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Issue 11

Glasgow's Lifeboat

Newsletter of the Glasgow Humane Society

Charity no SC001178



Officers Foreword Since our last magazine, we have had some amazingly different weather conditions on the river and other City waterways. While I have seen the temperature lower in this area, it has not been so cold for such a long spell. This resulted in ice forming on the river each night, and our breaking it up to ensure the swans geese and ducks did not get frozen in. Tony and I also went on radio and warned persons of the dangers of trying to walk on such ice or letting their dogs run wild onto the ice. Too many persons especially children have died playing on or trying to walk on ice. We chased young adults off City Park ponds, and ensured no one boated on the river during the ice or during the thaw. Safety is paramount and as we are always saying, if you do it, the less experienced and the younger will copy your actions. Fortunately except for some animals there were no really serious accidents during this time

Glasgow Humane Society Recycles

Lifeguards and Officers have been collecting donations of equipment for the GHS over the many years of its existence. Recent donations have included PPE of waterproof jackets, uniform shirts and jumpers, footwear plus simple donations of tea, coffee and sugar for break times.

The Society has membership of two recycling websites Freecycle and Freeshare where they can ask the local community for any items that people no longer require and put online for collection. Many articles are put to use by the Society that are cast away by others as useless. The GHS has even acquired boats and heavy duty machinery this way in the past as friends of the Society donate no longer wanted goods.

The Society prides its self as trying to be as green as possible with the whole of the pontoon floating on barrels destined for the dump but being put to good use. We have also been collecting hi-viz tape for use on boats, trailers, vehicles and equipment, from various companies mainly all in England who are disposing of old tape from previous jobs.

Another group that the GHS has recently been acquiring goods from is re-paint Scotland who are based in Govan and recycle old paint that mainly Local authority bodies have binned and no longer wish. This has been put to amazing use re painting Society sheds, boats and equipment at no cost but a few car drives to Govan.

If you or a friend have any items you feel could be put to good use by the GHS do not hesitate to contact us and you could be helping a local charity survive while helping us serve Glasgow's Waterways.



Left- Recycled paint used for property upgrading

Above - Jackets donated



Right - Donated boat is launched

[Rope throwing courses](#)

Strathclyde and Glasgow University Boat Clubs have received training from GHS personnel on rope throwing skills. The Society offers a course recognised by Glasgow City Council which guides coaches and rowers on how best to use throw bags and ropes in an emergency situation on the river without endangering their own life. The Society feels that any person who is working, living or generally in close proximity to waterways should take this course. Past participants of courses have rescued persons in danger, one group even rescuing a youth only 2 weeks after doing the course.

The course is at the moment free to anyone located close to waterways within the Greater Glasgow area and is a worthwhile few hours spent.



SUBC put through their paces on the course

[Cheapside remembered](#)

Watching the programme 'The Night Glasgow Burned' on BBC TV last Sunday evening brought back memories of the day I played the church organ at the wedding of one of the young firemen who died in the blaze, William Crockett. I was a very young organist at the time and this was the first church wedding I played for (I think it was in 1951).

William Crockett's name was clearly seen when a picture of the memorial to those who lost their lives was flashed onto the screen. I watched with tears in my eyes as I remembered Bill and his young wife on their wedding day all these years ago. I remembered not only that occasion but that this young man had been coming around the boathouse on Glasgow Green for some time. He was one of my father's voluntary helpers in those days ...today the helpers are know as lifeguards, helping my brother George, my father's worthy successor.

The programme was a fitting tribute to all those who so gallantly carried out their duties and who lost their lives in such tragic circumstances. *Elizabeth Parsonage Thomson*



Officers George and Tony along with City Engineer Marco Bardelli recently visited the site of the new Riverside Museum. The Society has been heavily involved with the safety features along the riverbanks of this development working with architects Zaha Hadid. The Officers have been advising on new quay wall ladders, lifebelt stances, lighting, CCTV and landscaping on the riverbanks. George and the Society also have an interest in the G.H.S. exhibition to be placed in the new museum, incorporating the Bennie Lifeboat, tools used for the maintenance of Society equipment and other articles pertaining to Officer Ben Parsonage .

Right - Officer George, Marco and Officer Tony with Museum Official on the site visit

[Riverside museum visit](#)

[GHS in the Media spotlight](#)

After a recent media campaign over the winter period, Officers featured in various papers, on the radio and TV. The campaign highlighted the dangers of being around waterways during the winter months and the associated dangers of frozen waterways. Media groups that featured the GHS included BBC, STV, Radio Scotland, Radio Clyde, Glasgow Herald, Evening Times and local Glasgow newspapers.

[GHS Christmas Lunch](#)

The Society annual Christmas lunch took place in Al dente, a good turnout resulted in two further tables being added to the already massed hungry Lifeboat personnel.

[Hugh Fulton Group assists GHS](#)

The GHS is very thankful to the HF group Ltd who hard wired machinery, equipment and PAT tested all electrical good on the premises, allowing the Society to channel money laid aside for that job into preventing accidents and saving lives on Greater Glasgow's waterways. HF has agreed to a long term commitment to carry of assistance where possible for the GHS from all sections of its group and helping ensure the safety of personnel working on GHS property.

[Donation received](#)

The GHS are very thankful to Strathclyde University Boat Club who donated a substantial amount of money to the GHS after a sponsored bag pack at Sainsbury's Braehead. An official cheque presentation will take place later in the year to Directors, Officers, Lifeguards and Riverwatchers.



