

JANUARY 1984

New years day

Flt Lt Sutherland, Flt Lt Clark, MAIM Allen.

Note the date and imagine the condition you might be in on that morning. Would you like to meet someone who had fallen down some 450' cliffs.? Luckily both for them and the casualty he only fell the last 30'. Highly relieved the crew stretcher lifted him from there to Scarborough.

7th

Flt Lt Pierce, Flt Lt Hewitt, MAIM Ainslie.

This gallant crew were asked to go and see if they might "stumble" across the missing vessel "Aqua Star" By NRCC, and to everyones amazement they did just that. The vessel was fishing happily 12 miles S.E. of Bridlington. O.K. you can stand the SEA KING down !

8th

Sqn Ldr Whitehead, Flt Lt Rule, MAIM Allen.

Mablethorpe C.G. rang the bell on this one, a small boat had overturned in the surf and one man was missing. The crew searched for him in vain, but managed to recover the boat to the beach, it wouldn't fit in the cabin and it was getting dark so they went home.

13th

Flt Lt Sutherland, Flt Lt Hewitt, MAIM Whitehead (on day release from Manston)

13 Lucky for some but not for the crew of the Belgian trawler "Zeepard" she went missing 15 miles east of Scarborough the crew found nothing but a short time later a Belgian Navy Minehunter located the wreck on the sea bed.

14th

Flt Lt Pierce, Flt Lt Rule, MAIM Ainslie

A report of 6 climbers having fallen down Mt Hellvelen in the Peak district got this crew flying west into some grim weather, stonking winds, driving snow, 30' waves oops! ignore the waves that comes later. Well anyway the WX was so bad they couldn't get through and were forced to RTB.

17th

Flt Lt Pierce, Flt Lt Hewitt, MAIM Allen.

Here we go again! Middle of the night and "nightrider" Pierce drags his crew off to search for flares in the Wash, nothing was found so after a refuel at Coltishall they set course for home only to be sent to a sinking cobble off Bridlington, but that resolved itself so the crew turned left and went home to bed.

21st

Sqn Ldr Whitehead, Flt Lt Hewitt, MAIM Ainslie.

Husband argues with wife, wife jumps off Brid pier, Winchman collects body from surf. Who needs marriage councils!?

26th

Flt Lt Pierce, Flt Lt Clark, MAIM Allen.

Humber C.G. came up with this one, the fishing vessel "Navena" was in distress 20 miles east of Scarborough. On arrival the crew found one man still on board and one multi-seat dinghy (unknown to them there were two), after some difficulty the skipper was lifted from the vessel (its true! they are last to leave.). The crew then came across to the M.S. dinghies one of which was upturned.

By now the helicopter was a bit tight for space with 10 survivors and a nav, so it was nice of a passing Sea King crew to pick up the one remaining survivor and our winchie and take them to Scarborough for a reunion; that was the easy bit the hard bit was getting as much press coverage as possible. I thought the winchman was marvelous!



Man spent 10 minutes under sea

ONE of the Navena crewmen today described how he survived 10 minutes under water in the icy North Sea—trapped beneath an overturned liferaft, with his head inside an air bubble.

John Sumner (36), of Tintern Walk, Grimsby, was among 11 men plucked to safety by RAF helicopter from raging seas after their trawler began sinking.

He was trapped under his liferaft, tangled up in its lines for 10 minutes before being rescued.

Mr Sumner was taken to Scarborough General Hospital suffering from exposure after the dramatic rescue yesterday. He was expected to be released later today.

Ten others were picked up by two RAF helicopters in the drama, including Mr

Sumner's brother Jeff, the vessel's skipper. He had given the order to abandon ship after it began to take in water in force 9 gales.

John Sumner said today that he knew he was minutes from death when the RAF helicopter arrived.

He was in the water dressed only in a pair of jeans and a shirt. He was asleep in his berth when the order came to abandon ship.

"Everyone was quite calm and there was no panic," he recalled.

