



THE LIFEBOAT 'MONA' DISASTER

8th December 1959



THE MONA DISASTER – 8TH DECEMBER 1959



In the early hours of Tuesday the 8th December 1959

Weather conditions were exceptionally severe with a strong south-easterly gale blowing across the entrance to the River Tay and the flood tide flowing to the westward.

Of Fife ness At 02.02 in the early hours of the morning, the North Carr Lightship broke away from its main anchor and started drifting in the gale and heavy sea. The North Carr Lightship was a ship without engines, so could not manoeuvre or move without tugs.

The Lightship – situated at the turning point for ships entering both the Tay and Forth Estuaries, the first ship was positioned there in 1887 and the 1959 ship was placed there in 1933. That is the one now anchored in Dundee Harbour.

The local Fifeness Coastguard first spotted that the lightship was moving off station. On board the North Carr, the Master Mr George Rosie and the crew were trying to drop another anchor, that too parted, the crew finally got an anchor over at 06.45 approx and stopped the drift. The crew were eventually rescued by helicopter

The Fifeness Coastguard had already asked for Lifeboat help, initially from the Anstruther or



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Arbroath Lifeboats, But due to a combination of very low water and the severe south easterly gale, neither of these boats could launch. Fifeness Coastguard telephoned for the help of the only available Lifeboat that could launch in any tide – The Mona at Broughty Ferry.

At 02.42 the acting secretary of the Broughty Ferry Lifeboat, Captain Norman Moug, received the following message from the coastguard – “North Carr Lightvessel broken adrift and drifting in north westerly direction. Advise launch.”

Captain Moug authorised the launching of the Broughty Ferry Lifeboat

He telephoned the Coxswain Ronald Grant who lived at Cotton Road in Dundee, and also the Lifeboat Mechanic John Grieve in Fisher Street Broughty Ferry. John wakened his son – also John to tell him the boat was being launched.

John Senior went across to the Lifeboat shed to fire the maroons and two bangs exploded in the Sky to summon the crew.

John junior had run round to David Anderson’s house in King Street to waken him up. The cox’n Ronald Grant had phoned for a police car to pick him up from his home in Cotton Road, within minutes he had kissed his wife and 18 month old daughter goodbye and left on his first rescue mission.



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THE CREW



RONALD GRANT, COXSWAIN, AGED 28.

Married, Wife Josephine, and he had a baby daughter (Gail) of 8 months. He was born in Tayport. Appointed Coxswain only five weeks previous in November 1959.

His father and grandfather were seamen, and he himself served in the Merchant Navy for 10 years from when he was a boy.

He joined the 'Ben Line' working as an Able Seaman and later as quartermaster on their Far East service. He was working with the D.P.& L. Shipping Co., Ltd., until 1957.

He had given up the sea to have a more settled and happy life with his wife and daughter. But he was never happy away from the sea. He had met Alexander Gall to old cox of the Lifeboat at the Caledon where both men worked.

Alex Gall said he was retiring and a young but experienced man was needed to take the wheel of the Mona.

Ronald saw this as a chance to get back to sea and he got the job at the beginning of November 1959. He was happy that he could still call himself a seaman.

He had been out on trial the previous Saturday and was very pleased with the way the boat handled.



GEORGE B. SMITH, AGED 53, 2ND COXSWAIN

160 Long Lane, Broughty Ferry, married, with son of 20 (Sidney).

He had more than 30 years service on Lifeboats. He was a well-known boatman at Dundee Harbour and was employed by Dundee Perth & London Shipping Co. Ltd.

Had received the R.N.L.I. bronze medal for his part in the rescue of the crew of nine of the Aberdeen trawler 'Quixotic', wrecked on the Bell Rock in December 1939.



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JOHN GRIEVE (SEN) AGED 56, MECHANIC

135 Fisher Street, Broughty Ferry,

Married with two daughters of 20 and 7.

Had been a member of the crew since 1922. He joined the service from Arbroath where he worked with a Marine Engineering firm. He also received a Bronze Medal for his contribution to the rescue of the 'Quixotic'.

Father and son both died in the disaster.



JOHN T. GRIEVE (JUN) AGED 22, CREWMAN

135 Fisher Street, Broughty Ferry

Unmarried, son of John Grieve, engineer.

