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Issue 14

Glasgow's Lifeboat

Newsletter of the Glasgow Humane Society

Charity no SCO01178



Officers Foreword River work, paperwork, day to day work, rescues, fundraising and searches all in this issue of Glasgow's Lifeboat. It often surprises us the vast array of tasks we get asked to do and what is still required to do on the river. We are never short of work to do and with the Commonwealth Games approaching this will only increase as we try to ensure all the safety features on our waterways are in place.

Riverman Appeal Launched

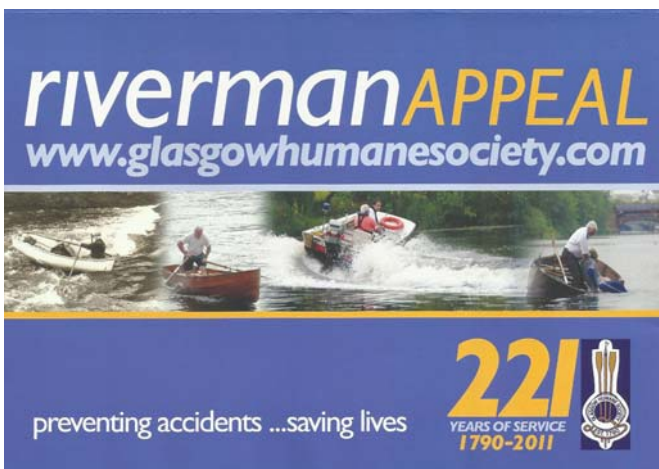
We feel that recent years have proven the amount of varying work that the Society carried out during the past 221 years and the absolute necessity for this work to be advanced for forthcoming generations. We hope that anyone reading this magazine anyone who has seen the Society in action or has perused our web site, and agrees with this assessment of our work, will send a donation to the Riverman Appeal.

The actual launch was on the 16th August, the same date that Glasgow Worthies sat down in the Tontine Hotel in 1790 and pledged themselves to the establishment and running of an organization for the "Prevention, Rescue and Recovery"

A pouring wet day may have helped with the "nautical look" photos of George and Blythe (Duff) but did not really encourage the public out onto the square. We were also competing for space with some film crew from across the Pond

The Lord Provost Right Honorable Robert Winter backed by Blythe Duff, Tom Urie and Glasgow Humane Society Chairman John Park opened the campaign with a very supportive speech

Thanks must be given to the many City Officials, Greater Glasgow businesses, Representatives of Glasgow's "Houses" and ordinary citizens including families who felt they owed a debt of gratitude to the Glasgow Humane Society



Help support the Riverman Appeal
www.glasgowhumanesociety.com

Day to day work

"Opportunity only comes to those who are prepared" and being prepared means constant assurance of readiness. Ongoing day-to-day work at the Society never stops; an organisation of this size requires continually maintenance, safety checks, upgrading and cleaning. This as well as the boat work, paper work, riverbank work, meetings, fundraising and public liaison.

In this new section we take a snap shot look at some of the unseen day-to-day work the Officers and Lifeguards do.

Pontoons covers

Last years storms and floods left the society pontoon looking bare and coverless. After a weekend and a few days of high water levels followed by low water levels and high wind the pontoon "kennels" were ripped off the pontoon and floated off on holiday to Greenock with the rushing currents. This left our Officers with a problem, the 3 boats used for immediate response on the river have always been covered, ensuring that they are sheltered from the elements and can be launched immediately (without having to be baled out 7 or 8 or more times a day as Georges Dad used to have to do). Very temporary covers were built using what was available that week, while a solution was reached to pay for new covers.

Along comes Lewis Davies Managing Director of Cladco Rutherglen, who had a solution. Lewis's company specialises in industrial cladding for buildings but also makes galvanised covers similar to what we used to have. Lewis after a site visit and measurements of the pontoon set his staff to work to make new covers for the pontoons. The new covers arrived and a good friend in Paul McCafferty arranged for them to be powder coated to ensure they had a lasting life and colour matched the St Andrews Bridge.



Officers George and Tony were then left with the jig saw to piece together over a couple of weeks building the new covers to protect the boats and ultimately someone's life on the river.

The Society would like to thank Cladco Rutherglen and Lewis and his staff for all their assistance in resolving our dilemma.



