

# LIFEBOAT



THE RNLI IS THE  
CHARITY THAT  
SAVES LIVES AT SEA

ISSUE 628 | SUMMER 2019

[RNLI.org](http://RNLI.org)



## THE LAST TYNE

A fond farewell to the Tyne class lifeboat

PLUS:

**RESCUE STORIES**

Lifesaving powered by you

**GIVE IT A GO**

Build the perfect sandcastle

# Welcome



## Not a dry eye in the boathouse

Lifeboats mean a lot to our volunteers. In this issue we join the emotional Wicklow crew, saying farewell to the last Tyne class lifeboat in the fleet (page 18). It's time for the much-loved Tyne to make way for our faster 25-knot lifeboats, but not without a good send off.

Some of you will remember the Fastnet Disaster of 1979, where crews of 13 lifeboats joined thousands of other rescuers braving hurricane force winds to save others (page 24).

We bring you into the present day in the rescue section, with a young woman drifting out to sea in a toy inflatable and a man in his 70s who was thrown into icy waters. Hold your loved ones close as you read how the RNLI's drowning prevention work saved the life of one family man.

This is my first issue of *Lifeboat* magazine as editor. In my 17 years at the RNLI I've loved interviewing lifesavers. I want to celebrate them in *Lifeboat*. This is *your* magazine – please send me your feedback and ideas for articles.

I also want to thank you for keeping our charity afloat. Every single rescue, every new lifeboat, every life saved is down to your support. Thank you very much and enjoy your magazine!

*Bethany*

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Photos: RNLI/(Nigel Millard, Nathan Williams)



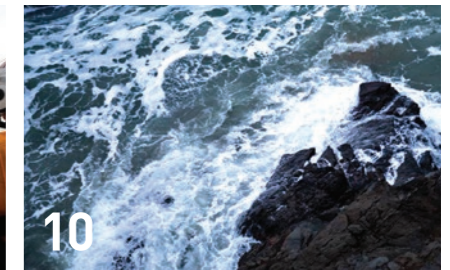
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The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea. We do so by providing a rescue service, safety education, and supervision on beaches. We also influence other organisations, policy-makers and regulators. Our crews and lifeguards have saved over 142,700 lives since the RNLI was formed in 1824. We want to halve UK and Ireland coastal drowning by 2024 and reduce drowning around the world where it's a major risk. We are independent from government and rely on voluntary contributions and gifts in Wills for income. Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), a charity registered in England and Wales (209603), Scotland (SC037736), the Republic of Ireland (20003326) and the Bailiwick of Jersey (14).



# News

Your guide to everything RNLI

## LIFEBOAT VOLUNTEER IS NEW LEADER



The RNLI's new Chief Executive Mark Dowie

We are delighted to introduce Mark Dowie as the RNLI's new chief executive. He succeeds Paul Boissier, who has retired after 10 years.

As a volunteer lifeboat operations manager at Salcombe Lifeboat Station, Mark knows how much the station means to the community. 'I've seen first-hand the dedication and commitment of volunteers and staff to help save lives and keep people safe,' he says. 'I know just what a unique and special organisation this is. I am absolutely delighted and proud to be the new chief executive.'

A keen sailor, Mark previously held senior positions in the Royal Navy and ran his own financial services company. It was a desire to help others that led Mark to serve on the board of trustees of two charities, which support ex-servicemen and women and their families. He also works with organisations giving disadvantaged children a better start in life.

A qualified gyrocopter pilot and avid historian, Mark says: 'I have a clear vision how I can support the RNLI as we reach our 200th birthday in 2024. My aim is to get us in even better shape for the next 200 years.'

Welcoming Mark onboard, RNLI Chair Stuart Popham says: 'Mark will be a huge asset to the RNLI and I am really looking forward to working with him.'

## REDS AND YELLOWS HIT THE BEACH



When you head to the beach this summer, look out for our lifeguards in their distinctive red and yellow. Look closely, and you may spot some new Helly Hansen gear.

The roll out of the new kit starts this summer. It caters for both men and women, and incorporates the latest fabrics and technology. The kit is waterproof, breathable and comfortable to wear – good for our lifeguards on patrol and on rescues.

As well as kitting out our lifeguards and all-weather crews, Helly Hansen is supporting our fundraising and safety campaigns this year. And, by sharing our water safety messages with its customers, is helping to prevent even more people from drowning.

## Date for your diary

A quick reminder that the RNLI Annual General Meeting takes place on Thursday 25 July 2019 at the recently renamed Leonardo Royal Hotel, in London. For full details, visit [RNLI.org/agm2019](http://RNLI.org/agm2019).

## Pride of Fred. Olsen



Winners of Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' RNLI Lifeboat Naming Competition – Margaret Whittington (left) Joan Hutchings and Peter Ruck – unveil *Pride of Fred. Olsen*

Thanks to a £170,000 donation from Fred. Olsen plus guests, our charity has a new B class lifeboat, *Pride of Fred. Olsen*.

In a first for the RNLI, the official Naming Ceremony took place on the premises of a corporate partner, at the Fred. Olsen head office.

It was the fifth lifeboat to be funded by generous guests from across the Fred. Olsen fleet. Mike Rodwell, Managing Director of Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, says: 'We are all extremely proud of our long and successful relationship with the RNLI.'

The lifeboat's part of the relief fleet, saving lives at stations when a local lifeboat goes away for maintenance.

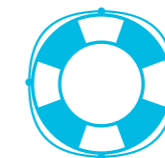
## 2018 at a glance

These figures (just confirmed) show what RNLI lifesavers achieved – with your support – last year.



329

lives saved by RNLI crews and lifeguards (248 in 2017)



41,619

people aided by RNLI crews and lifeguards (32,116 in 2017)



257,697

hours at sea given to rescues and exercises by our lifeboat crews (207,839 in 2017)

## ACTION ON PLASTICS

Thank you for your emails and letters about our use of polythene packaging for *Lifeboat*.

Anna Frizzell is the RNLI's sustainability manager: 'We know many of you care deeply about this issue. We're working hard to reduce our negative impact on the environment. Getting rid of plastic wrapping on our magazines is an important part of that.'

Our charity has started to investigate the environmental impacts and costs of alternatives, not just for *Lifeboat*, but for all our polythene-wrapped mailings. Biodegradable wrapping is one area we're looking at. However, currently only around half of local authorities accept this material in green or food waste recycling.

We have already taken action on many single-use plastics. This includes changing plastic carrier bags to paper, and changing some plastic retail and promotional items, although we still have much more to do.

We are committed to replacing the polythene packaging. Until we do, please help us by using the recycling facilities at your local supermarket – you can recycle the polythene packaging in carrier bag collection points. Find out more at [recyclenow.com](http://recyclenow.com).



Photos: The Press and Journal, RNLI/(Buckie, Longhope, Mary Harris)

Welcome to your community news for Scotland. For all the latest from where you are, head to [RNLI.org/news](http://RNLI.org/news)

Longhope



A flotilla of local lifeboats pass the Longhope Lifeboat Museum

## Local stations mark 50th anniversary of Longhope disaster

On 17 March, RNLI volunteers and supporters came together to mark 50 years since the 1969 loss of eight Longhope crew and their lifeboat *TGB*. The tragedy shook the small Hoy community of Brims and affected every family in the village.

A flotilla of lifeboats, from Longhope, Stromness, Thurso and Wick, opened proceedings in front of Longhope Lifeboat Museum, with a maroon firing and wreath laying on the water by the Longhope crew. A 2-minute silence followed for those ashore and afloat, and a second maroon signalled the end of the silence. Speeches, poetry, song and a guard of honour followed under sombre skies.

The Longhope Disaster happened on a dark March night, when Longhope volunteers went to the rescue of the steamship *Irene*, run aground on the Caithness coast. At 9.28pm, the final radio signal came in – after which, all fell silent. *TGB* was found upturned the next day by Thurso lifeboat.

All eight of the crew lost their lives. Their names were: Jimmy Johnston, Robbie Johnston, Robert (Sodger Bob) Johnston, Daniel Kirkpatrick, Jack Kirkpatrick, Ray Kirkpatrick, Eric McFadyen, James Swanson.

You can read the full story of the Longhope Disaster at [RNLI.org/LonghopeDisaster](http://RNLI.org/LonghopeDisaster).



Crew Member Stella Kirkpatrick lays a wreath for both of her grandfathers, who died in the tragedy



Members of Longhope crew with wreaths for the eight men lost



Lifeboats pay respect at the memorial statue

Coldingham Bay

## Scottish lifeguard to swim English Channel

Coldingham Bay Lifeguard Jennifer Laffan is challenging herself to swim across the English Channel in October to raise money for the RNLI.



Jennifer Laffan pictured after a training swim in Macduff

Jennifer originally set her heart on the iconic open water swimming challenge in her very first year at school! She says she draws inspiration for the swim from a respect for the way her two brothers – one is autistic and the other has a severe disability – take on everyday challenges.

At age 18 she completed a 10km open water swim and now the finish line is the French coast. Jennifer says: 'All the donations pledged will go straight to the RNLI. They're a great bunch of people who are selfless. My dad Seamus and all of my family are really supportive – my brother David always tells me "good swim" and I know that if James understood he would be proud.'

'I'm confident I can do it but nervous, as even 14°C feels cold after 10 hours and you're only allowed to wear a swimsuit!'

You can follow Jennifer's training progress at [facebook.com/JensChannelSwim](https://facebook.com/JensChannelSwim).

Buckie



## BUCKIE LIFESAVERS RECOGNISED IN HEROES AWARDS

Congratulations to Buckie Lifeboat Station volunteers who were recognised in the Moray and Banffshire Heroes 2019 awards. They won the very first Hero of Heroes award, plus the Emergency Service or Armed Forces Heroes of the Year award. During the awards night in April the crew were called out to a trawler in difficulty.

Coxswain Alan Robertson, says: 'We're just delighted to win. Everyone here is just chuffed. It is recognition for the commitment and dedication of our volunteers, who are prepared to drop whatever they're doing when the pagers go off to come to the aid of people in distress at sea. We're hugely grateful for everyone who nominated us.'

WHAT'S ON

Lifeboat open days happen all around Scotland throughout the summer months and are a highlight in the calendar. Check in with your nearby lifeboat stations – or ones where you're on holiday – to find out when theirs are.

**LARGS ANNUAL STREET COLLECTION**  
Saturday 13 July 2019

Millport, Cumbrae  
Meet fellow supporters and volunteers from Largs and hear about the work of the RNLI locally. For more information, contact Claire Taylor on 0300 3000 128 or [communitysupportteam@rnli.org.uk](mailto:communitysupportteam@rnli.org.uk).

**PORTPATRICK LIFEBOAT WEEK**  
Sunday 28 July to Sunday 4 August 2019

Portpatrick, Dumfries and Galloway  
Details of Portpatrick's 2019 lifeboat week are currently being finalised, with lots of family-friendly lifeboat fun and activities set to take place. For more information contact Claire Taylor on 0300 3000 128 or [communitysupportteam@rnli.org.uk](mailto:communitysupportteam@rnli.org.uk).

**RNLI MAGIC SHOW**

Friday 30 August, 7pm  
The Tivoli Theatre, Aberdeen  
Expect the unexpected in a magical extravaganza suitable for ages 8–108. Featuring incredible feats of magic, mind-reading, escapology and illusion from the north east's top magicians. In aid of Aberdeen lifeboat and in association with Aberdeen Magical Society. Tickets available from the Tivoli Theatre Box Office on 01224 641122.

**SEND US YOUR NEWS AND EVENTS**

Want to share your RNLI news and events with *Lifeboat* readers? By the time this issue lands on your doorstep, we'll be nearing our deadline for the winter issue, so please email [communitysupportteam@rnli.org.uk](mailto:communitysupportteam@rnli.org.uk) with anything you'd like considered.