"We were jumping into the liferaft but three men couldn't make it because the waves parted the lifeline and the raft drifted away. So we went forward and launched the other liferaft."

Mr Sumner's brother was on the bridge sending out an SOS while the three men

waited in the second liferaft.

But then another crashing wave parted their liferaft, too, from the sinking trawler and Mr Sumner had to watch as his brother was left stranded.

The skipper was rescued by a Wessex helicopter from RAF Leconfield after managing to climb from the bridge to the fo'castle of the 110-foot vessel.

"Then another wave hit us and turned us upside down," Mr Sumner went on. "The three of us were in the water. It was very, very cold and I was absolutely numb. The two deckies managed to get out, but I was tangled inside the raft upside down under water and there was nothing I could do. I was in an air pocket under the raft for about 10 minutes before we heard the helicopter."

Housewife's body pulled from sea

THE body of a Lofthouse woman was recovered from the sea off Bridlington on Saturday night, after an intensive search by local police, coastguards and lifeboat patrols.

A rescue helicopter from RAF Leconfield was called to help in the search for 43-year-old housewife, Mrs Frances Ann French, of Seven Acres Road.

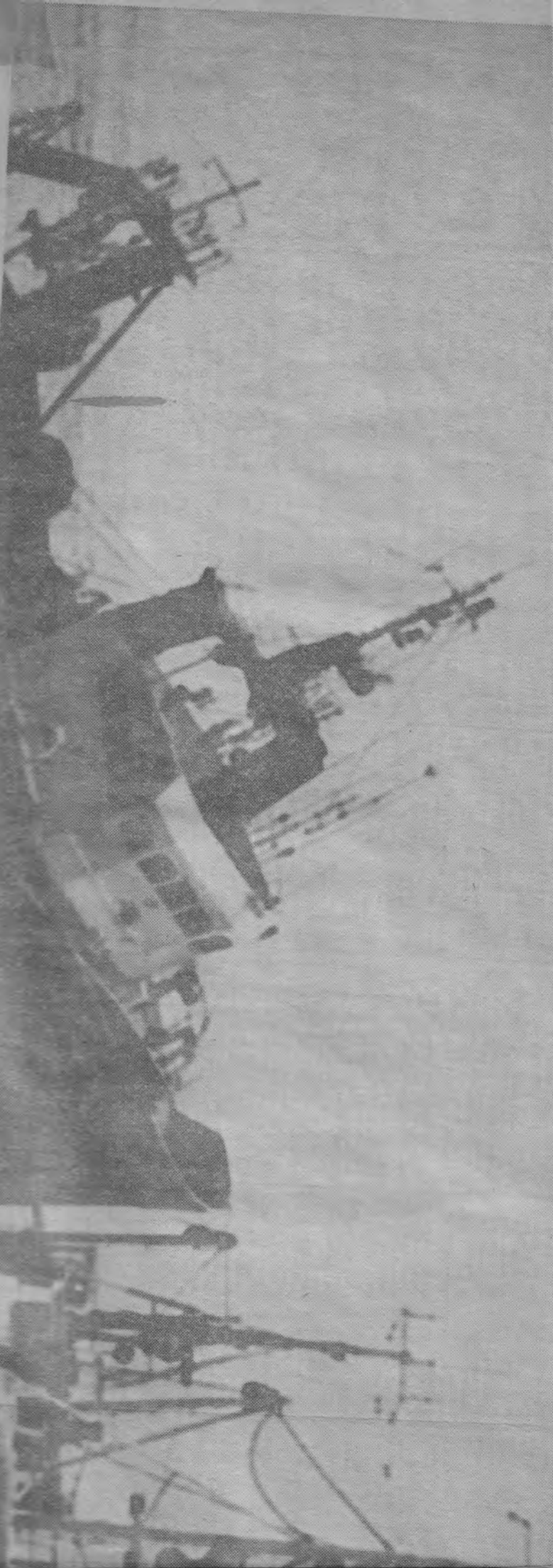
The search was launched after police were told there was a body in the sea off the Flora Pavilion Esplanade.

