

Editor JOHN FENTON
Masthead Design NICHOLAS SHILABEER
Printing STEPHENS AND GEORGE

David Dimbleby agrees to be a Patron of the Dartmouth lifeboat appeal.



David Dimbleby is the first person to sign the visitors book

Photo by JOHN FENTON

In February he found time to tour the lifeboat station in a very busy week that included appearing on Desert Island Discs as well as chairing Question Time in Stirling.

He was able to see for himself how his donation, along with those from many others, had been put to good use.

He commented, as he signed the Visitors book, "I am very impressed with the Station and the professionalism that has gone into building and running it. After an absence of over 100 years,

"Welcome back, and about time too!"

Five months and five shouts

There have been five callouts so far during the quietest time of the year.

The first was to a high speed collision. Two have been to motor cruisers who lost power whilst up-river. One was to investigate a tender reported floating out to sea on Christmas Day and we cannot leave out the ram that went over the cliff!

As the crew said on the day "It is easier to practice on a sheep when it is the first time you have to lift a body out of the water and into the boat for real"

The time between the pager going off and having the boat in the water has reduced from twelve minutes to nine.

Scenario training on the water usually takes place on Tuesday evenings and on Sundays. We have had the first of our regular joint exercises with the local mobile Coastguard teams from Stoke Fleming and Berry Head.



Cartoon by JAMES FENTON

To see more details of the launches, hopefully as soon after the event as possible, please look at the station web site or the Notice Boards, at present in Market Square and at the lifeboat station.

Future events.

Thursday July 3rd. A "Gipsy river cruise" on the Cardiff Castle. Food cooked by Philip Watts. Music by Marc Walpot, troubadour. "An evening of Hungarian style Gipsy Music, with a glorious candlelit feast." Embark Dartmouth Town Quay 19:00. Tickets £25, including a welcome drink and food, from Shipmates Chandlers, Dartmouth TQ6 9AF

Saturday 26th July. RNLI Flag Day in Dartmouth. (Can you help?)

Sunday 27th July. Possible naming ceremony of the new Dart RNLI lifeboat on Coronation Park.

Friday 1st August. RNLI Fete in the Royal Avenue Gardens.

Tuesday 21st October. Trafalgar night celebration at The Royal Castle Hotel, Dartmouth.

D Class Helms Course

My name is Chris Tracey and in July 2007 I was lucky enough to be selected as a helm of a 'D' Class lifeboat at the new Dart Lifeboat station. After a summer of intensive training on station, I and two others were given the opportunity to go on the 'D' Class helms course at the training college in Poole. The course ran from a Monday to Friday in early December. Having never been to the training college before I was amazed at the facilities at our disposal.

The Training Began

It was an 0830 start in the class room on the Monday where we met all the other helms from stations around Great Britain; there were sixteen of us. The camaraderie between everyone was immediate as we all shared the common bond of being volunteers for such a great service. The instructors briefed us on how our week would pan out and then it was straight into our written evaluation. Our result from this would dictate how we would spend the rest of our week. The better the result the more time you would spend on the water, or if there were certain areas that needed to be addressed then you would have classroom lessons in that area. After the written evaluation we got kitted up and headed out on the water for our waterborne evaluation. This was to cover a whole range of manoeuvres and for the instructors to see how we managed the boat and crew. The idea of this system is to find out everyone's level of experience so that you only cover the areas that you aren't quite so confident with.

Learning on the Water

On Tuesday we were separated into crews of either two or three people, in relation to the areas we would need to work on after our evaluation. I was crewed with "Poms", (Andy Pomeroy) also from Dart Lifeboat station and John from one of the Irish stations. Adam was to be our instructor for the week. We all had a bit of work to do on meteorology, which was to be a short lesson we would have on the Thursday before re-evaluation on the Friday. The next few hours were spent on the water practicing manoeuvres and boat handling. This was incorporated into a mock search for a missing kayaker. For Poms and me this was the first time we had participated in a search, mock or not and was an invaluable lesson. In the afternoon after a fantastic lunch, (who can complain when you are having a choice of roast dinners all week) we were taken to the training pool for capsize drills and basic sea survival. The capsize drill went very smoothly until I dropped the spark plug in the water (this turned out to be quite costly in the bar later that evening) but luckily there was a spare onboard. This was a fantastic experience as the wave machines kicked in and the manufactured thunder and lightning started. Not only was it



Chris Tracey and the youngest member of the launch crew

Photo by JOHN FENTON

great for the overall learning experience but also a great deal of fun. We then headed for dinner just after six. The food all week was amazing and dinner time, followed by the drinks at the college bar, gave a great opportunity to get to know the guys from the other stations and exchange station stories from around the country. The support and acceptance for the three of us from Dart Lifeboat into the RNLi family was mind blowing. In no other area of my life have I experienced such a strong bond with a group of people who only twenty four hours earlier were strangers from all different walks of life.

