Moelfre in this quarter's Spotlight section.)

A BAPTISM BY FIRE AND WATER

At the northernmost tip of mainland Scotland, the waters of the Atlantic Ocean siphon into the North Sea and back again, twice a day, through a churning channel less than 7 miles wide. One new recruit will always remember the Pentland Firth as her place of greatest testing. Elizabeth Paine reports





Photo: John Periam

There was, as the RNLI's Tony Trickett later observed, 'a hell of a sea on' around Orkney on 11 November 2006. The Shetland Coastguard had taken a call shortly after midday from the MV *FR8 Venture*, an oil tanker battling heavy seas in Pentland Firth. She had three crew seriously injured by a massive wave that had swamped the deck.

After liaising with Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, the Coastguard requested assistance from both their own rescue helicopter based at Stornoway and the RNLI's Longhope lifeboat station. Deputy Launching Authority Ian McFadyen responded immediately and the brand new Tamar class *Helen Comrie* was on her first ever emergency 'shout'.

Expert medical help would be needed but Longhope's Lifeboat Operations Manager and Medical Adviser, Tony Trickett, was still en route home from a visit to RNLI Headquarters in Poole. Acting as Relief Doctor at the GP practice on Hoy was Christine Bradshaw. Assisting with saving lives at sea was not in her job description but, as she said: 'On an island, you all pitch in.' Dr Bradshaw's sole experience of lifeboat service so far had been a flat-calm attendance on a sick diver a few weeks previously: now the weather was promising something entirely different. Today's knock on the door came with the plea: 'Go straight to the pier and don't let the lifeboat leave without you.'

Prepared for anything?

Casting off in a north westerly force 9 wind, the lifeboat's crew knew that using her 'in anger' in the ferocious weather that they would meet once they had cleared Cantick Sound would be even tougher than the poor conditions experienced during recent training. But they had full confidence in the seaworthiness of their new vessel, built for just such an eventuality.

The Doctor, too, trusted both lifeboat and crew. It was the uncertain extent of the casualties' injuries rather than the logistics of the rescue that occupied her thoughts. A clue to what might be to follow should have been when Mechanic John Budge handed her a drysuit: 'There's just the one size ... large ... '

As the lifeboat entered the Firth the swell was reaching an astonishing 15m. Coxswain Kevin Kirkpatrick and helicopter *Mike Uniform's* pilot Captain Tim Noble agreed that a direct transfer of the Doctor from lifeboat to tanker would be impossible. When asked if she would 'mind' being winched across, Christine simply said: 'Tell me what to do.' This would be her first such experience.



The two rescue craft diverted to the lee of the small island of Swona, as to chance more open water in these conditions would have meant injury to both Coastguard and RNLI personnel. Kevin remembers that the Tamar's greater room on the afterdeck made the tricky manoeuvre more manageable than it might have been. However, with the wind gusting to force 12, Tim's view was obscured by the three-storey-high waves. He was reliant on Winch Operator Phil Warrington to guide his positioning and needed several attempts before Winchman Chris Murray could lift off both the Doctor and her emergency kit.

Tim recalls the first time he glimpsed Christine: 'She was coming across the deck of the lifeboat on her hands and knees, because nobody could actually stand up ... she was presented to us in a formless rubber suit, like any other RNLI person, and we took her as such.'

Into hell

Some 20 minutes later, the helicopter was approaching the *Venture* and Dr Bradshaw watched waves breaking over her deck, the whole of which was awash. She began to feel a little apprehension: 'I wondered how on earth we were going to get down there – safely.' To make matters even worse, a squally hailstorm now

enveloped them, and the dense spray off the tanker was reaching 30m – the equivalent of a 10-storey block of flats.

A vessel the size of the *Venture* generates a massive turbulence 'bubble' behind the superstructure, a phenomenon described by Tim Noble: 'like someone's taken hold of the tail of the helicopter and is trying to bounce it around in the sky.' Phil concedes: 'It can all go wrong, very quickly.' Nonetheless, the experienced Coastguard air crew managed as smooth a set-down as possible.

The Doctor and Winchman found the casualties in three separate rooms inside the wheelhouse – but one had died and, tragically, a second soon followed, despite the Doctor's best efforts. The third was revealed to have head and spinal injuries, which needed immediate stabilisation to prevent more damage. However, evacuation could not be attempted yet: *Mike Uniform* had to leave the scene to refuel at Wick. The call out was at the furthest extent of its range and had been demanding on its resources.

The tanker's crew prepared her for the subsequent lift-off, turning her side on to the towering waves. Christine could sense their anxiety. Removing a stretchered casualty would require extreme care

THE DETAIL

Coxswain Kevin Kirkpatrick (40)
Crew Members
Angus Budge (46)
Mechanic John Budge (56)
Frank Gaertner (47)
Ian Avis (44)
Michael Johnston (41)
Non-RNLI medic
Dr Christine Bradshaw (49, relief GP)
Tamar class lifeboat ON-1284 (16-05)
Helen Comrie
Built: 2006
On station: 14 October 2006
Funding: £2.5M from the legacies of Mr Thomas Comrie, Dr Frederick Benjamin Porges and Lorraine Fyfe and gifts from the MV Millhouse and Evelyn Murdoch Charitable Trusts, Mrs Ruby Brown and Mr George Derbyshire

'The RNLI's a brilliant organisation; it does a tremendous job, I can't fault it. I'm very proud to now be part of it.'

Dr Christine Bradshaw, Bronze Medal awardee and new recruit

Photo: Western Morning News



Coxswain Kevin Kirkpatrick and locum GP Christine Bradshaw relive the dramatic rescue they performed in the 15m waves of the Pentland Firth

Photos: Courtesy of Longbow Productions

but conditions had deteriorated further – even Chris Murray seemed a little nervous. But no sooner had the enormity of the task become clear than the helicopter had returned and they received instruction to go leaving the *Venture* to struggle on against the storm.

Relief and reward

To everyone's delight, the airlifted man eventually made a full recovery. All involved still feel deeply saddened that they were unable to save the other two but know that they had all worked to their physical and technical limits. The *Tamar* had come up trumps, with a superior communications system and high-tech hull and seating that allowed much greater speed in the water: 'We had faith in the boat and the technology there. We looked after it and it looked after us.'

They are even more impressed with Dr Bradshaw, who has since volunteered as a crew member. They variously describe her as 'a good seawoman', 'plucky' and 'really cool'. Coxswain Kirkpatrick affirms: 'She undoubtedly saved a man's life.'

Regular Medical Adviser Tony Trickett concurs: 'This was no bob around the corner: this was serious stuff.' He admits: 'I wouldn't have liked it to be me on

the end of that string. She is more than a brave lass. She couldn't *not* join the crew. The boys said, "She's joining!"'

Coastguard Winchman Chris Murray declares conditions had been the roughest in which he'd ever been down inside a vessel, and commends Christine's actions: 'We need people like that, who aren't afraid – she's a volunteer at the end of the day and it's volunteers that save lives.'

Tim Noble adds: 'It's hard enough to get somebody winched out of a stable helicopter at 6m on a nice day; it's a very different matter when you're in the middle of a raging storm, dangled over huge waves out the back of a pitching boat, for your first time ... it's a baptism by fire. Most people wouldn't have even left the aircraft; to go down in those conditions to look after somebody else, I think just typifies her character – admirable.

'It's all credit to both the RNLI and Christine that they have people like her working for them. We do a very similar job and complement each other – but I get paid to do my job and they don't. I have total admiration for them and everything they do.'



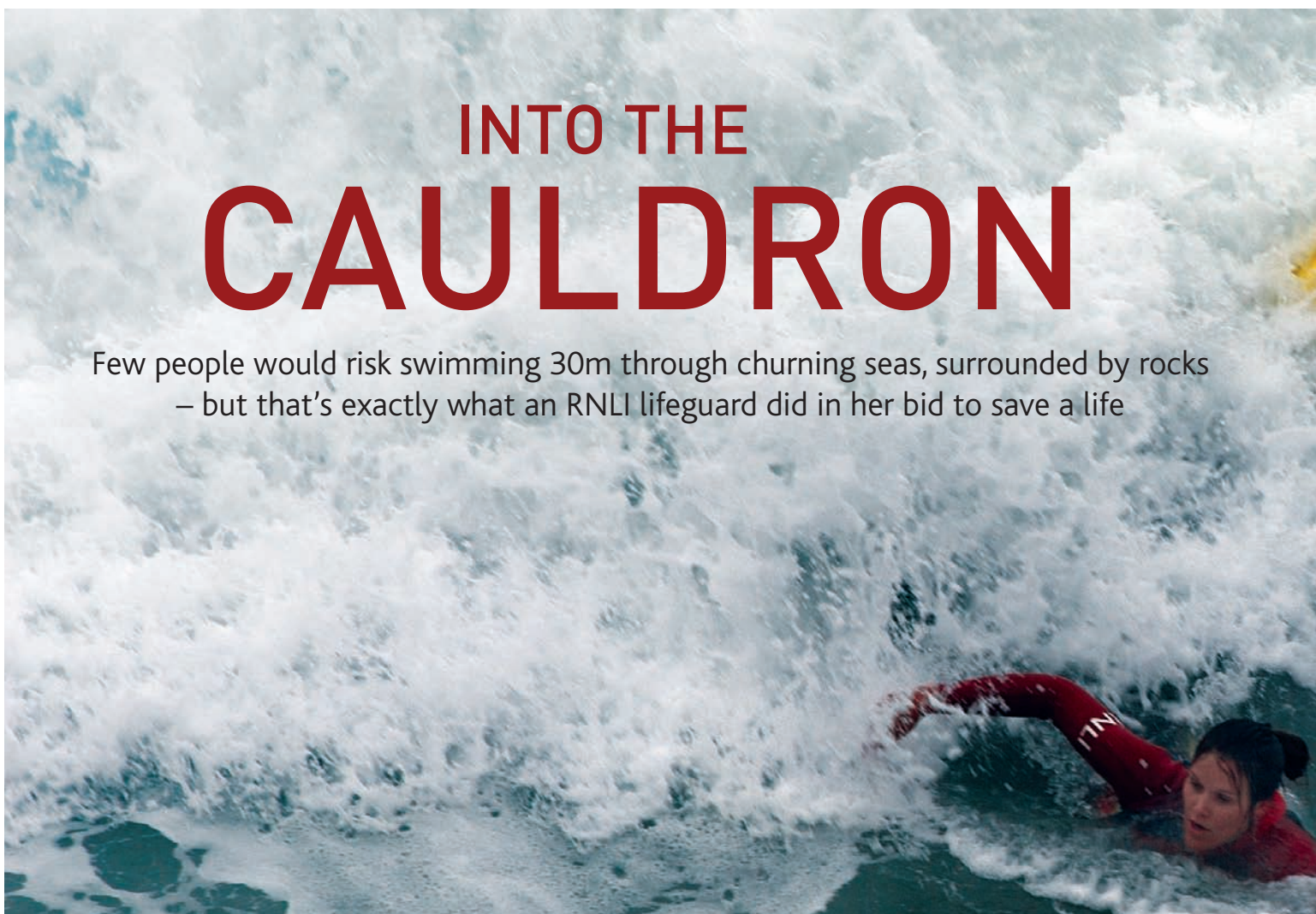
Dr Bradshaw is the first ever non-RNLI woman doctor to be awarded the Bronze Medal for Gallantry, recently bestowed at the RNLI's Annual Presentation of Awards in London for her part in this rescue.

Regularly practising at Truro in Cornwall, she spends 4 months a year as relief Doctor at the GP surgery on the island of Hoy in the Orkneys. Since participating in this rescue, she has become an official RNLI crew member and medical adviser.

