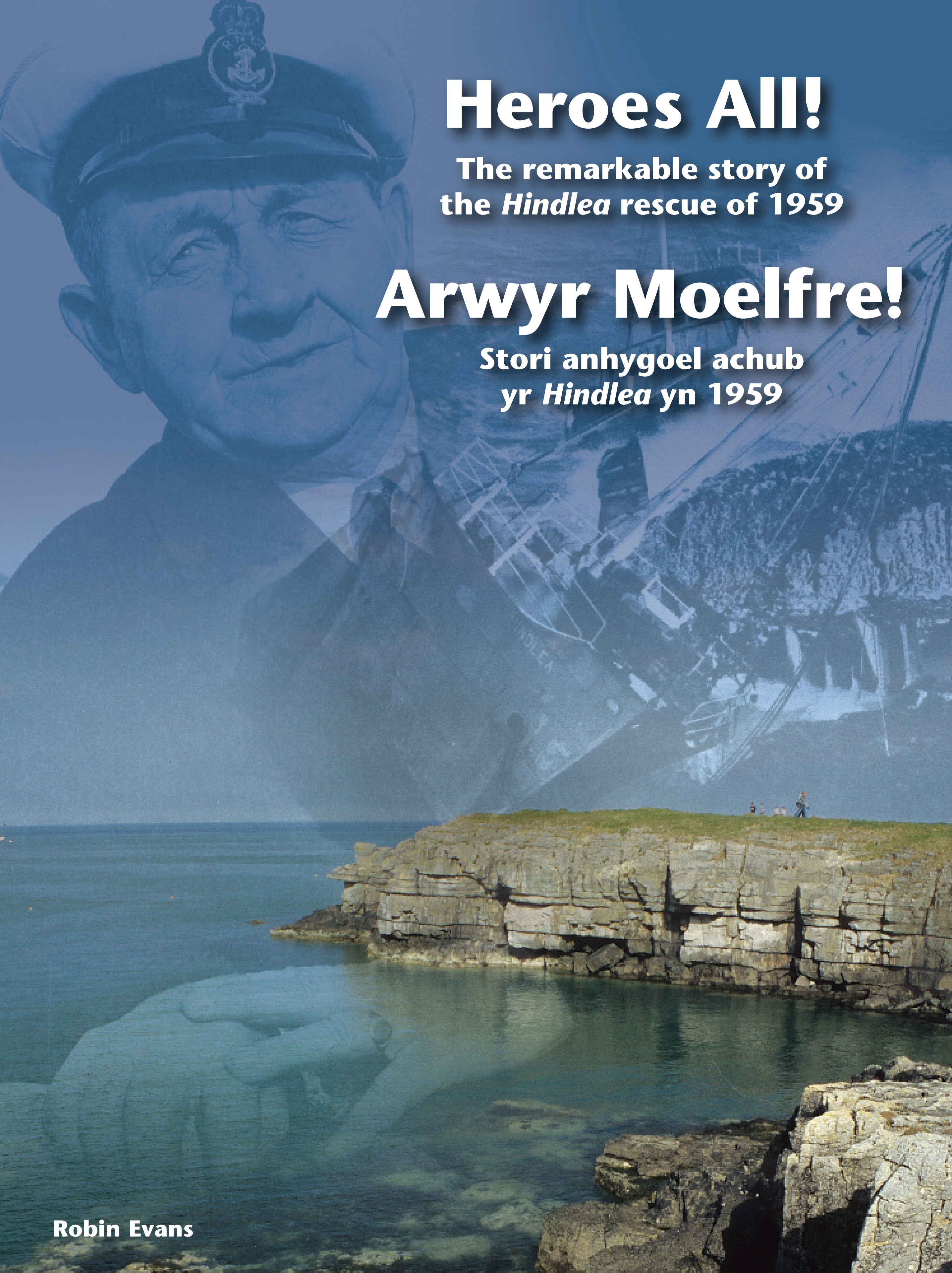

Heroes All!

The remarkable story of the *Hindlea* rescue of 1959

Arwyr Moelfre!

Stori anhygoel achub yr *Hindlea* yn 1959

Robin Evans

LLEOLIAD LLONGDDRYLLIAD YR *HINDLEA*
LOCATION OF THE WRECK OF THE *HINDLEA*

We would like to thank:

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Diolchiadau:

Hoffai Partneriaeth Moelfre ddiolch i'r canlynol am eu cefnogaeth a'u cymorth wrth baratoi'r llyfryn hwn mewn cyfres boblogaidd am hanes Moelfre.

