



# RNLI PENLEE

NEWLYN,  
CORNWALL

## Severn Class “Ivan Ellen” and Atlantic 75 “Paul Alexander”

NEWSLETTER No 70

SPRING 2015

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 24th May Open day in both boathouses

Tuesday 2nd June Coffee Morning in the ILB shed from 10.30

Sunday 14th June Fund-raising day at the Queens Hotel

Sunday 28th June (Golowan Sunday) Penlee Lifeboat Rescue Day, Newlyn Green

Tuesday 7th July Coffee morning at the ILB shed from 10.30

Friday and Saturday 17/18th July Collection at Sainsburys

Tuesday 4th August Coffee morning at the ILB shed from 10.30

Sunday 9th August Porthleven Lifeboat Day

Sunday 16th August Mousehole Lifeboat Day and Annual Service

Monday 31st August Newlyn Fish Festival

Tuesday 1st September Coffee morning at the ILB shed, from 10.30

Saturday 5th September Round the Mount sponsored swim.

### SERVICES BY PENLEE LIFEBOATS

**31st October** ILB/ ALB Both boats were launched when a suicide note left by a man with mental health issues was found on the beach. All the emergency services joined a huge and wide-ranging search of Mounts Bay. After several hours at sea the lifeboats were recalled when the man was found by police close to the vicinity of Hell's Mouth.

**25th November** ILB/ALB The service of the 25th November has become one of the most celebrated Penlee services of recent times, though it started quietly enough. On a beautifully clear and sunny winter's afternoon young local musician Joe Holtaway decided to take out his board for a late paddle before going up to London. Light falls quickly in November, and Joe found he had gone out so far with the help of the tide that he was unable to find the strength to paddle back in before darkness fell. The clear night was exceptionally chilly and Joe was soon dangerously cold and disorientated. Fortunately he had been missed and had been seen from the Mount heading out to sea. All the lifeboats had to do then was to find a man in a black wet-suit lying flat on a board in a black moonless night somewhere in Mount's Bay. Despite the carefully organised searches by the boats the odds against a successful outcome were enormous.

After three hours searching the crew of the ILB were freezing

and the boats met together in the bay to share a cup of tea, drifting a little off their search pattern as they did so. When they parted again the ALB had hardly gone a few yards when keen eyes on the flying bridge saw two tiny white spots of light in the water. These were the only reflective part of Joe's body, his exposed ankles. He was quickly taken aboard, confused and deeply hypothermic, probably not much more than half an hour from death.

There were two reasons why this rescue was so celebrated — one the diligence and persistence of the crew in finding Joe; and the other the unprecedented gratitude expressed in so many ways — see below — by Joe and his family. Truly a classic.

**11th February** ALB/ILB A local fisherman accidentally grounded his boat “Holly May” on the edge of St Clements' Island in a heavy swell. As the boat was bucking dangerously the owner jumped ashore, only to see his boat float off on the next wave! Both boats were called at 06.22 and the ILB rescued the fisherman while the Ivan Ellen fetched the “Holly May”. Owner and boat were reunited back in Newlyn.

**26th February** ALB Ivan Ellen was launched at 8.40 on a horrible windy and rainy morning to to assist with the tow into the harbour of the fishing vessel “Algarie” with four crew by Sennen lifeboat.



**10th March** ALB The yacht “Red Socks” found itself in trouble off The Lizard and required a tow-in.

**21st March** ILB A family exploring the Hogus rocks at Marazion on a low tide were dismayed to find themselves cut off by deep water as they tried to make their way back to shore. Such a simple situation can escalate to real danger very quickly. While the ILB was being called a Mount ferry picked up those of the family who hadn’t made it to shore, one of whom was in serious distress. The ILB picked up the family and gave them immediate first aid before landing them on Chapel Rock where they were met by paramedics. Teamwork at its best, as Patch said.

**31st March** ALB The ALB met the French fishing vessel “Azur” late in the evening in Gwavas Lake to take off an injured fisherman and ferry him to a waiting ambulance.

**9th April** ALB The Ivan Ellen was taken to the “Trevesa” in the harbour to take off an injured fisherman who had fallen down a hatch, breaking his knee.

**22nd April** ALB Ivan Ellen launched at 16.35 to escort a trawler towing in the scalloper “Philomena” which had lost a propeller near the Runnelstone. The ALB took up the rear stabilising position to thread her through the gaps and then coupled up to guide the “Philomena” the safety of the quay.

**22nd April** ILB The ILB was launched to bring in a sailing boat 1 mile South of Penzance

**30th April** ILB/ ALB A 36’ yacht lost a propeller off Porthleven and was reported in difficulties — no problem.

**2nd May** ILB/ALB There were reports of a wind/kite surfer in difficulties off Long Rock in an ESE 4 / 5 wind and a moderate sea. Nothing was found and the surfer was reported safely on shore.

**3rd May** ILB The ILB was called to a report of a man in the water off Penzance, but as he needed no assistance it was quickly tasked to the unfortunate “Red Socks” which had broken down again

**13th May** ILB Standard tow-in of 32’ yacht “Solstice” at 15.00.

**15th May** ALB Launched at 16.26 to assist Sennen lifeboat bring in the fishing boat “Emma Louise”

**15th May** ILB/ ALB Both boats were later launched the same day after reports of two paddle-boarders in trouble off Penzance promenade. The lifeboats could find no trace of them, but their car was discovered empty in Penzance, which led to an all-out search by lifeboats, cliff teams, the helicopter and the police. After 1 ½ hours with night almost upon them it was reported that they had been located ashore at Perranuthnoe — they had left another car there in order to paddle between the two, unfortunately telling no-one else.