Christine was once rescued by the RNLI herself. While surfing off the north Cornish coast, she was taken out by a rip current and a sea mist came down, leaving her stranded and lost, far from shore. 'Lo and behold,' she recalls, 'this white nose appeared out of the gloom, and some blond-haired lifeguard towed me back in ... It's good to put something back.'

INTO THE CAULDRON

Few people would risk swimming 30m through churning seas, surrounded by rocks – but that's exactly what an RNLI lifeguard did in her bid to save a life



South of Cornwall's popular Perranporth beach, a gully lies in amongst the rocks at Droskyn Head, evocatively named Bat Cave 2 by the locals. It was into this cauldron of water that a 36-year-old surfer found himself swept on the afternoon of 22 September 2006. Waves 2m in height were bouncing off three sides of the gully and quickly carried the surfer's board out of reach. Remarkably, the man managed to scramble onto a rocky shelf for temporary respite but the tide was rising and he could not climb any higher. As the waves hurtled in, he desperately hoped someone would hear his cries for help.

Half a mile to the north, RNLI Lifeguard Kris O'Neill was training aboard a rescue watercraft (RWC) when he saw Senior Lifeguard David Green on the beach signalling for him to return to shore. The trapped surfer was in luck – a member of the public had seen him and raised the alarm. Lifeguard Sophie Grant-Crookston was detailed to join Kris on the RWC. 'Sophie jumped on the back and told me what was up,' remembers Kris, who duly sped off

towards Droskyn Head.

'When we arrived, we could see a crowd of people at the top looking down at the surfer. He was still on the rocks and the conditions were rough.' Kris knew that he couldn't take the RWC in close to the casualty without putting Sophie, himself and the craft in serious danger. The Lifeguards agreed that the only way to reach the surfer was for one of them to swim through the confused seas themselves. Sophie volunteered.

Kris found a more sheltered area of water to allow Sophie to put on swim fins and attach a rescue tube (a buoyancy aid for casualties). He then drove within 30m of the casualty and Sophie set off on a treacherous swim through the breaking waves and pillars of rock. 'I just did it, it was automatic,' she recalls. 'The sea swell was taking me here, there and everywhere. It was pure adrenalin, no fear, apart from one point when I lost sight of Kris.'

While Sophie made slow progress towards the casualty, Kris assessed the

situation and decided to radio for back up. He asked for a Coastguard cliff rescue team, in case the casualty could not be reached from the seaward side after all, and requested the launch of the lifeguards' inshore rescue boat (IRB). Back at the beach, David Green responded by asking off-duty colleague Robin Howell to forego his planned surf and take the helm with him in the IRB.

Sophie, meanwhile, had succeeded in negotiating her way through the waves and was now in reach of the ledge – but climbing onto it was a task in itself. 'It was really difficult,' she remembers. 'I thought it would be easier to climb up if I took my fins off, but as I was doing so a wave came in and sucked me backwards. So I had to put them back on to swim in again.' Eventually she scrambled up to reassure the surfer, who was shocked, tired, and had suffered many cuts and bruises.

Robin and David arrived at the scene aboard the IRB shortly afterwards. Robin decided he would attempt a run right into the gully. He signalled his intentions to



Sophie, waited for a lull in the waves and drove in, turning into the oncoming swell with the rock ledge to his port side. 'It was impeccable driving,' says Sophie, who, having attached her rescue tube to the surfer, encouraged him to jump into the water. She helped him swim to the IRB, and the pair were pulled aboard. 'You have to remember that I had a boat with a 30hp engine on the back,' says Robin. 'But to get in the water and swim in and out is a lot more difficult, so I had the easy end of the stick – Sophie had the other end.'

Back at Perranporth beach, Sophie and the casualty were both treated for cuts sustained on the rocks. The exhausted surfer was also given oxygen therapy. 'I think he would have been in serious trouble if there had been no lifeguards on that beach because the tide was coming in and he would have got washed off. He would have been so tired that he would have lost his life,' says Sophie. 'One poor guy did die there 12 months earlier, when there were no lifeguards on duty.'

The sea swell was taking me here, there and everywhere.'

Sophie Grant-Crookston, RNLI Lifeguard

For his part in the rescue, Robin Howell received the RNLI's Thanks of the Institution Inscribed on Vellum, while Kris O'Neill and David Green receive Service certificates. 'Robin showed great skill, judgement and bravery,' adds the RNLI's Lifeguard Manager for south west England Steve Instance. 'Our lifeguards showed tremendous teamwork that day and, under difficult conditions, were able to put all their training into practice.'

Sophie was awarded the RNLI's Bronze Medal for Gallantry at the 2007 Annual Presentation of Awards (see page 6) – the first woman lifeguard to be recognised in this way. 'She put herself at considerable risk to reach the casualty,' says Steve Instance. 'She did it without a thought for her own safety.'



Photos: Nigel Millard and Mike Thomas/Western Morning News

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A SWIM TOO FAR

During the aftermath of Hurricane Gordon, when Ireland was buffeted by extraordinary gales, one woman found herself in grave danger

The call came on 21 September 2006. As she cleared the shelter of the harbour and entered Killiney Bay, Dun Laoghaire's Trent class *Anna Livia* met winds gusting storm force 11. The sun was going down when the crew noticed a man standing above the landing steps frantically waving a torch to attract their attention. A woman who had been swimming with companions had been swept by a flood tide 250m from the landing (a popular spot for swimmers) to the top of the bay.

Although her friends had managed to reach the shore to raise the alarm, worryingly, the remaining swimmer was caught between the outer breakers and the steep shelving rocks at the base of the cliff. The Dublin-based Coast Guard helicopter had already been summoned but because the cliff and houses were so close, it was unable to intervene safely. The only solution was for the lifeboat to go in. This was particularly difficult, not only because of the shallower water, but also because recent work on the sea defences had resulted in stray boulders lying scattered on the seabed.

Skill and bravery

Coxswain Ken Robertson said: 'As we launched and headed for Killiney Bay we could see the weather deteriorating. Rounding Sorrento Point, it was clear that pulling the swimmer straight from the water was the only solution to a rapidly worsening situation.' He carefully steered the lifeboat towards the shore while trying to avoid hazards. The nearest he could get was 10m from the swimmer. Crew Member Wayne Farrell was ready on the foredeck in a drysuit with a heaving line firmly attached. Surf was breaking over the stern,

making standing difficult. At the Coxswain's instruction, and without hesitation, Wayne jumped into the sea and swam towards the woman in difficulty.

Ken manoeuvred the *Anna Livia* astern into the breaking seas to gain more depth. Second Coxswain Patrick Boyd, the Navigator, judged there was less than 3m of water between them and the seabed. With a draught of 1.4m, any approach closer to the shoreline could have been disastrous. In the meantime, Wayne had caught hold of the woman and hung on tightly as Crew Members Chris Watson, Gary Hayes and Rory Bolton hauled the pair back to the lifeboat. Wayne commented after: 'This is what we train for and jumping in with a line didn't cost me a thought other than I had to get to the swimmer before her luck ran out. I had complete trust that Ken and the crew would get us back safely.'

The relieved swimmer was taken into the wheelhouse and made comfortable. When safely back in harbour, she was handed over to the awaiting ambulance and coast guards and the lifeboat returned to station. Despite her life-threatening ordeal in the water, which had lasted over an hour, the woman recovered well and returned to the station on her birthday a few days later to thank the crew.

Awards for all

Coxswain Ken Robertson and Crew Member Wayne Farrell receive the Thanks of the Institution Inscribed on Vellum; Second Coxswain Patrick Boyd, Mechanic Kieran O'Connell and Crew Members Chris Watson, Gary Hayes and Rory Bolton are presented with Vellum Service certificates. Stephen Wynn, Lifeboat Operations Manager for Dun Laoghaire receives a Letter of Appreciation.



Wayne (left) and Ken answered the call

Photo: Ken Finlay, Southside People



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RNLI-OJY



Not in my backyard?

Windfarms are springing up all around the British Isles, but most are offshore, away from the controversy blowing in the countryside. Bethany Hope investigates their impact

Devotees of the modern equivalent of the windmill consider the waters of the UK and RoI ideal for the generation of electricity from wind power. But this is no mere theory – offshore windfarms are now at the forefront of the attempt to lessen our reliance on oil for energy.

The UK's first such installation was commissioned in 2000 off Blyth, Northumberland. Just two turbines were erected, supplying electricity for almost 2,250 households. Four further farms, with up to 30 turbines each, off north Wales, Norfolk,

Kent and Cumbria are now generating power for the National Grid. Arklow Bank windfarm, off Co. Wicklow also has seven turbines in operation.

More are to follow. Offshore wind farms with the potential capacity of 8.4 gigawatts have been approved or offered site licences around the UK. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) forecasts that a third of these farms will be in operation by 2010. The north west and north east of England, the greater Wash, the Thames estuary and the east coast of Ireland are all prime locations. Larger

developments with hundreds of turbines will be far more efficient than their inshore cousins, resulting in electricity cheap enough to rival nuclear power stations as they near their time for decommissioning.

However, energy companies looking to develop offshore must first gain permission. Guidelines from the British Wind Energy Association (BWEA), the industry's representative body, stress the importance of consulting local communities and bodies such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Countryside Agency, Wildlife



**Offshore windfarms –
a blot on the seascape or an
answer to global warming?**

Photo: © Dong VE / AS

Trusts, Ministry of Defence (MoD), Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), Royal Yachting Association and RNLI. In our island nations, emotions will always run high when the seascape is at risk so the results of an environmental impact assessment are key to the statutory process.

The view from the coast

Offshore windfarms have so far been built in waters less than 30m deep and are clearly visible from the coast. The majority of the planned farms, though larger, will be more

than 8 miles offshore and hard to spot on anything but a crystal-clear day. Opinions differ on whether the structures detract from or add to the view. Some find their minimalist design elegant while others object to a blot on Nature. Windfarms on floating platforms, still further out to sea, would resolve any such debate but are currently too expensive to build and maintain.

The construction phase is most feared. No one wishes their home to turn into an industrial site, with increased noise, dirt

and traffic. However, surveys highlight consistently that most people living near windfarms like them and that tourism isn't harmed. Further, local communities often benefit from job creation, with energy companies keen to employ local contractors.

Several companies have shown their commitment to the local area through donations. For example, npower renewables has set up the North Hoyle Community Fund, which has already given a £25,000 4x4 vehicle to Rhyl lifeboat station. →

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Any disruption by windfarms will, however, be nothing compared with the dramatic effects of global warming predicted for coastal communities over the next decades and centuries. These include increased storms and a rising sea level with associated erosion and flooding. It is argued that a switch to renewable energy sources, including wind, and the resulting drop in carbon emissions, might delay or even prevent such life-threatening damage.

Sensitive habitats

Each tower must be firmly anchored, with piles driven into the seabed, and cables laid to the shore, so there is clearly some effect on marine life. Conservation specialists work to ensure that windfarm designs do not interfere with particularly sensitive species or designated sites. For example, the RSPB

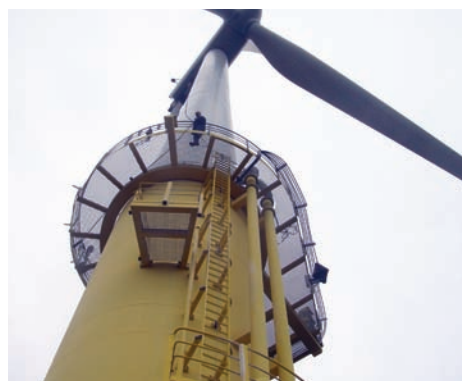


Photo: RNLI

has objected to several windfarm proposals because of the risk of habitat loss for birds or their collision with turbines.

