



Lifeboats

# News release

30 September 2006

SB0906

## RNLI donor sees her lifeboat launch just hours after the naming ceremony

**Exmouth's new inshore lifeboat, *George Bearman*, was launched to assist a kite surfer just hours after it was officially named at a special ceremony today (Saturday 30 September). The IB1 D class lifeboat was donated to the RNLI by Mrs Pauline Smith, who witnessed the emergency call out.**

The lifeboat was launched at 1717 when some of the volunteer RNLI crew who were clearing up after the naming ceremony, noticed the kite surfer was having difficulty reaching the shore. The 17 year olds kite had collapsed and he was trying to swim to the beach on Exmouth seafront but was struggling in the conditions. The wind, which was against the tide, was gusting up to force 6.

RNLI crew volunteers Robert Thompson, Andy Smith and Roger Jackson immediately launched the new D class and helped the exhausted teenager to the shore. The emergency, which was all over in 13 minutes, was watched by Mrs Pauline Smith who had just named the lifeboat after her grandfather.

Kevin Riley, RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager at Exmouth, says both the casualty and Mrs Smith were delighted to see the lifeboat in action:

'The young man who'd been kite surfing was delighted to have received help from the lifeboat crew and thanked each of the crew volunteers individually when they reached the shore. Mrs Smith was also pleased to have seen the lifeboat go on its first emergency shout. There can't be many people who've donated a lifeboat, and then been there to see it go out on its first launch. During the naming ceremony I assured Mrs Smith we would look after the lifeboat, but also that we would work it hard protecting life off the shores of Exmouth. We've proved that to her already!'

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

- Please see the news release that's attached with this launch report, for details of today's naming ceremony and the story behind the lifeboat name of *George Bearman*.

**For further details please contact Tamsin Thomas, RNLI Media Relations Manager for the south, on 07786 668847.**

- The RNLI is a registered charity that saves lives at sea.
- It provides, on call, the 24-hour service necessary to cover search and rescue requirements to 100 nautical miles out from the coasts of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.
- There are over 230 lifeboat stations.
- RNLI Lifeguards operate in the south and south west of England.
- The RNLI further saves lives through sea and beach education.
- The RNLI depends on voluntary contributions and legacies for its income.

### **Vision**

To be recognised universally as the most effective, innovative and dependable lifeboat service.

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