The body was eventually recovered by a helicopter winchman a few hundred yards north of the coastguard station on the North Beach.

A spokesman for Bridlington Police said they were

still investigating how Mrs French fell into the sea.

The spokesman added the sea was extremely rough and cold and a gale force wind was blowing.



RECOVERED BY HELICOPTER

to family. Our...
family. Inside row and family.

THE FATE of the stricken Hull trawler Navena lay in the balance this afternoon after she was beached at Scarborough.

She was towed into the shallows of the south shore beach near the harbour by two Scarborough fishing boats, Our Heritage and Emulator, around midday, just over 24 hours after her 11-man crew were airlifted to safety in a daring operation.

The vessel, owned by J. Marr and Son, of Hull, was later being pumped out so that the insurers could inspect the cause of the leakage and see if she could be refloated.

Her insurance value is understood to be about £600,000 — and negotiations were still in hand about the valuable salvage rights which were at the centre of an argument between the Scarborough boat owners and Hull-based United Towing earlier today.

The two Scarborough boats, and a third, the Cassamanda, had stood by the vessel all night. The first two put lines aboard.

United Towing, which has a salvage contract with Marr's, sent the tug Yorkshireman to the scene today. A tug crewman went aboard the Navena to see if she could be pumped out at sea.

Line attached

But later the Emulator and Heritage took the flooded trawler to Scarborough where she was secured by a line attached to the lifeboat tractor on the beach.

She was lying grounded a few hundred yards out as lifeboat coxswain Ian Firman and his men kept an eye on her.

Meanwhile, the fishing boat teams were making their claim to the salvage payments with Marr's insurers, the UK Trawler Mutual Insurance Co. Ltd. Chief executive Admiral Charles Branson travelled to the resort this morning to conduct the negotiations.

Crowds gathered on the resort's sea front in a heavy drizzle as the Navena was buffeted by the waves.

Coastguard Mr Clive Watts said that attempts would be made to pump out the vessel and if they managed to float her she would be taken away.

Ironed out

A spokesman for UK Trawler Mutual said: "If she is re-floated, it is very doubtful that they will be able to get her into the harbour at Scarborough, because the water is not deep enough. She cannot be left on the beach, so she will have to be moved at some point."

"The fishermen do have a claim for salvage and they have appointed solicitors to act on their behalf. We will try to settle the claim amicably, but if that is not poss-

ible a Lloyd's arbitrator will have to be called in."

It could be some time before the salvage rights of the Navena are finally ironed out, said the skipper of Our Heritage, Colin Jenkinson.

His boat helped to keep the Navena afloat during the night, but with the ever threatening danger that she would sink completely, the three skippers, Mr Jenkinson, Mr Fred Normandale, of the Emulator, and Mr David Bevan, skipper of Casamanda, decided today to put her onto Scarborough beach.

"We were returning to Scarborough harbour yesterday with the other two trawlers when we heard the radio message that the Navena was sinking and the crew abandoning ship," said

Mr Jenkinson. He added: "All three of us went to help, thinking that perhaps we could take the crew aboard, but by the time we arrived at the scene the helicopters ERE ALREADY THERE."

Mr Jenkinson added that once the crew had been airlifted away from the scene one of the Navena's engines was still running and she was on automatic pilot.

Today a drama of a different kind was taking place a few miles from the scene of yesterday's spectacular rescue of the 11-man crew of the Navena by RAF helicopters from Leconfield and Boulmer.

One Hull man, deckhand Peter Waudby, of St. John's Grove, Preston Road, was detailed in hospital for a few hours for observation at Scarborough, but returned

home to his family last night.

The Grimsby cook John Sumner, brother of the Navena's skipper, Jeff Sumner, and two other crewmen from Fleetwood, were still in hospital this morning, but were due to go home later today.

Hero-of-the-day, helicopter winchman Dave Allen, who carried out his part in the rescue in spite of being injured, returned to Leconfield and remained on duty through the night.