However, if carefully sited, offshore windfarms do not appear to have a significant effect on bird populations. A recent report from the Swedish State Energy Authority found that only 14 individuals out of 1.5M seabirds migrating by two windfarms in south east Sweden were endangered. Further, new sealife can flourish around the erosion-resistant tower bases. Of course, the sites are free of both the smoke and steam exhausts so associated with fossil fuel power stations

and the increase in sea water temperature seen at nuclear installations.

Accident imminent?

Is it only a matter of time before a boat or plane crashes into a turbine? Windfarms certainly pose a physical hazard, especially when close to major shipping routes, popular fishing grounds or if encountered by low-flying aircraft.

The first line of defence is taken by the owners: the towers are marked with bright yellow paint at sea level, have lights on top and are fitted with fog horns. Next, the UK Hydrographic Office includes them on nautical charts.

The UK's DTI funded practical trials in 2004, in conjunction with the MCA, the Department for Transport and offshore windfarm industry representatives, to assess any risk to navigation and communication. Happily, they found minimal impact on boat-based communications and satellite navigation systems, including VHF radios and GPS. There was also little effect on magnetic compasses, other than what could be reasonably expected near a 100m-plus steel tower.

The effect on radar was more complex. While it should clearly identify a windfarm at a distance, there are risks of false echoes when closer. Further, the MoD found that the blades have the potential to interfere with systems used by Air Traffic Control and Air Defence.

The RNLI's advice to all skippers is clear. 'Although it isn't currently illegal to enter an offshore windfarm, you should steer well clear. Keep at least 100m from any structure,' says Hugh Fogarty, RNLI Staff Officer Operations (Fleet). 'Use extreme navigational caution and beware the effects of the tide carrying boats down onto turbines. For sailing vessels, there will be no increase downwind, but there may be turbulence.' Importantly, the MCA considers any effects on navigational efficiency or safety as part of each formal application approval process. →

'Although this is a new source of activity for the RNLI, for crews it's only slightly different from dealing with any other "rock" sticking out of the sea.'

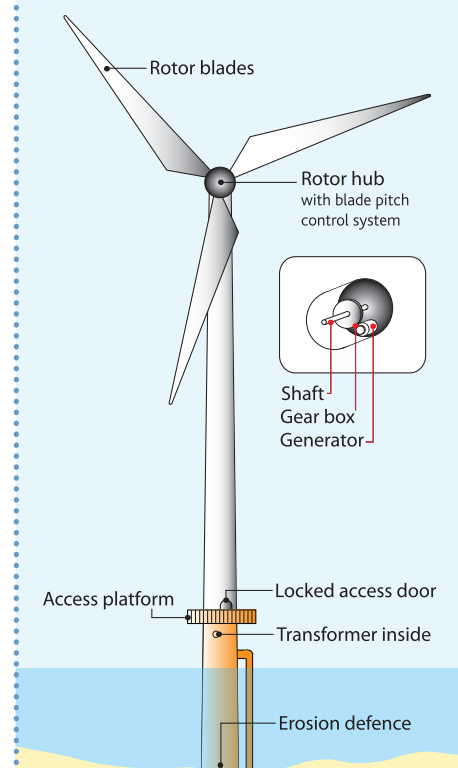
Hugh Fogarty, RNLI Staff Officer Operations (Fleet)



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Search and rescue

What of the effect of windfarms on the RNLI's own vital work? The charity has conducted exercises off Rhyl, Denbighshire, and the Kentish Flats to look at just this question.

'Although this is a new source of activity for the RNLI, for crews, it's only slightly different from dealing with any other "rock" sticking out of the sea,' says RNLI Staff Officer Hugh Fogarty. However, coxswains and navigators are alerted to take extra caution with radar and to beware interference on VHF direction finding systems within 50m of windfarms.

Lifeboat crews must be prepared for a new type of rescue and every one of the RNLI's 230-plus lifeboat stations has been suitably briefed. Those crew who live near offshore installations are encouraged to liaise with the owners and familiarise themselves with the towers and platforms so they can access them quickly and safely in an emergency. Volunteers may have to assist following a collision with a turbine; reach someone who has taken refuge on the service platform after a sinking; or help maintenance personnel who get into difficulties.

Similarly, the MCA conducted winching and radar tests at North Hoyle windfarm with an RAF Sea King rescue helicopter. It found that rescue helicopters might be able to winch from the top of the towers although their cables aren't usually long enough to reach the platform. Pilots also need to be aware of air turbulence downwind of the turbines and that the turbine blades may be difficult to spot in murky conditions.

'Helicopters can still operate within and close to windfarms but they have to take more care,' says Sophie Turner of the MCA.

'In future, all renewable energy installations will be required to undergo a search and rescue assessment and to create an emergency response plan with the MCA and their local lifeboat stations.'

She also stresses that search and rescue teams will rise to the challenge in the event of an emergency: 'Helicopter and lifeboat crews respond to varied incidents on a range of boats and assess and evaluate how they are going to handle any incident when they arrive. A windfarm is no different – and at least it does not move around on the sea like vessels do!'



Ready for action – crew members familiarise themselves with a local windfarm

Rhyl people

Paul Archer-Jones, Second Coxswain at Rhyl lifeboat station, is a self-employed electrician. He also works on the service boats that take maintenance staff out to the local windfarms.

'Because the turbines appear so big on the horizon, people think they must be close, but they're 5 miles out. Five of the Rhyl crew have been or are involved in various roles within the construction and maintenance of the turbine towers.

I know other local people have been employed on the electrical/mechanical side of things. 'During the building there wasn't much noise or disruption for Rhyl.

There was a bit of noise banging in the monopiles and then some upheaval setting up the cables, but the disruption was minimal.

'People don't realise how many will be built – particularly in the Thames estuary. The east coast of England will be dotted with them.

The North Hoyle farm has been good for charter boat fishing and local anglers who fish nearby as the bases of the turbines attract molluscs and other marine creatures, which serve as a feeding ground for fish.

'We've had two shouts near the windfarm. One was a 4-hour search with Llandudno and Hoylake lifeboats and the Anglesey RAF rescue helicopter. That was for five people in thick fog. The other was to a motor sailing boat that had lost power.

All were landed safely.'



Cargo ships: a colour portfolio

by David L Williams and Richard de Kerbrech

Cargo ships embraces a bygone era of shipping before the imposing container vessels of today that now dominate our seas. The book is a mine of information on the coasters and freighters from the mid 1950s to the early 70s. These were the days of the Blue Star Line, Cunard and other shipping companies that ran vessels loaded with tea, rice and porcelain, fruit, tobacco, leather, coffee and sugar from the Orient, Caribbean, South America and Africa. Some also carried up to 100 passengers in relative comfort – it was certainly a different way to travel from their contemporaries RMS *Queen Elizabeth* and *Queen Mary*.

This is a work that would be of interest to mariners who served on the merchant vessels or those who remember seeing big traditional ships like the *Scottish Prince*, the *Jamaica Planter* and the *Athenic* at berth around our coasts. This charming book is widely illustrated with previously unpublished colour photos that were taken by the late Kenneth Whiteman.

Published by Ian Allan
ISBN 9780711031616
Price £14.99 hardback

Learning to sail in dinghies or yachts

by Basil Mosenthal

Learning to sail is a guide for those who are complete beginners at sailing. Unlike many guides that annoyingly assume you already have a certain amount of knowledge, this one really does begin with the basics. It is aimed at both children and adults so the language is simple, and diagrams and pictures clear. Although not designed to replace practical instruction on the water, it does prepare you for what's to come by clearly explaining the different parts of a dinghy or sailing boat; how the sails work; managing ropes; tides and much more. Even if you are not actually planning to set foot on the water it is interesting to read the mechanics of boathandling.

This is an excellent guide but we would like to add two reminders. The RNLI advises sailors to wear lifejackets at all times – and booms and winches can be extremely dangerous to be around, so please take care.

Published by Adlard Coles Nautical
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BOOKS

From cargos of coffee and tobacco to the thrills of speedboat testing, from learning the ropes to total disaster – Carol Waterkeyn and Sam Price review four more titles to bring you closer to the sea

Unless other ordering details are stated, all books reviewed in *the Lifeboat* are available from all good bookshops and online from Amazon via the RNLI website at rnli.org.uk/amazon. Amazon will donate a minimum of 5% of the value of all such orders to the RNLI. (For the RNLI to benefit in this way you must access Amazon via the RNLI website and not go direct to Amazon.)

Challenges

by Dag Pike

'It is not what you've done that counts, it is what you are going to do'. This is what 74-year-old Dag Pike believes, and he is still setting challenges for himself, after enjoying huge success on the sea. The book records his life story, from a young child falling in love with the sea aged just 8, to becoming one of the most respected seamen in the world. An exciting story, *Challenges* states the ups and downs Pike encountered on his way to becoming a skilled navigator and the various tasks he has accomplished. The book is a thrilling read, and shows Pike's prowess as an author as well as a seaman. His vivid descriptions will capture readers' imaginations, helping them to envisage the challenges of life at sea. An inspirational read.

Dag was an inspector of lifeboats for the RNLI in the early 1960s, and was involved in the introduction of the rigid inflatable boat for the RNLI.

Published by Bosun
ISBN 9780954693275
Price: £19.95 hardback

When the wind blows

by Maggi Ansell

Maggi and Robin Ansell's amazing journey around the world is put into writing, in the extraordinary *When the wind blows*. Descriptions of love and happiness turn to tragedy and despair in a sudden turn of events, leaving the family only just intact. Despite this, a happy theme is maintained throughout the book, as they manage to deal with even the loss of the boat. Their story takes us from Cuba to Australia, and climaxes with Maggi and Robin being caught in a cyclone and almost losing their lives. A stunning tale, bringing to attention both the thrill and risks of sailing, *When the wind blows* is an adventure that grips you from beginning to end.

Maggi has written for a number of international sailing publications. She has lived and worked in Libya, the Cayman Islands, the Philippines, Australia and latterly on Vancouver Island, Canada.

Published by Trafford
ISBN 1412099226
Price: £12 paperback





Lottery lifesavings

When it comes to saving lives at sea, £200,000 is a great deal of money to raise. Luckily, improvements to the Lifeboat Lottery will save the RNLI approximately this much in administration – every year. Mairéad Dwane explains



From 1977–2004, Lifeboat Lottery winners were chosen the old-fashioned way. Tickets were put in a large drum, the handle was turned and the winning tickets drawn. As the Lottery's popularity increased (takings are up 281% in the past 3 years) either the job would have to be outsourced or the RNLI was going to need a bigger drum! An outside lottery-handling agency was indeed engaged by 2005.

But this need for outside help has been eliminated thanks to the huge efforts of members of the Information Systems, Income Processing and Supporter Communications teams at RNLI Headquarters. The new system is largely electronic.

Firstly, barcodes have been added to the vouchers that replaced books of separate tickets for those who 'buy all'. Details can now be recorded up to four times quicker than before, bringing the task back within the capacity of in-house staff and saving the RNLI £130,000 a year.

Next, a unique computer system, developed internally by RNLI programmers, drives the draw itself. It gives every ticket its own numbered entry and then mixes up the sequence randomly. At the time of the draw, a display counts through the

randomised entries at a rate of 270 a second. Simply pushing a button freezes the process at the winning number and reveals the ticket holder's details – and saves another £80,000 a year.

The first draw of this kind was made at RNLI Headquarters in March 2007, with Poole fundraising branch Chairman Brian Traves pushing the button and selecting a ticket bought by Mr DJ Penn from Essex, who won a brand new Citroen C1.

