

Shout!



Lifeboats

Lifeboat Association Newsletter October 2015

St Peter Port Lifeboat Station Branch

Chairman's Column

Welcome to this edition of Shout!

When I wrote this column last year Spirit of Guernsey was in the UK having her new engines fitted. I am pleased to report that 'our' boat (which is actually the oldest of the Severn class of lifeboats still in service) is now back on station and the crew are delighted with the enhanced performance. As you will read elsewhere in this issue after an extremely busy 2014 in terms of lifeboat callouts this year has been very quiet. But the lifeboat itself is always busy. It is of course kept in a constant state of readiness by the station mechanic Carl Bisson. And crew training exercises are held regularly. Indeed earlier in the year I had the privilege of witnessing a training exercise in conjunction with an RAF helicopter. The skill of the crew of the lifeboat and the helicopter was amazing to watch.

While a quiet year for lifeboat callouts, it has not been a quiet year for the fundraising team who as always have continued to work tirelessly in their fundraising efforts. But it is not only the team themselves, but we are also so grateful to the organizations and businesses whose staff choose to support the RNLI. It really does make a difference.

For those who are not already aware of it you may be interested to look at the St Peter Port lifeboat website at www.rnli.org.gg. As well as this website there is a new addition this year in the form of a Facebook page for our lifeboat. It can be found at [facebook.com/stpeterportlifeboat](https://www.facebook.com/stpeterportlifeboat). It contains up to date information and photos of many activities and callouts of Spirit of Guernsey.

Jim Le Pelley



Facebook

The St Peter Port lifeboat Facebook page was set up earlier this year by Colin Le Conte following the success of the St Peter Port lifeboat website.

The site has been immediately very popular with the people of Guernsey and internationally and the site already has over 1,000 'Likes'. These are the people who follow the site and receive information whenever the site is updated. Many businesses could only dream of receiving so many followers.

A number of people update the site to ensure the latest information is available. They include Danny Blake and Carl Bisson of the lifeboat crew, the photographer Tony Rive and Colin together with Celia Allen's Lifeboat Guild team who post forthcoming events.



The rescued teenagers on Flag Day.

The most popular Facebook post was the rescue of the teenagers at Grand Rocques. Due to the nature of Facebook, people shared the article and the more people liked it and commented, the wider it went. It ended up with 6,288 people seeing the article Colin posted. A photo of the rescued people on the bow of the lifeboat following their help with fundraising gained over 30 comments and reached 21,711 people with over

400 people liking the article. Such is the power of Facebook.

Even Carl's photo of the lifeboat engines with the title "ready for action" reached 2,132 people!

The Facebook site has a more immediate response and coverage and will provide increased exposure. The official St Peter Port lifeboat website will continue to be updated with the current and historic information as an official record of the activities of the local lifeboat.

Colin Le Conte

Lifeboat Operations Manager's Report

Last year was one of the busiest ever for the St. Peter Port lifeboat, partly due to the sheer number of calls and partly due to the quantity of training associated with the various combinations of equipment upgrade to the lifeboat on station. Since January, however, we have entered a lull in call-outs, so much so that a check on the records suggests that we have entered one of the quietest periods in some 40 years. So much for statistics, trends and averages.

In stark contrast to the preceding year, at the time of writing, the "Spirit of Guernsey" has only been called out nine times and there is little of significance upon which to comment. Of the nine calls, four have been to yachts, and one to an elderly tug which had been adrift for some thirty six hours. Refreshingly, a group of teenagers who had been stranded on rocks and for whom the lifeboat had stood by until the tide had subsided, promised to assist with fundraising as a way of expressing their gratitude, which they did on Flag day. Unrelated to this, but very strongly related to the underlying reasons for call out, is the irregular but more than occasional

underlying link between incidents and consumption of alcohol continues to be a problem. The task for the RNLI is to save lives, and bring those rescued safely to shore. Comment and condemnation is reserved for others. We continue to offer a charitable life-saving service, yet many clamour for a stronger link between cost of rescue and recompense, such as exists



in other jurisdictions. It is for those in Authority to consider and determine the balance between legal obligation and social conscience. Not so long ago, seat belts were considered unnecessary, yet today they are obligatory. In the same way, attitudes towards safety at sea and particularly the wearing of lifejackets is slowly, yet inexorably following suit.

Familiarisation with the upgraded engines and equipment is now complete and we are extremely pleased with the changes to our lifeboat, which now exceeds all expectations.

