



Lifeboats

RNLI ANNUAL REVIEW 2006

PRIDE
REFLECTION
TRUST
PASSION
SKILL
TIMELESSNESS

PRIDE

Mary Taylor

Voluntary fundraiser

'Lifeboat Mary' has raised funds for her local lifeboat station at Padstow, Cornwall, since she was a child



'I was born into a lifeboating family. My father and grandfather were coxswains and my son and grandson are

involved with the Penlee station. I go to the boathouse once a week and, as long as I can see the lifeboat, I'm all right.

'I'm proud that I've done my bit – I've raised £70,000 in the last 20 years. I've been lucky enough to get some RNLI awards for fundraising: the Silver Statuette, Silver Badge and Gold Badge. I got my Bar to Gold Badge in 2006. HRH Princess Alexandra presented me with that one at the Annual Presentation of Awards in May. When I went up to collect it, she said she liked my top, pointing at the RNLI jumper that I wear. So I said: "You can't have this; my boys gave it to me!"

'That's what I call the Padstow crew members: "my boys". I can't sleep when I know they are out on a shout at night and I light a candle for them. It feels better to know that they've got such good kit, though. They got a new boathouse, slipway and Tamar lifeboat in 2006. They are all beauties, the lifeboat crew. They deserve the best.'

Mary McAleese

President of Ireland

President McAleese opened RNLI Ireland's new headquarters in Swords, Dublin, in June 2006



'The official day of opening is an important day in the life of the RNLI, a day of pride, relief and gratitude that a huge project which stretched the charity and its supporters, that was ambitious and testing, not only now exists but is proof positive of the remarkable capabilities of the RNLI and its preparedness for what lies ahead tomorrow.

'This organisation is a classic example of the phenomenal, unselfish, generous voluntary endeavour in literally thousands of spheres that goes on in Ireland around the clock, week in and week out, year in and year out, without thought of thanks or recognition. We take pride too in the fact that RNLI Ireland operates on an all-island basis.

'We transcend all the vanities of jurisdictional issues to ensure that the sea, which is no respecter of man-made boundaries, is tackled with the best will that can be harnessed, not just on this island, but in this region of Europe. This building says comprehensively that the spirit of courage and selflessness, which has been the hallmark of the RNLI since its foundation, is flourishing and is set to continue for many years to come.'

Pete Lawrence

Company director

Pete is a member of the Bantham Surf Lifesaving Club, Devon, which joined forces with the RNLI in 2006 to provide a beach lifeguard patrol during the summer

'I used to live in Devon and was a junior member of the lifesaving club.



I did a season as a lifeguard with the club in 1992 but then moved away to work in London. In 2006, my family and I returned to Bantham and I trained as a lifeguard again. This year the RNLI became involved and, by joining the voluntary weekend patrol, I benefited from the charity's excellent training and kit.

'Volunteering as a lifeguard again was a great moment. It's brilliant to be able to give something back and to be involved with such an important charity. The kit is excellent – when I was a lifeguard back in 1992 I had to buy my own gear! The surf lifesaving club shared its clubhouse with the RNLI for the season, which worked very well.

'There is a real sense of pride in belonging to a surf lifesaving club, a charity like the RNLI and a larger system of emergency services working together to save lives. It's what I returned to lifeguarding for.'

REFLECTION



Eleanor Holder Stone

Pupil at Purbeck School in Dorset

Eleanor and her classmates raised funds for the RNLI in 2006 following the tragic loss of their friends Matthew Myburgh and Charlie Morrell, who were swept from a cliff edge at Lulworth Cove in November 2005



'I remember hearing on the radio that two boys had been washed away at Lulworth Cove. I never thought in a million years it could have been my friends. Someone sent me a text the next morning simply saying: "It's Charlie and Matt". I didn't believe it. At school, me and my friend Lauren waited for the bus to come from Lulworth, hoping the boys would walk off the bus. But they never did.

'I was very grateful to the RNLI lifeboat crew from Swanage, who went looking for the boys. I wanted to help them but the only thing I could do was stay out of their way, which was hard. They were amazing.

'To say thank you to the crew members, we had a non-school-uniform day and had collection buckets going around the school. Everybody understood why we were collecting, so most people didn't hesitate to donate money. We raised £500 for the RNLI. The crew came to collect the cheque and gave us a talk about what they do. It made me feel a little bit better.'



Tony Watson

Exhibitions Project Manager

Tony is the voluntary Lifeboat Press Officer at Teignmouth, Devon, the first of three stations to operate an Atlantic 85 lifeboat in 2006



'Our lifeboat was funded and named by a lady called Anne Bache. She became very ill with cancer and I strongly believe that the thought of naming the lifeboat drove her on and kept her alive longer.

'The lifeboat is called *The Two Annes* after Anne and her sister-in-law, Ann. We had an Atlantic 21 before, which was a good boat, but this is like stepping up from a Ford Prefect to a Maserati. The increased size and power of the lifeboat has already proved important in two particular rescues in 2006. We had one that involved towing a yacht off a sandbank and another in very challenging sea conditions.

'The crew were very grateful to Anne for funding the lifeboat and there were strangers coming up to her at the naming ceremony to say thank you. The last time I saw Anne was when I waved goodbye to her when she left the hotel in Teignmouth. She died a few weeks later. The lifeboat crew formed a guard of honour at her funeral – I think she would have liked that.'

