

- 3rd. Sqn Ldr Jeff Whitehead. Flt Lt Mark Hewitt. Sgt Terry Williamson.  
Having heard overnight of flares being sighted it came as no surprise to have to get up at first light to go and look for the source. Nothing was found, and it later transpired that nothing was reported either missing or in trouble.
- 3rd. Sqn Ldr Jeff Whitehead. Master Nav Ron Dedmen. Master ALM Dave Allen.  
There was this chap on this Sailboard in this strong wind... who decided to have a go at getting to Norway. Then he jumped off and swam. Then he got picked up by Helicopter as it was quite obvious to him as well as us that he wasn't going to get to the shore with arm and leg power. When deposited with the Coastguard at Skipsea his legs gave way as he was somewhat exhausted! His Sailboard was not recovered, but his last words were, apparently, that he didn't want to see the b...y thing again .. ever!!
- 5th. Flt Lt Paul Engden. Master Nav Ron Dedmen. Master ALM Dave Allen.  
Report of a Trawler sunk off New Holland Pier, which turned out to be a false alarm the trawler having been moored there overnight, and missing in the morning - it turned up in Grimsby eventually.
- 7th. Sqn Ldr Jeff Whitehead. Flt Lt Graham Clark. Master ALM Eric Ainslie.  
Almost dark call to two swimmers who 'disappeared' when swimming from a sandbank to the shore off Cleethorpes. After a lengthy search it was considered - and later turned out to be, a well intentioned false alarm, the onlooker concerned having mistaken two buoys as being people, and moving in the fast tide - just as the pilot did when he first saw them.
- 11th. Flt Lt John Sutherland. Master Nav Ron Dedmen. Sgt Terry Williamson.  
Nasty old windy night, and the Hull to Rotterdam Ferry, the Norwave, decides to set light to its engine room. Fortunately not yet out of the Humber Estuary, but two Fire Officers were deposited on the ship in somewhat unpleasant conditions to assess the situation. 'Norwave' was then towed to Immingham where many Firemen put the fire out
- 12th. Sqn Ldr Jeff Whitehead. Flt Lt Mark Hewitt. Master ALM Syd Hutchinson.  
The 'Renate S', a Freighter/Coaster from Norway to Rochester went missing - obviously in the gale overnight. No Distress call heard and a Nimrod sighted wreckage which was identified by Syd as being the lifeboat from the ship. No survivors found.
- 16th. Flt Lt Tom Taylor. Flt Lt Graham Clark. Master ALM Eric Ainslie.  
At 5 in the morning call to take out a pump to the 'Mary Ronn' a trawler taking on little fish but much water. Regretably she was 120 miles out - so we flew the route direct and put Eric on the trawler with the pump. Which didn't work. So he came off and we flew to a rig to refuel and standby while Boulmer sent a Sea King with their pump. The Sea King had a Transmission problem indicated and promptly landed on another Rig. Enter on scene the second Boulmer Sea King - with groundcrew who landed on the rig to repair the first, transferred the pump, and then it was taken to the Mary Ronn. She was last heard of pumping madly and making for Grimsby under tow. Rumour has it that she made it in a couple of days as we have got our useless pump back. ENTER NEW TYPEWRITER (OF NORWEGIAN MANUFACTURE!)
- 25th. Sqn Ldr Jeff Whitehead. Flt Lt. Adrian Rule. Sgt. Terry Williamson.  
Lunchtime call on a quiet Sunday to a Fisherman who had been swept off the rocks at Filey Brigg and was struggling in the water. Originally there were two in the water - unfortunately by the time we arrived the ILB had pulled one out, later to be declared dead on arrival at Scarborough Hospital, while the other had struggled ashore.
- 27th. Sqn Ldr Jeff Whitehead. Flt Lt Adrian Rule. Master ALM Eriv Ainslie. (NORWEGIAN EXCHANGE CHEN)  
Very late in the evening on a misty night, just after a night Navex when a Tornado crashes close to Sandringham - the Navigator is picked up by Coltishall while the pilot is still missing. After an early morning search by both Coltishall and us, the pilot is eventually found with the crashed aircraft - a total electrical failure caused the accident.

September 1983 (contd)

27th. Flt Lt John Dean. Flt Lt Mark Hewitt. Flt Lt Brown. Master AIM Dave Allen.  
Chivenor pilot, an extra nav with a chap from Valley, both on detachment to help  
out, and assisting in the Tornado search.

