

Coastal Notes

All the hard work paid off and even the weather was kind for the MRI Harbour Festival.

This is an opportunity to thank all those who made the day possible – Cameron Stout, the sponsors, the demonstrators, the entertainers, the stallholders, the many helpers, both on the day and in the run up, those who lent us equipment and last, but by no means least, the public who turned out in such numbers. Thank you, one and all. The day raised £5,000, which is brilliant!

This money will go to support the local lifeboat service, as is always the case with our local fund raising. The SAR Team equipment has to be kept in good order, whether it's personal gear like their suits, or pagers and radios, medical kits have to be fully stocked and in date, the boats must always be in tip top condition and the SAR Youth Team also requires funding. Rescue callouts often come in cycles and the past few weeks have been particularly busy for the SAR Team. It does cost a considerable amount to provide the service, and this cannot be met purely through MRI's training activities. As with other rescue services, there is no government or other central body who funds the work; we all have to stand or fall by our own efforts. The Trossachs Search and Rescue Dogs who put on such a great demonstration on Sunday also face the constant task of funding themselves.

Running alongside the conspicuous fundraising efforts are other less obvious routes. The Great Weather Lottery brings in a small income every month and winnings to the participants.

Those with Internet access can check out www.buy.at/mri; this is a gateway to many well-known Internet sites such as Amazon, Cotton Traders and Thorntons. Purchases made via this site will generate a donation to MRI at no cost to the buyer; this money comes out of their marketing budget. Donations range from 3 – 15% of total spend.

Other initiatives are currently in the pipeline, so watch this space.

We have been asked a number of times recently why a town the size of Stonehaven needs 3 lifeboats, when Aberdeen for example only has 2. Stonehaven is fortunate to have 3 rescue craft because of the training that MRI provides to other rescue organisations worldwide. Our boats perform a dual role, being both rescue craft when required, but are also used as training units. Each craft is different, not only in size, but in design, propulsion, and capability, so we can tailor a course to suit individual needs. Recent groups of trainees have come from Holland and Germany, with groups from Iceland expected in the autumn. This income supports salaries, costs of the premises, major maintenance, insurance and all the other costs associated with running any venture.

Not only do these people bring income to the town, but they also carry images of Stonehaven and the North East back to their home areas. We always make time during the courses for a little bit of sight seeing; numerous people have come back on holiday following time at MRI. Having experienced a little bit of the area, they are keen to see more.

For further information, or to find out how you can support the work of Maritime Rescue Institute, please contact 01569 765768.