Bill Callaghan

Tower of London Yeoman Warder/
Crew Member

Bill volunteers for the Tower lifeboat crew on the River Thames at the new station near Waterloo Bridge

'The Tower lifeboat is named *The Legacy*. It's an apt name, as the legacy of Lt Cdr Philip King paid for her. England rugby star player Lawrence Dallaglio named her and that was appropriate too. His sister was killed in the *Marchioness* disaster and the RNLI presence on the river is a legacy of that dreadful event. The bereaved of the *Marchioness* were present on naming day in 2002 and they watched the crew place 51 roses in the water: one for each life lost. Almost 15 years after the accident their sorrow remained.



'That day I discovered that the RNLI does more than save lives at sea. Our tally board shows that, in almost five years of service, Tower lifeboat and her crew have saved the lives of 120 people and rescued many more.

'It's always such a buzz to save a life, worth every cold, wet day of training and maintenance. And now, thanks to RNLI supporters, we have a new station with changing, workshop, training and storage space. It will help us save even more lives and much sorrow.'

Sorrow for lost friends, and hope for the future

The view from Hoylake lifeboat station, pictured by Nigel Millard

TRUST

Andrew Bull

Watersports enthusiast

Andrew regularly visits the beach in the summer with his son Matthew



'Saturday 2 September 2006 was a wet and windy day at Slapton Sands in South Devon, so I had

expected the beach to be deserted and without lifeguard provision. But there were numerous people on the beach – none in the water, admittedly – many strolling, some by the shore. To their credit the RNLI lifeguards were on duty. Signs were up, flags were out, rescue equipment was ready and two lifeguards were on hand.

'It was one of six beaches I visited in Devon and Cornwall in summer 2006. I am utterly impressed by the increase in beach lifeguard provision that has taken place in the last two years. The RNLI and local authorities appear to be working together well to meet the need.

'On 27 June 2004 my son lost his best friend to the sea: four-year-old Ryan Pitney was taken out by a rip current on a non-lifeguarded beach near Pendeen, Cornwall. Today I would urge all parents to try and find a lifeguarded beach, where qualified lifeguards are looking out for your child's safety. It's well worth the hassle.'

Kevin Kirkpatrick

Coxswain of Longhope lifeboat

In 2006, Longhope lifeboat station, Orkney, took delivery of one of the first Tamar class all-weather lifeboats



'We launched our new Tamar on a real service for the first time in November 2006. Some men had been seriously injured on an oil tanker in force 11 conditions. The seas were 10–15m high

and visibility was poor. A doctor was airlifted from the lifeboat safely onto the tanker. They were tough conditions but we knew we had a very good boat – our old lifeboat served us well but the Tamar is a step forward. The Tamar came through her first real test with flying colours.

'If you have been involved with the RNLI for some time, as I have, you trust that their lifeboats are all very well designed to cope with all conditions. As crew members we have to trust each other too as it is very much a team effort. We look out for one another – it's the only way it can work.

'All the people we meet always have trust and respect for the RNLI and what the charity does. It's the generosity and trust of the public that allows us to operate a service the way we do.'



Tony Richardson

Civil Service Motoring Association (csma) Charity Coordinator

The csma has raised funds for the RNLI for more than two decades and paid for two lifeguard rescue watercraft in 2006



'The csma is Britain's biggest private motoring club and, together with Frizzell Financial Services Ltd, we've been involved in raising money for the RNLI almost continuously since 1984. It all started in Blakesley, a village in Northamptonshire where the residents ran home-made go-cart races for charity. csma got involved in the early 1980s. The RNLI became the event's chosen charity and csma offered support on a regular basis with various competitions being run in our magazine *Motoring & Leisure* to raise money.

'The csma board agreed in 1990 that the RNLI should become our national charity, and over the years we have bought equipment for lifeboat stations across the UK, including four inshore lifeboats, three vans, a lorry, a lifeguard rescue boat and, in 2006, two rescue watercraft.

'To date we have raised over £535,000, mostly from donations by our members supporting the competitions appearing in *Motoring & Leisure*. We've always trusted that these generous contributions will be spent wisely, because we see the tangible results: equipment that saves lives.'

A lifesaving vision



Our lifeboat crews and lifeguards experienced their busiest ever year in 2006. Lifeboat crews launched 8,377 times, an average of 23 services per day, and rescued 8,015 people. During the summer RNLI lifeguards assisted 10,448 people on beaches in the south and south west of England. Together, our lifeboat crews and lifeguards rescued 8,870 people.

More people than ever need our lifesaving services, whether at sea, on inland waterways or beaches. We aim to provide an integrated lifeboat and lifeguard service from the beach to the open sea, so we are accelerating the expansion of our lifeguard coverage. In 2006 we operated on 62 beaches and are committed to doubling that number in the United Kingdom over the next five years. To this end, we are working with the Government to clarify who has duty of care for the public on the UK's beaches – progress is slow but we remain optimistic.

I am pleased to report that our financial position has significantly improved since last year. There are several reasons for this: our fundraisers and supporters have responded superbly to our appeals – the 'Train one, save many' campaign has reached £5M – and our investments have also performed well. Above all, it was an exceptional year for legacies, which are difficult to predict. However, in an increasingly competitive charity environment, we cannot assume that legacy income will continue to do as well.

