



'No matter how many people you rescue, you always remember the one you couldn't reach'

Antony Binns – Volunteer Helm, Withernsea Lifeboat Station

Dear friend,

Christmas is a time to get together with family and friends. And to reflect on the year gone by.

I'm an RNLI lifeboat volunteer, on call to rescue anyone who gets into danger at sea or by the water. And at this time of year I often think of the people I've helped rescue. I'm so happy to know that they're able to spend Christmas with their families, thanks to my lifesaving crew and the kind people like you who support us.

But the truth is that sometimes, despite our very best efforts, people do still drown. The vast majority of our call outs end happily, with warm blankets, hugs and smiles. But on rare occasions the sea gets the better of people. It's those that tend to stick in your head, and in your heart.

We're determined to save as many people as we possibly can. To do that, we need to invest in ongoing training and lifesaving equipment. Can you help?

WILL YOU GIVE £30 AND HELP US SAVE EVERY ONE WHO NEEDS US?

On a hot summer's day, my crew saved a woman and her little girl, who were being swept out to sea on a lilo. The woman was pregnant. And they were half a mile out to sea when we got to them – a very scary situation, as I'm sure you can imagine. We got them onto the lifeboat and back to shore. The little girl held on tight to my finger and wouldn't let go – until she saw her dad a little way up the beach and felt safe again.

As we were getting ready to go home, we were called on to give first aid to another person on the beach. It felt good to help three people in one day – four if you include the unborn baby.

It's always brilliant to bring people home safe, especially when children are involved. And it was even more special that day. Because our previous call out, just 2 weeks before, had a very different outcome.

I'd known Pete, a local fisherman, for years. He was always laughing and joking, and had a young family. When I heard he was missing after going overboard, we launched straight away. Knowing what a good swimmer Pete was, I thought we'd find him quickly, but there was no sign. Neighbouring lifeboat crews, local fishing boats and the Coastguard searched too – a community coming together for Pete.

We searched for 5 hours. When we spotted a lifering, I honestly thought we'd found him. I thought he'd pop up and say: 'Where've you been?' But he just wasn't there.

As night fell, we knew we were running out of time. When the search was called off, I walked up the slipway and the first person I met was Pete's dad. I didn't know what to say. When someone's lost out there, on their own, you just want to get them back to their families. Further searches in the following days were also fruitless. Pete was gone.

WE'LL NEVER FORGET PETE. AND, WITH YOU BY OUR SIDE, WE WILL NEVER STOP TRYING TO SAVE THE NEXT PERSON, AND THE ONE AFTER THAT ...

Pete wasn't wearing a lifejacket when he went overboard. Now his dad is campaigning for all fishermen to wear lifejackets. He says he doesn't want any other parent to go through what he has.

So many lives could be saved by stopping people getting into danger in the first place. Safety campaigns like this are just one way your donation could make a huge difference.

RNLI VOLUNTEERS HELPED 10,734 PEOPLE LAST YEAR. THAT'S PRETTY AMAZING. AND, WITH YOUR SUPPORT, I BELIEVE WE CAN DO EVEN BETTER

Even one life lost to drowning is one too many. All my friends on the crew here at Withernsea give our time and face rough seas not just to save **most** people. We're in it to save **every one**. From training to water safety education, we know that there are things we can do to give brave and skilled crews like mine the very best chance of saving a life, every single time.

Lifeboat volunteers near you are on call to save lives this Christmas



Withernsea lifeboat crew drop everything to launch to the rescue in their D class lifeboat *Mary Beal*



Pete's family miss him every day. Now, his dad is campaigning for fishermen to wear lifejackets



'Every life is precious. And when the call for help comes in, we're determined to save every one.'

Turn over to see how your Christmas gift can help us to save every one

