

The Lifeboat



Summer 1994

Outstanding Lifeboat Services

Fundraisers Nationwide

The Annual Meetings



Last year, legacies helped us launch over 5,000 times



Isn't that worth remembering?

As a voluntary organisation, we rely on your generosity to launch our rescue missions and help bring our lifeboat crews safely home.

Last year, legacies funded over 60% of the RNLI's income.

Providing our courageous volunteers with a vital lifeline of lifeboats, equipment and protective clothing.

As a result over 1,300 lives were saved.


We certainly think that's something to remember



If you would like more information about leaving a legacy to the RNLI (including our recommended wording), please contact: Mr Anthony Oliver, Dept. CFRL42, RNLI West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

Registered Charity No. 209603

Lifeboat



Royal National

Lifeboat

Institution

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Chairman:

MICHAEL VERNON

Director and Secretary:

LT CDR BRIAN MILES CBE RD FNI RNR

Editor: MIKE FLOYD

Editorial Assistant: MARY GYOPARI

Advertisement Manager:

BARBARA TROUSDELL

Classified Advertisements:

MARION BARDSLEY

Headquarters:

Royal National Lifeboat Institution,

West Quay Road,

Poole,

Dorset BH15 1HZ.

Telephone Poole (0202) 671133

Telex 41328.

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COVER PICTURE

by Maggie Murray

The four Bronze Medallists arrive at the Festival Pier before the Annual General Meeting and Presentation of Awards. Full details in the report on page 194 in this issue.

Next Issue: The Autumn issue of THE LIFEBOAT will appear in October 1994, and news items should be received by 19 August 1994, but earlier if possible.

All material submitted for consideration with a view to publication should be addressed to the Editor, THE LIFEBOAT, Royal National Lifeboat Institution, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

Photographs intended for return should be accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope.

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For further information on how to join the Institution as a Member or Governor contact the Membership section at RNLI Headquarters, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ. Subscriptions are also available - contact the Editor at the same address for details.

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NEWSPOINT

Few can complain at the amount of exposure the Institution has received on television recently.

Hardly had the Salcombe-based documentary left our ITV screens than BBC's 'Blue Peter' took up the cudgels; and even before that successful appeal had ended the drama 'The Lifeboat' kept up awareness ably supported by reconstructions of service on almost every episode of '999'. There can be little doubt that television publicity is self sustaining!

What has been particularly interesting over the past few weeks has been the contrast between '999' and 'The Lifeboat' – one reconstructing real-life events and the other with its imaginary events against a lifeboat background.

The contrast between the quiet understatement of the real coxswains and the dramas surrounding the fictional Penrys lifeboat station and crew is marked, yet both are equally important in keeping the word 'Lifeboat' in the forefront of the public mind. Without awareness there can be no funds, and without funds there can be no lifeboats.

The RNLI co-operated in the making of both series although in the drama the main concern was to ensure as accurate a portrayal as possible of the RNLI in action.

Surprisingly perhaps there are those who seem to think that the incidents are real, or that the RNLI wrote the scripts – to the extent that the Public Relations office braces itself for a busy Thursday when a fictitious shore helper murders his fictitious wife before setting out on a fictitious lifeboat on a Wednesday evening!

The series is to lifeboats what 'London's Burning' is to the fire service - an exciting environment in which to set a drama series. It can only do good in making more people aware of the Institution's work – and is well worth the busy phones on Thursday!

Royal visits

On the LLeyn...

Over a period of two days in April HRH the Duchess of Kent visited the four lifeboat stations on the LLeyn Peninsula – Absersoch, Pwllheli, Porthdinllaen and Criccieth and attended a coffee morning with the ladies' guild.

On Tuesday 19 April the Duchess arrived by helicopter and was greeted by the Lord Lieutenant for Gwynedd, Mr Meurig Rees. She went to the station at Absersoch, which is still under construction, and met the lifeboat crew, wives and children and representatives from the



station branch committee and ladies' guild. The Duchess then moved on to Pwllheli and again met crew, wives, station branch committee

Agency status for Coastguard

Her Majesty's Coastguard has long had the responsibility for co-ordinating civil maritime search and rescue around the coast of the UK, with the RNLI's fleet of lifeboats just one of the operational assets available to it. Other resources it can call on include its own helicopters and those of the RAF and RN, its own cliff rescue teams and general purpose rigid inflatables and other merchant shipping and aircraft which are in a position to give help. HM Coastguard and the Marine Pollution Control Unit (MPCU) together formed the DoT's Marine Emergencies Organisation.

However as from 1 April this year the two bodies have become a single agency under the name 'Coastguard', but with each retaining its individual name and responsibilities.

Although both remain in the public sector the aim is to make the service 'as responsive as possible to the needs of the citizen by setting it challenging targets – relating both to quality of service and efficiency.'

The RNLI works very closely, and has excellent relations, with HM Coastguard – the great majority of lifeboat services are initiated and co-ordinated by them – and it is unlikely that the changes will have any marked effect on the way in which the two organisations work together.

HM Coastguard

- *HM Coastguard maintains a 24-hour watch on the maritime radio distress frequencies and can also be contacted by dialling 999.*
- *In some locations the Coastguard operates the lifeboat crew's radio pagers after consulting the Honorary Secretary.*
- *Most SAR operations are initiated and co-ordinated by the Coastguard.*
- *HM Coastguard is divided into six SAR Regions, each with a large Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC).*
- *The Regions are subdivided into three or four Districts, each under a District Controller either in a Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre (MRSC) or in the MRCC.*
- *Each District is in turn divided into a number of Sectors, with Sector Officers who manage the Auxiliary Coastguard Centres provided with rescue vehicles and equipment.*

and representatives of the ladies' guild and had lunch in the new crew room. She then went for a short trip around the area on the Mersey class lifeboat and then moved on to Porthdinllaen lifeboat station where again she met the station personnel.

The following day she visited Criccieth lifeboat station and inspected the newly extended lifeboat house and souvenir shop after which she met the 80 members of the South Caernarfonshire ladies' guild at a coffee morning at the Mynydd Ednyfed Hotel.

(Top) HRH The Duchess of Kent talks to crew and station personnel at Pwllheli lifeboat station during her tour.

Photo Peter Westley Photography

...and in the Scillies

While visiting the Scilly Isles in March to open the new airport the Duchess of Kent found time to visit St Mary's lifeboat station – a planned visit last September having to be cancelled at the last minute as the island was shrouded in fog.

After being introduced to the crew and their wives and partners, the station committee and the ladies' guild committee the Duchess then boarded the lifeboat which took her to St Agnes, where she carried out an engagement. She later returned to St Mary's by lifeboat.



The right lines for Blue Peter lifeboat

The first all-weather lifeboat to be funded from the proceeds of the 1993 Blue Peter Appeal underwent self-righting trials at Cowes on 8 April.

The new Trent class lifeboat is to be called *Blue Peter VII* and will be stationed at Fishguard, going on service there later this summer.

As with all new all-weather lifeboats the Trent was delib-

erately capsized with the aid of a large crane, the strops being released when she was completely inverted.

The lifeboat righted herself, as designed, in just six seconds.

She is pictured here just a little over half-way through the righting procedure, water streaming from her decks and upper steering position



US Coast Guard visit



A helicopter from the US Coast Guard cutter *Dallas* carried out an air-sea rescue demonstration with Poole's Brede class lifeboat *Inner Wheel* in Poole harbour on 2 June 1994.

Veterans being accommodated on the cutter for the D-Day commemorations in Dorset were among a large crowd which watched the display from Poole quay.

The display was part of a two-day courtesy visit to the RNLI by the US Coast Guard whilst *Dallas* was in the area. Vice Admiral Paul Welling, commander, US Coast Guard Atlantic Area, and Captain Hull, commanding officer of *Dallas* also visited headquarters and entertained RNLI staff on board the cutter.

Fast lifeboat allocations announced

Several more of the stations to receive new Severn and Trent class lifeboats within the next two or three years were announced recently.

Lerwick's Arun and Islay's Thames classes will each be replaced by a new Severn and Whitby's Tyne, Dunbar's Waveney, Oban's Brede and Sheerness Waveney will all be replaced by Trents.

Key players for car

'Emmerdale' star Frank Tate, in real life actor Norman Bowler, handed over the keys of a brand new Volvo 460Li to Muriel Hullah, the winner of the RNLI's 64th draw, at Har-

rogate Volvo dealers Lex Harrogate on 3 March.

Mrs Hullah's winning ticket had been drawn by actress and keen lifeboat supporter Wendy Craig on 31 January.

RNLI Director receives CBE



As reported in the Spring issue of *The Lifeboat* the RNLI's Director, Lt Cdr Brian Miles, was awarded the CBE in the New Years Honours List.

Lt Cdr Miles is pictured at Buckingham Palace with his award accompanied by Mrs Anne Miles and their son Martin and daughter Amanda.

photo Charles Green

Irish Awards

Maureen Potter presented the annual awards to RNLI volunteers from all over Ireland in the Oak Room of Dublin's Mansion House on 18 May 1994.

The Lord Mayor in welcoming the assembled guests spoke of his amazement that such vital work as the lifeboat service was carried out by volunteers and that all income was raised by voluntary contributions.

The deputy director, Ray Kipling, who had travelled from Poole headquarters outlined the developments within

the RNLI in Ireland, in particular the opening of new lifeboat stations on the west coast at Bundoran, Kilrush and Fenit.

'The provision of a new 25 knot Trent class lifeboat at Dun Laoghaire later this year will be a major improvement in search and rescue in Dublin Bay'.

Mr Colie Herson, retired coxswain and secretary of Galway Bay lifeboat, presided over the evening.

Maureen Potter then entertained the gathering before presenting the awards.

Lifeboat Services



TIME OF THE ESSENCE AS TOW IS PASSED

Eight saved from yacht dismasted and close to rocks in onshore gale

The coxswain of Blyth lifeboat, Keith Barnard, has been awarded the RNLi's Thanks of the Institution on Vellum for saving the lives of eight people from a dismasted yacht in gale force winds off Curry Point near Blyth. Divisional Inspector for the RNLi's Northern Division, Tom Nutman, said 'The teamwork and speed in both thought and action of the lifeboat crew were instrumental in saving eight lives.'

The 38ft yacht *Eau de Vie* had been taking part in a race from the Royal Northumberland YC on Sunday 26 September when her problems began. By chance an auxiliary coastguard was watching through binoculars from an MRSC some three miles to the south and saw *Eau de Vie* capsize and the crew clinging to the upturned hull. She was off Curry Point, near the disused St Mary's lighthouse, just over three miles SSE of the lifeboat station.

At 1312 Blyth's honorary secretary was contacted by the Coastguard and the 44ft Waveney class *The William and Jane* launched at 1321 in a NNW Force 8.

Dismasted

Setting a course towards St Mary's light the yacht could be seen ahead, very close to offlying rocks and being driven towards them by the wind and sea. She had now righted herself but was dismasted and lying with heavy seas on her port quarter with the remains of her mast and rigging overboard to port. She was shipping water and rolling heavily in the very steep broken seas as she was driven quickly downwind and tide into a maze of rocks near the old lighthouse. Luckily she passed between two of the outermost outcrops but to leeward was a rocky shelf where a very heavy breaking sea about 12ft high was running.

Time was of the essence and although two liferafts had been brought onto the yacht's deck ready to abandon her the lifeboat crew realised her crew would have little change in an inflatable among the rocks.

There was no time to run in and take

Thanks on Vellum

off the survivors from the seaward side as the rigging lying in the water and the heavy confused seas would have meant a 'touch and go' operation, picking up one or two survivors at a time. There was no longer any sea room to even contemplate an approach from the lee side.

The coxswain decided the only option was to put a towline aboard the yacht quickly, and attempt to pull her clear.

The lifeboat was run in from the north, down wind and sea, and then turned

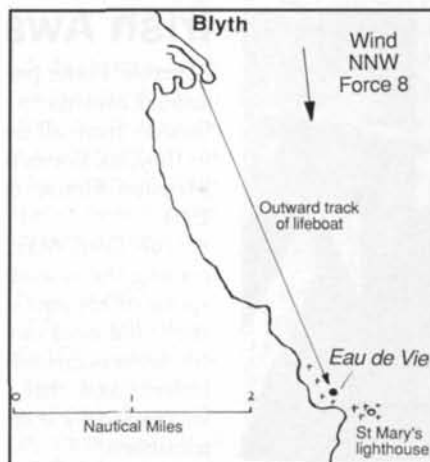


Chart of the service to the yacht *Eau de Vie*. The lifeboat's return track took her close inshore to obtain maximum shelter from the NNW Force 8.



head to sea, clear of the casualty's stern. A heaving line was thrown and caught by a survivor on the stern of the yacht, but he dropped it while taking it forward.

The lifeboat was cleared ahead and then made a second run in. Another attempt was made with the heaving line, but the yacht was hit by a large breaking sea. As she slid down the face of it, almost capsizing, the line was let go.

Coxswain Barnard realised time was running out, and decided to go in close enough to pass the tow line direct. He kept the bow of the lifeboat into the wind and seas and watched ahead while Second Coxswain/Mechanic John Scott shouted directions from the aft deck. The survivor on the bow of the casualty took the tow line on a near approach and this time managed to make it fast to the yacht.

Danger

Easing out the tow line the lifeboat took up the strain. As the bow of the casualty was held up into the wind, her stern blew down wind, bringing her head to sea and the lifeboat was able to ease her out to sea and out of immediate danger. It was now around 1400.

The tow back to Blyth was slow, into the gale force winds and heavy seas, but by keeping close to the shore around Blyth Bay for maximum shelter the casualty was brought safely alongside at 1440.

In his report the RNLi's divisional inspector, North, Tom Nutman, said that the speed and brevity of the service in no way detracted from the great seamanship and awareness displayed by Coxswain Barnard.

Second coxswain/mechanic John Scott, assistant mechanic Ronald Hatcher and crew members Peter Morton and John Orrick have been awarded Vellum Service Certificates for their part in the service.

LIFEBOATS ENGINES TOUCH BOTTOM IN SURF

Injured couple rescued from yacht aground in heavy surf

The Chairman of the RNLI, Michael Vernon, has written a letter of congratulation to helmsman William Walker-Jones of Criccieth's inshore lifeboat following the rescue of two people from a yacht aground on Porthmadoc Bar. The service was the first he had carried out as a helmsman and was made difficult by surf, shallow water, and the rolling and pitching of the grounded yacht.

Aground

At 1238 on Thursday 7 October 1993 the deputy launching authority at Criccieth heard a radio Mayday call from the yacht *Lady Amanda*, a 36ft ketch. She was hard aground near Porthmadoc Bar with two people on board. The call was also heard, and responded to, by Holyhead MRSC which paged the crew.

The fourth person to arrive at the boathouse was Paul Filby, a shore helper with a small boat and seagoing experience, so the DLA selected him as the fourth crew member – as he wanted the lifeboat launched as quickly as possible.

The C class inshore lifeboat was launched at 1255 with a SW Force 4 and a slight to moderate sea with helmsman William Walker-Jones in command – the first time that he had commanded the

boat on service. She reached Porthmadoc Fairway Buoy in about 10 minutes in an increasing wind and sea. From the Fairway Buoy the yacht could be seen, aground on the North Bank.

Lady Amanda had been trying to sail up the estuary to Porthmadoc, as her engine was not working, and the skipper was below seeking pilotage advice on the radio when the yacht's helmsman missed the channel entrance and she grounded. The skipper had tried to sail her off, then dropped the anchor, lowered his sails – during which he was hit on the head by the boom, causing bleeding and black eyes – and sent out a Mayday.

Worsening

Helmsman Walker-Jones made his approach head to sea in worsening conditions, the wind now SW Force 5 gusting 6, and with a breaking sea of up to 6ft in the shallow water. The time was 1310. The helmsman could see that the yacht was rolling and pitching in the surf, obviously hard aground in the falling tide and snatching at her anchor as she pitched and rolled. At times the yacht was taking spray overall.

The helmsman attempted a starboard quarter approach, but the yacht's roll



seemed heavier in this direction and he decided to try an approach from dead astern. However, the bow of the C class was almost struck by the counter stern as it dropped on a sea and the engines struck the sandy bottom in the trough of a wave.

He withdrew and attempted a port side approach. This was more successful, and for a few vital seconds helmsman Walker-Jones managed to hold the ILB alongside the yacht. The engines again touched the bottom, but she was held in position and the yacht's crew, a mature couple, were manhandled aboard by the ILB crew before she cleared the area.

The lifeboat had taken a substantial amount of water while manoeuvring and with the extra people on board she seemed sluggish responding to the engines so the helmsman had a difficult time working clear of the yacht and the surf.

Transfer

The casualties needed medical attention so it was decided to transfer them to a helicopter – which had arrived from RAF Valley. Once in relatively clear water the transfer began – made difficult by the motion of the ILB. The skipper of the yacht was transferred first, but it was fairly rough due to the motion, so helmsman Walker-Jones asked that the second transfer be made in deeper water with the lifeboat lying to the sea anchor, and a more comfortable transfer of the yacht's crew was made.

The ILB then headed back to Criccieth, made a net recovery and was refuelled and ready for service at 1410.

The two casualties were flown to hospital at Bangor where they were both treated for mild hypothermia, the skipper for a head injury and his wife for a broken finger. The yacht was refloated on the following day's high tide and towed to Porthmadoc.



Newhaven's Arun class lifeboat *Keith Anderson* closes in on the MFV *Ocean Spirit* after the vessel ran aground while entering Newhaven Harbour on 31 March 1994.

Coxswain/mechanic Michael Beach had been about to leave the lifeboat when he saw the MFV run aground to the east of the entrance channel in an onshore gale and a very heavy ground swell.

The lifeboat was soon on the scene and

attempted to tow the MFV off, but found that she was being pulled into the shallows.

While the Arun was returning after picking up a longer line the casualty managed to refloat herself on the rising tide and was escorted to the safety of the harbour.

The size of the seas kicked up by the onshore gale can readily be appreciated from this photograph, taken by a lifeboat crew member

TYNE CREW MEMBER THROWN OVERBOARD FROM CASUALTY

Crew overboard for 35 minutes in darkness and heavy seas

Michael Weeks, a crew member aboard Appledore's Tyne class all-weather lifeboat spent some 35 minutes in the water, in darkness and heavy seas, on 3 May 1994 when he was thrown overboard from a casualty under tow. The coxswain of the lifeboat faced an agonising decision when it was discovered that one of the rescued survivors needed to be put ashore urgently and the Tyne had to abandon her search for her missing crew member to ensure the survivor's safety.

At 1535 that day Swansea Coastguard had paged Appledore lifeboat to say that a powered craft had steering failure nine miles SSW of Hartland Point and the lifeboat, the Tyne class *George Gibson*, was away 10 minutes later.

Contact

The lifeboat was at the scene and had the casualty in tow at 1726, having put crew member Michael Weeks aboard because the casualty's crew were not in a fit state to secure the tow line. When the tow started he stayed aboard to keep radio contact with the lifeboat.

At 2045, when the lifeboat was about 50 yards outside the Bar Buoy, the seas started to build and the Coxswain decided to abort the entry to wait for calmer conditions nearer the top of the tide.

As the lifeboat went back out to sea she met three particularly heavy seas and the casualty rode one wave, then dived into the trough and, with no steering,

rolled over on her beam ends. The time was then 2102.