Into the Gale

On the Wednesday we were lucky enough to have force 7 winds gusting 8 which gave us a brilliant opportunity to do some rough weather handling over the bank just outside Poole harbour. This was followed by an anchoring and veering session onto the beach; the first time I had done this manoeuvre in any sort of swell. It really made me understand why it is classed as a last resort as at one point I nearly flipped the boat. After lunch we were back out on the water again using a Trent class lifeboat to pace against and carry out underway transfers. Again more invaluable experience, especially as pacing is not allowed to be practiced on station. After a welcome cup of coffee onboard the Trent, the light was fading and we spent a couple of hours practicing a night navigation exercise. The following evening we were to be assessed on this. By the time we had finished this exercise it was about 2030 and we headed for dinner. I think everyone was starting to feel the aches and pains for spending such a prolonged period crouched in a 'D' Class.

Thursday brought yet another superb

experience for us as we got to practice helicopter transfers with an Army helicopter from a nearby base. This was then followed by a multi-vessel search for which my crew were chosen to be 'on scene command'. The casualty boat and all casualties were found, all of whom looked very familiar. Nothing like hauling an instructor onboard with enough force to tighten his crutch strap and make his voice squeak. Again we would not finish until 2030 as we had to carry out our night navigation assessment.

On Friday morning we had our re-assessments on our written paper which for me was on meteorology. We then headed out on the water for the last time for an assessment in the form of a search which would incorporate the majority of skills we would need. We then had a de-brief with our instructors and I was happy to receive my RYA Advanced Powerboat certificate.

After lunch we all said our farewells and we left to head back to our respective stations to put into practice all we had learned during the week.

I must say a huge thank you to all fundraisers and donors who provide us with such an excellent training facility and the opportunity to have so much fun whilst being on a serious learning course.



Chris Tracey, Kevin John and Chris Rampling on exercise

Photo by JOHN FENTON

The Appeal moves towards its Target

Significant progress has been made towards our new appeal target of £259,000. Our previous target of £205,000 was extended in January this year to take account of additional ground works that had to be undertaken. At the time of writing we have now raised £232,702 towards this new target.

Despite the economic downturn in the economy the support and enthusiasm for our new station has continued to grow. Two donors, who both wish to remain anonymous, have contributed £30,000 and £15,000 (plus Gift Aid) respectively to our appeal in early 2008. The latter has been donated to specifically fund our new tractor. In addition Mr Mike Felton, the Chairman of Caterfoods, who has funded our new inshore lifeboat due later on this summer, has continued to make approaches on our behalf and secured sponsors for eight crucial items of equipment for the new station.

The Bill Howell Fund, set up by Marilyn Howell and Elizabeth Essex to commemorate Marilyn's husband, have very generously used part of their donation to fund the substantial table and set of chairs for the crew room. A plaque to commemorate Bill has been put on the side of the table.

Recent visitors to the Station have included David Dimbleby, who has very kindly supported our efforts as a Patron of our appeal. Mike and Jane Madigan, who asked for donations towards our appeal, rather than receive wedding



Photo by ROB CLEMENTS



Photo by JOHN FENTON

presents, have also been able to see what their generosity has enabled us to achieve.

Due to the magnificent support that we have had and are continuing to get this may well mean that by the time you read this Newsletter we will have passed our appeal target. In which case I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our supporters for helping us achieve the funding for our new Dart Lifeboat Station. Thank you and well done to you all. All your contributions are commemorated on a plaque in the new boathouse, which reads: 'The establishment of the Dart Lifeboat Station has only been made possible through the enthusiasm and dedication of our volunteers and the generous donations made by the public and other organizations. We are grateful for all their support'. **David Hannah, RNLI Appeals Manager**

Above Left: Marilyn Howell by the table donated in memory of her husband, Bill

Above Right: Mike and Jane Maddigan's visit to the lifeboat station

Woodlands
DARTMOUTH

100,000 sq. ft. of INDOOR FUN!