Kathy Stuart, 20 year old fiancée of John junior heard the rumour on the Lunchtime train from Dundee to Broughty Ferry.

She had been engaged to John for nearly a year, but no date had been set for the wedding. She was a shop assistant and worked in the Boy's department of Smith Brothers.

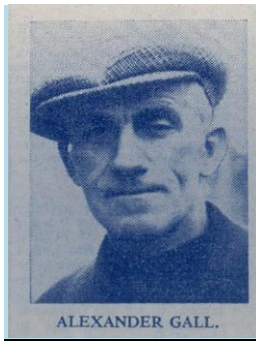
John was a mechanic. Both were fond of dancing and had planned a crowded party season over Christmas and New Year.

John was the youngest member of the Mona's crew.



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ALEXANDER GALL.

ALEXANDER GALL, AGED 56, FORMER COXSWAIN

19 David Street, Broughty Ferry, married with a married daughter.

A riveter slinger at the Caledon Shipyard

He was Coxswain for three years and regularly turned out with the crew for 25 years before that.

Until trawling was abandoned from Dundee in 1953, Mr Gall was a Fisherman.

He was born in Broughty Ferry but brought up in Arbroath where he went to sea on a Trawler at 14.



JAMES FERRIER

JAMES FERRIER AGED 43, CREWMAN

161, Fisher Street, Broughty Ferry.

Married with 2 sons aged 11 and 7.

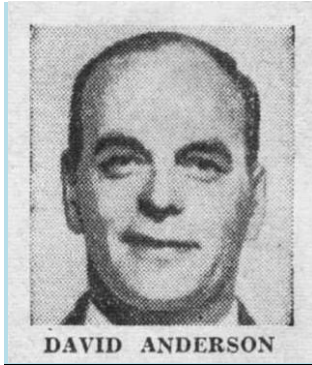
A Machine man/driller at the Caledon Shipyard, had lived all his life at 161 Fisher Street, not far from the lifeboat shed.

Had been a member of the Mona for five years.



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DAVID GALL ANDERSON, AGED 42, CREWMAN

Plumber by trade, 142 King Street, Broughty Ferry. Married with 3 sons aged 11, 9 (George) and 6
Had been a crew member for three years



GEORGE WATSON AGED 38, BOWMAN

104, Forthill Drive, Broughty Ferry.

Married, no family. He was in business as a Contractor.

He had four brothers, all of whom were in the contracting business. All four brothers and their father had been until recently members of the Broughty Lifeboat crew but business commitments had called them away from home so often that they had felt it would be fairer to have just one member of the family permanently on call. George – a veteran of the Wartime Merchant Service – volunteered.

His wife was Winnie, who belonged to St. Cyrus. They had been married for nine years. Mrs Watson was a nurse at the Armitstead Convalescent Home.

When she had heard the news she had to be given a sedative.



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THE MONA LIFEBOAT

Life-boat MONA was a 45'6" x 12' 6" Watson cabin Life-boat with twin engines, each of 40 h.p. Built by Messrs Groves & Guttridge at Cowes in 1935. Nineteen boats of that class were built between 1927 and 1935.

This was the first disaster to any of them.

Crews have always spoken very highly of their sea-keeping qualities of these boats. The sister ship to the Mona based at Longhope, Orkneys, crossed the Pentland Firth both ways against the tidal stream on the 7th December in a whole gale (force 10 to 11) which is strong evidence of the soundness of the design of the boat.

A complete survey of the hull and engines were carried out at Weatherhead's boatyard at Cockenzie between 9th December 1957 and 19th March 1958.

The hull was opened up and water-tested and no leaks were found. The general condition was good and no structural defects or decay found. Only normal maintenance work was necessary.

Both engines were removed and completely stripped down and coolers and propeller shafts were also removed. Everything was found to be in good order.

The engines were last air-tested for water tightness on 24th/25th November 1959.

No machinery failures have been reported in the boat over the past eight years.

The life boat was taken out on an exercise and tested by the Northern District Inspector on the 27th October 1959 and by the Northern District Engineer on the 5th December 1959.