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Heroes all!

The remarkable story of the *Hindlea* rescue of 1959

The modern day village of Moelfre is a popular tourist destination
Mae pentref Moelfre yn gyrchfan boblogaidd i dwristiaid

A seafaring and life saving community

The village of Moelfre on the east coast of Anglesey in North West Wales has played a prominent role in the country's maritime history. Before the 19th century it was a poor hamlet which relied heavily on agriculture and fishing, but nevertheless produced many ship owners, captains and sailors. Its population almost doubled during the early decades of the century as stone quarrying developed in the region with agriculture and fishing remaining an integral part of people's lives.

During the second half of the 19th century, the main development was that Moelfre evolved into a maritime community, with the vast majority of its male inhabitants embarking on a career at sea. They sailed in all types of vessels to all parts of the world carrying every type of cargo. They were ordinary sailors, able-bodied sailors, mates, ship's carpenters, lamptrimmers, cooks, whalers, coastal captains and master mariners. Wherever ships sailed, Moelfre men could be found. Some made a fortune from a lifetime at sea, others lost their lives and left widows, orphans and grieving mothers.

It is not surprising with such a varied maritime history that Moelfre became the natural home for a lifeboat. It is possible that Moelfre had a lifeboat as early as 1830 and by the 1850s the village had its own lifeboat station. Moelfre Bay often provided shelter for all kinds of vessels in

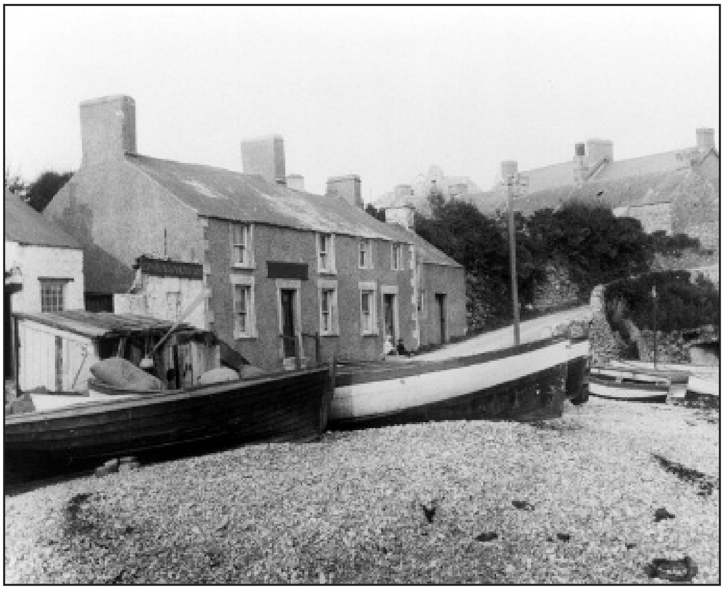
Arwyr Moelfre!

Stori anhygoel achub yr *Hindlea* yn 1959

Cymuned ddewr â heli yn ei gwaed

Mae pentref Moelfre wedi'i leoli ar arfordir dwyreiniol Ynys Môn yng ngogledd-orllewin Cymru ac mae iddo le amlwg yn hanes morwrol Cymru. Cyn y 19eg ganrif roedd yn bentref bychan, tlawd a dibynnai'n helaeth ar amaethyddiaeth a physgota er bod nifer o berchnogion llongau, capteiniaid a morwyr hefyd yn hanu o'r pentref. Yn ystod degawdau cyntaf y ganrif, fe welwyd cynnydd mawr yn y boblogaeth, a hynny yn sgil y datblygiad mewn chwarela yn yr ardal. Er hynny, roedd ffermio a physgota yn dal i chwarae rhan bwysig ym mywydau'r bobl.

Yn ystod ail hanner yr 19eg ganrif datblygodd Moelfre'n gymuned lan môr ac âi mwyafrif y bechgyn a'r dynion i weithio ar y môr. Teithient mewn pob math o longau i bob cwr o'r byd a chludai'r llongau bob math o nwyddau. Roedd rhai yn forwyr cyffredin, eraill yn forwyr profiadol, prif swyddogion, seiri, gwŷr a ofalai am lampau'r llong, cogyddion, pysgotwyr, capteiniaid yr arfordir a chapteiniaid llongau. Roedd gwŷr Moelfre yn gwneud pob math o swyddi ar y môr. Gwnaeth rhai eu ffortiwn, ond collodd eraill eu bywydau gan adael gwragedd gweddwon, plant amddifad a mamau mewn galar.



