



Lifeboats

December 2018/Issue 19

# FOREVER BY THE SEA

TRIBUTE FUNDS NEWSLETTER

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Photo: RNLI/Nigel Millard

Welcome to our tribute funds newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading about the lives of those who left such happy memories for the ones they loved. Doreen, Paul and Joyce led very different lives but had one thing in common – they all adored the sea.

We show you the difference your tribute

funds can make. Without the swift action and cool heads of the Moelfre lifeboat crew a family adventure would almost certainly have ended in tragedy.

With the support of people like you, our crews will be there at Christmas and all through the year ahead, to keep people safe.

# 'WE ARE EXTREMELY HAPPY TO SUPPORT THE RNLI'S WONDERFUL WORK'

Very sadly, my husband Paul died of a heart attack in May, aged 52. Following that, we set up a memory page in support of the RNLI and the British Heart Foundation.

I chose the RNLI as I'm originally from Anglesey and I met Paul in Rhosneigr, where his family have a holiday home. They have been sailing for generations and are members of the Rhosneigr Boating Association. They appreciate how vital the services of the RNLI are to all seafarers.

Our whole family has a long association with the RNLI. My step-brother Andrew Hodgson is also a member of the lifeboat crew at Trearddur Bay, in Anglesey. Paul's aunt, Ann Bromley also passed

Paul rigging his Laser on Rhosneigr Beach



Photo: Debbie Crouch



Paul, Emily and Debbie on a friend's boat in Trearddur Bay

away this year. The Bromleys of Penarth are award-winning sailors, and Ann was a hugely committed RNLI volunteer and supporter.

It felt so right that donations for Paul went to a charity that fits in with our lives. My 13-year-old daughter Emily and I spend most of the school holidays in Anglesey. Emily loves to go kayaking, fishing with her uncle Andy on his boat, or bodyboarding and surfing off the beaches in Rhosneigr.

Paul sailed a Laser dinghy and although Emily is yet to learn to sail, I am sure this is something she will do in the future. The RNLI will therefore continue to be a much-needed service for our family and we are extremely happy to support their wonderful work.

## Words from Debbie Crouch

We'd love to hear about your loved ones too. To share your memories with us, please email the Giving In Memory Team on [in\\_memory@rnli.org.uk](mailto:in_memory@rnli.org.uk).

# 'GRAN WAS AN INSPIRATION ALL MY LIFE'



Anne Green and her gran Joyce Powell

**Joyce (gran) has been an inspiration all my life. Whatever happened to her, she always remained jolly. She loved her family, which included a total of 35 children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren.**

Gran and grandad adored the outdoors. They met at the Cyclists' Touring Club when gran was 15. They passed their love of the outdoors on to their children: gran and her girls (including my mum) would think nothing of putting their tents on their bikes and cycling from their home in Birmingham all the way to Wales.

We used to call gran 'Granny Cuckoo'. She'd pull up a stool – she was only 5 feet tall – and stand on it to wind up her cuckoo clock every hour, just before the hour. We watched as the music played and two tiny clock children – a girl and a boy – came out and danced a little dance around the top of the clock, before the cuckoo popped out of the door. One of those watching was my niece Emily, who helped coin the phrase. Granny Cuckoo's 90th birthday cake was in the shape of a cuckoo clock!



Granny Cuckoo's 90th birthday cake

For gran, the outdoors included being by the sea. Gran and grandad would go and live in a caravan in Barmouth for 6 weeks over the summer, and my brother, sister and I would go and stay. We slept next door in a tent and gran would warm us up each morning with a cooked breakfast.

It was from these seaside holidays that gran started supporting the RNLI. She sent RNLI Christmas cards to her friends, bought raffle tickets every year and sang the charity's praises whenever she could.

I wanted to do something positive in gran's memory, so I set up an RNLI tribute fund in her name and chopped off my hair to raise money for it. I donated my hair too – to the Little Princess Trust, which makes wigs for children with cancer.

## Words by Anne Green



Family photo in the back garden



Moelfre's all-weather lifeboat.

Photo: RNLI/Nathan Williams

## 'I HUGGED MY DAUGHTER CLOSE THAT NIGHT'

**When a firefighter and his teenage son set off on a kayaking adventure from Anglesey, they had no idea they'd soon be fighting for their lives.**

Paul and his 13-year-old son Joe weren't aware of it, but a hatch lid had come off their kayak. As they paddled, it began taking on water. About 1½ miles offshore, and ½ mile from their destination Ynys Dulas (Dulas Island), the kayak capsized, dumping them both into the sea.

'It was cold, but I righted it and Joe got back on,' Paul recounts. 'But as soon as I let it go, it went straight over again.' This happened again and again. Thinking on the spot, Paul told Joe to straddle the kayak

and began pushing it, kicking with his feet. Half an hour later, they were getting nowhere. The kayak was so full of water it was a dead weight. 'I knew that the only way we were going to get to safety was if we left the kayak and tried to swim,' says Paul.

