

The naming of the Copeland Bell

From the original establishment of a Lifeboat Service in Port Isaac in 1887 through to the present day, the great tradition of saving life at sea has been carried out by volunteer crews. Port Isaac had four traditional pulling lifeboats up to 1933 and then with the re-establishment of the station in 1967 to present day, five D Class Inshore Boats each carrying their individual names with pride.



Photo: Colin Shephard

During these years three Silver Medals have been awarded to our lifeboat crews or fishermen. In addition five 'Thanks of the Institution on Vellum' have been awarded to crew members for life saving operations at sea plus seven Bronze Badges and four Silver badges to members of the supporting committee.

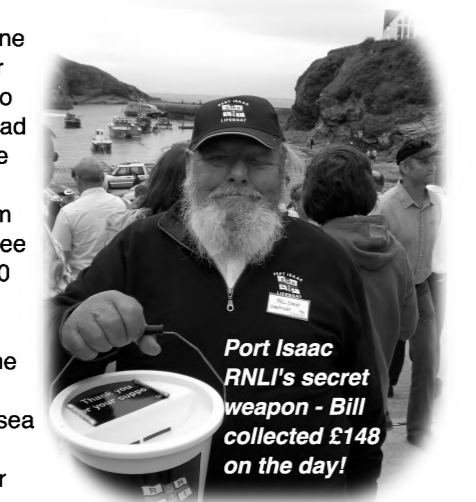


Photo: Colin Shephard

It was with this great tradition in mind that the Station prepared to celebrate the naming of their latest "state of the art" D Class Inshore lifeboat on Sunday June 13th. With the weather staying fair the Station was a hive of activity from early on Sunday morning with crew members giving the Station that final spring clean and polish and setting out the Harbour Platt with bunting and flags surrounding the centre of attraction – our new lifeboat. The committee ladies were kept busy preparing 350 cream teas! Altogether a great village atmosphere attracting the interest of many visitors as they took a Sunday morning stroll.



By 2-30pm all was in place for the ceremony to start with our Station Chaplain, Father John May, taking the service. Chairman Bob Bulgin welcomed, on behalf of the crew and committee, all those attending with particular reference to Godfrey & Mary Copeland. Godfrey was one of the prime fund raisers contributing to our new boat. There was also a big welcome to Station Hon President, David Castle who had made a special effort to travel over from the Canary Islands plus ex Senior Helmsman, Richard Hambly who had made it back from Australia. With many ex crew and committee swelling the crowd there were well over 300 present.



Port Isaac RNLI's secret weapon - Bill collected £148 on the day!

Our very own Fisherman's Friends took time out from their busy recording and concert schedule to join us with a rousing salvo of sea shanties and Janet Townsend's Port Isaac Chorale together with the St Breward Silver Band further enhanced the service with some great music and singing. Readings were Psalm 107 by Helmsman Damien Bolton, "Prayer For Seafarers" by Chairman Bob Bulgin, "The Lifeboat Prayer" by ex Senior Helmsman Richard Hambly and "If I May Share" by Deputy Chairman Annie Price.

In time honoured tradition, Mr Godfrey Copeland, representing the donors, handed over the new lifeboat to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Mr Simon Pryce Inspector (Coast Operations) of the RNLI accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the Institution and delivered her into the care of Port Isaac Lifeboat Station. Lifeboat Operations Manager, Phil Tidey, accepted the boat on behalf of the station.



Tom Mansell, Training Divisional Inspector of lifeboats (South) gave a vote of thanks followed by Father John May dedicating the boat to saving lives at sea and blessing all who will operate in her. Hon President David Castle then invited Mary Copeland to name the boat and anoint her bows with a liberal splash of Champagne - and so our new D Class COPELAND BELL took on a spirit of her own.

For all those who attended I feel sure this service represented a special moment to remember in the history of the village, non of which would be possible without the generous support of the public and of course the voluntary crew and committee who work so hard to maintain the traditions and continuing service of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

Port Isaac RNLI would like to thank the following for their specific support in helping with this ceremony - Port Isaac Harbour Commissioners, Byron Buse and Phil Tidey, Fisherman's Friends, Port Isaac Chorale, The Slipway Hotel, Malcolm Barnecutts Bakery, Sharp's Brewery, *Secrets Gallery* and the St Breward Silver Band.

Finally we all congratulate Janet Townsend on the award of the MBE in the Queens Birthday Honours List.
Bob B, Chairman

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Up to the time of going to press *Copeland Bell* has been out on two operational calls during June. The first was on the 3rd with crew made up of Andy Cameron, Nikki Bradbury and Mark Grills to a fishing boat that had experienced engine failure and in danger of being swept onto the rocks near Port Quin, our boat stood by and then established a tow taking the boat safely in to Padstow.

The second on the 21st June saw Andy Cameron and Nikki out again when called to search for an Angler reported as possibly in the water to the East of Port Isaac in the Trebarwith area off Penhallick Point. *Copeland Bell* launched at 13-48 hours making a very careful search of the area working in company with RNAS Helicopter cover. the search was called off at approx 16-00 hours having found no sign of a person in the water.

extract from Trio, July 2010

The Copeland Bell



Ian Johnson, Damien Bolton, Phil Tidey and Nigel Sherratt with the Copeland Bell



seeing what the new boat can do