# RESCUE

As a supporter, you are helping our lifeboat crews and lifeguards carry out thousands of rescues every year. Here are some highlights, and see full accounts on the following pages:

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**8 BLACKPOOL** | PAGE 16

You can also watch and read the latest rescues online at [RNLI.org/news](https://www.rnli.org/news) or [facebook.com/RNLI](https://www.facebook.com/RNLI).



## 1 DISCOVERED BY DRONES HUNSTANTON/WELLS

When a man got separated from his friends during an evening walk near Brancaster, Norfolk, the emergency services began a search – with the help of two lifeboat crews. Volunteers from RNLI Hunstanton and RNLI Wells joined Norfolk police, the Coastguard and Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service to find the missing walker. He was eventually located, stuck in dense reed beds at Titchwell Marsh, by a drone. The rescue teams pulled him from the muddy creek, where he was winched to safety and transferred to hospital to make a full recovery.



## 2 'WE'RE HERE NOW, BUDDY!' BUDE

'Lean right back, we're going for this one!' Bude lifeboat crew shouted to one another, as they sliced through choppy waves to rescue an exhausted bodyboarder. 'We're here now buddy,' the volunteers called as they approached him, and pulled the bodyboarder from the icy surf into their D class inshore lifeboat. They powered him back to safety at Widemouth Beach.



## 3 SAVED FROM THE WAVES ST OUEN'S BAY

A surfer was enjoying the water at St Ouen's Bay, Jersey, when a wave suddenly broke over him, snapping the leash on his board. Senior Lifeguard Kris Heron paddled out to him on his rescue board right away. 'As soon as we returned to the beach, I performed casualty care to make sure he was OK. We train regularly for situations like this.'



## 4 BOY TRAPPED IN SAND FISTRAL BAY

RNLI lifeguards at Fistral Beach, Cornwall, ran to help a teenage boy trapped in a 6-foot deep hole, which had collapsed. The lifeguards began to dig away at the sand and deliver oxygen to the boy who was struggling to breathe under the weight. The teenager was eventually freed and transferred into the care of an awaiting ambulance.



## 5 CALL FOR HELP KINGHORN

Kinghorn lifeboat crew launched to a distress call from two kayakers near Longniddry, East Lothian. The volunteers quickly located the kayakers from their personal locator beacon and pulled the casualties to safety onboard the lifeboat. Helm Leanne Taylor explains: 'One paddler was struggling to get back on his kayak and the pair decided to call for help – that was a good decision.'

Photos: Peter Jeffery, Norfolk Police, RNLI/Nathan Williams

# CLINGING TO SURVIVAL

When his craft hit a wave and flipped him into the chilly November sea, a boater was left holding on for dear life. Could anyone help him – or even see him?

'I was just about to put on my hairnet and get baking when the call came,' recalls caterer and Crew Member Mel Varvel. Pagers alerted Mel and her fellow Mudeford volunteers just after 2pm on 5 November.

Once at the station, the crew of four discovered what the emergency was: a passer-by at Southbourne Beach had spotted an upturned boat out at sea, with someone clinging to it in the cold swells. The crew pulled on their kit and launched their Atlantic 85 lifeboat immediately.

'My role on the way there was to keep in touch with the Coastguard on the radio,' says

Crew Member Simon Smith, who was aboard along with Mel, Crew Member Ian Derham and Helm/Station Mechanic Ian Parker. Simon discovered they had some welcome help from a another set of volunteers too: 'We had been told roughly where the boat was, but then we heard that the National Coastwatch Institution had people in the lookout at Hengistbury Head. That was extremely handy.' Simon radioed the Coastwatch volunteers – who had recently restarted the local service for the first time in years – and they gave the exact location of the boat, clearly visible from their elevated position on the headland.

## 'He was so lucky'

'It was a brand new boat. The man had turned towards a wave that caught him – it was a tiny boat so it wouldn't have taken much to turn it over. While he was in the ambulance, we went and retrieved it. Better to not leave a craft out there on its own like that. He was very grateful! He was OK after being checked over by the paramedics and came back to the station on exercise night to say thank you. He was so lucky – he hadn't taken out a lifejacket or means of calling for help with him, which everyone should do when they go afloat.'



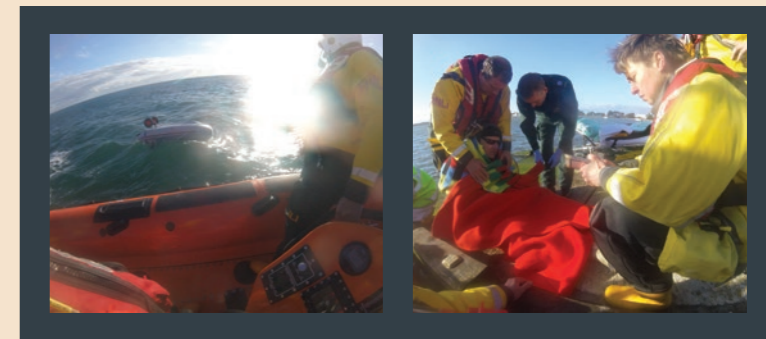
**MEL VARVEL**  
CREW MEMBER | MUDEFORD

That led the crew directly to the upturned boat, with a man in his 70s desperately holding on to its outboard motor. 'One of the first things that goes through your mind is, can he speak? Is there anyone else with him?' recalls Crew Member Ian Derham. 'Luckily he was able to shout to us that it was just him.'

Meanwhile Helm Ian Parker considered the best way to approach in the conditions – the sea was fairly choppy and an icy offshore wind blew. 'The man was really cold and reluctant to release his grip, so we couldn't throw him a line. We also realised that his boat was anchored. When he went over, his anchor must have been loose on the deck and fallen out. That prevented the boat – and the man – from being blown out to sea.'

As the boat wasn't moving around too much, Helm Ian felt he could get alongside the man without risking crushing him. While he carefully approached, Crew Members Simon and Ian prepared to lift the casualty from under his arms. 'He didn't want to let go at first,' says Simon. 'His hands were all hard and tight – he was scared and cold. I don't think he would have lasted much longer. And when we did coax him to let us help him aboard, he was really difficult to lift because he had a heavy coat on.'

Mel joined the effort and the trio managed to pull the man onto the Atlantic 85. 'We tried to keep that cold wind off him by sitting him on the deck, giving him a survivor's blanket and shielding him,' says Crew Member Ian.



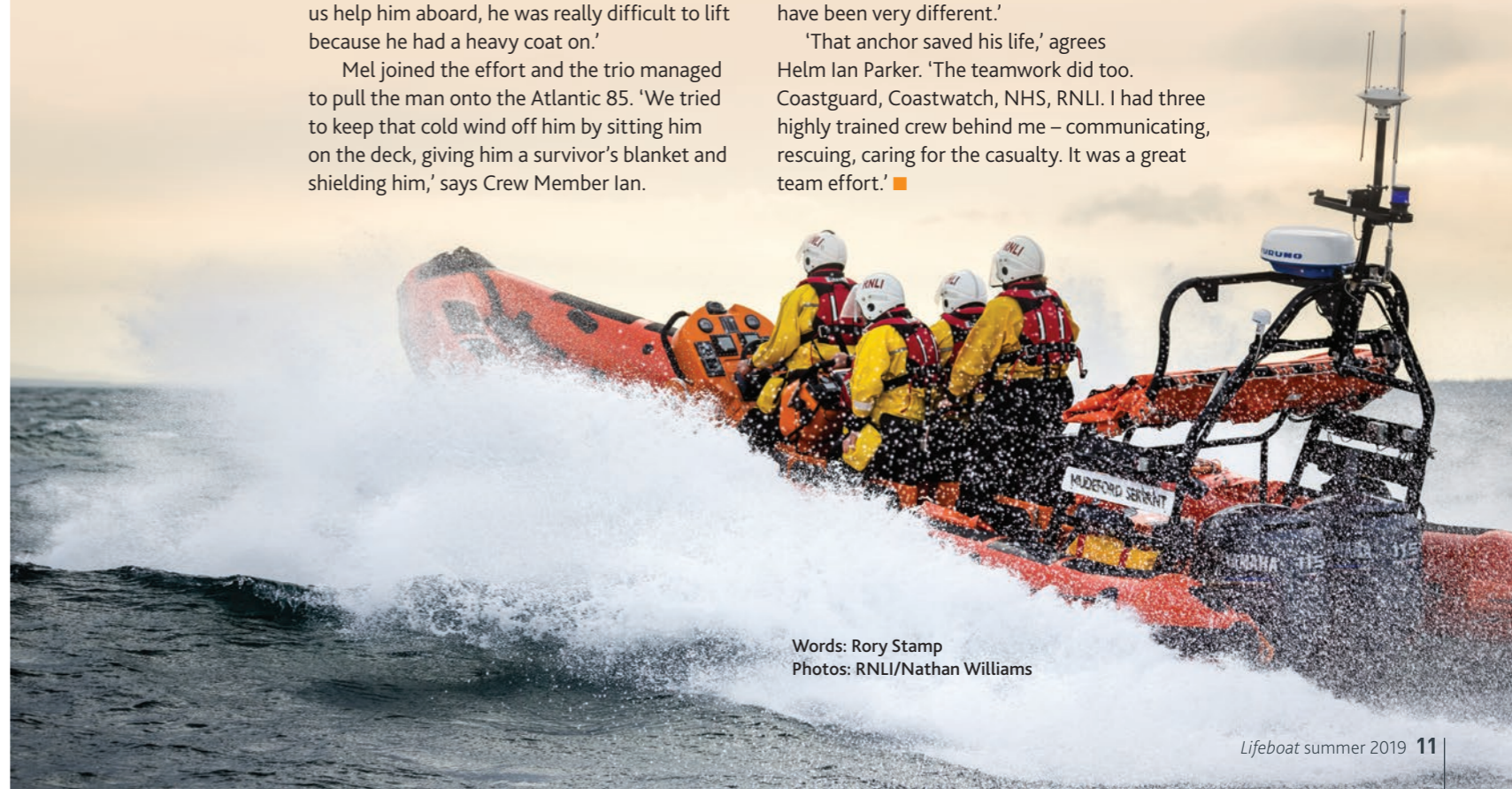
The rescue wasn't over yet. Although Mel knew from her casualty care training that the man was not quite hypothermic, he was extremely cold and had swallowed some water. 'He had tried to swim for shore a couple of times and gone under,' she explains.

Helm Ian Parker headed back to the station, and the man was stretchered into the care of paramedics.

'He was very fortunate,' reflects Crew Member Ian Derham. 'If his anchor hadn't fallen out, if someone hadn't spotted him, if we didn't get to him when we did ... it would have been very different.'

'That anchor saved his life,' agrees Helm Ian Parker. 'The teamwork did too. Coastguard, Coastwatch, NHS, RNLI. I had three highly trained crew behind me – communicating, rescuing, caring for the casualty. It was a great team effort.' ■

'Can he speak? Is there anyone else with him?'



Words: Rory Stamp  
Photos: RNLI/Nathan Williams

Since learning to fish on the River Trent in Nottinghamshire, angling has always been an important part of Neal Dews' life – it's a passion that's stayed with him ever since he was young. 'I was taken under the wing of a man called Colin Walton – a master on the river who taught me everything about fishing,' Neal remembers.

Later in life, with his wife Zoe, Neal named his first son after the river that shaped him – Trent. As a family, it wasn't long before they swapped life in Newark, Nottinghamshire, for a fresh start in Cornwall. Neal has been fishing the rocky Atlantic shores around Newquay for over 21 years.

'A fisherman will understand that when you're by the water, nothing else matters,' he explains. 'Your mind is clear and day-to-day problems are totally gone. It's just you and the water and it's good for the soul.'

#### 'We've really got to get you a lifejacket'

A builder by trade, Neal has always been safety conscious – but on the familiar angling trips he knows like the back of his hand, a lifejacket slipped down the priority list. Zoe always knew whereabouts he was fishing and he kept a portable VHF radio on him at all times, just in case.

