



Ahoy!

National Coastwatch Institution
www.nci.org.uk

**The bi-monthly newsletter for Friends of
Hengistbury Head Lookout and its Watchkeepers**

Issue 4 June 2020

As lockdown continues, albeit with easing restrictions, we hope that this finds our readers, their friends and families safe and well.

Watchkeepers at the Lookout were mightily delighted in May when National gave their blessing for the re-opening of Stations around the country, with strict guidelines to ensure Covid-19-safe environments. The Station management worked swiftly and efficiently to enable NCIHH to re-open on 23rd May, at first for only three days a week, but increasing availability of Watchkeepers has led this to steadily increase to six days by mid-June. Watchkeepers are coping well with an intense work rate for the two personnel currently permitted on each shift.

Watchkeepers continue to keep in touch with developments via the weekly Bulletin, and many continue to enjoy the weekly online coffee mornings, which are beneficial to all in maintaining camaraderie. The photography group in their weekly online meetings have enjoyed setting each other a variety of tasks requiring an imaginative eye as well as maximising the gadgets on their cameras. Busy planning next year's calendar, last week half a dozen keen snappers met at 5.30am ! to capitalise on the early morning light.

We look forward to being able to bring you continuing positive news about our Station and its activities in the next edition of *Ahoy!*, which will be published at the end of August.

In this issue:

- **Moving on** – thanks to an outgoing volunteer
- **Congratulations** – recently qualified Watchkeepers
- **In Focus** – a regular feature about our volunteers
- **Been there, done that.....** - events since our last edition
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Moving on.....

We were sorry to receive the resignation of our Friends Administrator, Maureen Taylor, who has recently moved away from the area. We thank her for her sterling work over the past 12 months and wish her every happiness in her new home nearer to many friends and family.

We are delighted to announce that one of our Watchkeepers, Adele Orr, has kindly agreed to take on this role and we wish her all the best. Adele's contact details can be found in the "Stay in touch" section at the end of this document.

Congratulations..... 😊😊😊😊😊

Watchkeepers

Since our last edition, we have had only one Watchkeeper assessment since April, which demanded some real Covid-19-secure ingenuity. The irony of the eleventh hour change of date for Mary Turner's original Final Assessment – from 22nd to 23rd March – produced a brain-teasing conundrum for Training Officer Chris Lloyd-Smith. Chris reports how some serious thinking eventually resulted in a positive outcome....

"When we were able to start Watches again, with only one person being allowed in the Watchroom at any one time, Mary's status as a Trainee prevented her from taking part. To rectify this I had to find a new way to carry out a Final Assessment, ensuring Covid-19 safety-compliant procedures.

It had been a while since Mary had been on Watch so we took the opportunity of a closed day at the Lookout, firstly sitting outside and carrying out a couple of hours' revision training in the sunshine . Mary undertook a practice run at opening up the Station as if she were on Watch, with me observing from behind the black and yellow line, keeping my social distance and prompting where needed.

A couple of weeks later, Mary underwent her Final Assessment proper in a similar manner. I sent her the plotting questions which she completed at home with great accuracy, and she assured me that she had completed all three in a very swift six and a half minutes! We then repeated the sitting in the sunshine session when I took Mary through all the competency questions, and then once again she opened up the Station and demonstrated all the practical elements of the assessment.

Despite the strange and slightly difficult nature of the process, I am pleased to say that Mary passed with flying colours and the overall exercise was rounded off with the now traditional presentation of Watchkeepers' epaulettes; 2m social distancing between us was achieved using that versatile piece of random equipment, the litter-picker! Well done Mary! Thank you for your commitment to NCI Hengistbury Head and we wish you much enjoyment and every success in your work for the Station.



We now have 89 qualified Watchkeepers and five Trainees. The suspended training programme will resume at the end of July

Station Manager

We are delighted to announce that, following his (Covid-19 extended) probationary period as Acting Station Manager, the Trustees have confirmed that Peter Holway has satisfactorily completed this period of service and is accordingly approved as Station Manager for NCIHH. Congratulations, Peter, and all best wishes as you guide the Station to further success.



In Focus

Name Brian Roberts

Role within Station Hon. President, NCI Hengistbury Head



Brian is one of the founders of NCIHH, and was the inaugural Station Manager. Following his resignation from this role in September 2019, and in recognition of his drive and initiative, he was elected as the Station's Honorary President. He is a valued advisor, and continues to be active as a Watchkeeper and in many other aspects of Station life.

