

## LOOKING AFTER HISTORIC LIFEBOATS

The RNLI works closely with National Historic Ships UK. Many of our historic lifeboats are listed in the National Register of Historic Vessels (NRHV) or the National Small Boat Register (NSBR) on their website at [nationalhistoricships.org.uk](http://nationalhistoricships.org.uk). We recommend that anyone aiming to preserve an historic lifeboat refers to the *Conserving Historic Vessels* section of their site, which has guidelines on *Recording and Deconstructing Historic Vessels* and can be downloaded free of charge. A third volume *Conserving Historic Vessels*, which sets down the fundamental principles, is available in hard copy and can be purchased from National Historic Ships UK.

### 1. Can the RNLI help us to look after our historic lifeboat?

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea. We cannot give financial assistance to any external organisation. We recommend that you work on a plan to look after your boat and consider the following:

- Are you restoring or conserving your vessel?  
One of the best sources of advice on this is on the website [nationalhistoricships.org.uk](http://nationalhistoricships.org.uk).
- Who are you looking after the boat for? Is it the public or for private interest?
- How will you keep funding the care of the boat?
- If you plan to publicly display your boat, have you spoken to museums in your local area?

### 2. Can the RNLI provide us with the correct paint for our boat?

No. The RNLI does not supply paint for ex-service lifeboats but we may be able to advise on what colours your boat would have been.

### 3. Can the RNLI give us the plans or boat specifications for the boat we are looking after?

Possibly, but not all lifeboat plans have survived. The RNLI holds very few from before the 1950s and most of these are held by the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. Find out more at [rmg.co.uk](http://rmg.co.uk). For post-1950s plans please contact us at [heritage@rnli.org.uk](mailto:heritage@rnli.org.uk). Please bear in mind that lifeboats were continually modified and improved throughout their service so the original build plans may not exactly match the specifications of the vessel in your care. NHS UK's *Conserving Historic Vessels* publication may help you to decide whether to conserve your lifeboat incorporating adaptations, or return it to a previous state.

### 4. Can the RNLI give us the service history of our boat?

Yes. In most cases we can provide you with the service history of your boat but the level of detail will vary.

### 5. Does the RNLI have a crew list for our boat?

No. However, we may be able to provide some names and details within the provision of the Data Protection Act.

### 6. Does the RNLI have photographs or film of our boat?

We may be able to offer display images from our photographic archives. Please contact us at [heritage@rnli.org.uk](mailto:heritage@rnli.org.uk) to request a search.

### 7. Can the RNLI publicise our boat on its website?

No. The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea – we cannot advertise your boat.

### 8. Can we put an RNLI flag on our boat?

No. Only operational RNLI lifeboats and sites can fly an RNLI flag. If your boat has an RNLI roundel this can be used but no other RNLI markings should appear on a vessel that is no longer in our service.

### 9. Can the RNLI help us set up our lifeboat museum?

No. The RNLI has limited funds for heritage. We run seven museums and cannot support external projects. Speak to your local museum or get in contact with your Museum Development Officer via the Association of Independent Museums' (AIM) website at [aim-museums.co.uk/content/mdos](http://aim-museums.co.uk/content/mdos) to find out what support is available in your area. AIM also publish *Successfully setting up a new museum* – a guide, which is free to download.

### 10. Can the RNLI help us to find a part for our boat?

No. The RNLI cannot trace parts for non-serving lifeboats.

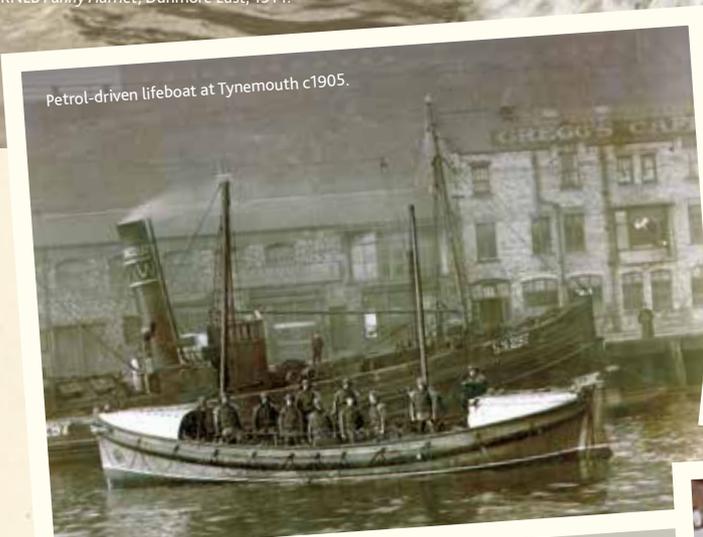


Lifeboats

# FAQs



RNLB *Fanny Harriet*, Dunmore East, 1914.



Petrol-driven lifeboat at Tynemouth c1905.



Henry Greathead's 'The Original'.



Fundraising in Manchester, c1890.



RNLB Admiral Sir George Black, *The Lizard*, c1907.