

Launches Training Fundraising Education

2010 has so far been the busiest year yet for the Dart volunteers.

Launches

The Launch Requests from the Coastguard are up again from last year. During the first three months of the year Dart had the third highest number of callouts in the UK and Eire amongst the twenty seven lifeboat stations where the RNLI only has a D class ILB. The calls have often been preventive rather than lifesaving, but three lives were lost on the Dart last year and it has to be better to stop life threatening situations from developing.

Training

Training does not only take place on the water. Three of the crew and the two Press Officers have been trained by Tamsin Thomas, RNLI Media Relations Manager, and are now able to edit the helmet – cam footage that the crew bring back from their callouts and exercises. This can not only be supplied to the News Agencies such as the BBC and the Press centre on the www.rnli.org.uk web site, but is also a focus of interest used by the Educational volunteers on their visits to schools and other organisations requesting visits.

Fundraising

The whole Operations team have given their enthusiastic support to Harry Escott and his team of fundraisers. Lifeboat crewmember Jamie Mathys has joined the Committee and Rob Clements LOM and John Fenton LPO attend their monthly meetings. Training exercises have been linked to many a fundraising event.

Education

This year for the first time the Dart Education volunteer John Fenton, backed up by Bob Thomas Boathouse Manager and various crewmembers, took the Beach Safety message to the Dartmouth



Spirit of the Dart on exercise at Blackness Marine family fun day, June 2010

Photo by John Fenton

Community College as well as to the five Primary schools in the area. All the students at Dartmouth Community College between the ages of 11 and 15 years attended the two Assemblies and the forty minute lessons that were given by the presenters. Students then had the task of promoting the "Get on Board" RNLI magazine for teenagers on the www.rnli.org.uk/shorething web site. Some of the work was outstanding and prizes were presented to the four best entrants at their final assembly.

The effectiveness of the teaching was measured and at an IT lesson later in the term forty seven Year 7 students completed the Educational Quiz on the Shorething web site. 95.5% correctly answered questions on the significance of the various flags used on the RNLI Lifeguarded beaches and 100% knew what to do if they got into trouble in the water. 100% also knew to contact the Coastguard for an emergency on the coast, or in the river or sea using the 999 number, or 112 if they were using a mobile phone.

Janet Hall

A new Assistant Press Officer, Janet Hall, has been appointed to the Dart lifeboat Operations Team to help Press Officer John



Photo by John Fenton

Fenton. Janet brings plenty of press experience as she worked in the press and exhibitions department at the Design Council in London and with volunteers at a campaigning charity called Charter 88. When she and her late husband David retired to Dartmouth 15 years ago

Janet became involved with the drive to build the Flavel, Dartmouth's community arts centre, by helping as a volunteer with fundraising. She was their Press Officer for eight years during the struggle to get the centre established.

Janet and David owned a Westerly Konsort cruising yacht and were members of the RNLI, though happily never had to use them in an emergency. She was pleased when John Fenton asked her if she was interested in helping. Janet said "The RNLI is such a brilliant charity and I am delighted to be making my small contribution in this way to its vital work."

