

ISSUE 581
AUTUMN 2007



the lifefboat

SAVING LIVES FROM THE BEACH TO THE OPEN SEA

Music for
heroes

A TRADITION OF
FUNDRAISING

RAPID
RESPONSE

INLAND FLOODING
EMERGENCY

PLUS

RAPTURE OF THE DEEP
PAGE 32

TALL SHIP ADVENTURE
PAGE 11

A DREAM COME TRUE
PAGE 49

OUT IN A FLASH
PAGE 23



Joyce Sant



James Lynch



James Nevill



Joyce Lawrey



Fred Plappert



Joyce Mancini



Don Perfect



Ron Griffiths



John Tyler



Kaye Hammond



Maureen Howden



Robert Gough

Extraordinary people.

Each year, thousands of remarkable people provide voluntary donations which enable the RNLI to carry out its work. Many have no direct connection with the sea or maritime history, but simply have responded to our call and the bravery of our crews.

Quite naturally, we also lose some of these supporters each year, though a great many are kind enough to arrange for collections to be made at their final ceremonies.

To mark the magnificent contribution made by these donors we have set up a special website which celebrates their lives in words and pictures. The website also features crew members and other RNLI personnel, who served us on land or sea.

Each person's web page has the facilities for visitors to add their memories and make further donations direct to us, which means our friends can continue to serve our cause.

If you would like to include a member of your family, or a friend, now passed away, on this new website, please go to rnli.org.uk/rememeralovedone or contact Nina Stubbs on 01202 663591 or email nstubbs@rnli.org.uk.



THE RNLI

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

SUPPORTING THE RNLI

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

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- Supporter Care team, for membership, donations, Lifeboat Lottery enquiries: telephone 0845 121 4999, email supporter_care@rnli.org.uk or write c/o Headquarters address above
- Legacies team, for finding out about gifts in Wills: telephone 01202 663032, email jmarshall@rnli.org.uk or write to John Marshall c/o Headquarters address
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- Advertising in *the Lifeboat*: Landmark Publishing Services: telephone 020 7692 9292, email landmark@lps.co.uk

rnli.org.uk



Cover picture: A member of the RNLI's Rapid Response Unit watches over an evacuee in the Summer floods

Photo: Robin Goodlad



Lifeboats

Dear Reader

With over 230 lifeboat stations across the whole of the UK and RoI, there are always many stories to tell. But this Summer's weather prompted a surprise move inland for some crew members, adding to the already busy picture. See page 6 for details.

The volunteers at the heart of the charity are a remarkably varied bunch. A furniture maker in his 40s, a GP in her 30s and a local port operative in his 20s rescue three teenagers near Fishguard (page 26), while it is talented teenagers in Manchester who continue the city's tradition of fundraising for the RNLI (page 16). Another supporter, award-winning garden designer Chris Beardshaw, is equally passionate about scuba diving and the RNLI. You can hear his 'voice' on page 46.

Many of you took me at my word and let me know what you thought of the

changes we'd made to *the Lifeboat*. Several had read the magazine from cover to cover for the first time. Some questioned the place of advertising in the magazine. Adverts and inserts contribute towards production costs, so we will be keeping this valuable line of income, but newly appointed Landmark Publishing Services are working on improving the quality for future issues. Please keep up the correspondence – see page 51 for other topics.

Finally, look out for the RNLI's own new advert on selected cable and satellite TV stations throughout October – it's quite a spine tingler!

Liz Cook
Editor

**Friends of the RNLI**

A reminder of some special offers that can benefit you and the RNLI

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www.rnli.org.uk/amazon

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Chip & Trace boat security

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Goodyear

The RNLI receives £2 for each set of HydraGrip tyres sold (see page 11)
www.mygoodyear.uk

Lifeboat Tea

4p is paid to the RNLI for every pack sold. Available at lifeboat station shops or from Williamson Fine Teas
www.williamsonstea.com 01582 813810

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Recycling – Cartridges 4 Causes

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Travelscope has supported many RNLI projects and initiatives over the years. They make a significant donation for every holiday booked through adverts in *the Lifeboat* and organise onboard collections. They also regularly donate prizes for the Lifeboat Lottery.

If you fancy a break before the end of the year, why not check out the special offers available from Travelscope? Choose from destinations such as exotic Fiji, the dramatic Canadian Rockies or a relaxing European river cruise along the Rhine, with savings of up to £150 per person.

Visit www.rnli.travelscope.co.uk/special-offers or speak directly to a Travelscope representative on 0870 264 2161. Remember, every booking benefits the RNLI!



Photo: Nigel Millard



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the Lifeboat

AUTUMN 2007, ISSUE 581

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

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This magazine is printed on 50% recycled paper

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Photo: Jonathan Keenan

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Photo: George Brown

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Insight



1 ISLAND RESCUE IN GALE CONDITIONS

Kinghorn's inshore lifeboat *Frederick Robertson* battled gale force winds and 4m seas to rescue four stranded tourists from an island on 6 May. A crew member clambered ashore and guided the two men and two women to a rocky outcrop. The lifeboat drew in close and the tourists jumped, one by one, onto the bow, with the crew member's help. Between each transfer, the Helmsman had to swiftly reverse the lifeboat from her rescue position to avoid being blown onto the rocks, before going back in to repeat the process.

3 DRIFTING YACHT BROUGHT IN

Helvick Head's B class lifeboat *Alice and Charles* went to the aid of a yacht reported to be drifting $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles off Mine Head, County Waterford, on 14 June. The yacht was suffering engine failure and a broken mast. The crew of three had erected a makeshift replacement, but were in danger of running aground in the force 4 winds. The lifeboat volunteers managed to establish a tow and brought the yacht safely into harbour.



4 PLIGHT OF THE PORTHCAWL PORPOISE

On 8 July, Porthcawl crew were out on exercise when they were tasked to help a young porpoise in difficulty in shallow water. The Atlantic 75 *Giles* towed the animal, which had a cut to its face, out into deeper seas, but not before it spat water into a crew member's face! The porpoise got stranded briefly on rocks, but was last seen swimming out to sea.

2 AGROUND ON EASTBOURNE BEACH

Both Eastbourne lifeboats went to the aid of an 11m wooden boat that had run aground on the beach near Splash Point on 30 May. The lone sailor had dislocated his thumb and was struggling with the rigging. Two crew members from the small D class went aboard, while the injured man was taken off for his safety. The Mersey class lifeboat then set up a tow and was able to pull the sailing boat clear when a large wave refloated her. The man returned to his craft and sailed her into Sovereign Harbour under the escort of the lifeboats. His injury was treated by waiting paramedics.



Nor any drop to drink

To the surprise of many, RNLI lifeboat crews headed inland this Summer, responding to a different kind of emergency. Carol Waterkeyn finds out what was going on

What can be worse than losing your home and everything in it? Surely only the loss of life itself. It was to prevent just this that local and national emergency services, including the RNLI, worked together during the severe flooding that hit parts of England and Wales this Summer.

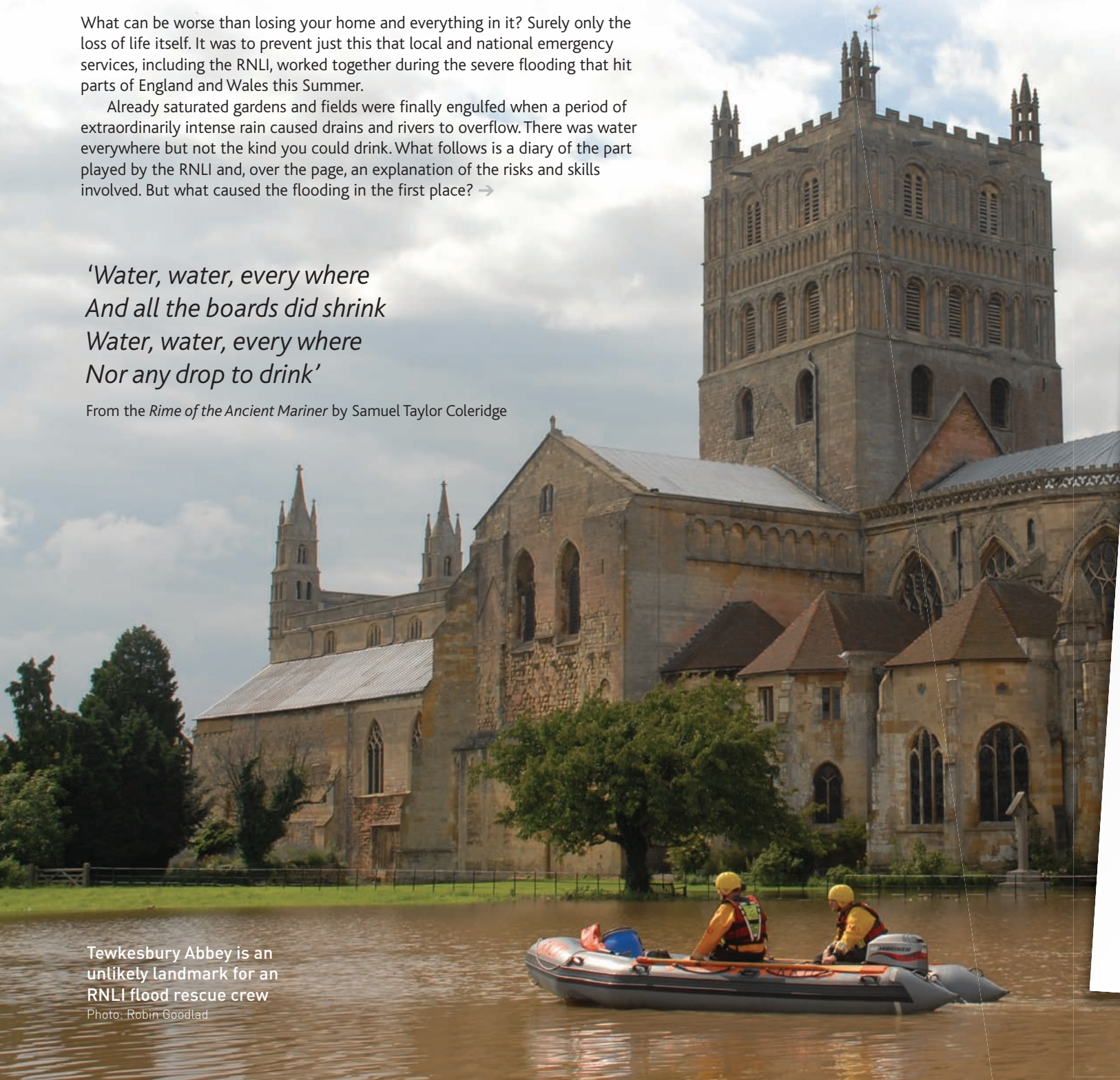
Already saturated gardens and fields were finally engulfed when a period of extraordinarily intense rain caused drains and rivers to overflow. There was water everywhere but not the kind you could drink. What follows is a diary of the part played by the RNLI and, over the page, an explanation of the risks and skills involved. But what caused the flooding in the first place? →

*'Water, water, every where
And all the boards did shrink
Water, water, every where
Nor any drop to drink'*

From the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Tewkesbury Abbey is an unlikely landmark for an RNLI flood rescue crew

Photo: Robin Goodlad



JUNE

26 Seven lifeboat crew members from Redcar, North Yorkshire, travel 120 miles with a D class lifeboat and lifesaving equipment to help people in Hull. The city's sea defences are no barrier to the land-borne waters. Meanwhile, RNLI volunteers from Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire, evacuate 15 people from homes and a community centre in the Willows estate, Grimsby.

27 People rescued today include a woman in urgent need of dialysis and a couple in their 80s.

29 The newly formed National Flood Support Team requests help from the RNLI in anticipation of flooding in South Yorkshire. Ten members of the Rapid Response Unit (RRU) make their way to meet two D class lifeboats despatched from Headquarters in Poole.

30 The RRU team is now operating in Toll Bar, Doncaster and Sheffield. They are patrolling the streets in lifeboats, evacuating householders and making sure that any still camping at home are safe. They also give safety advice to children playing in or near the water and anyone attempting to get through the floodwaters in their own vehicles.

JULY

1 As the immediate emergency is over, the clear-up operation starts for thousands. RRU members return gratefully to their own homes.

19 An RNLI RRU team is put on alert due to the threat of flooding further south, in Worcester.

20 Severe weather hits Gloucester and Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire, Worcester, Tenbury Wells and Upton-on-Severn in Worcestershire, Kingston-upon-Thames in Surrey, Weston-super-Mare in Avon, and Oxford. Local authorities request assistance and the RRU deploys. A police escort on the M5 eases an arduous journey.

21 Operations start at 3.15am. One RRU team rescues people from the tops of caravans at Hardlow, Worcestershire. They evacuate elderly residents and rescue a casualty from the water in Pershore, Worcestershire. Crew also see action in Droitwich,



RNLI volunteers keep evacuees safe in flood waters

Kidderminster, Wick and Hawford. The initial team of 12 is supplemented with a further 11 from the RRU and lifeboat stations. Now equipped with four lifeboats, they can work around the clock in shifts.

22 It's Sunday morning and both RNLI teams set up base at Gloucester fire station. They evacuate a woman, her 7-month-old baby and several elderly people from the Royal British Legion club in Tewkesbury. Also in Gloucestershire, team members evacuate from a care home six adults with learning difficulties and two support workers. A third RRU team arrives.

23 Rescue work continues day and night with minimal breaks. Overnight, the RNLI provides the safety cover, and only means of escape, for the team of engineers trying to protect Welham electricity substation. During the day, they provide humanitarian help, delivering bottled water and medication, and transport emergency service personnel. RNLI-adapted Landrovers pull to safety people in their stranded cars. One team helps transport power workers and a portable generator to the Castle Meads switching station. A further 10 RNLI personnel arrive, allowing some of their colleagues to withdraw while maintaining full capability on scene.

24 At 6.25am a man and seven animals are rescued – including four Rottweilers!

25 The water starts to recede. The RRU stands down at 8.30am, exhausted but high from all the support and kindness they have themselves received while doing their lifesaving work. In all, they have rescued over 140 people.