So, we must look to other sources of support, such as the marine leisure community. The increased use of the sea for leisure has been evident for many years and, in 1997, we

introduced a membership scheme called Offshore, designed for sea users. More than 50,000 people have been recruited since and we are marking Offshore's 10th birthday with a campaign to encourage others to sign up – after all, there are over 400,000 registered boat owners in the UK and Republic of Ireland who still have not done so. We believe it is only right that those most likely to need



our services should join as members or supporters.

The Institution received excellent media coverage in 2006, especially through the popular BBC television programmes *Seaside rescue* and *Coast*. The BBC television documentary *Cruel sea* also informed large audiences of our work, dealing sensitively with the tragic loss of the Penlee lifeboat 25 years ago.

The Penlee disaster was a stark reminder of what

our lifeboat crews may face, reinforcing our determination to provide them with the best lifeboats, equipment, support and training possible. The first Tamar class all-weather lifeboats went to Longhope, Padstow, Peterhead and Tenby in 2006 and more will go operational this year. The exceptional capabilities of the Tamar were fully tested last November when the new Longhope lifeboat was launched to save life in the Pentland Firth in atrocious storm force conditions; both lifeboat and crew came through with flying colours. Our new, much improved B class inshore lifeboat, the Atlantic 85, has been rolled out to 10 stations and is already proving its worth.

The development of MOB Guardian, the electronic position monitoring and man overboard system continued, despite delays due to the sale of our commercial partner, McMurdo. However we remain on track to fit a significant number of the UK inshore fishing fleet by the end of 2009.

This year's *Review* follows six emotive themes: Pride, Reflection, Trust, Passion, Skill and Timelessness. They encompass the special qualities and experiences of all those who work together to save lives at sea, whether they are lifeboat crews, lifeguards, shore teams, fundraisers or supporters.

We owe them all a huge debt of thanks.

Jock Slater

Admiral Sir Jock Slater GCB LVO DL
Chairman
Royal National Lifeboat Institution



The lifeboat crew and station personnel and emergency services at Tenby lifeboat station, Pembrokeshire
pictured by Nigel Millard.

A lifesaving year



JANUARY

Best in show

A new class of all-weather lifeboat, the Tamar, was unveiled to the public for the first time at the 2006 London Boat Show. Around 140,000 people flocked to the event at ExCel, where they were able to view the slipway-launched lifeboat and speak to crew members.

Save Our Soles

On the RNLI's second SOS Day, office workers and school pupils raised funds for the Train one, save many crew training campaign. Supporters raised a total of £170,000 through taking part in dress-down days and other events.

Rescues in your living room

6M people tuned in to the first programme in a new series of *Seaside Rescue* on BBC 1, which featured the lifeboat volunteers at Weymouth, Dorset, and lifeguards in action on Perranporth beach, Cornwall.



FEBRUARY

Busiest year ever

The RNLI released its launch statistics for 2005, which showed that lifeboat crews and lifeguards had experienced their busiest year so far. Lifeboats rescued 8,104 people, while lifeguards assisted 9,930 people.

Late Christmas gift

Final figures for the 2005 Christmas appeal showed that the RNLI raised more than £1.7M, making it the charity's most successful ever direct marketing appeal.



MARCH

A new arrival

Tenby lifeboat station in Pembrokeshire was the first to take delivery of a Tamar class lifeboat. The lifeboat crew also benefited from new facilities after RNLI supporters raised enough funds to build a new boathouse and slipway.



Pier into the future

Tower lifeboat crew, one of the RNLI's busiest, moved to Lifeboat Pier, a new floating station on the Victoria Embankment. The lifeboat station has more space for training, crew changing storage and maintenance, and sleeping quarters for standby crew.

Safety net

The RNLI's first education website, mli.org.uk/shorthing, went live. The website, designed to raise awareness about the RNLI and water safety among young people, is packed with games and resources for children, parents and teachers.

MAY

Event of the year

The RNLI's Annual General Meeting and Annual Presentation of Awards took place at the Barbican in London. During the afternoon ceremony, crew members, supporters and fundraisers received awards for their efforts.



Lifesaving literature

The Complete Guide to Sea Safety, a free pack containing a booklet and CD-ROM full of Sea Safety information, was released by the RNLI. More than 72,500 copies of the guide have been circulated.



Guided to safety

Barra Coxswain Donald MacLeod used his local knowledge to help guide a badly damaged yacht to safety. It was later announced that he would receive a Bronze Medal for Gallantry for his efforts through severe gales and heavy seas.



SEPTEMBER

Ambassador unveiled

The Southampton Boat Show was the venue for the launch of the new RNLI Ambassador scheme. Boat retailers that receive Ambassador status agree to promote RNLI Offshore membership to their customers.

Dangle for Angle

There were lots of fundraising events inland in aid of the RNLI in 2006. One of the most spectacular was the Dangle for Angle, which saw fundraisers slide down a zip wire from the top of the new Fort Dunlop building in Birmingham. The event raised more than £9,000 towards a new Tamar lifeboat at Angle lifeboat station.

