

SOS

YOU'RE SAVING LIVES AT SEA



Spring 2013

We can't do it without you!

Enjoy reading how your donations are being put to good use saving the lives of New Zealanders in trouble on the water.



When Tracey and Glenn Brown sold up their home and everything in it to buy and live aboard a 33-foot Hartley Queenslander, 'The Lady Jessie', they thought their lives were about to change for the better.

"We were all set for a great adventure", said Tracey. Despite being fully equipped with all the necessary safety gear, including lifejackets and a VHF radio, and years of boating experience behind them, their lives were about to turn upside down.

They set off on an adventure at the end of May that would see them bring the boat home to Thames from Marlborough, a trip that would take them around the east coast of the North Island. Mindful of the poor weather forecast, Tracey and Glenn slowly sailed north, stopping frequently for a night or two to wait for storms to pass and seek shelter. Throughout the journey, they kept a close watch on the weather

conditions via their VHF radio and by talking to locals. Glenn's dad also kept a close watch on the Internet and reported back regularly on the phone.

On May 25, the weather cleared. It was finally time to make a straight run across the Bay of Plenty, from the top of the East Cape to Whangamata.

It was the most scary thing I've ever had to go through.

Tracey Brown



"We were keeping a close watch on the VHF and at lunchtime, when I went into the cabin to make lunch, I heard a storm warning predicting gale force winds. Glenn headed straight towards the coast. But it was on us within half an hour."

Despite their vigilance, and as can happen without warning, 'Mother Nature' had quickly turned and caught Tracey and Glenn off guard.

Glenn Brown onboard 'The Lady Jessie'

For four hours, Glenn battled the seas as he tried to get close to land to take shelter. As they got near Plate Island, about two-thirds of the way through the trip, Tracey said she "started to freak out". Glenn put out the anchor which took all of the chain as well as a further 60 metres of rope, but it wasn't holding. The boat was being buffeted by ferocious seas. Inside the cabin, plates were smashing on to the floor and their belongings were being thrown about, whilst Tracey and Glenn were suffering a frightening ride.

The Police were alerted, who, in turn, alerted **Coastguard Maketu**. Our dedicated volunteers responded immediately, launching their rescue vessel. They were on the water within five minutes. As the couple waited, Tracey sent a text message to the Police:

"Hurry up, I'm scared, I'm not going to make it."

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ▶ A letter of thanks from a group of friends kayaking near Lyttelton Harbour. Find out how Coastguard helped to bring them back safely to shore.
- ▶ We speak to Mark Bolland, Hutchwilco Coastguard Volunteer of the Year 2013. Mark volunteers on the treacherous and unforgiving West Coast.

TEAM RESCUE

FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT COASTGUARD WITH A MONTHLY GIFT

THE CHARITY SAVING LIVES AT SEA

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Shane Beech of Coastguard Maketu described the blustery weather as “a horrible, gnarly night, horizontal rain and big waves.” The volunteer crew were operating in some of the most difficult conditions many of them had encountered.

As the crew neared the island they made contact with Glenn and Tracey on the VHF radio. By now, ‘The Lady Jessie’ was just 20 metres away from jagged rocks. It was not going to be possible for the Coastguard crew to tow the boat to safety.

Glenn and Tracey had to make the decision to ‘abandon ship’. Tracey didn’t want to leave the cabin. Glenn helped her get to the bow of the boat where she grabbed hold of the hatch cover, closed her eyes and hung on for dear life. It took 20 minutes for the Coastguard crew to get close enough, and even longer to lift the couple off the boat safely. Glenn has only one leg and first he had to help the Coastguard crew get Tracey. He prised her fingers off the hatch cover so the crew could grab her hand to pull her on-board. In the rough seas the transfer was a real challenge, and by this time Tracey was hypothermic and possibly in shock. But the Coastguard volunteers got them safely on board the rescue vessel and began the rough ride back to shore, where they finally began to get their senses back and recover from their horrendous ordeal.

