



A word from the Branch Chairman...



Hello and welcome to the latest edition of our branch newsletter, which is my last one as Chairman of the Branch as my term of office ends at our AGM on 16 May. I have thoroughly enjoyed serving the branch over the last three years and I wish my successor Jenny Robinson well in the role. The branch has been very busy during the last year with many events including a concert at St John's Church in July, the Used Boat Show at Premier Swanwick Marina in September and two Skittles Evenings. We have also held regular souvenir sales at the Lockwood Centre and our Christmas collection at TGI Fridays. We are always on the lookout for more helpers so if you can spare just a couple of hours for one of our events during the summer please do get in touch. As the lifeboat service costs £100 million to run each year your continued help and support is very much appreciated. Please feel free to contact me or any of the other committee members about any items in the Newsletter or to offer support. Thank You. Best regards, *Keith*.

New Lifeboat arrives at Calshot Lifeboat Station



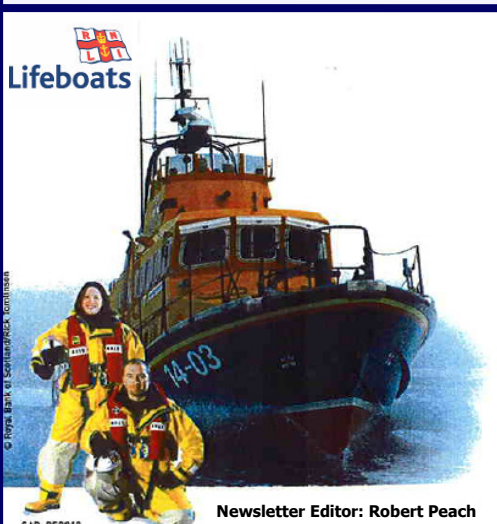
Tyne Class Lifeboat

The Arun class lifeboat based at Calshot lifeboat station was withdrawn from service on Sunday 4 February 2007 after 17 years of service in the RNLI fleet. Calshot's Arun, named the *Mabel Williams*, was the last such vessel in the RNLI's fleet. This has been replaced by a Tyne class lifeboat, ON 1155, named the '*Sarah Emily Harrop*', which was built in 1989, and previously served as Lytham St Anne's lifeboat and more recently in the RNLI's relief fleet. The '*Mabel Williams*' - ON 1159 - had been on service at Calshot since 2004, and before that they had an Arun called the '*Margaret Russell Fraser*', which boat had

replaced the last ever Brede class lifeboat that had served at Calshot for many years. The '*Mabel Williams*' has rescued 258 people and launched 239 times during her service in the RNLI fleet. RNLI Deputy Divisional Inspector Richard Weeks said: "This last Arun marks the passing of an era. They have served the RNLI extremely well and provided us with years of dependable service. When first introduced the Arun class was at the forefront of lifeboat design." The Arun class lifeboats introduced in 1971 have carried out 15,081 launches and rescued over 13,545 people. In 1982 the Arun class received a Design Council Award for 'the excellence of the design'. Calshot's crew has undergone two weeks of training on their new Tyne class lifeboat and RNLI Calshot Lifeboat Operations Manager Brian Laughlin said: "We are delighted to receive the Tyne class. It is a newer boat, capable of 17 knots and thanks to its hull design and protected propellers means that it is better suited to our local environment of shallow waters and sandbanks." The '*Sarah Emily Harrop*' Tyne class lifeboat has rescued 175 people and carried out 177 launches to date.



Arun Class Lifeboat



Lifeboats

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Newsletter Editor: Robert Peach

Tyne

The Tyne class lifeboat was introduced in 1982 and was the first 'fast' slipway lifeboat. It is currently the RNLI's main slipway launched lifeboat but can also lie afloat. Features include a low profile wheelhouse, a separate cabin aft of the upper steering position, and propellers protected by substantial bilge keels. The last Tyne was built in 1990.

Length	14m
Speed	17 knots
Range	240 nautical miles
Construction	Steel
Crew	6
Weight	27 tonnes
Launch	Slipway or afloat

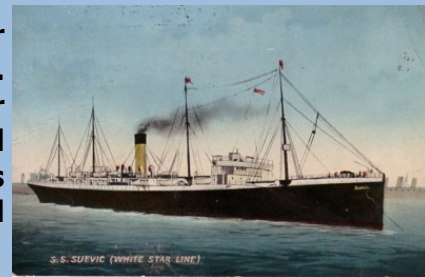


Train one, save many

Charity Registered in England number 209603

RNLI salute the centenary of the charity's biggest ever rescue

March 2007 marked the 100th anniversary of the biggest rescue ever carried out by RNLI volunteers during the charity's 183-year history. Four rowing lifeboats rescued 456 people from the White Star Liner *SS Suevic* after she struck rocks off the Lizard Point in Cornwall. In all 525 people escaped from the incident, and not one life was lost. This huge life saving achievement still stands as a record one hundred years after the shipping disaster.