OCTOBER

Outstanding seamanship

Falmouth Coxswain Mark Pollard received The Lady Swaythling Trophy from the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society after he and his crew went to the aid of a powerless cargo vessel. The vessel was in danger of being driven ashore in 7m swells and gale force winds, but the crew managed to attach a tow and pull her away from danger. Coxswain Pollard had already received an RNLI Bronze Medal for Gallantry for the rescue.



A training first

The RNLI's first purpose-built training boat was named at The Lifeboat College. The *Ian and Anne Butler*, designed for the training of all-weather crews, has a classroom section and sleeps up to seven people. She was named after the late Mrs Anne Butler and her first husband Ian, who were both active RNLI supporters.



2006 was another busy year for the RNLI's volunteers, fundraisers, supporters and staff

APRIL

And it's good day from him...

Ronnie Corbett officially opened the Henry Blogg Museum in Cromer, Norfolk, dedicated to the greatest lifeboatman who ever lived. Henry Blogg (1876–1954) saved hundreds of lives during his 53 years as a crew member and coxswain aboard the Cromer lifeboat.



Crew training hits the road

The RNLI received a new state-of-the-art training vehicle thanks to the generous donations from passengers and crew members of Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines. The Mobile Training Unit instructs crews at strategic locations around the UK and Ireland in many of the essential aspects of navigation that they need to learn before taking active roles on board lifeboats.



Watching the waves

RNLI lifeguards were on hand at 13 beaches in the south west of England on Good Friday, ready to patrol during the Easter break. The beaches included Croyde and Woolacombe in North Devon, which, along with Blackpool Sands in South Devon, were patrolled by RNLI lifeguards for the first time in 2006.

Best foot forward

Runners always give charities a boost at the London Marathon and in 2006 the RNLI was no exception. The 121 entrants that ran in aid of the RNLI raised £147,951.

JUNE

Come together

The operations and fundraising staff in the island of Ireland were brought together in 2006 when a new building was opened by the Irish President, Mary McAleese. The new purpose-built base at Swords, Dublin means that operations and fundraising staff now work under one roof.



AUGUST

VAT's good news

There was welcome news from HM Treasury when a new ruling made fuel VAT-free for all lifeboats. The Value Added Tax (Lifeboats) Order 2006 will save the RNLI around £30,000 of the £1.6M charged per year at current rates.

Sun, sea and safety

A campaign aimed at keeping children and young people safe on the beach was launched through August. The Beachwise campaign reminded parents that the RNLI rescues an average of four young people every day, and spread messages on how to read safety signs, avoid dangers and raise the alarm.



JULY

Paddington Bears all for charity

Barclays Bank launched an RNLI fundraising campaign, selling toy Paddington Bears at its branches for a month. The campaign raised more than £126,500.



Picture this

The last entries were accepted for the RNLI Photographer of the Year Competition, which was won by Portsmouth Helmsman John Brooks. The competition, sponsored by Pentax, encouraged crew members and lifeguards to take photographs using lifeboat station cameras. The new waterproof cameras had been sent to each station to help document rescues and exercises for future training and to get images to help promote the charity.



NOVEMBER

Braving the breakers

Helmsman Gavin Forehead and crew members Rory Bushe and James Watkins from the inshore lifeboat crew at St Agnes, Cornwall, received a Vodafone Life Savers Award. The award was presented in recognition of the crew's rescue of a man and young girl who had been swept into a cave by large, breaking waves. Helmsman Forehead, who also received the RNLI's Silver Medal for Gallantry for the rescue, reversed the inshore lifeboat into the cave and rescued the pair.

DECEMBER

A busy Christmas

RNLI lifeboat crews experienced their busiest Christmas for four years in the last few days of 2006. There were 90 launches between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day, with crews going to the aid of a range of casualties including surfers, sailors and walkers.

A sad loss remembered

The 25th anniversary of the Penlee lifeboat disaster saw the Cornish village of Mousehole remember the sad events of 19 December 1981. That night, in hurricane force winds and 18m waves, Penlee's *Solomon Browne* lifeboat was lost with all her volunteer crew. Eight others from the *Union Star*, a stricken freighter, were also lost, including four people taken off the vessel by the lifeboat.



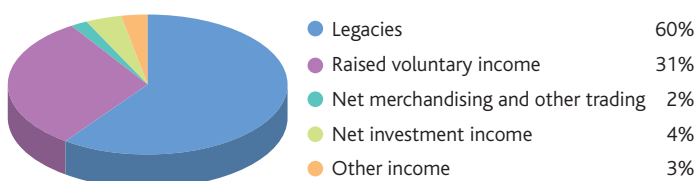


The financial year

Income

2006 was an excellent year for the RNLI in financial terms, with income exceeding expenditure for the first time since 2002. Legacy income was exceptional, £13M (18%) higher than last year. Our fundraisers also delivered a strong performance, with raised voluntary income up £6M (15%) on 2005.

Sources of income totalling £139M



Expenditure

Total expenditure increased by just £2M (2%) in 2006, largely due to additional expenditure of nearly £3M (5%) on rescue. The cost of generating voluntary income was down £1M (4%) on last year and operational maintenance costs were up just £0.3M (1%).