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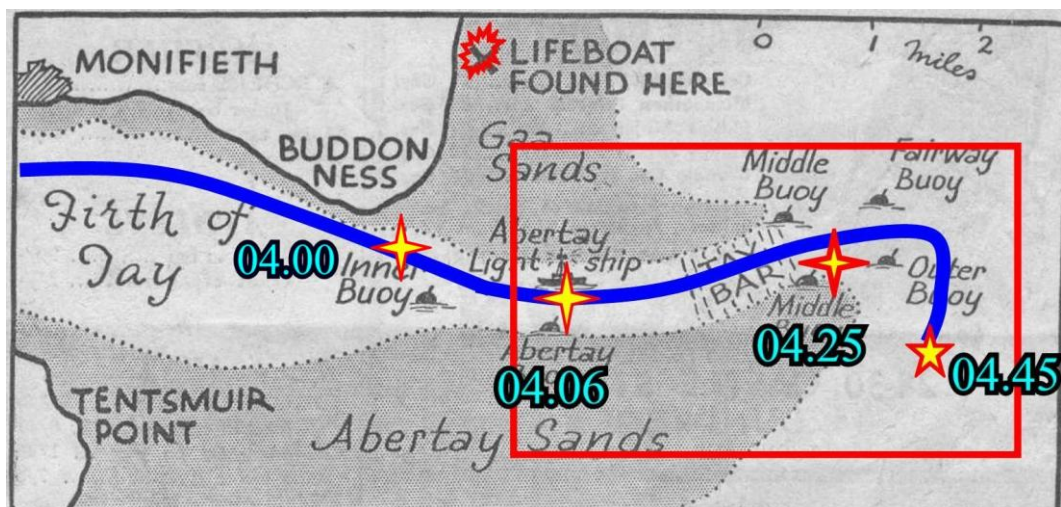
MONA BATTLES THE WEATHER AND ROUGH SEAS UP THE RIVER TO THE BAR.

With the help of Head Launcher Charles Knight, the Mona was launched at about 03.13, Captain Moug reported that the launch went smoothly and the Lifeboat went down the slipway into the river and out into the river for the last time.

The Mona sent her first R/T message to the Fife Ness Coastguard at 03.20, and made her way down river at 6 knots. They tried to call the North Carr but without success. The North Carr was also sending up rockets at regular intervals to give her position.

At around 04.00 the senior coastguard at Carnoustie, David Mearns, caught his first sight of the Mona as she cleared Buddon Ness, he reported later that she appeared to have reduced speed and was constantly disappearing in the mountainous seas. He watched as she crossed the bar of the Tay.

At 04.06 the Mona reported that she was abeam of the Abertay Lightship.



The North Carr fired another distress rocket at 04.25 and the Fifeness coastguard asked Mona if she had seen it. The Mona radio operator only managed to gasp out 'No...our position.... We have just passed the middle buoys on the Bar and we are just hanging on.'

David Mearns of the Carnoustie Coastguard station saw the Mona turn south into St Andrews Bay at about 04.45.

At 04.48 the Fifeness coastguard told the lifeboat that the North Carr had sent up a red rocket and they asked if the Mona had seen it. The Mona reported "Yes we saw that one. We have just cleared the bar." That was the last message heard from the Mona.

The Fifeness coastguard saw the Mona's masthead light in St Andrew's Bay at 05.39, they were unable to estimate how far away the Mona was, they radioed the lightship to see if they could see

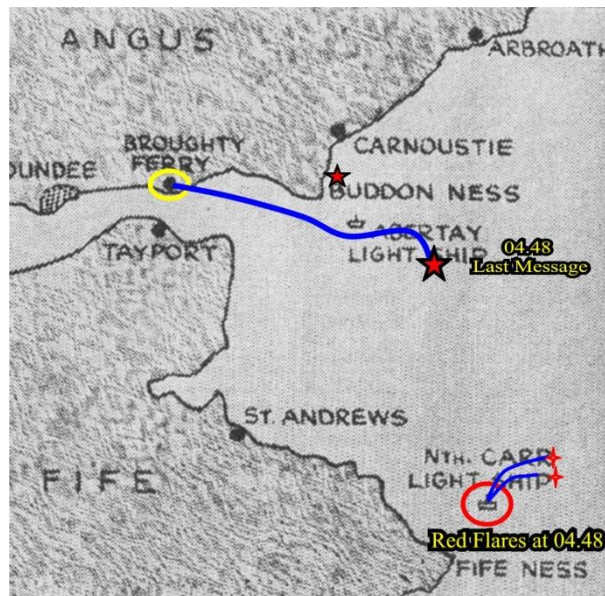


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the lifeboat, the reply was 'Yes, I think it is the lifeboat, will burn another flare.'