The White Star Liner *SS Suevic*



SS Suevic Aground on the Lizard

The *SS Suevic* was on passage from Australia to Southampton with a general cargo when she ran onto the Maenheere Reef in dense fog and a strong south westerly gale. The signals of distress were quickly responded to by RNLI lifeboats from The Lizard, Cadgwith, Coverack and Porthleven. The Mullion lifeboat was also alerted but did not attend. In heavy seas, the RNLI volunteers rowed out time and time again to rescue hundreds of men, women and children. It took them almost 16 hours and, as a result of the bravery and determination of the volunteer crews, six silver RNLI medals were subsequently awarded.

Peter Greenslade, RNLI Honorary Secretary at today's Lizard lifeboat station, and a local historian, says it's hard to imagine just what the lifeboat crews went through one hundred years ago: *'When the lifeboats first launched it was dark, foggy and very rough, but that didn't deter the crews from putting to sea. We know that at times the rowers were barely stemming the tide as they pulled against the prevailing conditions. They were in open boats and at the mercy of the sea. It must have been terrifying and yet they went back to the Suevic time and time again. I, and the present day RNLI volunteers at The Lizard have nothing but admiration for what they all achieved.'*



SS Suevic being cut up by salvage teams



SS Suevic's bow section left on the Lizard

After the incident the Committee of Management of the RNLI granted six silver medals. One was to the Rev. 'Harry' Vyvyan, the Honorary Secretary at Cadgwith, in recognition of his gallant and arduous services. At one stage he went on board one of the ship's lifeboats manned by the *SS Suevic's* crew. Afterwards he recalled: *'I went on board to steer her into Polpeor but soon found the six men could hardly pull against the wind. You know the place and how nasty it is to come in with six men who could hardly pull at all, particularly against a heavy sea, a strong wind freshening all the time and a cross tide running strong. I can tell you I felt jolly proud when she touched the beach and all the women and children were landed safely. Directly I landed my passengers I stood up in the bows of the boat and called for volunteers to go back with me.'*

Silver medals were also awarded to Edwin Rutter, Coxswain Superintendent of the Cadgwith lifeboat, William Mitchell, Coxswain Superintendent of The Lizard lifeboat and Edwin Mitchell, Assistant Coxswain at The Lizard. The two other silver medals were presented to two of the *SS Suevic's* crew, George Anderson and William 'Bill' Adams, who time and again climbed down the side of the stricken ship to hand children to the waiting lifeboat crews. George Anderson said afterwards: *'It was a trying task but, lor, to see those mothers clasp their bairns to their breasts and to hear their thanks and 'God Bless yous' – well, it made me feel that I could have swum ashore with all the babies in the ship.'*



SS Suevic's stern section in Southampton Docks

RNLI surf experts warn extreme sports enthusiasts

Watersport and beach safety experts from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution are issuing a warning to extreme sports enthusiasts following the release of the charity's 2006 rescue statistics that show launches to surf sport incidents have increased by over 15 per cent. RNLI lifeboats and lifeguards have responded to more surf sports enthusiasts (wind/kite/board surfing, jetskiing and canoeing) than in 2005 for incidents such as sail failure, man overboard, capsizes, surfers overdue, and abandoned kit.



Matt Horton is an RNLI lifeguard manager and also a surfer. He comments: 'RNLI statistics show a worrying increase in the number of incidents that lifeguards and lifeboat crews respond to. Most recently, RNLI lifeboat crews have launched to surfers in trouble in Wales and a kitesurfer in difficulties off Bournemouth, an incident which sadly ended in tragedy. The fast-growing popularity of these sports will obviously mean there are more people out on the water but these increased figures are concerning. As a charity whose aim is to save lives at sea, the RNLI has a number of safety initiatives in place to help reduce these incident figures. 'The RNLI's website – www.rnli.org.uk – is worth checking out for surfing information about how to steer clear of danger, such as identifying surf conditions and understanding the 'rules of the waves', and there are also lots of different safety fact sheets for various surf sports. Becoming a member of an organised club is also a great way to pick up useful safety information and to develop skills with advice from experts.'



One such safety initiative pioneered by the charity is the introduction of the role of Lifeboat Sea Safety Officers (LSSOs) – a completely new volunteer role within the RNLI that aims to offer advice and information to the public about how to stay safe on the water.

