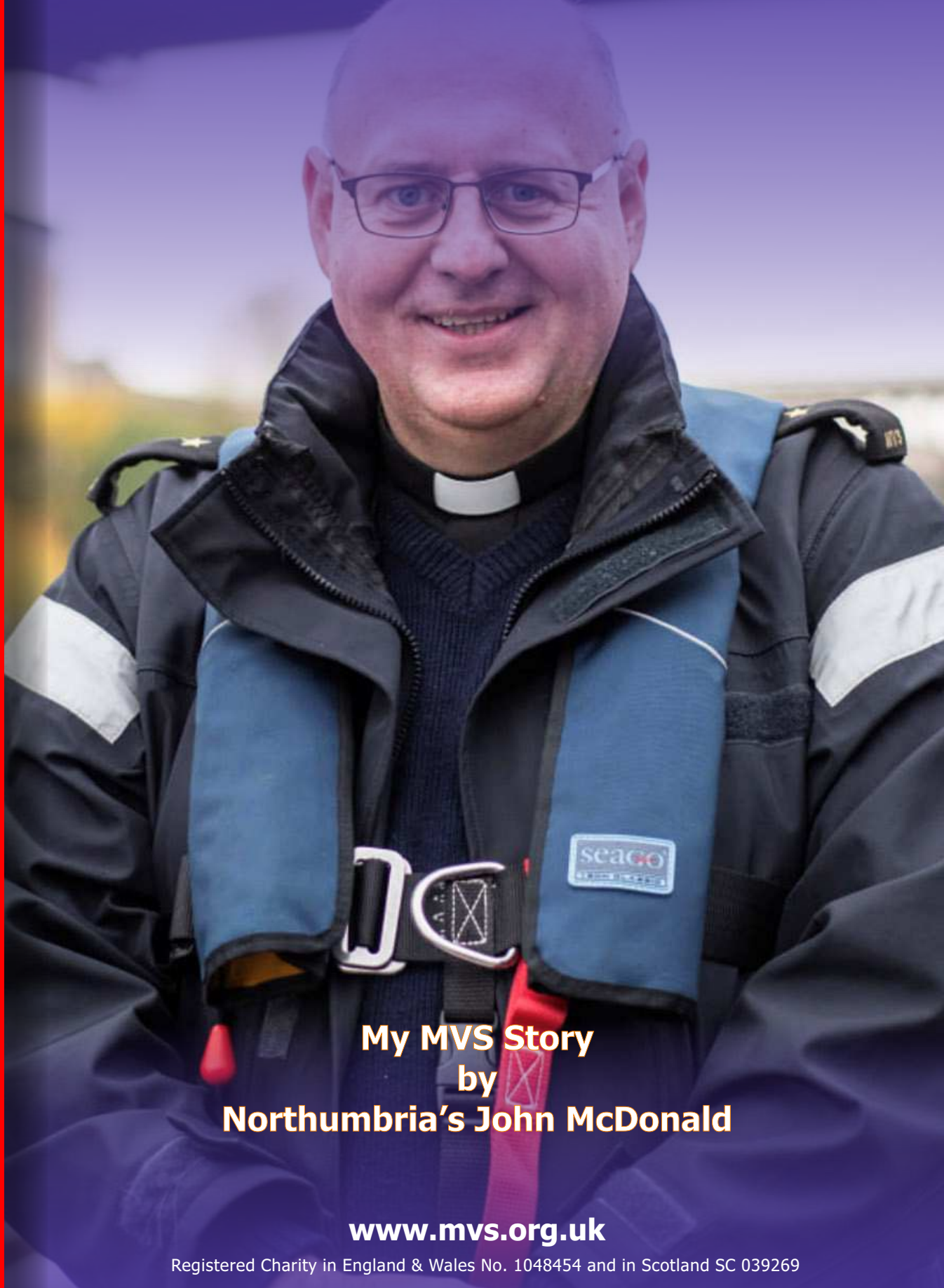




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The Maritime Volunteer

The Journal of the Maritime Volunteer Service



My MVS Story
by
Northumbria's John McDonald

www.mvs.org.uk

Registered Charity in England & Wales No. 1048454 and in Scotland SC 039269

A Message from the Chair



We are approaching the end of the summer boating season, though perhaps there will be an Indian Summer to follow the remarkably hot period we have just experienced. For most of our Units this has been the first full 'real summer' since 2019 in terms of being able to undertake afloat training and operations.

