

172

(5)

"D" FLIGHT

202 SQUADRON

SCRAPBOOK

SEP 89

TO

DEC 92

Major alert follows mix-up

A COMMUNICATION mix-up on board a Danish fishing boat sparked a major air-sea rescue operation yesterday.

The emergency services were alerted when the Peter Michael failed to dock at Fraserburgh as expected early yesterday.

Buckie lifeboat and a rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth were called out.

As the Coastguard were raising Fraserburgh lifeboat, the vessel was spotted by the helicopter 45 miles north-east of her intended destination.

A Coastguard spokesman said there had been a mix-up on board and the ship was steered out towards the fishing grounds instead of into Fraserburgh to pick up ice.

The boat turned back and reach Fraserburgh at 11.30a.m. yesterday — nine hours late.



Angler stranded by flash-flood is hooked — by RAF Sea King

A NORTH farmer went fishing yesterday — and found himself dangling from the end of a line.

For Mr Norman Fraser was marooned by a flash-flood on a River Findhorn island and had to be winched off by an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter.

The three-hour incident began when Mr Fraser (37), Newlands of Broomhill, Cawdor, waded through a few inches of water to fish off an old tree stranded on midstream rocks near Glenferness House.

Father-of-two Mr Fraser, still shaken from his ordeal, said: "I was caught in a sudden flood. The river rose about 3ft. in 30sec. and I was marooned."

"I tried to make a run for it, but the water was too fast for me. By the time I heard the roaring of the water, it was on me."

Mr Fraser was trapped 25 to 30yd. from the bank and was afraid the water would rise higher and sweep him away.

The alarm was raised by his brother-in-law, Mr George Phillips, farmer, of Castle Stewart, Dalross.

Mr Fraser said: "George was upstream and knew I was out in midstream. When he saw the

□ NEIL MACPHAIL

water surging up he ran back to see if I was OK."

A fire engine, ambulance and police attended the incident, but due to the extremely inaccessible terrain and the fast-flowing water, were unable to rescue Mr Fraser.

Inverness head chef Mr John Pestana (27), of the Glenmor Hotel, was fishing with friend Mr Dave Hume (50), on holiday from Manchester, and tried to assist the stranded angler.

He said: "The helicopter did an excellent job to get a man down to him because they had to dodge trees and the sides of the gorge."

Mr Fraser said: "I wasn't fancying being dragged to the shore through the water on the end of a rope — but at the same time I am afraid of heights."

Sea King second pilot Lt. Donald Strother, on attachment from US Coastguard, confirmed it was a tricky operation.

Winchman Flt. Sgt. Ian Bonthron, from Kingston, near Garmouth, was lowered at the end of 200ft. of cable.



■ Mr Norman Fraser



■ Mr John Pestana

■ Under way — angler Mr Norman Fraser is raised on a 200ft. line to safety.

KENNETH FRASER,
52 ST CATHERINE'S PLACE
KIRKSWALL,
ORKNEY
27.10.89.

Sir

I am writing on behalf of the crew of the coaster MU. CALF SOUND which sank on the 25th of September 89. We all wish to thank you and rest of the crew for your assistance and taking us of.

Could you please send us copies of the photographs you took on the day.

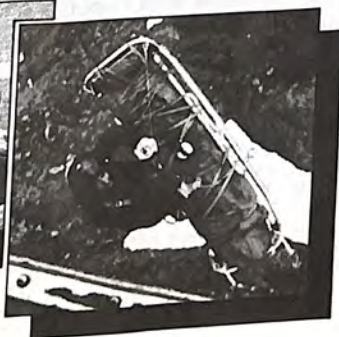
They would be much appreciated as a souvenir.

Yours faithfully
Kenneth Fraser.



RESCUE

**The true-life drama of
Royal Air Force
search and rescue.**



**Paul Beaver
and Paul Berriff**

The Piper Alpha oil platform disaster, and the more-recent Lockerbie and M1 air crashes, again highlighted the essential role played by the Royal Air Force's Search and Rescue helicopter units in Britain. Here is all the dramatic background to the major 13-part ITV documentary series featuring a year in the life of the Search and Rescue helicopters at RAF Lossiemouth in Scotland.

- **The book of the major
ITV 13-part
documentary series.**
- **Includes over 250
dramatic photographs
and illustrations**
- **Substantial promotion
campaign**
- **Dramatic point of sale
including:**
 - full colour poster
 - full colour showcard
 - single copy holder

1 85260 291 0 192pp 254×198mm
colour illustrations £8.99 paperback 21 August 1989



A THORNS COMPANY

PATRICK STEPHENS LIMITED
Wellingborough NN8 2RQ



SEPTEMBER 1989

3 Standby to evacuate oil rig.NAR.
GEAR ANDERSON BODIAM PAYNE

4 Search for missing girl at Aboyne. Walked in safe.
STROTHER WILLSON THIRKELL POUNTNEY

5 Medevac injured crewman from FV TREASURE to Aberdeen.
STROTHER WILLSON THIRKELL POUNTNEY

6 Two injured men casevaced from Lossiemouth beach to Elgin.
GEAR ANDERSON GRIFFIN PAYNE

6 Casevac from overturned vehicle near Braemar to Aberdeen.
WILLSON ANDERSON THIRKELL DAVIDSON + TURNBULL
Sorry 10m

8 Diver with bends from Plockton to Aberdeen.
GEAR ANDERSON GRIFFIN PAYNE

11 Medevac head injury from Wick to Aberdeen.
WILLSON STROTHER BODIAM TURNBULL

11 Fisherman missing in River Conon. Nothing found.
TENISON-COLLINS LLOYD SOUNDY BONTHRONE

15 Search for missing warden on Rhum. Found dead and flown
to Fort William.
GEAR ANDERSON BODIAM POUNTNEY

17 Search for overdue FV. Found safe on passage.
GEAR ANDERSON GRIFFIN POUNTNEY

20 Man stranded in middle of River Findhorn. Lifted to
river bank.
STROTHER LLOYD THIRKELL BONTHRONE

21 Search for missing canoeist in Loch Ness. Walked in
safe.
WILLSON GEAR PARRISH POUNTNEY

23 Medevac sailor from Dutch submarine to Stornoway.
GEAR ANDERSON PARRISH POUNTNEY

24 Collapsed walker near Inch. Recalled, casualty dead.
STROTHER LLOYD THIRKELL BONTHRONE

25 MV CALFSOUND sinking off Kirkwall. 4 crew lifted before
ship sank.
PRINCE ANDERSON GRIFFIN POUNTNEY

Millhowe Salmon Hatchery
Knockando
Morayshire
IV35 7SD

9th October 1989

Station Commander

Royal Air Force Station Lossiemouth

Lossiemouth

Morayshire

Dear Sir,

Helicopter Assistance- Lossiemouth Beach. Wednesday 6 September 1989.

I am employed as the Head Water bailiff with the Spey District Fishery Board, and during an anti poaching operation on the beach area at Lossiemouth, on Wednesday 6 September 1989 I, together with one of my colleagues was injured. Due to the inaccessible nature of the area a helicopter from your Search and Rescue Squadron was sent to our assistance. Though I am unable to recall the flight to Dr Grays Hospital, Elgin, I am aware that my fairly rapid recovery from my injuries was helped by the fact that I was airlifted directly from the scene instead of having to travel over rough country in a landrover, which would have been the only alternative if your aircraft had not been available.

I would request that you pass my sincere thanks to the aircrew of the Seaking, tasked on that morning, and also to the ground crews and all of the no doubt considerable staff 'behind the scenes' at R.A.F. Lossiemouth. It is all too often these days that one only hears of the 'negative' publicity accorded to the Royal Air Force, especially regarding low flying, however my staff and I will always have cause to be grateful, for the service you provide. Thank you once again.

Yours faithfully

Ken Rodger
K D Rodger

Head Bailiff

Police take an interest at the beach

ELGIN police are investigating an incident on Lossiemouth beach earlier this week which resulted in two injured men being airlifted to Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin.

The men were picked up from the East beach, about 1½ miles east of Lossiemouth, at 6.15 am on Wednesday by a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

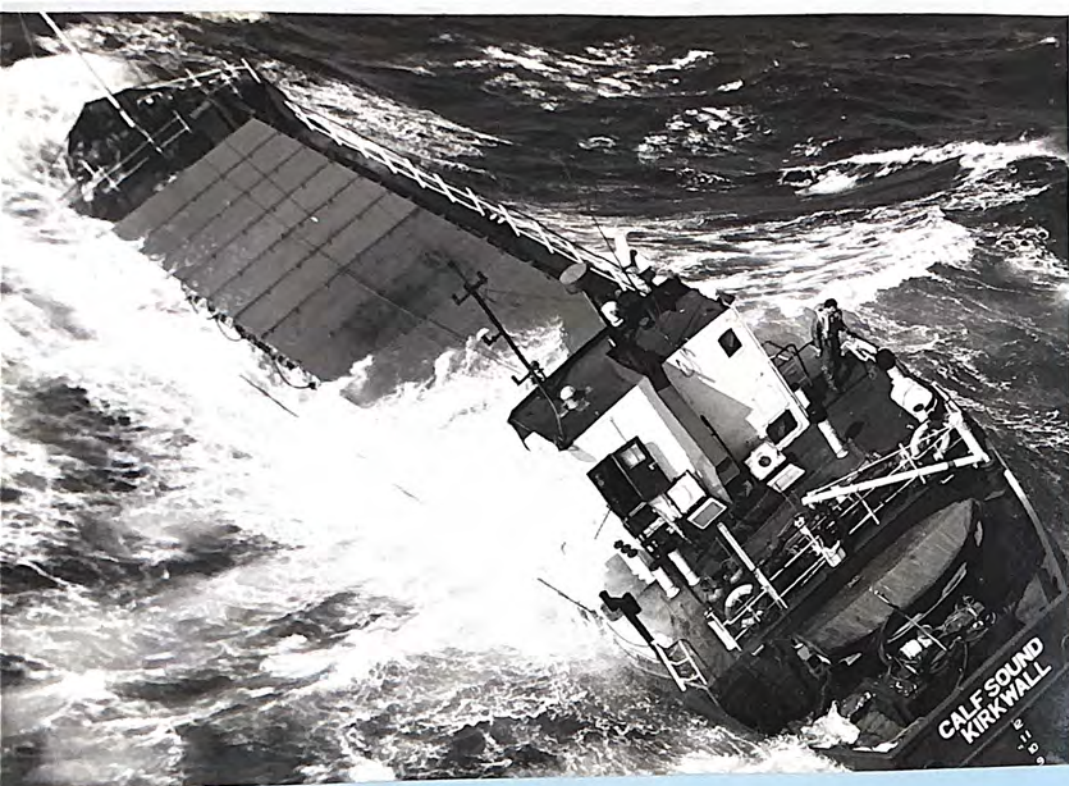
Their injuries were found not to be serious, and they were both released from hospital later the same day.

A police spokesman said that the matter was being investigated and that a report was being sent to the procurator fiscal in Elgin.

oc 202 D Rek

*Please pass on to the
crew with congratulations -
my thanks.*

AP 10/10



SHIP OWNERS
SHIPPING AGENTS AND STEVEDORES
SAND, STONE AND COAL MERCHANTS

TELEGRAMS AND TELEPHONES: KIRK WALL 2201 & 3362
(Business or after hours)
Telex 75106

DENNISON SHIPPING LIMITED

COMPANY REG. NO. 41098 (SCOTLAND)

26 Junction Road,
Kirkwall,
Orkney Isles,
KW15 1AG

26 September 1989

RAF Station
Lossiemouth

For Attention Rescue Division

Dear Sirs

mv CALF SOUND

We wish to convey our thanks and appreciation for the prompt rescue of the members of the crew of the mv CALF SOUND.

Yours faithfully

R H Dennison

R H Dennison

SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER, 1989

- 01 Capsized yacht off Burghead.
TENISON-COLLINS CROSBY THIRKELL BONTHRONE
- 02 Transfer pump to FV 7nm west of Frazerburgh.
TENISON-COLLINS CROSBY THIRKELL BONTHRONE
- 02 Premature baby from Wick to Raigmore.
STROTHER ANDERSON MORRICE PAYNE
- 03 Search for elderly lady near Pitmedden.
STROTHER ANDERSON MORRICE PAYNE
- 18 Transfer of complicated advanced pregnancy
from Wick to Raigmore.
PRINCE LLOYD BODIAM PAYNE
- 24 Burning FV off Burghead.
TENISON-COLLINS ANDERSON THIRKELL RICHARDS

Fishing boat towed to safety

FRASERBURGH Lifeboat and an RAF Sea King helicopter went to the assistance of a North-east fishing boat which ran into trouble off Fraserburgh, early today.

The Buckie-registered Cardanel was seven miles off when she requested pumps after making water in the engine room.

Pumps were transferred by both the lifeboat and helicopter. The lifeboat towed the Cardanel into port.

NE woman (84) turns up safe

AN 84-year-old woman missing overnight was found safe and well near a farm stading this morning.

A massive air and land search was mounted after Mrs Mary Anne Williamson disappeared from her home in sheltered accommodation at Hanover Court in Tarves.

Mrs Williamson was last seen, walking on the road with her pet miniature collie near East Newseat Farm on the B999 near Pitmedden.

An RAF helicopter joined 20 policemen, 16 army volunteers and two dog handlers who began a search of the area this morning.

It called off when Mrs Williamson was found at a stading by farmer John McKessick of Tillymaud at Udney Green, Udney.

A police spokesman said: "She appeared to be well. It is fortunate that the weather overnight was good."

Mrs Williamson has been missing on previous occasions

Copter mercy dash for baby

A PREMATURE baby boy was airlifted from hospital at Wick and flown to Inverness shortly after birth yesterday.

The emergency flight was carried out by an RAF Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth.

The baby's condition at Raigmore Hospital last night was said to be stable. The baby's mother, who comes from Thurso, has been detained in Caithness General Hospital, Wick, for observation.

The mercy helicopter was called out shortly before mid-day, and the aircraft picked up a

doctor, a midwife — and a special incubator — at Raigmore before flying to Wick Airport.

"The airport was considered a more stable environment for the transfer of the baby to take place," said helicopter co-pilot Flt-Lt Jim Anderson.

The Sea King returned direct to Raigmore, touching down shortly before 3p.m.

The hospital authorities are not naming the mother.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

YELLOW PERILS



One of the nice things about the Search and Rescue job is the occasional thank you letter we receive from our customers. This drawing was sent by a little girl who set off from Nairn with her friend in a small dinghy. The job ended happily with the two little girls only frightened, wet, and wiser.

This month has been rather lean with only six jobs, and most of those were nothing to write home about. There was a capsized yacht off Burghead, the occupants being rescued by the Coastguard before the helicopter arrived. Then there was a fishing boat off Fraserburgh, taking water, but with a pump winched on board the boat stayed afloat. Something of a novelty!

There is something in the air at Wick, or a very careful midwife, as yet again we had a premature baby, followed by a Pregevac, both to Inverness. A fruitless search for a missing woman in the Aberdeen area ended when the subject turned up of her own accord. Finally, there was a replay of a rescue some two and a half years ago when a fishing boat caught fire and the crew had to take to the dinghy. The two crew were winched up, leaving the burning boat to the Navy and the Lifeboat.

On the lighter side we had a short detachment to Belgium. On the way there John Prince demonstrated his inability to catch a train. (At least not until the HSI25

slowed down to pass through Berwick because a heavy Sea King can only do a little over 100 knots). The time spent in Belgium passed fairly uneventfully, ie no arrests etc.

Farewells: we have lost Al Reeves, posted to Manston. Squipper Gary Nicol to civvy street, and likewise Gordon Jones. If any of you pushbike freaks think you can chat a discount out of Gordon, he has just bought the cycle shop at the eastern end of Elgin High Street.

Finally, we may have solved our shortage of pilots. The Station Commander is getting quite good on the Sea King, if only he wouldn't let go of the stick when the trim is switched off

GEE RAMPS

SUMMARY FOR NOVEMBER, 1989

- 04 Fisherman with severe abdominal pains from FV west of Aberdeen to ARI.
TENISON-COLLINS GOW BODIAM BONTHRONE
- 06 Search for missing person near Glenmore Lodge.
WILLSON GOW BODIAM PAYNE
- 10 Fisherman with broken arm from FV 15nm east of Aberdeen to ARI.
GEAR ANDERSON THIRKELL PAYNE
- 11 Person with leg injuries from Glenmore Lodge to Dr Grays.
WILLSON CAMPBELL GRIFFIN POUNTNEY
- 16 Search for missing FV near Macduff.
TENISON-COLLINS CAMPBELL BODIAM PAYNE
- 17 Two pumps delivered to FV off Peterhead.
TENISON-COLLINS CAMPBELL BODIAM PAYNE
- 17 Two pumps to FV north east of Peterhead.
STROTHER PRINCE THIRKELL BONTHRONE
- 19 Search for missing walker near Cairngorm.
WILLSON TENISON-COLLINS THIRKELL POUNTNEY
- 19 Search for missing walker near Fort William.
WILLSON TENISON-COLLINS THIRKELL BONTHRONE
- 20 Investigation of SARSAT hit east of Aberdeen revealed EPIRB unknowingly lost overboard.
PRINCE LLOYD GRIFFIN POUNTNEY
- 21 HMS Spartan submariner with suspect appendicitis taken from 100nm NNW of Cape Wrath to Raigmore.
STROTHER ANDERSON BODIAM BONTHRONE
- 22 Severely burnt elderly lady from Elgin to Dundee.
WILLSON GEAR GRIFFIN POUNTNEY
- 25 Burning FV 1nm west of Rosehearty escorted by Frazerburgh lifeboat.
TENISON-COLLINS ANDERSON WARD PAYNE

Hills search is called off

SHORTLY before a weekend search-and-rescue exercise in the Cairngorms ended on Sunday, it nearly became a search for real — until missing climber Mr Malcolm Maclean (35), Dalgety Avenue, Edinburgh walked out of the swirling mists to the head of the upper Cairngorm chairlift.

His climbing companion had told the mountain rescue centre at Glenmore on Saturday evening they had become separated while climbing the 3860ft. Cairn Lochan at the top of the Larig Ghru.

Last night a police spokesman said they had not instigated an immediate search but, had Mr Maclean not turned up when he did, a full search would have been launched.

Lochaber search on for female hillwalker

A BIG search was under way last night in Lochaber for a missing woman hillwalker.

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth joined Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team in a sweep of the Loch Traig area, south of Roy Bridge.

Conditions were said to be bad with fog and rain sweeping the district.

The hunt is being co-ordinated by the rescue co-ordination centre at Pitreavie Castle.

It is believed the missing person was accompanied by a female companion and they got separated in mid afternoon.

Sea King in double airlift to boats

TWO Peterhead fishing boats which got into difficulties within hours of each other yesterday were helped to the safety of their home port by similar means.

Each used the same set of additional pumps, airlifted to both by the same RAF Sea King from Lossiemouth, after they reported they were taking water.

Both operations were co-ordinated by Aberdeen Coastguards.

The first to request assistance was the Sustain, which started leaking about 14 miles north-east of Peterhead about 2a.m. in heavy seas.

The Peterhead lifeboat was called out and the RAF helicopter managed to get two pumps on board the 75ft. boat, which has a crew of six.

The pumps did the trick and the Sustain was eventually towed into port by her fishing partner, the Starlight Rays.

In the middle of the morning the Three Bells, also with a crew of six, put out a similar call for aid and the lifeboat and the helicopter were in action again.



Pensioner in airlift to hospital

A 73-YEAR-OLD Moray woman was rushed by helicopter to a special burns unit in Dundee on Wednesday.

Mrs Elizabeth Wiles, of Whitewreath Bungalow, Longmorn, sustained serious burns after her night dress accidentally caught fire from an electric fire in her home.

Her condition is so severe that an RAF helicopter was called in to transfer her to Dundee Royal Infirmary's special burns unit.

Her husband, Mr Philip Wiles (75), is being detained in Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin, where he is said to be satisfactory. He sustained hand and shoulder burns and suffered the effects of smoke inhalation when going to the assistance of his wife. *24/11/68*

ALL
GEAR
GRIF
RAI

18-20 High Street
Rothies
Moray
IV33 7AU

Dear Sir,

I am writing on behalf of my mother, Mrs Dorothy Tawse, and her family to express our thanks to the crew members who flew Mrs Elizabeth Wiles, our Granny, to Ninewells Hospital on the 22nd of November. We thank them for the excellent and very prompt service.

Thank you,

yours faithfully

Carol Tawse

SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER, 1989

- 11 Medevac man with head injuries from Thurso to Raigmore.
WILLSON CAMPBELL GRIFFIN AITKEN
- 13 Investigation of SARSAT hits on 243.0 revealed faulty remote transmitter.
WRIGHT PRINCE BODIAM AITKEN
- 20 Search for 2 missing walkers on Ben Nevis. Found safe and well using NVG. Taken to Fort William.
GEAR ANDERSON GRIFFIN AITKEN
- 21 Search for missing walkers in Ben Nevis area.
LLOYD TENISON-COLLINS BODIAM BONTHRONE
- 22 Medevac of RTA victim from Elgin to Aberdeen RI.
GEAR CAMPBELL THIRKELL PAYNE
- 28 Search for missing FV 3 nm North of Banff. Vessel found and 1 person recovered.
WILLSON CAMPBELL GRIFFIN BONTHRONE
- 29 Assisted Dundonnell MRT in recovery of an inaccessible body.
WILLSON CAMPBELL GRIFFIN BONTHRONE
- 31 Recovery of climber with serious head injuries from Lochnagar area to Aberdeen RI.
LLOYD GEAR BODIAM BONTHRONE

Man adrift four hours is whisked to safety

□ BOB CARTER

A FORMER publican was airlifted to safety off Banff yesterday after a 90-minute sea search in darkness by a rescue helicopter and two lifeboats.

Mr Alan Caplain (40), 3 High Shore, Banff, had taken his 15ft. boat out in the morning but had run out of fuel and drifted for nearly four hours before being rescued. His attempts to anchor the vessel were unsuccessful.

The helicopter landed Mr Caplain at its Lossiemouth base and while she waited for him to phone her, his wife Anne told the "Press and Journal": "What a relief he is safe. I'd feared the worst."

She said her husband put to sea from Banff Harbour at 9a.m. yesterday, saying he would be returning around 2p.m. She went to the harbour to collect him but became alarmed when he failed to turn up by 3p.m.

Mrs Caplain then went to the police and the emergency services swung into action. A helicopter was scrambled at 4.35p.m. from RAF Lossiemouth and the Macduff inshore lifeboat was launched.

Also involved in the search was the Fraserburgh lifeboat. An area stretching north and east of Banff Bay to Pentlands was swept and just before 6p.m. a message was flashed to the Coastguard rescue co-ordinating centre in Aberdeen that the helicopter had picked up Mr Caplain eight miles north-north-east of Banff.

While the Macduff lifeboat returned to her home port the Fraserburgh lifeboat took his glass-fibre boat in tow to Fraserburgh.

Mrs Caplain said her husband had bought the boat only a month ago. The couple were publicans in Leicestershire before moving to Banff several months ago.



ENTER THE HEROES

Telly salute to the 'whirly' wizards..



★ THE LIFESAVERS... the RAF rescue squad, along with their vital back-up team of coastguards, police, firemen, and nurses, who are on constant call to save life on the hills and around our shores.

THE crews of two Scots-based rescue helicopters are all set to become instant TV stars in the New Year.

A major 13-part documentary series, *Rescue*, which starts on January 7, follows a year in the life of Britain's busiest helicopter search-and-rescue unit at RAF Lossiemouth.

Scottish Television has captured all the tears, tragedy, laughter and drama on 40 miles of film and more than 100 miles of sound tape by the award-winning producer-cameraman Paul Berriff and his team.

“When we lost our power, I thought, that’s it”

— PAUL BERRIFF

Atrocious

There was joy at helping to save Orkney baby Sam Harcus's life... then the horror of Piper Alpha.

Viewers will also see the crews of sinking fishing boats saved from the sea, searches for missing climbers in atrocious conditions,

and even the rescuers being rescued! Berriff himself was injured when an RAF Sea King came a cropper as it went to the aid of the Stornoway-based Coastguard rescue helicopter in the Atlantic.

Father-of-two Paul said yesterday: “I thought we’d had it.”

“We were flying at 80 mph, about 100 feet up, when we suddenly lost power. After hitting the ground, we somersaulted for more than quarter of a mile.”

Living side by side with the heroes of the air for a whole year, and going on 120 mercy scrambles with them, rubbed off on Paul.

One stormy night in October last year, when neither the helicopter nor a lifeboat could reach a climber trapped on the 300-foot Old Man of Storr, a rock stack off the Sutherland coast, it was Paul,

aided by Asynt mountain rescue team, who finally reached him.

Three bravery awards were won for this amazing rescue.

At a weekend preview of the TV series, helicopter winchman Bob Pounney, 46, met up again with 17-month-old Sam Harcus, born three months premature, at his isolated home on the Orkney Island of Sanday.

Healthy

Life started dramatically for the baby son of fisherman Alan Harcus, 24, and wife Gillian, 21.

Faced with breathing difficulties, little Sam was wrapped in towels and hot water bottles, and taken on a 20-mile lifeboat voyage to Kirkwall. But there was no sign of the RAF helicopter to take

the desperately-ill baby on the 110-mile flight to hospital in Aberdeen. Liverpool-born Bob said: “We could not find the airport - the fog was so thick.”

So the chopper landed in an Orkney farmer's field and Bob went airport-hunting with the aid of the farmer and his van.

Bob, a 30-year RAF veteran, added: “During the flight to Aberdeen, the machine monitoring wee Sam's condition packed up and he started to go downhill rapidly.”

“I didn't think he would make it.”

But after giving the tiny infant heart massage, Bob and the doctor aboard saw his condition gradually improve.

Yesterday, as she bounced a healthy Sam on her knee, mum Gillian said: “I am very grateful to the helicopter boys. They gave him his chance of life. Without them, Sam would not be here now.”



★ HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU, KID... helicopter winchman Bob Pounney is delighted and thrilled to meet up again with Sam Harcus, the premature baby he had to give the kiss of life to after an emergency call to the Orkney islands.

SUMMARY FOR JANUARY, 1990

- 02 Investigation of smoking vessel off Findhorn revealing a controlled fire.
TENISON-COLLINS ANDERSON GRIFFIN AITKEN
- 03 Recovery of injured walker from Ben Klibreck to Raigmore.
STROTHER LLOYD BODIAM BONTHRONE
- 04 Three caught in avalanche on Ben Nevis. Stood down on route, NAR.
GEAR CAMPBELL THIRKELL AITKEN
- 04 Three caught in avalanche at Coire an t-sneachda taken to Raigmore.
GEAR CAMPBELL THIRKELL AITKEN
- 04 Pregnant lady from Wick to Raigmore.
GEAR CAMPBELL THIRKELL AITKEN
- 04 Climber caught in avalanche on Bein a Bhuid. Lifted to Aberdeen RI.
LLOYD STROTHER BODIAM BONTHRONE
- 09 Pregnant lady from Wick to Raigmore.
LLOYD CAMPBELL BROOKS BONTHRONE
- 09 Pre-positioned at Sumburgh prior to rig evacuation, NAR.
LLOYD CAMPBELL BROOKS BONTHRONE
- 10 Search for old lady fallen over Randalphs Leap into Findhorn River. Nothing found.
TENISON-COLLINS STROTHER SOUNDY POUTNEY
- 11 Search for missing person near Huntly, found by Police.
TENISON-COLLINS STROTHER SOUNDY POUTNEY
- 11 FV 'IRIS' taking on water off Fraserburgh, NAR with lifeboat in attendance.
TENISON-COLLINS STROTHER SOUNDY POUTNEY
- 12 Pump lifted to FV 'ACHIEVE' taking on water 15NE of Fraserburgh. 2 lifted to Peterhead.
GEAR ANDERSON SOUNDY POUTNEY
- 21 Windsurfer in difficulty off West Beach. Found safe, WIFA.
LLOYD STROTHER THIRKELL BURLINGHAM
- 23 Two pumps lifted to Rig support vessel 'CAM JACKAL' 120nm E of Aberdeen.
TENISON-COLLINS LLOYD BODIAM POUTNEY
- 24 Medevac man from Dr Grays to Aberdeen RI.
TENISON-COLLINS LLOYD BODIAM POUTNEY

- 24 Medevac of baby from Raigmore to Edinburgh RI.
TENISON-COLLINS LLOYD BODIAM POUTNEY
- 25 Medevac from Dr Grays to Aberdeen RI.
TENISON-COLLINS ANDERSON BODIAM POUTNEY
- 28 Injured fisherman lifted from FV 'BLUE SKY' to Aberdeen RI.
STROTHER ANDERSON THIRKELL BURLINGHAM
- 29 Two missing walkers on Isle of Skye. Found safe, WIFA.
GEAR LEIGH REID BONTHRONE

Boat bonfire brings aid to drifting fishers

THE two-man crew of a small Lossiemouth fishing boat had to improvise yesterday to get help after their vessel broke down in the Moray Firth.

Skipper Dan Flett of the 25ft. Tern and his companion were hit by battery problems after setting out on a trip at teatime on New Year's Day.

They put out 15 flares in the early morning, but ran out without attracting attention.

They then started burning fish boxes and tyres on board.

Finally, a member of the public saw smoke from the vessel two miles north of Findhorn at about 10.30a.m. and contacted the coastguards.

An RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter, which had been on exercise in the area, located the vessel.

A pleasure craft from Burghead, the Sea Hawk — owned by Mr Gordon Robertson — went to the Tern's aid with an auxiliary coastguard on board.

The Tern's engines were restarted with jump-leads and she made Burghead Harbour by lunchtime.

Lucky breaks for injured walker

HILLWALKER Mr Christopher Draper (48), West Shinness, near Lairg, had one bad break yesterday — and then two lucky ones.

He was walking on the snow-capped hills above Dornoch when he slipped and fell, breaking his ankle.

The first bit of good luck was when his shouts for help were heard by another man out hiking near Loch Nan Uan.

□ JOHN VASS

The rescuer made him as comfortable as possible before going for help.

Mr Draper's second lucky break came when an RAF search-and-rescue helicopter on exercise in the area picked him up and airlifted him to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Climbers survive double terror

By TIM BUCKLEY

THREE climbers cheated death yesterday after they were swept 400ft down a mountain by TWO avalanches.

Tons of snow crashed down on the trio pushing them over the edge of a 3,500ft peak in the Cairngorms.

Then, as they plunged down the face, they were caught in a second snow-slide.

Amazingly the three men were not swallowed by the crashing snow.

They managed to break their fall and were spotted by hill-walkers who raised the alarm.

A rescue helicopter was on the scene within minutes to airlift the climbers, one of whom suffered serious head injuries, to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Lucky

Rescue winchman Dave Aitken, said: "They are very lucky to be alive. We saved half an hour flying time because we were on an exercise nearby."

"We were concerned about the condition of one of their party so we picked up a doctor in Aviemore before going on to Inverness."

ANOTHER climber had to be flown to hospital from Bein a Bhuid near Braemar in Aberdeenshire last night after he suffered a broken leg in an avalanche.

Mountain rescue team leaders slammed Dane Benny Haahr, 30, and two 16-year-old boys who spent 24 hours lost on Ben Nevis, for going onto the mountain wearing training shoes and anoraks.

NATCHED FROM THE SNOW



SKY-HIGH HEROES: Braving the fierce crosswinds, the Sea King helicopter hovers precariously as the winchman hoists a victim to safety

Pictures: PETER NICHOLLS

RESCUE (Sunday, ITV, 6pm)

HUGE clouds of snow swirled around the canary yellow Sea King helicopter as RAF winchman Dave Aitken launched himself into thin air.

Fifty feet below on the freezing mountainside, three climbers are entombed under tons of snow and ice, victims of an avalanche.

I was with the RAF crew of Lossie, month based D Flight, 202 squadron on a practice run over the treacherous Cairngorms when the avalanche alarm sounded. The exercise is now a matter of life or death.

Co-pilot Tony Gear, who is also the flight commander, brings the Sea King into position on the mountainside, a difficult manoeuvre where the slightest mistake could send the rotor blades smashing into the icy rockface.

He holds the Sea King, emblazoned with a mallard logo, hovering 50 yards away from the disaster area, so as not to spray snow over the victims, while winchman Dave is lowered down. On the ground Dave faces immediate problems, for the slope is steep and icy and he has no crampons on his mountaineering boots.

Anxiously we watch while he quickly examines the three men then radios that is merely hurt, one is serious and one critical.

A stretcher is lowered down and Dave, like all winchmen a trained first aider, puts a protective collar on the injured man's neck before bringing him back up to the helicopter.

He goes back down to deal with the other two men while we fly to Aviemore, pick up a doctor and race to Raigmore hospital at Inverness.

The victim is a young man in his mid-20s, his eyes

WE JOIN RAF SAVIOURS ON MISSION TO AVALANCHE NIGHTMARE

BY SANDRA PARSONS

screwed up in pain. He lies with his head just inches from me, wrapped in a thermal blanket, barely able to speak.

By the time we get back to the avalanche site, Dave is ready to bring up the next two victims.

The pristine snow is stained crimson with blood from the second man's head. Dave sees he has a dislocated left hip so immobilises his legs and administers Entimox, a gas pain killer.

The third victim has only a suspected broken ankle. He is desperately lucky — all three had fallen 350 feet.

"They were still fairly well

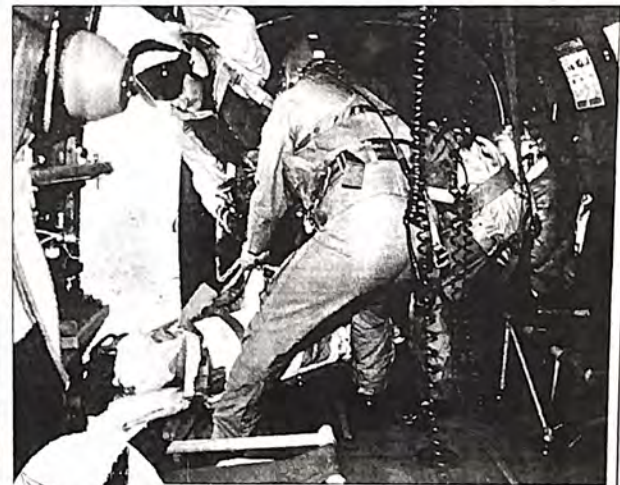
impacted in the snow, and we had to dig two of them out," says Dave, 30.

"With the state of their hypothermia they would have been in a lot of trouble within three or four hours. They might have died."

These men get few thanks, but their chance of glory comes tomorrow when the first episode of *Rescue*, a 13-part series about their work, is shown on ITV.

By 3.30 we had delivered the other two men to Raigmore Hospital when another call comes through, this time to fly the 100 miles to Wick where a pregnant woman is having complications.

We have now been flying five and a half hours since the 10am scramble, with



FLYING DOCTORS: Fall casualty gets airborne first aid

warned by flight commander Tony Gear that we may have to go back out to relieve another crew, who are searching for a missing climber.

I feel I could fall asleep standing up. Even Dave Aitken admits to being "pretty tired." Our relief on being told we will not have to go out again is immense.

The word hero is all too freely applied. Yet without a doubt that's what these men are — quick to praise their colleague and reluctant to accept glory.

"Dave Aitken was the real hero today," says Pat Thirkell, the winch operator whose "patter" — instructions to the pilot — ensured all three avalanche victims

were brought safely on board.

"He didn't hesitate to go out at ridiculous heights with total disregard to his own safety. I believe all winchmen should get medals."

As I lie exhausted in my camp bed, I know that if we are scrambled again that night I will not have the energy to go.

I also know if there is another call out the crew will be airborne within 45 minutes, no matter how exhausted they are. "We're not heroes, insists Dave. "We're just doing our job."

But Flight Lieutenant Tony Gear sums it up better: "The men were superb today. I can't praise them enough."

Neither can I.

nothing to sustain us but endless coffee.

We increase speed to 120 knots, stopping briefly at Raigmore Hospital again to pick up a doctor and midwife.

An hour later the woman is safely on board. She will have to have a caesarian, but appears to be out of danger.

Our crew finally arrives back at the base at 7pm after nine gruelling hours in the noisy Sea King.

We are exhausted, but are

6 We were at the point of turning back when we both heard what seemed like the roar of a jet crossing overhead. I looked up and saw the snow . . . P+J 839287

EXPERIENCED Elgin climber Mr Kenneth Ferguson (30) yesterday relived the powder avalanche which saw him being carried some 200ft. down Coire-na-Clebe on Beinn a' Bhùird in the eastern Cairngorms on Thursday afternoon.

Speaking from his hospital bed in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, community nurse Mr Ferguson, 41 Birnie Place, New Elgin, who has a broken leg, said it was after walking to the bottom of the coire that he and his partner, Mr James Moir (33), 6 Allenvale Gardens, Aberdeen, realised the conditions were too dangerous.

"We were at the bottom of the coire and saw there was too much powder snow and were at the point of turning back when we both heard what seemed like the roar of a jet crossing overhead."

"I looked up and saw the snow . . . Jim slid behind a rock and I stuck my ice-axe into the ice as I did not have time to move."

Climber relives 200ft. avalanche nightmare

□ JOE WATSON

"It passed over Jim, but I was caught in the middle of it and as the pressure built up, I was carried down with it around 200ft. before being thrown out of it."

"I think I managed to get clear of it by hitting a couple of outcrops of rock, but I'm not sure," he said.

At this point, Mr Ferguson's companion came down and assisted him to crawl to the bottom of the coire, where he placed him behind a rock and helped put his leg in a splint before running to a nearby gamekeeper's cottage at Altdourie, near Braemar, and raising the alarm.

"The emergency services were excellent," he said. "Because of the cloud level I was carried by the mountain rescue teams down a

further 500ft. to the waiting RAF helicopter and taken directly to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary some eight hours after the accident happened."

Mr Ferguson has been climbing for 17 years and this is the first accident that he has had.

Powder avalanches are one of the most rare and dangerous types which can strike the Scottish hills and are more common in the Alps and Himalayas.

RAF in mercy airlift for baby with heart defect



Touch down: The sick baby arrives in Edinburgh

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

... the baby was born with a heart defect and was in a critical condition. The parents, Mr and Mrs Ann Harley, 51, of ...

SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY, 1990

- 03 Recovery of skier with broken ankle to Raigmore.
GEAR CAMPBELL BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 04 Search for two missing motorcyclists at
Drumnadrochit. Recalled en route, NAR.
LLOYD ANDERSON REID POUTNEY
- 06 Medevac of man with ruptured heart from Raigmore
to Edinburgh RI.
STROTHER ANDERSON THIRKELL POUTNEY
- 06 Scrambled to assist 3 crag bound climbers but
forced to abort due to poor weather south of
Inverness.
STROTHER ANDERSON THIRKELL POUTNEY
- 09 Recovery of Hypothermic soldier from Ben
Klibreck to Raigmore.
STROTHER ANDERSON THIRKELL BURLINGHAM
- 09 Pregnant lady and premature baby from wick
to Raigmore.
GEAR LEIGH LITTLE AITKEN
- 10 Medevac of RTA casualty from Dr Grays to
Aberdeen RI.
LLOYD STROTHER THIRKELL BURLINGHAM
- 12 Transfer of Donor patient from Wick to
Aberdeen RI.
LLOYD ANDERSON THIRKELL BURLINGHAM
- 18 Climber believed to have been caught in
avalanche in Glenshiel area. Found safe, NAR.
TENISON-COLLINS CAMPBELL BODIAM AITKEN
- 25 Fallen climber, Loch Laggan area. Unable to search
due to weather. Assisted MRT movements.
TENISON-COLLINS ANDERSON BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 27 Recovery of sledge accident victim from north of
Blairgowrie to Dundee RI.
TENISON-COLLINS ANDERSON BODIAM BURLINGHAM

YELLOW PERILS

Unsung heroes no more! A blaze of media attention shines down on the D Flight team, causing the shy and retiring (the latter is well overdue) John Prince to take a winter break in the trout infested Falklands, which he owns. Grumpy Paul (Grumps) Challice can't take any more either, after petulantly breaking a shiny Sea King apart he is now going to oversee the Aberdeen Coastguard Cartel. The Coastguards run a tight ship now, but Paul will be an asset to any helicopter ops — as most CG recruits are Navy chaps who know precious little about matters of the air.

Apart-height is still rampant in the bowels of the SAR world, or sadistic 6' 7" boss, Tony Gear has insisted his 6' 6" sidekick is given total power over the Manston Flight. T-C Tenison-Collins takes over this plum posting, despite obvious signs that he has been very rude to his long suffering wife Shona.

Exchange cowboy "pretty boy" Don Strother was catapulted off his mount recently, falling a huge 13½ hands. Expert modeller Bob Pountney filleted his index finger fitting a tricky trinnion to his latest galleon. More injuries than our usual customers, although the avalanches are providing a steady crop at the base of the mountains. Meanwhile the news on the streets is that Bas Basford hasn't crashed a car for a month.

We all had a super Christmas, only interrupted by the Station Commander and OC Ops visiting with copious good cheer, waking the mince pie stuffed engineers and snoring aircrew from their slumbers.

The rapidly greying John Dean prepares his smooth transition from philanthropic saviour to idle rich commercial pilot as the minutes to serve tick by. Already commissioning a mansion on the shores of the Moray Firth on expected future earnings, he is to convert the old mansion into servants quarters to appease his long suffering wife Irene.

Our quite serious manning problem is being alleviated somewhat by the recent arrival of Messrs Leigh Barlingham and Carter, our OCU's total output. All are, of course, ecstatic to be in this earthly paradise. The full glamour of a morning's mountain "spacewalk," the exploration of the flight envelope of 250" of cable above a scenic, but distant, valley floor, have been demonstrated.

FLORY D



"202 exercising with local fishing boats"

THEY'RE OFF... TO THE RESCUE!

They are the men who risk their own lives to save others from certain death. In a new television series, *Rescue*, tracks a year in the life of one of Britain's most active

their bravery is legendary, their heroic deeds unparalleled. Now a major new Search and Rescue units. By Sarah Edghill. Pictures by Andrea Cringean



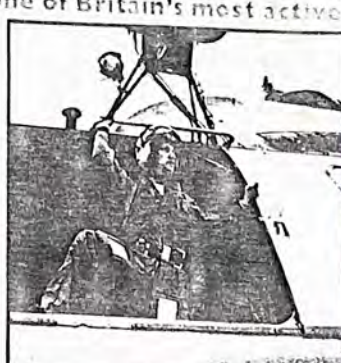
OUR HEROES

A yellow helicopter thundering overhead is a familiar sight in Lossiemouth and one at many locals have had cause to be grateful for. Based at the RAF site on the north-east coast of Scotland, 202 Squadron is one of the busiest Search and Rescue units in Britain. The men working here devote themselves to saving lives and have to deal with harsh weather, treacherous mountains and an angry sea.



DANGER...

A Mayday call comes over the radio. Every year the crews rescue climbers, fishermen and tourists from the rugged countryside and the ravages of the weather. But they play down the dangers of the work they do. "We certainly aren't heroes!" exclaims Flight Lieutenant John Prince, a pilot on hundreds of hazardous missions. "It's all a question of experience. Everything is rehearsed, so mistakes shouldn't happen."



SCRAMBLE!

When the scramble alarm sounds the crews race into action, never sure what awaits them. They work 24-hour shifts, maintaining a Sea King rescue helicopter on 15-minute readiness. Each crew has two pilots, a radar/winch operator and a winchman. When they reach the scene, the pilots can't see directly below the helicopter, so winch operator Steve Griffin gives them directions over the radio.



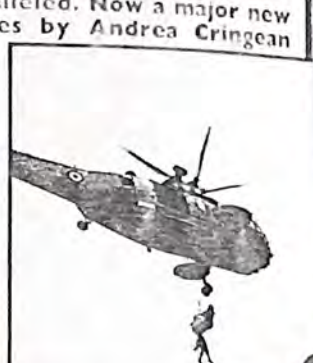
TRAPPED

own in Stonehaven, a little fishing village south of Aberdeen, coastguards have spotted two lads trapped at the bottom of a cliff. The incoming tide will soon cut them off. In the fierce waves no boat can get in to get them to safety. The Sea King hovers over the scene and winchman Bill Payne is lowered down on a line to where the boys are trapped. His job is to secure them into a harness and get them lifted up to safety.



TERRIFIED

It turns out that the two lads, who are up in Scotland on holiday, climbed around the cliffs not realising that they would be stranded when the tide came in. They are cold and terrified, but so far unhurt. Bill straps them into a rescue harness with him one at a time, and gives a signal to Steve up in the helicopter. The high wind causes problems, but both are slowly winched up towards the hovering Sea King.



UP, UP AND AWAY

Once they are well above the crashing waves, pilot John Prince manoeuvres the helicopter so the lads can be set down safely on top of the cliffs, where their anxious families are gathered waiting. Dazed and frightened, they are nevertheless out of danger. Since the £2 million Sea Kings were introduced in 1978, the unit has carried out over 1,300 rescue missions. This is just one more to add to the list of successes.



BACK HOME

While the crews are on duty, being called out this kind of emergency, their wives often sit anxiously at home. Maureen Pountney's husband, Bob, is one of the winchmen. When a helicopter takes off when the rain sounds, "You'd often rather not think about what they're doing," she admits. "Now that all the dangers are there, but you can't let the worry take over your life."



IT'S OVER

As operations go, the rescuing of the two boys on the cliff was routine, with all the usual risks the men are prepared for. Bill, with the grateful thanks of the lads, sits back exhausted as they come into land, for it could all have gone very wrong. Had they flown in too low, the boys could have been swept into the sea by the blast, or smashed against the rocks as they were raised up to the helicopter.



SAFE AND SOUND

Many others have reason to be grateful to the Search and Rescue team, like Peter and Stephen Bruce, whose fishing boat got into trouble 100 miles off the Aberdeen coast. The Budding Rose was taking in water, and her pumps had failed. When 202 Squadron arrived a Force 10 gale was blowing and the fishermen were winched off the floundering vessel. "They think they're just doing a job," says Peter. "But they're real heroes."



TUNING IN

When the crews touch down safely after a rescue mission the relief felt by their wives and families is overwhelming. When their husbands are on standby, wives like Maureen, Stella Payne and Angie Redfearn find it easier to wait together for news, tuning in to local radio reports. "They say not to worry, but when we're sitting home on stormy nights we can't help it," says Stella. "We support one another."



FAMILY TIES

There is a real homely atmosphere at the Lossiemouth base, and all the men's families spend a lot of time there—it's one way of relieving some of the tension that builds up. Angie Redfearn's husband, Paul, has recently been promoted to Squadron Leader and their two-year-old son, Stuart, is very intrigued by his daddy's job. He loves to sit in the cockpit of one of the Sea Kings, being taught to fly by a real professional.



JOB WELL DONE

Another tour of duty finished, the crew hand over control of their magnificent machines to the men on the next shift. The 24-hour period always brings a variety of incidents, some perilous, others relatively minor. But as he signs off at the end of the day, each man can be proud of his part in 202 Squadron's Search and Rescue missions. And those whose lives they've saved will always call them heroes.

Rescuers at book launch



Members of RAF Lossiemouth's 202 Squadron Search and Rescue flight were on hand on Saturday to launch the new "Rescue" book at Yeoman's Bookshop, Elgin. Skipper William Coull (front left), of the fishing boat "Choice", who was himself rescued by the squadron, presents a bottle of whisky to winchman David Aitken. Also pictured are winchman Ian Bonthorne and fitter David Selby.

Walkers led to safety from ridge

THREE hillwalkers were led to safety from a ridge on a Lochaber hillside last night.

The two men and a woman were found huddled on a ledge 2800ft. up the hillside on the north side of Glencoe.

A bid to get the stranded trio airlifted to safety had to be aborted when a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth had to turn back.

The drama took place on Aonach Eagach and late last night the hillwalkers were being led down the ridge by Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team.

A police spokesman at Fort-William said it was understood the trio were unhurt.

He added that the low cloud base and deteriorating conditions had resulted in the helicopter pilot deciding to return to base.

It was unclear how the alarm had been raised but a spokesman for the rescue co-ordination centre at Pitreavie Castle said first reports indicated the party had been stuck fast.

He added: "Conditions were really bad and there were fears they could be injured on the ledge by protruding jagged edges."

Climbers led to safety in Glencoe

FIVE climbers were led to safety after getting into difficulties descending a gully in Glencoe last night.

The alarm was raised after a policeman, dealing with another incident, spotted flashing lights coming from 1500ft. up on Clachaig Gully.

Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team were alerted and helped the climbers down from the gully, which is the recognised descent route from Aonach Eagach ridge.

Police also contacted the rescue co-ordination centre at Pitreavie Castle and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was scrambled.

The helicopter got as far as Fort-Augustus when it was reported the climbers were safe and it was recalled to base.

A police spokesman at Fort-William said it appeared one or more of the party had got stuck as they came down the gully.

There had been a covering of fresh snow which was freezing at low level, he said, and there was a possibility the climbers could also have lost their bearings.

Summit-fall climber had lucky escape

A 54-YEAR-OLD Dundee climber who fell through a cornice near the summit of Beinn a'Chaoirinn on Sunday night was nursing a bruised hip in Belford Hospital, Fort-William, last night, otherwise none the worse of his fall or the eight hours he spent awaiting rescue.

Mr Ian Young, who runs a photographic business at St Andrews and is a keen photographer, was found just after 9p.m. by a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

His climbing companion, Mr Bill Burbridge, from Carnoustie, who lost sight of Mr Young as he fell, raised the alarm.

Mr Young's wife, Nancy, son Colin and daughter Jill are driving up from the family home at 6 Cambridge Street, Dundee, to take him home today.

Heart patient

AN RAF air sea rescue Sea-king helicopter landed at Raigmore Hospital yesterday to transfer a male cardiac patient to Western General Hospital, Edinburgh.

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 6 1990

HOME NEWS

PR



■ Air Vice-Marshal Jim Morris

Forces' rescue squads in more action

SEARCH-and-rescue incidents involving the RAF, Royal Navy and HM Coastguard continued to rise in 1989.

The RAF Rescue Co-ordination Centres at Pitreavie, Fife, and at Plymouth handled 1682 incidents with 1314 people being rescued or given assistance — increases of 41 in the number of incidents and 29 in the number of rescues, compared with 1988.

Speaking at RAF Pitreavie Castle yesterday, Air Vice-Marshal Jim Morris said: "In 1989 we did not, thankfully, have the number of major disasters which marred the previous year, but overall the military and coastguard helicopters, and the RAF Mountain Rescue Teams, went to the assistance of

□ JOE WATSON

a record number of people, most of them civilians."

At Pitreavie, they controlled 866 incidents involving 734 rescues, while they called out RAF Mountain Rescue Teams to assist on 67 occasions.

The number of incidents handled by the Scottish rescue headquarters was up 50 (6%) on 1988, but the number of people helped dropped by 11 (14%).

The Rescue Co-ordination Centre at Plymouth called the helicopters in their area into action to attend 816 incidents, nine fewer than the previous year, but the numbers of people helped jumped 38% to 650, compared with 420 the previous year.

Search-and-rescue helicopters at RAF Lossiemouth and RAF Leuchars and the Sumburgh coastguard helicopter were called out fewer times.

At Lossiemouth, helicopters were called on 136 occasions — down 14 — while Leuchars showed a drop of 15 to 134 callouts.

The coastguard helicopter at Sumburgh had seven fewer callouts, with its assistance being required on only five occasions. Crews at Sumburgh handled nine more incidents, bringing their total to 40.

Mountain Rescue teams from RAF Kinloss had a slightly busier year with 22 incidents requiring their help, compared with 19 in 1988.

Their colleagues at RAF Leuchars had 31 callouts, down nine.

Nimrods at RAF Kinloss dealt with 50 incidents, compared with 60 in 1988, handled through Pitreavie and Plymouth.

The primary task of military search-and-rescue helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft and RAF Mountain Rescue teams is to aid downed military and civilian aircrew and all military personnel on land and sea.

When safety of life is at stake, the Forces normally have sufficient capacity to support requests for assistance from the police and HM Coastguard.

About 95% of all rescues involve civilians.

SUMMARY FOR MARCH, 1990

- 01 Medevac of lady with spinal injuries from Dr Grays to Aberdeen RI.
TENISON-COLLINS LEIGH BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 01 Flashing lights seen at night in Glencoe area. Recalled en route, NAR.
TENISON-COLLINS LEIGH BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 02 Medevac of RTA victim from Belford to Raigmore.
LLOYD ANDERSON THIRKELL AITKEN
- 03 Search for 2 missing walkers in Cairngorms. Nil found.
LLOYD ANDERSON THIRKELL AITKEN
- 03 Continuation of search for 2 missing walkers. Walkers turned up safe in Tomintoul.
STROTHER LEIGH LITTLE BURLINGHAM
- 03 Recovery of fallen climber with broken leg from Lochnagar to Aberdeen RI.
STROTHER LEIGH LITTLE BURLINGHAM
- 04 Recovery of fallen climber with broken leg from Coire-an-t-Sneachda to Raigmore.
GEAR CAMPBELL THIRKELL AITKEN
- 04 Search for missing pensioner at Longside. Nil found.
GEAR CAMPBELL THIRKELL AITKEN
- 08 Recovery of skier with broken ankle from Coire-an-t-Sneachda to Raigmore.
STROTHER CAMPBELL BODIAM POUNTNEY
- 10 Skier with dislocated shoulder on Cairngorm lifted to Aviemore Medical Centre.
GEAR STROTHER BODIAM POUNTNEY
- 13 Investigation of Red Flares in Golspie Bay revealing FV 'Boy James' safe, NAR.
GEAR CAMPBELL BODIAM POUNTNEY
- 13 Pre-position at Sumburgh on report of gas leak in Brent field. Recalled en route, NAR.
TENISON-COLLINS PRINCE GRIFFIN BURLINGHAM
- 20 Recovery of walker with broken ankle from Corrour Bothy to Dr Grays.
WILLSON CAMPBELL THIRKELL PAYNE
- 20 Scrambled to helicopter with severe airframe vibrations near Sumburgh. Landed safely, NAR.
WILLSON CAMPBELL THIRKELL PAYNE

- 24 Scrambled to fallen climber on Five sisters. Body recovered the following day.
LLOYD CAMPBELL GRIFFIN BONTHRONE
- 25 Recovery of fallen walker on Beinn Eighe to Raigmore.
GEAR LEIGH LITTLE BURLINGHAM
- 26 Fisherman with broken hand from FV 'Day Dawn' to Aberdeen airport.
WILLSON LLOYD GRIFFIN BONTHRONE

FEARS were mounting today for two walkers missing in the gale-lashed Cairngorms.

Police at Glenmore Lodge said that searchers had already encountered three avalanches on the Northern Corries near Aviemore.

"It is not looking too good at the moment," said a rescue co-ordinator. "Our men on the plateau are having problems walking because of the high winds."

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth joined Cairngorm Mountain Rescue team this morning after the men were reported overdue.

The walkers, thought to be from north Wales, set out from Coire Cas car park for Lurchers Gully around 11am yesterday and were due to return by 5.30pm.

The alarm was raised when they failed to return and emergency services set out at first light this morning to search along the route to Lurchers Gully.

The spokesman said that turbulence was making it difficult for the search helicopter.

The 21 members of the Cairngorm rescue team had been joined by three men from the Scottish Avalanche Project and two search dogs.

After sweeping most of the Aviemore side of the mountain they were extending the search. They were discussing calling in a second helicopter.

On Saturday an injured climber was airlifted to safety after he fell on snow-covered Lochnagar.

Chartered surveyor Mr Ian Swarbrick (30), 64 Robertson Street, Airdrie, had been climbing with a friend in one of the corries on the mountain when the accident happened.

It is understood he slid about 60ft. down a slope which was thickly covered by snow, injuring his right ankle.

A Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth flew the injured man to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. After being detained overnight he left yesterday.

Lossie P+S 5 MAR 90 copter helps in search

□ STEVE STEWART

A HELICOPTER from RAF Lossiemouth was called out yesterday to help in the search for a 66-year-old man who has gone missing from his home near Peterhead.

Mr Luigi Ferrari was last seen by his family at 8.30p.m. on Saturday, and police and the helicopter crew have been concentrating the search in an area around his Longside home.

The air search was called off as darkness fell and a spokesman for Grampian Police said they are becoming increasingly concerned for Mr Ferrari's welfare.

Police will resume the search this morning.

When last seen he was wearing a grey anorak with a wine stripe across the front, blue trousers and a flat cap.

Anyone who has seen Mr Ferrari or who knows his whereabouts should contact the nearest police station.

Elderly Dutch hiker survives hills ordeal

plus 21 MAR 90

□ ALASTAIR BISSET

AN ELDERLY Dutch hiker who lay injured in a remote Cairngorm bothy for close on two days was airlifted to hospital in Elgin yesterday.

Last night Mr Luc Bunt (61) — who has a broken ankle — was being detained for observation in Dr Gray's Hospital, where his condition was said to be satisfactory.

He had been flown to hospital by an RAF Sea King rescue helicopter from Lossiemouth which had been called out to the Corrour Bothy in the Larig Ghru after other hikers had raised the alarm yesterday morning.

Mr Bunt and his son, Kees (27) — both experienced climbers — had been walking through the Larig Ghru late on Sunday afternoon when Mr Bunt senior slipped between

two boulders and broke his ankle.

Despite the injury, Mr Bunt junior managed to half-carry and half-drag his father nearly three miles to the bothy where they decided to remain until help came along.

But it was more than 24 hours later — on Monday night — before three other hikers arrived at the bothy.

By that time it was too late to summon help, and the group waited until early yesterday before the three hikers set off to raise the alarm.

Last night, young Kees — who accompanied his injured father in the helicopter — said: "We both know the Cairngorms area very well as we

have been to Scotland on climbing holidays before. In fact, we were in the Larig Ghru area last November.

"We arrived at Aviemore on Saturday and had camped overnight before deciding to walk through the Larig Ghru on Sunday. We were walking over boulders near the Pools of Dee when the accident happened. The rocks were very slippery and my father just lost his footing between two boulders.

"We knew that it was possibly a leg break or an ankle break. It was very wet and windy, and it took me about three hours to get to the bothy where we stayed on Sunday night.

"We had plenty of food and other supplies with us, so there was no real problem. We

thought some people might be passing on Monday morning who would be able to get help — as I did not want to leave my father alone.

"But it was Monday night before three Englishmen arrived. We all decided that it would be best to stay.

"This morning they set off to telephone and the helicopter arrived around lunchtime. We are very grateful to them all."

Kees, a hospital cook in Rotterdam, visited his father several times in Dr Gray's yesterday.

"The injury is not too bad and he hopes to be allowed out within the next two or three days," he added. "Obviously our walking holiday plans are over and we will be making arrangements to fly back to Rotterdam."



Lossie pilot flies on secret mission to school



■ **Fit.Lt.** Tony Gear, from RAF Lossiemouth's "Rescue" squadron explains the controls of a Sea King helicopter to Alexander Morrice (left) and Daniel Buchan yesterday during a special mission which took everyone in Primary 7 at South Park School, Fraserburgh — except the teacher — by surprise. Miss Lynne Cunningham had asked RAF Lossiemouth for information about Sea Kings and was delighted when a live demonstration was offered.

SUMMARY FOR APRIL, 1990

- 04 Assisted MRT in Search for fallen climber on An Teallach. Body carried out.
WILLSON LEIGH GRIFFIN BURLINGHAM
- 07 Recovery of walker with broken ankle to ambulance at Pittodrie hotel.
CLEMENTS CAMPBELL GRIFFIN BONTHRONE
- 07 Airlift of Danish Fisherman with crushed hand to Aberdeen airport.
CLEMENTS CAMPBELL GRIFFIN BONTHRONE
- 10 Search for man missing in rubber dingy off Troup Head. Subject found by Fraserburgh lifeboat.
PRINCE CAMPBELL GRIFFIN BONTHRONE
- 12 Pump lifted to FV 'Ocean Triumph' taking on water 110 nm NNE of Aberdeen.
STROTHER LEIGH THIRKELL AITKEN
- 12 Scrambled to walker with dislocated shoulder in Cuillins. Casualty transferred to ambulance.
STROTHER LEIGH THIRKELL AITKEN
- 13 Search for missing man in Cape Wrath area. Lifted to local Police.
PRINCE WILLSON LITTLE POUNTNEY
- 13 Recovery of walker with broken ankle from end of Loch Quoich to Fort William.
PRINCE WILLSON LITTLE POUNTNEY
- 24 Scrambled to missing Lynx on Isle of Lewis. RTB when Lynx called in safe on the ground.
STROTHER LEIGH LITTLE POUNTNEY
- 28 Assisted MRT with cragbound climber on Ben Alder. Deployed MRT in area then diverted to following.
GEAR LLOYD HOLMES POUNTNEY
- 28 Medevac of baby with viral infection from Mallaig to Raigmore.
GEAR LLOYD HOLMES POUNTNEY
- 30 Scrambled to Shackleton crash on South Lewis.
LLOYD GEAR HOLMES BURLINGHAM
- 30 Tasked to transfer doctor and Kinloss MRT to crash site.
PRINCE CAMPBELL GRIFFIN AITKEN

Hillwalker comfortable in hospital

A TURRIFF hillwalker was comfortable in hospital today after falling near the Mither Tap on Bennachie at the weekend.

Mr Adrian Law (45), of Balmelle Road, Turriff, was walking with his family on Saturday afternoon when he fell and fractured his leg.

Mr Law, an industrial chemist, was rescued by a helicopter from Lossiemouth and taken to Pittodrie House Hotel from where he was driven by ambulance to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Copter in Coolins rescue effort

A RESCUE effort was under way in the northern Coolins in Skye late last night after a woman climber was injured.

The woman, who was accompanied by a man, has a dislocated shoulder.

A spokesman at the RAF Rescue Co-ordination Centre at Pitreavie said the Stornoway Coastguard helicopter had dropped two members of the Skye Mountain Rescue Team near the scene, but had been unable to lift the woman off.

Members of the RAF Kinloss Mountain Rescue Team, who were on an exercise in the area, had also gone to the scene.

The spokesman said an RAF rescue helicopter had been sent from Lossiemouth

Man saved in Moray Firth drama

By JOHN THOMSON

A FULL-SCALE rescue operation in the Moray Firth may have been sparked off by a group of young people skylarking.

The drama took place in the sea off Pennan when a search was mounted for a young man adrift in a rubber dingy.

It involved a helicopter from Lossiemouth, a Fraserburgh lifeboat, the Gardenstown marine rescue unit and the police.

The lifeboat picked up the stranded man, George Strachan (20), of Graymar House, Lumphanan, after a 45 minute search early this morning.

And lifeboat secretary, Mr William Cowe, revealed he had told off Mr Strachan about the cost and inconvenience he had caused.

Mr Cowe said he spoke to Mr Strachan after the lifeboat landed him at Fraserburgh Harbour.

"He told me three of them had been in the dingy in the harbour at Pennan. Two of them jumped out but he stayed and was blown out of the harbour. It looks like they were skylarking," said Mr Cowe.

"I got on to him for causing so much expense and asked him if he realised it had cost thousands of pounds."

Mr Cowe said after the rescue, he drove Mr Strachan back to Pennan where he is living in a holiday home.

"He asked me to thank the crew for taking him in," he said.

Lifeboat coxswain, Albert Sutherland, said Mr Strachan had been glad to be aboard the lifeboat.

"He was beginning to think we would not see him in the water," he said.

The alarm was raised around 11pm last night when coastguards received an emergency call about a dingy drifting in the sea off Pennan.

After a search, Mr Strachan was picked up about two and a half miles east of Pennan.

Wow, this dog is out on a limb!



■ He is man's best friend — but let's face it, this high-flying canine looks like he's wearing the trousers as he is winched on board the Sea King helicopter after the Search and Rescue Dog Association's weekend exercise in Glencoe. Navigator Fl. Lt. Pat Thirkell is on the winch.

Another picture and story — Page 7

□ IAN FORSYTH 25

A MAJOR search was launched in the sea south-east of Stornoway yesterday morning after an Army helicopter from Fort-George, near Inverness, was reported missing.

However, the Lynx helicopter with four people on board had actually landed on Eishken Estate, at the head of Loch Shell, about 20 miles south of Stornoway.

Stornoway Coastguard said that the alarm had been raised after air traffic control at Stornoway reported that the helicopter had disappeared from their radar screen.

A spokesman for the rescue co-ordination centre at Pitreavie added: "There seems to have been a misunderstanding in communications between the helicopter and Stornoway airport as to the pilot's intentions."

An Army spokesman said: "My information is that the helicopter landed at Eishken to drop off passengers. In doing so, they got out of communication. They later took off again."

Involved in the search were the Coastguard helicopter from Stornoway and another helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth. Stornoway Lifeboat and the car ferry Sulven had also headed for the scene.

However, the search in an area around a dozen miles south-east of Stornoway, was called off after just over an hour when the missing helicopter was located.

Mum starts big air search as son sits it out in bothy

□ KEN JONES

A WORRIED mother sparked off a big air search when her 24-year-old son failed to return from a hillwalking expedition.

But yesterday, Mr Ian McMillan, of Grantown, was found safe and well — sitting in a West Sutherland bothy.

Police said later: "There had been a misunderstanding at home between the young man and his mother about how long he would be away."

"The mother understood he was to return home yesterday. The lad says he indicated he would be walking until the end of the week."

Neither Mrs McMillan nor her son were available to comment at their home in the Old Station House, Woodlands Terrace, Grantown.

A rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth traced Mr MacMillan within minutes of arriving in the search area.

The helicopter crew dropped him off at Bonar Bridge police station where, after an interview, he was able to hitch-hike home.

Meanwhile, a Cumbrian woman was airlifted from a Skye mountainside after an agonising eight hours in blizzard conditions.

Mrs Antoinette Samsby (27), Burton in Kendal, dislocated a shoulder while lowering herself from a rock in

the Coolins during a hillwalking holiday with her husband, Martin, and a friend, Mr Robert Reynolds.

Skye Mountain Rescue Team were alerted and later joined by members of the Kinloss search team, on exercise in the area.

Stornoway Coastguard helicopter dropped two members of the Skye team near the scene, but was unable to airlift Mrs Samsby because of deteriorating weather conditions.

A second helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth eventually picked up the woman, who was then flown to Sligachan where she was transferred to an ambulance and taken to Broadford Hospital.

Climber airlifted

A WOMAN climber was airlifted to hospital at Fort-William last night after falling in the Knoydart Peninsula.

The woman was taken to Belford Hospital with leg injuries by an RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth.

Police, who were waiting to interview the woman, have released no further details.