Ray Barton is a PWC instructor and is also the first RNLI volunteer Lifeboat Sea Safety Officer (LSSO) in Scotland, using his watersport expertise and lifesaving knowledge to advise the public about sea safety issues. He says: 'The very nature of extreme sports is that they carry an element of risk – and actually, RNLI lifeboat launches to kitesurfers have increased by over 25 per cent and

launches to canoeists by around 40 per cent since last year. I understand why rough weather conditions can be tempting, but people – particularly in strong winds and cold seas – can become tired and vulnerable very quickly when things start to go wrong. It concerns me just how many people go to sea without following basic safety advice, which the RNLI offers free of charge.'

There are currently 27 RNLI LSSOs at lifeboat stations around the UK and Republic of Ireland and the aim is to have an LSSO at each RNLI lifeboat station around the coast (232). Ray continues with some general watersports safety advice:

- Check the weather and tides before you set out
- Ensure your kit is complete and in good condition – wear a lifejacket, and when jetskiing check the engine and fuel
- Make sure you go with a friend or let someone know where you are and when you'll be back
- Carry a means of communication – for example a VHF handheld radio, mini flares or a mobile phone in a waterproof bag
- Write your contact details on your equipment – if you lose your equipment at sea, report that you are safe to the rescue services so that they don't spend time looking for you
- If you see anybody in trouble, call 999 and ask for the Coastguard.'



For more information on watersport safety, along with beach and sea safety, phone 0800 328 0600, email: seasafety@rnli.org.uk or visit: rnli.org.uk for downloadable fact sheets.



Souvenir Sales!



Look out for our Branch Sales Caravan at our various local events and at Premier Swanwick Marina.



We always have a good selection of Lifeboat Souvenir Gifts and Christmas Cards/Calendars available to buy or order.



For further details or to place an order for any items please contact Jenny Robinson, on (01329) 310651.

Silver Badge Awarded!

Congratulations are due to one of our Branch's longest serving Committee Members, Robert Peach, who has just been awarded a Silver Badge by the RNLI in recognition of his long service to the Branch. Robert has been a member of the Branch Committee since 1993 and in that time has held the position of Chairman once (2001 to 2004) and for most of the rest of the time has held the post of Honorary Secretary helping to ensure the smooth running of the branch. Robert said: "I am delighted to receive this award and to know that our hard work does not go unnoticed."



Used Boat Show



The Branch had its usual stand at the Used Boat Show held at Premier Swanwick Marina during September 2006. This was the first year that the show had been held by the new owner's of the marina, Premier, and it was well supported. We sold stock totalling £1,913.50 and collected donations of £335.63, both of which were well up on last year's figures. Our thanks to Premier Marinas for hosting us during this superb event.

Christmas Appeal

Despite the cold weather the Branch braved the elements to hold our annual Christmas Appeal outside of TGI Friday's American Restaurant and Bar at Segensworth between the 14th and 24th December 2006. Patrons of the restaurant were as always very supportive and generous which enabled us to raise our second best ever total from this event of £1,277.79 for the RNLI. Our present record total is £1,385.49, which was raised in 2001. In addition, our sales of Christmas cards and other festive stock through our various outlets in the local area raised £1,902.29 for the RNLI. Our thanks to



TGI Fridays for their highly valued support and also to all of our outlets in the area too.

Skittles Evening

The Branch has hosted two skittles evenings at the Crofton Pub in Stubbington over the last 12 months. These were both very well supported and we raised £162.50 at the one held in September 2006 and £179.40 at the one in March 2007. A BIG thank you to all who supported these events.



Lifeboat Statistics

Search and rescue statistics published on the 21 February 2007 by the RNLI show that 2006 was its busiest year yet, continuing a climbing three-year trend. Last year saw a total of 8,377 lifeboat launches – the highest annual number to date. The total number of people rescued was 8,015 – only the second time in the RNLI's history that this figure has passed the 8K mark.



Forthcoming Locks Heath Branch Events

- 07.07.2007 Annual Flag Day Collection at Lockwood Centre, Locks Heath
- 14.07.2007 Stand at Summer Event at Lockwood Centre, Locks Heath
- 14.09.2007 Stand at the Used Boat Show at Premier Swanwick Marina (10 day event)
- 29.09.2007 Annual Concert at St John the Baptist Church, Locks Heath (7.30pm)
- 27.10.2007 Souvenirs and Christmas Card Sales Stand at Lockwood Centre, Locks Heath
- 24.11.2007 Souvenirs and Christmas Card Sales Stand at Lockwood Centre, Locks Heath
- 14.12.2007 Christmas Appeal Collection at TGI Friday's Restaurant, Segensworth (through to 24.12.2007)



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