Why and when did you join NCI?

I was born in Christchurch but lived for most of my married life in North London and more recently North Hampshire, I moved back to the coast in June 2012. Two months later I watched this South Today news item

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J08FUZwScwk>

I had been sailing for a number of years and saw this as a wonderful opportunity to give something back to the sailing community. I applied to join Calshot Tower NCI almost immediately and then spent over a year on a waiting list for a training course which finally happened in October 2013.

What did you do in your working life?

I started in London for BOAC/British Airways working in reservations management and then providing technology to travel agents. I left BA to join a subsidiary which developed and ran Travel Agency systems; I became their Technical Director and then CEO.

I left the travel industry to join KPMG IT Systems, becoming Global IT Director (based in Amsterdam) delivering systems to over 100,000 staff in 155 countries.

On coming home to the UK I turned to Interim Management fulfilling contracts across a number of industries.

How did your work towards the opening of HHNCI evolve?

From the word go at Calshot I wanted to be a Watchkeeper at Hengistbury Head. I quickly sought permission from my Station Manager to start working on the possibility of opening up the Lookout. I researched the number of accidents reported in the Press, and the history of the Coastguard at HH. In early 2014 I sent my first report to NCI HQ on the possible value of a Station at Hengistbury Head. This was met with a response that they were working on a UK Station development strategy with HMCG and would get back to me. I continued to cajole HQ, the result being given various unrelated tasks to keep me quiet, including being asked to conduct a first survey of Hayling Island as a possible location for an NCI Station. Progress was slow and frustrating until two things occurred in 2017. Firstly, meeting a Christchurch Councillor, Sally Derham-Wilkes, who showed great interest in my plans and gave me contacts in Bournemouth Council, and secondly finding Chris Lloyd-Smith and Ed Essery at Calshot who were also keen to open up HHNCI. It was our unique blend of skills, hard work and resilience that got us through to opening at Southbourne in March 2018. We needed each other through the highs and lows of the 18 month project to enable us to achieve our final goal of opening the Lookout in August 2018.

How do you like to spend your leisure time?

I have many and varied interests, but top of my list is time with my family; my wife Joan and I have three married daughters, and 4 grandchildren. Joan and I love walking, including with a local rambling group, and I also enjoy gardening. In an attempt to improve my knowledge and understanding of technology, I am learning Microprocessing for Raspberry Pi and Microbit. I am following an Open University course in Astronomy and am pursuing my interest in photography with the PIGS – NCIHH's very own photography group 😊.

In the early 70s I was the BOAC British Sub Aqua Club Training Officer, and spent many a happy weekend on the south coast exploring wrecks and more. I made frequent visits to Kyrenia, Cyprus, to dive with Andreas, the accredited discoverer of a 4th century Greek merchant ship which is on display in Kyrenia Castle; for further information on this, see "Kyrenia Ship" on Wikipedia.

I have been sailing on and off for a number of years, mostly on a friend's Swedish Najad 331 based at Hamble Point Marina until he finally sold the boat. Since then I have occasionally chartered, but not enough, so if you need a competent crew member let me know, although I have no formal sailing qualifications!

What's the best thing about volunteering with HHNCI?

I love the way we have built up a new community at HHNCI along with some great new friendships. It is so good to be involved in something that is appreciated and directly benefits the local community whilst having the best office views in the country.

Thank you, Brian, and for giving of your very busy leisure time to serve NCI HH



Been there, done that....

Incidents since the last Friends Newsletter

An "Incident" in NCI terms is a situation concerning the safety of life or property, during which an NCI Station has observed, or had any involvement of supporting the Coastguard (CG) or other Search and Rescue (SAR) resource. NCI Hengistbury Head is the third busiest Station in the country after Porthcawl (84 Incidents) and Calshot Tower (60 Incidents), having been involved in 54 Incidents from 1st January to 30th December 2019. This consolidates the importance of our presence on the Head. Most recent Incidents appear at the top of this list. CRT = Coastguard Rescue Team; MoP = Member of Public CG = Coastguard; ILB = Inshore Lifeboat; nfa = no further action; case vac = casualty evacuation. Incidents since 18th March (when the Station closed) up to 24th June inclusive...