28th. Flt Lt John Sutherland Flt Lt Graham Clark Sgt Terry Williamson.  
Search for an escaped prisoner from Selby prison nothing found, but it transpires some  
weeks later that it is Arthur Hutchinson, who meantime murders three in Sheffield -  
pity we couldn't find him when he originally escaped.

# Mystery of red flare off Hornsea

NORTH Humberside rescue services were today trying to solve the riddle of a mysterious firing of two red parachute flares off Hornsea late last night.

When the flares were seen Bridlington and Humber lifeboats were both launched and the Trinity House boat, Siren, joined in.

But despite a five-hour search in difficult conditions, the lifeboat returned to base and, at daylight, an RAF helicopter from Leconfield took over.

But despite sweeping the area for 3½ hours, there was still no sign of any boat in trouble or any wreckage and it, too, returned to base.

This morning, coastguards along the North Humberside coast made a search of the beaches between Withernsea and Flamborough Head to see if this would throw any light on the mystery.

Spurn coastguards said: "The flares were seen by Members of the public and confirmed by coastguards at Hornsea.

"They were well-confirmed sightings, yet nothing was found. We are now starting to make extensive inquiries, to see if any boat is missing or overdue."

Bridlington lifeboatman Brian Cundall said: "I saw the flares myself in the direction of Hornsea. Something must have sent them up."

## FIRST TIME

Acting Coxswain Tony Ayre, who was in charge of the Bridlington lifeboat for the first time, saw the lifeboat safely back into the boathouse at 5.30 am, and then went straight to work in his pork butchers shop.

3 SEP 83

S/L JEFF WHITEHEAD

F/L MARK HEWITT

SGT TERRY WILLIAMSON



# Air training that really paid off

HULL DAILY  
MAIL  
12 SEP 83

RECENT training with RAF helicopter crews paid off sooner than expected for two senior North Bank fire officers, who were airlifted to the stricken Norwave within minutes of the call being received at fire headquarters in Worship Street, Hull.

In a carbon-copy of exercises they had performed in the past six weeks, divisional officers Frank Clarkson and Colin McNicol were rushed by car to Anlaby Road rugby ground where they were plucked into the air by an RAF helicopter from Leconfield.

Only 20 minutes later, they were suspended on a wire over the blazing ship with the winch — their only lifeline — hampered by high winds and smoke from the fire.

Said Mr McNicol (40), of East Hull: "I was apprehensive to say the least.

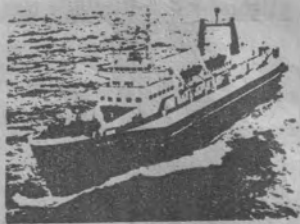
"But we had been training with just such an incident in mind, although we never expected it would pay off so quickly.

"It was blowing a gale and there was a lot of smoke, but the RAF lads dropped us right on the nail. They were superb."

The two firemen were winched aboard to assess the danger, and report back to headquarters, so that land-based firefighters could be deployed efficiently.

## 'FANTASTIC'

"The ship's crew had done a fantastic job. They had battened down the hatches and pumped carbon dioxide into the engine-room to contain the fire.



"And more importantly, they had kept the passengers calm," said Mr McNicol.

The man responsible for keeping a steady hand on the controls while the two firemen were lowered on to the deck was 27-year-old pilot, Flt. Lt. John Sutherland.

He said: "Luckily, our training with the fire brigade came to fruition.

"There is always a danger where there is turbulence of giving the man on the end of the wire a heavy landing or bashing him into something.

"But there were no problems although the smoke made us cough a bit."

During the pitch-black operation, Flt. Lt. Sutherland was assisted by Master Navigator Ron Dedman and winchman, Sgt. Terry Wilson.

## THE NORWAVE DRAMA



## VIP grizzly bear escapes fire drama

A VIP passenger was on board the Norwave only hours before its journey to Zeebrugge.

Hercules, the 72 stone grizzly bear, star of TV commercials, was returning to Britain from Hollywood where he had been filming the latest James Bond movie Octopussy.

The last leg of his journey was from Zeebrugge to Hull on the North Sea Ferry before going into six months quarantine in Edinburgh Zoo.

## "NORWAVE"

FLT LT	JOHN	SUTHERLAND
M. NAV	RON	DEDMAN
SGT	TERRY	WILLIAMSON

11 SEP 83

5 SEP 83  
PAUL LONGDEN  
RON DEDMEN & DAVE ALLEN

## Missing trawler mystery solved

WORKERS at New Holland Pier today raised the alarm when they thought a trawler had sunk in gale force winds.

