



SARA

Beachley and Newport

Autumn 2016



Lifeboats; Land Search; Cliff, Mud, Mountain, Swift Water and Flood Rescue

Operational Activities

In the last few weeks the teams have supported Gwent Police on river search operations in the Ebbw Area and the Monmouth Area. We also responded to an urgent mud rescue situation in Newport, this was resolved by the Fire & Rescue Service. SARA 1 'The Jim Hewitt' rescued a small boat with engine difficulties in the lower Wye, recovering it and its crew safely back to Beachley.

The SARA Flood Rescue teams were stood by in November, as part of the DEFRA contingency plan in which they were made available to respond to flood emergencies nationwide in the heavy rain. So far this season they have not been called upon.

In October, the Beachley Land Search Team supported a large operation with Gloucestershire Police, working with teams from Tewkesbury and Sharpness to search a significant area to the south of Gloucester. This was followed recently by another extended search in the Forest of Dean, during which the missing person was found safe and well.



As always there have been a number of callouts which resulted in 'nothing found', including a callout to a suspected casualty in the Severn mud and to search for a missing boat in the Usk.

Launch of SARA 14 'The Maureen Easton'

Newport now has its own official Lifeboat! On Oct 22nd SARA dedicated and formally launched the new lifeboat. SARA Lifeboat 14 'The Maureen Easton' is now based at SARA's Newport operations base and is on call to HM Coastguard and the Police 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The dedication was conducted by the Mayor of Newport Cllr David Attwell, who sacrificed the traditional bottle of champagne, thoroughly spraying the new boat! In a more sombre moment, the Mayor's Chaplain blessed a Coastguard Bible, which will be carried about the boat, and everyone sang the hymn 'For those in Peril on the Sea.'

This new boat was made possible through a generous bequest from the estate of the late Ms Maureen Easton, who lived in the West Midlands and holidayed in our area. In a moving dedication ceremony at the Riverfront Theatre in Newport, Maureen's two sisters and her partner all paid moving tributes to her life, her love of the sea and her strong sense of public service. SARA Commander Area West, Mervyn Fleming, led the ceremony which was also attended by senior representatives from the Police and UK Coastguard, and Delta Power Group which constructed the boat.



SARA 14 'The Maureen Easton' is christened by the Mayor and Maureen's sisters

Maureen's sister Pauline said "Maureen was an amazing lady – a professional scientist, magistrate, school governor, ballroom dancer and a dedicated volunteer in the field of education. Although born in the West Midlands, she loved the sea. She was determined to support a local organisation which saved lives at sea. She was aware of the important role played by SARA as an independent lifeboat organisation assisting people affected by flooding."

Following the ceremony, the Newport Coxswain Rich Dainty led a demonstration of the new boat together with the Newport Flood Boat, SARA Rescue 19

SARA Lifeboat 14 'The Maureen Easton' has a max speed of 30 knots and carries a crew of 2 or 3. It has a number of features specifically incorporated into the design to meet the needs of the River Usk area, for example the spine of the hull is Kevlar-reinforced so it is very durable for beaching (e.g. during mud rescues).

It has a small 'A' frame at the stern to increase the height of the VHF radio antennas, to improve radio range at times of low water, when the Usk and other local rivers run in deep trenches, and the antennas can be lowered to pass under low bridges at high tide. It has the latest electronics built-in, and a combined loudhailer and directional microphone, to help with locating casualties.



The SARA Team with Maureen's Family at the Dedication Ceremony



Demonstrating the new Lifeboat on the River Usk

Boat Crew Training

Through the autumn a number of crew have been training hard to become operational boat crew. The SARA coxswains have taught them a number of critical skills, such as navigating on the river, how to rig a tow to a casualty boat in various configurations, and recovering a casualty into the boat.



There have also been classroom sessions, teaching how to recognise different types of vessels by day and night, and to qualify as Maritime VHF Radio Operators. The trainees will soon be part of the operational team, able to respond to emergencies in all conditions.

Mountain Rescue

The ability to navigate in the mountains is also a vital skill for the Land Search and Mountain Rescue Team. In a recent exercise they spent a Sunday morning on the Llangattock Plateau, practicing their map and compass skills



This was followed by a scenario exercise in which a casualty was evacuated down steep ground. With a heavy stretcher it is important that there is no risk of it slipping out of control if someone misses their footing, so the stretcher is secured at all times - on a long downhill path that takes some practice to perfect!

New Trainees

November also saw the arrival of a new intake of trainee crew for both our Beachley and Newport stations. We wish them good luck as they begin their training programmes leading them towards becoming operational crew for our Mountain Rescue, Lifeboat and Swift Water response teams.



New Arrival

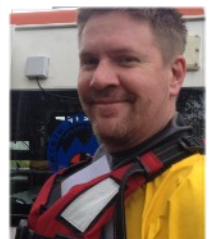
Our congratulations went to SARA crewman Ed Davy, and his wife Natasha, on the birth of their baby William John in October, at 5lb14oz.

Everyone is doing well, though the parents are tired! William has been placed on the waiting list for the SARA Induction Course in 2034.



Congratulations

Our congratulations also go to crew members Zahara Ally and Anthony Perrett, who have become engaged to each other





Please Join Us!

Do you have free time? There's nothing more rewarding than investing your free time to save lives. If you think you have what it takes, why not contact us to enquire about joining our team?

We are also looking for 'non-operational' support staff to join the team. If you have technical, financial, fundraising, marketing or other skills relevant to a large organisation, we'd love to hear from you. Please email us via beachley.fundraiser@sara-rescue.org.uk for more information.

Donate @ Just Giving

As a charity SARA depends on donations.

To donate to SARA, please visit:
www.justgiving.com/sara-rescue/Donate

Don't forget to tick the 'Gift Aid' box so that we can claim an additional 25% of your gift back from the tax-man

Thanks to our Donors

Our collecting tins continue to bring in a steady flow of necessary funding toward our operational costs.

Whilst "every penny counts" is an often used and familiar quotation, we are acutely aware that SARA Beachley's annual operational overheads exceed £40,000.

We are very grateful to all who have contributed toward our vital work

Paxman at SARA

And finally... In September SARA hosted a visit from journalist Jeremy Paxman and a camera team. He was taken out in SARA Lifeboat 1 to film part of a documentary about British rivers.

Mr Paxman was very interested in the work of the station, asking about the boat maintenance, the relative numbers of female crew and other matters. It has not yet been announced when the series will be screened



SARA Search Controller Andy Barley, working with a Police Search Advisor (PolSA) on a recent search operation. They are working inside the Beachley mobile Incident Support Unit (ISU).



SARA (Severn Area Rescue Association) is a U.K. Registered Charity No: 505504
Registered Address: The Lifeboat & Rescue Station, Beachley Road, Chepstow NP16 7HH