12 September 2013

Stunning sea rescue photography book and exhibition launched

A new book and exhibition showcasing striking photos of the lifesaving work of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) are being launched today (Thursday, 12 September).

From dramatic shots of lifeboats battling fierce seas to candid portraits of the charity’s dedicated volunteer crew members, lifeguards and fundraisers, The Lifeboat: Courage on our Coasts showcases over 400 iconic images captured through the lens of RNLI lifeboat crew member and award-winning professional photographer Nigel Millard.

Nigel’s photos – the result of two years’ work – offer a unique eyewitness insight into the full scope of the RNLI’s lifesaving work. To capture the images, Nigel, who volunteers as a crew member at Torbay in Devon, visited RNLI lifeboat stations and lifeguard units around the UK and Ireland. At each lifeboat station, Nigel carried a pager and was alerted to shouts, along with the local crew, to capture the action first-hand.

The Lifeboat: Courage on our Coasts, published by Conway, is written by Dr Huw Lewis-Jones, with the foreword by HRH The Duke of Cambridge. A selection of striking images from the book also features in a touring exhibition of the same name. The exhibition is freely available to everyone, 24 hours a day, whatever the weather, just like the RNLI itself.

It is the first time that photographs of the RNLI’s work have been made available to the public in this way. It is travelling to locations including London, Southampton, Manchester, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Dublin and Birmingham.

Copies of the book will be available to buy at the exhibition, along with other specially-designed merchandise featuring Nigel’s stunning images.

Nigel Millard says he hopes the images will give people a better understanding of the RNLI’s lifesaving work:

‘My favourite photo is a casualty’s eye view. I’ve been a man overboard on exercises – once in the water, you see nothing, then just a tiny bit of orange, and it’s not the sun, it’s a lifeboat. It epitomises the work I do, and the work of the RNLI.

‘I hope the exhibition will raise awareness of the charity. People who don’t know anything about rescue at sea will get to hear about it, they will know we’re here to help. Someone might be inspired to volunteer – not necessarily on the crew, but maybe as a fundraiser. Or some might wish to donate.’

Author, Dr Huw Lewis-Jones, who accompanied Nigel on many of his photoshoots, says of the book and exhibition:

‘It’s a show of great photos that represent the best of the RNLI. It’s a way of reminding people that they are only ever 70 miles from the sea – we may all need the RNLI’s help. We’ve joined crews all around the country on shouts, but also for a cup of tea. The photos are a collection
of what the RNLI family means, the true spirit of the RNLI – ordinary people doing extraordinary things.’

The book’s publication date is 30 September. It can be pre-ordered and is available direct from the RNLI (www.rnlishop.org) as well as good bookshops and stockists including Waterstones, Foyles and WH Smiths and Amazon UK.

The outdoor exhibition prints, measuring 1750mm x 1170mm, are created with Epson's 64-inch (162.6cm) SureColor SC-S70600 large format printer. As leader in the photographic and fine art print markets, Epson’s technology produces high resolution and the widest colour gamut to ensure that Nigel’s photography is reproduced to the highest standard.

**My Coast photography competition**

In partnership with Epson, the charity is running a photography competition, *My Coast*, while the exhibition is touring. The charity is challenging photographers to capture what the varied and beautiful coasts of the British Isles mean to them. The winner will receive:

- A large format print of an image of their choice from the *Lifeboat: Courage on our Coasts* exhibition, signed by the photographer Nigel Millard
- A photo quality Epson colour printer (kindly donated by Epson)
- A waterproof housing for an SLR camera and an iPhone waterproof housing (kindly donated by Cameras Underwater)

A short-list of 10 entries will be selected by Nigel Millard. He will be looking for striking images that encapsulate the photographer's experience of the British Isles coastlines and something of their relationship with the sea. The short-list will then go forward for a public vote on the RNLI’s Facebook page. **The closing date is Monday 31 March 2014** and the winner will be notified by Monday 5 May 2014. Entries should be submitted by completing the online form at www.rnli.org/mycoast and emailing images as a JPEG file to mycoast@rnli.org.uk.

For those who can’t make it to the exhibition, an online version will also be available at www.rnli.org/courageonourcoasts.

**Notes to Editors**

- A selection of images (watermarked) are attached. More images are available for media use. To request additional, non-watermarked or high-res versions, please contact RNLI or Anova PR on the details below to request copies.

- **Book credit:** *The Lifeboat: Courage on our Coasts* by Nigel Millard & Huw Lewis-Jones. Published by Conway - RRP £25.

- Nigel Millard and Dr Huw Lewis-Jones are available for interview. Please contact RNLI or Anova PR on the details below to make arrangements.

- Nigel Millard is an international photographer and a lifeboat crew member at Torbay in Devon. He is best known for his ongoing commissions for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, for his special issue Royal Mail stamps, and for commissions for companies including Mercedes, Land Rover and Lloyds Bank. He has been working with the RNLI now for almost a decade. In 2010 Nigel was awarded an RNLI Supporter Award for his continued support.
Dr Huw Lewis-Jones is a historian and editor with a PhD from the University of Cambridge. Huw was Curator at the National Maritime Museum and is now an award-winning author who writes and lectures widely about maritime history, exploration and the visual arts. His books include *Arctic*, *Ocean Portraits*, *In Search of the South Pole*, and *Mountain Heroes*, which won Adventure Book of the Year at the World ITB Awards in Germany.

RNLI media contacts
For more information please contact Laura Fennimore, RNLI Public Relations Officer, on 01202 663181 / Laura_Fennimore@rnli.org.uk or Benedicte Lerfald, Anova Marketing and Digital Community Executive, on 0207 605 1422 / blerfald@anovabooks.com.

RNLI online
For more information on the RNLI please visit [www.rnli.org](http://www.rnli.org). News releases and other media resources, including RSS feeds, downloadable photos and video, are available at the RNLI Press Centre [www.rnli.org/news](http://www.rnli.org/news).

Key facts about the RNLI
The RNLI charity saves lives at sea. Its volunteers provide a 24-hour search and rescue service around the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland coasts. The RNLI operates 237 lifeboat stations in the UK and Ireland and has 200 lifeguard units on beaches around the UK. The RNLI is independent of Coastguard and government and depends on voluntary donations and legacies to maintain its rescue service. Since the RNLI was founded in 1824 its lifeboat crews and lifeguards have saved over 140,000 lives.

A charity registered in England and Wales (209603) and Scotland (SC037736). Charity number CHY 2678 in the Republic of Ireland