Master Air Load Master Allen badly bruised his knee during the operation to pluck Skipper Sumner from his floundering vessel. He went off duty at 9 am today, but his helicopter had not been called out again.

A Marr's spokesman said the salvage operation was beset by problems: "If they

decide to beach her, they might run into difficulties with the Scarborough authorities, who would not be happy about it.

There is still a lot of fuel on board and that could lead to a danger of pollution. The Humber authorities may not allow her to be towed back to port, either, as she may be in too dangerous a condition.

11 rescued from stricken trawler

By JOHN DUNSFORD

A DARING helicopter winchman yesterday unhooked himself from safety to stay in a wave-lashed liferaft near a listing trawler so that 11 men could be rescued faster.

The freezing men from the Hull stern trawler Nevena, 156 tonnes, were saved 8 miles north-east of Scarborough in Force 10 gales after sending out a May Day which was answered by two helicopters from RAF Leconfield and RAF Bulmer.

An RAF winchman, Dave Allen, 36, sacrificed his place on the Wessex helicopter hovering over liferafts near the stricken trawler.

Despite exhaustion from numerous descents to the icy, wave-tossed rafts, he chose to be lowered on to one and stay there while the Wessex, almost overloaded with survivors, dashed for the shore.

Injured leg

Winchman Allen, who had injured his leg, crouched in the flimsy dinghy and unhooked his lifeline and helped get more men winched into the helicopter, two at a time while he stayed with the remainder.

He sat it out with the last critically exhausted seaman until they were picked up by a Sea King helicopter from Bulmer.

Then he insisted on completing his shift on emergency duty stand-by at the Leconfield air-sea rescue base.

"This is what we are trained to do. We are not heroes. We work as a team to go out like this—that's what we're here for and we're glad to help out," he said later.

One of the men rescued was M. Jean-Paul Caudel, a French fishing adviser who had accompanied the 10 crew of the Nevena which was listing badly but under two to Scarborough.

'Terrible seas'

Skipper Geoff Sumney, from Fleetwood, Lancs, who had stayed behind on the listing 117ft-long factory ship, watched helplessly as Winchman Allen was lowered to him and was repeatedly sent crashing on to the ship's deck at 25ft waves tossed it about "like a toy."

Afterwards, Capt. Sumney said: "The seas were terrible. The rescuers did a bloody marvellous job. We all owe our lives to them."

Last night two crewmen were being treated in hospital from hypothermia but their mates were discharged after treatment.

As the Arctic weather continued to cause chaotic conditions, the bodies of the two soldiers who died in blizzard conditions in the Cairngorms were found yesterday on Corrie Domhain after a three-day search.

But atrocious weather conditions prevented a helicopter taking off to recover the bodies. They were found and identified

The local heroes of air-sea rescue

An injured leg did not stop a Driftfield man giving up his place aboard an RAF helicopter during his first rescue mission to save 12 fishermen.

Master Air Loadmaster Dave Allen, a 36-year-old father of two, was the winchman in an RAF helicopter rescue crew from Leconfield called to help a stricken fish transporter, the Nevena, 12 miles off Scarborough.

He was sent on the winch to rescue the skipper, Jeff Sumner, who had stayed on the ship to put out a may-day after sending the other 11 crew off in two liferafts. Dave, in danger of being

cut to pieces by cables around the mast, finally managed to get on to the boat but was thrown against the deck and injured his leg. At the time he thought it might be broken but it later turned out to be bruised.

30ft WAVES

Battling against 30ft waves, the rescue crew managed to get the skipper on board the helicopter and turned their attention to the liferafts, one of which had overturned, throwing four fishermen into the sea.

As conditions grew worse, Dave was winched down to pull them to safety. He was then lowered to the second liferaft where he

released himself from the winch to allow the survivors to be winched up two at a time.

With one fisherman and Dave still to be lifted, the overloaded helicopter was forced to return to shore. The men were later rescued by a Sea King from RAF Bulmer.

