

## Dartmouth Visitor Centre



Cartoon by James Fenton

From the 7th December it is planned for the full RNLI Visitor Centre in Dartmouth to be open to the public. The retail side of the Centre was opened on July 6th and has been very successful; so much so that the shop has become one of the more popular RNLI outlets in the four months since opening. There has been a steady stream of visitors during the summer holidays and the 30 volunteers were practically run off their feet during Dartmouth Regatta and then again during the Food Festival in October. Important though the retail aspect is, the RNLI had declared from the outset that the primary aim of the Centre was to allow the space to be a "Flagship for the RNLI" and to concentrate on the Educational and Engagement aspects of the visitor's experience.

The Edge design team, working with input from the RNLI, have arranged the space so, as you come in, the first welcoming impressions lead straight into an area designed to "Inspire and Engage." Ahead you will see a foreshortened D class lifeboat. D 633, Pride of London Foresters from Southend-on-Sea. She was stationed

there from 2005 -2014 and during her time there the volunteer crew rescued 173 people and saved seven lives.

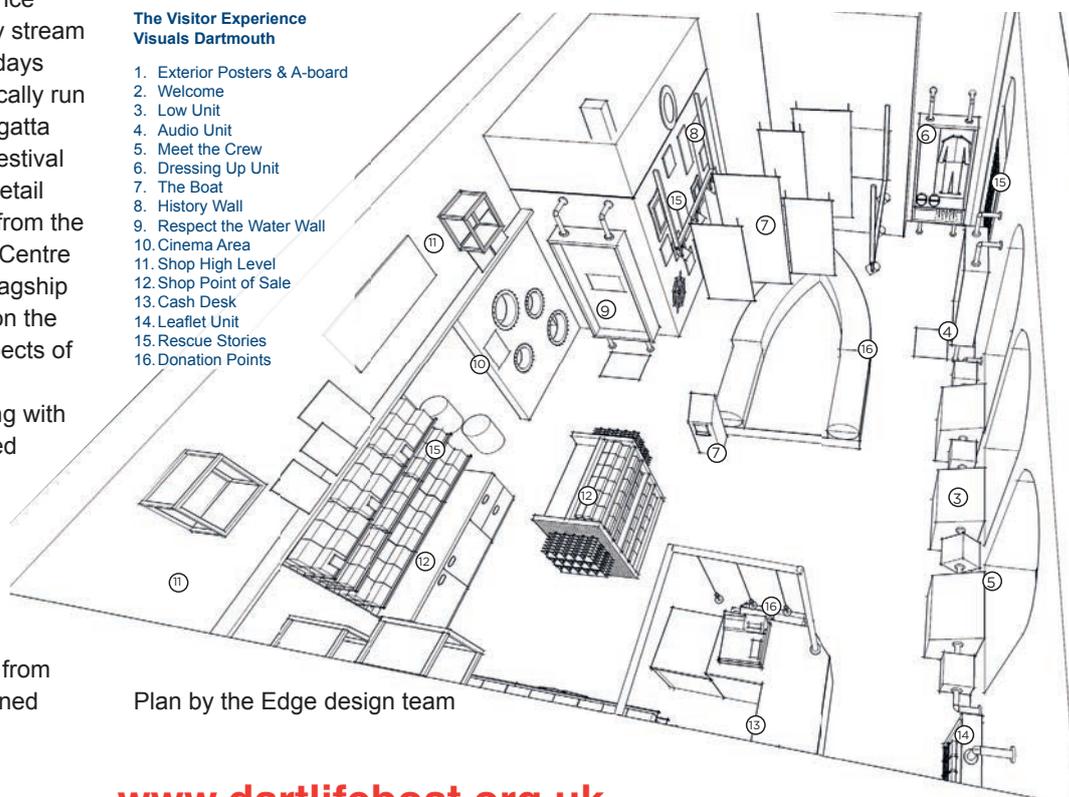
Children will be able to climb into the lifeboat which will contain much of the equipment she carried when she was

operational. It is planned for there to be a large cinema screen in-front of the boat to add realism to the experience. Beside her will be a low unit and posters giving