But, in early 2018, Neal came across an RNLI video featured on the blog of respected angler and writer Henry Gilbey (search online for 'Henry Gilbey RNLI film'). In the video, Henry and some fellow anglers plunge into cold water with, and without, lifejackets.

'When I saw that film, I said to Neal: "We've really got to get you one";' Zoe remembers. 'We do everything to keep our two sons safe. Lifejackets. Belts and braces, the lot.'

But for himself, Neal would say: "No, I'm fine. I've got a phone and my VHF radio".

Taking matters into her own hands, Zoe bought Neal a lifejacket for his 50th birthday – surprising him early, as an angling competition was coming up. She had done her research

and bought one online for under £70. 'I got to grips with it straightaway,' Neal admits.

#### The tides turn

A few weeks later, on Sunday 4 November 2018, Neal headed out for an early morning fish at Newquay's Tolcarne Beach. Kitting up with his rod, tackle-bag, waders, head torch and coat he had everything he needed – complete with his new lifejacket on top.

'We do everything to keep our sons safe. But for himself, Neal would say: "No, I'm fine"'

# 'A LIFEJACKET SAVED MY LIFE'

For experienced fisherman Neal Dews, wearing a lifejacket didn't matter. But when an angling trip took a turn for the worst, he soon realised how much it did



Neal, recovered after being battered and bruised



Revisiting the scene, Tolcarne Beach, Newquay

Looking over the ocean from on top of the beach, Neal spent a few moments assessing the conditions. And, spotting a steady platform to stand on down by the water, he made his way down.

After a while, Neal decided to move to a different beach through a cave that connected them. He'd made the journey hundreds of times before without any problems. Grabbing his bag and kit, Neal turned to make his way through the shortcut – but, suddenly, the surf grew stronger.

'I took about a dozen steps and then I heard something,' Neal describes. 'I saw a small rush of water coming in, so I stood and braced myself and it rushed up to my knees.'

'Not even 30 seconds later, there was a louder noise – a big noise. I put my head torch back on and I was faced by a wall of water.'

#### 'Please not like this'

'I didn't have time to react,' Neal continues. 'Before I knew it, the waves were on top of me. They knocked me clean off my feet, backwards, into the rocks upside-down.'

The crashing surf churned up the sand from the beach, adding to the impact striking him inside the cave. 'It was an absolute commotion,' Neal recalls. 'I hit the rocks and all the wind got knocked out of me. Panic set in – real fear – and I had no control of what was going on around me.'

'My eyes, ears, nose and mouth were full of sand and water. The only way I can describe it is like putting a rag doll in a washing machine.'

As Neal was being dragged under the water, the waves triggered the lifejacket's automatic inflation mechanism, bringing Neal's head back to the surface. But he wasn't yet out of the woods.



Neal with Zoe, who bought the lifejacket that saved his life

## STAY SAFE THIS SUMMER

We want you to make the most of our wonderful coast this season. But just like not knowing when your next catch will be, water is unpredictable. So, however you choose to enjoy the water, follow our simple steps to stay safe:

- Always wear a lifejacket when fishing from rocks or exposed shoreline.
- Check the weather and tides before heading out.
- Tell someone where you're going and when you expect to be back.
- Carry a means of calling for help and keep it on your person at all times – even when heading out into water.
- If you see someone in trouble at the water, dial 999 or 112 and ask for the coastguard.

Water and sand began filling his clothes and he was getting weighed down by his bag and kit – leaving him at the mercy of the crashing waves.

**'Before I knew it, the waves were on top of me – they knocked me clean off my feet'**

'The water must have dragged me for 30 or 40 yards,' Neal explains. 'I remember trying to dig my heels into the sand going backwards. The sea wanted me. It was not going to

let me go. I can remember crying to myself: "No, no. Not like this. Please, not like this".'

#### 'If it wasn't for the lifejacket, I wouldn't be here'

Just as hope was fading, another wave came, pulling Neal back towards the shore. In desperation, he clung to a rock with one hand and pulled himself up onto it until the water rushed away. He was battered and bruised, but managed to clamber onto the beach, to safety.

'I was sobbing and sobbing,' Neal describes. 'I was petrified – terrified. Words cannot explain it.'

Somehow, Neal managed to get himself home to Zoe and, shortly after, he visited a nurse to treat his injuries. His bruising was so severe that the nurse assumed he had been hit by a car.

Neal has no doubt how he survived that morning by the water. 'If it wasn't for that lifejacket, I wouldn't be here,' Neal says, confidently. 'It saved my life.' ■

Words: Michael Carhart-Harris and Jasmin Downs

Photo: RNLI/Nathan Williams



**'I was full of sand and water. It was like a rag doll in a washing machine'**

Angler Neal Dews recalls his ordeal and revisits the scene at Tolcarne Beach, Newquay

## LEARN TO FLOAT

When you enter cold water, your body experiences cold water shock – making you gasp uncontrollably, increasing your risk of inhaling water – which can be fatal. If you find yourself unexpectedly in the water, follow these steps:

1. Fight your instinct to thrash around.
2. Lean back, extending your arms and legs and pushing your stomach up to the surface.
3. If you need to, gently move your arms and legs to help you float.
4. Float until you can control your breathing.
5. Only then, call out for help or swim to safety.



Find out more at  
[RespectTheWater.com](https://www.respectthewater.com)



# OUT OF REACH

A father swam out to stop his daughter drifting away in an inflatable dinghy, but couldn't reach her. Thankfully, there were willing RNLI volunteers who could

On Saturday 30 June 2018, Blackpool Crew Members Iain Procter-Dow and Brent Kenny were looking forward to soaking up the last of the day's sunshine with an evening cycle down the promenade.

Starting at Brent's house, they saddled up when, suddenly, the pager sounded.

'It was an immediate launch page for the inshore D class lifeboat,' Iain remembers. 'We jumped straight into Brent's van and drove to the lifeboat station.'

Helm Kyle King and the other inshore lifeboat volunteers arrived moments later. As they pulled on their yellows, reports began to come in of a young woman who had been blown offshore in an inflatable boat – and someone was swimming out to try and help her.

With sunset fast approaching, time was of the essence, and both inshore lifeboats launched.

Kyle was at the helm of the D class *Basil Eric Brooks*, with Iain and Brent. They powered towards the young woman while the volunteers aboard the second Blackpool D class *Eileen Mary George* began to search for the swimmer – the girl's father who, unbeknown to the crew, had returned to shore.

'With the easterly wind growing stronger, he quickly realised that if he kept going, he would have drowned,' explains Kyle.

As the crew of *Basil Eric Brooks* approached the girl in her dinghy, her 'boat' was already beginning to deflate and fill up with water.

'If we hadn't arrived, it would have completely deflated in the next 20 minutes or so,' Brent says.

'She looked quite scared,' adds Iain. 'She immediately told us: "I'm cold and I can't swim." I got a lifejacket out, blew it up for her to put on and we pulled her onboard.'

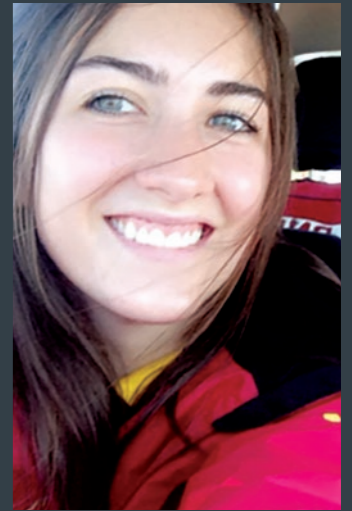
Returning to the station, the crew wrapped the girl in blankets and extra layers to keep her temperature from dropping.

Safely back on land, the crew gave the teenager a medical assessment. 'I work for the ambulance service, so I gave her a full medical exam to make sure she wasn't hypothermic,' Iain describes. 'Luckily, she was OK.'

The teenager's family had been sat on the beach – near to the lifeboat station – watching the crew rescue their daughter on the water.

'With inflatables not designed for the beach, you could be put at risk'

'Conditions at the beach can change quickly and, with inflatables not designed for the beach, you could be put at risk. Choose a lifeguarded beach [find your nearest at [RNLI.org/FindMyNearest](http://RNLI.org/FindMyNearest)] and stick between the red and yellow flags. If you see an orange windsock flying, it means there is an offshore wind – never go out in any inflatable in an offshore wind.'



**POLLY LYONS**  
LIFEGUARD SUPERVISOR |  
NORTH-WEST ENGLAND

'Her dad came over and shook all of our hands. He was over the moon,' Kyle recalls. 'He thought his daughter was going to be lost at sea.'

**You help us save lives at sea**

Thanks to your support, we'll continue to reunite families like this one. With your help, we will also get safely messages through to other families, so that they don't have to suffer what this father went through.

'Together we can prevent an event happening'

'Inflatables are not designed for the sea – many are made for swimming pools. If you do bring one to the coast you can help your young family stay safe by tethering it somewhere on land and staying close by. That way, if you start to drift out, someone can pull you back in. We'll never stop people from using inflatables – but together we can prevent an event happening.'



**KYLE KING** HELM | BLACKPOOL

Words: Jasmin Downs  
Photos: RNLI/(Blackpool, Nigel Millard)



# WAVING ANNIE GOODBYE

Wicklow lifeboat crew reflect on 30 years of lifesaving with the last of the Tyne class lifeboats – the *Annie Blaker*



'I believe she has a soul,' says *Annie Blaker*'s Mechanic Brendan Copeland

In 1982, Dexy's Midnight Runners got the world on the dancefloor. A little boy named William became third in line to the throne. At the cinema, ET phoned home – and then flew away in a shiny spaceship.

And RNLI volunteers got a shiny new craft of their own in the Tyne class lifeboat. Wicklow's Second Coxswain Ciarán Doyle recalls the first time he stepped onboard the Tyne: 'I had been lifeboat crew for 5 years, and then suddenly this spaceship arrived. I looked in it and saw all these electronics, engine control systems, nothing like we were used to. It was a huge leap.'

Thirty-seven years later, the Wicklow volunteers were the last crew in the RNLI to still go to sea in a Tyne class lifeboat. And while they were excited about the arrival of a brand-new Shannon class lifeboat, there was a certain sadness at saying goodbye to *Annie Blaker*, the last of the Tynes.

## Got soul

'I believe she has a soul,' says Mechanic Brendan Copeland. 'She requires a lot of attention, and a lot of looking after, but when we're out there, never once has she frightened us. And we've been out in some horrendous conditions.'

Crew Member and Deputy Mechanic Connie O'Gara agrees: 'Her personality? Rock solid. A little bit temperamental every now and again, but she will keep going. Whatever the coxswain wants, she'll give it to him.'

With Press Officer Tommy Dover describing *Annie Blaker* as 'a reliable big sister, always there waiting to help', it's clear that, for the volunteers at Wicklow, the lifeboat is not just a vehicle, a platform, a collection of metal parts. She's part of the team.

## Lifesaver

*Annie Blaker* started helping those in trouble off the Wicklow coast before she even arrived at the station. On the day she was due to arrive, a September

Saturday in 1989, the station's existing Watson class lifeboat *JW Archer*, with various local dignitaries onboard, headed out to escort her home.

That's when the call came in. Someone had broken their leg near Wicklow Head. There were too many people onboard *JW Archer* to carry out a speedy and safe evacuation. And so the new lifeboat was off on her first shout.

Since then, lifeboat crews onboard *Annie Blaker* have rescued more than 400 people, in more than 340 launches.

One that sticks in Ciarán Doyle's mind was a November call-out to a windsurfer, reported overdue by a friend ashore. The man had broken his shoulder and been helpless and adrift on his board for an hour and a half.



Part of the team, since the 1980s

'He was getting to the point where he felt he was slipping away,' Ciarán says. 'He fell off the board and was half in the water, without the strength to climb back up. As he slipped under, I heard something in the water. The Tyne has a very roary type of engine, and it carries through the water.'