FRIGHTENING

Later Dave said: "It was my first rescue. I had never done anything like it before and I had to start with a near-disaster! It was pretty frightening."

He had a lot of praise for the navigator and winch operator, Flt-Lt. Graham Clark, 30, from Cherry Burton. "Graham probably worked hardest of all. I put a lot into it but he had the most on his hands what with the weather, the sea

and the conditions. He had a lot going against him."

The third member of the team, who are all members of 22 Squadron, was the pilot, 27-year-old Flt-Lt. Hugh Pierce, who lives in Driftfield with his wife who is expecting their first child. Flt-Lt. Pierce has been at Leconfield for three months and is nicknamed 'The Night rider' because until this mission all his rescue call-outs had been at night.

HOSPITAL

Three of the rescued fishermen were treated in hospital for hypothermia and were detained for observation. The others were allowed home after treatment for shock and exposure.

For one crewman, Mr John Taylor, 39, of Westbourne Grove, Hesse, it was his third shipwreck. "I never gave up hope," he said.

Relaxing after the rescue, left to right, Flt. Lt. Hugh Pierce, pilot; Master Air Loadmaster Dave Allen, winchman; and Flt. Lt. Graham Clark, navigator.



Capsize leads to tragedy



Team work as ambulance men, Flamborough lifeboat crew, and a local doctor, lift the injured seaman ashore

AIR and sea rescue services were alerted to help deal with two incidents off the East Coast yesterday.

The Humber lifeboat and an RAF Leconfield helicopter were called out to search for a man missing from an inflatable boat which overturned in heavy surf off Mablethorpe.

Hope is fading for the man, who was a member of the boat's three-man crew from Saltfleet, Lincolnshire.

The two other men managed to scramble ashore after the boat, which was powered by a small engine, capsized in the waves.

The Humber lifeboat and a Leconfield helicopter searched until dusk, but failed to find any trace of the missing man, who has not been named.

The helicopter, piloted by Flt. Lt. Adrian Rule, searched two miles of coastline before returning to the stricken boat.

HE'S A NAV

Winchman Master Air Load Master David Allen was lowered into the water and tied a rope to the boat. With the help of coastguards and passers-by it was pulled into shallow water.

Efforts to right it were hampered because rescuers were knocked off their feet by waves.

The search resumed this morning but was confined to local beaches.

A Bridlington doctor was taken by the Flamborough lifeboat to the Belgian trawler Falcon anchored off the coast after a crewman was injured when he was thrown against the side of the ship in rough seas.

The youth, Andre Vandenbeughe (17) who suffered back injuries, was attended by Bridlington GP Dr Robert McLaren.

The Falcon radioed for help while 20 miles off Flamborough Head but anchored in calmer waters to rendezvous with the lifeboat.

After being examined by Dr McLaren, the youth was put on board the lifeboat by stretcher and taken to Bridlington.

An ambulance waiting at the harbour transferred him to the resort's Lloyd Hospital.

THE SEA GAVE HIM BACK

Youth's body found

THE body of 19-year-old Saltfleet youth John Mark Bishell, who was swept overboard while on a fishing trip off Mablethorpe, has been washed ashore at Gibraltar Point, near Skegness.

John, of Sea Lane, was out with his friend Jim Walker (16), of Coastguard Cottagers, Main Road, Saltfleet, earlier this month when they were caught in a sudden hailstorm just yards from the beach.

Jim was rescued by Alan Taylor (41) of The Chase, Little Carlton, near Louth, who plunged into the sea when he saw the capsized boat.

A full-scale air, sea and shore rescue, involving a lifeboat, RAF helicopter, Coastguards and Lincolnshire Police failed to find John.

John, a former pupil of John Birkbeck School at North Somercotes, worked as a bricklayer for his father, builder Mr. Frank Bishell.

His body was found by a member of the public at high water mark yesterday afternoon and his relatives have been told.

S/L JEFF WHITEHEAD
Flt ADRIAN RULE
M/LM DAVE ALLEN