

BRIGADIER ANDREW FREEMANTLE CBE (S58-62)

He was born on 26 September 1944.

Prior to becoming Chief Executive of the RNLI, Andrew had an impressive service record.

He served in the British and Australian Armies for a total of 25 years, reaching the rank of Brigadier at the age of 43. He served in many operational theatres, including a tour in South Vietnam in the Australian SAS.

A graduate of the Royal Military College of Science and the British Army Staff College, he commanded the Royal Hampshire Regiment and, later, 19 Infantry Brigade. He was then selected to be a Member of the Royal College of Defence Studies.



He was awarded an MBE and Mentioned In Dispatches for operational service and is one of the very few Brits to have served in Vietnam as the UK had no official



involvement there (see this forum

<http://www.britishmedalforum.com/viewtopic.php?p=39225&sid=f55ade73389878e11eb7aaae9f326cac>)

He left the British Army in 1990 to become General Manager and, then, Chief Executive of the Scottish Ambulance Service; at that time the largest such service in Europe. In 1995 he obtained a postgraduate qualification at the University of Sheffield. He joined the RNLI as Director in 1998 (title changed to Chief Executive in 2001). He became a Freeman of the City of London and a Companion of the Chartered Management Institute. He was also decorated as an officer of the French Ordre du Merite Maritime.

He is pictured here with the late Queen and Prince Phillip at the opening of The Lifeboat College on 28 July 2004 - The opening of this, the world's first lifeboat college, is evidence of Andrew's commitment to training which was rewarded by the award of the CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list in 2007 for 'Services to Maritime Safety.'

In September 2007, he cycled from the RNLI's Head Office in Poole, Dorset to Rome, to raise funds for a memorial and garden in Poole to recognise all members of lifeboat crews who have died saving lives at sea since the RNLI was established in 1824. See this article on their website, which also provides links through to pictures taken along the way



http://www.rnli.org.uk/how_to_support_us/appeals/afcycleride/afcycleride2 .

Following retirement from the RNLI, he remained a Trustee of ABF The Soldiers Charity for 6 years and is still a Trustee and member of the Executive Committee of the Royal Commonwealth Ex Services League, which has 48 countries in its membership.

He is married to Pat and has four daughters, 7 granddaughters and one grandson.

Below is a picture of Andrew in Rome after completing the 1230 mile journey. Brilliant effort.



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Lifeboats

Foreword by Andrew Freemantle CBE, Chief Executive of the RNLI

It is a real pleasure to be asked to write this foreword, especially as it gives me the opportunity to thank the N R Omell Gallery and its patrons for their continued support. As a charity, we rely on voluntary contributions to stay afloat – so your support and the proceeds from this catalogue will help us continue to save lives at sea.

We also rely on people to give their time, since the overwhelming majority of our crew members are volunteers. They undertake many hours of training for rescues and are always ready to carry them out, responding to the call whatever time of day or night. Our lifeboats have never been more in demand: they launched 8,141 times in 2007, an average of 22 launches a day.

2007 was also a busy time for our lifeguards, who patrolled beaches in Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Norfolk and Pembrokeshire. These highly-trained lifesavers went to the aid of 9,883 people during the summer season and offered safety advice to many more. In the coming years we plan to expand the lifeguard service to more of the UK's busy beaches, which, we feel sure, will reduce the number of seaside tragedies.

The subject of maritime rescue has inspired many an artist over the years and we have now chosen the design for a memorial for all members of the RNLI's family. The stainless steel sculpture, designed by Sam Holland, will take the simple, timeless form of one person saving another and the design was selected by a team that included RNLI crew members, staff and trustees. This fitting tribute is being funded through the fundraising activities of staff and supporters – I tried to do my bit last year when I cycled to Rome, raising more than £54,000. Subject to planning permission, we hope to unveil the memorial at our HQ in Poole, Dorset next summer. It will feature the names of more than 700 people who have lost their lives in the cause of saving lives at sea.

Reflecting on the sacrifice that these people made only makes us more determined to equip and train our volunteers as best we can. Since 1824, we have depended on the public's support to allow our brave lifesavers to carry out their difficult and sometimes dangerous task. Your help means they can continue to do so as safely and efficiently as possible.

I wish the exhibition every success in the future

Andrew Freemantle CBE
Chief Executive, RNLI