[Historical Picture board](#)

This photo is from the 29th January 1936, the occasion is the laying of the lintel of the present Society House. Persons present that day included, the Rt Hon Lord Provost John Stewart, Lord Inverclyde, Sir James Norval and Officer Benjamin Parsonage.

The House was officially opened on the 15th June 1937 by the Secretary of State for Scotland the Rt Hon Walter Elliot MC, LLD, DSC, MB, MP

DAYS GONE BY

This brings us to the 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 1980's on the banks of the Clyde.

Burning sensation

I received a shout from some scullers informing me that a crowd of Neds had been throwing stones and bricks at the scullers. The group were coming up the towpath. I said right lads bring your boats in here and we shall go up and "talk" with them. I strolled up to the gate and out onto the towpath to face the approaching Neds. I looked round to see where the scullers had gone—they had cleared off and left me to it. Well there was no turning back. "Here there" I said to the group of about 10 aged from 28 to 34 "whits the big idea throwing stones at the racing boats? Are you trying to kill someone" There came the usual response "whits it tae you big man? "Whit are you gaunny dae about it" "come on I said that could be your wee brother out their one of your pals. In fact they are only young students enjoying themselves they don't deserve to be stoned. I could see that I was getting through but unfortunately there is always one hero. He stepped towards me and took a swing at me. I side stepped caught his arm put it right up his back as I ca'ed the feet away from him. He hit the ground and I placed my foot on his back and held him there. The gang were now up for a fight and were encircling me and muttering menacingly. One thing I was sure and that was that if I was going to get a hiding, this ned was going to suffer a broken arm and I related this to the now closing in group. At this point we heard a sort of muffled noise almost screaming. We all looked at the chap lying under my foot. He was shouting "for F— sake let me go "the fags burning ma f— nose. Sure enough the cigarette that he had been smoking when he hit the ground had turned up the way and it had slowly burned down until it reached his nose. Everyone saw the funny side of this and fell about laughing, even the one with his nose burned. They actually apologised for throwing the stones and left the scene still roaring with laughter. Lucky or what?



Mark with his ACCESS Pride Award

LIFEGUARD RECEIVES AWARD

Congratulations are due to Lifeguard Mark McKay who was presented with an ACCESS Pride Award for services to community groups through his work with the Glasgow Humane Society. Mark has been a volunteer for some 7 years, as many Lifeguards, Mark started off as a Riverwatcher advising George of on goings on the river. Mark is now a senior member of the Lifeguard Corp having taken many courses and is now able to assist Officers run courses. Mark also is the GHS webmaster ensuring we communicate with the World Wide Web along with being an IT consultant for the GHS.

The Society is very grateful to Mark and all its volunteers for the time they dedicate to the GHS and Glasgow's waterways.

Different waterways and different types of boats

The Society has many different types of boat used for different waterways and different types of work. There are times when the one boat could be used but we believe where possible to use the boat most suited for a certain purpose. George is drawing up a list of the various types of craft and the purposes for which they are best suited. Articles on this subject will be included in future magazines.



Lifeboat Lady Sarah in readiness to attend any suitable locus by road.

Welcome to a new Lifeguard

Welcome to Ross Cooper who has recently joined the Lifeguard Corp. Ross travels all the way from Edinburgh to assist the Society and we are very grateful for his time and welcome him into the GHS.

Rowers assisted to safety

Officers George and Tony were called out to assist Glasgow University Boat Club over the winter period. The shout went up when a novice crew managed to crash into the piles just above Rutherglen Bridge and were trapped there. George and Tony raced up river to see how they could help, on arrival it was decided it was best to remove everyone from the boat as it had sustained some damage. Along with 5 "casualties" and 2 Officers on board and a coxed 4 in tow the Lifeboat continued back to the GUBC Clubhouse. This incident was a great example of the quick reaction of the GHS and how having the right craft for the right situation serves its purpose well.

Searches at Erskine Bridge

Recent ongoing searches of the river Clyde have been carried out daily by Officers, Lifeguards or Riverwatchers for 3 missing persons at Erskine Bridge.

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Glasgow Humane Society

"Preventing Accidents.....Saving Lives"

Winter Events

Events over the last few months have mainly included water based activities. Some events have included Clydesdale Scullers, GUBC Western Head, GRC Head, SUBC Small boats Race, Clydesdale Head, Clydeport Paddle, Guy Fawkes night, Glasgow RC Regatta and other smaller events all within the Green.

Preparation for events can be time consuming and on going, ensuring that boats / equipment are in readiness, Lifeguards and volunteers mustered, paper work completed and simple jobs done to ensure the safe running of the GHS operations.

Our Lifeguards and volunteers play a vital role in assisting Officers to continue providing this free service to the city and river users. Ensuring that whether a water or land based activity is taking place, accidents are prevented where possible and any assistance that is required can be given. Long quiet hours can be spent providing safety cover at events, sometimes with no action needed by our personnel , as the hi-viz presence on the river helps dissuade persons endangering their life. A good system has been set up and is put into full swing no matter what event is taking place whether large or small, all treated with the same pro activeness.



Officers & Lifeguards after a long paddle to Erskine Bridge.



Officers, Lifeguards and Riverwatchers provide safety cover to over 40 events a year.



A final happy one for you all,. Officer George successfully rescued and returned this Goose to the riverbank after a sightseeing run around Glasgow Green. The only casualty being a tired Officer Tony who was led on a wild goose chase.

Officer George safely herding the goose onto the riverbank