Mr Traves explains: 'Each ticket really has an equal chance now, no matter when bought. Gone are the days of your ticket being stuck at the bottom of the barrel!' He adds: 'I was most impressed with the superb technology provided by the RNLI team in creating such a wonderful, fair system. The Lifeboat Lottery brought in £3.9M for the RNLI's lifesaving work in 2006.'

Due to differing gaming laws in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, we regret that supporters here cannot enter the Lifeboat Lottery. A new raft of gaming laws comes into play in Great Britain in September 2007, which may have further implications for the way in which the Lottery is run. *The Lifeboat* will keep you informed of any changes.

A new discovery each day

RNLI corporate partner Travelscope Holidays Ltd has kindly donated several Lifeboat Lottery prizes over the years, as well as passing on to the charity a percentage of every holiday booked by RNLI supporters. It recently extended its river cruising fleet and range of destinations and invited the RNLI's Rhys Parker to sample 2 days of a trip from Amsterdam to Basle on board the MS *Britannia*.

'Having never been on a river cruise before, I was unsure what to expect. I was very pleasantly surprised,' says Rhys. 'I joined the *Britannia* for her evening cruise to Utrecht then retired to an en suite, air-

conditioned cabin for a good night's sleep.

'I was awoken next morning by the sound of the *Britannia* working her way through a lock en route to Arnhem, featured in the film *A Bridge too far*. We had the choice of exploring the city or an excursion to the British Airborne Museum and war cemetery.

'Back onboard, I had the pick of the sun deck and pool, a spacious lounge with all-round views of the passing countryside, a reasonably priced bar, sauna, solarium, TV room and souvenir shop.

'The following day, I was sad to leave. The *Britannia*'s other passengers, however,

were journeying onwards to Germany and Switzerland. I asked Margaret and Bill Dunn from North Shields their opinion of the holiday: "Firstly, we were surprised at how big the boat is. The food and accommodation have been good too. It's our first river cruise; we've cruised the Caribbean but the thing that attracted us to this holiday was the idea that we could see and discover new places each day."

To find out more, see Travelscope's advert on page 8, see www.travelscope.co.uk/lif, or speak to an RNLI-designated Travelscope representative on 0870 264 2160.

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!



First prize in the Autumn 2007 Lifeboat Lottery is a Peugeot 107. Second prize is a Travelscope 12-day cruise for two to St Petersburg and the Baltic capitals. There are seven cash prizes from £500-£100

Tickets will be available to members on 18 July and earlier to fundraising branches. If you don't usually receive tickets and would like to, please call 0845 121 4999 or email lottery@rnli.org.uk.



Lottery winner David Penn (centre) enjoys his visit to West Mersea lifeboat station, with Deputy Launching Authorities Ian Crossley (left) and Jeremy Dumas (right).

Photo: Nigel Brown

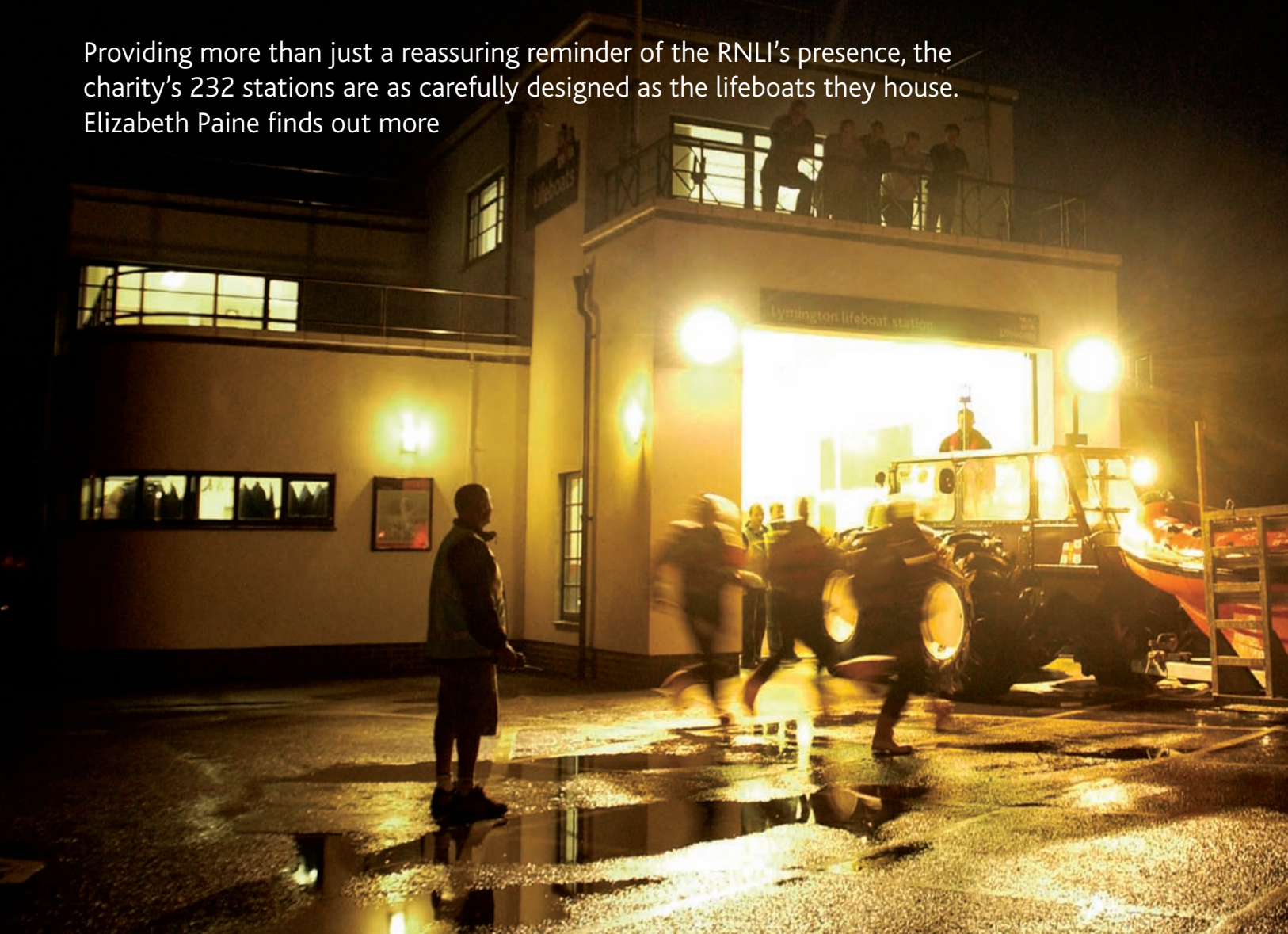


Spring 2007 Lottery winners

1st prize Citroen C1, Mr DJ Penn, Essex
 2nd prize 9-day Blue Danube cruise from Travelscope Holidays Ltd, Mr JL Dawson, Birmingham
 3rd prize £500, Miss J Baker, Cardiff
 4th Prize £250, Mr R Clark, Middlesex
 Five prizes of £100 each, Mrs J Jones, Hampshire; Mr GHW Jeffries, Norfolk; Ms BM Stoddart, South Yorkshire; Mr AW Sharp, Surrey; Mr CH Horton, Norfolk

Innovation stations

Providing more than just a reassuring reminder of the RNLI's presence, the charity's 232 stations are as carefully designed as the lifeboats they house. Elizabeth Paine finds out more



When a volunteer is on deck, facing waves as high as a house, they have little thought for what awaits them onshore. Every ounce of energy is focused on the task in hand, every second accounted for. But eventually, hopefully, they will make it back safely; perhaps help to recover the lifeboat up a slipway or onto a carriage and into the boathouse.

Once all is made ready for action again, they can at last relax, have a warming cup of tea, a hot shower, a change of clothes; maybe sit and talk with the survivors and their relatives. They will know the station well, spending hours of their own time in training,

in showing visitors around, or fundraising during an open day.

But what if the changing rooms never dry out, there's no space to meet in except for the mechanic's workshop, and valuable equipment gets damaged or even stolen because security is inadequate? Who would want to volunteer to risk their lives – and to change in the public toilets en route?

Withstanding wind and wave

The 'fleet' of stations owned by the RNLI must withstand the toughest of environments, often immersed in salt water and battered by the elements, while enabling

efficient operation of the lifeboats that they house. However, they range in age from more than 100 years to 6 months, so their facilities, and state of health, vary considerably.

To deal with this, the RNLI must balance its duty of care to its volunteers and its purpose of saving lives with the wise use of hard-won funds. Thus, a rolling shoreworks plan identifies the stations most in need of updating operationally, addressing welfare and environmental factors too.

Lately, the introduction of the latest lifeboat designs (the Tamar class all-weather and Atlantic 85 inshore) has demanded modifications to, or even replacement



Volunteers at Lymington making full use of their new boathouse
Inset: Nicknamed 'the Odeon' for its retro styling, Lymington's facility also includes an RNLI shop

Photos: Graham Wilding



of, many shore facilities. As a result of extraordinarily successful fundraising for the RNLI in 2006 (see page 7) the implementation of the shoreworks plan is now to be accelerated (see panel).

Experience and evolution

The RNLI must consult widely to go ahead with a shoreworks project. The charity leads the field in working with local authorities and other organisations to ensure that the design, materials, construction process and lasting impact are sensitive to the local environment, using the best in modern architectural and engineering techniques.

Padstow's multi-award-winning new station is a perfect example of function, form and process coming together successfully in a remote and rugged location. As it had to meet the minimum 50-year lifespan expected of all lifeboat stations, traditional materials combined with the latest civil engineering research were a sound investment.

This is no simple achievement, however. An example of the uphill struggle that can be faced in getting a new lifeboat station off the drawing board is in Lymington, Hampshire.

Solent saga

The search for a new site for Lymington lifeboat station began 9 long years ago. In 2006, after much controversy, the new station finally opened – on the old site.

Initial hopes for the New Forest yacht-spot were to find a deep-water location so that a davit (crane) could be installed to ease launch and recovery. The local Lifeboat Operations Manager Mike Webb, RNLI Estates Manager Howard Richings, the site's architect and three successive lifeboat inspectors walked the entire town in their quest. The quay was too congested, particularly in Summer when tourists pack the picturesque waterfront. Across the river, hard by the Isle of Wight ferry dock, the train gate would have caused major hold-ups for the crew during emergencies.

Finally conceding that the existing site remained the best option, a larger footprint was agreed. A pontoon was proposed to alleviate territorial concerns from neighbours (frequent regattas make this a hectic frontage) but the Harbour Commissioners rejected this idea, so priority access to the area's one slipway was delicately negotiated. The RNLI was determined to find a solution that would not only suit its operational needs but also be sensitive to the location and the locals. Altogether, 28 different plans were drawn up before permission was finally granted.

Since five members of the crew of 1965 officially opened it, the new building has evolved into a focus for the community.



The award-winning boathouse and slipway at Padstow

Photo: Dave Nicoll

MAJOR SHOREWORKS COMPLETED IN 2006–7

Fraserburgh	new D class boathouse and shore facility
Clacton	new B and D class boathouse
Tower	Lifeboat Pier on River Thames
Lymington	new B class boathouse
Padstow	new Tamar class boathouse and slipway
Port Erin	boathouse and slipway adaptation
Saltash	extension to divisional base
Whitby	boathouse substructure and new berth

MAJOR SHOREWORKS PLANNED FOR 2007–11

Angle, Anstruther, Aran Islands, Baltimore, Barrow, Bembridge, Borth, Bridlington, Castletownbere, Cromer, Douglas, Dunbar, Enniskillen, Exmouth, Gravesend, Hayling Island, Howth, Hoylake, Islay, Kinsale, Llandudno, Moelfre, Morecambe, New Brighton, Portaferry, Porthdinllaen, Portrush, Sennen Cove, Shoreham Harbour, Southend-on-Sea, St Davids, St Helier, The Lizard, The Mumbles, Torbay, Weston-super-Mare, Wexford, Wick

('Major' is more than £250,000 cost)

The integral RNLI shop is booming and local clubs can hire any vacant meeting rooms. State-of-the-art training facilities were generously funded by local resident Rufus Eyre, and comprise a dedicated room with plasma screen, projector and laptop and a computer network throughout the building. A well-equipped workshop enables any maintenance issues to be dealt with promptly, and changing facilities are warm and comfortable.

