

May 2013 Issue 17

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RNLI Man Reaches The South Pole

One hundred years ago, Captain Titus Oates, formerly of the Royal Dragoon Guards, famously left Antarctic legends Scott, Wilson, Evans and Bowers in their tent, saying, "I am just going outside and maybe some time." He had limped to the South Pole as one leg was shorter than the other, having been shot during the Boer War.

Last December Dr. Lynne Tracey, Mum of Dart lifeboat helmsman Chris, joined an expedition to the South Pole in Oates's memory as the medical officer. She was accompanying three young soldiers from Oates's regiment, all wounded in Afghanistan, to ski the last 120 nautical miles to the South Pole. The venture was led by explorer, David Hempleman-Adams and also ex- Dragoon Guard, Justin Packshaw. Matthew Pinsent, four times Olympic Gold medalist, was among others on the team. Lynne had already trekked with David and Justin to the North Pole. The aim this time was to raise much needed funds for the charities 'Walking with the Wounded' and 'Alzheimers Research UK.'

Lynne had hung up her polar boots after five Arctic expeditions, but she was persuaded to join the expedition, having seen photos of the three soldiers and heard about their heroic actions in Afghanistan. Adam Crookshank had been blown up by a mortar, Robbie Harmer

was shot rescuing an Afghan and cheeky Nick Webb, only 23 years old, had suffered foot injuries when an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) exploded under his vehicle. She felt there was no choice but to trek with them and it was an honour and privilege to travel with these present day heroes.

The trek was Lynne's toughest. High altitude posed its expected problems as the South Pole is at over 9000 feet. The trek was organized to start with shorter distances and then these were ratcheted up as the trekkers became acclimatized to the lack of oxygen.

The wind was unrelenting during the first few days, dropping the temperature from minus thirty five degrees to minus fifty five and causing frostbite problems. Adam Crookshank's face, split from hairline to chin by a mortar, opened up five times during the journey, exuding shrapnel as it did so. The Sastrugi (hard, wind-blown hillocks of snow) caused Lynne to dislocate



Antarctica, under azure blue skies, there was much time for reflection. Everyone, especially as they watched the trek's three 'walking wounded,' thought of the soldiers fighting in Afghanistan. Knowing by satellite phone that there were floods in England, Lynne was very mindful of the RNLI and its Flood Rescue services. (Her son Chris on the Dart lifeboat crew was in fact deployed to the floods at Lostwithiel at the time.) Titus Oates coped with the tranquility of Antarctica by repeatedly restocking his yacht *Saunterer* in his mind. This was another link to Dartmouth as the *Saunterer* is now based in the Port.

Poignantly, whilst trekking, news was received that one of the Regiment, already redeployed to Afghanistan, had lost his legs in action. The trek seemed all the more important, tainted by grief but hopeful that 'Walking with the Wounded' will help the injured young soldier to lead a relatively normal life in the future.

When they reached their destination the three soldiers marched to the Ceremonial Pole, saluted their Regimental Colours, and everyone stood for a



The three wounded Royal Dragoon Guards march to the Pole

ribs pulling her pulk (sledge). She even had to evacuate one trekker due to illness by calling in a rescue Twin Otter plane with skis from the base camp at Union Glacier, 500 miles away.

