



LIVERPOOL
Shipwreck & Humane Society

BEYOND BRAVERY

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ISSUE 1

SUMMER
2025



Celebrating History and Bravery

The Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society (LS&HS) recently opened its treasure trove of maritime history to the public at The Hatch gallery in New Brighton with a remarkable event that brought to light stories of courage, sacrifice, and humanity that have too often gone untold.

The showcase down The Hatch offered guests a rare opportunity to examine historical artefacts and documents that tell the story of countless rescues, acts of bravery, and the society's ongoing mission to protect life at sea.

Among the exhibits were medals awarded for heroic rescues, historical documents detailing dramatic saves, and artefacts that speak to the evolution of maritime safety. Each piece told its own story of courage and compassion in the face of maritime peril.

The event succeeded in its aim to engage new audiences with this vital part of Liverpool's maritime heritage.



Guests at the showcase event were moved by the personal stories behind the artefacts - tales of ordinary people doing extraordinary things to save lives at sea. This showcase wasn't just about preserving history; it was about ensuring these important stories continue to inspire future generations and remind us of the ongoing importance of maritime safety and humanitarian service.

The success of this event demonstrates the enduring relevance of the LS&HS and its mission, proving that while times may change, the value of saving lives at sea remains constant.

Chair of the Society, Chris Riley, said: "For over 185 years, the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society has celebrated quiet acts of extraordinary courage; on rivers, in the air, and on our city streets as well as at sea. Our mission is to ensure that bravery in all its forms is recognised and remembered, and that the people who risk their lives to save others know their courage has not gone unnoticed. This event is also a chance to share our vision for the future, to grow our reach and raise awareness as we move towards our 200th anniversary in 2039."

The event was also an opportunity to recognise the most recent recipients of the MV Derbyshire Award for Maritime Safety, Liverpool based Recall Recover, for its work developing and promoting trauma-informed approaches to investigating critical incidents at sea.

[Read more and view the event gallery online](#)





Nominations Open For MV Derbyshire Maritime Safety Award

Nominations are now open for this year's MV Derbyshire Award, presented by the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society. Visit our website for more details and to complete the nomination form

This annual award honours outstanding contributions to maritime safety and is named in memory of the MV Derbyshire, a Liverpool-registered ship tragically lost in 1980 with all 44 people on board during Typhoon Orchid. It recognises those working to prevent similar tragedies at sea.

The first recipients in 2022 were Survitec, recognised for their commitment to life-saving safety equipment and innovation.

In 2023, the award went to Recall Recover for their pioneering trauma-informed approach to investigating maritime incidents and supporting crew wellbeing.

Nominate an individual or organisation making a real difference to maritime safety by 31 July 2025.

[Nomination Form](#)

Meet the Trustee

Chris Riley

In the first of our Meet the Trustee series, Chair of the Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society, Chris Riley is in the hot seat and shares why he got involved with the society, what his role involves and some stand out acts of bravery from the Society's history.



Why did you become a Trustee?

I became a Trustee after a brief conversation at an awards ceremony for the Royal Yachting Association in London. I was there with an existing Trustee who, over lunch, suggested I might like to do some charity work. He wasn't very explicit in what that would entail but three months later I was roped in.

Throughout my early life I was brought up to volunteer for and do charitable work. My mother had always given back to society, through fostering and latterly childcare, and I saw this Society as an opportunity for me to put something back, although it's not in the same league as my mother's huge and selfless efforts.

What does Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society mean to you?

I like the fact that we recognise the various noble acts that ordinary people perform every day. Annually we recognise a number of our fellow citizens who step up and perform CPR on complete strangers. This in itself is not brave, but they did something which in most cases saves a life. For this they deserve to be recognised.

It is poignant, and an honour, that we are in a position to reward or recognise acts of selflessness and bravery. These are cases where members of the public have put themselves at risk to save another person's life.

What are you responsible for as a trustee?

I am the current Chair of the Society and therefore I am responsible for ensuring that we run our charity along ethical and financially sound business lines.

As with most small charities I am required to see that we spend and invest wisely thus husbanding our limited resources.

Do you have a specific area of interest/expertise?

As someone who spent a significant part of his life in the reserve forces I appreciate the importance of recognising bravery and service through medals and/or certificates. It is a very important part of what we do within the Society, and I enjoy and take an active role in the awards process.

