



Hold onto your hats buoys



THE CHOSEN charity for Graeme Easton, national president is the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. It became apparent on a lovely May evening recently why this decision was no accident. Graeme has a working history with the Dunbar Lifeboat, which spans over 10 years and the opportunity for your editor to cover a training session seemed too good to resist. Stupidly though, I thought the input would be given in the safe confines of a classroom. With a coffee. Well the safety briefing was... then it was off out on the high seas to get the 'real' training done.

Graeme had manfully volunteered to be the casualty for the evening. This entails donning a dry suit and being jettisoned over the side. The photos are hazy due to the swell of the sea and the rapid movement in the water. I was following strict instructions to always have one hand on a rail and even so the movement on the boat was huge. Graeme was recovered by the smaller boat and then transferred onto the offshore vessel.

The training evening continued with the crew, led by coxswain Gary Fairbairn rehearsing safety training which covered,

engine failure (whilst simultaneously recovering a casualty overboard) and loss of steering and having to manually (and very wetly) steer the boat with ropes and a block and tackle – I am sure there is a nautical term for this. We can sometimes question the need for training and next time you are in an input situation, you would do well to think of the volunteers who train weekly with the sole aim of saving lives at sea.

The exploits of the crew, the history of the boat and much better photos can be found on www.dunbarlifeboat.org.uk - it is well worth a visit. ▲