The outcome for ‘The Lady Jessie’ was much bleaker. In the days following the rescue, a Coastguard crew took the couple back out to the island in the hope of finding ‘The Lady Jessie’—but sadly there was no sign of her. Weeks later, she was discovered on the sea floor. Glenn and Tracey lost all their possessions, including their home.

But thanks to Coastguard volunteers they survived what would have been a certain tragedy.

“The Coastguard crew put themselves at risk to save us; it was amazing...we really are very thankful.” said Tracey.

It’s because of your support that our hard-working volunteers can go on making courageous rescues in all weather conditions.



Tracey Brown



‘The Lady Jessie’ in happier times

I feel that here I am starting my life over again. Before the trip I had told my grown children what I wanted them to do if anything happened to us. Never for one moment did I think it would...

Your donations help Coastguard’s volunteers bring people like Glenn and Tracey home to safety, even when the risks are high and the situation disastrous. You’re helping us continue on our mission of saving lives at sea. **Thank you.**

SURVIVOR STORY



My name is Manishi Kohli. I am writing on behalf of everybody who was helped by Coastguard on

the day we went on a kayaking adventure. The help and assistance we received from Coastguard Canterbury will always remain as a gift to us which is very dear to our hearts.

“We can never forget what a terrifying day that was for us. We were a group of six people and we went out for Kayaking in Cass Bay. Soon, we began to be carried by the water, losing control of our kayaks and our direction. We ended up on a beach very far away from where we started and we couldn’t find a way to get back on the bay or to a road. Two of our group mates headed back in search of help. It was already dark and we are not professional kayakers. We were not sure if we would be able to get back. The waters began to get violent and we were scared for our group mates who headed back.

“The remaining four of us stayed at the beach whilst Coastguard looked for us. The four of us eventually managed to find a road after two long hours, but were scared to death for our other two group mates who had gone off to seek help. But Coastguard had found them, offered them tea, made them feel relaxed and dropped them back to their car. We are so grateful to Coastguard. We believe that if Coastguard hadn’t helped us that day, we might have lost lives.

“We would like to thank the team who helped us and the whole organisation associated, who is carrying the burden of society and helping us whenever we need them. We wish the Coastguard all the very best in their endeavours. We need your services to live and enjoy.

Thank you for all you did for us.



Warmest thanks to our loyal sponsors and funders:

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ON BOARD WITH...
MARK BOLLAND,
 Coastguard West Coast



Mark Bolland has been saving lives on New Zealand's West Coast for more than two decades.

It's an unforgiving coastline that presents unique challenges for those who work and play on the water there. It's this that has led Coastguard and Surf Life Saving to work together in a virtual partnership to save lives—and Mark volunteers for both services:

“As well as my work with Coastguard West Coast, I'm President of the Kotuku Surf Life Saving Club, where I actually started out as a volunteer myself.

My overall vision is for our young recruits to have the same training and education that I've benefited from. We enlist passionate, young volunteers through Surf Life Saving where they learn the basics of water safety, first aid and IRB training skills. Then, when they're old enough they can migrate into Coastguard and commence a whole new journey and education from there, with the end goal of learning how to skipper Coastguard boats and executing search and rescue missions alongside our partners and the emergency services.

It's been a remarkable journey for me and nothing makes me prouder to see young recruits coming through the ranks and developing all those rich life skills that are involved in volunteer roles like this.”

This year, Mark won the prestigious Hutchwilco Coastguard Volunteer of the Year Award, which recognises exceptional commitment, dedication and an outstanding contribution to Coastguard.

“I've been hugely humbled by this accolade and the recognition that comes with it,” says Mark.

“Coastguard's national volunteer network is considerable. It's an honour to be part of such a committed, passionate group and I know I was in

some pretty fine company on the night of the National Coastguard Awards in September.”

Mark told us about one of the most memorable search and rescue missions he's been involved in.