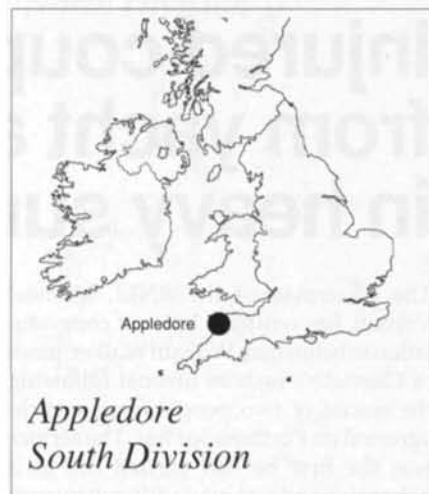
Crew member Weeks, realising the seriousness of the situation, had already told the three people on board to come out into the cockpit and secure themselves. However as the casualty rolled crew member Weeks slipped on spilled diesel fuel and was thrown overboard when the after rail he was holding gave way.

One of the lifeboat crew members told the coxswain that he thought someone had gone overboard from the casualty. The tow was immediately shortened and the three survivors taken off and put in the aft cabin, with seats belted and the door shut.

It was then that they realised the man overboard was Michael Weeks and so, as the lifeboat was near the surf and the casualty already swamped, the coxswain decided to cut the tow and start searching for the missing crew member straight away.

The coxswain immediately asked Swansea Coastguard to launch Appledore's Atlantic class inshore lifeboat to search for the crew member. This radio message was heard in the boat-house and a maroon was fired immediately.

The inshore lifeboat was launched at 2109 to help with the search, but when neither boat was able to locate Michael



Weeks, even after firing paraflares for illumination, Swansea Coastguard was asked for helicopter assistance.

At this point one of the crew checked the survivors and found one of them to be in the first stage of hypothermia. Advising the Coastguard of the position an ambulance was asked to meet them at the lifeboat slip and, because of the state of the tide, it was decided to launch the boarding boat to meet the lifeboat and transfer the casualties ashore to the ambulance which they reached at 2128.

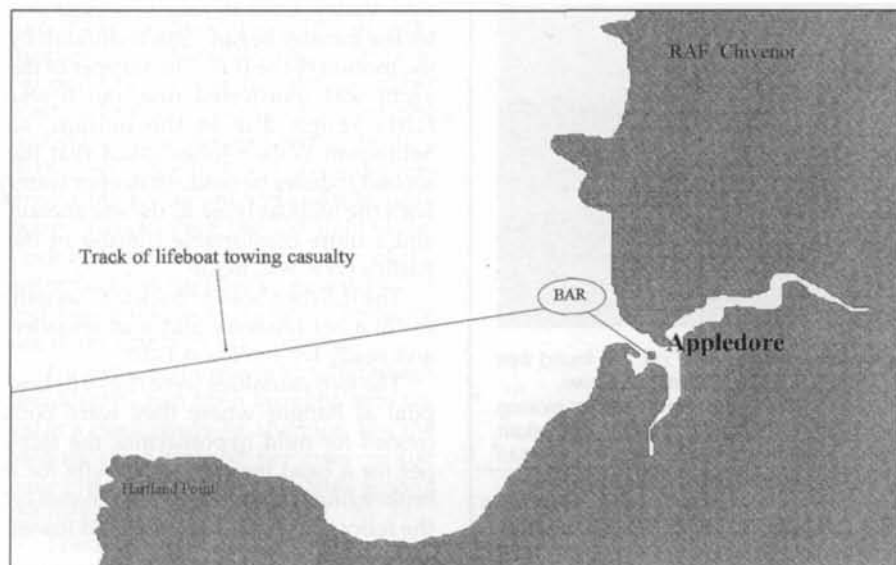
Search

Meanwhile a Wessex SAR helicopter from RAF Chivenor was carrying out a search pattern from the Bar Buoy northwards off Saunton Beach and, at 2133, just as they were turning at the end of their run some 200 yards from the shoreline the crew member was spotted – with the aid of night vision equipment – in the water waving.

Much to everybody's relief he was recovered by the helicopter and taken to hospital in Barnstaple, where he was placed in the intensive care unit overnight and released the next afternoon.

Crew member Michael Weeks was wearing one of the RNLI's new pattern of lifejackets, which are less bulky and designed to inflate automatically on contact with the water. As soon as he entered the water it inflated immediately.

There is a second, manually operated, chamber to provide additional buoyancy but at no time did he find it necessary to inflate it.



(Left) Sketch chart of the approaches to Appledore. The Tyne had encountered large seas on the bar and was returning to sea to wait for slack water when crew member Michael Weeks was thrown from the casualty.

Heavy tow for Channel Islands Tyne saves fishing boat and four crew

St Helier's relief Tyne class lifeboat *Owen and Ann Aisher* is pictured towing the 105ft commercial fishing vessel *Ross Alcedo* into St Helier harbour after taking her in tow just yards away from grounding on rocks in a heavy swell.

Ross Alcedo had left St Helier on the morning of 30 January 1994 with four people aboard and had developed engine problems just 15 minutes after leaving in rough seas and a Force 5 from the WSW.

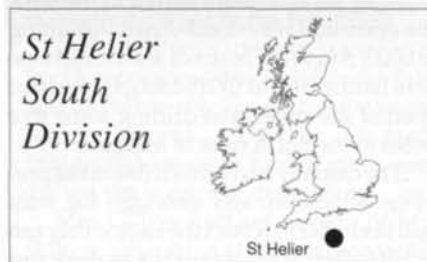
The lifeboat was launched at 0816 and by the time she reached the casualty at 0835 the fishing vessel was just minutes away from being swept onto rocks in a swell more than 6ft high.

The Tyne was able to take her in tow, but because of the size of the casualty and the sea and wind conditions it took more than two hours to tow her to the safety of St Helier harbour. The 105ft casualty dwarfed the 47ft lifeboat and was the largest vessel the station's crew had taken in tow, one of the crew members telling the local paper '...we had to do a job that a tug



would normally do... our hearts were in our mouth as we towed the vessel through the harbour mouth.'

Repairs were made to the vessel – which was believed not to have been to sea for some two years – and she left again on the evening tide. The following day she was reported to have lost power again off the French coast.



CASUALTY ANCHORED OVER DRYING REEF

D class inflatable tows large yacht to safety

A service to a yacht by Lough Swilly's D class inshore lifeboat last July has earned the station a letter of congratulation from the RNLI's chief of operations, Commodore George Cooper. During the service the 16ft inflatable managed to tow the heavy 31ft yacht in winds up to Force 6 until assistance arrived.

Reef

The first indication of the service came at 2130 on 22 July in a phone call from the Garda, who had heard from a man at Rockstown that a yacht was at anchor in a dangerous position – over a reef which would dry out at low water.

The man was unable to shout to the yacht's crew and Malin Head Radio could not raise them on VHF, so at 2151 the ILB was launched.

While the lifeboat was on the half-hour passage to the yacht Malin Head Radio broadcast a Pan Pan message seeking a vessel capable of towing the yacht clear.

The ILB arrived at the casualty to discover that both her engine and VHF had

broken down and, as the tide was now falling fast the helmsman of the inflatable decided to try to tow her clear himself.

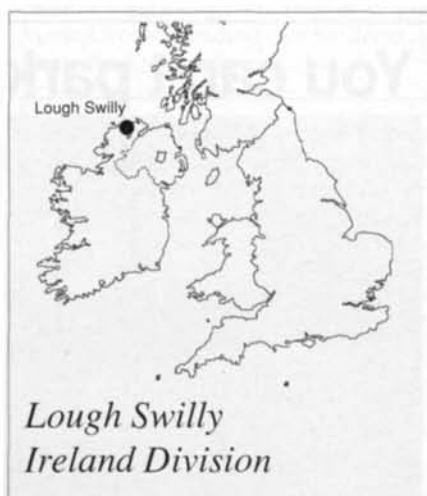
There was still no response to the Pan Pan broadcast and the lifeboat was making slow progress with the 31ft yacht in tow. All of the fishing boats from the nearby harbour were at sea but as they were expected to return shortly the honorary secretary suggested to Malin Head Radio that they try a Pan Pan on the ship-to-ship channel which the fleet used.

Freshened

Within a few minutes of the broadcast at 2250 the fishing vessel *Dunaff Girl* responded and gave an ETA of 0030.

A white paraflare was fired at 2305 so that they could see their way out of the bay, but the wind had freshened to around Force 4 with a rough swell running and the lifeboat crew were concerned about their tow.

However at 2340 another fishing vessel, *North Star*, called on the VHF saying that she was inside Lough Swilly and that



her ETA at the scene was only 15 minutes away, and 14 minutes later she was alongside the casualty enabling the inflatable to let go her tow line. By 0006 both vessels were underway.

The larger fishing vessel was able to make much better progress with the disabled yacht and by 0150 she had been put on a spare mooring in the safety of nearby Portsalon, having been escorted by the ILB.

North Star and the lifeboat then returned to their base, the lifeboat arriving at 0225 after nearly 4 hours at sea – much of it in darkness.

MASSIVE SEARCH FOR MISSING PAIR ADRIFT IN 14FT BOAT

Four lifeboats in search for missing anglers

Lifeboats from Whitstable, Margate, Sheerness and Walton and Frinton were involved in a massive search for a man and his 12-year-old son after they failed to return in their 14ft boat following a fishing trip.

The alarm was raised at 2050 on Saturday 21 May when the boat was reported overdue, having left Herne Bay at 0930.

An area of more than 1,000 square miles was searched by the lifeboats, coastguards a helicopter and even a Nimrod from Kinloss in Scotland.

After several hours search in the dark the operation was stood-down, resuming at 0500. After two hours of searching hope was fading but, at 0720, Margate lifeboat spotted the small boat drifting some five miles to the north west of Margate.

The casualty had broken down the previous afternoon, and although the man had been able to restart the engine they ran out of fuel off Margate just before dusk and had been drifting since then.

Margate lifeboat landed the two occupants, the son suffering from cold and seasickness, and they were taken to hospital.

Coastguards quoted in the local press were critical of the vessel, describing it as a river craft, and the lack of lights, flares, radio or back-up propulsion.



(Left) Margate lifeboat returns for refuelling during the night search.

(Above) 12-year-old Timothy Irving is landed after his ordeal
photos Chris Davey,
Whitstable Times

You can't park that 'ere...



The Tyne class lifeboat *Ethel Anne Measures* stationed at The Mumbles was at sea for five hours on 28 January 1994 when she stood by the 560ft Indian-registered freighter *Vishva Parag* whose cargo had shifted causing her to list heavily. She was also taking water.

The casualty had reported the list to Swansea Coastguard, and when it had increased to 10° and her pumps could not cope with the leak The Mumbles lifeboat was launched at 0313 to stand by her.

33 of her crew of 56 were taken off by

helicopter and a local pilot was put aboard to nurse her to a place where she could safely be beached.

A section of Mumbles Bay was chosen, and shortly after high water *Vishva Parag* was put ashore without damage. As the tide fell and she was no longer in danger the lifeboat was stood down and back at her station by 0830.

It was found that the casualty was not holed, the cargo having shifted and a ballast tank leaking. She was later refloated and docked in Swansea.

Horrific conditions for two lifeboats

Clogher Head and *Newcastle*'s Mersey class lifeboats were launched in winds of Storm Force 10 to Hurricane Force 12 on 3 February 1994 when an 80ft trawler reported that she was taking water and required a pump.

Both lifeboats were launched from a lee shore in horrific conditions within five minutes of each other around 1420, both with about 20 miles to go to the casualty.

In such severe conditions both lifeboats had to reduce speed and both reported several items of equipment carried away or damaged during the service. They reached the scene at around 1550 and a helicopter lowered a pump to the casualty.

Once the pump was running – and a small fire on the trawler dealt with – the trawler made her way to shelter in Carlingford Lough escorted by the *Clogher head* lifeboat, *Doris Bleasdale*. By 1550 the lifeboat was stood down but could not return to station because the appalling sea conditions there made it impossible to recover her. She remained in the Lough overnight.

The *Newcastle* lifeboat, *Eleanor and Bryant Girling*, was diverted to a second casualty, where a crew member had broken his arm, and did not return home until 1930. She too could not be recovered and was left overnight on a buoy in the harbour.

Naming Ceremonies

New lifeboats named and dedicated

Arbroath – Mersey class *Inchcape*



The Countess of Airlie takes a trip on *Inchcape* after her naming ceremony accompanied by The Earl of Airlie, Andrew Cubie, Capt W. A. Davidson (Station Honorary Secretary), Commodore George Cooper (RNLI Chief of Operations) and Lt John Caldwell (RNLI Divisional Inspector).

The naming of Arbroath's new Mersey class lifeboat *Inchcape* went ahead on 22 April 1994 despite the unfortunate accident sustained by the namer, HRH Princess Alexandra, two days before the ceremony. The Countess of Airlie CVO, wife of the Lord Lieutenant of Angus, and sister in law of HRH, graciously agreed to name the lifeboat.

Upon arrival at the site, the Earl of Airlie presented civic and RNLI dignitaries to Lady Airlie, as she made her way to the platform.

Miss Nicola McLeod, aged seven, daughter of a crew member, presented Lady Airlie with a posy, while she in return was given an inscribed bracelet as a memento of the occasion.

Four hundred invited guests attended the ceremony, while a splendid crowd watched from various vantage points around the site, many of whom were local schoolchildren. The cold and wet weather did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the crowd on this highly memorable and enjoyable day.

Major John Ingram, station branch chairman, opened the proceedings and welcomed everyone to the ceremony. In his capacity as appeal chairman he then made mention of the many people who had given to the appeal to fund *Inchcape*. Major Ingram then handed the lifeboat over to Andrew Cubie, vice chairman of the Scottish Executive Committee, and Committee of Management member,

himself deputising for the chairman, Mr Vernon, who could not attend due to a knee injury.

Mr Cubie praised the local appeal which had raised around £300,000 and congratulated the community for its magnificent efforts. He then handed the lifeboat over to Captain William Davidson, station honorary secretary, who accepted it with gratitude and reiterated Arbroath lifeboat station's commitment to saving life at sea.

A service of dedication was then conducted by the station honorary chaplain, Reverend Guy Brownlie, during which mention was made of the lifeboat disaster in 1953. Lady Airlie then named the lifeboat and delighted everyone by going for a trip in the lifeboat, despite the inclement weather.

Following the ceremony a reception was held at the community centre, during which Lady Airlie met crew wives and children, station branch and guild office bearers and other special guests. A celebration cake was cut by Lady Airlie and Mrs Mary Gerrard, wife of the coxswain. Lady Airlie was presented with a framed photograph of the lifeboat signed by the crew.

Finally, following the departure of the Earl and Countess of Airlie, Mr Cubie presented Jim Wallbridge, lifeboat enthusiast, with a model lifeboat and congratulated him on his attendance at this, his 150th naming ceremony.

Relief – Atlantic 75 class

Vera Skilton

The new boat store at the Inshore Lifeboat Centre (ILC) at Cowes was the venue for the handing over and naming ceremony of the new Atlantic 75 lifeboat *Vera Skilton* on 19 April 1994.

Alan Tate, superintendent of the ILC opened proceedings and welcomed the guests who included family and friends of the late Vera Skilton whose bequest funded the new lifeboat.

Mrs Jean Williams, cousin of the late Mrs Skilton, handed over the lifeboat to the RNLI and it was accepted by Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fundraising and marketing for use in the relief fleet.

Colin Williams, deputy training officer (Operations) described the lifeboat and its future role before the Reverend Jenny Evans, Parish Deacon, Whippingham and East Cowes conducted the service of dedication.

Mrs Gillian Butcher, cousin of Mrs Skilton, stepped in at the last moment in place of her sister Rebecca Fletcher, Mrs Skilton's goddaughter, who was prevented from attending due to illness, to name the lifeboat *Vera Skilton*.

Relief – D class *Maureen Samuels*

The naming ceremony for the D class lifeboat *Maureen Samuels* was held at the RNLI's Poole depot on Wednesday 18 May 1994.

The lifeboat had been funded by Mr Jim Samuels and his wife Maureen who were both present at the ceremony, accompanied by some of their friends.

Mr Samuels handed over the new D class to the RNLI and she was accepted by Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fundraising and marketing for use in the relief fleet.

Mike Pennell, staff officer operations, described the lifeboat and its future role before the Rector of Poole, the Reverend Stanley Holbrooke-Jones dedicated the lifeboat.

Mrs Maureen Samuels named the lifeboat *Maureen Samuels* after which it was announced that the lifeboat would take up relief duties at Shoreham Harbour as her first duty.

Mrs Maureen Samuels names the new Relief fleet D class



Naming Ceremonies

continued

Tobermory

– dedication of new boathouse

On 26 March 1994 the new crew facility at Tobermory was opened by Sir Charles McGrigor Bt DL, a vice president of the RNLI and former convener of the Scottish Lifeboat Council.

The boathouse was funded as the result of a local appeal which raised more than £61,000, far surpassing the expectations of the local lifeboat community. Over 400 people attended the ceremony as invited guests.

The appeal was started in memory of the late Bobby MacLeod, who was one of Tobermory's lifeboat's youngest crew members, joining the crew at the age of 15 in 1941. Due to manning problems, the station was closed from 1947 until 1990 when Bobby's efforts to re-establish a lifeboat service in Tobermory came to fruition. Sadly, he died only a few days before the lifeboat *Ralph and Joy Swann* arrived on station.

At the boathouse opening a plaque was unveiled by Bobby's widow, Jean, while his son Robert, now station honorary secretary, chaired proceedings. Dougie MacNeilage, station honorary treasurer, spoke of the appeal and the 411 individuals, companies and groups which had contributed to the funding of the boathouse.

A service of dedication was led by Reverend A. Taylor and Monsignor T. Wynne, including a Gaelic blessing of the new building.

A reception funded by Argyll and Bute District Council was held in the Aros Hall following the ceremony.

A commemorative book, listing the names of all contributors to the appeal, will be on permanent display in the boathouse and a vellum telling of the extraordinary life of Bobby MacLeod will also hang in the building.

Minehead

– Re-dedication of boathouse

The high winds and heavy rains of the preceding weeks died away on Sunday 10 April 1994 for the re-dedication and re-opening ceremony of Minehead lifeboat station's enlarged and modernised boathouse.

More than 150 guests, among them representatives of other lifeboat stations, emergency services and members of fundraising branches from Somerset and adjacent counties, were seated in the boathouse to be welcomed by station branch chairman Bill McNab.

The history of Minehead's lifeboat station, from the building of the boathouse in 1901, was described by the station honorary secretary, Kevin Escott. The lengthening of the boathouse now enabled the launching tractor to be left connected to the carriage of the station's Atlantic 21, allowing launching to be carried out by one man in addition to the boat's crew, thus reducing further the launch time.

Much improved crew rooms for training and for the storage of dry suits were included, and a purpose-built shop for the sale of souvenirs. Mr Escott also announced that the station had been allocated an Atlantic 75 to replace the Atlantic 21 *Catherine Plumbley* at the end of 1994.

After a service of re-dedication conducted by the vicar of Minehead, the Reverend G. Wrayford, the branch chairman invited the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, Colonel Sir Walter Luttrell, KCVO, MC, to perform the re-opening ceremony.

Sir Walter, whose great grandfather had given the site for the boathouse in 1900, then presented long service awards and after a vote of thanks by Mr Durman the afternoon was rounded off by a visit from a helicopter from RAF Chivenor and the launch of the station's Atlantic 21.

Relief

– D class *Elsie Frances I*

The naming ceremony for the D class lifeboat *Elsie Frances I* was held at the RNLI's Poole Depot on Wednesday 30 March 1994.