As they trekked across the pristine white snows on

Continued on page 6

Launches since August 2012

No.	Date	Assisted	Location / Search area.	Description
154	22/8/12 Wednesday 1:06pm	2 adults	Newfoundland Cove Dart Estuary	Two kayakers rescued. Two men were attempting to paddle from Dartmouth to Paignton in a kayak. They became swamped as they left the estuary and beached the craft on rocks at the entrance to Newfoundland Cove. They contacted the Coastguard by mobile who tasked the R.N.L.I lifeboat. The kayakers were returned to Darthaven Marina. The lifeboat then returned to the scene and towed the kayak back.
157	15/9/12 Saturday 01:12am	2 adults	Anchor Stone River Dart	Fishing boat hit Anchor Stone at 1am. A 16ft. open boat with two men on board was returning to Totnes from a fishing trip at the Skerries when they hit the Anchor Stone on the River Dart. Neither was injured but the boat's steering was disabled. The lifeboat towed them back to Dartmouth. The crew was then redirected by the Coast Guard to a further incident. A large object had been reported, possibly an upturned boat, near the Western Blackstone. The area was thoroughly searched including the use of parachute flares, but nothing was found.
159	27/9/12 Thursday 2:39pm	1 adult	Half a mile off Beesands Start Bay	Topper capsized off Beesands. An elderly local sailor capsized his Topper and was unable to get back on board. He was spotted by two S. Devon College training yachts, Endeavour and Aspiration. The casualty had been in the water for 15 mins and was very cold. He and his craft were taken on board the Endeavour, skippered by Ian Mills. The Dart inshore lifeboat was tasked by the Coast Guard to assess the situation and took Haydn Glanville, their Paramedic crewman. The sailor was given a change of clothing and brought back by Endeavour to Dartmouth and taken to the local Cottage Hospital.
160	5/10/12 Friday 12:30am	1 adult	Dartmouth harbour	45 ft. yacht with problems in high winds. The lifeboat was launched when cries for help were heard from the river. The jib of the yacht Sea Brigand, with only the skipper on board, was unfurling in the high winds. The skipper was on the foredeck and was in danger of being thrown into the water in the wind and driving rain. Two lifeboat crewmen boarded the yacht but the jib could not be furled further. The yacht was swinging widely on her anchor chain and coming closer to other vessels as the tide fell. The Torbay All Weather Lifeboat launched to give assistance and came round Berry Head in F 10 (50 Knot) winds taking an hour to reach Dartmouth in the atrocious conditions. They went alongside and both lifeboat crews worked together to move the yacht to the visitor's pontoon at Darthaven.
165	16/1/13 Wednesday 12:02pm		Lighthouse Beach Dartmouth harbour	Callout to a 'body.' The Police asked the lifeboat to attend as they had a visual sighting from the cliff top of a body on Lighthouse Beach. The object turned out to be a life-sized mannequin used for training purposes. From identity marks the Coastguard was able to link it to the Britannia Royal Naval College. The lifeboat crew was asked to remove it before there were further sightings. They returned it to a BRNC boat exercising on the river.
166	4/2/13 Monday 11:50am	1 dog	West of North Hallsands Start Bay	Dog rescued after 80 ft. cliff fall. The Dartmouth Coastguard Search and Cliff Rescue team were called to the cliffs west of North Hallsands beach after a German Shorthaired Pointer had fallen 80 ft. They could see the dog on a ledge at the foot of the cliffs and requested that the Dart inshore lifeboat recover him. When the crew arrived the dog tried to come to them but his leg was too badly injured. He also had a fractured jaw and rib. The crew carried the very well natured dog back to the lifeboat. Once at the beach he was gently placed in a padded fish-box for his owner to take him to the vet. Tom (the dog!) is making a good recovery. The video of this rescue has been seen by over 31,000 people.



A full account of all launches, with photographs, video if available and positional maps, can be found on the Dart RNLI station web site whose address is at the foot of the page.

You can receive a Tweet when we launch, followed by details of the call out as it unfolds.



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The Launch and Recovery Vehicle for the Shannon all-weather lifeboat.



Taken during trials at Llandudno

Photo provided by Supacat

There is plenty of news and information about the RNLI's latest all-weather lifeboat, the Shannon, but as yet less has been said about the launch and recovery vehicle which has been designed by Supacat in conjunction with the RNLI. The Shannon will replace most of the charity's ageing Mersey and Tyne class boats. Of the 50+ Shannons to be built 50% will be carriage launched.

Today each new lifeboat and launch and recovery vehicle costs £1.5M and £1M respectively. At the moment the charity is fundraising for the launch and recovery vehicles for both Exmouth and Ilfracombe.

Supacat employee Carole Faithfull keeps her boat on the Dart and has met up with the Dart lifeboat crew and excited our interest in the project. As two of the first batch of Shannons are destined for RNLI Devon lifeboat stations, it seemed a good opportunity to visit Supacat's design and build centre of operations at Dunkerswell and to learn about the new system.

I was greeted by Nick Jones, an Engineer with a long interest in all-terrain vehicles. He was one of the founders of Supacat and moved the business to Dunkerswell in 1989 when they were developing vehicles for the MOD. They have since moved on to design and build the Jackel, the latest all-terrain mobile platform for the British Army in Afghanistan.

Supacat were asked by the RNLI to

enter a design for the new Shannon launch and recovery vehicle (L&RV). We were joined by Simon Turner the Project Engineer who described how the design evolved.

The Rig.