The lifeboat itself (currently an Atlantic 75 but soon to be an 85) is now dry-housed, her carriage permanently hitched to her launching tractor. The old shed could not accommodate this arrangement and the coupling was dealt with in the open, at the time of launching. This time saving quickly proved its worth, as caught on film by BBC TV's *Seaside rescue*, when a casualty was airlifted away only 18 minutes after the initial shout, almost certainly saving his life.

Lymington's design is so successful that it is now considered a blueprint for future lifeboat stations – and there is now a waiting list to join the crew. →



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Salcombe correspondence

RNLI supporter Richard J Garnett Harper had watched some RNLI shoreworks underway at Salcombe, Devon, in 2006 and wrote to query its cost-effectiveness:

'My house overlooks the lifeboat mooring station, which was built in 2005. Previously the lifeboat had to be moored out in the estuary. After what seemed a short time, the lifeboat was remoored in the estuary and the new, presumably costly mooring partly dismantled. It would be comforting to know that the cost of this mistake is not being borne by the Institution.'

RNLI Estates Manager Howard Richings replied:

'We provided a new boathouse and slipway for the newly allocated inshore lifeboat and a new "alongside" berth for the existing all-weather lifeboat, to improve response time and safety. Finding this solution proved difficult due to the sensitive nature of the area and providing a berth and access channel of sufficient depth.

'However, we were less than satisfied with the new pontoon, in particular the performance of the paint system. But remedial work, in factory conditions, was done at the cost of the supplier and contractor.



Photo: Tim Stanger LRP5

'We also took the opportunity to prepare the pontoon for new fendering to accommodate a possible future lifeboat that was not known of at the time of the original design. We brought this work forward while removal and transport costs were being borne by others.

'Marine works are by their nature difficult and problems with corrosion common. It was essential that we obtained value for money from our contract and minimised the risk of

future maintenance problems. The berth is now operational again (pictured).'

Mr Garnett Harper concluded:

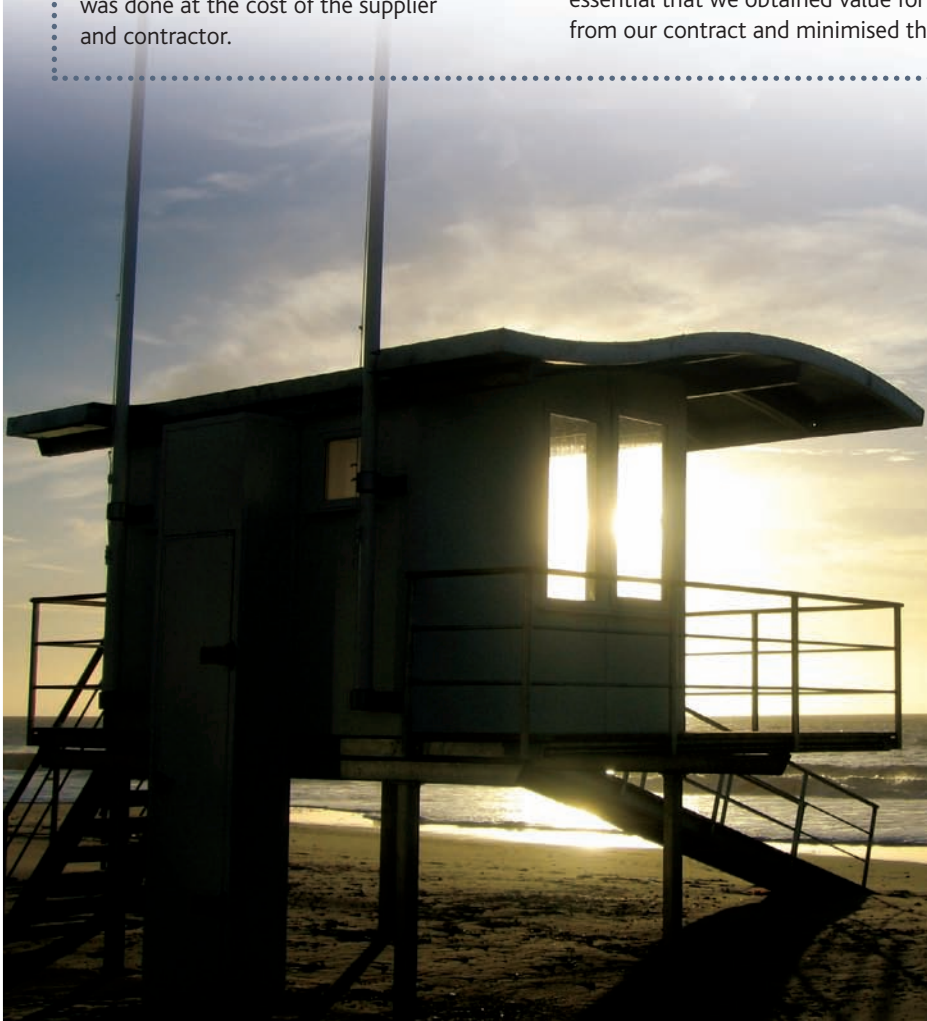
'Thank you for your comprehensive and helpful reply. It has given me the reassurance that my contribution to the RNLI, and that of others, is being spent wisely. The support that I and my family give to the volunteer crews will continue and our admiration of them is constant.'

TESTING, TESTING ...



For the RNLI, going 'green' is not about flaunting eco-worthiness. There are sound economic and common-sense principles behind the trial of the PowerEd, a combination mini wind turbine, solar panel and weather sensor freshly installed on the roof of the depot at Headquarters in Poole.

In an experiment run in partnership with local Lytchett Minster school, the equipment is being assessed for possible use at RNLI lifeguard units. Often in remote spots, not connected to a conventional electrical supply, lifeguard units all need to run lighting, various appliances and communications equipment. Though probably too early to try out in the new lifeguard towers being installed this Summer (pictured), the thoroughly practical package could become the standard – and even pay for itself.



LAUNCHES

2,190 LIFEBOAT AND RESCUE HOVERCRAFT LAUNCHES OCTOBER 2006–MARCH 2007

ABERDEEN

ON-1248(17-24):Oct20,
Nov27,28,29,Dec29,
Feb2,7,Mar25
D-500:Oct20
D-536:Nov28,30,Jan9,20,
Feb11

ABERDOVEY

B-758:Oct8,Jan11(x2),15

ABERSOCH

B-754:Jan10

B-790:Oct22(x2)

ABERYSTWYTH

B-704:Oct25,Jan10,Feb3,
Mar17,21,24

AITH

ON-1232(17-14):Dec24,
Jan19,Feb22,Mar19

ALDEBURGH

ON-1193(12-34):Feb7,
Mar24

D-520:Oct29

ALDERNEY

ON-1199(14-04):Jan14

AMBLE

ON-1176(12-19):Oct1,8,
17,18,Nov10,Dec20,Jan17,
30,Feb15

D-569:Oct1,2,Dec20,

Jan17(x2),Feb15

ANGLE

ON-1114(47-011):
Oct26,Nov10,17,18,Dec5,
Mar16,25,28

D-638:Oct1,9,14,26,

Nov17,Dec2

ANSTRUTHER

ON-1124(12-001):

Oct8,Nov10,25

D-461:Oct8(x2),Nov10

D-667:Dec17,Jan2

APPLEDORE

ON-1140(47-027):Feb19,
20,Mar4,11,14,31(x2)

B-742:Dec3,Feb19,20,

Mar4,11,19,22,26,30,31(x2)

B-753:Oct11,26,27,Nov10

ARAN ISLANDS

ON-1217(17-06):Oct29,

Nov7,12,24,Dec7,31(x2),

Jan7,13,29,Feb18,

Mar2,26,30

ARBROATH

ON-1194(12-35):Nov2,

Dec12,13,16,Feb1,16

D-621:Nov2,Dec16,Feb1

ARKLOW

ON-1223(14-19):Mar8,10

ARRAN (LAMLAISH)

B-770:Oct4,24,Jan31,

Feb6,7

ARRANMORE

ON-1244(17-22):

Oct19,Jan6,17

ON-1263(17-34):

Jan26,Feb7,15,Mar1

BALLYCOTTON

ON-1204(14-06):

Jan13,Feb3,28

ON-1233(14-25):

Oct1,13,Jan11,12

BALLYGLASS

ON-1235(17-15):Mar24

D-507:Oct16,19,20,Feb4

BALTIMORE

ON-1122(47-017):Dec4,

Jan2,30

ON-1137(47-024):

Oct4,15,Nov18

BANGOR

B-584:Oct6

B-805:Oct6,21(x2),Nov2,

11,23,25(x2),Dec18,Jan2

(x2),31,Feb18,Mar10,28

BARMOUTH

ON-1178(12-21):Nov11

D-524:Dec14

BARRA ISLAND

ON-1230(17-12):Oct8,

Feb4,7

BARROW

ON-1117(47-014):Dec27

D-567:Oct30,Mar31

D-570:Dec2,Jan22

BARRY DOCK

ON-1245(14-29):Oct26(x2),

Nov18,Jan27,Mar14

BEAUMARIS

B-768:Oct4,24,29,Nov5,

Dec5,10,Jan3,Feb3,7,15,18,

Mar18,19,27

BEMBRIDGE

ON-1112(47-010):Dec3,31

D-640:Mar16

D-649:Oct2,Dec3

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED

ON-1162(12-004):Jan21

D-610:Jan7,21

D-639:Oct18

BLACKPOOL

B-748:Oct4,Feb26,Mar26

B-773:Feb3

D-558:Oct4,Nov30,Feb3,4,

26,Mar26

D-566:Nov30,Feb3

BLYTH

D-606:Oct3,Jan23,26

BORTH

D-635:Nov4

BRIDLINGTON

ON-1169(12-12):Oct19,

Nov4,26,Feb5,26,Mar13

D-557:Oct6,19,Dec16

BRIGHTON

B-724:Oct1,3,14,15

B-737:Oct31,Nov4,5,Jan6,

27,28,Feb18,25,Mar24,31

BROUGHTY FERRY

ON-1252(14-31):

Oct9,Nov21,Dec3,10(x2),

Jan1,Mar19,24

ON-1253(14-32):

Jan30(x3)

D-539:Oct9,Nov21,26,

Dec2,10(x2),12,Jan1,24,30,

Mar19,24,30

BUCKIE

ON-1268(17-37):Oct21,28,

Nov3,7,16,25,Dec3,Jan23,

Feb16,Mar12,25,29

BUDE

D-617:Oct21

BUNDORAN

B-711:Feb1,Mar2

BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH

B-733:Oct21(x2),Nov9,

Dec19,Feb25(x2)

D-672:Feb25

BURNHAM-ON-SEA

B-795:Nov1,Dec20,Jan4

D-552:Nov1

D-664:Dec20,Jan4,Feb19

BURRY PORT

D-602:

Oct31,Nov4(x2),Nov12

CALSHOT

ON-1150(52-44):Oct1,3,

8(x3),17,21,25,27(x2)

D-1155(47-037):