Stuart Underdown, accompanied by his cousin Joan Wyatt, handed over the first of two D class lifeboats which he has presented to the Institution. The lifeboat was accepted by Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fundraising and marketing, for use in the relief fleet.

Mike Pennell, staff officer operations, described the lifeboat and its future role before the Rector of Poole, Reverend Stanley Holbrooke-Jones dedicated the lifeboat.

Mr Underdown then named the lifeboat *Elsie Frances I* in memory of his mother.

Within a fortnight of the ceremony the lifeboat was carrying out relief duties at Minehead, and the second lifeboat, which will be a station lifeboat, will enter service in 1995.

Newcastle, Co Down

– Mersey class

Eleanor & Bryant Girling

A lifeboat station was first established in Dundrum Bay at Rossglass near Killough in 1825. It was closed ten years later, but in 1856, following numerous shipwrecks along the coast and the provision of a boathouse by the Earl of Annesley, a new lifeboat was provided and stationed at Downs Road, Newcastle.

Many heroic services spanning 170 years are recorded in the history of the station with family connections being evident over all those years. The names Murphy, McClelland and Lenaghan recur with regularity.

On Saturday 30 April 1994 the new Mersey class lifeboat at the station was named *Eleanor & Bryant Girling* and the new Penza lifeboathouse was handed into the care of the local lifeboat station following a service of dedication.

Mr Will Wilson chaired the proceedings, assisted by the honorary secretary Bob Johnston. Mr J.R. Sargent, nephew of the donor, Mrs Eleanor Girling and members of his family also attended. Mrs Sally Parry, Mrs Girling's great niece named the lifeboat. The Chairman, deputy chairman, the Lord Stanley of Alderley, the Director and deputy chief of operations represented the Committee of Management and RNLI headquarters.

This Mersey class lifeboat, together with the new purpose built boathouse, ensures that the Newcastle station is prepared for the saving of life at sea well into the next century, continuing a long and proud tradition.

The new boathouse at Tobermory which was opened by Sir Charles McGrigor on 26 March 1994



PAST...AND...PRESENT

35 years ago

The report of the 1959 AGM in the June 1959 issue of THE LIFEBOAT makes an interesting comparison with that of its successor 35 years later, the costs may be missing several zeros compared with today's figures but three-and-a-half decades ago much of the underlying business was along similar lines. There were new boats under development and new equipment was on trial... The then Chairman, The Earl Howe, began his address:

For the third year in succession life-boats were launched more than 700 times. That is really a remarkable thing. Between the wars life-boats were never launched more than 500 times, but since the last war the figure has gone up and up, and for the last three years it has exceeded 700...

Last year was an interesting year and might be considered an outstanding year, particularly in one respect. A new life-boat was completed to an altogether new design produced by one of our own staff, Mr Oakley. In memory of that outstanding achievement we have called the boat after him the Oakley life-boat, and successive boats of the class will be known as the Oakley class. A feature of this life-boat is that she is self-righting. If she is capsized she will right herself, and she does this in six seconds. As you know we have had self-righters in the service for a long period, and about the middle of the last century the Institution started to build all its boats as self-righters. One of the features of those boats and the ones that succeeded them was that they were built with rather a narrow beam, with the result that they were apt to capsize rather more easily than non-self-righting boats. We found that the crews, when we questioned them, preferred for the most part to go to sea in a non-self-righter than a self-righter...

This new boat has been through a most exhaustive series of trials and has come through with flying colours, and we have sent her to Scarborough.

...she represents a great advance in design. The self-righting is achieved by the transfer of water ballast from one compartment to another, and this is done quite automatically.

Another thing which we have been able to do during the past year has been to complete our programme of fitting the selected boats in our fleet with very-high frequency radio-telephones. The reason why we have done this is to enable complete co-operation to be achieved between aircraft with fixed wings and helicopters and life-boats...

We have continued with our progress of providing more and more stations with new tractors and new carriages. You cannot do that for nothing. The tractor that two years ago cost about £6,000 costs £8,000 today, and in the effort to try to keep pace with rising prices we have to be all the more active and do all we can in order to pay the bill.

... you will have noticed that receipts have reached an absolute record, upwards of one million pounds!

Today's lifeboatmen

John Pearson, crew member of Whitby's all weather and in-shore lifeboats since 1987.

John was awarded a Bronze medal in 1993 in recognition of his high standard of seamanship, boathandling skills and bravery when he took the D class life-boat into heavy breaking 12ft seas and rescued a man who was in the water after his



rigid inflatable dinghy had capsized close to the Whitby Rocks, east of the harbour.

The lifeboat had not officially been put on service for the season, and she was without a radio or normal launching facilities.

The Thanks of the Institution inscribed on Vellum were accorded to crew members Nick Bentley and Glenn Goodberry for their outstanding contribution during this service and a collective framed letter of appreciation was presented to Coxswain Mechanic Peter Thomson and his crew on board the *City of Sheffield* for the support they gave their fellow crew members in the D class lifeboat.

Facts and Figures

Provisional statistics as at 20 May 1994 show that so far during 1994:

- The RNLI's lifeboats were launched 446 times (an average of 3 launches a day)
- 146 lives were saved (an average of one a day)
- Some 11% of all services carried out by lifeboats were in winds of Force 8 and above
- More than 38% of all services were to pleasure craft (sail, power and manual pleasure craft)
- There are 274 lifeboats on station, with a further 100 in the relief fleet.
- To 20 May 1994 1993, 125,376 lives have been saved since the RNLI was founded in 1824.

Costs

The cost of running the RNLI in 1993 was £46m.

The approximate current cost of building a lifeboat is:

16ft D class inflatable	-	£11,000
7.5m Atlantic rigid inflatable	-	£61,000
14m Trent	-	£1,025,000
17m Severn	-	£1,380,000

YOUR LETTERS



Charting progress

I recently finished reading the Spring 1994 issue of *THE LIFEBOAT* and am, as always, utterly amazed at the achievements of the Institution over the years.

The accounts of the lifeboat services in particular fill me with admiration for the crews, most of whom are volunteers, and their astonishing feats of seamanship and courage leave me gasping, in spite of - or perhaps because of - my own experience during 35 years in the Royal Navy, of the sometimes appalling conditions at sea.

I am also awestruck every time I think of the cost of running such an organisation, and the fact that every penny is raised by voluntary donation. It is heartening to realise that the activities of the Institution do not appear to have suffered significantly on account of the recession, and that the year by year cost increases have continued to be covered in this way. I am glad to be able to play a very small part in this venture.

I would like to offer a suggestion regarding the presentation of the accounts of lifeboat services in *THE LIFEBOAT* magazine. It is helpful to have the small-scale map of the British Isles, showing the location of the station involved. However, the text usually includes towns, sand bars, channels, rock formations etc. This is all essential to the narrative, but for the reader who does not know the scene it would help him to relate more closely to the actual event if, in addition to the small-scale map mentioned above, a portion of the chart of the relevant local area could also be included. I seem to recall that this has been done on occasions in some past issues of the magazine, and I am sure that it would make the accounts even more readable and interesting if you could see your way to including this detail when reporting most, if not all, lifeboat services.

I hasten to add that this suggestion is intended to be helpful, and not in any way a criticism of the magazine, which I always find most interesting.

Keep up the good work!

Lt Cdr I. Sandeman RN (Rtd)

Unfortunately Admiralty charts are often too detailed to reproduce successfully, particularly when reduced to the size needed for the journal, and specially-drawn ones are too expensive and time consuming. However the RNLI's Rescue Records department has recently up-dated its computer software and we hope to be able to obtain small chartlets from this source. Some development work is still needed, but watch this space! – Editor

Gorleston remembered

I was most interested to read in the Spring Issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*, a letter from Mr George Bracey of Bourne-mouth about the Gorleston lifeboat in the 1930s.

My father used to take my brothers and myself on holiday to Gorleston between 1930 and 1938, staying at either the Pier Hotel or the St Edmunds.

I remember having trips on the Gorleston lifeboat, we liked the rough sea, and would call at the St Nicholas lightship in Yarmouth Roads, thence to Seroly Sands.

My father collected a year's issue of two magazines which he would give to the crew of the Lightship and in return, we as boys would have a marionette given by them, which they made themselves.

Perhaps Mr Bracey was on board at the same time as we had our wonderful trips.

Peter Seed,
Bridport, Dorset.

Information Wanted

Does anyone have any photos or information about the following *Titanic* survivors: Ruth Becker Blanchard, Ethel Garside, Kate Buss Willis, Edwina Troutt Mackenzize, Bertha Watt Marshall, Louise Kink Pope, Agnes Sandstrom, Beatrice Sandstrom, Lillian Asplund, Eleanor Johnson and Vera Quick?

Also the following *Lusitania* survivors: Alice Lines Drury, Edith Williams, Elsie Hook Hadland, Frank Hook, George Hook, Audrey Pearl and Chrissey Barnett.

If anyone does could they please write to me at the address below.

James Woods,
1 Onslow Road, Southsea,
Portsmouth, Hants PO5 2NH.
Telephone (0705) 752895.

Lifeboats and the War

Wartime lifeboat memories

Greetings from Adelaide, Australia, where I live with my wife and two children.

For sometime now I have been writing a book; my research for this work has been extensive, and much has yet to be done prior to completion. I have approached many newspapers, publications and organisations - world-wide - inviting people to contribute to this project.

The book predominantly, will be a composite of letters, written by servicemen - their family's, and war-ravaged civilians. I am asking these war affected people to reflect on their lives and reveal how war, and its inherent after affects, changed or influenced their lives.

Most of my childhood was spent in the small Sussex town of Littlehampton, we lived not more than 200 yards from the sea - which I could observe from my bedroom window. Thus it was (in those carefree days of the 50s), that my deep respect for the sea and the British Lifeboat Institution evolved. Consequently, I am very eager to include in my book a chapter relating to the valiant men who faced so many formidable perils manning the lifeboats, and saving lives, during WWII.

My very best wishes to friends and members of the RNLI.

Rodney Parr,
29 Angas Crescent, Marino 5049,
South Australia.

Lifeboats at Dunkirk

On 30 May 1940 the Poole lifeboat *Thomas Kirk Wright* was requested to go to Dover and then on to Dunkirk to evacuate troops from the beaches of Dunkirk. She was, in fact, the first lifeboat to be sent, another eighteen followed her.

Can any reader help by giving any information about this lifeboat in her time away from the Poole station? I do believe she rescued a troop of free French troops, but unfortunately this cannot be confirmed.

Any information at all will help.

Andrew Hawkes,
99 High Street, Poole BH15 1AP

Above the call of duty...

I am writing this letter after being rescued by the Poole lifeboat on the night of Saturday 16 April 1994, Cox'n Steve Vince and Crew.

My brother, 10 year-old-son and I had been on passage from Weymouth to Chichester Yacht Basin, via Poole or Swanage, on our maiden voyage after an extensive refit over three years on my yacht *Hurlwind* a fin keel Hurley 22.

I thought I had taken all the necessary precautions, with radio, lifejackets, harnesses, flares, the normal safety items, navigational instruments and so on. I served in submarines for 10 years and sailed with the Royal Navy in various yachts, completing RYA Dinghy Sailing, Competent Crew and Day Skipper Courses and felt competent for our planned passage. Over the past two years we had gone over all the details in order to avoid accidents.

Unfortunately, as you know, not everything can be covered.

We predicted, and had, a very hard sail with N-NE winds increasing in strength throughout Saturday. Darkness fell and with ever increasing wind, seas and current we decided to make for Swanage as soon as possible. Unfortunately, as we were to find out later, the tiller fitting to the top of the rudder had fractured and subsequently broke leaving us in quite considerable danger with no steerage at all. I put out a Pan-Pan, with, I must admit very rusty radio procedure, but acknowledged immediately by Portland Coastguard - who informed us that the Poole lifeboat was being launched to our aid. What a relief!

Contact was made with the lifeboat via VHF. When they reached us, Cox'n Steve Vince manoeuvred the lifeboat very close with extreme precision and a skill that must come from years of experience. It was absolutely incredible to witness first hand in such difficult conditions.

One of the crew members was transferred to us and later a paramedic to check us, in particular my son, who had badly bruised his leg.

The whole operation was so professional. My yacht thoroughly checked out in case of damage and the tow and drogue put into operation. The crew member and paramedic were very cheerful and friendly and made all the difference to our morale which was very low at that point. They did a superb job and we would like to extend our thanks to them.

Lifelong interest

I read with interest the letter from C. Williams giving the reason for his or her interest in the RNLI.

I cannot say I have any memory of the start of my interest as I was quite literally a babe in arms - or should I say pram!

I had a collecting box on my pram later on, when sitting up, this was transferred to my lap - way back in 1923!

As a child I looked forward to the arrival of the Journal, which was in those days, if memory serves me correctly, a small edition with a cream coloured cover with a sepia picture of a lifeboat man in full rescue outfit.

Henry Blogg was my childhood hero.

I have followed my mother's example of a lifetime's interest in and work for the RNLI and although I am not now as active as I would wish I am still very proud and happy to belong to the lifeboat 'family' as a Life Governor.

I am, as always, filled with admiration for the very brave men and women who crew the boats.

Long may they continue to give such an excellent example of service to others in a world which seems, increasingly, to be so self seeking.

Joan Batty,
Chipping Sodbury

We were towed for two hours until alongside at Poole Quayside, totally shattered by the whole experience. The lifeboat crew then made our yacht secure alongside while we were invited inside the station. We were offered tea and coffee and introduced to the Cox'n and the crew who also invited us to sleep in the station for the night. One member of the crew even drove us about the town trying to find somewhere for food - our thanks to him. The friendliness, helpfulness and hospitality extended to us, I am sure, was above and beyond their call of duty, and I have never met such a group of professionals in my life.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Steve Vince and his crew and the lifeboat service and indeed everyone involved in our rescue, for all they did for us.

For each of us, especially my son Karl, the experience will be with us forever. He has now joined Storm Force and I shall become a member also.

A special thanks from my wife Sue and daughter Emma, who were very worried about us.

Also, I should like to thank Steve for all the arrangements he made and trouble he went to in order for a temporary berth to be arranged. Many thanks.

Paul Custance,
Aldershot, Surrey.

And more thanks...

On 3 April this year while returning from Bangor, Northern Ireland, to Largs we were overtaken by some extremely heavy weather while crossing the North Channel. We left Bangor at 0430 in our 25ft Motor Sailer *Lady-O* with a fair wind and tide, however, by 0800 the wind was up to Force 9 with large breaking seas of 20-25ft.

At 0955 we suffered a complete knockdown five miles south of Ailsa Craig which left me with a broken arm. As there were only the two of us on board and Linda had not had much experience in such huge following seas (come to think of it neither had I) I put out a Pan Pan call.

In response to the call Girvan lifeboat was launched along with a helicopter from *HMS Gannet* at Prestwich. The helicopter was with us within 25 minutes but due to the wind and sea state they could do nothing but stand by while we continued to make our own way north to the lee at the north end of Ailsa Craig.

The helicopter then was called away to another emergency and once again it was just us and the sea. However Girvan lifeboat soon contacted us via VHF and reassured us that they would be there soon (I was almost passing out with the pain from my arm by this time).

Eventually we rendezvoused with the lifeboat and a transfer was made with two lifeboatmen boarding *Lady-O* and we were taken on board the lifeboat. We were met at the harbour by an ambulance and conveyed to hospital where it was established that my arm was broken. On returning to Girvan harbour later we found that not only had the lifeboatmen berthed *Lady-O*, they had also removed valuables from the boat to the lifeboat station for safekeeping.

I often read about rescues which have been carried out and, of course, like most people I assume that it will always happen to someone else. Wrong - that day it happened to us and I feel that if it had not been for the reassurance over the VHF from the lifeboat we may not have made it. We owe our lives to the crew of the Girvan lifeboat and for that we will be forever grateful.

T P Haggart, L Beattie,
Glasgow

THE LIFEBOAT welcomes readers' letters on all aspects of lifeboats and related subjects.

Write to the Editor, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ

The RNLI's 1994 Annual Meetings

The RNLI's Annual General Meeting and Presentation of Awards were held once again on London's South Bank on Tuesday 10 May 1994. Once again both meetings attracted a large and interested assembly to hear of the Institution's work in the past year and its plans for the future and to honour lifeboatmen for their gallantry and voluntary workers for their dedication.

In recent years another tradition has manifested itself – warm spring weather, and this year 10 May obliged with pleasant conditions greeting those attending, many of whom had travelled quite considerable distances.

The relief Mersey class lifeboat *Her Majesty the Queen* was on hand to provide a platform for the four medallists' photo call in the morning and then to lie alongside for visitors to see in more detail. A new Atlantic 75 on show outside the concourse flew the flag for the Institution's inshore lifeboat fleet.

Addressing the morning's Annual General Meeting in the Queen Elizabeth Hall the Chairman, Michael Vernon, began by remarking that the year's Annual Report again made impressive reading, showing yet another record of calls answered, at 5,568, and also a record income of £61.9m.

'Neither of these statistics,' remarked Mr Vernon, 'have any meaning if they cannot be related to what the RNLI is basically setting out to achieve - to preserve life from disaster at sea by the most effective means available. The 1,308 people whose lives were saved last year will surely agree that our aim is being met.'

1993's Bronze Medals and Thanks on Vellum show that whether the casualty is a factory ship, a yacht, a fishing vessel, a stranded climber or a man drowning in the surf, the RNLI has the boats, the technology and the crews for the situation.

The Chairman stressed that this ability to cope was not achieved by accident, and that providing the most effective service meant keeping abreast of casualty trends, keeping pace with modern technology and knowing how to raise the funds.

All three had been in mind, he reported, when the target was set to complete the introduction of fast lifeboats by the end of 1993, a target which had been met in November when the 34th Mersey arrived at Aldeburgh.



'...we are looking further ahead... to a 33% improvement in speed of response'

But the RNLI cannot stand still and the Chairman went on:

'Now we are looking further ahead. By the year 2000 our aim is to be able to reach a casualty at virtually any point 50 miles off the coast in two-and-a-half hours – a 33% improvement on today's declared speed of response.'

Every new Severn and Trent class lifeboat moves the Institution nearer that target and, if Aldeburgh witnessed the end of the eight-knot era, Alderney, as the first Trent station, heralded the age of the 25 knot all-weather lifeboat.

With eight Trents and three Severns currently under construction, at a cost of some £12.3m, the RNLI is well on its way towards the second target for the year 2000 – to have a 25 knot replacement at half the all-weather stations where the lifeboat lies afloat. By the same year at least half the Atlantic rigid inflatable stations would have new, 34 knot Atlantic 75s – and two have already entered service at Sheringham and Flamborough, with six more scheduled for 1994.

The Chairman also announced that work is to begin this year on a design to replace the Tyne class slipway boats. The first Tyne entered service in 1982 and, with a twenty year planned life for all-weather lifeboats, a successor must be ready by 2002. The Institution is increasingly well equipped for these new projects, and computer aided design is now an important tool which will be of great value in developing Fast Slipway Boat 2.

Research and experiment continues on current designs, the Chairman went on, illustrating this with the trials aboard the prototype Severn which will lead to electrically operated throttle controls on future Severns and Trents. Successful research and development depends on technicians and operators working side-by-side, and Mr Vernon referred to the new trials team – made up of experts from both disciplines.

Reorganisation of divisional boundaries has given lifeboat inspectors and coastal technical staff the same areas to cover which, together with the establishment of divisional workshops, was bound to lead to a more systematic approach to manning, running and maintaining a fleet of 374 high technology lifeboats.