But the trawler, the 60ft. inshore vessel Maaik, had moved down river and taken refuge in Grimsby Fish Docks after leaving a dinghy at a mooring bouy near the pier.

The inflatable dinghy was seen capsized and partially submerged, and people on the scene early today feared the trawler had sunk.

The men raised the alarm and a helicopter from 22 Search and Rescue Squadron, RAF Leconfield, was sent to the scene.

The mystery was quickly solved after the helicopter's winchman Master Air Lead Master Dave Allen had spoken to the workers and made other inquiries, but there was no sign of the dighy.

## Mystery of red flare off Hornsea

NORTH Humberside rescue services were today trying to solve the riddle of a mysterious firing of two red parachute flares off Hornsea late last night.

When the flares were seen Bridlington and Humber lifeboats were both launched and the Trinity House boat, Siren, joined in.

But despite a five-hour search in difficult conditions, the lifeboat returned to base and, at daylight, an RAF helicopter from Leconfield took over.

But despite sweeping the area for 3½ hours, there was still no sign of any boat in trouble or any wreckage and it, too, returned to base.

This morning, coastguards along the North Humberside coast made a search of the beaches between Withernsea and Flamborough Head to see if this would throw any light on the mystery.

Spurn coastguards said: "The flares were seen by Members of the public and confirmed by coastguards at Hornsea.

"They were well-confirmed sightings, yet nothing was found. We are now starting to make extensive inquiries, to see if any boat is missing or overdue."

JEFF WHITEHEAD

MARK HEMTT  
DAVE ALLEN

3 SEP 83

JEFF WHITEHEAD  
RON DEDMEN  
DAVE ALLEN

## Gales cause power chaos

Officials arrived at the North Marine Road ground where the festival and Asda Cricket Challenge competition is on, to find the twisted covers had made deep holes in the pitch. These had to be hastily repaired.

A tent inside the ground took off and finished up in The Cricketers public house car park on the other side of the road.

An RAF helicopter from Leconfield rescued a surfboard sailor, Stephen Hodgkin, of Pocklington, blown off his surfboard off Ulrome, South of Bridlington and trying to swim ashore.

An articulated lorry was blown over on the A1 at Boroughbridge, but no-one was injured.

Selby police reported today the only calls they received involved branches blown from trees, which were removed by officers.

A motorcyclist sustained slight injuries when he fell from his machine in the high winds at Newthorpe, near Sherburn-in-Elmet.

At Thorpe Willoughby, a garden wall blew down and at Carlton, on the bridge carrying the A1041 Selby to Snaith road over the Aire, scaffolding planks had to be secured after they started blowing onto the road.

A fallen tree blocked the route from Busby Stoop to Topcliffe earlier today, and roads around Thirsk had to be cleared by county council workmen.

Trees also came down on the Helmsley to Oswaldkirk road at Golden Square and across the Hovingham to Helmsley road just outside Hovingham, and on the road to Castle Howard from the A64 near the Welburn turn-off. Holidaymakers had to go via Welburn village to get on to the A64 including coaches.

Workmen were today called to remove two trees down on roads at Askham Bryan and Angram.

## Lucky to be alive . . .

A POCKLINGTON man was rescued by an RAF helicopter crew today, as he tried to swim ashore at Ulrome, near Bridlington after wind-surfing from the beach.

He is Mr Stephen Hodgkin (33), of Burnby, Pocklington who had lost his surfboard.

He was still half-a-mile from shore and was exhausted when he was picked up.

A member of the helicopter crew said: "We put him ashore on the beach. He was very lucky to be alive."

## Wind-surfer air-lifted to safety

A wind-surfer was air-lifted to safety after getting into difficulties off Ulrome on Saturday morning.

Mr Stephen Hodgkin (33), of Beck House, Burnby, became separated from his craft, and could not swim back in heavy seas.

A helicopter from RAF Leconfield was called, and he was lifted to safety — but the craft could not be retrieved.

Bridlington coastguard in charge Mr Keith Cattermole said: "He was very grateful to the helicopter and told me there was no way he could have got back to shore on his own."

Mr Hodgkin was treated at Lloyds Hospital.

3 SEP

NORWAVE (British) A342/8

Spurn Point, Sept 11 — Following received from Hull Radio: Ro-ro m ferry *Norwave* (Hull for Zeebrugge) at anchor Grimsby Road with a serious fire in the engine-room. Two tugs proceeding, also fire brigade and Spurn pilots alerted. Urgency broadcast being transmitted by Hull Radio. RAF helicopter from Leconfield proceeding to pick up two fire officers and take them to *Norwave*. — Coastguard Humber MRSC.