SUMMARY FOR MAY, 1990

- 01 Tasked to assist the crash team at the Shackleton site.
WILSON CAMPBELL LITTLE POUNTNEY
- 02 Scrambled to Jaguar with control restrictions. Jaguar landed safely. NAR.
GEAR LLOYD LITTLE BURLINGHAM
- 05 Recovery of fallen climber from Cuillins to Raigmore.
PRINCE LEIGH LITTLE PAYNE
- 12 Airlift of injured fisherman from FV 'OCEAN WAY' to Aberdeen RI.
STROTHER LLOYD LITTLE BONTHRONE
- 12 Medevac of man with compressed spinal column from Raigmore to Aberdeen RI.
STROTHER LLOYD LITTLE BONTHRONE
- 16 Recovery of suspected Heart attack victim from Montrose platform to Aberdeen RI.
PRINCE LEIGH HOLMES POUNTNEY
- 16 Medrescue of man with suspect Heart attack from survey ship 'PACIFIC HORIZON' to Aberdeen RI.
PRINCE LEIGH HOLMES POUNTNEY
- 17 Pregevac from Wick to Raigmore.
LLOYD PRINCE HOLMES PAYNE
- 18 Recovery of fallen walker from Ryvoan Pass, Cairngorms to Raigmore.
WILLSON LEIGH GRIFFIN POUNTNEY
- 25 Scrambled to light aircraft with engine trouble over Loch Lochy. RTB a/c force landed safely.
STROTHER CAMPBELL GRIFFIN AITKEN
- 25 Medevac of premature baby from Raigmore to Aberdeen RI.
STROTHER CAMPBELL GRIFFIN AITKEN
- 26 Scrambled to recover fallen climber from near Grantown to Aberdeen RI.
LLOYD PRINCE LITTLE BURLINGHAM
- 27 Medevac of two babies and mothers from Elgin to Aberdeen RI.
STROTHER WILLSON HOLMES AITKEN
- 28 Recovery of walker with dislocated shoulder in Cuillins. Taken to Broadford Hosp.
GEAR LEIGH LARKE POUNTNEY

Hurry in Moray as baby makes early debut

A MORAY baby got off to a flying start in life.

For within seconds of being born, little Larissa Donald was winging her way to Aberdeen — courtesy of the RAF.

Larissa made her premature debut in an ambulance just as mum Mandy (22) was to be transferred to a Sea King helicopter.

The flight was arranged when the unborn baby showed signs of complications. But as the ambulance drew up in Elgin, where the helicopter was waiting, she made her grand entrance.

By RAYMOND SHEWAN

In less than an hour mother and baby were safely in Aberdeen Maternity Hospital.

Now back home in Dufftown, Mrs Donald said of the helicopter crew: "They were just excellent. Some of them even came to the hospital to ask for us."

Inconvenient though Tib Larissa's arrival may have been, she aptly chose her parents' first wedding anniversary.

"We couldn't have asked for a better present," said her proud dad.

Platform man dies as airlift set in motion

A PRODUCTION technician has died after becoming ill on BP's Magnus platform, 110 miles north-east of Shetland.

Mr Jeff Wood (40), from South Wales, was taken to the platform's sick bay on Tuesday. After showing initial signs of improvement, his condition worsened and a doctor was airlifted from Shell's nearby North Cormorant.

During the evening it was decided to fly Mr Wood to hospital. A helicopter was already on its way to take him to Lerwick's Gilbert Bain Hospital when he died.

A BP spokesman said: "We do not know the cause of death at the moment, but Mr Wood's wife and family have been told and the police have been informed in accordance with normal procedure."

He added that there would be a post-mortem examination. Meanwhile, a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth had a busy time yesterday, flying two missions to the North Sea to airlift men with suspected heart attacks to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

The first incident involved a fisherman on the Inverness-registered Kiloran, 100 miles north-east of Aberdeen.

Mr Sandy Main (41), from Lossiemouth, arrived in Aberdeen just before noon. He left after treatment.

After refuelling at Dyce, the helicopter flew to the seismic-survey vessel Pacific Horizon, 120 miles east of Wick, and landed an ill crewman in Aberdeen at 2.30p.m.

By BRUCE TYLER

The birth operator on the helicopter, FO Glenn Moore, said: "We were just about to transfer the mother to the hospital when the pre-term baby was born. It was a surprise for us."

A leading official of the campaign for a specialist staffed maternity unit at Elgin said his unit had been set up in the Special Unit at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital.

At the Scottish Tory Party Conference in Aberdeen earlier this month, Scottish MP Mr Michael Moray pledged the unit.

The specialist maternity unit would be provided with five years as part of a £1.1million redevelopment of Elgin's Dr Gray's Hospital. The chairman of the MUM — Maternity Unit for Moray — campaign for Mrs Alice Gray, Elgin, said: "We need a specialist facility in our area."

Until we get this, these emergencies will continue to occur. I hope both mothers and babies are well."

Mr Moray has asked Grampian Health Board to make further improvements in maternity services in Moray and the new specialist unit is provided.

SUMMARY FOR JUNE, 1990

- 01 Medevac of severely burnt male from Broadford Aberdeen RI.
GEAR PRINCE LARKE POUNTNEY
- 02 Recovery of injured fisherman from FV 'SAPPHIRE' to Aberdeen.
LLOYD ANDERSON HOLMES AITKEN
- 03 Scrambled to fallen climber in Cuillins. Taken to Raigmore.
WILLSON PRINCE LARKE POUNTNEY
- 07 Scrambled to report of upturned boat off Burghead. Nil Found. WIFA.
WILLSON BELL CORNES BURLINGHAM

Injured Elgin boy airlifted to hospital

A SEA King rescue helicopter was scrambled last night from RAF Lossiemouth to take an injured Elgin boy to hospital in Aberdeen. Police at Elgin said they are making inquiries into how the six-year-old boy was hurt. It is understood he has a fractured skull.

Woman hurt in 200ft. fall

A SCHOOL teacher was airlifted to hospital on Saturday after falling 200ft. while walking on the West Coast. A helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth airlifted Ms Elizabeth Matthews (50), 5 Braeside Park, Gairloch, to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, where she was detained with head, neck and leg injuries.

Climber falls on Cuillins

A CLIMBER is in hospital at Inverness after an 80ft fall on the Cuillin ridge, Skye. Outward Bound instructor Robin Watts (58) was stretchered out by the Skye mountain rescue team before being flown to Raigmore Hospital by an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter. Mr Watts, from Gwynedd in Wales, suffered leg and chest injuries.

Man badly injured

A MAN was being treated for a broken leg and ribs in the Dr MacKinnon Memorial Hospital, at Broadford, Skye, last night, after falling in the Coolins. He is thought to have been found by Skye Mountain Rescue Team, and transferred to the hospital by a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

Meanwhile, a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth took a hillwalker to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, after an accident in Skye.

The man slipped and fell while out walking with a party on Spurr Thearlich in the Coolins.

Skye Mountain Rescue Team were alerted and took the injured walker off the hill to the waiting helicopter.

The man, whose name was not being released until relatives had been informed, is understood to have head and chest injuries.

- 09 Search for possible suicide victim between Lossie and Burghead. Nil Found.
GEAR BELL CORNES BURLINGHAM
- 10 Scrambled to fallen climber in Cairngorms. Unable to assist due to low cloud base. RTB.
STROTHER LEIGH GRIFFIN POUNTNEY
- 12 Recovery of fallen climber in Cuillins to Raigmore.
LLOYD LEIGH GRIFFIN POUNTNEY
- 15 Medevac of head injuries boy from Elgin to Aberdeen RI.
BELL ANDERSON LARKE BURLINGHAM
- 16 Medevac of 8 yr old baby from Wick to Edinburgh RI.
PRINCE CAMPBELL LITTLE PAYNE
- 17 Medevac man with Haemorrhage from Golspie to Raigmore.
LLOYD LEIGH LARKE POUNTNEY
- 17 Recovery of injured walker in Cairngorms to Glenmore Lodge.
LLOYD LEIGH LARKE POUNTNEY
- 17 Medevac of lung transplant patient from Aberdeen to Newcastle.
LLOYD LEIGH LARKE POUNTNEY
- 20 Airlift of poss heart attack victim from Lossie station water tower to Dr Grays.
LLOYD LEIGH LITTLE PAYNE
- 23 Recovery of seriously injured woman from Kintail to Raigmore.
PRINCE ANDERSON HOLMES BONTHRONE
- 23 Compassionate lift from Lossie to Glasgow.
PRINCE ANDERSON HOLMES BONTHRONE
- 27 Canberra crash on Kinloss approach. One taken to Raigmore.
PRINCE BELL BODIAM PAYNE

Copters lift two climbers to safety

TWO people had to be airlifted from Scottish hills at the weekend.

A 27-year-old climber who was flown to Broadford Hospital, Skye, from the Coolins after a serious fall down a scree slope, was last night recovering after surgery at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Mr Winton Mairs, Rhodes Farm, Alva, Clackmannan, was found injured by Skye Mountain Rescue Team. He had apparently been hurt both by his fall and by rocks which he had dislodged and which struck him as he fell on Sgurr na Banachdich.

When brought down by the rescue team, it was suspected he had suffered a fractured pelvis. Shortly after his admission to Broadford's Dr MacKinnon Memorial Hospital, doctors decided he should be transferred to Raigmore for orthopaedic surgery.

Meanwhile, a student was airlifted from the Cairngorms yesterday after injuring an ankle.

Lisa Miller (19), from Kirkcaldy, was one of a party of 90 students from Moray House College, Edinburgh, climbing on Cairngorm.

She injured her ankle while she was on Coire Raideirt.

Her college instructor, Mr John Thayers (39), raised the alarm and a Sea King helicopter was scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth.

She was taken to Glenmore and then on to Aviemore, where she was treated by a local doctor. After treatment, she returned to the party's base at Glenmore Lodge.

Buckie trawl for cash

ORGANISERS of Buckie's annual Lifeboat Gala were today hoping to trawl in over £2000 to contribute to vital RNLI funds.

"We were delighted that 202 Squadron agreed to come and give a demonstration of how they rescue people from the sea," said Ian Rennie, chairman of the Buckie RNLI Committee and assistant

manager at the town's Bank of Scotland branch.

His wife Rosie is also very much involved in today's annual bash as she is a member of Buckie RNLI Womens Guild.

"And so that he didn't feel left out, our eighteen-year-old son, Kenneth, recently joined the boat as a crew member," added Ian.

AN RAF Lossiemouth helicopter

Baby Transferred To Edinburgh Hospital

AN RAF Lossiemouth helicopter transferred a 10-day-old baby from Wick to the Edinburgh Hospital for Sick Children. The aircraft flew to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, to uplift a doctor and incubator before flying on to Caithness, then Edinburgh.

Wick incubator baby 'stable'

THE 10-day-old baby girl who was airlifted in an incubator from Wick to Edinburgh's Sick Children's Hospital on Saturday was reported as "stable" last night but still very ill.

She was taken to Edinburgh by RAF helicopter.

SUMMARY FOR JULY, 1990

- 02 Search for owner of rucksack found floating down Spey. RTB when capsized canoeist called in safe. PRINCE LEIGH LARKE POUNTNEY
- 05 Search for missing diver in Scapa Flow. Found by surface craft dead. NAR
CAMPBELL PRINCE LITTLE BONTHRONE
- 08 Search for 3 missing walkers nr Loch Arkaig. Found safe and well, taken to road.
PRINCE GEAR LITTLE BONTHRONE
- 09 Medrescue of overdosed 4 yr old from Durness to Raigmore.
GEAR CAMPBELL LITTLE POUNTNEY
- 09 Search for missing 70 yr old walker in Cuillins. Man walked in safe.
GEAR CAMPBELL LITTLE POUNTNEY
- 14 Scrambled to fallen fisherman in Spey. Found body 250 yds downstream.
BELL LEIGH HOLMES BONTHRONE
- 15 Red flares seen off Mallaig. Search carried out with nil found.
CAMPBELL WILLSON HOLMES POUNTNEY
- 18 Scrambled to man seen drifting in Dinghy. Found safe ashore.
BELL ANDERSON BODIAM BONTHRONE
- 19 Injured walker in Ryvoan Pass. Lifted to ambulance at glenmore lodge.
PRINCE WILLSON LITTLE BURLINGHAM
- 22 Medevac transplant patient from Thurso to Aberdeen RI.
WILLSON PRINCE HOLMES BURLINGHAM
- 22 Report of aircraft ditching south of Montrose. Search carried out with nil found.
STROTHER ANDERSON LARKE POUNTNEY
- 25 Scrambled to report of man seen walking in water. Nothing found after Cruden Bay search.
STROTHER BELL LARKE POUNTNEY
- 28 Medrescue of casualty from MV Seamac to Dyce. Casualty dead prior to pick up.
STROTHER ANDERSON LARKE BONTHRONE
- 29 Medevac injured boy from Forres to ARI.
BELL PRINCE HOLMES AITKEN
- 31 Recovery of 350 lb American tourist with heat exhaustion from Loch Avon to Glenmore.
PRINCE LEIGH HOLMES AITKEN

Rescue men on summer alert

□ CAROL GRUGEON

SEARCH and rescue teams in Britain are preparing for a hectic mid-summer season.

The man in charge of the RAF's rescue facilities is urging holidaymakers to take more care before they head to the sea or the hills.

Air Vice-Marshal Jim Morris said yesterday: "The mid-summer holidays are easily the busiest time of the year for the RAF rescue co-ordination centres in Edinburgh and Plymouth.

"It means our helicopter crews, and those of the Royal Navy and HM Coastguard, who are there to look after military and civilian aircrew who may be in trouble, are being used frequently to assist people who get into difficulties at sea or in the hills.

"Lack of preparation, or plain thoughtlessness, could mean a rescue helicopter being committed to an avoidable incident when it might be needed for a major emergency.

"With the main school break now under way, I would urge parents of children to be careful when they are planning to tackle any outdoor activities. We want people to enjoy themselves, not end up as a search and rescue statistic."

The RAF's rescue co-ordination centre at Pitreavie have assisted more than 800 people so far this year, but they say they are busiest between April and September, when longer daylight and better weather bring more people out of doors.

They claim lack of preparation, poor or badly maintained equipment, ignorance of highly variable weather conditions and over-confidence are among the main factors which result in many outings ending in disaster or tragedy.

They appeal to people to seek professional advice before undertaking an outing in an unfamiliar area.

Air Vice-Marshal Morris said: "A couple of phone calls could be a simple insurance which would be very useful if things start to go wrong."

Angler swept to death after fall into Spey

□ ALASTAIR BISSET

AN ELDERLY angler was swept to his death after falling into the River Spey on Saturday night.

He was named by police yesterday as Mr John Caldecott (66), of Ramsbury, near Marlborough, Wiltshire.

He had been with a party who were fishing the Spey near

the Imperial Distillery at Carron around 9.30p.m. when he fell into the water and was swept downstream.

After the alarm was raised, a search of the area was carried out, and a Sea King rescue

helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was called in to help.

Two hours later, Mr Caldecott's body was found a short distance downstream by the helicopter crew.

Police said last night that there were no suspicious circumstances.

Woman survives peak plunge

A GLASGOW woman was recovering in hospital last night after a fall on Ben Nevis.

Mrs Sarah Dickson (43), Canborne Road, was reported missing on Saturday after failing to return from a solo walk.

A search was launched involving Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Leuchars.

Mrs Dickson was found with leg injuries and was airlifted to Belford Hospital, Fort-William, where she was said to be "comfortable".

Rescuers to the fore again

THE popular TV series Rescue, which was based on the work of the Search and Rescue Unit, 202 Squadron, RAF Lossiemouth, will feature as part of this year's Granite City Air Rally.

Members of the unit will talk about life behind the camera and how the series was made, at Kirkhill Lodge Hotel on Saturday August 3.

The rally is being staged that weekend at Dyce, with an expected entry of 60 light aircraft.

Boy safe after mercy flight

By RAYMOND SHEWAN

A FORRES boy was satisfactory today following a helicopter mercy dash from Kinloss to Aberdeen.

William Sutherland (14), Bynack Place, received a head injury after apparently falling off his bike in the Kinloss area.

He was taken to the town's Leachnail Hospital but later transferred by an RAF Sea King search-and-rescue helicopter to

Aberdeen Royal Infirmary after his condition deteriorated.

Police are trying to trace the person who took William to Leachnail Hospital and are also appealing for witnesses to the accident which happened about 9.45p.m.

Happy ending for SOS mission

A SEA King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was scrambled last night after a holidaymaker was thought to be in difficulty in a dinghy in Burghead Bay.

But Mr Peter Dobson was found safe on the beach at Roseisle.

Mr Dobson and his brother-in-law, Mr Ken Fitch, had beached their dinghy at Roseisle.

When the incoming tide lifted the dinghy and carried it along the beach the two men set off in pursuit.

Mr Dobson borrowed a small dinghy to paddle out to retrieve their boat. As he seemed to be getting into difficulties, Mr Fitch ran to Burghead and contacted the auxiliary coastguard.

However, when a helicopter arrived Mr Dobson was found to be safe and well. He was flown to Burghead.

A coastguard spokesman said: "The incident was not as serious as at first thought."

Meanwhile, a Fife family of four who were reported missing between Gigha and Oban on their 37ft yacht, Ailsa Ban, turned up safe and well yesterday.

Relatives, concerned when the Dunstaffnage-based vessel did not show up after a voyage from Northern Ireland, raised the alarm on Tuesday night.

But Oban Coastguard confirmed yesterday that the two adults and two children had stayed overnight at the Craobh Marina, 12 miles south of Oban, and had been in no danger.

Kidney woman's airlift to new life

A NORTH woman was undergoing surgery last night after an airlift gave her the chance of a new life.

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was scrambled on its medical mercy mission early yesterday.

It touched down in the High School playing fields at Thurso where it uplifted the woman and flew her to Aberdeen.

The patient from Caithness, who has not been named, underwent a kidney transplant operation in the renal unit at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

□ NEIL WATSON

A spokesman for Grampian Health Board said she was still in the theatre late last night and no condition report would be available until today.

No details were released on the donor who had been in the hospital for a few days, said the spokesman.

Patients from throughout Grampian and the Highlands and Islands go to the Aberdeen unit and the donor rate has increased

since the first kidney-transplant operation at the infirmary in 1975.

In Caithness, fund-raisers collected £10,000 in five years for a kidney machine.

Their original plan was to pay for a kidney machine which would be installed at Caithness General Hospital, Wick, but the fund-raising committee were told two years ago this would not be feasible.

Instead, the money paid for a dialysis caravan for holidaymakers and the balance provided "luxury" equipment and help not available on the Health Service.

A Christmas cracker in the summer sunshine

CHRISTMAS came early for a group of Speyside youngsters when Santa — complete with fur-trimmed cloak and snowy-white beard — paid a rare summer visit to Craigellachie.

In sweltering heat Santa, alias barman Gary Webster, dropped in on the Craigellachie Hotel to meet enthusiastic local children.

They had been quick off the mark in writing letters with requests for festive presents, which included personal stereos, doll's prams and dictionaries. Taking no chances with the British postal system, the youngsters asked the crew of a Sea King

helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth to pick up their sack of mail and deliver it to Santa's home in Lapland.

As Father Christmas put in a personal appearance, a helicopter winchman was lowered into the hotel grounds to collect the postbag.

Satisfied that their letters were safely on their way to the frozen North, the children turned their attention to other important festive preparations by helping Santa and hotel staff mix Christmas puddings.

The tasty treats have been set aside in a safe place, allowing the flavour to develop, until Christmas when they will be served to guests at the Craigellachie Hotel.



Santa witnesses the arrival in Craigellachie of a Sea King helicopter to collect the children's letters addressed to Lapland.

NS Photo

Survey ship man dies

A CREWMAN from a North Sea survey ship has died after collapsing on board the vessel 40 miles north-east of Peterhead on Saturday afternoon.

The man was transferred from the Kommander Michael to the barge Semac I, which has a medic and hospital facilities, then taken by a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth to Aberdeen.

However, he was found to be dead on arrival. The man, who has not been named by police, is believed to be from the North of England.

Forres airlift boy gets better

FORRES boy William Sutherland (14), who was airlifted to hospital in Aberdeen by an RAF Sea King helicopter on Sunday night, was satisfactory yesterday.

William, Bynack Place, was taken to Leachcoil Hospital with a head injury after apparently falling off his bike in the Kinloss area.

The Lossiemouth Sea King took him to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary after his condition deteriorated.

Police are trying to trace the person who took William to Leachcoil Hospital and are also appealing for witnesses to the 9.45p.m. accident.

Anyone with information should contact police at Forres or their nearest police station.

SUMMARY FOR AUGUST, 1990

- 04 Search for 2 missing walkers in Cairngorms. Found and directed Mrt to position.
CAMPBELL PRINCE HOLMES AITKEN
- 05 Medevac injured person from Raigmore to Edinburgh RI.
CAMPBELL PRINCE HOLMES AITKEN
- 07 Recovery of fisherman with broken leg on Findhorn to Raigmore.
BELL ANDERSON LITTLE BURLINGHAM
- 10 Search for 65 yr old on Black Isle coastal walk. Found safe, asleep with bottle.
WILLSON CAMPBELL BODIAM POUNTNEY
- 12 Windsurfers in trouble off Cromarty bridge. NAR as safe ashore.
BELL CAMPBELL HOLMES BONTIRONE
- 18 Search for missing french walker in Cape Wrath area. Stornoway helo brought in to help and walker found.
WILLSON LEIGH HOLMES BURLINGHAM
- 19 Red flares sighted off Cruden bay. Search carried out and nil found.
WILLSON LEIGH HOLMES BURLINGHAM
- 20 Medevac of injured parachutist from Raigmore to Glasgow airport.
BELL LEIGH HOLMES AITKEN
- 20 Recovery of injured walker from Ben Nevis to Fort William.
BELL LEIGH HOLMES AITKEN
- 21 Medrescue of female with broken arm from Cairngorms to Raigmore.
WILLSON ANDERSON BODIAM BONTIRONE
- 22 Medrescue of fisherman from FV 'Juachrene' to Aberdeen RI.
BELL POLLOCK WARD BURLINGHAM
- 24 Missing walker in Cairngorms. Found at Sinclair hut. Taken to Glenmore Lodge.
GEAR CAMPBELL HOLMES AITKEN
- 25 Missing pleasure cruiser en route to Cromarty. Boat found underway. NAR.
BELL SCOTT HOLMES AITKEN
- 26 Sarsat hits near Aberdeen. Narrowed down to South of airfield. Nil found.
WILLSON POLLOCK WARD BURLINGHAM

- 27 Scrambled to report of fire on rig 'Ocean Bounty'. Found under control with NAR.
GEAR HARRIS BODIAM POUNTNEY
- 28 Scrambled to sinking pleasure cruiser in Loch Sunart. Crew picked up by Tobemory lifeboat.
GEAR HARRIS BODIAM POUNTNEY
- 30 Medevac of injured man from Elgin to Aberdeen RI.
WILLSON POLLOCK HOLMES AITKEN
- 31 Search for missing woman and child at Durness. Stood down when turned up safe in Thurso.
PRINCE HARRIS BODIAM POUNTNEY

Fisherman rescued after gully fall

AN ANGLER cheated death on Tuesday after falling 30ft down a gully in the middle reaches of the River Findhorn when the path he was on gave way. The accident happened at about 5pm near Ardclach Farm, Ferness, off the Granton to Nairn road.

The man lay at the site for almost an hour before being spotted by a Spanish woman who alerted the emergency services.

An ambulance crew from Nairn attended the scene and, although they were able to reach the man, they were unable to lift him up the steep sides of the wide gully.

He was rescued by an RAF Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth, whose crew were able to winch him up on a stretcher and transfer him to the waiting ambulance.

The angler was taken to Raigmore Hospital Inverness and was believed to be suffering from a fractured leg.

He had not been named by yesterday and no condition report was available.

Sea King scrambled in oil-rig fire scare

A FIRE alarm aboard a North Sea oil rig in the Moray Firth sparked a full-scale alert yesterday and resulted in an RAF Sea King helicopter being scrambled from Lossiemouth.

But yesterday afternoon personnel on the Odeco-owned 'Ocean Bounty' were still trying to identify the cause of alert, which sent the majority of the rig's crew of 58 to muster.

The rig, working for Sovereign Oil and Gas, was on alert for more than an hour before the crew were stood down.

The alarm was tripped at 10.07a.m. when smoke was spotted coming from a duct. One theory is that the smoke may have come from work being carried out on the rig's heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system, although this could not be verified, according to Sovereign.

A company spokesman said he was puzzled that the Sea King had arrived, because there was no need for any outside assistance and no alert had been put out from the Ocean Bounty.

The scramble was triggered by a call from Air Traffic Control at Dyce to Aberdeen Coastguard, following notification from Bond Helicopters that a routine crew-change flight to the Ocean Bounty had been delayed.

A Coastguard spokesman said the rig's installation manager had been contacted to see if help was required.

Alert but overdue yacht is traced

A YACHT due in Aberdeen at the weekend was yesterday reported to be three miles off the coast of Blyth.

A spokesman for Aberdeen Coastguard said he had received a message from his colleagues at Tyne-Tees and all passengers on the Alexander Louise were safe and well.

Aberdeen Coastguard were alerted when the wife of a crew member phoned them saying the yacht was overdue on a passage from Esbjerg in Denmark to Aberdeen.

In a separate incident the Coastguard spokesman said nothing was found following three reports of red flares in the Cruden Bay to Newburgh area on Saturday night.

An extensive search was mounted involving Coastguard personnel, Peterhead lifeboat and a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

Angler escapes in 30ft. gorge plunge

□ STEVE STEWART

AN ANGLER had a lucky escape yesterday when he fell 30ft. down a gorge along the middle reaches of the River Findhorn after the path he was walking along gave way.

The incident happened at around 5p.m. in an isolated area near Ardlach Farm, Ferness, just off the Grantown-Nairn road.

The man lay helpless for nearly an hour with a fractured leg, before a Spanish woman spotted him and alerted the emergency services.

An ambulance spokesman said: "If he had knocked himself out he would have drowned. He fell off the path on to some rocks. If he had rolled into the water he could have been killed."

An ambulance from Inverness was sent to the scene, but was unable to reach the man.

The RAF rescue co-ordination centre at Pitreavie were alerted and a Sea King helicopter was scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth at around 7.30p.m.

Mr Barry Butcher (32), Levrattich, Ardlach, who saw the rescue, said: "It is quite a nasty part of the river. The ambulance went down, but couldn't get him out because of the road."

The Sea King managed to winch the man up on a stretcher and transfer him to the ambulance at around 8.30p.m.

Mr Butcher, a former RAF aero-engine technician, said the rescue was an impressive operation. "It was really quite difficult, because there were a lot of power lines around."

"They had to fly in backwards to get the winchman down to pick the guy up. It was a textbook rescue."

The angler, who has not been named, was taken to Raigmor Hospital, Inverness. No condition report was available last night.

Helen's helicopter debut ends in a ducking

DAVID MURRAY

□ KAREN GRANT



■ A Sea King winchman lifts Mrs Helen Boyd from the sea to the safety of the helicopter. Inset — Mrs Boyd before the mission.

THE ambition of Inverness woman Mrs Helen Boyd has always been to fly in a helicopter — but never did she imagine that her dream would end up as it did.

In an effort to raise cash for the "Reach for the Sky" appeal, Mrs Boyd (40), 72 Drakies Avenue, a secretary at the WRVS, Raigmor, agreed to do a sponsored search-and-rescue exercise with the Sea King crew of 202 Squadron D flight at RAF Lossiemouth.

This involved Helen, the wife of commanding officer of 30 Group Royal Observer Corps Mr George Boyd, being flown from Lossiemouth to Nairn Harbour — then being lowered on to a dingy in the Moray Firth.

She was then "abandoned" for a short time and later winched aboard the helicopter, which ensured her safe return to the RAF base, Lossiemouth.

"I was very surprised by myself," she said. "I thought that I would be really nervous and forget to enjoy the event, but I was remarkably calm."

"I have always wanted to fly and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I think the 202 Squadron helicopter personnel helped to make me feel safe."

Helen's husband came up with the idea and could not think of anyone more appropriate for the stunt.

The search-and-rescue exercise was one of a series of nationwide events taking place this year — the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain — in an attempt to raise £20million for the RAF Benevolent Fund.

Already the 30 Group ROC, who are also celebrating their 50th birthday, have raised £1500 and they hope to increase the figure by at least £1000 through Helen's success.

Cruiser trio wade ashore

A COASTAL search was mounted for a Nairn cabin cruiser, The Christina, on Saturday evening after she was reported overdue with three people on board.

A spokesman for Aberdeen Coastguard, who co-ordinated the search, said the vessel was located five miles offshore by a search-and-rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth making her way back to port under auxiliary power.

He said the three occupants — Mr James Hendry (70), Mr Robert Prosser (30) and Brian Prosser (5), all Nairn — waded ashore after the vessel grounded in shallow water.

The Christina was towed back to harbour later.

Witnesses answer appeal

A POLICE appeal which followed an accident in the Kinloss area on July 29 in which a 14-year-old Forres cyclist was injured has met with success.

Academy pupil William Sutherland, 27 Bynack Place, was taken to Leachhill Hospital, Forres, with head injuries after being found by a passer-by. When his condition began to deteriorate, medical staff decided to call in a 202 Sqn. Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth and airlifted him from Mosses Park to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

The prompt response by witnesses to the appeal has helped establish that William fell from his bike and struck his head after his bike collided with a kerb. No other vehicle was involved. He left hospital last week and is making a good recovery.

Airlift man comfortable

AN ARRBROATH fisherman was comfortable today in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary after being flown to hospital suffering from severe stomach pains and spitting blood.

A helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth winched the man from the Aberdeen registered Jasirene 125 miles east of Aberdeen.

Copter airlifts sick crewman

A CREWMAN from an Aberdeen-registered fishing boat was airlifted to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary yesterday afternoon after suffering stomach pains.

The Jasirene was 110 miles east of Aberdeen at the time and a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth took the man ashore.

SUMMARY FOR SEPTEMBER, 1990

- 01 Medevac of heart attack victim from Isle of Skye to Raigmore.
GEAR ANDERSON BRODIE BURLINGHAM
- 01 Search for 70 yr old lady in Braemar area. Nothing Found.
WILLSON POLLOCK HOLMES AITKEN
- 07 Recovery of fallen walker in Cuillins. Taken to Broadford (AppDead).
CAMPBELL POLLOCK SPAIN BURLINGHAM
- 10 Medevac of poorly baby from Raigmore to Aberdeen RI.
ANDERSON WILLSON HOLMES DODSWORTH
- 12 Recovery of fallen climber in Cuillins. Taken to Glenbrittle (AppDead).
BELL ANDERSON LARKE DODSWORTH
- 13 Medevac of serious RTA victim from Elgin to Aberdeen RI.
GEAR LLOYD HOLMES BURLINGHAM
- 13 Medevac of premature baby from Wick to Aberdeen RI.
GEAR LLOYD HOLMES BURLINGHAM
- 18 Scrambled to assist 2 fisherman cut off by rising river. Wx abort.
PRINCE STROOKMAN BODIAM BONTHORNE
- 19 Medrescue of man with stomach pains from Flotta to Kirkwall.
BELL POLLOCK SPAIN BURLINGHAM
- 24 Search for missing party in Glen Shiel area. Found safe and well.
ANDERSON LLOYD BODIAM BURLINGHAM

Copter transfers crash victim



■ The scene after yesterday's accident near Lhanbryde.

A96 closed for two hours

AN ABERDEEN man was flown by helicopter to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary yesterday after being cut free from the mangled wreckage of a car which had been involved in a collision with two lorries on the A96 near Lhanbryde.

Alexander Smith (21), unemployed, 25 Byron Crescent, was first taken to Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin, with head and leg injuries, but was later flown by a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth to Aberdeen.

He is understood to be in a serious condition.

Mr Smith was a passenger in an Astra car driven by Mr Graham McKenzie, 2 Lintmill Place, Aberdeen, which was involved in the collision on the Sheriffston stretch of road about half-a-mile west of Lhanbryde shortly after 10a.m.

Mr McKenzie was also taken to Dr Gray's Hospital, but left after receiving treatment for cuts to his face and arms.

Elgin firemen were called to the scene of the crash and had to use cutting equipment to free Mr Smith.

The A96 road was closed for two hours following the collision. Traffic was diverted to minor roads.

The two lorry drivers involved — Mr William Duguid (32), 80 Knockie Road, Turf, and Mr Hamish Stewart (35), 27 South Covea Terrace, Lossiemouth — were unhurt.

A DERBYSHIRE couple taken to safety after being marooned all night by a spate-swollen Highland river have sent a "substantial" donation to their rescuers.

The volunteers of the East Sutherland Rescue Association, who crew an in-shore lifeboat in the Dornoch Firth, were called out by police along with auxiliary coastguards to rescue Mr Ian Scarr Hall (52) and his wife, Ruth, when bad weather forced an RAF helicopter to give up.

The scene was 30 miles inland, on the River Cassley in Sutherland, about two weeks ago. The waters suddenly erupted

□ JAMES HENDERSON

in spate after the couple, from Ardoch, Thorpe, Ashbourne, had crossed over to fish for salmon. When they had not returned for dinner to the Achness Hotel, Rosehall, the alarm was raised.

In high winds and lashing rain, they were stranded on the far bank in gathering darkness. An RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth located them with its searchlight in the early hours of the morning, but high winds and the risk of the downdraught blowing the couple into the river forced the airborne rescuers to give up.

Rescuers at library

THE sight of yellow Sea King helicopters is common ground Moray and the work of RAF Lossiemouth, those in distress, is well known.

Recently, the knowledge of their operations has been improved through watching "Rescue", the television programme, and also by reading the book of the same title by Paul Beaver.

Moray District Libraries is offering an opportunity to get even closer to the work of these airmen.

On Wednesday September 19, a slide show, talk and demonstration of equipment will take place in Elgin Library at 8pm.

Admission is free.

Search and rescue show

THE search and rescue role of RAF Lossiemouth's Sea King helicopters will be the subject of an open evening to be held in Grant Lodge library, Elgin, on Wednesday, September 19.

Members of No. 202 Squadron will be on hand to present a slide-show and demonstration of equipment.

Admission to the lecture, which begins at 8p.m., is free.

SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER, 1990

- 02 Medevac of 3 RTA victims from Buckie to Aberdeen RI.
ANDERSON LEIGH BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 03 Medevac of RTA victim from Elgin to Aberdeen RI.
CAMPBELL WILLSON LARKE BONTHTHONE
- 04 Medevac of man with ruptured Aorta from Raigmore to Edinburgh RI.
GEAR HODGSON HOLMES AITKEN
- 05 Medevac of baby and mother from Broadford to Aberdeen RI.
WILLSON LLOYD LARKE BURLINGHAM
- 10 Search for possible suicide victim near Cruden Bay. Nothing found.
CAMPBELL ANDERSON BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 10 Continuation of above Search. Nothing found.
LLOYD POLLOCK HOLMES POUNTNEY

Elgin boy serious but stable

AN ELGIN boy was serious but stable yesterday after receiving a fractured skull when he was knocked down by a bus on Wednesday night.

Matthew Kelly (13), Lossiemouth Road, was walking with three friends on the Elgin-Lossiemouth road, near Myreside Road.

He was taken to Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin, before being transferred to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary by a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

No one else was injured.

Injured boy flown to ARI

A 13-YEAR-OLD Elgin boy was taken by helicopter to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary last night, after being knocked down by a bus and seriously injured on the Elgin-Lossiemouth road.

The accident happened shortly before 8p.m., near Myreside Farm, Elgin, as the boy was walking with three friends towards the town.

He was taken to Dr Gray's Hospital then transferred to Aberdeen by an RAF Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth.

Police said no one else was injured in the accident. They were not releasing the boy's name meantime.

Flare mystery

A full-scale search was mounted in the Moray Firth late last night after reports of distress flares being seen off Nairn.

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was joined by the Invergordon lifeboat, but the search was called off when it became clear none of the vessels in the area was in difficulty.

"It is all a bit of a mystery," said a coastguard spokesman. "We have not been able to find where the flares came from."

Nothing found

A SEARCH of the Nairn area of the Moray Firth, sparked by reports of red flares, was called off early yesterday after nothing was found.

Nairn auxiliary Coastguards, Invergordon lifeboat and a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth were involved.

Crewman comfortable

A CREWMAN was comfortable in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary today after being airlifted by an RAF helicopter after a suspected heart attack on the standby at Grampian Falcon about 100 miles east of Aberdeen.

- 11 Search for missing fisherman on River Spey. Nothing found.
PRINCE CAMPBELL BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 12 Search for missing walker in Cuillins. Found safe and wet.
PRINCE CAMPBELL BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 14 Search for missing divers in Cullen area. All found safe and placed ashore.
GEAR HODGSON LARKE POUNTNEY
- 21 Medevac of 2 yr old overdose victim from Thurso to Raigmore.
LLOYD POLLOCK HOLMES AITKEN
- 23 Search for 2 missing climbers on Skye. Found un injured.
ANDERSON GEAR BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 23 Red flares seen off Nairn. Nothing found.
LLOYD GEAR LARKE BONTHTHONE
- 28 Medevac man from Dr Gray's to Aberdeen RI.
GEAR POLLOCK BODIAM POUNTNEY

SUMMARY FOR NOVEMBER, 1990

- 03 Rescue of cragfast climber on Ben Nevis. Taken to Fort William.
HODGSON CAMPBELL LITTLE AITKEN
- 07 Search for missing walkers on Ben Nevis. Climbers reported safe on arrival.
GEAR POLLOCK BODIAM POUNTNEY
- 09 Positioned at Benbecula for long range FV RV. RV not viables and R 137 RTB.
PRINCE POLLOCK BODIAM POUNTNEY
- 11 Scrambled as top cover for F4 with engine failure. Landed safely at Lossie.
ANDERSON WILLSON BODIAM BONTHTHRONE
- 12 Search for 77 yr old man near Mintlaw. Found safe whilst 137 en route.
WRIGHT HODGSON BODIAM BURLINGHAM
- 14 Diverted to provide top cover for F4 with difficulties. F4 landed Lossiemouth.
WRIGHT ANDERSON BODIAM BONTHTHRONE
- 18 Medevac of man from Kinloss area to Aberdeen RI.
WILLSON POLLOCK LARKE BONTHTHRONE
- 26 Medevac of patient from Raigmore to Aberdeen RI.
PRINCE ANDERSON WATSON BURLINGHAM

Climber rescued after nine-hour mountain ordeal

A YOUNG climber was rescued from Britain's highest mountain yesterday after spending nine hours trapped on a narrow ledge. Mr Timothy Walker (20), Spring Valley Gardens, Morningside, Edinburgh, was rescued by eight mountain rescue team members after his ordeal on Ben Nevis.

He became stuck on the 294ft. ledge, 3000ft. up the 4408ft. mountain, on Saturday afternoon and it was not until hours later that he was spotted by four other climbers who raised the alarm.

Members of the Lochaber rescue team were alerted and a helicopter was scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth.

The helicopter failed to reach Mr Walker and returned to Fort William and took eight members of the rescue team close to the ridge.

With the temperature on the mountain well below freezing, Mr Walker, a technical engineer, was finally rescued, cold but unhurt.

Rescued climber tells of escape

A CLIMBER spoke today of his amazing escape after being trapped for nine hours on a tiny ledge 3000ft up Britain's highest mountain.

Ferranti worker Timothy Walker (20), of Edinburgh, became trapped after getting into difficulties on Ben Nevis.

Mr Walker, a technical engineer at Ferranti's Crewe Toll plant, was scaling the Eno Terrace route on Saturday afternoon when he ran into problems on the mountain's Tower Ridge.

He admitted he was not carrying vital equipment for the type of climb he had attempted.

"There was not a lot of room to move and I couldn't do anything but wait. The cold didn't bother me too much because I had plenty of clothing with me."

Hours after becoming trapped, four climbers saw him clinging to the ridge and raised the alarm.

The Lochaber mountain rescue team was alerted and a helicopter scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth. It dropped eight members of the rescue team close to the ridge.

Mr Walker, who has been climbing for four years, apologised to the emergency services for the trouble he had caused and vowed not to make the same mistake again.

He said: "I would like to thank the rescue team, helicopter crew and police for their help."

"I can't afford this to happen every week."

Helicopter winchman is thrown a line by the man with the red book

ONE of RAF Lossiemouth's Sea King rescue helicopter heroes who, with his colleagues, has helped to save hundreds of lives over the years, was last night threatening — jocularly — to "kill somebody".

For veteran winchman Bob Pountney was watched by millions of TV viewers as he was lowered on to a Moray coast beach for what he had been told was a routine pick-up of a cliff-fall victim.

Then the camera zoomed in as Bob (46) was told: "This is Your Life" — by programme host and temporary "casualty" Michael Aspel.

"You are joking — I will kill somebody," said Bob before he was flown back to RAF Lossiemouth, where the famous red book was opened.

It was not only a tribute to Bob, but also to the RAF search-and-rescue crews who are on permanent standby around Britain's shores.

Lossiemouth is the busiest of the rescue bases.

There was the inevitable reference to the Piper Alpha disaster — which saw Bob being winched down several times to pick up badly-burned survivors.

There was the part he played in the rescue of the six-man crew of the Peterhead fishing vessel Budding Rose only minutes before she sank in heavy seas 120 miles north-east of the Buchan port — with the youngest crew member, Justin Thomas (15), making his first trip to sea, telling viewers: "I will never forget the feeling



Bob Pountney ... has saved hundreds

ALASTAIR BISSET

when Bob winched me off the vessel."

Bob's remark before he had strapped the youngster into the rescue harness had been: "There is no way I would do what you do for a living."

Reference was also made to Bob's part in saving the life of baby Sam.

It was 18 months ago when one of the Lossiemouth helicopters had to fly, in atrocious weather, to Orkney to pick up six-month-old Sam Marcus, who had breathing difficulties and who had already been taken by boat from Sanday. His only hope of survival was to get to Aberdeen.

Due to thick fog, the Sea King had to land on an Orkney field — and Bob had to flag down and commandeer a car to get to Kirkwall hospital to collect the baby.

With a doctor and nurse in the Sea King, Bob helped in the fight to keep the baby alive until the helicopter arrived in Aberdeen.

Last night, baby Sam — now two and accompanied by his mum, Gillian — walked on in front of the cameras to bring tears to the eyes of even a veteran like Bob Pountney.

Relaxing at his home after watching and taping the show, Liverpool-born Bob said: "I am just glad my mum, who is very poorly in hospital down South, was able to see it."

His commanding officer, Flt-Lt. Tony Greer, said: "It was a pleasure to see Bob honoured in this way. It was a fitting tribute to a man who is devoted to his job."

Airman flown to hospital

A RAF aircrew officer was airlifted by an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter from the Mosset Park in Forres on Sunday morning.

The 28-year-old flight lieutenant was transferred from Leanehill Hospital to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, where his condition, on Monday was said to be "satisfactory".

SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER, 1990

- 04 Search for SARSAT hit 125 nm to the NE. Nothing found.
HODGSON PRINCE LARKE POUNTNEY
- 09 Medevac of man from near Lochinver to Raigmore.
LLOYD ANDERSON LITTLE BARNES
- 11 Search for missing walker in Cairngorms. Spotted by crew and lifted to Glenmore.
PRINCE HODGSON LITTLE BARNES
- 11 Search for origin of 243 and 121.5 hits. Localised to Aberdeen Harbour. RTB.
PRINCE HODGSON LITTLE BARNES
- 12 Scrambled to evacuate Rig Glomar Artic 3. Diverted en route to capsized FV Premier which sank on scene. Nil found.
GEAR WILLSON GRIFFIN BONTHEONE
- 12 Seconds scramble to search for above 9 missing fishermen. Nil found.
HODGSON PRINCE LITTLE BARNES
- 16 Search for 65 yr old missing man in Glencoe. Found whilst en route.
ANDERSON LLOYD HOLMES AITKEN
- 16 Recovery of injured skier from Choire Chais ski area. Taken to Raigmore.
CAMPBELL POLLOCK BODIAM POUNTNEY
- 17 Scrambled to burning boat off Nairn. 2 persons lifted to Nairn.
LLOYD ANDERSON GRIFFIN AITKEN
- 22 Recovery of injured sailor from MV Cam Jaguar to Aberdeen RI.
SCOTT GEAR GRIFFIN BARNES
- 22 Airlift of 2 Comp A persons from Edinburgh and brought back to Elgin.
SCOTT GEAR GRIFFIN BARNES
- 26 Assisted Mrt reach fallen climber in Coire Bhrochain. R134 continued rescue.
LLOYD HODGSON HOLMES BARNES
- 27 Medevac of Heart Attack victim from Forbes to Aberdeen RI.
HODGSON ANDERSON LITTLE AITKEN
- 27 Local search for missing boat offshore. Nothing found R138 RTB.
LLOYD POLLOCK HOLMES BARNES

- 29 Attempt to recover female with large loss of blood from Rhum. Weather abort.
HODGSON LLOYD GRIFFIN BARNES
- 31 Medevac of 2 RTA victims from Fort William to Glasgow Southern General.
LLOYD CAMPBELL GRIFFIN BARNES

How Harry Secombe was bait to lure helicopter winchman into a TV trap

HAVE you ever wondered how the "victims" of the "This Is Your Life" television series always manage to be taken completely by surprise when host Michael Aspel produces that famous red book?

Last week's episode featured RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter winchman Bob Pountney who, during the course of his career, has helped to save hundreds of lives.

The programme was not only a tribute to "veteran" Bob—who, at the ripe old age of 46, has been around the

rescue scene longer than most—but to all the aircrew and ground crews of the RAF's mercy mission teams.

But back to how Bob was "conned".

"I had been told by the lads that we were going to pick up Harry Secombe, who had been up North recording one of his 'Highway' programmes," said Bob. "They said that he wanted to come and visit us on the station."

"Having been a great fan of the 'Goon Show' in my younger days, I was delighted at the prospect of meeting him.

"When we arrived at the beach and saw this figure huddled up at the foot of the cliffs, I presumed that it was Harry having a bit of a joke.

"Even when I went up to him, after having been winched down from the helicopter, I was still totally convinced that it was Harry Secombe I was going to meet—until Michael Aspel rolled over and produced the red book."

Bob assures me his subsequent comments did not have to be edited out of the programme!

Airlift for injured skier

A SEA KING helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth yesterday flew an injured skier from the Cairngorms to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

The man was recovered by the Chairlift Co. ski patrol and taken to the Coire Cas ski tow to await the helicopter. He is understood to have received broken bones and head injuries in a fall.

Earlier, an RAF helicopter was scrambled when a hillwalker was reported overdue in Glen Etive. The man later walked off the hill safe and well.

Mum-to-be flown to Aberdeen

A PREGNANT woman was last night airlifted from Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin, to the helipad at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary by a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

It is understood that the woman, who was taken to Aberdeen Maternity Hospital, had gone into labour three months prematurely.

Rescue P+S 31 DEC 90 delayed by blizzards

HELICOPTERS, a lifeboat and a fleet of road vehicles battled against blizzards to bring a badly-injured woman to hospital yesterday.

The six-hour drama began on Saturday night in Rhum, when Mrs Rosemary Neil, wife of the island's estate foreman, gashed her wrist when she fell through a window.

There is no doctor in Rhum, so Nature Conservancy Council chief warden Mr Chris Eatough and nurse Mrs Elaine Wilkinson gave first-aid while liaising by phone with a doctor at Mallaig.

When it became clear hospital treatment was required, Rescue Command Centre at RAF Pitreavie were alerted and an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter was scrambled.

But in the Great Glen it met a "solid wall of snow" and was forced to turn back.

Pitreavie then sent Stornoway Coastguard's Bristow's Sea King to approach from the north-west.

For more than two hours, it tried in conditions of almost zero visibility to reach the island, but seven miles out, it too was forced to abandon the rescue attempt.

Still in atrocious conditions, and with icing and lack of radar vision a major problem, the aircraft was also unable to land at Mallaig.

A coastguard spokesman at Stornoway said: "The wind wasn't so much the problem, but the aircraft encountered banks of very heavy snow."

□ NEIL MACPHAIL

"The snow also caused a return image on the radar which meant it was virtually useless. I understand the trip was quite hairy."

Mallaig lifeboat then took over the rescue mission and brought Mrs Neil to Mallaig, arriving about 4a.m. Helicopter evacuation was recommended but, as the weather had not improved, it was decided to risk the drifts on the A830.

By this time, police, ambulance and Highland Regional Council were involved.

The ambulance left Mallaig with a coastguard Land-Rover escort, while a police four-wheel-drive vehicle led by a snowplough set out from Fort William to meet them.

A spokesman for Oban Coastguard, who had been co-ordinating the operation, said: "Despite the road conditions, Mrs Neil was in Belford Hospital about 5a.m."

Yesterday, her husband, Barry, at home looking after their daughter, Vaia (3), was full of praise for all involved in the rescue.

"It was great the way everybody rallied together to help out."

He said his wife was bringing in coal when she tripped and put her hand through the window. Last night she was "comfortable" in Belford Hospital.

PRESS AND TELEGRAPH 31 DEC 90

A CLIMBER who cheated death when he was swept nearly 300ft. in an avalanche on one of Scotland's highest mountains was recovering in hospital last night.

The accident happened at about 2p.m. on Christmas Day, as two climbers from Derby were walking around 1000ft. apart at Coire Bhorochain, on Braerach, in the Cairngorms. Insurance agent Mr David Wharton (27) was caught in the avalanche and stranded on the mountainside for nearly 24 hours before being picked up.

Climbing companion Mr Brian Ottewell (42) found Mr Wharton lying in the snow after being swept 300ft.

He put him in a sleeping bag, dug a snowhole and left him with a supply of food before battling against blizzard conditions to get help.

Mr Ottewell struggled down the Lang Ghru mountain pass in darkness, through weather conditions described by the RAF as "horrendous", before

□ STEVE STEWART

reaching Braemar at 7.30a.m. yesterday to raise the alarm.

Search-and-rescue helicopters from RAF Leuchars and RAF Lossiemouth were scrambled to conduct an air search of the area.

Mountain-rescue teams from Braemar and Aberdeen co-ordinated the rescue on the ground. They were assisted by four members of an RAF Mountain Rescue Team from Wales, who were staying at Newtonmore, and airlifted in by helicopter.

They found Mr Wharton just after midday, 3500ft. up the 4248ft. mountain, which lies on the border between Inverness-shire and Aberdeenshire.

The helicopter pilots were hampered in their rescue by a cloud base of 2500ft. and blizzard conditions. They worked a shuttle system, dropping teams of four as far up the mountain as possible.

Rescue co-ordinator Constable Graham Gibb — leader of Grampian Police and Braemar Mountain Rescue Teams — said: "It took close on two hours to get to a place the helicopter could get him from. The weather closed in behind the helicopter immediately. We just made it by two minutes."

He praised quick-thinking Mr Ottewell's part in the rescue. "If it wasn't for that, his companion would have been dead. It's due to his forethought that he survived the night."

But he criticised the climbers for being out on the hills after a category-four warning of avalanche risk had been issued on Christmas Day, predicting snow showers and strong southerly winds.

"They were a bit naive and a bit inexperienced. Anyone who knows the Scottish mountains, knows they are prone to avalanches. New snow on an old, firm base is always dangerous."

And he added: "A large number of climbers are coming up from the South. The problem is that there is not the same level of awareness down there."

The injured climber was carried on a stretcher for more than a mile through knee-deep snow by mountain-rescue personnel, before being transferred to a Wessex helicopter.

Mr Wharton, 68 Brooke Street, Loscoe, Derbyshire, was taken by helicopter to Dundee Royal Infirmary, with a fractured pelvis and fractured jaw. Last night, he was described as "satisfactory".

Father and son rescued as explosions sink boat

□ DARRY MACKAY

A FATHER and son were snatched to safety by helicopter yesterday less than an hour before their luxury cabin cruiser sank in flames two miles off Nairn.

Mr Michael Jacobs (47), and his son Blair (20), both of Willowvale, Tradespark Road, Nairn, had only seconds to escape to their inflatable dinghy.

They were only 100ft. away from their cruiser, Rubicon, when she exploded and was engulfed in flames from bow to stern.

The boat's VHF radio was destroyed, and it was only by luck that the men were able to throw aboard the dinghy a portable telephone with which they contacted the rescue services.

They were soon picked up by a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth, which was

diverted from a training flight to rescue them.

Mr Michael Jacobs, a former general manager of the Nontox waste-disposal firm at Dalross, now working as an environmental consultant, and his son, an operations officer with Dan-Air at Inverness Airport, had left Nairn about 9a.m. to sail the 35ft. cruiser to Inverkeithing on the Firth of Forth for an overhaul.

About half-an-hour out from the town's harbour, they spotted smoke coming from a hatch. When they looked in, they found the engine space alight.

Mr Michael Jacobs said: "There were flames everywhere around the engine and I knew the fuel, along with two-stroke mix for the outboard engine, was stored alongside."

"We immediately ran to get the rubber dinghy off the cabin roof, untie it at the stern, and jump in."

"Then, as we tried to push off, to our horror we realised that a rope from the dinghy had become entangled at the bow of the cruiser."

"We had a moment of sheer panic as we fought to loosen it, and eventually managed to get ourselves clear."

Mr Jacobs said: "We were about 100ft. away from her when there was a huge explosion. All the windows were blown out and there was a giant plume of flames."

"This was followed by another couple of explosions which left her burning along her full length."

Mr Jacobs said: "There was no chance to make a mayday call on the boat's VHF, but, luckily, I had the presence of mind to grab my portable telephone before jumping into the dinghy."

The RAF helicopter winched the two men aboard and they were taken to the Links at Nairn. A police car then drove them to the Town and County Hospital, Nairn, for examination.

JANUARY 1991

01 Medevac RTA victim from Fort William to Raigmore
WILLSON ANDERSON HOLMES BONTHTHONE

03 Search for missing civil light a/c. Found by Lossie ATC
landed safely at Dalcross
WILLSON POLLOCK LITTLE BONTHTHONE

07 1st light search for missing walker Ben Atow.
Relieved by R138, missing walker, member of Kintail
MRT walked in

127 WILLSON CAMPBELL GRIFFIN BRAGG

138 HODGSON POLLOCK LITTLE AITKEN

08 Fisherman with eye injury from Fort Fortunia to ARI
CAMPBELL LLOYD HOLMES BRAGG

09 Search Dunnet Head for missing 70 year old, nil found
CAMPBELL LLOYD HOLMES BRAGG

09 Walker with leg injuries Cairngorms to Raigmore
ANDERSON POLLOCK HOLMES BARNES

20 Search for two missing climbers Ben Nevis, found safe
by MRT

GEAR CAMPBELL BODIAM AITKEN

21 Medevac premature baby from Wick to Raigmore
HODGSON ANDERSON GRIFFIN BARNES

23 60 yr old lady with broken femur Lochnagar to Dundee
ANDERSON HODGSON GRIFFIN GODLEY DUNGATE

27 Faller with multiple injuries in Cairngorms, taken to
Aberdeen airport due fog
CLEMENTS HODGSON LITTLE GODLEY

28 Search for 82 yr old hillwalker, nil found
WILLSON GEAR HOLMES BARNES

28 Medevac premature baby +1 other patient from Wick
to Raigmore
WILLSON GEAR HOLMES BARNES

31 2 fallen climbers in Glencoe found with leg injuries
taken to Ft William
ANDERSON WILLSON HOLMES BARNES

JANUARY 1991

Rescue man caught out on Ben Atow

KINTAIL Mountain Rescue Team stalwart Mr Joe Quinn (45) found out what it was like to be on the receiving end of a rescue operation — after being tracked down by members of his own team yesterday.

He had spent a cold Sunday night on Ben Atow, in the Kintail area, after the weather clamped down.

A search was launched at first light after he was reported overdue.

Members of the Kintail team — joined by volunteers from Skye Mountain Rescue Team, a police search-and-rescue dog from Inverness and an RAF rescue helicopter from Lossiemouth — scoured the hill for Mr Quinn, Invernet, Kintail.

A second helicopter, from RAF Kinloss, was scrambled at 11.30a.m. after searchers failed

□ ANDREW JARVIE

to find any trace of Mr Quinn. It carried members of the Kinloss team to join the operation.

Rescuers found Mr Quinn safe and well by mid-afternoon.

Yesterday, the seven-year veteran of the rescue team and their former leader told of his night on Ben Atow.

"I was about three-quarters of the way from the top when, suddenly, the most incredible wind blew up out of nowhere," he said.

"It must have been gusting at around 70-80m.p.h. and was knocking me to the ground every five minutes. I have never known a wind so strong. It was churning up the snow so much that visibility was almost zero."

"I knew I had to get off the



■ Mr Joe Quinn, safe after his night on Ben Atow.

hill as quickly as possible and had two routes planned, but the wind automatically cut off one of these. And, when I saw the other, I decided the slope held too great an avalanche risk."

In the end, Mr Quinn was forced to go with the wind, a journey which meant walking 12 miles farther from his starting point.

"Eventually, I made it to

sheltered glens," he said. "I decided to head for the Glen Affric youth hostel, a section of which is left open in winter as a bothy."

After a short rest, he set off to walk to Cluny to phone his family and tell them he was OK — a journey of six miles.

But night had fallen and conditions were against him. After two hours of walking through waist-deep snow, Mr Quinn had travelled only a mile.

"I knew there was no way I would be able to make Cluny, so I dug in for the night," he said.

"Next day, the wind had dropped and I was able to walk out and reach safety with little more damage than two very sore feet — and a red face when I found out three rescue teams and two helicopters had been out looking for me."

Avalanche man in lucky escape

□ NEIL MACPHAIL

A CLIMBER escaped death and serious injury when tons of snow swept him 400ft. down a Highland mountainside.

Marketing manager Mr Andrew Lazenby (26) was buried for about 20 minutes in the avalanche which struck Coire Ardair on Saturday afternoon.

But after being dug out by his companion and other mountaineers, he was able to walk the six miles off the hill.

Mr Lazenby, West Hampstead, London, was climbing up Easy Gully on Creag Meagaidh near Laggan with another Londoner, Mr Robin Duncan, when the avalanche was triggered by a larger climbing party making their way down.

After Mr Lazenby was freed, it was thought he was badly hurt and could not move. Help was summoned and Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and an RAF rescue helicopter were called out.

When it was realised he was suffering only severe cramp and was able to walk out unaided to Aberarder, the rescue operation was stood down.

Kingussie policeman Sgt. George MacDonald

said yesterday: "Mr Lazenby was very lucky indeed to be able to walk away after a 400ft. tumble like that."

"At first it was reported he was seriously injured, but it transpired he had only cramp or something like that and he got mobile again."

Mr Mick Tighe, of Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team, said there were not many who survive a 400ft. avalanche without injury.

Yesterday, the avalanche risk for Creag Meagaidh was reported as "high", particularly on north to east-facing slopes and gullies, as south-west winds and rain produced a thaw.

The avalanche-risk category for the Lochaber area today is low, with forecasted colder conditions stabilising the existing snowpack.

● Two climbers stranded on Ben Nevis overnight were found safe and well yesterday afternoon. The alarm was raised when Mr Steven Coney, Sinclair Court, Birmingham, and Mr John Keska, Judes Road, Wolverhampton, were overdue from a climb late on Saturday.

Hillwalkers found safe and well

THREE Montrose hillwalkers were found safe and well yesterday morning after an all-night search for them in the Corrie Fee area of Glen Doll, north of Kirkcubright.

Tayside Police search-and-rescue unit and a civilian rescue team took part in the search, but as darkness fell they had to call it off until dawn.

An RAF helicopter from Leuchars was then scrambled, but as it arrived at the scene the three men were found. Police said the men became

disorientated as darkness fell, but they had sensibly dug themselves a snow-hole on the hillside.

The three were offshore worker Mr Hugh Bell (33), 5 Loanhead Cottages, cook Mr Gordon Milne (38), 4 Hill Road, both Hillside, and nursing assistant Mr Graham Simpson (20), c/o Sunnyside Hospital staff residence, Montrose.

A police spokesman said last night the men were none the worse for their night on the hills.

Man missing

A DOUBLE helicopter search was underway this morning for a man missing overnight on a mountain.

Kintail Mountain Rescue Team were out at first light on Ben Atow in their search for the man, who is believed to be a former leader of the same rescue team.

A RAF Lossiemouth helicopter joined in the search and was later joined by a second helicopter with members of the Kinloss Mountain Rescue Team.

Climber airlifted

A WELSHMAN was airlifted to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, after a summer of climbing in the Cairngorms on Saturday.

An RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth was scrambled after Mrs Geroline Westrup, Gwynedd, North Wales, fell near the Snitter Stone beside Loch Aon, breaking her leg.

A spokesman for Raigmore Hospital said Mrs Westrup left hospital yesterday.

Four dead, two are injured on Scots mountains

Inverness
man is
victim

PLS 285-091

□ MIKE BEAUMONT

FOUR MEN died and two others were injured in a weekend of disaster on Scotland's mountains.

● Miner Mr James Hunter (20), Alva, Clackmannan, fell 500ft. to his death during a Saturday ski outing with three friends on the slopes of the Cairngorm's Coirena Ciste.

He is said to have slipped and, unable to get his grip, slid into a gulley and crashed on to rocks.

A doctor on the slopes rushed to help, but was unable to resuscitate him.

● Bristol solicitor Mr David Davies (31), slipped and fell to his death as he descended from the north-east ridge of the 3708ft. Ben Lui, near the village of Tyndrum on the border of Perthshire and Argyll.

● Later the same day, Tayside Police search and rescue team were called out to hunt for Perth climber Mr Stuart Walker Adam (17), who fell 300ft. down Winter Corrie, Glen Cova.

An RAF helicopter from Leuchars joined the search, and the badly-injured youth was flown to Dundee's Ninewells Hospital, where doctors were unable to save his life.

● And yesterday afternoon a 27-year old mountaineer died of his injuries after losing his footing during a solo ice-face attempt at Corrie an t-Sneachda on Cairn Gorm and falling 200ft.

Mr Mike Durham Selwood (27), a medical registrar at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, died in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Ironically, he was stretchered out by an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter scrambled by the Kinloss Mountain Rescue Team to help an experienced mountaineer who tripped and fell 10ft. during a training course on the same mountain, injuring his knees.

Six miles from the rendezvous point, the aircraft was diverted to pick up the fatally-injured man.

● English teacher Mr Leslie Anderson (36), had a miraculous escape from death after he fell 200ft. down a corrie on Lochnagar on Saturday.

Mr Anderson, Huddfield, Cheshire, was climbing with friends when the snow gave way.

His fellow climbers raised the alarm, and a Leuchars helicopter was sent out to take him to Dundee, where he was treated for scratches and bruises to his ankle and ribs.

Flt-Sgt. David Whalley, in charge of the Kinloss Mountain Rescue Centre, said last night: "This has been a terrible weekend. Hundreds of people have been out on the mountains because the weather has been so good."

"But the snow has been very, very hard, and has made it difficult for climbers to get a proper grip."



WINCHING DEMO' FEATURING F.S. DAVE AITKEN
(PHOTO: 'SCOTLAND ON SUNDAY')

Climbers rescued in mountain drama

► RAYMOND SHEWAN

TWO men — one of them injured — were plucked off a Glencoe mountain by an RAF helicopter early today.

The alarm was raised after Alan Thompson (51), of Ballachulish, and 22-year-old Calum McLennan, from Glenachulish, failed to return from a climb on Stob Coire nam Beith in Glencoe.

Glencoe mountain rescue team located the men and directed a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth to the area.

Mr Thompson was found to have leg injuries sustained in a 15ft fall.

Both were winched aboard the helicopter at around 4.30am and flown to Belford Hospital at Fort William.

Mr McLennan was released after a check-up but doctors were considering this morning whether to transfer Mr Thompson to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, for further treatment.

Rescue man rescued after 12-hour ordeal on narrow ledge

□ KEN JONES

A LEADING member of a mountain rescue team found himself on the wrong side of a mercy mission yesterday — and had to be airlifted off a ledge.

Mr Alan Thompson (51), a member of the Glencoe team for 16 years, and his climbing colleague, Mr Callum MacLennan (22), were plucked to safety by an RAF helicopter after their 12-hour ordeal.

Among one of the first to greet Mr Thompson was his son Malcolm (24), a member of the rescue team, who had earlier twice scoured the area for his father.

"It was an enlightening experience," said Alan, who was last night detained in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, with leg injuries. "It gave us an insight into what people go through."

The drama began while Alan — the "Press and Journal's" correspondent in the Glencoe area — and Callum were climbing in the Stob Coire nam Beith area.

As the two surmounted the last stage of a 1200ft climb on Wednesday, one of Mr Thompson's crampons skidded and his ice axe came free, causing him to fall back 15ft.

When the crampon then embedded itself in the ice, he turned, breaking his right ankle and left leg.

Mr Thompson, an award-

winning photographer, said: "Callum lowered me to his level and as I tried to get across to him, about 10ft away, I realised I had done something serious."

The two eventually took refuge on a 5ft ledge above a 1000ft drop but, despite their shouts, whistling and torchlight flashes, it was 3.30am yesterday before help arrived.

Their flashing light was seen by Glencoe team leader Mr Hamish MacInnes, who alerted the rescue squad and an RAF helicopter.

"The chopper flew just 12ft from the cliff face to winch us off — the pilot and the winchman were just brilliant," said Alan.

The two were taken to Belford Hospital, Fort William, for treatment, but Mr Thompson was later transferred to hospital in Inverness. It was his first accident in 20 years of climbing.

Apart from the excruciating pain, we sat and talked about things we don't normally get a chance to, and sang," said Mr Thompson, who lives at Ballachulish Bridge.

Callum, who is a ski technician, recently joined the rescue team's reserve squad. "It was a bit embarrassing but we will have to live with it," he said.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

ROTOR TORQUE!

Gnomer how many times you ask people if they have any news to put in the Lighthouse something is always missed out. Last month I forgot to mention the fact that Pete Shaw (the small but perfectly formed oily tick) was leaving, posted back to Finningley to become the rotor tune man. Finally, after a year of gnomadic travelling he is at last co-habiting with his wife. On a similar note Flying Officer (ex-Sgt) Steve Griffin has returned to the flight after his 5 month frontal lobotomy (brain removal) operation at Cranwell, he is now staying with us until he takes over as rearcrew leader at one of our other flights. Our deputy flight commander Pete Bell has grounded himself due to a short span of attention caused by signal problems, we always thought that he was just sleeping, anyway he now has an excuse for dozeiness until he has his nose rebored (a fund has been set up to pay for plastic surgery, all contributions gratefully received).

Now, what else have we done this month? Yet again NO JOBS. It really is becoming money for old rope this rescue business, but we sit here ever hopeful. The dreaded Trappers visit was actually quite a pleasant affair and they have now headed back to south of the border to write reports and make recommendations.

A visiting camera crew took some footage for a film to be called 50 Years of The Royal Air Force. The only member of the flight old enough to remember the early days of dope, string and stiff white scarves was Flt/Lt John Prince, also a veteran of 'RESCUE', so it was straight back to film-star mode: make-up, lights, sound, and action. . . . However,

super-star of the month award has to go to Winchman Bob Pountney who after a delay of a week to show 'This is Your Life Steven Hendry' (the boy isn't old enough to have had any life and what time he has had has been mis-spent in snooker halls) had his past spread before us all by Michael Aspel.

The oily ticks have been kept busy with rogue fuel pump problems and more recently a crack was found by the NDT (non-destructive testing) inspector so now we have an aircraft u/s until a repair team come up for a major rebuild of the gearbox mounting frame. A second standby aircraft will probably come up for the festive season so GEF will have even less room in our shared hangar with three Sea Kings in there.

Finally and on a more serious note while everyone was enjoying the filming of This is Your Life the squadron duty crew were scrambled to a road traffic accident at Buckle where 2 people were killed and 4 seriously injured. With the festive season upon us and all the beer calls and section parties make sure you aren't going to be part of the job we're waiting for, you smashed into pieces strapped into one of our stretchers on the way to ARI isn't what I want to be looking at this Christmas. Now that this is done I will have to get back to writing cards to everyone who has kindly sent us one, so from all of us on the two hundred and second;

and all the best for 1991
D SCRIBE

So desperate for a job, 202 were on scene even before the first of this year's Cairngorm lemmings made an impact!