Date	Incident Summary	Lifeboat involved
24/06/2020	CG requested monitoring of struggling kayaker. Target identified and position passed. Updated when ILB brought him safely ashore.	Yes
01/06/2020	CG requested watch on drifting upturned inflatable. Target sighted and monitored and reported but nfa	No
01/06/2020	CG requested sighting of drifting inflatable white swan. Target sighted and reported until out of sight.	No
31/05/2020	Reported empty inflatable being blown offshore. CRT attended, target monitored until it reached shore. nfa	No

Date	Incident Summary	Lifeboat involved
31/05/2020	CG requested visual check on PWC reportedly taking on water. Target identified for a time until NCI Swanage took over monitoring. Casualty towed in by RNLI.	Yes
23/05/2020	CG requested any sighting of drifting unoccupied inflatables. Targets not visible. nfa	No

Calling Hengistbury Head Friends or Watchkeepers who are Amateur Radio Operators....

David Wilkins, one of HHNCI's Watchkeepers, and the Members' Representative for Health & Welfare on the Committee, would like to make contact with any HHNCI Friends and members who are licensed Amateur Radio operators or listeners.

David tells us that there are a few Amateur Operators at other NCI stations, in particular at Exmouth, where they organise a special Amateur Radio Station in the training room next to their lookout once a year, something which is, unfortunately, not possible at our location.

David has already met a couple of Watchkeepers who are licensed, so if any of our Friends are interested in joining the ranks, he would be delighted to hear from you. David's call sign is G5HY; please contact him via his personal e-mail at david@g5hy.com.

Quiz time

Kindly forwarded to the Station from Lee-on-The-Solent. Enjoy!

WHERE ARE WE?

Find the NCI stations using the weird, wonderful, tenuous, cryptic clues! Number shows letters in the answer. First one has been done for you, so you can continue, or hit delete!

You may need a warped imagination for some of these, sorry!

1. CERTAIN PIG [8] SHOREHAM
2. OLD [Opp.] SANCTUARY [8]
3. SINGE FACIAL FEATURE [9]
4. PLACE OF WORSHIP, SHARP [6] [5]
5. CLOTHING, CROP PART OF BUILDING [4] [8]
6. FISH INDICATE [4] [5]
7. WATER HOLES, BESIDE, OCEAN [5] [4] [3] [3]
8. QUICK TREE [9]
9. COB OLD OR YOUNG? [7]
10. KNITTING YARN PIN, TIP [8] [5]
11. PEOPLE PEBBLE [9]
12. GREEN FRUIT, TREE [4] [3]
13. SEWING IMPLEMENTS [7]
14. MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OCEAN [7]
15. SHELTER, ON THE STITCH LOANED [3] [2] [3] [6]
16. NEAR [Anag.] SHARP END [4] [5]
17. PRINCE OF WALES AREA [11]
18. CHIEF QUEEN'S RESIDENCE [9]
19. LOG BOOK CODE FOR POLICE WRECK [7]
20. RIPPED COVE [6]
21. EIGHT+TWO LIPS [10]
22. SWEDISH GROUP ARM PART TOGETHER [11]
23. HAMMER THESE IN, INDICATE [5] [5]
24. RED LEFT, NOT SEA, BEAK [8] [4]
25. COST, TONGUE USE, FOOT DIGIT [9]
26. GWENDOLINE'S SNOOZE, BRAIN HOLDER [7] [4]
27. ROCK, TIP [5] [5]
28. KEGS [Anag.] LAKE MONSTER [8]
29. BANK HOLIDAY HORSE'S HOME [10]
30. NORTH BEGINNING [Opp.] [8]

Mary Thompson [Lee on The Solent]

Looking ahead.....

Visits to the Lookout for Friends of Hengistbury Head Lookout (FoHHL)

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, we are currently unable to offer these until further notice.

Last chance for a bargain!

Halfway through the year and we still have a few of our 2020 NCI calendars available. For a small donation, one of these epic pieces can be yours! Please contact Ed Essery if you would like one (or three!): hengistburyhead.treasurer@nci.org.uk Strict deadline for orders – Sunday 20th July, while stocks last!

Stay in touch

Please let us know if any of your personal contact details change. Please address all correspondence to our Friends Administrator Adele Orr hengistburyhead.administration@nci.org.uk who will also be happy to provide details of how to become a Friend should you know of anyone interested.

You can keep up to date with our activities via various social media:

- Facebook Hengistbury Head NCI
- Twitter [@NCIHengistburyH](https://twitter.com/NCIHengistburyH)
- Instagram @hengistburyheadnci

NCI Hengistbury Head is one of 56 NCI Stations around the UK keeping “eyes along the coast”.

Current opening hours are 10am – 7pm

From Monday 20th July opening hours will be 8am-7pm



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