

June 2010  
Issue 12

# Glasgow's Lifeboat

*Newsletter of the Glasgow Humane Society*

*Charity no SC001178*



**Officers Foreword** Due to our extreme pro active vigilance and readiness we have been involved in several rescues this year, mainly involving normal river users which sometimes are regular occurrences and at other times can be extremely few and far between. Involvement in some other rescues though has been high profile and no doubt most of you will have read about them in the media.

We have also been called upon to assist the Police in missing person searches—most of which had happy endings.

Other recent ongoings include, the development of new lifebelt/ladder/gate colour in conjunction with Highland Colour Coaters, lifebelt posts and GPS signage for towpath between Rutherglen and Dalmarnock, railing gates lifebelt posts and signage for Richmond Park development, new Bridge over Jennies Burn (Jennies Bridge) with correct safety railing, encouraging more waterside premises to keep rescue equipment in house and train personnel in use of said equipment, Re-painting of gates fencing lifebelt posts by GCSS restorative justice

## ***Erskine Searches***

Recently Officers and lifeguards have been involved in searching the River Clyde at Erskine for 3 missing persons. A Clydeport launch had been put at the Society's disposal and regular searches carried out as far downriver as 1 mile past Bowling.

The Clydeport Paddle this year took the form of an intensive search of the river by GHS personnel for the three missing people.

5 GHS craft, bank patrollers and a Port Authority launch combed the river and riverbank between the City Centre and Bowling.

Although the search had no result, it was an excellent training outing for all concerned.



***Officers George and Tony heading out on a search in Clydeport launch***



These searches have recently been concluded which hopefully has brought closure to the families concerned.

Our thanks go to Clydeport for the lone of a boat, fuel and personnel, thanks also goes to all who assisted the Society on these long incidents.

***Lifeguard Ian assisting Searching Erskine Bridge area***

***"Preventing Accidents.....Saving Lives"***

## Sustrans Route N75

The upgrading of the river towpath from Glasgow Green to Dalmarnock Road Bridge has been moving along well with only some minor hiccups, on what is a big job. Over 300 trees have already been removed as they were either dangerous or breaking up the walkway rendering it impossible to relay the surface. New lifebelt stances, new railings, tarmac walkway and improved access routes will all be part of the development. Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, encouraging people to use mainly bikes and helping local authorities to set up cycle corridors.

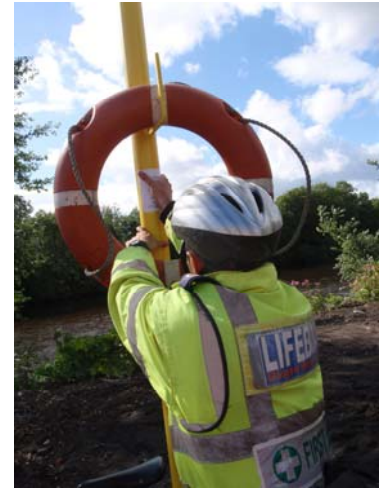
The Society has assisted in the removal of the trees, also providing safety boat coverage for Arborists and river users while large trees on the riverbank were felled.

It is hoped that further work will be completed by the end of the summer improving the walkway and riverside safety.



*Officer Tony placing new temporary signage on poles*

*Officer Tony and Lifeguard Mark replacing lifebelts*



## The Standing Boats

On 6th June 2010, George completed his sculpture on the riverbank inside the Society Compound.

This sculpture epitomises the "junk sculpture" idiom in which George has worked since graduating from the Glasgow School of Art in 1967.

Boats used in this art work were involved in crashes on the river, and therefore for by commanding a place in Glasgow Green as a work of Art, it is a warning to all river users that if they do not behave and follow the Rules and Guidelines for safe behavior, their boat could end up in a similar sculpture.

The hulls of the boats are placed facing south west into the prevailing winds

George Parsonage Riverman  
Art 2010



## Society AGM The 220<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting of the Society took place in the City Chambers in June



### Statistics

An update on the statistics from January 1st until June 29th 2010 show,

2301 patrols were carried out at various waterways (though mostly the River Clyde) by Officers, Lifeguards and Riverwatchers

On 221 occasions lifeboats were launched

193 Lifebelts were recovered

Animals were dealt with on 14 occasions

192 potential hazards were removed from the river or riverbank

On 10 occasions stolen or lost goods were recovered

96 meetings were attended or held

Advice or assistance was given on 439 occasions

Additional safety cover was given at 31 events

8 Acute rescues were carried out

On 11 occasions rescues were attended or accidents prevented

9 Talks/presentations were given

6 training courses were organised, run and certificated by the Glasgow Humane Society

### SUBC & GHS

The GHS are very thankful to Strathclyde University Boat Club who donated a substantial amount of money. A special cheque was presented on behalf of SUBC by Club Captain Karen Finlay to Society Director Sam Brown after the Barony Cup races.



## *DAYS GONE BY*

This brings us to the newest section in our newsletter, where George and Tony scour the old minute books looking for an interesting story that George has turned into a short story.

Our latest story sees us go back to the 1890's with a passage taken straight from George Geddes's minute book.

### **Wednesday 31st July 1895**

Miss Alma Beaumont the lady aeronaut from the Carnival at the Coplawhill Road in descending from her balloon by means of her parachute dropped into the river a little east of the Green Suspension Bridge. George Geddes fearing that she would land in the Clyde put off in a boat with his assistant Dan Bree to be able to render assistance if necessary. Luckily she dropped within ten yards of the rescue boat & was at once submerged. As the boat was broadside on Geo Geddes dived off the boat, swam one or two strokes caught the lady & lifted her on her feet in shallow water at the side where the parachute lay. Some trouble was experienced in cutting her from the tangled ropes, which when accomplished Miss Beaumont was taken on board of a boat & taken to the Humane Society House, where she was kindly treated by Mrs Geddes and after a little attention and loan of a complete change of warm dry clothing she was driven off in a cab to the carnival by her manager nothing the worse of her dangerous immersion.