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### The Visitor Experience Visuals Dartmouth

1. Exterior Posters & A-board
2. Welcome
3. Low Unit
4. Audio Unit
5. Meet the Crew
6. Dressing Up Unit
7. The Boat
8. History Wall
9. Respect the Water Wall
10. Cinema Area
11. Shop High Level
12. Shop Point of Sale
13. Cash Desk
14. Leaflet Unit
15. Rescue Stories
16. Donation Points



# Launches since August 2015

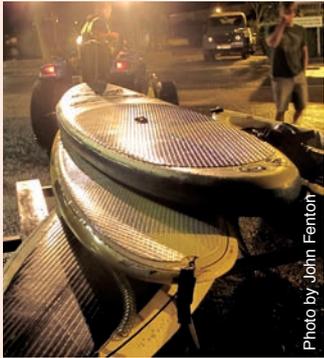
No.	Date	Assisted	Location / Search area.	Description
237	09/08/15 Sunday 10.23am	7 adults 1 child	A quarter of a mile west of Froward Point Start Bay	<b>Ski boat with mechanical failure</b> Dart Lifeboat was on a training exercise when tasked by Falmouth Coastguard to assist a 19 ft. Ski boat. Lifeboat crewman Dean Nettleton was able to board the ski boat and attach a tow. The boat was towed into Dartmouth Harbour and moored at the visitor's pontoon. The eight occupants of the boat were safely transferred ashore by the Lifeboat.
239	26/08/15 Wednesday 5.14pm	3 adults	The Range	<b>Moody yacht with engine failure.</b> The 31 ft. yacht suffered engine failure and put out a PanPan call which was heard in the Dart lifeboat station. The Lifeboat Operations Manager decided to self-launch as the PanPan message was closely followed by a MayDay which declared that they were close to the rocks. There were three people onboard, one male and two females. The yacht came within 15 feet of the Mew Stone but the crew managed to turn the vessel. Chris Tracey, RNLI Dart lifeboat crewman, boarded the yacht and assisted the crew to sail it into the mouth of the river. A tow was attached and she was taken to her mooring in the Bight.
242	30/08/15 Sunday 9.02pm  	4 adults	Dartmouth Harbour	<b>Safety concerns for three paddle-boarders and a kayaker.</b> The crew of the Dartmouth Lower Ferry reported their concerns about three paddle-boarders and a sit-on kayaker attempting to paddle upstream, in the dark, against a very strong ebb tide. Falmouth Coastguard requested the RNLI Dart lifeboat to investigate. As the lifeboat approached, one of the paddle-boarders was seen to fall off. The four men had left Dittisham early that morning, only wearing shorts and tee shirts. They were attempting to return from Dartmouth to Dittisham, some two miles upstream, and appeared intoxicated. The lifeboat crew took them on-board and brought their boards ashore. The boards and kayak were stored in the Lifeboat Station for collection the next day. The four were supplied with lifejackets while the lifeboat returned them to their embarkation point in Dittisham. 
244	02/09/15 Wednesday 11am	1 adult 1 steer	Compass Cove Start Bay	<b>Steer me home!</b> Two local fishermen on the <i>Emily Grace</i> , Steve Parker and Anthony Green, were leaving Dartmouth when they saw that a six month old British White steer had fallen 20 metres from the cliffs into the sea, west of Compass Cove. The animal then scrambled back onto a ledge at the foot of the cliffs. The Deputy Launch Authority carried out a Crew Assemble and decided to launch the lifeboat. Once the lifeboat arrived Farmer Norman Easley climbed onto the ledge to attach a rope to the steer which was having none of it and dived back into the sea. The animal then tried to escape into a small cave where it became wedged, head down. Chris Tracey, lifeboat crewman, dived into the sea and with the help of the other lifeboat crew pulled it from the cave. Chris guided it alongside the fishing boat where the steer was secured by the farmer. The steer then swam alongside the boat the 200 metres to the cove. The reluctant steer was then encouraged by Farmer Easley, along with Kevin Murphy and Chris Tracey from the lifeboat crew, up the very steep wooden steps from the beach. They also remained to assist the farmer, along with Steve Donohue from the RSPCA and the Dartmouth Coastguard Search and Rescue team, to move a second steer back from the cliff top undergrowth onto safer ground. As the cove is skirted by the South West Coastal path the rescues were watched by numerous members of the public. The RNLI will assist in the rescue of animals at the request of the owner or where there may be a danger to the owner or others of putting themselves at risk. Lifeboat crew; Kevin Murphy helmsman. Richard Eggleton and Chris Tracey crew. Launch crew; Mark Strudwick tractor driver. Aaron Spicer crew.



