

Fifth Anniversary

On the 25th October 2007 Dartmouth Lifeboat Station was declared operational and later the trustees of the RNLI, on 7th November that year, renamed it the DART Lifeboat Station.

Today we can celebrate our fifth anniversary. Flanked as we are by Torbay and Salcombe Lifeboats with hundreds of years of service between them, five years does not seem much, but we can all be proud of our achievements to date.

I am sure many of you remember the first meeting called by John Fenton at the Dartmouth Yacht Club in August 2004 when volunteers were called for. The result was overwhelming. Eleven possible sites for the boathouse were suggested and some pursued in great depth. Meanwhile Tom Mansell, the Training Divisional Inspector from Saltash and I interviewed 24 volunteer crewmen at the rowing club. Such was their enthusiasm that we decided to take all of them.

Planning permission was granted by SHDC in July 2007 by a vote of 18-0. At last we could get going! We were now under our new chairman, Robin Shiffner, while David Hannah led the campaign and local fundraising was guided by Terry Knight. Support from the community was exceptional. Our target to raise £259,000 was soon achieved and surpassed.



All the RNLI team are lifesavers

In October 2007 we moved into our new boathouse and training gathered apace. Potential helmsmen were tested and appointed and on this day five years ago we finally achieved our objective.

Our first lifeboat was Bob Savage D602 which had been the ex-Aldburgh lifeboat and our first shout was on 25th November.

In October 2008 our new boat, generously donated by Caterfood Ltd, was officially named 'Spirit of the Dart' and the

Mayor, Councillor Debbie Morris, cut the tape to open the new boathouse.

Local support continues to humble us and the efforts of our new chairman of fundraising, Harry Escott, working with his team, deserves special mention for his energy and leadership.

All our efforts, be it management, shore teams or fundraising are focused on getting the lifeboat in the water with a competent well trained and equipped crew to help those in distress on the water.

To date we have launched 160 times, saved 5 lives and rescued many more.

Ladies and gentlemen, "The Dart Lifeboat crew".

Abridged from the speech given by Rob Clements, RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager, at the Dart lifeboat Fifth Year Anniversary Dinner at the Dartmouth Apprentice. ●