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'The floodwater was flowing at a frightening 8–15 knots. We were rescuing people from a caravan park south of Kidderminster. Residents were fast asleep, oblivious that the nearby river had burst its banks and was flowing through the site, tearing away the caravans in its path.'

Alwyn Dunn, RRU member and Helmsman at Flint lifeboat station, Clwyd.

Photo: Robin Goodlad



World weather systems

Met Office figures show that England and Wales experienced their wettest May–July since records began in 1766.

The jet stream, a ribbon of very strong winds in the upper atmosphere, largely determines where the weather systems that bring rain to the British Isles will develop. For much of this Summer, the jet stream was further south and stronger than usual. This resulted in more low-pressure systems crossing southern and central parts of the UK, some of which interacted with the very warm air over Europe, generating the exceptionally heavy rainfall. The already sodden earth was unable to soak up the excess.

There are many serious hazards of flooding:

- drowning in the fast-moving waters
- dehydration from loss of drinking water supplies
- bacterial and viral infection from exposure to sewage
- physical injury from submerged hazards
- poisoning by toxic chemicals such as petrol and pesticides
- electrocution or carbon monoxide poisoning from using appliances in wet or confined spaces
- distress, anxiety and depression.

The RNLI Rapid Response Unit

The RRU is a crack group of RNLI volunteers and staff specially trained to deal with flood disasters. Three teams of 20

people are on a rota to be ready to deploy at 24 hours notice. All RRU members, and some volunteer crew at stations adjacent to areas prone to flooding, receive Swiftwater Rescue Technician (SRT) training, which prepares them for the different behaviour of floodwaters and the special hazards involved. Each team undertakes a 3-day training exercise every year to refresh their skills and everyone attends an annual conference.

Home and abroad

The unit was set up following the RNLI's flood relief work in Mozambique in 2000, although the RNLI has been helping in such disasters since the floods in East Pakistan in 1970. It was most recently deployed in Guyana in 2005. In the UK, members of the RRU and/or SRT-trained volunteers from lifeboat stations have seen service in Lewes and Uckfield in Sussex in 2000 and Carlisle in Cumbria in 2005. When overseas, the costs of RRU operations are borne by the Government's Department for International Development, but the equipment, training and logistics are provided through public generosity.

Ready for anything

RRU members wear an alternative kit to deal with the different conditions they find themselves in, including personal flotation devices rather than lifejackets and red or yellow canoe-type helmets. They carry spare engines, generators, clothing,

lifejackets and sundry stores to ensure they are self-sufficient, and use D class lifeboats and lifeguard inshore rescue boats. Almost flat bottomed and highly manoeuvrable, these craft are perfect for negotiating unexpected hazards like submerged cars and fences in water of unknown depth. They can also be deflated, packed and reinflated quickly, enabling rapid transport.

Future flooding?

In the midst of disaster, one positive outcome to draw from this Summer's events is that people who live far from the sea and know little of the RNLI have seen the charity active in their own communities and realised its significance.

Flood rescue neatly complements the lifesaving service provided at more than 230 lifeboat stations around the coast of the UK and RoI, on the River Thames and on selected inland waterways, and seasonal lifeguarding on more than 70 beaches. (See page 10 for news of a fully integrated service planned for Dartmouth in Devon.)

Hugh Fogarty, RNLI Staff Officer in charge of the charity's flood response, explains:

'The RNLI has always adapted to new situations both on the coast and inland and will continue to meet the challenges of saving lives in the future. We have no statutory obligation with regard to inland flooding but, providing a formal request is made and there is an immediate risk to life, the RNLI will respond.'

The latest launches, live!



Photo: Michael Picknett



The rescue stories you read in *the Lifeboat* are but a handful of the thousands of RNLI lifeboat launches undertaken every year. Now, the RNLI desktop pager allows computer users to keep up to date with every launch, as it happens.

The virtual 'pager' is connected to the system that triggers crew members' real pagers, so every time it beeps, volunteers around the UK and Ireland really are dropping what they're doing and going to sea.

You can choose to monitor only your favourite stations or all 230-plus – see just how active the RNLI is! The in-house-designed programme works on computers with operating systems up to and including Windows XP and Mac OS X. Download your own pager at rnli.org.uk/pager.

Remember a loved one

The RNLI has created a web page as a space for all members of the RNLI family to pay tribute to friends and relations who have passed away.

The site welcomes tributes to supporters, volunteers, staff and anyone else who has been involved with the RNLI. It allows visitors to add their own recollections and photographs to celebrate the lives of those listed.

As death notices are no longer a feature of *the Lifeboat*, this site gives the RNLI community as a whole the chance to share its memories of those no longer with us, throughout the year.

To add a person, contribute your memories of someone already featured, or simply to read the moving tributes to the people who have been central to the charity over the years, go to rnli.org.uk/rememeralovedone.



Photo: Rob Clements

NEW FOR DARTMOUTH

The establishment of a permanent lifeboat station at Dartmouth, Devon, has come one step closer, with the granting of planning permission for a boathouse.

The River Dart and its estuary are home to 3,400 local boats and up to 8,000 visiting boats a year. Until now they have relied on lifeboats from Torbay (10 miles away) and Salcombe (13 miles away). It takes at least 30 minutes for their crews to reach the mouth of the Dart and the large all-weather craft are not ideal in such confined waters.

Dartmouth's Lifeboat Operations Manager Robert Clements says: 'Local support has been tremendous and 25 crew members have already been recruited. Training is intensive as we strive to maintain the standards set by our neighbouring stations, who respond to about 70 incidents a year in this area.'

RNLI lifeguards patrol the nearby beaches of Blackpool Sands and Torcross. They can rely on the back-up of an inshore lifeboat now and so provide a fully joined-up rescue service in the area.

The RNLI considered 11 locations for the new station, which would be the first on the coast for 4 years. The site of an old tennis pavilion in Coronation Park was finally chosen, as a nearby slipway makes for convenient launching. A bespoke wooden building now houses a lifeboat, her launching and recovery equipment, crew changing facilities, and an operations and training room.

Deputy Divisional Inspector Tom Mansell says: 'It has taken a lot of effort and heartache from all concerned to reach this stage in Dartmouth. The volunteer crew and fundraisers have shown a huge amount of commitment. I am sure that having a lifeboat station at Dartmouth will prove to be a success, upholding all the traditions of the RNLI and helping to save more lives at sea.'

Photo: Laura Wilshire



AN EXPERIENCE NEAR YOU?

The RNLI's **Train one, save many** campaign is marking its second birthday with the unveiling of a new roadshow vehicle. The Lifeboat training experience will bring the crew training message home to thousands around the UK and RoI.

Onboard is a simulator that gives members of the public a taste of what it's like to be out on a shout. Participants can get all the kit on before boarding the 'lifeboat' and taking on a full-scale rescue drama.

'This is a fantastic opportunity to learn about what RNLI crews have to do when the pagers go off,' says yachtswoman Dee Caffari. 'It will reinforce the huge part training plays

in ensuring everyone works as a team and comes home safely.'

Dee launched the Experience at the Southampton Boat Show. Check the events listing in *RNLI Compass* or the regional news section of the RNLI website to see where it will go next.

Train one, save many is a 5-year campaign to raise £10M (€14.7M). Only 1 in 10 crew members join the RNLI with any professional maritime experience, and regular training is vital to allow them to go to sea and save lives. It costs an average of £1,000 (€1,500) a year to train each volunteer crew member.



Youthful crew set sail



Photo: Tall Ships Youth Trust

Nine young crew members from around the RNLI will step aboard a tall ship for a very different seafaring experience this October, kindly sponsored by Trinity House.

The 17–25-year-old volunteers are to sail from Ipswich to Portsmouth. The 60m square-rigger *Prince William* will be their home for a week as they hone their skills in teamwork, communication, leadership and cooperation, all in a very confined space!

RNLI Staff Officer George Rawlinson, who coordinates the programme, says: 'Being part of the RNLI is about so much

more than just crewing the lifeboat. Lifeboat stations promote a sense of community, respect and maturity, which sailing aboard a tall ship brings. We are grateful that Trinity House has again given our younger crew this opportunity.'

Criccieth Crew Member Katie Quaack, who sailed on the programme in 2005, comments: 'It was an amazing experience, and I know I'll never, ever, forget the great time I had onboard.'

The *Prince William* is operated by the Tall Ships Youth Trust, a charity dedicated to the personal development of young people through the crewing of these beautiful craft (see www.tallships.org). Trinity House is the authority for England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar responsible for a range of 'signs of the sea', from lighthouses to radar beacons. It is also a charitable organisation dedicated to the safety, welfare and training of mariners and has a long-standing association with the RNLI.

GO WITH GOODYEAR

A new deal with Goodyear means that for every set of the company's award-winning HydraGrip tyres sold in the UK, a donation of £2 will be made to the RNLI. All money raised in this way will go to the Train one, save many funds. HydraGrip tyres are famed for their safe wet-weather performance. Find your nearest stockist at mygoodyear.co.uk.

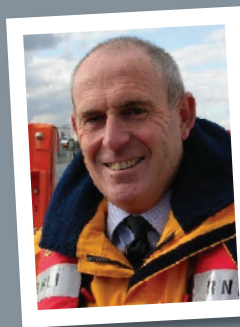


ATLANTIC AWARD

Three volunteers from Portaferry have received the Walter and Elizabeth Groombridge Award in recognition of their service to the crew of the fishing vessel *Greenhill*. After a gruelling and traumatic search, spread over 2 days, only the skipper was found alive.

The award is presented each year to a crew that has performed an exceptional service in an Atlantic inshore lifeboat. Helmsman Simon Rogers has already been awarded the Thanks of the Institution Inscribed on Vellum for the rescue, which was described in detail in *the Lifeboat* Spring 2007.

IMRF APPOINTMENT



The RNLI's Operations Director Michael Vlasto has been appointed Chairman of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF), a charity that

aims to unite rescue organisations around the world. More than 60 countries have been involved since its foundation in 1924. The IMRF gives members the chance to share expertise and technology for greater cooperation in saving lives on a global scale. The IMRF was formerly known as the International Lifeboat Federation.

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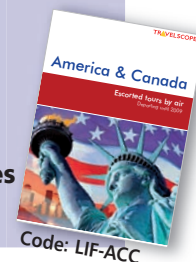


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LIF Autumn '07

Photo: Nigel Millard



LIFEGUARDS WORK WET SUMMER

Despite the Met Office reporting the wettest May–July since records began, RNLI lifeguards in England were very much in demand. In particular, spring tides led to a number of mass rescues, one of which you can read about in detail on page 23.

The lifeguards had a successful first season on the beaches of Norfolk. In one of the area's more dramatic incidents, a 12-year-old girl was caught in a rip current while bodyboarding and dragged onto a groyne. She hung on despite the rough waves. Lifeguard Jake Davidson swam out and brought her back to shore with a rescue tube.

For the first time, Police community support officers helped patrol at Fistral and Perranporth in Cornwall in a trial project aimed at making these popular beaches even safer. An evaluation will be made before deciding whether to

continue the scheme in 2008.

Meanwhile, four lifeguards were honoured for two separate rescues off Cornish beaches in 2006:

Matt Boon and Ryan Lyat saved the life of a surfer swept onto rocks by a rip current. Despite huge breaking waves, Ryan jumped into the water and swam to the surfer, bringing him back to the inshore rescue boat (IRB), which Matt was helming expertly.

John Bull and David Hooper went to the aid of three teenage boys whose yacht had run aground in poor weather. The local lifeboat was unable to get close enough in the shallow water but the IRB was ideal for the task.

(A book has just been published on the history and development of the IRB, as used by RNLI lifeguards. See page 30.)

Choose Volvo



If you're in the market for a new car, consider a Volvo – and the RNLI will benefit too.

The Swedish giant renowned for the quality and safety of its vehicles is offering a range of generous discounts to RNLI supporters. For each car sold in this way, the RNLI will receive a royalty of £500.

Volvo has been a long-time supporter of the RNLI, and was the first company to donate a car as the top prize in the Lifeboat Lottery (see page 38 for a Lottery timeline).

Their range includes coupés, saloons and estates, and new environmentally friendlier Flexifuel versions of popular models.

Victoria Stringer, Managing Director of Cambridge Garage Volvo in Portsmouth, says: 'Safety is a key feature in the design and build of our cars, just as it is in lifeboats. We are delighted to continue to support the RNLI's vital lifesaving work.'

Phone 0845 680 1305 to find out more about this deal, or visit rnli.org.uk/volvo. Unfortunately, the offer is not available in the Rol or the Channel Islands.

Fraggle funds

'Dance your cares away' with these Fraggles Rock character keyrings, available from Halifax and Bank of Scotland (HBOS) branches during November. They cost £2.50 each, with all money raised going to the RNLI and the Family Holiday Association (FHA).

The FHA is a charity that helps disadvantaged families go on seaside holidays. It has joined forces with the RNLI for this fundraising initiative, as RNLI lifeguards and beach safety programmes help keep happy holidaymakers safe too.

For every £2.50 you spend on a Fraggles friend, HBOS Foundation will contribute an additional £2.50 jointly to the two charities. The characters available from Jim Henson's hit children's TV show are Mokey, Red, Gobo, Wembley and Boober.



Photo: Laura Wilshire

RNLI SOS

fundraising day



JOIN OUR BIGGEST FUNDRAISING DAY

RNLI SOS day 2008 is going to be lots of fun and we'd love you to get involved!

On Friday 25 January supporters old and new will be fundraising for the RNLI in schools, at work, at home and through our fundraising branches.

The choice of how to fundraise on SOS day is yours – organise a dress down day, party or quiz night, hold a cake sale, sporting event or car wash. The SOS fundraising pack is crammed with lots of ideas, as is the SOS website at www.rnli.org.uk/sos

Monies raised from SOS day will help

our volunteer crew members and lifeguards continue their lifesaving work. So please spread the word about SOS day and encourage your family, friends and colleagues to join in. It's a great way to brighten up a Winter's day and a fun way to support the RNLI.

Also enclosed with this copy of *the Lifeboat* is a sheet of SOS address labels. Please use them when sending letters, cards, presents and parcels as another easy way of promoting SOS day. We want as many people as possible to support the RNLI on SOS day – your spreading the word will make all the difference.