**DES DAVITT**  
LIFEBOAT OPERATIONS  
MANAGER | WICKLOW

'What will I remember about *Annie*? Standing here on the radio at 3am when the lads are out on a dirty shout. It's always such a relief to see her lights on her way back in, early in the morning. We're sending the crew out, and they know the risks, but you get a little bit fearful. "What will I say to the families if anything happens?"

'I've always found the Tyne class to be the only lifeboat in the fleet with classical lines. She just looks right in the water. The lads will tell you she goes through the water perfectly. There's nothing she can't take – she's a fabulous boat.'

'But we're really looking forward to a new Shannon. And we're really, really excited about the future for Wicklow RNLI.'

When he heard the sound he knew somebody was coming. We were still a long way away at that point, but that sound gave him the strength to climb back on to the board. I got quite emotional when he told me that.'

**Annie's song**

It's the sound of *Annie Blaker's* engines that Connie O'Gara will miss the most: 'On a Sunday morning, when I'm in bed with the windows open, and I'm not on the training exercise that day, I hear that sound – that two-stroke diesel, turbo-charged sound – and I know it's her. It'll be sad to see her go, and to hear that noise one last time as she goes off into the distance. I'm sure we'll get to know the sound of the Shannon too, but somehow I don't think it'll be quite the same.'

*Annie Blaker* speaks to Brendan Copeland and his team of volunteer mechanics in her own way. 'Somehow, she tells me when there's something wrong,' he says. 'I get a feeling that something's not right, and I go and check and, sure enough, something's about to give. I can't explain it.'



Annie's Mechanic Brendan, tending to her every need

It could be a different sound or a slightly different smell. And it's not just me. The Second Mechanic, Lisa O'Leary – a brilliant pair of hands, can strip an engine quicker than I can – the same thing happens with her.'

There are mixed feelings at Wicklow Lifeboat Station. Sadness at the end of the *Annie Blaker* era, but also excitement at the imminent arrival of a Shannon class lifeboat.

**A step up**

The Shannon will be faster and more manoeuvrable, with advanced safety features like SIMS – the system that allows crew members to manage the boat's functions from their seats. But the longer-serving crew, who remember when *Annie Blaker* arrived on station, don't think the Shannon will be too big a shock.

'When we first got the Tyne, it was a huge leap,' says Second Coxswain Ciarán Doyle. 'The Shannon is quicker, it's smarter, it's got integrated electronics, but I still think the change from a Watson to a Tyne in 1989 was much more of a leap.'

'The Tyne is a covered lifeboat, whereas the Watson only had a sort of canopy a couple of crew could get under. You were pretty much standing out in the elements, very cold and very wet. The Watson was an 8-knot lifeboat and the Tyne at its best can do 18 knots. Also, on the Tyne you could boil water and make a cup of coffee, which is not to be underestimated. There was much more capacity for survivors than the Watson, and the engines were much more powerful.'

In 2019, as in 1989, saying goodbye is sometimes the price of progress.

Coxswain Nick Keogh sums it up: 'It'll be hard, but we can't live in the past or we'd still be rowing around in open boats.'

Brendan adds: 'I'll be broken-hearted to see *Annie* go. But I'm delighted for the young people here. They're going to get a new station, and it's not going to be as draughty or as cold. And a faster, more modern boat that works like their touch phone. They give so much of their time – it's what they deserve.' ■

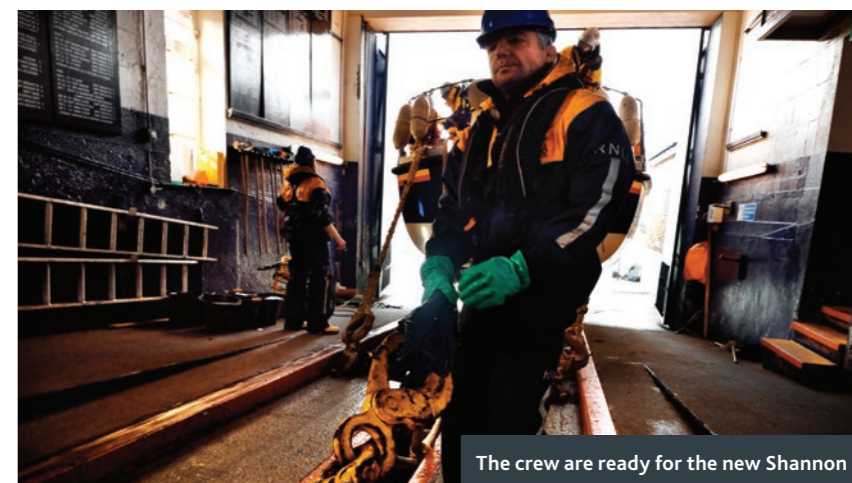
Words: Mairéad Dwane  
Photos: RNLI/(Mairéad Dwane, Nigel Millard)



Coxswain Nick Keogh



Second Coxswain Ciarán Doyle



The crew are ready for the new Shannon

**Who was Annie Blaker?**

The lifeboat *Annie Blaker* was named after a supporter, who was brought up in Bognor Regis, West Sussex. Annie left home at a young age to work as a nanny, and travelled to Canada and Europe, returning to Bognor Regis around 1930 to work in a furniture shop. Annie inherited the shop and bought a sheep farm. She was known in Sussex farming circles as a fierce trader, particularly enjoying the Findon Sheep Fair.

Annie covered half the cost of the lifeboat with a gift in her Will. Find out more about this way of giving at [RNLI.org/legacy](https://www.rnli.org/legacy).



**Tyne**

Top speed: 18 knots  
Driven by: Propellers  
Introduced: 1982  
Survivor capacity: 108  
Length: 47 feet (14.3m)  
Engines: 2 x 525hp  
Made from: Steel and aluminium  
Launches: 14,008



**Shannon**

Top speed: 25 knots  
Driven by: Waterjets  
Introduced: 2013  
Survivor capacity: 79  
Length: 13.6m  
Engines: 2 x 650hp  
Made from: Composite materials, including epoxy resin and carbon fibre  
Launches (so far): 940

# Give it a go: sandcastles

For the young or young at heart, it wouldn't be summertime without sandcastles on the beach. Sand artists Claire Jamieson and Jamie Wardley inspire us with tips on texture and turrets

## The right place

'We're blessed with some incredible beaches to enjoy,' enthuses Jamie from Sand In Your Eye. A good beach for sand sculpting means fine angular sand grains, rather than round grains. You can find some of the best sand on beaches close to estuaries. Choose one that's got RNLI lifeguards for safety.

Based in Yorkshire, Claire and Jamie's favourite local beach is Filey. They also recommend Blackpool, Weymouth, Weston-super-Mare, Prestatyn, Broad Haven, St Andrews, the Outer Hebrides, Murlough and Duncannon.

## The right time

Time it wrong and you'll be racing against high water, risking your castle being washed away prematurely or – worse – finding yourself cut off by the tide. Jamie advises: 'Get there just as the tide is beginning to go out, so you'll have maximum time and the sea won't be too far for collecting extra water.'



Claire gives us some inspiration for the perfect sandcastle

## 1. Building your sandcastle

One of the biggest mistakes people make when building sandcastles is not adding enough water: 'If the sand is too dry, your structure will not stick together and will quickly fall apart,' says Claire.

'For a castle, begin with a strong "volcano" base, with a large crater. Into this, pour a bucket of water and tamp [pack] it into the sand with your fingers, vibrating the sand into place. When all the water has soaked in, the sand will go harder – giving you a solid base to build on.'



## 2. Tools of the trade

Your hands are great tools, but Claire and Jamie also recommend a small shovel, a wooden ruler and an ice lolly stick for adding shape and detail. A wooden float or tray, can help you build additional features. Tools are easily lost, so avoid plastic if you can.

'With a castle, initially build up the structure by keeping one hand still and bringing the sand up against it, patting at it with the other hand to make it firm,' Jamie advises. 'For the walls, pinch down on the top with your thumbs.'



'Build impressive towers by mixing sand in a bucket with water until it is goopy and the water is above the sand. Take a handful at a time and make a mud pie, gently tapping it with your finger tips until it sets hard. Then add another until you have a tower of sand to carve.'

Use your ruler to cut the shapes of the walls and towers, and your lolly stick to make larger holes and small windows.



## 3. Getting fancy

Now you can work on the details. Jamie recommends: 'To add protective crenellations or battlements on walls and towers, take wet muddy sand onto your wooden float and compact it down with dry sand on top, patting it into a large "chocolate bar". Cut this into small cubes and space them at regular intervals around the walls and towers.'

'Every castle needs a drawbridge! Simply dig a moat around the castle wall, get someone to make a loose fist with their hand, then build and compact sand over the top of it. Then gently pull the hand out and use the ruler to shape and neaten it.'

Don't forget to take a picture of your sandcastle and send it to us – before a child or the big kid in you tramples on all your fine work!



For more sand sculpture inspiration, visit [sandinyoureye.co.uk](http://sandinyoureye.co.uk).

## Sand safety top tips

- Visit a lifeguarded beach, where trained professionals are on hand to keep you safe.
- Check the tide times to avoid a premature washout or tidal cut-off around headlands and sandbars.
- Do not dig deep holes in the sand; the sides can easily collapse, trapping people.
- Avoid really saturated sand, with a danger of sinking.
- Consider exposure – both sun and windchill. Take sunscreen and layers.



Words: Anna Burn, Claire Jamieson and Jamie Wardley Photos: Sand In-Your Eye, Shutterstock

# STORM FORCE 10: THE FASTNET DISASTER

The Fastnet Race is one of amateur yachting's greatest challenges. Always daring. Always demanding. Always dangerous. Yet nothing prepared crews and rescuers for the historic storm of 13 August 1979



Volunteers of St Mary's Watson class lifeboat battled through the storm

## 'And now the Shipping Forecast...'

*1.55pm: 'Sole, Lundy, Fastnet – south-westerly 4 to 6, increasing 6 or 7 for a time, veering westerly later. Occasional rain or showers. Moderate, locally poor, becoming good later.'*

The morning of 13 August dawned fair with smooth seas. Even the Shipping Forecast gave little indication of what was to come. Peter Whipp, skipper of *Magic*, recalls: 'There was no wind, no forecast of anything significant, and it was a warm, humid afternoon.' But he recollects feeling uneasy: 'It was kind of eerie,' he says, 'and I remember charging up all the batteries and lashing everything down.'

Peter's premonition was to unfold into yachting's deadliest tragedy and one of the largest ever rescue operations in peacetime.

Unknown to the fleet of 303 yachts hurtling furiously toward Fastnet Rock, a mesoscale surface jet of hurricane speed was racing to meet them. Data from the storm of 1979 reveals that an extraordinary event occurred. As the weather system 'low Y' passed over the Western Approaches, a column of cold air crashed down from the stratosphere, splitting it into many smaller systems and turbocharging the wind.

## Radio silence

*4.05pm: 'Sole, Fastnet, Shannon – south-westerly gale force 8 imminent.'*

Few competitors were listening to BBC Radio 4 at 4pm when the first gale warning was broadcast and only 8% reported becoming aware of the severity of the storm between 2pm and 4pm.

Unlike today, there was no GPS, no terrestrial navigation, and many of the vessels spread over the 605 miles of open sea between Plymouth and Fastnet had no radio communications onboard. And 40 years ago, it was not general practice for those at sea to keep a continuous listening watch on Radio 4.

Philip Crebbin, a crew member aboard *Eclipse*, points out another factor that was problematic in 1979: 'Even in heavy conditions at night, it was not automatic for everybody on deck to wear lifejackets and harnesses in those days – that became a requirement as a result of this race.'

This combination of factors – a freak storm, inadequate communications, and lack of safety measures that are standard in yacht racing today – was to prove fatal, as many crews were unprepared for the turmoil about to hit them and were too far out to sea to turn back.