Lifeguard maintenance

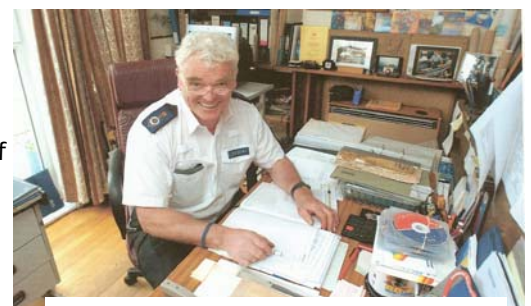
As a Lifeboat Service you would expect to be offered a lifejacket before venturing out onto the water, this is very true the Society has enough Lifejackets and buoyancy aids for its Officers and volunteers. The Society is legally obliged to ensure that all of these are working properly and meet strict guidelines. Some organisations send their lifejackets to be checked by a company, but this can cost upwards of

Officers George and Antony building the covers

£10 a unit. This is one of the reasons that the Glasgow Humane Society is so cost effective.

Paperwork

Some of you reading this think that a lifeboat station is just jumping into boats and racing out onto the waterways without realising the amount of backroom work. But yes an abundance of paperwork has arisen since the Society Officers have been pushing for safer waterways and safer developments. Communication with developers, architects, council staff, contactors, and the public coupled with the general administration work certainly mounts up. We say paper work, but we try to keep the "Office"



Officer George at his desk

as clear of paper as we can and do as much work as possible on e mail. We often wonder why so many firms (even council departments) still use paper.

Painting

At the start of this section we mention the "continual maintenance". We have been lucky this summer to have four youngsters willing to help and wanting to learn. The upkeep of equipment also requires it to some would say look good, but annual painting of equipment, when required, allows the society to keep boats, trailers, buildings etc for longer and preventing it from becoming a rusty unusable piece of kit.



Lifeguards Cameron and Ben on painting duty

AGM



The 221st AGM of the Society was held in the City Chambers in May

Searches

GHS Officers and Lifeguards have been asked by a number of different families to carry out searches for their loved ones assumed lost in the river. Currently Society personnel still have one case open and are still carrying out searches on a daily basis.

Statistics

An update on the statistics from January 1st until 30th September show,

4416 patrols were carried out at various waterways by Officers, Lifeguards and Riverwatchers

On 553 occasions lifeboats were launched

335 Lifebelts were recovered

Animals were dealt with on 22 occasions

326 potential hazards were removed from the river or riverbank

On 12 occasions stolen or lost goods were recovered

191 meetings were attended or held

Advice or assistance was given on 1186 occasions

Additional safety cover was given at 38 events

14 rescues were carried out

7 searches have been carried out

On 24 occasions rescues were attended or accidents prevented

8 Talks/presentations were given

0 Bodies recovered

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

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LES ENVIROMENTAL BUISNESS AWARDS

The first non-licensed premise to receive this award was the Glasgow Humane Society. The GHS was officially presented the award by the Lord Provost on the 16th of August, the Society's 221st Birthday.

LES Environmental Business Awards are aimed at licensed and food establishments

Officer George said "The Society a very unique organisation, is very proud to have been granted this award, we have always been keen to be green although money restrains have somewhat forced us into recycling and reusing others unwanted items".



Society President and Lord Provost of Glasgow Robert Winter & Senior Officer George

Missing lifebelts could make the difference between life and death

By Gordon Thomson

KEEP your hands off the lifebelts located along the banks of the Clyde unless you need one as a lifesaver. That's the message today from river rescuers who have been given the use of a quad bike to help them maintain the network of lifebelts. Council chiefs made the all terrain four-wheeler available to the Glasgow Humane Society, the organisation which tries to prevent river accidents by giving safety advice to local government officials, developers and the public.

Members of the Humane Society also provide safety cover at a number of public events and regularly patrol the Clyde. They also help recover bodies from the river. Workmen at Glasgow City Council maintain hundreds of lifebelts, but it's left to Tony Coia and colleague George Parsonage to look after the 500 lifebelts on a 10-mile stretch upriver from the tidal weir at the Saltmarket to Carmyle because the banks are difficult to tackle Both usually use pedal bikes



Officer Antony and the new Society Quad bike

with a trailer but council chiefs have now provided a quad bike to make their maintenance work a little easier. Tony said: "The council has said it appreciates the work done by the Glasgow Humane Society and has given us use of the bike, which is great. "The banks up river can be difficult to negotiate, but the bike does make life that bit easier."

The council gesture comes at a time when members of the Glasgow Humane Society are trying to highlight the importance of not vandalising or removing the lifebelts.

