

Operational Activities

We recently had 3 boat callouts in 24 hours, which is a new record!

Our operational crew have, as always, been busy this Spring. Land teams have supported Gloucestershire Police in searching for missing persons in areas from the Forest of Dean to Ledbury and beyond. Boat crews have rescued a number of vessels in distress in the Severn, as well as conducting searches of the River and the recovering of some large floating objects which can be hazards to shipping.

In April and May we have also provided safety cover at both the Devauden Races and the Devauden Festival, and for the Offas Orror race.



New Land Search Graduates

Seven new crew graduated in April to become operational Land Search Technicians. The course started in earnest in November under the leadership of Ed Davy – supported by Kev Caster and Kathy Donaldson.

Over the course of 6 months the candidates learned and practised a range of search techniques, radio procedure, using stretchers, fine navigation skills and how to handle a wide variety of 'missing persons' when they are found. They also practiced basic mud rescue, safe working near cliffs and dynamic water, and working with helicopters.

Poor Bob, the station's full weight rescue mannequin, kept getting into trouble, wandering off and being found passed out in the woods. At one point he got himself 'murdered' on a cliff edge, but he is now back home and very comfortable. Janine's painfully broken leg also seemed to heal up remarkably quickly.

Since 'graduating', by the end of May most had already participated in at least one real search – one crewman had notched up three!



HART Training

In 2014 we were approached by the Great Western Hospitals NHS Trust to provide structured, water-based rescue training for members of their Hazardous Area Response Teams (HART). We are running this training again through 2016 and 2017.

This involves one or more HART paramedics being taken out on the SARA lifeboats, to deal with a realistic scenario. One or two SARA crew act as casualties, being rescued and attended to by the paramedic onboard one of our boats. They are recovered back to Beachley, and then taken off the boat by stretcher up to an ambulance.



The HART teams get to learn and practice boat safety drills, and we get to practice working with another branch of the emergency services. Plus some lucky crew get to be strapped into a stretcher and bounced, helpless, around the Severn for a while - what's not to like?

Exercise Polygon

Exercise Polygon was a major flood exercise, involving 15 organisations who make up the Joint Emergency Services Group (JESG). Fire and Rescue, Police, lifeboat and ambulance crews, mountain rescue and the RSPCA were all involved.

The idea was to test the emergency teams as if the incidents were happening in extreme weather in November – and perhaps more importantly to test the police and fire management teams in coping with a dramatic scenario.



Two teams from SARA participated, with two boats. They practised ‘standard’ flood rescue and also learned how to rescue people from the upper story of a flooded house, using a ladder mounted on a small boat held in place by a second boat.

Planning for the New Newport Boat

We are rapidly approaching our funding target thanks to a recent, significant donation. This means that we are able to buy a substantial new lifeboat for Newport – to sit alongside the new flood boat there.

Ryan Hewitt, Beachley’s Chief Coxswain, together with a team of experienced lifeboat crew have been in consultation with some of the UK’s leading inshore lifeboat manufacturers to design a craft specifically to meet the unique conditions in the River Usk and its estuary.

We have been working on this project since October last year,” said Merv. Fleming, SARA’s Western Area Commander, “and we are anticipating the completion of this project before the end of 2016.

Helicopter Training Day

In 2015 we said farewell to the yellow Sea Kings from RAF Chivenor after many years. The service is now operated by Bristow Helicopters Ltd on behalf of Her Majesty’s Coastguard.



We have worked with the new AgustaWestland helicopter from St Athan already, but in March we had our first formal training with it. The sports pitch became the best-secured landing zone in the whole of southern Gloucestershire whilst it arrived. After a guided tour there was the opportunity for all the helms, and some crew, to be winched up and down - and to try not to fall out of the strop.

The main training was out on the water, where the helms could practise bringing the boats in to the winchman dangling below the helicopter. If you are a big boat the helicopter comes to you, but small RIBs can’t be seen under the heli so the boat has to come to it instead. All good fun on a sunny afternoon, not so easy in a stormy night.



School Visits

Our Beachley Lifeboat and Rescue Station is open to the general public every Sunday morning between 09:30 and 12:00. We also open up for visits from schools, scouts, youth groups and other interested parties during the week.

A conducted tour takes just over an hour viewing the rescue equipment, vehicles and boats with discussions centred on water and outdoor safety / accident prevention.



Station visitors this spring included: Offas Mead Academy, Durand Primary School, Sedbury Explorers, Shirenewton Cub Scouts, and Lydney Fishing Club.

Ron's 35 Years

In May the team at SARA Beachley honoured one of our longest-serving members. Ron Harris has been an operational crew member, continuously, for 35 years! He was presented with his award and a medal, at the Beachley Station, by Area Commander Merv Fleming and Deputy Executive Chairman Mark Carwardine.

Ron joined SARA in 1981, as a lifeboat crewman. He qualified as a Coxswain, and has been the station's Senior Coxswain for many years. He has trained all our current coxswains, and he is also the Beachley Station Manager.