FEBRUARY 91

SUMMARY FOR FEB 91

03 ASSYNT MRT Leader killed in avalanche on CEANA
BRAIGH taken to Raigmore

PRINCE POLLOCK BODIAM BONTHRONE GUEST (DOC)

03 Two missing walkers in CREAG MEAGOIDH,wx abort
Found dead by Lochaber MRT

PRINCE POLLOCK BODIAM BONTHRONE

03 Search for missing 9 yr old boy at Peterhead
nil found

PRINCE POLLOCK BODIAM BONTHRONE SMITH (OBS)

04 Continued above search,boy found safe before
arriving on scene

CAMPBELL GEAR GRIFFIN AITKEN

09 First light search for missing person at Loch
Leven,found safe by ground party

WILLSON LEIGH GRIFFIN BARNES

11 Search for missing 60 yr old lady walker at
Loch Laggan,found walking out

BELL POLLOCK BODIAM BARNES

11 Scrambled to assist evacuation of TATAN ALPHA
platform,held on THAROS until rig secure

ANDERSON CAMPBELL HOLMES AITKEN

12 First light search at AN TEALLACH for missing
walker,found safe

ANDERSON CAMPBELL HOLMES AITKEN

14 Fallen climber BEINN SGRITHEALL ,area searched
nil found.Night stop Plockton,casualty found 1km
south of original datum

LLOYD POLLOCK LITTLE BONTHRONE

16 Kinloss MRT member with broken ankle lifted
from LIATHACH and taken to Raigmore
HODGSON LEIGH LITTLE BONTHRONE

18 MedevacRTA victim from Wick to Raigmore
HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM BONTHRONE MACHIN (DOC)

18 Medevac man with broken leg and arm from Thurso
to Raigmore

HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM BONTHRONE

21 Lifted sick seaman from CAM RETREIVER,refuelled
on BRAE BRAVO,taken to Aberdeen RI

CAMPBELL LARKE WILLSON BURLINGHAM

21 3 fallen climbers CREAG MEAGOIDH ,1 dead 2 injured
taken to Raigmore

CAMPBELL WILLSON LARKE BURLINGHAM

23 Medevac 2 patients from Raigmore to Aberdeen RI

ANDERSON GEAR LARKE BURLINGHAM

23 Fallen female climber on MAOL SHEAN DEARG with
head injuries,taken to Raigmore

ANDERSON GEAR LARKE BURLINGHAM

23 Medevac 1 WRAP from Lossiemouth to Aberdeen RI

ANDERSON GEAR LARKE BURLINGHAM

24 Search on BEN NEVIS for missing walker on "Tourist
path",found dead in SURGEONS GULLY,taken to FT William

ANDERSON GEAR LARKE BURLINGHAM

26 Search for missing boat between Lossiemouth and
Tarbet Ness,found by 137 and crew recovered by Buckie
lifeboat

MORRISON POLLOCK LITTLE BARNES

27 Search for missing person on river Findhorn,nil found

ANDERSON GEAR HOLMES BONTHRONE

28 Continued above search,man found in "Little Chef"
Diverted during search for Jaguar with fuel problem
Landed safely

WILLSON CAMPBELL LITTLE BARNES

Mountain death toll worsens

Climber killed in ice-face tragedy

ONE OF Scotland's most experienced climbers has died in another weekend of tragedy in the mountains.

Rescue team leader Mr Phil Jones' ice-face fall brought the number of deaths to seven in less than a fortnight — and police confirmed another man was still missing last night.

Mr Jones (42), was demonstrating ice-descent techniques during a weekend exercise with his squad — the Asynt Mountain Rescue Team — when he plunged off a crag on the 3000ft Seana Bhragh, on the borders of Sutherland and Ross-shire in Strath Mulzie.

Paramedics flown to the mountain by an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter were unable to save Mr Jones.

Mr Jones, Hillside, Strathairn, Lochinver, leaves a widow and two teenage children.

In 1988 he received a leadership commendation for his part in a televised rescue at the Old Man of Stoer, filmed as part of the highly-acclaimed ITV series *Rescue*.

Another climber who fell 500ft down rocks and snow on

WEATHER

Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty, Western Isles, Inverness-shire, Central Highlands, Dundee, Moray Firth: Windy, with rain and snow in morning. Dry and bright in Dundee.

Full forecast — Page 2

● LATE last night the bodies of two climbers were found in Craig Menghaidh, near Newtonmore, after a search by Lochaber Mountain Rescue team.

Friday has died in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Off-duty Aberdeen policeman, Det Sgt Kenny Lawson, watched as Leeds man Mr Rennie Croft (38) plummeted down the slopes at Lochnagar on Friday.

Mr Lawson instantly alerted rescue squads on his emergency radio.

TV researcher Mr Croft was on board an RAF Leuchars helicopter within five minutes of the accident, but doctors were unable to save his life.

Bleak Glencoe claimed another victim yesterday as three separate helicopter rescue operations were mounted to save people trapped by the freezing conditions.

The dead man — who has not been named — was believed to have been swept away by an avalanche. His body was taken to Fort-William where a post mortem examination will be held.

Another avalanche nearby hit a climber, who was later rescued by a Wessex helicopter from Prestwick, which flew him to Fort-William's Belford Hospital.

He was later named as Mr James Caughie, 58 Gardiner Street, Glasgow.

● Last weekend four men died and two others were injured in a series of accidents on the frozen mountain slopes.

The dead included medical registrar Mr Mike Selwood (27), who lost his footing during a solo ice-face climb on Cairn Gorm, and 17-year-old Perth climber, Mr Stuart Adam, who fell 300ft down Winter Corrie, Glen Cova.



■ Together again — Mum Carol and nine-year-old Jamie, who spent yesterday sleeping off the effects of his sub-zero ordeal in the open air.

Rescued boy safe back home after sub-zero ordeal

A NINE-YEAR-OLD Peterhead boy was at home yesterday sleeping off the effects of spending a night in the open in sub-zero temperatures.

Jamie O'Brien, 36 Maiden Street, sparked one of the biggest searches of the Buchan coastline in recent years on Sunday night, when he failed to return home from a picnic with his two brothers and a friend.

He was found shivering but well, sleeping on the banks of River Ugie, not far from the new Birnie Bridge, shortly after 8am yesterday. After a visit to the doctor, he was allowed home where he slept for most of the day.

Last night, his parents, John and Carol, thanked all those involved in the search, who included an RAF helicopter crew from Lossiemouth, the police, coastguard, personnel from RAF Buchan and numerous local volunteers.

Mrs O'Brien (36), who also spent the night looking for her son, said she was glad the ordeal was over.

"It was really terrible. Everything goes through your mind. Now I am shattered, but so grateful he was found."

"It's amazing how everyone rallies round at such a time. We can never thank them enough," she said.

A pupil at Peterhead Central School, Jamie had gone to an area known as the Pirates' Graveyard, north of Peterhead, with his brother, Martin (16), and some friends.

On the way home the boys split into two groups. Jamie, who had been crossing the golf course, twisted his leg and collapsed from exhaustion.

Mrs O'Brien said Jamie had heard the helicopter and spotted three policemen nearby during the night. "He shouted but they did not hear him," she said.

Boy survives freezing night in open



ROBERT McALLISTER
Chief reporter

QUOTE

■ Now I am shattered but very happy and we are so grateful to everyone who helped. It's amazing how everyone rallies round at such a time — we can never thank them enough.

— Jamie's mother, Mrs Carol O'Brien

known as The Pirates' Graveyard north of Peterhead.

On the way home the boys split into two groups. Jamie, who had been crossing the town's golf course, had tried to reach the other group at Craigewan Beach.

But on the way he twisted his leg and collapsed from exhaustion.

Mr O'Brien, who was out most of the night searching for the youngster, said rescuers must have been within yards of Jamie but had missed him.

Jamie, who was allowed home after a visit to the doctor, said he had heard a helicopter and seen a group of policemen.

He had shouted but his voice

was weak and they couldn't hear him.

He said he had pulled his coat over his head and had been able to fall asleep despite having no shelter.

Mrs O'Brien said the night had been an awful experience. "It was really terrible. Everything goes through your mind. I thought if he was there they would have found him — and I was almost certain he wasn't going to be there," she said.

"Now I am shattered, but very happy, and we are so grateful to everyone who helped. It's amazing how everyone rallies round at such a time. We can never thank them enough."

SNOWFALLS, accompanied by continued bitterly-cold temperatures, are expected over most of the North and North-east today, but the resulting cover should be generally fairly light.

Further south, however, there is a risk of longer and heavier falls and the Met Office warned last night that disruption to transport might be fairly widespread.

The present combination of sub-zero temperatures and biting north-easterly winds could make conditions very hazardous and the public were advised to keep a check on weather forecasts and warnings on radio and TV.

A Met official in Aberdeen warned the weather could worsen tomorrow when a trough of very cold air approached from the Continent. This could produce more significant falls of snow.

Yesterday an Aberdeen University student was airlifted by RAF helicopter to Dundee Royal Infirmary after breaking a leg when he lost his

footing and slid down a steep ice slope on Lochnagar.

Andrew Taylor (20), from York, was descending the slope with another Aberdeen University student, Samuel Benson (20), from Briery Hill, Dudley, when the accident happened shortly after 2pm.

The pair had completed a snow-and-ice climb on the north-east corrie.

Police said Mr Taylor slid about 50 feet before stopping himself with his ice-axe, but as a result of catching a crampon in the ice during the fall, he received a severe fracture to a leg.

The Braemar and Grampian Police mountain rescue teams were called out and an RAF Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth was scrambled.

During the rescue, the temperature had been very cold, with quite heavy snow showers making it difficult to get to the accident area.

Unwelcome intruders make it a hazardous anniversary for the Search and Rescue men of 202 squadron. Andy Malone spent 24 hours with one crew

IAN RUTHERFORD

Sea King crews join the jet set

"JESUS, they're all over us." The change in pitch of Flying Officer Chris Leigh's voice is as unexpected as the the Buccaneer jet streaking across the front of the Sea King helicopter.

"I've got visual, a Hawk I think, coming in fast 300 metres below the port side." Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell, 30, bespectacled and amiable beneath the black visor on his helmet, remains calm, assessing the route and speed of another potentially hazardous airspace intruder.

This is not a pooled dispatch from the Gulf; this is D flight 202 Squadron, RAF Lossiemouth, plus its 10-ton Sea King, carrying out one of many training sorties needed to keep skills as sharp as one of the rotor blades holding them above the mountains.

Leigh, Campbell, and Dave Aitken and Ted Little ... the SAR crew. Search and Rescue, *Semper Vigilante* — Always Vigilant. This week is the official 50th anniversary since its inception, the helicopter incorporated after its invention.

The vigilance last Thursday was enforced and unwelcome. Increased low-flying training over the north east by fighter crews preparing for the Gulf war brings another day, another hazard. The fighters take off from RAF Kinloss 10 miles away, the Sea Kings take off from Lossiemouth. Both runways face each other.

The tempo of the crews' messages through the on-board radio gains an upbeat excitability in such circumstances. Normally, as the crew scampers out of its Nissan hut on some 100 serious incidents each year, the mood is measured — more horn-rimmed spectacles in style than aviator shades.

"We have all trained in jets. I got chopped at the final stage. The RAF stream us into jobs that suit the different aircrew. Aggressive, flash, and more arrogant for fighter pilots; calmer,

more thoughtful and reliable for SAR crew," says Campbell.

During 24 hours last week — sharing their small quarters a rotor length away from the hangar that houses the two Sea Kings kept on 15 minute standby — the good-humour turns to introspection only when the talk turns to the tragedies they have dealt with.

Last Wednesday, the crew was scrambled at 0300 hours to fly to Glencoe and pick up a climber with broken legs. The log book records the rescue as simply: "Alert from Pitreavie. Proceeded to the location. Climber lifted by winchman. Airlifted to Fort William. RTB [return to base]."

Such records neatly logged daily in the captain's handwriting hold different memories for those involved.

Campbell: "I remember a guy we had to evacuate to hospital. He was in a mess. We couldn't carry out a transfusion. We had to try to flush bags of blood into open wounds to try to keep him alive. He was dead on arrival."

Little: "It's the little kids that make me mad. Parents take them up the hillsides without proper clothing. We had one little girl with just shorts on, shivering and shaking. She had hypothermia. You want to hit someone."

Aitken: "Dangling from the cable with a 3,000ft drop below as we attempted to lift somebody in the middle of the night from a ledge on the Ben (Ben Nevis). I'm scared of heights. I wouldn't look down from the top of St Paul's Cathedral."

Leigh: "Flying blind in darkness, being backed in against a cliff. You are meant to keep the rotors 15ft away from the cliff face. We were down to six feet, the wind bucking the plane."

The ground crew are also on call round the clock. "We're all just people doing a job, nothing special, despite all the rubbish that's written about SAR," said one engineer of the air crew-ground crew relationship.



Coastwatch: Winchman Dave Aitken scours the coast near Lossiemouth on a training sortie by the RAF's search and rescue service

SUMMARY FOR MARCH 91

02 2 avalanched climbers from COIRE AN-T-SNEACHDA to Raigmore

PRINCE WILLSON LITTLE BARNES

02 1 person with back injury from Cairngorm car park to Raigmore

PRINCE WILLSON LITTLE BARNES

02 Scrambled to assist Leuchars MRT with search MRT found missing person safe and well, NAR.

PRINCE WILLSON LITTLE BARNES

03 Search for missing persons at Lochnagar relieved by 138

PRINCE WILLSON LITTLE BARNES

03 138 not required for above search as missing person already recovered.

LLOYD POLLOCK LARKE BONTHRONE

03 Deployed MRT on Ben Nevis to recover injured climber, casualty taken to Raigmore.

LLOYD POLLOCK LARKE BONTHRONE

05 Ferry ST ROGNVALD disabled by large wave 4 crew lifted by 137 while vessel steamed in circles, winchman assisted R117 to recover 10 crew once steering recovered

WILLSON PRINCE LITTLE BARNES

14 Scrambled to assist Glencoe MRT, while briefing with MRT missing person walked out.

LLOYD POLLOCK LITTLE BARNES

16 Search at LOCHNAGAR for 2 overdue climbers Weather prevented helicopter search.

BELL POLLOCK LITTLE BARNES

17 Scrambled to assist Mayday aircraft inbound to Dalcross, landed safely.

PRINCE GEAR BODIAM AITKEN TRETHEWEY

21 Skier with broken legat lurchers gully taken with friend to Raigmore.

BELL LLOYD HOLMES BRAGG

22 Injured seaman from CAM GENET 70 nm East of Aberdeen, taken to ARI.

PRINCE ANDERSON BODIAM AITKEN

24 Medevac two babies in incubators from Wick to Raigmore.

ANDERSON POLLOCK BODIAM AITKEN

25 Medevac 11yr old boy with suspected Meningitis from Wick to Raigmore.

HODGSON LEIGH LARKE BURLINGHAM

26 Fallen climber in CUILLINS lifted and taken to Broadford, DOA.

ANDERSON POLLOCK HOLMES TRETHEWEY

27 Scrambled to oil rig BRAE BRAVO with gas leak, NAR.

GEAR POLLOCK BODIAM TRETHEWEY

28 Fallen climber at SPIDEAN MIALACH with leg injury, taken to Raigmore

GEAR POLLOCK BODIAM TRETHEWEY

29 Fallen climber at CREAG MEAGOIDH lifted and taken to Raigmore

WILLSON LEIGH LARKE BARNES

29 Fallen climber BEN ALDER, Cairngorm MRT deployed to recover casualty due to bad weather Casualty taken to Raigmore

WILLSON LEIGH LARKE BARNES

31 Jetskier in difficulty off Nairn, found safe ashore.

WILLSON LEIGH HOLMES BURLINGHAM

31 Medevac 68yr old man with head injuries from Raigmore to ARI.

WILLSON LEIGH HOLMES BURLINGHAM

Elderly walker spotted by RAF

AN ELDERLY hillwalker was found safe and well early yesterday after spending a night on a remote Highland hillside.

Mrs Janet Fabian, Clermiston Road North, Edinburgh, who is in her 60s, was spotted by the crew of an RAF helicopter near Moy Lodge at Loch Laggan, Badenoch.

She had become separated from her three companions while walking in the Geal Charn area on the Ardrerikie Estate on Sunday.

They reported her missing at 9pm on Sunday, when weather conditions were frosty.

A large-scale search of the area was launched by Cairngorm and RAF Kinloss mountain rescue teams, aided by dogs, police and civilians.

The search was resumed at first light yesterday and Mrs Fabian was found in mid-morning.

A police spokesman at Aviemore said: "Mrs Fabian was fairly well-equipped and had taken shelter during the dark."

"When she was picked up she was shaken, but in good spirits. Anyone who is benighted on the hills at this time of the year is very lucky to escape injury."

Mrs Fabian was treated by a doctor at Laggan before rejoining her companions.

Hunt for pensioner lost in the hills

E/E 11 FEB 91

► RAYMOND SHEWAN

A FULL-SCALE search was continuing in Badenoch today for an elderly woman missing overnight in the mountains.

Search teams were out all night in sub-zero conditions after the woman — believed to be in her 60s — became separated from a party of hillwalkers.

The search, involving the Cairngorm and Kinloss mountain rescue teams and police with tracker dogs, got under way at midnight.

It was being concentrated on a remote area between Loch Laggan and Ben Alder.

The alarm was raised around 9pm by the woman's three companions. She went missing as they were descending the 3036ft Geal Charn.

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was called in at first light. Overnight conditions were said to have been very cold, with a severe frost.

Kingussie police said the woman, understood to be an experienced hillwalker from the Edinburgh area, was reasonably well equipped.

Two students escaped with only minor injuries after falling more than 300 ft in separate incidents at the weekend.

Oilmen airlifted after gas leak on rig

A GAS leak on a North Sea platform forced the helicopter evacuation of more than 100 oil workers to Aberdeen last night.

The evacuation from the 29,000-tonne Texaco-operated Tartan Alpha platform was described as a "controlled down-manning" followed by discovery of a gas leak in an export riser pipe at 3.35pm.

Recently-installed topside emergency shutdown valves operated on cue and in-field aircraft were mobilised.

The Sumburgh-based Coastguard S-61N helicopter and an RAF Sea King from Lossiemouth were scrambled as a precaution and a Nimrod reconnaissance aircraft was also called in.

The evacuation of 112 non-essential personnel appears to have been a copybook operation, helped by light southerly winds and good visibility.

The men were first flown off Tartan Alpha to the nearby semi-submersible rigs Borgny Dolphin and Treasure Seeker. They were then transferred to other helicopters for the 120-mile flight to Aberdeen.

Neither of the emergency services helicopters was needed.

Texaco said 50 people were left on the platform to carry out repairs to the export riser, but it was unable to say when production might resume.

According to a company spokesman, the shutdown of Tartan Alpha also forced Amerada Hess and Occidental UK to suspend output from associated installations.

Amerada Hess transports gas from its AH001 platform to Tartan Alpha and then into the Frigg gas export system, while Tartan Alpha oil is pumped to Occidental's Claymore platform and then to Flotta, Orkney.

Mountain toll: 1 dead, 3 hurt

A JOINT services mountain-ecuring expedition ended in tragedy on Saturday when one of the team of five, a Naval warrant officer from Dunfermline, fell to his death in Glencoe.

Marine engineer David Hall (40), serving aboard HMS Intrepid based at Portsmouth, was traversing a snow gully on Buchaille Etive Mor when he slipped and fell 400ft down the gully, receiving fatal injuries.

An RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth was called out and attended but Mr Hall was already dead.

This is the third climbing fatality in Glencoe this year.

Three further accidents occurred in the Glencoe area on Sunday afternoon, with a

further incident in the Lochaber area on Sunday night.

Police at Fort William were unable to give much detail of the casualties due to the unprecedented pressure of mountain-rescue incidents.

Shortly after noon, Mr Stephen John White (41), 12 Witt Road, Fair Oak, Eastleigh, Hampshire, was up lifted from Stob Coire nan Beith by RAF helicopter to the Belford Hospital, Fort William, suffering from a fractured ankle and leg.

Later, a male member of a party of four ice climbing at Stob Coire nan Lochan was

recovered from the mountain suffering from a fractured left femur after falling 60 ft.

A girl climber was also rescued by helicopter from Stob Coire nan Beith, believed to be suffering from minor injuries, and also taken to the Belford Hospital.

Late last night police at Fort William were undertaking a further search in yet another incident.

● RESCUE workers from Courmayeur, Italy, found the bodies of seven people, including a two-year-old child, killed by an avalanche near Mont Blanc yesterday. Police said they held out little hope for another 10 people feared buried.

Climber in mountain snowstorm rescue

► MARTIN TREACHER

A WOMAN climber who lay injured in a snowstorm on 3194ft Ben Sgritheall last night was rescued during the early hours today.

Jennifer Nichols (31), of Muiriston Road, Edinburgh, was found by a 15-man Glenelg mountain rescue team following a six-hour search.

She was airlifted to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, and discharged this morning.

Miss Nichols had fallen about 100 metres from the summit of the Wester Ross Munro yesterday afternoon, suffering severe bruising.

Her male companion set off down the mountain and at 5pm arrived exhausted at the home of Glenelg mountain rescue leader Willie Mackenzie.

An RAF Lossiemouth helicopter took three members of the mountain team close to the summit at around 6pm.

Two hours later a 10-man team from Kintail mountain rescue unit were also airlifted into the storm to join the search.

At 9pm the Glenelg trio made a radio plea for more help. Two further members of the Glenelg team joined the hunt and Miss Nichols was eventually found and taken off the mountain by stretcher.

Search mounted for injured climber

TWO West Highland mountain-rescue teams were searching around the summit of 3194ft Ben Sgritheall in a snowstorm late last night for an injured woman climber.

An RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth was standing by at Plockton after airlifting four members of the Glenelg mountain-rescue team close to the summit at 6pm.

Two hours later, a 10-man team from Kintail mountain-rescue unit were also airlifted in darkness to join the search.

Then, at 9pm, they made a radio request to team secretary Mr Brian Lane to call out the remainder of the squad.

"It was a very cryptic message," said Mr Lane. "They said they were having difficulty locating the injured woman."

The injured woman's male companion set off down the Glenelg side of the mountain and arrived exhausted just before 5pm at the home of Glenelg mountain-rescue team leader Willie Mackenzie.

He turned out three team-mates after taking down location details from the climber.

The Lossiemouth helicopter flew the team close to the spot described by the man, but the woman was not located.

Police understand the woman is unlikely to be able to make her own descent because her fall had resulted in her sustaining a severe hip or thigh injury.

RAF man dies in 400ft fall

New Glencoe tragedy

A SERVICEMAN became the twelfth person to die in the Scottish mountains in less than a month after falling 400ft in Glencoe.

And three other climbers were injured in separate incidents within a few miles of Saturday's fatal accident.

The dead man was marine engineer David Hall (40), who was part of a five-strong joint services expedition tackling Buachaille Etive Mor.

He slipped as he was traversing a snow gully.

A rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was called out but Mr Hall, a warrant officer serving aboard HMS Intrepid at Portsmouth, was found to be dead.

A helicopter from RAF Leuchars was involved in three rescues in the same area yesterday afternoon.



► **RAYMOND SHEWAN**

Hampshire man Stephen White (42) was airlifted to Belford Hospital at Fort William with a broken ankle and leg after a 15ft fall on Stob Coire nam Belth.

On Stob Coire nan Lochan, sales rep Ian Gallagher (27), from Cumbria, broke a leg after falling 60ft and was also flown to hospital in Fort William.

And later in the afternoon the helicopter returned to Stob Coire nam Belth after 30-year-old archaeologist Catriona Appleby, of Linlithgow, suffered a leg injury after stumbling.

Mountains claim 13th victim

A TEENAGE climber has been swept more than 1000ft to his death in the Scottish mountains.

But a companion escaped with only a broken leg as the pair were hit by a huge avalanche on 3700ft Creag Meagaidh in Badenoch.

The dead man — the 13th person to die in climbing accidents in the Highlands in the past month — was John Turner (19), of Redditch, Worcestershire.

► RAYMOND SHEWAN

His friend, 26-year-old Stephen Christian, also of Redditch, was airlifted by an RAF helicopter to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, where his condition was today stable.

The men were traversing Easy Gully when it is believed they triggered the avalanche.

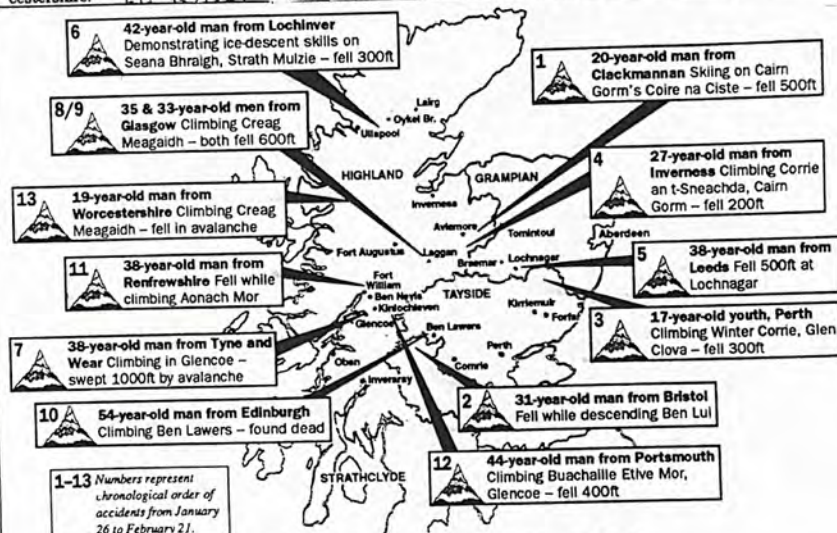
A police spokesman said they had been swept the entire length of the

gully by the massive wall of snow and described Mr Christian's escape as "very lucky."

In nearby Raeburn's Gully, Welshman Timothy Snaith (36) suffered leg and chest injuries in a fall.

The alarm was raised by fellow climbers and Mr Snaith was airlifted to Raigmore. No condition was available.

Fresh falls of snow have led to new avalanche warnings.



DEATH IN THE HILLS — 1991

TEENAGER John Turner, Worcester, has been named as the 13th person to lose his life on a Highland mountain in the past month.

The 19-year-old was descending the East Gully of 3,700ft Creag Meagaidh, with plantworker Mr Stephen Christian (26), also from Worcester, on Thursday evening when they triggered an avalanche that swept them the length of the Gully.

Mr Christian received leg injuries, but Mr Turner was found to be dead.

Just three hours later, on the same mountain, Mr Timothy Snaith (36), a teacher from Gwynedd, Wales, fell while climbing in Raeburn's Gully.

The incident was seen by other climbers, who summoned help from the local mountain rescue team.

Both injured men were flown by an RAF Sea King helicopter, from Lossiemouth, to Raigmore Hospital.

Body of climber found

THE crew of a rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth yesterday found the body of a young student on Ben Nevis.

Mr Martin Begg (23), Anchor's Cross, Dunblane, set out from Achante Farm early on Friday to climb Ben Nevis by the tourist track. His body was found at the foot of Surgeon's Gully.

The condition of St Andrews solicitor Miss Fiona Christie (27), who fell 250ft down a snow gully on Ceann Dearg, Torridon, on Saturday night, was "stable" at Raigmore Hospital.

Climber dies, two hurt in hills

□ DAVID STEELE

ANOTHER climber died in an accident in the Highlands yesterday, adding to the grim death toll which has reached 13 in the past month.

It is believed the man died in an avalanche on 3700ft Creag Meagaidh, east of Loch Laggan in Badenoch.

A companion was badly injured in the accident, one of two within half-a-mile of each other yesterday.

An RAF Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth and mountain rescuers were involved in the rescue effort and the plane flew the body and two injured men to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Winchman Sergeant Phil Burlingham said later that in one incident a climber was hurt — with suspected knee, ankle and rib injuries — and a companion made him comfortable in the shelter of some rocks before going for help. The mountain rescue team had been called out.

Then in a separate incident in the same area, another climber was killed and his companion injured, with a suspected right leg break.

Sgt Burlingham said the helicopter had made three lifts — of the body and the two injured — at three separate locations.

He did not know the circumstances of the accidents.

"The conditions were difficult but the captain, Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell, brought the aircraft as low as he could," he said.

The other members of the crew were co-pilot Flight Lieutenant "Slug" Wilson and winch operator Sergeant Steve Larke.

Last night it was snowing heavily in the area.

Moray rescue

TWO Moray men were today recovering from their ordeal after their crippled boat was towed to safety from the Moray Firth last night.

Mr Neil Smith (40), of Seatown, Lossiemouth, and Mr James Gair (35), of Abbey Street, Elgin, were on a trip from Inverness to Lossie in Mr Smith's boat Homer when the engine suddenly seized up.

As darkness fell and the wind increased, the 23ft vessel drifted helplessly some eight miles off Burghhead.

"I was getting very worried," said Mr Gair today.

An Aberdeen coastguard alert was made at 5.30pm and a lifeboat launched at Buckie.

Having drifted for four to five hours, a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth located the Homer and the lifeboat towed it into Burghhead Harbour at 9pm.

Mr Gair, married with three children, was today recovering at his home.

Mr Smith, who works at McDermotts, Ardersier, took the day off to recover.

Moray man 'critical'

AN ELDERLY Moray man was critically injured on Saturday night when his car was in collision with another vehicle on the Burghhead-Roseisle road.

Mr David Murdoch (81), 1 Charleston Forestry Houses, Roseisle, received serious injuries when his Metro collided with an Escort driven by an RAF Lossiemouth serviceman.

Mr Murdoch was transferred to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary where his condition yesterday was "critical".

The Escort driver, Corporal Ian Duguid (28), went home from hospital in Elgin after treatment.

Student found dead

A STIRLING student has been found dead two days after setting off on a walk up Ben Nevis.

Mr Martin Begg (23), of Anchor's Cross, Dunblane, was located at the foot of Surgeon's Gully by an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter.

The student set off on Friday morning to ascend the tourist track on Britain's highest peak.

Meanwhile, St Andrews solicitor Miss Fiona Christie (27), who fell 250ft down a gully in Torridon at the weekend, was "stable" at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Helicopter finds boat

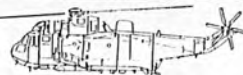
A SEARCH was mounted in the Moray Firth last night for a missing boat with two people on board.

The 23ft Homer was eventually located near Findhorn by a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth and towed into Burghhead by Buckie lifeboat.

The boat left Inverness in the morning, heading for Lossiemouth, but had engine trouble.

Auxiliary coastguard units were also involved.

THE LIGHTHOUSE



THE ROTARY BRIGADE REPORTS

Firstly, a catch question to start:

Q. What is the response to the call "Cut Out!!!"

A. Yep you guessed it. "You what!!!!!"

Right then, that's the little in-house ditty I was paid to include; now down to our article for real. Well with 1990 past and disappearing in the rear view mirror we ended last year on 167 scrambles of all different types. Mountains, boats, searches, medevacs and false and hoax alarms. We are already into our work for 1991 with 11 scrambles on the board thus far.

Coming in to join our happy band we welcome on the aircrew side Barney "Bus Killer" Barnes, and in the ground crew Coffee and Resting Palace Ian Smith, Craig Hutton and Nick Morling. Out has gone Jock McEwan.

A special mention must read... Bob Peebles bottles out... or in as the case may be. As our Bob, destined for civilian street and hard work sees the camp gates looming on his final departure, promptly about turns and rejoins. Well Bob on our reckoning that's about £20 you owe for the goodbye drinks.

The saga of 590 and its disappearing fuel has finally ended after 90% of the heavies had lost sleep, gone bald through pulling their hair out, and generally gone mad when one of the fairies decided to change the circuit breaker.

On the aircrew side a mystery head illness has struck horror into the hearts of the pilots as the unaffected ones have been getting obscene phone calls at home asking them to come into work for extra duties. But on a note of optimism the Squadron isn't too concerned as after all it is only the pilots that seem to be susceptible to this unknown ailment.

Tony Gear, our beloved leader, has asked that this issue carry the following announcement. That the red MG he has purchased, at a very reasonable price, is an investment or that is what he has told her indoors, and that in the very near future it will be renovated to its former glory. He has assured us that the holes and rust in the bodywork adds character to such a



magnificent specimen. Furthermore he would also like it known that the guy did not see him coming and that his white stick and Labrador are only a sympathy angle.

On a more serious note to end, all at 202 Sqn who worked while the rest of you had 3 weeks Christmas holiday would sincerely like to thank the chefs from the catering section for providing us with such fine meals throughout the holiday period and kept us well fed and watered, especially on the occasions when we were very busy and meal times were just a grab it and run affair. It was very much appreciated. Thanks.

EVELYN

50 YEARS OF GREAT WORK BY THE RAF

IT IS 50 years since the Royal Air Force instituted its Search And Rescue arm, so this is an appropriate moment to salute the wonderful work done by past and present members.

Born in wartime to recover downed aircrew, the Search And Rescue branch blossomed in peace to play a central role in civilian as well as service emergencies.

Here, divided between the two big air stations in Moray, we are proud to have three contingents actively involved in mercy missions. Kinloss is the base of a highly-trained, rapid-response RAF Mountain Rescue Team and, of course, long-range Nimrod maritime reconnaissance aircraft, which are used to search for vessels in distress — often at virtually wave-top level — and to drop lifesaving equipment if required. Lossiemouth is the home of D Flight of 202 Squadron, whose familiar bright-yellow Sea King helicopters have become synonymous with difficult, sometimes daring, rescues.

Over the years, so many people from all walks of life have had reason to be grateful to these dedicated Search And Rescue crews for extricating them from danger. Often those plucked to safety have been the victims of a genuine accident, an unforeseeable circumstance which has placed them in jeopardy. But there are others, usually among the sailing and climbing fraternities, who ignore weather warnings, carry on with their activities and end up overdue in dreadful conditions. The latter, through lack of thought, make a tough job worse for the Search And Rescue teams. They cannot — will not — ignore a call for help, but many a time they must know that they are being asked to take bigger than normal risks to bring in someone who should not have been in the mountains, or out to sea, in the first place. Such selflessness is beyond praise.

Thank God we are fortunate enough to have these RAF units. They have proved indispensable over the past 50 years. Long may they continue with their great work.

RESCUE

The Northern Scot

A celebration of 50 years of mercy missions undertaken by Royal Air Force personnel, often at great risk to themselves



• High in the Scottish mountains, an RAF Sea King helicopter comes in close to lift an injured climber to safety. Tricky jobs like this are all in a day's work for the crews of Search and Rescue units like 'D' Flight of 202 Squadron at Lossiemouth.

"HELLO, it's the rescue co-ordination centre here. We have a job for you."

It is a typical call to the RAF search and rescue service. Within 15 minutes the four-man crew of the Sea King helicopter — two pilots, a radar operator and a winchman — is airborne and so begins another mercy dash.

This month marks the official 50th anniversary of the RAF Search And Rescue organisation. During that time it has been involved in saving about 50,000 people.

Last year was the busiest so far with a total of 1875 people throughout the country plucked to safety.

Moray's RAF Search And Rescue units — the mountain rescue team and Nimrod crews at RAF Kinloss and the Sea King helicopter crews at RAF Lossiemouth — recorded increased activity. Between them, they were called out 243 times as opposed to 208 times in 1989. With 34 calls already this year the signs are that they are in for another busy 12 months.

'An average year'

"At this stage this is looking like an average year so far," said Flight Lieutenant Peter Bell, the deputy flight commander of D Flight 202 (Search And Rescue) Squadron, based at Lossiemouth.

Search And Rescue at local levels can be traced back to World War I but it was not until 1941 that a nationally co-ordinated body was set up to help downed military aircrews either on land, by the use of mountain rescue teams, or on the sea through boats.

Two years later came the formation of the first RAF mountain rescue team, at Kinloss, and that was followed shortly after by Search And Rescue air units at the naval stations at Kinloss and Lossiemouth.

Air Search And Rescue really took off at Lossiemouth and Kinloss in the 1950s. At

Kinloss, the huge Shackleton aircraft came into force as a rescue plane, to be replaced by the Nimrod in 1970, while at Lossiemouth the introduction of the helicopter revolutionised rescue operations, making sea rescues much quicker than by boat.

A number of helicopters have seen service at Lossiemouth since then, including the Dragonfly, Whirlwind, Wessex and, since 1978, the Sea King. With each model, the number of people it can carry and the range it can travel has increased. The Sea King can take up to 12 survivors and, with a refuelling capability, has a range of about 260 miles, stretching out to Norway and Denmark. "We can remain airborne for up to six hours at a time," said Flt Lt Bell.

There are five SAR crews at Lossiemouth for three Sea Kings, but usually only one helicopter is on stand-by. Each crew stands a shift of eight hours and does 10 24-hour shifts a month.

During the day a helicopter can be scrambled in eight minutes, while at night there is a deadline of 45 minutes to get off the ground.

Despite the guidelines of its initial role, about 90 per cent of the SAR's work involves rescuing civilians — either stranded climbers or missing vessels.

"The number of rescues tend to level themselves out over the year. In the summer we have so many people up on their holidays, while in the winter there are a lot of people on the hills but the environment is so much more harsh that they can come to grief," said Flt Lt Bell.

The standard procedure in a helicopter rescue is for the winchman to be lowered on a 245ft long cable to the victim. The helicopter then leaves the site of the accident for about 10 minutes to allow the winchman to establish how serious the injury is, and to work in relative quiet away from the deafening drone of the aircraft.

The helicopter then returns to pick up the winchman and the casualty, and once inside the winchman can administer first-aid.

The Sea Kings contain life-saving aids, including oxygen and drugs, and there also splints and stabilising equipment. The winchmen are first-aid experts and are trained up to the standard of an ambulance crew.

Each Sea King flies at an average speed of 140mph and it costs £3,000 an hour to scramble one of the £7 million helicopters.

One hour's notice

It costs a similar amount to fly a Nimrod. One Nimrod is on 24-hour standby for SAR, based for three weeks of the month at RAF Kinloss and for the other week at RAF St Mawgan in Cornwall.

The Nimrod, with its crew of 13, is allowed an hour's notice to be airborne from the initial rescue call. With a range of 1,200 miles it can scan an area stretching from the North Sea to the Eastern Atlantic and the Iberian Peninsula.

Because of its size it deals entirely with sea rescue. It is generally used to locate vessels such as fishing boats in trouble and guide the Sea King in to rescue.

On the ground is the RAF mountain rescue team which is able to go where the helicopters cannot and in conditions which are too poor for flying. There are five full-time members of the RAF team based at Kinloss under the leadership of Flight Sergeant Dave Whalley.

As well as the full-time mountaineers, the RAF team can call on more than 30 volunteers at any time.

Each section of the SAR organisation relies on the other to successfully do the job and, in turn, relies on help from a variety of non-military organisations such as the

police, local mountain rescue teams and the public.

It is the bigger rescue operations that the members of the SAR tend to remember most vividly — last year's Shackleton crash or the Piper Alpha disaster when rescue helicopters flew backwards and forwards from Lossiemouth for two days, the Premier tragedy last December, and Lockerbie for crew members who were posted away from the area.

"The thing that hits you most about Lockerbie was the sheer scale of the accident," said Flt Lt Bell. "As we were flying in we could see the number of ambulance and fire brigade lights flashing so we knew that there was massive damage below. The whole town was burning and it did not sink in that this 747 aircraft had come down," he added.

"Often it is the rescues which do not make much in the papers that stick in the mind because they are the most difficult to do, for example if a climber falls down a hole."

Emotional scars

The emotional scars of the job are hard to bare, but to find people alive makes it worthwhile. "It is quite a sad job but we had a tremendous success in finding up to 20 people alive in 23 call-outs last year," said Flt Sgt Whalley.

Talks in the House of Commons are centring on the possibility of a new batch of Sea King helicopters for the SAR organisation. They would probably feature a more complex radar system.

Whatever the outcome, there are at least 50,000 good reasons why the Search And Rescue organisation should remain at the forefront of help for those in danger.

ANDY BRADSHAW

Boy (7) falls 120ft to his death

□ JOE WATSON and STEVE STEWART

A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD Aberdeen boy is missing, feared drowned, after falling 120 feet from cliffs near Slains Castle, Cruden Bay.

Nicholas French, 60 St Swithin Street, had been playing with two friends near the edge of the cliffs when the accident happened at lunchtime yesterday.

His father, Clive, jumped into the water, grabbed hold of him and brought him on to the Sugar Loaf Rock, but had to let go due to the heavy swell.

Mr French was taken to Peterhead Cottage Hospital following the accident and treated for hypothermia. He and his wife, Jane, went home later.

It is understood Nicholas, an only child, had been picnicking with his parents, another Aberdeen couple and their two children and two Americans from Dallas when the accident happened.

Police Inspector Ian Burnett said that although the alarm was raised within minutes, Nicholas's body wasn't found despite an extensive search of the coastline by Peterhead lifeboat, an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter and coastguard auxiliaries from Peterhead, Cruden Bay and Collieston.

It is expected the search will resume today.

Following the incident, Insp. Burnett issued a warning to all parents to take extra care at the popular tourist attraction.

He said the cliffs at the spot were "extremely dangerous" for youngsters and adults alike.

Neighbour Mr Jack Fraser, 58 St Swithen Street, said: "It's tragic. He was a super wee lad."

"The first time we met was when the old neighbours were moving out. I really took to that kid. He was such a cheery lad."

"With not having lived here all that long, I think they have been out discovering some of the sights in the area."

Nicholas, who was a pupil at St Joseph's RC School, was a keen reader and interested in horse riding.

The French family, who are understood to come from the Midlands originally, moved to Aberdeen in September.

Mr French, who works in the oil industry, was too distressed to speak about the accident last night. He and his wife were being comforted by friends.



■ Above: Peterhead Coastguard sector officer Mr Bruce Lee guides the helicopter to the spot where Christopher was last seen alive, while Peterhead lifeboat continues its search of the coastline.

Right: The helicopter makes a final sweep of the coastline round Slains Castle before darkness fell.



Safety call after death plunge

► ROBERT McALLISTER
Chief Reporter

THE village of Cruden Bay was in shock today as the search resumed for an Aberdeen youngster who plunged 100ft from cliffs into the sea.

And a call was made for extra safety measures to prevent another tragedy.

Nicholas French (7) of St Swithin Street was on a picnic with his parents, Clive and Jane French, and friends near the ruin of Slains Castle when he fell.

His father dived into the sea in a desperate bid to reach him but the child was swept from his grasp by the heavy swell.

A Grampian Police underwater search unit joined auxiliary coastguard personnel when the search resumed early today.

Attempts by an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter crew, Peterhead lifeboat and coastguard rescuers from Cruden Bay, Peterhead and Collieston failed to find the boy.

Regional Councillor Jim Towers today said the tragedy had shocked villagers.

He said: "I certainly hope local groups, such as the community council and community association, will look into this."

"Perhaps the time has come when we have to consider some means of fencing off the area — although it's difficult because of the length of the cliffs — or putting up more prominent warning signs."

Sister Patricia McMahon, headmistress of St Joseph's RC Primary School, where Nicholas was a pupil, said the tragedy had stunned the school.

"We are still coming to grips with the shock of this happening to one of our boys. Nicholas was a super boy, lively and bright," she said.

Objecting

OBJECTORS to a 'mini-Gleneagles' planned near Pitcaple have lodged a 55-signature letter with Gordon councillors.

Extensive search fails to find little Nicholas

DUNCAN BROWN



■ Top: An RAF Sea King helicopter makes a final despairing sweep over the treacherous coastline around Stairs Castle for the body of seven-year-old Nicholas French before darkness fell last night.

Above: The RAF Sea King, Peterhead lifeboat and cliff-top rescuers comb the area where Nicholas fell 120ft to his death.

Left: The coastguard's auxiliary cliff rescue team stand by the exact spot where Nicholas fell to his death.

Right: The RAF's search and rescue helicopter hovers over the Sugar Loaf Rock — the part of the coastline where Nicholas was last seen.



Man dies, two cheat death on Lochnagar

DARK Lochnagar claimed another life at the weekend — but two other climbers cheated death on the same mountain after terrifying experiences.

Mr Richard Berry (28), a scientist from Bayswater, London, fell 800ft and is believed to have pulled down his companion, medical physicist Mr George Brimlow (34), of Nottingham.

Mr Brimlow was knocked unconscious for a short time — and then was hit by an avalanche.

The accident happened about teatime on Saturday and he remained in the hills overnight, vainly trying to dig out his friend who had been buried in the avalanche.

Then Mr Brimlow walked to safety and raised the alarm at around 8am yesterday.

Grampian Police and Braemar Mountain Rescue Teams searched the area, assisted by a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

Mr Berry was the 14th person to die in the hills in five weeks.

Mr Brimlow was taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, where he was detained with face injuries and a broken wrist. His condition last night was satisfactory.

Rescue team leader Constable Graham Gibb said it had been a miraculous escape. "Having fallen 800ft, the chances of survival are very slim."

Also on Lochnagar, another climber fell 50ft through a snow cornice and throughout the night dangled on a rope held by his friend.

The men, experienced climbers from Ikey, West Yorkshire, both escaped unhurt from Eagle Ridge yesterday morning.

Mr Andrew Bunnage (31) fell through the cornice at around 8pm and was held by Mr Kevin Rogers (32) until daylight.

They had been completing a climb and were unsure of their

□ LYNNE ILLINGWORTH
and CAROL GRUGEON

direction in the darkness when Mr Bunnage fell.

The men were unable to communicate with each other in what were described as horrendous weather conditions, with poor visibility and high winds.

Neither knew what had happened to the other, as Mr Bunnage hung on for more than 14 hours.

His attempts to climb back up were unsuccessful.

Mr Rogers eventually secured the rope as daylight broke and went for help.

Two nearby climbers were then able to reach his companion and help him to safety.

Although physically and mentally exhausted after their ordeal, the climbers did not require hospital treatment.

Last night, Grampian Police warned that high avalanche risks would continue in the Lochnagar area and Northern Cairngorms.

They said gale-force winds and snow showers would lead to more windslab build-up on existing unstable snow and further unstable cornices.

Mountain rescue services issued a warning to all climbers in the area to be aware of the dangers and steer clear of gullies.

Constable Gibb said he had not seen such a massive build-up of cornice snow in more than 11 years of mountain rescue experience.

"People have to be aware of the high risk when planning routes. They should get in touch with the Avalanche Information Service and see what they are saying. It is then down to individual judgement."

He said climbers involved in weekend incidents in the Lochnagar area had been staying at Geldershiel Lodge and were

Helicopter rescuers notch record they do not want

By Andy Bradshaw

LAST weekend was the busiest in the history of the Search and Rescue helicopter team at RAF Lossiemouth.

The SAR unit was called out seven times between noon on Saturday and Monday morning.

In the first incident, the four-man Sea King helicopter crew of flight lieutenants John Prince and Simon Willson and master air load masters Ted Little and Barney Barnes, rescued two avalanche victims in the Cairngorms in an hour-and-a-half ordeal.

Five minutes after having taken one of the victims to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, they were called out to the Cairngorms again to pick

up a climber with a back injury. He was also taken to hospital.

Later in the afternoon, they were called out to help a fallen climber in Glenshee and attend another incident on Lochnagar.

On Sunday, the crew of flight lieutenants Scott Pollock and David Lloyd and flight sergeants Steve Larke and Ian Bontherone were called to Lochnagar to help in the search for a London man, who was found to be dead, and two others who were missing.

The helicopter spent more than three-and-a-half hours at the site and was joined by

another Sea King containing Saturday's crew, to help in the successful search.

At 2.15pm, the Sunday crew was called to Cruden Bay to help search for a seven-year-old boy who fell into the sea.

They spent three-and-a-half hours on the lookout before returning to RAF Lossiemouth at 6pm.

Four hours later they were called out to Ben Nevis to help look for a Thurso climber. However, the weather was so bad that they had to wait until 7am the following day before the climber could be taken to Raigmore Hospital.

The two crews clocked up 16 hours flying time in the rescue operations.

A spokesman for D Flight 202 (Search and Rescue) Squadron, based at Lossiemouth, said: "It was a record for such a short period of time. The snowy conditions are a favourite time for climbers and there seem to have been a lot of people out there."

There was no rest for the SAR team this week either. A Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth spent more than five hours at the rescue of the crew of the North Isles cargo ferry, St Rognvald, which ran into trouble in gales off the Caithness coast early on Tuesday.

Airlift on to St Rognvald

SENIOR officers from the P&O ferry company were airlifted early today to the cargo ship St Rognvald to assess damage from mountainous seas which left the vessel without steering.

The boat was anchored in Sinclair's Bay, north of Wick, after heavy seas smashed the bridge windows and cut much of the vessel's power.

The officers were also expected to decide when the vessel could return to Aberdeen, and when the 14 crew members evacuated to John O'Groats could rejoin the ship.

Managing director of P&O Scottish Ferries Mr Eric Turner, said the boat had suffered a partial loss of power but the main problem had been the loss of steerage.

During the drama, he said, winds of up to force 8 were against the tide and seas of up to 30ft were forecast. Engineers



► ROBERT
MCALLISTER
Chief reporter

had worked flat out to restore steering and power.

Those taken off in difficult conditions by helicopter crews from RAF Lossiemouth and Coastguard personnel included the master, Captain Brian Robertson who suffered minor head injuries when the bridge windows were broken.

Mr Turner said Capt Robertson had been taken to hospital in Wick and received stitches after X-rays revealed no serious injuries.

Meanwhile the boat's senior captain, Capt James Winterburn, had broken his leave to rejoin the vessel and help in assessing damage.

Other senior officers were on their way to Wick.

Said Mr Turner: "They will assess what the situation is and our hope would be that the crew members who were taken off will rejoin the ship and then she can make her passage down to Aberdeen."

Two girls among the rescued

□ IAIN GRANT

AT THE height of the drama and with Wick lifeboat standing by, an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter winched up four of those on board to safety. They included two female YTS trainees.

Before the ship rigged makeshift steering, Wick lifeboat coxswain Mr Walter McPhee was ready to move in to help evacuate the crew from the stricken vessel.

But then, the ferry's emergency steering was started and limited power was regained to allow her to head slowly seawards.

Mr McPhee said: "Up to then she had been going round in circles and was getting

very close in. It was becoming a very desperate situation and we were all set to go alongside her."

A Sumburgh coastguard helicopter had picked up walkie-talkie sets and dropped them on board the ferry. These were used by the crew to communicate with the lifeboatmen who helped guide them to safer waters.

At about 4am the helicopter picked up the injured master, Captain Brian Robertson, and nine other crew members, leaving five on the ferry.

Capt Robertson was airlifted to Wick where he was taken to Caithness General Hospital and treated for a head injury. His condition was described yesterday as "fair".

The other crew members were taken to nearby John O'Groats where they spent the night in the Seaview Hotel.

After the all-night rescue, Mr McPhee said he was delighted by the way the 47ft Tyne-class lifeboat had performed on her first serious test since her arrival on station last year.

The lifeboat "handled perfectly" in what were the worst conditions he had encountered on a rescue mission.

Rescue teams save 2 trapped on ridge

□ ADRIAN O'DOWD

BRAEMAR and Aberdeen Mountain Rescue Teams were called out in hazardous weather at the weekend to save two climbers trapped on a mountain ridge for 19 hours.

Mr David Park (35), Bathgate, and Mr Douglas Jeffries (35), Linlithgow, were reported overdue from a climb on Lochnagar just after midnight on Friday.

A 13-man rescue team and an RAF rescue helicopter from Lossiemouth joined in the search and the climbers were heard before they were seen, trapped on a ridge beneath a snow cornice 3,000ft up the mountain.

Braemar and Grampian Mountain Rescue Team leader Mr Graham Gibb said last night: "When we first approached the cliff face there were small avalanches, but we could hear the whistles and knew they were up there somewhere."

Poor visibility of 20 yards thick fog and gale-force wind forced the helicopter to abandon its search, but the teams on foot carried on.

The climbers were throw ropes which they fastened the 500ft cliff face to enable them to be hoisted to safety.

Despite being exposed to freezing temperatures were well enough to wait from the scene.

Copter in mercy dash to save twins

AN RAF Sea King helicopter made a mercy dash to Wick yesterday afternoon to save the lives of twin babies born six weeks prematurely.

The helicopter, from 202 Squadron, RAF Lossiemouth, took on board a senior specialist, two nurses and two incubators before flying to Caithness General Hospital, where the mother was already in labour.

It spent more than two hours on the ground awaiting the birth, before leaving with the newly-born infants in the incubators, landing at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, shortly after 6pm.

Dr John Henderson, senior registrar in paediatrics at Raigmore Hospital, who flew on the mercy mission, described the condition of the twins, a boy and a girl, as stable.

Helicopter winchman Flight Sergeant Dave Aitken, who videoed the mission, said that readings from instruments on the incubators were affected by the helicopter's vibration during the 50-minute flight, "giving some cause for concern".

Flt Sgt Aitken and winch operator Sgt Chris Bodiam helped waiting ambulances load the incubators gently on to two ambulances. From there, the twins were rushed to the special baby-care unit in the maternity block. Their mother remained in hospital in Wick.

Captain of the helicopter was Flight Lieutenant Jim Anderson, based at Lossiemouth, with Royal Navy Lieutenant Scott Pollock as co-pilot.

Miracle escape after climber's plunge

□ KEN JONES

POLICE last night were trying to trace the parents of a young climber, who fell 800ft down a Highland mountain — and escaped serious injury.

The climber, who is not named until relatives have been told, plunged down Easy Gully on Creag Meagaidh, near Laggan.

Colleagues found him buried in a 4ft snowdrift with minor injuries. He is now recovering in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

A police spokesman said: "It was an amazing escape to fall 800ft then almost walk away from the scene."

The climber's parents are believed to be holidaying in the North.

A London photographer also had a lucky escape when he plunged into a pothole after losing control while ginsading down a snow slope on Ben Alder in the Cairngorms.

Mr Paul Hyatt (37), Putney, fell into the hole made in snow by a waterfall and was showered with freezing water until lifted clear by Cairngorm mountain rescuers.

An RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth took him to Raigmore for treatment for hypothermia and leg injuries.

His companion, County Durham teacher Mr Melville Walker, left hospital following treatment.

Police have named the climber who died in a 500ft fall on Beinn a' Bheilhir near Balachulish on Friday as Mr Martin Jones (30), Solihull, West Midlands.

His body was recovered by Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team.

Award for winchman who helped save 11 men in Atlantic white-out



■ Proud moment for rescue hero WO Bill Payne (centre) as he receives his GOC's commendation from Air Vice-Marshal Jim Morris, air-officer-in-charge of Scotland and Northern Ireland. Also pictured is Bill's wife, Stella.

Ex-Lossie man had key role in daring rescue

A FORMER Lossiemouth winchman has been honoured for his bravery in helping to rescue 11 crewmen from the heaving deck of a crippled ship in one of the worst storms on record in the South Atlantic.

Warrant Officer Bill Payne, of RAF Lossiemouth's 202 Squadron, was on a two-month detachment in the Falklands when he was involved in the dramatic rescue last September.

Bill, and the three other members of the helicopter crew — pilot Flight Lieutenant Dave Kerr-Shepherd, co-pilot Flight Lieutenant Graeme Gow and radar-winch operator Mike Cornes — have received the General Officer Commanding South Atlantic Forces commendation for brave conduct.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessel Gold Rover was plunging through 40ft-high winds of more than 70mph, 15 miles off Port Stanley, when she lost her rudder in white-out conditions.

The captain decided to evacuate non-essential crew and a search and rescue helicopter was scrambled from Mount Pleasant.

The helicopter landed on the ship and picked up 10 men. But, when the crew returned for the rest, the sea was too rough to land.

Bill was winched on to the deck and the remaining 11 crewmen were drop-winched to the helicopter. The Gold Rover was towed to harbour when the storm subsided.

Bill, whose wife Stella comes from Lossiemouth, has been in search and rescue for 17 years, the last seven at Lossiemouth.

He is now serving in the RAF's rescue co-ordination centre at Pitreavie, near Edinburgh, and hopes to return to Lossiemouth to complete his service, and to retire in the area.

Airlift for injured climber

AN RAF Lossiemouth helicopter was diverted to the Cairngorms yesterday afternoon to airlift a climber with a broken leg to hospital.

The casualty was picked up in the Spidean Mhalach area and flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

IN BRIEF

Climber killed in 600ft fall

A CLIMBER fell 600ft to his death in Skye yesterday afternoon.

The accident, shortly after 1pm, occurred at Rotten Gully in the Cuillins. The body of Royal Marine Mr Mark Pearce (25), from Arbroath, was recovered by members of Skye Mountain Rescue Team. An RAF Sea King helicopter was also on the scene.



■ Right: Hanging by a thread... or at least it felt like it. The huge Sea King hovers above a rocky outcrop on Creag a' Chalamain, a mile north of Lurcher's Crag, pulling reporter Gary Cooper and winchman Flight Sergeant Ian Bonthron into the safety of its belly.

■ Below: Don't worry, you're in safe hands... Smiling winchman Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey tries to reassure our ashen-faced reporter near the Coveca Cliffs at Lossiemouth.



RAF Lossiemouth is home to one of Britain's busiest search-and-rescue teams. So far in this 50th anniversary year of the RAF's air-sea rescue organisation, 15 climbers and skiers have died on Scotland's unforgiving mountains. The sea has claimed many other victims. And when the SOS calls come through, lives can hang in the balance as the Sea King crews move into action. Reporter **GARY COOPER** and photographer **STEVE BAIN** spent two days with the men of 202 Squadron's D Flight and spoke to them of their fears and triumphs and the tragedies which face them every time they take to the air.

When D is for danger...

WHEN disaster strikes on Scotland's cruel seas and mountains, D Flight - RAF Lossiemouth's famous search-and-rescue team - are the men who have the grim task of picking up the pieces.

Since January, scores of people have been saved by the team; for the grieving families of the 15 who have lost their lives on Scottish mountains this year, there is the cold comfort of a decent burial for their loved ones.

From the time they receive a call saying a climber is injured or a life is in danger offshore, a giant Sea King helicopter can be airborne in just seven minutes.

When a child is involved, the crews do all they can to trim a few more life-saving seconds from their response time.

As we prepared for take off, the SAR men told me about the unwritten rule that adds extra tension to the dangers that face them every time they fly into action.

Winchman Flight Sergeant Ian "Boney" Bonthron (28) said: "If an adult gets into trouble, fair enough. He or she has made the decision to be on the side of a mountain and they are subject to the consequences. Children have those decisions made for them."

"I have the stomach for most things, but it is still hard when a young person with his whole life ahead of him dies. 'I always get angry when children's lives are endangered because their parents are responsible for everything they do,' he said.

The thoughts of radar/winch operator Sergeant Steve "Larkey" Larke (34), who is married and has an 18-month-old son, were very similar. Larkey has been with D Flight for four years, and during that time the carnage he has seen on Scottish mountains means he will do all he can to keep his son off the hills.

Primed to answer a call to action, he sat in the Lossiemouth operations room in full flying gear and said: "You carry out your job as if a relative or a member of your family was at risk, but it is more distressing when a kid is involved."

"I have seen so many terrible accidents involving people of all ages I



■ Even the birds aren't flying today, says US Coast Guard exchange pilot Lieutenant Scott Pollock aboard Rescue 137 on a mucky wet day.



■ Watching the dark mountains tower above the contour-hugging, low-flying helicopter in the Cairngorms is winchman Flight Sergeant Ian Bonthron.

can't think of anything more dangerous you can do than climb for fun."

"I can understand the lure of the hills, which look even better from where we are, and you can't stop people climbing, but I will try my hardest to prevent my son from doing it," he said.

Having a youngster of his own often plays on his emotions when children are involved in accidents. "I will the helicopter to go faster. Each minute that passes seems like 10."

RAF veteran Master Air crew radar/winch operator "Uncle" Ted Little (45), who is married with three children, often shares the anguish felt by parents when their children do not come home alive.

He said: "There is a lot of job satisfaction in this line of work, when you give someone a fighting chance and get an end result, but there is nothing I dread more than searching for kids, finding up dead children, but at least when you have a body to hand over, the parents can lay them to rest and they have something to grieve over."

The crews are the first to admit they are no supermen. Ted told me why his first operation at RAF Lossiemouth a year ago was so memorable - he was violently sick throughout. "It was dur-

I have seen so many terrible accidents involving people of all ages I can't think of anything more dangerous you can do than climb for fun."

- Lossie airman Steve Larke (34)

man Boney. In a stage whisper, he told me: "I can't understand what drives a man to become a winchman - they must be nuts."

"All that keeps you attached to a very thin wire and from smashing yourself on rocks are two collets and a silver soldered ball."

Boney was quick to retort: "Piloting can be done by a monkey and to do a

job like mine you have to be a real man."

It is this kind of banter that makes the rescue team such a tight-knit body, according to flight commander Flight Lieutenant Tony Gear (36).

He said: "Things are informal here, but that in no way means things are lax. 'The men get together very well and the close relationships help on our seat-of-the-pants flying in some tricky situations."

"They have to know what each of them is doing and thinking because even the smallest error can prove fatal."

Their close working spirit and sheer professionalism were certainly comforting as we climbed aboard Rescue 137 - the Sea King used for our two training missions.

As I was winched down from the noisy, yellow, bone-shaking machine, I could see at first hand how important teamwork really was.

Attached only by a "monkey harness", Ted Little hung out of the door to guide our American exchange pilot, Lieutenant Scott Pollock (36), over cliffs at Coveca, Lossiemouth.

Then the safe hands of Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey (32) made sure I was properly strapped to the winch.

His reassuring comments at full volume were barely audible above the deafening thump of the rotor blades as he tried to make a terrifying experience seem almost enjoyable.

Stepping out on the end of the wire, I could see how dangerous the job of the winchman is and tried to imagine what could happen if engine problems flared up at a crucial moment.

The procedures say that the priority would be to save the three other crewmen - and the winchman would be cut free from the helicopter, probably to fall to his death.

It is a nightmare scenario that has never had to be put into practice by the Lossiemouth fliers and one which "Boney", for one, would rather not dwell on.

With a shrug of devastating understatement, Flt Sgt Trethewey said: "It's only a job."



■ Right: Preparing for a pre-flight briefing at the air station before setting off for a training operation in the Cairngorms are (from left) winch operator Sergeant Steve Larke and pilot Flight Lieutenant Simon Wilson and Flight Lieutenant Tony Gear.

ROTOR TORQUE

After a quick tour in the southern latitudes of the Atlantic for Christmas and the New Year I returned to 'D' Flight expectant of a new supply of lemmings heading for the mountains in droves as is their wont. I was, however, not quite prepared for the dramatic way in which it was to occur. 24 hour shifts have extended up to 36 hours as required to complete SARops (we have even made headlines in the Scottish papers and that's not just the P&J.) Crews have given up the infamous 6hr aircrew coffee breaks to change their carpet slippers for mountain boots and head off to the hills. Ben Nevis, Cairngorm, An Tealach, Lochnagar, Loch Laggan, Torridon we have been all over, so far this year we have completed 45 jobs, 22 of those in February. Flt/Lt Jim Anderson and his crew did 4 of those in one long shift. A week later Flt/Lt John Prince and his crew topped that when they responded to 6 separate incidents. (It has even been rumoured that this will be mentioned in 'THE HOUSE' — if only for the endless reports they had to write.)

February has definitely been a month for mountain jobs; climbers falling from rock and ice faces, walkers caught by avalanching snow and most of them barring the lucky few sustaining quite serious injuries, sadly, some fatal. It's a sobering thought knowing that such incidents in the Scottish mountains have this year claimed the lives of 15 people, from

the very experienced doing nothing wrong but being very unlucky; to the people failing to take proper equipment and sensible precautions to preserve their own lives.

Apart from working in the hills, what else have the Growbags been doing? Flt/Lt 'Sludge' Wilson had an evening of fun and entertainment when the cargo ferry 'St Rognvald' put out a 'MAYDAY' call after a freak wave smashed her bridge injuring the skipper and rendering the steering gear useless. As in all good SAR stories '60kts of wind waves as big as houses' the ship was going round in circles and with an onshore wind was being blown ever closer towards the coastline. Winchman MALM 'Barney' Barnes in SOP heroic style was placed!!!! on the pitching heaving deck to organise the winching-off of 14 of the crew, 10 taken by RESCUE 117 (the Coast Guard helicopter from Sumburgh). RESCUE 137 took 4 off and collected a new master and equipment to make temporary repairs to the steering gear. The ship finally got on to a safe heading, only ¾ of a mile from being smashed to pieces on the rocks. Valuable assistance also came from Wick Lifeboat, who, even in some of the worst sea conditions the skipper had seen, stayed on scene throughout the entire operation. (Oh,

by the way, TACO (MAEOP) Ted Little and co-pilot Flt/Lt John Prince were there as well.)

Other Growbag news — welcome to a new winchman F/Sgt Paul Trethewey (I think it's Cornish). He has just completed his Sea King conversion course and previously served on 18 Sqn Chinooks at RAF Gutersloh.

The engineers have done a superb job working non-stop to keep 2 aircraft available during this hectic period. Sgt Jerry Kerr (William Arthur Norman to his friends) has recently arrived on the flight following his promotion and subsequent posting from the shed at RAF Finningley. Also promoted are Craig Hutton and Ian Smith LAC to SAC. It's only a small step to some but it's the first when your own way up to Air Marshal, their shift bosses however say there has been no improvement and they still aren't allowed to make their own orange squash.

Dave 'Chainsaw' Breerton, while doing good deeds for a neighbour nearly severed his leg with the saw. However, since he'd only cut a couple of logs for her at the time,

he stayed in the job before going to hospital to have his leg stitched back together.

Our resident archetypal WWII pilot 'Smudge' (he with the big handlebar moustache) got the chance he had longed for when he was star in a photograph to feature in Air Force News and the Daily Record marking 50 years of Search and Rescue in the Royal Air Force. Outside of working hours in an attempt to sweep up this old Etonian image he has taken to wearing Rudolph Nureyev look-alike blue lycra tights, multi-coloured day-glow/luminous jackets or rainbow psychedelic baggy trousers. All this combined with mutterings of belays, pitons, ropes and crabs has led us to believe that he has taken up a new hobby. Confirmation of this has come from him being regularly seen with the oily ticks resident mountain climber/biker and squadron 'Bartman' look-alike Carl Hodge.

Finally, Sgt Steve Kenny says 'There is no fair representation of the social, domestic and neo-fascist views of the Oily Ticks'. Therefore to correct this as best as possible we hereby announce that Sgt Kenny won the groundcrew big nose competition after an official measuring with a technicians nose micrometer.

That's all for this month so till my next effort, this D.SCRIBE signing off.

OFF
Even though this young lady was totally unprepared for the prevailing weather conditions the winchman was unable to persuade her to be rescued. (What is he on! . . .)