Photo by John Fenton

The early volunteers hoping to join the RNLI team. Nov 2006



Photo by John Fenton

Rob's presentation by Tom Mansell

Lives saved since we became operational in October 2007









No.	Date	Assisted	Location / Search area.	Description
21	30/11/08 Sunday 3:27pm	2 adults	Mill Meadow Cove Start Bay	<p>Rescue of hypothermic kayaker. Two 18 year old students were sea kayaking from Redlap Cove to Blackpool Sands in 20 knot winds when they capsized off Mill Meadow Cove. After 30 - 40 minutes in the water they both reached the shore. One was able to climb the cliff and raise the alarm. The ILB put a crewman ashore who assessed the casualty on the beach as being severely hypothermic and requiring immediate medical attention. The ILB veered to the beach and took the casualty to Blackpool Sands for onward transfer to Derriford Hospital.</p> <p>Lifeboat; Ben Board helm with Lee Darch & Chris Rampling. Pete Callis Tractor driver.</p> 
78	16/08/10 Monday 12:09am  	1 adult	Dartmouth harbour	<p>Man overboard. A yachtsman on the deep river moorings in the harbour reported, shortly after midnight, that there was a man in the water 20 metres from his yacht. The lifeboat launched six minutes after the alert and reached the casualty two minutes later. He had fallen from his yacht tender and the crew found him in the water holding onto a tender, supported by the original yachtsman who had raised the alarm. He had been in the water for about ten minutes when he was lifted into the lifeboat. As he had no injuries and had declined a medical check he was returned to his vessel.</p> <p>Lifeboat; Buster Hart helm with Darren Hopley & Chris Rampling. Jerry Gilby Tractor driver.</p> 
93	07/10/10 Thursday 09:16pm 	1 adult	Dartmouth harbour	<p>Medical evacuation from boat in harbour. The Coastguard requested the lifeboat to take a Paramedic to a 60ft Motor Cruiser berthed in the Harbour. She and the Paramedic on the lifeboat crew assessed the casualty as being seriously ill and requiring immediate transfer to Hospital. The lifeboat returned to shore to collect another three crewmen and the six First Aid trained volunteers were able to lower the casualty on their stretcher down into the lifeboat. He was taken to an ambulance on the Lower Ferry slip and transferred to Torbay Hospital.</p> <p>Lifeboat; Tony Chapman helm with Haydn Glanvill & Kevin Murphy. Jerry Gilby Tractor driver.</p>
134	24/08/11 Wednesday 12:08am 	1 adult	Dartmouth harbour	<p>Swimmer saved. A man was seen to enter the river on the Dartmouth side, fully clothed, with the intention of swimming to the Noss Marina. The lifeboat crew was alerted and had retrieved him within eight minutes of the pagers sounding. He was brought back to the Dartmouth side and taken into the care of the Police.</p> <p>Lifeboat; Buster Hart helm with Darren Hopley & Yorkie Lomas. Jerry Gilby Tractor driver.</p>
138	11/11/11 Friday 7:48pm 	1 adult	Dartmouth harbour	<p>Medical emergency. A middle aged holiday maker had become very short of breath whilst on a yacht on the Kingswear trots. The condition had not responded to his medication and he requested medical help. The inshore lifeboat attended and he was assessed by the paramedic crew member. He was given oxygen and transferred by lifeboat to a waiting ambulance for onward transfer to Torbay Hospital.</p> <p>Lifeboat; Buster Hart helm with Haydn Glanvill & Chris Rampling. Mark Conroy Tractor driver.</p> 

Photo by John Fenton

Photo by RNLI

Photo by John Fenton

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.

Chris Wallace

At a crew meeting in November Rob Clements, the Lifeboat Operations Manager, thanked Chris for all his contributions to the Dart RNLI station. Rob said, "Unfortunately we are losing Chris as he has moved to Blackawton. Since 2007 Chris has launched on exercise and service on 83 occasions, many of them as helm. This involved a total of 130 hrs. afloat. I would like to thank Chris for his considerable contribution to our lifeboat station." He was then presented with an engraved tankard from the crew.

Chris skippered all the River Link boats on the Dart but spent most of his time in charge of the *Cardiff Castle*. He now works as a Patrol Officer for the Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority. He joined the Dart lifeboat crew in May 2007 and was one of the six original helmsmen. His knowledge of the river, especially of the higher navigable reaches, was invaluable in training the less experienced crewmen. He was also able to pass on his skills in night time navigation, learnt during the many evening

and night pleasure boat excursions he had skippered.

He has loved his time at work on the river and felt that joining the lifeboat crew was his way of giving something back to the community. "There is great satisfaction in helping someone in difficulty on the water and getting them ashore safely" he said.

His first rescue was to pluck a sheep from a crevice at the foot of the cliffs at Kingswear. "We learnt a lot from that one! It is surprising how many incidents we are diverted to whilst we are training on a Sunday morning. Towing the Stoke Gabriel ferry to safety was one and rescuing a family of four on board a broken down inflatable from the path of the Higher Ferry was another."

The launch that made the greatest



Photo by RNLI

impression on Chris was the fatality at Totnes on 1 August 2009. He had mentally prepared for it, but the actual recovery of the youth's body shocked the whole crew.

His skills as a helmsman were seen during last year's Dartmouth regatta in the Air Sea Rescue demonstration with a RN Sea King from Culdrose. The downdraught from the helicopter meant that the lifeboat could not hold its position, even with a sea anchor deployed, and Chris had to change the plan so that the crewman was winched back into the lifeboat whilst it was travelling at full speed.

