



THE
FISHERMEN'S
MISSION

Summer 2017

network

The Newsletter of The Fishermen's Mission

Caring for fishermen and their families

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Providing a lifeline of welfare and support to fishermen and their families

More than just a shipmate



Gill at the quay

How would you describe a typical fisherman?

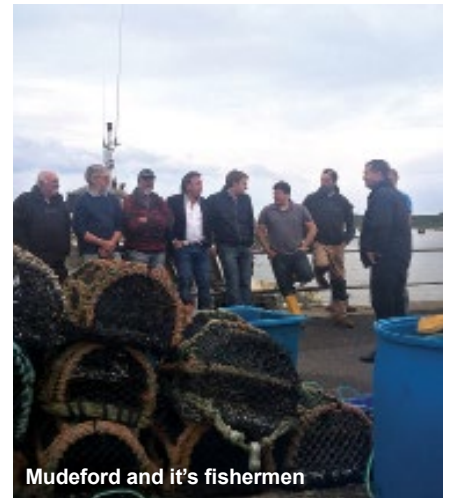
If you ever visited Mudeford Quay in Dorset and came across Mark Gillard you would probably say he was a 'typical fisherman.' For a start, he was known as 'Gill' and was a larger than life character. Working the boats for over 10 years he was well liked by all in this close-knit fishing community. Gill was every inch what you might call a 'proper' fisherman.

But then consider Gill's Skipper, Richard Stride. Here you will find a softly spoken man. An experienced and highly respected fisherman, admired by his colleagues at the

harbour. In many ways Richard and Gill were chalk and cheese but in 2009 they formed the crew of the FV Carlee and developed a close friendship. As Richard says

"Spending ten to twelve hours a day together at sea on a small boat, living in each other's pockets, means you have to get along."

But even that close bond could not have foreseen the tragedy that was to shatter this small fishing fraternity. On a bleak January morning this year, Gill took his own life. Gill was suffering with anxiety and depression.



Mudeford and it's fishermen

I was also stunned but hurried to the port to give any comfort I could."

Nick visited Gill's devastated Mum and Stepdad. As well as discussing the funeral and helping with the cost Nick recalls the privilege of just sitting with Gills loved one's,

"We shared memories and stories, looked at photos and celebrated Gill's life."

The chapel for Gill's funeral was filled to overflowing, reflecting just how loved this 'proper' fisherman was.

For Gill's friend and Skipper, Richard, the shock of Gill's death remains, "It's hard, very hard, fishing on my own but I carry on. I'm sure that's what Gill would expect me to do"

There are no 'typical' fishermen. Like all of us they can suffer the storms of life. Please pray for our fishermen and our Port Superintendents as they care for them.

"It's hard, very hard, fishing on my own but I carry on. I'm sure that's what Gill would expect me to do"

He worried about how to exist on the money from a poor summer, and feared the prospect of the winter months when fishing is very sparse. Like many fishermen it was a struggle just to exist.

Fishermen's Mission Superintendent for the South Coast of England Nick O'Neill speaks movingly of the morning the news broke,

"Suddenly my phone was buzzing with messages from Mudeford fishermen, all desperately struggling to cope with Gill's death.



Mudeford harbour



On board with Gill (left) and Richard (right)

It's a beautiful late spring Sunday morning. The waters of the Wash above Kings Lynn are a glassy calm. Lowestoft fisherman Geoffrey Melton is doing what he does best. Aboard the Serene Dawn, brown shrimps are tumbling into the nets and all is well.

Against **all odds**

Geoffrey hears an alarm sounding in the engine room and he goes down below to investigate. In an instant, everything changes. A stumble, a trip and a snagged oilskin results in Geoffrey's leg being shot into the propeller shaft. The consequence is a catastrophic injury, searing pain and with no crewmate to help, a battle for survival.

Somehow Geoffrey manages to make an emergency call to the Coastguard and the Hunstanton Lifeboat arrives on the scene. Moments later a Search and Rescue helicopter comes overhead and Geoffrey is airlifted to hospital, his life in the balance.