On the crew side, there were two departures towards the latter part of 2014 in Keith Martel and Dan Hamon. They were both long serving and dedicated crew, both having followed their respective fathers onto the boat. Their experience, dedication and contribution will be hard to replace. There remains, unlike many locations in the UK, and fortunately for us, always a list of selfless willing volunteers in Guernsey wishing to join the crew. The need for volunteer numbers with the right skill sets assists with succession planning, which is always key and selection is no easy task. Following considerable analysis and discussion, the crew selected four new recruits, two of which soon dropped out, for very good reasons. The remaining pair of Jack Sparkes and Shaun Tullier are both settling in well and have embarked upon their training schedule with considerable

enthusiasm. We wish them all the best in their commitment as volunteers.

The station was given its regular audit from Divisional HQ, who again struggled to find any matter of substantive criticism, mostly due to the manner in which the Station mechanic Carl Bisson looks after the nuts, bolts and fabric and Alison Marquis who ensures that the paperwork keeps pace too. Most recently, a new Divisional Inspector has been appointed. Nigel Jones has been promoted and replaces Richard Weeks who has departed for a position with a Solent ship operator. Nigel is no stranger to the Region and will, as with his predecessors, visit the station at regular intervals.

So I leave you with the following thought: After all call-outs and exercises, the lifeboat crew reflect on the experience, pick it apart, discuss the highlights, faults problems and lessons learned. Hopefully in future, those rescued, and others will do likewise.

Captain P. Gill



The Cobo rescue.

Air Marshal Peter Walker

It was with an immense sadness that we learned of the death of Air Marshal Peter Walker who was the president of our branch. Peter was a true friend of the RNLI and gave willingly of his time supporting us. He was well known for his caring support for so many Guernsey charities, but as a keen yachtsman himself he seemed to hold the RNLI in particularly high esteem. He and his wife Lynda used to come to every Flag Day, walking through town encouraging the collectors – and putting money into each and every collecting box he passed. When there were ceremonies for awards or certificates for crew members or volunteers, Peter would invariably offer to host the reception at Government House. He will be greatly and sadly missed by the branch and all involved with it. We send our sympathy and condolences to his widow Lynda who is herself the President of the Fundraising Guild and has together with Peter been a staunch supporter of our branch.



Jim Le Pelley

Sark Sea Service

Once again the RNLI and the St Peter Port lifeboat were represented at the annual Sark Sea Service held on the quay in the picturesque setting of Creux Harbour in August. After an exciting trip through the inshore passage around the south of Sark, Spirit of Guernsey went into Creux Harbour and tied up alongside. This year we were lucky in that after a damp early morning the sun came out and the service, led by Karen Le Mouton of the Methodist Church, was held in sunshine. Lifeboat coxswain Buz White had kindly allowed his own boat to be used to transport the Salvation Army band and other guests to Sark. Quite a large congregation enjoyed the service following which all had time to look at the lifeboat stall set up on the quay by Simon Adams and helpers and then it was time for the Guernsey contingent to board the lifeboat again for the return trip to Guernsey.



May Day Fundraising

Every year the RNLI nationwide is asked to stage a Mayday fund raising event. Originally it was hoped to use Castle Cornet as a venue but, owing to a double booking glitch, the Castle became unavailable. Fortunately the field to the side of **Le Friquet Garden Centre** became available. We were fortunate to obtain reduced costs for a small marquee and a generous rate from a shipping company to bring over a D Class inshore inflatable lifeboat.

Sunday 3rd May dawned overcast with drizzle! However by launch time, 13.00, the sun was shining and along came a steady stream of customers. There was face painting



and games for the children and a great display of archive photos, courtesy of John Webster, and some amazing model lifeboats. The D Class lifeboat was on display kitted out with the latest equipment and ably guarded by trainee crew members Jack Sparkes and Shaun Tullier. Grateful thanks to **Le Friquet Garden Centre** and all who helped on the day to raise public awareness of the work of the RNLI Guild in Guernsey.

Tony Pattimore

Supporters Association

This year we have been most fortunate to receive a number of donations from local companies as a result of their in house fund raising activities. In December staff from **Collas Crill** stepped aboard Spirit of Guernsey to learn more about the RNLI and to present a cheque for £1000 raised in their Christmas raffle. The money will go towards general upkeep of the Lifeboat and continued training of the crew. Raffle organiser, Jackie Mauger, said "We are delighted that the money we have raised will benefit the RNLI in Guernsey".

Also in December we were able to install a new, state of the art plotter system thanks to the generosity of **Willow Trust** and **Cherry Godfrey Ltd**; a big thank you to all the staff for their support.



The Greenman Motorcycle Club.

More recently we were fortunate to receive a donation from the **Greenman Motorcycle Club** raised from one of their summer charity bike nights. Along with other bike clubs the monthly meet takes place from the White Rock Café and attracts anything up to 200 bikes from young to old. July's event was in aid of the RNLI.



