



National Coastwatch Institution
www.nci.org.uk

Ahoy!

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

Issue 7 December 2020



Festive felicitations one and all!

We trust that you and yours are keeping well and warm.

By the time you receive this, four volunteers in two shifts of two have undertaken our first Christmas Day Watches at the Lookout! Due to the exceptional circumstances this year, a few people found themselves “un-duty bound” on Christmas Day – what better way to spend it than by keeping an eye on all the crazy cold-water swimmers and keen as mustard water-users? Copious mince pies and chunks of home-made cake were consumed, but no accompanying hot toddy – that treat was waiting at home 😊

As the year draws to an end, we look forward to more positive lives in 2021 with the promise of a vaccine giving hope to all. We send our heartfelt thanks to you for your continuing support of NCIHH and wish you and your families and friends all the best for health and happiness in the coming year.

In this issue:

- **Congratulations** – recently qualified Watchkeepers, and more good news
- **Money for nothing** – simple fundraising
- **Stay in touch** – essential contact details
- **In Focus** – a regular feature about our volunteers
- **Been there, done that...** – a summary of recent Station events

Congratulations ... 😊😊😊

To Terry Smith, who has qualified as a Watchkeeper since the last edition of this publication. We wish you many years of enjoyable Watchkeeping ahead.

We finish the year with a total of 103 Watchkeepers, 88 of whom are fully qualified. Training and assessment opportunities are somewhat limited due to current restrictions and we are grateful to all concerned for their patience in the progress they are able to make. Two Trainers have resigned their duties this past year but we have recruited five new Trainers to join the team. In November we welcomed eleven new Trainees who had been patiently waiting to be invited to join us for quite some time; they finally undertook their initial classroom training session on 2nd November, courtesy of Covid-secure conference facilities kindly made available to us at The Captain's Club Hotel in Christchurch. We wish them all the best as they embark on their paths to becoming Watchkeepers with us.

Additional congratulations – and thanks – to two Friends who each recently won £25 in the BH Coastal Lottery, and very kindly donated their winnings back into our funds 😊

Money for nothing...

As we continue to use online shopping facilities, there is a very simple way of fundraising for our Station which is no more than a click away. AmazonSmile is a program that donates 0.5% of your eligible purchases on Amazon to a charity of your choice. All you need to do is start your shopping at smile.amazon.com. The donation will be made at no extra cost to you and you can choose from nearly one million public charitable organisations. Download or update to the latest version of the Amazon Shopping app on your phone. You can find it in the App Store for iOS or Google Play for Android. Open the app and find 'Settings' in the main menu (☰). Tap on 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on AmazonSmile on your phone. When selecting your charity, look for NCI Hengistbury Head. Thank you!

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 Adele.Orr@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



In Focus

Name

John Grundy

Role within Station

Watchkeeper

Qualified Oct. 2018



Tell us a little about what's involved in your role as a Watchkeeper

My role, as part of the team on duty, is to watch our local waters and coastline, and monitor various radio channels in order to “spot, plot and report” any individual or vessel that appears to be, or is reported to us as, in need of assistance. We report to Her Majesty’s Coastguard (HMCG) and liaise with our Search and Rescue partners such as Solent Coastguard, the RNLI, Border Force and the Maritime Coastguard Agency to assist in any way we can in saving lives at sea and around the coastline, and all relevant details are officially logged at the Station.

Obviously, buying biscuits and mince pies on the way to your shift and the ability to make tea and coffee are pre-requisites for becoming a Watchkeeper, but we also undertake in-depth on-the-job training from our team of Training Officers before taking a final assessment with the aim of becoming a Watchkeeper, qualified to a national standard.

What did you do in your working life?

After leaving school in Warwickshire I trained in radio, television and electronic repairs and was employed in this environment for thirteen years. I began my training at a time when most electronic equipment used thermionic valves. By the time I qualified, radios, televisions and other electronic equipment was transitioning to using transistors and integrated circuits, now known as micro-chips. I relocated to Bournemouth in 1976 and worked for Supertel and Visionhire - remember them?!

In 1982 I moved into Broadcast Engineering with Television South and Meridian Television, both based at Northam TV Studios in Southampton. It was great fun to be involved in telecine (film projection system), videotape editing, news editing and working with studio productions. I was based there for 23 years. In 2005 I moved to Arqiva, a satellite facility based in a control room just north of Winchester. We were in contact with broadcasters from around the globe, distributing mainly sport and news 24/7. We had around ninety satellite antennae on site, ranging in size from three to thirteen metres in diameter. These were used to send and receive satellite services to and from clients. I worked on long day and night shifts for eleven years until my well-earned retirement.