SUMMARY FOR APRIL 1991

04 Faller at TORRIDON with head and leg injuries, lifted and taken to Raigmore.

HODGSON GEAR HOLMES BURLINGHAM

06 Medevac man with cardiac problem from Broadford to Raigmore. WILLSON POLLOCK LARKE BURLINGHAM

08 Injured skier at AONACH MOIR taken to Dundee WILLSON POLLOCK LARKE AITKEN

14 Exhausted walker and companion near BEN NEVIS lifted and taken to Ft William ANDERSON BELL BODIAM BURLINGHAM

16 Injured climber at CIC hit BEN NEVIS? taken to Belford hospital HODGSON POLLOCK LARKE BARNES

18 Injured climber in CUILLINS with multiple injuries taken to Broadford hospital WILLSON GEAR LITTLE AITKEN

19 Medevac 9yr old boy with eye injury from Portree to Raigmore ANDERSON POLLOCK LITTLE BARNES

27 Fallen climber on BEN NEVIS, MRT deployed to recover casualty, airlifted to Ft William. HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

30 Medevac seriously ill 1yr old from Aberdeen to London, diverted to Edinburgh due to patients condition. LLOYD WILLSON LARKE BARNES

30 R138 scrambled to medevac baby with cardiac problem from Raigmore to Edinburgh HODGSON LEIGH LITTLE BURLINGHAM

Injured Torridon climber named

THE badly-injured climber airlifted from the Torridon mountains after falling on Sgurr Dubh yesterday has been named as Mr David Wilson (28), of Wokingham, Berks.

Last night a spokeswoman at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, said his condition was stable.

Woman saves climber

A YOUNG woman became a heroine at the weekend as she clung desperately to a rope linking her to a climbing companion who had plunged past her on Ben Nevis.

It was early on Saturday evening when university lecturer Mr Derek Brandford, from Edinburgh, slipped in icy

□ COLIN CAMPBELL

conditions while scaling Tower Ridge near the summit.

At the time, he was 50ft above research assistant Miss Paraskevi Terzoudi (27), also from Edinburgh.

The rope linking them broke his fall and he was left dangling in mid-air.

Miss Terzoudi held on to him until other climbers nearby arrived to help.

Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team also attended and a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was alerted.

Mr Brandford was airlifted to Belford Hospital, Fort William, where he was treated for broken ribs.

Last night, his wife, Jean, said from her home: "He is obviously shaken by what happened, but he is safe, and that is the main thing."

"He is an experienced climber. I suppose these things happen in the mountains, but it is obviously very alarming. I'll be glad to see him home again."

Mercy flights at the double for copters

□ NEIL MACPHAIL

TWO RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopters were involved in simultaneous medical mercy missions yesterday afternoon — one to Inverness, the other to Aberdeen.

One aircraft was scrambled to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, to transfer an eight-day-old girl to the Simpson Memorial Maternity Pavilion, Edinburgh, accompanied by her father, a doctor and nurse.

The second call-out was to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary to transfer a year-old girl to Great Ormond Street Hospital, London. While airborne, two nurses accompanying the girl from Aberdeen noticed a deterioration in her condition and the Sea King diverted to the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh. An RAF spokesman said that flight did not continue to London.

By chance, both Lossiemouth Sea Kings were on the grass at Edinburgh's Meadows at the same time.

Simpson Maternity said the Inverness baby was in a stable condition, but could not give further information until her mother arrived by road. The children's hospital said the Aberdeen girl was now stable but under intensive care.

Copter helps in big whin blaze

FIREFIGHTERS last night prevented a major coastal cliff-top whin blaze in Moray spreading to a forest — helped by an RAF Sea King search-and-rescue helicopter.

The Lossiemouth helicopter flew two senior fire officers over the scene at Clashach, between Hopeman and Lossiemouth, to assess the extent of the blaze and decide the best place to deploy crews.

Later, Moray's fire chief, Divisional Officer Tony Turner, praised the helicopter crew's assistance.

"The helicopter landed at the scene and offered the officers in charge the opportunity to carry out an aerial survey to decide the disposition of the fire crews," said DO Turner.

"It was extremely useful to us and we are very grateful."

Assistant Divisional Officer Bert Stewart, Elgin, and sub-officer John McCracken,

Lossiemouth, were in the helicopter.

A strong north-east wind fanned the flames, and 35 firefighters battled for two hours to bring the outbreak under control.

DO Turner said: "The fire was being driven rapidly towards the mature forest."

"But extremely hard work by the crews prevented it from entering."

Six fire units fought the blaze, which affected 80 acres of whins.

DO Turner said there was no indication how the fire started.

The alarm was raised shortly before 4pm and fire crews were expected to be at the scene until around midnight.

The helicopter crew was — pilot, Flt Lt John Prince; co-pilot, Flt Lt Simon Wilson; winchman MACR Barney Barnes and winch operator Sgt Chris Bodiam.

Hill walker killed

A GOOD Friday walker fell to his death in the Glencoe hills yesterday.

The accident happened high on Beinn a'Bheilthir, above Ballachulish.

The hill walker was among a small holiday group traversing to the west of Sgurr Donnhal when he lost his footing and plunged from the ridge.

One of his companions descended to a cottage in the glen to raise the alarm.

But his friend, who had severe head injuries,

was later found to be dead when Glencoe mountain rescue team reached the face.

A helicopter from RAF Leuchars airlifted the dead climber to the mortuary at Fort William.

Police are withholding his name until next-of-kin is contacted.

● A climber injured in a separate accident was last night in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness. An RAF Lossiemouth helicopter was scrambled to Coire Ardaire, Creag Meagaidh, to airlift him.



Royal Air Force Kinloss
Forres Morayshire

Telephone Forres 72161 Ext 531

Flt Lt J Prince
202 Sqn (D Flt)
RAF Lossiemouth
Moray

Your reference

Our reference

Date
8 May 1991

PHOTOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF WINCHING OF WG CDR YELDHAM
FROM RAF KINLOSS

1. I thought you might be interested in some photographs of Wg Cdr Yeldham WRAF being winched onboard your helicopter, for your Sqn album or for individuals who were involved on the day (the Yeldhams have already got copies).
2. Incidentally, you still have not been forgiven for your last minute ultimatum. Nonetheless, the Wg Cdr made a very dignified and lady-like exit!

PA Drissell

P A DRISSELL
Sqn Ldr
for OC



In the wilderness of the Scottish highlands a climber lies injured. Overhead hovers a yellow Sea King of the R.A.F. Search and Rescue (SAR) flight. Soon, a winchman will be lowered to pick up the injured climber.

INSIDE STORY

Volunteer mountain rescue teams have been searching for this climber for hours. Now a radio call from the SAR helicopter means they can relax. Once again our dedicated SAR teams have scored a success, in their round the clock work, as Inside Story has found out...

Originally formed for military rescues, the SAR squadrons were quickly brought in to help in civilian operations. The pilots are hand-picked, the best in the R.A.F. Each plane carries an enormous amount of special rescue equipment, just some of which is pictured here!



The ground crew also man the flight's emergency control centre. One 'copter must be ready for take-off at a moment's notice.

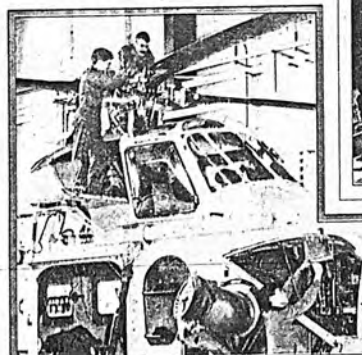


The crew of the SAR 'copter train every day, and are often interrupted during training to perform a real rescue. It's all part of their normal routine. In fact, SAR flights perform about 150 rescues each, a year!

NEXT TIME YOU LOOK INTO THE SKY AND SEE A YELLOW SAR HELICOPTER, JUST THINK — IT MAY BE CARRYING AN INJURED PERSON TO HOSPITAL — OR IT MAY SIMPLY HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SAVE A COW OR SHEEP STRANDED ON A CLIFF-FACE LEDGE!



There are four Wessex and five Sea King flights of SAR helicopters, two 'copters to a flight, and they cover the whole of mainland Britain and its coastal waterways.



The distinctively yellow coloured 'copters are kept on a 24-hour standby basis, and this calls for a lot of maintenance. Here we see a ground crew checking over a Wessex.

SUMMARY FOR MAY 91

01 FV VOUNTY 2 taking water 15nm SE of Peterhead
NAR lifeboat on scene.

LLOYD WILLSON LARKE BARNES

05 Exhausted walker in Cairngorms, taken to
Derry Lodge.

PRINCE LLOYD RUSH BURLINGHAM

06 FV SCORPIO off Hopeman firing red flares,
propellor fouled, assisted by Buckie lifeboat.

ANDERSON LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

14 Diverted from medevac at ST Kilda to search
in Glencoe, aircraft u/s at Plockton.

HODGSON PRINCE LARKE AITKEN

16 Lifted casualty from GRAMPIAN ENDEAVOUR to
Rig IOLAIR then to ARI, additional cas and nuresse
also lifted.

ANDERSON HODGSON BODIAM AITKEN

19 Medevac baby plus incubator from Wick to
Raigmore.

WILLSON GEAR LITTLE BARNES

20 Walker with broken ankle in Strathfarrar area.
Winchman walked in due to local turbulence, 137
returned to Kinloss for MRT. Casualty carried off
and flown to Raigmore.

LLOYD LEIGH BODIAM BURLINGHAM

21 FV ELIZA taking water and firing red flares,
located and escorted to Burghead harbour.

LLOYD LEIGH BODIAM BURLINGHAM

21 Assisted evacuation of Rig PETROLA to Sumburgh.

GEAR WILLSON LARKE BARNES

23 Search for missing person at Kinloch Rannoch
Deployed MRT and dog, missing person made own way
to safety and flown to Rannoch

CLEMENTS ANDERSON LARKE TRETHEWEY BRAGG

26 Fallen climber at Loch Avon with leg injuries
taken to Glenmore Lodge

WILLSON LEIGH PARRISH TRETHEWEY

27 3 soldiers taken from Cuillins to Broadford/
Balmacara, 1 with heat exhaustion, 2 with minor
injuries

GEAR POLLOCK BODIAM BARNES BRAGG

28 Fallen climber in Cuillins, body taken to
Police at Glen Brittle, fellow climber and Skye MRT
leader recovered to Glen Brittle.

GEAR POLLOCK BODIAM BARNES BRAGG

30 Medevac girl with severe head injury from
Golspie cottage hospital to Raigmore.

WILLSON GEAR PARRISH TRETHEWEY

30 Fallen climber with broken leg in Cuillins,
taken to Broadford.

HODGSON LEIGH LARKE BURLINGHAM

30 Medevac 1 man from Broadford to Raigmore.

WILLSON GEAR PARRISH TRETHEWEY

31 Long range pickup from Spanish trawler FV
PETTY, 250nm west. Injured fisherman taken to
Stornoway.

HODGSON LEIGH LARKE BURLINGHAM

Walker airlifted

A LIVINGSTON man was
airlifted to hospital after be-
coming ill while walking the
Lairig Ghru at the weekend.

Mr David Gillham (40) suf-
fered breathlessness and ex-
haustion and stayed Saturday
night at Corrour Bothy.

A companion raised the
alarm the next day and a rescue
helicopter from Lossiemouth
flew him to Derry Lodge.
Grampian Police then took him
to Braemar, where a doctor
found he was suffering from a
slight viral infection.

Hurt student airlifted

AN RAF search and rescue
helicopter from Lossiemouth
flew a 22-year-old girl student
with a broken ankle off Ben
Alder, near Loch Erich.

Air loading trainee Mr Paul
Tretheway helped her into the
helicopter under the supervi-
sion of examiner Mr Geoff
Bragg last Thursday. She was
taken to Raigmore Hospital,
Inverness.

RAF flying training will not jeopardise the birdies

OFFICIALS at Lossiemouth's Moray Golf Club — venue for next week's Northern Open golf tournament — have made a "peace plea" to the authorities at nearby RAF Lossiemouth.

They were worried about the possibility of excessive noise from low-flying jet aircraft disturbing the concentration of players — including several leading Scottish professionals — during the five-day event.

The RAF authorities have promised to co-operate.

Moray club secretary Mr Jim Hamilton said yesterday: "We have excellent relationships with the RAF and we have taken this matter up with it."

"It has promised to do all it can to minimise the noise."

"Depending on wind direc-

□ ALASTAIR BISSET

tion, the RAF hopes to bring its shorter runway into use and to avoid overflying the course."

Two years ago — during the Scottish women's championships at Lossiemouth — there were numerous complaints from competitors about aircraft noise and low flying.

This had been due to a detachment of Harrier jump-jets not normally based at RAF Lossiemouth.

But the RAF authorities have indicated that there might be some slight noise disruption next Friday — the final day of the Northern Open tournament.

For the RAF's famous Red Arrows aerobatic team — which is to be based at Lossiemouth for a spell to "work up" for the forthcoming display season — will be carrying out a full-scale "public" dress rehearsal over the lunchtime period.

Although this will take place in the skies off Lossiemouth's east beach esplanade — at the opposite end of the coast town — the Red Arrows Hawk jets are likely to assemble in formation over the golf links area.

"At least we have been made aware of this and, depending on the timings in the final round, we might be able to work something out," added Mr Hamilton.

Crew airlifted as tugs fight to keep rig from cliffs

NON-ESSENTIAL personnel on board a semi-submersible drilling rig 17 miles west of Shetland were being evacuated by helicopter last night.

The offshore installation manager of the Petrolia, with 66 men on board, took the decision at 8pm for the "precautionary down-manning" amid storm-force winds.

At the height of Shetland's worst May gale in living memory, three tugs fought to control the rig.

Coastguards said they had lost full control of the rig, but still had lines aboard and were managing to stem its drift towards the 1,000ft Foula cliffs.

A Coastguard Sikorsky S61 helicopter from Sumburgh was first on the scene to airlift the men to Eshaness Lighthouse, Shetland.

It was joined by a Sea King from RAF Lossiemouth at 9.40pm which plucked the last 11 men from the rig and took them to Sumburgh.

A Shetland police spokesman said 23 men had been accommodated at St Magnus Hotel, Hillswick, by 10pm. Another 23 were taken to the Sumburgh Hotel.

About 20 men remained aboard the Petrolia. No injuries have been reported.

The rig was being towed from Invergordon to the Clair Field, 50 miles west of Shetland, when it first broke free in the storm off Foula on Monday. That evening two lines were successfully attached.

□ GARY COOPER and IAN FORSYTH

Two of the supply boats which were hauling the rig northwards were the Oil Challenger and the Salvageman.

The rig, owned and operated by Odfjell Drilling Company, is on contract to French oil firm Elf as part of a £25million expedition to find out how to tap the vast Clair Field.

Clair's oil is thick and heavy and lies in deep, turbulent waters. The difficulties in exploiting the field have brought together eight oil companies in a joint venture to fund exploration.

By the end of the month, BP should have a second rig drilling into Clair.

Analysts have argued about how Clair should be developed. Initial suggestions that the oil could be transferred direct to tankers berthing at oil platforms were written off by Energy Minister Mr Colin Moynihan earlier this year because of the risk of an oil spill.

The only alternative would appear to be piping the oil to Shetland's Sullom Voe oil terminal.

One thing oil experts agree on is the cost of development, which will be enormous. A steady price of \$25 a barrel was said to be the prerequisite for oil to flow from the North Atlantic.

Busy evening for RAF rescuers

MONDAY evening turned out to be one of the busiest for RAF rescuers at Kinloss and Lossiemouth when no less than three emergencies were triggered within hours.

A 120 Sqn Nimrod carrying Crew 1 and captained by Sqn Ldr Tim Newman was scrambled to assist in the airlift of an ill Spanish trawlerman from his 65 ft boat 100 miles off Cornwall and returned to Kinloss after completing the task to spot flares in the Moray Firth.

The sharp-eyed Nimrod crew and Kinloss air traffic staff saw the emergency signals and a Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth returning from another incident on the West Coast went to a small boat's assistance. The craft, believed to be leaking, was later towed safely into Burghhead harbour by a lifeboat.

The helicopter involved in the small boat incident had been returning from the Strath Farrar area near Lochcarron after airlifting a 62-year-old Paisley woman from a mountainside after she broke her ankle. Poor visibility and gale force winds prevented the RAF Lossiemouth helicopter reaching the casualty and the seven-man RAF Kinloss mountain rescue team had to recover the injured woman and take her to the aircraft which flew her to Raigmore Hospital at Inverness.

The Fraserburgh-registered boat, which operates out of Burghhead, had one crewman on board.

An RAF Nimrod landing at Kinloss sighted red flares from the Eliezer just before 1am. The coastguard then received a barrage of calls about the flares.

The Invergordon lifeboat was launched and an RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth was scrambled.

The first vessel to reach the Eliezer was HMS Inverness on her way from Rosyth for the week of celebrations.

HMS Inverness, which naval experts claim is 20 years ahead of any other minehunter in the world, spotted a flare from the fishing boat.

Lieutenant Commander Grenville Johnson said: "We saw the flare and were first on the scene. We liaised with the Aberdeen coastguard and were able to give the position to the helicopter from Lossiemouth. We then followed the Eliezer into port."

Girl thrown from bike

AN ENGLISH schoolgirl is today recovering in the head injury unit at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary after a bike fall in Sutherland. Caroline Hudson (13) of Keighley, West Yorkshire, was cycling with her twin sister and a 15-year-old sister in Dunrobin Glen near Golspie when she tumbled off her bike and hit a telephone pole.

The helicopter, from RAF Lossiemouth, on an anti-submarine exercise in the Moray Firth, was diverted to pick her up at Golspie.

Rescue hero to open Lossie fete

THE star of a recent This is Your Life programme, Warrant Officer Bob Pountney, of the RAF's air/sea rescue operation, is to open this year's Lossiemouth High School fete.

The fete runs from 2pm to 5pm this Saturday, and there will be a host of side shows and entertainments for the whole family.

There will be cake-and-candy, plants, crafts and bottle stalls, as well as teas and a raffle with a top prize of £150.

A car boot sale is also being held during the fete, with stalls costing £5 each.

All donations for raffles and stalls will be gratefully received.

NE boat assists in rescue bid

A BANFF-registered fishing boat helped guide an RAF Kinloss Nimrod and a Sea King rescue helicopter from the Royal Naval Air Station at Culdrose, Cornwall, to the assistance of a Spanish trawlerman in poor weather last night.

The Scottish fishing boat, Constant Hope, had been fishing near the Spanish trawler, Carrigeina, more than 100 miles west of Land's End when she sent out a mayday seeking assistance for a severely-ill crewman.

The RAF Kinloss Nimrod and the helicopter faced difficult conditions with mist and fog in an attempt to pinpoint the trawler.

In a separate incident involving RAF mountain rescue teams from Kinloss, and an RAF Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth, a major rescue operation was mounted to locate a woman climber reported to have fallen and broken a leg in the Lochcarron area.

Gale-force winds and poor visibility hampered the helicopter which had to return to Moray to refuel before making a second attempt to search for the injured woman, who fell on Maullish.

The air search was aided by mountain rescue volunteers on the ground.

Teacher killed

A TEACHER from Cheltenham has been killed in a climbing accident on Skye.

Mrs Kathleen Sweeney (39) died after falling 300ft on Coire Laggan in the Cuillins while on a climbing holiday with a female companion.

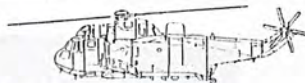
The alarm was raised by another group of climbers who saw the accident.

Mrs Sweeney's body was recovered by Skye mountain rescue team and a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth which was on an exercise in the area.

THE LIGHTHOUSE



ROTOR TORQUE



Greetings, and as we head into spring and a noticeable improvement in climatic conditions, trade has slackened off. Here at the home of the brave, we sit dormant like coiled springs, potentially would be brave in waiting. April and up to the 10th May, we have had 13 rescues, mostly in the mountains as is the norm. A couple exhausted on Ben Nevis taken to Fort William, a broken leg or two in Cairngorm and a real AARGH

in the Torridon area. All survived due to the TLC (Total Lack of Concern) (Tender Loving Care) shown by the winchmen. Even 'SPLAT' just has some big scars and a limp (or he will have in about 6 months time when he gets out of hospital!)

Both of the Flight's aircraft, Rescue 137 and rescue 138 were used when 2 medevacs were required. R137 went to Aberdeen to collect a 1 year old baby girl with respiratory problems to take her to Great Ormond Street Hospital in London for laser treatment. The a/c was abeam Edinburgh when the baby's heart stopped and while the crew tried to resuscitate her, a pan was called and the a/c diverted to Edinburgh Sick Children's Hospital where a paediatrician was waiting with an emergency team. Regrettably, the baby died the next day. R138 was just returning from its yellow taxi role taking the Station Representatives to Harris for the memorial service of Shackleton Gambia 08, when it too was scrambled to take an 8 day old baby girl with heart problems from Raigmore to Edinburgh's Simpsons Memorial Hospital. Both a/c were on the ground at Meadows Park in the city centre at the same time, causing quite a lot of public interest and a headache for the police.

Other news, on a recent scramble to an a/c calling a 'mayday', the G-force exerted on the mini-bus driven by Flt Lt Bell as it shot out of the hangar, caused the sliding door to shoot right off the rails and was found lying on the hangar floor (well these things happen — but not according to MT). The oily ticks found the same sort of problem when the jetwash from an aircraft taking off, forced Mick Scanlon's Land Rover backwards (even though it was going forward in 1st gear!) into the parked tractor (MT don't believe that either — what a cynical bunch). (The above views are not necessarily those of THE MANAGEMENT)

It was back to the good old days of the Wessex when both Sea Kings were unserviceable and OC SAR Wing was visiting. His 22 Sqn Wessex was roled for SAR and held first standby at Lossiemouth. Wg Cdr Cocksedge also presented SAC Ian Smith with a certificate for coming 1st of his class whilst on his AV Mechs trade course at RAF Halton.

Finally, while on shift at RAF Boulmer, Flt Sgt Dave Aitken (on loan from Lossiemouth) was involved in an aircraft accident, when during SAR operations in the Lake District, the a/c suffered severe vibration due to main rotor blade damage some 500 ft up and with a mountain rescue team member on 100 ft of cable, carried out a forced landing 2 km away. The MRT member was successfully recovered to the aircraft prior to impact and no-one was seriously injured, but the a/c is provisionally assessed as CAT 4.

Till next month. D SCRIBE
STOP PRESS . . . Cpl Basford came last (at least he entered) in the Stn Orienteering, even behind his knackered old Chief Tech, Keith Taylor!



2 u/s Sea Kings in the hangar.



Wg Cdr Martin Cocksedge, Sqn Ldr John Dungate and Sgt Phil Burlingham, 1st Standby Aircraft D Flt Dispersal, 23 April 1991.

SUMMARY FOR JUNE 91

01 injured climber on Ben Nevis with leg injuries lifted and taken to Belford Hospital.
HODGSON LEIGH LARKE BURLINGHAM

01 medevac pregnant woman from Dunvegan on Skye to Raigmore Hospital.
HODGSON LEIGH LARKE BURLINGHAM

01 4 casualties from RTA at Fort Augustus taken to Raigmore Hospital.
HODGSON LEIGH LARKE BURLINGHAM

03 medevac 2 patients from Broadford Hospital to Raigmore Hospital.
GEAR ANDERSON BODIAM BARNES

05 scrambled to locate serviceman walking in Cairngorms for Comp A transfer to Kinloss.
HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM BARNES

06 search for missing walker on AN TEALLACH, found safe and well.
CAMPBELL WILLSON LARKE BURLINGHAM

08 search for source of brief distress call on CH16 False alarm, nothing found.
HODGSON LLOYD LARKE AITKEN

11 search Kessock area of Inverness for missing person. Turned up safe.
ANDERSON KING BODIAM BONTHORNE

13 scrambled to "sinking boat" off Fort George - well intentioned false alarm.
LLOYD GEAR LITTLE AITKEN

13 collapsed walker at Dundonnell lifted and confirmed DOA by doctor.
HODGSON KING LARKE TRETHEWEY

15 13yr old boy cut off by tide at Portsoy, recovered and handed over to coastguard.
HODGSON KING LITTLE TRETHEWEY

16 medevac man with thrombosis from Broadford to Raigmore.
CAMPBELL LEIGH LITTLE BARNES

16 urgent medical supplies transferred from Aberdeen R.I. to Wick for patient with heart problems.
CAMPBELL LEIGH LITTLE BARNES

18 transfer badly burned patient from Eigg to Glasgow.
LLOYD LEIGH LITTLE BARNES

19 search for missing helo on West Coast. Helo turned up safe.
ANDERSON POLLOCK LARKE TRETHEWEY

19 137 investigated possible parachute sighting. Located large quantity of orange fishing net near position.
ANDERSON POLLOCK LARKE TRETHEWEY

21 medrescue trapped lorry driver from scene of accident to Raigmore.
CAMPBELL POLLOCK LARKE TRETHEWEY

21 medevac burns patient from Wick to Aberdeen R.I.
CAMPBELL POLLOCK LITTLE TRETHEWEY

25 fishing vessel aground at Rattrayhead, Fraserburgh. L.B. in attendance, NAR.
HODGSON CAMPBELL HOLMES AITKEN

30 medevac patient with head injury from Wick to Aberdeen R.I.
WRIGHT POLLOCK LARKE BARNES

Sea-blaze demo by firefighters

A TEAM of Lossiemouth firefighters dropped in on their brigade's open day on Saturday.

Sub-Officer John McCracken, Nigel Biswell, Ally Devine and Sandy Ware linked up with a RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter and Buckie lifeboat to demonstrate how to tackle a fire at sea.

Fire units from Elgin, Gordons, the ambulance service, police and coastguards also took part.

The event — opened by Grampian Firemaster Neil Morrison — is likely to raise around £2,500 for local charities and the Fire Services' Benevolent Fund.

Baby puts paid to mum's Skye do

□ NEIL MACPHAIL

A FEW days' rest with her parents in Skye suddenly became eventful for a mother-to-be at the weekend.

Mrs Jeanette Kroll (33) and husband Rohan, who live near Reading, were not expecting their second child for seven weeks and were staying with Skye councillor Mr Duncan Grant and his wife, Kathleen.

But as Mrs Kroll rested

before going out for a meal to celebrate their sixth wedding anniversary, baby Katie-Louise began showing signs of imminent arrival. A doctor was called and it was decided more specialist care was required.

Within 15 minutes, an RAF Sea King helicopter on exercise at Plockton landed at Dun-

vegan and Mrs Kroll, her husband and the district nurse were in flight to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Mrs Kroll gave birth to a girl at 3am yesterday and last night she was doing well in the baby care unit.

The Krolls already have a son, James, aged 16 months.

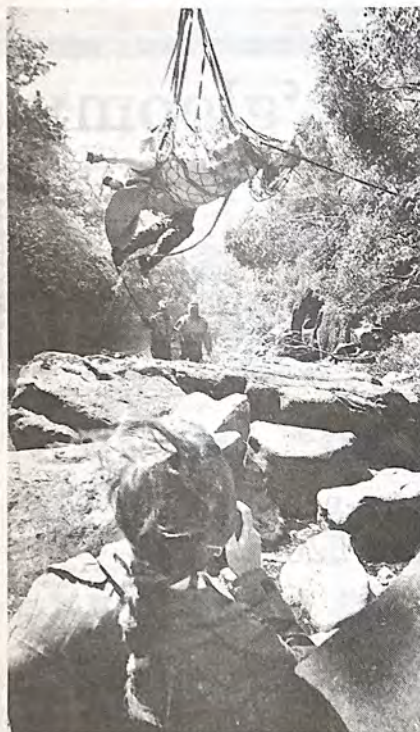
Mrs Kroll said: "It happened so quickly. The doctor was at the house in five minutes and

the helicopter 15 minutes later. I missed my celebration but Rohan says the new baby is his anniversary present."

Mr Grant said: "We are terribly grateful to all who helped my daughter. It all went splendidly, although when the doctor told Jeanette she was going to hospital she told them she couldn't because she was going out for a meal."

Trapped pony plucked from ravine

□ COLIN CAMPBELL



■ Telstar is winched free of the riverbed where it spent the night after a 50ft plunge.



■ The RAF Sea King pilot, diverted from an exercise at Plockton, holds his helicopter steady as the mare is hoisted to level ground.

A HIGHLAND pony was winched to safety by an RAF helicopter after plunging 50ft into an Ullapool ravine.

Telstar, a 22-year-old mare, caught its hoof and was trapped overnight in a river after it strayed from its pasture and tumbled down the deep gully late on Thursday.

Ullapool schoolboy Gregor Matheson (14) raised the alarm and trekking-centre worker Sharon MacLeod (16) climbed down to the horse and held its neck for three hours until help arrived.

Dingwall vet Mr Neil Johnston applied heart massage and a drip to the mare after it was hoisted to level ground in a sling around noon on Friday.

The horse's owner, farmer Mr Ewen Scobie, said: "It's amazing. Telstar was on her feet and none the worse later that night. It tells you how tough a Highland pony is."

"It was a happy end to a terrible drama. That helicopter pilot was magnificent, holding the machine steady and only 30 metres from a power line."

"If it was not for the young lad, I do not know what might have happened. He and Sharon played their parts in the rescue and the vet did a first-class job."

When Mr Scobie climbed down the steep path to the riverbed, he found Telstar stranded and injured. He summoned help and the pony was dragged from the water and lashed to a tree until morning.

Ullapool coastguard Mr Peter Godding alerted RAF Lossiemouth and a Sea King helicopter on exercise at Plockton was diverted to the scene.

Mr Godding said: "The pony seemed in a very bad way after its ordeal but appeared to improve after about 20 minutes. Everyone who attended did a good job in rescuing the mare."

● A COW escaped injury at the weekend after she walked off the edge of a 100ft cliff in Skye.

Six-year-old Hereford cross Rosie was winched to safety by a Navy helicopter after her owner, crofter Mr Roddy Bain, found her lying at the bottom of a 100ft gully.

Ferry rescuers are nominated for awards

WICK lifeboatmen, together with helicopter crews from RAF Lossiemouth and Sumburgh Coastguard have been nominated for awards for their part in saving the St Rognvald ferry.

Their names have been put forward for the national rescue and seamanship sections of the Silk Cut Nautical Awards.

In March, the rescue services swung into action after receiving a mayday call from the St Rognvald. The vessel had suffered steering and engine damage in force 10 winds and was rolling heavily in 35ft seas, close to the rocky shore.

The lifeboat, which was first to arrive on the scene, became the hub of the radio network, relaying messages, guiding aircraft to the stricken ferry and standing by for more than seven hours.

The RAF helicopter arrived shortly after 1am and began to airlift non-essential personnel from the 19-strong crew until, an hour later, its rescue strape broke and it returned to base with four rescued crewmen aboard.

As the ferry regained emergency steering, 10 more men were taken off by the coastguard helicopter and a relief captain was lowered to the ferry.

As dawn broke and the gale moderated, the lifeboat escorted the St Rognvald to a safe anchorage.

A spokesman for the awards said: "There is little doubt that the combination of outstanding airmanship, seamanship and determination, backed up by superb co-ordination and teamwork, prevented the St Rognvald from shipwreck and the possible loss of many lives."

If the rescuers reach the shortlist, they will be invited to attend a gala luncheon in London in November, when the winners will be announced.

SUMMARY FOR JULY 91

03 F.V. Silver Chord taking water, coastguard pump delivered and 137 remained on scene until relieved by Aberdeen lifeboat.

ANDESON GEAR LITTLE BARNES

06 faller on AN TEALLACH lifted and taken to Raigmore.
BELL CAMPBELL HOLMES BURLINGHAM

06 member of Kinloss MRT suffering heat exhaustion from Loch Maree.

BELL CAMPBELL HOLMES BURLINGHAM

08 search for missing person in Braemar area carried out with MRT. Found safe and well and taken to police R.V.
CAMPBELL BELL LITTLE BURLINGHAM

09 youth with breathing difficulties at Loch Treig. Taken to Fort William with blisters and exhaustion.
ANDERSON LEIGH LARKE BARNES

11 mountain biker with fractured femur lifted from Inverness area and taken to Raigmore.
CAMPBELL ANDERSON HOLMES AITKEN CHAPMAN(OBS)

12 suspected heart attack, crewman lifted from M.V. Polar Princess and taken to Aberdeen R.I.
BELL POLLOCK BODIAM BONTHRONE SHARMA(DOC)

13 walker with injured ankle lifted from Corpach area and taken to Fort William.
CAMPBELL LEIGH HOLMES AITKEN CHAPMAN(OBS)

14 capsized Trimaran 90NM NE of Aberdeen. 3 crew lifted after several hours in water and taken to Aberdeen R.I.
CAMPBELL LEIGH HOLMES AITKEN

17 cragfast climber at Foyers, lifted and delivered to local police.
HODGSON POLLOCK HOLMES AITKEN

22 overturned bus in Caithness area, recalled, no serious casualties.
LLOYD POLLOCK COX BARNES

23 fisherman stuck in mud at Beaully firth, recalled as casualty became unstuck!

BELL LEIGH HOLMES BONTHRONE

23 medevac 3 RTA casualties from Wick to Aberdeen. Bad weather prevented landing at Aberdeen, continued to Edinburgh.
BELL LEIGH HOLMES BONTHRONE

25 scrambled to badly burned casualty atop HT cable pylon at Inverness. Lifted and taken to Raigmore.
BELL POLLOCK BODIAM TRETHEWEY

25 diverted following above incident to 2 persons in water 15 NM N of Aberdeen. Stood down when casualties safe ashore.
BELL POLLOCK BODIAM TRETHEWEY

27 RTA near Fort Augustus, 1 casualty taken to Raigmore.
HODGSON BELL BODIAM TRETHEWEY

28 search for missing walker on North shore of Loch Ness. Ground search deemed more effective and 137 stood down.
LLOYD PRINCE CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

29 search for missing person in Aberdeen area. Recalled en route, subject found.
LLOYD PRINCE CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

30 medevac heart patient from Elgin to Edinburgh.
HODGSON POLLOCK BODIAM TRETHEWEY

30 scrambled to Kessock Bridge Inverness to potential jumper. Not required as jumper talked down by fireman.
PRINCE GEAR CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

Tourist dies in Ben Nevis accident

□ KEN JONES

A TOURIST died in an accident on Ben Nevis yesterday afternoon.

Police were last night attempting to trace the person's next-of-kin before releasing further details.

A RAF Sea King helicopter assisted Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and later flew the body to Belford Hospital, Fort William.

In another Lochaber incident, a man was taken by air ambulance to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, after an accident near Invergarry.

It is understood the man was driving an all-terrain vehicle in Invergarry Forest when it overturned, trapping him.

It is believed the man has a broken leg, but Fort William Police declined to release any further details.

Student is airlifted

A CHESHIRE student was airlifted to Belford Hospital, Fort William, after becoming exhausted on a Duke of Edinburgh award-scheme exercise.

Lewis Clark (18), Malpas, Chester, had complained of chest pains while walking south of Loch Treig in Lochaber.

Sorry sight at Peterhead



■ The broken wreck of the racing trimaran, Heliode, which capsized in the North Sea on Saturday night, lies at Peterhead harbour after being towed in by a Banff-registered fishing vessel.

The Heliode — which last week won the Stavanger-Banff North Sea race — clearly shows the evidence of the huge wave which struck the vessel north-east of Fraserburgh.

One hull is missing and the mast is broken off.

Danish skipper Claus Kampmann (42), and Americans Axel Sigmar (30) and Lucia Stretcher (31), were thrown from the vessel and spent six hours in the water before being rescued by helicopter.

Skipper of the Crystal River, which towed the Heliode, Mr Bruce Robertson, Hillhead, Portknockie, said they were heading to port when they heard the mayday.

"We were 30 miles away. So we headed to the scene and took the boat in tow," he said.

Crew saved from upturned yacht

By PETER STEELE

A YACHT crew were trapped for seven hours inside the capsized hull of their race-winning trimaran after it capsized in the North Sea.

The two men and a girl clung to an upside-down bunk until they were plucked to safety early yesterday by an RAF helicopter crew.

"They kept their heads in difficult circumstances and luck was on their side," said coastguards at Aberdeen.

Impact

The boat sailed from Macduff on Saturday and the three were on deck when they were hit by a freak wave.

The force of the impact threw them into the sea and flipped over the hull of the American-registered Heliode.

Coastguards said they managed to swim back to the upturned yacht and climb inside the main area through an emergency escape hatch.

They waited as the yacht wallowed in the sea 60 miles off Fraserburgh.

Hours later one of their distress flares was spotted

by the oil rig support vessel Maersk Rider, which raised the alarm.

The sea was too rough to put the ship's rescue launch alongside so a helicopter was scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth on the Moray Firth.

The three crew were winched aboard and flown to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary for treatment to minor injuries.

Skipper Claus Kampmann, a 42-year-old engineer from Stavanger, Norway, injured a leg.

Lucia Stretcher, 31, from Tennessee, had face bruising, and Axel Sigmar, 30, from Han-

over, Germany, was detained for observation.

A hospital spokesman said none was in a serious condition but they were being detained overnight as a precaution.

The rescue was led by Sea King pilot Flt Lt Ian Campbell, who was able to home in on the stricken yacht in the dark.

Dramatic

The three were plucked to safety by winchman Flt Sgt Dave Aitken, who was lowered down to the upturned hull.

"Given the state of the sea, it was quite a dramatic operation which

required considerable skill," said an RAF spokesman.

The Heliode had been first across the line the previous week in the Mobil North Sea handicap yacht race from Stavanger to Banff.

It was one of 38 yachts to compete in the annual 280-mile race and also won last year.

Skipper Kampmann and Mr Sigmar, from the winning crew, were sailing the yacht back to Stavanger with the help of Miss Stretcher.

The trimaran was last night taken under tow by a fishing boat heading for Peterhead.

Helicopter to the rescue after capsized

3 survive six hours in North Sea

□ KATE YUILL, ALASTAIR BISSET and BOB CARTER

THREE crew members of a racing trimaran that capsized 60 miles offshore survived in the icy North Sea for more than six hours — by sheltering under the vessel.

The Heliode — which last week won the Stavanger-Banff North Sea race — was north-east of Fraserburgh on her way back to Scandinavia when she was hit by a tidal wave at about 10pm on Saturday.

Danish skipper Claus Kampmann (42) and Americans Axel Sigmar (30) and Lucia Stretcher (31) were thrown into the water.

They were eventually winched to safety by the crew of a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth and taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Yesterday, a spokesman for Aberdeen Coastguard said the three climbed through an escape hatch when the vessel stabilised in the water and went inside the hull, where they sheltered on a bunk.

They fired distress flares, which alerted the oilrig supply vessel Maersk Rider. But the ship was unable to launch her rescue boat because of sea conditions and the helicopter was alerted.

There was "quite a large sea" with a wind speed of force 5 or 6, the coastguard spokesman said. He added that survival time in the North Sea was only a few hours without protection.

"It certainly would be no more than that," he said. "They did very well."

Flying Officer Glen Holmes, navigator on the Sea King, said: "It must have been quite an ordeal for them. They are very lucky considering they were in the water all that time during darkness."

The helicopter got to the scene around 4am yesterday.

"They were very wet and cold, and obviously a bit distressed," said FO Holmes. "I understand that two of them had been in the cabin of the trimaran when it overturned and had been thrown about a bit."

"We managed to winch them on board and flew them straight to hospital in Aberdeen, getting there around 5.40am."

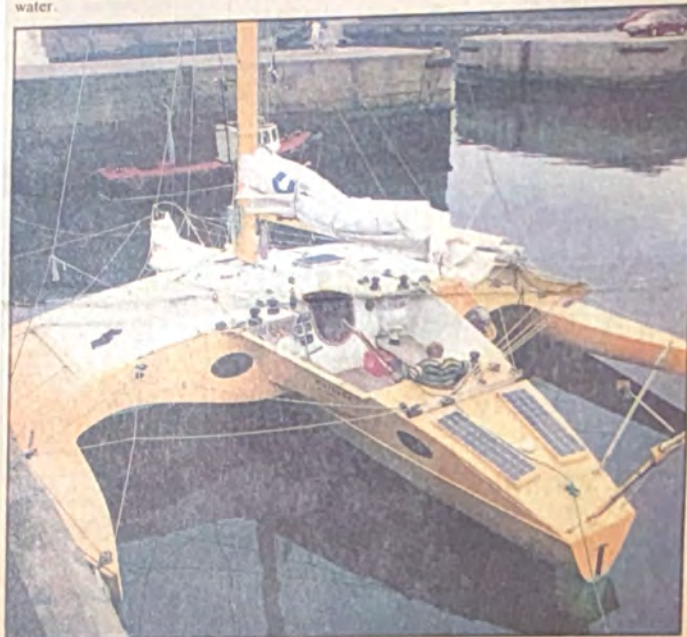
Mr Kampmann has an injured right leg. Miss Stretcher has bruising to the face and Mr Sigmar was detained for observation. Yesterday the three were reported comfortable.

Attempts by the Maersk Rider to take the Heliode under tow were unsuccessful and the yacht is believed to have sunk.

The trimaran, built and registered in the US, had completed the 280-nautical mile race in 49hour 40min, finishing five hours ahead of the next vessel.

She was crewed during the race by skipper Mr Kampmann, engineer Mr Sigmar and Norwegian Mr Alexander Holst.

But the three — all engineers with an international seismic firm in Norway — had to return to work before the mid-week prizegiving.



■ The Heliode pictured at Macduff last week, as were two of the crew rescued yesterday — Skipper Claus Kampman (below) and Axel Sigmar (bottom).



Pylon rescue in vain

□ COLIN CAMPBELL

Man dies after 132,000-volt contact

TWO rescue heroes scaled a 100ft electricity pylon yesterday in a bid to save a severely-injured hospital patient burned by 132,000 volts.

But last night, the patient, Mr Jonathan Dinnage (19), Higher Town, Sampford, Devon, died.

Fire officer Mr Gordon Fraser and power worker Mr Donald McNeil risked their lives in the nerve-racking mid-day drama high above the grounds of Craig Dunain Hospital, Inverness.

They tethered the trapped and semi-conscious man to the pylon and tried to comfort him, before a four-man helicopter crew flew in for a hazardous winching operation.

The missing patient was spotted near the top of the steel tower at 10.30am, following a search of the hospital grounds involving a police dog team. An alert was flashed to emergency services and Hydro-Electric.

Mr Dinnage is believed to have come in contact with a 132,000-volt conductor on the centre crossarm 80ft up, before power workers succeeded in isolating the current. He was seen slumped over a stanchion, apparently unconscious.

A helicopter rescue team



■ Rescue heroes fire officer Mr Gordon Fraser (left) and power worker Mr Donald McNeil, who climbed the pylon and tethered the man until the helicopter arrived.

from RAF Lossiemouth decided to try to winch him aboard.

Mr Fraser, assistant divisional fire officer based at Inverness, and Mr McNeil, a Dingwall-based Hydro Board linesman, agreed to climb the pylon to secure him and assist with the helicopter lift.

Mr Fraser said: "We reached the position in a matter of minutes, and found a young man on the conductor strut. He had been severely burned from head to foot.

"He was conscious and we were able to talk to him. He appeared in some pain, but the severity of the burns could have meant he was in a state of trauma shock.

"The top half of his body from the waist was hanging over the strut, and his legs were interlocked with other struts. We had to move him so we could tie his legs securely to the pylon."

Mr Fraser, who has 22 years' service, said: "It was a

hazardous experience and the most unusual rescue situation I have come across."

Helicopter pilot Flight Lieutenant Peter Bell and his crew then took off to try to complete the operation.

Co-pilot Flt Lt Scott Pollock said: "We discussed the situation, and although it was an extremely unusual rescue, it wasn't all that difficult for us. We hovered beside the pylon and dropped the winch around 20ft."

Winchman Sergeant Paul Trethewey secured straps around the patient and he was hoisted into the helicopter, where a doctor and paramedic were in attendance. He was then taken to Raigmore Hospital. The time from take-off to landing at Raigmore was less than 20 minutes.

A spokesman for Hydro-Electric said: "We were pleased to be able to help in the rescue, by quickly removing the current. It involved an overhead transmission line serving a large area of Inverness, and we were able to assist without causing disruption to the supply."

Mr McNeil, Tulloch Avenue, Dingwall, said: "I was on a squad of six preparing for a job at Beaulieu when we got the call to go to Inverness. Any of the lads could have gone up the tower but, as a retained fireman, I said I would make the climb.

"The man was in a bad condition, with 65-70% burns. I'm glad I was able to help."

Another picture — Page 13



■ The crew of the RAF Lossiemouth rescue helicopter which winched the badly-burned man from the pylon.



Man saved from high voltage pylon

By Tom Morton

DRAMA unfolded 125 feet above Craig Dunain psychiatric hospital in Inverness yesterday, after a patient climbed to the top of an electricity pylon in what was thought to be a suicide attempt.

The man, Johnathan Dinnege, 19, of Hightown Avenue, Stamford, Devon, was badly burned but still conscious after touching the 132,000 volt power lines. He had not been at Craig Dunain long.

He was eventually snatched from the top of the pylon by the crew of an RAF Sea King helicopter from Lossiemouth, hovering only feet from the high tension cables. A Hydro Board linesman and a fire officer helped to bundle the patient on board. He was flown directly to Raigmore Hospital.

Police sealed off the area around the hospital at 10.35



Donald MacNeil: one of the 'real heroes' of the rescue

yesterday morning after a search by police tracker dogs traced the patient, who had been missing since early morning, to the tree-shrouded pylon in the Craig Dunain

grounds. Hydro Board employees cut power to the cables on either side of the pylon to allow a rescue attempt to be mounted.

The joint operation included police, fire, ambulance and Hydro Board personnel. As well as the RAF helicopter, the air ambulance from Raigmore Hospital was in attendance.

Hydro Board linesman Donald MacNeil and assistant divisional fire officer Gordon Fraser were holding the badly injured man as the helicopter gingerly approached the pylon through a gap in the trees at 12.23pm. "It was a nerve-racking experience," said Mr Fraser. For Mr MacNeil, however, used to climbing the towers "virtually every day" the only unusual thing was "having a helicopter crewman drop in."

"We tied his ankles to the tower to stop him falling," said Mr MacNeil. "He was badly burned and his clothes had been burned off him. Once we were secure we positioned him so the RAF winchman could reach him."

One eyewitness said later that the helicopter had hovered so close to the pylon that "the winchman was able to literally step out." But RAF pilot Peter Belsaid he was never closer than five feet. "Fortunately there wasn't much wind so we were able to hover quite comfortably," he said. "It was one of our most unusual rescues but not the most dangerous." His winchman, Paul Trethewey, paid tribute to Mr Fraser and Mr MacNeil.

"The real heroes were the hydro man and the fireman who had the hair-raising task



Rescue drama: the man was lifted off the pylon by the crew of an RAF helicopter hovering only feet from high tension cables

of climbing up the pylon to reach the man, tie him down and make my job easy."

The firemen's courage was praised by Divisional Officer Dick Mackintosh. He said: "This was a unique incident for us because it is something

we cannot train for. Gordon volunteered for the task.

"The fact Donald MacNeil was a retained fireman as well meant we did not have to ask one of the other men to accompany Gordon. They

both acted above and beyond the call of duty."

And ADO Fraser said: "I couldn't ask one of my men to venture into the unknown so I did it myself. It must be the first time an ADO has taken orders from a retained

fireman but Donnie MacNeil's advice and expertise was invaluable.

"I have a head for heights obviously but this was in such a different environment, sitting in such an exposed position with all sorts of hazards."

Pictures by KEN MACPHERSON

Helicopter rescues boy (14)



■ Grateful Portsoy parents Mr Magnus McKay (back right) and his wife, Jacqueline (back left), say thank you to Flight Lieutenant Steve Hodgson (right), who took part in the rescue of their son, William (front, centre), when he was trapped on rocks at Portsoy. William's sisters, Kerry (10) and Kim (4) also went to Lossiemouth to thank the search-and-rescue crew.

□ BRUCE TAYLOR

obviously very cold and I think he was glad to see us."

William's home to tell his father and then to his own home to phone the emergency services.

William said: "The tide just came in too quickly and I couldn't get across."

"When I saw the two boys going to the pool on their bikes, I shouted to them to get help."

"I fish there a lot, but the tide came in quicker than I expected."

"The sea was around me, but it was too far to try to jump across to the other rocks."

Mr McKay said: "I was going to throw a rope over to William for him to put round his waist to get him across, but we decided it would be too risky."

The helicopter was about to start an exercise with the Lever-gordon lifeboat at Findhorn Bay when the crew was alerted by the Coastguard.

William soon forgot his fear, according to winchman Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey.

He said: "When we were being winched up, he kept saying to me, 'this is brilliant'."

Helicopter pilot Flight Lieutenant Steve Hodgson, who has been at Lossiemouth for five years, said: "The boy was

"I was glad to see them coming to rescue me," he said.

Yesterday, William went to Lossiemouth with his parents and sisters, Kerry (10) and Kim (4), to thank the helicopter crew.

Mr McKay said: "They do a tremendous job and we are very grateful to them."

He also praised the three boys for their part in the rescue.

The other members of the helicopter crew were co-pilot Flight Lieutenant Nigel King and winch operator Master Air Electronics Operator Ted Little.

Saturday's rescue was the 99th incident in which Lossiemouth Sea King flight has been involved since the start of the year.

Lochaber car-crash 4 are flown to hospital

□ WILLIE MORRISON

FOUR young Lochaber people were flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, by RAF Sea King helicopter on Saturday evening after their car left the road and overturned.

The accident happened on the A82 a mile south of Invergarry at 6.45pm.

Driver Miss Tracy Cox (20), 1 Keppoch Terrace, Roy Bridge, and front-seat passenger Miss Rachel MacCrimmond (19), 12 Nevis Road, Inverlochty, were trapped in the wreckage for more than an hour.

With a doctor and other medical staff in attendance, they were eventually freed by firemen from Fort Augustus, Fort William and Inverness.

The rear-seat passengers

were Mr William Mackay (23), 31 Lundy Road, Inverlochty, and Mr Neil Henderson (24), 9 Perth Place, Fort William.

Mr Henderson left hospital after treatment and the other three detained. Yesterday, a hospital spokeswoman said Miss Cox was satisfactory but that the other two had asked that no condition reports be released.

Police did not name another five people taken to Raigmore on Saturday evening following a two-vehicle crash at the junction of Green Drive and Culduthel Road, Inverness, at 7.45pm.

Four later left and one detained for observation.

make its way across
try from the coastal
drop in low
only then that I realised
just how bad their situation
really was

TWO 14-year-olds were plucked to safety by RAF helicopter rescue teams in races against the incoming tide at Portsoy and St Andrews on Saturday.

Schoolboy fisherman William McKay, 21 Gordon Crescent, Portsoy, was rescued by an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter after being trapped on rocks at Portsoy.

William, a Raiff Academy pupil, later said: "It was a bit frightening and I was glad to see the helicopter coming."

Before the helicopter arrived, William's father, Mr Magnus McKay, considered trying to pull his son to safety with a rope, but decided it might be too risky.

The outcrop of rocks — known locally as The Puntie — is a favourite fishing haunt of William's.

He was fishing alone from its furthest point when the incoming tide filled a gully behind him, trapping him.

Two younger boys — Ian Thompson and Myles MacDonald — who had been cycling to the town's outdoor swimming pool, heard William's cries and went for help.

They met William's pal, Nick Gardiner (14), 7 Campbell Drive, who went first to

Teenagers in tide-race dramas

Lossie copter rescues boy (14)

TWO 14-year-olds were plucked to safety by RAF helicopter rescue teams in races against the incoming tide at Portsoy and St Andrews on Saturday.

Schoolboy fisherman William McKay, 21 Gordon Crescent, Portsoy, was rescued by an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter after being trapped on rocks at Portsoy.

William, a Banff Academy pupil, later said: "It was a bit frightening and I was glad to see the helicopter coming."

Before the helicopter arrived, William's father, Mr Magnus McKay, considered trying to pull his son to safety with a rope, but decided it might be too risky.

The outcrop of rocks — known locally as The Pintie — is a favourite fishing haunt of William's.

He was fishing alone from its farthest point when the incoming tide filled a gully behind him, trapping him.

Two younger boys — Ian Thompson and Myles MacDonald — who had been cycling to the town's outdoor swimming pool, heard William's cries and went for help.

They met William's pal, Nick Gardiner (14), 7 Campbell Drive, who went first to

□ BRUCE TAYLOR

William's home to tell his father and then to his own home to phone the emergency services.

William said: "The tide just came in too quickly and I couldn't get across."

"When I saw the two boys going to the pool on their bikes, I shouted to them to get help."

"I fish there a lot, but the tide came in quicker than I expected."

"The sea was around me, but it was too far to try to jump across to the other rocks."

Mr McKay said: "I was going to throw a rope over to William for him to put round his waist to get him across, but we decided it would be too risky."

The helicopter was about to start an exercise with the Invergordon lifeboat at Findhorn Bay when the crew was alerted by the Coastguard.

William soon forgot his fear, according to winchman Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey.

He said: "When we were being winched up, he kept saying to me, 'this is brill'."

Helicopter pilot Flight Lieutenant Steve Hodgson, who has been at Lossiemouth for five years, said: "The boy was

obviously very cold and I think he was glad to see us."

A member of Portsoy Army Cadet Force, William had a flight in a Sea King when he visited the Lossiemouth base with fellow cadets, but Saturday's incident was far real.

"I was glad to see them coming to rescue me," he said.

Yesterday, William went to Lossiemouth with his parents and sisters, Kerry (10) and Kim (4), to thank the helicopter crew.

Mr McKay said: "They do a tremendous job and we are very grateful to them."

He also praised the three boys for their part in the rescue.

The other members of the helicopter crew were co-pilot Flight Lieutenant Nigel King and winch operator Master Air Electronics Operator Ted Little.

Saturday's rescue was the 99th incident in which Lossiemouth Sea King flight has been involved since the start of the year.



Grateful Portsoy parents Mr Magnus McKay (back right) and his wife, Jacqueline (back left), say thank you to Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey (front left) and Flight Lieutenant Steve Hodgson (right), who took part in the rescue of their son, William (front, centre), when he was trapped on rocks at Portsoy. William's sisters, Kerry (10) and Kim (4) also went to Lossiemouth to thank the search-and-rescue crew.

Lochaber car-crash 4 are flown to hospital

□ WILLIE MORRISON

FOUR young Lochaber people were flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, by RAF Sea King helicopter on Saturday evening after their car left the road and overturned.

The accident happened on the A82 a mile south of Invergarry at 6.45pm.

Driver Miss Tracy Cox (20), 1 Keppoch Terrace, Roy Bridge, and front-seat passenger Miss Rachel MacCrimmond (19), 12 Nevis Road, Inverlochty, were trapped in the wreckage for more than an hour.

With a doctor and other medical staff in attendance, they were eventually freed by firemen from Fort Augustus, Fort William and Inverness.

The rear-seat passengers

were Mr William Mackay (23), 31 Lundy Road, Inverlochty, and Mr Neil Henderson (24), 9 Perth Place, Fort William.

Mr Henderson left hospital after treatment and the other three detained. Yesterday, a hospital spokeswoman said Miss Cox was satisfactory but that the other two had asked that no condition reports be released.

Police did not name another five people taken to Raigmore on Saturday evening following a two-vehicle crash at the junction of Green Drive and Culdueth Road, Inverness, at 7.45pm.

Four later left and one detained for observation.

make its way across
try from the coastal
low

only then that I realised
just how bad their situation
really was



Yvonne King

TODAY'S GUEST WRITER IS AN AMBULANCE WOMAN

An uplifting experience of heroism

CHOPPERS or Chinooks, whirlybirds or Wessex, whatever word you use it means the same.

Whether you love flying or loathe it, few words can describe the feeling one gets when lifting off for the first time in a helicopter. I experienced this feeling when I visited RAF Lossiemouth in Scotland and spent three days with 'D' Flight, 202 Squadron search and rescue.

No call for ladies'

It was at the invitation of an RAF Medical Training Officer that I found myself, one morning, standing in the middle of a flight crew room surrounded by a group of handsome men in flying suits. I was taken to the "outfitters" and given similar apparel to wear. It was very cold in Scotland in January so the best of warm clothing,

consisting of several layers, was provided.

It took quite a while to get into and during the next three days I consciously took time out on a regular basis to visit the "gents" for up to ten minutes for what is normally a two-minute operation. (There's no call for a "ladies" in this essentially male environment).

The first two days I spent with the second flight on exercises. A visiting winch man from RAF Manston in Kent was practising the evacuation of a casualty from mountainous territory. There aren't many mountains in Kent.

I was the casualty, of course, so firstly the crew abandoned me in the snow.

As the helicopter flew off into the distance the silence after the relentless noise of the rotors was slightly eerie.

It seemed like an age before the

A tense moment in the airlift operation

craft returned, the winch man hanging 30 feet below ready to pick me up. He placed the strop over my head and arms and at his command we rose into the air.

I'll never forget the feeling of pleasure, this was only an exercise but I'm sure I experienced the total relief and confidence that a real casualty must feel.

On the third day, and probably the most exciting of all, I was to be a casualty on board a trawler. This meant being winched down on to the deck.

The sea was quite rough and as I sat in the open door of the heli-

copter, my legs dangling over the side, I did have reservations.

However, my momentary anxiety was needless, as soon as the strop was placed over me I found myself floating in space.

Courage and expertise

Down I went, and as I descended I could feel the salt water on my lips. I closed my eyes for a second then suddenly strong hands grabbed me around the waist and I landed on deck.

Before I had time to catch my

breath, I was re-attached to the winch and with the winchman's legs firmly around my back, his hand resting gently on my head, we rose up together to the waiting navigator.

Later that day I accompanied the first crew on a medical evacuation, or medi-vac as it is known, from Wick Hospital to transfer a sick baby that needed urgent treatment in a special care baby unit, the nearest one being Raigmore Hospital in Inverness.

I'll never forget the courage and expertise of the "unsung heroes" that I met in Lossiemouth, or the friendship they showed me.



WORTH A LOOK



Paul Smith

THE crossroads of life are singularly badly signposted and, thinking back, it's easy to imagine taking an entirely different route. Thus it is with Lauren Bacall. Speaking recently at the Sorbonne in Paris, the Hollywood actress revealed: "Howard Hawks wanted me to start my career with either Humphrey Bogart or Cary Grant. What would have happened if it had been

In an Independence Day edition of *Mavis Catches up* with... (ITV, 2.20pm) the husky-voiced Bacall, born Betty Perske in 1924, talks about her childhood, her relationship with her parents, her own experiences as a mother, and her writing. And, of course, she and Mavis talk about her love affair and subsequent marriage to Humphrey Bogart, 25 years her senior. Bacall's astonishing early acting success — she co-starred with Bogart in her first film, *To Have and Have Not* (1944), at the age of 20 — immediately established her among the Hollywood greats. A year later she and Bogart were married, and remained so until his death in 1957.

Mavis Nicholson, who has twice before interviewed Bacall, catches up with her once more at BAFTA in London and asks about the frustration of being continually associated with an era that ended over 30 years ago with Bogart's death.

Falling prey to the dreaded red spider may sound like the blood-chilling storyline to one of those infamous Hollywood B-movies, but a Dorset shepherd knows otherwise. Fortunately it wasn't he who was the victim, nor his flock, but his biggest ever prize fuchsia — a cautionary tale for followers of *Flowering Fossils* (Channel 4, 8pm), the "definitive guide to choosing and growing flowers", which tonight focuses on this pendulous member of the evening primrose family and its suitability for growth in containers.

From pest-infested fuchsias to a Budding Rose in distress — cue the Dambusters March, etc. — as viewers have another chance to see *Rescue* (Scottish, 7.30pm), the documentary series shown last year about Britain's largest helicopter rescue unit, the 202 Squadron based at RAF Lossiemouth, whose quest it is tonight to save the fishing vessel *Budding Rose* from the 40ft waves of the North Sea during 60mph gales.

The plight of Palestinian children living under military occupation in Gaza is told in "Do They Feel My Shadow?", the *Under The Sun* report on BBC2 at 9.30pm. Stone-throwing confrontations with Israeli defence forces have become part of growing up for many of the children, and, according to psychiatrist Dr Eyal El-Sarraj, cases of mental anguish are increasing.

At 10.35pm, viewers can choose between a repeat of *Baka — Komba's Forest* (Channel 4), which employs a wealth of material left over from the award-winning *Baka* — People of the Rainforest (repeated last Thursday), including supplementary footage filmed on a subsequent visit to the rainforest, or hedge their bets against a boring "box" by plumping for *Scottish Books* (ITV, 10.45pm) in which presenter Jenny Brown recommends more new poetry and some summer reading. In some respects, *Baka — Komba's Forest* is like a film version of a Rudyard Kipling story. *Komba*, we are told, is the Baka people's god who first created the forest and then carved the Baka from its wood. According to legend, when the Baka teased and tricked *Komba*, he rounded them all up and carved animals of the forest from them instead. Fortunately *Komba* later relented and created a new Baka people from the debris — sort of chips off the old blocks?

In my view Real-life dramas

WE tend to forget the price of fish includes the risk of human lives.

It is the only food that man still hunts in the worst of weather and in the most dangerous waters in the world.

But it was all dramatically brought home in the repeat of the first programme in the excellent documentary series, *Rescue*, (ITV).

It's centred on the work of the helicopter crews based at Lossiemouth.

A Peterhead fishing boat *Budding Rose* radioed for help.

It was July, and the crew of the fishing boat were struggling in 40-foot seas and winds gusting at more than 60mph.

They were somewhere in the Montrose Field 100 miles out in the North Sea, off Aberdeen.

The helicopter responded within minutes.

MESSAGE

After the winchman was lowered, and two crewmen brought aboard the aircraft, the struggle was on to pump out 7ft of water in the flooded cabin.

The battle was lost and eventually all seven fishermen were lifted off.

Four hours later the *Budding Rose* sank.

The message was clear. Without the helicopter, the fishermen could have died.

The RAF squadron at Lossiemouth has 120 calls a year and the television crew spent an entire 12 months with them.

It is a series well worth watching, even as a repeat, if only to wonder at the matter of fact courage of the men of the rescue service.

JAMES LAING

Flying to the rescue



Safely home: RAF rescuers, with two of the Budding Rose crew

IN JULY 1988 about 100 miles east of Aberdeen, the Peterhead-based fishing boat, Budding Rose, started to take on water. The crew struggled to contain the flooding but, in 40-foot seas and with winds gusting to 60 miles an hour, it soon became obvious that help was required.

A few minutes later, at RAF Lossiemouth, the duty standby crew of D Flight, 202 Squadron — one of Europe's busiest helicopter search and rescue units — received the message which meant that once again their special skills were about to be put to the test. Within 15 minutes they were airborne and heading towards the stricken vessel.

The dramatic action which follows is shown in the first of a repeat run of the acclaimed documentary series, *Rescue* (Scottish, 7:30 pm), which attracted a large and enthusiastic audience when first shown 18 months ago. There is no reason to believe that it will be any less popular this time round, for the shots of the little boat struggling in the huge waves of the North Sea are guaranteed to make viewers wonder at the courage, not only of the men who sail in these tiny vessels, but of those who go to help them when things go wrong.

As the Sea King helicopter approaches the area, the Budding Rose is pinpointed and the pilot realises there are going to be special problems for landing the winchman because of the small deck area. But the crew are equal to the situation and winchman Bob Pountney is soon being launched into space to be helped on to the boat by the fishermen. A lightweight pump is lowered to try to stem the flooding but it has little effect and with the water in the cabin now seven feet deep and the weather worsening, the decision is taken to abandon the vessel.

Syd Mayne

Finally, the skipper is winched on board and the Sea King delivers the seven-strong crew to Longside Airfield, Peterhead, where 15-year-old Justyn Llewellyn-Thomas, after his first trip to sea, is warmly welcomed by his relieved mother.

Anyone who missed this series first time round should make an effort to watch it — many who saw it then will not complain about this repeat. The production team lived with the crews for 12 months and filmed numerous real-life dramas which will be shown during the 13-week series, including exclusive footage of the world's worst oil rig disaster, Piper Alpha.

There is a neat link between *Rescue* and *Scottish Frontiers on Medicine* (Scottish, 6:30 pm), the programme which looks at pioneering medical research currently taking place in Scotland, for it includes reports from Aberdeen and Dundee on equipment designed for survival at sea. A revolutionary new video system (about to be installed on North Sea oil rigs) will enable doctors on shore to diagnose illnesses and injuries sustained by off-shore workers. Presenter Kaye Adams also looks at a special human dummy currently being used in the development of more effective survival equipment, like life-belts and harnesses.

The programme also investigates a portable high pressure chamber — now in use at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee — which is proving highly successful in accelerating healing of a number of medical conditions. A Dundee diver underwent sessions in the chamber for a badly damaged spinal cord and is now well on the way to recovery.

RAF WINCHMAN'S INCREDIBLE GAMBLE ON EDGE OF 3500-FT. DROP

A RAF winchman found himself on the edge of disaster when he went to the aid of an injured climber.

For the only way to deal with the trapped man was to unhook himself from the winch and perch precariously on a lethal ice lip just five feet from a sheer 3500-ft. drop.

RAF rescue crews are well used to taking to the skies to help the unwary and inexperienced who've been caught out by the treacherous mountain conditions in the Scottish Highlands.

But this time, it was a mountain rescue man who found himself seeing the other side of a dramatic rescue operation.

The 51-year-old man, who'd been a member of the Glencoe Mountain Rescue team for over 15 years, had been climbing the spectacular Stob Coire nam Beith with a 22-year-old colleague when disaster struck.

Alarm raised

It was Wednesday, January 30 this year and the pair were on the last stage of a 1200-ft. climb when one of the climber's crampons skidded and he spun and tumbled down the virtually sheer ice sheet.

A crampon caught in the surface and stopped his descent but the sudden impact resulted in him breaking his left leg and right ankle.

The climbers were forced to hole up on a tiny lip of ice formed around a rock on a ledge just five feet from a terrifying drop.

Frantically they shouted, blew whistles and shone their torches as the early winter dusk closed around them.

Early help was essential and the alarm was raised at 10 p.m. that night when they failed to return off the mountain.

Searches were mounted

and the Glencoe Mountain Rescue team, led by founder Hamish MacInnes, swung into action.

At RAF Lossiemouth on

the Moray Firth in northern Scotland the RAF Search and Rescue crews had spent the day tackling routine exercises and Master Air Crew Barney Barnes had just dropped off to sleep when the alert came through.

"Our co-pilot Flight Lieutenant Simon Willson had taken the call and as we pored over our charts he gave pilot Jim Anderson and winch operator Glenn Holmes and myself a quick briefing," said 36-year-old Barney.

"The adrenalin was flowing as usual when we heard that it was a trapped and injured climber in Glencoe and we made arrangements to rendezvous with Hamish MacInnes at a spot in Glencoe."

It took the powerful Sea King just 45 minutes to make its way across the sea from the coastal base at Lossiemouth.

HELICOPTER HEROES

THIS year is the RAF's Search and Rescue Service's 50th anniversary. During that half century they've helped rescue 50,000 people. Last year was their busiest ever when their helicopters flew to the assistance of more than 1800 people. In this dramatic series, we recount some of their most daring rescues.



An RAF winchman in action in a Sea King similar to the one used in the rescue.

"We got close enough above them to decide that I could probably be winched down. The idea was that I'd make a judgement when I got down there as to whether we could get a stretcher down or whether the mountain rescue guys would be needed.

Vertical

"In such critical situations we can get within 15 feet of the rotors hitting the rocks and in this particular case we pushed that to the very limit.

"We played out about 75 feet of cable which took me down to them and it was only then that I realised just how bad their situation really was.

And — after several stiff checks of the lines — I unhooked myself from the winch to let the aircraft pull away to a much safer position.

"I saw instantly that there was no way the injured man could be put on a stretcher.

"I radioed back up to the helicopter and, as soon as they were in position, they lowered the winch again and I strapped the casualty in as quickly as I could.

"He was hauled up and, within a minute or two, the winch came back down again. I hooked myself into it along with the other chap and, after we gingerly cut our securing ropes, we too were lifted clear.