To order a free fundraising pack, go to www.rnli.org.uk/sos, phone 0845 121 4999 or complete and return the coupon.

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We never give your information to other organisations for marketing purposes. Your details will be used by the RNLI and passed to RNLI trading companies. We would only give your data to another organisation if required to do so by law. If you do not want to receive information about other ways to support the RNLI, please tick here DPA

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SOS08/LB10

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE SET TO EXPAND

Did you know that the RNLI builds and repairs its D class and Atlantic lifeboats itself, on the Isle of Wight? Now, the skilled staff of the Inshore lifeboat centre (ILC), Cowes, are looking forward to a larger, more modern facility.

For 30 years, one of the Atlantic workshops remained largely unchanged, before demolition began this September. A new two-storey building will go up on the site, with a total floor area of almost 3,000m², more than double the space of the original. It is planned to open in October 2008 and to cost £3.5M, inclusive of new equipment and rent for a temporary boatshed meanwhile.

A review in 2005 identified the need for the new facility after it was found that no external contractor was suitable for taking on the building and maintenance of the Atlantic B class fleet. The Atlantic 85, a rigid inflatable, is the fastest seagoing lifeboat in the RNLI fleet, with a top speed of 35 knots (illustrated here by Martin Wale). It is substantially larger and its equipment more complex than its predecessors the Atlantic 75 and 21, many of which are still in service and require expert oversight.

(Offshore members can find out about the maintenance of the all-weather fleet in their own *Offshore* supplement.)



Christmas shopping all wrapped up



It's that time of year again, and lucky RNLI supporters can do that little bit extra by checking out the range of Christmas cards and stocking fillers at their local RNLI shop. High-quality cards are available in a number of eye-catching designs at reasonable prices, so drop in and have a look around. Alternatively, RNLI mail order gift catalogues are available from 0845 126 6999, while our online shop (rnlishop.org.uk) features the entire range.

One of the 230-plus new products to choose from is the Airfix air-sea rescue

set (£24.95 +postage), which has all you need to build 1:72 scale models of both an RNLI Severn class lifeboat and an RAF Sea King helicopter. It includes 189 pieces to construct your lifeboat, 90 pieces for the helicopter, glue, paints and a brush. (See how well this pair's full-size counterparts cooperate in real life on page 20.) The lifeboat model is also available separately for £16.95 +postage.

New RNLI hampers for Christmas 2007 include the Yuletide basket (£29.95), the Chocoholic's hamper (£24.95), the After Dinner gift set (£19.95) and the Afternoon Tea set (£15.95), all crammed full of luxury festive products.

You can also buy a selection of virtual gifts. Call 0800 543210 for a catalogue or log on to rnli.org.uk/splashout. All profits from any RNLI shop, online or gift catalogue orders go straight to the RNLI for saving lives. (See the enclosed letter for news of the RNLI's 'virtual' gift catalogue for a different approach to Christmas.)

RNLI AUCTIONS

Two special eBay auctions over the Summer raised over £5,000 for the RNLI. Winning bidders in June's auction bought 'once-in-a-lifetime' experiences including special tours of selected lifeboat stations, a hot-air balloon flight, and a day's powerboating with a professional stuntwoman. In July, a beach-themed auction featured watersports lessons, surf clothing and signed collectables. A number of companies generously donated lots for both auctions. If you sell on eBay and would like to donate a percentage of your profits to the RNLI, visit ebay.co.uk/rnli.



STAYING IN TOUCH

Are you a former RNLI station volunteer or staff member? The RNLI Family association can help you keep in touch if you are no longer so actively involved. When you join you'll get a membership pack and two issues a year of the association's magazine, *Lookout*, full of news of other members.

For more information, contact Family association Secretary Helen McHugh on 01202 662222.

JOE SHOWS



Journalist Joe O'Shea raised funds for, and awareness of, the RNLI across Ireland by representing the charity in RTÉ's Charity *You're a star* TV show during the Summer.

Joe got through to the final seven acts with diverse numbers from *King of the road* to *I think we're alone now*. Joe also took part in *The late late show's* one-off Celebrity Face Your Fears on behalf of the RNLI. Many thanks to Joe and to all who supported him.

15-year-old
Sarah Bennett,
a Chetham's
pupil and RNLI
fundraiser
Photo: Jonathan
Keenan



It's a kind of magic

Over 115 years after the first rattle of an RNLI collecting tin in Manchester, Rory Stamp discovers how young musicians are ensuring that the charity still strikes a chord in the city

A pupil hurries along a dark corridor, passing rough stonework walls and old, heavy oak doors. As his footsteps echo through the passageway, he quickens his pace, worried that he won't make his next lesson on time ...

It sounds like a scene from a best-selling book about a certain young wizard, but this is actually a glimpse of real life at Chetham's School of Music, in the heart of Manchester. Some of the finest young musicians in the country are taught here, and the magical sounds they create help raise RNLI funds.

The boys and girls of Chetham's regularly perform for the public in the school's unique 15th century buildings; the medieval surroundings seem to amplify the spellbinding effect of the music. But the school hasn't always been all about conjuring crotchets and semiquavers. When the wealthy city merchant Humphrey Chetham died in 1653, he left money in his Will to buy the buildings, stipulating that they should be turned into a school for 40 'poor boys'. He also bequeathed funds for part of the site to be converted into a library for scholars, which is still used today and is the oldest surviving library in England.

After centuries of continuing its benefactor's vision, Chetham's became an independent grammar school in the 1950s and began to earn a national reputation for producing excellent musicians. This was recognised in 1969 when it became a specialist music school. The principles behind Humphrey Chetham's legacy were not forgotten, though: the most promising of today's young musicians can attend the school regardless of their financial background.

'There's a great heroism about the kind of work that the RNLI do and, of course, the voluntary ethos – which I think young people can learn a great deal from.'

The school's charitable ethos is reflected in the support it shows for another historic institution: the RNLI. 'Humphrey Chetham left this fantastic legacy to support people,' explains the school's Director of Music, Stephen Threlfall. 'And that created a strong tradition of benefaction here, which I think fits in well with the charity. While I wouldn't say the school "rescues" people these days, we certainly offer them opportunities, regardless of where they've come from. There are some humanistic parallels between us and the RNLI that, I think, make our relationship very special.' He adds that he has always supported the charity: 'There's a great heroism about the kind of work that the RNLI does and, of course, the voluntary ethos – which I think young people can always learn a great deal from.'

It was Stephen's admiration for the RNLI that led to Chetham's first fundraising concert in aid of the charity

in 2002. Since then the pupils have raised thousands of pounds, and learned about the RNLI's rescue and sea safety work. Lifeboat crew members have visited the school to talk to pupils and, in October 2006, Chetham's even hosted a special fundraising reception in its Baronial Hall. 'It was a fantastic event,' remembers Viv Featherstone, RNLI Regional Education Manager for North England. 'Some of the pupils played for us in the hall and the music was just outstanding. It was part of Manchester lifeboat week, and they really helped make it a success. The money they've raised is enough to train five crew members.'

Viv was so grateful for Chetham's support that she nominated the school for an RNLI Supporters Award in the Youth 13–18 Category; an award that they went on to win. The RNLI's President, HRH The Duke of Kent, presented the award to Stephen and some Chetham's pupils at the Barbican in London in May 2007. 'It's great for the school to win the award,' says 18-year-old pupil and violinist Joe Devalle. 'And for us it's also been great to be able to use something we enjoy doing to help a charity like the RNLI.'

By taking part in lifeboat week, Chetham's pupils were supporting a Manchester fundraising tradition that began in 1891, when the world's first charity street collection took place in the city in aid of the RNLI. The collection was arranged in memory of a lifeboat disaster 5 years earlier in which 27 lifeboatmen from Southport and St Annes died while trying to rescue sailors from the stricken vessel *Mexico*. With a sense of charity not unlike Humphrey Chetham's, the wealthy local industrialist

Sir Charles Macara was concerned for the widows and children of the crew members lost. He organised the collection in aid of them, which raised £5,500 – a very large amount of money at the time – and in doing so laid the foundations of fundraising as we know it today. In the following years, 'Lifeboat Saturdays' in Manchester saw lifeboat crews visiting the city to help raise funds.

More than 115 years on, the collection buckets will be out once again on 22 October for the beginning of the 2007 Manchester lifeboat week. The lifeboat making an appearance in the city this year will be rather different from the wooden pulling vessels that were once wheeled through the streets. A new Atlantic 85 inshore lifeboat will be named and accepted into the RNLI's relief fleet as part of the week's events. And what better location in Manchester for the naming ceremony than the enchanting surroundings of Chetham's School of Music?

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FIVE ALIVE

Two miles from land, a group of kayakers was at the mercy of gale force offshore winds. How could they summon help and how long could they stay afloat? Mairéad Dwane reports

A distressed father on the shoreline made the call that would save his son's life. It was 18 March and he could see the boy and fellow canoe club members getting into difficulty just outside the estuary of the River Deben, Suffolk. In response, Thames Coastguard requested the help of Harwich's inshore lifeboat, *Sure and Steadfast*. She would be best designed to search along the surf line but the conditions were more than challenging. With Scott Wiltshire at the helm, she launched at 12.32pm.

Seeing the north-westerly winds averaging force 9 and whipping up the sea, full-time Coxswain Paul Smith (pictured) decided to launch the Severn class all-weather lifeboat too: 'After initial disbelief that children were out in kayaks under the instruction of adults in such winds, my thoughts quickly reverted to the requirements of the service, and I decided to launch *Albert Brown* to support *Sure and Steadfast* and assist in the search and casualty handling.

'The weather was well within the capability of the Severn class, but my concern was for the safety of the inshore lifeboat crew. The height of the Severn is also an asset when searching for people in the water in big seas.'

Just 10 minutes after launching, in seas up to 4m high, *Sure and Steadfast* found two people in the water, a man aged 63 and a boy aged 12, clinging onto their kayaks. They had gone out to sea for adventure training – without flares, radios or checking the weather forecast. They were hauled aboard.

Two more kayakers were spotted further inshore. Scott set off towards them, while his crew assessed the first casualties.



a man aged 51 and a 14-year-old boy, who were in much better shape. The search was now on for the one remaining member of the group.

Sure and Steadfast began scouring the shallow waters of the surf line about 200m from the shore. The third child was soon spotted. He had been separated from his kayak, and was brought aboard before also being transferred to *Albert Brown*. All five kayakers were now onboard the all-weather lifeboat, and it was confirmed that the whole group had been accounted for.

The RAF's rescue helicopter from Wattisham Airfield was now overhead, and the first two casualties to be plucked from the water were winched aboard – no mean feat in the challenging conditions. The others stayed onboard *Albert Brown*, 'shocked, frightened and understandably concerned for their colleagues and themselves', according to Paul.

An ambulance was waiting as they arrived back at the lifeboat station, just an hour after launching. The group's kayaks were also kindly brought ashore on the all-weather lifeboat.

At stages during the rescue, winds of storm

'After being in the sea for 45 minutes, cold and exhausted, you start to wonder if you can hold on much longer.'

They were worried about the 63-year-old, who was responsive but clearly in need of medical attention.

Scott remembers: 'With one semi-conscious hypothermic casualty onboard, the child made it known to us that his brother was still missing. This required some quick thinking and difficult decision making.' He finally decided to transfer the pair to the all-weather lifeboat, from which they could be airlifted to hospital. He radioed the Coastguard to request helicopter assistance and then coordinated the manoeuvre with Paul.

Some of *Albert Brown's* crew members warmed up the two patients in the slightly more comfortable conditions below deck, while others set about picking up the second pair of survivors,

force 10 were recorded. Harwich Lifeboat Press Officer Keith Churchman comments: 'These kayaks were only about 1m long and really meant for boating lakes, so we are relieved there was a happy ending.'

In recognition of their skill, determination, sound decision-making, hard work and foresight, the Coxswain and volunteers involved were formally thanked by the RNLI's Chief Executive and Operations Director.

In his own letter of thanks, one survivor wrote: 'After being in the sea for 45 minutes, cold and exhausted, you start to wonder if you can hold on much longer. So you can imagine the feeling of relief when I saw the lifeboat speeding towards us.'

THE DETAIL

INSHORE LIFEBOAT B-789 *Sure and Steadfast*
On station: 2002
Funding: Funded by the Boys' Brigade
Crew: Helmsman Scott Wiltshire, (37, marine construction superintendent), Matthew Preston, (28, marine construction coxswain)
Stuart Henderson, (25, marine construction deckhand)

ALL-WEATHER LIFEBOAT SEVERN CLASS
ON-1202 (17-03) *Albert Brown* – the first Severn class lifeboat to be placed on operational service
On station: 1996
Funding: Bequest from the late Victoria Maisie Brown in memory of her late husband
Crew: Full-time Coxswain Paul Smith (46)
Second Coxswain John Teatheredge (49, pilot boat coxswain), Brendon Shaw (32, design engineer), Glen Davis (41, relief pilot boat coxswain), Simon Benham (32, printer), Stuart Vincent (31, motor technician), Deputy Mechanic Stephen Amner (36, electrical mechanical engineer), Elliot Kemp (35, police officer)



Laura Wiltshire decided to treat her parents, Dave and Joan, to the ride of their lives, with a little help from an RNLI supporter offer

'With Mum's 50th birthday fast approaching I wanted to surprise her with one of those "top ten" things to do! Hot air ballooning was something that she had often talked about, but that Dad, being rather scared of heights, was conveniently ignoring. I decided to go for it and book three places. One July day we all arrived at the launch site in Blandford Forum, Dorset, for 5.45am tired, but excited.

We met about a dozen other fliers and our pilot. My parents and I joined in every step of the preparation, unpacking the 30m balloon and helping to inflate it.

Taking off was amazing. One minute we were all being helped into the basket, the next we were looking down at miniature buildings and people. There was a thick mist surrounding us, but once we rose through

and above it, the views were out of this world. We could see for miles. And it was so quiet; the entire journey was amazingly peaceful.

The complimentary champagne went down well with all onboard, and then after about an hour came the landing – one of the most exciting parts! As a team we had to find a suitable field for the balloon to land in, without risk of collision with hedges or horses. As we touched down, we jumped out and all helped deflate and pack away the enormous balloon.