Moving on from the lifeboats to their stations Mr Vernon reported:

'Fast lifeboats are only part of the answer to being in the

Media interest after the arrival of the medallists at the Festival Pier aboard the relief Mersey *Her Majesty The Queen* – Mark Paterson interviewed all four medallists for BBC local television and is seen here talking to Barry Bennett of St Mary's.

right place at the right time to save life at sea. Our constant review of the disposition of lifeboat stations has led to the decision to open stations at Kilrush and at Fenit on the west coast of Ireland and at Rock in Cornwall. By the same process of review, the infrequency of calls on the D class inflatable at Crimdon Dene led to the station's closure in 1993.'

The establishment of stations and the introduction of new classes of lifeboat, especially the carriage-launched Mersey, has led to a huge increase in work to provide the right facilities ashore. Thirty capital projects were completed in 1993 with another 20 in progress, representing £6.3m expenditure.

Many lifeboats are stationed in extremely attractive locations, and a pretty place attracts more visitors, which increases the casualty potential. But when a new boathouse is needed, as at St Ives and Aldeburgh, the RNLI goes to enormous lengths to ensure the design is in accord with the surrounding architecture or landscape; even so, it is always difficult to please everyone.

Turning to the manning of the lifeboats the Chairman said:

'New lifeboats and shoreworks are part of fulfilling our search and rescue commitment but ultimately, the responsibility for saving lives rests with the lifeboat crews themselves. We must therefore be equally dedicated to providing the most effective equipment and training facilities for them.'

'These have to be tailored to fit the crews' requirements, not the other way round. A small but important step in that direction has been the successful development of a new, less bulky lifejacket which has proved very popular among crews of all-weather boats.'

Mr Vernon was also encouraged that crew members gave up precious time to attend RNLI courses in such large numbers, a sign that the RNLI is providing what the crews want.

The Chairman then referred to a newspaper article which had astonished some supporters by implying that with the advent of new technology the RNLI no longer valued seamanship as an important skill aboard a lifeboat. Mr Vernon was unequivocal:

'This could not be further from the truth, and you only have to hear today's medal citations to realise how crucial good seamanship and local knowledge are to the success of sea rescue. Every lifeboat coxswain will, nevertheless, tell you how important it is to understand the modern equipment at his disposal designed to make the job that much simpler.'

However, lives can be saved without having to put to sea, said Mr Vernon, adding that the Institution had appointed a sea safety liaison officer to promote safe practices at sea in liaison with other national organisations. The RNLI's experience of seafaring accidents was a valuable resource and should be better harnessed to help prevent them – and minimise the demands on lifeboat crews.

The Chairman then moved on to the fundraising aspects of the Institution:

'Judging by the accounts, our supporters are still determined to see that the crews get what they deserve. Subscriptions and donations are up by 8% thanks substantially to the efforts of our branches and guilds. Congratulations to them for yet another splendid year. Legacies were also up to a

record £46.3m and the figure includes our largest single bequest of £6.3m from the estate of Mr Roy Barker.

'The terms of his bequest tell an interesting story. He made his money over to the RNLI in the form of an endowment which would ensure lifeboats bearing his name would be built for many years to come. Here was a man who wanted his gift to provide not just for the present lifeboat service but for a future one as well.'

The lifeboat service is certain to be required for as long as people take to the sea, and as it is so dependent on capital investment for its success Mr Vernon made it clear that the RNLI would be ill-advised to hold only slender reserves. The current level, equivalent to about three years' annual expenditure, was by no means excessive, he said, especially taking into account the unpredictable nature of legacy income and the Institution's substantial capital commitment.

In spite of the success of our branches and guilds and the £61.8m income figure for 1993, there were some warning signs in the accounts, added the Chairman.

'Leaving out legacies, overall income was the same as the year before. Expenditure was not, it increased by about 11%. This year, because of the Severn and Trent building programme, total expenditure is expected to rise by a further 21%. Overall income is not.'

'Obviously our plans allow for such a discrepancy and as long as legacy income holds up, we can stay on course. But all our voluntary income ultimately relies upon the efforts of fundraisers and there is clearly no let-up for them in the foreseeable future.'

Mr Vernon then drew the meeting's attention to an apparently modest entry in the Notes to the Accounts headed Value Added Tax. In 1993 the RNLI paid nearly £1m to the government in VAT. Surely, the Chairman remarked, it was enough for RNLI supporters to be providing the nation's lifeboat service without expecting them to contribute to the Exchequer as well. He added that the RNLI would continue to make its feelings known on this subject at appropriate opportunities.

He then took the opportunity to thank the local branches and guilds for their co-operation in implementing recent changes, and reported that the new system of branch accounting with quarterly reports is working very well. Regional staff had been equally grateful for their support in the recent boundary alterations, and larger regions with branches receiving better attention from area organisers undoubtedly improved the use of our resources.

Mr Vernon went on to say that the RNLI believes it is fairer to review membership rates regularly, to avoid drastic rises. He

'New lifeboats and shoreworks... are tailored to the crews' requirements, not the other way round'

Shortly after their arrival at the Festival Pier prior to the meetings the four 1994 Bronze Medallists greet friends and press. From left to right – William Clark (Lerwick), Richard Davies (Cromer), Barry Bennett (St Mary's) and Ian McDowell (St Bees)



The 1994 Annual Meetings continued

therefore announced that in September Shoreline membership would increase from £9pa to £10pa, joint Shoreline from £15 to £17 and the annual governor's rate from £30 to £33. Life governorship will remain unchanged at £500 as would the junior membership, Storm Force, at £3.

Remarking on the RNLI's effort to attract the attention of young people, of which Storm Force was part, the Chairman referred to the boost given by the BBC's Blue Peter programme, which held another appeal on the RNLI's behalf. Besides a phenomenal amount of audience coverage, the appeal had brought in enough 'treasure' to pay for the replacement of all six Blue Peter inshore lifeboats and fund at least half the cost of the Trent for Fishguard.

On the subject of television coverage Mr Vernon mentioned the unprecedented exposure on television received over the past year. Up to 10 million people had watched the six-part ITV documentary series about Salcombe lifeboat station in which Coxswain Frank Smith and his crew did the Institution proud.

At least as many have been watching the recent '999' series, featuring two graphic reconstructions of services, and there was also the BBC's current drama series, 'The Lifeboat'.

Finally, the Chairman noted that the meeting was the last to be held on the South Bank. Next year the AGM and awards ceremony would be at the Barbican Centre, where facilities are better suited to providing an enjoyable and worthwhile day, remarking that:

'In many ways it is a fitting time to break with tradition. We are at the end of an era with the passing of the double-ended wooden boats and are now steaming proudly into the future at 25 knots. If we can continue to rely upon the generosity of all those who support the work of the RNLI, we can guarantee that a lifeboat suitably equipped for the job will launch whenever the call comes now and in the years that lie ahead.'

The meeting closed with questions from the floor on a variety of operational and fundraising subjects before the Governors were invited to view a special compilation video of some of the RNLI's television coverage over the past year.

Awards Presented at the Royal Festival Hall

Since the last Annual Presentation of Awards Meeting the Committee of Management has awarded ten Bars to the Gold Badge and forty-eight Gold Badges.

BAR TO THE GOLD BADGE

Mrs Margaret Driscoll
Burnmouth Branch: Honorary Secretary 1959 to date
Mrs Mary Hiley JP
Leeds Guild: Chairman 1954-1975. Leeds Luncheon Club: Chairman 1955-1975. Horsforth Guild: President 1970 to date
Mrs Pauline Thompson
Penarth Guild: Honorary Secretary 1962 to date
Mr John Kennedy
Crew Member: 1939-1945. Fundraiser: 1945-1965. Newquay Station Branch: Chairman 1965 to date
Mrs Phyllis Duckworth
Reading Branch: Member 1958-1962. Reading Guild Branch: Chairman: 1962-1979. Caversham Branch: Honorary Secretary 1979 to date
Mr John Eagle
Walton and Frinton Station Branch: Vice Chairman 1953-1957, Chairman 1957-1980, President 1980 to date
Mr Robert Oxley
Walton and Frinton Station Branch: Assistant Honorary Secretary 1953-1960, Honorary Secretary 1960-1980, Deputy Launching Authority 1980-1990, Chairman 1980 to date
Mr Elson Phillips
Little and Broad Haven Station Branch: Honorary Secretary 1967-1986 Chairman 1986 to date

GOLD BADGE

Mrs Barbara Yuille
Biggar Ladies Lifeboat Guild: Committee Member 1970 to date, Honorary Treasurer 1970-1992
The Lady Jean Fforde DL
Isle of Arran Ladies Lifeboat Guild: President 1957 to date
Mrs Janet Miller MAJP
Kilwinning Branch: Convener 1958-1974, Chairman 1974 to date
Lady Catherine Henderson
The Stewartry of Kirkcudbright Lifeboat Guild: President 1971 to date
Mrs Barbro Scott
St Andrews Branch: President 1968-

1971, Joint Honorary Secretary 1971-1972, President 1972-1993, Committee Member 1993 to date
Mr H Speak BEM
Blackrod Branch: Honorary Treasurer 1960-1993
Mrs Elizabeth Downs
Bredbury Guild: President 1961 to date
Mrs Mary Aldridge
Bromborough and Eastham Branch: Honorary Secretary 1967 to date
Mr Peter Bowman BA
Crewe Branch: Honorary Treasurer 1969-1984, Honorary Secretary 1970-1991, Chairman 1984-1994, Honorary Treasurer 1991-1994
Mrs Margaret Park
Didsbury Branch: Founder Member 1964, Honorary Treasurer 1969 (6 Months), Committee Member 1969-1973, Honorary Secretary 1973 to date
Mrs Margaret Wild
Prestwich Branch: Honorary Secretary 1966 to date
Mrs Margaret Watson
Stoke on Trent Ladies Lifeboat Guild: Chairman 1968 to date
Mrs F (Dorothy) Read
Tottington Guild: Honorary Treasurer 1967 to date
Mrs Doreen Baxter
Up Holland Branch: Chairman 1967 to date
Mrs Helen Owen
Up Holland Branch: Honorary Secretary 1967 to date
Mary Lady Macdonald of Sleat
Bridlington Guild: Vice President 1956-1973, President 1973 to date
Mr Geoffrey Timson
Grantham Guild: Honorary Treasurer 1965 to date
Mrs H (Dorothy) Ludlam
Halifax Guild: Assistant Honorary Secretary 1967-1968, Honorary Secretary 1968-1981, Acting Secretary 1981-1985
Mrs Muriel Pearson
Huddersfield Guild: Assistant Honorary Secretary 1968-1970, Honorary Secretary 1970 to date
Mr Peter Fenby
Filey Station Branch: Committee Member 1964-1967, Chairman 1967-1978. Hull Branch: Active Committee Member 1978-1980, Assistant Honorary Secretary 1980-1982, Chairman 1982-1986, Acting Chairman Secretary 1986-1989, Honorary Secretary 1989 to date
Mrs Vera Beaumont
Morley Guild: Honorary Treasurer

1968-1978, President 1978-1983, Vice President 1983 to date
Mrs Margaret Taylor
Norton Branch: Honorary Secretary 1959-1962, Committee Member 1962-1966, Honorary Secretary 1966 to date
Mrs Joan Beynon
Porthcawl Guild: Honorary Secretary 1967 to date, Honorary Treasurer 1967 to date
Mr John Gilbert
Luton and District Branch: Committee Member 1970-1973, Honorary Secretary 1973-1979, Chairman 1979-1992, President 1992 to date
Mrs Gillian Jeckells
Wroxham and District Branch: Honorary Secretary 1967-1973, Chairman 1973-1983, President 1983 to date
Mrs Anne Morris
Weymouth Ladies Guild: Souvenir Secretary 1964 to date, Honorary Treasurer 1974-1978
Lt Cdr Barney Morris RN (Retd)
Weymouth Station Branch: Deputy Launching Authority 1971-1975, Honorary Secretary 1975 to date
Lt Cdr William Hartt RN (Retd)
Rustington and East Preston Branch: Honorary Secretary 1968 to date, Lifeboat Week Organiser 1968 to date
Mr Henry Dollin
Bushey Heath Branch: Committee Member 1963-1965, Box Secretary 1965-1980, Honorary Secretary 1966-1980, Honorary Treasurer 1966-1980. Seaford Branch: Committee Member 1980-1986, Box Secretary 1986 to date
Mrs Clara Welfare
Shoreham and Lancing Ladies Lifeboat Guild: Committee Member 1965 to date
Mrs C (Patricia) Telfer
Central London Committee: Committee Member 1967 to date, Vice Chairman 1985-1988
Mrs Ivy Quinney
Sutton, Cheam and Worcester Park Branch: Honorary Treasurer 1969-1991, Flag Day Organiser 1969-1992
Mrs Mary English
Cobh Branch: Honorary Secretary 1963 to date
The Right Honourable Lord Margadale of Islay
Isle of Islay Station Branch: President 1934 to date
Mr Gerald Finn
Sunderland Station Branch: Committee Member 1961-1967, Chairman 1967-1983, Deputy Launching Authority 1971-1983, Honorary Secretary 1983 to

date
Mr Jack Lewis MBE BSC CENG FIMIME
Walmer Station Branch: Chairman 1974-1993, President 1993 to date
Mr Gwyn Martin DFM
Aberystwyth Station Branch: Honorary Secretary 1964-1981, Committee Member 1981-1987, President 1987 to date
Mr John Griffiths BEM
Borth Station Branch: Crew Member 1966-1971, Honorary Treasurer 1966 to date, Deputy Launching Authority 1971-1992
Mr Eric Bancroft
Tenby Station Branch: Deputy Launching Authority 1973-1980, Honorary Secretary 1980-1994
Mr James Tyrrell
Arklow Station Branch: Deputy Launching Authority 1971-1977, Honorary Secretary 1977 to date
Dr Patrick Murphy
Baltimore Station Branch: Honorary Medical Advisor 1968 to date
Dr John Gowen FRCC
Youghal Station Branch: Honorary Medical Advisor 1952-1990, Deputy Launching Authority 1990 to date

The following recipients were unable to attend the Ceremony and their awards are being made locally:

BAR TO THE GOLD BADGE

Mrs W Milne
Kirriemuir Guild: Honorary Treasurer 1953-1980, Kirriemuir Branch: Honorary Treasurer 1980 to date
Mrs F V McDonald MBE
Stonehaven Ladies Lifeboat Guild: President 1957-1982, Chairman 1982-1983, President 1983 to date

GOLD BADGE

Mr Edward Coker
Didsbury Branch: President 1968 to date
Cdr William Donald DSC
Keswick Branch: Chairman 1968 to date
Mrs D L (Tessa) Thomas
Porthcawl Guild: Chairman 1967-1992, President 1992 to date
Mrs Eileen O'Flanagan
Dun Laoghaire Ladies Lifeboat Guild: Box Secretary 1968 to date, Flag Day Organiser 1968 to date
Mr William Halcrow
Stromness Station Branch: Honorary Treasurer 1958-1994
Mr Andrew Collier
Clogher Head Station Branch: Chairman 1954 to date

Awards for Gallantry presented at the Royal Festival Hall

Helmsman Ian McDowell – Bronze Medal St Bees lifeboat, 31 July 1993



Ian McDowell was in charge of St Bees' C class inshore lifeboat when she saved the crew of two from a grounded fishing vessel.

The casualty was being swept by breaking seas on an exposed reef and the lifeboat had to beach to make repairs after her propellers were damaged. She was able to save the men although the engines were damaged again and two crew members had to be left ashore.

• A full account of this service appeared in the Winter 1993/94 issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*.

Coxswain Richard Davies – Bronze Medal Cromer lifeboat, 13 October 1993



Richard Davies was in charge of Cromer's Tyne class lifeboat when she was involved in a long service in which she rescued a 30ft yacht and saved her crew of four.

Onshore winds of up to Force 10 made the launching conditions the worst the crew had experienced in 30 years and it was some time after launching before it was safe to venture on deck to raise the radio aerials.

• A full account of this service appeared in the Spring 1994 issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*.

Coxswain Barry Bennett – Bronze Medal St Mary's lifeboat, 12 September 1993



Barry Bennett took St Mary's Arun class lifeboat Robert Edgar into a small, shallow and rock-strewn cove to rescue two yachts anchored there and caught out by a change in the weather.

A Severe Gale Force 9 was blowing into the cove and a nasty 5m high swell was breaking heavily around the yacht. With very little room to manoeuvre the lifeboat snatched a man to safety just seconds before his yacht was overwhelmed and sank.

• A full account of this service appeared in the Winter 1993/94 issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*.

Joint Second Coxswain William Clark – Bronze Medal Lerwick lifeboat, 17/18 November 1993



William Clark took Lerwick's Arun class lifeboat *Soldian* alongside the Russian Factory Ship *Borodinskoye Polyte* 35 times to rescue 37 people.

The casualty was aground in winds up to Force 10 and total darkness. Searoom was severely limited, fuel oil was spraying on to the lifeboats decks and she was also damaged by a large fender swinging from the ship.

• A full account of this service appeared in the Spring 1994 issue of *THE LIFEBOAT*.

The Presentation of Awards

Welcoming HRH the Duke of Kent and all those present the Chairman pointed out that this would be the last time the Annual Presentation of Awards would be held at the Royal Festival Hall, as it would, along with the Annual General Meeting, be moving to the Barbican Centre in 1995.

The Chairman opened his address by recounting two apparently routine lifeboat services, one by the Alderney lifeboat which, on a chilly March morning, went to the aid of a small fishing boat broken down in the Swinge and threatened by steep overfalls and a lee shore. Both vessels were back in Braye harbour in time for lunch. The other was at Aldeburgh last September when the lifeboat searched for three hours for a boy reported missing in a 12ft dinghy on the river Alde. The lifeboat found nothing, but her crew were relieved to hear that the boy eventually turned up safe and sound.

What was so momentous about these apparently routine incidents? Simply that the rescue off Alderney was the first by a 25-knot all-weather lifeboat, in this case the 14m Trent prototype on temporary station duty there, and the Aldeburgh search was the last call made on a traditional double-ended lifeboat in RNLI service.

'In 1994,' said the Chairman, 'we have truly begun a new era of fast lifeboats. The transition to an all-fast fleet has been completed on schedule and is something in which everyone should take pride. It could never have happened without the crews' enthusiastic willingness to adopt new technology or the ability of the staff to shape that new technology to the Institution's needs. Above all, it would never have happened if the fundraisers had not risen to the challenge of the building programme.'

Congratulating supporters on this achievement the Chairman remarked that they need only listen to the afternoon's medal citations to realise its value. Two fishermen, six yachtsmen, and thirty-seven crew members from a Russian factory ship were only alive today, he said, because the RNLI has the



HRH The Duke of Kent addresses the gathering before presenting the awards

boats and the crews to cope, even in the worst conditions.

One way of measuring how far we had come in recent years was to look at the speed of response. Currently an all-weather lifeboat can usually reach a point 50 miles off the coast in three-and-a-half hours, which compares with the previous 30 miles in four hours, and a new target – by the year 2000 – of reducing the time for those 50 miles to two-and-a-half hours. This meant that at least half the Severns and Trents planned by the Institution would need to be on station and at least half the new 34 knot Atlantic 75 inshore lifeboats.

In the next five years new boats would cost the Institution well over £80m, said Mr Vernon, a major undertaking by anybody's standards.

While confident that the target could be achieved the Chairman stressed that he appreciated the size of the challenge facing the fundraisers. Six and seven figure numbers have become commonplace, but that it was worth remembering how many flag day stickers, raffle tickets and tea towel sales are needed to raise enough money for a £1m lifeboat.