Fast forward 18 months and 11 operations later and incredibly 54-year-old Geoffrey Melton is taking on the brown shrimps once again. The Serene Dawn is back out to sea with Geoffrey, now sporting a prosthetic leg, back at the helm.

Fishermen's Mission Senior Superintendent at Lowestoft, Tim Jenkins comments,

"Fishermen really are unique characters, often battling against the odds. Geoffrey is a prime example of that. Even a serious, life changing injury could not prevent him going back to sea."

Tim speaks of how the Fishermen's Mission helped in Geoffrey's case.

"Our emergency response meant that we were able to see Geoffrey and his family within hours of the accident happening. We gave them the reassurance they needed that they were not alone in this shattering crisis."

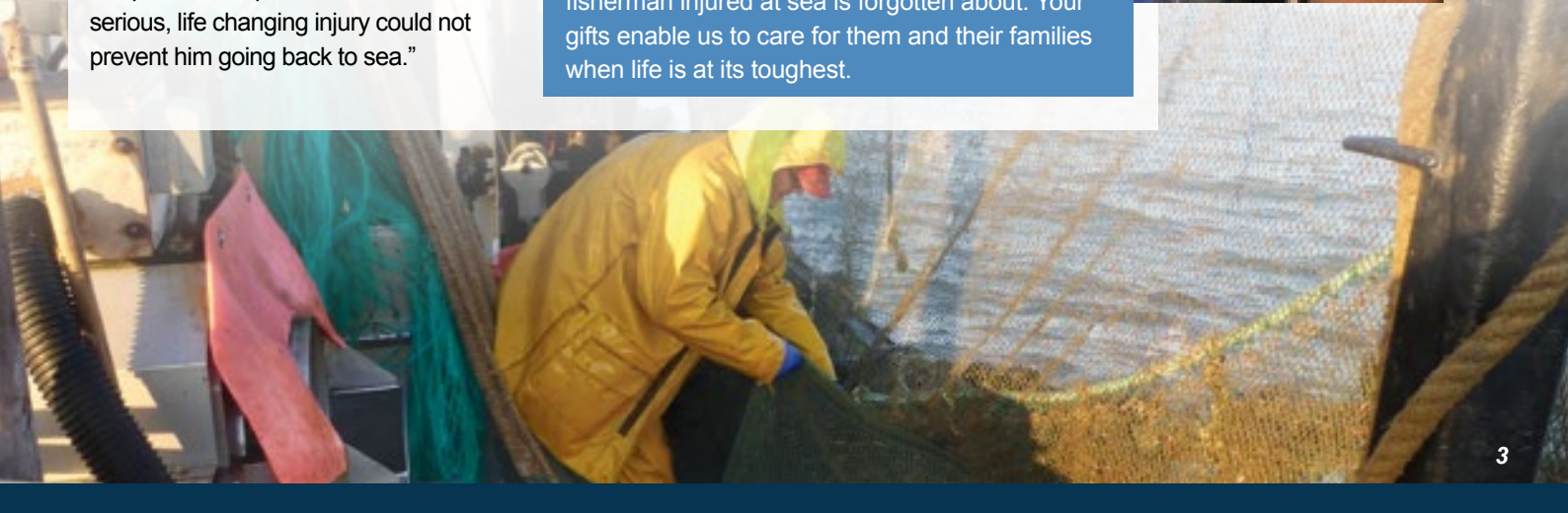
In the days that followed Tim co-ordinated an industry wide financial response, helped with budgeting and accessed long term financial help. Tim also supported the family practically with Geoffrey being many miles from home in hospital for long periods of time. Tim continues.

"Most importantly of all we were there to help the family emotionally with the trauma that naturally follows such an accident."

Whenever a fisherman is hurt at sea the Fishermen's Mission is there to help. Thank you that your support means that not one UK fisherman injured at sea is forgotten about. Your gifts enable us to care for them and their families when life is at its toughest.



Images courtesy of Mike Warner. Please visit <https://eastcoastvoice.com/2017/01/29/true-grit/> for more on this story.



Around the Ports

A friend you can trust

“Describe a typical day? That’s a tough question!”

The words of Fishermen’s Mission Clyde Superintendent Karen Burston. For our Port Staff around the coast, each day brings its own challenges delivering an expanding outreach programme. No two days are ever the same.