The Waitrose "Rowathon".

Also in July **Waitrose** did us proud with a 70 mile "Rowathon". Each year **Waitrose** hold a Partnership Day where they celebrate being in a Partnership and co-owners, and raise money for their Charity of the Year, which is the RNLI. Rowing machines were set up at both stores in the Rohais and Admiral Park. During the day a total of nearly £700 was raised. Grateful thanks to all the Partners at **Waitrose** Guernsey for their support.

In early August the St Peter Port station received a visit from eight-year-old Harry Mascall. Harry is on a mission to visit all 237 Lifeboat Stations in Great Britain and Ireland to raise money for the RNLI. Guernsey is his 72nd visit so far. We wish him success in his quest.

We were delighted that the teenagers who were rescued from the rocks at Cobo earlier in the year (see the Operations report) came out in force to help with the annual flag day on the 20th June.

It remains for me to thank most sincerely all those individuals and organisations who have supported us in so many ways during the last year.

Edward Fattorini. Chairman

Fundraising Chairman's Report

I cannot believe that another year has gone by so quickly but so profitably! Our thanks go to everybody who has continued to support us so well to ensure that we can raise the funds needed for the Spirit of Guernsey.

I should particularly like to thank the crew for giving up their time to help us with a number of events in addition to all the hours they put in with training, shouts etc. Their bravery, skills and commitment are the reasons that people are prepared to donate money to the Guernsey Lifeboat Guild and we value them greatly.

The Guild is fortunate to have a very hard-working Committee, and I would like to thank Jenny Ridley, Tony Pattimore, David and Kathy Le Cras, Lisa Corbet, Val Kilby, and Steve and Veronica Gould for all their hard work. We are delighted that Steve has been awarded the Bronze Badge by the RNLI and we look forward to his presentation.

Very sadly, we have recently lost Barbara Evans, who had been a very valuable member of the Committee for 25 years and our sympathy goes to her family. During the course of the year we have also lost three members of the shop rota: Jenny Mackay, Michelle Swift and Elizabeth Jordan and other supporters who have worked for us over the years. They will all be greatly missed. We are delighted to welcome Jo May and Rod Swanson to the Committee and would be very happy to welcome other members.

The RNLI shop in the Clocktower has been closed for refurbishment and I am pleased to say it will be re-opening in good time for your Christmas purchases. We are very grateful to crew member Danny Blake for all his hard work with the project. Souvenir sales have continued at the usual events and we look forward to a busy Autumn with Christmas sales. Thanks also go to Jill Vaudin for her donations of calendars and postcards which we sell.

Mostly Books in Commercial Arcade, supporting the RNLI, Guernsey Samaritans and Actionaid continues to do well, so do visit when you are in Town. We are open from 10 am to 2pm in the week and from 10am to 3.30pm on Saturdays.



The lifeboat alongside on Flag Day.

Particular mention must go to our fundraisers in Sark, led by the Adams family and to Alf Solway, all of whom have added considerably to our funds.

Flag Day, now split into 3 parts because of the many charities in Guernsey, has gone well. We have our last session at the **Waitrose**

Stores on 17th. October when we will have a final total for the year. Many thanks to all the helpers and to **Waitrose** for making us their Charity of the Year.

Annual events such as the Lunch, the Quiz and the Charities Christmas Fayre were again successful and the dates for this year are below. The slip for the Lunch is enclosed, but please apply soon as spaces are limited. Our Mayday event was excellent as you will see from Tony's report.

All in all it has been another good year and I thank you all for continuing to support us.

Celia Allen



Future events:

1. Friday, 2nd October, Quiz Night at the Peninsula Hotel.
2. Friday 9th to Sunday 11th October, *Host an RNLI Fish Supper!* See Facebook for further details.
3. Saturday 17th October, Flag Day at Waitrose stores.
4. Sunday, 22nd November, Charities Christmas Fayre at Beau Sejour.
5. Sunday 29th November, Annual Lunch at Les Rocquettes.

Call Celia on 720414 or email cla@cwgsy.net for further details.

Thank you again for all your support and we look forward to seeing you at our various events.



RNLI CHRISTMAS CARDS

Please support us by visiting the Clock Tower Shop for Christmas Cards and other gift ideas.



Lifeboats

Royal National Lifeboat Institution
Registered charity number 209603
Supported by voluntary contributions

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
President: HRH The Duke of Kent KG
Chairman: Admiral The Lord Boyce GCB
OBE DL

A charity registered in England, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland
www.rnli.org.uk

We apologise should any information in this newsletter be incorrect, and ask that you contact Ali Marquis at the Harbour Authority on **720229** with any corrections.

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