## Hell and high water

*6.30pm: 'Finisterre, Sole, Fastnet – south-westerly gale force 8, increasing severe gale force 9 imminent.'*

Although offshore racing yachts can be sailed through force 8 gales (in open waters away from areas of fast tidal streams),



A welcome sight for the yachtsman – Courtmacsherry lifeboat

gale warnings are important to allow adequate precautions to be taken.

The 6.30pm shipping forecast was the first to indicate that anything more than gale force 8 was expected. The first warning of storm force 10 conditions didn't come until the 11pm broadcast – too late for the majority of competitors to seek shelter. Any who tried, would've risked hazarding their yachts by approaching the coast in a rising storm.

At midnight on Tuesday 14 August, the low was close to Valentia Island in south-west Ireland, with a minimum central pressure of around 979hPa making it one of the most intense lows on record. The wind rapidly shifted by more than 90°, causing mountainous waves – some as high as 25m – to cross in an unpredictable pattern. Worse still, they were breaking



Lowestoft lifeboat crew in action – just a few of the 4,000 people involved in the rescue operation that day

at the top and dropping vast quantities of water onto boats caught in the troughs below.

John Rousmaniere of *Toscana* and author of *Fastnet, Force 10* remembers: 'Our navigator, John Coote, stuck his head up the companionway, paused for a few moments, and mournfully intoned words that I had never expected to hear when I first went to sea: "Men are dying out here."'

Surmising the tragedy in his *Yachting World* article published later that year, Alan Watts wrote: 'This time the boats did not have a chance. No amount of seamanship would have prevented many of those which rolled, or were knocked down repeatedly, from succumbing to their fate. The cruel sea saw to that.'

Only 86 of over 300 starting boats finished. There were 194 retirements and 25 yachts were sunk or otherwise disabled and abandoned, with 75 turned upside down in the crashing waves. Five boats were 'lost, believed sunk' and 15 sailors drowned. Reserve lifeboat Crew Member and skipper of the yacht *Cavale* Peter Dorey, from St Peter Port, was one of those who died.

### Rescuers braving the storm

11pm: 'Fastnet – south-westerly severe gales force 9, increasing storm force 10 imminent.'

Courage was by no means limited to the sailors. Thirteen RNLI lifeboats went out into that storm, served nearly 170 hours, and towed or escorted 18 yachts with more than 100 people back to safe haven.

At the height of the storm Baltimore lifeboat was at sea for about 24 hours, Courtmacsherry lifeboat for around 22 hours and St Mary's lifeboat for nearly 21 hours. Ballycotton, Dunmore East, Lizard-Cadgwith, Padstow, St Ives, Sennen Cove, Angle, Clovelly and Penlee lifeboats also took part. Falmouth's crew were away from their station for 38 hours with only brief visits to St Mary's and Newlyn.

'I'd been out earlier,' says Diarmuid O'Mahony, retired coxswain of Courtmacsherry lifeboat. 'I was just in bed 10 minutes when we got the shout at 2am. It took us 4 hours to reach the area. The seas were so high it was almost impossible to see anything.'

While the winds were gusting at hurricane speed, the massive rescue operation was mounted, coordinated by the Irish Coast Guard and the UK Coastguard. 4,000 people were involved in a collaborative effort including British, Irish and Dutch personnel, naval vessels and aircraft. The Royal Navy, RAF and RNLI led the way, charging into perilous conditions.

It is certain that, without the selfless determination of these courageous rescuers, the death toll would have been even higher. Sadly, three of the brave rescuers also lost their lives.

Roger Vaughan of the *Kialoa* notes the depth of the trauma this way: 'Most competitive sailors in the UK had a mate – or at least the mate of a friend – who was injured, traumatised or lost during that violent night.'

### Hard lessons

12.15am: 'Lundy, Fastnet, Irish Sea – south to south-west veering westerly 7 to severe gale 9, locally storm 10 in Fastnet.'

The 1979 Fastnet race had consequences that are still felt today, and not just for the race itself. The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) and Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC) jointly commissioned an inquiry to thoroughly investigate the safety and performance of small craft, their crews and equipment. This far-reaching report on standards for offshore sailing led to significant changes and improvements to yacht design, safety and equipment.

Today, crews have to pre-qualify to take part in ocean races. Participating boats must have VHF radios, safety harnesses now bear a 200kg load, yachts have been re-engineered to give more stability, and crews are advised not to abandon their boat until sinking is inevitable.

Huge advances in technology – from GPS to personal locator beacons (PLBs) – have also made an enormous difference to sailors' safety. 'The greatest innovation,' says Diarmuid O'Mahony, 'is the personal locator. Some even come clipped to lifejackets.'

2019 marks the 40th anniversary of the Fastnet disaster. For those who battled bravely against the elements, for those waiting at home for word from their loved ones, and for those involved in this historic rescue, it remains a painful memory. One that must not and will not be forgotten.

Rousmaniere puts it this way: 'Talking leads inevitably to stories, stories attract people's attention, and so, as long as there are veterans of that wild August night telling those stories, lessons will be learned.' ■

Words: Anna Burn

Photos: Ambrose Greenway, Nigel Millard, RNLI, Shutterstock

### NEVER FORGOTTEN



Some lifeboat volunteers recall the disaster and are still on high alert during each Fastnet race. 'Fastnet is etched in your psyche,' says St Mary's Coxswain Pete Hicks. 'I was at primary school when it happened and I remember the crews were out for hours and hours. But that race changed yacht racing – made it safer.'



The furthest point in the race, the iconic Fastnet Rock

The Shipping Forecast  
13 August 1979

1.55pm: 'Sole, Lundy, Fastnet – south-westerly 4 to 6, increasing 6 or 7 for a time, veering westerly later. Occasional rain or showers. Moderate, locally poor, becoming good later.'

4.05pm: 'Sole, Fastnet, Shannon – south-westerly gale force 8 imminent.'

6.30pm: 'Finisterre, Sole, Fastnet – south-westerly gale force 8, increasing severe gale force 9 imminent.'

11pm: 'Fastnet – south-westerly severe gales force 9, increasing storm force 10 imminent.'

12.15am: 'Lundy, Fastnet, Irish Sea – south to south-west veering westerly 7 to severe gale 9, locally storm 10 in Fastnet.'

# The RNLI and me: David Hayman

The star of stage and screen talks sea shanties, his charity work, and the respect he has for the RNLI

## THE REAL FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS

Fisherman's Friends is a singing group who perform traditional songs of the sea. Their story inspired the 2019 film.

They started off singing to raise money for charity, including the local Port Isaac Lifeboat Station, where three members of the original line-up also served on the crew.

They were spotted by a music industry executive and signed to a major label in 2010, releasing three hit albums.

The family link is still strong today, with current Port Isaac crew members George Cleave and Tom Brown both having family members in the band.

David stars in *Fisherman's Friends*, a film telling the true story of how a group of friends who sang sea shanties – including several Port Isaac lifeboat crew members – got signed to a major record label.

### Can you tell us about your role in the film?

My character is a composite of several of the band members. While we have all 10 in the film, the film focuses on four central characters who collect together the different personalities. I play Jago, the grandfather of the family at the centre of the story. He's a grizzled old fisherman, but warm and friendly. A well-loved part of the community.

### How did you prepare for the role?

The cast spent 5 weeks with the band. Living with them, working with them, drinking with them. Singing with them! It was so we could learn their attitudes, mannerisms and so on. They were absolutely invaluable to our preparation, and a lovely bunch of men.

### What was it like being out on the water?

I've been out on boats before but never for a feature film. We spent 5 days at sea during the filming. Fishing is a job I could never dream of doing – it's too wet, too cold, too dangerous. I have so much respect and admiration for those who make their living out on the water.

### So was the singing much easier?

Sea shanties are the folk songs of the sea and they're not the most complicated arias

to perform. We would often get together with the band during filming to practise and sing. At a recent concert, Dave Johns and I joined the band on stage for the last three numbers. One of the highlights of my life.

### Why did you set up your own charity, Spirit Aid?

I think it's incumbent on all of us to give something back. I have had a good, comfortable life. The vast majority of people have not.

### Do you see any similarities between the volunteers of the RNLI and those at your charity?

They've all got good hearts. They are brave human beings. I've known a lot of fishing communities around Scotland, and you hear stories of how generations of families have been lost in the same boat.

Lifeboat crews have my admiration and respect. They come from all walks of life and are very special people. They are humble, they don't want credit. They just quietly go about their business. They put on their drysuits and off they go into the wildest of oceans. You have to take your hat off to men and women like that.

### Would you have joined a lifeboat crew?

If I had grown up in a seaside town where it was second nature to be out on a boat or I had that family connection. I certainly hope that I would help in some way. The RNLI, it's a vital lifeline.

Photos: Fisherman's Friends, Shutterstock

## WHO IS DAVID HAYMAN?

From Hollywood blockbusters to the Donmar Theatre in London, actor David Hayman has been a feature on stage and screen since his breakthrough in the eighties.

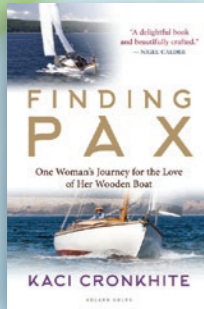
He is perhaps most famous for his role as DCS Mike Walker in ITV drama *Trial & Retribution*.



David (foreground) in his latest film, *Fisherman's Friends*

# Book reviews

There's nothing quite like lounging in the sun with a brand-new book to devour. Get your taste buds tingling, quench your thirst for adventure and brush up on your history with our delectable selection



## **Finding Pax**

by Kaci Cronkhite

Kaci Cronkhite, a first-time boat owner, takes on the task of discovering the history of her beloved 8.5m wooden sailboat *Pax*, a Danish spidsgatter. Who had loved her before? What did she originally look like? Where has she sailed? Unravelling the mystery of *Pax*'s ownership launches Kaci into a 7-year challenge where she finds new friends and explores new places.

This true story of discovery and reconnection will delight boat owners and history enthusiasts alike. And who knows, it may sow the seed for your own voyage of discovery.

Published by Adlard Coles  
ISBN 9781472958600  
Price £12.99



## **Cutty Sark: The Last of the Tea Clippers**

by Eric Kentley

*Cutty Sark* is synonymous with a golden age of sailing, when blousy tall-ships raced across the South China Sea carrying tea and other precious cargo.

Featuring old drawings, maps and images cleverly interspersed with contemporary photographs, this is a generously and well illustrated read. We hear from the ship's crew about life onboard and discover how *Cutty Sark* survived to become a national treasure, now on permanent display at the Royal Museums Greenwich in London.

A perfect appetiser for any museum visit, this book may taste even better with a cup of tea.

Published by Adlard Coles  
ISBN 9781472959539  
Price £20



## **40 Dives, 40 Dishes: Dive Stories and Recipes from the MV Salutay**

by Al and Freda Wright

MV *Salutay* is liveaboard dive boat run by husband and wife Al and Freda Wright. In this part memoir, part recipe book, the couple pick their favourite cook-aboard dishes and dives around the British Isles, which have won them rave reviews from 30 years' worth of happy customers.

The dives are vividly retold and will appeal to experienced, novice and armchair divers alike, and while the recipes are all tried and tested for cooking in cramped conditions at sea, the mouthwatering photography will inspire all cooks. Indeed, the Sprouting at Sea chapter is just as relevant for those with a windowsill at home, dreaming of a life afloat.

Published by Sandsmedia Publishing  
ISBN 9781717270788  
Price £19.95  
Order your copy from  
fredamvsalutay@aol.com



## **Crossing the Bar: Tales of Wells Harbour**

by Robert Smith MBE

Through a thoughtful collection of historic events, local geography, poetry, personal experiences and even ghostly legends, Robert Smith recounts the captivating story of Wells Harbour and its community.