Feb21,26,27,Mar6,18,20

ON-1159(52-45):

Dec18(x2),Jan17

D-609:Dec18(x2),Jan10,

Feb19,21,27,16,18,28

D-615:Oct1,3,8,20

CAMPBELTOWN

ON-1241(17-19):

Nov24,Jan7,18

D-571:Jan7

CARDIGAN

B-752:Feb17,Mar28

B-757:Oct13,Nov4,

Jan8

D-491:Mar19

D-547:Oct26

CASTLETOWNBERE

ON-1269(17-38):Feb7,

Mar26

ON-1277(17-44):

Oct6,19,Dec5

CHISWICK

B-801:Jan26,29,Feb4,6

E-001:Dec28,Mar7(x2),12

E-003:Oct7(x2),Nov1(x2),

25(x3),26,28(x2),Dec2,

3(x2),8(x2),10,11,15,17,18,

23,26,27,31,Jan1(x3),5,7,8,

21(x2),Feb14,21,Mar1,10,

17,19,23,24(x2),25,31

E-006:Oct6(x2),13,20,25,

Nov5,6(x2),12(x2),13,

Mar31

CLACTION-ON-SEA

B-744:Oct15(x2)

B-774:Feb3,11,Mar2

D-495:Mar30

D-559:Oct7,19,29,Feb3

CLEETHORPES

D-618:Oct1,3,Nov25(x2),

26,Dec27,28,Feb1,4

D-650:Mar24

CLIFDEN

B-751:Dec28

D-504:Nov22,Dec28

CLOGHER HEAD

ON-1190(12-31):Dec11,

Jan25

CONWY

D-627:Oct15,Nov11,

Dec26,Mar6,30

COURTMACSHERRY

HARBOUR

ON-1205(14-07):Oct24

COWES INSHORE

LIFEBOAT CENTRE

B-812:Nov6

CRASTER

D-542:Jan7

CRICCIETH

B-707:Oct1(x2),8,25,

Nov18,Dec8,Mar2,6(x2)

CROMER

D-568:

Nov22,25,Dec28,Feb27

CROSSHAVEN

B-782:Oct1,6,Nov23,26,

Dec6,20,Jan13,17,20(x2)

CULLERCOATS

B-590:Oct10,21(x2),28,30,

Dec1,17,Jan5

B-811:Jan6

B-815:Feb18

DONAGHADEE

ON-1267(14-36):

Oct14,Nov1,18,Dec20

DOUGLAS

ON-1147(47-032):Mar27

DOVER

ON-1220(17-09):Dec26,27,

Jan9,Feb13,Mar9,27(x2)

ON-1260(17-31):

Oct14,Nov12,13,24

DUN LAOGHAIRE

ON-1200(14-05):Oct1,28

D-565:Oct28,Mar24,29

DUNBAR

ON-1207(14-09):

Oct8,22,Dec20,Jan3,

Feb11,18,Mar4

D-497:Feb11

D-544:Oct8,22,Nov26

DUNGENESS

ON-1178(12-21):Mar9

ON-1186(12-27):

Nov29(x2),Jan9

DUNMORE EAST

ON-1215(14-17):

Oct17,Nov1,3,4,5,6,8,10,

11,12,Dec16,Jan10,11(x2),

12,16,Feb17,Mar5,21,30

EASTBOURNE

ON-1195(12-36):Oct3,27,

29,Nov2,10,Dec18,25,

FLINT

D-505:Oct2,22,Dec7
D-658:Jan8,21,Mar7

FOWEY

ON-1204(14-06):Dec9,24
ON-1222(14-18):Mar25
D-480:Oct24,Dec9

D-526:Mar25

FRASERBURGH

ON-1259(14-34):Oct30,
Nov18,Jan22,Feb6,23

GALWAY

B-738:Oct2,31,Nov25,
Dec4,11,15

GIRVAN

ON-1184(12-25):Nov22
ON-1196(12-37):Oct13,21,
29,Dec26,Feb10(x2),Mar9,
22,24,27

GRAVESEND

B-732:Jan18
B-801:Mar14,15,25
E-001:Oct17,24,26(x2),30,
Feb15(x2),17

E-002:Oct1,7(x2),15,21,
Nov13,14,Dec1,3,10,
Jan11,23,27,Feb3,18,Mar5

E-004:Dec27

**GT YARMOUTH AND
GORLESTON**

ON-1208(14-10):

Jan26,Feb22,Mar13

B-767:Oct8,11,15,16,
Nov12,19,23(x2),Jan31,
Feb5

B-786:Feb17,18,28(x2),
Mar4,8

HARTLEPOOL

ON-1274(14-37):

Oct1,7,10,11,14,Nov29,
Dec21,Jan26,Feb26

B-766:Oct7,Dec17,29

HARWICH

ON-1202(17-03):Oct15(x2),

Dec3,9,22,Jan4,Mar18

ON-1278(17-45):Mar9

B-755:Oct28,30,Nov30,
Dec3,9,23,27,Jan17,20,27,
28,Mar4,5

B-789:Oct7,9(x2),15(x2),
16,Mar13,18,28,31

HASTINGS

ON-1125(12-002):Nov19,

26,Dec10,28,Jan22

D-477:Oct4,23,Nov19,26

D-540:Feb2,13,14,Mar17

HAYLING ISLAND

B-712:Oct19,29,Nov17,20,
22,Dec31,Jan6,31,Feb1

D-642:Oct19

D-655:Nov20,Dec31,Jan31

HELENSBURGH

B-791:Oct1,6,Nov5,22,25,
Dec9,13,Mar3

HELVICK HEAD

B-760:Oct9,Nov12,17,

Dec9,Feb3,Mar31

HOLYHEAD

ON-1257(17-30):Nov2,4

ON-1272(17-41):Dec17

D-654:Oct30,31,Nov4

**HORTON AND PORT
EYNON**

D-531:Feb10

HOWTH

ON-1258(14-33):Nov22,

Dec6,Jan21,24,Feb16

D-659:Oct3,Jan21,22,

Feb4,12,Mar2,24

HOYLAKE

ON-1163(12-005):

Oct2,Jan8,Feb3(x3),20

HUMBER

ON-1216(17-05):Oct3,27,

Nov4,24,Dec11,22,Jan6,
18,Feb15

ON-1236(17-16):Feb17,20

ON-1237(17-17):

Mar20,23,24,26

HUNSTANTON

B-749:Oct1,13,22,24,

Nov23,25,Dec2,17

H-003:Feb4,22,Mar25

ILFRACOMBE

ON-1165(12-007):

Oct13,Dec2,Mar14,30

D-555:Oct14,Nov4,5,

Dec18,27,Feb12,Mar30

INVERGORDON

ON-1206(14-08):Oct12,14,

26,28,Dec31,Jan10,11

ISLAY

ON-1219(17-08):Mar3,4

KESSOCK

B-771:Oct26,28,Nov2,4,11,

Dec1,15,Feb15,Mar25

KILKEEL

B-593:Oct7(x2)

B-812:Nov27,Mar18

KILMORE QUAY

ON-1133(47-021):

Oct14,24,Nov3,Dec20,

Jan10,11,12(x2),16,
Mar7,21

KILRUSH

B-729:Oct14,15,Feb1

KINGHORN

B-720:Oct5,19,Nov4(x2),

25,Dec3,16,17(x3),31,Jan2,

28,Feb4,19,Mar4,27,28,31

KINSALE

B-734:Oct3,4,19,Nov9,

19(x2),29,Dec3

KIPPFORD

D-553:Oct8,Feb11

KIRKCUDBRIGHT

B-585:Oct2

KIRKWALL

ON-1231(17-13):

Oct22,Nov6,13,Feb4,19

KYLE OF LOCHALSH

B-740:Oct12,Dec8,

Jan21,Mar3

LARGS

B-739:Nov16,Dec1,9,20,

22,24,Jan13,Feb11,18(x2),

Mar4,16

B-773:Oct4

LARNE

ON-1246(14-30):Jan11,

15(x2)

D-630:Jan15

D-646:Nov30

LITTLE AND BROAD**HAVEN**

D-628:Oct28,Dec18

LITTLEHAMPTON

B-779:Oct22,Nov8,Dec5,

Mar17

D-631:Oct7,22,Dec5,

Feb26,Mar1,17

LITTLESTONE-ON-SEA

B-732:Oct8,13

B-785:Jan6,Mar9,31

LLANDUDNO ,

ON-1164(12-006):

Nov8,Dec15,Jan19,Feb3

D-508:Oct15,19

D-656:Jan27,Feb19,Mar7

LOCHINVER

ON-1263(17-34):Oct10,31,

Nov3,Dec13

ON-1271(17-40):Mar17

LONGHOPE

ON-1284(16-05):

Nov11(x2),Jan2

LOOE

B-767:Mar17

D-491:Oct21,Nov26(x2)

D-574:Dec16

LOUGH DERG

B-586:Oct7,8,Nov2,Dec3,

Feb6,17,Mar16,18

LOUGH SWILLY

ON-1111(47-009):Nov12

B-717:Nov24,Mar29

LOWESTOFT

ON-1132(47-020):

Oct8,Nov1,Dec12,Feb17

LYME REGIS

B-774:Oct15,29,Nov6(x2)

LYMINGTON

B-755:Oct4

B-784:Oct7(x2),28,29,

Dec13,Feb25,Mar17,31(x4)

LYTHAM ST ANNES

ON-1148(12-11):Dec28

ON-1189(12-30):Oct6(x2),

Nov5,Feb3,Mar27

D-657:Oct19,20(x2),Nov5,6,

Feb3,12,25,Mar27

MABLETHORPE

B-778:Nov8,Feb22

D-653:Nov8,Jan14,Mar14

MACDUFF

B-804:Dec2,Feb1,Mar31

MALLAIG

ON-1250(17-26):

Oct17,20,25,26,27,Feb16,

23,26,Mar11

ON-1262(17-33):

Dec15,Jan13,21

MARGATE

ON-1148(12-11):Oct15

ON-1177(12-20):Feb17

D-545:Oct6,Feb4

MINEHEAD

B-708:Oct29,Jan29,

Feb9,11,Mar28

D-549:Oct29,Feb4,9,

Mar28

MOELFRE

ON-1116(47-013):Oct15,

Dec5

ON-1142(47-029):Jan18,

Feb6,11

D-532:Jan19,Mar24

MONTROSE

ON-1096(47-005):Jan6

ON-1152(47-034):Dec29

D-626:Jan6

MORECAMBE

D-564:Oct29,Nov4,26,

Jan23,27,Feb4,Mar12

H-002:Oct21,28,29,Nov4,

26,Dec27,Jan23,27,

Mar12

MUDEFORD

B-802:Dec27,31,Feb2

B-806:Oct6,12,15,19,

Dec3(x2),7,12,Feb11,17,19,

21,Mar10,16,31

NEW BRIGHTON

B-721:Oct11,23,28,Nov1,

11,20,Dec16,31,Jan2,16,

20,Feb3,Mar3,4,13,23

H-005:Nov1(x2),20,Dec1,

Mar27

NEW QUAY

(CARDIGANSHIRE)

ON-1172(12-15):Oct12

D-616:Oct22,23,29,

Mar2,21

NEWCASTLE

ON-1188(12-29):Oct7,

Jan7,Feb21

D-637:Jan7

NEWHAVEN

ON-1243(17-21):Oct11,29,

Nov10,19,Dec5,26,Jan22,

Feb10,Mar3,17

NEWQUAY (CORNWALL)