"Even though we were dangling with a 3500-ft. drop beneath us, there was a great relief to be off that tiny ridge and on our way up.

"It's certainly a job which will stick in the memory for some time."

Elgin Cubs are high fliers

CUB SCOUTS at Elgin have reached new heights — flying the flag for the movement.

As part of the celebrations to mark Scouting's 75th anniversary, Cub Scout packs nationwide are being asked to make new flags and use their ingenuity to fly them from unusual places.

Boys of 5th Elgin (New Elgin) Pack hope to be in pole position, after getting an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter to fly their one.

The chopper did the needful when the boys visited the air station's search-and-rescue flight.

□ BRUCE TAYLOR

"The boys were delighted to see the helicopter overhead with the flag," said Miss Jean Dinwoodie, one of the pack leaders.

Helicopter pilot, Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell, said: "Flying the flag for the boys was certainly among the more unusual requests we get."

"The boys were delighted and we were happy to oblige."

The Cub Scouts spent an hour with the search-and-

rescue flight, meeting the helicopter crews, getting a talk on the flight's role, and seeing the hangars and helicopters at close quarters.

"It was one of the best nights we have had for a long time," said Miss Dinwoodie.

"The boys thoroughly enjoyed themselves."

Below: Taking a firm grip of their new flag after its helicopter flight are members of the 5th Elgin (New Elgin) Cub Scout Pack. With them are leaders (from left) Miss Jean Dinwoodie, Mrs Mandy McIntosh and Mrs Nikki Moddle.



One dead, four hurt in weekend crashes

□ DAVID STEELE and ANDREW JARVIE

A BUCKIE mother and son were detained in hospital yesterday following a two-car collision on the A96 Aberdeen-Inverness road near Pitcair.

Mrs Jessie Henderson (51), Trevear, South Pringle Street, the driver of one of the vehicles, received multiple injuries and was described as stable last night at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. Her son Bruce, of the same address, a passenger in the vehicle, was detained with a chest injury.

Mrs Henderson's husband, Alexander, left hospital after treatment, as were the occupants of the other car, driver Mr William Gillan (61), and his wife Nancy (56), both of 26 Westfield Road, Inverurie.

Both vehicles were extensively damaged in the crash, which happened about

3.20p.m., a short distance north of the Inveramsay Bridge.

Police have appealed for witnesses.

THREE serious accidents in the North at the weekend left one man dead and two injured, one critically ill.

A man whose car left the Castletown-Wick road yesterday morning was taken to Caithness General Hospital, and later transferred by air ambulance to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Engineer Mr Ian Cunningham (26), 18 Albyn Court, Thurso, was cut free from his car by firemen.

He was unconscious at the time of his transfer and was in a critical condition last night.

He is believed to be suffering from head injuries.

No other car was involved in the accident and no one else was hurt.

Orkney labourer Mr Drew Taylor (20), Shapinsay, received fatal injuries when the car he was a passenger in was involved in a two-vehicle collision.

The accident happened on the B5059 at Howie, Shapinsay, on Saturday. No one else was injured.

After another accident on Saturday, the A87 Inverness-Kyle road was blocked for four hours as firemen fought to release a lorry driver trapped when his vehicle left the road and overturned near Achnagart Quarry in Glen-shiel.

Mr Brian Stewart (28), 12 Community Way, Lossiemouth, was travelling south when the accident happened.

Firemen from Kyle had to radio brigade headquarters in Inverness for a heavy crane to free Mr Stewart, who was trapped in the cab by his legs.

He was taken to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, where he was in a stable condition yesterday.

The accident caused long delays for people travelling to Skye, as police were unable to divert traffic on to any other route.

It also caused hold-ups at sea as the Hebridean islands ferry at Uig, Skye, was held back to allow motorists to embark for other destinations, avoiding the accident.

Pylon heroes to rescue

By GRAHAM PATERSON

A HELICOPTER hovered just feet away from a 125ft power pylon as firemen battled to save a badly burned man yesterday.

He was winched aboard the Sea King and whisked to hospital during the daring rescue.

The drama happened in the grounds of Craig Dunain Mental Hospital, in Inverness, where the man is a patient.

Last night RAF Lossiemouth winchman Paul Tretheway praised part-time fireman Donald McNeil and Assistant Divisional Officer Gordon Fraser.

"They were the real heroes," he said of 36-year-old Donald, from Dingwall, and Gordon, of Inverness.

Paul added: "The firemen had a

Burns man grabbed by copter crew

hair-raising job climbing the pylon to reach the man and then tie him on to make my job easier. "They are top of my Christmas card list this year."

Rescue services were called in after hospital staff who had been searching for the missing patient spotted him clinging to the pylon about 25ft from the top.

Police last night named the man as 19-year-old Jonathan Dinnege, of Sampford, Devon.

Mr McNeil is employed by the North of Scotland Hydro Board

and is used to scaling pylons.

He said last night: "I didn't worry me that much. I'm used to it. The main power line was made safe before we started to climb. When Mr Fraser and I reached the man he was in a bad way."

"His clothes had been burned off and we tied his ankles to the pylon so he wouldn't fall."

"We had to position him so the winchman could reach him. He was very lucky to still be alive."

The helicopter hovered just five feet away from the 132,000-volt power cables in the difficult manoeuvre.

Pilot Peter Bell said: "Fortunately there wasn't much wind and so we were able to hover quite comfortably."

He added modestly: "It was one of our most unusual rescues — but not the most dangerous."



DARING: The Sea King whisks the patient to hospital yesterday

6 die in weekend carnage on roads

SIX people died in accidents in the North and Central Belt in a weekend of carnage on Scottish roads.

Three members of the same family died when two cars were in a head-on collision on the M9 Edinburgh-Stirling motorway early yesterday.

And one person died and seven were injured when a car carrying English holiday-makers was in a collision with a minibus on the A87 near Invergarry.

An Aberdeen father was also seriously ill in hospital after a head-on smash which killed a young woman in North Yorkshire.

Early on Saturday, sixteen-year-old James Shaw Peterkin was knocked down and killed by a car on the old A9 road near Beaulieu Police Station.

He was with a few other youths who had been walking northwards, the three miles to their homes in Muir of Ord when the accident occurred.

James was the son of Mr Shaw and Mrs Katherine Peterkin, Oldtown, Broad Brae, Muir of Ord.

The M9 motorway was closed for six hours after yesterday's crash involving a Ford carrying a family from Linlithgow and a Mazda driven by an Edinburgh man.

The driver of the Mazda, Mr Robert Crawford (28), of

□ STEVE STEWART
and KEN JONES

Kirknewton, Edinburgh, died, with Mr Kevin Gardiner (18), the driver of the Ford, and his mother, Maureen (45), and 15-year-old sister, Linda.

Mr Gardiner's father, Robert (44), a front-seat passenger, was injured and detained in St John's Hospital, Livingston.

Lothian and Borders Police said it appeared the vehicles were travelling in opposite directions, but on the same carriageway of the motorway.

The second accident, which happened on Saturday on the A87 Invergarry-Bunloyn road near the Glengarry viewpoint, involved a BMW, whose driver was killed, and a minibus.

The driver of the wrecked car, Mr Derek Peek (60), 10 Hereford Road, Luton, was cut free by firemen. He was taken by an RAF helicopter to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, but later died.

The other four occupants of the BMW — Andrew Peek (22), 79 Russel Road, Luton; Irene Lee (78), 12 Moor Place, Frizington, Cumbria; Tracey Peek (25) and Phyllis Peek, both of the same address as the dead man, — were taken to Raigmore Hospital.

The driver of the minibus, Susan Bentley, 12 River Bank,

Broadford, Skye, was injured in the crash.

Her passengers, Roderick MacIntyre, Adam MacIntyre (3) and Cheveone MacIntyre, all of Broadford, were also taken to hospital.

Aberdeen man Mr Neil Watson (30), 21 Abergeldie Road, was "stable" in York District Hospital after an accident late on Friday.

Mr Watson, his wife and two children were taken to hospital after the accident in North Yorkshire which claimed the life of a young woman.

The family's BMW car was involved in a collision with a Ford Fiesta driven by Joanne Long (20), of Cockmanthorpe, North Yorkshire, who was killed in the accident.

Mr Watson, who is understood to have been on holiday with his family, received multiple fractures in the accident.

His wife, Elaine (28), received abdominal injuries. Son, Barry (6), was bruised and daughter, Joanne (2), was treated for shock. Mrs Watson and the children left hospital after treatment.

Police are still appealing for witnesses to the accident on the A59 in the village of Hessay.

● Police and firemen were attending a serious road accident on the Braco-Comrie road in Perthshire late last night. People were understood to be trapped in their vehicles.

THE LIGHTHOUSE



ROTOR TORQUE

202 SQN

Summer Greetings from the 202nd — is it Summer or just a malicious rumour started by Execs so that the heating can be turned off. An enquiry is being undertaken by The Man from the Ministry of Awkward Aircraft Ladders, London.

What has the Station's Operational (all year round) Vertical Pursuit Squadron been up to? Ops first — by the end of June we were up to 108 jobs this year — recently we have reacted to a couple of sinking fishing vessels, several medi-vacs, the odd mountain lemming and a young boy cut off by the tide at Portsoy. Secondly, the flight had its annual detachment to the village of Plockton (no Gibraltar or Barbados for us) at the end of May beginning of June, where two crews on consecutive weeks used their time to work with the life boats and MRTs on the west coast. The oily ticks had a wonderful holiday in the sun while the aircrew notched up lots of hours flying (29 hours in three days — Sons of Fun don't do that in a month) and seven rescues. The pressure of it all proved too much for one crew who filled the aircraft with fuel at Benbecula and tried to escape to America. Unfortunately the RAF took exception to this and sent a Nimrod from Kinloss to persuade them to come back and even managed to talk them into picking up an injured Spanish fisherman from his boat at 46° 20' North 015° 20' West. So we only got one-quarter of the way to the USA. Growbag news — congratulations to MALM Barney Barnes who after completing Biggin Hill selection last year and suffering the long wait since has now been selected for a Branch

commission as an Air Load Master (hello Mr Biggar Fatter Wallet!). So it's off to jolly old Cranwell for pinepole technology courses and the brain removal operation in January. FS Trethoooweee is now breaking out from his crewman duties and is trying to get into the free range egg sales market — all orders via D Flt Ops. Our pet co-pilot, Fg Off Chris Leigh has still not done anything outstanding, noteworthy or expansive so he gets a mention for that or lack of that for that matter!

DAVE LLOYD FOR SAN FRAN — START A RUMOUR!

Finally there is no truth in the rumour that one of the winchmen gets his copy of the Lighthouse transcribed into Braille — he just gets a pilot to read to him.

Oily Ticks News — The men with the dirty fingernails have had a fairly quiet time — a nice holiday on the West coast, lying in the sun while Lossie was stuck with 8/8 at 100 RASH and BAC Cpl Basford is getting married and hasn't invited any of the Flight to the reception (A remarkably clever and uncharacteristic trait previously unseen). However at his stag night he was chained to a concrete ball which he carried all night until the following morning when it was hacksawed off by Bob Peebles, who incidentally had a very handy blind date in Glasgow last weekend but failed to get an away from home result. Steve Furness and Billy Fisher have departed the Flight, heading for a summer holiday in the Falklands, not accompanied by Cpl Dave Brereton who has been medically downgraded and is unfit to work in the South Atlantic (what a shame not being allowed to go to the windy, snowy,

cold holiday camp at MPA). NOW HE'LL DEFINITELY NOT GET HIS THIRD! The Irish and Scots representatives on the Flight, FS Bill Lowry and Jnr Tech Al Harris are trying to be understood and have enrolled for a course of O level English — life for everyone else will hopefully be much clearer. Finally, farewell to Cpl Johnathon Forster — WHO — Floss! has now left the Air Force to make a big bag of gold on the oil rigs. Well that's all the news on the home front. Take care.

Yours aye,

D. SCRIBE

P.S. — Gary the Stacker, recently returned from computer courses at Hereford, got down to the 'bare essentials' when he enrolled in Fitness classes in Lossiemouth, but who is the mystery lady?



P.P.S. — Congratulations from all on 202 to FS Dave Whalley (Heavy), the MRT Leader from Kinloss, recognised for his years of service in Mountain Rescue, by the award in the Birthday Honours List of a British Empire Medal.

Remote Cairngorm peak plane crash remembered

□ ALASTAIR BISSET

A WARTIME air crash on a remote Cairngorm peak which claimed eight lives was remembered yesterday — exactly 50 years on.

One of the men who died when the RAF Anson ploughed into the mountain ridge 2,300ft up Glen Loin, six miles south of Tomintoul on August 7, 1941, was Group Captain Edward Tennant — father of Moray's present Lord Lieutenant, Sir Iain Tennant of Innes House, Elgin.

Yesterday, Sir Iain and his family were present at the exact spot of the Anson crash as cadets and officers from the Air Training Corps unveiled and dedicated a memorial cairn and plaque.

To get there had involved a 40-minute Land-Rover journey — plus a 20-minute upward hike through moor and heather.

The ceremony on the sunbaked, windswept ridge was a moving one.

Group Captain Tennant — a World War I fighter ace who held the Military Cross and Distinguished Service Order — was the senior officer on board the Anson when it crashed in atrocious weather.

He was also the first Scottish Commandant of the Air Training Corps, which had been founded only six months earlier to allow young men below the age of military service to be trained in aviation skills.

Yesterday's ceremony was the 50th anniversary tribute by the ATC in Scotland. Three officers and 11 cadets had been involved in the construction work of the cairn — which had been flown to the hilltop site by a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

Meantime, at Elgin, the ATC was also paying tribute to another of the Anson crew — Pilot Officer Alex Gill, who is buried in the town's cemetery.

Local ATC cadets, accompanied by Highland ATC wing Squadron Leader Jim Duncan, laid a wreath on the grave as a young piper played a lament.

Members of Pilot Officer Gill's family also attended the Cairngorm crash site ceremony.



■ A time to remember... Lord Lieutenant of Moray Sir Iain Tennant (left) and Commandant of the ATC in Scotland, Group Captain Ian Pantou, at the cairn dedicated yesterday in memory of Sir Iain's father, Group Captain Edward Tennant and the seven others who died when the Anson crashed near Tomintoul 50 years ago.

SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 91

02 Fallen climber in Cuillins with fractured ankle lifted and taken to Raigmore.

BELL CAMPBELL LITTLE BURLINGHAM

03 Investigated Flotsam thought to be from fishing vessel 40 NM NE of Aberdeen. Found to be section of netting and driftwood.

GEAR LEIGH BODIAM BARNES

04 Medevac premature baby from Wick to Raigmore.

CAMPBELL LLOYD LITTLE BURLINGHAM

05 Search for 11 missing children at Loch Ericht. Two groups found by ground party and lifted by R137 taken to police R.V.

GEAR LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

06 Investigated Sarsat hits in vicinity of Fraserburgh. R137 landed on and winchman located beacon in private garage.

CAMPBELL POLLOCK LITTLE BARNES

07 Evacuation of Fulmar 'A' oil platform following reported explosions on board. Stood down after arrival on scene.

ANDERSON LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

09 Transfer of unconscious patient from Kyle of Lochalsh to Raigmore.

GEAR BELL LITTLE BURLINGHAM

09 Medevac heart patient from Golspie to Raigmore.

LLOYD POLLOCK HOLMES TRETHEWEY

10 Transfer RTA victim with spinal injury from Lochalsh to Raigmore.

LLOYD POLLOCK HOLMES TRETHEWEY

10 Transfer RTA victim with severe injuries from Fort William to Raigmore.

BELL GEAR LARKE BURLINGHAM

11 Called to search for missing fisherman who was found asleep in car at police R.V.

BELL GEAR LARKE BURLINGHAM

11 Scrambled for oil platform evacuation, stood down en route.
CAMPBELL LLOYD CHAPMAN BARNES

11 Windsurfer reported in difficulty near Portsoy. On arrival windsurfer was being assisted by local boat.

CAMPBELL LLOYD CHAPMAN BARNES

12 Search for missing person in Kintail area. Stood down en route, person found safe and well.

CAMPBELL LLOYD CHAPMAN BARNES

12 Transfer pregnant woman from Torridon to Raigmore.

ANDERSON BELL LARKE BURLINGHAM

13 Yacht aground at Peterhead-beaten by lifeboat, stood down.

ANDERSON BELL LARKE BURLINGHAM

14 Transfer Navy EOD team to R.N. Vessel to deal with a suspected mine. Mine located by 137 and found to be a fishing pot.

CAMPBELL POLLOCK CHAPMAN BARNES

17 F.V. aground near Buckie-lifeboat wins again, stood down.

WILLSON POLLOCK HOLMES TRETHEWEY

18 F.V. Magnificent on fire 20NM E of Peterhead. Winchman lowered and fire was found to be out. R137 stood down when lifeboat arrived on scene.

WILLSON POLLOCK HOLMES TRETHEWEY

18 Transfer heart patient from Dyce to Newcastle.

WILLSON POLLOCK HOLMES TRETHEWEY

21 Injured person lifted with 2 companions from Cairngorm to Raigmore and remainder of party taken to chairlift car park.

PRINCE ANDERSON CHAPMAN BURLINGHAM

22 Search for 2 missing 14 yr olds on Ben Lawers. Search not possible by helo due to weather. RTB.

BELL LEIGH LARKE TRETHEWEY

24 Medevac pregnant woman from Wick to Raigmore.

ANDERSON LLOYD CHAPMAN BONTHORNE

SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 91 (CONT)

24 Aux coastguard with back injury following cliff exercise taken to Raigmore.

PRINCE LEIGH LARKE TRETHEWEY

25 Medevac one from Portree to Aberdeen.

ANDERSON POLLOCK CHAPMAN BONTHORNE

27 Medevac baby from Raigmore to Edinburgh.

CAMPBELL POLLOCK CHAPMAN BONTHORNE

30 Uplift casualty + one from Ben Nevis, delivered to MRT, then search for sighted flashlight in Glencoe - nothing found.

GEAR LLOYD HOLMES TRETHEWEY

31 Girl in water at Cullen Bay, safe ashore on arrival.

PRINCE LEIGH LITTLE BONTHORNE

31 Faller with broken ankle at shelter stone, Loch Avon, taken to Raigmore.

PRINCE LEIGH LITTLE BONTHORNE

Diving boat rescues windsurfer

MACDUFF inshore lifeboat and a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth were called out last night after a windsurfer got into trouble at Sandend, near Portsoy.

However, the man was rescued by a Sandend diving boat before the helicopter and the lifeboat reached the scene.

A Coastguard spokesman in Aberdeen said the windsurfer, believed to be from Portsoy, had been landed at Sandend and was none the worse for his experience.

The alarm was raised by the man's wife after he could not get back to shore.

A DUIRINISH, Kyle, woman was badly hurt when her car rolled down an embankment after it veered off the Kyle-Invermoriston road on Saturday morning.

Mrs Elizabeth Macdonald (32), Heathcrest, Duirinish, near Kyle, was airlifted to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, by an RAF helicopter, with a serious back injury.

Last night a hospital spokeswoman said that Mrs Macdonald was stable.

A TILlicoultry man, Mr Daniel Comrie (53), Stalker Avenue, knocked down by a foreign tourist's car on Saturday while crossing the Fort William-Glencoe Road, half a mile south of Fort William, was last night fighting for his life in Glasgow's Southern General Hospital.

At first he was taken to Belford Hospital but later transferred by RAF helicopter to the Southern General where he underwent neurosurgery.

A hospital spokeswoman described Mr Comrie last night as "very serious".

A SHETLAND schoolgirl was knocked down by a taxi early yesterday.

The girl, who has not been named, was taken to the Gilbert Bain Hospital in Lerwick after the accident on the town's Old North Road.

Fishing boat rescue

SIX men were towed to safety after their 25-ft angling boat run aground on rocks at Boddam and began taking in water early today.

Peterhead lifeboat towed the Fraserburgh-registered Mermaid to the town's harbour around 1.35am.

An RAF Lossiemouth helicopter was scrambled and the Stirling Albion supply vessel and Peterhead auxiliary coastguard were in attendance.

The skipper of the crew, all from the Boddam area, suffered slight face cuts and was treated and later released from Peterhead Cottage Hospital.

Fraserburgh creel boat towed ashore

A SMALL Fraserburgh-registered creel boat was rescued by Peterhead lifeboat early yesterday after she ran aground on rocks at Boddam.

The Mermaid, with seven on board, is thought to have been returning from a sea-angling trip when she hit the rocks and started taking in water.

Aberdeen Coastguard received a distress call from the skipper, whose name has not been released, shortly before 1am and a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was scrambled.

The Stirling Albion supply vessel and Peterhead auxiliary coastguard were also in attendance.

The lifeboat took the stricken boat into Peterhead harbour just after 1.30am, and secured her on the beach.

The skipper received minor face cuts in the accident and left Peterhead Cottage Hospital after treatment. None of the others on board was injured.

Oil rig in mine alert

BOMB disposal experts raced to an offshore platform today to deal with a suspected mine.

The object was reported by a stand-by ship less than a mile from the Borgny Dolphin, a rig drilling for Texaco 100 miles east of Aberdeen.

Seventy personnel are on board the rig but there was no move to evacuate the platform pending identification of the object.

Coastguard officers said tides threatened to bring the object even closer to the installation.

A helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was scrambled to pick up the bomb disposal team, which had been on exercise in Scrabster.

A Coastguard spokesman said the stand-by ship, the Colne Phantom, had reported a suspicious object around 6.30am.

It was floating in the water half a mile south west of the rig but crew lost sight of it shortly afterwards.

He said the object could pose considerable problems if it went below the sea surface.

Fisheries protection vessel HMS Guernsey and a helicopter from BP's Forties field 20 miles north of the rig were called in to scour the area.

Trawler crew beat blaze at sea

THE six-man crew of the Peterhead fishing boat Magnificent made port yesterday aboard their smoke-blackened vessel after facing a fire at sea.

A rescue helicopter and Peterhead lifeboat were called out and other fishing vessels made for the scene after fire hit the 99ft vessel around lunchtime yesterday.

The trawler was some 10 miles outbound from her home port.

Skipper Mr George Milne (35), 55 St Mary's Street, said he had been about to turn in when smoke was spotted filtering into the wheelhouse from the berth at the back of the bridge.

The crew prepared the inflatable raft on the stern as a precaution and broadcast a mayday call.

An RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter shadowed the vessel as she made about, streaming smoke.

With the lifeboat and other vessels on hand, the crew broke out fire extinguishers to tackle the blaze in the engine-room. They finally put it out with a fire hose.

Peterhead lifeboat escorted the stricken vessel into port.

Once berthed in the South Harbour, the Magnificent was boarded by firemen.

Tourist plucked from Foyers rocks

A FRENCH holidaymaker was rescued by an RAF helicopter last night after he became trapped on rocks at the picturesque — but dangerous — Falls of Foyers, Loch Ness-side.

A woman who had been with the man raised the alarm at the Foyers shop, run by Mr Alex Campbell, and the police were alerted.

Mr Campbell's son Derek (24) said the 28-year-old tourist was stuck on a ledge about 50ft below the path, unable to go up or down.

The police called in the RAF but, because of the confined space in the gully and dense woods, winchman Flight Sergeant David Aitken had to be lowered through the trees while the aircraft stayed 100ft above.

None the worse for his ordeal, the holidaymaker was flown to the local shinty pitch, where he was greeted by his companions and got a ticking-off from the local bobby for straying from the path.

Float causes 'mine' scare on rig

A DRIFTING fishing float sparked an alert on a North Sea oil rig yesterday when it was mistaken for a mine.

Navy explosive experts were flown to the Borgny Dolphin semi-submersible 85 miles east of Aberdeen after a standby ship reported a 4ft object with prongs floating less than a mile from the rig. Soon afterwards, it disappeared from view.

A Sea King helicopter flew the bomb-disposal team from Scrabster to the fisheries-protection vessel HMS Guernsey, which began a sweep.

The bomb experts later discovered the seaweed-coated object, which turned out to be a type of fishing float used by trawlers.

"It bore a close resemblance to a mine and it was quite correctly reported," an Aberdeen Coastguard spokesman said.

Big search launched for 2 lost teenagers

A MAJOR search operation was launched last night after two 14-year-olds became lost on a Perthshire hill.

The two were in a party, thought to come from the Glasgow area, who were out walking on Ben Lawers. They became separated from the main party and when they had failed to return to base by 7pm the alarm was raised.

As darkness fell Tayside Police Mountain Rescue team, a civilian team and a search and rescue helicopter were called in to try to locate them.

They were thought to be ill-equipped for a night in the hills, probably wearing jeans and trainers. However, with weather conditions quite mild it was considered they would not be in immediate danger.

Just weeks ago a similar operation swung into force when a party of youngsters got lost in the Perthshire hills. They eventually were located safe if somewhat exhausted.

Sir Jimmy is star of RNLI gala day



■ Bidding Sir Jimmy Savile welcome to Buckle at the Seamen's Memorial are (from left) Mr Peter Slater; chairman of Buckle Lifeboat Committee Mr Ian Rennie; Mr Roddy Ferguson, owner of the Rathburn Hotel, and Mr Sandy Sutherland, vice-chairman of the Seamen's Memorial Committee.

□ FIONA McPHERSON

A KNIGHT in a shining golden tracksuit sailed in to Buckle at the weekend and fixed it for the town's lifeboat gala day to be a runaway success.

As larger-than-life TV personality Sir Jimmy Savile made his way from the harbour to the town's Merson Park, hundreds of people lined the route in blazing sunshine to cheer him on.

Guest of honour at the Royal National Lifeboat Institution gala day, Sir Jimmy was the star attraction at the helm of a massive fund-raising day which took in more than £4,000 for around 20 local charities.

The crew of the Buckle lifeboat fixed it for Jim to join them on a simulated sea rescue, during which he was winched up to an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King rescue helicopter before being lowered back down to the deck.

"It was exciting and thrilling but I was in safe hands," said Sir Jimmy, who reckons he has raised £30million for charity over the years.

"I knew that my lifeboat friends would not let me get too wet."

Being winched up by the helicopter was a new experience for the man who has tackled just about everything but who is better known for his marathon running.

"What people do not realise is that the helicopter attracts sharks and I could clearly see 30-40 man-eating sharks circling below me," he said.

"I saw a 140ft long Moray eel licking its lips but I was pulled up in the nick of time."

Sir Jim's busy day in Buckle started with a poignant visit to the Seamen's Memorial, before he was taken to meet the residents of the Ark Housing development, where he offered to lend his support to the elderly tenants who are trying to raise money to buy a minibus.

Handicapped youngsters from the Clydeville centre were able to chat to their hero before he moved on to Netherha old folks' home, where the gallant Sir Jim charmed female staff and residents.

Runners of all ages joined the veteran of 200 marathons for the three-mile fun run from Merson Park during the afternoon where stalls and displays kept the crowds entertained.

With boundless energy Sir James spent the rest of the day signing autographs and made time to talk to everyone.

"Jim broke his own holiday to be here in Buckle," said Mr Ian Rennie, chairman of the lifeboat committee.



■ Just what the doctor ordered, Sir Jimmy Savile stops for a chat with Mrs Isobel Rumbles, a patient at Seafeld Hospital, Buckle, during his trip to the town for the lifeboat gala day.

ON BOARD

After a hurried snack lunch, Jimmy was down at the harbour and on board the Buckle lifeboat Charles Brown. There was a good turn-out of the lifeboat crew to welcome him aboard before setting off for the open sea.

Watched by a large crowd lining the sea front, the lifeboat was joined by a helicopter from 202

Squadron Search and Rescue RAF Lossiemouth for an exercise. How many onlookers realised at the time that one of the people being airlifted was none other than Sir James himself?



Jimmy among the action at sea.

Our mistakes, by trek bosses

Pt 5 74x91



Children at risk in shambles, says rescue leader

LEADERS of an adventure camp for children admitted last night waiting at least 14 hours before taking action to find 12 girls and two boys lost in a Perthshire mountain area for which they were ill-equipped.

The youngsters, aged from eight to 15 and led by 18-year-old Rachel Brown, had a frightening 36-hour ordeal before being found near Loch Erich.

The huge rescue operation involved a helicopter from Lossiemouth, dog teams and local searchers.

As they recovered at the base camp near Calvin, assistant manager Mr Tol Dixon said he did not know why he delayed taking action to find them and admitted it had been a mistake to leave them in charge of a junior leader in such an area.

Earlier, Cairngorm Mountain Rescue Team deputy leader Mr Chris Barley said: "We were lucky we didn't find 15 dead kids. The weather was extremely kind to us."

"The organisers have to take responsibility. This was a shambles. They didn't even know where the children were."

The children, from England, are on a two-week holiday due to end on Saturday. It was organised by the Scunthorpe-based Children and Adventure Health Camp Trust.

They were supposed to go walking near Loch Con, four miles from their camp, but were sent to Loch Erich, near Dalwhinnie, where they were to spend Sunday and Monday.

■ **Left:** Some of the children safe and well back at their camp.

□ **NORMAN MacLENNAN**

nights in mountain shelters before returning to camp.

Trust organiser Mr Barry Bishop said a staff member, a teenage girl, changed the children's route at the last minute without telling him.

"She is no longer with us," he said. "The route she gave them was far too difficult."

"What was planned was easily within the children's capabilities and they were successful in finding it."



LES PARKER



...sculptures Birmingham, who led the party is praised for the way she coped emergency.



6-actre

Children's adventure holiday nightmare



BISHOP: Defensive



SAFE: Some of the youngsters back at camp yesterday

By DONALD STEWART

RESCUE workers last night hit out at the leaders of a children's adventure holiday which turned into a nightmare.

A hill trek ended in a full-scale search when 14 youngsters, led by an 18-year-old girl, went missing in the Highlands. They were found cold, hungry and exhausted yesterday after spending the night lost on the Grampian mountains. Rescue leader Chris Barley said last night: "We were lucky we did not find 15 dead kids."

"They were so hopelessly equipped for an expedition of this sort they could have died."

Ordeal

The children — among them a nine-year-old boy — were discovered near Dalwhinnie in Invernesshire.

As the party recovered from their ordeal the organiser of the holiday, Mr Barry Bishop, defended himself.

He said a member of staff had made a last-minute change to the planned route.

The youngsters should have been taken over a fairly easy track near their camp at Calvine, Tayside.

Instead they were asked to hike over much rougher ground on hills beside

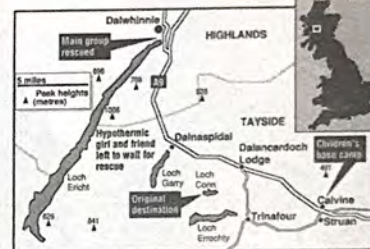
Leaders attacked after big trek party vanishes

Loch Erich. "I was horrified and when I heard of it — I could hardly believe my ears. The children should never have been there."

"The route was changed by a female member of staff who is no longer with us," said Mr Bishop, a retired teacher.

He and his wife run the Children and Adventure Health Camp Trust based in Scunthorpe, Humberside.

The private organisation, sponsored by charities like the Round Table, has been taking youngsters to Scotland for the past 11 years since the couple set up a camp in Perthshire for under-



privileged children. Last night Rachael Brown, who was supervising the party of youngsters, aged between nine and 13, told how she had feared for their lives.

She walked over 30 miles with only one boot after giving her other one to a girl who had lost hers.

"I was in agony but I couldn't show it because I was the leader and had to be strong. I believed the best way to keep them all alive was to keep going," said Rachael.

Desperately trying to find her bearings after taking a wrong turn she spotted anglers John Kerr and his father, Jim, from Stirling fishing on Loch Erich.

They took her and the three most distressed children to Dalwhinnie.

She told the other youngsters to stay put but they split up and left their equipment behind.

6 We were lucky we did not find 15 dead youngsters 9

Search ends as boys found safe

□ HELEN JACKS

A MAJOR search for two Glasgow schoolboys, missing on a Perthshire hill, ended yesterday morning when they were found sitting on a cottage doorstep.

Kevin Coyle and Derek Leggat, both 14, from the Cranhill area, were found by pensioner Mrs Martha Thomson, when she opened her front door. In the hills above, more than 60 people had been searching all night for the youngsters, who became separated from their party on 3,988ft Ben Lawers.

Mrs Thomson, who was taken aback to find the exhausted boys sitting on her doorstep, took them into her home, The Toll House, Lawers, and gave them tea and cheese sandwiches.

"They were absolutely exhausted and starving, but otherwise seemed fine," Mrs Thomson said.

She phoned Aberfeldy police station, but got no reply as the officer was involved in the search. After more tea and biscuits she thought of contacting the doctor's surgery and emergency services were soon at her door.

The boys told Mrs Thomson very little except that they were unharmed.

"They were just typical of lads of that age, shy and self-conscious — and I think they were worried they would be getting a row when they got home," she said.

She found the two teenagers around 10.15am. One was wearing a Parka-style anorak with jeans and training shoes and the other had on a jumper, jeans and trainers.

Conditions on the hill overnight had been

reasonably mild, but there had been a light drizzle and mist. The two had taken shelter behind a large boulder when they realised they were lost and had at one point seen a rescue helicopter, but had been unable to attract its attention.

They had been with a party of two adults and two older children from the Cranhill Outdoor Centre and had reached the summit of Ben Lawers on Thursday afternoon.

Kevin and Derek had set off downhill ahead of the others. Mist suddenly fell, cutting them off from view of the adults and when they had not returned to the foot of the hill by 7pm the police were alerted.

A full-scale rescue operation was launched, involving Tayside Police Mountain Rescue Team, a civilian team and a helicopter from RAF Kinloss. They were joined at first light by

the RAF Kinloss Mountain Rescue Team and a helicopter from RAF Leuchars.

The path to the summit of Ben Lawers is a popular walk for tourists, and the National Trust for Scotland, which runs a visitor centre there as well as nature trails, has clear safety warnings about the type of dress and equipment which should be used on the mountain.

There is an audio tape which states that the walk should be undertaken only by properly-equipped walkers and there are three-dimensional models, one dressed casually and the other properly, with the caption that the casual approach adds risks to hillwalking.

In case anyone setting out has missed these warnings, there is a sign at the foot of the path which states: "Attention, are you adequately equipped to walk up this mountain?"

SUMMARY FOR SEPTEMBER 91

02 Fallen climber in Cuillins. One app. dead casualty taken to Sligachan.

PRINCE LEIGH LITTLE TRETHEWEY

02 F.V. Fiona reported hitting rocks N.E. of Helmsdale. On arrival F.V. entering harbour. R137 RTB.

PRINCE LEIGH LITTLE BURLINGHAM

04 Called to search for missing walker by Glenbrittle. On arrival casualty walked up to aircraft.

PRINCE CAMPBELL LARKE BARNES

06 Called to lift 2 climbers on Glen Coe. 1 with broken ankle.

PRINCE LLOYD BODIAM BARNES

07 Tasked to lift 59 yr old off Rig Safety Vessel 'Grampian Sword'. Casualty taken to Aberdeen Airport.

CAMPBELL WILLSON LARKE BONTHORNE

08 Transfer baby + 2 from Wick to Raigmore Hospital.

CAMPBELL WILLSON LARKE BONTHORNE

08 Transfer 6 yr old girl with cancer from Thurso to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

BELL GEAR BODIAM TRETHEWEY

10 Tasked to search for Epirb washed overboard F.V. Epirb reported washed overboard 3 weeks earlier and possible damage to box caused transmission.

GEAR LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

10 Search for missile in water. Torpedo found.

BELL CAMPBELL LARKE BURLINGHAM

11 Scrambled to fallen climber on Skye. Casualty taken to Broadford Hospital.

ANDERSON WILLSON LITTLE BONTHORNE

14 Medevac patient for heart transplant from Aberdeen Airport to Newcastle.

GEAR LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

15 Search for missing 43 yr old woman. After extensive search nothing found. Stood down.

GEAR LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

16 Tasked to transfer liver patient from Aberdeen R.I. to Boulmer.

ANDERSON LEIGH CHAPMAN BURLINGHAM

19 Scrambled to German Air Force C-60 with mayday. Aircraft landed safely.

LLOYD GEAR HOLMES BARNES

20 Fallen climber taken to Broadford Hospital and then on to Raigmore.

PRINCE POLLOCK CHAPMAN BURLINGHAM

20 Scrambled to search for man overboard in Fraserburgh anchorage. Nothing found.

PRINCE POLLOCK CHAPMAN BURLINGHAM

22 Tasked to take 3 day old baby from Raigmore to Edinburgh.

ANDERSON POLLOCK CHAPMAN BURLINGHAM

23 Epirb transmissions on 243 & 121.5. Nothing found on either 243 - Kirkwall area or 121.5 - Fraserburgh area.

WILLSON LEIGH LITTLE BONTHORNE

25 Dinghy in trouble with 2 people in Pennan Bay. R137 remained on scene till casualties on IRB.

WILLSON LEIGH LITTLE BONTHORNE

27 Transfer premature baby from Wick to Raigmore.

PRINCE LEIGH LITTLE BONTHORNE

28 Medevac brain haemorrhage patient from Raigmore to A.R.I.

GEAR POLLOCK LARKE TRETHEWEY

28 Diverted from above to possible jumper off Kessock Bridge. Nothing found. after search.

GEAR POLLOCK LARKE TRETHEWEY

29 Scrambled to search of area E of Kessock Bridge after red flare reported. Nothing found.

GEAR POLLOCK LARKE TRETHEWEY

29 Medevac young girl with suspected meningitis from Isle of Skye to Raigmore.

LLOYD LEIGH CHAPMAN GODLEY

Death fall in Cuillins

A WALKER from England died in a mountain accident on Skye yesterday afternoon.

Mr David Hurst (36), 39 Eskdale Avenue, Blackford, Bolton, fell 400ft from Am-Bhastier Ridge in the Cuillins.

His partner walked to Sligachan where he alerted police at Portree. Skye Mountain Rescue Team was called out and a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth airlifted the victim from the mountain.

Sea King rescue after man falls

A MAN was flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, on Saturday evening, after falling and breaking his ankle while walking in the Loch Avon area of the Cairngorms.

The man, who has not been named, was airlifted by an RAF Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

Caithness girl flown to ARI

A SIX-YEAR-OLD girl from Caithness was airlifted yesterday by an RAF Sea King helicopter from Thurso to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

No details have been released about the girl although it is understood her condition was not giving cause for concern.

Copters fly NE liver patient south

A NORTH-EAST woman has been flown to London for a life-saving liver-transplant operation.

The patient, who has not been named, underwent a four-hour airlift through the night from Aberdeen to London in two flights in RAF Sea King helicopters.

The journey began shortly after 9pm on Monday when it was decided to use a helicopter to fly the woman — who was in intensive care in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary — after no fixed-wing aircraft could be found.

A crew from RAF Lossiemouth flew the first leg from their base to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, where they picked up the woman and flew her to RAF Boulmer, Northumbria.

She was then transferred to another Sea King, which started the 260-mile second leg around 11pm and arrived at Guy's Hospital in London at 1.15am.

The patient was then driven to King's College Hospital, where she was admitted for the operation.

A spokeswoman at the hospital said last night she could make no comment on the woman's condition. No further details have been made available.



ROTOR TORQUE

202 SQN

RING... RING!... RING... RING!!

"Good morning Sea Kings, home of the brave, how can we help?"

"Hello, it's Flying Officer Heffer."

"Who?"

"The Lighthouse editor."

"Oh, you're a bit early, the article isn't due until September the 2nd."

"Ah yes, that's why I've phoned, I need it by Wednesday. What with fitting in all my leave and the pressures of work in the Education Centre, if I don't get it now I won't be able to fit in the long week-end grant!"

"What's a grant?" I ask the oily tick stood in the Ops room, demonstrating why a piece of broken helicopter couldn't, or wouldn't, when it should have but didn't. He doesn't know what grant means either but being a jolly clever chap starts putting oily finger prints all over Rhona's dictionary.

EUREKA! GRANT (-ah-) I.V.T Consent to fulfil, concede, permit (thing to person) admit, 2n legal assignment thing, esp sum (money).

This doesn't make sense, the RAF won't allow you to do much and it certainly won't give you any free money, so it can't be either of those. Chris Leigh has the answer (as all good co-pilots should), so according to Chris, Grant is Phil's brother from Eastenders.

So here I start the sequel to all my previous scribbles on yet another 24 hour shift which, just for a change, runs through another weekend. Firstly let's get the facts straight for the record (it's only the facts you will see written in this column). We are operating a policy of never letting the truth get in the way of a good story and all information is from a source who's identity will be protected at all costs, to ensure a good supply of dirt, filth, perversion and malicious gossip. An example is the door to door Gallup Poll carried out in the Wimpy housing estate. The survey found that 98% of residents thought that the choir practice held in the Officers' Mess on Friday, 9th August was too loud, too tuneless, too blue and went on too long.

We welcome to 202 Sqn Flt Lt John Davies, ex 8 Sqn and now our Ops Officer,

Sgt Clive Chapman, a new Radar Operator, recently escaped from one of the Comet Squadrons at Kinloss, and finally to Pilot Officer Dave Parker (christened and baptised POD by the oily ticks in the water tank at 202 on families day, with the Station Commander presiding). Dave is holding with us for six months while he waits to start flying training — he's not actually much use for anything, can't even cope with a decent curry and if current information is correct is also the owner/wearer of a purple shirt; but we're sure his heart's near the right place and if he's got one of Betty's commissions he's OK by us. We will treat him with TLC (total lack of concern) while he's in our care.

She who must be obeyed — well by Chris Leigh at least — was most unimpressed by the way her loved ones character was spoken of in such defamatory terms in last month's Lighthouse, so she has made him change his MG (well it was a Maestro I know but it still counts) for a shining new red 1000cc Nissan Micra — does lots more miles per gallon; so he has now done something noteworthy and expensive, ha! the pen is mightier than the sword.

Rumours that Phil Burlingham dressed all in black leather is actually trying to open a BLUE OYSTER BAR in Lissie are totally untrue, and he is definitely not too sexy for those trousers or too sexy for anything really. What has happened is that he now owns a Hondakamazuki moped in an attempt to join the newly formed chapter of Hells Angels at 202. Well not so much a chapter at the moment, more a phrase soon to become a paragraph. Oily ticks and growbags alike have joined with bikes from C90, H100s, 125s right up to the big boys with 750 and 1000cc BMWs.

Remember the rumour started last month to send Dave Lloyd to San Francisco? It worked! He goes in November on a two year plus exchange with the US (not unserviceable) Coastguard flying the Jay-Hawk from a base near the Golden Gate Bridge.

On an international note, 202 Sqn will be hosting 13 members of 40 Sqn — Belgian Search and Rescue at the end of August. More details next edition after the event.

Since last writing, we have done a further 41 jobs bringing our total to 149; so we could still be on the line for 200 by the end of the year. We have had quite a few false calls,

ROTOR TORQUE continued...

fishing boats sinking off Buckie and Peterhead; but the local lifeboats were on the scene first and no action was required from us. At times we feel as though we are another air ambulance, not so much Rescue 137 as Helimed 137. Lots of medevacs and pregevac from Wick and other remote areas to the specialist hospitals in Aberdeen, Inverness or Edinburgh. When cars collide in the remote hill areas we have provided quite speedy removal from the scene of the emergency. Helping badly bashed and mangled people included a flight with a very seriously injured man who was taken to Glasgow Southern General Hospital for a seven hour operation to rebuild the entire contents of his abdomen, after he was dragged for 25 yards under a very small car. It was hard to believe he was still alive. Other real jobs this month, we have had our usual supply of lemmings in the Cuillins on Skye and in the Cairngorms. The foreigners have really taken a battering — they just don't seem to realise how treacherous the Highlands can be. French, German, English, they all fall just the same and the splat is usually just as messy.

The two most noticeable jobs this month were the Trimaran that capsized out in the North Sea on a particularly foul night. The winchman, Dave Aitken, dragged all of them from the sea and upturned hull since it was too rough for the rig support vessel to rescue them. No medals but Rolls Royce ties have been given to the crew for life saving rescue using the Rolls Royce Gnome engines (Flt Lt Ian Campbell, Fg Off Chris Leigh, Fg Off Glen Holmes and Flt Sgt Dave Aitken). This goes to prove all our wet winching training can be put to good use. The other job worthy of note was the six hours of searching for a missing party in the Cairngorms. One leader and a mixed bunch of 8-16 year old kids, well covered in the local press and on the news, but it just shows how easily it can all go wrong; luckily they were all recovered safely and well by ourselves, the search dogs or the mountain rescue teams. On a lighter note, after being called out at first light to commence a search for a missing fisherman just south of Wick, we were due to rendezvous with the police and as we landed

next to the vehicles, the noise woke a man asleep in his car next to the police vehicles. Yes, you've guessed it, he was the man the police had been searching in the dark for!

Finally, volunteers are invited for wet winching drills and claims that you have to be female and single are totally unfounded, as all you need is a swimming certificate and a medical check up. But if you wear a basque, stockings and suspenders you are in with a good chance (oops — back to the Blue Oyster Bar).

Well, with news from our intrepid aviating growbags, complete with news from the men with grubby fingernails on the shop floor.

Primarily, and as is the want of any shift worker, there were lots of complaints about the day workers having too much time off; when the only day workers on the flight happen to be the Chief and Flight Sergeant any slander directed their way is doubly just. When questioned about the two previously mentioned SNCOs the only info available was that the Chief (Keith Taylor) would be attending the flight some time between now and January, 1992 but that would only be to fill in his application form for the RAF ski championships. Of the Flt Sgt (Bill Lowry), most people couldn't actually remember him, but one astute JNCO did hear a rumour that one afternoon a month or so ago Bill had got a hole in one at the golf, but he kept it quiet to save on the round he would have to buy.

Apart from that, Cpl Basford is still putting peas into jam jars to keep score and has a permanent smile on his face (newly weds really make everyone else sick). He is completely happy with the RAF as well as being happy with the rest of the universe; so he is 1/3 of teaching the squillions of air cadets about the Sea King. Sgt Al Barclay is on RDP (Run Down Period) to leaving the Air Force. OK so he still has six years to go, but as he says you must start sometime.

Before we get too far from the subject of the air cadets, we owe three of them a deep debt of gratitude. As the sole RAF

representatives at the Buckie Gala Day (attended by his highness Sir Jimmy Saville) 202 had to put up a scratch tug-of-war team consisting of Cpl "Smudge" Smith, his wife Julie, Cpl(W) Caroline Dobson (our head squipper), her husband Mark, Flt Sgt Twey (growbag representative) and three ATC cadets. They succeeded in beating the Fire Brigade and coming third overall. Well done to all of them.

Dave McQuigg has bought himself another new used car from a pretty suspect source — "Honest guv, nuffin rong wiv dis mota, a bootiful example of a 7 seeres Volvo, nice 'n' clean, an absolute bargain — OK, so she's been to the moon and back a couple of times — mileage smileage."

After five years of minor league football with no credit to his name Steve Kenny (one of the chapter) made it into the 202/GEF football team to play MT section and scored, to everyone's surprise including his own, two remarkable goals. Remarkable more so when you realise that he scored in the oppositions net — wonders never cease to amaze.

After being threatened with death, that is the death of our Stacker by his wife, this reporter chose (well was bribed by a man who shall remain anonymous but who has no kitchen) to say that there is a shelter for the claustrophobic opening in Elgin. (SORRY GARY — TOO MUCH MONEY PAID NOT TO KEEP QUIET).

On the subject of people with no kitchens, Dave "Hygena" Breerton started to replace the kitchen in his house himself at Christmas. It's now August and it's still not completed. If anybody knows a plumber (armourers don't count), Dave would be incredibly appreciative of any assistance allowing completion of his DIY attempts by this Christmas. Carl Hodge, our resident Bartman, was very close to becoming one of our rescues — during a climb near Loch Avon the weather turned foul and Carl and his companion were stuck overnight, half way up their climb after their rope jammed during an abseil off. After an unpleasant night Carl free-climbed back up to free the rope — no harm done.

Well that's it for now, all the news and pursuits from the Stations VPS (Vertical Pursuit Squadron) and with a few slips I have tried as much as possible to use plain language and not too many TLAs (Three Letter Abbreviations). Dress to survive! Of our two models demonstrating wet winching outfits the one on the right definitely is dressed to survive and can therefore be left happily warm and secure in her dinghy. The other young lady however is most definitely dressed to be RESCUED and as such would have to be our primary concern. With this in mind, the inky stick at the end of telephone extensions 234/757/600 is poised to take note of volunteers for wet winching, dressed to survive!

Yours aye,

D-SCRIBE



SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 91

01 Medevac casualty with head injuries from Wick to Aberdeen Hospital.

GEAR LLOYD CHAPMAN GODLEY

02 Tasked to search for missing 70 yr old male in Glenelg. Casualty found by ground party.

GEAR LLOYD CHAPMAN GODLEY

10 Tasked to search for overdue walker near Braemar. Fog and low cloud prevented any transit overland.

ANDERSON PRINCE LARKE TRETHEWEY

12 Scrambled to search for missing man in Newtonmore area. Nothing found.

HODGSON POLLOCK LITTLE BALL

13 Tasked to move heart attack patient from Broadford to Raigmore.

WILLSON PRINCE BODIAM TRETHEWEY

13 Tasked to take doctor to rig vessel 'Regalia' for diver with crushed arm in hyperbaric chamber.

WILLSON PRINCE BODIAM TRETHEWEY

14 Tasked to search for life raft in D8095. Search called off due to bird activity.

HODGSON POLLOCK LITTLE BALL

15 Tasked to investigate white flare sighted on Ben Nevis. Nothing found.

WILLSON CAMPBELL BODIAM BONTHRONE

16 Scrambled to over-turned boat on Lochness. Boat aground and crew safely ashore. NAR.

GEAR HODGSON LARKE TRETHEWEY

17 Medevac man with renal failure from Wick to Raigmore Hospital.

WILLSON PRINCE CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

17 Scrambled to evacuate rig adrift NE of Sumburgh. RTB after evacuated by other helos.

WILLSON PRINCE CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

18 Airlifted captain of FV 'Magat' E of Aberdeen.

Casualty taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

CAMPBELL GEAR LITTLE TRETHEWEY

18 Retasked from above to take patient with haemorrhaging kidneys from Wick to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

CAMPBELL GEAR LITTLE TRETHEWEY

22 Airlift fallen walker with broken ankle at Carrbridge to Raigmore Hospital.

WRIGHT GEAR LITTLE TRETHEWEY

25 Tasked to locate source of PLB reported N of airfield which homed to a tornado on VAS dispersal.

HODGSON POLLOCK CHAPMAN AITKEN

26 Scrambled to investigate upturned canoe at Buckie. Canoe had been pushed into harbour earlier.

CAMPBELL LEIGH LITTLE BONTHRONE

26 Scrambled to fallen climber in Glencoe. Casualty taken to Raigmore Hospital.

CAMPBELL LEIGH LITTLE BONTHRONE

28 Scrambled to search for missing walker in Loch Mullardoch. Missing man located by police.

CAMPBELL LEIGH HOLMES BRODIE

31 Tasked to lift injured walker from Loch Erich to Raigmore.

CAMPBELL BELL CHAPMAN AITKEN

Rescue alert

A MAJOR maritime 'disaster' in the Sound of Mull on Sunday was a resounding success.

Oban coastguard's station officer Sid Turner said the exercise to test the co-ordination of maritime rescue services and other emergency organisations was 'very, very useful.'

'It's the kind of thing that only crops up with a Zeebrugge or Piper Alpha disaster. It's not the kind of thing you would have a lot of experience with,' said Mr Turner.

'We treated it as a real life event with no pre-planning.'

He added that the exercise identified many areas that could cause problems which will be discussed at a debriefing at Soroba House Hotel on December 20.

The 'disaster' consisted of a collision between a coastal tanker (supplied by Foster Yeoman) and a Caledonian Mac-Brayne ferry carrying 200 'passengers.'

Though the passengers were from organisations like the Royal Navy in Faslane and the Territorial Army in Glasgow, none of the groups knew each other which would happen in a real life situation.

The ages represented ranged from 13-60.

Trawlerman raises hopes of survivors

Missing crewmen may be adrift in liferaft



A SURVIVOR of the trawler Frank C, which sank off Rockall at 4am on Tuesday, last night told of his ordeal when the 110ft boat was swamped by heavy seas.

Mr Gerrardo Jose (36), from Corunna, was one of the crew on the Frank C, a German ship, but Spanish-owned and with a mainly-Spanish crew.

Last night, the search was continuing for the 16 men still missing — the German skipper, a South African crewman, and 14 Spaniards.

A coastguard spokesman said: "We are looking for a liferaft capable of holding 25 men."

"The survivor reports that he saw people getting into a liferaft. If that is the case, there's

□ BILL LUCAS

a good chance we will find it and the people in it should be alive."

Mr Jose, who was rescued from a liferaft by the Danish fishing vessel Nuka Ittuk, was picked up by the Stornoway coastguard search-and-rescue helicopter and landed about 6.30pm.

He was taken to the coastguard control room where he phoned the ship's agents and gave the coastguards information with the help of Dr Alan Fraser, a former headmaster at St Andrew's College in Peru.

Meanwhile, the Nuka Ittuk and a bulk-carrier, Chickashaw, continued to

scour the area with two RAF Nimrods, one from Kinloss and the other from St Mawgan, Cornwall.

Mr Jose, a married man with three children, said they had been fishing off Rockall, 240 miles west of Lewis.

"There was engine trouble and because of that we could not turn away from the heavy seas. The ship was swamped," he said.

"One liferaft was launched and a number of men got in. I was up in the bow and attempted to launch another liferaft with a young fellow. When I looked again he had gone."

"My liferaft overturned and before it was righted again, the men in the other liferaft had disappeared. The ship went down."

"That happened about 1am on Tuesday. I just drifted. I sent up red flares. Finally I was picked up by a Danish boat. I am lucky to be alive."

Weather conditions were not good, according to the RAF search and rescue co-ordination centre at Pitreavie, Fife, which reported: "The wind is from the south-east and is blowing 25 knots."

"The sea state is four — that is quite lumpy — cloud base is 600ft and visibility five nautical miles in the rain."

Spokesman Mr Craig Lindsay said: "An added complication is that the Danish rescuers released the dinghy the man was picked up from."

"So now there are two dinghies loose in the sea, one of them we believe with more survivors on board. Now we have to search for both."

The ship sank so quickly there was no time to send a mayday. A lookout on the Nuka Ittuk spotted the survivor's liferaft at 8am yesterday and raised the alarm.

Last night, Mr Jose — who did not require medical treatment — was taken to the fishermen's mission in Stornoway.

● A DANISH fisherman was airlifted to hospital in Shetland yesterday after he was injured in a fall.

Emil Larsen (19) received head injuries on board the Svanesund while fishing 110 miles south-east of Sumburgh.

Shetland coastguard rescue helicopter was scrambled with a doctor on board at 7.30am and landed the injured man in Lerwick shortly after 10am. He was taken to the Gilbert Bain Hospital.



■ Mr Gerrardo Jose . . . 'ship was swamped'

Air hunt for 16 seamen is ended

AN AIR search for 16 crewmen whose fishing boat sank in the Atlantic nearly three days ago was suspended last night.

Clyde Coastguard said: "We cannot confirm at this stage whether it was the liferaft that one survivor was rescued from yesterday or if it is the one he saw his shipmates get into."

Photographs of the partially-inflated liferaft were yesterday being compared with descriptions given by the skipper of a Danish trawler which picked up the single survivor.

Mr Jose Gerrardo (36), from Spain, was flown on Wednesday night by coastguard helicopter to Stornoway where he spent the night in the Royal National Mission for Deep Sea Fishermen.

He flew out from Stornoway yesterday to return home to his wife and family in Corunna.

A coastguard spokesman said the search for the rest of the mainly Spanish crew was continuing in improved sea conditions, with visibility of three miles.

Two Nimrods had also joined the search.

Mr Gerrardo said on Wednesday that the 110ft German-registered Frank C went down in heavy weather on Tuesday.

There was no time to send a distress signal.

District nurse goes up in world

□ FIONA MACPHERSON

A DISTRICT nurse, who first started visiting patients on her rounds by bicycle, has certainly gone up in the world.

As a special thank-you before Lossiemouth district nurse Mrs Doris Shaw, Pluscarden Road, Elgin, retires after 34 years, the RAF helped realise one of her long-standing ambitions — to fly in a helicopter.

Accompanied by health visitor Lesley Hedger, who also works at the Laich Medical Centre, Lossiemouth, Mrs Shaw took to the skies to get a bird's-eye view of the town where she has made her rounds for 10 years.

She said: "I have always wanted to go up in a helicopter and one of the doctors promised to fix it for me after talking to one of my patients."

Last year, Mrs Shaw, who retires in the new year, was awarded the Queen's Institute of District Nursing long-service certificate for her contribution to the profession.

The two Lossiemouth nurses were special guests of RAF Lossiemouth's search and rescue unit, No 202 Squadron.

They were whisked across Speyside, over the Cairngorms and past Mar Lodge and Braemar on a flight which luckily coincided with a break in the recent stormy weather.

"It was a lovely day and I enjoyed every minute of it," said Mrs Shaw.

"I especially enjoyed going over Speyside, where I spent my childhood."

After her nursing training, Mrs Shaw qualified as a district nurse in Edinburgh in 1957 and went to work in Falkirk.

"It was all pedal power then and I had to do my rounds by bicycle," she said.

Mrs Shaw also worked in the Forres area for five years and has close associations with the two RAF bases.

"I am looking forward to my retirement, although I have not made any plans."

"I will certainly miss my patients very much and the company of my friends at the medical centre," she said.



■ Crew of the Peterhead-registered Accord check damage on their storm-battered boat.

Buchan skipper praises gale rescue heroes

Battered boat is towed to safety

A BUCHAN skipper yesterday praised his rescuers after a night of drama in the North Sea when gales and high seas battered his powerless boat.

In a series of daring operations, several attempts were made to tow the Peterhead-registered fishing boat Accord to safety after she lost all power in a Force-10 storm.

Two crewmen from the fisheries protection vessel HMS Anglesey were injured during the operation about 40 miles north of Peterhead.

The drama began on Thursday night after the main engine of the 108ft purser failed as she made her way home from Lerwick.

The Fraserburgh-registered fishing boat Sedulas was first on the scene and twice managed to connect a tow line — but it broke twice.

"After we broke from the Sedulas, we were drifting and the conditions were getting worse," said Skipper James Duthie (30), 9 Ugie Bank Place, Peterhead.

"Then the Anglesey seemed to appear out of nowhere. We were pretty happy, to say the least."

The Navy vessel, skippered by Lieutenant Commander Neil Tidbury, managed to tow the Accord for several miles before the connection broke.

It was while trying to reconnect the tow that the crewmen — Leading Seaman John O'Rourke (33) and Leading Stores Accountant Gary Tait (25) — were injured.

Lt Cdr Tidbury said it was only after the two men were smashed against the ship by waves crashing over the deck that he decided to head for Aberdeen.

"In 20 years at sea, I have never seen such mountainous waves."

"Any sensible person would

□ KAY DRUMMOND and CAROL GRUGEON

have made the same decision. When the two crewmen were injured my priorities had to change. We have no medical staff on board and only limited equipment."

The Accord's 11 crew were finally towed into home port around lunchtime yesterday by the Peterhead tug Schelde 12.

Skipper Duthie said: "I would really like to thank everyone who gave us assistance. The conditions were pretty bad, especially when the Anglesey attempted to connect the second tow."

It was the second rescue in 24 hours in atrocious weather for the Schelde 12 and her master, Captain Russell Withycombe (42), from South Wales.

She had just returned from rescuing the Peterhead-registered Utsiera — which had fouled her propeller in a Force-9 storm, 16 miles east of Rattray Head — when she called to help the Accord.

An Aberdeen Coastguard spokesman last night praised Capt Withycombe and his crew — mate Jim Bruce, chief engineer John Tullerfield and seamen Andrew Masson and William Robertson — for their "sterling work".

● The RAF rescue services operation at Lossiemouth had its busiest day for months yesterday.

The four-man crew of the RAF's Sea King helicopter were called to rescue a French fisherman who broke his back in the heavy seas.

The helicopter picked up Mr Roger Leon Libert (42), of Boulogne, from the trawler Margat at around 3pm.

The accident happened when the vessel, owned by la Garrec, struck bad weather about 70 miles north-east of Aberdeen.

Mr Libert, who cracked the base of his spine, was last night "stable" in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Ft. Lt. Ian Campbell said: "It was quite interesting. There was a fairly heavy sea and the boat was rolling and pitching — it was good fun from out point of view."

"The winds were about 40-50mph and it made it difficult

The helicopter — with crewmen Ft. Sgt. Paul Trethewey (winchman), Ft. Lt. Tony Gear and Master Ted Little — was then diverted to Wick to transfer a 21-year-old man with kidney problems to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.



■ Skipper Duthie ... lost power



■ Capt Withycombe ... second rescue



■ Going up in the world are district nurse Doris Shaw (back) and health visitor Lesley Hedger, both from the Laich Medical Centre, Lossiemouth. They were taken for a flight to remember by Ft Sgt Paul Trethewey (kneeling), Ft. Lt. John Prince, and Ft. Lt. Tony Gear (far right), from 202 Squadron Search and Rescue at RAF Lossiemouth.

Broch sea mystery

FRASERBURGH lifeboat and an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter were last night searching for a life raft spotted about 20 miles north-west of the Broch. A coastguard spokesman said it was not known whether there was anyone on the vessel which was sighted about 5pm by a passing fishing boat. "Nobody has been reported missing and no boats have sunk

Rescue No.202 for 202 Squadron

A SEA KING helicopter from 202 Squadron at RAF Lossiemouth yesterday chalked up this year's 202nd rescue when it went to the aid of an injured youngster in the Cairngorms.

The 15-year-old, who has a broken ankle, was picked up from the north shores of Loch Erich and flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

This has been the busiest year yet for the Lossiemouth Sea Kings.

Last year, they carried out

ALASTAIR BISSET

167 mercy missions in Northern Scotland.

Yesterday's landmark call came after police at Aviemore alerted the rescue services about the Loch Erich incident.

The Sea King touched down at Kingussie on its way to Loch Erich to pick up four members of the local mountain rescue team.

The helicopter crew on the

mission were pilots Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell and Fl Lt Pete Bell, radar operator Sergeant Clive Chapman, and winchman Fl Sgt Dave Aitken.

Meanwhile, a coastguard helicopter crew, who launched a daring Christmas Day rescue in a Force 10 gale off Shetland, have been rewarded for their bravery.

The four-man crew from Bristow Helicopters, based at Sumburgh, snatched 11 men and a woman to safety as the Danish tug Maersk Tackler floundered in huge seas just 150yd from rocks.

In driving rain and winds gusting to Force 12, Captain David Miller hovered overhead while his team, Mr Dave Gribben, Mr Bob Taylor and Mr Freddy Manson, winched up the ship's crew one by one.

Now all four men are to receive the Chief Coastguard's Commendation — a special award for bravery.

Chief coastguard Cdr Derek Ancona was due in the isles last night to present the awards at a ceremony in the Shetland Hotel, Lerwick.

The tug's master, Capt John Philbert, said at the time that the helicopter crew had done a "tremendous, fantastic job" for which they "deserved a medal".

The tug lost all power when she was swamped by a rogue wave near Out Skerries, 19 miles south-east of Lerwick at lunchtime. She was later towed to safety off Whalsay by a sister ship, the Maersk Logger.



Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter winchman Dave Aitken prepares to help yesterday's young casualty from the aircraft, at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Visit to 202 Squadron (Search & Rescue) R.A.F. Lossiemouth

by
Qualified Ambulanceman I.C. Donald,
Elgin Station

It was a bitterly cold snowy morning last spring when John Quinney and I visited 202 Squadron Search & Rescue at R.A.F. Lossiemouth to spend the day with a helicopter crew. We both hoped we would be lucky enough to witness a rescue in operation.

Our flight coincided with that of Steve Horrocks, a film cameraman with Gramplan Television, whose purpose was to film some action shots of the crew during their training flight. The footage taken was to be used in the evening news programme warning the public of the treacherous conditions existing on the mountains during winter, and to profile the work of the S.A.R. crews. The subject was highly topical as only recently, over the space of eleven days, ten people had been killed in separate incidents.

Before entering the craft we were given an in depth safety talk and shown the location of emergency equipment. It was noticeable that safety is taken very seriously by the crews; there are constant checks to ensure that all on board are securely strapped in and equipment is secured.

The plan for the morning was to fly overland to allow the pilots to practise flying by instruments only. This method of flying is used when visibility is poor and the pilot does not have the benefit of seeing his surroundings. A radar assisted approach to a neighbouring airfield was made following signals transmitted from fixed radio beacons, after which the pilots tested their ability to recover control of the craft following simulated loss of hydraulics and engine failure. This effect was created by use of an onboard computer. Although we were told that it was highly unlikely that such an incident would occur, it was reassuring to witness the manner in which the pilots handled the helicopter during the simulations and their speedy response to each fault.

On boarding the helicopter we were informed that there would be some winch practise. Steve

was expecting this as it would help him obtain better shots. John settled down in the aft and happily watching all that was going on around him; I was happily up front quizzing the pilots about the various manoeuvres and the dials and gauges when I heard our winchman call John forward. I turned round to see John sitting on the floor with his feet hanging out of the sliding door and him hooked up to the winch. John stepped boldly into fresh air and I was called forward to take my turn. As if in a trance I found myself sitting with my feet dangling over the side of the helicopter, ready to follow John's example. Words fail me when it comes to describing the shock I felt in dangling from a length of wire beneath a helicopter on a cold and snowy Sunday morning. Having experienced being winched out and back into the helicopter safely and surprisingly not feeling in any real danger, I would jump at the chance of having another go! Morning objectives completed the crew returned to base for lunch and to await any call outs.

After lunch we were shown round the operations room and all the various maps and charts were explained to us. The crew used the time to strip down and check the equipment on a helicopter which was being serviced. Observing them at work made us appreciative of the many people involved behind the scenes who contribute to the smooth running of the operation.

In late afternoon we flew over water to practise target location. Some fifteen minutes into our flight the winchman spotted what appeared to be hydraulic fluid on a window and reported this to the pilots. Although the gauges indicated no signs of a problem, the pilot decided to return to base for checks. There appeared to be no significant problems and the helicopter was once again declared fully operational. We however had to end our visit as darkness was beginning to fall and regulations stipulate that only those holding a current survival certificate can fly over water during the hours of darkness.

Although we did not witness a rescue, we had an interesting and very enjoyable visit and we were made very welcome by all concerned.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all at 202 Squadron, Search & Rescue, R.A.F. Lossiemouth for allowing us to visit them and for the hospitality extended. We both had a memorable day!

I also acknowledge the time and effort spent by D.A.O. Mr Gerry Egan in arranging the visit.