Shaped by his years as harbour master and an RNLI crew member, Smith's fascination with this enchanting coastal town is infectious. We follow the harbour's history from the 1500s to the present day, accompanied by thrilling tales of freak waves, lifeboat rescues and the crossing of the notorious sandbar. Whether you're new to Wells Harbour or know it well, this is a wonderful read.

Published by Wells Harbour Commissioners  
ISBN 9781527228290  
Price £19.50  
Available to order from [jarrold.co.uk](http://jarrold.co.uk)



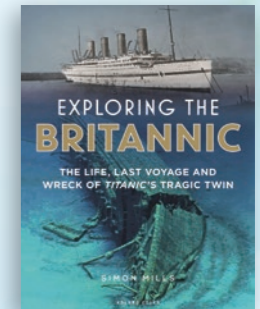
## **Sail Away: How to Escape the Rat Race & Live the Dream**

by Nicola Rodriguez

Longing to escape the daily grind and sail away? You'll be captivated by the story of Nicola and John Rodriguez. After Nicola lost her job, they decided to use her redundancy money to refit their blue-water boat *Moonshine* and set sail on an adventure around the world.

'25,000 miles, 8 years, 2 hurricanes and 2 sons later, I wrote this book,' Nicola says in the book's first pages. *Sail Away* is an inspirational and practical guide, which shows you how to turn your dream into a reality. It's packed with useful information, from choosing and equipping your boat and sorting insurance, to living with children onboard and trying out recipes in the galley.

Published by Fernhurst Books  
ISBN 9781912177233  
Price £18.99



## **Exploring the Britannic**

by Simon Mills

We all know the story of the *Titanic*, but few of us are familiar with the tragic tale of her twin ship *Britannic*.

Although she was built to be a transatlantic passenger liner, the First World War changed her fate and the *Britannic* was requisitioned as a hospital ship. On her sixth voyage, collecting wounded troops from the Balkans, she encountered a mine and sank in the middle of the Aegean Sea. Just over 1,000 people survived the sinking, but 30 men lost their lives.

This rich, detailed book documents the life of the *Britannic*, from her construction to her life as a hospital ship; her final voyage to the exploration of her wreckage. It's a fascinating read for history lovers, bursting with old photography, documents and illustrations.

Published by Adlard Coles  
ISBN 9781472954923  
Price £25

Buy these books online via [RNLI.org/amazon](http://RNLI.org/amazon) and Amazon will donate a minimum of 1% of the value to the RNLI. Recommended retail prices may vary from the time of writing. Post and packaging costs may apply to online orders.

Words: Denise Griffiths, Rob Westcott, Eleanor Driscoll, Lydia Cooke and Nikki McMullen



# 1,134 RNLI RESCUE CRAFT LAUNCHES 1 JANUARY-31 MARCH 2019

Behind every launch, new lifeboat and naming ceremony listed in this section is a community of volunteers, fundraisers and supporters. Whatever you do to keep our crews ready to rescue, thank you.



Photo: RNLI/Nigel Millard

The launches listed here are those for which returns have been received at RNLI Headquarters and processed by 16 April 2019.

**ABERDEEN**  
D-830: Feb 9  
**ABERSOCH**  
B-886: Jan 5  
**ABERYSTWYTH**  
A-78: Feb 6  
B-822: Jan 26, Feb 23  
**ACHILL ISLAND**  
D-523: Feb 21  
ON1240 (14-28): Feb 6, Mar 17  
**ALDEBURGH**  
ON1193 (12-34): Mar 22  
**ALDERNEY**  
ON1199 (14-04): Jan 21, 22, 23  
**AMBLE**  
D-736: Jan 4, Feb 6  
ON1323 (13-16): Jan 13, Feb 6  
ON1291 (16-11): Jan 14, Feb 22, 25, 26  
**ANSTRUTHER**  
D-802: Feb 27  
ON1174 (12-17): Feb 27  
**APPLEDORE**  
B-861: Jan 9, Feb 25, Mar 5  
ON1296 (16-16): Feb 24, Mar 20  
**ARAN ISLANDS**  
ON1217 (17-06): Jan 6, 12, 13, 20, Mar 20, 21  
**ARBROATH**  
D-759: Jan 10, 20  
ON1194 (12-35): Jan 10, 21  
**ARKLOW**  
ON1223 (14-19): Jan 6

**ARRAN (LAMLASH)**  
B-876: Jan 14, Feb 4, 19, Mar 1, 20  
**ARRANMORE**  
BB-067: Feb 20  
BB-682: Feb 21  
ON1244 (17-22): Jan 9, Feb 2, 20, 28(x2), Mar 8, 18  
**BALLYGLASS**  
ON1235 (17-15): Mar 19(x2)  
**BANGOR**  
B-805: Jan 5, Feb 21, 22  
**BARMOUTH**  
ON1185 (12-26): Feb 24  
**BARROW**  
D-733: Jan 29, Feb 27  
ON1288 (16-08): Feb 3, 27  
**BARRY DOCK**  
ON1245 (14-29): Feb 27, Mar 21, 22  
**BEAUMARIS**  
B-838: Jan 25, Feb 14, 17, 24, Mar 14  
**BEMBRIDGE**  
D-778: Mar 20  
ON1297 (16-17): Jan 5, 31, Feb 8, Mar 4, 24  
**BERWICK-UPON-TWEED**  
ON1191 (12-32): Feb 25  
**BLACKPOOL**  
B-867: Jan 5  
D-729: Jan 4, 12  
D-732: Jan 4, 12  
**BLYTH**  
B-776: Jan 20  
D-746: Feb 26  
**BORTH**  
D-760: Jan 26

**BRIDLINGTON**  
D-721: Jan 6, 13, 26, Feb 17, 23(x2)  
ON1329 (13-22): Jan 26  
**BRIGHTON**  
B-852: Jan 1, 7, 17, 22, Feb 1, 13, 23, 25(x3), Mar 20, 24, 27  
**BROUGH FERRY**  
D-698: Jan 6, 10, 13, 17, 22, 26, Feb 11, 12, 17  
ON1226 (14-22): Feb 12, 17  
ON1252 (14-31): Jan 6, 10, 13, 17, 22, Feb 11  
**BUCKIE**  
ON1268 (17-37): Jan 15, Feb 8, Mar 5, 12  
**BUDE**  
D-756: Jan 20, 25, 27, Feb 21  
**BUNDORAN**  
B-834: Feb 10, 26, Mar 18, 31  
**BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH**  
B-849: Feb 17  
**BURNHAM-ON-SEA**  
B-796: Jan 1, 22  
D-801: Jan 22, Feb 25  
**BURRY PORT**  
B-793: Jan 22, Feb 17  
D-749: Jan 22, Feb 17, 23  
**CALSHOT**  
B-835: Feb 13  
B-860: Jan 30, Feb 27  
D-748: Jan 2, 29, Feb 4  
**CAMPBELTOWN**  
D-737: Feb 6  
ON1241 (17-19): Jan 2, Feb 6, 18, 24

**CARRYBRIDGE**  
B-904: Jan 24  
**CHISWICK**  
E-005: Feb 7, 26, Mar 1, 2, 3  
E-07: Jan 8, 9, 10  
E-08: Jan 4, 6, 12(x2), 13(x2), 14(x2), 16, 18, 22, 23, 24(x2), Feb 1, 7, 8(x2), 9, 10(x2), 12, 16, 19, 20, 21, Mar 9, 12, 17, 20, 21(x2), 23, 24, 28, 29  
**CLACTON-ON-SEA**  
B-863: Jan 13, Feb 5, 28  
D-774: Jan 13, Feb 5, 18, 26, Mar 8, 16, 28  
**CLEETHORPES**  
D-757: Jan 29, 30, Feb 3(x2), 6, 13, 17, 21, 24, Mar 20, 21  
**CLOGHER HEAD**  
ON1189 (12-30): Jan 30  
ON1190 (12-31): Mar 18  
**CONWY**  
D-765: Jan 1, Mar 26, 29  
**COURTMACSHERRY**  
**HARBOUR**  
ON1205 (14-07): Jan 4, 21  
**COWES**  
B-859: Jan 8, 26, Feb 19, 22, Mar 7(x2), 8  
**CRASTER**  
D-703: Jan 13  
**CROMER**  
D-734: Jan 16  
ON1287 (16-07): Feb 21  
**CROSSHAVEN**  
B-892: Jan 6, Mar 14  
**CULLERCOATS**  
B-875: Feb 5, 24, 27, Mar 10

**DART**  
B-794: Jan 5, Feb 1, 28, Mar 13  
D-702: Jan 5, Mar 8  
**DONAGHADEE**  
ON1267 (14-36): Jan 14, Feb 22  
**DOUGLAS**  
ON1184 (12-25): Feb 11  
**DOVER**  
ON1220 (17-09): Jan 21, Feb 18, 24, 27, Mar 2, 28  
**DUNBAR**  
D-708: Feb 23, Mar 28  
ON1266 (14-35): Feb 23, Mar 10, 28  
**DUNGENESS**  
ON1309 (13-02): Feb 18, 27  
**DUNMORE EAST**  
ON1204 (14-06): Jan 16, 20(x2)  
**EASTBOURNE**  
D-744: Jan 1(x2), 20, 27, 28, 29, Feb 1, 6, 14, 22, 24(x2), 27, 28, Mar 5, 22, 23  
ON1293 (16-13): Jan 1, 20  
ON1303 (16-23): Feb 9, Mar 10, 12, 21  
**ENNISKILLEN**  
B-912: Feb 16  
RWC-052: Feb 16  
**EXMOUTH**  
D-805: Feb 12, 22, 25, Mar 20(x2), 31  
D-809: Jan 14, 15  
ON1310 (13-03): Jan 15

**EYEMOUTH**  
D-745: Jan 22, Mar 16  
ON1336 (13-29): Jan 22, Feb 25(x2), Mar 16  
**FALMOUTH**  
B-756: Jan 3, 16, 27, 29, Feb 19, Mar 15, 18, 21, 22, 24  
D-522P: Mar 18, 21  
ON1256 (17-29): Jan 15, 27, Mar 21  
**FENIT**  
D-726: Jan 24, Feb 28  
ON1239 (14-27): Jan 14, Feb 28, Mar 19  
**FILEY**  
D-728: Jan 9, 10, Mar 17  
ON1170 (12-13): Jan 10, Mar 5, 17  
**FISHGUARD**  
D-789: Jan 24  
ON1198 (14-03): Jan 24, 29  
**FLAMBOROUGH**  
B-820: Jan 16, Feb 23, Mar 17  
**FLEETWOOD**  
D-719: Mar 9, 20, 22(x2), 23(x2)  
ON1321 (13-14): Jan 26, Feb 2, 3(x2), 8, 21, 22, Mar 8, 9, 23  
**FLINT**  
D-795: Jan 20  
**FOWEY**  
D-817: Jan 5, Feb 14  
ON1222 (14-18): Jan 3, 11, 12, Mar 27  
**FRASERBURGH**  
ON1259 (14-34): Jan 18, 19, 21, 23, Feb 3, 4, 26  
**GALWAY**  
B-853: Jan 6, 20, 25, Feb 22  
**GIRVAN**  
ON1330 (13-23): Mar 24  
**GRAVESEND**  
B-827: Jan 13, 30, Feb 2, 10, 14, 25(x2), 26, 27, Mar 10, 19, 24, 25, 27(x2), 28(x2)  
**GREAT YARMOUTH AND GORLESTON**  
A-77: Mar 9  
B-788: Jan 1, Mar 8, 11, 24  
ON1208 (14-10): Jan 20, Mar 30  
**HARTLEPOOL**  
B-881: Jan 4, 5(x2), 11, Feb 18, 26  
B-901: Mar 6  
ON1274 (14-37): Jan 5(x2), 24, Feb 18, Mar 6  
**HARWICH**  
B-907: Jan 26, Feb 28, Mar 1  
**HASTINGS**  
D-699: Feb 17, 26  
ON1335 (13-28): Feb 9