London, Sept 12 — Firemen today brought under control a blaze in the engine-room of the *Norwave* after she berthed at Immingham. The fire-fighters had to wait until the 55 passengers and 49 crew had been evacuated from the vessel before moving in to tackle the blaze. The fire started in the engine-room at 2200 yesterday as the *Norwave* was leaving for Zeebrugge. The vessel was in the River Humber off Grimsby. Crew members shut down the engines and sealed off the engine-room. Twelve firemen were taken to the vessel by tug, while two senior fire officers flew out by helicopter. Several tugs from Hull and Grimsby towed the *Norwave* to Immingham, where she berthed early today. A Coastguard spokesman said evacuation of the passengers and crew was slowed because the jetty at Immingham was not designed to disembark people from a vessel the size of the *Norwave*. The fire was believed to have been started by a fuel leak. — Press Association.

Immingham, Sept 12 — *Norwave*, on passage from Hull to Zeebrugge, had fire in engine-room night of Sept 11. Vessel towed to Immingham Bulk Terminal jetty and berthed 0330 today. Shore firemen extinguished fire and *Norwave* proceeded from Immingham under tow at 1200 today for Hull for examination and repairs. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Sept 12 — The *Norwave* will be docked at Hull this afternoon for a survey of the fire damage. Her passengers are being offered berths on her sistership, ro-ro m ferry *Norwind*, which will sail from Hull for Zeebrugge this evening. A spokesman for Humber Tugs Ltd whose vessel took part in the emergency, said there were difficulties in getting towlines on board because of high winds but there were no real problems in berthing the vessel. — Press Association.

1 SEP 83

JOHN SUTHERLAND

RON BEDMEN

TERRY WILLIAMSON

## Blaze drama ferry towed into port

A blazing North Sea ferry was towed back into port with more than 100 passengers and crew on board in a dramatic rescue.

Fire experts watched from a helicopter as the ferry *Norwave* was towed into the Humber side port of Immingham, with flames and smoke streaming from the engine room.

They ordered the 55 passengers and 49 crew to remain on board during the agonising six-hour drama — because it was too dangerous to evacuate

the ship at sea.

Two senior fire officers risked their lives when they were winched in gale force winds from an RAF helicopter to the ferry.

They battened down hatches and emptying tanks of special gas into the engine room to contain the blaze.

The *Norwave* was in the River Humber, off Grimsby, bound for Zeebrugge in Belgium, when leaking fuel caught fire.

It had sailed from Hull and would normally have had 250 passengers on board.

12 SEP 83

JEFF WHITEHEAD

MARK HEWITT

SID HUTCHINSON

## Search for ship is called off

Yorkshire Post Reporter

NO further searches are to be made for the German ship *Renate S* missing in the North Sea, Humber Coastguard said yesterday.

Searches by aircraft and shipping were called off yesterday following the discovery of wreckage and a lifeboat indentified as coming from the Hamburg-registered ship, which disappeared in a gale while on passage from Norway to Kent, with a cargo of bulk zinc.

A submerged lifeboat from the ship was identified by an RAF helicopter crew operating from Leconfield after it had been spotted about 30 miles east of Whitby by the crew of an RAF Nimrod.

## Seamen missing

THE four crew of a German coaster are missing after their vessel was lost in the North Sea, probably during the weekend gales.

An air and sea search was launched yesterday for the *Renate S*, which was carrying a cargo of zinc, after two empty liferafts were picked up by an oil rig support vessel, the *Esso Forth*.

A helicopter from RAF Leconfield later saw a dinghy with the vessel's name, and the Whitby lifeboat later picked up a door from the coaster.



# Air and sea search is called off

# NO HOPE FOR LOST SAILORS

**AN AIR and sea rescue operation was abandoned today after four seamen were feared drowned off Whitby.**

A lone German aircraft is expected to scour the area 40 miles south-east of Whitby for survivors from the Renate S which is thought to have sunk in 25 foot seas.

A day-long search by Whitby lifeboat and Nim-

rod aircraft was finally halted after midnight and hopes are now fading for the four German crewmen who were en route for Odda in Norway

A spokesman for Tees Coastguard said it is thought the 57 metre vessel foundered in gale force ten conditions

A search was mounted following the discovery of lifeboats and lifebelts by the 76,000-ton oil tanker, The Esso Forth, yesterday.

The tanker was on its way to the Tees to load a cargo of crude oil when a

deflated liferaft was spotted.

