

March 2 – “Search and Rescue Volunteer Memorial Day”

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British Columbia News

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Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, has issued the following statement on Search and Rescue Volunteer Memorial Day:

"Today, we reflect on the sacrifice and dedication of British Columbia's search and rescue volunteers – the thousands of hard-working specialists who help those injured or stranded in our province's backcountry.

"B.C.'s search and rescue volunteers are among the best in the world, and I am so proud of the efforts they make to reduce the harm for those in dangerous situations. They deploy to rescue people in need at any time of year, in all conditions, at any hour of day or night. They spend countless hours training to the high standards set by the BC Search and Rescue Association, Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue and Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) Air.

"With each deployment, these responders risk their own safety. Tragically, some of our best and brightest search and rescue volunteers have lost their lives in the line of duty in years past. To compound the challenges these volunteers face, the last 11 months have been the busiest in the history of B.C.'s search and rescue program.

"When COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic in early 2020, we were all challenged to adjust our approaches to daily life to stay safe and healthy. Many people responded by seeking out the beauty of B.C.'s trails and backcountry.

"This renewed enthusiasm to explore our wilderness has been heavily felt by B.C.'s 79 ground search and rescue groups and PEP Air teams. These groups normally deploy for approximately 1,700 ground search missions in a year. In the first 11 months of fiscal 2020-21, there were 1,985 incidents – more than any other year in the history of the program, with one month still to come.

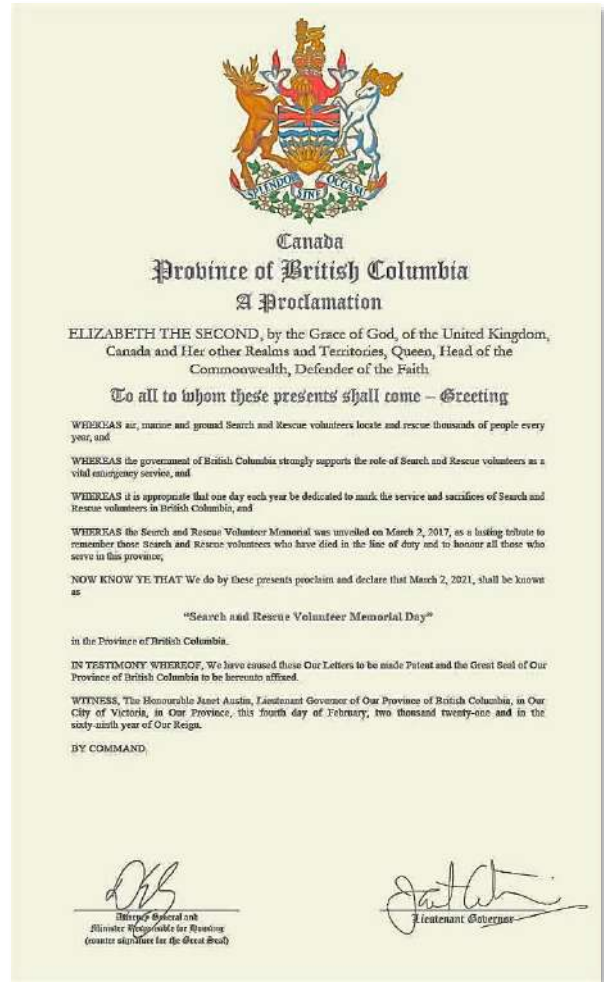
"Today, I encourage all British Columbians to honour the memory of those who lost their lives trying to save the life of another and the incredible work these skilled responders do to keep us all safe. This can be done in many ways, including visiting the memorial at the Parliament Buildings in Victoria, by taking a moment to reflect on their sacrifice and that of their loved ones and by ensuring we are all as prepared as we can be before heading out into the elements.

"On this Search and Rescue Volunteer Memorial Day, I extend my deep gratitude to the thousands of selfless volunteers who put service above self and, in doing so, make British Columbia a safer place to live, work and play."