Chris has enjoyed being part of the close-knit team that the Dart lifeboat crew have become, but he is not losing his connections with them as he continues with his role as RNLI Sea Safety Advisor at the station. He concluded, "I have found it a pleasure and an honour to serve at this station." ●



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The generosity of our advertisers has enabled us to produce this edition at reduced cost to the RNLI. Please support them. Additional costs have been met by donations from the Friends of the Dart lifeboat.

As we have now just passed the fifth anniversary of our station becoming operational it seems a great time, as Box Secretary, to thank in print all the public houses, shops, catering businesses and the many other establishments that are such wonderful supporters. We have about 80 boxes in Dartmouth and the surrounding districts which I and a small team have the job of emptying. It is only through your unwavering support during these past years by having our boxes in your establishments, and your loyal customers that are willing to contribute so generously, that we are a fully functioning RNLI station.



Photo by John Fenton

Gordon Pepperell

The unstinting support of the Dartmouth people and those in the surrounding districts has been a huge, huge, help to the fund raising committee in our endeavour to collect enough money to keep our crew afloat.

The support given to our additional fund raising events, such as SOS week every January, our summer fete, the fun day at Blackness Marine and our flag day also helps enormously.

Everybody knows I am sure that all the crew and fundraisers are volunteers, so from each and every one of us, to every single one of you, may I repeat an enormous big thank you? We could not exist without you all.

If there is anyone who would like to display a collection box to help our fundraising effort, please contact me, Gordon Pepperell, on 07791 448391, or if you wish to volunteer in any other way please contact Harry Escott on 01803 834296. ●

Future Events

2012

Fridays 7 & 14 December
**RNLI Souvenirs, Calendars
 Diaries, Mugs and Coasters**
 Dartmouth Butter Market

Saturday 8 December
**RNLI Souvenirs, Calendars
 Diaries, Mugs and Coasters**
 Royal Dart Yacht Club
 10am-2pm

2013

SOS week 21 to 26 January
 Monday to Friday
 Events at local schools

Tuesday 22 January
Quiz Night
 Dartmouth Arms
 Teams up to 6 welcome
 £2 pp to RNLI

Thursday 24 January
**Emergency services Skittles
 night**
 Dartmouth Yacht Club 7.30pm

SOS
 Friday 25 January
Bag packing at Sainsbury's

SOS

Friday 25 & Sat 26 January
Sample our Steaks
 6pm-9.30pm
 £5 to RNLI with each steak
 Ship in Dock

SOS

Saturday 26 January 10am
Events at Dart Lifeboat Station

Thursday 7 March
Talk by Gordon Partridge
**"My life as a Lighthouse
 keeper"**
 Dartmouth Yacht Club
 7:30pm

Thursday 21 March
Dart Fundraising Branch AGM
 Dartmouth Yacht Club
 7:30pm

Saturday 27 July
Dartmouth Garden Safari
 If you would be willing to open
 your garden to the public for
 the RNLI please contact
 Anna Perry. 01803 832393

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

Local Dart RNLI contacts

President

Robin Shiffner. Tel 01803 835853

Lifeboat Operations Manager

Rob Clements. Mobile 07917 514 948

Chairman Fundraising Team

Harry Escott. Tel 01803 834296

Secretary Fundraising Team

Clare Thorp. Tel 01803 832123

Box Secretary

Gordon Pepperell. Mob 07791 448391

Treasurer Fundraising Team

Colin Myers. Tel 01803 832674

Local Membership Secretary

Bob Hattersley. Tel 01803 832182

Souvenir Secretary

Tony Kirkland. Tel 01803 732877

Events Liaison

Anna Perry. Tel 01803 832393

Boathouse Manager

Bob Thomas. Mobile 07980 099 932

Lifeboat Visits Officer

Kevin Murphy 07890 809106
 or by the "Contact us" link on the web site

Administrator, Press Officer & Education volunteer. 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 9RR (Note change in
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 is in progress.

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