Fifeness coastguard sent a signal to the Mona on the distress frequency asking the Mona that if their receiver was working to fire rockets and flash their searchlight up into the sky – There was no response, and the masthead lights disappeared a few minutes later.

THE LOSS OF THE MONA, EXPLAINED IN THE OFFICIAL REPORT.

"It is clear from internal evidence that the Life-boat capsized. The capsizing was almost certainly caused by the life-boat being thrown off course and across the sea some time between 05.15 and 06.00 in the morning. The Life-boat was probably in the shallow water just to the south of the entrance to the River Tay at the time.

The Lifeboat then appears to have drifted bottom up in a north westerly direction until her signal mast touched bottom in the shallow water between Buddon Ness and Carnoustie. This had the effect of righting the boat."

That the Mona sent her last R/T message at 04.48. By calculations from the fuel levels before and after the disaster and the boat's consumption by the engines gave an earliest possible time of the capsizing at 05.15 and the latest time of 06.45.

Weather conditions were exceptionally severe. The Lifeboat probably first got into difficulties when approaching the bar.

After 04.06 the lifeboat reported she was abeam of the Abertay Lightship – the crew could not have been wholly certain of her position because of the absence of the navigational buoys which had been blown of course.

The RNLI considers that the decision to launch was in the circumstances a wholly correct one.



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THE FINDING OF THE MONA



At first light about 08.30 a search was organised by the coastguards in which a shore party and a helicopter took part.

Mr William C. Philip, a barman of the Carnoustie Station Hotel, was the first person to reach the scene of the disaster.

He usually went for a walk first thing every morning and spotted a boat in the distance bobbing in the water. At first he thought it was a ship's small boat that had come in with the storm. When he reached the boat he shouted if there was anyone there, but with no response. He stayed around for a while and when he started to walk back he saw a young man's body floating in the surf. Mr Philip tried to pull him in, but the body was too heavy. Just then Coastguard John Hamilton came along the beach and together they pulled the body up onto the sands. That turned out to be the youngest member of the Mona's crew, John T. Grieve.

John Hamilton, was a Corporation employee, who was also a relief coastguard. When the rocket went off he left his municipal job and hurried to the coastguard station. The other coastguards with the life saving equipment having already left for the Gaa Sands.

By walking and cycling in turn along the wet sand, he arrived before the others who had had to take the road way round in their vehicle.

John Hamilton took part in both the beginning and the end of the Mona's disastrous trip. He had been on coastguard duty from 2 am to 8 am that morning (8th) and he had received the message at 02:45 am from the coastguard at Fifeness that the North Carr Lightship had



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broken adrift..

He had called senior Coastguard David Mearns and the message was relayed to Broughty Ferry to call out the Lifeboat.

Shortly after Mr Hamilton had returned to his job as a Burgh Labourer in Carnoustie he heard the maroon being fired from Westhaven.

A message on the pad at the Coastguard station told him the Mona had been driven ashore at Buddon. The team of coastguard officers led by Senior Coastguard officer David Mearns, of Westhaven, had also spotted the shape of the boat on the beach a mile west of his station. He called out his men and they headed for the spot.

On his way there, Mr Hamilton met Mr Philip who told him that a body was in the water beside the Lifeboat. Together they brought the body ashore. When the live-saving apparatus crew with breeches buoy equipment arrived, Mr Hamilton was sent to telephone the police.

The Carnoustie Coastguard Station officer first person to board the lifeboat. This was about 09.20. He found 5 bodies all wearing life-jackets.

Of these the body of mechanic John Grieve was half in and half out of the engine room. Hatch being secured in the open position.

Three other bodies in the after shelter, two with their hands to port. The fifth body was lying under the steering shaft, abaft the steering position, head to port.

The body of John J. Grieve, the mechanic's son was found on the beach near the lifeboat.

Half a mile to the southward of the lifeboat was found the body of ex-coxswain Alexander Gall. Near it was the lifejacket of George Watson along with the broken foremast of the lifeboat.

All seven men died from drowning, they suffered no injuries apart from abrasions.

The police walking to the scene found the body of the seventh member of the crew on the beach at South Flat, about half a mile away from where the Mona had gone aground.