Karen’s patch on the west coast of Scotland extends from Greenock in the north to Girvan in the south. Her day starts with a visit to a Troon fisherman. Skipper Tom is in his mid-forties and struggles with early onset dementia and mobility problems. Unlike his children, who are following in dad’s footsteps as fishermen, Tom’s days at sea are over. This family have a hard road ahead of them. Karen brings some cheer with a donation of clothes from a supporter in Prestwick. Moving down the spectacular Ayrshire coastline Karen arrives at Girvan, home to a few trawlers and creel

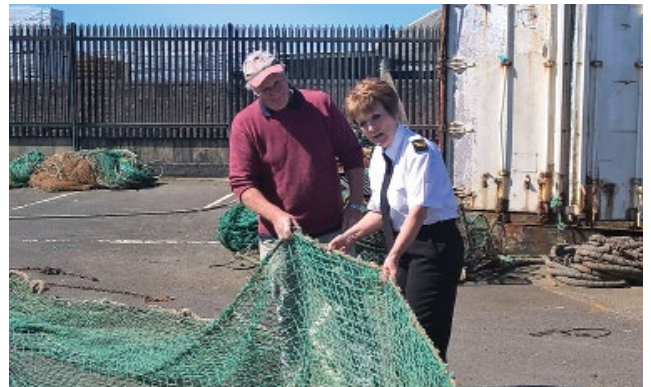
boats. It also boasts a busy boatyard with vessels from further afield arriving for repairs. Karen is warmly welcomed by local and visiting fishermen. They chat about life on and off the boats, fishing and family. Next a call to John who is the chandler in Girvan and Tarbert. John is a great source of local news and acts as Karen’s ‘eyes and ears’ for any local fishermen in need.

More stops are made along the coast catching up with pastoral calls, boat visits and fundraising tasks. Today that includes helping a fishing family dealing with debt, comforting a lonely fisherman’s widow, and supporting a fishing crew struggling with poor catches. To each one Karen is a friend they can trust, bringing practical care and words of reassurance.

Karen’s final call is made at picturesque Dunure whose castle overlooks the natural



Girvan Skippers Simon Jack & Sean McIlwraith

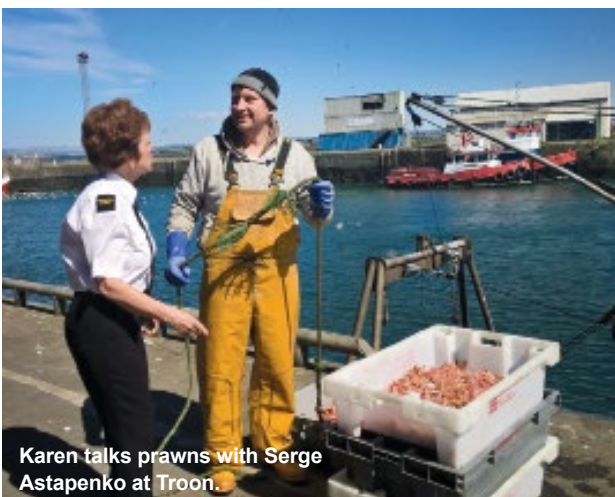


Karen with retired Troon Skipper and chief net mender Edgar Agnew

harbour. This small fishing port is home to a handful of creel boats. Here Karen has a full welfare caseload of mainly retired fishing folk. Today Karen visits an elderly lady in the village. Joan’s fisherman son was lost at sea off the coast of Dunure some years ago. His body has never been found. Joan struggles with Parkinson’s Disease and a simple chat over a cuppa with Karen makes all the difference to her week.

Karen speaks for the whole Fishermen’s Mission family in saying,

“Fishing folk like Tom and Joan can only receive our help because of your generous support. Thank you for enabling us to care for those enduring a tough life.”



Karen talks prawns with Serge Astapenko at Troon.

Mussel-man **Bill!**

10,000 tonnes of sustainable mussels every year!

There is a thriving shellfish industry dotted around the North Wales coastline. Ports and harbours of all shapes and sizes berth working fishing vessels and they are all looked after by Bill Rogerson, Fishermen's Mission Superintendent for North Wales.