Launches since April 2010

No.	Date	Assisted	Location / Search area.	Description
60	2/5/10 Sunday 17:26 hrs		River Dart Search area; Lower ferry to Totnes.	The Coastguard requested a search for two overdue canoeists who had left Steamer Quay, Totnes, at midday in an inflatable canoe. They were located ashore at Dittisham fit and well.
63	27/5/10 Thursday 06:06 hrs		Search Dartmouth Harbour	A fishing vessel picked up a drifting Zodiac dinghy just above the Higher Ferry with no one on board. The Coastguard organised a search of the harbour by the Inshore Lifeboat and the mobile C.G. teams from Dartmouth and Berry Head. The ILB found the parent vessel to the dinghy near Old Mill Creek and it was established that it had been taken without the owner's permission. No one was found and after a two hour search the teams were stood down
64	30/5/10 Sunday 13:55 hrs	Assisted 5	Dartmouth Harbour	The Dart Inshore Lifeboat was about to be recovered after a training exercise when the crew saw a small inflatable dinghy with five people on board that had suffered engine failure right in the path of the Higher Ferry. The ILB gave immediate assistance and towed the vessel to the landing pontoon at Coronation Park.
65	1/6/10 Friday 19:25 hrs	Assisted 1	Dartmouth Estuary	A small boat with one person on board had broken down by the Mew Stone East of the Dart Estuary. The Coastguard helicopter was on exercise in the area and stood by the casualty until the Dart Inshore Lifeboat had attached a tow. The vessel was towed back to its berth on the Kingswear side of the river at Hoodown.
66	13/6/10 Sunday 16:22 hrs	Assisted 3	Start Bay Leonard's Cove	A speedboat with three on board had engine trouble near the rocks at Leonard's Cove. On arrival the crew of the ILB found that the speedboat was already under tow by another vessel. The ILB escorted the vessels back to Dartmouth Harbour and gave assistance returning the casualty vessel to a pontoon. Please see the article with Cricket cartoon for an explanation of the quick 5 minute time between Launch request and Boat in the water.
68	20/6/10 Sunday 16:14 hrs	Assisted 2	River Dart Old Mill Creek	The ILB was returning from an exercise at Blackness on the river Dart when they saw two small tenders attempting to assist a 27 foot yacht with two people on board, stuck in mud at the mouth of Old Mill Creek. The single finned yacht was already beginning to tilt on the ebbing tide and although the engine was functioning she had no propulsion. The ILB reported to the Coastguard at Brixham and towed the yacht into deeper water and back to her mooring down river.
71	14/7/10 Wednesday 19:53		Dartmouth Estuary	Brixham Coastguard reported that a Squib keel boat was having problems near the Mews Stone in strong winds. The vessel had been engaged in an organised weekly club race. A yacht in the vicinity was unable to offer assistance due to the proximity of the rocks. The Dart lifeboat was launched and found that the boom of the Squib had snapped in half and that the two crew were sailing on their jib. A tow was declined and the lifeboat escorted the casualty to the safety of their mooring on the trots at the Royal Dart Yacht Club at Kingswear.

A fuller account of these launches, as well as those not mentioned above, can be found on the Dart RNLi station web site. The inshore Lifeboat was launched twice in 2007, twenty times in 2008, thirty one times in 2009 and eighteen times up to the end of July in 2010.

Is Dart the only RNLi Lifeboat Station with a cricket pitch on their front lawn?

During the Summer Sundays the local hostelries play in a 20 - 20 league on Coronation Park. Many of the crew are in the Ship in Dock team and are at present second in the League. Jim Brent is owner of the Ship in Dock, groundsman of the cricket square and usually the first Dart RNLi tractor driver to respond to a shout. (He doesn't have far to come!) Tony Chapman made headlines in the local paper when he had been declared Man of the Match for his superb catch and three wickets taken with his bowling, but had to dash to helm the lifeboat just as the presentation was due to be made. (Launch 66)



Don Campbell's Farewell Janet Hall

A combined farewell-birthday party was held on 14 May at the Lifeboat station to say goodbye to Don Campbell, but also to celebrate his 70th birthday. Unfortunately, under RNLI rules, on reaching the age of 70 Don was obliged to retire from his position as Deputy Launch Authority for Dart lifeboat – a position he had held since “Spirit of the Dart” became operational in October 2007.

Crew members, with their families and many friends, assembled in the lifeboat station to wish Don well in his retirement. Rob Clements, Lifeboat Operations Manager, on behalf of the assembled company, thanked Don for his work with the lifeboat. He spoke of Don's lifetime of experience with boats, even though his chosen career was in the army. After commissioning at

Sandhurst Don served in the Royal Engineers, reaching the rank of Major before retiring in 1971 when he and his wife Ginny moved to Dartmouth and started a sailmaking business. Don served in Germany, the Congo, Libya, Cyprus, Aden, the Gambia, British Honduras. He always said the best job of all was when he was appointed as Chief Instructor at the Joint Services Sailing Centre in Kiel, W. Germany.

Don owned the famous boat “Uomie” that won the Fastnet race in its class in 1953 and was also a competitor in the first Admirals cup in 1957. He and Ginny had many happy times sailing her and sold the boat in superb condition when the boat was 56 years old.

Rob said that the town of Dartmouth and the lifeboat operation were immensely enriched by the efforts of

Don. Not only had he been Deputy Launch Authority, but had been chairman of Dart Harbour and Navigation Authority, and a past Commodore of Dartmouth Yacht Club. He is a stalwart of the Dartmouth Rotarians and Chair of the Joint Regatta Sailing Committee putting in many hours on the regatta committee.

It was this spirit of service and in particular volunteering that marked Don's achievements. His expertise and wise counsel will be missed by everyone. Rob hoped that Don would accept the title of Honorary



Photo by Janet Hall

Launch authority with free rein to “castigate any errors of the future, defend the past and of course enter the boathouse un-bidden with pearls of salty wisdom.”