Reports from our Units show that the MVS has been busy doing what is supposed to do. Training our own members and carrying out community support operations that range from safety to patrols in rivers and ports through providing sea experience to youth groups and environmental protection operations.

September will be busy with Units based on the Thames supporting the Great River Race on the 10th while throughout the month and into October our national training vessel East Sussex 1 will be deployed to the Solent operating training trips that are available to members from all Units.

Realistically though the focus will soon shift to ashore training and preparing for next years operations and activities. Significantly boosting our training capabilities and increasing the level of our Volunteers' qualifications are top priorities for us now. Achieving this is being made possible in large part by the generous sponsorship of the Caledonia Investments Charitable Foundation. We are now in the position of being able to implement a long term business plan which, among other things, will allow us to deliver Royal Yacht Association and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs training for afloat operations and flood response.

So a busy time afloat is coming to a close but there will be plenty for us to do over the winter months.

With best wishes
David Hughes
Chair of MVS Council

From the Director of Communications



I thought it would be useful to offer a brief guide to submission in order to make the most of your stories. Please remember that we use submitted stories on the website, on social media and in this journal.

Please make sure you submit a high resolution picture with your story at least 4000 x 3000 pixels. This enables the images to be edited and still be large enough to use online. Make time to take a good picture and try to be creative and avoid an image of a group of people simply facing the camera. We cannot use a story without an image to go with it.

Aim for around three paragraphs for the story as people tend not to read longer items. Tell us what is happening, who is involved and what the result has been. Have a look at some stories on the website or in this journal to give you inspiration.

Whenever possible look to make the story about people and not about boats or kit. Stories about people get by far the most hits online and tend to be more widely shared. If you are a Facebook or Twitter user please share our content as it is critical in exposing us to many more people.

I look forward to hearing from you.

John Spencer-Barnes,
MVS Director of Communications

National MVS Day

The Maritime Volunteer Service has celebrated our first National MVS Day. Units all over the country were involved in the celebration which was held to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

The aim was to showcase our involvement in keeping the country's maritime traditions alive. Practical training in seamanship, small boat handling, engineering and communications helps to achieve this.

The flagship event took place on the River Tyne where we partnered with NE1's Newcastle City Marina to provide a day of free river rides, music, and an evening parade of sail.

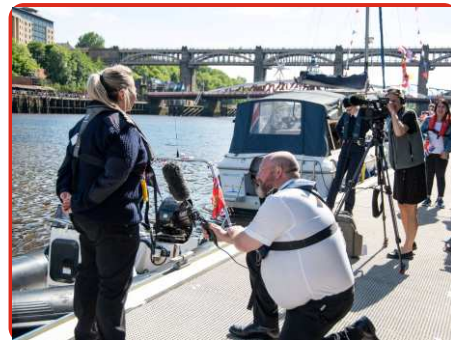
During the day, more than 100 members of the public received free river cruises on the charity's rigid hulled inflatable boats and had a chance to see the unit's 29ft patrol vessel "Melita" up close.

The Parade of Sail included several pleasure vessels and work boats that are regularly seen on the Tyne including the Tyne and Wear Fire Boat.

Angela Carrington, Regional Volunteer Officer of the MVS said, "We'd like to thank Newcastle Marina for helping us put on this event and the Port of Tyne for their cooperation.

We'd also like to thank every boat owner who attended and decorated their vessels for the Jubilee. It was a great day and a good way to celebrate Her Majesty's Jubilee and the first National Maritime Volunteer Service Day."

On the first Saturday in June annually, there will be a National Maritime Volunteer Service Day where units across the UK will celebrate the sea, ships and nautical traditions.



John McDonald - My MVS Story

My name is John McDonald and I have volunteered with the MVS for five years.

I have a brain injury, however, my disability does not stop me from being an active member of the Northumbria Unit, although I do have to take some extra precautions.