Holyhead based Bill outlines his outreach area,

"From Queensferry in the North to Aberystwyth in the South you will find me dealing with crews from small local mussel boats to large visiting trawlers."

Bill also cares for fishermen's widows and the retired fishing community. As Bill points out, providing that care is not always straightforward,

"It can be quite tricky to engage with our North Wales fishing folk. Many are very private people and wouldn't naturally ask for help. We know there are needs in the community and life can be a struggle. By gently building trust we can get alongside people and make changes for good in their lives. When that happens it's always appreciated."

Like all our Port Superintendents Bill's work is a mix of welfare tasks and emergency action. At any one time Bill could be providing a new wheelchair for a disabled fisherman via social services, facilitating medical care for an injured fisherman at the Dreadnought Hospital in London or assisting with accommodation and living costs for a fisherman stranded away from home by severe winter weather. Bill comments.



Bill Rogerson

"I'm here to help practically in many different ways but most importantly in North Wales my role is to be a friendly and trustworthy face, there to be relied upon whatever the need may be."

That means Mussel-man Bill will not let anyone in need slip through his fingers,

"A few years ago we came across Julie who had recently moved to North Wales. Tragically she lost her fisherman husband overboard from a UK trawler. Julie received grants facilitated by us but after a while the grants stopped and Julie ignored

our letters and telephone calls. We persevered and finally managed to make a welfare visit. It was clear that Julie was in poor health and living in totally unsuitable accommodation. We arranged a Social worker for Julie, adapted her flat, re-accessed her grants and ensured she received her full benefits".

By going the extra mile Bill has changed Julie's life for the better. That is only made possible by your support of our work. On Julie's behalf, thank you.



Holyhead scallops packed off to market



KFE ON A MISSION

3,741 miles! That was the distance travelled in March by the UK's top friers as they imparted their knowledge to chippies across the country. Fish and chip shop range manufacturers KFE are longtime supporters of the Fishermen's Mission and they were the driving force behind 'KFE on a Mission.' Shops around the country hosted training sessions from the frying elite in return for donations to the Fishermen's Mission. The chippy road trip culminated in a charity dinner at Colemans, South Shields and to date KFE on a Mission has raised over £13,000! A huge 'Thank You' to all involved. Mission completed!



Mission completed, the KFE team

Going, Going, GONE!

The Porthleven Great Baulk Auction has proved comprehensively that you can make money from old wood! The auction was the climax of a year long project that has resulted in over £40,000 being raised for the Fishermen's Mission.

The devastating storms of February 2014 saw the harbour defences of Porthleven in Cornwall ripped apart. The shattered wooden baulks lay strewn across the sea leaving the towns fishing fleet at the mercy of the oncoming waves. A trail of devastation followed as the ferocious storm bared its teeth. Then came a story of triumph over adversity.

Those same splintered baulks were reclaimed from the sea. Local artists and

celebrities were commissioned to turn a piece of baulk into a piece of art and in March the resulting 163 items were exhibited and auctioned. 500 people packed into a marquee overlooking the harbour

and were joined by many more online. Auctioneer David Lay banged his gavel and the bidding for a slice of historic local art began.

Fishermen's Mission Fundraising Manager for the south west, Julian Waring comments, "It was an incredible day and to achieve £40,315 is just amazing. It also shows the quality of the artwork and the generosity of all involved. Thank you to everyone who painted, sculpted, volunteered and splashed out in

the auction. The sum raised will do so much for our fishermen, their families and retired fishermen."

The Porthleven Great Baulk Auction story has been turned into a DVD which also includes an image of each piece of art produced. These are available online at ebay (search: Porthleven baulk art auction) where you can also purchase three limited edition poster prints displaying some of the transformed baulks. All proceeds go to the Fishermen's Mission.



PORTHLEVEN BAULK AUCTION 2017 LIMITED EDITION POSTER COLLECTION 2 OF 3



Fabulous Fundraisers!

The Fishermen's Mission receive no Lottery or Government funding. Every gift we receive is vital and every one of our donors is deeply appreciated. At our AGM held in April one of the highlights was the Fishermen's Mission Fundraising Awards for 2016.