Even at 2,500m, Dad loved the whole day, but particularly enjoyed the landing: "Certainly an unusual kind of parking!" And Mum was delighted with her birthday present.'

'It was the most breathtaking experience so far in my life.'

1/2 PRICE CHAMPAGNE BALLOON FLIGHTS!

Would you like to follow in the Wiltshire family's footsteps and try an exhilarating Virgin balloon flight? Then take advantage of this limited-edition offer for RNLI supporters. The Virgin Balloon Flight Adventure Pack (rrp £285 per person) is yours for half the normal price, just £142.50. What's more, £5 from every sale will go to the RNLI.

You can look forward to a:

- 3- or 4-hour experience, with around an hour in the air
- traditional champagne toast onboard
- certificate signed by Sir Richard Branson and your pilot
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- limited-edition Virgin flight shoulder bag containing compact binoculars, heavy weight branded pen, baseball cap, DVD and key ring.

But be quick – this offer ends 31 December! Call 0870 444 2768 or visit www.virginballoonflights.co.uk quoting 'RNLI' to book.

Terms and conditions: Offer valid until 31 December 2007 relates to a Virgin Balloon Flights Adventure Pack (rrp £285), valid for one year from start date, which you can specify at the time of purchase. Voucher price is £142.50 for one person including VAT and postage and packing. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or promotion and is only open to readers and staff. Children aged 7-16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Passengers must be at least 4'6" in height. Offer not valid in ROI and Northern Ireland for flying, but vouchers may be purchased and used for launch sites in England, Scotland and Wales. We are unable to fly passengers who are pregnant. Full terms and conditions available on request – call 0870 444 2768 or visit www.virginballoonflights.co.uk.

LANDMARC LOTTERY PRIZES

Virgin was one of the generous companies that provided prizes for the RNLI/Landmarc lottery in early Summer 2007. Landmarc, which maintains and operates the army training estates around the UK, has chosen the RNLI as its charity partner and its employees raised £2,862 for the RNLI, selling raffle tickets to friends and family.

The Virgin balloon flight went to Mrs SP Gray in the West Midlands. Other lucky winners included: **1st prize:** Mr D Granger, East; **Pontins holiday;** Mr CL Callaway, Pembrokeshire, **ipod nano;** Mr K Oliver, Otterburn, **Manchester Utd football tickets;** Miss E Humphreys, West Midlands, **Liverpool football tickets;** Mr A Bennett, South West, **Karcher pressure washer;** Mr M Best, Pembrokeshire, **£30 Travellers World voucher.**

Above: The preparation and the views from above
Right: Passengers help pack away the enormous balloon



OUT IN A FLASH

When three children were suddenly torn out of their depth by a rip current at a Devon beach, they were in danger of being thrown onto rocks – or worse



Rip currents are the main surf hazard for beach goers – they can sweep swimmers from shallow water out to sea and prevent them from swimming back. For the informed observer, there are sometimes warning signs, such as murky brown water, surface foam extending

beyond the surf line, and debris floating out to sea. But on 18 July at Bantham beach, south Devon, there was no warning when a flash rip developed at 4.30pm.

As its name suggests, a flash rip is quick and powerful. 'We were keeping a watch on bathers when we suddenly saw three young children struggling in the water. They were out of their depth and being dragged towards the rocks in a rip current,' says Senior RNLI Lifeguard Liam Krige, who was on duty that day. He and his fellow lifeguard Cordell Venter immediately launched their inshore rescue boat (IRB).

As the lifeguards neared the scene, they realised the rocks were too close even for the IRB. 'We would have put the children and the boat at risk if we'd hit the rocks,' explains Liam. Instead, Cordell jumped into the water and swam to the children. He helped to keep them afloat and calm while Liam returned to shore, where he swapped the IRB for a rescue board.

Paddling back out, Liam pulled two of the children onto his board and took them to shore, skilfully avoiding the rip. Cordell swam back unaided with the third child. 'Once back on shore Cordell stayed with the children – they were very distressed,' remembers Liam.

By now, the rip current had begun to sweep more bathers out to sea and eight were in difficulty. Liam launched the IRB again with Lifeguard Ben Howey and radioed his colleagues at the neighbouring Sedgwell Cove for back up.

In two trips, Liam and Ben pulled six people aboard and returned them to the safety of the beach. Two lifeguards from Sedgwell Cove picked up the two remaining casualties. In 15 minutes, the lifeguards had rescued 11 people from the rip current. No one had suffered any injuries.

Area Lifeguard Manager Patrick Renauld praised Liam and the other lifeguards for their actions. 'Lifeguards are trained to recognise and help anyone caught in a rip,' says Patrick. 'Luckily the lifeguards on duty were able to respond immediately and tragedy was avoided. It just shows the importance of swimming at a lifeguarded beach.'

L-R (above): Cordell, Ben and Liam helped to rescue 11 people at Bantham beach





PERILOUS PLAY

Swept along by a powerful ebbing tide, a 9-year-old girl's survival depended on the reaction of her local lifeboat crew



Jade Kerrison was playing with a friend at South Quay, Great Yarmouth in Suffolk. It was 7 June 2007 and the sun was beginning to set. The pair were larking around when suddenly Jade fell into the River Yare. It was a 4m drop and surprisingly cold.

Her friend ran to tell Jade's mother. Caroline Kerrison recalls: 'As I was running down to the quayside I was screaming: "No, Jade, no, Jade". I thought she must have gone under and we would not find her.' But remarkably, Jade had resurfaced and caught hold of a lifebelt thrown to her by onlookers.

The little girl used all her strength to hang on to the lifebelt in what was a strong tidal current. Jade describes the experience: 'I remember falling and started swimming. When I

went under, I grabbed hold of something. My hands slipped and I got pulled by the current until I managed to grab the lifebelt and then hold on to some stairs. I felt upset and very cold.'

Had she lost her grip, Jade would have been swept out into the path of a cargo ship. The growing crowd on the quayside could now do nothing but watch and wait.

It was then that the Great Yarmouth and Gorleston

Atlantic 75 lifeboat came to the rescue. Lifeboat Helmsman Kevin Bennington recalls: 'We launched *Seahorse IV* in just 3-4 minutes after a call from the Coastguard at 9.09pm. Jade was only 1 mile from the station but, as she's a small girl, she took some finding. We spotted her in the water, very cold, in shock, with real fear on her face.'

For the crew it brought back awful memories of the search for a little boy in 2003. Jade was 500m or so from where the 7-year-old is thought to have fallen to his death.

The extreme danger to Jade of the fast-moving tide meant that Kevin could waste no time: he drove straight in and Crew Members Scott Kennington and Andrew Mason plucked the 9-year-old out of the water. The crowd above clapped and cheered the crew.

Getting Jade back up to the quayside would be tricky and time consuming, so Kevin decided to take her back to the station for urgent medical assistance. Scott held the child tight to try to warm her up.

From the lifeboat station an ambulance transferred Jade to Gorleston's James Paget University Hospital but she was later discharged. Kevin describes Jade as 'very, very lucky' to have survived both the strong ebb flow and the temperature of the water.

Reliving the ordeal, Jade's mother is full of praise for the lifeboat crew who took only minutes to reach the scene. Sitting cradling her daughter now safely at home again, Caroline says: 'I could not believe how quickly the lifeboat got there. I want to thank the people who saved her.'

Jade after her ordeal

Photo: Archant Norfolk

Research: Andy Bash
Background photo: Laura Wiltshire

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TEAM EFFORT

The Pembrokeshire coast enjoyed a sunny evening on 7 August last year but, under cliffs near Newport Bay, a stiff onshore breeze was imperilling the lives of three unprepared teenagers. Elizabeth Paine describes what happened next



Photo: Wales News Service

THE DETAIL

INSHORE LIFEBOAT D CLASS

D-652 *Team Effort*

On station: 10 April 2006

Funding: Fishguard boat appeal

Crew: Helmsman Stephen Done (44, furniture maker)

Joanne Boughton, (36, GP and musician)

Robert Lanham (28, local port operative)

ALL-WEATHER LIFEBOAT TRENT CLASS

ON-1198 (14-03) *Blue Peter VII*

On station: 2 September 1994

Funding: funded by viewers of BBC TV's *Blue Peter*

Crew: Coxswain Paul Butler (46), Mechanic Stephen Phillips,

Second Coxswain Christopher Bean, Simon Cookson,

Wyn Griffiths, Peter Hughes, Andrew Nicholls, Paul Potter

Local boys James Thomas, Michael Richards and Thomas Bendell were enjoying picking their way around the rocky coastline east of Fishguard, walking, jumping, even climbing when necessary. They were seeing how far they could get just using their own physical skill and no special equipment, inspired by the adventure sport of coasteering. Clambering down towards a small bay, just west of Cat Rock, they found themselves on a ledge. They were horribly close to the chaotic water and the tide was rising – they had no way out.

Thankfully, they were spotted. Following a 999 call, at 6.31pm the Coastguard requested assistance from the volunteers at Fishguard lifeboat station. Just 11 minutes later the inshore lifeboat *Team Effort* launched.

While the D class was ideal for work in shallow waters, conditions were stretching its capabilities, so Fishguard's all-weather *Blue Peter VII* escorted the inflatable. Once in open sea, the powerful Trent class took the lead so the smaller craft could shelter in

her slipstream. Even so, as the two vessels approached Dinas Head the waves grew so powerful that it took all of Helmsman Steve Done's skill to keep his crew members from being thrown overboard.

Arriving on scene at 7pm they began a shoreline search. With the help of a Coastguard cliff rescue team that had also arrived, the boys were finally spotted sheltering behind a small ridge – visible only from the extra height of the Trent's upper steering position. But between the boys and their rescuers lay a nightmare of broken rocks through which backwash from the cliffs slammed into the opposing 2m waves. The resultant turmoil promised to swamp the D class.

With the cliff rescue team now atop the cliff, Coxswain Paul Butler ordered his crews to stand off – the land-based team had the better chance of success. Meanwhile, Steve was familiarising himself with the complex wave patterns and, with Paul's agreement, warily re-entered the bay. Time after time Steve



Photo: Colin Watson

let the surging waves drive the little boat backwards into the bay, using short bursts on the engine to keep her bow forward and avoid submerged rocks. Several times, larger wave sets loomed and the lifeboat had to get out fast, only to try once more.

It was now evident that, while Thomas was nearer the cliff base and reachable by the Coastguard team, James and Michael were more dangerously exposed. An RAF helicopter was still 20 minutes away and, with the seas breaking ever closer to the trapped teenagers, Steve knew that time was running out. He radioed *Blue Peter VII* saying he could reach the remaining two.

Manoeuvring once again into the bay, the lifeboat found a little protection behind the same ledge that was sheltering the pair. They moved towards the boat with relief but passing swells forced her to retreat twice before, without warning, a back-swell picked up the boat and dropped her on the rock ledge. Seizing the moment, Crew

Members Jo Boughton and Robert Lanham grabbed the boys aboard, just before another swell refloated the lifeboat – at which Steve took his chance to speedily power clear.

The rescued teenagers, while unhurt, felt frozen. As the two lifeboats met back up, Jo transferred with them to the *Trent* to help deal with their mild hypothermia. One of *Blue Peter VII*'s crew swapped to *Team Effort* to provide more stability and both lifeboats returned through the rough seas to a safe landing – and some very relieved parents.

Stephen Done's exceptional seamanship and courage that day has earned him

the Thanks of the Institution Inscribed on Vellum. He remembers: 'Despite the conditions, it never entered my head for a moment that we wouldn't be able to rescue them – it's what we're trained to do. When you're in situations like that, the training kicks in and you never think twice about going in. I don't think [the boys] realised how dangerous a situation they were in. They were shivering and obviously very relieved to see us.'

Joanne Boughton and Robert Lanham are awarded Chairman's Framed Letters of Thanks for their bravery and team working; Paul Butler's effective command receives an Operations Director's Letter of Appreciation.

'Despite the conditions, it never entered my head for a moment that we wouldn't be able to rescue them – it's what we're trained to do.'

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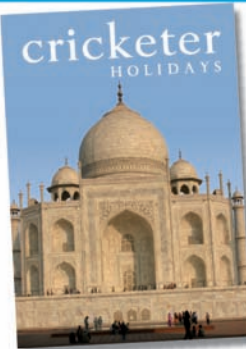
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BOOKS

A lifeboating selection to inspire, thrill and ponder



Asboville

by Danny Rhodes

Asboville may not sound like it has any relevance to the RNLI, however a lifeboat crew member plays a key part in this surprising novel.

Sixteen-year-old JB lives on the run-down Jubilee Estate, somewhere in London. He has been given an ASBO (Anti-Social Behaviour Order) after falling in with the wrong crowd and is sent away to stay with his uncle at the seaside where he is forced to paint beach huts. But, despite his previous bad behaviour, there is a glimmer of hope for JB that he might just be able to turn his life around ...

This is a cleverly written and absorbing novel – a real page-turner with a main character and somewhat gritty subject matter that I didn't think I would like, but did.

Written for both adults and young people, this would appeal to teenagers, their parents and grandparents, or anyone who has witnessed first hand the angst and frustration of this age group. And the lifeboat link? The impact on family life of a father called out 'too often' on a shout is described from an unusual, and understandably unsympathetic, point of view.

published by The Maia Press
ISBN 9781904559221
Price: £8.99 paperback

Break through

by Edward Wake-Walker

Review by Adam Wooler, RNLI Staff Officer,
Operations (Prevention and Lifeguards)

This book pulls together the true history of the lifeguard's inshore rescue boat (IRB) – and shows its significance.

Many people and organisations around the world influenced its development but it is Warren Mitchell, the 'father of the IRB', who is truly the hero of this book. Edward Wake-Walker has done a superb job in bringing alive the whole story through Warren's eyes. Anyone who has an interest in small boats would learn a great deal from this book, but its appeal is broadened by the human story of persistence: to have a 'mad' idea that would save lives finally recognised.