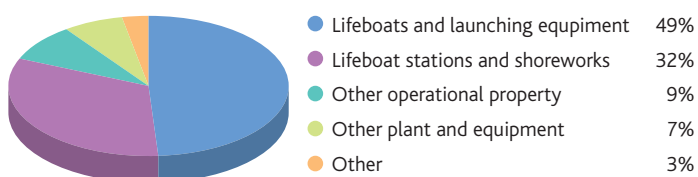
Expenditure totalling £122M



Capital expenditure

Our capital expenditure programme continues. Four all-weather lifeboats and 35 inshore lifeboats were acquired during the year, and 26 shoreworks projects completed. Surplus of income over expenditure achieved in 2006 will allow us to accelerate our capital expenditure programme in future years.

Capital expenditure totalling £21M



This summary is intended to give an understanding of the overall financial position of the RNLI for 2006 and has been taken from the full audited accounts for the year ended 31 December 2006. Please contact us to request a copy.

A generous year

The RNLI's lifesaving work is only possible because of the unstinting generosity of thousands of individuals and organisations to whom we extend our heartfelt thanks. Some of them are listed below.

Train one, save many

Thank you to all those who have directly supported the largest fundraising campaign in RNLI history. At the time of writing, the fund stands at an extraordinary £5.6M, a testament to the dedication of our increasing number of personal, corporate, trust and appeal donors. On behalf of the RNLI's lifeboat crews and lifeguards who depend on high-quality training to fulfil their roles safely, thank you.

In 2006 ...

The Civil Service Motoring Association gave £19,500 for two lifeguard rescue watercraft

Mrs Sheila Peters and family gave £44,800 for Sedgewell Cove's lifeguard inshore rescue boat and the SIMS screens onboard Salcombe's planned Tamar class lifeboat

Miss Yolande Rampton gave £14,000 for the North Cornwall lifeguard training inshore rescue boat and crew training

Mrs Irene Munford funded an Atlantic 85 lifeboat in memory of her late son, Martin Harvey

Mrs Beatrice Townrow funded a lifeguard inshore rescue boat for Dorset and a D class lifeboat and oxygen cylinders for Howth

The Alfred George Ker Trust funded a 4x4 transport vehicle for the Inshore lifeboat centre, Cowes, Isle of Wight and a lifeguard training inshore rescue boat for North Devon

Mrs Joan Woodland funded a D class lifeboat and her refits for Shoreham Harbour

The Essex Freemasons' OrangeAid 05 campaign contributed funds towards a D class lifeboat for Southend-on-Sea and an Atlantic 85 lifeboat and launching tractor for Clacton

The trustees of the Dulverton Trust gave £40,000 towards the Train one, save many campaign

The Headley Trust gave the first of three annual payments of £20,000 towards the Train one, save many campaign

The Sir John Fisher Foundation gave £20,000 towards crew training at Barrow

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation gave £15,000 towards public lifesaving equipment

The WO Street Foundation gave £25,000 towards refitting Fleetwood's Tyne class lifeboat

The Mary Webb Charitable Trust gave £35,000 for the refit of Whitby's Trent class lifeboat

The Olive Herbert Charitable Trust gave £30,250 for a D class lifeboat for Fowey and the station's annual lifejacket exchange

The Samuel & Freda Parkinson Trust gave £15,000 towards a Tamar class lifeboat for Barrow

The Foyle Foundation gave £29,500 for the education and community room at the RNLI Grace Darling museum

The Gosling Foundation made a contribution towards the training boat *Ian and Anne Butler*

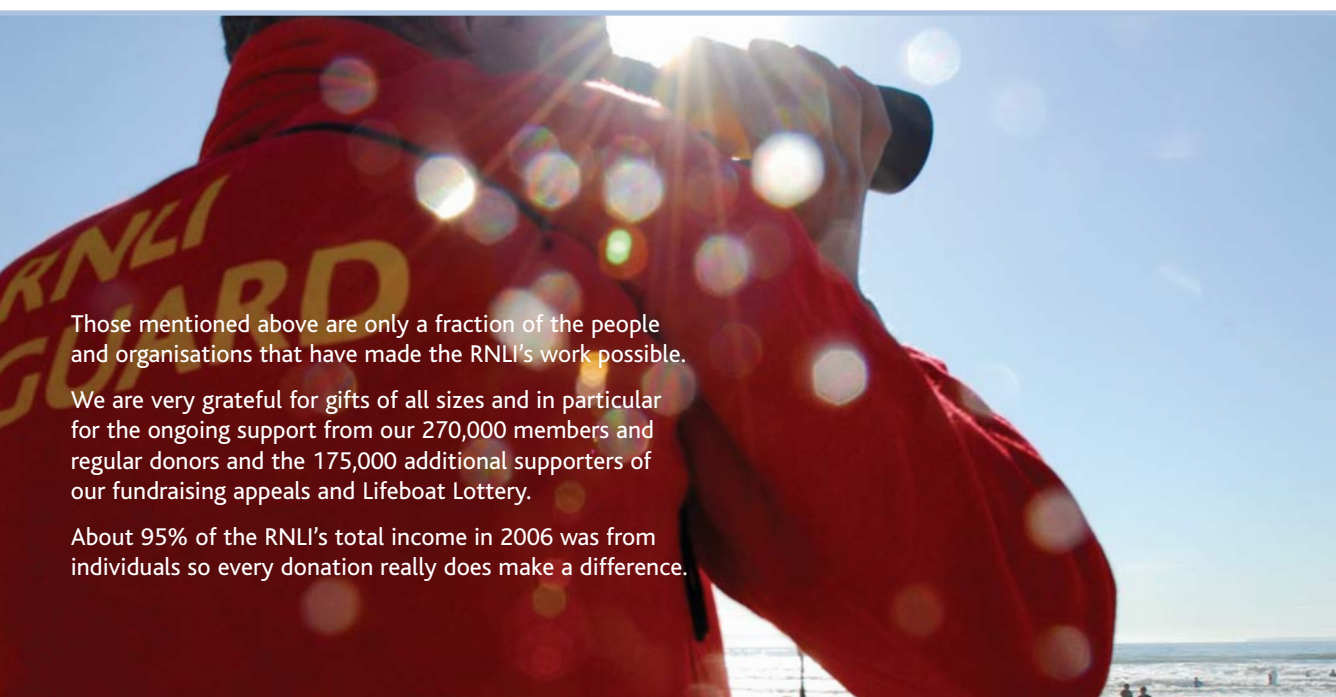
The late Mrs Betty Battle funded an Atlantic 85 lifeboat for Hayling Island