The seven bodies were taken to the police mortuary at Carnoustie. The eighth (the body of George Watson) was never found.

THE NEWS BREAKS IN BROUGHTY FERRY

At Broughty Ferry Lifeboat Station early in the morning a group of people waited in silence for the news of the Mona. It was some time before details of the tragedy were conveyed to the station. The news quickly spread through the streets, but many were not prepared to believe it until they had called at the station.

Arrangements were made to tell relatives of the crew.

Local ministers and Mrs A.R. Young, wife of the Lifeboat secretary, went round to break the news and comfort the wives.

Mrs David Anderson, wife of one of the crew, was walking along Fisher Street when she heard



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people speaking about the Lifeboat. She hurried into the station. She broke down when told that everyone was lost. A friend assisted her home.

The wife of lifeboatman George Watson was at work as a nurse at the Armitstead Convalescent Home, Broughty Ferry, when she heard, she had to be given a sedative.

Later her parents drove from St Cyrus to be with her. Mr and Mrs Watson had been married for nine years.

Before officials could visit her, Mrs Grant, wife of the coxswain, heard the news on a radio bulletin.

Mr James C. Pattison, the Chief Constable; Mr Robert Cook, Deputy Chief Constable; and Mr Robert Lyell, the Town Clerk, were among visitors to the Lifeboat Station during the forenoon.

Councillor James Gilles, one of Broughty Ferry's Town Council representatives, accompanied the Rev. Malcolm Ritchie round some of the houses.

The homes of all the dead men were visited also by Captain W.F. Keay, R.N.V.R. (Ret), president of Dundee branch, R.N.L.I., and Captain N.B. Moug, harbourmaster at Dundee, and a branch committee man.



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MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY



1	Duchess of Kent	President of the R.N.L.I.
2	John S. Maclay	Scottish Secretary
3	Earl of Airlie	Lord Lieutenant of Angus
4	R. W. L. McCaig	Convenor, Angus Council
5	John Stratchey M.P.	M.P.
6	George Thomson	M.P.
7	Lord Provost Myer Galpern	Lord Provost of Glasgow
8	Lord Provost Buchan	Lord Provost of Perth

Lord Provost William Hughes, Dundee, received messages of sympathy for those bereaved in the Lifeboat disaster.

Mr Williamson S. McCulloch, town Clerk of Forfar, writes – “The Provost, Magistrates and Councillors of the Royal Burgh of Forfar, on behalf of the whole community of the burgh, desires to express, through you their most sincere sympathy and condolence with those bereaved in the recent Broughty Ferry Lifeboat Disaster and to ensure you of their utmost support in your endeavour to make arrangements to provide for the dependants.”

Provost William Johnston, Montrose – “May I convey through you to the relatives of the men who lost their lives in the Broughty Ferry Lifeboat Disaster the deep sympathy of the Town Council and citizens of Montrose. I have no doubt that my council will wish to support in the fullest manner the appeal fund which you have launched in aid of the relatives.”



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Mr John Couch, Mayor of St. Ives, Cornwall, - "I was greatly distressed to learn of the disaster that overtook the Broughty Ferry Lifeboat, particularly as this town endured a similar disaster about 20 years ago. I have launched an appeal in St. Ives for the fund in aid of the dependants."

Miss Elsie Williams, chairman of the 'MUMBLES' Ladies Lifeboat Guild, writes to the Secretary of the Broughty ferry Lifeboat Committee - "We were greatly distressed by the news of the loss of your Mona with all her crew, here we have lost three boats, two of them with no survivors, so in especial measure our heartfelt sympathy goes out to all those who have been bereaved."



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THE MEMORIAL SERVICE



In the wee Kirk near the empty Lifeboat shed (Friday 11th November 1959)

St James's Church, Fort Street, Broughty Ferry

The crew of the Arbroath Lifeboat, and representatives from the crews at Montrose, and Anstruther, were among the many men of the sea who went to St James' Church, the Fisherman's Kirk at Broughty Ferry.

They joined the many hundreds of people from all walks of life who went to the memorial service for the eight men who perished when the Mona was lost.

The order paper said the service was in commemoration of the crew of the Lifeboat, who died on duty at sea in the early morning of Tuesday, December 8, 1959.