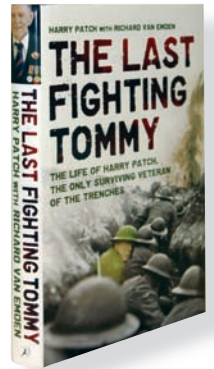
Professor Jaggard of Edith Cowan University, Perth, says: 'What I particularly like about the book is its breadth of history ... British, Australian, New Zealand ... There's nothing parochial about it, as the various strands of the story are woven together very skilfully. The book should also quieten those critics who believe the story can only be written by an Australian author ... Great piece of writing.'

published by Granta Editions
ISBN 9781857570885
Price: £11.95 paperback



The last fighting Tommy: the life of Harry Patch, the only surviving veteran of the trenches

by Richard Van Emden



What a delight to review this book! Harry Patch, age 109, is famous for being the last British survivor of active service in the First World War. But he is now known personally to us at the RNLI: on Friday 20 July he named a D class lifeboat at a ceremony at our Headquarters in Poole. *The Doris and Harry* is now part of the relief fleet and will go into service anywhere she is needed to cover for an 'on station' craft removed for refit or repair.

Harry wanted to honour the memory of his dear friend Doris Whitaker, a lifelong supporter of the RNLI. Doris came into Harry's life 5 years ago at their care home in Somerset. Sadly Doris died in March this year.

When one has lived to a great age, it is understandable to have lost family members. In Harry's case, he has dealt with the loss of parents, siblings, two wives, two children – and all his contemporaries. Of course, horrifying numbers of his fellow servicemen died alongside him during the 'war to end all wars', as documented in Richard Van Emden's heart-warming and sensitive account.

Starting with Harry's earliest recollection of getting into trouble by helping himself to fruit from his father's prized trees, a remarkable eyewitness account unfolds of a life that spans the Victorian and Edwardian eras and beyond to the new Millennium.

There are graphic and extremely moving accounts of Harry's time in the trenches – a subject he found too painful to talk about until his centenary. But we also hear of Harry's working life as a plumber and his time with the Auxiliary Fire Service during the Second World War.

Harry's personality absolutely shines through the pages of this book. The format has been cleverly thought out, with extensive passages in Harry's own words interspersed with research findings from the author. There are also maps of the battlefields and some poignant photographs.

This is the tale of an ordinary man, called to do extraordinary things and trying, and succeeding, to survive against the odds.

Published by Bloomsbury

ISBN: 9780747591153

Price: £16.99 hardback

All reviews by Carol Waterkeyn unless otherwise noted.

All books are available from all good bookshops, or via rnl.org.uk/amazon (Amazon will make a donation to the RNLI for each one sold by this route), or from the RNLI gift catalogue or rnlshop.org.uk where noted.

Offshore members will find reviews of: *Sailing for dummies* 2nd edition by Peter and JJ Isler, *A passion for design* by German Frers, and more in their accompanying issue of *Offshore*.

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published by AA Publishing

ISBN 9780749542283

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Treasures of Britain

A gorgeous, heavy tome portraying the architectural, cultural, historical and natural heritage of the British Isles. It ranges from the earliest Stone Age features through to Victorian and modern architecture. In it you will find Britain's favourite man-made and natural features, towns, villages, and oddities. In a helpful alphabetical format, it is widely illustrated and would make a wonderful present.

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Rapture of the deep

Scuba diving is fraught with dangers, but each year thousands of adventurers find that the rewards far outweigh the risks. Bethany Hope discovers the appeal of diving close to home

One of the main attractions of recreational scuba diving lies in the privileges it brings. You are, after all, breathing underwater, defying Nature thanks to technology. Divers explore a new underwater world, and feel like they're the first person to step into a secret garden.

Whether divers are into shipwrecks, sea life, archaeology or photography, the seas of the British Isles are teeming with sites to explore, full of different colours, shapes, textures and creatures. More ships have sunk around the coasts of the British Isles than anywhere else in the world and it's estimated that we have more than 60,000 wrecks.

They are a magnet for plant and animal life including fish, shellfish, and crustacea. Certain wrecks are out of bounds, such as war graves and those in a state of collapse, but divers can still discover boats that have been preserved for centuries. With no noise except the sound of the bubbles from your breathing, it can be an eerie experience.

Fantasies of discovering long-lost treasure chests are unlikely to materialise as only a few ships, such as galleons bringing bullion from the New World to Spain, had coins, ingots of gold or silver aboard. But there are other treasures to be discovered in the waters of the UK and RoI.

People who have only dived abroad might be surprised by the range and popularity of dive sites around the British Isles. Just as the view above the waterline changes around our coast, the underwater panorama varies tremendously. Underwater treats for divers include reefs, pinnacles and caves, and diverse marine fauna from sea slugs to sharks. Above water, divers often have a spectacular view too as some of the best dives are found near areas of outstanding natural beauty.

A sport for all?

Scuba diving promoters stress that diving is 'a sport for all', that anyone over the age of 10, male or female, can do it, but this isn't the whole story. Your mind and body need to be in good working order in the first place.

Tom Templeton is a qualified diving instructor and part of a diving family but uses his experience at work too. As an RNLI training manager, Tom trains RNLI divers in the survival tank at The Lifeboat College in Poole. They need to be ready to help in case of accident during lifeboat capsize exercises. He agrees that the sport of scuba diving is increasingly accessible, but stresses that there are limits: 'Diving is for those who are adventurous by nature and fit. You don't have to be match fit, but some people

with medical conditions such as high blood pressure shouldn't dive.'

Scuba diving is an expensive sport, but not exclusive. To enable you to survive underwater for 30 minutes or more, you need a lot of good-quality equipment and protective clothing, which isn't cheap to hire or buy. Many dive clubs and shops offer a 'try dive', a taster of what it's like to be under the water. This will help you decide whether to invest the time and money that will be required to pursue the sport.

Getting started

If you are keen to learn to dive, there are several UK and RoI organisations that can help. The Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI, see www.padi.com) is an organisation many will come across, perhaps on a one-off holiday experience. The British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC, see www.bsac.org) is the biggest of its kind in the world, with hundreds of affiliated clubs around the UK. The Irish Underwater Council (www.cft.ie) plays a big role promoting scuba diving around the RoI, with more than 80 clubs.

To pass diving courses you need a good

basic level of swimming, although there are exceptions for people with certain disabilities. You'll also need to be comfortable with simple maths – the ability to calculate your rate of ascent from a dive will be key to your safety. The initial training typically comprises classroom, pool and open-water lessons, and successful divers will be qualified to dive to a maximum of 20m.

Michael Avril, RNLI Sea Safety Manager, has been diving for 14 years, mainly off the east coast of Scotland, and he stresses that qualifying is only the beginning:

'You wouldn't run a marathon with no training. It's the same with diving. You practise, and dive within your capabilities.'

Local limitations

Some divers brave the cold and dive during the Winter, although the main season for diving around the British Isles is generally May to September or October because of the likelihood of better weather. Even in the season, an ocean dive may well be called off because of rough conditions. You might think that divers wouldn't need to worry about a spot of rain or gusts of wind up above. →

'You wouldn't run a marathon with no training. It's the same with diving. You practise, and dive within your capabilities.'



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However, they have to get out to and back from the dive site safely, whether in a dive boat or by swimming through the surf.

The weather affects visibility underwater – the 'vis'. Rainwater run off from the land will cloud the sea and sometimes it will be so churned up that a diver would be unable to see their hand in front of their face. Visibility in waters around the British Isles can be frustrating: it averages just 3m. Spring algal blooms and coral spawns can add to the effect, as will ebb tides, lack of sunlight and the depth at which you dive.

As well as protecting themselves, divers must manoeuvre with care to avoid damaging coral or disturbing the seabed with their fins. Despite all this, low visibility needn't ruin a dive as marine life is sometimes best examined at close quarters. Many divers even prefer night dives for a different view of the underwater world.

Dangers of diving

Scuba diving started in the 1940s but there was a rise in diver incidents in the 1990s, following an increase in the sport's popularity. According to BSAC, there have been around 400 reported incidents in the UK annually since 2000. Considering the number of people diving, this is remarkably low. The emphasis on training and 'belts and braces' equipment helps reduce fatalities and the British Diving Safety Group, chaired by the RNLI, reaches out to recreational divers with safety messages (see www.bdsg.org).

However, RNLI lifeboats still went out to 65 divers in 2006, and when divers are



Photo: Whiteframe Creative

in trouble it is often life threatening. Tom spells out why it's so dangerous: 'You have to respect you're breathing in a non-breathing environment. It is an extreme sport.'

There are as many RNLI call outs to dive boats as to divers themselves. Alistair Crowe, St Abbs Lifeboat Operations Manager and a dive boat shop owner comments: 'The main problem with divers is that they have no knowledge of the sea. You can be a competent diver but be clueless with a boat. Divers are lucky to have the RNLI close at hand. Not many sports get better safety cover. It's an exceptional service and most divers know this.'

Common problems for divers include decompression sickness and nitrogen narcosis. Both can be lethal. →

'You have to respect you're breathing in a non-breathing environment. It is an extreme sport.'



Photo: Whiteframe Creative

TOP DIVING SITES

Scapa Flow, Orkney Islands

A long-time 'Mecca' for divers from all over the world, with wrecks from the scuttled First World War German fleet.

Oban and Sound of Mull, Argyll and Bute

Superb wreck dives and sheer underwater cliffs.

Farne Islands, Northumberland

An extensive group of offshore islands renowned for excellent underwater life and diving with grey seals.

Isle of Man

Features clear waters, wrecks, strong tidal currents and richer marine life including basking sharks.

Old Head of Kinsale, County Cork

The wreck of *Lusitania*, torpedoed by a German U-boat in 1915.

Plymouth, Devon The liberty ship *James Egan Layne* attracts thousands of divers, but in recent years has begun to collapse. In 2002 former warship *HMS Scylla* was sunk close by to form an alternative site.

Isles of Scilly The clear waters have diverse marine life including friendly seals but also an extensive range of wrecks including the treasure ship *Association*.

Lundy Island, Devon The only true marine reserve in the UK, with an exceptional range of marine life.

Thanks to BSAC for supplying the bulk of these recommendations. For further information visit www.bsactravelclub.co.uk.

GO DEEPER. GO DIVE.



**FIND OUT WHAT'S BELOW THE SURFACE.
GO DEEPER. GO DIVE. IF YOU'RE SERIOUS
ABOUT WANTING TO LEARN TO DIVE, SEND
US AN EMAIL ENTITLED 'WATER PLEASE' TO
godiveoe@padi.co.uk AND WE'LL SEND
YOU A **FREE** INTRODUCTORY DVD. AIN'T WE NICE!**



Decompression sickness, the 'bends', is caused by nitrogen gas bubbles forming in the blood and tissues of the body. The bends will strike if the diver has risen to the surface too quickly. Alistair describes a recent shout to a diver with the bends: 'His symptoms were classic. Back on the boat he was on his knees, in pain, constantly vomiting. We gave him oxygen and fluids and comforted him as best we could. He had to be taken to Aberdeen hyperbaric chamber to be decompressed.'

Nitrogen narcosis affects divers at depth and is a side effect of breathing nitrogen under pressure. Iconic diver Jacques Cousteau called it the 'rapture of the deep' and it can feel like being under the influence of alcohol. Diving instructors often tell the story of a 'narked' diver sharing their mouthpiece with a fish. Being 30m under the water isn't a good place to lose control.

Sadly, some divers don't surface in time to be rescued. Dave Milford, Plymouth lifeboat Coxswain reflects: 'Once the divers are down that far, you've got no control. As a lifeboatman, all you can do is look on the surface. You can't get down there with them – it's frustrating. The body of one diver turned up after 2½ years. It's not the best bit of the job.'

This is why one of the main rules of diving is to always dive with a 'buddy'. However experienced and careful you are, you can still get into trouble. Tom Templeton has had many safe and thrilling dives, but he'll never forget how his buddy saved his life:

'It was Valentine's Day in 2004 and I ran out of air at 20m in the Channel. It was pitch black and the current was strong, so it was difficult connecting the back-up equipment. Then the "octopus", my back-up air source,

'I did a controlled emergency swimming ascent, but I needed my buddy.'

free flowed – I could hear the air coming out. By torchlight, my buddy tried to assist while I got the DSMB (delayed surface marker buoy) up. I did a controlled emergency swimming ascent, but I needed my buddy. I took her main air source and she used her octopus. A buddy gives you someone to rely on, to bail you out.'

See below to share in the diving experiences of RNLi member Donald MacNeill and meet another, perhaps unexpected, diver on page 46.

Up close and personal



There's a whole package of experiences to enjoy when you're diving. For me, it includes the 'messing about in boats', visiting new locations and doing it all in the company of good friends. I've been diving for 11 years,

and the dives from the 'top drawer' provide memories that will last a lifetime, often for very different reasons.

On one memorable dive my buddy and I were on a cliff in Loch Duich, near Skye in the Inner Hebrides, on a dark

Autumn night. It was a site our dive club visited often, with no reports of tidal currents, but tonight was different – with the spring flood tide going like a train! At a depth of 35m, in the pitch black, we were being blasted along the cliff face, with the bottom at least another 20m below. On the surface we agreed the best description was 'challenging' because we couldn't admit to 'scary'!

Another unforgettable dive for me was off Little Skellig – one of a pair of islands 5 miles off the coast of the Rol. Six of us dropped into the water in three buddy pairs. It was already a great experience – the sheer rocks, hundreds of gannets wheeling over our heads, but what was to come surpassed all that. As we reached the bottom in an amazing 20m visibility I became aware of a small, blurred shape circling on the edge of my vision. Within minutes we had a young grey seal, growing in confidence, and getting up close and personal with four divers.

Trying to keep him in sight I twisted onto my side – the seal followed; I rolled onto my back – he copied in a flash. The seal stayed with us for the rest of the dive, at one point even getting as close as to nibble my drysuit sleeve, forcing me to push him gently away. It was fun to the last moment as he played tug-of-war on the surface with our orange marker buoy. Interacting with a wild animal in its own environment for nearly 20 minutes – I doubt I'll ever match the wonder of that dive.