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https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021PS090014-000200



2021 Herring fishery by John Horton

The 2021 herring fishery in the Gulf of Georgia was again attended by the ‘Delta Lifeboat’ that deployed for 15 days.

With COVID restrictions and protocols in place and a crew limited to 5 ‘Delta’ sailed for the grounds on Sunday 28th February with winds from the SE ranging from 20 – 35 knots. An interesting transit was made to Baynes Sound where a protected anchorage was found in company with several seine boats in Henry Bay.

It was now a question of waiting for the fish. This would prove to be a somewhat different year. High winds, COVID19, the fish arriving late and



spread out from north of Cape Lazo, south to Nanaimo. Combined this made it difficult to decide where the most pressing need might be. ‘Delta’s’ patrol area was mainly decided in consultation with Mike Frost of Canfisco and by monitoring the AIS movement of Packers. While waiting the week prior to the start of fishing the time was well spent conduction checks and maintenance on all equipment and training. Some minor electrical repairs were traced and repaired thanks to the technical skills of John Oystensen, Brian VanVliet and Andy Russell.

Bruce Docherty inspected all the medical supplies and equipment on board and restowed it into a new ‘jump’ bag. Once completed, training was given to all crew members. Other training during the week consisted of towing, anchoring, boat work, MOB and transfer of patients from



RHIB down to the after mess, using the boom and purchase. This last in case we had to transfer a heavy patient.

At the conclusion of training, which added up to 28 hours, some crew task sign offs were done. Some of the training was spent in trying to improve actual methods used in evolutions to save time and improve safety. The crew fully engaged in this and good ideas brought forward. Len Cheveldale proved an excellent and efficient crew member. His willingness to quietly perform tasks was gratefully noticed. During one of the towing exercises the WorkSafe B.C. launch joined and allowed 'Delta' to take it in tow. Again demonstrating the close bond CLI has with FishSafe and WorkSafe B.C.

Owing to COVID restrictions 'Delta' spent no time in harbour except to water or crew change. The only exception to this was the last day in French Creek when after a crew change it was decided to wait overnight for an improvement in weather.



As far as the actual fishery went, the action was mainly over 5 days starting with the seines who fished from French Creek down to North West Bay. The weather was fine as 'Delta' patrolled through the fleet. The gillnetters opened the following day off Cape Lazo so 'Delta' proceeded north at her best speed. After a patrol through the fleet to get a feel of where the main action would be, 'Delta' came to anchor where a continuous radio and visual watch could be maintained. 24 hours later it appeared that the fleet was thinning out and moving south and 'Delta' weighed anchor and also moved south through Lambert channel and around Hornby Island where some fishing was observed. A phone call with Canfisco indicated however that the main event was still at Cape Lazo, so 'Delta' returned to anchor on the south side of the Cape.

At midnight the weather changed from a light breeze to SE 15 – 20 knots. This made the anchorage very uncomfortable and little sleep for those off watch. However, because the gillnetters were continuing to fish off the lee shore and a real risk of a vessel being swamped, 'Delta' stayed on station. During the morning watch the seine boat 'Sun Fisher' was observed dragging anchor onto the lee shore. After dragging for 2 – 3 cables 'Delta' was able to alert the crew who weighed anchor in time and move into deeper water. By midday 'Delta' was advised that the fishery was moving down to the Qualicum River and so redeployed to that location. Night watches were again maintained as the fishing was quite intense. 'Delta' stayed in the area until the conclusion of fishing when she proceeded into French Creek for a crew change.