Captain David Ling ordered the engines to be put on standby as he battled to turn his ship around in the heavy swell.

A second raft was spotted with a canopy and the ship was eased alongside while the crew tried to grab it.

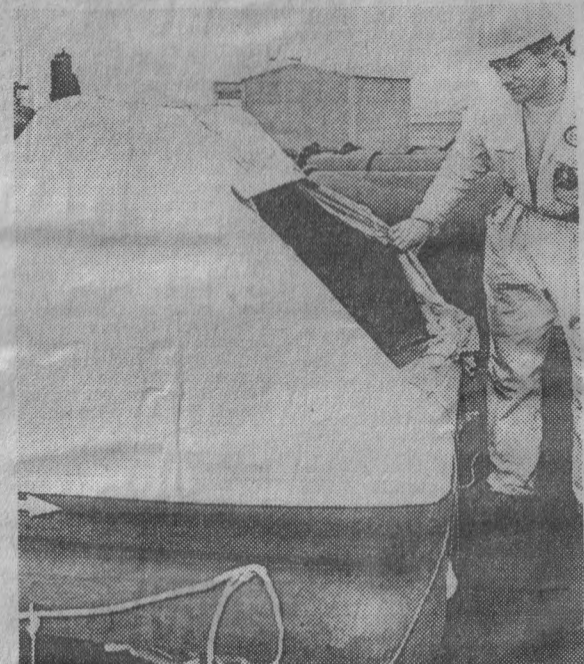
The rafts are now on the deck of the tanker which is berthed on the Tees awaiting inspection by the Receiver of Wrecks.

Speaking from the bridge, Captain Ling said: "The conditions out there were appalling. This ship

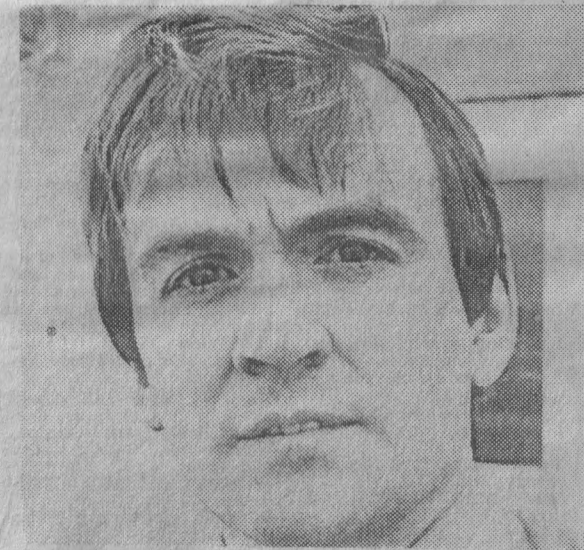
was rolling about 25 degrees in the swell so I wouldn't give much for anyone's chances in the water.

A nine-hour search of the area by Whitby lifeboat crew, working closely with an RAF Nimrod flying overhead, failed to turn up any survivors.

They found only evidence that the 500-ton cargo vessel had been wrecked. One of its lifeboats was awash, stray timbers littered the sea and floating in the area was a door from the wheelhouse, still locked and in its frame.



THIRD MATE of the Esso Forth, Doug Lawson, today inspecting one of the life-rafts found empty in the North Sea.



Captain of the Esso Forth, David Ling — "I wouldn't give much for their chances."

12 Sep 83

12 SEP 83

# Missing coaster: Search given up

A SEA and air search for a German coaster missing in the N. Sea was called off today as hopes of finding survivors faded.

No trace of the four man crew has been found despite repeated sweeps of an area about 30 miles off Whitby where wreckage from the Renate S was spotted yesterday.

Humber coastguards officially abandoned the search this morning after co-ordinating rescue services for almost 24 hours.

The alert was raised early yesterday after an oil rig supply vessel spotted two liferafts from the Renate S, which was carrying zinc from Norway to Rochester, Kent.

The German Rescue Centre at Bremen con-

sidered joining the search overnight, but the move was ruled out as the likelihood of finding survivors receded.

A Wessex helicopter from RAF Leconfield spotted a lifeboat from the 500 ton vessel partially submerged in rough seas off Whitby. There was no sign of life on board.

An RAF Nimrod from Kinloss, Scotland, also spotted an orange life raft and a yellow life jacket.

At the height of the search, two RAF Nimrods and the Leconfield helicopter flew in winds gusting up to 40 knots.