SUMMARY FOR NOVEMBER 91

03 Scrambled to lift woman with injured leg from GlenCoe to Belford Hospital.

GEAR POLLOCK LITTLE TRETHEWEY

09 Scrambled to medevac male patient with head injuries from Wick to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

WILLSON PRINCE LITTLE TRETHEWEY

14 Tasked to deliver water pump to FV 'Unity' taking on water 70 NM NE of Lossiemouth.

CAMPBELL GEAR HOLMES AITKEN

15 Scrambled to medavac sceptic shock victim from Wick to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

WILLSON PRINCE CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

16 Called on CH 53 to lift exhausted Kinloss MRT member to Raigmore Hospital.

GEAR CAMPBELL COX TRETHEWEY

21 Scrambled to deliver pump to FV 'Sunbeam' taking on water off Fraserburgh.

PRINCE POLLOCK LARKE BRODIE

22 Scrambled to assist a FV on fire but recalled after 20 minutes.

HODGSON GEAR LITTLE AITKEN

25 Scrambled to deliver pump to FV 'Glenmore' taking water NE of Aberdeen. Remained on scene until lifeboat arrived.

HODGSON WILLSON LITTLE BONTHRONE

25 Tasked to lift Officer Cadet with broken ankle from West Hinglands to Raigmore.

GEAR PRINCE HOLMES AITKEN

27 Scrambled to search for overdue FV with 2 POB. Stood down after person located.

GEAR POLLOCK HOLMES AITKEN

28 Medevac mother and baby from Fort William to Raigmore Hospital.

CAMPBELL WILLSON LARKE BONTHRONE

30 Tasked to medrescue RTA victim on West coast to Raigmore Hospital.

PRINCE WILLSON LARKE TRETHEWEY

DISTRESS flares were sent up by a speedboat a mile out in the Moray Firth yesterday.

The boat, with two men on board, got into difficulties just off the coast at Findochty, near Buckie, after suffering engine trouble.

The flares were spotted by people on the shore and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was scrambled to investigate the incident.

Buckie lifeboat and the harbour master from Findochty in his boat escorted the speedboat back to the harbour after it managed to restart the engine.

However, the engine again

Speedboat towed in

failed and the boat had to be towed in by a fishing boat.

Men airlifted from storm-hit coaster

A COASTER with a damaged gearbox, which has been anchored for a week in Lochmaddy Bay awaiting a tug to tow her for repairs, broke her anchor chain in last night's storm and ran aground on an islet in the bay.

All three crew of the Isle of Man-registered Sea Light were airlifted to Lochmaddy Pier car park by the Stornoway Coastguard helicopter.

Only an hour before she ran aground, the Greenock tug, Flying Phantom, had arrived at Lochmaddy and berthed at the pier until the storm died down so she could tow the Sea Light back to Greenock for repairs.

"The weather was so bad last night that any attempt to start the tow would have been too hazardous, said port manager Mr Uisdean Robertson.

He added: "It is a pity that when the tug

arrived, the anchor chain should have given out and they were blown up on the island."

Last night, from the Lochmaddy Hotel, where the crew of the Sea Light were spending the night, the master said: "I can tell you all the crew are safe, but I am not prepared to make any other comment."

It is understood a representative of the owners, Glenlight Shipping (Manx) Ltd, will arrive at Lochmaddy to assess the damage to the Sea Light later today.

Meanwhile, the two-man crew of a 30ft open boat reported overdue on a passage from Kyle to Gairloch were rescued.

An RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth joined the hunt, along with a Coastguard aircraft and Portree lifeboat, but distress flares were spotted and the boat located.

Copter saves 6 — Page 13

ransom as Moray empties its pockets for Children in Need

District chips in for Children In Need

MORAY folk will be called on to dig deep into their pockets for charity as the BBC's annual Children In Need appeal rolls round again today.

Throughout the area, people have been hatching scores of ways to make this year's appeal one to remember.

RAF Lossiemouth are hoping to reach for the skies in the cash stakes tomorrow when a Sea King helicopter crew will fly TV star Mark McManus — otherwise known as the detective Taggart — and Scottish rugby captain David Sole to various schools in the area.

The two stars will touch down at Nairn Academy, Forres Academy and Elgin Academy, after which David Sole is expected to leave the trip.

The helicopter will then take Mark to Kinloss Primary School, Elgin High School, Lossiemouth High, Keith Grammar School and Keith Primary School.

At each 10-minute drop the crew will collect cash and hand out rugby footballs signed by the Scottish captain, and pictures of Mark.

They will then make their way to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and the BBC studios in Aberdeen where winchman Dave Aitken will drop onto the roof.

Two members of service personnel from the air base are also believed to have broken the record distance for a "jail-break" attempt when

they flew a 16,000 mile round trip to the Falklands.

Sergeant Steve Furness made the trip dressed as Pudsey Bear and was accompanied by Senior Aircrafts-woman Caroline Anderson.

Eight more personnel are attempting to climb the height of Mount Everest — 29,028 feet — in 24 hours.

The marathon started at 3pm yesterday, and the climbers, sponsored by Cairngorm Climbing Rope, will have to tackle a 30-foot climbing wall at the RAF base a total of 968 times.

Elsewhere, Keith Community Centre is to be the venue for a sponsored hockey tournament tonight, when eight teams — four of them from Keith Grammar School — will be trying to raise as much money as possible.

And shop assistants at Main's bakers in Hopeman are planning to get up in fancy dress garb for the day.

Last night, students from Moray College were planning to carry out a daring kidnap raid on a celebrity at Elgin Town Hall and take him to Elgin Community Centre's Greyfriars Club.

The leisure complex at the Eight Acres hotel is to be the venue for a 24-hour sponsored racket ball marathon to be played by complex manager Colin Pritchard and senior supervisor Rob Campbell.

The marathon will start at 3pm on Sunday, and the two men are hoping to be able to

take a 10-minute break every hour.

Meanwhile, a team of Moray horses will be doing their bit to raise money in a race tonight.

It will be "neigh" bother for the mounts in question, which are hobby horses made by Fochabers woman Mrs Fiona Hay.

However, a fair amount of braying is expected, for the "riders" are to be a group of councilors.

Fiona, who runs Carousel Hobby Horses from her home at 26 Maxwell Street, sold eight of the hand-crafted hobby horses to the Northern Racing School in Doncaster at the beginning of this month.

In a preview for Children In Need, the horses were used in a sponsored race between stable lads at Sedgefield race course last Tuesday.

Tonight, the horses will star in a race to be held at at Radio Cleveland's offices in Middlesbrough. Local councillors will be the jockeys, and it is hoped that the event will be televised.

On TV, Hazel Irvine and Paul Coia will host an evening of entertainment from BBC Scotland's studios in Glasgow, while TV-AM's Lorraine Kelly is to assemble a team of celebrities at Heriot's FP Rugby Club in Edinburgh.

In Aberdeen, presenters Jane Franchi and Bill Torrance will be co-ordinating coverage, while Fiona Kennedy will be in Dundee.

At the BBC studios in London, regular hosts Terry Wogan and Sue Cook will be joined by action girl Anneka Rice for the evening's events, and a galaxy of stars are expected to turn up.

Anneka launched a "get knitting" appeal in Scotland and called on the country to produce at least 3,000 jumpers to be passed on to needy children.

The BBC's radio network is also playing its part, and throughout the day fundraising schemes and games will be held throughout the country.

Last year Children In Need raised £20.9 million, 10 per cent of which was distributed in 603 separate grants in Scotland.

A number of organisations in Moray, including Women's Aid and the Rainbow Developmental Group, received grants this year as a result of last year's appeal.



Dropping in on Elgin Academy, TV's Taggart, Mark McManus, receives money for Children In Need from Hamilton Drive pupil Greig Fotheringham (second left). Scottish rugby captain David Sole hands a signed Scotland rugby jersey for the academy to auction to senior pupil Andrew Scott (third left). Second-year pupils Joni Mackay (second right) and Morag Wilson (far right) hold the cheque for £200 that was presented to David Sole. Also pictured, back row, left to right: Pudsey Bear, Flt Sgt David Aitken, Sgt Steve Larke and Elgin Academy rector Mr Norman Strachan.

NS Photo

Chopper men in charity surprise

RAF Lossiemouth's search-and-rescue helicopter flight found itself in a new role yesterday — giving thanks instead of receiving them.

Its life-saving exploits have been praised from all quarters. But yesterday, the rescue heroes said a big thank-you to people in the North and North-east for their support of the station's efforts for Children in Need.

Millions of TV viewers saw the station's £13,000 cheque being handed over on Friday night.

However, the final total looks like being nearer £14,000 — one of the biggest single donations from Grampian for the nationwide appeal.

"It is absolutely incredible," said winchman Dave Aitken. "We were expecting to collect about £3,000, but the response was absolutely fantastic."

Air and ground crew of the search-and-rescue flight joined forces with the station's physical-education flight for a variety of fund-raising stunts — from a sponsored "jailbreak" to the Falklands, to dropping in by helicopter on schools and hospitals from Alesso to Aberdeen with actor Mark McManus — TV's Taggart — and Scotland rugby captain David Sole.

They also climbed the equivalent of Everest twice on the base's gymnasium climbing wall.

"The whole thing was an unqualified success — thanks to people's generosity," said Dave.

Fliers help children —

CASH donations to the BBC's Children In Need appeal were put on hold for a short time yesterday when an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter had to divert to an offshore emergency.

The 202 Sqn Search and Rescue helicopter — with two celebrities on board — had been picking up cash during the day from schools and hospitals throughout the North and North-east.

They were on their way to hand the money over, courtesy of winchman Flt Sgt Dave Aitken, when they received a

call at about 3pm that the Buckie-registered fishing boat Kilvarock was on fire 20-miles north-east of Buckie.

Buckie lifeboat had been launched, but the fire, thought to be caused by the exhaust overheating, was quickly extinguished by the four-man crew and neither the lifeboat nor the helicopter was needed.

Yet more drama was to come for the RAF crew as the down-draught from the copter's rotors threatened to lift a marquee in the grounds of the BBC's Beechgrove Studios, Aberdeen, as the winching took place.

Around 30 people "hung on to the tent for dear life" said a BBC spokesman.

He said entertainer Robbie Shepherd got the event off to a bright start. His hat took off when it was caught by the wind from the copter.

Mark McManus — TV star detective, Taggart — and David Sole — Scotland's rugby captain — had been transported around the various schools and hospitals by the helicopter.

The crew stopped off at Elgin Academy to collect a £200 cheque. Pausing for breath, Mark said: "Every-

where we go there has been a great response — it's something that happens every year and you just get involved."

Then over to Forres Academy where pupils dug deep to boost the charity.

The school turned out in force to hand over donations to the celebrities during their flying visit through Moray for the nationwide appeal.

Other stop-offs included Alness Academy, Dingwall and Conon Bridge Primary School, Raigmore Hospital, Lossiemouth and Elgin High Schools.

Personnel at Lossiemouth air

station and from nearby Kinloss raised money by climbing the equivalent of Mount Everest three times in a gym.

Pupils take on teacher roles

BANFF Academy pupils briefly became teachers yesterday as part of their fund-raising efforts for Children In Need.

They handed over cash to take teacher's place in class and conduct lessons for five minutes.

Other novelty events which helped raise £1,322 for the day included five-a-side football, a greasy-pole challenge, a karate demonstration, tossing sponges at volunteer teachers and classroom collections.

Highlight of the day was the arrival by RAF helicopter of Taggart, otherwise TV star Mark McManus, with Pudsey the Bear. He was given a big welcome by hundreds of pupils and staff and duly "sold" autographs.

The academy will also be auctioning later a Scottish international rugby jersey signed by team captain David Sole.

Children In Need — A well-attended disco last Friday raised £150 for Children In Need. There will be a further collection in school today. It is hoped an RAF helicopter will bring Mark McManus (alias Taggart) and Pudsey Bear to uplift the contributions.



■ Scottish rugby captain David Sole accepts a cheque for £200 from Elgin Academy pupils Joni Mackay and Morag Wilson, as part of the Children in Need appeal. Also pictured are, from left, actor Mark McManus, Hamilton Drive School pupil Greg Fotheringham, academy pupil

Andrew Scott — with rugby gear presented by Mr Sole — and academy rector Mr Norman Strachan. Behind them are Pudsey Bear and two of the helicopter crew from 202 Sqn, Steve Larke and Dave Aitken.



Scaling new heights were this group at RAF Lossiemouth who between them, in a 24-hour effort, climbed the equivalent of more than twice the height of Mount Everest on the climbing wall at the station's gym. The team of eight from 202 Squadron and Physical Education Flight made a total of 2,224 ascents of the wall in rotation, passing on a Pudsey bear as a mascot. The money raised went into the Station's Children in Need kitty, currently standing at over £13,000, with more still to come in.

SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 91

17 Tasked to search for mentally unstable man in Stonehaven area. Man found by ground party.
GEAR LEIGH CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

17 Scrambled to Bristow 561 calling mayday 50NM NE of Aberdeen. Aircraft reached land safely.
GEAR LEIGH CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

18 Medevac casualty from Wick to Raigmore.
PRINCE WILLSON LITTLE AITKEN

18 Scrambled to Russian FV with 51 PIB. Transferred 10 casualties to Ballykelly and 6 to Crosshouse Hospital Irvine.
BELL HODGSON LARKE TRETHEWEY

21 Lifted man with badly broken leg from Ocean Tug Husky and casualty with broken leg from rig S.V. DV102.
WILLSON PRINCE HOLMES AITKEN

23 Tasked to cover damaged British Airways ATP but aircraft landed safely.
BELL POLLOCK LARKE TRETHEWEY

24 Scrambled to medevac elderly lady from Wick to Raigmore.
BELL CAMPBELL CHAPMAN AIRKEN

27 Coast cliff faller at Stonehaven and, on arrival, ambulanceman had also fallen and damaged his back. Both casualties taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.
ANDERSON PRINCE HOLMES TRETHEWEY

29 Medevac 68 yr old woman with sprained ankle from Cairngorms to Raigmore.
ANDERSON PRINCE HOLMES TRETHEWEY

31 Diverted from training to red flare sighting near Corpach. Nil found. WIFA.
ANDERSON POLLOCK HOLMES AITKEN

Rescuers praise stranded walker

AN EDINBURGH school-teacher, lost in the mist near Europe's highest waterfall, was yesterday praised by rescuers for staying put and not panicking.

Ms Caroline Walker (30), originally from the Manchester area, went hill-walking with four friends from Easter Ross on Saturday to view Eas-Caul-Aulinn, the 600ft waterfall above Loch Glencoul in West Sutherland.

As the five were returning to their cars, parked off the A 894 Kylesku-Inchnadamph road, Ms Walker was in the rear.

In the gathering mist, she became disorientated at a fork in the path and began walking back the way she had come.

The others raised the alarm when she failed to show up as darkness fell.

Assynt mountain rescue team traced her, safe and well, in less than three hours.

A police spokesman said: "She did the right thing when she realised she was lost. Instead of getting into a panic, stumbling off and perhaps injuring herself or worse, she stayed put and waited for someone to find her. She was warm because she was well equipped."

At the same time; another emergency had rescue services on the move just 10 miles to the north.

Fish-farm worker Mr John Macfarlane (30), Park Terrace, Scourie, was airlifted to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, with head injuries after a road accident.

His pick-up truck left the A894 about two miles from Scourie. An RAF helicopter was called out to avoid a two-hour ambulance journey over mountainous roads.

Mr Macfarlane is married with two children.

His condition is understood to be better than was first thought.

Four die as 'horrendous' seas smash Soviet ship

FOUR Soviet sailors — including a 20-year-old woman — died after a huge wave smashed into their ship in "horrendous" weather off the West Coast early yesterday.

The pilot of an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter, which was first on the scene, last night spoke of the battle to lower a winchman on to the ship in a bid to lift shipmates to safety.

Flight Lieutenant Pete Bell described conditions as atrocious and told how the bow of the 1,900-tonne factory ship Kartli was thrown up 60ft continually in the mountainous swell.

Helicopters picked up 48 people in the hazardous mission, which lasted almost six hours.

Among those rescued were the ship's master and her chief officer, both injured, and two uninjured women crew, coastguards said.

Two people died when the wave smashed into the vessel's wheelhouse. The body of the young woman was later found in the water. One person, who had been flown to hospital in Londonderry, later died.

The alarm was raised by the

□ KAY DRUMMOND

British tanker Drupa, which spotted red distress signals at 4.25am.

Six RAF and Royal Navy helicopters were scrambled and a "spy-in-the-sky" RAF Nimrod was sent up as a flying command post and communications centre.

The Islay lifeboat was sent with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary tanker, Olina, and Royal Navy Auxiliary tug the Roisterer.

Rescuers planned to fly uninjured crewmen to the civilian tanker, which was lying half a mile from the stricken ship, but they were flown instead to the civilian-crewed Olina as it had a heli-deck, medical facilities and a Russian-speaking crewman.

The Lossiemouth crew, which was based at Prestwick on operational duties for the Royal Navy, was scrambled just before 4.30am.

"We were on our way to the ship when we heard that the Russians had tried to abandon ship, so we were then on the

Turn to Page 2



■ Flt Lt Pete Bell
... 'bow throw up 60ft'

Sgt Wankowski
AIR HISTORICAL BRANCH
Lt Bentley Priority
STANMORE
MIDDLESEX
HA 7 3HH.

Bodies of two dead still aboard Kartli

From Page 1

lookout for the dinghies," Flt Lt Bell said.

The crew picked up one survivor, who was alone in a life raft, before reaching the stricken vessel.

"The high winds gave us a bit of a problem as there was a lot of turbulence and the helicopter was shaking quite badly," he said.

"However, the main trouble was the heavy sea swell. Because the ship's engine had failed, it was bobbing about like a cork in the sea and we had a terrible time trying to get the winchman on board.

"The front of the ship was rising about 60ft every couple of seconds and, in darkness, it proved to be very tricky."

It took 40 minutes for winchman Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey to board the Kartli.

The crew then concentrated on reaching the injured and lifted eight people to safety.

A Navy helicopter from Prestwick continued the mission while eight casualties were flown to Altnagelvin Hospital, in Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

During the mission, helicopters plucked 32 crewmen to safety and landed them aboard the Olina.

Ten were rescued and flown to Londonderry.

Shortly before 9am, the Lossiemouth crew, on its return to the scene from Northern Ireland, picked up six survivors drifting in one of the ship's dinghies.

"They were the last six to be rescued and were in a pretty bad state," said Flt Lt Bell.

"They were suffering very badly from hypothermia

'My heart thanks them' says survivor as rescue crews save 47

STEPHEN MANSFIELD



The battered factory ship Kartli adrift south of Islay yesterday

Four die as massive wave engulfs ship

By Denny Macgee

FOUR Soviet sailors, including a 20-year-old woman, died yesterday after a huge wave smashed into their ship off the west coast of Scotland.

A dangerous and complex six-hour air-sea rescue in the Atlantic swung into operation soon after the 1,900-ton Klondyke factory ship Kartli was engulfed by the 40ft wave early yesterday.

In mountainous seas, six helicopters, surface vessels and an RAF Nimrod rescued 48 crew members as the sea tossed the Kartli out of control south of Islay. One of the rescued died in a Londonderry hospital.

Six survivors were pulled to safety after spending five hours in two liferafts and were taken to Crosshouse Hospital in Kilmarnock. They were recovering from hypothermia and were expected to be discharged within 24 hours.

One of the rescued crewmen, Teodosil Stefanov, 54, a Bulgarian technician, wept as he told of what sounded like a bomb going off as he slept.

As the crew waited in horrendous weather on its shattered decks he said he lied to them that help was on the way, even though he did not know that it was. "Maybe God helped us first," Mr Stefanov said. "But then the pilots and

the captain of a nearby tanker helped us. My heart thanks them."

The Kartli's captain, Vladimir Gayduk, 60, was initially admitted to Crosshouse with multiple injuries then



An injured seaman arrives at HMS Gannet, Prestwick

transferred to Glasgow Royal Infirmary where last night his condition was described as stable.

Last night the Kartli was drifting without power about five miles south-east of Islay and Clyde coastguard expected its likely course to be between Islay and Jura and the Kintyre peninsula. A Royal Naval auxiliary tug, the Roisterer, was heading towards the vessel. An attempt

to secure a line will probably be made today, weather permitting.

Clyde coastguard said that although the Kartli was taking in water, it was in no immediate danger of sinking.

A spokesman said that without lights and at night the vessel was a danger to shipping. However, warnings were being broadcast to vessels in the shipping lanes between Scotland and Northern Ireland to keep a lookout for it.

The bodies of two of those who died were found in the Kartli's wheelhouse, which was turned into a mass of tangled and twisted metal by the force of the wave that appeared to hit the 25-year-old Soviet-registered vessel head-on as it tried to ride out the storm 15 miles west of Islay.

The Kartli's electrical and navigational systems were swamped by the wave, which completely disabled it, leaving it at the mercy of the elements.

Rescuers found the body of the woman, one of three in the 51 crew, in the water. The fourth victim died in hospital in Londonderry where he had been flown for emergency treatment.

The alert began shortly after 4am yesterday when the



Ilena Finogenova, 31, one of three women crew, is helped from a rescue helicopter at Crosshouse hospital, Kilmarnock, after being plucked from the sea

tanker Drupa spotted red distress flares off Islay and notified the coastguard.

Immediately a big air-sea rescue operation began, with helicopter crews battling against horrendous weather.

Two RAF Wessex helicopters from Aldergrove in Belfast were first on the scene. However, the hazardous task of winching the survivors to safety in weather which experienced staff described as the worst in 20 years, was left to the crews of two Sea King helicopters from HMS Gannet at Prestwick and RAF Lossiemouth.

The Lossiemouth Sea King, which had been stationed at Prestwick overnight, picked up the first batch of ten survivors, among them the most seriously injured, and ferried them to Altnagelvin Hospital in Londonderry.

The two aircraft then ran a series of rescue missions, picking up survivors from the Kartli's deck and from two liferafts which the crew, in their panic, had launched even although the vessel was in no danger of sinking.

An RAF Nimrod from Kinloss flew over the scene, co-ordinating the rescue.

A vital factor in the success of the operation, however, was the presence of the Royal fleet auxiliary vessel Olna which was in the area at the time. After being alerted, it manoeuvred into sheltered water to enable its own helicopters to take off and join the search.

As well as being within a relatively short flying time from the rescue scene, allowing the Sea Kings to land on the helideck and deliver the survivors, the refuelling facilities on board the Olna, which saw service during the Gulf war, meant that the

helicopters involved in the winching operations were able to refuel at sea. This gave them a far quicker turn-round and allowed them to resume faster than would be the case for a land-based operation.

In total, 32 survivors were airlifted on to the Olna, which is equipped with medical equipment and has a Russian-speaking crew member. They were later airlifted to HMS Gannet in Prestwick, where arrangements had been made to accommodate them.

Apart from the man who died at Altnagelvin Hospital in Londonderry, nine were

treated for hypothermia, then released and spent the night in a hotel in Londonderry.

Clyde Coastguard said last night that the rescue, which had been conducted in exceptionally dangerous conditions, had gone smoothly.

One rescuer described the reaction of the survivors to their ordeal as mixed. "One man cried from the time he got picked up till the time he was put on the Olna.

"Others gave the thumbs up and sat down and stared into space. Some were very cheerful and shook hands."

Wave 'hit like bomb', Page 3

Cliff-fall OAP and 'rescuer' saved

A PENSIONER and an ambulancemen were plucked off cliffs at Stonehaven today in a double dawn rescue.

An RAF Lossiemouth rescue helicopter was scrambled at 5.30am after an elderly man was found by local fisherman Mr Donald Ogilvie (35) about 100ft down the cliffs, badly bruised and suffering from hypothermia.

But when the Sea King reached the scene about 300 yards south of



LIBBY DUNN

the harbour, there were two casualties.

In a bid to reach the rocky ledge ambulanceman Alan Duff had slipped and fallen.

The pensioner James Christie (76) Clifton Road, Aberdeen, had been out for an early-morning walk when he is thought to have lost his footing.

He lay just a few feet from the sea on a rocky ledge for up to four hours before a passer-by heard his cries for help.

Helicopter winchman Ian Bonthorne described the scene

"It was an awkward job because the moss-covered rock was slippery and it was very dark."

The injured pair were airlifted to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary where Mr Christie was detained for treatment for a back injury.

Mr Duff, Brickfield Road, Stonehaven, who was thought to have neck and pelvic injuries, was later discharged.

Ambulanceman airlifted to hospital with pensioner after rescue attempt

Cliff rescue bid turns into double drama

A STONEHAVEN ambulanceman recounted a double dawn drama yesterday after he was injured in a cliff-face rescue mission near Stonehaven harbour.

Mr Alan Duff, 88 Brickfield Road, was airlifted by an RAF Lossiemouth rescue helicopter to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, with the man he helped save, Aberdeen pensioner Mr James Christie (76), Clifton Road.

Slipped

Mr Christie was found badly bruised and suffering from hypothermia, at around 5am, 100ft down the cliffs, when his cries for help were heard by local fisherman Mr Donald Ogilvie (35).

But when the Sea King helicopter arrived there were two casualties to be winched to safety, after Mr Duff slipped on the rocks and injured his back while bringing a stretcher from the ambulance.

"I just slipped, it was quite simple," he said.

His injuries meant a second ambulance crew had to be

□ KATHERINE PACITTI

brought in from Aberdeen to aid the paramedic working with him.

Mr Duff was released from hospital yesterday and Mr Christie's condition was described last night as satisfactory.

At home, Mr Duff was philosophical yesterday about his injuries — although his bruised back means he may be forced to spend much of his remaining seasonal holiday lying down.

"It's just one of those things — it's all part of the job," said Mr Duff, who has been an ambulanceman for 12 years, transferring from the Peterhead station six years ago.

Praised

"I was supposed to be on holiday, but we are always on call — I was quite looking forward to being off," he said.

Inspector Charles Milne praised Mr Ogilvie for his prompt action in raising the alarm.

"He did a good job. No doubt he probably saved the man's life by his prompt action," he said.

"Mr Christie was very lucky that Mr Ogilvie heard his cries for help and called us," he added.

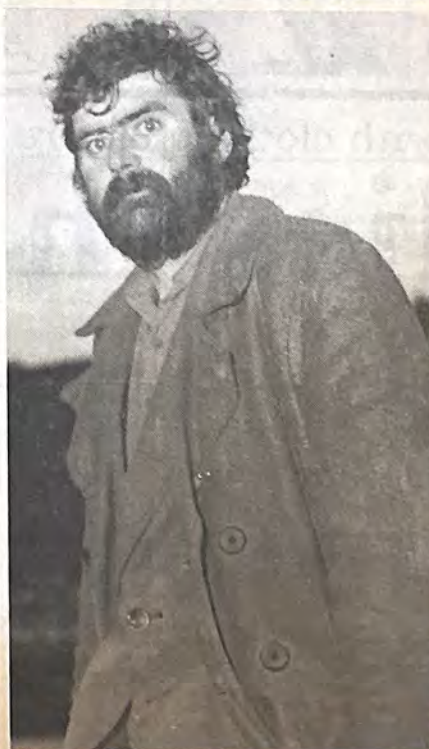
Mr Ogilvie said: "I was walking down to look at a boat I was working on when I heard his cries for help. I didn't hesitate — I went straight to the police and reported it."

Pains

Together with a constable, he searched the foot of the cliffs and found Mr Christie lying on an injured left shoulder.

"He was complaining of bad pains on his left shoulder, the back of his neck and down his back. He said he had been lying there since half past one in the morning," said Mr Ogilvie.

"We did the best we could to get him comfortable until the ambulance arrived. I took off my fur-lined jacket and wrapped it round him."



Stonehaven man Mr Donald Ogilvie, who raised the alarm after he heard cries for help from the cliffs.

SUMMARY FOR JANUARY 1992

01 Precautionary launch to Sumburgh to assist in Shetland Basin operations. NAR.

ANDERSON POLLOCK HOLMES AITKEN

02 Scrambled to injured sailor with leg and head injuries 160NM E of Lossiemouth to A.R.I.

GEAR POLLOCK BODIAM AITKEN

03 Tasked to transfer elderly lady with thoracic embolism from Raigmore to Edinburgh.

WILLSON PRINCE LARKE TRETHEWEY

08 Medevac an asphyxiated premature baby from Wick to Raigmore Hospital.

PRINCE HODGSON LARKE BRAGG

10 Tasked to search for 27 yr old epileptic man at Sutors Gap. Casualty found and taken to Raigmore Hospital.

CAMPBELL HODGSON LARKE BRAGG

11 Tasked to transfer man with chest injuries from rig support vessel to Aberdeen airport.

CAMPBELL HODGSON LARKE BRAGG

14 Scrambled to search for man overboard off Ducansby Head. Nothing found after search.

GEAR DIXON LITTLE BRAGG

17 Diverted from training to assist Aberdeen C.G. with a small boat in trouble at Nairn. NAR.

ANDERSON LEIGH BODIAM AITKEN

18 Search for source of transmission on 121.5 approx 50 NM NE of Aberdeen but nothing found.

HODGSON DIXON COX TRETHEWEY

19 Tasked to assist MRT for overdue walkers in Ballater area. On arrival men found and R137 RTB.

HODGSON DIXON COX TRETHEWEY

19 Tasked to search for missing man in Dingwall area. Man found and handed over to Dingwall police.

GEAR PRINCE CHAPMAN AITKEN

21 Tasked to search for 2 missing climbers on Bheinn Fhada. Climbers found safe and well and taken to Glencoe MRT hut.

CAMPBELL LEIGH LARKE TRETHEWEY

29 Medevac patient with severe head injury from Wick to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

CAMPBELL POLLOCK BODIAM TRETHEWEY

31 Medevac RTA patient from Stornoway to Raigmore Hospital.

GEAR POLLOCK LARKE TRETHEWEY

Training by night

RAF Lossiemouth search and rescue helicopters will be carrying out increased night training in Grampian and Strathspey from Monday until the end of the month.

During the first week, training will take place in the area bounded by Lossiemouth to Banff along the coast, and inland to Keith and Huntly. In the second week the area covered will move inland to Braemar and Aviemore.

Flying will normally take place in the evening, but will be finished by 9pm.

The intensive training is being carried out with a view to enhancing the squadron's existing capabilities for night search and rescue by training the crews in the use of night-vision goggles.

These goggles act as image intensifiers during darkness and give a more defined picture of features at night to assist in search and rescue operations.

Copter crews' willing pupils

► **RAYMOND SHEWAN**

HELICOPTER crews at RAF Lossiemouth are to be trained to see in the dark.

The station's search-and-rescue flight has been issued with revolutionary goggles which will help crews during night-time operations.

The night vision goggles act as image intensifiers to give a more clearly defined picture of features and objects.

Crews will undergo intensive training in the use of the goggles and night-time exercises will take place next week along the coast between Lossiemouth and Banff and inland as far as Keith and Huntly.

"The training is being carried out to enhance the helicopters' existing capabilities for night search-and-rescue," said an RAF spokesman.

Flying will normally take place in the evening and finish by 9pm.

CALL OUTS

Rescue
Co-ordination
Centre,
Edinburgh

SUMBURGH
15 (11)

STORNOWAY
54 (65)

LOSSIEMOUTH
222 (169)

LEUCHARS
161 (124)

HMS GANNET
151 (135)

BOULMER
117 (137)

LECONSFIELD
111 (142)

VALLEY
166 (172)

COLTISHALL
56 (95)

CALL OUTS
Mountain Rescues

KINLOSS 28 (16)
LEUCHARS 15 (14)

LEEMING 12 (12)
STAFFORD 9 (14)

ST ATHAN 15 (13)
VALLEY 15 (13)

RAF Nimrod Maritime
Reconnaissance

KINLOSS 46 (58)
ST MAWGAN 39 (18)

LOSSIEMOUTH 1 (-)

ROYAL AIR FORCE SEARCH AND RESCUE STATISTICS 1991

RAF Lossiemouth is UK's busiest copter rescue unit

□ TIM PAULING

THE RAF base at Lossiemouth had the busiest helicopter search-and-rescue unit in Britain last year.

Figures released by the RAF show the two Sea Kings in D Flight, 202 Squadron, were scrambled 222 times — the busiest year yet — 53 times more than 1990.

The second busiest unit was the Royal Navy flight at Culdrose, Cornwall, with 205 missions, followed by RAF Valley, North Wales, (166) and RAF Leuchars (161).

Flight Lieutenant Tony Gear, officer commanding D Flight, said he could not say for certain why it was a record year.

"We had quite a bit of snow at the beginning of the year and a lot of people came a cropper on the hills," he said.

"Call-outs just seemed to continue and didn't stop. We seemed to do more car crashes and the NHS is using us a lot for medical evacuations."

"We had 30 scrambles in August, one a day almost. During midsummer we had more days on rescue than training, which is very unusual."

About half the missions involved rescues on land, with the remainder split between sea rescues and medical evacuations.

Flt Lt Gear said the hairiest mission was to the St Rognvald ferry in March, an operation which earned the crew a Silk Cut Nautical Award.

The vessel's steering and engine were damaged in Force 10 winds. The helicopter managed to lift off four crew as the ship rolled in 35ft seas off the rocky Caithness coast.

Flt Lt Gear said the crews were now training with special night goggles which will help a lot in the hills.

RAF, Navy and Coastguard rescue helicopters and mountain rescue teams helped 1,382 people in distress in 1991, 21% less than the previous year. If the 400 people rescued when the sea broke through defences at Towyn, North Wales, in 1990 are excluded, the number is slightly up.

Overall, the 14 search-and-rescue units around the UK

were called out by RAF rescue co-ordination centres in Edinburgh and Plymouth to 1,806 incidents, slightly fewer than 1990.

Air Vice-Marshal Allan Blackley, Air Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland, said false alarms from the misuse of emergency beacons accounted for the largest increase in flights.

The number of search-and-rescue satellite alarms caused by the careless or thoughtless use of beacons jumped from 52 in 1990 to 145 last year, he said.

"This means we needlessly expended many more man-hours and helicopter flying time than before while we looked for people we thought were in distress."

Careless

"While most beacons were switched on accidentally, say on a fishing boat by a busy deckhand, we found that some started broadcasting because someone had carelessly knocked over the beacon while rummaging in a cupboard."

● THE number of search-and-rescue helicopters at RAF Lossiemouth is not about to be increased.

A report in the Press and Journal yesterday said the Ministry of Defence was expected to announce the fate of RAF Leuchars search-and-rescue unit soon, with the news that at least five new helicopters had been bought for Lossiemouth.

The involvement of a Leuchars helicopter in the rescue of two boys from cliffs near Arbroath at the weekend resulted in renewed calls for the unit's retention.

An RAF Lossiemouth spokesman said an announcement was expected soon about an order for a number of Sea King helicopters for search-and-rescue units around the UK.

"As far as RAF Lossiemouth is concerned, we have no knowledge of at least five new helicopters coming to the station," he added.

At present, Lossiemouth has two Sea Kings.

THE large number of missions carried out by the RAF Leuchars search-and-rescue unit underline the need for helicopters to stay at the base, says East Angus MP Mr Andrew Welsh.

Leuchars crews were called out 161 times, 37 more than 1990. Of the 104 people picked up, 88 were carried to safety. The Ministry of Defence is expected to announce soon that Leuchars' Wessex helicopters will be replaced by new Sea Kings to be stationed at Lossiemouth.

The Government is also planning to phase out Arbroath Coastguard station and transfer equipment 14 miles to Montrose.

Mr Welsh — with Banff and Buchan MP Mr Alex Salmond and Moray MP Mrs Margaret Ewing — has been pressing for the retention of the rescue services in the area.

He said vital time would be lost if rescue teams had to fly from the Moray coast.

"These figures underline the crucial importance of the search-and-rescue helicopters. Everyone should redouble their efforts to get the Government to change its mind," he said.

"The service has proved its worth time and time again. If you take away equipment and expertise you will have a vast gap in safety in the area."

RAF crew rescue cliff fall teenager

THE crew of an RAF Lossiemouth rescue helicopter came to the aid of a teenager who fell nearly 300ft down cliffs on the Black Isle last Friday afternoon.

Eighteen-year-old Ian Coles, of Cromarty, was winched aboard suffering only from bruising and the effects of a crack on the head.

He had slipped and fallen while out for a morning walk with his dog along the cliff top

on the Sutors of Cromarty, but managed to climb 100ft back up before being spotted by the helicopter crew.

Winchman Rick Bragg said later that the youth seemed confused. As it had been reported that he was epileptic, he was taken to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

His golden retriever puppy was found unharmed on Monday by an Inverness coastguard.

Copter plucks youth in 200ft fall to safety

A BLACK Isle teenager had a lucky escape yesterday when he was plucked to safety by an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter after he fell 200-300ft down cliffs on the Sutors of Cromarty.

Rescuers found Ian Coles (18), Hideaway, Shore Mill, Cromarty, who slipped while walking his dog, clinging to a small tree on the steep side of the headland which guards the entrance to the Cromarty Firth.

Although dazed by his fall, Ian had managed to scramble about 100ft back up the dangerous slope, where he became stuck.

Last night, a spokesman at RAF Lossiemouth said: "He must have fallen 200-300ft and is certainly lucky to be alive. Fortune was kind to him."

Worried relatives raised the alarm after Ian failed to return from a morning walk with the dog.

The RAF rescue helicopter was scrambled around 1pm and located and uplifted the youth, 20 minutes later. Police and coastguards were also called out.

A spokesman at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, said last night Ian's condition was satisfactory.

The dog, a golden retriever, is still missing.

DIGEST

news in brief

Mercy airlift

A SICK seaman was airlifted to hospital in Aberdeen today by helicopter from his ship 30 miles off Fraserburgh.

The man, from the standby ship Cam Jaguar, was said to be suffering from chest pains.

He was flown to Dyce by a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth and transferred by ambulance to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Oil rig

AN RAF Lossiemouth rescue helicopter whisked an oil industry worker to hospital in Aberdeen early on Saturday after it was reported that he was having difficulty breathing.

He was a crew member on the oil rig standby vessel Cam Jaguar, serving the Ocean Alliance rig

Lossie fisher lost at sea

TRAGEDY struck at sea this week when a Lossiemouth fisherman was lost overboard from the vessel he co-owned.

An extensive air-sea search failed to find anything, and the missing man is now presumed drowned.

Mr James Gault (48) was last seen at 2am on Tuesday, when he went to take over the watch on the 67-foot motor fishing vessel "Dayspring".

The remaining crew of three on the Lossiemouth-registered boat raised the alarm at 9.17am, when Mr Gault was found to be missing.

Rescue helicopters from RAF Lossiemouth and the Claymore oil field's Alpha platform, three merchant vessels, the naval warship "Lindisfarne" and the Wick lifeboat combed the waters 30 miles east of Wick, with Pentland Coastguards co-ordinating operations.

The "Dayspring", which is skippered by the missing man's brother, Mr William Gault, also joined in the search. Hopes faded as darkness fell, and at 4pm the search was called off. The helicopters, which were running low on fuel, returned to base, and the other ships were released from the search.

The Dayspring returned to Lossiemouth in the early hours of Wednesday morning. The crew includes Mr William Bain, the skipper's son-in-law, and Mr James Prentice of Coullardhill.

Speaking for the Gault family, Mr Ian Affleck, the missing man's brother-in-law, said: "Jim was very much a family man. His life revolved around the Lossiemouth community."

"He was in fishing all his life, and everyone knew him. He was very well respected in the town for his beliefs."

Mr Gault was very active as an elder of the local Brethren Assembly. He leaves a wife, Mary, and two grown-up children, Andrew and Angela.

Mr Affleck explained that the family were too shocked to comment. The whole Lossiemouth community had been stunned by the tragedy.

Fisher lost in plunge from boat

□ BRUCE TAYLOR

A LOSSIEMOUTH fisherman was lost, presumed drowned, after falling overboard from his brother's vessel early yesterday.

An all-day, air-sea search 40 miles east of Wick found no trace of Mr James Gault (48), Gilmour Crescent, mate on the 67ft Lossiemouth boat Dayspring.

Helicopters from RAF Lossiemouth and the Claymore oil field platform joined Wick lifeboat and surface vessels in the search.

The alert was raised after Mr Gault was reported missing by the skipper, Mr William Gault, Community Way, after having been on watch.

As darkness fell, Pentland Coastguards stood down the search. There are no plans to resume it today.

The dead man was a respected member of the fishing community and a leading light in the local Brethren Assembly.

Lossiemouth-based Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen superintendent Mr Ray Hall said the tragedy had stunned the community.

"James was a friendly and popular man. He lived out his Christian faith helping others."

Mr Gault and his wife, Mary, have two grown-up children, Andrew and Angela.

The other crew members are Mr William Main, the skipper's son-in-law, and Mr James Prentice, both of Coullardhill.

Blind spot delays North Sea rescue

A NAIRN coastguard has revealed that vital minutes could have been lost during a rescue operation which took place off the town's harbour last Friday evening.

Auxiliary coastguard Alex Taylor was in the coastguard hut which doubles as a harbour office when the 21ft lobster boat Lady Sheila skippered by Mr Eddie Fraser from Inverness grounded 200 yards off the east pier.

But because his view was restricted by the new boatyard, he did not realise the Lady Sheila's predicament until he was on his way home.

Mr Taylor contacted the coastguard service at Aberdeen who summoned a Sea King helicopter

from Lossiemouth and Invergordon lifeboat.

Two auxiliary coastguards went out in a cabin cruiser skippered by Mr Danny Howatt, King Street, Nairn, to assist.

The Lady Sheila was holed in two places by her drive shaft and was taking in water. She was towed in by Mr Howatt and his crew as the helicopter stood by on the beach.

Highland Regional Council and the Coastguard are presently involved in negotiations to relocate the coastguard hut to the seaward side of the new boat yard.

Mr Taylor said it completely blocks out the view of the harbour entrance at Nairn and a large part of the Firth to the east of the hut.



Master Aircrewman Edward Little (above), of RAF Lossiemouth, has graduated BA from the Open University.

A helicopter winch operator with Air-Sea Rescue, Mr Little began studying foundation science and social science five years ago, essentially to pass the time. Lately, he has completed courses in biology and geology.

THE LIGHTHOUSE



202 SQN

It's a time of great upheaval over here at D Flight. We are in the process of being moved from old, cramped and uncomfortable accommodation into a swish, modern, spacious and very comfortable working environment.

As most people are well aware, just about every Section or Squadron has a collection of "gizzits," those little pieces of memorabilia "acquired" from various sources over the years. At 202 we have a prototype "supergun," but to protect those concerned, I cannot say where they found it.

Enough trivia for the moment, and on to news of the brave aviators. In 1991 we were involved in 225 missions and we rescued 191 people — this goes down on record as being our busiest year yet. So much then for 1991, what about 1992? Well, a run of shifts wouldn't be complete without a trip to Wick via Raigmore would it? On a more interesting note though, while most of the Station was shut down over the festive period we managed to get ourselves on News at Ten. It was the usual story, both aircraft were in bed for the night and everyone was just about to settle down to watch yet another film. This of course is the perfect time for us to be scrambled. The look on Dave "Oh I hate missions involving boats" Aitken's face said it all. "Rescue an injured man from a boat," came the call. "In this weather?" came the reply. But rescue him they did, and while poor Dave battled on the deck of the boat against the elements and a stretcher, Rad Op Chris Bodiam, from the comfort of the helicopter, captured it all on video for the rest of the world to see.

Till we meet again,

ELDRITCH

SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 1992

01 Called by off duty winchman to scene of RTA at
Dulnain Bridge. Casualty taken to Raigmore.

CAMPBELL WILLSON CHAPMAN AITKEN

01 Medevac 8 year old girl with pneumonia from Wick
to Raigmore.

CAMPBELL WILLSON CHAPMAN AITKEN

04 Scrambled to investigate reported aircraft crash
in Alford area. Smoke found to be controlled burning
and no aircraft was involved. WIFA.

PRINCE HAYWARD LARKE TAYLOR

06 Scrambled to standby vessel with broken propshaft
to evacuate 12 crew. On arrival to assistance
required and R137 stood down.

PRINCE HAYWARD HOLMES TAYLOR

09 Search for 3 missing walkers in Ben Alder area.
En route, advised walkers were safe and well. NAR.

ANDERSON LEIGH BODIAM BONTHRONE

09 Requested to assist in search for missing man on
Island of Hoy. Man walked in and R137 stood down.

ANDERSON LEIGH BODIAM BONTHRONE

10 FV 'Charuny' taking on water NE of Fraserburgh
and R137 assisted with pump. Crew and winchman
lifted off FV and later it sank.

CAMPBELL PRINCE HOLMES AITKEN

15 Transfer female patient with cardiac problems
from Wick to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

ANDERSON LEIGH BODIAM BRAGG

15 Scrambled from Stornoway to ditched Hunter aircraft
but aircrew recovered by other assets.

HODGSON HAYWARD LARKE TAYLOR

16 Tasked to transfer heart transplant patient from
Aberdeen airport to Glasgow airport.

HODGSON PRINCE CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

16 After completing previous task, transferred fallen
climber from a bothy to Belford Hospital.

HODGSON PRINCE CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

17 Scramble to cliff incident at Logie Head. Casualty
and husband lifted and taken to Dr Grays.

CAMPBELL WILLSON LARKE BRAGG

20 Tasked to lift sailor with back injury off tanker 'Atco
Thames' and take him to Dyce airport.

GEAR POLLOCK CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

20 Scrambled to search area N of airfield after reports of
green flares. Nothing found.

GEAR POLLOCK CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

22 Scrambled to MV 'Superiority' near Peterhead with
shifting cargo. On arrival, vessel underway and no further
assistance required.

CAMPBELL HAYWARD LARKE AITKEN

22 Scrambled to SARSAT hit off Claymore. Weak signal heard
on arrival and advised beacon found on the FV.

GEAR POLLOCK BODIAM TAYLOR

22 Tasked to lift crewman with illness in family to
Edinburgh airport.

GEAR POLLOCK BODIAM TAYLOR

29 Scrambled to fallen climber on Ben Nevis. Due to bad
weather shut down at Fort William first and then Corpach
for a night stop.

HODGSON HAYWARD LAKE BONTHRONE

Climber survives Ben Nevis plunge

A LONDON policeman emerged with nothing more than a broken ankle after falling a "considerable" distance while tackling a tough Ben Nevis ascent yesterday.

The exact distance he fell was unclear but his colleagues at Fort William said the climber was lucky to have come out of the incident without major injury.

Constable Michael Laidlaw (29) was rescued by members of Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and an RAF helicopter from Leaconfield, Humber. He was taken to Belford Hospital, Fort William.

The accident happened on No. 2 Gully on Comh Buttress. Constable Laidlaw was found about 300ft from the bottom of the gully.

A police spokesman said his climbing partner, another constable, was not due off the mountain until today as he had decided to stay with the main party after learning his companion had not been injured seriously.

It is thought Constable Laidlaw slid about 50ft before falling, and new snow may have cushioned his impact. Further details will not be available until the rest of his party leave the mountain.

Plane-crash alert is smoked out

Boys' warning traced to gorse burn-up at NE hillside farm



■ A Piper Cherokee like the one flying during yesterday's plane-crash alert.



WELL-intentioned schoolchildren launched a full-scale emergency operation in the North-east when they reported a plane crash yesterday.

Nine-year-olds Niall Ferguson and Duncan Shimwell, of Tough School, near Alford, raised the alarm at 11am when they saw a light aircraft drop towards a hill, followed by a bang and a plume of smoke.

Two search-and-rescue helicopters were scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth and Leuchars, and a fleet of ambulances and fire engines went to the area.

But when they arrived the flames on top of a hill at South

□ TIM PAULING

Tillykerrie, about a mile south of the school, turned out to be controlled burning of gorse and heather by a farmer.

The boys were in the school playground when the false alarm started.

Duncan said: "We were playing our games when we saw the plane wobble about then go into the hill."

Niall added: "The engine had cut off. We heard a bang and we thought it had hit the ground. We then saw the smoke."

The classmates alerted head-

master Mr George Montgomery, who called the emergency services.

Firefighters from Aberdeen, Alford, Banchory, Inch and Kintore attended with the police. The ambulance service turned out five vehicles, a paramedics' rapid-response unit plus two officers.

All emergency services said the schoolchums had acted correctly in reporting what they saw.

Assistant Divisional Fire Officer Donnie Harper said when they arrived there was column of dense smoke.

When Aberdeen Airport confirmed no aircraft from

Dyce was missing, it was feared a military plane had gone down, he said.

"Once on the hill, we discovered it was a gorse fire but we could well have been looking at a plane crash," said Mr Harper.

Inspector Donald Ross said: "There is controlled burning on the hill. The children saw the plane go over and disappear."

"They put two-and-two together and got five. There is no criticism of the children — it was a good intention."

A spokesman for the rescue co-ordination centre at RAF Pitreavie said: "With this sort of thing you have to check just in case something is wrong."

"It was just coincidental. We are simply calling it a well-intentioned false alarm."

An instructor from Aberdeen Flying Club confirmed he was flying a Piper Cherokee over the Alford area at the time.

He said he and a pupil were above 3,000ft the whole time and did not practise closing the throttle — a normal part of training.

■ Left: A helicopter and emergency-service vehicles stand by at Tough School, near Alford, during the missing-aircraft alert.



■ Tough School pupils Niall Ferguson (left) and Duncan Shimwell, who raised the alarm.

Four hurt in cliff and hill accidents

FOUR people were injured on hills and cliffs in the North and North-east yesterday.

In the first incident, a Dundee student fell 150ft after slipping and falling on Stob A Chearcall, near Barrisdale. Mr Stuart McKeggle (19), Westpark Hall, 319 Perth Road, was airlifted to Belford Hospital, Fort William, where he was detained last night.

He and his student companion, Mr Thomas Vaughan (20), Flat 9, 67 Seagate, Dundee, managed to walk to Barrisdale bothy, where the alarm was raised.

Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and an RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth were alerted, and

□ KEN JONES, STEVE SMITH and ALISTAIR BEATON

Mr McKeggle was taken to hospital with cuts, bruises and deep cuts to his elbow.

Also taken to Belford Hospital was Inverness woman Christina Pinkney (70), 3 Ormond Drive, Balloch, who was rescued after fracturing her foot while walking with friends on moorland between Blarmafalach and Glen Nevis, Fort William.

And a Cullen woman was winched to safety after she became ill while walking along cliffs at Logie Head.

The woman, whose name has not been released, was picked up by a Sea King search-and-rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth shortly after 11am.

Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell said the woman was at the base of the cliffs and police had requested a helicopter to take her out on a stretcher.

The aircraft took the woman to Elgin's Borough Briggs football ground, where she was transferred by ambulance to Dr Gray's Hospital.

At Collieston, coastguard auxiliaries and police went to the aid of an Aberdeen woman, helpless and injured after falling on a cliff-top path.

A family outing became a lunchtime ordeal for Mrs Elizabeth Bain (61), 13 Abergeldie Road, after she slipped on wet grass and fell, hurting her ankle near the car park north of the village.

The alarm was raised by the family party and auxiliaries from Collieston and Cruden Bay went to her aid.

With Mrs Bain said to be in more pain than immediate danger, coastguards set up cliff-rescue gear as a safety precaution beside the Whinniford path before lifting her to an ambulance.

She left Aberdeen Royal Infirmary after treatment for an ankle injury.

RAF team notch up a record year for rescues

By Andy Bradshaw

RAF Lossiemouth's life-saving helicopter squad was the busiest rescue unit in the UK last year.

The two Sea King choppers from D Flight 202 Search And Rescue Squadron were called out a record 225 times in 1991 — 56 times more than in 1990, and 125 more than the year before.

But squadron members are at a loss to explain how the increase has come about.

"We cannot quite put our fingers on why it is happening," said deputy SAR commander Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell.

"People may be more used to our presence, or the danger factor could be increasing in sports like climbing or abseiling. It could be a number of things," he added.

"It did seem particularly busy, especially around August, when we were doing jobs every day for virtually the whole month. Normally it is quite seasonal, but in 1991 it was all year round," he said.

Emergency electricity phone number

HYDRO Electric has introduced a 24-hour emergency telephone number for use by customers in Moray and elsewhere.

It is part of a move to improve customer service. The number is 0345-200500. All calls will be charged at local rates and will be routed automatically to Hydro Electric staff in the appropriate regional control centre.

"Winter was quite busy because we had avalanches, and in summer people come out climbing, but last year we were consistently busy."

About half the missions involved rescues on land, with the rest split between sea rescues and medical evacuations. Overall, 190 people were rescued or medically evacuated.

One rescue operation which stood out for Flt Lt Campbell was a night flight into a corrie at Glencoe in November to save a climber who had fallen and sustained back injuries.

In that operation, the Mountain Rescue Team brought the injured climber down to the cloud base, where he was picked up by the helicopter, which transferred him to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Other memorable rescue operations included last December's bid to save the crew of the Soviet factory ship "Kartli", which found itself in severe trouble off the West Coast.

In horrendous weather, a huge wave smashed the vessel, killing several crew members. A Lossiemouth helicopter led by Flt Lt Pete Bell, with co-pilot Flt Lt Steve Hodgson, winchman Flt Sgt Paul Trethewey and winch operator Flt Sgt Steve Larkie was the first on the scene.

With the bow of the barge being thrown up to 60 feet in the swell, Flt Sgt Trethewey was lowered onto the deck, and rescued several of the crew before other helicopters arrived.

Another of the most notable rescues took place last March, when crew members were rescued from the P&O ferry "St Rognvald" off the coast near Wick. That rescue earned the crew a nomination for a Silk Cut Nautical Award.

"It is nice to be doing a job where you feel that you are in constant use. You can come back feeling pretty high because you have done a good job. Sometimes people are not saved, but more often than not they are," said Flt Lt Campbell.

The SAR crew flew out on their 13th mission this year on Wednesday afternoon, to transport a man with head injuries from Wick to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

"It has been a fairly slow start, but if we hit bad weather I would say we would probably reach the same number of rescues as last year," said Flt Lt Campbell.

The Lossiemouth Sea King crews recently completed training in the use of night vision goggles, which will enhance their capabilities for night search and rescue.

The Mountain Rescue Team based at RAF Kinloss was busier than any other last year.

The team was called out 28 times, with RAF Leuchars in second place on 15 scrambles. In 1990 the Kinloss team was called out 16 times, and was again the busiest mountain rescue outfit.

RAF Kinloss's Nimrod rescue service was the busiest again last year, with 46 call-outs. In 1990, however, they were called out 58 times. RAF Lossiemouth's Shackleton-flying 8 Squadron was called out once last year.

Captain tells of storm nightmare

By ALISTAIR BEATON

Crew waist-deep in freezing water battle to free tonnes of loose timber

THE captain of a badly-damaged ship which fought mountainous seas off the North-east coast at the weekend admitted afterwards that it had been his "worst experience in 42 years at sea".

Captain George O'Brien (57) and his five-man crew told how Force 9 gales and 25ft waves tore loose hundreds of tonnes of timber from the deck of the *Superiority*.

They battled with saws, axes and knives to free the massive timbers — lashed by spray, and with the vessel on a 12-degree list and the deck pitching wildly.

One crewman said: "I was up to my waist in freezing water, working away with a hacksaw in the middle of a full gale, and wondering after 30 years at sea, 'What the hell am I doing here?'"

"It was a very wild night and pretty scary."

Huge heave

The drama began at 4am on Saturday when the London-registered vessel, bound for Ireland from Sweden with 477 tonnes of timber on deck and paper rolls in her hold, was hit by "a very heavy sea" 50 miles off Peterhead.

Captain O'Brien said: "It was running to at least eight metres and we took a massive heave to starboard. It took away about 75% of the deck cargo immediately."

"We were lucky it was timber. At least it was buoyant and floating, so there was no risk of us going over — but we had to get it all jettisoned clear."

"It was pitch black and we had just the ship's deck lights to work by. It was very

hazardous for the crew but they did a magnificent job."

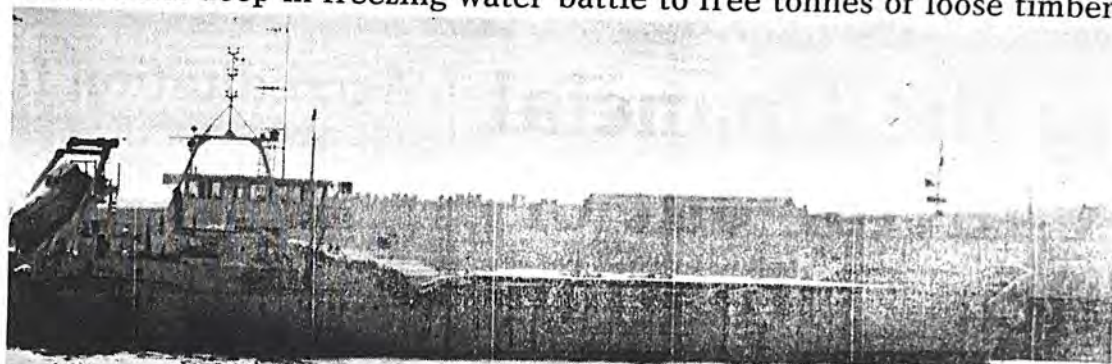
Chief engineer Mr Fred Ditty (49), Lennoxton, East Stirling, said: "It was quite an experience, but we came through all right."

Six vessels in the immediate area responded to the mayday and Peterhead lifeboat was put on alert in an operation co-ordinated by Aberdeen coast-guard.

As the supply ship *Sun Wrestler* stood by the *Superiority* and an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter circled overhead, there were fears that the timbers and tarpaulins had damaged the propeller.

After jettisoning much of her remaining deck cargo, the *Superiority* punched through heavy seas to Peterhead where the exhausted crew berthed her at lunchtime on Saturday.

The battered ship suffered "extensive damage" and a diver was checking the propeller and hull.



■ Above: The storm-battered *Superiority* arrives at Peterhead after her battle 50 miles away.
■ Below: Sleepless but safe... Captain George O'Brien and chief engineer Fred Ditty.



French trawler crew airlifted to safety at Stornoway harbour

SIXTEEN crew members of the 59th French trawler *Capitaine Byron* were airlifted to safety early on Saturday.

The vessel was heading for Stornoway when she ran aground on the Sgeir Mhor, a rock in the Stornoway harbour area.

The Stornoway lifeboat was launched and the Stornoway coastguard search and rescue helicopter scrambled.

The lifeboat was unable to get alongside the French vessel and the helicopter lifted off the crew.

They were taken to the fishermen's mission in the town. The lifeboat also tried to tow off the *Capitaine Byron* but the tow-line parted.

However, she was towed off about 8am by the Shetland trawler *Alison Kay*.

A crew member said later: "She came off very easily as it was almost high tide."

The crew went back on board and although there was some damage to the bottom of the vessel, she sailed yesterday for her home port of Lorient.

48 SQN GOES SOUTH

AT long last we've finally managed to make the front page in the *Lighthouse*. Does this mean something good has actually happened on 48 Sqn? Well, that depends on who you are really.

Since the departure of Sqn Ldr Drissell last year I've heard a number of rumours telling of deep divisions within the Sqn, well readers it's true, we really are a Sqn divided.

That young gun (pun) Fg Off Gunn (honest, that's his name) has gone rogue and has taken his men off to his hideaway in the jungle to terrorise the locals with their blowpipes and pop guns.

Meanwhile, our new boss, Sqn Ldr Nash (see photo . . . he's the one with hat and glasses) decided that within one week in command of 48, he needed a holiday (he knows what's what).

As the destination was secret, he tasked Fg Off Murray with seeing to the arrangements. Off the Adjt trotted to PSF to see the lovely SACW Polley (can't be too familiar). Whilst there, he got so tongue tied he somehow managed to book the rest of 48 as well. Never mind Adj, practice makes perfect!

So there we are folks, half of us in Belize and the rest enjoying(?) the delights of the Falklands (whatever they may be!).

Actually, I've been telling a wee white lie, our split is all above board and, most important, has the full support of OC 48 who is firmly in command and certainly doesn't need a holiday . . . yet!

On the 29th January half the Sqn flew out to the Falkland Islands on a four month detachment at RAF Mount Pleasant. Our mission is to provide air defence for the base

and a number of installations close by.

Our guys will be living and working(?) on the four permanent Rapier sites that circle the camp with the boss and his crew running the show from the Resident Rapier Sqn HQ situated in the camp itself. It's very much an operational tour with a lot of hard work to be done by all.

Some of our Rapier sites are quite remote and can only be reached by helicopters and small boats and as a result our training programme has been quite varied (see photo). It's not all work — there's plenty to do in the Falklands and if you're into birds and penguins you'll have a field day.

Keen military types won't be disappointed as there are plenty of battlefield tours to go on and if you ask nicely, Fg Off Murray will help you find your very own unexploded grenade (there's a story there somewhere!).

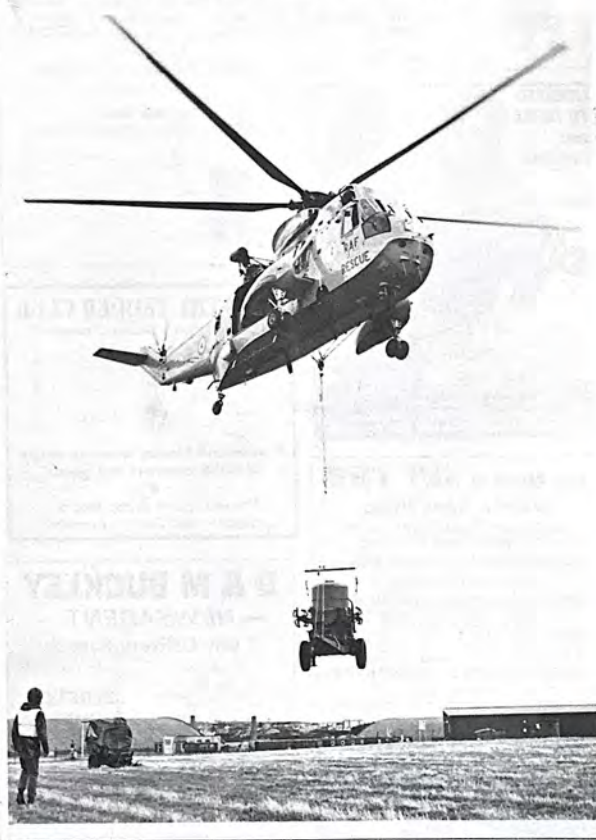
Fg Off Gunn on the other hand won first prize in the 'start your own war' competition and is off with his Flt to Belize to do much the same thing as we're doing down south.

B Flt depart in two C-130s on the 24th and 26th of January and will also be away for four months. To tell you the truth it's not all fun out there as Calumn and his men will have a number of equipment trials to complete as well as mounting several patrols into the hot steamy jungle.

As for relaxation, well I can't say too much or the wives won't let us go again — let's just say they'll be looking after the flowers in the rose garden!

Anyway, we'll all be back at the end of May so in the meantime take care and be good, we'll be thinking of you.

Love, MUSSWELL



■ Left: The Fraserburgh-registered trawler Three Sisters, which was nearby when the Charuny capsized and took four of the crew back to Fraserburgh.

N-east crew in rescue drama

Seven safe as fishing boat sinks

□ JOE WATSON

THE seven-man crew of a North-east fishing boat narrowly escaped death last night when their vessel capsized in the North Sea.

The Fraserburgh-registered Charuny, FR 391, was 16 miles north-east of the Buchan port when she began to take water through the engine-room in the afternoon.

Fraserburgh lifeboat and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth were scrambled and put three pumps on board.

However, the pumps choked on debris and crew and rescuers were forced to leave the vessel.

Crew members Mr Colin Clark (26), 37 Salford Place, Fraserburgh, Mr Kevin Philip (20), 3 Gavenny Place, Macduff, and Mr Steve Moir (35), 120 Marconi Road, Fraserburgh, were all sleeping when skipper Colin Duff alerted them that the boat was sinking.

Mr Clark — one of four to be taken back to the Broch by the Fraserburgh-registered Three Sisters which was nearby — said: "All I knew was the boat

was taking in water. Four of the crew took to the lifeboat and made their way to the Three Sisters.

"The skipper and mate stayed on board to get the pumps going.

"I was in my bed. I didn't know what was going on. The skipper shouted and when I got up I didn't have my boots on and my feet were soaking."

Mr Duff and another crew member were too distressed to speak to the press as they left Fraserburgh lifeboat when she finally docked at 9.30pm.

However, lifeboat cox Mr Albert Sutherland described the dramatic rescue.

He said Mr Duff "did not have a clue" where the water came from and by the time he realised what was happening it was too late.

"When we arrived there were only two crew on board. The helicopter put one pump on board and we put on two.

"We got one pump to go, but

the helicopter one then packed up with the floating debris.

"It came to the stage they just realised the boat was going to go."

Mr Sutherland said the skipper and mate shouted that "enough was enough" and left the vessel for the safety of the lifeboat.

One of the helicopter crew said later: "When we arrived the winchman took a coast-guard pump down to the fishing vessel."

The winchman stayed on board for around 30 minutes until the Fraserburgh lifeboat arrived and put two pumps and two men on board.

The winchman was then lifted back on board the aircraft, which returned to base at around 6.40pm.

During the rescue, the lifeboat's propellers were fouled twice with debris and lifeboatmen were last night trying to clear the propellers as the boat was taken back into her shed.

Aberdeen coastguard co-ordinated the rescue.

SUMMARY FOR MARCH 92

01 R137 tasked to assist in search for missing woman at Beinn A Bhuid. Task completed the following morning and the woman was found safe and well.

PRINCE LEIGH BODIAM SCOTT

03 R137 scrambled to fallen climber at Ben Nevis. One casualty and 20 MRT members taken to Fort William.

HODGSON HAYWARD HOLMES AITKEN

04 R137 diverted from training to medevac patient and doctor from Wick to Raigmore.

HODGSON ANDERSON HOLMES BRODIE

09 R137 tasked to help MRT search for missing walker. Initially tasked to lift MRT member with knee injury. On return to sight walker not found and R137 RTB.

PRINCE POLLOCK CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

11 R137 diverted from training to man overboard from FV 'Anythet'. Casualty sighted and taken to Stornoway Hospital.

CAMPBELL HAYWARD BODIAM SCOTT

12 Medevac one patient from Nairn and one from Raigmore to Glasgow.

GEAR WILLSON HOLMES BRAGG

14 R137 scrambled to recover cardiac victim from rig support vessel 'St Paul' in the Forties Field. Casualty taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

WILLSON LEIGH HOLMES JOYCE

16 R137 tasked to search for missing FV 'Spray' and 2 crew members off Point of Sleat. After intense search, vessel located and 1 crew member. Search curtailed due to engineering considerations.

HODGSON ANDERSON LARKE AITKEN

21 R137 scrambled to search for missing woman reported near Portree. Lady found safe and well and R137 RTB.

CAMPBELL LEIGH BODIAM SCOTT

26 R137 diverted from training to investigate report of red flares on Black Isle. Nothing found.

PRINCE ANDERSON CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

Glencoe search goes on

A SEARCH for a climber missing in Glencoe is expected to resume today. Meanwhile, in Glen Doll, Angus, a hillwalker reported missing on Sunday was found alive and well by rescuers yesterday.

Mr Stuart Bryan (43) failed to return on Sunday night after a day-long climbing expedition in the Lost Valley area of Glencoe.

Suggestions that Mr Bryan, 5 Birkdale, Stuartfield, East Kilbride, may have left the area were discounted when his grey Volvo was found parked nearby.

Throughout yesterday, Glencoe, Leuchars and Kinloss mountain rescue teams scoured the area.

They were supported by four search and rescue dogs and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

Inspector Robbie Smart, Fort William, said Mr Bryan was believed to be an experienced climber and well equipped.

It is understood he had been glissading — controlled ascent with an ice axe — in the Lost Valley area.

"As time goes on, we are obviously becoming more concerned about this man's safety," he said.

But he said the search had been made more difficult because Mr Bryan had failed to leave details of his proposed route.

Conditions on Sunday night were reported to be wet and windy, and deteriorating with a medium avalanche alert.

Mr Bryan is described as being 5ft 8in, of thin build and has dark shoulder-length hair. He has a moustache and wears glasses.

He was wearing dark outdoor clothing and carrying a green rucksack with an ice axe, crampons and a torch.

