

Padstow Lifeboat Launches 2004

27th September 2004

A small commercial fishing vessel reported engine failure to Falmouth coastguards. She was 14 miles NNW of Trevoze Head.

Despite numerous attempts to contact other fishing vessels in the area the coastguards could not find anyone to assist. Padstow Lifeboat was then asked to launch and tow the casualty back to Padstow.

The James Burrough launched at 11.10 and by 16.00 the fishing boat had been safely towed into Padstow Harbour where her engine could be repaired.

The local Cub/Scouts had arranged a visit to the station for 18.00 that day to see over the lifeboat and so after the crew had finished and gone home our Coxswain and Mechanic stayed on to look after their visitors. (Bet the cubs/scouts wished they had arranged to come a bit earlier, they could have witnessed the crew in action – and helped to wash the boat too!!!)

24th September 2004

Up with the dawn for this shout...at 4.30 am the lifeboat went to the aid of a catamaran with five people onboard less that one mile from Trevoze head. Apparently they had become entangled with a buoy rope. It was quite windy and on the way to the boathouse the crew could see the light of the boat quite clearly. Once the lifeboat arrived alongside two lifeboat crew were put aboard with cutting gear to try and free the rope. A tow rope was fixed to the casualty and the buoy rope then cut. Once she was free the lifeboat towed her into the safety of Padstow and she was moored in the Pool. All safe and sound the crew could return to station, wash down the lifeboat and go about their business for the rest of the day.....or so they thought!!!!!!

24th September 2004

Well yes perhaps we should have known that we could not escape the thirteenth so easily.....some 13 hours after returning from the thirteenth shout the pagers went off again. This time it was following reports of red flares being seen in the Polzeath area.

Coastguards were on scene and reported that they had found a small yacht aground with one person onboard. He was helped to shore and when we arrived we decided to try and secure the yacht so that she could be re-floated on the next tide. Two of the lifeboat crew went ashore in the X-boat with a tow rope. Unfortunately the yacht was lying in such a way that she filled with water before she came afloat. Despite every effort by the lifeboat and crew to get the casualty afloat she still lay firmly on the beach. As no lives were at risk and to carry on trying to re- float her could have been dangerous the yacht was left anchored on the beach under the watchful eye of the local coastguards. The lifeboat returned to the boathouse at 23.30 and the James Burrough got her second wash of the day before the crew went home to their beds.

Padstow Lifeboat Launches 2004

15th September 2004

At about 9.20 Falmouth coastguards received a telephone call from a man saying that, along with four other people, he had been in a life raft for 8 days following the sinking of their converted trawler. He said that they could see land and thought that it was might be Cornwall.

(Apparently they had been en route from Ireland to France and their converted trawler had sunk.)

The survivor stated that he could see windmills and this along with the mobile phone signal suggested that they were somewhere off either Godrevy or Trevoise.

Padstow and Newquay lifeboats were launched along with a helicopter and a search was started. The helicopter quickly located what appeared to be the life raft 4 miles west of Trevoise and as we approached we could see the survivors being winched to safety.

They were then taken in the helicopter to Treliske Hospital and all that was left to do was for the lifeboats to recover the life raft. This we did and returned to station.....job done nothing much to report...or so the crew thought! On arrival back at the boathouse they were greeted by newspaper reporters, cameramen and they all wanted to hear what had happened and to take pictures.

The crew being the shy and retiring bunch they are were quite taken aback by all this media attention but, true to form, they rose to the occasion and one member even managed to get into the Sun newspaper (NOT page 3 I hasten to add)

The five survivors all made a speedy recovery and were discharged from hospital apparently none the worse for their ordeal.

11th September 2004

The James Burrough had been away to Appledore for repairs and the crew had just brought her back to Padstow and tied up in the Pool. The ferry was taking the crew back to shore when they heard on the ship's radio that a helicopter was being tasked to help some people who were in difficulties at Porthcothan Bay.

Once ashore the crew started to make their way to the crew Land Rover, before reaching it their pagers went off. The sea conditions were not good and so time was of the essence.

The relief lifeboat was launched and on arriving on scene the crew learned that 3 people had been swept into the sea whilst trying to recover lost fishing gear and one other was stuck on the rocks. The helicopter managed to rescue one person from the sea and the other from the rocks. The lifeboat went in as close as it could to search for the missing person.

Newquay lifeboat arrived on scene and a search from Trescore to the north of Porthcothan was carried out. The local lifeguards managed to recover a body from the surf and this was flown to hospital along with the two survivors.

Sadly the sea can catch you out when you least expect it and unfortunately on this occasion, despite everyone's best efforts, a life was lost.