**17th May** ALB Coming in from exercise the Ivan Ellen stopped beside the catamaran “Two Hoots” which seemed to be having trouble with its outboard. This was found to be dislodged from its housing so the ALB towed her in.

**18th May** ALB An evening search which turned out to be a false alarm.

### JOE’S THANKS

The Penlee crew often receive sincere thanks from those they’ve rescued from danger — and quite often don’t — but the response from Joe Holtaway and his family has been almost unique. They have taken part in innumerable photo calls and created a tremendous amount of excellent press and media for us. Finally they organised a whole fund-raising gig on 9th May at Penzance’s Mill, a packed evening of music, games, raffles and fund-raising fun featuring a large number of local musicians who gave their time for free, not forgetting Joe’s own band the Sea Kings. Joe’s mum gave an emotional vote of thanks to all who co-operated so well in Joe’s rescue. A splendid time was had by all, and over £3,000 was raised for...

### THE APPEAL

Back in January Tom Mansell, Guy Botterill and the Penlee committee convened to confirm the news we have been waiting for so long, that the funds have been allocated for the rebuilding and extension of our boathouse and that work will begin this year. It had already been decided that Penlee and the local community would contribute as much as they thought they could raise towards the total, and a target of £200,000 was decided upon. The appeal is up and running and all our fund-raising efforts this year will be directed towards it.

These are exciting times. The huge disparity between the facilities enjoyed by most Cornish stations and Penlee’s ‘hut’ has finally become too much to ignore, and Penlee, one of Cornwall busiest stations, will at last have a bit of space for a proper crew-room, workshop, training area, public archive, and somewhere for both crews to change simultaneously without putting their feet into each others’ boots. Hurrah! Please will everyone concerned with Penlee give as much as they can spare, in person or online, to help us reach our target...

### DAVID RICKARD

One man we won’t be chasing for money is David Rickard from Honiton. David, who is even older than I am still does a paper round and other activities around Honiton in order to make an annual donation to a worthy cause in the name of his late Mum. This year Penlee was the lucky recipient and gratefully accepted the fine sum of £1,000 from David towards our appeal. Many, many thanks

### JACK NOWELL

Another man we were happy to have on board — literally — in launching the appeal was young Jack Nowell from Newlyn. Jack somehow managed to resist the call of the sea which had occupied most of his family for generations in order to play some kind of ball game, but as he seems to be doing rather well at it we were sincerely grateful to him for lending his high-profile energy and support to the appeal. Naturally we’ll all be glued to the telly this autumn hoping to watch his blue hat crossing the whitewash as often as possible, and wish him the very best of luck. Still not sure about that moustache though... By the time you read this we should already know the result of the real rugby clash of the season, the local RNLI v the Fire Service at the Mennaye, but sadly it may not have received quite the same exposure.

### AWARDS

In February the station got together to present some awards and say a few thanks. Tom M was on fine form as he handed out long-service certificates to such outstanding servants of Penlee Lifeboat as Dave Osborne, Stephen Astley and Rob ‘Cookie’ Cook. Station ‘Dad’ Roy Pascoe received not only the congratulations of the whole branch for his well-deserved British Empire Medal — one of a clutch of medals now awarded to Penlee, which say such a lot about the dedication and hard work of our members — but also a special certificate for 35 years of sustained effort.

Special thanks were expressed by all to Mike ‘Doc’ Hersant, who had decided the time was right to stand down as Branch Chairman, but who has agreed to remain as Honorary President. Mike has been hugely active for Penlee, originally as the station’s Medical Officer, taking part in scores of sometimes hairy medicos, and then using his wisdom on the administrative side, following the very best of the RNLI’s traditions. Also thanked was your humble servant who bowed to age and ignorance in handing over the increasingly demanding role of Lifeboat Press Officer to Elaine Trethowan, whose amazing energy and expertise in all media has already transformed our station’s profile. One of her initiatives has



been to apply for the Jewsons Building Better Communities Fund on behalf of the boathouse appeal. This required at least a thousand online votes in order to come top of the applicant list, but we should end up well on top at around 1500 - well done everybody. The potential payout could be £5,000 or even £50,000 — we should know by the time you read this. I will still be around Penlee too, as Deputy Press Officer and of course writer of this literary jewel.

### SECOND OPEN DAY

Following the huge success of the last open day, in which the Penlee Point boathouse was opened for the first time ever, the experiment was repeated on 29th March. Although it was a cold and damp day the succession of visitors to Penlee Point never paused, and once more the response was one of awe and respect. The ILB shed was transformed once more into a magic cavern of lifeboat memorabilia and yummy food, and the event was well worth-while.

### MEDIA

The Penlee crew deal well with media representatives and make it look easy, but their presence does cause extra pressure and concentration. Anyone saying a silly thing or even appearing on camera without the exactly right kit on display can cause ructions and earn a severe wiggling from up the line. This winter we’ve been visited by BBC’s 5 Live, and for a much longer period by an ITV film crew who were stationed in Newlyn, happy to wait for the opportunity to go out on a live shout, which they did. The programme will be called “Fishing Town” or something similar, in three parts and should appear towards the end of this year. Look for alerts on our always-on-the-ball Facebook site.

On with the summer- please come to as many events as you can, and let’s get that £200,000 in the bag.

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Ivan Ellen accompanies Scillonian III to Penzance Harbour where local RNLI branch members waited on the quay to collect from the passengers. Photo: Michael Ellis, Mousehole