Meanwhile, hillwalker Mr Ian Russell (50), from East Kilbride, was found yesterday by police and mountain rescue teams in the Corrie Fee area of Glen Doll. He had become separated from a hillwalking group on Sunday evening.

The climber was equipped to stay out and was none the worse for his experience.

A search-and-rescue helicopter, which was to have helped in the search, was recalled when he was found at 7.40am.

Search for hillwalker

A MASSIVE search was under way last night for a year-old woman hillwalker reported missing in the mountains around Braemar.

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was called out to support rescue teams from RAF Kinloss, Braemar, Aberdeen and Grampian.

Police after the woman failed to meet her family as planned. The search was being concentrated on the Beinn a Bhuidh area of the Cairngorms.

Glencoe search resumes today

A SEARCH of the Glencoe area will resume at first light today for a missing East Kilbride climber.

But Mr Stuart Bryan (43), 5 Birkdale, Stuartfield, has been missing since Sunday night and hopes of finding him alive are fading.

JOY AS WIFE SURVIVES PEAKS AGONY

By SUN REPORTER

DELIGHTED Bob Caird was reunited with his wife yesterday after fearing she had died on a freezing mountain side.

Kathleen got lost in thick mist 4,000 feet up Beinn a Bhuidh in the Cairngorms after Bob had left her to climb to the summit.

Eventually she found a bothy with three climbers. They made soup and huddled together to beat the temperatures of minus 20 degrees.

Meanwhile Bob, of Dundee, was searching for her with four mountain rescue teams and a helicopter.

Shop assistant Kathleen said: "I was really scared. I knew there were sheer cliffs all round and I could hardly see a thing in front of me."

She stumbled into the bothy trembling with cold and fear, and spent the night praying.

Kathleen added: "I couldn't sleep, although

I managed to doze off from time to time."

Police rescuers finally brought her to safety.

Bob said: "I was on my last legs. Eventually I prepared myself for the worst."

A climber broke his ankle after falling off Tower Ridge, Ben Nevis last night.

Glencoe climber search called off

□ KEN JONES

ONE of the biggest search operations in the Glencoe area in recent years was abandoned last night when rescuers failed to find any trace of a climber.

The three-day search for Mr Stuart Bryan (43) had involved more than 60 mountain rescue and service personnel and some 2,000 man hours.

Now, police will question walkers and climbers in the area at the weekend in an attempt to retrace the steps of Mr Bryan, who was married with a 17-year-old daughter.

Factory manager Mr Bryan, 5 Birkdale, Stuartfield, East Kilbride, was reported overdue on Sunday after a day-long solo climbing expedition.

Flight Sergeant David Whalley, leader of the Kinloss



Mr Stuart Bryan
... no trace found

Mountain Rescue Team, said: "Sunday was a beautiful day with a good, high snowline and there were about 500 people in the area."

"One of them should hold the

key to this man's whereabouts."

Flt Sgt Whalley said the team would be remaining in the area and would resume the search if any new information came to light.

Yesterday, nine members of the Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team, with 33 colleagues from RAF Kinloss and RAF Leuchars, moved the search from the Lost Valley to the adjacent Ben Fhada, following new information.

They were supported by a Wessex helicopter from RAF Leuchars and four search and rescue dogs.

But they were hampered by poor weather, a high avalanche risk, and no positive indication of the route taken by Mr Bryan.

Inspector Robbie Smart,

Fort William, said last night: "Hope of finding Mr Bryan alive is diminishing as time goes on."

He added: "There is no intention of a further search but we will continue our inquiries at the weekend among hill-users who may have seen Mr Bryan before he went missing and who might be able to give us a clue as to his intended route."

And Insp Smart again urged climbers and walkers to leave details of their route and return time with a friend or family in the event of an accident.

Mr Bryan's grey Volvo, which had been parked at the Piper's Lay-by near the Lost Valley, was moved to Glencoe police station.

Among those watching the search operation were Mr Bryan's wife, Ann Marie (42), and his company boss.



New kit for fly-by-nights

► ALISON SHAW

NEW hi-tech flying goggles have given Lossiemouth airmen vital nighthawk vision.

The station's Sea King chopper crews are the first in Scotland to be equipped with the £14,000 per set goggles.

And earlier this week they were used for the first time in a night mission to search for a missing hillwalker.

The electronic equipment, which looks like a pair of binoculars, can magnify even a tiny amount of starlight and turn night almost into day.

"They are quite an incredible piece of kit," said RAF press officer Craig Lindsay. "They enable them to fly into what looks like pitch darkness and pick out detail on a hillside."

As well as making life a lot safer for the crews, the device can also make it much easier to home in on people in

RAF hails nocturnal vision goggles

trouble — if they are suitably equipped. A torch, for example, could be picked up several miles away.

Trials were initially carried out several years ago but a number of factors, including the Gulf War where they were widely used, delayed their introduction. RAF Lossiemouth now has three sets with more to follow there and at other bases.

"They have been found to be such successful items we are very keen to get them in as quickly as possible," said Mr Lindsay. "There are a lot of jobs we do at night and any bit of kit that makes life easier for crews, or helps to find people faster, is what it is all about."

Man in 6-hour rescue drama

ELE 3042

► RAYMOND SHEWAN

AN INJURED climber was airlifted from Ben Nevis at first light today after a gruelling all-night rescue mission.

Searchers were hampered by darkness and appalling weather conditions as they struggled to reach the man, who had fallen 80ft while climbing with a companion.

They made themselves as comfortable as possible on an exposed ledge until help arrived.

But because of their position it took members of Lochaber mountain rescue team more than six hours to lower the casualty to safety.

The injured man — named by police as Sheffield probation officer Paul Bliss (39) — was flown by an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter to Belford Hospital at Fort William.

It is believed he broke both legs in the fall on Tower Ridge.

His companion, who has not been named, was unhurt.

The alarm was raised last night by a party of climbers who heard shouts from the face of the Great Tower.

A Royal Navy helicopter from Prestwick was forced to turn back because of cloud around Ben Nevis.

Members of the Lochaber rescue team battled through driving rain to reach the stranded climbers before lowering the injured man 2000ft to the bottom of Observatory Gully on a stretcher.

"It was a technically difficult rescue, but nothing we have not done before," said team leader Donnie Watt (55).

"But what made it more difficult was the weather."

A hospital spokesman later described Mr Bliss's condition as satisfactory.

Wife survives mist ordeal on mountain

She tells of terror in dark at 2,500ft

by HELEN JACKS and ADRIAN O'DOWD

A DUNDEE man yesterday hugged the wife he thought he would never see alive again after they became separated in fog on a treacherous ice-covered mountain in the Cairngorms.

Mr Robert Caird had prepared himself for the worst after his wife, Kathleen (40), went missing while they were climbing on Beinn a Bhuidh on Sunday and, as a massive search got under way for her, temperatures on the mountain dropped to minus 20 degrees.

Mrs Caird was found safe and well around 7am yesterday.

She said she had been caught in thick, swirling mist after there had been brilliant sunshine.

Around 2.30pm, when the couple reached 2,500ft, Mrs Caird had said she wanted to go back down. But it was still a beautiful spring day and her husband decided to go on alone to the summit.

"He was worried about leaving me, but I said I would follow him slowly," she said from her home at 26d Lewis Terrace.

"I kept going on and then all of a sudden I was surrounded by mist. I could hardly see a thing in front of me and I was really frightened. I have never been in the hills alone before. I always relied on Bob to keep me right," she said.

Mrs Caird thought she had to keep moving — but realised her danger because of the cliffs surrounding her. She said she was terrified.

"I was so frightened of going over the edge . . ."
— Mrs KATHLEEN CAIRD

"I was so frightened in case I went over the edge. I had to go really slowly because of the danger I knew I was in."
She kept going in what she hoped was the right direction for about two-and-a-half hours before she arrived at a boby. She was even more relieved to find someone inside.

"Some people from Manchester were using it as a base to climb from and one of them was there. All I know is that his name was Ian."

He made her some hot soup and gave her his sleeping bag. His two male companions had thought they were lost as well and stumbled back to the boby around 10.30pm, exhausted.

"It was so cold but at least bearable because of the company," said Mrs Caird.

"I tried to sleep but I couldn't. I just kept praying and worrying about Bob."

Meanwhile, her husband, having retraced his steps from the summit, began to panic over his wife's safety. Some other climbers told him that they had seen her heading for the top — so he went back to try to find her.

Eventually, he was found by



Reunited . . . Mr Robert Caird and his wife, Kathleen.

police, alerted by the other climbing party.

"I was almost on my last legs by that time. I was so worried, but they just would not let me go with them to keep searching. They kept asking what would she do, what would she do. But I could not tell them. It was so difficult."

"Then, as I waited, everything started to go through my mind and as time went on I just prepared myself for the worst," he said. "I just cannot tell you the total relief I felt when I saw her and she was safe."

Mrs Caird, a shop assistant

with Norco, said that during the night she had vowed never to set foot on a mountain again. However, she now felt she would be back on the hills — but not until summer, and much more prepared.

The couple felt they were well equipped for the mountains. They had food with them when they set out, were wearing the right clothes and had a change of clothing in the car.

Fifty-seven men were involved in the 11-hour search — including mountain rescue teams from Braemar, Grampian Police in Aberdeen, RAF

Kinloss, RAF Leuchars, and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

Meanwhile, two engineers reported overdue in Glencoe on Sunday night were found safe and well at the Clachaig Inn yesterday.

Mr Donnie MacLean (31), 66 Rockmount Avenue, Orchard Park, Greenock, and Mr Douglas Mann (25), Blantyre Park House, Blantyre, had become separated during a climb on Aonach Eagach ridge.

A search involving Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team and a Sea King helicopter from HMS Gannet, Prestwick, began at 9am.

But after being reunited, the two men made their way down to the Clachaig Inn, where they were found at 12.05pm.

Mist foils rescue mission on Ben Nevis

by JOHN VASS

A ROYAL Navy Sea King helicopter from Prestwick, called out last night to rescue an injured climber on Ben Nevis, was forced back when mist made searching impossible.

Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team, led by Mr Donnie Watt, began a 3,500ft ascent in darkness at 9pm to the Great Tower, where the climber was reported to have fallen.

Once the climber is located, the team is likely to take the casualty to a boby in the area and await daylight before requesting an airlift, if the climber's injuries are not serious.

If necessary, an RAF Sea King from Lossiemouth would make the trip as soon as practicable.

At Lossiemouth, an RAF spokesman said: "We are keeping tabs on the weather right now and if the mist lifts we will probably set off."

A spokesman for Northern Constabulary said: "We know that someone has fallen on the Great Tower and that is all the information we have at present."

● A hillwalker who fell 800ft on Ben Nevis more than a week ago was last night "critical" in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, Mr Adrian

Forde (30), Fagley, Bradford, was airlifted after falling from Devil's Ridge on February 23.

Probus club lands airbase outing



Enjoying a visit to RAF Lossiemouth are Nairn and District Probus Club members, who are seen in front of one of 'D' Flight, 202 Squadron's Search and Rescue helicopters. The group was briefed on the role of the station and shown some of the Lossiemouth aircraft.

Man dies in NE cliff fall

by BILL PHILLIPS and KAY DRUMMOND

A MAN died last night after falling into the sea from cliffs near Cruden Bay.

It is understood the man slipped and fell near Bullers of Buchan, a mile north of the village. His body was recovered by rescue services a short time later.

A second man was taken to hospital in Peterhead after being rescued from the cliff face. It is believed he had been trying to reach the fall victim.

A major rescue operation got under way after the alarm was raised by a third person around 7.40pm.

Peterhead Lifeboat was launched and a search and rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was scrambled. A coast rescue company from Collieston also went to the scene.

The winchman on the RAF Sea King, Flight Sergeant David Aitken, was lowered to pick up

the man's body. He also plucked the other man to safety from the cliff face.

A crew spokesman said later: "The man was face down in the water when we arrived at the scene. We sent our winchman down. He picked him out and put him on top of the cliffs."

"The other person seemed to be stuck on the cliff face. We do not know if he had been trying to help the man in the water."

The rescue services believed the man who died was climbing when the accident happened. One of the others involved in the incident was also thought to be a climber.

A police spokesman said the names of those involved would not be released until next of kin had been informed.

Search for hillwalker

A MASSIVE search was under way last night for a 40-year-old woman hillwalker reported missing in the mountains around Braemar.

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was called out to support rescue teams from RAF Kinloss, Braemar, Aberdeen and Grampian Police after the woman failed to meet her family as planned.

The search was being concentrated on the Beinn a Bhuidh area of the Cairngorms.

Press & Journal

Wednesday 15 April 1992

SUMMARY FOR APRIL 1992

03 Helo broadcasting mayday with single engine failure.
A/C landed safely and R137 RTB with NAR.

POLLOCK WILLSON CHAPMAN BRAGG

03 Missing aircraft near Balmoral. Pieces of A/C found
in Loch Muick on second day of search by ground party.

POLLOCK WILLSON CHAPMAN BRAGG

03 R138 called to 5 missing walkers on Suilven. Recalled
4 miles from search datum as party had walked in safe.

GEAR HAYWARD BODIAM AITKEN

04 R137 scrambled to fallen climber at Coire-Nan-Sneachtda.
Casualty made it to Cairngorm Ski Resort car park and then
lifted to Aviemore.

PRINCE LEIGH LARKE AITKEN

05 Scrambled to assist search for overdue climbers on
Ben Nevis. Casualties found cold and tired on Hadrians
Wall and taken to West End car park.

WILLSON POLLOCK CHAPMAN BRAGG

06 R137 tasked to collect comp 'A' case from Aberdeen
airport and transport onwards to Lerwick.

PRINCE HAYWARD LARKE AITKEN

07 Tasked to uplift crew member from RFA Fort Grange to
Inverness Airport. Destination changed to Lossiemouth
when train journey was established.

POLLOCK HODGSON COX BRAGG

09 R137 tasked to medevac premature baby from Raigmore
to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

MORRISON LEIGH COX JOYCE

09 R137 tasked to assist in recovery of female with
back injuries from Beinn Eighe area. Casualty + two
lifted to Raigmore.

GEAR LEIGH COX JOYCE

19 R137 scrambled to SARSAT hit on 121.5. After 30mins
search stood down as no signal picked up.

ANDERSON POLLOCK BODIAM BONTHRONE

22 R137 tasked to transfer heart attack victim from MV
'Grampian Freedom' to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

ANDERSON HODGSON BODIAM BONTHRONE

22 R137 scrambled to medevac premature baby from Wick to
Raigmore. Baby died before leaving Wick but another casualty
needed transferring to Raigmore then R137 RTB.

GEAR HAYWARD LITTLE JOYCE

25 R137 scrambled to assist 2 climbers in the Cuillins.
Climbers walked in safe to the MRT hut.

HODGSON LEIGH HOLMES TRETHEWEY

30 R138 scrambled to collapsed asthmatic female near
Broadford. Casualty plus companion lifted to Broadford.

HODGSON LEIGH HOLMES TRETHEWEY

Mercy air dash

Baby flown in for vital surgery



► PHIL ALLAN

A SERIOUSLY ill new-born baby boy was today airlifted to hospital in Aberdeen for a life-saving operation.

An RAF helicopter from 202 Squadron at Lossiemouth ferried the tiny baby in an incubator from Raigmore Hospital in Inverness to the special nursery at Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital.

The child was born early today suffering from a diaphragmatic hernia — a condition which required immediate surgery using the specialist skills of surgeons in Aberdeen.

His mother, in her early 20s, comes from Strathpeffer and accompanied her son on the 45-minute journey.

"It was vital we got to hospital as quickly as possible," said Dr Lyn McLaren, who also travelled from Inverness with a midwife.

"It is a very serious condition which impairs the child's breathing. He is expected to have the operation later today," she added.



► AIRLIFT:
The incubator is lifted from the helicopter at Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital.



► MOTHER:
The baby's mother is helped out of the copter.

Children safe after mountain alert

AN air-and-ground search for a party of children on a Sutherland mountain was called off last night when the group turned up safe and on schedule.

Assynt Mountain Rescue Team and an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter were beginning to scour 731m Suilven for five London children and a teacher after reports of screams for help.

The walkers were in a party of 28 children and four adults from Chigwell School, based at the Elphin Outdoor Centre, Assynt.

The alarm was raised by one of the adults who had been walking lower down on Suilven at Suileag, between Glencanisp Lodge and the Sugar Loaf Suilven mountain.

He alerted police at Lochinver, saying he heard what he thought were children shouting for help.

Later it became clear that the alert was sparked by a misunderstanding after the party split into three groups of two.

Police at Dornoch said two boys abandoned the ascent and returned to the bothy. When another boy wanted to return also, the teacher decided he would have to accompany him. The remaining two 16-year-olds continued to the summit.

The shouts heard at the bothy were between the boys at the summit and the pair lower down, letting each other know everything was alright.

Massive Deeside hunt launched

HOPES were fading last night for two men who vanished with their light plane over snow-clad hills.

Pilot Mr Mark Ives and his 19-year-old pupil, Mr Ken Ramsay, both Aberdeen, failed to return from a training flight over Deeside yesterday morning.

A massive air and ground search, involving three RAF helicopters and four mountain rescue teams, swung into action after the pair were reported overdue at 12.30pm.

But last night, with plunging temperatures and snowdrifts forecast in the hills, there was still no trace of the aircraft or the men.

However, Mr Ives is an experienced pilot and could have touched down safely. The glass-fibre aircraft is thought to be strong enough to withstand a crash-landing in mountainous terrain.

The search area, believed to cover hundreds of square miles, was covered in snow and may be hiding the white-topped two-seater plane.

The West German-built Grob H15 — owned by Tayside Aviation and used by Aberdeen Flying Club — took off

□ JILL GLENNIE and JOHN MACDONALD

from Aberdeen airport at 10.20am.

After striking bad weather, the two abandoned their plan to fly to Inverness and remained over Deeside practising manoeuvres.

They radioed the club to say they would return to Aberdeen at midday, according to Tayside Aviation managing director Mr Lovat Fraser.

Their last radio signal at 10.47am put them at 3,300ft between Ballater and Ban-chory.

Mr Ives moved to Aberdeen about a year ago to take up the post of chief flying instructor at the flying club.

"He's a very experienced pilot and a very experienced pilot they could have made a forced landing in the open somewhere," said Mr Fraser.

Mr Ramsay, a technician with a geological analysis firm, was believed to be almost due to sit his pilot's licence. His family were too distressed to speak last night.

Two Sea King helicopters from Lossiemouth and Leaconfield and a Wessex from

RAF Leuchars were put in the air at 2.30pm. Search and rescue teams from Braemar, RAF Kinloss, RAF Leuchars and Grampian Police were sent out to cover the countryside around Ballater.

Superintendent Max Wallace, who was heading the ground teams, said a number of people spotted the plane flying over the area.

Police were last night interviewing Ballater people who had reported the sightings in a bid to narrow down the search.

"The fuel would have run out at about 2pm, but from the last sighting the plane would have been able to travel between 50-100 miles more," said Supt Wallace.

"Because there have been so many sightings it has been difficult to pinpoint an area to send the mountain rescue out to."

About 54 men were involved in the operation. Most were on stand-by in the Albert Memorial Hall.

"As long as they have stayed near the aircraft, they have a better chance of surviving," said Supt Wallace.

The ground teams and at least one helicopter were due to continue the search at first light today.

Divers search loch for plane

A LONELY mountain shrouded loch near Royal Balmoral estate has proved to be the icy grave of a lost light aircraft.

With wreckage from the overdue Aberdeen plane located early on Saturday at Loch Muick, near Ballater, searchers combed the shores and slopes for any trace of the two North-east crew at the weekend.

Fearful dead are father-to-be Mr Mark Ives, the flying instructor from Aberchirder, and his 21-year-old pupil, Mr Kenneth Ramsay of Aberdeen.

The search yesterday was being concentrated under the surface of the loch — a team from Grampian Police under-

□ AUSTAIR BEATON

water search unit working and any trace of an oil slick to indicate the likely location of the aircraft that had apparently plunged into the water the previous day.

But with the loch believed to be up to 300ft deep in places and conditions difficult — being so far above sea level the divers can encounter barometric pressure problems that restrict operations — there were suggestions that a specialist deep-water team and possibly remote-control underwater vehicle may have to be called in.

The two-seater plane had set out from Aberdeen Flying Club at Dyce on a training flight over Deeside around 10.20am on Friday. The last radio signal came at 10.47am from somewhere between Ballater and Banchory at an altitude of 3,300ft.

A massive ground and air search involving RAF rescue helicopters was mounted after the German-built Grob 115 was notified overdue at 12.30pm. The daylight-long Friday hunt proved inconclusive, with fears the white-topped plane would be extremely difficult to detect in the snow-swept landscape.

Scattered wreckage of the missing plane was spotted on

the dark waters of Loch Muick at 11.14am on Saturday by a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth, sweeping the western shore area only a few miles from the Queen Mother's holiday home at Birkhall.

It appeared the pieces from the glass-fibre aircraft had been washed up on the shore rather than being impact remnants on the ground. Confirmation seemed to come soon after with more debris located further round the 2½-mile long loch, near the royal picnic lodge of Glas Alp Shiel, and some floating on the loch's surface.

Police were questioning hillwalkers

Search operation around Loch Muick — Page 2

Newborn baby 'stable' after copter dash for op

A NEWBORN baby was "stable" in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary last night after a life-saving operation.

The tiny boy was airlifted in an incubator from Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, by an RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth only hours after being born.

He was suffering from a diaphragmatic hernia — which impairs breathing — and needed immediate surgery.

His mother, thought to be a woman in her early 20s from Strathpeffer, travelled to Aberdeen with her son.

■ Right: The scene at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary's helipad yesterday as a newborn baby in an incubator is taken from an RAF helicopter.



Massive Deeside hunt launched

HOPES were fading last night for two men who vanished with their light plane over snow-clad hills.

□ JILL GLENNIE and JOHN MACDONALD

from Aberdeen airport at 10.25am.

After striking bad weather, the two abandoned their plan to fly to Inverness and remained over Deeside practising manoeuvres.

They radioed the club to say they would return to Aberdeen at midday, according to Tayside Aviation managing director Mr Lovat Fraser.

Their last radio signal at 10.47am put them at 3,300ft between Ballater and Banchory.

Mr Ives moved to Aberdeen about a year ago to take up the post of chief flying instructor at the flying club.

"He's a very experienced pilot and there's every chance they could have made a forced landing in the open somewhere," said Mr Fraser.

Mr Ramsay, a technician with a geological analysis firm, was believed to be almost due to sit his pilot's licence. His family were too distressed to speak last night.

Two Sea King helicopters from Lossiemouth and Leaconfield and a Wessex from

RAF Leuchars were put in the air at 2.30pm. Search and rescue teams from Braemar, RAF Kinloss, RAF Leuchars and Grampian Police were sent out to cover the countryside around Ballater.

Superintendent Max Wallace, who was heading the ground teams, said a number of people spotted the plane flying over the area.

Police were last night interviewing Ballater people who had reported the sightings in a bid to narrow down the search.

"The fuel would have run out at about 2pm, but from the last sighting the plane would have been able to travel between 50-100 miles more," said Supt Wallace.

"Because there have been so many sightings it has been difficult to pinpoint an area to send the mountain rescue out to."

About 54 men were involved in the operation. Most were on stand-by in the Albert Memorial Hall.

"As long as they have stayed near the aircraft, they have a better chance of surviving," said Supt Wallace.

The ground teams and at least one helicopter were due to continue the search at first light today.

Children safe after mountain alert

AN air-and-ground search for a party of children on a Sutherland mountain was called off last night when the group turned up safe and on schedule.

Assynt Mountain Rescue Team and an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter were beginning to scour 731m Suilven for five London children and a teacher after reports of screams for help.

The walkers were in a party of 28 children and four adults from Chigwell School, based at the Elphin Outdoor Centre, Assynt.

The alarm was raised by one of the adults who had been walking lower down on Suilven at Suileag, between Glencanisp Lodge and the Sugar Loaf Suilven mountain.

He alerted police at Lochinver, saying he heard what he thought were children shouting for help.

Later it became clear that the alert was sparked by a misunderstanding after the party split into three groups of two.

Police at Dornoch said two boys abandoned the ascent and returned to the bothy. When another boy wanted to return also, the teacher decided he would have to accompany him. The remaining two 16-year-olds continued to the summit.

The shouts heard at the bothy were between the boys at the summit and the pair lower down, letting each other know everything was alright.

From: Flight Lieutenant J T Prince RAF

'D' FLIGHT No. 202 SQUADRON

Helicopter Search and Rescue



ROYAL AIR FORCE

LOSSIEMOUTH

ELGIN

MORAYSHIRE

SCOTLAND

Telephone: LOSSIEMOUTH 2121 Ext. 600

All Aircrew Wives
'D' Flt 202 Sqn

1 April 1992

Dear Wife,

PROPOSED AIRCREW WIVES SUPPORT GROUP

1. Following lengthy crewroom discussions and as the only bachelor on the Flight, it has fallen to me to write to you and seek your support for the formation of an Aircrew Wives Support Group.
2. Life for the Aircrew has changed considerably in the past few months; the advent of Night Vision Goggles has greatly extended the potential hours which will be flown at night. A further, deeper, change is upon us; Health and Safety at Work Regulations which come into effect at the beginning of April means that Aircrew will no longer be able to have their meals delivered from the Officers' Mess in hot boxes.
3. The Catering Squadron propose to supply fresh rations and we will have the use of an oven and a microwave in the Crewroom for our evening meal. To ensure that the Duty Crew are properly fed requires properly cooked food and to this end I wonder whether you would be prepared to take on and share this task with other wives?
4. Any roster depends on the amount of support you are prepared to give. Some wives will only be able to manage perhaps one evening a fortnight, others, maybe more.
5. Would you let me know, as soon as possible, of your views. Drop me a line at the Flight or for an even quicker and easier response leave a message on my answering machine on Fochabers 820178.

Yours sincerely,
John Prince

SUMMARY FOR MAY 92

01 R137 called to a yacht aground on beach near Nairn. R137 remained on scene but yacht in no immediate danger until lifeboat arrived.

GEAR LEIGH HOLMES JOYCE

01 R137 diverted from above to Benbecula for cover for R119 who was assisting a FV taking on water. R137 RTB when R119 returned from delivering pump.

GEAR LEIGH HOLMES JOYCE

02 R137 scrambled to medevac poison victim from Wick to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

PRINCE POLLOCK CHAPMAN AITKEN

04 R137 scrambled to medevac pregnant woman and midwife from Wick to Raigmore Hospital.

GEAR HAYWARD HOLMES JOYCE

05 R137 scrambled to two girls cut off on sand bar east of Nairn. Girls collected and taken to coastguard at harbour.

GEAR HAYWARD HOLMES JOYCE

06 R137 scrambled to medevac patient with fractured hip from Isle of Barra to Raigmore Hospital.

ANDERSON POLLOCK CHAPMAN AITKEN

08 R137 tasked to search for Jet Ranger pilot and 3 pax. Pilot and passengers located east of Loch, Ruthven and lifted to RAF Lossiemouth, safe and well.

PRINCE ANDERSON HOLMES TRETHEWEY

11 R137 tasked to search for missing walkers in Letterewe Forest area. Soon after search started walkers located and lifted to police at Poolewe.

ANDERSON LEIGH HOLMES TRETHEWEY

11 R137 scrambled to RTA and 2 casualties with head injuries and 1 with minor injuries lifted and taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

PRINCE POLLOCK CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

14 R137 scrambled to deliver pump to FV 'Kingfisher' undertow by FV 'Taranis'.

WILLSON LEIGH LITTLE AITKEN

15 R137 tasked to standby on Glomar Arctic One to cover RSV 'Grampian Otter' with fire on board. R137 stood down once fire was well under control.

WILLSON LEIGH LITTLE AITKEN

16 R137 tasked to help yacht taking on water NE of Kessock Bridge. NAR as yacht entering harbour on arrival.

PRINCE LEIGH CHAPMAN AITKEN

16 R137 diverted from training to female with broken ankle on top of Bennachie. Casualty lifted to Pittodrie House for onward ambulance journey.

PRINCE LEIGH CHAPMAN AITKEN

16 R137 scrambled to cliff faller in ravine near Glenatterach reservoir. Male casualty with severe head injuries lifted to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

PRINCE LEIGH CHAPMAN AITKEN

17 Tasked to search for missing walker in Cairngorm. MRT located missing walker and R137 lifted casualty and MRT to Aviemore.

PRINCE LEIGH CHAPMAN AITKEN

17 R137 tasked to help windsurfer in trouble in Moray Firth. Casualty located and lifted to Nairn coastguard uninjured.

HODGSON HAYWARD BODIAM JOYCE

17 R137 scrambled to medevac premature baby from Wic to Raigmore Hospital.

HODGSON HAYWARD BODIAM JOYCE

18 R137 scrambled to 2 missing hillwalkers in Loch Mullardoch area. Kinloss MRT were lifted and then Dingwall MRT but on return to scene, walkers had returned safely.

HODGSON HAYWARD BODIAM JOYCE

20 R138 alerted to light aircraft with non instrument rated pilot above clouds. R138 shepherded aircraft through clouds to land safely at Lossiemouth.

HODGSON GEAR CHAPMAN JOYCE

22 R137 scrambled to fallen climber on Skye. Casualty and friend winched from cliff. Friend left with Skye MRT and casualty taken to Broadford Hospital.

WATT MUNNELLY LITTLE BONTHRONE

23 R137 scrambled to fallen climber in Glencoe. Victim declared dead by MRT but could not be lifted because of darkness and turbulence. R137 night stopped at Fort William to RTB next day.

WILLSON POLLOCK LARKE TRETHEWEY

23 R138 diverted from training whilst at Plockton to recover injured climber and brother from Sgurr Nan Gilleann. Both casualties taken to Broadford Hospital.

PRINCE HAYWARD CHAPMAN JOYCE

24 R138 diverted from Tobermory to fallen walker at 'Bad Step' on Skye. Casualty + companion lifted to Broadford.

PRINCE HAYWARD CHAPMAN JOYCE

24 R138 continued from above to a 4 yr old girl at Arisaig with pneumonia. Girl lifted to Raigmore Hospital.

PRINCE HAYWARD CHAPMAN JOYCE

24 R138 scrambled to casualty with obstructed airway who was lifted to Broadford Hospital. After patient had stabilised, R138 transferred casualty to Glasgow Airport for onward journey by ambulance.

PRINCE HAYWARD CHAPMAN JOYCE

25 R137 asked to assist Assynt MRT locate missing walker. Casualty walked in safe and well. R137 diverted to different task.

WATT WILLSON LARKE TRETHEWEY

25 R137 diverted from above to lift injured seaman with eye injury from FV 'Kookaburra'. Casualty taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

WATT WILLSON LARKE TRETHEWEY

27 R137 tasked to search for 2 missing walkers Loch Avon/Cairngorm area. Search carried out and walkers spotted 500yds from MRT RV point. R137 RTB after walkers confirmed safe and well.

WILLSON LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

28 R137 scrambled to 2 boys who had fallen 80ft down a gorge near Golspie. Thick tree canopy stopped winching from helicopter so winchman walked to boys. R137 waited at Golspie Hospital to transfer one seriously injured boy to Raigmore.

ANDERSON GEAR CHAPMAN JOYCE

30 R137 scrambled to motorcycle accident in Glen Cova. One casualty with head injuries transferred to Dundee Ninewells.

GEAR HAYWARD LARKE AITKEN

30 R138 tasked from Plockton to recover injured soldier from the Cuillins. Casualty taken to Broadford.

HODGSON MUNNELLY HOLMES BONTHRONE

30 R138 tasked from Plockton to recover heat exhausted casualty from Glen Coe and lift to Alcan Hills, Fort William for onward journey by ambulance.

HODGSON MUNNELLY HOLMES BONTHRONE

30 R138 tasked from Plockton to recover body of person missing for 3 months. Body taken to Corpach Hills.

HODGSON MUNNELLY HOLMES BONTHRONE

Spectacular Pennan crash



Four cheat death in 100ft car plunge

3 men
airlifted
from
Pennan

□ BILL PHILLIPS

FOUR men miraculously escaped death last night when their car left the road and plunged more than 100ft at a North-east village.

Three of the men were seriously injured in the accident, which happened at teatime in the coastal community of Pennan.

One of them fell another 100ft when he was thrown clear of the vehicle as it careered over an embankment.

A helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth flew three of the men to hospital in Aberdeen. The fourth was taken by ambulance to Fraserburgh Hospital and later transferred to Aberdeen.

All four occupants of the silver Peugeot 205 Gti are believed to come from the Fraserburgh area.

The accident happened at a sharp bend on the road down to the village. The car slid down a grassy slope before crashing on to the road below.

One of the men, thought to have been thrown from the rear window, plunged another 100ft at the other side of the road.

Another ended up on the bank overlooking the spot where the wrecked car came to rest.

The driver of the vehicle scrambled to the nearby Pennan Inn to raise the alarm.

Proprietor Mr Norrie Grierson said that was the first anyone knew of the accident.

"No one heard a thing," he said. "I was working in the kitchen and never heard anything."

"He just walked in and said there had been an accident. He was dazed and upset."

Mr Grierson alerted the emergency services and two ambulances and a paramedic



■ Police trace the path of the wrecked Peugeot from the top of the embankment at Pennan to the road below. One occupant plunged farther after he was thrown clear from the car.

More dramatic pictures by DUNCAN BROWN appear on Page 6

a serious condition, although the nature and extent of injuries was unknown.

The other three were "stable" — one has neck injuries, another received a fractured leg and head cut, and

Man killed in ridge walk fall

A LECTURER was killed in a mountain accident in Wester Ross at the weekend, when he slipped and plunged 150ft.

Mr Arthur Sime (56), McArthur Crescent, Maddiston, Falkirk, a senior lecturer at Glasgow Polytechnic, had been walking with his wife, Jessie, on the An Teallach ridge, near Dundonnell, on Saturday when he slipped and fell on to rocks. It is believed he died instantly.

The couple have three children.

The dead man's fall was heard by a man and woman who were camping at the Tollan Lochain.

The man went to help while the woman raised the alarm.

Scrambled

His body was recovered by the Stornoway coastguard helicopter, which was scrambled around 8.30pm to help Dundonnell Mountain Rescue Team, led by Mr Nevis Hume, in the search for the couple.

Mrs Sime had tried to descend further down into the Tollan Lochain on An Teallach, but became stuck just 50ft from where her husband lay.

A STUDENT priest, who spent Saturday night stuck in the Cairngorms dressed in shorts and training shoes, was counting his blessings yesterday after being found safe and well by rescue services.

Mr John Cudlipp (26), a trainee priest from Edinburgh, was airlifted off the mountains at first light on Sunday morning by an RAF Lossiemouth SeaKing helicopter — cold but unhurt.

Mr Cudlipp had been out walking with two companions on the summit of Cairn Toul when he felt tired and decided to return to the Sinclair Memorial site at the Lairig Ghrù.

But instead of following the path, he took a short cut and became stuck. His companions raised the alarm and mountain rescuers and a helicopter began a search.

Stricken boat is towed to safety

A FISHING boat which started taking in water 70miles east of Peterhead was being towed into the town's harbour today.

The Inverness-registered Kingfisher, with eight crew on board, got into difficulties shortly after 7pm and was towed towards Peterhead by the Inverness-based Taranis fishing vessel which was also in the area.

However, the Kingfisher continued to fill with water and a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth was scrambled, which lowered a pump on to the vessel.

A coastguard spokesman said the water was successfully pumped out and both boats were expected into Peterhead about 9am today.

NE fishers home — Page 6

Walker in gorge fall

A MORAY man is recovering in hospital after a 100-foot plunge down a gorge last Saturday evening.

Mr Andrew Ross, aged 22, of Inverurie Road, Hopeman, is reported to be in a satisfactory condition at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary after suffering head and back injuries.

The accident happened around 7.15pm, and in a dramatic rescue, a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth winched Mr Ross to safety.

The injured man had been walking with a friend — Mr Malcolm Ritchie of Kingsmills, Elgin — to Glenlatterach waterfall, Birmie, when the ground gave way beneath him.

He tumbled down a rocky slope before landing near a stream.

Companion Mr Ritchie escaped injury and ran to a nearby car park to raise the alarm.

22 MAY.

Sea King crew rises to the occasion

RAF LOSSIEMOUTH'S Sea King helicopter crews have been involved in many epic rescues down the years — but I hear that a rather unusual one occurred over the Moray Firth the other evening.

A small private aircraft en route from Kirkwall to Dundee had to radio for assistance after encountering unexpected bad

weather which forced the pilot to climb above the cloud and fog layer.

Not to put too fine a point on it, the pilot of the tiny Zenith was lost and, when his compass packed, in he headed out to sea.

A Sea King piloted by Flt Lt Tony Gear was scrambled to go

to the aircraft's assistance and another helicopter pilot, Flt Lt John Prince, who is also a qualified flying instructor, grabbed a seat in Lossiemouth's air traffic control tower.

John opened up a chat-line conversation with the Zenith pilot to re-assure him that help was on its way. He managed to

get sufficient detail to give Tony's Sea King a radar direction from Lossiemouth.

Eventually, the helicopter met the light aircraft and led it safely back through the bad weather to a successful landing at Lossiemouth.

Another job well done by the Sea King lads.

PRESS AND JOURNAL 28 MAY 92



18 MAY.

Sea King shepherds aircraft to touchdown

AN RAF Sea King rescue helicopter and Lossiemouth Air Traffic Control combined forces to go to the aid of a small private aircraft in trouble over the Moray Firth, on Wednesday last week.

The Zenith aircraft was en route from Kirkwall to Dundee when the pilot asked Lossie Air Traffic Control for assistance.

He had encountered unexpected bad weather in crossing the coast at Banff and had been forced to climb above the cloud and fog level.

Flt Sgt Shelly Gunter, the Lossiemouth radar controller, gave him directions to fly over the sea and set him on a radar approach for a landing at Lossiemouth.

The pilot broke off this approach as he appeared to have compass trouble, and headed back out to sea.

A helicopter, captained by Flt Lt Tony Gear, was scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth.

At the same time, another Sea King pilot and qualified flying instructor, Flt Lt John Prince, arrived in the air traffic control tower, and opened up a conversation with the Zenith pilot to re-assure him and get details of his problem and his aircraft, which were then passed to the Sea King.

An RAF spokesman said: "Fortunately, there was a happy outcome, as the Sea King, directed by Lossiemouth radar, met up with the light aircraft and led it through the bad weather to a successful landing at Lossiemouth."

29 MAY.

SUMMARY FOR JUNE 92

03 Report of vessel sinking off Wick. Extensive search carried out but WIFA. R137 then diverted to report of drowner at Wick harbour. Nothing found believed hoax.
PRINCE HAYWARD CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

05 R137 scrambled to act as cover for Canberra inbound to Kinloss in trouble. A/C landed safely.
PRINCE LEIGH CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

06 Comp A case moved from Kinloss to Glasgow Airport for onward transit to Manchester.
PRINCE LEIGH CHAPMAN BONTHRONE

06 Search for missing fisherman in GlenCoe area. Search stopped overnight due to weather conditions. Fisherman found in morning and taken to Police.
GEAR MUNNELLY HOLMES TRETHEWEY

06 R137 diverted from above to search for missing climber in Three Sisters. Search cancelled when climber found by other means.
GEAR MUNNELLY HOLMES TRETHEWEY

08 Scrambled to medevac heart attack patient from Dr Grays, Elgin to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.
GEAR MUNNELLY HOLMES AITKEN

08 Scrambled to medevac from Wick to Raigmore but then diverted to Aberdeen due to bed shortage. Weather unsuitable at Aberdeen so patient taken to Lossiemouth for onward transit by ambulance to Aberdeen.
GEAR MUNNELLY SPAIN AITKEN

09 Scrambled to pick up man with suspected appendicitis from oil rig support vessel 'Magellan Sea'. Casualty taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.
GEAR MUNNELLY SPAIN AITKEN

13 Scrambled to assist small boat in trouble near Burghead. On arrival, boat returning to harbour. NAR.
HODGSON MUNNELLY HOLMES JOYCE

13 Scrambled to medevac 8 yr old boy with head injuries from Golspie Hospital to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.
HODGSON MUNNELLY HOLMES JOYCE

14 Scrambled to medevac RTA victim with serious injuries from Broadford to Raigmore.
CAMPBELL HAYWARD LITTLE AITKEN

18 Scrambled whilst training to RTA near Ballachulish. NAR.
ANDERSON PRINCE LARKE JOYCE

20 Scrambled to fallen climber with broken ankle from Garbh Beinn Coire to Raigmore.
PRINCE CAMPBELL LARKE JOYCE

20 R137 called to lift exhausted 60 yr old walker from Leathach to Raigmore.
PRINCE CAMPBELL LARKE JOYCE

23 Scrambled to investigate report of overdue vessel 'Jennie B' Vessel located and occupants safe and well and continuing on course.
CAMPBELL PRINCE BODIAM TRETHEWEY

24 Scrambled to injured walker in Strath Nethy. R137 landed and casualty lifted to A/C with suspect broken ankle. Casualty taken to Raigmore.
PRINCE HAYWARD BODIAM TRETHEWEY

28 Scrambled to fallen mountain runner. Casualty lifted to Raigmore.
HODGSON HAYWARD BODIAM TRETHEWEY

RAF copters in three rescue callouts

□ JACKIE MACKENZIE

RAF rescue helicopters were called out three times on Saturday to attend separate North mountain incidents, including one in which a 44-year-old man died.

Mr Maurice Marklobe, Pound View, Churchend, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucester, was walking in the Cairngorms with his wife, Shirley, when he collapsed around 3pm.

Other walkers in the area, including broadcaster and Mastermind host, Mr Magnus Magnusson, and an off-duty RAF mountain rescue team member, went to his aid.

Mr Marklobe, a quarry manager, was airlifted by an RAF rescue helicopter to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, where he later died.

In Argyll, an Inverness farmer was airlifted to hospital after falling 100ft on Garbh-Bheinn.

Exhaustion

Mr Hugh Ellis Munro (42), Conon Bank Farm, Kirkhill, was rescued around 3pm by a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

He was flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, where he was detained.

And in a third callout, an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter went to the aid of a 63-year-old university consultant from Inverurie who had collapsed with exhaustion in Torridon.

Mr Richard Hill, Keithhall, was walking with three companions on Saturday evening when he collapsed 1,500ft up Ben Liathach.

The alarm was raised at Glen Cottage, Torridon, by a member of Mr Hill's party and Torridon Mountain Rescue Team flew to the scene in an RAF helicopter.

Mr Hill was taken to Raigmore Hospital. It is understood he later left.

DISTRICT NEWS

PRE

Sea King swoops in at Buckie RNLI gala



■ Above: This is the view the crew of stricken vessels get of the RAF's Sea King air-sea rescue helicopters, here being demonstrated at the weekend's RNLI Gala in Buckie.

Morgan backs all-weather pitch suggestion

Walker²¹ airlifted after holiday fall

A YUGOSLAVIAN holiday-maker was in hospital last night after falling while hillwalking in the Lairig Eilde area of Glencoe.

The woman, who has not been named, was a member of a party of holidaymakers.

The accident happened at 2.40pm. An RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth, with the help of Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team, airlifted the woman, believed to be suffering from an ankle injury, to the West Highland Hospital, Oban.

Rescuers hailed for saving 48 lives

A MAJOR sea disaster was averted by the bravery of rescuers who went to the aid of a crippled fish-factory ship off the West Coast, an inquiry heard yesterday.

Sheriff Principal Robert Hay praised rescuers as he gave a formal finding on the deaths of four crew members of the Russian-registered Kartli at an inquiry at Port Ellen, Islay.

Procurator fiscal Mr Iain Henderson described the search and rescue as a "textbook operation".

It had been carried out with "consummate skill and outstanding courage in the most difficult conditions".

The inquiry heard that a huge wave smashed the ship's wheelhouse on December 18.

The weight of water buckled the 1/2-inch steel plates of the superstructure under the bridge.

Three men and a 20-year-old woman were killed, but 48 were rescued by helicopters.

Winchman Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey, 202 Squadron, RAF Lossiemouth, said he was hauled out of his aircraft by the desperate crew of the vessel after he dropped them a line which was attached to him.

He hung suspended 5ft below the aircraft and had to clamber back aboard.

Sheriff Principal Hay returned a formal verdict on the four victims.

He said the evidence indicated that the

1,900-tonne ship had been navigated correctly and there was no evidence to suggest that any defect in the vessel had contributed to the accident.

"It should be recorded that the loss of life might have been substantially greater had it not been for the work of the emergency services and for the skill and courage displayed."

He singled out the Navy and RAF helicopter pilots and crews, the masters and crews of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Olva and the Shell tanker Drupa and crew of the Isla lifeboat.

The sheriff principal said the four crew members died as a result of the accident — two men died at the scene from multiple injuries, another man

died several hours later in hospital and the woman drowned after falling into the sea.

The accident happened about nine miles from the Rinns of Islay lighthouse. The Kartli was struck and immediately disabled by a large wave.

The ship was left adrift after the survivors were taken off and ended up on rocks off the coast of Gigha.

Two hundred tons of oil were removed but her cargo of 400 tons of frozen fish remains on board, provoking complaints from residents on Gigha about the smell and pollution.

Yesterday, a London lawyer for the vessel's owners said there were plans to salvage the ship.

Copter crews hit the ton

RAF Lossiemouth's rescue helicopter crews notched up a notable century yesterday.

When one of the Sea Kings was scrambled following a report that a fishing vessel was in difficulty in the Pentland Firth, it was the 100th mercy call-out this year.

At the same time last year, the Sea Kings had answered 88 calls — so it seems more than likely that last year's all-time record of 225 mercy flights will be topped during 1992.

In fact, May was a record month for the helicopter crews when they completed 36 mercy missions.

With the Ministry of Defence expected within the next few weeks to announce what

has been described as a major shake-up of airborne rescue operations in the northern half of Scotland, it will be interesting to see what changes — if any — take place at Lossiemouth.

Statistics alone would tend to point not only to security, but to expansion.

Praise for rescuers

I HAVE received the following letter from Mr William Ross, of Birnie, near Elgin, whose youngest son, Andy (22), was badly injured after falling 80ft down a gorge near the Glenlatterach reservoir last month.

He writes: "May 1, through your column, be privileged to show my appreciation for the work carried out by our local emergency services."

"But for the swift action of these brave and knowledgeable people, Andy might no longer be with us."

"On behalf of my family may I say a very sincere thank you to the Elgin paramedics who gave on-the-spot treatment; to the Elgin firemen who helped them down the gully; and to the RAF Lossiemouth Sea King rescue helicopter boys who so often risk their own lives in order that others may live."

"I also wish to thank the local police who are always ready and willing to help in a time of need."

"Too often it is taken for granted that our emergency services are there waiting for a call, but words alone can never explain what their services meant to us."

Thanks to emergency services

Sir, - May 1 through your columns show my appreciation for the work carried out by our local emergency services.

On Saturday, May 16, our youngest son, Andy, fell down the rocks at Glenlatterach, Birnie, and sustained some very severe injuries. But for the swift action of these brave and knowledgeable people Andy might no longer be with us.

On behalf of my family may I say a very sincere thank you to the Elgin paramedics who gave on-the-

spot treatment, to the Elgin firemen who helped them down the gully and to the Sea King rescue boys who so often risk their lives in order that others may be saved.

Too often it is taken for granted that the emergency services are there waiting for a call but words alone can never explain what their services mean to us.

I must also praise our son's friend Malcolm for the way he coped with the situation and raised the alarm so quickly.

Finally I must thank all medical staff concerned at Foresterhill Hospital,

especially the night shift staff of Ward 40 on the night of the accident, for their understanding and kindness. - Yours etc,

WILLIAM ROSS

The Cottage
Birnie
By Elgin

Sea Kings on 100th call-out of year

THE Search and Rescue helicopter unit at RAF Lossiemouth recorded its 100th call-out of the year this week — but the mission proved to be a double false alarm.

"D" Flight 202 Squadron is already on target to at least equal its record-breaking number of call-outs last year — and has just completed its busiest-ever May, with 35 missions.

On Wednesday, the helicopter flew north to the Pentland Firth after Kirkwall coastguard received a brief radio message saying a boat was sinking.

It was thought the troubled craft might have been part of the Round Scotland Inflatable Boat Race which was in the area at the time — but the three-and-a-half-hour search was abandoned as a "well-intentioned false alarm".

On the return journey, the helicopter flew to Wick harbour, where a 999 call had reported a man drowning — but this was found to be a hoax.

"We are not well pleased with this last incident," said a spokesman for the SAR unit.

"The helicopter rescue service is quite busy enough covering a very wide area, and it does not need this sort of thing."



WED 3 Jun 92

Rescue crews who saved 48 are praised by sheriff

By Susan Dean

A SHERIFF yesterday praised the heroic efforts of rescue crews who had braved mountainous seas and gale-force winds to reach 48 people from a stricken Ukrainian fish factory ship off Islay last December.

Sheriff-Principal Robert Hay said the loss of four crew from the 1,900-ton Kartli could have been substantially greater if it had not been for the work of the emergency services.

On the final day of the fatal accident inquiry at Port Ellen, Islay, into the tragedy, Sheriff-Principal Hay made special mention of the courage and skill displayed by the two helicopter crews from HMS Gannet at Prestwick and RAF Lossiemouth who winched survivors from the crippled vessel and from liferafts.

He also praised the masters and crews of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessel Olna and the Shell tanker Drupa which stood by at the scene. He spoke, too, of the bravery of the crew of Islay lifeboat who scoured the area looking for casualties.

Issuing his determination into the deaths of three ship's officers and a female crew member, the sheriff-principal said that the Kartli was struck and immediately disabled by a large wave at about 4am on 18 December as she steamed on a southerly course nine miles north-west of the Rhins of Islay Lighthouse. The wave

caused extensive damage and wrecked the wheelhouse.

He exonerated the vessel's surviving captain, Vladimir Gayduk, from blame, and said that the ship had been well-founded in all respects. There had been nothing to suggest that any defect in her or her equipment contributed to the accident, he ruled.

He also formally found that two of the men died on the ship as a result of multiple injuries while a third died in a Londonderry hospital from hypothermia. The woman drowned after falling into the

Sheriff Principal Hay made special mention of the "courage and skill" displayed by the two helicopter crews from HMS Gannet at Prestwick and RAF Lossiemouth

sea at or shortly after the time the wave struck.

Earlier, the inquiry heard dramatic evidence about the helicopter rescues.

Flt Sgt Paul Trethewey, a winchman aboard the RAF Sea King, told the court that he had been pulled out of the hovering helicopter by frightened crew on Kartli's violently pitching deck.

The survivors, mostly non-English speakers, had misunderstood his instructions

and grabbed his guideline which had been lowered towards the deck. The winchman, attached to the aircraft by a separate line, had been able to break free and attempt another descent to the ship.

A pilot, Flt Lt Peter Bell, said he had found a group of seamen huddled together in a liferaft. He said he thought they would have died if he had found them half an hour later.

The lawyer representing the Kartli's owners, Kerchytrom, said yesterday that money had been promised by the company to salvage the wrecked vessel, which has lain aground on Gigha since drifting on to rocks there just after the accident.

According to Philip Wiggs, bureaucratic delays in the confusion of the former Soviet Union Republic were holding up the arrival of the cash in Britain.

The vessel, built in the mid-1960s, had been in good condition for her age, before the accident, but was now holed and would have to be broken up, probably on site.

An agreement has been reached with a Scottish salvage operator to dispose of the 385-tonnes of rotting mackerel in the hold by removing it and dumping it at sea under Government supervision in addition to the breaking-up of the vessel, but nothing could go ahead until the money arrived, he added.

CLIMBER IN DEATH FALL

Man's horror wait for copter rescue

► RAYMOND SHEWAN

A CLIMBER huddled for 12 hours on an exposed ledge after watching in horror as his companion fell to his death in Wester Ross.

Lecturer Graham Walker (40) was winched off the mountain by an RAF helicopter early today after his weak calls for help were heard by rescuers.

He was located on a narrow ledge, frozen by fear and unable to find a way down.

Mr Walker, from Cupar in Fife, was airlifted to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, suffering from shock and hypothermia.

His climbing partner — who plunged 400ft into a gully — is not being named until relatives are informed.

He fell yesterday afternoon while the pair were descending 3,484ft An Teallach.

The alarm was raised late last night by a friend when they failed to turn up for a pre-arranged round of golf at Fortrose.

Members of Dundonnell Mountain Rescue Team began a search of the mountain and were drawn to the stranded climber by his barely audible cries for help.

Because of the inaccessibility of the ledge a helicopter was scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth to winch Mr Walker off.

Meanwhile his companion's body was located in a gully below.

It was later recovered by the Sea King helicopter.

The men had set out on Monday evening and reached the summit of An Teallach yesterday morning.

They were on their way back down the mountain

SAR

The Search and Rescue Wing of the Royal Air Force operates the yellow helicopters of Nos 22 and 202 Sqn, from 3 detached locations around the UK coast.

At each location at least one helicopter is on standby for 24 hrs, 365 days of the year.

Although established primarily for the rescue of military aviators, at least 90% of those rescued each year are civilians in distress.

Sea King



The Sea King. The Sea King is the larger of the 2 types. It has a 245 foot winch cable and can pick up 18 survivors, even out of its radius of action limit of 280 nautical miles. It carries a crew of 4, 2 pilots, a radar operator and a winchman and it has a comprehensive navigation aid fit, including VOR, DME, ADF, ILS, RAD ALT, DOPPLER, DECCA Mk 19 and a ground stabilized radar. Central to this nav fit is the TANS computer, which receives Decca, Doppler and Air Data and gives a constant read out of position. On arrival at the rescue scene the Flight Control System will take the aircraft down to an automatic hover in nil visibility or at night. In the hover the winch operator can then manoeuvre the aircraft from his position at the cabin door. The Sea King is in service at Boscombe, Brandy, Lossiemouth, Leconfield and Manston, there is also a 202 Sqn detachment on the Falkland Islands.



Wessex



The Wessex. The Wessex was introduced into SAR Wing shortly after the Wing was formed in 1976. The effective un-refuelled radius of action of the Wessex is 90 nautical miles and it has the capacity to carry 8 survivors. The aircraft is operated by a 3 man crew (pilot, navigator and winchman), and provides a rapid response short range rescue helicopter, and provides a rapid winch. The navigation aids of the aircraft include Mk 19 Decca Navigator, radio compass, radar altimeter and transponder. The Wessex is in service at Chivenor, Leuchars, Valley, and Coltishall.



SUMMARY FOR JULY 92

01 Tasked to assist Dundonnel in recovery of casualties from Antellach. One casualty lifted to Raigmore and one body to police near scene.

GEAR HODGSON LARKE TRETHEWEY

01 Diverted from training to transfer baby in incubator from Wick to Raigmore.

PRINCE WILLSON SPAIN AITKEN

02 Tasked to assist in search for missing man in boat on Lock Ness. CG found casualty app dead and R137 NAR.

PRINCE WILLSON SPAIN AITKEN

03 Tasked to search for 4 missing walkers in Glen Coe area. En route to MRT, 4 walkers located and taken to Fort William safe and well.

WILLSON MUNNELLY SPAIN AITKEN

05 Scrambled to report of fallen climber in Glen Etive. Casualty located on steep sided gully and lifted to Fort William.

GEAR HAYWARD LARKE BONTHRONE

06 Scrambled to assist in precautionary evacuation of Piper Bravo Platform. En route R137 instructed to RTB with no further action required.

PRINCE HAYWARD LARKE TRETHEWEY

07 Tasked to assist Skye and Kinloss MRT in search for missing female near Sligachan Hotel. After extensive search nil found but it was then established that the missing walker had returned to car.

HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM JOYCE

07 Tasked to recover climber with broken ankle to Broadford Hospital and then divert to further SAROPS.

HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM JOYCE

07 Scrambled to recover crewman with crushed hand from FV 'Ardeil' off Isle of Mull and lift to Glasgow Airport.

HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM JOYCE

08 Tasked to lift fisherman with stomach pains from FV 'Rival' and deliver him to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

PRINCE SOUZA LARKE TRETHEWEY

09 Tasked on compassionate grounds to collect lady and child from Tomintoul area and deliver them to Lossiemouth.

HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM JOYCE

11 Tasked to investigate sarsat hits on 121.5. Transmission traced to MV 'Varhelmar'. Master of ships in no difficulty and after all beacons checked transmissions ceased.

HODGSON LEIGH SPAIN JOYCE

12 Scrambled to report of hiker with ankle injury near Loch Enich. Casualty lifted to Aviemore.

WILLSON SOUZA LITTLE AITKEN

13 Scrambled to rescue young female stranded on island in Loch Laggen. Girl lifted to rest of party on nearby shore.

CAMPBELL MUNNELLY SPAIN BONTHRONE

15 Tasked to transfer injured climber from Fords of Avon bothy to Glenmore Lodge.

CAMPBELL MUNNELLY SPAIN BONTHRONE

16 Scrambled to report of flares just off Lossiemouth. Small FV with engine failure located in no immediate danger. R137 RTB when Buckie lifeboat en route.

WILLSON HAYWARD BODIAM AITKEN

18 Tasked to locate collapsed walker near Loch Ericht. Search hampered by hill fog but casualty located and pronounced dead by doctor on board. Body lifted to police at Kingussie.

CAMPBELL MUNNELLY LITTLE JOYCE

19 Tasked to medevac male with head injuries from Kyleakin on Skye to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

GEAR LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

23 Tasked to search Lossiemouth forest and local cliffs for missing man. Nothing found and R137 RTB.

ANDERSON HAYWARD BODIAM TRETHEWEY

In brief

Injured Glencoe climber airlifted

AN RAF Lossiemouth search-and-rescue helicopter rescued an injured climber from Glencoe yesterday after he was reported missing on Buachaille Etive Mor.

Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team was alerted shortly after midnight, when Mr Douglas Hartley (27), of Rutherglen, was reported overdue.

Rescuers found him on a ledge after he had fallen 60ft. The climber was taken to Belford Hospital, Fort William, with arm and head injuries and was described later as "satisfactory".

Fisherman flown to hospital

A BUCKIE fisherman was airlifted to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary last night from his boat 130 miles north-east of Fraserburgh.

Mr Victor Vass was taken by an RAF Lossiemouth rescue helicopter from the Buckie-registered Rival.

Hillwalker is airlifted

A HILLWALKER was airlifted by an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter after falling in the Cairngorms yesterday.

London bank clerk Mr Martin Rowell (19) was walking at the Fords of Avon when he slipped on wet grass and received a minor injury. When he was unable to complete the trip, companions went to Derry Lodge, Braemar, to get help.

Police called for RAF assistance and Mr Rowell was taken to Glenmore Lodge. He did not require medical attention.

Lost fisher had 'heart flutters'

A BUCKIE fisherman plucked from the sea by helicopter minutes after plunging overboard had already drowned, a fatal accident inquiry at Dornoch heard yesterday.

Mr William John Geddes (46), a share fisherman on the Buckie-registered prawn boat, Amethyst, had suffered heart flutters moments before.

Skipper Ronald Grant, from Buckie, told how Mr Geddes, 26 Pringle Court, complained of his heart "giving two jumps" while scooping prawns into baskets on deck.

It happened on March 11 when the Amethyst was 12 miles offshore from Loch-inver.

Vanished

Mr Grant urged him to lie down below deck, but Mr Geddes said he felt better, and continued working.

The fisherman vanished while the skipper was briefly in the engine-room and Mr Grant immediately sent a mayday.

"An RAF rescue helicopter on exercise in the area picked up the body just 100 yards from the boat."

Pathologist, Dr Rosalind Rankin said it seemed that Mr Geddes had suffered from heart trouble. The "fluttering" might have caused him to lose consciousness and fall overboard.

Sheriff Donald Booker-Milburn found that Mr Grant drowned after probably falling into the sea.

RAF man honoured for storm rescue

By JAMES McKILLOP

AN RAF helicopter winchman based in Lossiemouth, who in December helped to save the lives of 16 Russian seamen whose stricken factory ship Kartli was foundering off Islay, was yesterday awarded the Air Force Medal.

Four died after the Russian vessel was hit by a freak wave. But for the extraordinary courage of 34-year-old Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey the death toll would have been much higher.

The full story of his part in the rescue operation was revealed yesterday in his citation.

His Sea King rescue helicopter, normally stationed at Lossiemouth, was on relief duty at Prestwick when it was scrambled during the hours of darkness on December 18 to assist in the Kartli rescue 75 miles away.

The weather in the area was appalling with heavy rain showers. A 50-knot gale was blowing, and the sea state was very severe.

The ship, which had left Shetland bound for Bulgaria, was drifting without power after being hit by the freak wave.

She was in danger of foundering and was moving violently in the extreme sea with the bow pitching through 60ft and rolling through 30 degrees.

When the Sea King arrived at the scene, one crew member was spotted in a life raft.

Despite appalling conditions, in which he was submerged by heavy seas several times, Flt Sgt Trethewey managed to board the life raft and bring the casualty to safety.

The Sea King then approached the Russian vessel and the airman volunteered to be lowered on to the deck to rescue the shocked and disoriented crew.

After three attempts to be lowered on to the deck were foiled by the motion of the ship, he insisted he make a fourth attempt. This one was successful.

He administered first aid to a crew member with severe head injuries. At the same time he despatched uninjured, but shocked, seamen to the helicopter before he and the casualty were winched on board.

After transferring the injured man to a hospital in Northern Ireland, the Sea King returned to the scene and again Flt Sgt



Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey, who has been awarded the Air Force Medal for his part as helicopter winchman in rescuing survivors from the Russian ship Kartli in the hazardous conditions of a December storm

Trethewey was lowered to a life raft to recover further survivors.

At that time he had been an operational winchman for only nine months.

At the fatal accident inquiry at Port Ellen, Islay, at the beginning of last month, Sheriff-Principal Robert Hay said: "It should be recorded that the loss of life might

have been substantially greater had it not been for the work of the emergency services."

"All played vital roles in carrying through to a successful conclusion a difficult and hazardous search and rescue operation at night and in adverse sea and weather conditions."

In addition to the

award to Flt Sgt Trethewey, the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air was awarded to Flight Lieutenant Peter Bell, the aircraft's captain.

Flight Lieutenant Steve Hodgson, the co-pilot, and Sergeant Steve Larke, the winch operator, were awarded the Air Officer Command-in-Chief's commen-

dation for their part in the rescue.

Flt Lt Bell is just now on a sponsored walk between the Lake District and Cape Wrath in aid of the Candlelighters, a children's charity.

In all, the rescue services saved 47 crew members from the Russian vessel that night. The Kartli is still lying off Gigha

THE HERALD 29 JUN 92

JULY 92 CONT.

24 Scrambled to alert on Beryl 'B' platform. Shortly after alert was down-graded and R137 instructed to RTB.
HODGSON LEIGH SPAIN BONTRHONE

24 R137 initially tasked to lift casualty from Raigmore with leg complications. R137 then informed that casualty would be travelling by civilian air.
HODGSON LEIGH SPAIN BONTRHONE

25 Tasked to lift mountain bike casualty with head injuries South of Lairg to Raigmore.
ANDERSON SOUZA BODIAM JOYCE

29 Scrambled to medevac woman with heart problems from Raigmore to Edinburgh Airport.
PRINCE SOUZA LARKE JOYCE

30 Scrambled to search for missing sailor who had swam ashore after engine failure of his small boat. Extensive search off Dounreay carried out with nil found.
GEAR ANDERSON BODIAM TRETHEWEY

30 R137 tasked to medevac female patient from Fort William to Raigmore.
GEAR ANDERSON BODIAM TRETHEWEY

31 Called to search for 4 overdue walkers near Glenshee. All 4 located safe and well and R137 lifted them to Kingussie.
HODGSON CAMPBELL LARKE JOYCE

31 Scrambled to capsized sailing dinghy near Pennan. Local boat had lifted sailors prior to R137 arriving. After confirmation of no injuries R137 RTB.
HODGSON CAMPBELL LARKE JOYCE

'I heard my brother slide away'

Vain bid to save climber

AWARD-WINNING Scottish journalist Mr Iain Walker plunged 400ft to his death on a Wester Ross mountain as his brother desperately tried to grab him.

Yesterday, Mr Graham Walker spoke of the horror of seeing him disappear over the edge of a cliff face.

He tried to catch Iain's hand, but could not reach. Then he attempted to lower his leg for his brother to get hold of.

"The next thing, Iain said 'I am going' and I heard him slide away. Then there was a thump," said Mr Walker.

Five-born Iain (48) was walking with his brother on An Teallach, near Dundonnell, when the tragedy happened on Tuesday afternoon.

Graham (40), a biochemistry lecturer at the Institute of Technology, Dundee, huddled on a narrow ledge for 12 hours in a state of shock while his brother lay dead in a gully below.

Experienced

Executive editor of the Mail on Sunday, father-of-two Mr Walker, who lived in Purley, Surrey, was an experienced climber who accompanied Chris Bonnington on a Himalayas expedition four years ago.

He was "Munro bagging" — climbing mountains over 3,000ft — with Graham, who lives at 7 Tarvat Gardens, Cupar, when bad weather closed in around 1pm and they got into difficulties.

The two men had spent Monday night in a bothy on An Teallach. They set off for the summit at 9am on Tuesday.

□ JACKIE MACKENZIE

expecting to be in Fortrose in the afternoon to play a round of golf with journalist Mr Alex Main, a friend and former colleague of Iain's. When they had not turned up by 8.15pm, Mr Main raised the alarm.

Realising they would not make the summit, the pair decided to turn for home. But in the mist, they wandered off the narrow, descending path on to dangerous terrain.

Graham became stuck against a rock ledge and, unable to help, could only watch in horror as his brother slipped and fell to his death.

Around 10 hours later, his faint cries were heard by Dundonnell Mountain Rescue team

members as they searched Corrie Tollan Lochan. But they were unable to reach Mr Walker because of the inaccessibility of the ledge.

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth winched Mr Walker to safety about 2am. He was taken to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, suffering from hypothermia.

Iain Walker was born in Markinch and began his journalistic career with D. C. Thomson of Dundee, serving in the Inverness, Forfar and Montrose offices. He returned to Inverness in 1967 as reporter with the Scottish Daily Mail.

He was appointed news editor of the Mail on Sunday when it was launched 10 years ago and rose to become executive editor in 1990.

Moments before a tragedy

SPEAKING from his hospital bed yesterday where he is recovering from shock and exhaustion, Mr Walker recalled the circumstances which led to his brother's death.

He said: "It was like pea soup. Iain realised we couldn't continue until the cloud cleared."

Mr Walker added: "After some time, we decided to try and get below the low cloud to see where we were — but we got disorientated."

"Before we knew it, we were on a narrow path and Iain decided we should stop because we were on steep-sloping ground and we had slipped a couple of times."

Mr Walker said he was having trouble getting round a

big boulder because of his rucksack. Iain advised him to take it off and throw it down. Then he changed his mind and asked him to slide it down in case he was knocked over.

Mr Walker took it off and slid it towards his brother, but it went past him. Then there was silence and a thump.

"I tried to reach down and catch his hand, but I couldn't reach. I then tried to lower my leg for Iain to catch. But if Iain had got a hold of it, I think we would both have gone over."

"The next thing, Iain said 'I am going' and I heard him slide away."

Death on the mountain

AIN WALKER, executive editor of the Daily Mail's sister paper the Mail on Sunday, fell 350ft to his death on a mountain while trying to guide his brother to safety.