**HAYLING ISLAND**  
B-829: Jan 1, 13, Feb 3, Mar 30  
D-779: Jan 1, Feb 20  
**HELENSBURGH**  
B-903: Jan 2(x2), 13(x3), 26, Feb 16, 20, 27, Mar 2, 16  
**HELVICK HEAD**  
B-874: Feb 17  
**HOLYHEAD**  
D-791: Feb 10  
ON1272 (17-41): Mar 20, 29  
**HORTON AND PORT EYNON**  
D-824: Jan 2, Feb 11, Mar 7  
**HOWTH**  
D-796: Jan 20, Feb 16  
ON1258 (14-33): Jan 17, Mar 18  
**HOYLAKE**  
H-001: Mar 1  
H-005: Jan 2, 10, 15  
ON1313 (13-06): Jan 9, Feb 24, Mar 31  
**HUMBER**  
ON1216 (17-05): Jan 22, 31, Feb 3, 21, Mar 20  
ON1237 (17-17): Feb 26  
**HUNSTANTON**  
B-848: Feb 3, Mar 1  
**ILFRACOMBE**  
D-717: Jan 20, Feb 9  
ON1311 (13-04): Jan 20, Feb 14, Mar 9, 21  
**INVERGORDON**  
ON1206 (14-08): Jan 2, Feb 5, 17, Mar 13  
**KESOCK**  
B-873: Jan 20, Feb 17(x2), Mar 13  
**KILKEEL**  
B-812: Feb 24, Mar 6, 17  
**KILMORE QUAY**  
ON1298 (16-18): Jan 14, Mar 20  
**KINGHORN**  
B-898: Jan 20, 28(x2), Feb 2, 15, 22, 23, 27, Mar 8, 10(x2), 13, 17  
**KINSALE**  
B-850: Jan 6  
**KIRKWALL**  
ON1231 (17-13): Mar 11  
**KYLE OF LOCHALSH**  
B-856: Feb 12, 19  
**LARGS**  
B-854: Jan 18, 27, Feb 24, Mar 24, 28, 31  
**LARNE**  
ON1246 (14-30): Jan 14, Feb 22  
**LERWICK**  
ON1221 (17-10): Feb 8, Mar 10, 30

**LEVERBURGH**  
ON1332 (13-25): Jan 17, 24, 26, Feb 28, Mar 20(x2), 30  
**LITTLE AND BROAD HAVEN**  
D-766: Feb 25  
**LITTLEHAMPTON**  
B-891: Jan 18, 25, Feb 20, 24, Mar 3, 7  
D-769: Jan 14, Feb 13, 20  
**LITTLESTONE-ON-SEA**  
B-785: Jan 8, Feb 24  
**LLANDUDNO**  
D-793: Jan 1, Feb 16, 17(x2), 24, Mar 18  
ON1325 (13-18): Feb 16, 21, 24, Mar 13, 17  
**LOCH NESS**  
B-902: Mar 8  
**LONGHOPE**  
ON1290 (16-10): Mar 2  
**LOUGH DERG**  
B-911: Mar 31  
**LOUGH REE**  
B-772: Jan 2, Mar 18, 28, 30  
**LOWESTOFT**  
ON1312 (13-05): Jan 4, 19, 29, Mar 18, 30  
**LYME REGIS**  
B-857: Feb 17, 19, Mar 15, 29  
**LYMINGTON**  
B-882: Feb 10, Mar 26  
**LYTHAM ST ANNES**  
D-800: Jan 1  
ON1331 (13-24): Jan 3  
**MACDUFF**  
B-804: Jan 18  
**MALLAIG**  
ON1286 (17-26): Jan 4, Feb 3, 12, 25  
**MARGATE**  
D-706: Jan 9, Feb 16, Mar 5  
ON1177 (12-20): Jan 9  
**MINEHEAD**  
D-712: Feb 11  
**MOELFRE**  
ON1286 (16-06): Feb 11  
**MONTROSE**  
D-764: Mar 26  
**MORECAMBE**  
H-001: Mar 22  
H-002: Jan 7, Feb 1, Mar 18  
**MUDEFORD**  
B-806: Feb 17, 24, Mar 7, 10, 24(x2)  
**NEW BRIGHTON**  
B-825: Feb 16, Mar 1, 11, 22, 23, 26, 30  
B-837: Jan 7  
D-609: Feb 15  
**NEW QUAY (CEREDIGION)**  
D-754: Feb 21, Mar 4  
ON1172 (12-15): Feb 15

## LAUNCHES



ON-####(13-##)  
Shannon class  
introduced 2014  
new cost: **£2.2M**



ON-####(16-##)  
Tamar class  
last built: 2013



ON-####(17-##)  
Severn class  
last built: 2004



ON-####(14-##)  
Trent class  
last built: 2003



ON-####(12-##)  
Mersey class  
last built: 1993



ON-####(47-###)  
Tyne class  
last built: 1990



B-###  
B class  
new cost: **£214,000**



D-###  
D class  
new cost: **£52,000**



E-##  
E class  
new cost: **£560,000**



H-###  
Inshore rescue hovercraft  
new cost: **£450,000**



A-##  
Inshore rescue boat  
new cost: **£13,000**



RWC-###  
Rescue watercraft  
new cost: **£10,000**

Additional rescue craft:  
BB-### Boarding boat  
Y-### Y boat  
X-### X boat  
XP-### XP boat  
FR-### and  
RR-### Flood Rescue Team boat



# Friends of the RNLI



Photo: Haven

## Our partnership with Haven is in full swing this year, creating a 'safe haven' for family holidays

Last year, Haven raised an amazing £122,605 for the RNLI. Haven employees arranged events – such as football tournaments and Strictly Come Dancing shows – and even got gunged in aid of the RNLI.

All 36 of Haven's award-winning holiday parks are close to the coast, where their Park Rangers lead fun family activities spreading our RNLI Water Smart messages. Together, we reached over 3,000 children in 2018, with much more planned this year to share vital safety messaging to 2.6M Haven holidaymakers.

Haven offers a 10% discount to RNLI supporters. Visit [haven.com/RNLI](http://haven.com/RNLI).

## Puzzle time

### Quick wordsearch:

Can you find all the words connected to sunny days at the beach, building sandcastles?

Y M R Z B U C K E T Z U W I  
M A J R Y F E G R D M S I M  
S N O I T A C I F I T R O F  
E S S U R X D U E E B F A X  
L G N H C T W A R J E K V C  
B R D B E L A R P F A M D S  
B N A I M L U O A V C S F Y  
E L M G R T L V M H H L O L  
P O U N L B Y S O N A T E P  
P E L M E A W K O G D P N W  
R D T S R R O A S B K K C V  
E Z Q N P Q G C R X W F S A  
J N T J C H Z I E D A P S M  
J X G F J X P C W F U V F T

BEACH  
BUCKET  
DRAWBRIDGE  
FLAGS  
FORTIFICATIONS  
MOAT  
PEBBLES  
SHELLS  
SPADE  
TURRETS

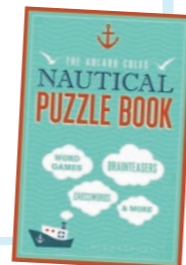
## NAUTICAL PUZZLES

### Get hitched

Pair these, whatever the weather  
(solution on page 39).

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Shipping  | A. Weather   |
| 2. Marine    | B. Scale     |
| 3. Hurricane | C. Direction |
| 4. Tornado   | D. Forecast  |
| 5. Beaufort  | E. Season    |
| 6. Wind      | F. Watch     |

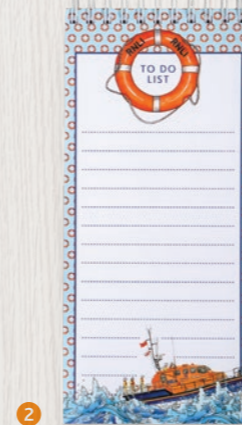
From *The Adlard Coles Nautical Puzzle Book* published by Bloomsbury and reproduced with their kind permission.



# Summer at sea

Add a flash of orange to your home with our new RNLI Shop range At Sea

The At Sea collection is designed by sisters Stephanie Baylis-Crisp and Jenny McCormick, two watersports enthusiasts from south-west Wales. The main design depicts a Tamar class all-weather lifeboat crew powering through the swell, on their way to a rescue.



**1. At Sea Weekly Planner, £5**  
Featuring tear-off to do list on each page, approximately 50 sheets  
Ref: RS603412

**2. At Sea Magnetic Pad, £4**  
Lined wirebound jotter with a magnetic back cover, 70 pages  
Ref: RS603049

**3. D Class Lifeboat Pencil, £1.50**  
HB pencil with inshore lifeboat rubber topper  
Ref: RS16134

**4. Lifeboats Carabiner, £3**  
Anodized carabiner and split keyring with orange nylon strap  
Ref: RS511292

**5. At Sea Lifering Tankard Mug, £8**  
Bone china mug featuring exclusive RNLI design, dishwasher and microwave safe  
Ref: RS881933

**6. At Sea Lifeboat Tea Towel, £6**  
Designed and made in the UK, 100% cotton  
Ref: RS742885

Shop online at [shop.rnli.org](http://shop.rnli.org), visit your nearest RNLI shop or call us on **0300 300 9916** (in the UK) or **+44 1375 484 577** (from outside the UK). We're here to help Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm.

# SPECIAL DELIVERY



Coxswain Blogg

## MEMORIES OF A LIFEBOAT LEGEND

My mother Gwen Hargreaves, aged 95, was delighted to see a bit about Coxswain Blogg and his medals in a recent copy of your interesting *Lifeboat* magazine. He still is one of her great heroes.

Gwen has been a lifeboat supporter since she was 16. She says: 'As a child, living near Cromer, I remember watching Coxswain Blogg hauling the heavy boat into the water and how he loved children. He used to take us for rides in his crab boat. He was such a hero in our

time long before the museum opened. I also remember playing with a huge dog in the sand – a survivor from one of his rescues.

'Coxswain Blogg was known as one of the bravest men who ever lived, yet he couldn't even swim! He and his cousins the Davies spent so many hours risking their lives amongst heavy storms and treacherous seas.'

Chris Venables

## WHY I SUPPORT THE RNLI

Though I live in London, your *Lifeboat* magazine always takes me back nearly 40 years to the time I was a 'novice' crew member in the June 1980 Plymouth–St Malo sailing race.

I will never forget the experience and particularly the return when we found ourselves in a storm 10 with 30ft and more-high waves and having taken water aboard our 27ft yacht!

Luckily at about 3am a big Greek tanker found us and sheltered us until the Torbay lifeboat came out and slowly towed us back into Salcombe, which was like going on a giant roller-coaster! On landing, I remember stumbling up the quayside and running to hug the first lifeboat man I saw. So I have been a supporter of your wonderful teams ever since.

Clive Loveless

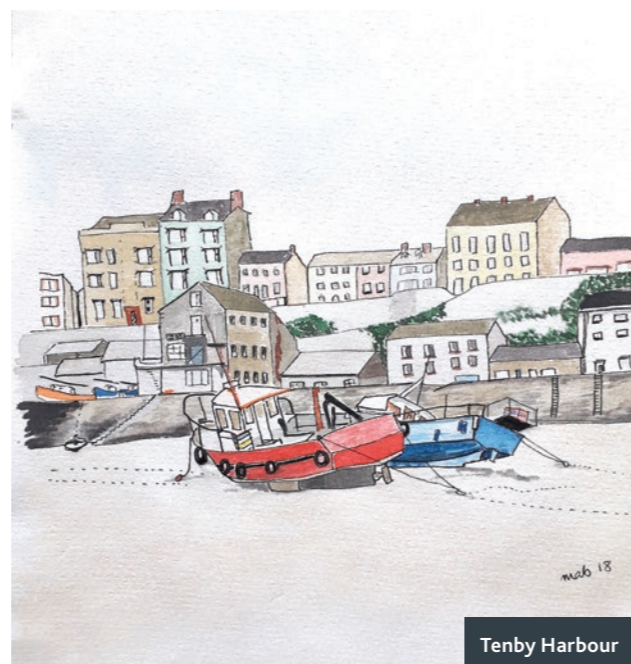


Torbay Arun class lifeboat faced 10m waves

## INSPIRED AT THE HARBOUR

I saw the article in the *Lifeboat* about coastal sketching and wondered if you would like to see my sketch/painting of Tenby Harbour at low tide in the winter.