The late Miss Anne Bache funded an Atlantic 85 lifeboat for Teignmouth

The late Mickie Allen's HB Allen Charitable Trust most generously funded the £2.5M Tamar class lifeboat at Padstow

Of the many companies and businesses, large and small, who supported us in a variety of ways in 2006, we particularly thank:

- Landmarc, in the second year of our Charity of the year partnership in aid of the Train one, save many campaign
- Travelscope Holidays Ltd, for their continuous fundraising and support of the Lifeboat Lottery
- Wall's, winner of our corporate supporter award, for the contribution they have made to our beach safety programmes
- Wolseley, who raised £125,000 to fund an Atlantic 85 lifeboat for Sunderland
- and all the individuals who donated to the RNLI through payroll giving.



Those mentioned above are only a fraction of the people and organisations that have made the RNLI's work possible.

We are very grateful for gifts of all sizes and in particular for the ongoing support from our 270,000 members and regular donors and the 175,000 additional supporters of our fundraising appeals and Lifeboat Lottery.

About 95% of the RNLI's total income in 2006 was from individuals so every donation really does make a difference.

PASSION

Kathryn Butler

Student/crew member

In 2006 Kathryn trained as a crew member of Atlantic College lifeboat station, in the Vale of Glamorgan, where the lifeboat is crewed by sixth-form students and teachers



'When I was seven, I went on a school trip to Minehead lifeboat station in Somerset,

which was my first experience of the RNLI. I loved being shown around the lifeboat and joined Storm Force, the RNLI club for children, on the spot.

'I felt inspired by those who crew the lifeboats and everyone who rallies round to raise funds. I remember initially being shocked and impressed that the crew members are volunteers with separate careers. Both myself and a close friend who joined Storm Force at the same time would often speculate about the possibility of moving closer to a station one day and volunteering. It was something that I have always wanted to do, but I never imagined the opportunity would arise so soon in my life!

'I am now one of eight student crew members at Atlantic College. We went to The Lifeboat College at Poole to complete the inshore lifeboat intro course in August 2006, which was a wonderful experience. We all enjoyed receiving such intensive training. To go from a complete novice on the sea to a trained crew member in little over a year at the age 16/17 is something I would never have imagined myself capable of! I feel very humbled by the experiences of other crew members I have met.'