As dusk fell last night, the Whitby life-boat joined the search and recovered the life-boat spotted by the helicopter.

One Nimrod was still flying after dark, making a radar search of the sea area where the ship is believed to have gone down.

A coastguard spokesman said the search had covered 2,610 square miles. There was now little hope of finding the crew alive.

The coaster Mairi Everard, which ditched part of its timber cargo to right a severe list during weekend storms, was expected in Hull today to have the damage inspected.

She was escorted into Grimsby yesterday by the Humber life-boat.

Conditions have improved off the North Humberside coast and only two of the nine merchant vessels which sheltered from the northerly gale were still in Bridlington Bay this morning.

It was expected they would depart during the day.

S/LDR JEFF WHITEHEAD  
F/LT MARK HEWITT  
MALM SID HUTCHINSON



## Lifeboat drama as Yorks angler is swept to his death

# Sea hero braves waves— but rescue bid in vain

A Yorkshire lifeboatman could be in line for a bravery award after plunging into 11ft. waves off the east coast this weekend in a vain bid to save an angler.

Mr. Colin Haddington dived into the sea off Filey Brigg in an attempt to keep angler Mr. John Blackburn, 54, afloat.

But when Mr. Blackburn was pulled on board the inshore lifeboat he was already dead. Attempts to revive him with the kiss of life failed.

Mr. Blackburn, of Foljambe Street, Wakefield, had been on a fishing trip yesterday with a neighbour, Mr. David Rhodes, 27, of the same street.

The head of Scarborough police, Supt. Danny Bailey, said their lines became entangled with another line and they had gone to the edge of the Brigg to unravel it when they were both washed into the sea by a freak wave.

Mr. Rhodes managed to scramble to safety but Mr. Blackburn was swept out to sea. Mr. Rhodes was taken to Scarborough Hospital suffering from shock and exposure.

An RAF rescue helicopter airlifted Mr. Blackburn to the hospital, where he was found to be dead.

### WORST

Filey coastguards said conditions on the Brigg were among the worst they had seen for a long time.

Mr. Rhodes, a sales representative with Yorkshire Post Newspapers, has a wife, Tina, and a daughter, Dawn, four.

● Bridlington coastguard auxiliary boat brought ashore a surfboard rider caught in a stiff Northerly breeze off the resort's south beach.



Mr. David Rhodes

25 Sep 83

SON LDR JEFF WHITEHEAD

FLY LT ADRIAN RULE

SGT TERRY WILLIAMSON

13423

# Killer tide traps day trip angler

A FISHING trip to the East coast ended in tragedy yesterday when a middle-aged angler was washed out to sea by freak waves.

John Blackburn, 54, tried saving himself by swimming back to the shore, but was later seen floating face-down in the water.

Rescue services were immediately alerted and his body was later recovered half a mile out by an RAF helicopter.

Mr Blackburn had gone to Filey Brigg for the day with two friends and a 12-year-old boy — all from Wakefield.

They decided to cast their lines from a spot known as Green Rock, on the northern side of the town. To get there, they climbed down a steep 200-foot cliff on iron ladders.

## Struggle

Later, Mr Blackburn's line became tangled with that of another angler and he went into the sea to free it.

One of his companions, 27-year-old David Rhodes, followed him to help out when without warning three large waves hit them in succession and both were swept away.

Mr Rhodes managed to struggle back to the rocks.

A police spokesman said weather at the time was free of wind and the sea was moderate, but with a heavy North-Easterly swell.

Mr Blackburn's body was flown back to Scarborough Hospital. The Coroner has been informed and an inquest is expected to open shortly.

25 Sep 83.

## RAF JOIN HUNT FOR PRISONER

<sup>A34218</sup>  
An RAF helicopter joined armed police yesterday in the hunt for a prisoner who escaped from Selby Magistrates' Court, North Yorkshire, before he was to appear for committal on a serious charge.

Arthur Hutchinson (42), of Easington, County Durham, was described as dangerous and violent, and police said he could be armed.

## Hostages fear as prisoner slips net

<sup>A34218</sup>  
ARMED police and an RAF helicopter were last night hunting an escaped prisoner described as "dangerous and violent."

North Yorkshire police were asking people in the Selby area to watch for keep-fit fanatic Arthur Hutchinson but not to approach him.

Hutchinson, 42, of Easington, Durham, escaped from Selby magistrates' court before he was to appear for committal to Crown Court on a serious charge.

Supt Michael Bennison, leading the hunt, said "We are mindful of the fact he may have taken hostages."