One specification was that the 18 tonne lifeboat on her carriage could be towed up an 18 degree (1 in 3) shingle beach. The breakthrough concept was to use a permanent four-tracked rig with two hydraulically powered tracks under the tractor and two under the carriage. The carriage is connected by a newly designed 5th drive swan neck coupling based on those found on articulated lorries. In tests at Dungeness the Prototype L&RV was able to tow the lifeboat up a 22 degree (1 in 2.5) slope. Currently the Mersey at Dungeness is first recovered onto her carriage. The tractor



Nick Jones. Director and Founder of Supacat

then climbs the shingle slope and winches the lifeboat on her carriage up to the top. The time to make the lifeboat ready to re-launch will improve from 25 to 10 minutes using the new system.

The Bridgestone supplied tracks are made of rubber and this provides a much quieter, more comfortable and speedier ride. The track system has been researched and completely re-designed by Supacat using grease filled bearings with poly-urethane overmouldings to render them maintenance free. The Shannon can be towed at 9mph over sand or shingle and, as the launching trials at Hoylake on the Wirral Peninsular demonstrated, the launch is also quicker because the new L&RV can take the Shannon across areas that the present lifeboat carriage cannot be towed over.

The Tractor

The RNLI also specified that the tractor and carriage should be able to operate in 2.4 metres of water and if the vehicle became immobilised it could be safely left to be covered by a 9 metre tide before being recovered.

The initial steel cabin was redesigned and replaced with one made at the RNLI subsidiary SAR Composites. Not only did it give a much better view for the driver but there was considerable weight reduction. The tractor driver is now high enough to have direct line of sight vision with the Coxswain. The Coxswain directs the



carriage to the final launch position and then operates the single forward release point. This means that the crew can be in their seats in the cabin for the launch and no longer have to simultaneously release four chains from the deck.

The air or water cooled L&RV Scania engine is the same as the two powering the lifeboat, giving a commonality for spares and servicing operations. The L&RV turbo diesel produces 450 hp, whilst the two lifeboat engines, rated at 650 hp, are capable of ejecting three quarters of a tonne of sea water per second through their water jets.

There is room in the tractor cabin for the driver and two launch crew if required. The driver has two joysticks on either side of his seat and a screen in front of him giving the engine and control read outs. When the direction of travel is reversed he swivels his seat through 180 degrees and the screen and joysticks move with him. The control logic is changed so that the joystick on his right side is always the driving control and pushing the joystick forwards is always in the direction of travel – neat! The left hand joystick controls the winch, as well as the cradle rotation, tilt and kneels.

Launching.

In a calm sea the Shannon can be launched by raising the cradle by means of a hydraulic arm and the lifeboat slides down the 7 degree slope under her own momentum. The angle can be greater if

she is positioned on a slope. In rougher seas the whole assembly is driven into the sea and the cradle is also lowered by 400mm. The coxswain times his launch to exit between waves and the thrust of the water jets is deflected by two ducts near the back of the tractor. The ability of the cradle to be lowered has resulted in cost savings as some lifeboat stations will not have to be altered as much to accommodate the new lifeboat.



The L&RV production line at Dunkerswell

The turntable.

The other main breakthrough concept was the use of a turntable cradle to enable the boat to launch and be recovered bow first. The cradle is mounted on a slewing bearing similar to those found on excavators to allow 360 degree rotation.

Recovery.

To recover the boat after a launch the cradle is swung through 180 degrees and

tilted again so that the feet, which were at the tractor end, are now resting on the sea bed for the lifeboat to drive on to. Two righting wheels prevent her tilting as she comes up the cradle. When the centre of gravity of the boat is over the slewing point, she is restrained and the rig is returned to the horizontal. The cradle is then rotated and the boat is winched stern first on the cradle, back to the tractor. The 18 tonne weight of the boat is therefore shared equally between the four tracks for the tow up the beach.

The prototype of the Shannon class, which is currently undertaking sea-trials, will enter the fleet as a relief lifeboat this summer. Exmouth and Ilfracombe RNLI Lifeboat Stations hope to receive their new lifeboats and launch and recovery vehicles in 2014.

If you would like to support the RNLI's appeal for the launch and recovery vehicle at Exmouth or Ilfracombe by holding a fundraising event or by making a donation please contact Guy Botterill: 07774 436265 or Guy_Botterill@rnli.org.uk.



John Fenton.
Dart Lifeboat
Press Officer

It is that time of year again!

This magazine and the station web site are produced and funded entirely locally. The costs are mostly met by our generous advertisers who continue to support us in these difficult financial times. The teams at the Dart lifeboat station, which include the Operational team, the Management team and the Fundraising team, all hope that you are interested in hearing about the activities of the RNLI locally and occasionally, as in this issue, in the wider field.

We will continue to distribute Dart D'Tales to the Friends of the Dart Lifeboat, national members of the RNLI, others who have declared their support over the years and to the wider public in Dartmouth, Kingswear and the surrounding areas.