Photo by John Fenton

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

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information about the capabilities of the D class and a dressing up point for children and adults, along with information on the actual costs of the crew's operational clothing.

A further low unit will display information on the services provided by the RNLI Lifeguards as well as the meaning of the various flags they use to direct beach users to areas of safety for swimmers and those on non-powered water craft. Information on other aspects of the RNLI, including Fundraising, will be displayed on posters and panels in the area.

Photographs of the members of the RNLI Dart Operations team will be on display, along with an explanation of the various roles within the team.

Facing the windows there will be a History Wall with facts and stories about the RNLI and other coastal rescues from the earliest days up to the present time and, around the corner, a large "Respect the Water" unit with an inter-active screen. This will introduce the concept of Community Lifesaving, highlighting the aim of the RNLI to halve the number of



Photo by John Fenton

Rob Clements LOM training the volunteers from the Visitor Centre

deaths by drowning within the next ten years and will be a further important area of the Centre aiming to "Educate and Engage" the visitors.

Passing on, you will come to a small enclosed Cinema area showing RNLI rescues, both locally and from elsewhere.

From the Cinema your path will lead you through the shop where there will be additional information on how your purchases can help the RNLI achieve its aims. By the door there will be a Community display. This will give

information about the latest launches by the Dart D class and highlight forthcoming local events. There will be the opportunity to pick up information leaflets or the latest copy of Dart D'Tales.

During the quieter weeks of the year it is planned to encourage school and youth groups to visit the Centre. Early in the New Year there will be invitations to local teachers and youth workers, to show them what is on offer and how the next generation can be "Educated and Inspired."

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# Lifeboatman of the Year

Mark Strudwick is the genial and very popular Mechanic at the Dart Lifeboat Station. He has just been voted "Lifeboatman of the Year" by the RNLI Dart Operations team. When he is not delving into the engine of the Holland tractor used to launch the lifeboat, or investigating why the lifeboat's 50Hp Mariner engine is not achieving that last knot of speed, he can be found running one of the three Castle Ferries from the Castle Steps opposite the RNLI Visitor Centre.

The crew and Operations team, with their partners, traditionally have had a self-funded dinner in the lifeboat station to celebrate Trafalgar night. The excellent meal was provided by Simon Entwistle and Serin Aubry of Dartmouth Fine Foods Ltd.

The evening concluded with the presentation of the crew's Comedy Awards. There is no hiding place when there are two keen Lifeboat press officers willing to catch the crew's every glitch, although on this occasion the tables were turned. The two were awarded Pac a macs to avoid getting soaked next time they venture on the water.



Photo by John Fenton

Presentation of Lifeboatman of the Year award to Mark at the Trafalgar Night Dinner



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For more information go to [www.dsfire.gov.uk](http://www.dsfire.gov.uk)

Acting to Protect & Save

[www.dartlifeboat.org.uk](http://www.dartlifeboat.org.uk)

[www.youtube.com/dartlifeboat](http://www.youtube.com/dartlifeboat)

# Hit the Surf

The Hit the Surf education programme, provided by the RNLI lifeguards, gives Primary school children the chance to develop their confidence in the water and learn about beach safety.

They also learn what it means to be a Beach lifeguard. The closest venues to us in Devon are at Dawlish and Exmouth and they took place over a period of three weeks in June.

Once the lifeguards have completed their initial training and three day Casualty course they are invited to join the team. There are usually five children being supervised by each lifeguard, so the groups of seven to eleven year old Primary school children usually come in groups of 30. The school has to carry out a competency assessment prior to the event. Each child must be able to swim 25 metres and any medical conditions are noted, as are any children with special needs.