RNLi member Donald McNeill meets a young seal

Lifeboat Lottery >>>>



Take your chance

First prize in the Winter 2007 Lifeboat Lottery is a Kia Picanto. Second prize is a 10-day Alpine train holiday very kindly provided at short notice by Great Rail Journeys (see their advert on page 8). There are also seven cash prizes from £500–£100.

Tickets will be available to supporters on 18 October and earlier to fundraising branches. If you don't usually receive tickets and would like to, please call 0845 121 4999 or email lottery@rnli.org.uk. (Please note that due to differing tax and gaming laws, Lottery tickets are not available in Northern Ireland or the RoI.)

Lottery timeline



Spring 1986



Winter 1989

The RNLI's Lottery is 30 years old this Autumn, and is going stronger than ever. Here, we take a look back at events in the competition's history, some key, some quirky

30 September 1977

The first winner of the Lifeboat Lottery is drawn. WE West from Arundel wins £1,000.

Summer 1981

Janet Brown brings Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to the event with her impressions of the Iron Lady.

Winter 1983

The grand prize doubles to £2,000.

Summer 1986

Light entertainment legend Max Bygraves says that he keeps up to date with the RNLI through the pages of *the Lifeboat*. We hope you like the new look, Max!

Early 1990s

Cars begin to appear as top prizes, thanks to the generous support of Volvo (also see page 13).

Summer 1991

Lottery income reaches £100,000 for the first time. Russ Abbott, starring in a show in nearby Bournemouth, helps with the draw.

1977

1987



Summer 2007 winners

- 1st prize:** smart fortwo car, Miss B Kemeys, Gloucestershire
- 2nd prize:** Generously donated by Fred. Olsen, 13-night Canary Islands cruise, Mr BL Nicholls, Devon
- 3rd prize:** £500, Mr J Campbell, Berkshire
- 4th prize:** £250, Mrs P Brown, London
- Five prizes:** £100 each, Mr A Denney, London; Mr MG Bernat-Jones, Worcestershire; Miss B Bryant, West Sussex; Mr and Mrs DRP Johnson, Lancashire; Mrs L Cooper, Essex.



Summer 1991



Spring 1994



Summer 1996

Summer 1994
Former Beirut hostage John McCarthy and comedian Sandi Toksvig, part way through filming their TV series *An island race*, get caught up in a shout!

Autumn 1994
Millvena Dean, the youngest *Titanic* survivor at 9 weeks, makes the draw aged 82.

Winter 1996
The top prize is increased to £10,000. The winners are drawn by Wick crew members, at Headquarters for training on their new Trent class lifeboat.

Autumn 1997
The Lottery's first holiday prize, a 2-week Mediterranean trip with £1,000 spending money, is donated by Sunworld Sailing.

Winter 2004
Proceeds of the draw top £500,000 for the first time.

Winter 2006
In just two years, Lottery takings have doubled, with a single draw breaking the £1M barrier.

Spring 2007
The first computerised in-house draw takes place, with the help of Brian Traves of the Poole branch (see our report in *the Lifeboat Summer 2007*).

1997

2007

LAUNCHES

2,210 LIFEBOAT AND HOVERCRAFT LAUNCHES APRIL–JUNE 2007

ABERDEEN

ON-1248(17-24):Apr15,29, Jun2,14,21

D-536:Apr29,May4,15,28, Jun26

ABERDOVEY

B-758:Apr12,17,May6,17, 23,Jun23

ABERSOCH

B-754:Apr5,7,16,28, May24,27(x2)

B-790:Jun10,12,16,25,26

ABERYSTWYTH

B-704:Apr1,7,27,28,29, May1,2(x2),12,18,Jun2,7, 11,12,18,20(x2),25,30

ACHILL ISLAND

ON-1240(14-28):Apr29

AITH

ON-1254(17-27):May25

ALDEBURGH

ON-1193(12-34):Apr15(x2), 16,May15,Jun14,21

D-520:Apr15,16

D-673:May31,Jun18,21

ALDERNEY

ON-1199(14-04):

May23,29,1(x2),Jun7,30

D-551:Jun25

AMBLE

ON-1176(12-19):Apr7,8,23

D-569:Apr7,23

ANGLE

ON-1114(47-011):Apr6,21, May1,5,6,27,Jun23,28

D-601:Apr3,7

D-638:May4,7,11,Jun7,10, 17,22,23,25,26

ANSTRUTHER

ON-1174(12-17):

Apr29,May26,30,Jun3,7

D-667:

Apr2,May9,26,Jun3,7,12

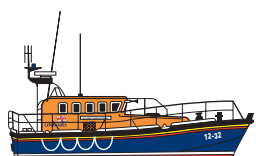
APPLEDORE

ON-1140(47-027):

Apr13,Jun3,8

B-742:May1,Jun16,17, 23(x3)

BB-060:Jun1,4,6



ON-####(12-##)
Mersey class
last built: 1993
refit cost: £190,000

ARAN ISLANDS

ON-1217(17-06):Apr13,15, 19(x2),28,30,May16,17(x3), Jun6,9,11,15,17

ARBROATH

ON-1194(12-35):

Apr29,May25,Jun10,30

D-621:Apr29,May25,

Jun10(x2),30

ARKLOW

ON-1223(14-19):Jun13

ARRAN (LAMLASH)

B-770:Apr23,May5(x2),15, 18,Jun26

ARRANMORE

ON-1244(17-22):Apr9,21, May6,8,26(x2),Jun2,3(x2), 8,16,17,24(x2),29

ATLANTIC COLLEGE

B-763:Apr14,15

BALLYCOTTON

ON-1204(14-06):Apr29

ON-1233(14-25):

May23,28,Jun2

BALLYGLASS

ON-1235(17-15):Apr15,

May4,21,31(x2),Jun11

BALTIMORE

ON-1122(47-017):

Jun19,23,28

BANGOR

B-805:Apr4,May5(x2),13,

Jun1,4,9(x2),15,19,24, 28,30

BARMOUTH

ON-1185(12-26):Apr15

D-514:Apr14,15,28(x3),29,

May14,18,29,Jun1

BARRA ISLAND

ON-1230(17-12):

May29,2,6

BARROW

ON-1117(47-014):

May11,19,Jun5,27

D-567:Apr18,19,Jun1,2,11

BARRY DOCK

ON-1245(14-29):

Apr11,15,May5(x2),15,

Jun1,12(x2),13,27



ON-####(14-##)
Trent class
last built: 2003
refit cost: £220,000

BEAUMARIS

B-757:May25,27,Jun6,7, 10,12,15,24(x2)

B-768:Apr1,8,13,21,27,28, May1,2,7,11,21,23

BEMBRIDGE

ON-1112(47-010):

Apr22,May7(x2)

ON-1126(47-018):May16,

27,Jun16(x2),23(x2),25,

30(x2)

D-640:Apr2,7,May5

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED

ON-1191(12-32):

Apr1,May12,24,Jun3,5,7

D-639:

Apr1,18,May24,Jun3,26

BLACKPOOL

B-748:Apr18,May15

D-508:Apr18,May17,21,

Jun2(x2),11,12,17

D-558:Apr9

D-566:Apr9,18,May15,17,

21,Jun2(x2),11,12,17

BLYTH

D-606:May25,Jun17,22,23

D-660:Apr22(x2),May6(x2)

BORTH

D-622:Apr6,May6,12,

Jun18,23,24,25

BRIDLINGTON

ON-1169(12-12):Apr11,

May25,Jun3,4,5,9,10,

22(x2)

D-557:Apr8,27,29(x2),

May6,Jun17,26

BRIGHTON

B-722:May15(x2),21,23,26,

27,Jun2,4,6

B-737:Apr2(x2),3,8(x2),

9,14,7,22,29,May3,5(x2),

Jun14,15,23

BROUGHTY FERRY

ON-1252(14-31):

Apr7,9,15,19,May18,Jun6

D-539:Apr7,9,15,19,28,

May18,22,Jun5,6,19

BUCKIE

ON-1268(17-37):Apr15,6,

19,25(x2),Jun24,30

BUNDORAN

B-711:

May13,22,Jun4,12,16

BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH

B-733:Apr1,19,Jun2

D-672:Jun2

BURNHAM-ON-SEA

B-795:Apr19,May20

D-664:Apr19,May14,18,20

BURRY PORT

D-603:Jun30

D-611:Apr14(x2),18,May3,

16,Jun2,11,12,15,17,21,22

CALSHOT

ON-1109(47-007):Apr17

ON-1155(47-037):

Apr1,2,May6,7(x2),9,19,

26(x3),Jun12,26,27

D-604:

May30,Jun9,12,23,27,28

D-609:Apr2,3,4,14,17,18,

21,28,May17

CAMPBELTOWN

ON-1241(17-19):Jun7,11

CARDIGAN

B-752:Apr6,17(x2),May3,

16,25,Jun1

D-491:Apr6,9,17,29(x2)

D-547:May16,21,28

CASTLETOWNBERE

ON-1277(17-44):

May20,Jun3,25

CHISWICK

E-003:Apr8(x2),9(x2),13,

May2,5,7,9,12,Jun28,

29,30

E-006:Apr1(x2),3,7(x2),23,

28,29,May6,18,20,23,Jun9,

10,15,17(x2),18,19,21(x2),

23(x2),27,29

CLACTON-ON-SEA

B-744:May19

B-774:Apr6,11,18,May9

CLEETHROPES

D-625:May26,Jun2,3,4,13

D-650:Apr3,6,8(x2),15,28

CLIFDEN

B-724:Jun10,29

D-525:Jun29



ON-####(16-##)
Tamar class
introduced 2006
new cost: £2.6M

CLOVELLY

B-723:Apr6

B-759:May1,5,11

CONWY

D-627:Apr5,9,28,May1,4,6,

Jun2,9,11,17(x2),23(x2)

COURTMACSHERRY

HARBOUR

ON-1205(14-07):

Apr11,May18,24,Jun3(x2)

CRASTER

D-498:Apr9,May6

CRICCIETH

B-707:Apr14,28,May1,19

CROMER

ON-1162(12-004):

May10,Jun7,16(x2),24

D-509:Jun10,24,28

CROSSHAVEN

B-782:Jun22,25(x2),27

CULLERCOATS

B-811:

Apr5,7,15,May8,17,18,19

DOUGLAS

ON-1147(47-032):

Apr15(x2),May31,Jun25

DOVER

ON-1220(17-09):Apr6,17,

23,May15,18,19,27,Jun5,

10,12,16,17,21,23

DUN LAOGHAIRE

ON-1200(14-05):

Apr21,27,28,May3,7,26,28,

29,Jun3,4,12

D-565:Apr5,21,27,May3,

Jun8,15,18

DUNBAR

ON-1207(14-09):

Apr16,19,23,Jun22,24,27

D-544:Apr17(x2),19,May3,

Jun17,21,24

DUNGENESS

ON-1178(12-21):

Apr11,26,May6,Jun9,20

DUNMORE EAST

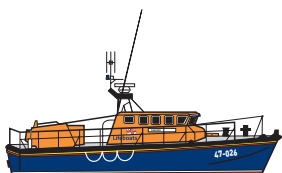
ON-1215(14-17):