Maggie Bouchier



Tenby Harbour

## AFTER PENLEE: FAMILY TIES

One reader shares his surprise that the RNLI allows members of the same family out on the same shout

The account of the tragic loss of the Penlee RNLI *Solomon Browne* and her crew in 1981 is memorable for many reasons and one in particular. I believe that the coxswain refused to take Neil Brockman in addition to his father Nigel, who perished, on the grounds that two members of the same family should not be involved together in a high-risk incident.

I read, and enjoyed the autumn 2018 issue of *Lifeboat*. One article 'Danger rising' describes an incident in which a husband and wife (parents of two children), were crew on the same craft. Another article 'Next generation joins dads on Douglas crew' is great PR but I shudder, at the potential for it all to go wrong.

## RNLI FAMILY: THE LIFE OF THE CHARITY

Celebrating the RNLI family, past and present

### Next generation join dads on Douglas crew



Philby and Peter Corrie, Robert and Tony Radcliffe, Leiria and Peter Washington

I'm surprised, after the Penlee lifeboat disaster in 1981, that RNLI policy is still to allow family members to serve on the same call out. Has the RNLI looked at this and is the current policy still the right one?

Fortunately, advances in technology and training have reduced the risk to lifeboat men and women considerably, but I still make my point.

James Coleborn

**Oli Mallinson, RNLI Senior Operations Manager (Lifeboats), replies:**

The RNLI doesn't have a policy or rules about family members going on shouts together.

We are grateful that children would want to follow in their parents footsteps and volunteer for the RNLI. Sometimes this does mean that daughters, sons, fathers, mothers, partners, cousins are on the same service.

When selecting a crew for each call out, it is left to the station to decide. Some stations would rather not have family members on board in any circumstances, some are fine with it.

If you speak to crews all around the UK and Ireland about launches in different conditions, often the decision seems to depend on the risk, and the numbers and experience of crew available. They make the call.

## Write to us

Were you moved by a rescue story? Do you want to know more about something you've read? We love hearing your thoughts and ideas. Please get in touch with us.

Email the editor at [lifeboat@rnli.org.uk](mailto:lifeboat@rnli.org.uk)

Share your stories at [twitter.com/RNLI](https://twitter.com/RNLI)

Connect with us on [facebook.com/RNLI](https://facebook.com/RNLI)

Get hitched puzzle solution (page 36): 1:D 2:A 3:E 4:F 5:B 6:C



This stunning photo of Baltimore lifeboat *Alan Massey*, was taken by supporter Dennis Horgan

# RNLI FAMILY: THE LIFE OF THE CHARITY

Celebrating the RNLI family, past and present

## Welcome to the lifeboat family, Freya!

Cowes RNLI are celebrating a new addition to their crew with the christening of baby Freya, the 2-year-old daughter of volunteers Alasdair and Heather Boden. The Boden family have been volunteering at the station for the past 8 years but are about to move to the Lake District.

Family, friends and members of the crew watched from the lifeboat station balcony as Rev Andrew Poppe took Freya in his arms and used water that had been poured into a lifeboat helmet for the baptism.

Alasdair says: 'We've loved our time in Cowes and the RNLI has been a massive part of it. As there is much talk of the RNLI family, we thought it would be a nice farewell to our involvement with the lifeboat by having Freya baptised on it.'

We wish Alasdair, Heather and Freya all the best in this exciting new chapter of their lives.



Baby Freya, baptised at Cowes



## Brotherly love and sibling rivalry

Three brothers from Cornwall – Beau, Tristan and Charlie – have followed in each other's footsteps to become RNLI lifeguards. Between them, they have 23 years of lifeguarding experience and have taken part in many memorable rescues.

Is there any rivalry between the trio? Not on the beach. But in the pool, the brothers' competitive side comes out. As part of their training, all RNLI lifeguards must complete timed swims once a month. Beau says: 'I've accepted the fact that I'm not going to beat Charlie. But I still beat Tristan!'

Hear more from the brothers at [RNLI.org/GillettBrothers](http://RNLI.org/GillettBrothers).

## 'He has left us with wonderful memories'



Martyn Smith, who will be much missed

We were sad to learn of the passing of RNLI friend and colleague Martyn Smith in February. Martyn worked as a divisional inspector in East England and Ireland and the Isle of Man, taking on the role of regional operations manager there before moving to the Operational Policy Team.

'Supported by his wife Rachel, Martyn was immensely proud of working for the RNLI and was a highly experienced mariner. He met The Queen and two Irish Presidents while working for the RNLI and took great delight in regaling everyone with his RNLI and life experiences. 'His enthusiasm and zest for life was infectious,' says George Rawlinson, RNLI Operations and Safety Director.

'He has left an incredible legacy in the RNLI. The affection with which he is held by all who knew him is a great testament to him. Martyn has left us too soon, but he has left us with wonderful memories.'

### Celebrating life

Join us in remembering our RNLI Family members who have recently passed away.

**Alasdair Barker – March 2019**

Former Coxswain at Islay Lifeboat Station

**Robert Braithwaite – March 2019**

RNLI Vice-President

**John Clark – May 2018**

Former Second Coxswain at Poole Lifeboat Station

**Joan Crabtree – January 2019**

Guild Member at Bembridge Lifeboat Station

**Brian Faulkner – February 2019**

Former Radio Communications Manager

**Eric Jesse – December 2018**

Guild Member at Mudeford Lifeboat Station

**James Manson – February 2019**

Former Coxswain at Aith Lifeboat Station

**Owen Roberts – February 2019**

Former Coxswain Mechanic at Pwllheli Lifeboat Station

**Charlie Sharp – September 2018**

Former Crew Member at Cardigan Lifeboat Station

**Mattie Stafford – February 2019**

Former Crew Member and Deputy Launching Authority at Achill Island Lifeboat Station

**Peter L White – February 2019**

Former Coxswain at Plymouth Lifeboat Station

**Arthur John Wilkins – January 2019**

Long-standing supporter of Largs Lifeboat Station and South Clyde Fundraising Branch

## REMEMBERING MARY BLYTH



The Sheringham community are paying tribute to stalwart volunteer Mary Blyth, who recently passed away. After moving to the area with her husband, who became the honorary lifeboat doctor, Mary dedicated almost 60 years to the station.

She made history by setting up Sheringham's first RNLI shop, selling souvenirs from a small suitcase at the station, and later became a volunteer lifeboat shop manager. Mary also founded the Sheringham Lades Guild, served as a branch member, and became chairman of Sheringham Museum.

Mary was awarded an RNLI silver medal for her diligent volunteering and, in 2005, she was made an MBE for her services to the community. Her commitment and passion will forever be an inspiration to us all.

Photos: George Chastney, Cowper Johnson family, RNLI/(Nigel Millard, Jess Putt)



## UNSUNG HEROES

Husband and wife Derek and Pauline Weatherburn have been part of the Portishead family of volunteers for nearly 20 years

Photo: RNLI/Jen Burbridge

### What volunteer roles have you had?

Derek: We started volunteering at Portishead when it was an independent lifeboat station. I was shore crew and launch tractor driver, and Pauline was a fundraiser.

Nearing retirement we wanted to do more locally, for the community. We're part of team that hosts visits to our station and we do talks. In our first year as an RNLI station we spoke to 2,232 children and 983 adults.

### Why did you choose to be visits officers?

Pauline: If you can prevent someone getting into trouble in the first place, that saves an awful lot. Teach the children and they'll tell others – they love being in charge.

The safety messages get through – we can tell from the thank you letters and cards.

It's something the two of us can do. We relish being together.

### What memories stand out from your time at the station?

Pauline: When you get a child coming to visit and they bring their 10p pocket money to donate.

Once we had a group of brownies visiting and there was a call out. They saw the lifeboat launched and recovered and the helm had a chat with them afterwards.

### You're stepping back this year after nearly 20 years.

#### What would you say to prospective volunteers?

Derek: Giving something back to the community is a privilege. It's a family here at Portishead – the crew and the fundraisers, the shop, the education volunteers, the supporters. We're all marching together.

Find your place in our family of volunteers at [RNLI.org/volunteer](https://www.rnli.org/volunteer).

# A LASTING LEGACY

Dr Derek Thomerson's daughters miss him terribly. He passed away aged 87, but his legacy lives on.

A keen yachtsman, one of Derek Thomerson's favourite stories was of a perilous trip from France to England in 1984. His daughter Viv says: 'He used to recount his journey very dramatically with a twinkle in his eye.'

Derek was with his friend Bob, on the yacht *Engel*, without a full mast, when the wind whipped up to force 7.

'DISASTER' wrote Derek in his log, as the yacht's engine 'suddenly increased in revs and then cut out' at 9.15pm.

Four and a half hours later, when a passing ship attempted to help, things went from bad to worse. 'Unable to stop *Engel* approaching bow of tanker. Just as we were under the 5 ton anchor, a wave lifted us and Bob and I threw ourselves backwards to escape instant death. The anchor crashed through the cabin roof.'

Thankfully, at 3.45am, Selsey lifeboat crew came to the rescue. They set up a tow and after 4 hours, all were safely back on dry land. Derek remembered the crew's 'extreme proficiency' adding that they were 'jolly chaps'.

After this 10-hour ordeal, Derek never forgot the lifeboats. After providing for his daughters, Derek left the RNLI a gift in his Will.

Derek's four daughters wanted their local lifeboat station at Calshot to benefit from their dad's generosity. A plaque in the boathouse recognises the gift in his Will, which contributed towards the station's running costs in 2018.

Leaving a gift in your Will to the RNLI is easy to do. It means that other trained crews and lifeguards can save lives, maintaining the professionalism and confidence that Selsey crew displayed that day.



Photo: Shutterstock

To find out how to leave a gift to the RNLI in your Will, visit [RNLI.org/legacy](https://www.rnli.org/legacy)

or contact our Gifts in Wills Team on 0300 300 0124 (UK) or 1800 360258 (Republic of Ireland) or [legacy\\_enquiry@rnli.org.uk](mailto:legacy_enquiry@rnli.org.uk)

# LIFEBOAT LOTTERY

## WIN UP TO £5,000 AND HELP SAVE LIVES

To enter our autumn lottery, simply call 0300 300 9990 or email [lottery@rnli.org.uk](mailto:lottery@rnli.org.uk).

Phone lines are open Monday–Friday, 8am–6pm.

Enter by 13 September 2019 for the autumn Lifeboat Lottery. Draw date is 27 September.

Just £1 a ticket. Every pound you spend powers our lifesaving.



Photo: RNLI/Nicholas Leach

## LIFEBOAT LOTTERY SPRING 2019 WINNERS

**1st prize: £5,000 – Mr Fitzgerald, Cambridgeshire**

**2nd prize: £2,000  
Mr Cox, Renfrewshire**

**3rd prize: £500  
Mr Margrave, Gloucestershire**

**4th prize: £250  
Miss Bews, Hertfordshire**

**And five prizes of £100 each**

**Mr Slowman, Perthshire**

**Mr Baker, Hampshire**

**Mrs Tizzard, West Sussex**

**Mr Robinson, Gloucestershire**

**Miss Slack, Lancashire**

Please note that, due to tax and gaming laws, Lifeboat Lottery tickets are only available in England, Scotland and Wales. Entrants must be aged 18 or over. For full details, including terms and conditions, visit [RNLI.org/LifeboatLottery](http://RNLI.org/LifeboatLottery).