He slipped over a sheer rock face after they lost their way in thick cloud. As he clung to the edge trying to gain a foothold, his brother Graham, trapped on a narrow ledge above, reached out desperately to help him back up.

But Iain, 48, could hold on no longer, and slipped from Graham's view into the clouds swirling around 3,484ft. An Teallach near Ullapool in the North-West Highlands.

Graham, 40, was on the ledge for 12 hours before he was plucked to safety in darkness by an RAF helicopter crew.

Last night, from his Inverness hospital bed, he told how they had climbed to around 2,500ft on Tuesday when the cloud came down.

Scots-born Iain, who had climbed with Chris Bonington in the Himalayas, told his less experienced brother they should retrace their steps to below cloud level.

'We became completely lost,' said Graham, who lectures at Dundee Institute of Technology. Then we found we were stumbling on heather and rocky ground that was

Journalist dies in bid to save brother

By ROGER SCOTT

too steep for us to risk stopping.

'I got stuck, and Iain advised me to take off my rucksack and roll it towards him just below. But it went straight past him and then there was silence followed by a crash. To our horror we realised we must be on the edge of a precipice.'

'Seconds later, Iain slipped. He was hanging there. I reached out with my arms, and then my feet, but he was just beyond my reach. Iain shouted, "I'm going" and disappeared into the

mist. A mountain rescue team, alerted by a friend, reached Iain's body after a five-hour search by torchlight, and called out the Sea King from Lossiemouth.

Pilot Tony Gear inched to within a few feet of the rock face before winchman Paul Trethewey snatched Graham to safety. 'I can't find words enough to praise those who came to find me,' said Graham.

Iain Walker leaves a widow, Clare, daughter Kirsty, 18, and son Andrew, 16. Mrs Walker said: 'If he choose a w would have mountain in Scotland.'



Caring campaigner: Iain Walker

TRIBUTE TO A FIGHTER

Last night Mr STEWART STEVEN, Editor of The Mail on Sunday, paid this personal tribute:

Iain Walker, who became one of the first people to join the Mail on Sunday, was hugely important in its subsequent success.

He had a remarkable ability to deal with complex issues and present them in a manner which attracted a huge audience to his writings. Because he cared passionately, he also had that rare ability to take an important issue and almost literally rattle the windows of the soul. No one can doubt, for example, that his writing during the Rochdale satanic abuse case, for which he was named Campaigning

Journalist of the Year, was journalism at its very best — angry, passionate, but also remorselessly detailed and researched.

There was no subject he could not handle, but he dealt best with stories involving ordinary people beset by an uncaring authority.

Iain Walker cared, and cared deeply, and it was this which gave his journalism such vitality. He believed in the ability of journalists and journalism to change things for the better and in many of his campaigns he succeeded.

His early death is a tragic loss to the trade of journalism which he loved. What made him so special was that not only was he a writer, he was a fighter, too.

Radio ham to rescue as girl falls in pass

□ JOHN VASS

AN INJURED English schoolgirl was airlifted from the Lairig Ghru near Inverness, more than 40 miles away, picked up an alarm call and alerted the police.

But the identity of a hiker, who probably used a small hand-held CB transmitter as he walked the famous pass was still a mystery last night.

A police spokesman said Victoria Burns (16), Holdpark, Leeds, was in a party of 14 students from St Michael's College, Leeds, when she

stumbled and injured her ankle coming down Braeriach.

The hiker, who saw she was in pain and unable to continue after her fall, transmitted a message for help on his transceiver in the hope it would be picked up.

By luck it was and it was relayed to police, who in turn called out a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

The girl was airlifted to

Aviemore with a teacher and a fellow student and treated at the medical centre there.

The party was on a three-day hike through the pass, which crosses from Braemar to near Glenmore. 'The trek was due to be completed yesterday afternoon.'

Cairngorm mountain rescue unit leader Mr John Allan said police had told him about the radio call, which he understood to have been picked up by a ham living just outside Inverness.

Bravery award for winchman who risked his life to save seamen

AN RAF Lossiemouth helicopter winchman is to receive a top bravery award for helping to save the lives of 16 Russian seamen after their vessel had been damaged by a freak wave off the West Coast last December.

Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey (34) has been awarded the Air Force Medal for his "outstanding display of professional skill and personal courage in very dangerous circumstances".

Four of the 52 crew members of the 1900-tonne Soviet factory ship *Kartli* — including a 20-year-old woman — died when a huge wave smashed through the wheelhouse during atrocious weather conditions 75 miles west of Prestwick.

The Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter, which had been based at Prestwick on operational duties, was first on the scene during a five-hour rescue mission which eventually involved six RAF and Royal Navy helicopters and an RAF Kinloss Nimrod.

The Sea King's pilot, Flight Lieutenant Peter Bell, is to be awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air; and co-pilot Flight Lieutenant Steve Hodgson, and winch operator Sergeant Steve Larke are to receive commendations from the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief for their part in the December 18 rescue.

When the Lossiemouth Sea King reached the

□ ALASTAIR BISSET

scene, the *Kartli* was foundering in a 50-knot gale, with the bow of the vessel continually being thrown up 60ft in the mountainous seas.

One survivor was spotted in a liferaft and, despite the appalling conditions, in which he was submerged by heavy seas several times, Fl Sgt Trethewey managed to get on board and bring the casualty to safety.

It then took four attempts before he could be lowered safely on to the deck of the pitching vessel where he found another crew member with severe head injuries, and immediately administered first aid.

A winchman with only nine months operational experience, Fl Sgt Trethewey then supervised the transfer of some of the *Kartli*'s crew to the Sea King before he and the casualty were winched aboard.

After transferring the injured to a hospital in Northern Ireland, the Sea King returned to the scene. Again Fl Sgt Trethewey was lowered to a liferaft to pick up more survivors.

His citation states that, despite the appalling conditions, he immediately volunteered to be lowered to both the vessel and the liferafts "fully conscious of the very real risks to his own safety".



■ Flight Sergeant Paul Trethewey . . . awarded the Air Force medal



SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO

The London Gazette

of Monday, 27th July 1992

Published by Authority

 Registered as a Newspaper at the Post Office

TUESDAY, 28TH JULY 1992

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

HONOURS AND AWARDS

AIR FORCE DEPARTMENT

Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards:

Air Force Medal

Flight Sergeant Paul Leslie TRETHERWEY (H8119883) Royal Air Force.

Flight Sergeant Trethewey was winchman of the SAR Sea King Helicopter crew from D Flight 202 Squadron which was scrambled from HMS Gannet on 0420 hours on 18th December 1991 to assist the Russian vessel *Kartli* which had been damaged by a freak wave 75 miles west of Prestwick. The weather in the area was appalling; heavy rain showers, a 50 knot westerly gale and sea state 8. The aircraft launched at 0505 hours and, during the transit, it became apparent that the *Kartli* was drifting without power, in danger of foundering, and that an unknown number of the crew had abandoned ship.

On arrival at the scene one crew member was discovered in a liferaft and, despite the appalling sea conditions, Flight Sergeant Trethewey unhesitatingly volunteered to be lowered to the dinghy to recover him. Although he was submerged by heavy seas several times, Flight Sergeant Trethewey managed to board the liferaft and bring the casualty to safety.

The aircraft then closed with the *Kartli* which was drifting beam on to the weather and moving violently in the extreme sea; the bow was pitching through 60 feet and the ship was rolling through 30 degrees. Again, Flight Sergeant Trethewey unhesitatingly volunteered to be lowered to the deck to rescue the shocked and disorientated crew. A first attempt to lower him directly to the deck was foiled by the extreme motion of the ship. A further two attempts to steady his descent by use of a "hi-line" were frustrated by the inadvertent actions of the ship's crew; at one time, their frantic efforts pulled Flight Sergeant Trethewey from the aircraft and he fell several feet before being arrested by the winch wire. Nevertheless, he insisted that a fourth, and successful, attempt be made. On reaching the deck he discovered several clearly shocked and frightened crew members and one casualty with severe head injuries. Flight Sergeant Trethewey immediately began to administer first aid to the injured

man and prepare him for lift. At the same time, he was able to organise the dispatch of 8 uninjured crew to the Sea King before he and the casualty were lifted to the aircraft. The Sea King flew to Ballykelly to transfer the injured man to hospital and returned to the scene in daylight when, again, Flight Sergeant Trethewey was lowered to a liferaft to recover a further 6 survivors.

Flight Sergeant Trethewey has been an operational winchman for only 9 months. Despite the appalling conditions prevailing that night, he immediately volunteered to be lowered to both the vessel and liferafts, fully conscious of the very real risks to his own safety. By his personal courage and calm and professional actions Flight Sergeant Trethewey was instrumental in the saving of 16 lives. His brave, selfless conduct throughout a long and physically exhausting sortie was in the very highest traditions of the Royal Air Force.

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air

Flight Lieutenant Peter Adrian BELL, (5204248) Royal Air Force.

For his outstanding courage, leadership and flying skill resulting in the saving of the lives of 16 Russian seamen following the disabling of their stricken trawler in atrocious weather conditions.

SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 92

04 Search for report of missing yacht in the Claymore Field. Area searched with nothing found.

CAMPBELL LEAMING LITTLE AITKEN

05 Continuation of above search. A 6 man dinghy was observed with 1 survivor who was winched to Peterhead.

ANDERSON SOUZA SPAIN BRAGG

05 R138 called to continue above search and 1 body sighted in water, lifted and taken to A.R.I.

CAMPBELL LEAMING LITTLE AITKEN

05 Report of dinghy adrift off Nairn which turned out to be an inflatable alligator with was recovered.

ANDERSON SOUZA SPAIN JOYCE

08 Diverted from training to hang glider pilot injured near Golspie. Casualty lifted to Golspie hospital.

ANDERSON LEAMING LARKE BRAGG

11 Search for missing walker with Kinloss MRT. Night search unrealistic due to weather conditions and at dawn casualty found safe and well by MRT and taken to R.V.P.

GEAR MUNNELLY LARKE JOYCE

13 Report of man fallen into a gorge at Foyers. On arrival R137 informed casualty had walked to ambulance with paramedics.

CAMPBELL HAYWARD BODIAM TRETHEWEY

13 Scrambled to 2 males stranded on rock at Randolphs Leap. Both casualties delivered safely to Police on riverbank.

CAMPBELL HAYWARD BODIAM TRETHEWEY

14 Scrambled to SARSAT hit on 406MHZ off Fraserburgh. FV contacted by Aberdeen CG, in no distress, R137 RTB.

GEAR SOUZA SPAIN TURNBULL

15 Transfer stroke victim plus husband from Raigmore Hospital to Edinburgh.

WILLSON CAMPBELL BODIAM JOYCE

15 Tasked to medevac female with internal bleeding from Wick to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

WILLSON CAMPBELL BODIAM JOYCE

16 Diverted from training to fallen walker on Angel Point, Cairngorm. Casualty lifted to Raigmore.

GEAR SOUZA SPAIN TURNBULL

16 Diverted from training to heart attack victim on Ben Nevis. Casualty stretcher lifted off mountain and then transported by R137 to Belford Hospital.

GEAR SOUZA SPAIN TURNBULL

16 Report of person yelling from cliffs near shelter stone. Cliff area searched and talk with hiker who thought he heard yelling but nothing found. MRT request no further action.

GEAR SOUZA SPAIN TURNBULL

18 Scrambled to report of sailor with kidney stones. Casualty lifted and taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

GEAR SOUZA SPAIN TURNBULL

18 Scrambled to fallen climber at Whaligoe Steps. Casualty prepared by paramedics and doctor on scene and taken to Raigmore.

GEAR SOUZA SPAIN TURNBULL

19 Scrambled to missing walker in Glen Coe area, with MRT from Kinloss. During search hiker spotted by MRT member, lifted and taken to Glen Coe base.

GEAR SOUZA SPAIN TURNBULL

19 Scrambled to SARSAT hit on 243.0 in Peterhead area. Source area found to be NW corner of Peterhead harbour. Aberdeen CG informed and no further action required.

MORRISON MUNNELLY LITTLE JOYCE

20 Scrambled to fallen walker on "Maol Chean-Dearg". On arrival casualty reported in cloud and MRT were deployed on mountain, who found casualty and R137 lifted to Broadford before onward transportation, but hospital decided to keep patient there.

WILLSON HAYWARD SPAIN TURNBULL

21 Scrambled to medevac woman suffering cardiac failure from Inverness to Edinburgh. Casualty + medical team taken to Edinburgh and medical team back to Inverness.

PRINCE MUNNELLY LITTLE AITKEN

22 Scrambled to Freighter Sea Reefer aground on rocks off Peterhead. R137 lifted 12 crew to Peterhead.

HODGSON HOWARD RODIAN TRETHEWEY

23 Scrambled from Dalross to Skye to pick up Kinloss NRT and take to aircraft crash on Jura. On return R137 forced to make precautionary landing at Raigmore Hospital.

PRINCE MUNNELLY LITTLE AITKEN

24 R137 scrambled to report of fire on Bruce oil platform. R137 recalled as no assistance required.

HODGSON HOWARD RODIAN TRETHEWEY

25 Scrambled to injured fisherman on 'FV Unity' near Forties Field. Casualty lifted to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

WILSON MUNNELLY SPAIN AITKEN

27 R137 scrambled to medevac road accident victim from Broadford to Glasgow Southern General.

HODGSON HOWARD RODIAN TRETHEWEY

29 Diverted from training to take heart attack victim from Lossiemouth beach to Dr Grays Elgin.

PRINCE MUNNELLY LITTLE AITKEN

30 Scrambled to medevac casualty with head injuries from Dr Grays to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

GENE SOULA SPAIN TURNBULL

30 Scrambled to search for missing yacht on Cromarty Firth. Yacht found and no further action required.

PRINCE MUNNELLY LITTLE TRETHEWEY

30 Scrambled to medevac woman in premature labour from Wick to Raigmore hospital.

PRINCE MUNNELLY LITTLE TRETHEWEY



It's Crocodile Lossie! Pete snaps him up

SCRAMBLE the chopper - and make it snappy!

That was the order to RAF copter winchman Pete Joyce and his crew after a report from Nairn that someone was being blown out to sea on an airbed.

But when the Lossiemouth team arrived off Findhorn Bay Pete, 34, was

winched down to find - a seven-foot inflatable CROCODILE.

Said Pete: "If it had been an ordinary airbed, I would have slashed it with a knife to make sure there no more false alarms over it."

"But this was one for the book. If no-one claims it, we'll keep it as a mascot."

Picture: IAN JOLLY

Couple lost but son is saved in yacht riddle



■ Survivor Stewart Ogston arrives at Longside by helicopter

A TRAGEDY at sea was plunged in mystery last night after a middle-aged couple were lost with their yacht off the North-east coast during a "voyage of a lifetime".

Their 27-year-old son survived and was plucked from a liferaft yesterday afternoon after drifting 30 hours.

But Mr Stewart Ogston could shed no light on the catastrophe which struck as they sailed to Fraserburgh from Norway.

His father, Ian, and step-mother Liz, a teacher in her 30s, were lost on Tuesday as they abandoned their boat after the mystery accident in moderate weather conditions.

Stewart was unable to tell his rescuers what caused the tragedy, apart from saying he heard a "big bang".

A woman's body was later recovered and last night an RAF Nimrod and the coast-guard helicopter from Sumburgh were searching for Mr Ian Ogston and any trace of the yacht.

The tragedy happened 80 miles north-east of Peterhead.

A search for the 32ft yacht, Drummer of Hornet, from Port Edgar on the Forth, had been launched on Tuesday amid growing fears for the West Lothian family.

A mayday from the Contessa-class vessel was heard by a radio operator on a Claymore oilfield platform at 9.49 that morning.

Combing a 2,100 square miles, RAF and Coastguard helicopters were joined by an RAF Nimrod. Sea conditions were said to be "moderate".

The search was called-off as darkness fell and resumed again yesterday at first light.

But it was not until yesterday afternoon that the tiny liferaft with Stewart aboard was spotted by an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter.

Some time after he was winched to safety, the woman's body was spotted. It is believed to be that of his stepmother.

Stewart, who lives in Calder

□ MIKE BEAUMONT
and BILLY PHILLIPS

Grove, Edinburgh, was flown to Longside airfield, near Peterhead.

Draped in a white blanket, he was able to walk from the helicopter into a waiting ambulance and was taken to the nearby Ugie Hospital for a check-up.

He was treated for shock and remained overnight. Staff described his condition as "comfortable".

RAF helicopter captain, Flight Lieutenant Jim Anderson, said Stewart was "remarkably well considering his ordeal".

The airman added: "He had been in the dinghy for around 30 hours but he was fine, able to speak and fully coherent."

A member of the helicopter crew had spotted the dinghy and a figure in it waving to them.

Pt Lt Anderson said there was no sign of anything or anyone else in the area and the sea conditions were moderate at the time. How the tragedy had happened was still unknown.

He said Stewart had told them he had been below deck and had heard a "bang", but did not know if a large wave or object had been involved.

He had gone up on deck, realised something was badly amiss, and tried to pass a life-jacket to at least one of the other people on board.

Stewart had then jumped into the self-inflating liferaft, but had lost sight of the others.

Mr Ian Ogston, in his 50s and a brewery drayman, was one of the East Coast's most experienced yachtsmen, who for years had extensively sailed the often-treacherous waters around Scotland.

He was vice-commodore of the Port Edgar Marina and was social convener of this year's East Coast sailing week at Granton.



■ Drummer of Hornet when she left Banff in the Stavanger race last month.

The family were on the last leg of a five-week voyage, having taken part in the Banff to Stavanger race.

Last night, a friend of the Ogstons, Edinburgh newspaperman Mr Stewart Boyd, said: "Ian was an excellent sailor, very strong and very experienced."

"There must have been a sudden disaster because there is no way something like this could have happened through negligence or lack of sea knowledge."

"They had been looking forward to the trip for a long time. Ian had managed to get five weeks off work so that he could take part in the race and Liz was on holiday from her Edinburgh school."

● Police and coastguards last night condemned the "totally irresponsible" hoaxer whose mayday call launched a search costing over £37,000 off the West Coast. A helicopter, lifeboat and Mallaig fishing boats were involved in the fruitless night-long hunt.

RAF crew rescue colleague in fall

AN RAF helicopter crew from Lossiemouth was last night called out to rescue a colleague who had fallen more than 30ft down a Caithness cliff.

Glen Ballard was winched up and flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, where he is being treated for a broken right leg and back injuries.

The accident occurred as the 23-year-old serviceman and three others climbed the historic stone steps at Whaligoe, near Ullster, which zig-zag down the cliff-face.

Scrambled

It is believed that halfway up the steps, he left the pathway and tried to clamber up the grassy embankment.

He lost his balance when a sea-bird suddenly swooped towards him and tumbled more than 30ft, his fall broken by a small retaining wall on the seaward side.

□ IAIN GRANT

An RAF Lossiemouth helicopter was scrambled after the alert was raised by one of the others in the party.

Pentland coastguard also mobilised its personnel and launched Wick lifeboat, though the search was stood down after the helicopter arrived and winched Mr Ballard aboard the chopper.

A police spokesman said: "He was very lucky that he fell on to the steps."

"If he had fallen a few feet the opposite way, he could have gone right over."

A spokeswoman at Raigmore said Mr Ballard was in a stable condition.

Daredevil in glider plunge on hillside

NORTH daredevil Mr John Ross survived a weekend crash-landing in his hang-glider — two days after smashing his pick-up truck in a "demolition derby".

Mr Ross (27), of Balclaggin, Rogart, Sutherland, plunged into the side of Ben Bhaggie

1,000ft above Golspie on Saturday after losing control of his hang-glider in turbulent weather.

It spiralled just after he took off from the summit, the second of six fliers.

His predicament was seen by instrument maker Mr Ian Vass, Skitten, Wick, who was already airborne. He radioed for help to a light aircraft overhead.

Pilot Mr John Kinch, of Delny, Easter Ross, alerted air traffic controllers at Dalcross Airport, Inverness, who contacted the ambulance service.

The ambulance became bogged down on the steep mountain track, but the crew went on with a stretcher and gave Mr Ross first-aid.

Concerned that he might have a back injury, they decided with police to bring in an air ambulance.

Mr Ross was transferred by RAF helicopter to Lawson Hospital, Golspie, but went home after a check-up.

The rescue helicopter was diverted by coastguards to check a report from the Dornoch Hotel that a big inflatable dinghy had grounded in the firth, with the occupants thrashing about in the water.

This turned out to be an Aberdeen University mammal research team tagging seals to monitor their movements.

expedition and returned to their base at Invergarry.

It was the second rescue mission the RAF helicopter was on yesterday, earlier being called to the Cairngorms to take a climber who injured his back to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

The first alert was on the Cairngorms at Angel's Peak, Cairn Toul, where Stuart Burn (18), Edgeworth, Manchester, received a back injury after slipping and falling while walking with a party of six.

Mr Burn was flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

with the six Shetland ponies to raise money for the Cancer and Leukaemia in Children Trust, with six of the children riding the ponies.

The organisers were Scots-born William Renwick and his wife, Pat, Ulvers Croft Shetland Pony Stud, in Leicestershire, who are well known in Shetland pony circles.

A police spokesman said Mr Bearcroft had been walking with the group when he collapsed. The party were very upset and stunned by his death, he said, and abandoned the

Charity helper dies on Ben trek

A FUND-RAISING effort for a children's cancer charity ended in tragedy yesterday.

One of the helpers on a sponsored Shetland pony trek, collapsed and died while ascending the Ben Nevis tourist path.

He was Mr Leslie Bearcroft (60) agricultural contractor, Ropers Farm, Longdonhill, Evesham.

Mr Bearcroft was airlifted by RAF Lossiemouth helicopter to Belford Hospital, Fort William, where he was found to be dead.

□ NEIL MACPHAIL

His wife, Sue, had watched while a nurse with the party tried to revive Mr Bearcroft with the kiss of life.

The helicopter and Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team were alerted by the farrier with the group, who carried a mobile telephone in case of emergency.

For the past week the group comprising seven children and 11 adults have been travelling

Two in Moray river rescue drama

POLICE have issued a warning after two men were airlifted to safety from a beauty spot on the river Findhorn yesterday.

Joiner Mr Francis Bell (26), 65 Whittemire, Darnaway, Forres, and Oxfordshire electrician Mr Ian Biggs (25), were caught by a massive surge of water at the popular Randolph's Leap, six miles from Forres, as they attempted to cross the river through the narrow gorge.

Mr Biggs reached the safety of the opposite bank, but his colleague was stranded on an exposed rock as the water rose more than a metre in less than a minute.

Dangerous surges

An RAF Lossiemouth helicopter from 202 Squadron was called to the scene by police who were alerted by the men's wives, Mrs Elizabeth Bell (23) and Mrs Karen Biggs (22).

The two men were plucked by helicopter to the safety of the bank 30 minutes later, suffering no ill-effects.

Randolph's Leap has already been the scene of fatalities. The river Findhorn's dangerous surges can force large rises in the river level within seconds, as tons of water squeeze into the narrow gorge created by a rock wall.

Grampian Police stressed that the area is dangerous and urged visitors to keep to the paths and stay away from the water's edge.

Yesterday's incident followed a period when the water level was low, exposing rocks which appeared to give a convenient stepping-stone crossing.

A member of 202 Squadron rescue team said that although the operation had not been especially difficult, it required special handling.

"We couldn't get the helicopter in low because of the surrounding trees. Around 200ft of cable was put out and the winchman was lowered down to the man trapped on the rock," he said.

River surge traps man at beauty spot

A SUDDEN surge of water left a Moray man stranded in the middle of the River Findhorn at a popular beauty spot last week.

Grampian Police said that Forbes man Mr Francis Bell, aged 26, was in "extreme risk of being swept off the rocks" when the river surged into spate at Randolph's Leap.

Mr Bell, 65, Whitebire, Darnaway, and friend Mr Ian Biggs, aged 25, of Oxford, were visiting the gorge with their wives Mrs Elizabeth Bell, aged 23, and Mrs Karen Biggs, aged 22 on Thursday.

The two men were walking across the river using rocks exposed by the very low water level at about 4.15pm when the incident happened.

Mr Biggs crossed safely to the other side, but Mr Bell found himself stranded at the midway point as the river surged into spate - its level rising over five feet in less than a minute.

Mrs Bell alerted the police in Forbes, who called in a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

Not able to get low into the gorge, the helicopter crew lowered around 200 feet of cable and plucked both men, who were uninjured, to safety on the east bank.

Salvage bid on cargo ship off till today

EFFORTS to move a 2,800-ton cargo ship from rocks near the entrance to Peterhead Harbour were abandoned last night.

An investigation by maritime experts revealed the hull of the Antigua-registered Sea Reefer was holed on a large rock.

It is expected another effort will be made today to tow the vessel off the South Head, but locals feel the salvage crew may be wasting their time.

Said one: "Historically, boats that have run aground here do not usually come off in one piece. This one does not look any different from those before it."

A salvage crew had been standing by with a tug to try and free the vessel, which ran aground in treacherous conditions at 9.30pm on Saturday.

Airlift

Her 22-strong Egyptian crew were airlifted off in a delicate operation two hours later, involving two RAF rescue helicopters from Lossiemouth and Boulmer, in Northumbria.

No one was injured in the incident, but the master, who has not been named by either the Coastguard or police, is understood to be in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

He is believed to have taken ill after the rescue, which was co-ordinated by Aberdeen Coastguard.

Peterhead auxiliary coast-

□ JOE WATSON and
FIONA McPHERSON

guard officer Mr Jim Buchan said the rescue was relatively simple.

"We understand the anchor had been dragging and the master tried to correct his position."

"He could not, however, hold the vessel against the current and the tide, and she went aground," he said.

Mr Buchan said conditions at the time the crew were airlifted off were slightly better than they had been earlier in the evening.

"Rain was the main problem, but it was a fairly straightforward operation, involving seven auxiliaries," he said.

The crew were taken to Peterhead Lido before being transferred to the port's Fisherman's Mission and then on to the Palace Hotel where they spent the night.

The crew were allowed back on board the ship to collect their belongings and throughout yesterday thousands of people flocked to the harbour's North Pier to see the vessel.

The vessel's chief engineer, Mr Fouad El Deriny, said they had been waiting to enter Peterhead to load frozen fish.

They were then heading for Aberdeen before continuing to Holland and returning to Alexandria, Egypt.

It was very stormy at the time the ship struck the rocks and waves were crashing over the vessel, which was losing some of its bunker fuel.

Mr El Deriny said: "We must save the boat, we will not live without it."

It was understood the ship's Copenhagen owner was in Peterhead last night watching the salvage operation.

It is believed some of the non-essential crew may be flown home.

Lossiemouth helicopter pilot, Flight Lieutenant Tony Gear, said two crews were called out because the scale of operation was thought to be considerable at first.

He said: "She was a large ship with a fairly large crew on board."

"She was stuck hard on the rocks with the tide going out, but there were pretty big waves hitting her."

Meanwhile, earlier on Saturday night, Peterhead coastguards monitored the progress of a Russian klondyker's lifeboat as it tried to reach its parent vessel in adverse weather conditions.

An Aberdeen Coastguard spokesman said yesterday the boat's crew were eventually dissuaded from making the attempt at 5.40pm and were transferred to other vessels in the harbour until the weather eased.

□ KEN JONES

A MAJOR land, sea and air search has failed to find any trace of a Lochaber teacher who went missing on a fishing trip.

Mr Graham Thompson (27) was last seen at lunchtime on Sunday when he set out from his home at 10 Achaphubuil, near Fort William.

A part-time creel fisherman, Mr Thompson had gone to check on creels laid between Stronchreggan and Trislaig Bay in Loch Linne.

His small boat was later found aground, but with its engine still running, near the mouth of the River Lochy.

Local fishermen and boatmen, supported by a coastguard helicopter from Stornoway, searched the loch until nightfall.

The air search was resumed early yesterday by a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth with

Loch search fails to find teacher (27)

members of Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team scouring the lochside.

Police raised Mr Thompson's creels from the loch, but again nothing was found.

Eyemouth-born Mr Thompson took up a technical teaching post at Lochaber High School three years ago. It was his first teaching appointment.

Yesterday, staff at the school were too distressed to speak about the incident.

Mr Thompson, who has a wife, Mary, but no family, was a well-known fiddle and guitar player and played with a local band.

Police are now asking loch boatmen, anglers and people walking the shores to contact them if they spot anything in the water.

A spokesman said that at this stage it was not proposed to resume the search.

SUMMARY FOR SEPTEMBER 92

03 Diverted from training to search for missing hill walker. Whilst deploying Kinloss MRT R137 informed walker found safe and well. R137 ferried MRT back.

HODGSON SOUZA SPAIN JOYCE

06 Tasked to medevac casualty with serious injuries from Wick to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

HODGSON HAYWARD CHAPMAN TRETHEWEY

08 Diverted from training to report of red flares W of Fraserburgh. During search R137 informed by CG that flares had been fired by children on shore.

HODGSON HAYWARD CHAPMAN TRETHEWEY

09 Scrambled to RTA near Keith. R137 landed on road and lifted casualty to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

HODGSON HAYWARD CHAPMAN TRETHEWEY

13 Scrambled to take person with severe food poisoning off RSV 'Can Seeker' and transfer to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

WILLSON MUNNELLY SPAIN TURNBULL

14 Scrambled to collapsed walker in Strathearn area. R137 lifted casualty and paramedics to Raigmore Hospital.

GEAR MUNNELLY SPAIN TURNBULL

17 Tasked to assist with RTA at Loch Shin. On arrival ambulance crew has casualty ready to lift to Raigmore.

HODGSON PRINCE CHAPMAN AITKEN

20 Tasked to search for 2 missing walkers at Glencoe. Walkers found en route to deploying MRT tired but well and taken to police R.V.

CAMPBELL PRINCE CHAPMAN TURNBULL

21 R137 called to trapped canoist in River Spey. On arrival canoist on river bank, lifted and taken to Dr Grays Elgin.

HODGSON CAMPBELL LITTLE TURNBULL

22 Diverted from training to assist Lossiemouth and Burghead CG with boat which had ran onto rocks near Hopeman. Casualty ashore so no action required.

WILLSON SOUZA CHAPMAN AITKEN

24 Diverted from training to uplift medical staff from Raigmore prior to lifting pregnant woman with severe bleeding from Wick to Raigmore.

WILLSON HODGSON LITTLE AITKEN

26 Scrambled to assist Glencoe MRT recover person flashing light from Aonach Eagach. Survivors sighted almost immediately and winched onboard then taken to Glencoe MRT.

ANDERSON MUNNELLY BODIAM JOYCE

26 Scrambled to assist Leuchars MRT in search of missing 81 yr old male. Prior to arrival at RV casualty located.

WILLSON SOUZA CHAPMAN AITKEN

27 Tasked to 1st light search for source of torch SOS with Glencoe and Leuchars MRT. Nothing found.

WILLSON SOUZA CHAPMAN AITKEN

28 R137 called to search for 2 missing walkers on Kintail Ridge. As R137 arrived, walkers arrived safe and well. R137 shut down at Plockton for night due to bad weather.

WILLSON HAYWARD CHAPMAN TURNBULL

Soldiers in river rescue

TWO soldiers waded waist deep into the fast-flowing River Spey yesterday to rescue a colleague after his canoe hit a half-submerged tree.

The soldier — aged 30 — was trapped against the tree after freeing himself from the canoe.

He was in a party of six Army personnel on a canoeing

□ BRUCE TAYLOR

exercise from Craigellachie to the river mouth when he hit the tree about a mile north of the Fochabers road bridge.

His colleagues rigged up a rope to assist the rescue and two of them waded in and helped him to the bank.

A police spokesman said: "The water was waist deep."

Cold and shocked, the canoeist was flown by an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter to Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin.

The soldier, who has not been named, was not detained.

Helicopter co-pilot Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell said the soldier had been trapped for about 20 minutes.

"There was a lot of water in the river and it was flowing fast," he said. "He was lucky he was able to keep his head above the water."

"He was cold and shocked when we flew him to hospital."

The other helicopter crewmen were pilot Flt Lt Steve Hodgson, winchman Master Air Loadmaster Tony Turnbull and winch operator Master Air Electronics Operator Ted Little.

Fisher falls into sea

AN RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter and local coastguards were called out last night after a Burghead fisherman fell into the sea about a mile east of Hopeman.

Mr George Sutherland (47), 7 Young Street, had been trying to refloat his 23ft creel boat which had grounded on the rocks earlier in the day.

At that time he had been unable to refloat the vessel and returned to the scene last night.

While trying to get a line aboard from a dinghy he fell into the water.

His plight was spotted and the coastguards and helicopter were called out.

Mr Sutherland managed to swim ashore unhurt.

Lossie copter airlifts sick man

A 28-year-old man experiencing sickness and severe stomach pains was yesterday airlifted to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary from his boat in the North Sea.

The man was taken off the standby vessel Cam Seeker, 100 miles east of Aberdeen, by a rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth, and arrived at hospital shortly after 11am.

Spey canoeist is airlifted

A SOLDIER was rescued from the River Spey near Fochabers after his canoe smashed into a semi-submerged tree.

Two colleagues helped him to safety after wading waist-deep into the fast-flowing river.

The 30-year-old soldier, who has not been named, was airlifted by an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter to Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin, where he was released following a check-up.

Friends come to aid of stricken canoeist

A SOLDIER taking part in an Army canoeing exercise was dramatically rescued from the River Spey on Monday.

The rescue services were alerted at lunchtime after the un-named 30-year-old soldier's canoe collided with a tree in the water approximately a mile north of the Fochabers road bridge.

The soldier managed to free himself from the canoe, then became trapped in the tree.

Two of his comrades, who were part of a party of six canoeists, then waded into the waist-deep water and helped the man to the bank with the aid of a rope.

A search and rescue Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth then took the canoeist, who was thought to be suffering from shock and hypothermia, to Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin.

The man was found to be uninjured, and was released a short time later.



Up, up and away . . . helicopter winchman Master Air Load Master Tony Turnbull is winched back into the helicopter from the Fortuna after the exercise.

Moray Firth fishermen's survival training gets a lift

SURVIVAL training for Moray Firth fishermen has been given a lift by RAF Lossiemouth's search-and-rescue helicopter.

An exercise off Buckie involving a trawler and a Sea King helicopter has been hailed a big success.

It winched 20 skippers and fishermen in pairs from the boat in the first exercise of its kind organised by the North-east Fishermen's Joint Group Training Association.

"It was a total success," said Buckie-based training officer Mr Edward Smith. "It is the first time we have done an

exercise involving a helicopter and the men were really elated about it."

It was aimed at showing the men what to do if they needed helicopter assistance.

"Trained men will always react better in an emergency situation," said Mr Smith, a former skipper.

Buckie skipper Mr Jimmy Grieve loaned his boat, Fortuna, for the exercise. The skippers and fishermen involved were from the area from Buckie to Whitehills.

The helicopter lowered pumps and a stretcher to the Fortuna as part of the exercise.

Coastguard sector officer for the Lossiemouth area, Mr Ian Fairbairn, helped organise it.

Another Buckie boat, Choice — skippered by Mr Willie Coull — was also involved.

Mr Smith, who was also winched up, said: "It was a very satisfactory day and we are grateful to the RAF for their co-operation."

The helicopter crew was pilot Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell, co-pilot Flight Lieutenant John Prince, winch operator Sergeant Clive Chapman and winchman Master Air Load Master Tony Turnbull.

SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 92

03 R137 scrambled to report of smoke on oilrig Brae 'B' with 205 POB. Recalled en route.

WILLSON SOUZA LITTLE AITKEN

04 Scrambled to report of exhausted walker in Cuillins. After intensive search MRT located walker and R137 lifted casualty to Slighacan Hotel.

CAMPBELL HAYWARD BODIAM TURNBULL

06 Scrambled to lift man with loss of feeling in leg from oil tanker 128 miles W of Lossiemouth and transfer to Dyce.

PRINCE CAMPBELL CHAPMAN AITKEN

08 Diverted from training to injured sailor aboard HMS Lindisfarne. Casualty with injured "pinkie" taken to Dyce.

HODGSON SOUZA CHAPMAN TURNBULL

09 Scrambled to report of 121.5 beacon in Peterhead area. Beacon in racal office at harbour. False alarm.

WATT HAYWARD SPAIN JOYCE

11 Scrambled to fallen walker in Loch Mulladroch area. One casualty and companion airlifted and taken to Raigmore.

ANDERSON HAYWARD BODIAM JOYCE

15 Scrambled to oulrig 'West Omikron' in difficulties under tow N of Fraserburgh. 28 people lifted to Fraserburgh.

CAMPBELL HUMPHRIES CHAPMAN AITKEN

15 Scrambled to medevac baby with suspected meningitis. Baby and parents taken to Raigmore.

CAMPBELL HUMPHRIES CHAPMAN AITKEN

16 Scrambled to search for overdue walkers in Loch Torridon area. After arrival, casualty walked in safe and well.

ANDERSON WILLSON SPAIN TURNBULL

20 Tasked to medevac serviceman with brain haemorrhage from Raigmore to Aberdeen Airport. Whilst at Aberdeen, PLB TXs were received and R137 carried out homing checks. PLB located at Bristows.

PRINCE MUNNELLY CHAPMAN TURNBULL

25 Tasked to search for missing deaf girl walkin N of Loch Lomond. Missing walker located on steep slope, airlifted and taken to R.V.P.

GEAR PRINCE SPAIN TRETHEWEY

27 Scrambled to report of 2 missing walkers on Ben Nevis. Casualties located on ledge up gully, lifted and taken to Fort William where AC shut down to engine problems.

CAMPBELL HAYWARD SPAIN AITKEN

28 Scrambled to medevac infant with respiratory problems and woman in premature labour + 2 midwives from Wick to Raigmore.

WILLSON SOUZA BODIAM JOYCE

28 Scrambled to red flare sighting in Kessock Bridge area. Search carried out with nothing found.

WILLSON SOUZA BODIAM JOYCE

29 Scrambled to medevac RTA casualty + doctor and nurse from Wick to Raigmore.

CAMPBELL MUNNELLY SPAIN AITKEN

31 Scrambled to fallen climber on the 'Five Sisters'. Kintail MRT had already located casualty when R137 arrived. Casualty lifted to aircraft and taken to Raigmore.

CAMPBELL MUNNELLY LITTLE AITKEN

31 Scrambled to search for 3 missing walkers in Dubh Loch, Lochnagar. R137 deployed MRT, refuelled and returned to Ballater. Due to deteriorating weather conditions, search called off until 1st light, but missing walkers walked in later. R137 then retasked to locating SARSAT hit N of Lossiemouth TX in Lossiemouth harbour, boat located and R137 RTB.

CAMPBELL MUNNELLY LITTLE AITKEN

27 airlifted in rig drama

TWENTY-SEVEN oilmen were last night airlifted from a North Sea rig when high seas and heavy winds threatened to sweep it towards the North-east coast.

The non-essential personnel were taken off the West Omikron oilrig while it was under tow off the Buchan coast.

The rig was eight miles north-east of Fraserburgh when the offshore installation manager decided, as a precaution, to evacuate part of the crew. Winds were gusting up to 50 knots and there was a 7-metre swell.

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth made two trips to ferry 27

□ TIM PAULING

crew to Fraserburgh. Eighteen were left on board.

The rig was being towed by two tugs, the North Valiant and the Far Senior. Last night, a third tug from Aberdeen, the Maersk Chancellor, was on her way to try to put a third towing line on board.

Mr Mike Salter, chief executive of the operator, Smedvig of Aberdeen, said: "It was off Fraserburgh and not making good headway because the tide and weather were against her."

"Everything was under control, but be-

cause there was a lee shore only eight miles away the OIM decided he wanted to evacuate the rig. There was no risk or injuries to anyone on board or on the helicopter."

Once the tide changed last night, the rig was being towed farther out to sea. The evacuated crew were on standby at an Aberdeen hotel.

Mr Salter said the West Omikron was a large, modern jack-up rig, equipped with the latest safety equipment.

It left Danish waters on Monday when it completed work for Danop and was on its way to Invergordon for modifications prior to work in the UK sector.

Rescue nets award for Sea King crew

THE bravery of an RAF Lossiemouth helicopter crew has been honoured by the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society at a ceremony in London.

The society presented the Edward and Maisie Lewis Award for 1992 to the RAF Sea King fliers from 'D' flight, 202 Squadron, at the Fishmongers' Hall, London

Bridge.

The RAF Lossiemouth crew consisted of co-pilot Flt Lt Stephen Hodgson, Flt Sgt Paul Tretheway, Sgt Stephen Larke and pilot Flt Lt Peter Bell, who has since left Moray to join a flying instructors' course in Lincolnshire.

The award recognised their part in the rescue of 48 sea-

men from the stricken Russian factory ship "Kartli" last December.

The crew were joined by their Royal Navy Sea King colleagues of 819 Squadron from HMS Gannet, Prestwick, who shared the award — for "outstanding air/sea rescue" — for their role in the incident.

It acknowledges the work of the men in the early hours of December 18 last year, when the bridge of the Russian ship was engulfed by a huge wave 75 miles west of Prestwick.

The vessel drifted without power, and some of the crew abandoned ship and took to liferafts in "atrocious" weather — 50-knot winds and 30- to 40-foot seas.

The Lossiemouth helicopter, acting as the duty search and rescue aircraft at HMS Gannet, was first to be scrambled to assist.

The search for survivors in the water was carried out in darkness — four liferafts were checked visually from a low hover position.

One survivor was recovered to the helicopter by the Lossiemouth winchman, Flt Sgt Tretheway, despite repeated submersion in the heavy seas.

During this phase his winch operator, Sgt Larke, controlled the aircraft using the steering device, the Auxiliary Hover Trim, with considerable difficulty in the 40-foot swell and 65-knot gusts of wind.

Flt Sgt Tretheway was also lowered onto the deck of the ship, where he administered first aid, and allayed the fear of the sailors left on board, despite the language barrier.

He was later awarded the Air Force medal for his skill and courage during the incident. He had been an operational winchman for only nine months at the time.

The Edward and Maisie Lewis Award for outstanding air/sea rescue was instituted in 1980, following a donation from Mr Richard Lewis in memory of his father and mother, Sir Edward and Lady Lewis. Sir Edward Lewis was a former chairman of Decca Limited, who manufacture navigation equipment.

In brief

Ben Nevis two safe and well

A BROTHER and sister were found safe but cold yesterday after a night on Ben Nevis in white-out conditions.

A Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth spotted Mr John Hughes (30) and Miss Karen Hughes (25) in Five Finger Gully where they spent the night in bivouac bags after losing their way.

The pair, who live in Glasgow, were taken to Belford Hospital, Fort William, suffering from the effects of cold.

Two climbers in Skye rescues

TWO female climbers were recovering today after separate mountain rescues on Skye.

One of the women — Jacqueline Farquhar (25), from Irvine in Ayrshire — was airlifted to safety early today after a search lasting more than eight hours.

Her husband Douglas, also 25, went for help after she collapsed with exhaustion in a remote part of the Cuillins yesterday afternoon.

He alerted Skye mountain rescue team, who eventually reached Mrs Farquhar shortly after 1am after an operation hampered by darkness.

Although suffering from cold and exhaustion, she was uninjured. She was airlifted by a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth to the hotel where she and her husband had been staying.

In another incident, members of the Skye rescue team went to the assistance of a woman who had suffered a leg injury while climbing with friends.

The casualty — who has not been named — was taken to Broadford Hospital and later transferred to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

SUMMARY FOR NOVEMBER 1992

01 R137 tasked to move a comp A case from Lossiemouth to RAF Leuchars.

HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM TRETHEWEY

05 Scrambled to lift appendicitis case from French submarine 'Agosta' and transport to Dyce Airport.

CAMPBELL SOUZA LARKE JOYCE

06 Scrambled to lift sailor with sprained ankle from 'Oslo' to Aberdeen Airport.

ANDERSON MUNNELLY SPAIN TURNBULL

10 Scrambled to double medevac of underweight baby and trachyotimy of elderly man from Wick to Raigmore.

CAMPBELL ANDERSON BODIAM BRAGG

11 Scrambled to sinking FV 130NM NE of Lossiemouth. Pump delivered and crew taken off by nearby FV 'Blue Sky'. R137 instructed to remove pump as FV sinking.

GEAR HAYWARD CHAPMAN AITKEN

13 R138 scrambled en route to Plockton from Stornoway to sinking FV near Canna Island with 2 POB. FV found on rocks with survivors on shore who were lifted to Heast on Skye.

HODGSON MUNNELLY LITTLE TURNBULL

14 R137 scrambled to medevac RTA casualty from Raigmore to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

CAMPBELL HAYWARD SPAIN TRETHEWEY

22 Scrambled to missing hill walker in Torridon area. Search carried out until R137 relieved by R138.

HODGSON SOUZA CHAPMAN AITKEN

22 R138 relieved R137 to continue search. MRT deployed but search called off at last light to continue at first light on 23 Nov.

GEAR MUNNELLY BODIAM TURNBULL

23 Search continued from previous day by R137 for missing 24yr old male. A/C shut down on scene due to gear box problems. Engineers rectified problem and search continued but nil found.

ANDERSON LEIGH SPAIN AITKEN

24 R137 returned to Torridon to continue search and Kinloss MRT found casualty. A/C landed and casualty carried off mountain to A/C for onward transportation to Raigmore.

HODGSON MUNNELLY LITTLE TURNBULL

24 R137 scrambled to medevac woman with brain haemorrhage from Raigmore to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

HODGSON MUNNELLY LITTLE TURNBULL

29 Scrambled to fallen walker North of Glen Spean. Casualty located and lifted to Fort William car park and transferred to ambulance.

ANDERSON MUNNELLY BODIAM JOYCE



Moray schools generous to children appeal

THE generosity of Moray schoolchildren shone through yesterday — with lessons taking second place in helping the Children in Need appeal.

An RAF Lossiemouth Sea King Rescue helicopter collecting donations from North and North-east schools landed at Speyside and Buckie High Schools and Cullen School.

And who else but Carol Baxter, presenter of BBC Scotland's Beechgrove Garden, and Radio One DJ Lynn Parsons jumped out to meet the excited children.

Along with Pudsey Bear, the pair dropped in at Speyside High School where they were also met by pupils from Aberlour Primary School and Speyside Nursery Unit.

A week-long collection by the secondary pupils raised £290. It was handed over by Ewan Millar and Jayne Strathdee, the school's oldest and youngest pupils.

□ FIONA McPHERSON

Donations were also made by the primary youngsters and nursery class.

A come-as-you-please-day raised £322 in under five minutes, with youngsters — plus staff — paying for the chance to wear to school what ever they wanted.

The helicopter then stopped off at Cullen before heading to Aberdeen.

■ Right: Buckie High School prefects Claire Addison (left) and Amanda Pirie (right) hand over the school's Children in Need donation to Radio One DJ Lynn Parsons (2nd left) and Carol Baxter from the Beechgrove Garden, under the watchful eye of Pudsey Bear.

Drop in for cash

A RESCUE helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth flew a mercy mission today ... raising money for Children in Need.

The Sea King — with BBC Scotland's Beechgrove Garden presenter Carol Baxter on board — dropped in on a dozen schools throughout the North and North-east.

With US coastguard exchange pilot, Lt John Souza at the controls, the helicopter's first port of call were Culloden Academy and Inverness High School.

It also made flying visits to Buckie High, Glen Primary, Lochpots at Fraserburgh and Turriff Academy.

Hopes fading for young hillwalker

□ NEIL MACPHAIL

HOPES were fading last night of finding a young hillwalking student missing near Torridon in Wester Ross since Saturday night.

The snow-covered Ben Dearg and Ben Alligin hills, each more than 900 metres, were searched in vain yesterday by two mountain rescue teams, local and police volunteers and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

As the search was called off for the night, a police spokesman at Dingwall said they had been unable to contact relatives of the missing man, who is in his 20s.

The search is expected to resume at first light.

The student, who has not been named, drove north with other students, but was dropped off to climb alone on Ben Alligin.

He was due to rendezvous with his party at Ling Hut on Saturday night.

A senior policeman at Dingwall said the missing man was an experienced climber, well-equipped, and the weather was reasonable.

Meanwhile, on Ben Nevis yesterday, a search was getting under way for climbers Brian Burns (33) and Ian Bell (25), both from Ashington, Northumberland, when they walked down safe and well.

They had decided to spend Saturday night on the hill after the weather deteriorated.

● Two young Britons who died in an avalanche while ski-ing in the French Alps were named yesterday as Roderick Arkell, Rowlands Gill, Tyne and Wear, and Chris Maxwell, Stoke Bishop, Bristol.

It is understood they were aged 22 and 21 and students at Lyon University.

They were among seven skiers who died when the avalanche struck near the resort of Val Thorens on Saturday. About 20 people were injured.

'I thought we'd die'

► JENNIFER GRANT

AN ABERDEEN climber today told how he thought he and his friend were going to die on a gale-swept mountain.

For about five hours Mark Huxham admitted he feared dying "was a distinct possibility."

The 26-year-old experienced climber was speaking after he and student Peter Pollard (28) ran into serious difficulties on the Hanging Garden climb on Creag an Dubh Loch, below Broad Cairn, Glen Muick.

A full-scale six-hour search was

Two men in climb ordeal

triggered involving Grampian Police, Braemar and Aberdeen mountain rescue teams and a Sea King search-and-rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

But about 2am on Sunday the men managed to make their own way off the mountain — shaken but uninjured — after a marathon 14½

hour climb which should have taken HALF the time.

The men, both Bedford Avenue, had been fully equipped for icy conditions.

When it began getting dark about 6pm on Saturday they began to panic.

Mark said: "I saw some lights in the valley and thought it was prudent to give them an alarm call because I thought one of us was going to fall."

"We were climbing in the dark for about five hours. We heard a helicopter but it could not see us."

SCOTTISH NEWS

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 24 1992

Missing walker 'could still be alive'

□ NEIL MACPHAIL

MILD weather is increasing the chances of a Dundee student being found alive despite being missing for two days and three nights on the Torridon mountains.

The second day of a major mountain rescue operation again drew a blank yesterday.

Winds gusting to 70mph, mist and driving rain hampered yesterday's search and some of the more exposed peaks and ridges were too dangerous to venture on to.

These areas will be searched today, said co-ordinator

Constable Ian McColl at the rescue headquarters at Torridon Youth Hostel.

Three mountain rescue teams — Torridon, Dundonnell and RAF Kinloss — yesterday scoured the suspected route of William Haworth (24). They were backed up by four search-and-rescue dogs and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

The search resumes at first light today, with RAF Leuchars MRT joining the hunt, bringing search numbers to 58.

Mr Haworth, whose home is at Aylesbury, Bucks, left a party of students to walk between 2,995ft Ben Dearg and 3,020ft Ben Alligin but he failed to rendezvous with the group at the Ling Hut on Saturday night.

Mr McColl said: "The RAF boys say that although the weather is wild, it is reasonably mild, so he could easily be lying injured somewhere. That is why we are keeping going."

"Mr Haworth is well equipped and apparently experienced — so we are not giving up hope of finding him alive."

Missing student plunged to his death

THE Dundee University student missing since Saturday on the Torridon hills was found dead yesterday.

A massive search was mounted on Saturday after William Haworth (24), from Aylesbury, Bucks, failed to rendezvous with other members of the university mountaineering club after going off to walk alone on 3,020ft Ben Alligin.

Mr Haworth's body was found at the foot of crags on Sgurr Mhor, on the Ben Alligin ridge. The top of the crags are near the summit, and it is thought Mr Haworth may have fallen 500-600ft.

Members of RAF Kinloss Mountain Rescue Team found the body around 10.30am, about two hours after the third day of searching began.

High winds

High winds which hampered searching more exposed parts of the mountain on Monday eased yesterday.

An RAF Sea King helicopter involved in the search recovered Mr Haworth's body and flew directly to Raigmor Hospital, Inverness, where the student's parents and brother were waiting after travelling from Aylesbury. A post-mortem examination was being arranged.

A total of 77 searchers from four mountain rescue teams — Torridon, Dundonnell and RAF Kinloss and Leuchars — plus five dogs from the Search and Rescue Dog Association — were out yesterday when the sad news led to the search being abandoned.

Eleven students who had gone to Wester Ross with Mr Haworth took part in the search on Sunday and Monday.



Watch out! It's the flying gardener... Carole Baxter (centre), on a lightning visit courtesy of an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter, to promote la Friday's BBC Children in Need campaign. First Year pupil Jane Strathdee (centre, left), and Ewan Millar (centre, right), of Sixth Year, presented ti television personality with a cheque for £290 from the pupils. Campaign mascot Pudsey Bear was there, too.

NS Pho

Among the many events devised for the special day, "Beechgrove Garden" television presenter Carole Baxter — and Pudsey Bear — landed in Moray three times on Friday, for short stopovers at Aberlour's Speyside High School, Buckie High School, and Cullen School. Her transport was an RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter, on a high-profile Children in

Need promotion covering 13 schools from Inverness to Turiff.

SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 1992

04 R137 scrambled to double medevac from Wick to Raigmore of premature baby and lady in labour.

HODGSON MUNNELLY BODIAM AITKEN

05 R137 scrambled to fallen climber at Ben Nevis. After deploying MRT R137 waited at Corpach then returned to CIC hut to uplift 1 casualty + 2 MRT to Fort William.

GEAR HAYWARD CRIPPS TURNBULL

05 Scrambled to fallen climber on Ben Nevis. 1 climber and companion lifted from CIC hut to Fort William.

GEAR HAYWARD CRIPPS TURNBULL

07 Tasked to medevac patient with respiratory problems from Wick to Raigmore.

GEAR HAYWARD LITTLE TRETHEWEY

09 Scrambled to injured sailor on rig support vessel 'CAM Viking'. Casualty lifted and taken to ARI.

CAMPBELL MUNNELLY LITTLE TRETHEWEY

14 Scrambled to medevac baby from Wick to Raigmore. En route lifted doctors midwife + incubator from Raigmore.

HODGSON MUNNELLY CHAPMAN TURNBULL

20 Tasked to locate missing walker in GlenShee area. Casualty located safe and well and lifted to Police at Braemar.

CAMPBELL LEIGH CHAPMAN JOYCE

21 R137 tasked to assist MRT locate casualty in avalanche on Ben Nevis. MRT + dogs lifted to site of casualty and companion lifted to Fort William. App dead casualty carried down by MRT.

CAMPBELL LEIGH CRIPPS AITKEN

25 R137 scrambled to injured hillwalker at Halfway Lochan on Ben Nevis. Due to low cloud R137 unable to reach casualty who was then brought below cloud base before being lifted to Fort William car park for onward ambulance journey.

GEAR MUNNELLY CRIPPS TURNBULL

27 R137 tasked to medevac premature baby. Routed via Raigmore for incubator, doctor and 2 nurses before going to Wick and then returned to Raigmore.

GEAR MUNNELLY CRIPPS TURNBULL

27 Scrambled from previous task to fallen climber on Ben Nevis. Casualty located and lifted to Fort William.

GEAR MUNNELLY CRIPPS TURNBULL

27 R137 scrambled to search for 2 adults and 2 kids missing in Aonach Mor area. At RV point R137 informed family had been located by MRT. R137 lifted family and MRT to RV point.

GEAR MUNNELLY CRIPPS TURNBULL

28 Scrambled to fallen walker with broken ankle and bruised ribs from hills near Loch Treig. Casualty lifted to Belford Hospital.

HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM JOYCE

28 R137 retasked to assist with injured walker on Loch Nagar. Casualty sighted using NVG and female with leg and hip injuries lifted to ARI.

HODGSON LEIGH BODIAM JOYCE

29 R137 tasked to lift injured walker from Ben Nevis to Fort William.

CAMPBELL SIMPSON CHAPMAN TURNBULL

29 R137 scrambled from Fort William to Cairngorms for walker with head injuries. Casualty lifted to Raigmore.

CAMPBELL SIMPSON CHAPMAN TURNBULL

29 R137 retasked to fallen climber halfway down hillside east of Glen Shee ske resort. Casualty located and lifted with 2 companions to ARI.

CAMPBELL SIMPSON CHAPMAN TURNBULL

29 R137 retasked to search for 2 missing climbers above shelter stone area in Cairngorms. Casualty located belayed to vertical cliff 3000ft above Loch Avon, inadequately secured and taken to Glenmore for treatment.

CAMPBELL SIMPSON CHAPMAN TURNBULL

29 R137 retasked to search for 3 elderly persons possibly missing on top of Cairngorms. Area search but nil found. R137 RTB.

CAMPBELL SIMPSON CHAPMAN TURNBULL

30 R137 scrambled to recover male walker with ankle injury from hills near Loch Muick to ARI.

HODGSON LEIGH LITTLE JOYCE

30 Scrambled to medevac 13 yr old boy who had fallen from a tree in Forres to ARI with head injuries.

HODGSON LEIGH LITTLE JOYCE

31 Scrambled to medevac 2 day old baby from Stornoway to Raigmore. Doctor, midwife and incubator collected en route.

CAMPBELL SIMPSON CHAPMAN TRETHEWEY

31 Tasked to medevac young male from RTA at Raigmore to ARI. Cancelled due to casualty's condition.

CAMPBELL SIMPSON CHAPMAN TRETHEWEY

31 R137 retasked to assist Forth CG in search for young man seen falling from Tay Bridge. Extensive search carried out with no signs of casualty and R137 RTB.

CAMPBELL SIMPSON CHAPMAN TRETHEWEY

Lucky Victor cheats death

□ CAROL GRUGEON
and ADRIAN O'DOWD

A PERTH hillwalker admitted last night he was lucky to be alive after surviving a night in the Grampians in perishing conditions.

Joiner Victor Kurlus (41) was spotted at 3am yesterday by the crew of a RAF search and rescue helicopter from Lossiemouth equipped with night-vision goggles.

He had been lost in the Cairnwell area for almost 12 hours, after setting off at 9am to climb 3,340ft Carn an Tuirc and two other Munros near Braemar.

An experienced climber, Mr Kurlus, 39 Strathray Road, told the Press and Journal: "On my



■ Mr Victor Kurlus
... Shone torch into sky

road back to the car I just got a bit lost. By that time it was getting dark so I got into my bivvy bag. It probably saved my life.

"It was quite a longish night and I wasn't sure if anyone was

going to come and get me. I was just planning to wait until about 8am — if I survived that long — and look for another way down.

"I just kept telling myself not to panic and that I was doing all right.

"I had been up there before with someone else and I knew that was a bad bit."

Mr Kurlus had told his wife where he would be climbing and she reported him missing when his empty car was found late in the evening.

Grampian Police, Tayside Police and Braemar Mountain rescue teams, assisted by the helicopter, launched a search shortly after midnight. A mountain rescue team from RAF Kinloss was also alerted.

Mr Kurlus had already dug

himself into a shelter, clearing the snow and digging the peat out to make a wind break.

After an eight-hour wait in temperatures around -10C the helicopter arrived — passing him twice before he was picked up on Caen Lochan.

"I heard the helicopter coming and I stuck my head out of the bag and shone the torch. It just kept going and I thought he was maybe just passing over and not looking for me.

"It went away quite a distance — and I was really glad when it came back."

The rescue was co-ordinated from the Grampian Police rescue centre in Braemar by rescue team leader Constable Graham Gibb.

Reckless climbers 'stupid' — rescue chief

Emergency mayhem in mountains

□ LYNNE ILLINGWORTH
and JOHN MACDONALD

□ ALASTAIR BISSET

A POLICE mountain rescue expert branded reckless climbers as "stupid" after a spate of hilltop emergencies across Scotland yesterday.

Sgt Graham Gibb said it was a miracle nobody had died in the seven emergencies which stretched rescuers to the limit.

"It's just a matter of time before someone gets killed," he said.

The emergencies began around lunchtime:

● 1pm: Climber falls on Ben Nevis, taken to hospital in Fort William and later released.

● 1.30pm: Search for three climbers in Glencoe, who later turn up safe and well.

● 1.45pm: Hillwalker falls on Bynack More, to the east of Cairngorm.

● 3pm: Injured hillwalker stuck on ice-slope at Glenshee.

● 3.35pm: Party of two fail to turn up in Cairngorms. Search later called off after they were believed to have walked down.

● 4pm: Woman falls 100ft on Skye.

● 8.50pm: Two climbers stuck on a crag on Wee Devil, Cairngorm.

While the Lossiemouth Sea King, Rescue 137, was dealing with a series of incidents on the mainland, Stornoway Coastguard's rescue helicopter was assisting Skye Mountain Rescue Team after a woman fell 100ft on the Cuillins.

The Lossiemouth helicopter took off on a training flight at 11.30am, but was soon in action for real.

Aircraft was diverted

The first incident was on Ben Nevis when English climber Martin Prestige (18) fell 25ft after slipping on ice. He left Belford Hospital, Fort William, after treatment.

The aircraft was later diverted to Glencoe to assist in a search for three climbers. While on the way, the climbers were found safe and well and Rescue 137 turned for home.

Then came mission No. 3 — to pick up hillwalker Callum Fraser (31), 45 Charles Street, Inverness, who had slipped on hard-packed snow while descending the north ridge of Bynack More around lunchtime.

Mr Fraser was reported as having received a severe head injury, and was flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, and later transferred to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

After refuelling at Inverness Airport, the helicopter was sent to pick up an injured hillwalker at Glenshee, and flew him to hospital in Aberdeen.

Computer analyst David Leonard (47), 10 Moorland Close, Harrogate, north Yorkshire, decided to walk down a gully to the east of Sron na Gaoithe, slipped and fell down the snow-covered hill.

He is "comfortable" in hospital with back and shoulder injuries.

The Skye incident was sparked about 4pm after the woman fell about 100ft on Sgurr an Mhadaidh.

Warnings 'ignored'

A Coastguard spokesman said their helicopter managed to drop off winchman Steve Branley beside the casualty, but mist then forced the helicopter to stand-off.

The woman and winchman were uplifted late last night and the helicopter took her to hospital at Stornoway. She has a suspected broken arm, ribs and ankle plus cuts and bruises.

Mr Gibb, who led the Braemar and Grampian Police Mountain Rescue Team on one of the Cairngorm missions, said: "It's just a matter of time before someone is killed. Any of these accidents could have been fatal."

"The way some of these people ignore our warnings and go into the hills without the right equipment and precautions is as stupid as drink-driving."

"From now until May, nobody should be walking without crampons, ice-axes and without telling where they're going."

Police were constantly baffled when climbers ignored commonsense on the hills, he added.

"This is the start of the season and if today was anything to go by, it's very worrying."

Rescue 137 returned in the evening to the Cairngorms from Aberdeen to search for two climbers reported as being in difficulties as they climbed the Hell's Lum area. Around 9pm the climbers were uplifted and taken to Glenmore Lodge.

ROUND-THE-CLOCK mercy flights made yesterday the busiest day yet in the Lossiemouth helicopter flight log.

Last year, 202 Squadron D Flight completed 222 rescue missions — including Cairngorm rescues, plucking fishermen to safety from the North Sea and flying road-accident victims to hospital.

But yesterday Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell and his crew of Rescue 137 pushed this year's tally of mercy flights to more than 230.

After a series of helicopter mercy mission flights which covered around 1,000 miles over the northern half of Scotland, Fl Lt Campbell said: "It has been non-stop. We have gone from one job to another."

"Every time the radio messages came through they were calling up rescue 137."

"We have been to the Cairngorms, Inverness, Aberdeen and back — and some more."

"Now we are just about to put our feet up."

A flight spokesman last night: "Apart from today, which has been hectic, there were one or two other call-outs over the weekend and it is taking us all our time to get the records up to date."

"But I can say that we have had a record year — and there are still a couple of days to go."

■ Right: Putting their feet up and enjoying a welcome mug of coffee after their series of mercy flights are the RAF Lossiemouth Sea King helicopter crew — winchman Tony Turnbull, pilot Flight Lieutenant Ian Campbell and (front) winch operator Clive Chapman and co-pilot Squadron Leader Dave Simpson.

Lossie crew warns walkers

□ ALASTAIR BISSET

THE new commanding officer of RAF Lossiemouth's record-breaking Sea King helicopter flight, Squadron Leader Dave Simpson, yesterday warned climbers and hillwalkers: "Don't be fooled by bright, clear conditions."

Sqn Ldr Simpson, whose rescue crews will be on round-the-clock standby over the New Year period, said: "The mountains may look attractive when the sun is shining — but in these temperatures that is when the ice is forming."

"This is when conditions are at their most dangerous."

Sqn Ldr Simpson was speaking after his four-man Sea King crew had returned to Lossiemouth following an 1,000-mile series of mercy missions in the Cairngorms, Glencoe, Glenshee and Ben Nevis on Tuesday.

The crew had airlifted injured climbers and hillwalkers to hospitals at Fort William, Inverness and Aberdeen, and had also picked up several others who had been in difficulties and flown them to Glenmore.

History

It was the busiest day in the Lossiemouth Sea King flight's 20-year history and brought the tally of mercy flights this year to 232 — 10 more than last year's record figure.

"We were surprised at the number of people who were out on the hills," said Sqn Ldr Simpson. "They are obviously being attracted by the clear weather. But they should not let that fool them. Conditions can very quickly become treacherous."



Hampered by mist

And Ayrshire woman Barbara Dunn, Old Glasgow Road, Stewarston, was "stable and comfortable" in Western Isles Hospital, Stornoway, after falling about 100ft on Coire an Dorus in the Skye Cuillins on Tuesday.

Despite being hampered by mist, the Stornoway Coastguard helicopter, assisted by Skye Mountain Rescue Team, reached Ms Dunn late on Tuesday.

Inverness man Calum Fraser (31), 45 Charles Street, was said to be stable in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary yesterday after receiving a severe head injury when he fell on Bynack Mor in the Cairngorms the same day.

He was airlifted to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, and then transferred to Aberdeen.

Mr Fraser is the son of Inverness Royal Academy rector Ian Fraser.

PRESS AND JOURNAL

27 DEC 92.

Hillwalker hurt in Lochaber

A 24-YEAR old Kent man, injured while hillwalking in Lochaber yesterday, was airlifted to Belford Hospital, Fort William, by a rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth.

Mark Graniders, from Dartford, fell while walking on Stob Ban with four companions and injured his leg.

Two colleagues descended and told the police. Eighteen members of Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team were mustered to help, in addition to the helicopter.

PRESS AND JOURNAL

29 DEC 92

Cairngorm rescuers call off hunt for mystery trio

AN AIR and ground search for three hillwalkers in the Cairngorms drew a blank yesterday and was called off.

Concern for the trio was sparked when an experienced hillwalker told a Cairngorm ski patroller that he had seen them deep in the hills on Tuesday afternoon, and thought two of them were ill-equipped and would not make it back down by nightfall.

The two men and a woman were described as elderly but one of the men appeared to be fitter and better clad. They seemed to be heading for remote Loch Avon.

Police were alerted and yesterday a Wessex helicopter from RAF Leuchars and RAF Leuchars Mountain Rescue Team, on exercise in the area, carried out an extensive search.

Inspector Colin MacKintosh, at Aviemore, said: "Our problem was that no one was

□ NEIL MACPHAIL
and JOHN MACDONALD

reported missing or overdue but, if we failed to take any action and they were found dead or injured, we would be crucified.

"It was a good, clear night, although very cold, and it may well be that the party came down safely on their own."

Meanwhile, a helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth evacuated an injured New Deer hillwalker from Sandy Hillock, near Glen Muick, yesterday.

Electrical engineer David Gardner (45), Stoneybank Terrace, was flown to Aberdeen Airport and then taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, where his condition last night was not believed to be serious.

PRESS AND JOURNAL 31 DEC 92.