The day begins with a beach safety talk on the shore, similar to those given in schools in the summer term by the RNLI lifeguards or Education volunteers. Each session contains information about rip currents, the RNLI's safety flag system and what to do if they get into trouble at the beach. They also learn about the whole range of activities carried out by the

lifeguards, which cover advice, education and first aid for the beach goers, as well as performing rescues.

The children then change into wetsuits provided by the RNLI and the lifeguards introduce them to a series of racing games on the sand, similar to those used by Surf clubs, to warm them up before they enter the water to develop their practical board skills. They are taught how the lifeguards swim out with a rescue tube to someone in difficulty and bring them ashore. They are taught the high stepping gait used to race into the sea without falling over and to keep their distance when approaching the casualty and to pass them the tube from a distance so that the rescuer is not grabbed by the person they are there to help. They are also taught to check whether the person was alone so that other Lifeguards can be notified if required. There are always at least two lifeguards in the water to see that all is well. The children then swap over and the exercise is repeated. After lunch the whole event is repeated



Photo by Emma Tarling RNLI LPO Exmouth

with another school.

By providing the children with some basic safety advice the programme can prevent avoidable accidents and dramatically reduce the number of rescues attended to by RNLI lifeguards on over 200 beaches around our coast. The days are highly successful and many schools repeat the exercise each year.

Based on an interview with James Borne, Senior RNLI Beach Lifeguard.



# RNLI Dart Annual Charity Angling Competition

On August the 9th we ran our annual RNLI Dart Charity event for twenty keen anglers, distributed between two boats (*Outlaw of Dartmouth & Saltwind of Dart*)

This was the sixth year I have organised the one-day competition and as usual the event was over-subscribed! And lots of fun! Once again we were well supported by the local Pubs, Tackle Dealers and our Trophy suppliers.

We fished two of our favourite marks at anchor, situated west of Start Point. Everyone enjoyed a decent day's fishing with the usual set of surprises!

After the weigh-in the presentation was once again held at Dartmouth Angling Club HQ; Derek Caple looked after us all with food and drinks.

Local angler Sally Hoult from Paignton stole the show this year with an overall score of 247% with her two best fish. Sally won the Lloyd Saunders Shield. She also won the Ladies section over Emma Snow, taking home the Royal Castle Cup. She

also took the Dolphin Cup Trophy for having the highest aggregate of four fish overall weighed-in over 50% of species size.

Keeping it in the family, Sally's Brother-in-Law Phil from Exeter came second with a total of 228%; third place went to Andrew Marel from Dartmouth with 224%.

The winner of the Mike Concannon cup for the best species went to Dartmouth Landscape Gardner, Graham Webb with a nice Ling of 17lbs.

Many thanks to the following sponsors for their ongoing support of this popular event:

Euro Angling (Matt) – Torquay, Tidal Tackle (Simon) – Torquay, Hookz on line (Simon) – Torquay, Torre Trophies (Lee) – Torquay, Dartmouth Golf & Country Club – Dartmouth, Brown's Café, Coronation Park – Dartmouth, The Dolphin (Jon Pope) – Dartmouth, The Seale Arms (Mick) – Dartmouth, The Royal Castle Hotel (Nigel Way) – Dartmouth, The Ship Inn Dock (Kevin John) – Dartmouth



Photo supplied

Sally Hoult with Owen Mallia who wrote this report and organised the event. A cheque to the RNLI for £250 was presented to Rob Clements, Lifeboat Operations Manager.

# Trip to Bremerhaven, May 2015



The *Duke of Cornwall* arriving at Bremerhaven

A request came from the RNLI in Poole for some vintage boats to attend the German 150th Anniversary and International Lifeboat Conference in Bremerhaven, along with a Shannon, the latest jet-powered beach-launching RNLI lifeboat.

On 20th May 2015, a flotilla of three

lifeboats set out from Dartmouth. Frank Smith, an ex-coxswain from Salcombe, in the 46ft 9in Watson 1954 *City of Bradford* III 911 and Colin Sturmer in the 1957 *Frank Spiller Locke* 939 and myself and crew in the 1960 *Duke of Cornwall* 952 which are both 52ft Barnetts.