The 'Blue Peter' television appeal had helped to bring this point home. Two gigantic warehouses were filled by some 1,500,000 packages of 'treasure', to be sorted and sold to raise a sum estimated to pay for six new inshore lifeboats and half the cost of the Trent for Fishguard later this year.

That project represented a huge nationwide effort, and yet it was but a fraction of what volunteer fundraisers achieve every year. Last year their direct contribution towards the Institution's £62m income was another record, so we cannot but have faith that the target will again be met this year.

Mr Vernon hoped that all supporters would draw inspiration from the success of the past year and added that there was present another source of inspiration – one which had been with the RNLI for the last quarter of a century. HRH The Duke of Kent had succeeded his mother, Princess Marina, as President

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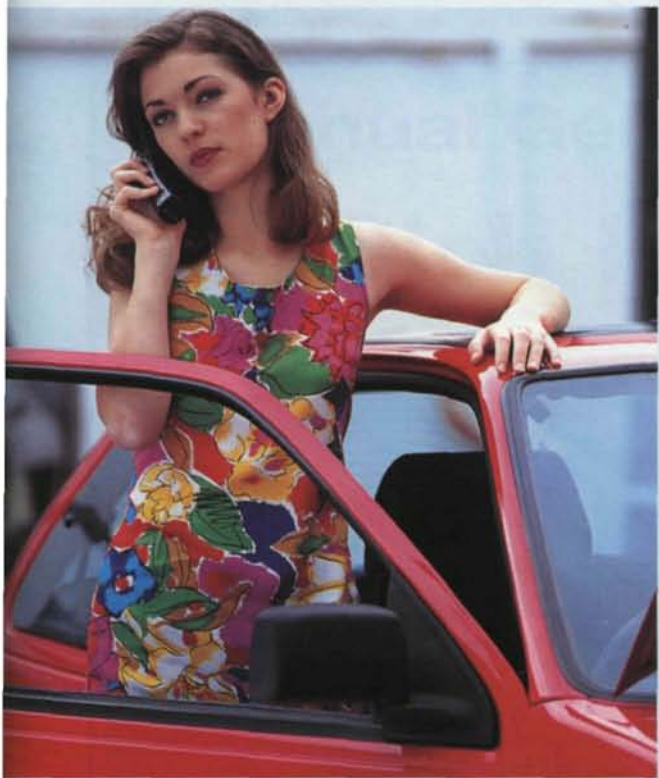
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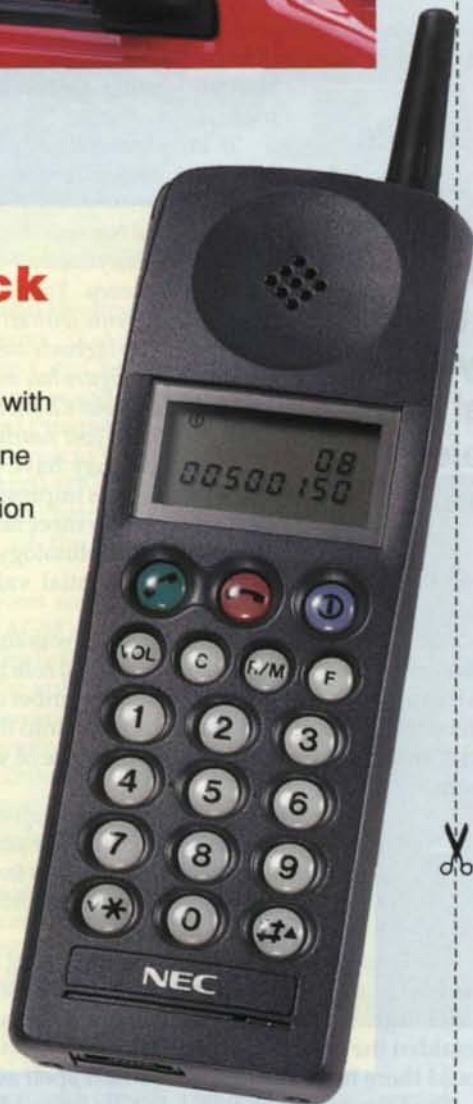
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 Time at this address Years _____ Months _____
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 Residential Status (please tick) House Owner Tenant Living with parent Local housing authority
 Employment Status (please tick) Employed Self employed Retired Unemployed Yrs with employer (please fill in) _____
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The 1994 Annual Meetings continued

of the Institution 25 years ago and, with genuine interest and understanding, had given everyone an added reason to continue with their work.

He had presided over some significant moments of RNLI history, some difficult, some tragic but many glorious. The Chairman remarked that as someone who had been a member of the Committee of Management for the whole of the Duke's Presidency, he was extremely aware of the support he had given the Chairmen who have served under him. Mr Vernon also praised the contribution made by HRH The Duchess of Kent, who had also been an enormous inspiration.

Mr Vernon then added: *'The Committee of Management has decided that the most fitting way to express the gratitude of us all is to present you, Sir, with the highest award the Institution can offer, the Gold Medal. I trust you will accept it as a mark of the esteem in which you are held by everyone in the large family which is the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.'*

The applause which greeted the announcement and the subsequent presentation reflected the appreciation shown by those present at the APA.

The President was clearly moved by the award, saying:

'It is not easy to put into words just how deeply honoured I feel at receiving the RNLI's highest award, the Gold Medal. That the Committee of Management should decide – without the knowledge of the President I might add – to confer on me the same award as that presented to only the very bravest of our lifeboat crews is something I take as a supreme compliment.'

'I accept the award on the strict understanding that no comparison can ever be made between my contribution and that of our lifeboat crews.'

His Royal Highness remarked that bravery had not been a resource on which he had had to call during his 25 years association with the RNLI, indeed he looked back on every assignment with the Institution, which had taken him to 92 lifeboat stations, with nothing but pleasure – as did The Duchess of Kent.

The Duke recalled lifeboat experiences which had remained particularly vivid in his memory, including the moment when he succeeded as President his mother, Princess Marina, who had been the last person to be honoured with the gold medal for service other than bravery. Equally vivid was the memory of his first official duty, attending the funeral of those lost in the Fraserburgh lifeboat disaster in 1970 – a reminder of the very heavy price that voluntary service can demand.

The RNLI strives to reduce the risks, but that they could never be eliminated was tragically proved by the disaster at Penlee in 1981, another sad occasion His Royal Highness would never forget.

Naming ceremonies were always occasions to look forward to, said the Duke, they take place at beautiful parts of the coast and are an occasion when fundraisers and lifeboatmen can celebrate their success together.

'When I meet RNLI fundraisers I am always struck by the enthusiasm as well as the dedication with which they throw themselves into their work. I have also noticed that they seem to have the happy knack of making other people part with their money with a smile on their face.'

The President added that he was lucky to have been able to go to sea aboard more lifeboats than probably most people in the hall, enabling him to appreciate the environment in which



The kind of conditions in which medals are earned... The St Mary's lifeboat goes to the aid of a yacht in the service which won her coxswain, Barry Bennett his Bronze Medal

'If the admirable voluntary nature of the RNLI has been a constant factor in the past quarter of a century a very great deal has nevertheless changed'

the crews operated and to get to know the people who do the job. It also allowed him to imagine more vividly the circumstances leading to the award of bravery medals.

'If the admirable voluntary nature of the RNLI has been a constant factor in the last quarter of a century,' the President went on, *'a very great deal has nevertheless changed in that time. In 1969 the fastest all-weather lifeboat was a 15 knot Waveney. Today we have the 25 knot Severns and Trents with all the latest electronic gadgetry. Then lifeboats answered 2,300 calls a year, now that figure has more than doubled to 5,500. It cost about £1.7m to run the service in 1969, in 1993 in cost nearly £48m.'*

The world may have changed, said the Duke, but he was impressed by the way the RNLI adapted to meet new challenges and embrace new technology and fundraising

techniques while retaining its essential values of voluntary service.

Looking to the future the President was sure that the Institution would be playing an equally crucial role 25 years from now, as there was no sign of a let-up in the number of casualties. New lifeboats are designed to take the RNLI into the 21st century, he said, and there appears to be no shortage of volunteers to crew them.

'Through the indefatigable work of voluntary fundraisers and the generosity of the public,' he added, *'we also have a sound financial base. It only remains for us to see that future generations come to appreciate the lifeboat service as much as those of us here today.'*

The Duke looked forward to a continuing involvement with the RNLI, and announced that he would shortly be going to Aldeburgh to name the new Mersey there. The new boat heralded the era of an all fast lifeboat fleet, and what better way could there be to embark on his next spell as President?

The Director of the RNLI, Lt Cdr Brian Miles, then read the citations as the President presented the awards for gallantry and for the long-serving fundraisers. To close he moved the traditional resolution recording hearty appreciation of the gallantry of the crews, and of all voluntary workers, and it only remained for Clayton Love, a member of the Committee of Management, to propose a vote of thanks to HRH The Duke of Kent – touching upon his visit to Mr Love's native Ireland – to bring the proceedings to a close.

Annual General Meeting of the Scottish Lifeboat Council



The Annual General Meeting of the Scottish Lifeboat Council was held on Wednesday 27 April 1994 in the Banqueting Hall of Glasgow's famous City Chambers. The meeting followed a civic reception for awardees and special guests provided by the Rt Hon Robert Innes, Lord Provost of Glasgow – a gesture resulting from the Lord Provost's visit to Troon lifeboat *City of Glasgow III* in April 1993 in the company of Archie MacKenzie, chairman of the executive committee of the Scottish Lifeboat Council.

The Lord Provost was not able to attend the reception or AGM due to ill health, but was represented by Bailie Alex Mosson, who paid tribute to the voluntary workers who were receiving awards and congratulated the RNLI on providing such a vital service.

His Grace the Duke of Atholl, convener of the Scottish Lifeboat Council proposed a vote of thanks to Bailie Mosson at the end of the civic reception.

The awardees were led into the banqueting hall for the presentations by the Duke of Atholl's piper, Bill Clement – to the great delight of the audience of 450 lifeboat supporters.

The meeting began with the convener's address, followed by the customary tribute to late lifeboatmen and branch and guild office bearers. Ray Kipling, deputy director of the RNLI, then gave an entertaining address, citing various rescues throughout the previous year, and urging all voluntary workers to continue their fundraising endeavours.

Archie MacKenzie then addressed the meeting in his capacity as chairman of the executive committee of the Scottish Lifeboat Council, followed by vice chairman Andrew Cubie, who gave a financial report, and David Richardson, organising secretary for

Scotland.

The Hon Mrs Henry Douglas-Home was re-elected as a vice convener of the Scottish Lifeboat Council, while Dumfries and Grangemouth branches and Peebles ladies' guild were elected to serve three years on the Scottish executive committee.

Finally, Lady Saltoun gave an entertaining speech, citing her own fundraising experiences over the years often in difficult situations, before presenting the 1994 honorary awards.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks, proposed to the convener by Mrs M.M. Grieve of Perth branch, an executive committee member.

Tea was then served to everyone, many of whom had travelled great distances to attend the meeting.

(Top) His Grace the Duke of Atholl addresses the Annual Meeting of the Scottish Lifeboat Council

(Left) Lady Saltoun receives her bouquet following her address and the presentation of awards.
photos Niall Hartley Photography

The following Bars to the Gold Badge and Gold Badges were among the awards made to branch and guild members from Scotland, although they were presented at the London AGM:

BAR TO THE GOLD BADGE

Mrs M. Driscoll, honorary secretary, Burnmouth branch.

GOLD BADGE

Lady Jean Fforde, president Isle of Arran ladies' guild.

Mrs B. Yuille, former treasurer Biggar ladies' guild.

The Rt Hon Lord Margadale of Islay, president Isle of Islay station branch.

Mrs J.D. Miller, chairman Kilwinning branch.

Lady Henderson, president Stewarty of Kirkcudbright lifeboat guild.

Mrs M.G. Scott, former president St Andrews branch.



Bookshelf

some recent publications reviewed

Dial 999 – Emergency Services in Action

by John Creighton
ISBN 1-85058-297-1
published by Sigma Leisure at £9.95

John Creighton has spent some time as an operational fire-fighter and in the maritime rescue services, so is well qualified to compile this mainly pictorial account of the various emergency services in action.

Although marine rescue is but one section of the 130-plus page book it does occupy a respectable 38 pages, with lifeboats appearing on almost every one, plus two more appearances in the separate colour section.

The book looks at the emergency services across the years, so in the case of lifeboats the photographs range from Liverpools to Aruns, Tynes and Merseys. The wide time scale also provides glimpses of 1960s Ford Zephyr police patrol cars and splendidly vintage fire appliances.

Many of the photographs are quite dramatic, and although bereft of much technical detail £9.95 is good value for this well-produced soft-back book – and will probably be considered worth the price for the lifeboat content alone.

A History of Happisburgh Lifeboat Station

by Nicholas Leach
ISBN 0 9522799 0 8
published by the Norfolk and Suffolk Research Group at £2.00

Happisburgh (pronounced locally *Hazebro*) is a lifeboat station which has been much affected by the changing pattern of casualties around the coasts and changes in lifeboat design.

The off-lying Happisburgh Sands had been a source of considerable danger for many years, and attempts were made to provide some sort of life saving equipment as far back as 1813 and leading lights, lighthouses and lightvessels used to guard it.

However it was not until 1866 that the lifeboat station was first established – with a 32ft boat which had to be hauled up a steep incline behind the beach.

However, although the boat and her successors carried out many services, the advent of motor lifeboats with their greater speed and range meant that less lifeboats were needed to provide adequate cover. The number of calls reduced – the last launch being in 1923 – and by 1926 the RNLI decided to close the station, cover being provided by the motor lifeboat at

Cromer.

However times change, and by the 1960s the increase in leisure activity and the availability of high speed inflatables led to the re-opening of the station, operating a summer-only D class from a new boathouse built on the

Using GPS

by Conrad Dixon
ISBN 0-7136-3952-0
published by Adlard Coles Nautical at £8.99

Major advances in navigation at sea have been made over the past few years, but perhaps the most spectacular has been the development of satellite-based navigation systems, the latest of which is the Global Positioning System or the 'GPS' of this book's title.

A 'cage' of orbiting satellites communicate with an on-board receiver which then decodes the signals to give a continuously updated position with an accuracy unheard of only a few years ago. Typically a civilian receiver will provide a position within a 100m radius of the true position 95% of the time, and mili-

site of the original building which had become neglected and had been demolished ten years before.

Nicholas Leach's look at the station and its history makes interesting reading and is available from Mark Roberts, the Honorary Secretary of the Lifeboat Enthusiasts Society's Norfolk and Suffolk Research Group, at 23 Wellcroft Court, Ivinghoe, Bedfordshire LU7 9EF at £2.00 including postage.

tary receivers – GPS is an American military system – and specially equipped civilian ones will provide an accuracy within a few metres.

Lifeboats now carry this navigation system, and with receivers less than the size of a car radio and available for as little as £300 a growing number of fishing vessels and yachts are similarly equipped.

Of course it is not quite as simple as it seems and Conrad Dixon's slim paperback (90 pages) will be an invaluable aid to anyone thinking of buying and then installing and using a GPS receiver. Certainly not just for general interest reading, but a very good investment prior to a major purchase. Practical, simple to understand and recommended for its purpose.

The Story of the Hoylake and West Kirby Lifeboats

by Jeff Morris

The Story of the Aldeburgh Lifeboats

by Jeff Morris

published by the author at £2.50

Once again the prolific Honorary Archivist of the Lifeboat Enthusiasts Society has provided a detailed and fascinating account of the history of three lifeboat stations – two of them grouped into one volume as Hoylake and West Kirby are very close to one another and their history somewhat intertwined.

The stations were originally established before the RNLI was formed – Hoylake in 1803 and Aldeburgh in 1826 (although the lifeboat was then kept four miles down the coast at Sizewell) and have a long, distinguished and interesting history.

West Kirby may be a relative newcomer – being established as an inshore lifeboat station in 1966, initially under the auspices of Hoylake – but what it lacks in history it has made up for in the number and quality of the services carried out.

Both books are right up-to-date, recording the latest Mer-

sey class allocated to them, with Aldeburgh in particular recording the replacement of the last traditional double-ended lifeboat in RNLI service with her fast Mersey replacement last November.

Both books are in the author's usual paperback style, now resplendent in full-colour card covers – and well illustrated with both historic and contemporary photographs.

One pleasant feature of this series is the attention given to the station's boathouses, in addition to the lifeboats themselves, with old and new buildings featuring in the Hoylake and West Kirby story.

Aldeburgh's lifeboats were kept in the open on the beach until the Mersey class arrived, but the interesting architecture and story behind the funding of the building are recounted.

The Story of the Hoylake and West Kirby Lifeboats can be obtained from Nigel Robinson at 14 Sea View, Hoylake, Wirral, Merseyside L47 2DD and The Story of the Aldeburgh Lifeboats from Mrs B. Grayburn at 12 Lee Road, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5HG.

Both books cost £2.50 including post and packing.

Two eminently sensible and practical books for the small boat owner – or potential owner – which will enable them to safely embark on the subjects of their title. Both are paperbacks with adequate photographic and line drawing illustrations.

How to Install a New Diesel

by Peter Cumberlidge

ISBN 0-7136-3777-3

published by Adlard Coles Nautical at £9.99

A good straightforward guide to re-engining a small yacht for the practical owner. Biased towards auxiliaries in sailing yachts, but covering many of the initial calculations, decisions, problems and installation details of most applications.

Based on personal experience this practical and pragmatic volume covers everything from initial considerations, through installation, transmission, propeller choice and soundproofing to auxiliaries such as power take-offs and hot water systems.

Trailer Sailing

by J. C. Winters

ISBN 0-7136-3779-X

published by Adlard Coles Nautical at £9.99

Trailer sailing is a way of getting afloat with much to recommend it – and some drawbacks which its supporters often forget to mention!

Mr Winters' book is a fair and comprehensive overview of the whole subject, although this reviewer's experience suggests that the physical labour and abuse of the towing vehicle may be slightly played down! Entirely concerned with trailer-sailers (no motor boats) the volume is nonetheless a good primer for anyone thinking of buying a road-transportable sailing boat.

Hearts of Oak

A Collection of Royal Naval Anecdotes

edited by P. McLaren

ISBN 0-906754-98-4

published by Fernhurst Books at £9.95

A collection of stories, many funny some poignant, from all sections of the Royal Navy which admirably illustrate the service's ability to retain a sense of humour and to laugh at itself if needs be.

An easy book to 'dip into' as it is broken down into sections and then again into individual short items – but beware, once dipped into it is hard to put down!

Sailor of Fortune

by Ian Jackson

ISBN 1 85821 022 4

published by The Pentland Press at £15.95

An account of the life of the author's uncle, Jack Arnot, through a lifetime of seagoing starting in the 1920s and culminating in becoming the Master of a tanker.

Along the way Jack Arnot took in a win in the Irish Sweepstake a yacht voyage to New Zealand and a long spell as the Master of tiny ships in the Pacific Islands.

In one chapter Jack Arnot is rescued by the RNLI in the early 1950s.

Please note that books reviewed on these pages are not available from the RNLI.

Where the books are available only from one source an address will be given in the review. Otherwise readers should contact a good bookseller, quoting the title, publisher and the International Standard Book Number (ISBN).