“There was a seaman in trouble on a badly damaged fishing boat with a head injury caused by the dangerous seas off Greymouth. Inclement weather conditions made it impossible to get across the dreaded Grey River Bar. Experienced skipper Brian Piner made the call to execute the SAR mission at midnight when the high tide provided a short, half-hour window when the sea flattens off. We hedged our bets that this would be the best time to attempt the SAR transfer.

This was one of the most incredible things I have seen Coastguard people do...



The Grey River Bar is unforgiving, the river was pitch-black and there were huge waves breaking on both tip heads and pressure waves coming up the river.

The mission was accomplished and the man was saved. This was one the most incredible things I have seen Coastguard people do. The weather dramatically worsened following that mission, with no boats leaving or entering Greymouth for two days following, so there was one crucial window to conduct the mission and we did it.

This is why I became a volunteer. It doesn't always work out and there are times that lives haven't been saved. But as volunteers we can only stretch so far. Any loss of life on the Grey River Bar impacts on the members of our unit. It is an incredibly difficult stretch of water and at times, it is terrifying. In the

Mark won this year's Hutchwilco Coastguard Volunteer of the Year Award



21+ years I have been with Coastguard and Surf Life Saving on the West Coast, together we have saved many precious lives.

I know all Coastguard volunteers put themselves on the line to do this work. We need to remember we are all great people and deserving of recognition.”



Have YOU heard about TEAM RESCUE?
 It's a great way to donate a monthly gift to help us save lives at sea. Your support will enable Coastguard to provide search and rescue services, on the water and in the air, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

As part of Team Rescue, your support will mean that over **2,400** dedicated and vigilant volunteers, stationed in **71** locations around New Zealand's coastline and major lakes, can receive the training, wet weather gear and equipment they need to save lives on the water and reunite family members who feared they may never see each other again.

Look out for information on our website, www.coastguard.co.nz in the post, or contact us with any questions on this exciting new venture!



FROM THE HELM

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I'd like to thank you for your support for Coastguard, without which our volunteer crews would simply not be able to continue their selfless lifesaving work around our coast, rivers and lakes.

With summer on the way and boaties all over the country heading for the water, it's important that everyone on the water follows a few simple steps to stay safe. Coastguard will always be there should you get into trouble, but we are committed to making New Zealand's waterways a safer place for everybody. Please take the time to read and remember the simple but effective advice in the Water Safety and Boating Safety Codes.

Coastguard is a charity, and provides the primary marine search and rescue service in New Zealand. With your kind gifts we are able to provide essential training, gear and equipment for our volunteer search and rescue crews, so they are ready to respond quickly to emergencies and bring loved ones safely back to our families.

Without your help we could not continue to save lives at sea.

Thank you.

Patrick Holmes
Chief Executive Officer

Who are we?

Coastguard is a Charity

The Government only provides 15% of the funds Coastguard needs each year. The rest is raised from a supportive community.

Coastguard is New Zealand's primary marine search and rescue organisation

Our 2,400 trained Coastguard volunteers undertake all search and rescue operations on the water and in the air.



Yes I want to Save Lives at Sea. My gift is enclosed.

Please send me more information about giving a monthly gift as part of TEAM RESCUE

Title _____ First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____ Postcode _____

E-mail _____ Phone _____

I would like to give:

\$48 to provide a volunteer's marine safety rescue grab bag.

\$140 to provide vital search and rescue training for 1 volunteer for 4 weeks

\$295 to pay for a month's repairs and maintenance on a rescue vessel.

Or I would like to give \$ _____

I have made my donation using online banking:

Please direct credit a payment to the Coastguard account.

Account: Royal New Zealand Coastguard Inc
Account #: **12 3209 0434030 01**

Please use your surname in the particulars box and reference 'Spring 2013 Newsletter'.

I enclose a cheque payable to: 'Coastguard New Zealand'

Please charge to my Credit Card

Visa

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Name on card _____

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Or you can donate online at www.coastguard.co.nz

Charities Commission CC #36138

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