Rob presented Don and Ginny with an engraved pewter tankard as a token of thanks on behalf of Dart lifeboat and its crew.

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Future Events

Dart RNLI Lifeboat "Week"
31 July to 8 August

Sunday 1 August
Local Garden Safari
11am to 5pm
Map showing the Gardens
£5 per adult from TIC.
Five of the gardens are in
Dartmouth. The others are at
Redlap, Stoke Fleming and Strete.

Friday 6 August
RNLI Fete in Royal Avenue Gardens
10am to 4pm.
If you can help in any way please
contact Harry Escott.

Friday 6 August
Source to the Sea
A sponsored run, bike and row by
Dart lifeboat crew members.
The runners will start on Dartmoor
at the source of the East Dart and
finish by rowing against the tide,
hopefully arriving around 3pm in
time for the Fete.

Sunday 8 August
**Deep Sea Angling on Outlaw of
Dartmouth**
Contact Owen Mallier for details on
01803 832897 or 07891 498023 for
booking information.

Dartmouth Regatta
Thurs 26, Fri. 27 & Sat. 28 August
Lifeboat Station open on
Coronation Park
See the Lifeboat. RNLI Souvenirs
will be on sale from 10am to 4pm.

Thursday 26 August
**Search & Rescue display in
Dartmouth Harbour**
with RN Sea King from 771
Squadron Culdrose at 5:30pm.
(SAR displays are subject to
operational availability)

Saturday 28 August
**Search & Rescue display in
Dartmouth Harbour**
with RN Sea King from 771
Squadron Culdrose at noon.

Thursday 23 September
Concert by Choir 86
Dartmouth Guildhall at 7:30pm.

The RNLI Flood Rescue Team

Volunteers from the RNLI's 236 lifeboat stations in the UK and Republic of Ireland, were asked if they wished to volunteer for the RNLI's Flood Rescue Teams, which the RNLI set up following its involvement with flood relief in Mozambique in March 2000. Yorkie Lomas and Chris Tracey from the Dart lifeboat crew both volunteered to join the thirty strong South West team and took part in a four day intensive course at the River Dart Country Park.

The course for eight volunteers at a time was run by Rescue 3, originally an American firm. They used white water rafts, but the RNLI will be using modified D class lifeboats with the front canopies removed. They were taught how to read the dangers of a river in flood and how water flows round obstructions, such as a submerged car. Rescuers are usually in pairs and use white water throwing lines during rescues. Having been taught how to swim in rough water they were shown how to rescue themselves as well as others from weirs and watched videos



Photo by RNLI

of past flood rescue situations and learnt from them. The Landrover and lifeboat for the South West team will be based at Poole and the team members will make their own way to an incident and rendezvous with the boat.

Since the training took place Yorkie and Chris were placed on standby when RNLI teams from N. Wales and elsewhere were deployed to Cockermouth in November 2009. The charity's flood rescue team proved their worth as, along with other emergency services, they rescued 300 people from the rapid influx of water using nine lifeboats especially transported to the scene.

Local Dart RNLI contacts.

Lifeboat Operations Manager.

Rob Clements. Mobile 07917 514 948

Chairman Management Team.

Robin Shiffner. Tel 01803 835853

Chairman Fundraising Team.

Harry Escott. Tel 01803 834296

Secretary Fundraising Team.

Clare Thorp. Tel 01803 832123

Treasurer Fundraising Team.

Colin Myers. Tel 01803 832674

Local Membership Secretary.

Bob Hattersley. Tel 01803 832182

Souvenir Secretary.

Mrs. Jo Escott. Tel 01803 834296

Event Co-ordinator.

Anna Perry. Tel 01803 832393

Boathouse Manager.

Bob Thomas. Mobile 07980 099 932

Administrator and Press Officer.

Editor Dart D Tales and web site.
John Fenton Tel. 01803 770761

Sea Safety Officer.

John Yunnie Mobile 07768 007 365

Dart Lifeboat Station.

Coronation Park, North Embankment,
DARTMOUTH, TQ6 9NL
Tel. 01803 839224

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

Chairman Totnes Fundraising Team.

Roger Jobson Tel. 01803 732837

**Do you have an idea for a feature
article? Got something to say? Please
send your views to John Fenton**

Details of our last seventy one launches, recent and forthcoming events, as well as information on the new IB1 D class lifeboat, can be found on the local RNLI web site. Notices are also posted on the Notice Boards in front of the toilets on North Embankment and on the Lifeboat Station.