Is there an act of bravery that particularly stands out for you in the history of LSHS?

Several awards I think are of note or at least appeal to me:



Firstly, the gentleman who worked on the docks who we awarded 7 or 8 medals over 15 or so years. Each for leaping into the docks to save a soul.



Then there is the William Wright who, in 1934, stopped an out-of-control runaway pony pulling a milk float down Crown St in Liverpool.



Latterly there have been a series of awards for bravery rescuing people from the water off New Brighton. It never ceases to amaze me that ordinary men and women will put themselves in harms way to rescue others.



We gave a number of awards to the crew of the Carpathia after she rescued many of the survivors of the Titanic. The Carpathia was registered in Liverpool, hence we could make the awards. At the time the magnitude was unheard and initial use of wireless. Harold Cottam the Carpathia's Wireless Officer received one of the medals for his outstanding efforts in recognising the distress calls and persuading the Captain of the serious nature of the unfolding disaster; thereby saving many lives.



What do you think is an important focus for the future of LSHS?

We need to continue our recognition of bravery and selflessness taking into account the changing face of society, its makeup and the change in the nature of incidents passed to us.

We must keep the local community aware that we exist and engage with them to enhance Lifesaving training and facilities where it is appropriate.

What is your role outside of LSHS?

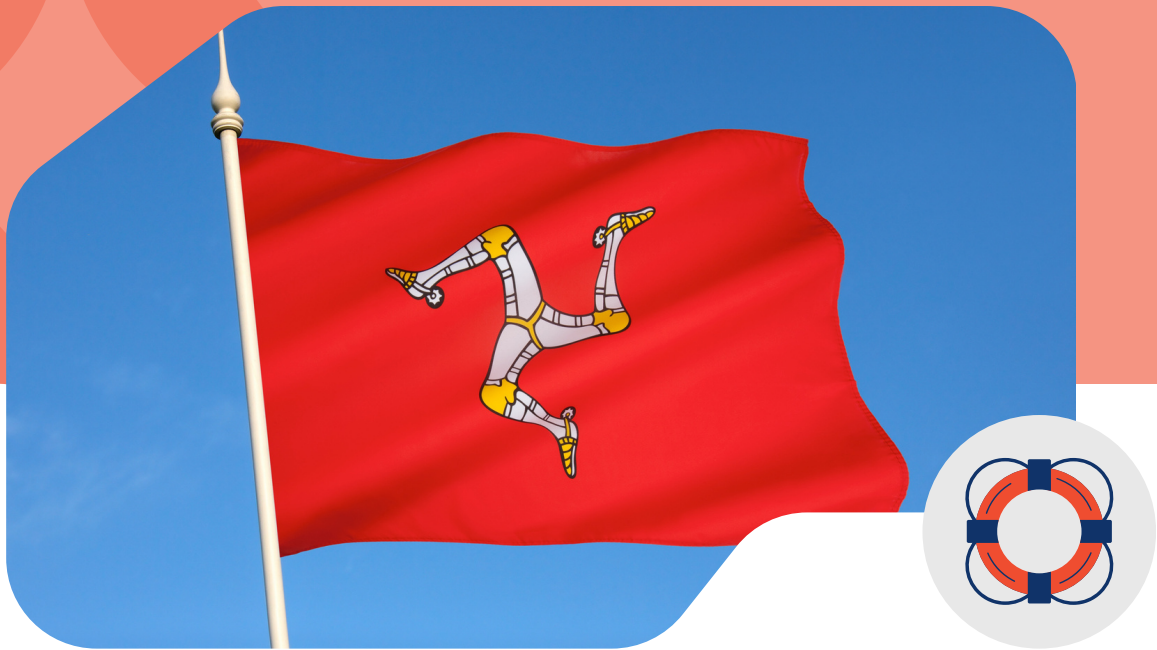
Before retirement I worked in IT for 35 years initially programming, analysis and latterly in a consulting role. Over the years I worked for many government departments and a number of well-known national companies implementing and managing projects.

Through most of my early working life I was in the Territorial Army, specifically The King's Regiment, historically this was the city regiment of Liverpool. Hence I have a strong affection and association with the city. I retired from the TA with the rank of Major and gained the Territorial Decoration (TD) for my efforts.