Apr30,May25,Jun19,23

EASTBOURNE

ON-1195(12-

<p>FOWEY ON-1222(14-18): Apr2,May12,19,Jun8,13 D-526:Apr2,4,17,May2,4, 19,26,29,30,Jun8,15 FRASERBURGH ON-1259(14-34): May8,12,31(x2),Jun19 GALWAY B-738:Apr14(x2),30, May6(x2),7,Jun1 GIRVAN ON-1196(12-37):Apr7, May5,14,21,Jun4 GRAVESEND B-801:Apr3,4,7(x2),10, 11(x2),14(x2),21,22(x2), May2,8 E-001:May19,20,28(x2), 30(x2),Jun7,10,16 E-002:Jun18,23,25 GT YARMOUTH AND GORLESTON ON-1208(14-10):Apr23 ON-1213(14-15): May28,Jun15,19 B-786:Apr5,24,29,May8,9, 13,19,20,Jun2,7,28 HAPPISBURGH D-607:Jun1,18 HARTLEPOOL ON-1274(14-37): Apr10(x2),29,May13,Jun2, 3,4(x2),12,14,17 B-766:Apr5,10(x2), May13(x2),16,17,25, Jun2,14,17 HARWICH ON-1202(17-03):Apr9,15, May7,10,16,18,19,28,Jun3, 9,14,19,20,26,27 B-789:Apr1,2,3,9,12,15,16, 21,29,May7,18,19,Jun3,6, 9,14,26,27 HAYLING ISLAND B-712:Apr14,May8,19(x3), Jun7,8,10,13,19(x2),23 D-642:Apr14,May20,Jun7, 8,13,19 HELENSBURGH B-791:Apr8,11,15,23(x2), 27,May15,27,28,Jun9,11, 14,17,18,20 HELVICK HEAD B-760:May18,21,Jun6,7, 14,18,28 HOLYHEAD ON-1272(17- 41):Apr9,26,30, May5(x2),14,17,Jun12,18 D-601:May19,22</p>	<p>HORTON AND PORT EYNON D-490:Apr14,16,29,May2, 3,21(x2) D-531:Jun16,27 HOWTH ON-1180(14-01): May26,Jun19 ON-1258(14-33): Apr2,10,May4 D-659:Apr9,29(x2),May7, 26,Jun17,21 HOYLAKE ON-1163(12-005):Apr5,8, 13,15(x3),May22,Jun17 HUMBER ON-1216(17-05):Apr6(x2), 14,16,28,May8,17,24,28, Jun12,16 ON-1237(17-17):Jun28 HUNSTANTON B-713:Apr30 H-003:Apr9(x2),May19, Jun2(x2),24 ILFRACOMBE ON-1165(12-007): Apr22,May6,Jun21,25 D-555: Apr8,20,May6,12,Jun25 INVERGORDON ON-1206(14-08):Apr15,28, May19,Jun7,13,16,24 ISLAY ON-1219(17-08): Jun2,23,25 KESSOCK B-771:Apr6,14,20,28, May18,19,Jun5,11,14 KILKEEL B-812:Apr6,May28,Jun16, 17,19,21 KILMORE QUAY ON-1133(47-021): May6,Jun15 KILRUSH B-729:May4 KINGHORN B-720:Apr5(x2),8,9,10,22, 29(x2),May5,6,7,8,11,13, 14,23,25,27,Jun3,9,17,23, 28,29 KINSALE B-796:Apr9,May17,19,24, 28,Jun18,21,23,25 KIPPFORD D-553:May1,Jun10 KIRKCUDBRIGHT B-814:May1,Jun3 KIRKWALL ON-1231(17-13): Apr15,May6,Jun19,28</p>	<p>KYLE OF LOCHALSH B-740:May17,Jun12,16 LARGS B-739:Apr1,9,15,25,28(x3), 29(x2),May13,27,29,Jun9, 23,24(x2) LARNE ON-1246(14-30): Apr17,Jun19,23,24 D-646:Jun10 LERWICK ON-1263(17-34):May22, Jun2,3,9 LITTLE AND BROAD HAVEN D-628:Apr20,May19(x2), Jun9(x2),16 LITTLEHAMPTON B-779:Apr2,5,6(x2),22,28, 29,May2,4,22,26,28, Jun10(x2),11,12,14,19, 24(x2) D-631:Apr6,15,May28, Jun10(x2),11(x2),12,14,24 LITTLESTONE-ON-SEA B-785:May6,28 LLANDUDNO ON-1164(12-006):Apr15, May4,24,27,Jun23(x4) D-656: May25,26,27,Jun6,25 LOCHINVER ON-1271(17-40): May26,Jun5,12 LONGHOPE ON-1284(16-05):Jun2,16 LOOE B-767:Apr6,11,12,29, May19,25 D-574:Apr9,May23 LOUGH DERG B-586:Apr1,18,25, May18(x3),27(x2),28,Jun2 LOUGH SWILLY ON-1111(47-009):Jun18 B-717:Apr3,May27,Jun4, 10(x2),22,24 LOWESTOFT ON-1115(47-012): Apr28,30,May17 ON-1132(47-020): Apr16,20,23,25,Jun6,8,23 LYME REGIS B-741:Apr14,18,May3,6,9, 10,21,Jun12,23 LYMINGTON B-784:Apr15(x2),21,22,26, May7,14,27,29(x2),Jun2, 4(x2),12(x2),17,23(x3),24, 25,26,28</p>	<p>LYTHAM ST ANNES D-657:Apr1,7,8(x3),9,14, 21,22,May16,17(x2),Jun1, 12,13,16,17 MACDUFF B-804:Apr25,Jun1,8(x2) MALLAIG ON-1250(17-26):Apr14, May9,17,21,22(x2),27(x2), Jun3,16,26 MARGATE ON-1177(12-20):Apr10, May12,18,20,21,25,27, 28(x2),Jun1,7,10(x2),20 D-545: May2,12,20,24,Jun7,28 MINEHEAD B-708:May2,6,19,Jun12,18 D-549:May2,6,19,Jun12,18 MOELFRE ON-1116(47-013):Apr9 ON-1142(47-029): Apr20,30 D-532:Apr9,14,Jun17 MONTROSE ON-1152(47-034): May30,Jun6 D-626:Apr11 MORECAMBE D-564:Apr1,8,14,30,May4, 18,Jun2,4,9,12 H-002:Apr8,14,15(x2),20, 26,30,May4,30,Jun2,9(x2), 11,12 MUDEFORD B-806:Apr2,14,18,21, May6,12,Jun3(x2),6,8,18,23 NEW BRIGHTON B-721:Apr5,10,15(x2),16, 17,May5,15,27,28 B-755:Jun9,19,26,27 H-005:Apr15,Jun3 NEW QUAY (CARDIGANSHIRE) ON-1172(12-15): Apr2,15,25(x2),Jun25 ON-1184(12-25):May18 D-616:Apr2 D-655: Apr25(x2),May4,Jun9,29 NEWBIGGIN B-745:Apr12,16,30, Jun3(x2),10,17 B-769:Apr10 NEWCASTLE ON-1188(12-29):Jun17 D-637:Apr28,May18, Jun1,4,17 NEWHAVEN ON-1243(17-21):Apr2,14, 15,19,27,29,May5,20(x2), 27,Jun9(x2),10,12,20</p>	<p>27,Jun9(x2),10,12,20 NEWQUAY (CORNWALL) B-715:Apr17,28,29,May6, 15(x2),Jun28 D-636:Apr14,15,17,25, May6,Jun28 NORTH BERWICK D-619:May6,22,Jun28 OBAN ON-1227(14-23):Apr8,11, 16(x2),18,20,May5,17,27, Jun3,6,17,24,26(x2) ON PASSAGE ON-1270(17-39):Jun2 PADSTOW ON-1283(16-04): Apr17,30,May6,9,16,26, Jun9,11,25(x3) PEEL ON-1181(12-22): Apr4,May11,31,Jun28 PENARTH B-725:Apr10,29,Jun2,12 D-534:Apr29,Jun3 PENLEE ON-1265(17-36): Apr14,May27,Jun27 B-787:Apr8,14,May19, 25(x2),Jun9 PETERHEAD ON-1138(47-025): Apr4,28,May16 ON-1282(16-03):Jun11 PLYMOUTH ON-1264(17-35):Apr1, 16(x2),May25,27,28,30, Jun9,13,18,21,25,30 B-775:Apr4,16(x2),May25, 28,Jun5,9(x2),15,21,25,30 POOLE ON-1131(47-023):Apr2, 8(x2),13,21,30,Jun2,4,17, 19,28 B-710:Apr2,8,9,13,20, 21(x3),22(x2),26,27(x2), 28,May6,10,11,19,27, Jun2(x2),4,10 POOLE, THE LIFEBOAT COLLEGE ON-1286(16-06):May23 PORT ERIN B-813: Apr1,May12,Jun17,19 PORT ISAAC D-546:Jun1,16 PORT ST MARY ON-1225(14-21): Apr28,Jun9,28</p>	<p>PORT TALBOT D-501:Apr11(x2),30 D-550:Apr7,Jun20,26 PORTAFERRY B-706:Apr11,12,13,15, May7,25,26,Jun21 PORTHCAWL B-726:Apr9,14(x2),28,29, May2,17,28,Jun5,9,10 PORTHDINLLAEN ON-1120(47-015):May5 PORTPATRICK ON-1151(47-033):Apr17 PORTREE ON-1214(14-16): May1,21,Jun4,10,12 PORTRUSH ON-1247(17-23): Apr16,May1,3,8,21 D-572:Apr16,23,May1,20, 26,Jun1,8,9,10 PORTSMOUTH B-718:Jun30 B-730:Apr1,4,8,20,22(x5), 23,25,28,29,May6(x2),10, 12,15,18,20(x2),21,26, 27(x2),31,Jun9(x2),10(x3), 13(x2),19(x2),20,23 D-554:Apr4,22(x3),23,29, May12,24,26,Jun3,10,13, 17,19,20 PWLLHELLI ON-1168(12-010): Apr15,28,29 D-522:Apr7,28,Jun5 QUEENSFERRY B-735:Apr4,5,16,May3,4,6, 16,20,Jun8,17,26,27 RAMSEY ON-1171(12-14): Apr4,13,4,27 RAMSGATE ON-1197(14-02):May6,15, 18,25,30,Jun1,3,18(x2), 20,22 ON-1213(14-15):Apr17,26 B-765:Apr9,10,May6,14, 19(x2),23,30,Jun2,3,10,18 RED BAY B-728:May7,Jun5,9(x2) REDCAR B-777: May6,Jun3(x2),17,23 D-511:Jun3 RHYL ON-1183(12-24): Apr15,21,Jun10 D-632:Apr8,11,12,14,15, 17(x2),21,28,30,May4,23, 28,31,Jun2(x2),8,9,10,11, 12(x2),22,24(x2),27</p>
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ON-####(47-###)
Tyne class
last built: 1990
refit cost: £220,000



B-###
B class
Atlantic 21,75 or 85
new cost: £135,000



D-###
D class
new cost: £29,000



E-###
E class
last built: 2002
refit cost: £60,000



H-###
Inshore rescue hovercraft
new cost: £175,000

ROCK D-634:Apr9,May15,29, Jun10,29,30	May5(x3),Jun9(x3),16, 17(x4)	D-668:Apr19,May4,8,13, 20,21,28,Jun22,25	TENBY ON-1281(16-02): May27,Jun8,22	TRAMORE D-615:Apr1,15,May20	WEXFORD D-644: Apr1(x2),20,29,May13
ROSSLARE HARBOUR ON-1276(17-43): May5,Jun6	SILLOTH B-714:Apr30(x2),Jun17	ST MARY'S ON-1260(17-31): Apr16,May11,25,27,Jun10	D-562:Apr5,8,10,14,May3, 24,Jun5,15	TREARDUR BAY B-731:Apr1,15,21,30(x2), May5,6,Jun9(x2)	WEYMOUTH ON-1261(17-32): Apr12,May3,5,24,28,29,30, Jun2,9,18,22,27
RYE HARBOUR B-727:Apr14,May6,26, Jun3,10(x2)	SKEGNESS ON-1166(12-008): May8,Jun1	ST PETER PORT ON-1203(17-04): Apr1,2,4,6,14,20,May17, Jun1,2,4,9,16	THE LIZARD ON-1145(47-030):May20	D-620:May5,6	B-746 :Apr28,May5,8,19, 28,30,Jun9,19,27(x2)
SALCOMBE ON-1110(47-008):Apr21	B-792:Apr29,Jun10	STAITHES AND RUNSWICK B-788: Apr28,May13,Jun6,23	THE MUMBLES ON-1127(47-019): Apr15,28,Jun30	TROON ON-1275(14-38):May1,8, 20,26,Jun7,23,24(x2)	WHITBY ON-1212(14-14):Apr8
ON-1130(47-022): Apr29,Jun12,14,18,24	SKERRIES B-747:Apr6	STORNOWAY ON-1238(17-18):Apr2(x2), 13,25,May14,Jun4,5,11,13, 26	D-623:Apr5,6,7(x3),12,18, 27,Jun2(x2),10,16,22,25, 29,30	D-506:Apr5,May8,13, 20(x2),Jun7,13,23,24	ON-1266(14-35):Apr28, May5,16,22,27,Jun29
B-794:Apr1,13,21,28, May5,6,14,Jun3,5,13,24	SLIGO BAY B-781:May18,Jun17(x2)	STRANRAER D-519:Jun11	THURSO ON-1273(17-42): Apr30,Jun7,12,29	TYNEMOUTH ON-1242(17-20):Apr1,22, May27,31,Jun10,11,24	D-512:Jun2
SCARBOROUGH ON-1192(12-33):Apr13	SOUTH BROADS D-492:Apr26,Jun2	D-538:May13	TIGNHABRUAICH B-718:Apr12	D-513: May14,20,31,Jun8,11	D-674:May30,Jun13
D-515: Apr29,Jun9,16,20,24,25	XP-42:Apr26	STROMNESS ON-1236(17-16):Apr17, Jun16,20	B-743:Apr27,May6,Jun24	D-535:Apr6(x2),21,25, May4,7(x2)	WHITSTABLE ON-1266(14-35):Apr28, May5,16,22,27,Jun29
D-560:Apr10	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA B-776:Apr11,21,27,29, May8,16,19,24,26,27,29, Jun7,9,16(x2),18,23	ON-1236(17-16):Apr17, Jun16,20	TOBERMORY ON-1257(17-30): Jun2,4,5,24	VALENTIA ON-1218(17-07):Apr10,11, 20,May4,13,19,Jun1,6,9	D-674:May30,Jun13
SEAHOUSES ON-1173(12-16): Apr5,10,May16,Jun3	D-492:Apr26,Jun2	SUNDERLAND B-762:Apr5,8,15,16, May9,15	ON-1270(17-39): Apr8,28,May27	ON-1218(17-07):Apr10,11, 20,May4,13,19,Jun1,6,9	WICK ON-1224(14-20): Apr7,30,May2,Jun12,22
D-529:Apr4,5,10,May4,13, 15,16,Jun3(x2)	D-633:Apr30(x2),May25 (x2),31,Jun5,6,17,18,22,26	SWANAGE ON-1182(12-23): May30,Jun16,18	TORBAY ON-1255(17-28):Apr1,6,14	WALMER B-808:Jun9	WICKLOW ON-1153(47-035): Jun1,16,21
SELSEY ON-1146(47-031):Apr5, May20,27,Jun10,25,28	H-004:May24	ON-1187(12-28): Apr1,6,7,8,15,23,Jun9	ON-1279(17-46):Apr29(x3), 30,May9,19,27,28(x2), Jun7,8,9,14,15,17,20	WALTON AND FRINTON ON-1112(47-010): May28,31,Jun13,14	D-671:Jun27
D-533:Apr5,May20	ST AGNES D-630:Jun22,24	D-613:Apr6(x2),14,15, May5,Jun7,9,16,27	D-602:Apr2,5,8,16,18(x2), 20,30,May12,14,18,25, 28(x2),29,31,Jun8,9(x2),12, 14,15,17(x2),20,23,24	ON-1154(47-036): Apr15,25,May7,14,19	WITHERNSEA D-541:Apr15,May7
SENNEN COVE ON-1121(47-016): Apr14,Jun3,9	D-641: Apr2,8(x2),May5,Jun17	TEDDINGTON D-576:Apr1	TOWER E-001:Apr5,6,8(x2),11, 15(x3),16,17,18,19(x3),20, 21(x3),22(x2),23(x2),24, 25,26,27(x2),28(x5),May1, 4(x2),5	WELLS ON-1161(12-003): Apr5(x2),Jun1,4,13,24	WORKINGTON ON-1141(47-028): Apr30,May1,3,27
D-624:Jun27	ST BEES B-719: Apr20,May23,Jun15,16	TEIGNMOUTH B-809:Apr13,14(x2),16(x2), 28,May17,23,27,Jun1(x3), 20,21,23,28(x2),30	E-004:Apr1,2,3,4,May15, 17,18,20,23(x2),27,28, 29,31,Jun2,3,6,7,8,9(x2), 10(x3),13,14,16(x4),17,19, 20(x4),25,26,28,29	D-661:Apr1,29	D-629:Apr30,May1
SHEERNESS ON-1211(14-13): Apr29,30(x2),May6(x2), 7(x2),28,Jun6,21	ST CATHERINE B-772:May1,20,26,Jun10	XP-32:Jun28	E-005:May3(x2),Jun4	WEST KIRBY D-610: Apr28,May2,6(x2),Jun19	YARMOUTH ON-1249(17-25):Apr10, May5,19,24,27,28(x2),30, Jun7,15,16,22,23,25
7(x2),28,Jun6,21	ST DAVIDS D-543:Apr3,25,May6			WEST MERSEA B-761:Apr1,8,9,13,15, May6,26,29,Jun9,28(x3)	YOUGHAL B-780:Apr21,Jun22
18,26,27,30,Jun2,8,10,23, 24(x2),26,30	ST HELIER ON-1157(47-039):Apr21, May26,30,Jun24,25(x3)			WESTON-SUPER-MARE B-701:Apr4,14,28, May3,Jun6	The services listed here are those for which returns had been received at RNLI Headquarters and processed by 30 June 2007.
SHORELAND HARBOUR ON-1158(47-040):Apr8,9, 21,May5,7,10,15,17,Jun16	Jun2(x2)			B-736:Jun12	
D-645:Apr2,6,17	ST IVES ON-1167(12-009): Apr3,May13,16			D-537:Apr3,4,14,28,May1, 3,7,17,19,Jun6,9(x2),12,20	
D-647:Apr21,24,29(x3),				D-570:Jun12	