First Aid at Sea

by Dr Douglas Justins and

Dr Colin Berry

ISBN 0-7136-3826-5

published by Adlard Coles Nautical at £8.99

There are many first aid handbooks available, and several aimed specifically for use at sea, but this particular book – now available in a second edition – caught our eye largely because of its presentation.

Spiral bound and with a quick-reference thumb-index First Aid at Sea should be an easy book to refer to in difficult circumstances, which is precisely the time when accidents are most likely to happen. Tossed around in a small boat, wet and uncomfortable is not the time to delve into a medical tome, no matter how authoritative it may be!

The text is simple, the illustrations clear and the type of injury included is clearly aimed at those likely to be encountered aboard a small boat.

This reviewer is not qualified to comment on the medical information provided, but both of the authors have impeccable credentials. Both are doctors with considerable sailing experience in small boats and, viewed from the potential users standpoint, the volume has much to offer.

Tales of Time and Tide

by Brian Martin

ISBN 0 7153 0050 4

published by David and Charles at £16.99

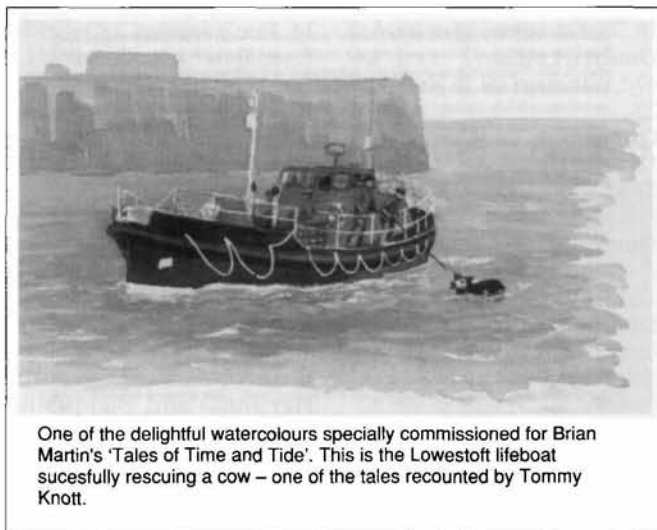
A delightful book which sets out 'to provide an insight into Britain's coastal heritage' and which succeeds in its aim by tracing the story of 16 characters with various links with the sea, often using their own words and dialect.

One of these raconteurs is Tommy Knott, Merchant Seaman and later, from 1968, mechanic and coxswain of the Lowestoft lifeboat. The chapter is entitled By Compass, Guess and by God – referring to the lifeboat's more interesting trips before modern aids to navigation were developed

– and traces his career both ashore and at sea, including the Bronze Medal he was awarded in 1974.

Like the other 15 contributor's Tommy's recollections are poignant and humorous and evoke the feeling and spirit of the tasks they undertook.

Many of their callings no longer exist, and the author's ability to coax their stories from them in a colourful style and to locate suitable photographs and commission delicate watercolours is to be applauded.



One of the delightful watercolours specially commissioned for Brian Martin's 'Tales of Time and Tide'. This is the Lowestoft lifeboat successfully rescuing a cow – one of the tales recounted by Tommy Knott.

The Right Way To Conduct Meetings

by H. M. Taylor and

A. G. Mears

ISBN 0-7160-2160-5

The Honorary Treasurer

by Roderick Boucher

ISBN 0-7160-2015-7

published by Elliot Right Way Books at £3.99 each

Not, this reviewer thought at first, books which would interest readers of THE LIFEBOAT. But, on reflection, with more than 2,000 RNLI branches and guilds and countless RNLI members who are officers in the many hundreds of sailing and other boating clubs, perhaps these two slim paperbacks are worth bringing to the notice of the journal's wide readership.

Both books are aimed squarely at those involved with voluntary organisations, clubs and societies and although the RNLI's methods may differ in some respects from those outlined (particularly so for the Treasurer's task) these easy to assimilate handbooks could prove to be worthwhile reading for those involved in voluntary work.

Simple, commonsense guides which take much of the mystique (or terror) out of the running of a small club or society and well worth their modest price.

LIFEBOAT SERVICES

Aberdeen, Grampian
54ft Arun ON 1050: Nov 28,
Dec 14 and 28

Aith, Shetland
52ft Arun ON 1100: Dec 2,
Jan 12

Aldeburgh, Suffolk
Relief D class: Nov 24 and
Dec 1

Alderney, Channel Islands
44ft Waveney ON 1045: Nov
2, 13, Dec 11 and 12

Angle, Dyfed
47ft Tyne ON 1114: Nov 3,
Dec 28 and Jan 25

Anstruther, Fife
12m Mersey ON 1174: Dec 8,
16, 22 and 27

Appledore, North Devon
47ft Tyne ON 1140: Nov 28
and 30

Relief Atlantic 21: Nov 21

Arklow, Co Wicklow
44ft Waveney ON 1029: Nov
12, 14 and Jan 15

Arran (Lamlash), Strathclyde
C class: Nov 13 (twice)

Arranmore, Co Donegal
47ft Tyne ON 1111: Nov 27
and Dec 3

Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1115: Dec
10, 30, 31, Jan 2 and 5

**Atlantic College (St Donat's
Castle), South Glamorgan**
Atlantic 21: Nov 6

Ballycotton, Co Cork
52ft Arun ON 1067: Nov 7
(twice), 25, 30, Dec 11, 17 and
Jan 6

Ballyglass, Co Mayo
52ft Arun ON 1159: Dec 4

Baltimore, Co Cork
47ft Tyne ON 1137: Nov 3,
Jan 3 and 31

Barra Island, Western Isles
52ft Arun ON 1143: Dec 1

Barrow, Cumbria
47ft Tyne ON 1117: Dec 12

**Barry Dock, South Glamor-
gan**
52ft Arun ON 1018: Nov 2, 6,
10, Dec 10 and 13

Beaumaris, Gwynedd
Atlantic 21: Nov 6, Dec 18,
Jan 15, 17, 19, 25 and Feb 2

Bembridge, Isle of Wight
47ft Tyne ON 1126: Nov 9, 13
and Dec 17

Blackpool, Lancashire
Relief D class: Nov 5

Blyth, Northumberland
44ft Waveney ON 1079: Nov
21, Dec 12 (twice), Jan 3 and
25

Bridlington, Humberside
12m Mersey ON 1124: Nov 20
(twice), 24, 28, 30, Dec 4 and
Jan 10

Brighton, East Sussex
Relief Atlantic 21: Nov 3, 7
and Jan 1

Atlantic 21: Jan 20
**Broughty Ferry (Dundee),
Tayside**

52ft Arun ON 1056: Nov 22
and Dec 13

Buckie, Grampian
52ft Arun ON 1093: Dec 26,
29 (twice) and Jan 15

Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex
D class: Nov 14

Calshot, Hampshire
Relief 33ft Brede ON 1090:
Nov 14, 28, Dec 29 and Jan 2

33ft Brede ON 1104: Feb 11

Campbeltown, Strathclyde
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1160:
Nov 7 and Dec 14

Cardigan, Dyfed
Relief C class: Jan 3 (twice)
and 23

Clacton-on-Sea, Essex
D class: Dec 4
Relief Atlantic 21: Dec 15 and
29

Cleethorpes, Humberside
D class: Feb 6

Clogher Head, Co Louth
12m Mersey ON 1190: Jan 18

Conwy, Gwynedd
D class: Jan 10

Criccieth, Gwynedd
Relief Atlantic 21: Jan 16 and
25

Cromer, Norfolk
47ft Tyne ON 1097: Nov 5
and Dec 7

Cullercoats, Tyne and Wear
Atlantic 21: Nov 28

Donaghadee, Co Down
52ft Arun ON 1107: Nov 23,
26, Dec 26 and 31

Douglas, Isle of Man
47ft Tyne ON 1147: Nov 14

Dover, Kent
50ft Thames ON 1031: Nov
16, 25, Dec 29 and Jan 8

Dunbar, Lothian
44ft Waveney ON 1034: Nov
22

Dungeness, Kent
12m Mersey ON 1186: Nov 2
Relief 12m Mersey ON 1169:
Feb 12

Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin
D class: Dec 18, 20, Jan 28
and Feb 7

**Dunmore East, Co Water-
ford**
Relief 44ft Waveney ON 1003:
Nov 9

44 ft Waveney ON 1035: Feb 7

Eastbourne, East Sussex
12m Mersey ON 1195: Nov
14, 16, 23, Dec 20, Jan 1, 2, 17,
18, 23 and Feb 5

D class: Nov 14 and Dec 27

Exmouth, South Devon
33ft Brede ON 1088: Nov 2
and Feb 20

D class: Nov 9 (twice), 19,
Dec 16, 30, Feb 20 and 22

Eyemouth, Borders
44ft Waveney ON 1026: Nov
8, Dec 7, Jan 3, 22 and 31

Falmouth, Cornwall
52ft Arun ON 1058: Jan 9

Atlantic 21: Dec 8 (twice)
Filey, North Yorkshire
12m Mersey ON 1170: Nov 1,
8, 17 and Dec 20

Relief 12m Mersey ON 1184:
Feb 2

Fishguard, Dyfed
52ft Arun ON 1076: Dec 26

Flamborough, Humberside
Atlantic 21: Dec 4, 26 and Jan
1

Fleetwood, Lancashire
Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1146: Nov
23, 24, Dec 5, 14, Jan 7, 13
and 29

D class: Nov 23, 24, Dec 4,
Jan 7, 13, 29, Feb 14 and 19

Flint, Clwyd
D class: Nov 9 (twice), 10, 13,
Dec 11, 15 and 16

Fowey, Cornwall
Relief 44ft Waveney ON 4401:
Dec 25, 30 and Jan 6

44ft Waveney ON 1028: Jan
18, 29, Feb 13 and 14

Galway Bay, Co Galway
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1150:
Nov 6, 8, Dec 9, 26 (twice),
28,

30, Jan 2 and 24

Girvan, Strathclyde
12m Mersey ON 1196: Nov
17, Dec 14, Jan 3 and
Feb 19

**Great Yarmouth and
Gorleston, Norfolk**
44ft Waveney ON 1065: Nov
14, Dec 9 and Jan 7

Hartlepool, Cleveland
44ft Waveney ON 1044: Nov
10, 11, 28, 29, and Dec 16

Atlantic 21: Nov 10 and 28

Harwich, Essex
44ft Waveney ON 1060: Dec
18

Atlantic 21: Dec 11, 27 (twice)
and Feb 13

Hastings, East Sussex
12m Mersey ON 1125: Nov 14
and 16

D class: Nov 5 and 6
Hayling Island, Hampshire
Atlantic 21: Nov 3, 14, Jan 3
and 22

Helensburgh, Strathclyde
Atlantic 21: Nov 25, Dec 3,
11, Jan 26, Feb 3 and 11

Holyhead, Gwynedd
47ft Tyne ON 1095: Nov 16,
Dec 28 (twice) and Feb 20

Howth, Co Dublin
52ft Arun ON 1113: Nov 11,
and Dec 31

Humber, Humberside
52ft Arun ON 1123: Nov 1,
14, 27 and Dec 17

Hunstanton, Norfolk
Atlantic 21: Nov 3, Jan 18,
Feb 13 (twice) and 16

Ilfracombe, North Devon
12m Mersey ON 1165: Jan 15

Invergordon, Highland
44ft Waveney ON 1033: Nov
7, Dec 21 and 31

Relief 44ft Waveney ON 1006:
Jan 16

Islay, Strathclyde
50ft Thames ON 1032: Nov 2,
7, 8 (twice) 11, Dec 22 and 23

Kilkeel, Co. Down
Atlantic 21: Dec 6

**Kirkcudbright, Dumfries
and Galloway**
Atlantic 21: Nov 7, Dec 18
and 19

Kirkwall, Orkney
52ft Arun ON 1135: Dec 5
and 15

Largs, Strathclyde
Relief Atlantic 21: Nov 14,
Dec 4, 14, 15, Jan 4, 12 and
Feb 3

Le Wick, Shetland
52ft Arun ON 1057: Nov 1, 7,
8, 9, 14, 16, 17, and 20 (twice)

Relief 52 ft Arun ON 1062:
Nov 21, Dec 12 and 17

Littlehampton, West Sussex
Atlantic 21: Nov 1 and Dec 27
(twice)

The Lizard, Cornwall
47ft Tyne ON 1145: Dec 21

**Llandudno (Orme's Head),
Gwynedd**
12m Mersey ON 1164: Nov 4,
Jan 17, Feb 12 and 21

D class: Nov 22 and Dec 26
Lochinver, Highland
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1103: Jan
9

Longhope, Orkney
47ft Tyne ON 1138: Dec 19

Looe, Cornwall
Relief D class: Jan 6

**Lough Swilly (Buncrana),
Co Donegal**
D class: Dec 25 and 28

Lyme Regis, Dorset
Atlantic 21: Nov 17, 21
(twice) and Dec 31

Lymington, Hampshire
Atlantic 21: Nov 13, Dec 24,
Jan 8, Feb 11 and 12

Lytham St Annes, Lancashire
47ft Tyne ON 1155: Nov 23

November and December 1993, January and February 1994

- Relief D class:* Jan 22
Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire
Atlantic 21: Jan 9
Mallaig, Highland
52ft Arun ON 1078: Nov 4, Dec 1 (three times), Jan 8 and Feb 3
Margate, Kent
D class: Nov 23 and Jan 2
Montrose, Tayside
47ft Tyne ON 1152: Nov 29, Feb 11 (twice) and 12
Mudford, Dorset
Atlantic 21: Nov 21, Dec 3, Jan 20, Jan 30 (twice), Feb 6 and 18
The Mumbles, West Glamorgan
47ft Tyne ON 1096: Nov 2, 10 and Dec 15
Newbiggin, Northumberland
Atlantic 21: Dec 12
New Brighton, Merseyside
Atlantic 21: Nov 5, 14, Dec 8, 29 and Jan 2
Newhaven, East Sussex
52ft Arun ON 1106: Jan 2
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1108: Jan 29 (twice)
Newquay, Cornwall
C class: Jan 5
North Berwick, Lothian
Relief D class: Nov 14
North Kessock, Invernesshire
D class: Nov 7
North Sunderland, Northumberland
12m Mersey ON 1173: Dec 15
Oban, Strathclyde
33ft Brede ON 1102: Nov 2, 5, 14 (twice), 20, 21, 29 (twice), Dec 13, 20, 21, Jan 11, 12, 23, Feb 2, 6, 15 (three times) and 17
Padstow, Cornwall
47ft Tyne ON 1094: Dec 17, Jan 7, Feb 2 (twice) and 3
Penarth, South Glamorgan
Relief D class: Dec 10, 13 (twice) and Jan 5
D class: Jan 23
Penlee, Cornwall
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1086: Dec 14, 15, Jan 3, 12, 13 and 17
Peterhead, Grampian
47ft Tyne ON 1127: Nov 4 and Dec 6
Plymouth, South Devon
Relief Arun ON 1086: Nov 13 (twice)
52ft Arun ON 1136: Dec 8
Poole, Dorset
33ft Brede ON 1089: Nov 13 (twice), 14, 18, 21, 23, 26, Dec 4, 8, 11, 13, 24, 29 and 31
Boston Whaler: Nov 13(twice), 14 (twice), 17, 18 (twice), 21, 26, Dec 4, 8, 13, 17 (twice), 20, 24, 29 and 31 (twice)
Portaferry, Co Down
Atlantic 21: Nov 14, Dec 12 and 31
Porthdinllaen, Gwynedd
47ft Tyne ON 1120: Dec 28
Portpatrick, Dumfries and Galloway
47ft Tyne ON 1151: Nov 6 and Dec 21
Portree, Isle of Skye
44ft Waveney ON 1042: Nov 2, 24, Dec 13 and 31
Portrush, Co Antrim
52ft Arun ON 1070: Nov 7, 29 and Dec 23
Portsmouth (Langstone Harbour), Hampshire
Atlantic 21: Nov 13, 16 and Dec 12
Port St Mary, Isle of Man
54ft Arun ON 1051: Nov 23
Pwllheli, Gwynedd
Relief 12m Mersey ON 1192: Nov 2 and 14
12m Mersey ON 1168: Dec 31
Queensferry, Lothian
Atlantic 21: Nov 12
Ramsey, Isle of Man
12m Mersey ON 1171: Nov 1, 7 and 11
Ramsgate, Kent
Atlantic 21: Jan 21
Redcar, Cleveland
Atlantic 21: Nov 7, 28, Dec 5, 11 and Jan 2
Rhyl, Clwyd
12m Mersey ON 1183: Nov 9 and 21
St Abbs, Borders
Atlantic 21: Nov 20 and Dec 7
St Catherine, Channel Islands
Atlantic 21: Jan 1 (twice) and 2
St Davids, Dyfed
47ft Tyne ON 1139: Nov 3 (twice), Dec 2 and 28
St Helier, Channel Islands
47ft Tyne ON 1157: Nov 4 and 21
Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1122: Jan 1 (twice), 2, 16 and 30
St Ives, Cornwall
12m Mersey ON 1167: Nov 9
C class: Nov 3 and 4
St Peter Port, Channel Islands
52ft Arun ON 1025: Nov 5, Dec 23, Jan 2 and Feb 2
Salcombe, South Devon
47ft Tyne ON 1130: Dec 4 (twice), and 9
Scarborough, North Yorkshire
12m Mersey ON 1175: Nov 20 (twice), Nov 29 (twice) and Dec 30
Selsey, West Sussex
D class: Dec 30 (twice)
Sennen Cove, Cornwall
12m Mersey ON 1176: Dec 10
Sheerness, Kent
Relief 44ft Waveney ON 1002: Nov 13 (twice), 14, 20, 28 and Dec 4
44ft Waveney ON 1027: Dec 22 and 23
D class: Nov 13, 14, 28, Jan 3 and 22
Sheringham, Norfolk
Relief Atlantic 21: Jan 5
Silloth, Cumbria
Atlantic 21: Nov 14 and Dec 4
Skegness, Lincolnshire
12m Mersey ON 1166: Nov 16 and Jan 10
Southend-on-Sea, Essex
D class: Nov 6
Atlantic 21: Nov 5, 14 (twice) 18, 19 and 20
Staithe and Runswick, North Yorkshire
Relief Atlantic 21: Nov 15
Stornoway (Lewis), Western Isles
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1103: Dec 4
Sunderland, Tyne and Wear
44ft Waveney ON 1043: Nov 30, Jan 3, 6 and 9
D class: Nov 30
Swanage, Dorset
12m Mersey ON 1182: Nov 13, Jan 22, 31 and Feb 11 (twice)
Teemouth, Cleveland
47ft Tyne ON 1110: Nov 10, 28, Dec 11 and 12
Teignmouth, Devon
Atlantic 21: Dec 29
Tenby, Dyfed
47ft Tyne ON 1112: Dec 28
Thurso, Highland
52ft Arun ON 1149: Nov 20 and 30
Tobermory, Strathclyde
54ft Arun ON 1052: Nov 5, 29, Dec 3, 11, 21 and 28
Torbay, South Devon
54ft Arun ON 1037: Nov 6 and 19
Troon, Strathclyde
52ft Arun ON 1134: Dec 22
Relief 52ft Arun ON 1071: Nov 28 (twice), Dec 5, 14, and 15
Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear
D class: Dec 11
Valentia, Co Kerry
52ft Arun ON 1082: Dec 19
Walmer, Kent
Atlantic 21: Dec 19
West Kirby, Merseyside
Relief D class: Nov 9, 28, Dec 15 and 16
West Mersea, Essex
Atlantic 21: Nov 14 and Dec 15
Weston-super-Mare, Avon
Atlantic 21: Nov 21
D class: Dec 6
Weymouth, Dorset
54ft Arun ON 1049: Nov 23, Jan 9, 29 and Feb 3
Whitby, North Yorkshire
47ft Tyne ON 1131: Nov 17, 22, 25, Dec 11 and 23
Whitstable, Kent
Atlantic 21: Nov 14 (twice) and Dec 28
Wick, Highland
47ft Tyne ON 1121: Dec 3 and 12
Wicklow, Co Wicklow
Relief 47ft Tyne ON 1115: Nov 30
Workington, Cumbria
47ft Tyne ON 1141: Dec 18 and 27 (twice)
Yarmouth, Isle of Wight
52ft Arun ON 1053: Nov 10, 11, Dec 11, 24, Jan 19, 25, Feb 11, 16 and 17
Youghal, Co Cork
Atlantic 21: Dec 19
Lifeboats on Passage
52ft Arun ON 1108: Dec 16

Making a splash...