To be a safe member of the unit I must declare my disability, not only on the membership medical form but also to my Head of Unit.

This is so that when I'm on active duty the necessary support is put around me to help me to participate and also to ensure the safety of myself and other crew members.

Reporting how I am on each day to the designated person in charge is also important.

I inform them of how my brain injury is affecting me as it can affect my balance and cognitive functions which is how I think.

If needed a designated crew member will keep a check on me or I may be on a vessel as a non-active member so I can gain learning without actively crewing the vessel.

Should I feel unwell I will either not attend, or I'll watch from the shore.

If you have a disability, you can still be an active member provided you disclose your disability for effective support to be put around you.

I have enjoyed five years of active volunteering on the water with the MVS because of the support that has been put around me and having a disability shouldn't stop anyone doing what they want to do.



Tewkesbury Big Weekend

For the first time in four years the Tewkesbury Big Weekend took place and many people thronged the town and the riverside. It was a very popular Community event which was also part of the Jubilee Celebrations.



The Severn Unit primarily had responsibility for safety on the river during the weekend and this year was called into action five times to give assistance to boats. The Unit also had to rescue a crew of five from a sinking Katanu which started to take on water as it passed the finishing line after coming first in the racing.

All crew members were safely taken off the craft into the MVS Rigiflex safety boat which was on hand and then towed the stricken boat to the quay.

HOU Nic Price said, "Everyone played their part to the full, from manning the comms, the first aid post, maintaining safety patrols, leading the procession of boats, running our recruitment stand and the duck race. It was all carried out with the professionalism that we train regularly to achieve. I consider this to be Severn Unit's most successful deployment to date."

MVS Putney assist Around The UK Rowing Team

MVS Putney has taken out two crew members of a team which is aiming to row around the UK and in the process break a record.



Jess Plail and Steph Toogood from Team All Systems Row will take part in the GB Row Challenge and are aiming to become the first all-female team of six to complete the event.

The race starts and finishes at Tower Bridge and after setting off, the crew will row down the river, into the Thames Estuary and out into the North Sea.

From there, they will head south to take a clockwise direction around Great Britain, before returning up the Thames to Tower Bridge for the race finish.

The MVS took the pair downstream to see where the race will start.

Busy Weekend for Severn Unit

The Severn Unit was busy during the Jubilee Weekend and the first National MVS Day.

The Unit was asked to lead the procession of decorated boats as part of the Jubilee celebrations in the riverside village of Twyning.

RVO for the Bristol Channel Region Gordon McDonald was invited to take the salute with the Chairman of the local Council.

Two boats of Unit members on MVS Minerva and Hannah Mae took part and also provided safety cover by deploying their Rigiflex safety boat for the event.

HOU Nic Price said, "it was a very memorable occasion and we were pleased to support and help organise the parade of boats.

The next day members of the Unit attended the Sunday Jubilee Civic Service at Tewkesbury Abbey where member Will Fish presented our Colours".



North Lincolnshire Armed Forces Day



This year's North Lincolnshire Armed Forces Day held on Saturday 18 June at Brumby Hall Sports Ground in Scunthorpe was bigger than ever.

This was the first public event for MVS Humber in two years due to COVID restrictions and helped raise funds for the unit.

The day included a fun fair, re-enactments and a military parade.

MVS Nene Armed Forces Day

MVS Nene supported Armed Forces Day at Rushden and Rothwell in Northamptonshire which has taken place for the first time since 2019 due to the Covid pandemic.

In Rushden hundreds of people lined the streets to watch the parade headed by two veterans on motorbikes followed by the RAF Air Cadet Band.

A smaller event took place in Rothwell the following day which was also supported by the Nene unit.



MVS attend Seawork



Thousands of visitors made their way to Southampton for Europe's biggest commercial marine and workboat exhibition which was back after a two-year absence.

Seawork was held at a specially built pavilion on Mayflower Park and featured exhibitions, conferences and awards.

It also allowed the MVS to host the Jobs in Maritime Team at our stand after our last meeting in 2019 while we also took the opportunity to meet up with training providers and recruiters from across the maritime industry.

