

ICESAR SAW THE NEW YEAR IN ON DUTY AT TOWER PIER!



Duty Crew: January 02 2007

The Tower Pier Lifeboat Station played host to two Iceland crew from ICESAR's Reykjavik rescue station..... Here's Janet Kelly, the station manager's report :

"Borstein and Theodor (known as Stony & Ted) from ICESAR quickly fitted in and were welcomed by the full time and volunteer crew. The fact that they both spoke excellent English was an enormous benefit and allowed them to fully understand the on-board communications.

They were both experienced helms on Atlantic 21 in Iceland so were familiar with our E class layout and equipment in no time. This enabled them to be active crew with the Tower crew, taking part in river exercises and interacting with all our visitors.

The Atlantic 85 was on trial at Tower Pier Lifeboat station during the time the Icelandic crew were there and this meant the extra crew were an enormous help to the three duty crew. It enabled the crew to take two lifeboats out for towing and man overboard exercises.

The New Years' Eve celebrations were literally on the doorstep of Tower Pier Lifeboat station which necessitated two operational lifeboats in place on the river at either end of the closure between Westminster and Waterloo Bridges; *we site one lifeboat above the closure and one lifeboat below.* Having Ted and Stony (one on each lifeboat) improved our efficiency, especially as one of them is a trained medic. The crews attended a total of 6 calls for the lifeboats in a very short time on Dec 31 and all were medical emergencies.

Both Ted and Stony were keen, easy going, English speaking and clearly efficient lifeboat crew in their own country. Consequently it was a pleasure to have them as part of our crew. They were extremely interested in our operational set up on the River Thames, our E class lifeboats and the equipment we use.

The attachment to Tower Pier Lifeboat was a clear success. Friendships have been formed with the common bond of saving life with lifeboats. The relationship between the RNLI and ICESAR has been enriched by this attachment."

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From the Icelandics' perspective, here's the Trip Report by Theodór (Ted) Bjarnason and Þorsteinn Jónas (Stony) Sigurbjörnsson (pictured right and below)

"The main purpose of the visit was to gain additional experience and a better understanding of search and rescue from the RNLI's point of view but also to exchange ideas and learn from each other. Our aim was met most successfully.

We found it interesting to see the excellent co-operation enjoyed between the RNLI, Coastguard and all the emergency services.



We anticipated a great experience from the opportunity but the reality far exceeded any expectation. On the whole, the experience with the crew was very good. During our time at the station we worked alongside the crew on 6 call-outs.

We very much appreciated the fact that they went out of their way to let us try as much as we possibly could to gain the maximum from the whole exchange experience. During the shouts we were treated as full members of the team, and we enjoyed their rich sense of humour.

Many of the RNLI procedures could work well in Iceland. Although the equipment the crews use is very similar to that used in Iceland, we see the RNLI as leaders in Search & Rescue and recognise that much can still be learned about procedures and equipment.

Through the week in such a busy lifeboat station we gained much experience and increased our own personal skills as rescuers. Ted & Stony."



<http://www.landsbjorg.is>
or <http://www.icesar.com>

¹ Slysavarnafélagið Landsbjörg / Icelandic Association for Search and Rescue (ICE-SAR)