Newbiggin's tractor illustrates what waterproof really means while recovering the station's Atlantic 21!

The lifeboat had been launched on 25 January when gale force winds caught the local fishing fleet at sea in deteriorating conditions.

Photo Richard Martin





Membership News

Governors • Shoreline • Storm Force

Deeds of Covenant

Thanks to the members who signed the deed of covenant in the Autumn 1993 issue of THE LIFEBOAT a total of 998 new covenants were received, resulting in an extra income of £5,600pa. If you missed the opportunity to complete a deed of covenant and believe you are eligible (by paying income tax on salary, pension or the interest from savings), please contact the Membership Services office on Poole (0202) 671133 for further details. You can increase the amount of money received by the RNLI from your subscription by a third at no cost to yourself.

Recruitment

As reported in the Spring issue of the journal, a new gift membership pack has been produced and this is being issued in a pilot scheme through selected branches and guilds selling the packs to new members who join through face-to-face recruitment. It is hoped that this will develop into a successful way of both recruiting new members and raising funds.

Late February saw an RNLI 'door-drop' take place to recruit new members and donors in selected areas in the south and south west. This is a way of distributing a large scale mailing through the Royal Mail without paying the full cost of postage. Door-drops are delivered without carrying personalised addresses, thus reducing costs. This is proving to be a very cost-effective way of recruiting new supporters, but will occasionally result in an existing member receiving one, as addresses

cannot be excluded under this scheme. If you have had one delivered please accept our apologies, but we hope that you will pass it on to a friend who may want to become a supporter.

In this issue you will find a leaflet promoting membership – again, through experience we have found this a cost effective way to recruit, so please... pass it on!

Subscription Rates

A small subscription increase is planned from 1 September 1994 to allow us to maintain the value of members' and governors' subscriptions and keep pace with inflation.

The new rates allow for THE LIFEBOAT to continue as a 'standard benefit' of the membership scheme. Please accept the RNLI's thanks for your continued and valued membership.

The new minimum membership rates, which will be reflected in membership renewals due from September 1994, are:

	<i>to 31/8/94</i>	<i>from 1/9/94</i>
Shoreline	£9 pa	£10 pa
Joint Shoreline	£15 pa	£17 pa
Annual Governor	£30 pa	£33 pa
Life Governor	£500	no change
		<i>(once only payment)</i>
Storm Force	£3 pa	no change
Group Storm Force	£1 pa	no change
<i>(minimum 10 members)</i>		<i>(£1 per group member)</i>

Help build a 'payroll-giving' scheme in your workplace

The RNLI is asking for your help in building a 'payroll-giving' scheme in your workplace. Payroll-giving is an easy and efficient way to help the RNLI, getting your colleagues involved in fundraising and providing the Institution with a regular source of income.

If you are in full-time employment you may already know of, and take part in, payroll-giving or 'Give As You Earn' as it is sometimes called. It is likely, however, that many of your friends and colleagues do not.

This could be for a number of reasons. Perhaps it is something they have just never got round to doing, or the tax concession part seemed too complicated, or they did not know that the amount could be as little as 50p a week. Perhaps no-one has ever asked them!

Why do we need your help ?

Supporters of the RNLI know and understand the cause of lifeboatmen and women who ask for nothing yet risk everything, so who better to ask to encourage others to share in this appeal?

Isn't payroll giving complicated ?

It couldn't be simpler, and the RNLI will make it even easier by providing all the support material needed: information packs for your employer and leaflets and posters for your colleagues. Even if your

company does not currently run a scheme, we will supply enough information to help them set one up.

What are the tax advantages?

When you give money to the RNLI in the normal way it is from money that has already been taxed. If you give through the Give As You Earn scheme, the money is taken from your pay by your employer before it is taxed. So it's worth more.

Your employer can deduct your donation - between 50p per week and £75 a month - from your gross salary. So for every pound donated, you pay 75p and the taxman effectively pays the other 25p, assuming basic rate tax.

It is one of the most efficient ways of giving, allowing donors to give month by month without involving the Institution in any additional expenditure.

What difference can a monthly donation make ?

Every month, our voluntary crews are called upon over 400 times. In one year, a regular monthly donation of:

- £5 would enable us to buy one pair of protective trousers for a crew member or five pairs of boots.
- £10 a month would provide enough throwing lines and seat-belts to equip one all-weather lifeboat
- £15 a month would equip a crew

member with a vital lifejacket.

- £30 a month would provide full protective clothing for a crew member.

Five reasons to give as you earn

1. Your RNLI donations are deducted from your pay before tax is calculated. For every £1 you give to the RNLI, there is a tax saving of at least 25p.
2. The difference in your pay may be small, but your donation will make an enormous difference to the RNLI. Regular contributions are exactly what we need. It costs some £4.6m a month, to build, maintain and run our boats and equipment.
3. Payroll giving is a very easy way to help the RNLI on a regular basis. The only form-filling is the application form.
4. Even the most modest regular donations help. Because they are regular, we can budget more confidently and plan more efficiently.
5. Above all, it gives you and your company the chance to play an active part in a worthwhile cause, which saves lives at sea.

If your company is not already registered to offer payroll-giving or if you want to take part, the RNLI can send you everything you need.

Contact Audrey MacKenzie, Fundraising Department, RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

Some ways of filling the coffers...

In Brief

DURING 1993/94 Brian Davey, the box secretary of Frampton Cotterell branch collected an amazing £1,739.25 from collecting boxes placed in pubs, shops, railway stations and clubs.

THE 20th annual buffet dance of the Selsey lifeboat association raised £430.

AN AUCTION of promises organised by the West Wight guild and held at the Royal Solent Yacht club realised just over £4,703 for the Yarmouth boathouse appeal. During the last financial year the guild forwarded £16,306 to lifeboat headquarters.

THE Isle of Islay branch/guild held an Easter bazaar and raised £1,757. The whole community was involved with local schoolchildren making cut-outs and paintings for the walls, all adding to the colourful display.

THE City of Oxford branch celebrated its sixth birthday this year. Although a very small branch it is very active in its fundraising events which range from flag days to carol singing to taking part in Oxford's annual Lord Mayor's parade. The branch has raised approximately £20,000 since it was founded.

FOR 70 years Ramsgate ladies' guild has been raising money and to celebrate this milestone 100 people attended a dinner dance at the Regency Hotel. Seventy years ago the guild raised just £8 6s. 8d. - last year more than £15,000 was forwarded to Poole.

FOUNDER members of Cromer ladies' guild cut a cake specially baked for the occasion of the guild's 21st anniversary. One hundred and fifty members and guests attended the celebration, and a total of £850 was raised during the evening. Over the past 21 years the guild has raised £92,000 for lifeboat funds.

THE Coventry ladies' guild held an auction at Quicks car showroom and raised £928 in 1.1/2 hours. Use of the showrooms was given free of charge as were the services of the auctioneer, Harvey Williams FRICS.

Music makes money

An audience of 300 enjoyed an evening of melody with the Ipswich Gilbert and Sullivan Society Singers at Needham Market community centre raising £1,047 for the Stowmarket and Needham Market branch.

The taste of Scotland



A taste of Scotland in the form of highland dancers and 40 different malt whiskies helped raise more than £700 for the lifeboat at Cullercoats on Tyneside.

The whisky tasting went with a swing thanks to Eric Winter, manager of Thresher wine shop in Whitley Bay, who organised the event at Whitley Bay holiday park.

More than 100 whisky lovers sampled malts from across the highlands and islands and were entertained by the Susan Donachie highland dancers, accompanied by local Scots piper Stewart Todd.

Scottish cheeses and shortbread by Sullivans added to the Celtic flavour of the evening when the funds raised were handed over to Ray Taylor, honorary secretary of Cullercoats station branch.

Pictured are Eric Winter (kilted) pouring a glass of malt for Ray Taylor.

New for Oldham

Although Oldham has a long history of supporting the RNLI its most recent RNLI branch folded. Plans were made to start a new branch and at the inaugural meeting held in March officials were elected and a fundraising programme for the coming months was planned.

The first event was to publicise the new branch over the Easter weekend in the town's Spindles shopping centre. A display featured moving furry bunnies in sou'westers pulling a boat towards a distant lighthouse and the centrepiece was Europe's largest chocolate Easter egg - two metres high!

In just three hours the branch recruited 130 members to swell its numbers to 147 and with the support of the centre's management and the generosity of the shoppers £1,350 was collected.

Five way split

Five clubs which share a patch of water west of Birmingham combined with the Brierley Hill and Kingswinford branch to organise a get-together at Netherton.

In a slick three-hour programme, senior members made presentations covering their interests in sailing, dinghy racing and sub-aqua diving with common gratitude to the RNLI. Kay Stone, area organiser, responded with the latest RNLI film and supper was served to all 90 members crammed into the clubhouse, rounded off with a professional Black Country cabaret.

After accepting a cheque for £482 Mr Hodgson, chairman of the branch, thanked members of Dudley water ski club, Dudley yacht club, Dudley Dolphin SAC, Nautilus SAC and the Midlands coastal cruising club for their enthusiastic support of the lifeboat service.

Please note that we are unable to publish details of forthcoming events in THE LIFEBOAT due to the vast numbers involved. Every effort is made to include all reports of functions which are received before the publishing deadline.

Please forward items for the fundraisers pages as they become available rather than waiting until the deadline approaches.

Photographs are welcomed (black and white or colour prints, not transparencies please) although we cannot guarantee inclusion because of space limitations. Photographs should have an obvious RNLI connection (perhaps a flag or logo) and include human interest where possible, preferably not just grinning at the camera or holding a cheque!

Antique appeal



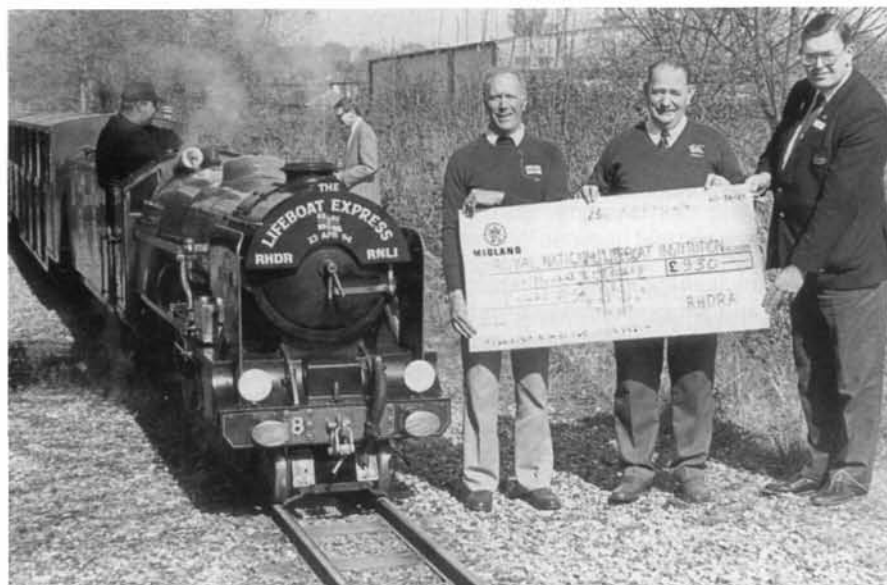
David Battie of the television series 'The Antiques Roadshow' made a return visit to Cuffley branch recently.

His talk revolved round the objects brought in by the audience of over 200. Estimated valuations were given and during his one-man roadshow David added anecdotes and advice on cleaning silver and testing real ivory.

His wide knowledge of pottery, porcelain and general objects made for a fascinating evening. The all-ticket event quickly sold out and raised over £700 for the RNLI. Raffle prizes naturally included a signed copy of the Antiques Roadshow book and the photo shows branch chairman Jill Fox with David Battie.

Photo In-Press Photography

Trains of thought



On 23 April 1994 the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway Association ran a special train, *The Lifeboat Express*, in aid of RNLI funds. The railway operates a 15in gauge service over the 14 miles between Hythe and Dungeness, there being two lifeboat stations adjacent to the line at

Littlestone and Dungeness.

The sun came out ten minutes after departure to help 100 passengers experience a steam-hauled trip between Hythe and New Romney behind locomotive No. 8 *Hurricane*. A specially commissioned headboard in RNLI colours was the star

In Brief

LADIES of the **Montrose** guild held a successful Hats Galore coffee morning and the princely sum of £663 was raised.

THE two rowing crews of **Walton and Frinton** ladies guild have been very successful, with *Gilded Lady* raising £1,237 and *The Lizzie Ann* £2,233 in sponsorship from their participation in the 22 mile Great River Race on the River Thames last September. The rowers are hoping to increase these totals this summer.

OVER the past 13 years the **Kidlington** Lifeboat Theatre Players have raised £35,000 from their traditional pantomimes. This year's production of Jack and the Beanstalk realised £2,800 in aid of the Yarmouth (Isle of Wight) boathouse appeal.

REGULARS of *The Swee* in Girvan have helped the pub raise more than £1,000. A monthly quiz night and a collecting box on the bar helped towards this total. Derek Hemy, box secretary of **Girvan** ladies' guild presented a certificate of thanks to Brian Galloway, who runs *The Swee* with brother Sinclair.

A CURRY supper organised by **Helensburgh** ladies' guild proved so popular that over £2,200 was raised. Approximately 140 people attended the supper and assisting the ladies in serving the delicious dishes were two crew members of the inshore lifeboat, Caroline Alexander and Erica Smith.

THE **Sanday** (Orkney) ladies' guild arranged a variety concert and dance last January. The concert played to a packed house in the island hall and the total raised for the evening was over £400.

A COFFEE morning and bring and buy sale held at *Maples Court* was very well attended and resulted in a profit of £272 for **Hitchin** and district branch. The branch also organised an auction of promises and gifts. Over 80 items were auctioned and the final figure for this event was in excess of £1,000.

prize in a raffle which was drawn upon the train's return to Hythe, after which driver Phil Goodsell treated everyone to a spectacular run past to ensure that passengers had a photographic souvenir of the day.

The photograph shows Mike Neighbour, special events organiser of the association presenting a cheque for £930 to Derek Buckland, Dungeness branch and Nick Smith, Littlestone branch. The organisers were delighted to associate this event with the memory of Mrs Lilian Rodgers, a friend of the railway and prominent in working for the RNLI locally. Her son is an employee of the railway. The association also raised the sum of £851 in donations from passengers travelling on its Santa Specials.

Photo Andrew Goyns

Joint initiative

The Institution's lifeboat station at Great Yarmouth and Gorleston, Norfolk, has benefited from a joint fundraising campaign by the Civil Service Motoring Association and The Frizzell Group, which has contributed £21,000 towards the lifeboathouse refurbishment and a new mooring for the Waveney class lifeboat.

The money was raised through a series of competitions in the CSMA's own magazine 'Motoring and Leisure'. The Frizzell Group has been associated with the CSMA for over 70 years and provides insurance for over 250,000 of its members. The two organisations began joint fundraising in 1983 and have donated nearly £140,000 to the RNLI.

Rafting up

For the last four years Bill Sheane, a local vet, has been the prime mover in organising a raft race in aid of the RNLI along the Bandon river – which flows from the hills of West Cork to the sea at Kinsale. From the town of Bandon to Innishannon, a distance of five miles, the current can flow at 10-15 knots after rain, and this was the stretch of water that saw 350 rafts taking part in this year's race.

Most of the rafts were from Cork, but some came from much further afield – Bude in Cornwall fielded a team as there is an informal 'twinning' between the two towns.

The race was started by Phil Coulter, composer of 'Home from the Sea' and, cheered on by spectators along the banks, the rafts set off at a great rate as the river was in spate! The amount collected so far is £16,000, with more still coming in.

Blue Peter's treasure trail

Auctions continue to be held in Ringwood and London to clear the vast stock of 'booty' sent in by viewers of 'Blue Peter' for the Pieces of Eight appeal.

Each of the seven auctions held so far has raised up to £61,000 and the total so far is approximately £430,000.

Another two auctions are to be held in Ringwood on 1 and 16 July.

It's a pushover

Over many months a two pence column built up at the Devon and Cornwall Inn in Millbrook – until in March it had reached the ceiling above the bar! A special RNLI evening was arranged by Joyce Goodacre, the landlady, and members of the Plymouth lifeboat crew were invited to demolish the pile.

A large crowd of regulars, including a number of Rame Peninsula branch members, gathered to celebrate the knock-down and carry out the counting. At the right moment down it came – and the number of 2p pieces had to be seen to be believed!

With the help of customers the count was finished and the total result was £366.24. The collecting box on the bar was also emptied producing a further £67.95 and the raffle and 'guess the amount of the column competition' added a further £96.50.

Joyce Goodacre then sprung another surprise on the branch by handing over a further £270, the result of various fundraising events she had organised personally.

The grand total for the evening was £800.89.

By the book

The Great Yarmouth and Gorleston ladies' guild committee, in association with Jarrolds, recently organised a lifeboat literary luncheon at Potter Leisure Centre at Hopton-on-Sea. It attracted some 260 guests, including members of the Gorleston Women's register literary group and the Society of Authors in East Anglia.

Three eminent speakers took part, Ronald Blythe whose book 'Akenfield' has become a film classic, Robert Malster with his epic stories of lifeboats on the Norfolk and Suffolk coasts and Baroness James of Holland Park, better known as P.D. James.

Commandant Vonla McBride CB, a vice president of the Institution, was an admirable chairman and the afternoon was rounded off with a book signing session by the three authors. Jarrolds provided the books and guests were encouraged to do their Christmas shopping early.

The event made a profit of £1,200 and the guild has been asked to do it again next year!

Racing certainty

RNLI supporters and crew members in the north west donned overalls for a recent fundraising event.

Over 50 supporters, including crew members from Barrow lifeboat station, took up the challenge to compete in a three-and-a-half hour endurance race at Mona Mill Go-Karting track in Chadderton, near Oldham.

Drivers raised sponsorship to the value of £2,900 making it not only a fun day out for drivers and spectators but a successful fundraising event.

Teams of 8 drivers competed for the accolade of being the first RNLI north west region's go-karting champions. The winning team, Woodies Warriors, completed 398 laps of the track in the allotted time.

Shakespeare walk

Martin Sanders, a member of the Stratford-upon-Avon branch committee, walked 100 miles from the New Globe Theatre in London to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

The sponsored walk took Martin five days and has raised over £1,000. He received active support from local branches along the route with overnight accommodation between stages and local sponsorship.

Martin's magnificent effort was inspired by his student days at Atlantic College where the Atlantic 21 lifeboat was developed.