How do you spend your leisure time?

I enjoy DIY and am always busy building, fixing or decorating. My hobbies include photography, walking, reading, travel, movies or a good TV drama. Days spent relaxing at my beach hut reading and watching the world go by are some of my favourites. At present I am editing all my videos from my holidays around the world. I also enjoy days out with the HH NCI photographic interest group (PIGs) of which I am a member.

When did you join HHNCI, and why?

I retired in December 2017 and was keen to volunteer locally and maintain a daily routine. I read an article in the Bournemouth Echo about HHNCI starting up in Spring 2018 and thought it would be a great opportunity to be part of something beneficial to the local community. The role of Watchkeepers sounded interesting and challenging and I undertook my first observation Watch in June 2018, when we were operating from the Beach Office in Southbourne.

What's the best thing about volunteering with HHNCI?

For me I think the best part of being a Watchkeepers at HHNCI is working alongside all the amazing volunteers. My colleagues have a vast range of life experiences and we can put our combined knowledge together for any challenge that a Watch can bring.

What are you currently reading?

I've just finished reading the sixth book in the Millennium series. Originally written by Stieg

Larsson, the two primary characters are a computer hacker and an investigative journalist. After Larsson's untimely death in 2004, the series was completed by David Lagerkrantz. I'm currently reading a non-fiction book about WW2 convoys.

Favourite tippie?

A cold pint of cider!

Thank you for giving us such a rich insight to your life and interests, John. We look forward to balmy days when the cider will be most refreshing!

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. In the 12 months to 30th September 2020, NCIHH was the second busiest Station in the country after Porthcawl (64 Incidents), having been involved in 47 Incidents. This consolidates the importance of our presence on the Head. Most recent Incidents appear at the top of the list below.

CRT = Coastguard Rescue Team; MoP = Member of Public CG = Coastguard; ILB = Inshore Lifeboat; LB = Lifeboat; nfa = no further action; cas evac = casualty evacuation; FAWGI = False Alarm with Good Intent

Date of Incident	Incident Summary	Lifeboat involved
09/12/2020	Reported grounded catamaran to CG. Monitored its safety until refloated on tide.	No
21/11/2020	CG requested visual check for kite surfer reportedly 'in trouble'. All surfers in sight were not in distress, CRT confirmed all clear. All assets stood down.	No

07/11/2020	MoP reported PWC in possible difficulty having hit rocks. ILB tasked to investigate. ILB with PWC - not in difficulty.	Yes
06/11/2020	Advised HMCG of kite-surfer in difficulty. Kite lost. ILB & CRT tasked. MoP reported her partner safe, kite lost. Details passed to HMCG.	Yes
31/10/2020	MoP reported kayaker struggling against wind and sea conditions. Advised HMCG and continued monitoring. Lost sight after sunset. HMCG stood NCI down & continuing to monitor remotely.	No
25/10/2020	MoP reported yacht with no mast stationary in water. Initially no sighting. Advised CG yacht now under power. Maintained eyes on till considered safe.	No

Watchkeepers have a day out...

At least one group of people from the Station has been fortunate to have met up a couple of times over the past few months. Members of the Watchkeepers' Photography Interest Group (aka The PIGs) have enjoyed socially distanced visits to Kingston Lacy and Moors Valley Country Park in their tireless pursuit of snapping THAT image which could adorn your walls in the future. This conveniently leads us to remind you about...

2021 NCIHH Calendars

Did we mention in a previous issue that the Station has calendars for sale?! We will all need one next year if only to record our vaccination appointments! The photographs in the calendars are of our beautiful surrounding areas and all were taken by members of the Photography Interest Group.

The calendars are available to Friends, Watchkeepers, and their families and friends, at a special price of £6 each; they are already on sale in a number of local retail outlets, where the recommended price is £7.50.

STOCKS ARE NOW VERY LOW so please order soon before they sell out! Please note that the calendars are NOT on sale to the public from the Lookout.



Friends who would like a calendar should contact our Friends Administrator Adele Orr
Adele.Orr@nci.org.uk.

Calendars will be dispatched / arrangements made for collection or delivery to local areas on receipt of full payment. Please make cheques payable to "NCI Hengistbury Head". Please include the cost of postage and packing should you require this:

one calendar p&p
 two calendars p&p to same address
 more calendars p&p

first class = £2 second class £1.75
 £2.50 and £2.25 respectively
 prices on application

The next edition of *Ahoy!* will be published at the end of February
 2021

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

Current opening hours are 8am – 5pm or dusk if earlier