MVS Putney Fund Raising

MVS Putney has again been fundraising at St. Mary's Church which is next to the Thames at the southern end of Putney Bridge.

The team used the opportunity to talk to local people about what we do and to offer taster sessions for those interested.

Almost £300 was raised.

In attendance were Duncan Thomsen, Frank Wells, George Mellett, Phil Morgan and the unit's newest member Dom Carrol.



Maritime Safety Week

As part of Maritime Safety Week, members of MVS Northumbria paid a visit to the operational hub of the Port of Tyne.



Alan Feast, Harbour Master at the Port of Tyne invited members of the Unit to the Port's Vessel Traffic Services to see the work carried out there.

Tyne VTS provides 24/7 coverage of the Statutory Harbour Area.

The aim of a VTS is to ensure safety of navigation and protection of the environment. The visit was one of several activities organised by the Port as part of Maritime Safety Week. Head of Unit, Jennifer Mitchelson said, " We were given a tour of the facilities by the Harbour Master and enjoyed a general discussion around maritime safety and the movement of vessels around the port.

For all of us who are river users it gave us a unique insight into the work carried out behind the scenes."

Kingston-Upon-Thames Water Safety Sessions

The Kingston-upon-Thames Unit has run six half-day water safety sessions in partnership with the Surrey Branch of the Royal Life Saving Society and the Albany Outdoors water sports centre.

The sessions were aimed at 14 to 15 year old boys who national statistics confirm are the group most likely to drown accidentally due to taking risks in water.

There was an enthusiastic response from local schools when the idea of running the sessions was put to them.

Steve Collins, Head of the Unit said: "We know from experience that it's pointless telling teenagers not to go into the water.

Just telling them about the risks doesn't work either – it can have the opposite effect and even encourage young boys to take even more extreme risks".



All the students who participated have qualified for the 'Water Smart Award'.

Patron

HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO KStJ

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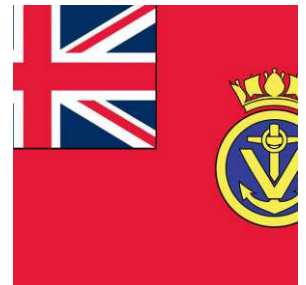
National Admin Officer / Newsletter Editor
Dave Spencer-Barnes



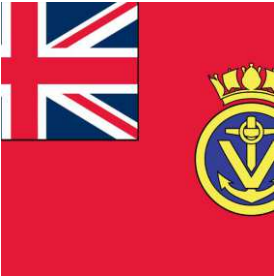
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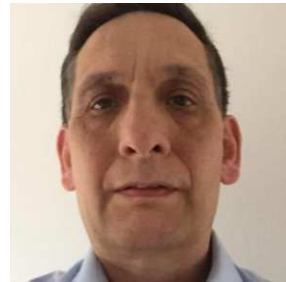
National MVS Fleet Manager

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Dt. Nigel Garbut



National Specialist Officer - Pollution Control

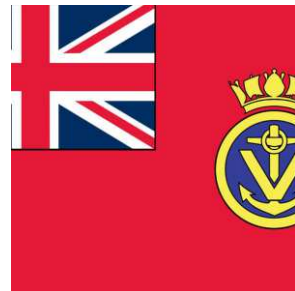
John Allam

Regional Volunteer Officers



RVO South (E)

Vacant



RVO South (W)

Frank Revill



RVO Thames

Paul Marlow



RVO Bristol Channel

Gordon McDonald



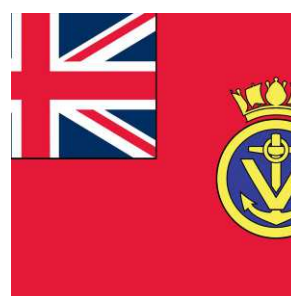
RVO North Wales

Giles Pepperell



RVO Central England

Andrew Smith



RVO Scotland & Northern Ireland

Vacant



RVO North

Angela Carrington

Facebook and Twitter

The MVS has an official Facebook page. Search for 'Maritime Volunteer Service Official' when you are logged in to find the group. You simply have to 'like' it to be kept up to date with the latest MVS news.

You can also get all the latest feeds by following us on Twitter [@MVSHQ](#)

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