Dr JJ Green

GP

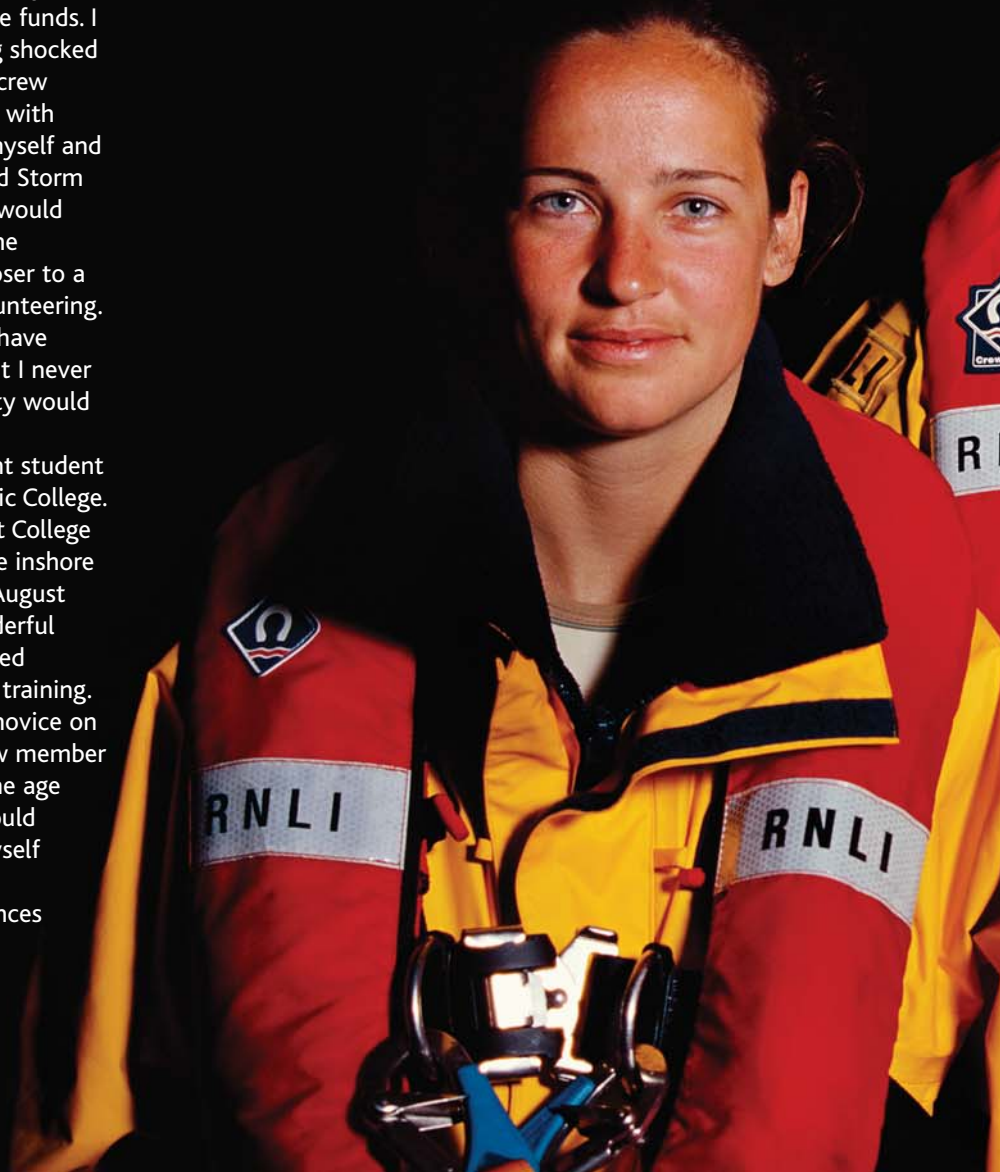
JJ is the voluntary Lifeboat Medical Adviser at Llandudno lifeboat station, Conwy. In 2006 he ran the London, Dublin and New York Marathons in aid of the RNLI



'My family come from the west coast of Ireland, and several fishermen lost their lives there over the years – but it would have been more without the RNLI. There has always been a massive regard for the charity in that community, and I was brought up on that.

'I'm lucky to be able to use my passion for marathon running to help the RNLI. It went fantastically well in 2006. I was lifted by shouts of "Come on the RNLI!" on Fifth Avenue, New York, near the finish. At that stage I knew I could beat my Dublin time but I really had to push hard to do it. Those shouts of encouragement helped enormously.

'For me, there could only be one charity when it comes to fundraising. My patients are wonderfully supportive of me and the RNLI. At least five consultations every day end with queries about my next run and whether they can give me the money now. I know I need to step up the training when they tell me they haven't seen me out running!'



Jody Ballard

RNLI Education Manager for
Wales and West Mercia

**Jody works with a team of education and lifeboat station volunteers,
offering lifesaving advice to young people**



'During 2006 we spoke to over 25,000 young people in our region, at events, schools and lifeboat stations. After one of our talks, the listeners leave knowing more about staying safe on the beach – and about the charity that saves lives at sea. The volunteers in our region had to work incredibly hard to speak to such a large number of people. Like volunteer lifeboat crews and fundraisers, they give up their time to play a part in saving lives. And, like all RNLI volunteers, the education team is passionate about the work it does and strives for the highest standards of professionalism. The RNLI supports them with training and resources.

'When questioned afterwards, the young people have usually retained the key safety messages, which could prove vital when they are at the beach. That's all thanks to the outstanding work of our volunteers. By encouraging young people to think before they act when visiting the beach, we are helping to prevent tragedies. The other great thing is that, when they realise what the RNLI does, many young people may become our supporters of the future.'



The passion of our volunteers and supporters knows no bounds

The Gray family from St David's, daughter Gillian, father Malcolm and son Ian, pictured by Nigel Millard

SKILL



Mike Storey

RNLI Staff Coxswain

In 2006, the RNLI introduced fitness tests for lifeboat crew members. Mike was the first to take – and pass – the test



'My role is to deliver all-weather lifeboats around the coast and to act as relief Coxswain

should a lifeboat station need a temporary replacement. It's a job that involves a lot of travel and different challenges. I need to be fit!

'The tests are fair and aren't there to catch people out. They will help set a common standard. It's not just about how generally fit you are, but whether you are fit for lifeboating. So, as well as aerobic exercise such as the step test, there's a grip test, weight carrying, and so on.

'One of the great things about this is that crew members who have reached retirement age will be able to take this test. If they pass, they will be able to continue as crew, using their knowledge and experience to save more lives at sea.'

Keith Wiggins

Secondary school teacher

Keith recently booked a free Safety Equipment Advisory (SEA) Check with one of the RNLI's newly titled voluntary Lifeboat sea safety officers



'I was already a Shoreline member of the RNLI, but upgraded my membership to Offshore when I bought my small sailboat – I thought it was the right thing to do. I read about the SEA Check in

Offshore News and booked one up straight away. It's fantastic that this service is free, and that volunteers are prepared to give up their time to do it.