George Geddes Rescuer

## *Bennie Decommissioning*



The Decommissioning service of the Bennie took place on Sunday 27th July. Over 100 persons attended which was quite good considering we clashed with a certain England v Germany football match. The service was conducted by the Rev Peter Davidge with assistance from Rev John Whiteford and the Clydebank Burgh brass band and friends played melodies and hymns. At one point the wonderful service was rudely interrupted by the Klaxon for the phone going off; thankfully it was not an emergency and was only a lovely wee lady with a wrong number. After the speeches decommissioning and official commissioning

of the other boats, a fine spread was partaken of in the Garden of the GHS House, many thanks to all those who helped provide the food and all those that attended.

A special Decommissioning newsletter is hoped to be published in due course.



### *LIFEBOAT CONTACT DETAILS*

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## *Albert Bridge call outs*

Most of you will have seen in the media that there were two rescues of women from the river Clyde in the vicinity of the Albert Bridge in the past few weeks. Both these rescues involved the Glasgow Humane Society with Officers informed by members of the public.

In the first incident they did not give the exact situation and exact locus of a woman in the water, and George arrived upstream of the weir/dam by boat and had to leave the boat there and run to the locus downstream of the weir/dam. George entered the water wearing a lifejacket, a safety rope round his waist and pushing a lifebelt in front of him to allow for a non contact tow. With three rowing club members holding his safety line, George swam out and caught hold of the woman who was at that point, sinking.

As for various reasons beyond his control, George's safety line was floating loose in the water, however a fire and rescue hose line provided the means of a rapid return to shore and quickly the woman was taken into an Ambulance. A very cold George returned upstream to the wharf with his boat. George thanks Officer Tony, Lifeguard Alex Macdonald, and rowers James Murphy, Donald Shearer and David Russell. He would also like to thank Strathclyde Police and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

We were not caught out a second time, when word was received that another woman was in the water "below the weir. This time the Glasgow Humane Society "machine" worked like clockwork. George LG's Colin Rae and Ben Parsonage ran to the House where boats on trailers are kept. While George and Ben pushed the boat out of the side gate, Colin drove George's car round to meet them. With George at the wheel they sped the 400 metres to the gate between the Weir and the Albert Bridge. Tony had driven ahead to the weir to open this gate; LG Ross Couper had run to the locus. As we launched the boat down the banking we were receiving word that two more persons were in the water rescuing the woman.

The time from receiving the call to when the boat was launched was less than 3 minutes. Tony and George rowed out into the stream to find that the two rescuers had managed to tow the woman to the Nautical College pontoon where a third person was helping the three of them from the water.

George and Tony drew alongside the pontoon as Fire and Rescue Officers with resuscitation equipment arrived on the pontoon. Leaving F&R with the rescued woman, George and Tony ferried the two rescuers to the north bank where there was a waiting Ambulance, as at least one of the rescuers required immediate medical treatment. LG's Colin and Ross now manned the lifeboat and rowed downriver retrieving 5 lifebelts that had been thrown into the river in rescue attempts.

LG's Ben, Colin, Ross with Officer Tony returned these lifebelts to empty stances. With assistance from Strathclyde Police Officers, and members of rowing clubs we lifted the boat from the water and replaced it on its trailer, again in readiness.

A job well done and thanks to all who assisted. A special vote of appreciation goes to the three Glasgow University students who carried out a very brave, and tactically well thought out rescue.

Although not officially "on call" for rescue, it is only correct that any boat in the vicinity competent of carrying out a rescue attends and it is pleasing to see that the Glasgow Humane Society is still in a state of readiness, willing and able to help a fellow human being in distress.

Several more rescues have been carried out since the above incidents including one where five youngsters from a capsized racing boat were speedily brought from the water.

## Events

Events over the last few months have included Clydesdale summer regatta, Barony cup, GUBC v EUBC, Clydeport paddle, race for life, GRC regatta

Well, the Clydesdale Regatta was a very successful affair with racing from early morning to well into the evening. Prizes were distributed to a wide range of Clubs, the Boat Races of St Andrew v Clydesdale, Edinburgh v Glasgow University and the Strathclyde University Barony Cup races provided extra entertainment. In the middle of the day safety cover was slightly interrupted when a woman entered the river below the weir at the Albert Bridge.

With George and Tony at the Regatta were the following Lifeguards Ross/Allan Tweedie/Kenny/Ben/Stephanie/Mark McK/Mark C/ Ian B/Marcin/Colin Rae and Riverwatcher Jack Doran.



*Officer George on duty during a regatta*



*Lifeguard Adel at the halfway point on the Clydeport Paddle*

## Restorative Justice

Glasgow Community Safety Services' Restorative Justice Programme has been improving the walkways from the Albert Bridge to the Helipad on the north bank. Most of the work has been carried out, after Society Officers persuaded GCSS that it would bring a new lease of life to Custom House Quay.

Work that has been carried out includes re-painting of lifebelt stances, emergency ladders & launching/landing site gates, riverside fences and painting out of graffiti. Officers have also given advice to GCSS while they are cleaning out burns in the Pollock area where rubbish has built up.

The Society would like to see this programme rolled out through the city waterways helping to not only refurbish waterside emergency equipment but also helping educate people on the importance of its use.

## Spring Wildlife

As spring has come & gone we are fortunate to be in a position to see new life born and grow up around us on the water & banks. Ducklings, signets & baby mink have all been born recently.



*Signets recently born on the river near Glasgow Green*