Marathon wheelchair winner

Tanni Grey MBE, accomplished wheelchair athlete and holder of four paralympic gold medals chose to support the RNLI when she took part in the Open Ladies' Wheelchair event in the London Marathon this year. Tanni won the event in a time of 2 hours 8 minutes.

In past years Tanni, a politics graduate of Loughborough University, has supported the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals, but 'had always meant to support the RNLI because my father is very involved with the lifeboats'. Tanni's father, Peter, is the vice chairman of Cardiff branch and £12,000 of the sponsorship money raised will go towards the Penarth lifeboat appeal.

So far £20,500 has been received, and it is still coming in!



Eggshellent fun!

The New Inn at Stratfield Saye shelled out at Easter on behalf of the Basingstoke branch by organising an egg throwing contest which lasted three days.

Yes, the eggs were raw and the skill lay in catching them unbroken. As these were thrown well over 100ft, it was no mean feat, but the most hilarious contest was throwing them over the roof of the pub from the car park to the unsighted catchers in the garden!

The finale was a quiz evening, resulting in a total of £160, worthy of a great 'ov-ation'!

Flying the flag

Birmingham flag week was another huge success for the nine Birmingham branches and guilds, with the record figure of £21,250 being raised, a 32.5% increase on last year's total.

Twenty-seven firms took part in the 'Dash for Cash' competition organised as part of flag week and raised £1,250.

In the firing line

Crew members of the fire-boat *London Phoenix* based on the River Thames have been supporters of the Sennen Cove lifeboat and a visit was arranged to view the station and its Mersey class lifeboat *The Four Boys*.

A raffle was organised to raise money for new lifejackets and a total of just over £713 was collected. This was presented to Coxswain Terence George together with a plaque of *London Phoenix*.

Challenging raffle and...

It is over a year since the finish of the British Steel Challenge but much has happened since Paul Jeffes, skipper of the *Courtaulds* and International sponsored *InterSpray* stepped ashore in Southampton. Paul has travelled the length and breadth of the UK delivering an illustrated talk to yacht clubs about his epic race around the world.

During the lecture tour he has been raising money for the RNLI, *InterSpray's* adopted charity, by raffling prints of the yacht passing Cape Horn. Paul's tour and raffles of the prints raised a considerable sum and as a bonus Paul was still left with the original painting. There was no better purchaser of the painting than International Paint themselves who now keep the painting as a reminder of the remarkable feat of human endeavour.

The sale of the prints and the painting, brought the total raised for the lifeboat service to £5,000 and a cheque for this amount was presented to Ian Ventham, head of fundraising and marketing.

Pulling power

A team made up from members of the Huddersfield ladies hockey team pulled a D class lifeboat 19 miles and raised nearly £1,300 for the Honley and Brockholes branch.

The weather was just right, and the lifeboat was decked out on its trailer advertising the cause, along with two support vehicles. After a press call the whistle was blown and the girls were away, armed with high spirits and collecting buckets, pulling the boat behind them.

Not only did they collect from pedestrians but also from passing motorists who all gave freely to such a worthwhile cause. Some collectors were even invited on to buses and coaches to collect.

A stop for lunch took place at the halfway mark, a time to take on food for energy and to rest tired feet and bones! The food and refreshments were all kindly donated by local people and businesses.

A further break was taken at Clayton West, calling at the home of Mr and Mrs Shepherd, members of Wakefield branch, who plied everyone with liquid refreshment. Onwards again and finally the end was in sight - the Black Bull Inn at Midgley which kindly supplied an excellent buffet. While the girls were eating the task of counting the buckets of money began.

The girls have volunteered to undertake a similar event in the future and have also supported the branch at other fundraising events.



Anniversary funds

On the 25th anniversary of Poole ladies' guild, Mrs Margaret Adam, chairman and founder, presented Douglas Kingsbury, chairman of Poole station branch, a cheque for £50,000, the result of this year's fund raising. Since its inception the guild has raised nearly £500,000.

...challenging weather

Supporters of Ascot branch braved the worst of the weather when they attended a buffet supper and a talk at the Chandler day centre by John Bagley who sailed in *Pride of Teeside* in the British Steel Round the World Yacht Race last year.

They were well rewarded by a fascinating account of the whole adventure from the training to the race itself through some of the most inhospitable waters of the world in the southern ocean.

His slides, many of which were taken in the most difficult conditions, varying from the top of the 87ft mast to scenes on deck in heavy weather, vividly showed both the pleasures and perils of the trip. It was very appropriate that as he talked the sound of the stormy weather outside gave just the right background to some of his superb shots.

His talk was followed by a supper organised by the ladies of the branch and the evening raised £555 which was donated to the appeal for refurbishing the Yarmouth boathouse.

Memorial funds

In the summer of 1986 the vice-captain of Tylden Mills School in Upminster, Essex, was drowned while on holiday in Hong Kong. His fellow sixthformers led a memorial appeal which raised approximately £20,000.

From this remarkable result, a sum of £7,250 was applied towards the provision of an inshore lifeboat for Burnham-on-Crouch. The balance of the appeal fund was invested as a memorial trust fund and every half-year since then the net income has been sent to the RNLI to aid the upkeep of the Burnham boat.

So far a sum of £4,517 has been so contributed and this will go on in perpetuity in remembrance of a greatly missed pupil.

In Brief

A SPRING Party organised by Lincoln ladies' guild realised a splendid £1,931 and a collection held at the local Tesco superstore added another £846 to funds. Many thanks to the generous people of Lincoln.

THE INSTITUTION has received a generous donation of £1,000 from the Football Association, the proceeds of a charity shield match.

MEMBERS of Portmagee Youth Club, County Kerry pushed a hospital bed from Valentia via Portmagee to Cahersiveen, a distance of 18 miles, and raised £800.

People and Places

around and about the RNLI

Manning the Rigging Royal Penarth

Three men from Ramsey lifeboat station have laid claim to being the first Manxmen to climb the rigging of an 1863-built full-rigged sailing ship since the Ramsey-built vessel last left the island some 100 years ago... And what were they doing in the rigging of a Manx sailing ship moored in San Diego, California in the first place? Well, like many a lifeboat tale it's a long story, but in essence they were celebrating a wedding... the wedding of the station's assistant tractor driver Mervyn Sims and his new bride Debbie.

The ceremony was held aboard the *Star of India* now preserved in the San Diego Maritime Museum and which provided a magnificent and appropriate setting for the wedding.

And of course what better to do after a wedding than climb the rigging of a sailing ship? Crew members Kevin Christian and Mark Kenyon together with tractor driver Juan Sable made the ascent, but bridegroom Mervyn claimed there were more important things to attend to...



HRH The Duke of York made a brief visit to Penarth lifeboat station in March. Having been introduced to civic dignitaries, Raymond Cory CBE, vice-president of the RNLI presented station officials and introduced HRH to members of the ladies' guild and station branch committee.

After leaving the boathouse the Duke walked along the sea front where he spoke to some of the many onlookers. At the end of the promenade he met the lifeboat crew before inspecting the lifeboat and watching the D class launched. He is pictured with crew members Callum Couper, Gareth Wigmore and Martin Bromley.

Photo Western Mail

Quick on the draw

Anthea Turner, one of the presenters of the BBC 'Blue Peter' children's programme drew the winning tickets for the RNLI's 65th national lottery on 30 April. The draw was held

while the fifth 'Blue Peter' Pieces of Eight appeal auction was taking place.

The draw, which raised over £134,000, was supervised by Anthony Oliver, deputy head of fundraising and marketing.

Since the RNLI started running a national lottery in 1977 over £4m has been raised for lifeboat funds.

The prize winners were:

£2,000 D. Ratcliff, Middlesbrough.
£1,000 G. Bruce, Washington, Tyne & Wear. **£750** Miss V.M. Waldron, St Helens, Merseyside; Mrs M.T. Reynolds, Canterbury, Kent. **£500** S.O. Warmington, Leamington Spa. **£250** P. Culken, York. **£100** K. Pearce, Okehampton, Devon; R. Jewell, Lymington, Hants; Miss L. Watson, Timperley, Cheshire; Mrs A. Jamieson, Sandwich, Isle of Lewis; Mrs F. Croft, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs. **£50** Mrs R. Bauer, Marlow, Bucks; Mr Davey, Uckfield, Sussex; Miss K. Wisdom, Twickenham, Middx; Mrs N. Wilson, Lancing, Sussex; A.C. Milne, Glasgow.



(Left) Anthea Turner and Anthony Oliver, the RNLI's deputy head of fundraising and marketing, are pictured ready for the draw outside the 'Blue Peter' auction in Ringwood with three young fans.

People and Places

around and about the RNLI

On Station

The following lifeboats have taken up station duties:

ALL-WEATHER

Alderney – Trent 14-01 (ON 1180) *Earl & Countess Mountbatten of Burma* on 7 March 1994. *Temporary station lifeboat.*

INSHORE

St Agnes – D453 *Blue Peter IV* on 21 February 1994.

Cleethorpes – D454 *Blue Peter VI* on 22 February 1994.

North Berwick – D452 *Blue Peter III* on 8 March 1994.

Falmouth – B595 *Falmouth Round Table* on 9 March 1994.

Portrush – D456 *Jonathan Simpson* on 26 March 1994.

Rock – D350 on 26 March 1994.

Aberystwyth – B704 *Enid Mary* on 30 March 1994.

Relief – D457 *Elsie Frances I* on 30 March 1994.

Tighnabruaich – C523 on 19 April 1994 for one year's evaluation.

Relief – B705 *Vera Skilton* on 20 April 1994.

North Kessock – D459 *Margaret & Fiona Wood* on 10 May 1994.

Bundoran – B512 *US Navy League* on 12 May 1994.

The following all-weather lifeboat stations have been allocated a D class to provide additional cover for evaluation over the summer season:

Newcastle, Co Down – D333 on 14 January 1994

Sennen Cove – D365 on 22 February 1994

Montrose – D398 *Victory Wheelers* on 14 April 1994

Angle – D336 on 5 May 1994

Whitby Summer

Over a six week period in March and April ITV screened a mini-series 'One Summer in Whitby' which followed the lives of seven people in the North Yorkshire fishing port. One of those people was the present owner/skipper of the former Whitby lifeboat *Mary Ann Hepworth* which is now used for taking visitors on pleasure trips around the bay.

Several sequences featured the old boat, one in particular when she was seen taking a party out of port for a short trip. The skipper told the passengers that there was a 'slight swell'. Not

quite true! It was a short, steep swell.

One or two looked uncomfortable but the grand old boat rode majestically over the waves.

Current members of Whitby lifeboat

crew were featured in a staged rescue for an episode of the ITV series 'Heartbeat' and were also involved in the annual blessing of the boats service conducted by the Bishop of Whitby.

Obituaries

With deep regret we record the following deaths:

FEBRUARY 1993

Geoffrey Flint, chairman of Weston-super-Mare station branch from 1976 to 1992 and chairman of the financial branch from 1971 to 1986. He was assistant treasurer for the station from 1949 to 1958 and was treasurer of the financial branch from 1965 to 1971. Mr Flint was awarded a Silver badge in 1976 and a Gold badge in 1982.

JUNE 1993

Captain Tom Winstanley, a founder member of Saltash branch in 1973 and box secretary until his death. He was chairman from 1980 to 1991 and president until 1993, was awarded a statuette in 1980 and a Silver badge in 1990.

JULY 1993

Mrs Marion Joel, a founder member of Ilfracombe ladies' guild in 1970 and honorary secretary until 1987. She was president from then until her death. Mrs Joel was awarded a Silver badge in 1981.

AUGUST 1993

Mrs Hilda Ford, a founder member of Margate ladies' guild in 1957 and honorary secretary for many years. She was made an honorary life governor in 1975 having previously been awarded a Gold badge in 1961.

SEPTEMBER 1993

Dr Jim Gendle, chairman of Polperro branch from 1978 to 1991 and then president until his death. He was awarded a joint statuette with his wife, Eileen, in 1987.

OCTOBER 1993

Ray Gentle, honorary treasurer of Weston-super-Mare financial branch from 1979 until his death. He was awarded a Silver badge in 1990.

Captain Terence Shaw, a founder member of North West Plymouth branch and honorary secretary and treasurer from 1973 to 1991. He was awarded a joint statuette with his wife, Ruth, in 1980 and a Silver badge in 1988.

NOVEMBER 1993

Mrs Joy Phillips, founder member of Worcester ladies' guild. She was chairman from 1965-1981 and then vice chairman until 1991. Mrs Phillips was awarded a Silver badge in 1975.

Mrs Fitzpatrick, honorary secretary of Moffat & Beattock ladies' guild from 1976 to 1992. She was awarded a statuette in 1989 and a Scottish Lifeboat Council record of thanks in 1993.

FEBRUARY 1994

Mrs K. Bryant MBE, a committee member of Torquay branch from 1930 until she became

chairman in 1946. She continued as chairman until 1974 when she became president until her death. She was awarded a Gold badge in 1985.

MARCH 1994

Cecil Brown, honorary treasurer of Bourne End and District branch from 1970 to 1989. **Mrs L. Milburn**, vice president and souvenir secretary of Sunderland ladies' guild since 1981.

Mrs Gladys Aplin, a flag week helper for Exmouth and Budleigh Salterton ladies' guild from 1954 to 1966 and honorary secretary from then until 1975. She was chairman until 1985 and president until her death. She was awarded a Silver badge in 1978, a Gold badge in 1984 and a Bar to the Gold badge in 1990.

Mrs Marion Pearce MBE, honorary secretary of St Ives ladies' guild from 1932 to 1968, chairman until 1983 and then president until her death. She was awarded a Gold badge in 1958, a Bar to the Gold badge in 1970 and became an honorary life governor in 1982.

APRIL 1994

Joe Martin BEM, coxswain/mechanic of Hastings lifeboat from 1971 to 1987. He first joined the crew in 1950, was mechanic from 1959 to 1969 and a travelling mechanic from 1969 until his appointment as coxswain.

Mrs Marjorie Barnes, joined the Great Yarmouth & Gorleston ladies' guild in 1940 and became vice chairman in 1970 and president in 1981.

Major Peter Longmore MC, president of Chichester & District branch. He joined the committee in 1976 and immediately took on the office of chairman until 1991. He was awarded a Silver badge in 1988.

MAY 1994

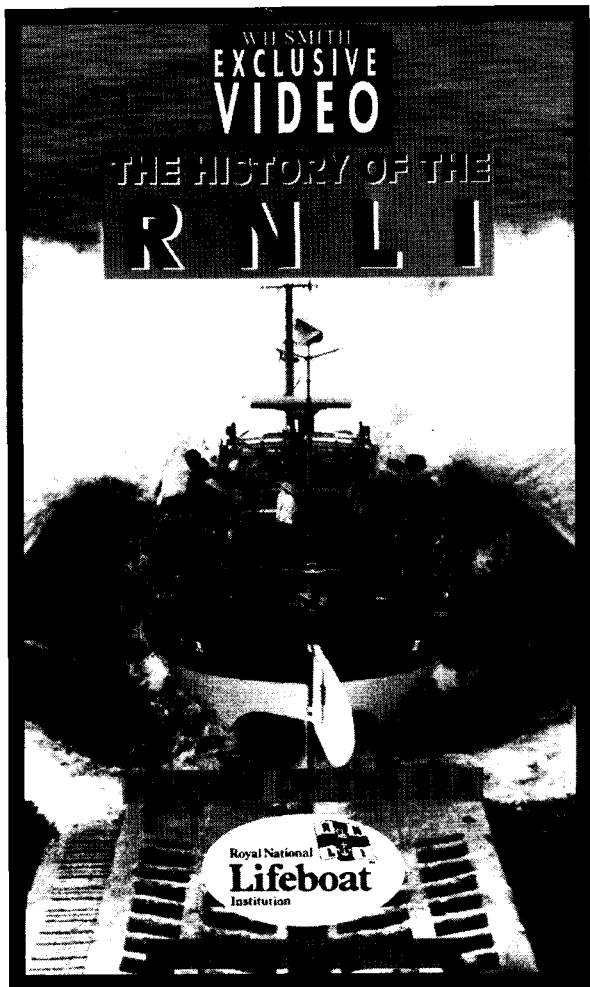
Mrs Pamela Swift, joined the Hull ladies' guild in 1971 and served as honorary treasurer for many years.

Mrs Marjorie Sanders, president of Walsall branch. She was secretary of the ladies' guild from 1956 to 1965 and then chairman from 1965 to 1967, 1970 to 1971, 1976 to 1978 and 1983 to 1984. In 1984 the guild was reformed into a branch of which she became president until her death. Mrs Sanders was awarded a Silver badge in 1966, a Gold badge in 1983 and a bar to the Gold badge in 1991.

Mrs Doris Chippindale, a member of Bradford ladies' guild for over 40 years and chairman for three years. She was awarded a Silver badge in 1974.

Miss J. Carr, chairman of Gateshead branch since 1985 and secretary since 1986.

Philip Leigh-Bramwell, donor of the relief Waveney class lifeboat *Lady of Lancashire*.



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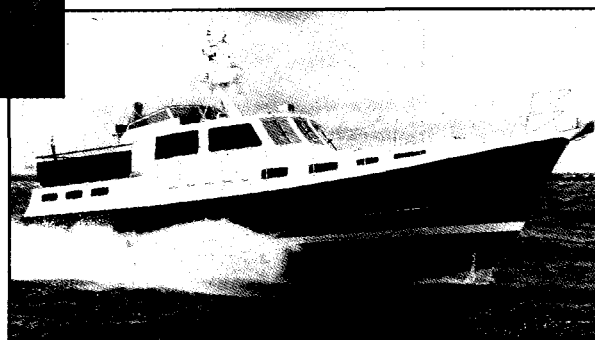
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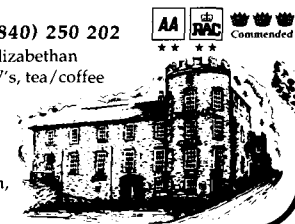
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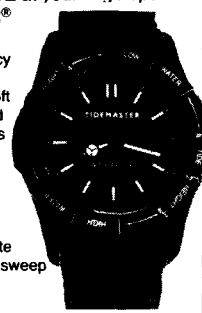
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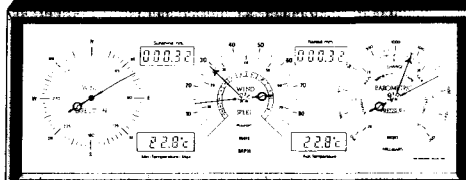
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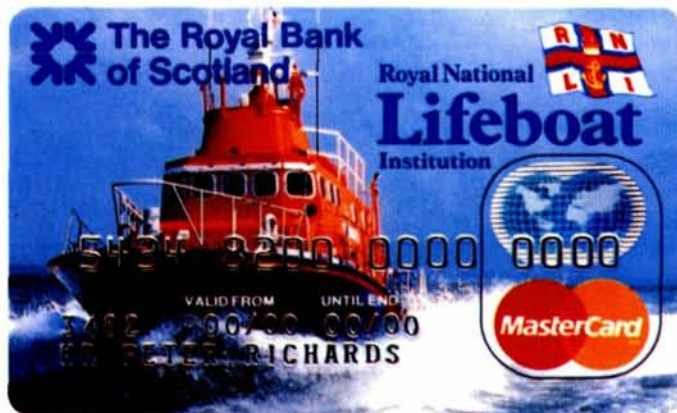
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Minehead's Atlantic 21 class rigid inflatable shows her paces shortly after launching on exercise in late February. The photograph was taken from a local fishing boat by Steve Guscott – who is also a helmsman at the station.