'The Lifeboat Sea Safety Officer came round to my house and we talked over my boat, which I keep on a trailer. Although it's called a "check", it didn't feel like I was being judged, it was just a very helpful chat, from someone who was a skilled and experienced boater.

'I've since updated my flares, which were out of date, lengthened my anchor chain and been on a radio course. These were inexpensive but important things that could one day save my life if the worst should happen. With that in mind, I enjoy sailing a lot more these days!'

Huib Swets

Yacht skipper from Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Huib and his co-skipper were guided to safety through notorious waters by the Barra lifeboat after their yacht was damaged in a round Britain and Ireland race



'We were hit by a huge wave from the port side and our yacht turned tail overhead. When the yacht was in her normal position and I looked around, it was a huge mess. My first reaction was to look for my co-skipper because he was having a nap amidship and he was more or less buried by mattresses and stuff. He was dizzy. Obviously something had fallen on his head. Then

he mentioned my head, which was quite a bloody mess.

'It's an aluminium boat and we found that some welds were broken. That means that the boat itself was damaged, so our little home in the wild sea was in danger. The first thing I did was call the Coastguard. I didn't trust our boat any more. We waited for the lifeboat and then on the top of the wave I could see the orange, and it was really a good, reassuring feeling. They guided us back.

'Later, back in Castlebay, the Coxswain told me, very coolly, that they were turned over on their way to us. Then I realised what kind of seas we were in. Afterwards I wondered, "If there was not this professional lifeboat crew, what would happen then?" Their boat handling was superb – perfect course, great skills.'

TIMELESSNESS



Sophie Grant-Crookston

RNLI lifeguard

Sophie was on patrol with the RNLI at Perranporth beach, Cornwall, in summer 2006, when she was involved in a lifesaving rescue



'It was getting towards the end of another busy day when we heard from a member of the public and the Coastguard that a surfer was in trouble. There was a heavy surf. My colleague Kris O'Neill was on a routine patrol on the rescue watercraft (RWC). He heard about it over the radio, picked me up from the beach, and we searched for the man.

'We found him in a cave – he had been swept in there and had managed to pull himself up onto a ledge. He was disorientated and panicking. There were large waves breaking into the cave, so we called for the assistance of the lifeguard inshore rescue boat, which can operate well in that environment. After reassuring the man and explaining what we were going to do, I swam in and attached a rescue tube (buoyancy aid) to him. We both got a few cuts and bruises in there, but I managed to swim him to the rescue boat. The lifeguards on the boat, Robin and David, pulled us aboard and took us to the beach.

'We gave the surfer some oxygen therapy and cleaned him up. He was OK. Two years previously, in the same cave and in the same conditions, a surfer died – but no lifeguards were in operation at the time. It just shows how important lifeguarding is.'

John James Davies

Coxswain

The Coxswain at Cromer, Norfolk, is continuing a family lifeboating tradition that stretches back to the 1800s



'I never really thought I would not be a lifeboat crew member – it runs in the family. My great, great grandfather had the same name as me and was on the crew with Henry Blogg.

'Lifeboating is part of Cromer and it is fantastic that the Henry Blogg Museum opened in 2006, dedicated to the greatest ever lifeboat crew member. The centrepiece is the lifeboat he used for a lot of his rescues, the *HF Bailey*. It is amazing that he saved hundreds of people in an old motor boat like that. And I can't imagine what it was like to rescue people in the rowing boats they used when Blogg was first around.

'The museum helps the public to appreciate the RNLI's past but also reminds them that the charity is still going today, and still relies on them to save lives. When they walk out of the museum, they can see the modern lifeboat station at the end of Cromer Pier. There's a bunch of volunteers prepared to launch down that slipway to the rescue at the drop of a hat, just like in Blogg's day. Some things never change.'

Tony Belli

HGV driver

Tony collected donations during Manchester lifeboat week in October 2006. In 1891 the same city hosted the world's first charity street collection, held in aid of the RNLI



'I was collecting at Manchester Piccadilly Station. It was about 40 minutes before we were due to pack up on the first day when a man came up to me, said: "Oh, lifeboats" and rustled in his wallet.

He looked at the notes in there, selected one, gave it to me, and said 'thanks very much'. I looked at it before I put it in the bucket and couldn't believe it. It was £50! I raised more than £400 in two days overall.

'I used to be in the Navy so I know a bit about the sea and was keen to give something back to society. So I joined my local fundraising branch and also became a Shoreline member of the RNLI.

'I get a real buzz out of it. It brought back a few memories, collecting at the train station. It was the same station that I used to use when I took trains down to Portsmouth and Plymouth to go to sea. I've got a grown-up family and live on my own these days. But I've found something I love doing. It has been and always will be a great cause.'

299

lives saved
by the RNLI in 2006

8,015

people rescued
by RNLI lifeboats in 2006

10,448

people aided
by RNLI lifeguards in 2006

Royal National Lifeboat Institution,
West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ
Telephone: 0845 122 6999 (UK) 1800 789589 (RoI)
rnli.org.uk (UK) rnli.ie (RoI) Email: info@rnli.org.uk

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