SARA Beachley Committee 2016-17

Re-Elected:

Chairman	Merv Fleming
Station Manager	Ron Harris
Treasurer	Steve Cox
Communications Mgr	Haydn Lyall
Boat Manager	Ryan Hewitt
SRT Manager	Rich Dainty
Fundraising Manager	Lou Brown

New Committee Members:

Land Search Manager	Kathy Donaldson
Training Manager	Dave Brown
First Aid Manager	Malcolm Bradley
PR Manager	Dean Paget

Co-Opted Member:

Vehicles Manager	Barry Buxton
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Many thanks to outgoing Land Search Manager Ed Davy, and Training Manager Ant Perrett.

SUPPORTERS OF SARA (SOS)

The Supporter of SARA help out on fundraising stands around the area and the team continues to grow. One new supporter has just completed her first aid training. We are still recruiting - forms are available!

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

Our collecting tins continue to bring in a steady flow of necessary funding toward our operational costs. Whilst "every penny counts" is an often used and familiar quotation, we are acutely aware that SARA Beachley's annual operational overheads exceed £40,000. We are very grateful to all who have contributed toward our vital work

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS IN 2015!

SCHOOLS	SPORTS & GROUPS (cont)	COMPANIES & COMMERCE	COMPANIES (cont.)
Dell Primary	Harley Davidson MC Club, Newport	The Wye Valley Hotel	Londis, Bulwark
Dewstow Primary	Kingswood Abbey W.I.	5559 Bikes	Lydney Tackle
Highnam Primary	Newport Scouts Association	Alcatel lucent, Newport	Merv. Fleming Associates
High Cross Primary	Newport Conservative Club	All Fleet Services	Millington Davies
Lakeside Primary	N.H.S. Retirement Club Bristol	Alvington Services	Newport Ford
Wyedene Comprehensive	Shirenewton Cub Scouts	ASDA Duffryn, Newport	Outdoor Action, Cardiff
	Slimming World	ASDA Pillgwenlly, Newport	Pie Corner, Newport
INDIVIDUALS	Tenshi Karate, Newport	Bank Farm Trailers, Newport	Redbrook Stores
Claire Field	The Barfly Bikers	Berkley Sports	Sedbury News
Lanie Ball	The Inner Wheel of Gloucester	Bridgedale Outdoors	Sedbury Pharmacy
Elana Brown	Thornbury Sailing Club	Budgens, Chepstow	Severn Sea School
Mr B Harrod	Uskmouth Sailing Club	Budgens, Monmouth	Spar Grocers
Dr Jane McLaughlin	1st Olveston Beaver Scouts	Bulwark Post Office	Spirax Sarco
		Caldicot Post Office	St Merryn Foods
CHURCH GROUPS	PUBS & HOTELS	Thornbury Park Post Office	TESCO Spytty
Chepstow Methodist Church	Speech House Hotel	Caerleon Post Office	TESCO Avonmouth
Devauden Village Hall	The Bell Inn	Celtic Recycling, Newport	Torus Crafts. Lydney
Ebbw Bridge Baptist Church	The Boat Inn, Chepstow	COOP Chepstow	United Healthcare
Holy Trinity Christchurch	The Cross Inn	COOP High Cross	
Narth Village Hall	The Five Alls, Chepstow	COOP Lydney	TOWN & DISTRICT COUNCILS
St Marys' Ladies Fellowship	The Hanbury, Caerleon	Debbies Red Lantern, Caldicot	Alkington
St Mary Magdalene	The Kings Arms	Delta Engineering	Aust
St Oswalds	The Kings Head	EasiLet	Berkeley
	The Lime Tree, Chepstow	Easy Car Care, Chepstow	Chancey
SPORTS & COMMUNITY GROUPS	The Lower Lode	EskiMarket, Coleford	Chepstow
Almondsbury W.I.	The Old Ferry Inn, Chepstow	Fancy Freds, Monmouth	Devauden
Bassaleg & Rogerstone Social Club	The Piercefield, St Arvans	First Aid International	Frampton on Severn
Bream Senior Citizens	The Pontagwyndy Inn	Force 4 Chandlery	Hill Parish
Bristol Cruising Club	The Rose & Crown	The Filling Station Café	Itton with Howick
Caerleon W.I.	The Royal Oak	Forest Adventure Centre	Kinlett
Caldicot Ladies Knit & Natter Club	The St Julians Hotel, Newport	Good Frydays	Langstone
Chepstow Athletics Club	The Severn Bore	Halfords Newport	Magor with Undy
Chepstow Boat Club	The Scrum Half, Pontypool	Hanley Bearings	Narth
Chepstow Radio Club	The Ship Inn, Caerleon	Hanley Farm Shop	Newland
Clingons Climbing Club	The Tredegar Arms Newport	HR's Bar	Pilning & Sedbury
Easy Car Care, Chepstow	The Usk Vale, Newport	Ideal Stores	Ruardene
Forthampton & District W.I.	The Village Inn, Sedbury	Imagine Technology	Tidenham
Gloucestershire Farmwomens Club	The Waterboard Club	Jaguar Land Rover	Tintern

SARA (Severn Area Rescue Association) is a U.K. Registered Charity No: 505504
Registered Address: The Lifeboat & Rescue Station, Beachley Road, Chepstow NP16 7HH