The national members of the RNLI may believe that part of their annual subscription helps support this magazine but this is not so. Of the two hundred and sixteen national members we distribute the magazine to only fifteen have given a small additional contribution by becoming a Friend of the Dart Lifeboat.

As well as the magazine we also send out a monthly email update to those who have asked for it. It gives news of the latest shouts as well as events such as the lifejacket clinic that we have just held at the lifeboat station. It also contains news of forthcoming fundraising events.

If you would consider making a donation as a Friend, or would simply like to receive this magazine and/or the email update, please fill in the form on the next page.

In an ideal world Friends would contribute annually in the year beginning 1 April. ●

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Continued from page 1

minute's silence in memory of Captain Oates as Lynne watched with pride. Our soldiers continue to selflessly give their all for peace and justice in the world. Robbie and Nick have now been redeployed back in Afghanistan.

To learn more about the work of this charity have a look at the web site
<http://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk> ●

Dr Lynne Tracey will be giving an illustrated talk on the expedition on Wednesday 11 September for the RNLI at the Dartmouth Yacht Club.



www.dartlifeboat.org.uk

Application Form

With an annual donation of just £5
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Date

I enclose a cheque made out to the RNLI as my donation to be a Friend of the Dart lifeboat for the year starting 1 April 2013.

Amount

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I would like to continue to receive Dart D'Tales by post. Yes / No / Does Not Apply

I would / would not like to receive the monthly news update by Email, listing forthcoming events.

**Thank you for your support, please send your application to: The Membership Secretary
RNLI DART LIFEBOAT STATION
Coronation Park, DARTMOUTH, TQ6 9NL**

Stories from RNLI Lifeguards on the South Hams beaches.

The RNLI plans to provide cover on 200 beaches around the U.K. by this summer and there have been lifeguards on some South Hams beaches for many years. Originally the cover was provided by the Bantham Surf and Lifesaving club and they still do so on Sundays, under the supervision of a senior RNLI lifeguard.



Chris Rampling.
Senior RNLI
Lifeguard

Chris Rampling, a member of the Dart RNLI lifeboat crew, is now a Senior RNLI lifeguard and has been working on the South Hams beaches for the last five seasons. Compulsory training and re-certification for the new season takes place over two weeks in March. Two of the most important areas are casualty care and training, both as crew and helmsman, in the Arancia inshore rescue boat.

The range of incidents where First Aid is required can go from treating minor



Devon Air Ambulance with RNLI Lifeguards at Bigbury

grazes one minute to dealing with a potentially fatal heart attack the next.

Chris had one such day last summer at Bigbury when he was the senior lifeguard on duty. 'A day that began in a routine way developed into anything but.' Chris said. 'We were alerted by a member of the public in the morning that there was a man who was feeling unwell in his car in the car park above our station. He had had heart problems before and we lifted him out of his car and gave oxygen and treatment for a heart attack until the Paramedic that we had called arrived. He in turn called in the Air Ambulance and we called our Senior Lifeguard Supervisor, Duncan Norris, who came over from Bantham. Whilst he was being prepared for his flight by the ambulance crew there was time for a quick photograph. Before the patient could be loaded the helicopter was diverted to what turned out to be a fatal accident at the recycling site at Dittisham and our patient was transferred to hospital by land ambulance.'

The afternoon was taken up with routine work, moving the flags that limited the swimming zone and minor first aid. '90% of our work is preventative,' Chris explained. 'For the majority of the time the public are receptive to any advice we give. They accept that the lifeguards work on the beach every day and have learnt how the currents can vary even by the hour.' The lifeguards leave the beaches at 6pm but shortly before that the two RNLI lifeguards at Challaborough radioed for immediate assistance. A man had been found unconscious in his caravan in the holiday park. Chris immediately took the 4 x 4 truck with all the First Aid equipment and was able to give a



First aid equipment carried by RNLI lifeguards

defibrillation shock to the patient as soon as he arrived. The machine indicated that they should continue to give CPR and they did this as a First responder arrived, quickly followed by the Air Ambulance and a land ambulance. The patient was taken to hospital by air ambulance but unfortunately on this occasion did not survive. His family came back to see the lifeguard team a few days later to thank them for all their efforts.

Chris's story highlights the vital work that RNLI lifeguards now perform on and around the beaches of the UK.

Dates that RNLI lifeguards will be on local South Hams beaches this summer.