## RAF JOIN HUNT FOR PRISONER

<sup>A34218</sup>  
An RAF helicopter joined armed police yesterday in the hunt for a prisoner who escaped from Selby Magistrates' Court, North Yorkshire, before he was to appear for committal on a serious charge.

Arthur Hutchinson (42), of Easington, County Durham, was described as dangerous and violent, and police said he could be armed.

28 SEP 83

JOHN SUTHERLAND  
GRAHAM CLARK  
TERRY WILLIAMSON

## Prisoner alert

<sup>A34218</sup>  
Armed police and an RAF helicopter were yesterday taking part in the hunt for an escaped prisoner described by officers as "dangerous and violent".

North Yorkshire police were asking people in the Selby area to watch for Arthur Hutchinson but not to approach him.

<sup>A34218</sup>  
**ON THE RUN:** Armed police and R.A.F. helicopter hunting escaped prisoner described by officers as "dangerous and violent". North Yorkshire police asking people in Selby area to watch for Arthur Hutchinson, 42, but not to approach him.

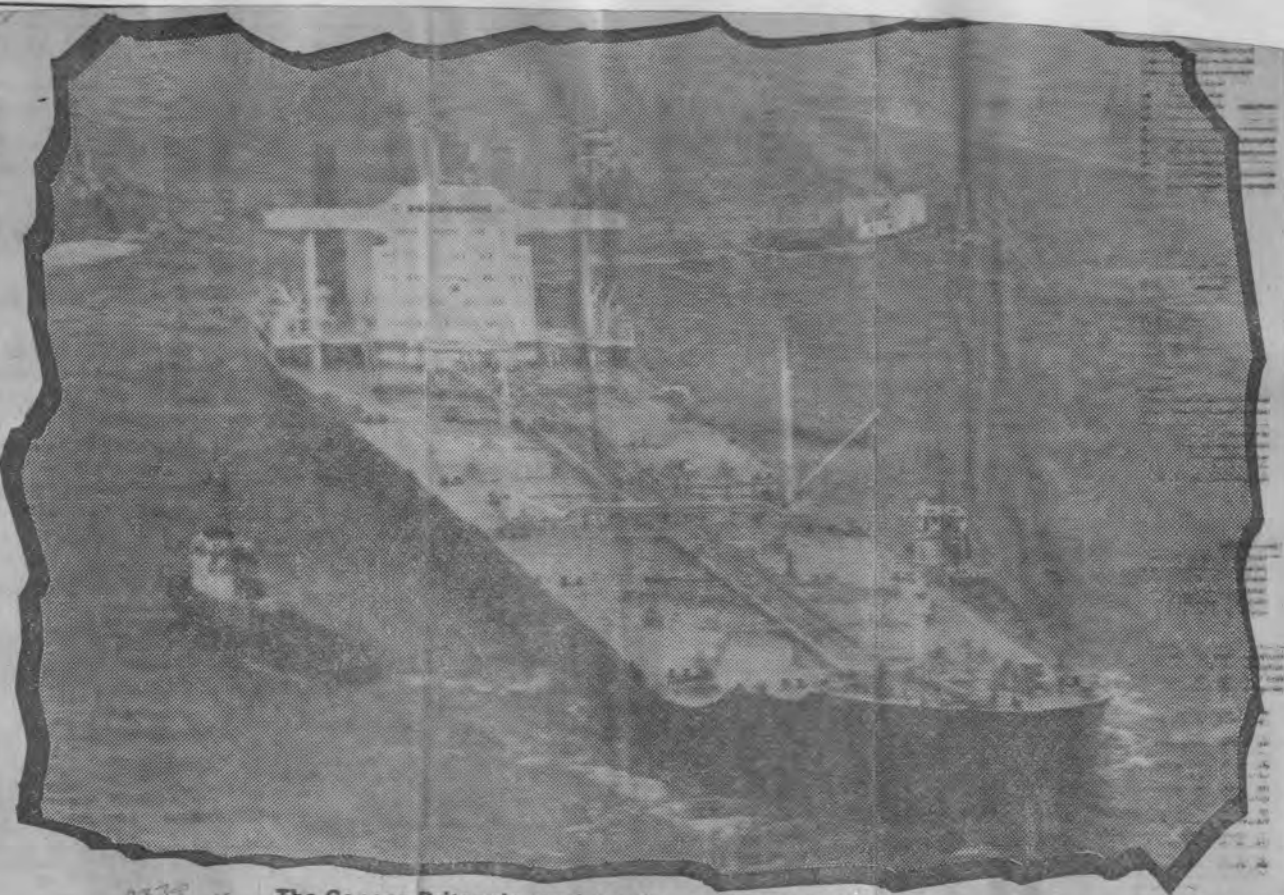
## PRISONER HUNTED

<sup>A34218</sup>  
Armed police and RAF helicopter today taking part in hunt for escaped prisoner described as "dangerous and violent". North Yorkshire police were asking people in Selby area to watch for Arthur Hutchinson but not to approach him. Hutchinson, 42, of Easington, escaped from prison officers at Selby magistrates court yesterday before he was to appear for committal to Crown Court.