At midday a gillnetter was towed in by another one and secured on 'Delta's' dock. It turned out they had run over a net and fouled both inboard/outboard props. Later in the afternoon a diver arrived on scene and proceeded with a clearance dive. Crew from 'Delta' assisted. The props and bearings were removed and finally cleared. Thanks were received from the fisherman and the diver. Although it had been planned to leave for Nanaimo that afternoon it was decided to wait out the weather overnight (it was blowing SE 25). On Sunday morning it was still blowing SE 15 – 20 but forecast to go to the NW. The decision was made that after securing the lifeboat for possible heavy weather that at midday 'Delta' would slip and transit directly for the Fraser

River. After clearing harbour the wind had dropped to 15 knots. However the old sea made for a very wet ride until abeam of Nanaimo when the promised wind of NW 30-35 knots was encountered. With a quickly rising sea from astern the watch went onto manual steering which gave them more practice of heavy weather steering. All hands performed well.

Sand Heads was reached at 17:30 and with a 6 foot sea running a very careful approach had to be made staying very close to the lighthouse before turning, with white water everywhere it was a relief to gain the protection of the break water. Few realize that it is conditions exactly like this that have claimed so many lives over the years. In fact, Sand Heads was the #1 most dangerous piece of water in Canada for many years.

'Delta' secured at her Ladner station at 18:30. A huge 'BZ' to all the crew who participated. You all performed extremely well and exhibited good teamwork and bonded as a true ships company.

CLI wishes to thank the Canadian Fishing Company, the Fish Producers Association, FishSafe and WorkSafe B.C. who supported our deployment.

The Canadian Coastguard Radio Station and the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre were kept fully informed of 'Delta's' position, intentions and also the status of the fishery. Thanks was received from JRCC. When 'Delta' departed the grounds a radio link was made with the 'Western Shore' which served as the management platform for the fishery. After receiving thanks from them they closed by saying "see you next year".

The real upside of this year's fishery was that no one was injured and there were no accidents except a couple of minor ones handled by fisherman themselves, although accidents were expected owing to rough weather.

Thanks to the efforts of CLI crews 'Delta' was never better prepared.



White Rose of Yorkshire by Ken Lewis



John Horton had been in conversation for some time with the RNLI in Poole, Dorset in regards to the upcoming sale of a retired Lifeboat. Our then Board of Directors made a decision to buy and fundraising began. The money was found and we bought the 1974 Groves & Guttridge Ltd. of East Cowes, Isle of Wight (Yard Number 663) built Ex-RNLI, 44 foot, 18 tonne, Waveney Class Lifeboat "White Rose of Yorkshire" (Official Number of 1033) (RNLI Number 44-012). She cost £70,000 (\$446,327.36 in 2020 money) to build.

The Creighton's, John Horton, my wife Kathie and I went to England to attend the 18th International Lifeboat Federation Conference held in Poole, Dorset beginning 21 June 1999 and to celebrate the RNLI's 175th Anniversary. We stayed in a B&B

Arrival at Surrey-Fraser docks

for the week of fun with full activities for the partners. We were also there to collect the White Rose who during her lifetime and been launched 239 times and saved 51 lives.

Part of the week's celebrations were a parade of boats which we took part in on the 23rd in Poole. In the evenings we attended one cocktail party at a huge mansion outside Horton, Dorset and two dinners for all the delegates and visiting crews. One was at the Royal Bath Hotel in Bournemouth and the other aboard the restored 1860 built ironclad warship HMS Warrior in Portsmouth's Royal Navy dockyard, held down below on the gun deck sitting 12 to a table amid the 68 pounder cannons. At the end of the week the RNLI crewed the White Rose and took her down to Felixstowe for onward journey to Vancouver.



This is part of the lifeboat parade in Poole. The gentleman in the middle was the last coxswain of the White Rose and gave us lots of information on how to run her.



After Ken Lewis being briefed by the SAR tech away he goes.



John Horton being hoisted in the through the door

SAR decals Fraser Lifeboat

Saturday March 20. In an effort to increase our visibility and understanding of our function by the community, the Fraser Lifeboat has added Search and Rescue decals to the wheelhouse. These were pre-approved by the Senior Lifeboat Commander. A donation was arranged through our Coxswain David Acton and business owner John Pinkerton of Sandpiper Signs & Decals Inc. John applied the reflective red decals today and we already got several comments about how amazing they look.