- Bantham and Sedgewell Cove
18 May – 29 Sept
- Challaborough 25 May – 29 Sept
- Blackpool Sands, Slapton/Torcross, Thurlestone, Hope Cove & Burgh Island
6 July – 8 Sept

For more information visit ● www.rnli.org.uk/beachsafety ●

Get On the Water to Try A Boat Free!

Sat 25 May – Sun 26 May

Have you ever wanted to try your hand at boating or try something different? Well now you can, for free! An exciting 'On the Water' event called Try A Boat Free is taking place in Dartmouth to encourage non-boaters to find out what they are missing.

The event is taking place on 25th and 26th May 2013 from 10 – 4pm at the South Embankment in Dartmouth and is a great introduction to any type of boating. The event is organised by The British Marine Federation's South West Region, and in conjunction with South Devon Marine,

with South Devon College and Ribeye sponsoring the event.

Secretary and Treasurer of The British Marine Federation's South West Region, Paul Singer, says, "This is an exciting opportunity to introduce everyone to the joy of getting on the water and to try boating for free. 'Try A Boat Free!' is an ideal event for having a go at boating for the first time under expert guidance and, trying the boat of your dreams or talking to South West based marine companies."

There will be lots of different boats available to have a go on over the two days

including powerboats, yachts and sailing boats. RIBS (rigid inflatable boats) will be available to try out under expert guidance, which are perfect for those seeking speed and want to get their adrenaline pumping. For those wanting the chance to try boating under sail power, yachts will also be an option.

For further information on the BMF please contact, BMF SW Secretary & Treasurer, Paul Singer, Boatshed Dartmouth, Tel 01803 867578 or 07710 426754 or email Paulsinger@bmfsw.co.uk ●

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Editor Dart D'Tales and web site.

John Fenton. Tel 01803 770761

Lifeboat Visits Officer

Kevin Murphy 07890 809106

or by the "Contact us" link on the web site

Dart Lifeboat Station

Coronation Park, North Embankment,
DARTMOUTH, TQ6 9RR (Note change in
Post code) Tel. 01803 839224

Please do not ring this number if you think
a launch is in progress.

**Do you have an idea for a future
article? Got something to say?**

**Please send your views to John
Fenton using the 'Contact Us' facility
on the web site.**

Future Events

May 2013

11th Annual Canoe Races
Postponed until 2014

Sunday 5 May

Bingo evening in Sainsburys Café.
18.30. £5 pp entry

Saturday 22 June

**Dartmouth Parish Outing on the
Fairmile.**

1pm – 4pm

Along the coast towards Slapton,
weather permitting
Open to all. £8 p.p. or £20 p. family
Includes cream tea. Half of the
proceeds to Dart RNLI & half to
WaterAid
Tickets from Yorkshire Building
Society and The Royal Castle Hotel

Sunday 7 July

Blackness Marine Family Fun Day.
14:30 – 18:30

Cream teas. BBQ.

RNLI demonstration

Saturday 27 July

Dartmouth Garden Safari.

Details will be on Posters and our
web site

Dart RNLI Lifeboat "Week"
9th to 15th August

Friday 9 August

Dartmouth RNLI Flag day.

If you can help please contact
Harry Escott 834296

Saturday 10 August

Classic Car Rally.

Coronation Park, Dartmouth
Details will be on Posters and our
web site

Sunday 11 August

**Deep Sea Angling on Outlaw of
Dartmouth.**

Spot On & Saltwind of Dart

Contact Owen Mallia for details &
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Thursday 15 August

RNLI Fete in Royal Avenue Gardens.
10am to 4pm

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He needs Cakes, Books & DVDs
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Dartmouth Regatta

Thurs 29 Fri. 30 & Sat. 31 August.

Lifeboat Station open on
Coronation Park.

See the lifeboat & RNLI

Souvenirs on sale 10am to 4pm.

Further information on all these
future events and reports of past
events can be found in the Events
section of the station web site.

RNLI Souvenirs

Tony Kirkland and his wife Penny have been extremely successful promoting our RNLI souvenirs since they took over the role in January 2012 and last year raised over £3000 by their efforts. They stock items purchased through the RNLI but increasingly they are selling items with direct links to the Dart lifeboat crew. The mugs and coasters, with a photograph of our lifeboat at Dartmouth Castle, are selling well, as are the CDs, diaries and phone pads. The range is being extended from April onwards with two jigsaws. The picture is a photo-montage involving the Dart crew. They will have 1000 pieces and 500 pieces and sell for £14.95 and £11.95 respectively. Tony can be found with his stall at most of the events listed in this issue. ●