Our voyage took us to Yarmouth, Eastbourne and Dover, where we were well received by the local RNLI crews. The weather could have been kinder and we spent nights at Denhelder and Sheveningen once across the Channel.

After nine days, on our final run to



Photo by Nicholas Leach

The small German lifeboat *Hecht* is usually launched from a beach but a jetty launch without a slipway is an alternative



Photo by Nicholas Leach

The Watson ex RNLI lifeboat *Frank Spiller Locke* in the grand parade

Bremerhaven, we were joined at sea by the Shannon Reg ON-1314 (13-07) from the Relief Fleet, crewed by the Coxswain and Mechanic from Dungeness. She had been named on 8 May at a ceremony in Poole. We arrived without incident and locked into the docks.

We were the last to arrive, having travelled 600 miles; the furthest of any of the craft to attend. We joined over fifty rescue craft from all over Scandinavia, Holland, Germany and France. It was a grand sight when they all were locking out and parading up the river to celebrate the naming of the latest German rescue cruiser, the *Ernst Meier-Hedde*.

The gathering and Parade of lifeboats was followed by four days of discussions at the International Maritime Rescue Federation's World Maritime Rescue Congress where the latest ideas in maritime Search and Rescue were discussed. We spent the time sightseeing and ship-visiting and it was all over far too soon.

We returned through the German and then the Dutch canals, passing through Amsterdam and Rotterdam on the way. We emerged from the Dutch canal system through the sea lock at Vlissingen and made our way back to Breskens. A 2.30am start the next morning saw us being sluiced down-channel and carrying our tide to Dunkirk and so to Dover. From there, we worked our way back to Brighton, Cowes and then to Dartmouth.

We had been away for a month. None of the boats had any problems or defects which was pretty good for sixty year olds. We had experienced widely differing conditions and had seen a great variety of towns and countryside.

Thank you to RNLI Poole for inviting us!!



Peter Lucas owner of the *Duke of Cornwall*

# The first two holders of the Albert Medal

Before the Dartmouth lifeboat was put on station in 1878 the area of Start Bay was covered by lifeboats at Salcombe and Torbay. When storms arose Dartmouth harbour was almost impossible to enter under sail when the wind was coming from the North East as the wind funnelled out through the narrow rocky entrance. The North East winds and heavy seas also made it almost impossible for the flank boats to row round Start Point and Berry Head. That meant that rescues in Start Bay were down to the shore based Coast Guard teams and individuals.

In 1866, twelve years before the Dartmouth lifeboat was even on station, one such individual rescue was performed by Samuel Popplestone. He carried out a single handed rescue of such bravery that it led Queen Victoria to instigate a new award, the Albert medal, for acts of outstanding bravery in rescues on or from the sea.

The London barque, *Spirit of the Ocean*, had sailed down the English Channel and was overtaken by a gale from the North East. She was bound for Nova Scotia with a cargo of tea and had a crew of 18 and carried 24 passengers. Of that company only two were to survive, thanks to their rescue by farmer Popplestone.

The barque had lost most of her sails and, having attempted and failed to enter Dartmouth Harbour, only just cleared Start Point. Almost immediately after she struck a rock and broke in half.

Samuel Popplestone saw this happen from his farm and sent a rider to warn the Coast Guards at Hallsands – an action that was to save his life. He single-handedly carried ropes to the cliff top and lowered himself down the cliff. He managed to crawl across the rocks to where the remnants of the ship were being dashed to pieces by the waves. At one point he was swept into the sea but managed to scramble back to the rocks. He managed to get a rope to the wreckage and dragged ashore the Mate of the barque before returning to rescue another seaman who still had the strength to help

himself. He found them shelter on a ledge at the foot of the cliff, but they were all too exhausted to climb up the cliff. Hours later his belayed rope at the cliff top was found by the search team and the three were hauled to safety.

He was personally awarded the first Albert Medal by Her Majesty Queen Victoria at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace on May 14th that year.