Football fans are known to throw them into the river on match days, while dozens are often removed or damaged by vandals. Lifebelt points are checked each week. Cyclists riding along the banks regularly fall into the river as well as canoeists and rowers, which is why lifebelts are essential.

Tony said: "A lifebelt stolen could be a life stolen." A council spokesman said: "Tony and George are a great help to our teams, maintaining safety on the riverbank, particularly spotting missing lifebelts in the less accessible areas. "We have made sure the Glasgow Humane Society has access to one of our bikes in order to make that job a bit easier."

Vehicle Signage

The Glasgow Humane Society is very proud to accept the kind donation of new vehicle graphics for volunteer's cars. Zero Seven Graphics (Clydebank) and Centurion Signs (East Kilbride) kindly donated their design teams to both come up with new graphics. Both companies then went a step further and also donated the time of skilled sign makers and the materials required to do the work.

The new signage not only brings increased road safety for Officers when attending waterways in Greater Glasgow, but also raising the profile of the Society ensuring the public that the Society is still looking after the City waterways and its citizens.



Proactive

The "pro-active" approach to the Society allows it to prevent far more accidents before they become rescue situations. By being on the water and around the water, Society volunteers are the eyes around our waterways, spotting dangers and preventing accidents and ultimately saving lives.

By being on and around the waterways on a daily basis the public expectation of Society Officers is that we will assist in a time of need. The Lifeboat has been launched a number of occasions this year to rescue persons in distress or in danger of drowning, who have all been successfully rescued from the river.

Rafts



Due to the Society's proactive approach to safety, Officers were able to prevent what could have been a potential accident in waiting. During a search of the river Lifeguards and Officers spotted a large amount of wood, barrels and other raft making materials on the river banking. These items were removed and any would be raft makers prevented from building such makeshift craft. In the picture you can see Officers George and Tony after collecting some of the materials.

Officers George & Antony with the makeshift raft materials

Strathclyde University Boat

GHS Personnel kindly accepted a donation from Strathclyde University Boat Club in recognition of work carried out in the past year. This has become a bit of an annual donation for the University Students who carry out a special fundraising event every year and donate a percentage of it to the GHS.



Duke of Edinburgh awards

My first year at Glasgow Humane Society I was delighted to be accepted as a volunteer at the Glasgow Humane Society as part of my Bronze Level Award for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. The first day I arrived I was taken by Tony in rowing Lifeboat upstream. Since then I have participated in washing boats, replacing lifebelts, painting, patrolling the river and assisted in safety cover provision for events both on the river and on Glasgow Green. Every day at the river has been different; I have learned many new skills and enjoyed every experience. I am continuing volunteering as a lifeguard for my Silver Duke of Edinburgh and I would like to continue to volunteer my time when I am older.
Cameron Grant

Summer events

Summer time brings with it unique problems and trials sent to test Society personnel but it also brings the main events season of the year with no less than 10 events packed into around 12 weeks.

The annual summer events are busy and make for long days for Officers and Lifeguards, usually starting work at 8am and not finishing till around 8pm. The Society is requested to carry out safety cover of all events that take place in Glasgow Green by Glasgow City Council, however small or large they maybe. The Society volunteers provide a very cost effective safety cover service for the Council.

A good working relationship with GCC events teams needs to be further enhanced before 2014, where the Society is in a perfect position to provide a valuable, proactive accident prevention approach to safety cover for the city over the weeks of the Commonwealth Games as it has done in this area of River for 221 years.

This summer has seen the annual Clydesdale Summer regatta, which incorporates the University boat races of Glasgow vs Edinburgh and the Strathclyde University Barony Cup. This is the biggest regatta on the Clyde and also the longest day for Officers and Lifeguards ensuring that all sections of the river are adequately covered during different races varying from 3000m to 250m.



Lifeguards Chelsea and Amy on event safety cover



The Society Officers and volunteers provided safety cover at other events through the summer including the County Grand Orange Lodge of Glasgow Demonstration, World Pipe Bands Championships and the Glasgow Show. Society Lifeguards attendance was requested at Alexandra Park for the parks open day, they provided a safety cover presence, assisting Glasgow Life who had "come and try sailing" on the park boating pond and engaging with the public, and nice to see Councillor Frank Docherty, at the Society Gazebo.

Lifeboats in readiness for Lifeguards on duty at Alexandra Park