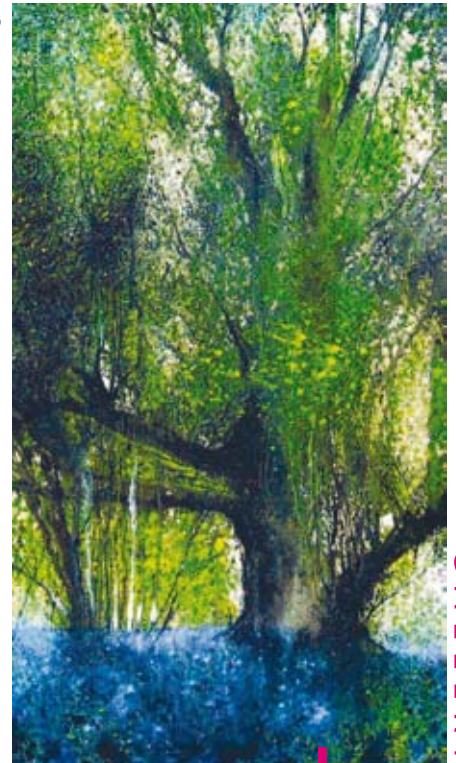
new White-knuckle MONSTER SWING SHIP

RNLI THE REAL HEROES OF THE SEAS!

Woodlands Leisure Park, Blackawton, Totnes, South Devon TQ9 7DQ
Tel: 01803 712598 • www.woodlandspark.com
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an exhibition for spring

'big, gnarly oak'
Stewart Edmondson



GALLERY

4 Lower Street,
Dartmouth
TQ6 9AJ
tel 01803 834923

paul.reach@lineone.net
dart-gallery.com

DART

We would love you to join our **LOCAL DART LIFEBOAT MEMBERSHIP SCHEME**. With a minimum (but more if you wish) of only £5 annual donation you can be kept in touch with the RNLI DART LIFEBOAT, hear about it's "shouts", the station and it's team, the many fun events that RNLI stage in support of their volunteer crews AND you can make appointments to visit us with your family to see for yourselves what we do and also examine the NEW DART LIFEBOAT here in Dartmouth.

Just complete this **RNLI DART LOCAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION** and we'll do the rest.

With my donation I wish to join the **RNLI DART LOCAL MEMBERSHIP SCHEME**.

Title (Mr, Mrs etc)

First Name

Surname

Home Address

Postcode

Home Tel:

Mobile

email

Gift Aid

(N.B. Joint declarations are not accepted by the Inland Revenue)

Tick here to increase the value of donations made to the RNLI. This enables us to reclaim the tax on any donations made to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution for the six years prior to this year (but no earlier than 6 April 2000). For every pound you give us we get an extra 25 pence from the Inland Revenue. To qualify for Gift Aid what you pay in income tax or capital gains tax must be at least equal to the amount we will claim on your donation in the tax year.

Signature

Date

With this completed application form, enclose your cheque made payable to RNLI Dartmouth Lifeboat & mail to :-

Membership Secretary

RNLI DART LIFEBOAT STATION

Coronation Park

DARTMOUTH

TQ6 9PW

You will receive an acknowledgement & Membership card. Plus our News Letter and invitations etc.

If you live locally & would like to volunteer to help in running things, please tick the box

COME AND JOIN US!

The Dart station is up and running. There are still opportunities to join our successful team in certain key areas: If you have not joined any of our teams yet and maybe were waiting to see if it would all happen, this is your chance.

Sea Safety Officer. We have three Sea Safety Advisers already, but we need someone with a sound maritime background to co-ordinate their activities and to promote Sea Safety activities. The successful candidate could use the Lifeboat Station as a base and to liaise with the Operations team and crew so that advice is directed appropriately. Please contact Rob Clements, LOM on 0791 751 4948

Boat house Visits Officer. Now that we are operational, donors and other interested parties are asking to visit the station. We need someone to co-ordinate these bookings and to join our team who are already acting as guides to the station. Please contact Bob Thomas, Boathouse Manager on 0798 009 9932

Fundraising team. The Fundraisers have been very active and successfully raising money for the Appeal. They are looking for others to join them, especially from outside Dartmouth, to bring in new ideas and fresh legs! Please contact Terry Knight on 01803 834933.

Third party events.

These events are organised by those who wish to support us, but are not members of the local RNLI fundraising team. Posters can be produced by the Fundraising team and keep the corporate RNLI image. Contacting Anna Perry Events Secretary, on 01803 832393 early in the planning stage should help to avoid date clashes, both with our own events as well as those of other organisations in the Town.

Third part events have included a donation from Mike Moody on behalf of the Joint Regatta Sailing Committee £3000, Kevin John's coastal path marathon £765, Totnes Fashion Show £1100, a Nautical quiz organized by Non Stop Sail £730 and a conducted tour of BRNC by Carol Rampling for RDYC members £180.

Local Dartmouth RNLI contacts

Lifeboat Operations Manager.

Rob Clements. Mobile 07917 514 948

Chairman Management Team.

Robin Shiffner. Tel 01803 835853

Chairman Fundraising Team.

Terry Knight. Tel 01803 834933

Boathouse Manager.

Bob Thomas. Mobile 07980 099 932

Administrator and Press Officer.

John Fenton Tel. 01803 770761