Padstow Lifeboat Launches 2004

17th August 2004

Following the flooding at Boscastle the Police, through the Coastguard requested us to launch to assist with the search for missing persons. We launched at 04.55 arriving on scene by first light. We commenced searching in the entrance to Boscastle where there was a considerable amount of debris. Two crewmen conducted a search around the shore using the x-boat. As nothing was found we then commenced a parallel track search from Boscastle up to Castle Point checking the floating debris we found.

Once the tide dropped we did a further search around the harbour entrance checking all the cars we could see and noting their registration numbers.

The search area was extended down towards Tintagel where further debris was checked.

At low water another extensive search was carried out around the harbour entrance using the x-boat. Information was passed to the fire brigade that there seemed to be several cars under the water in the harbour entrance.

Once the search was finished we were asked to recover an upturned vessel, which was in danger of breaking up inside the harbour entrance. The vessel was towed into deeper water where it was righted and pumped out so as to make it seaworthy enough to tow.

Owing to the deteriorating weather conditions we were reluctant to tow the vessel back to Padstow and conditions inside Boscastle Harbour meant that the vessel could not be berthed safely. After consultation with Port Isaac coastguard it was decided to tow the vessel to Port Gaverne where it could be safely recovered.

Once this had been done the Padstow lifeboat was released from the search to return to station arriving back some twelve and a half hours after launching. A long service call but one where thankfully no lives were lost.

The lifeboat was washed down and dried and by this time the crew were all tired and very hungry - then through the crew room door came the waft of - No it can't be? Yes it was - Fish and Chips!!!

The LOM had sent out for suppers for all the crew, what a welcome feast that was. (Perhaps the Operations Manager does have his uses now and again, but let's not tell him that)

Padstow Lifeboat Launches 2004

14th August 2004

Falmouth Coastguard alerted us at 22:01 to a report that a single handed fisherman had not returned to his home port at Bude and there was concern for his safety.

At 22:10 we launched to assist in the search with Bude ILB and Rescue 169.

The missing boat was located by 169 and a search of the vessel revealed that there was nobody onboard. The position of the boat was approx 7 miles west of Bude.

Arriving on scene we commenced a parallel track search starting close inshore off Bude in conjunction with Bude ILB. Several crab pot dhans were checked to make sure the man was not hanging on to them but nothing was found. A local fishing vessel from Padstow the 'Renown' and the THV Patricia had now also joined the search.

Crewmen from the Patricia went onboard the fishing vessel to check the GPS and engine controls for clues as to what had happened to the skipper.

After a discussion with the skipper of the 'Renown', Steve Conium, who is also a crewmember of the Padstow Lifeboat, we decided to go aboard the vessel and see if we could find the vessels track. Fortunately the GPS set was the same as that fitted to lifeboat crewman James Chown's fishing boat and as such he was able to find the vessels track. This showed that the vessel had been going round in large circles for some time, slowly going further out to sea. We traced the circles back to where they started and took the position. With the vessel in tow we went and checked the position which revealed a number of dhans belonging to the missing fisherman. We checked all the other ends in the area in case he was hanging on to one of them. Nothing was found so it was decided that we tow the vessel back to its mooring at Bude and wait for the local fishing boats to commence their search at first light.

With the help of Bude ILB we put the vessel back on its mooring then we proceeded back to the search area where a local boat began hauling the missing man's gear.

Unfortunately the missing skipper's body was discovered and he was taken aboard the Bude ILB.

There being nothing further we could do we returned to station. During the search all available crewmembers were on deck searching leaving only Deputy 2nd Cox Richard Pitman in the wheelhouse to monitor the radio and navigation.

The Lifeboat arrived back at the boathouse at 08.05 some ten hours after launching.

(The Coxswain, Alan Tarby, had been given the option of returning to Padstow once the missing skipper had not been located but the unanimous decision of all the crew was that they would stay and continue the search through the night. Despite their commitment and diligence the following morning brought the sad discovery of the Skipper's body.)

7th August 2004

At 18.25 Padstow Lifeboat was requested to launch to the aid of a capsizing dinghy with 2 persons onboard. When the crew arrived at the boathouse the 2 people had left the dinghy and were swimming towards the slipway. There were people on the beach and they helped them ashore.

The Lifeboat Shore Crew helped them into the boathouse and checked that they were all right and gave them a hot drink.

As the upturned dinghy still posed a danger to other craft and was likely to cause concern if it was reported at a later date we launched the lifeboat and recovered the boat. We towed the dinghy to Mother Ivey's beach where members of the public helped carry it clear of the tide.

Padstow Lifeboat Launches 2004

2nd August 2004

At 10.17 we were paged to assist a local fishing vessel that had suffered engine failure 4 miles to the north of Rumps Point.