I belong to and volunteer with several other Charitable organizations as well as some voluntary groups and am heavily involved in my local sailing club.



Get to know more of our Trustees on our website:
liverpoolshipwreckandhumanesoc.org.uk/news-page



Isle of Man Initiative Honours Acts of Bravery across the Island and it's Waters

The Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society is delighted to announce the formal launch of its Isle of Man initiative on Tynwald Day, the national day of the Isle of Man. As Trustees of this independent award charity, we are thrilled to begin our engagement with the island.

This significant development comes as the Society may now issue awards for acts of bravery, safety initiatives and lifesaving in the Isle of Man. The announcement deliberately coincides with Tynwald Day 2025, celebrating the island's rich heritage and autonomous governance.

"Tynwald Day represents the perfect occasion to formally announce our initiative for the Isle of Man," said Chris Riley Chair and Trustee of the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society. "The Isle of Man's rich maritime heritage make this partnership a natural extension of our mission to recognise acts of bravery at sea and on land."

Established in 1839, the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society has a distinguished history of recognising individuals who voluntarily risk their lives to save others. While maintaining our defined jurisdiction in the North West of England, this acknowledges the significant maritime connection between Liverpool and the Isle of Man that has existed for centuries.

The Society looks forward to working closely with the Isle of Man authorities, emergency services and first responders, as well as maritime organisations, to ensure that acts of bravery receive the recognition they deserve.

Our Areas of Jurisdiction

The Society restricts its activities to rescues arising in Merseyside, Lancashire, Cheshire and the Isle of Man, or anywhere at sea if the vessel involved is Liverpool or Isle of Man registered. Or the rescuer/salvor lives in Merseyside, Lancashire, Cheshire or the Isle of Man.



Support the Society

The mission of Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society - to honour bravery and encourage lifesaving - hasn't changed since the Society's formation in 1839, but we'd like more people to know about it.

We want to raise awareness of the Society and open it up to people who might be able to help take it forward.



Collaborate

We'd love to connect with people who have connections and skills they'd be willing to share. That might be helping us tell more people about what we do, supporting our work in schools and the community, helping with admin, or even just spreading the word.



Nominate

We rely on nominations, and we know there are still so many acts of bravery that go unnoticed and maritime safety innovations that should be recognised. We'd love to hear from anyone who knows of someone deserving of an award - get in touch or [complete the nomination form on our website](#).



Follow and Share

[Join us on LinkedIn](#) to keep up to date with the latest news, award announcements and maritime safety updates. Share our posts with colleagues and friends and [sign up to our newsletter](#).

If you'd like to chat about how you could help, or have a story you think we should hear, we'd really love to hear from you.

Email: secretary@liverpoolshipwreckandhumanesoc.org

Visit our website: liverpoolshipwreckandhumanesoc.org.uk

[Subscribe to our Newsletter](#)



Summer water safety

Accidents are mostly preventable with the correct knowledge and judgment and here are our tips to staying safe in the water during the summer:

To enjoy the water safely and make the right call...

- **Enter slowly and carefully**

Think carefully about your ability to splash or swim in cold outdoor water. 49% of those who lost their life were classified as swimmers*. Are you really a good swimmer?

- **Stay within reach**

Don't go too far and stay within a standing depth.

- **Always be supervised**

Over 70% of fatal accidents occur in the absence of professional supervision. Seek life guarded areas and always make sure some one is available to raise the alarm.

Summer is an amazing time to enjoy our beautiful waterways but we must be mindful that warmer weather is directly linked to an increase in fatal drowning incidents.

Rivers and Lakes/Lochs pose the greatest statistical risk as there are often hazards that the average person is equipped to handle and there is a lack of professional supervision.

In an emergency...

- **Call 999**

If you are at the coast, call 999 and ask for the Coastguard. Don't enter the water to rescue.

- **If you're in trouble FLOAT and call for help**

Fall in or become tired – stay calm, float on your back and call for help. Throw something that floats to somebody that has fallen in.



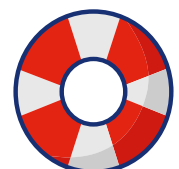
STOP AND THINK



STAY TOGETHER



CALL 999



FLOAT