Five metres in, Joe panicked again. 'I think we're going to die,' Joe's voice shook. 'I said that we weren't,' admits Paul, 'but – if I'm honest – I thought so too.' Seconds later, Paul lost consciousness.

Joe managed to drag Paul to dry land while his dad slipped in and out of consciousness. At one point, he hauled his dad up onto rocks and gave him CPR. 'I've seen it in films and random video clips online, so I just tried it,' Joe recalls.

Back at the family's holiday home, Paul's wife Julie was getting increasingly anxious. They should have been back for lunch, but they were late. Then, to her dismay, she found their personal flotation devices, which they should have taken with them, in the shower. Instinctively, she rang the Coastguard.

When the lifeboat arrived, Deputy Coxswain Martin 'Bonty' Jones scrambled onto the rocks. As experienced crew, he knew there was a significant risk of secondary drowning and that the casualties needed to be evacuated quickly. Bonty stayed with Paul and Joe until the helicopter arrived, monitoring them carefully. 'I brought Joe down from the rock, closer to me,' he said. 'I thought: "I need to see if we have anything in common that I can talk to him about."'

For new dad Bonty, this shout was one of his worst. 'If Julie hadn't called it in that they were missing, we might not have got there in time. 'My daughter is only 18 months old. I'd like to think that there will be someone there to help her if she ever gets into trouble. I hugged my daughter close that night.'

# 'SHE ALWAYS FOUND IT REASSURING THAT THE LIFEBOAT WAS STANDING BY'

My mum Doreen was born in Woolwich on 25 August 1928. The RNLI was dear to her heart and she gave generously to it throughout her lifetime. She spent many wonderful holidays in Salcombe with her family and grandchildren. It was a trip mum made every year for over 25 years and she developed a special relationship with Salcombe Lifeboat Station.

During our holidays we used to meet and chat with the lifeboat Coxswain Frank Smith and enjoy the Lifeboat Open Days, often watching the lifeboat head out to sea. Mum loved the sea, but never learned to swim. She was a nervous passenger on the little ferry that ran between Salcombe and South Sands, so she always found it reassuring that the lifeboat was standing by!

Mum held an annual fundraising garden party every summer for family and friends in support of the RNLI. Her garage was beautifully decorated with a different theme each year, featuring, among other things, flower arrangements and fancy-dress hat competitions. She and her dear friend Peggy enjoyed planning and preparing the event, which gave much pleasure to all generations. There was always a tombola in aid of the RNLI, raising many thousands of pounds for the charity during her lifetime.

We were looking for a way for family and friends to make a donation to a favourite charity of mum's as an alternative to sending flowers for her funeral. It seemed fitting to remember her and celebrate her life by setting up an RNLI tribute fund.

We were happy to give our family and friends an opportunity to support the RNLI in Doreen's memory and raise £1,000 for charity. We know Doreen would have both approved of this and supported it.

Now in their 20s, her grandchildren still have fond memories of our wonderful holidays with their nanna in Salcombe. By an amazing coincidence, we were all gathered in the area last July for a wedding. We contacted Salcombe Lifeboat Station as it seemed a fitting tribute to make a visit and rekindle fond memories. The family were superbly welcomed and hosted by Coxswain Chris Winzar and Mechanic Sam Viles. It was a special morning and we were shown around both the inshore *Gladys Hilda Mustoe* and all-weather *The Baltic Exchange III* lifeboats. It was a memorable occasion indeed, where we remembered mum and introduced her great-granddaughter to the charity. It meant a great deal to our family and we were so grateful to have been given the opportunity to make this visit.

## Words by Jo Jesson

Jo and Doreen playing table tennis at  
The Tides Reach Hotel, South Sands, Salcombe



Photo: Jo Jesson

# LOVED ONES REMEMBERED

We'd like to take this opportunity to celebrate all the **Forever by the Sea Tribute Funds** opened since our last newsletter. We're proud to commemorate:

Raymond Brill • David Fullman • Paul Crouch • John Knight • Alex Buckingham • Leonard Loebel  
James Gambrell • Dennis Taylor • Tony Lane • Royston Clark • Mollie Hobbs • Ron Trayling  
Napier Smith • Muriel Evans • David McKay • John Doherty • Ben Quartermaine • Brian Luscombe  
John Morris • Alice Fennimore • Ron Page • Phelim Hughes • Vicky MacDonnell • Harriet Forster  
Donald John MacInnes • Alan Ashworth • Steve Hinds • Ronald Findlay • Thomas Coupe  
Simon Templeman • Gerry Field • Hazel Clear • James Wilson • Sheila Wright • Felicie Laurent

## CONTACT US



If you have comments or questions about your Tribute Fund, or would like to share your story in this newsletter, we'd love to hear from you.

Please get in touch with us on:

**Tel:** 0300 300 0124 (+44 1202 663234 from outside of the UK)

**Email:** [In\\_memory@rnli.org.uk](mailto:In_memory@rnli.org.uk)

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[RNLI.org/ForeverByTheSea](https://www.rnli.org/ForeverByTheSea)

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