The sea was quite rough when we launched with winds force 4-5

Shortly after launching the lifeboat we learned that another local boat had got the casualty in tow and was making for the harbour. As we were now in sight of the two boats we went alongside and checked that all was well before returning to station.

29th July 2004

At 13.18 the Padstow Lifeboat was requested to launch to the assistance of a 42 ft yacht that had become entangled with a buoy rope. She was approximately 14 miles NE of the station.

It was raining and visibility was poor. When we arrived on scene we put two crew onboard the yacht and they used our long boathook to reach the rope.

We then towed the vessel stern first against the tide to reduce the strain on the rope and our crew cut the rope and rejoined the buoy.

Once free we proceeded towed the yacht to Padstow Harbour where she was safely berthed.

5th July 2004

At 11.20 Falmouth Coastguards requested that the lifeboat launch to the assistance of an angling boat 5 miles north of Stepper Point with 9 people aboard one of whom had collapsed. A fellow angler was a doctor and he had requested an immediate transfer to hospital for the casualty.

As a helicopter was not available we were tasked to attend and assist with the transfer of the man to hospital. On the way to the station we were notified that a helicopter was now on its way but that we should standby for possible launch in case the angler could not be airlifted off the boat.

Owing to the distance to the casualty it was decided to launch and proceed.

However when we were 3 miles from the casualty we were told that the helicopter had made a successful lift and we returned to station.

29th May 2004

At 20.17 the lifeboat was paged to assist a charter angling vessel off Pentire. She had engine failure and was dragging her anchor. There were two people onboard one of whom was a child.

The lifeboat launched and proceeded towards her.

Once alongside crewmember Neil Simpson was put aboard. He cast off the casualty's anchor and buoyed us off. We took up the tow and after recovering her anchor we took her to her mooring in Rock.

31st March 2004

A local charter fishing vessel with two people onboard, was fishing approximately 10 miles north of Trevoise Head Padstow when her propeller and rudder became fouled by a large amount of discarded fishing net. The skipper contacted Falmouth Coastguard and as there were no other suitable vessels in the area at 16.00 we launched and proceeded towards her.

When we arrived alongside the casualty crewmember Alan Hoskin went aboard to help secure the tow line. When all was ready we took the vessel back to Padstow harbour.

Padstow Lifeboat Launches 2004

14th February 2004

At 09.56 on Valentines Day we were requested to launch to the assistance of a 10 metre trawler with two people onboard. The casualty vessel had a large rope fouling her propeller and her skipper had tried diving under the boat to free the rope himself but there was too much for him to be able to clear it.

The coastguard had tried to obtain help from other fishing vessels in the area but had been unsuccessful.

At 10.10 we launched the James Burrough and headed towards her position 6 miles west of Trevoise.

We reached the trawler at 10.35 and took her in tow to Padstow where we berthed her alongside the quay. Here she would dry out at low water thus enabling the skipper to remove the rope

January 15th 2004

It was a cold, dark winters night and all the crew were safely tucked up in their soft, warm beds. At 23.00 our Coxswain, Alan Tarby, was awoken from his slumbers by the telephone ringing.

It was DLA Steve Hughes.

Steve had been contacted by Falmouth Coastguard and asked if we would go to the aid of an injured crewman aboard a large fishing vessel who was north of Bude. Due to the state of the tide the fishing boat would not be able to get in over the Bar and as such this would mean that the injured fisherman would have to wait over 10 hours to receive medical attention for his badly lacerated finger.

It was a rough old night and when the pagers went off so did the crew.

At 23.30 the Padstow Lifeboat launched into rough seas with swells of 3 to 4 metres.

The wind was westerly force 7 to 8 and there were heavy showers.

It was decided that Port Quinn Bay would be the ideal place to take the injured fisherman aboard and so the lifeboat set her course to rendezvous with the fishing boat.

When we arrived the fishing boat was still an hour away and so we dodged and waited.

‘Put the kettle on’ came the cry ‘and let’s have a cuppa’. Kettle on, cups ready and increasing anticipation of a nice hot drink. Not to be.....before the water had had a chance to boil word came of the casualty’s approach. Just like the nursery rhyme, (but without Polly and Suki), came the cry ‘Take it off again, and put the cups away!’

The transfer was carried out successfully and our onboard Paramedic, Phil Nelson, checked that no further medical intervention was necessary before the fisherman reached the hospital.

We returned to the boathouse arriving back at 02.45, we recovered the lifeboat and one of the crew, Michael Smith, offered to take the injured fisherman to Treliske Hospital where he was kept in overnight following treatment.

‘Now for that nice cuppa’ and once the James Burrough had been washed down and refueled the crew returned to their beds.