Towing exercises

Because towing is one of our major reasons for callouts so it is very important to practise towing on a regular basis. This can be done during alongside training like we did on the Fraser (Saturday March 20) or during an on the water training like we did on the Delta (Saturday March 27).



GPS coordinates



When we get a call from someone who needs assistance and they don't know exactly where they are then please ask if they have a smart phone with a compass app. This app will show the lat and long (thanks Adrian for sharing this). Google Maps is another app that can be used to get this information. Note: the image on the right is from an iPhone but it was rotated to make it fit in this document.



Who is John Horton?



John's lifesaving career probably started when he was a boy seaman in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) at the age of 16. Spending most weekends at sea on inshore minesweepers, this ship was often called in to conduct assistance and rescues. The many skills still used today were born then. Later while serving in the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron even more skills were honed. His ship HMS Wave provided medical and technical assistance to the deep sea fishing fleet from Iceland to the North Cape of Norway. John participated in many dramatic rescues.

John also served aboard the aircraft carrier HMS Warrior and witnessed four hydrogen bomb explosions. He was in charge of all the ships boats and served as Commodore Hick's coxswain driving the 38.0' barge.

Since a very young age John was a natural helmsman learning to sail at the age of 10 when after the war boats were again allowed out on the water. Racing was in his blood and his skill won him many races. During his time in the RNVR he won the 'President' cup in RNSA 14' dinghy's 4 straight years in a row.



Shortly after immigrating to Canada in 1966 he purchased several sailboats. A Mirror 14', a Paceship 25' and a Camper and Nicholson 30' half ton. He successfully raced all three.

In 1971 John received permission and support from the Royal Naval Sailing Association based in Portsmouth to establish a branch in B.C. With branches around the world the RNSA ran the 'Whitbread round the world race' and many of its members had completed solo circumnavigations and even held the world speed record under sail. The B.C. squadron has run the RNSA Single Handed Race across the gulf of Georgia for 40 years with fleets as large as 120 yachts with sizes from 27' to 95'.

In 2016 John was made an honorary life member in recognition of his long service to the RNSA which he had joined at the age of 16.

During his naval service John had specialized in minesweeping which demanded serious seamanship skills. During the cold war the Naval Reserve was equipped with 15 of the very latest 'Ton' class minesweepers. Fitted with the latest gear the reserve was brought to a state of readiness that would have them at sea, sweeping for mines within 24 hours or less. With exercise minefields laid in Scotland's Cromarty Firth, for the reserve sweepers to clear, great rivalry existed between ships, however John's ship was always deemed one of the most efficient and won 'Cock of the walk' on several occasions which was marked with the Thornycroft trophy, a solid silver model of a 'Ton' class sweeper.

In the late 70's John purchased a retired 35' gillnetter thought better to capture inspiration for his paintings. From time to time he found himself assisting other mariners in distress. By chance he learned of the newly established 'Canadian Marine Rescue Auxiliary'. After making inquiries John realized his skill gained from his naval service could again be put to use for the benefit of others. Having gained a deep respect for the dangerous life of commercial fisherman and living in the fishing community of Steveston John joined the CMRA which later renamed the 'Coast Guard Auxiliary'.

On Call 24 hrs a day he ventured out in all conditions to provide assistance to those in need. Most often he assisted commercial fisherman. As the years past a close bond was also forged with the Coast Guard and especially the Sea Island hovercraft base, a relationship that exists to this day.



For many years John and his ex-fishing vessel was reported to be the busiest auxiliary vessel in Canada tasked with 70-80 incidents a year. After 10 years it was decided to replace the fishing vessel with something larger. A search found an ex U.S. naval vessel. 52.0' long with space for a larger crew she was named 'Artist Life'. Volunteers were easily found and trained to continue with search and rescue support of the Coast Guard out of Steveston. While continuing to be available during fisheries and patrolling or at anchor off Sand Heads for up to 48 hrs incidents soon topped 600.