B-715:Oct19,21,Nov14,15,

19,24,Dec17,28,Jan7,25,

Feb17,20,22,Mar30,31

D-636:Nov14,15,19,

Dec28,Jan7,14,25,27,

Feb17,22,Mar31

D-640:Oct6(x3),19,21

NORTH BERWICK

D-619:Oct8,Dec17,Feb25,

Mar15(x2),22

OBAN

ON-1225(14-21):

Dec31,Jan6

ON-1227(14-23):Oct25,

Nov11(x2),24,26,Dec6,

Jan28,Feb6,10,27,Mar4

ON PASSAGE

ON-1110(47-008):Dec12

ON-1213(14-15):

Jan5,Mar3

ON-1233(14-25):Jan13

ON-1254(17-27):Oct1

PADSTOW

ON-1283(16-04):

Oct8,12,Dec20,31,Jan26

PENARTH

B-725:Oct8,12,Dec27,Jan

14,Mar11

D-50

RYE HARBOUR**B-727:**Oct7,Nov19,Feb24**SALCOMBE****ON-1130(47-022):**Oct15,
31,Nov27,Jan21,
Feb3(x2),12,13**B-794:**Oct24,31,Jan21(x2)**SCARBOROUGH****ON-1175(12-18):**Oct25**ON-1192(12-33):**Mar28**D-560:**Oct2,14,23,Jan23,
Mar13,31**SEAHOUSES****ON-1173(12-16):**Oct1,
Feb21**D-529:**Oct1,Nov18,Jan31**SELSEY****ON-1146(47-031):**Oct7,
15,Mar17**D-495:**Oct12,15**D-533:**Jan31,Mar14**SENNEN COVE****ON-1121(47-016):**Oct16,
26,Dec13,27,Jan16,Mar17**ON-1122(47-017):**Dec26**D-624:**Oct29,Dec26,
Feb22,Mar3,8,10**SHEERNESS****ON-1211(14-13):**Nov14,Dec20,24,Jan22,
Mar13,28,30**D-662:**Oct5,7(x2),8(x2),
9(x2),Nov8,19,30,Dec1,3,20,
Jan21,Feb22,25,Mar8,11**SHERINGHAM****B-702:**Feb17**SHOREHAM HARBOUR****ON-1158(47-040):**Oct19,Nov5,10,Dec7,
Jan30,Feb14,18**D-645:**Oct1,8,Nov10(x2),
Dec5,Jan30,Feb13,14**D-647:**Oct19(x2)**SKEGNESS****ON-1166(12-008):**

Oct5,24,30

D-499:Oct12,14,29,
Nov26,Jan1**SKERRIES****B-747:**Oct8,15,21,27,
Dec24,29,Feb17**SLIGO BAY****B-781:**Oct10,Nov22,26,28,
Dec5,6,Jan14,Feb10,18**B-782:**Oct8**SOUTH BROADS****D-492:**

Nov9,29,Dec25,Mar17

XP-42:Oct16,Nov9,
Dec12,25,Mar17**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA****B-776:**Oct24,Nov6,25,
Dec30,Jan16,Feb2,7**D-527:**Nov16,Dec14,
Jan24,Mar11**D-633:**Oct2,26,Nov14,
Jan1,Feb11**SOUTHWOLD****B-750:**Nov1,2,16,Feb17(x2),
Mar25**ST ABBES****B-722:**Oct21**B-783:**Jan14**ST AGNES****D-641:**Dec6,Jan14,16,22,
Mar11,31**ST BEES****B-719:**Oct9,Mar24**ST CATHERINE****B-772:**Nov5**ST DAVIDS****ON-1139(47-026):**Oct5,
9(x2),Mar31**D-488:**Oct9(x2)**D-543:**Mar31**ST HELIER****ON-1122(47-017):**Oct13**B-756:**Oct20,24(x2)**B-816:**Feb18,Mar7**ST IVES****ON-1167(12-009):**Oct9,13,
15,Nov2,Jan6,21,Mar28**D-494:**Jan15**D-515:**Oct9,13,Nov2**D-668:**Mar7,11**ST PETER PORT****ON-1203(17-04):**Dec24,30,31,Jan30,Feb9,
18,Mar11,18**ON-1278(17-45):**

Oct18(x2),22,24

STAITHESS AND**RUNSWICK****B-753:**Jan21**B-788:**Oct2,Nov19**STORNOWAY****ON-1238(17-18):**Oct24,Nov9,14,Jan12,22,
Feb17,24,Mar4(x2)**STRANRAER****D-538:**

Oct25,Feb5,22,Mar6,25

STROMNESS**ON-1201(17-02):**Nov13**ON-1236(17-16):**Oct1,5,
Mar2**SUNDERLAND****B-762:**Oct1,4,7,14(x2),
Dec10,Jan4,24,27,Feb24,
Mar3,26**D-608:**Oct4,14(x2),22,
Jan27,Feb17,23**D-625:**Mar3**SWANAGE****ON-1187(12-28):**

Oct3,Mar10,26

D-613:Nov2,11,12,Feb17,
Mar3,26**TEDDINGTON****D-576:**Nov24,Mar28**D-648:**Oct9,11,Nov6,12,
13,21,22,24,27,Dec1,6,8,
10,31,Jan1,19,21,27,28,30,
Feb7,17,18,Mar5,7,17**TEIGNMOUTH****B-809:**Oct14,16,22(x2),
23(x2),Nov1,6,15,28,Dec14,
18,28,Jan13,22,Feb25,
Mar15,24(x2)**TENBY****ON-1115(47-012):**Oct1,4**ON-1280(16-01):**Nov10,
18,27,Dec20,Feb10,27**D-562:**Oct1,4,Nov26,
Feb4,Mar19**THE LIZARD****ON-1145(47-030):**Nov1,
Jan11,18,25,Mar4**THE MUMBLES****ON-1115(47-012):**Nov4,9**ON-1127(47-019):**

Feb4,Mar2,30,31(x2)

D-623:Oct24,27,28,Nov2,
4,11,24,Jan30,Mar30,31**THURSO****ON-1262(17-33):**Oct1**ON-1273(17-42):**Dec10,
23,27,Jan10,Feb8,24**TIGHNABRUACH****B-718:**Feb17,Mar18,19,
30,31**B-743:**Oct6**TOBERMORY****ON-1270(17-39):**

Nov11,Jan6,Mar3,29

TORBAY**ON-1255(17-28):**Oct1,19,
Jan28,Feb3(x2),13(x2)16,
18,Mar7,12,13,15(x2)**ON-1269(17-38):**

Nov27,Dec14,16

D-602:Feb18,Mar2,5,7,10,
13,14(x2),28**D-651:**Oct8,9,29(x2),Nov6,
25,Dec7,16,Jan29,Feb11**TOWER****B-801:**Dec11,15(x2),
16,18,22,23,26,31,
Jan1(x4),34,14**E-001:**Oct6,7,9,11,12,13,
14(x2),15**E-004:**Oct2,5,6,28,29,31,
Nov1,4,8,9,11,12,14(x2),
15(x3),16(x2),17,19(x4),25,
Jan10(x2),Feb5,6,9,10,
12(x2),Mar30(x2)**E-005:**Oct19,20(x3),21,22,
24,Nov24(x2),25,26,28,
Dec2(x2),6,7,8(x2),9(x3),
10(x2),12,31,Jan17(x2),19,
21(x2),26,28,Feb18,21(x2),22,26,Mar2,4,6,7,8,9,10,11,
14,16,17,22,25,28**TRAMORE****D-615:**Feb15**D-643:**Oct14(x2),15,
Nov11,Dec3**TREARDUR BAY****B-731:**Nov2,4**D-614:**Nov4**TROON****ON-1275(14-38):**Oct19,
Nov17,Dec20,Jan2,19(x2),
31,Mar20,25,27,31**D-506:**Jan2,Mar14,20,27**TYNEMOUTH****ON-1237(17-17):**Dec1**ON-1242(17-20):**Oct12,22,
26,Jan4,Feb5,12,27,
Mar23**D-535:**Oct8,18,20,22,26,
Nov1,5,19,Dec1,Jan4(x2),
Feb1,20,Mar31**VALENTIA****ON-1218(17-07):**Oct1,
Feb7,14**WALMER****B-589:**Nov13**B-808:**Jan30**D-514:**Oct27**WALTON AND FRINTON****ON-1154(47-036):**Oct4(x2),
21,Nov11,24,Dec9,Jan21,
Feb3,25,Mar2,11**WELLS****ON-1161(12-003):**Jan30**D-512:**Oct7,Nov11,Jan2**WEST KIRBY****D-612:**Oct2,7,Nov21,
Feb18,Mar27(x2)**WEST MERSEA****B-761:**Oct5(x2),14,15,18,
22,25,31,Nov18,24,Dec8,
Jan13,Mar18(x3),31**WESTON-SUPER-MARE****B-701:**Oct28,Jan16**D-493:**Oct28,Nov13**D-537:**Jan16**WEXFORD****D-644:**Oct27,Jan30**WEYMOUTH****ON-1261(17-32):**Oct1,14,17,
21,Nov26,27,Dec12,13,14,31,
Jan5,6,Feb8,26,Mar17**B-724:**Nov25(x2),26,27,
Dec13,Jan6,19,Mar1,4,16**B-746:**Oct2,5,22,26,28,
Mar28**WHITBY****ON-1212(14-14):**Oct1,13,
17,27(x2),Nov12,Jan27,Feb6,
14,15,23,26,Mar11,16**D-521:**Oct24,Feb14,
22(x4),Mar7**WHITSTABLE****B-764:**Oct7,8,11,15,18,27,
Nov8,23,Dec2,7,Jan27,
Feb2,21,28,Mar2,3,11,16,
17(x2),18**WICK****ON-1224(14-20):**Nov22,
Dec2,3**WICKLOW****ON-1153(47-035):**Oct15**D-518:**

Oct15,Nov2,Jan14,Feb6

WITHERNSEA**D-510:**Dec17,Feb9**D-541:**Nov29,Dec3,Mar7**WORKINGTON****ON-1141(47-028):**Dec20,
Mar12**D-629:**Dec20,27**YARMOUTH****ON-1249(17-25):**Oct5**ON-1279(17-46):**Oct21,26,
Nov11(x2),24,28,Dec12,
21,29,Jan5,Feb1,25,Mar18**YOUGHAL****B-780:**Nov29(x2),Jan8,
Mar7

The services listed

here are those for

which returns had been

received and processed

by 1 May 2007.

NAMING CEREMONIES

B-808 *Donald McLauchlan*, Walmer, 5 May 2007**D-663** *Duggie Rodbard*, Walmer, 5 May 2007**ON-1284(16-05)** *Helen Comrie*, Longhope, 14 June 2007**B-811** *Hylton Burdon*, Cullercoats, 28 April 2007**B-805** *Jessie Hillyard*, Bangor, 21 April 2007**D-657** *Sally*, Lytham St Annes, 17 March 2007**D-658** *Sir Y Fflint*, Flint, 20 May 2007**D-652** *Team Effort*, Fishguard, 24 March 2007Bangor's *Jessie Hillyard*Flint's *Sir Y Fflint*Longhope's *Helen Comrie*

ON STATION

D-674 *OEM STONE III*, Whitby, 15 May 2007

(D-521 has been withdrawn to the relief fleet)

D-671 *Sheringham Shantymen*, Wicklow, 21 February 2007

(D-518 has been withdrawn to the Inshore lifeboat centre, Cowes)

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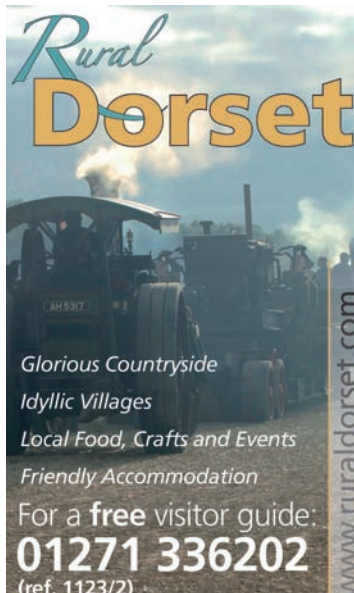


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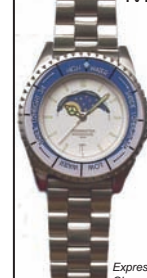
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Photo: Derek King

Murray Walker

The voice of Formula One tells Rory Stamp of his admiration for the RNLI's crews

'I've always had immeasurable respect for them,' says Murray Walker as he watches lifeboat crew members tuck into lunch at The Lifeboat College restaurant. The well-loved motor racing commentator has taken an afternoon out of his busy schedule to pay a visit to the RNLI's training centre at Poole, a short drive from his Hampshire home. 'When I think of those volunteers putting their lives at risk at sea for no financial gain, it makes me proud to be British,' he adds. His voice and face are already igniting flickers of recognition at surrounding tables.