Standing alongside the lifeboat men as they gathered in the sparse shelter of the lee of the empty lifeboat shed across the road from the wee kirk were representatives of the Coastguard service. The latter were led by Senior Coastguard David Mearns, Carnoustie, one of the 118 people rescued by the Mona during her 24 years service in Broughty Ferry. He was the skipper of the Abertay Lightship when she was abandoned on the orders of the harbour engineer after drifting off station in a gale in January 1937.

Mr Mearns came ashore from the lightship to become a coastguard. It was he who spotted the stranded Mona on Tuesday morning and was the first man aboard her.

The Church only seats 450 and the service was relayed to another 300 in the church Hall and to hundreds who stood in Fort Street on a cold windy, wet forenoon.

People started to queue outside the church doors an hour before the service began, but few of them were able to get in.

The R.N.L. I. Flag flew at half mast from the Lifeboat Shed as did many other flags in Broughty and Dundee.

Lord Provost William Hughes and Mrs Hughes, the Lady Provost, went first to the lifeboat shed,



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where they met other dignitaries, including Earl Howe, chairman of the R.N.L.I.; Lord Saltoun, chairman of the Scottish council; Captain W.F. Keay, R.N.V.R., (retd) president of the Dundee branch; Colonel A.D. Burnett-Brown, national secretary; Commander S.W. F. Bennets, and the other officials who have been investigation the disaster on the spot.

Centrepiece of the many floral tributes in the church was a large evergreen anchor, on which the Lifeboat colours were picked out in red and white carnations. Red floribunda roses intermingled with silver leaves gave a chain effect on the anchor.

Other tributes had sent from the coxswains and crews of lifeboats round the British Coast. It is proposed that the floral tributes left in the church will be transferred today to the empty lifeboat shed.

Soon after the service ended the first of the funerals of the seven men whose bodies have been recovered took place.

Small crowds gathered outside the homes of the six Broughty Ferry men who perished.

The Last Tributes.

The funeral cortege of Alexander Gall, 19 David Street, was the first to pass slowly through Broughty Ferry's rain-swept streets.

As the mourners left the house a group of men from the lifeboat houses at the corner of the street joined the cortege.

The coffin covered by the red and white Lifeboat Flag, was almost hidden beneath a mound of wreaths.

At the graveside in Barnhill Cemetery, 200 mourners had gathered to pay their last tributes. They included two busloads of men from the Caledon Shipyard. The Rev Malcolm Ritchie conducted the service.

The funeral of Coxswain Ronald Grant was attended by 300 mourners at Eastern Cemetery, Dundee.

Two busloads of men from the Caledon Shipyard were present and another bus brought representatives of the Arbroath Fishing community.

The service was conducted by the Rev J. E. Lyon, Victoria Street Church, Dundee.

Three of the funerals were to Dundee crematorium.

The first was the double funeral of mechanic John Grieve and his son John, every seat with the exception of those reserved for the family mourners was taken half an hour before the service began.

Two busloads of fishermen from Arbroath, coastguards, Caledon Shipyard and harbour workers were in the congregation, which overflowed from the pews and stood five deep in the side aisles. The service was conducted by the Rev Mr Ritchie.

Many of the mourners stayed on for the funeral of George Smith, second coxswain who was well known at Dundee harbour. The Rev T. Lowdon Cox, West Church conducted the service.

Four hundred people including 200 men from the Caledon attended the funeral of James Ferrier at Barnhill Cemetery. The service was conducted by Mr Ritchie.

Most of the mourners remained at the cemetery for the funeral of David Anderson. Mr Ritchie also conducted the service.



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THE DISASTER FUND

The Mona Disaster Fund (started Tuesday 8th December)

Lord Provost William Hughes, Dundee opened a Broughty Ferry Lifeboat Disaster Fund last night (Tuesday 8th Dec). It is proposed that Dundee should begin the list with £2000.

This marked the close of a black day on Tayside when the whole of the City mourned the loss of the Broughty Ferry crew, who gave their lives on a mission of mercy on the morning of Tuesday 8th December.

The Lord Provost's staff were working at full pressure and unable to keep up with the steady stream of callers and donations to the fund, money and cheques showered on the table before the staff.

One caller was 7 year old James Hopkins of Nethergate who had emptied his "bankie" and handed in 8s 10p.