NAMING CEREMONIES

B-806, *Mundeford Servant*,
Mundeford, 23 May 2007
B-675, *Tabby Cat*,
relief fleet, 20 July 2007
D-675, *The Doris and Harry*,
relief fleet, 20 July 2007
D-656, *William Robert Sanderson*,
Llandudno, 7 July 2007



Sunderland's Wolseley

ON STATION

B-820 *Elizabeth Jane Palmer*,
Flamborough, 13 August 2007
(B-703 has been withdrawn)
B-756 *Eve Pank*, Falmouth, 28 June 2007
ON-1286 (16-06) *Frank & Anne Wilkinson*,
relief fleet, 27 April 2007
D-677 *Jacky Hunsley*, Redcar, 8 August 2007
(D-516 has returned to the relief fleet)



Relief fleet's Frank & Anne Wilkinson

B-819 *Minnie & Ernest George Barry*,
Lough Swilly, 28 July 2007
(B-717 has been withdrawn)
B-818 *The Oddfellows*, Sheringham, 11 July 2007
(B-702 has been withdrawn)
B-705 *Vera Skilton*, Lough Derg, 18 July 2007
(B-586 has been withdrawn)
B-817 *Walseley*, Sunderland, 20 May 2007
(B-762 *Jack and Joyce Burcombe*
has returned to the relief fleet)



Relief fleet's The Doris and Harry (see page 31)

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Awe and wonder

Garden designer Chris Beardshaw is passionate about the earth, the sea – and the RNLI, as Liz Cook finds out

'What is your idea of Paradise?' That is Chris's question to everyone for whom he designs a garden. There is no 'Beardshaw design' to pick from a catalogue but instead a unique journey of exploration into the heart and mind of the person who will be experiencing that garden. 'We look at textures, heights, colours. It's orchestration for a personal space,' explains Chris. 'Putting outside what's inside can mean bearing your soul.'

Quietly bursting with a deep passion, Chris is something of a paradox. He is known to millions as a TV presenter and top-flight Chelsea Flower Show exhibitor, yet he is in constant awe of the very materials of his trade: soil, seed and plant. The near-magical transformation from modest, apparently inconsequential seed to majestic full-grown specimen is what has inspired him since the age of 4. Then it was cress on the windowsill, today a cedar tree perhaps.

Chris is keen to share the joy of gardening with all. 'I was so lucky to have met one or two people through my life who put their arm round my shoulder and encouraged me when I needed it,' he remembers. 'Anyone can garden. Don't think of it as a chore and don't get angst ridden about it – just have a go!'

The beauty of all that Nature can conjure is of course not restricted to land and, perhaps not so unexpectedly, Chris finds the same sense of wonder when scuba diving. 'I'm not someone who dashes about underwater,' he muses. 'I can be in the same place for half an hour, looking at the life down there, trying to really see. It can be very meditative.'

There is an added edge to venturing below the water's surface, though: 'It is so deeply relaxing, yet you are also so out of your comfort zone. You are a visitor for just a moment, before you return to your own world. You must respect that status. I've seen

diving accidents, so I avoid any risk that is beyond my capabilities.'

Chris explains his approach: 'I have to step inward. It's a bit like an athlete envisioning a race before they run. I become very conscious of every action I take underwater. Rational decision making is key – if the current suddenly picks up or the visibility drops, I need to get it right in a split second.'

Of course, Chris never dives alone: 'Choose carefully who you dive with,' he advises. 'Their personality underwater can be very different from on land! My buddy and I completely respect each other so if one feels uneasy about a dive the other will forego it immediately.'

Many of Britain's best diving locations are familiar to Chris, including Oban, the Orkneys, St Abbs, Pembrokeshire, Lundy, The Lizard and Lyme Regis. His dive boat skippers are often former RNLI lifeboat crew members and he values their knowledge of the sea and locality. 'If they say we're not going out today, we're not going out!' he explains. 'I've learnt not to "grab" a dive. It's safer that way and the best ones can sometimes be the least expected.'

But Chris's connection with the RNLI goes back much further. It was a lifeboat demonstration during a childhood holiday by the sea that caught his attention and admiration, something Chris maintains to this day. He promotes the RNLI on his website, is known to waive fees if a donation is made and often mentions the charity in media interviews. 'If I'd grown up nearer the sea, I would have got involved directly, but living inland, this is what I can offer instead,' says the 36-year-old. 'I tell everyone how much the RNLI and its volunteers are worth supporting. I know it's good to escape the bureaucracy and control of Government but I can't rationalise the lack of established

funding given the quality and importance of the service.'

'I live on the edge of the High Wold in Gloucestershire, just above Tewkesbury and saw the work of the RNLI in the floods. We all need to think so much longer term. The flood plains are there for a reason! We need to work towards a cohesive and vibrant form of planning that encompasses population, industry, agriculture and Nature.' That would be Paradise indeed!



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Chris was 'shocked and flattered' to be invited by the National Rose Society to put his name to one of the new 2007 series of roses, pictured above:

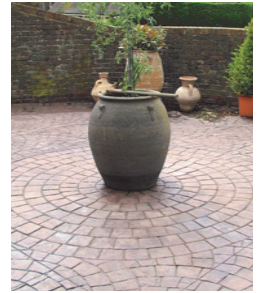
'The Rosa Chris Beardshaw, produced by C & K Jones, is big, pink, blousy and fragrant – not at all like me (!) but something just like I'd have seen standing in a vase on my grandmother's kitchen table. It's a hybrid tea, repeat-flowering and quite self-sustaining rose, suitable for an informal style of garden.'

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'I tell everyone how much the RNLI and its volunteers are worth supporting.'



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The pull of the lifeboat

Hannah Chittock tells how she came to join the RNLI 'family'

When my husband Jon was a child, he and his friends would peer through the window of the old RNLI station in Lymington for a glimpse of the lifeboat and, behind it, a photograph that captured their young imaginations.

That black and white picture showed a lifeboat in flight over the waves of the Solent. It was an image that encapsulated the selflessness and bravery of those who volunteer for the RNLI, and one that was extremely exciting for a young boy with a taste for adventure and a love of the water.

So, when Jon got offered a job at the Royal Lymington Yacht Club last year, back where he had learned to sail, he jumped at the chance. And as he would be working right next door to the lifeboat station, he became determined to volunteer for the RNLI.

The sea courses through my veins too.

I was born in Liverpool to a family with strong maritime links and spent my early years on the north west coast, where the smell of the sea provided one of the strongest memories of my childhood. Later we moved to North Yorkshire, and I have vivid recollections of visiting Whitby, Bridlington and Scarborough and marvelling at the lifeboats I saw there and their volunteer crews, who braved the often grey and swirling waters of the North Sea and the rough winds that battered the shore.

As adults, Jon and I have found ourselves back on the coast, despite a rather circuitous journey that included extensive travel for me as a freelance correspondent (including South America for the BBC) and Jon spending several years in the Parachute Regiment.

Now, volunteering for the lifeboat provides Jon with that same essence of

camaraderie that he enjoyed in the Army and a ready-made group of good friends. Since volunteering he has been driving the tractor to launch the Atlantic RIB, but has recently been asked to join her crew – working and training alongside some of the people who were onboard the very boat in the picture that so inspired him. Beyond the station, the other young lifeboat crew families provide a valuable network of support.

Almost a generation after we first became aware of the great work of the RNLI, we now have a child of our own. We are determined to raise her with an enjoyment of and a healthy respect for the sea. Azara may still be less than a year old, but her interest in the RNLI seems to have begun already – when she saw Daddy driving the tractor to bring in the lifeboat after a recent launch, the picture on her face was priceless.

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your shout

Dear Editor

I've always enjoyed reading *the Lifeboat*. This time I read it over breakfast when the washing machine – a noisy one – was on. The new eye-catching arrangement held me riveted until finally the silence drew my attention away. The machine had been off for 15 minutes and I had not even heard the last spin. A tribute to your new format, I think!

Yours sincerely
Miss L le Cheminant
Bembridge, Isle of Wight



[This letter is representative of the overwhelmingly positive response to our relaunch of *the Lifeboat* and introduction of *RNLI Compass*. Thank you to everyone who took the trouble to write in or phone with their comments.

However, some readers felt our Coastal Life feature 'Not in my backyard?' was biased towards windfarms and/or part of a global warming bandwagon. Our aim was to

address the impact on the coastal community in general and the RNLI in particular, accepting the fact that offshore windfarms are to become more widespread. Our sources included the British Wind Energy Association, but also the RYA, MoD, DTI and RSPB and even planning committee papers with local objections, plus RNLI volunteers local to windfarms and RNLI operational staff. We made every attempt to be balanced and factual and apologise if any other relevant voices were unrepresented.

In our Spirit feature on Gold Medal awardee William Roberts, the anniversary service contact telephone number quoted was wrong. The correct number is: 07811 906404. Apologies for any confusion. Ed]

Dear Editor

During the Winter of 1940–41, I was serving aboard HMS *Saltarello*, an anti-submarine trawler, escorting convoys between the Clyde and the Forth, from our base in Belfast. This entailed a passage through the notorious Pentland Firth, where I really gained my 'sea legs'.

I could therefore visualise the rescue described in 'Baptism of fire and water' in the Summer issue. Dr Christine Bradshaw is a very brave lady and well deserving of her Bronze Medal – I think she deserved a Gold!

God bless you all
Norman 'Nick' Carter
Hinkley, Leicestershire

Dear Editor

When I was a teenager, my school offered sailing at the local reservoir as part of our PE. We mostly sailed a small wooden dinghy. The school insisted on lifejackets all round.

One cold, wet afternoon my friend David decided it would be fun to gybe without telling the crew. He thought with a bit of luck he could get me in the water. Actually the boat capsized and we both went in. I still remember the feeling of the water as it grabbed hold of my already wet jumper.

It was stunningly cold. I can still see the sky turning a strange green colour as the murky water closed over my face. At that moment, I knew that I had no chance of getting out unaided.

And I can still remember, a couple of seconds later, my lifejacket popping me back to the surface, and of coughing out the filthy water as I tried to tell David just what I thought of his prank. It was a great feeling to have survived.

Now, I'm a strong swimmer, and if the conditions are right I'll happily go in for the fun of it. But if I'm working on deck, helming, or rowing in the dinghy, you won't be surprised to hear that I will always wear a lifejacket, no matter what the conditions.

Kind regards,
Ged Haywood

[Offshore members can read more lifejacket stories like Ged's in their specialist supplement to *the Lifeboat*. Ed]

Dear Editor

Further to two letters in the last issue of *the Lifeboat*. First, do people donate after rescue? I once met a fellow boater, a professional type, who told me he goes sailing off Wales. Twice, he capsized his catamaran and twice the Pwllheli crew rescued him. When asked for a donation for the fuel used, he told them to get lost. He found this amusing.

Second, Mr Skinner's quest for Governor types who have his car sticker. Perhaps he might give me an accusing look, with my shaven head, tattoos, van and Liverpool accent – a stereotypical kleptomaniac! But Pwllheli's crew would not have to ask me for diesel after deliverance. The tanks would be filled in mute gratitude.

Yours sincerely
Derek Pugh
Governor, Litherland,
Liverpool

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





Photo: Keystone View Co.

State of the art

When crowds gathered in Dover on 10 July 1930 to see the naming of a new 20m motor lifeboat, they were to witness an historic moment for the RNLI. Named *Sir William Hillary* after the founder of the charity, the specially designed vessel was capable of 17–18 knots, twice as fast as any of her predecessors, and the first with a fitted cabin. She had been designed with speed in mind, so that crews could deal with rescues in the busy Dover Straits and reach ditched aeroplanes before they sank.

The lifeboat was ahead of her time – it wasn't until the 1990s that the RNLI began to produce all-weather lifeboats capable of more than 17 knots. Indeed, there are still lifeboats on station today with a similar speed – the Mersey and Tyne classes. The RNLI is now

planning to replace Mersey carriage-launched lifeboats with a new class, currently at its experimental stage and codenamed Fast Carriage Boat 2, or FCB2.

FCB2 is intended to match the Tamar and Severn classes' capability of 25 knots, a key factor in reaching casualties faster and so saving more lives. But this time such speed is provided not by propeller but water jet. Trials have shown that, in extremes, the craft can even be driven directly onto the beach, to land casualties quickly or to make recovery in rough weather safer – the jet tunnels simply spit out stones!

Information gathered from FCB2's performance will be used to design a prototype and then pre-production boat, hopefully the forerunner of service lifeboats planned to enter the RNLI's fleet in late 2010.

1930: The innovative *Sir William Hillary* is launched for the first time, at Dover, Kent
2007: The experimental FCB2 is unveiled – the future face of carriage-launched all-weather lifeboats?



Photo: Tony Roddam

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