For motorsport fans everywhere, Murray's hi-octane tones are still as central to Formula One as the chequered flags and overflowing champagne, even though he stopped commentating on the sport in 2001. 'I chose to step down then because I wanted to finish with dignity. Age withers, and I wanted to stop nearer the top of my profession than the bottom,' he explains. But the energetic octogenarian hasn't completely taken his foot off the pedal. He still commentates at major international events and is 2007's Formula One Ambassador for Honda: a role that is taking him around the globe. It's a land-based, money-driven sport that can seem a million miles away from the world of boating, yet Murray (an RNLI Shoreline supporter) reserves a great deal of admiration for the charity's crews.

'It does your heart good to hear that young people want to give up their time to save lives,' remarks Murray, sipping a coffee as trainees leave the restaurant, suitably refuelled and ready for an afternoon's activity. 'I can see how important their lifeboat crew training is. Put it this way, you wouldn't want to put an inexperienced driver in charge of a Formula One racing car – it's a sophisticated, powerful, expensive bit of kit that can do more harm than good if you don't know what you're doing.' As he speaks, a man in an RNLI crew polo shirt rushes up and shakes him by the hand. 'Lovely to meet you, Mr Walker – just wanted to say I'm a lifelong fan.'

Murray's popularity amongst motorsport enthusiasts is perhaps down to him being such a big

fan himself. His father was a motorcycle TT champion and, for half his life, motorsport was more of a passionate hobby for Murray than a career. For more than 30 years he held down a successful day job in advertising while commentating in his spare time. 'I am a frustrated racing motorcyclist at heart, really,' he says. 'I would have loved to be the best like Valentino Rossi, but I wasn't good enough. So I supplemented my desires by talking about motorsport.'

Although he admits he feels pangs of envy when he sees others climb into the driving seat and tackle chicanes at extraordinary speeds, Murray still gets excited as a spectator. 'It's dramatic, noisy, colourful, dangerous, competitive and glamorous. A very heady mix!' he points out. 'There is something magical about the noise, speed and assault on your senses. Maybe it's not everyone's cup of tea, but some people fall in love with it from their very first event.'

With decades of commentating under his belt, Murray is greeted as an old friend when he bumps into Formula One team members on his travels. 'One of the best parts of it for me has been meeting some incredible people. Getting to know them amidst this travelling circus of Formula One and seeing their determination and dedication to get to the top has been fantastic,' he says, adding that, over the years, he has befriended Stirling Moss, Nigel Mansell and Michael Schumacher amongst others. 'Michael was adored by everyone in his team because he is a natural born leader and motivator of people. He made it his business to talk to everybody. He knew every nuance of his car and truly applied himself.'

It is his understanding of racing drivers that leads Murray to make a salient point about lifeboat coxswains. 'I suppose you need a lot of the same qualities if you're at the wheel of a lifeboat,' he says as he prepares to drive back to his New Forest home. 'You need to know your limits, your crew's limits, and the limits of your vehicle. Plus plenty of passion and experience, I would imagine': two qualities that Murray certainly isn't short of himself.

'The lifeboat volunteers make me proud to be British.'



A touch of brass

The names of RNLI boats give tantalising hints of their origin. Here, Carol Waterkeyn takes the rare opportunity to meet the man behind one such name

When news of a legacy arrives at RNLI Headquarters, staff and volunteers often wonder why the charity was special to the deceased person. But in the case of the recently acquired *Robert S Ellsmoor*, her eponymous donor is alive and well, and able to enjoy seeing his namesake used in crew training.

Mr Ellsmoor, now aged 68 and retired, has always had a keen interest in the RNLI. From an early age he watched the lifeboat launch in his home town of Hoylake county. 'As a teenager in the early 1950s, I knew all the names of the crew and regularly visited the station, even helping to polish the brasses. The

boats were so lovingly cared for by the crew and shorehelpers, something that has stuck with me throughout my life.'

Unsurprisingly, the sea later beckoned and, in 1955, Robert joined the Merchant Navy as a cadet and served as an apprentice, progressing to the role of deck officer (pictured). 'I qualified in 1960 and sailed out of Liverpool mainly, but also Hull, London and ports in mainland Europe serving the west African trade routes and even further afield. I took my Masters Certificate in 1966, which allowed me to eventually gain command.'

After substantial restructuring of

your shout

Dear Editor,

My wife and I were privileged recently to spend a day visiting RNLI Headquarters at Poole. Every aspect that we saw or heard made us deeply proud of the Lifeboat service and full of admiration both for the people and the organisation.

We saw operating several lifeboats and how impressive they were, particularly the latest Tamar, with its fully integrated electronics and ergonomic controls operated from shock-protected seats for all the crew. What truly innovative care your design department has taken, nothing being left to chance.

We walked through your remarkable residential College with all the latest aids to teaching – even a pool in which survival in a stormy sea at night can be simulated – but most humbling was the obvious professionalism and enthusiasm of the instructors and the infectious pride of the students, most of whom had given up their own time to be there.

Especially memorable was a class of young lifeguards about to deploy for the Summer season. Their instructor told us that prior to RNLI involvement with their club, they had no proper equipment,

uniform or training whereas now they have all three.

Lastly we saw the logistic operation to keep all this running, with over 20,000 items in a modern warehouse served by forklift elevators that can rise up to nine storeys.

I spent 32 years in the Royal Navy (I am a retired RN Engineering Commodore) so I know what a ship should look like and what it takes to get her there, in that malign environment which is bad weather at sea – and yet this is your norm! I spent 8 years working for a US firm and my American friends could not believe that in the British Isles what they assume has to be run by a Government agency is done by charity and very well done too!

Long may the RNLI continue and be an inspiration, even in other fields as it is in rescue at sea.

Yours sincerely
Robin Kerr, Bath



The RNLI Headquarters site overlooking Holes Bay, Poole Harbour

Photo: Sue Siegar

can lead to so much more

the merchant shipping business in the 80s, Robert was made redundant but was not to be separated from the sea. He worked on ferry services between Holyhead and Dun Laoghaire and for the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company.

'During my time on the ferries, we took part in exercises with the emergency and search and rescue services, so I saw first hand the type of rescues that the RNLI were involved in. I am amazed by the number of call outs the lifeboats and hovercraft respond to each year and I have enormous respect for what the crews do. I admire their professionalism and also that of the volunteer sea safety officers who carry out boat checks and give advice to sailors.

'Now I have my own boat, a Beneteau Antares 7.10, it is good to think there are RNLI volunteers on hand should I ever

need them – you never know what might happen. But I know that crew training is essential. That is why I decided to help fund an RNLI training boat.'

During construction, Robert was delighted to visit Hardy Marine's boatyard in Norfolk and witness craftsmen there make the final touches. The RNLI's two Hardy Commodore 42 motor yachts were built to its own specifications but some 'off the peg' craft were at earlier stages of construction and on view at the same time: 'It was fascinating!'

The *Robert S Ellsmoor* and her twin the *Ian and Ann Butler* can now both be found at The Lifeboat College in Poole, Dorset. They are already booked up for the year for training personnel from across the UK and Rol in boathandling, navigation and other key skills (see the Spring 2007 issue of *the Lifeboat* for details).

The proudest moment for this donor came in June this year when, as *the Lifeboat* went to print, he took part in the official naming ceremony at The Lifeboat College for the *Robert S Ellsmoor*.

'We are so grateful for Mr Ellsmoor's generosity. Over the past months, we have had the pleasure of getting to know Bob well – he really is part of the RNLI family.

'Everyone who gives to the RNLI helps keep the service running, both now and for years to come. It's not just boats we need, though: training, equipment and shoreworks always need funding and are just as important. If you would like to help please give me a ring on 01202 663115.'

Sarah Sleight,
RNLI Personal Donations Manager

Dear Editor,

Regarding the question in the Spring 2007 issue whether those rescued by the RNLI go on to donate: I was rescued by the Padstow lifeboat in 1968 [pictured] when I was 20, together with five members of my extended family. My father and uncle made a donation at the time and I am a Shoreline supporter. I also put money in every single lifeboat box I come across. My husband always complains to the people minding the box that he doesn't know why he's contributing as look what he's had to



put up with ever since! He thinks it's very funny but at least the RNLI is not forgotten by us and we spread the word whenever possible. Keep up the wonderful work.

Yours very gratefully,
Margaret Humphreys (née Mattos)
by email

Dear Editor

Would you believe? Some dirty rotten bouncer of a sneak thief has nicked my Governor's stick-on badge off the rear of my car. It must have taken hours because you Lifeboat lot don't muck about and the adhesive was designed to last. Would you be kind enough to send me another? Meanwhile, I will keep a sharp lookout for any cars sporting the Governor logo driven by a person who does not look like a Governor. Are there any characteristics I should be looking for?!

Kind regards

Terence Skinner
London

To add your shout, write to the Editor at
thelifeboat@rnli.org.uk or RNLI Headquarters,
West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ



Photo: London News Agency Photos Ltd

Capital gains

In 1927, London 'life-boat' day was a huge operation, supported by the Lord Mayor of London and many of the borough mayors. Four thousand collectors, mainly women, worked from 150 temporary depots. Lifeboats were stationed at Southwark Town Hall, and in Lambeth and Finchley, in an attempt to bring the coast to the streets of London and provide prominent landmarks for collectors.

In a fascinating account of the day, the *Life-boat* journal tells of: 'a collector in Central London, who was most touched to see an apparently homeless old man come up to put a penny in her box, and it was with the greatest pleasure that she fastened a paper Life-boat in his tattered coat.' Another was shocked to receive more from a chauffeur than from the lady whose Rolls he was driving! Generous-spirited Londoners and hard-working collectors combined to raise over £4,300.

Today, the RNLI is even more visible to residents of, and visitors to, the capital. Four lifeboat stations are located on the tidal stretches of the River Thames and one, Tower, is the busiest of all 232 RNLI stations. Its new home at Lifeboat Pier on the Embankment has certainly raised public awareness.

London lifeboat day remains an important activity for the RNLI, as Regional Manager for London Stuart Willson points out: 'London lifeboat day is the biggest single collection for the RNLI. This May, we had 1,900 collectors.'

Volunteers were to be seen at all major train stations in time to catch early morning commuters (raising £33,000) and at other key sites in the metropolis throughout the day. Stuart continues: 'We don't yet know the total for the whole of London lifeboat week but are hoping we can beat last year's total of £240,000.'

Above: 10 May 1927.
An underground repair worker wears his London Life-boat Day badge with pride
Below: 8 May 2007.
The Antony Gormley sculpture on Waterloo Bridge lends a helping hand with collections



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