By an amazing co-incidence the second holder of the award was Samuel Lake of Dartmouth. He was awarded the medal for saving the lives of 450 Muslim pilgrims onboard a Barque that sank off Bombay as they returned from Mecca. Later in his life he was awarded the RNLI's Vellum award for saving a life at Milford Haven and posthumously he was awarded the Swedish Gold Bravery Medal in 1887 for saving the lives of the crew of the Swedish ship *Ida*, when it was wrecked off Corsica.

The Albert Medal was named in memory of the Prince Consort who died in 1861. This series of medals was instituted for gallantry in saving life at sea. In 1877 it was extended to saving life on land. It is rare, as only 70 gold and 501 bronze medals have ever been awarded. In 1971 it was replaced by the George Cross.



Photo by Robert Prummel



Photo by John Fenton

The coast west of Start Point in a storm

## Local Dart RNLI contacts

### President

Robin Shiffner Tel 01803 835853

### Chairman Lifeboat Management Group

Jake Moores Tel 01803 833036

### Lifeboat Operations Manager

Rob Clements Mob 07917 514 948

### Treasurer Operations Team

Paul Weedon Tel 01803 833812

### Sea Safety Officer

John Yunnie Mob 07768 007365

### Chairman Fundraising Branch

Ed Featherstone

Tel 01803 835328 Mob 07889 953974

Email ed.featherstone@btinternet.com

### Vice Chairman and Visitor Centre Manager

Tracey Lucas Mob 07850 578127

### Secretary Fundraising Branch

Jenny Gould Mob 07905 935580

### Box Secretary

Gordon Pepperell Mob 07791 448391

### Treasurer Fundraising Branch

Lizzie Helyer Mob 07813 803472

### Events Secretary

Alan Makepeace Tel 01803 770775

### Local Membership Secretary

Anne Walton Tel 01803 833362

### Boathouse Manager

Bob Thomas Mob 07980 099932

### Administrator, Press Officer & Education Volunteer

Editor Dart D'Tales and web site.

John Fenton Tel 01803 770761

### Assistant Lifeboat Press Officer

Riki Bannister Mob 07709 694167

### Lifeboat Visits Officer

Kevin Murphy Mob 07890 809106

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

### Dart Lifeboat Station

Coronation Park, North Embankment,  
DARTMOUTH, TQ6 9RR

Tel. 01803 839224

Please note that this is an unmanned station.

## Future Events

Monday 7 December

**RNLI Visitor Centre fully re-opens**

Sunday 29 November

**Sainsburys Christmas Bingo night.**

7pm to 9pm

Townstal Community Hall

(Note the change of venue)

Tuesday 19 January

**'Debaitable fishy tails'**

A Talk by Mark Lobb

6.30 pm for 7pm

Dartmouth Yacht Club

Thursday 18 February

**Radius 7 Curry and Quiz night**

6.30pm

Thursday 21 April

**RNLI Dart fundraising AGM**

6.30pm for 7pm

Guest speaker tbc

Saturday 30 April

**'Sink our Ship'**

Noon

Dart Lifeboat crew in the Boatfloat.

Friday 3 May

**Dartmouth & at Sainsburys RNLI**

**Flag day**

If you can help for just one hour

please contact

Ed Featherstone 07889 953974

Friday 29 July

**RNLI Flag day**

If you can help for just one hour

please contact

Ed Featherstone 07889 953974

Dart RNLI Lifeboat Week

29 July to 6 August

Saturday 30 July

**Dartmouth Garden Safari**

Thursday 4 August

**RNLI Fete in Royal Avenue Gardens**

10am to 4pm

Dartmouth Regatta

Thurs. 25, Fri. 26 & Sat. 27 August

**Lifeboat Station open on**

**Coronation Park**

See the lifeboat and station

10am to 4pm

RNLI Visitor Centre

South Embankment Dartmouth

Open throughout Regatta

Saturday 10 September

**Picnic afloat on the Kingswear**

**Castle Paddle Steamer**

5.30pm to 8.30pm

Further information on these future

events and reports of past events

can be found on the Events section

of the station web site.



Tuesday  
workshops  
6:00 - 8:00pm  
Please call for bookings

# Fish & Game

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