## ESCAPER MAY HAVE HOSTAGES, SAY POLICE

<sup>A34218</sup>  
Armed police and RAF helicopter taking part in hunt for escaped prisoner described by officers as "dangerous and violent." North Yorkshire police were asking people in the Selby area to watch for Arthur Hutchinson but not to approach him. Supt. Michael Bennison, leading hunt, said Hutchinson could now be armed with a stolen weapon and added: "We are mindful of the fact he may have taken hostages."





**The Conoco Britannia stuck on the sandbank off Cleethorpes.**

# 400-ton spill was 'disaster'

IT'S exactly 10 years ago that Humberside had to contend with a major pollution alert. That caused widespread devastation, forced a flying visit from a Government Minister and, what is more frightening, involved a much lesser amount of oil as the current scare!

It was Sunday, June 25, 1973, when the 58,000-ton tanker Conoco Britannia arrived at the Tetney Monobuoy ready to discharge her cargo of crude oil.

Before she could be moored securely she ran out of control and came to a halt after hitting a sandbank off Tetney, lifting her head right out of the water.

Then, as she came under control, she settled on her anchor which punctured her hull and 400 tons of oil gushed out into the estuary.

Oil began leaking from the tanker at 4 pm on the Sunday and the anti-pollution brigade raced into ac-

tion to try to contain the damage.

But by first light there was oil over a 25-mile stretch of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire holiday beaches. In some places it was six inches deep.

Tugs were brought in to sweep in and out of the Humber Estuary treating the spillage, and a spotter aircraft was sent up to survey the Lincolnshire and Yorkshire coastline identifying the worst-hit areas.

By the time the pollution pattern had settled down it became clear that coastal settlements of Saltfleetby, Donna Nook and Grainthorpe were the greatest sufferers.

One of the main problems facing clearing up workers using tugs, was that they could not get close enough to the shoreline to spray detergent over the thick, oily blanket.

The incident provoked great concern in the House of Commons and, in particular, the MP for Louth at the time, Mr. Geoffrey Archer, said he would press for compensation for those affected in the holiday and fishing industries.

So serious was the threatening slick at one stage that Under Secretary of State at the Department of the Environment, Mr. Eldon Griffiths was taken by helicopter from RAF Leconfield along the polluted coastline.

At its height the slick stretched for 16 miles out to sea.

Following his first-hand look at the spillage Mr. Griffiths flew to RAF Manby where he met representatives from Lindsey County Council, Louth RDC and Cleethorpes Borough Council, the three authorities left with the task of clearing up the mess.

The reason for the accident which led to the pollution later emerged as being a complete power blackout on board the Conoco Britannia, which resulted in a loss of steering and the ships' compass.

Later Hull MP Mr. John Prescott asked a Government inquiry to declare as unsafe all tankers which had only one source of electrical power to drive such vital equipment as steering and compass.

In recent years there had

been a greater acceptance of the risks involved in berthing supertankers in the Humber Estuary.

Exactly a year ago there was a massive anti-pollution exercise on Cleethorpes beach after which the then Mayor of Cleethorpes, Councillor Harry Hall, said he hoped the facilities would never have to be used!

One of the most vociferous calls for a tightening up of anti-pollution measures came from Mr. Robbie Blair in 1978 as the Conservative Party's Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Grimsby.

Mr. Blair's activity on the question of pollution in the estuary intensified following the Amoco Cadiz disaster off the French coast.

He took his case to the then Shadow Minister for Trade and Industry, Mr. John Nott.

Potential disasters in the River Humber have long been talked about and, for many of those who have put their case over the years, yesterday's incident cannot have come as a complete surprise.

**Andrew McKinnon**

GORDON DAVIES RETIRES - SEP 83



KEV DONNELLY - REAL BUBBLY - GORDON DAVIES

GORDONS' LAST SWING !!







Sep 83

GORDON DAVIES



RETIREES !



# GORDONS FINAL FLING