A blind pensioner from Old Coulsden in Surrey who's father had been drowned of the North of Scotland 60 years ago, sent in a donation because of her high regard for those who went out to save lives.

A pencilled note on the back of a works ticket with a small donation from someone who simply signed himself as "Old Tom, the sweeper".

Mr James McNeil, 82, in Wellbank Home, Lochee, who had been 14 years as a storekeeper in the Caledon Shipyard sent in £5.

Among anonymous donations was one of £100 from Dundee, £20 from Crieff, £10. 10s from Cambridge and £10 from Arbroath.

Neighbouring authorities and organisations were organising their own funds, Angus County Council with £500, The Earl of Airlie 10 guineas, Forfar and Arbroath had started funds. The Arbroath Round Table members took collections in the local cinemas, in the Marine Ballroom and at Froickheim for the Lifeboat Fund. The Carnoustie Junior High School sent in proceeds of a collection amounting to £65.

Monifieth and Newport on Tay had opened disaster funds.

Dundee Round Table arranged to take collections in as many city cinemas as possible. Panmure Rugby Club to donate proceeds from their dance in Woodlands Hotel, Barnhill.

By Saturday 12th December it had reached over £22,000, two special deliveries of mail to the City Chambers brought over 1000 donations.



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THE FATE OF THE MONA



YESTERDAY—THE END OF THE MONA

Disaster lifeboat dies in secret

MONA, the Broughty Ferry disaster lifeboat in which eight men died, was burned secretly on a dark beach at 4.30 a.m. yesterday.

Only a handful of men saw the lifeboat—"perfectly sound and seaworthy"—destroyed on confidential orders phoned direct from London by a senior R.N.L.I. official.

Few people in the Port Seton holiday resort on the Forth Estuary near Edinburgh knew about it.

By **JOHN McLEOD**

Flames crackled as families slept in a tenement only 50 yards away—unaware of the funeral pyre.

They only learned about it when they saw the smoking ruin on the rocks at daybreak.

After dark on Thursday night, the Mona was taken across the harbour basin and moved just inside the protection wall.

Then about 4 a.m. she was moved round the seawall, secured by two chains and left to settle on the rock-strewn foreshore as the tide ebbed.

She was set alight and by daybreak all that was left was part of the stern and superstructure—piled, charred metal, still smoking.

Four men stripped the last of her metal fittings in the afternoon. And inquisitive youngsters were curtly told to leave the shore.

In his office overlooking the harbour, Mr. Bruce Jones, manager of the ship-repair firm, said he could not discuss the matter.

Foundered

"The R.N.L.I. officials in London did not want it publicised. I got all my instructions verbally. I must honour their requests."

Was it really a funeral pyre?

"Well, it is not uncommon for this to happen after a disaster," said a senior lifeboat official in London. "It would be rather surprising to see a lifeboat in a disaster zone."

The Mona was seriously damaged in the storm that caused her

Disaster Lifeboat dies in secret.

Mona, the Broughty Ferry disaster lifeboat in which eight men died, was burned secretly on a dark beach at 4.30 a.m. (date?)

Only a handful of men saw the Lifeboat – “perfectly sound and seaworthy”, destroyed on confidential orders phoned direct from London by a senior R.N.L.I. official.

Few people in the Port Seaton holiday resort on the Forth Estuary near Edinburgh knew about it.

Flames crackled as families slept in a tenement only 50 yards away – unaware of the funeral pyre.



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They only learned about it when they saw the smoking ruin on the rocks at daybreak. After dark on Thursday night the Mona was taken across the harbour basin and moored just inside the protection wall. Then about 4 am she was moved round the sea wall secured by two chains and left to settle on the rock-strewn foreshore as the tide ebbed.

She was set alight and by daybreak all that was left was part of the stern and superstructure – twisted charred metal, still smoking. Four men stripped the last of her metal fittings in the afternoon. And inquisitive youngsters were curtly told to leave the shore. In his office overlooking the harbour. Mr Bruce Jones of the ship repair-firm, said he could not discuss the matter.

The R.N.L.I. officials in London did not want it publicised. I got all my instructions verbally. I must honour the request.

Was it really a funeral pyre “well it is not uncommon for this to happen after a disaster” said the senior Lifeboat official in London, “It would be rather unpleasant to put a new crew in a disaster boat.