FUNDRAISING VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR:

WILLIE WESTON

From his fish shop in Blakeney, Norfolk, Willie raises £2,000 a year from donations for fishing bait

FUNDRAISING TEAM OF THE YEAR:

BEN NEVIS TREK & FIRTH CYCLE TEAM

Craig Taylor, George, Erlend, David & Magnus Currie and Roy Norquay trekked and cycled to raise £5,000

FUNDRAISING EVENT OF THE YEAR:

WING WALKING VICKY

Vicky Maclachlan of Mister C's fish & chips in Selby took to the skies....for a walk!

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP AWARD:

PECKHAM RYE TABERNACLE CHURCH

Being a long way from the sea has not prevented 24 years of faithful support through prayer and giving

TWITTER FRIEND OF THE YEAR:

EMMA McKEATING

Passionate fishmonger Emma is always ready to tweet and blog in support of UK fishermen

CORPORATE CHAMPIONS:

YORKSHIRE WATER

Supplying Christmas hampers and 'hands-on' volunteer help to our work in Hull



Our award winners with David Dickens CEO Fishermen's Mission (front right)

FISH & CHIP SHOP OF THE YEAR:

HANBURY'S OF TORQUAY

21 years of support raising £21,000 from their 'Albert' counter collection box

RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR:

The nationally acclaimed Gamba in Glasgow is our top fundraising restaurant

FRIENDSHIP AWARD 2016:

JACK ILLINGSWORTH

A long career as a Superintendent still supporting the Fishermen's Mission in his 80's

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:

HARBOUR LIGHTS FALMOUTH

Restaurateurs Pete & Sue Fraser for years of amazing Fish Friday Fundraising

THE STANLEY PRITCHARD AWARD:

Sandra Porter for her unfailing loyalty and passion for the work of the Fishermen's Mission in Cornwall.



There's something fishy going on in Hull

The Fishermen's Mission in Hull are proud to be part of the Hull City of Culture 2017 celebrations with a fantastic interactive exhibition. Hear veteran fishermen recall their life at sea, learn about life in the fishing community and see many artefacts displaying the history of fishing in Hull and the work of the Fishermen's

Mission. The centerpiece is the large community fishing net made by volunteers and stuffed with over 900 knitted fish, each one remembering a trawler lost from Hull between 1835 and 1985.



Visit the exhibition at Holy Trinity Church
Hull from 1st July – 31st August 2017

Congratulations

“Be sure to fear the LORD and faithfully serve him. Think of all the wonderful things he has done for you.”

1 Samuel 12v 24.

Congratulations to Lowestoft Senior Superintendent Tim Jenkins, recipient of the Lord Lewin Award for outstanding service to the Shipwrecked Mariners’ Society for his work in East Anglia. Well done Superintendent Willie Buchan in Orkney on receiving his long service medal after completing 10 years with the Fishermen’s Mission. A motion was also passed in the Scottish Parliament congratulating Willie “the face of the Fishermen’s Mission in Orkney”.



Willie congratulated by Senior Superintendent Aubrey Jamieson from Shetland with Superintendents Roy Norquay, Orkney and Colin Mackay, Scrabster.



Tim receives his award from Fishermen’s Mission CEO David Dickens

How you can help us

Make a donation

We receive no government funding or lottery support so every single donation makes a real difference to us. You can make a donation by calling **FREEPHONE 0800 634 1020** or donate online at www.fishermensmission.org.uk or post a cheque to our address shown below. 88p of every £1 generated is spent on providing our services.

Become a volunteer

We are always grateful for the help given to us by our dedicated volunteers. If you can spare a few hours each month do get in touch **FREEPHONE 0800 634 1020** or email enquiries@fishermensmission.org.uk

Remember us in your will

Everyone wants to ensure that friends and family are well provided for if you are writing or updating your will. However, just a small gift to the Fishermen’s Mission can make all the difference to our work and ensure that your help continues. If you would like a legacy leaflet call **FREEPHONE 0800 634 1020** or email: legacy@fishermensmission.org.uk

How to contact us:

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Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen

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