Mae Moelfre yn hen gymuned bysgota gyda chyfoeth o hanes forwrol
Meolfre is an old fishing community steeped in maritime history

O ystyried cysylltiadau'r pentref â'r môr, nid yw'n syndod iddo ddod yn gartref i fad achub. Mae'n bosibl bod bad achub ym Moelfre mor gynnar â 1830. Erbyn y 1850au roedd gan y pentref ei gorsaf bad achub ei hun. Roedd yn ddigon cyffredin i longau o bob math gysgodi rhag stormydd ym mae Moelfre a châi bad achub Moelfre ei alw allan yn aml i helpu llongau mewn trafferth. Waeth beth oedd yr argyfwng, roedd y bad achub bob amser yn barod ei ymateb – boed i achub morwr sâl neu forwr wedi'i anafu, i helpu ymwelwyr mewn trafferth, neu i gymryd rhan mewn ymgyrch chwilio ac achub fawr. Er mai ychydig o sylw sy'n cael ei roi i waith y bad achub o ddydd i ddydd, mae ambell achlysur sydd wedi denu

Meolfre's old lifeboat station, built in the 1850's
Hen orsaf bad achub Moelfre, a adeiladwyd yn y 1850au

stormy weather and the lifeboat was often summoned to help a ship in distress. Whatever the emergency, the Moelfre lifeboat responded – be it to take a sick or injured sailor off a ship, to help a lone tourist in distress, or to take part in a full search and rescue operation. Whilst there is little public acknowledgement of the day-to-day work of the lifeboats, at times the attention of the world has been focused on the bravery of the lifeboat crews. One such occasion was the afternoon of Tuesday the 27th of October 1959 off the coast of Moelfre.

"Early on the morning of the 27th of October it appeared that the whole village was shaking such was the strength of the storm."

Shelter from the storm

On Friday the 23rd October 1959 Moelfre Bay was full of ships sheltering from a southwesterly gale that was blowing at Force 9 with winds gusting at around 50-55moh. This was not an unusual sight both in the age of the sailing ship and the modern vessel since Moelfre Bay provided adequate shelter from such storms. One of the ships anchored in the bay was the *Hindlea*, a 506 ton Cardiff-owned motor vessel which was sailing light from Manchester to Newport in South Wales. On that particular Friday, the crew of the *Hindlea* came ashore to procure some stores, which was a common practice for ships anchored in the bay for an unknown period. The motor mechanic of the Moelfre lifeboat, **Evan Owens**, spoke with the crew as they loaded their stores and they complained to him that the *Hindlea* was not the best of ships in bad weather. They also told him that they would be moving her to a more sheltered area near the lookout, which is precisely what they did later that day.

Such was the ferocity of the storm by early morning of the 27th of October, it appeared that the village itself was shaking to its foundations. Although the coastguard and lifeboat crew knew that an emergency might well occur in such weather, they were not unduly worried. The situation soon changed when the southwesterly wind unpredictably veered from south to north. This did not happen often but its implications were dramatic.

DAILY EXPRESS

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 28 1959

Weather: Gales and rain

Six people die as 100 m.p.h. gale lashes Britain

OFF-THE-ROCKS RESCUE

Lifeboat saves eight as ship breaks up

Express Staff Reporter

FIVE men and a woman were killed by the storms which swept Britain yesterday. But the lives of eight other men were saved as their ship smashed against rocks at Moelfre (Anglesey).

Gusts of 100 miles an hour lashed the little holiday spot, driving the 500-ton Cardiff coaster Hindlea on to the jagged, black Swnt Rocks.

Then, just before the Hindlea started to break up among the 80 ft. high waves, Moelfre lifeboat took off the crew of eight.

The Hindlea, running in ballast from Manchester to Newport, had been stormbound off Moelfre for two days. Skipper Roland Chipchase, aged 54, of West End Newcastle, said she was safe until the south-westerly wind veered north.

Then she started to drag anchor towards the rocks and he ordered "Full engines" into the wind. But the howling gale won, and she was wrecked.

As the rescued seamen were given hot drinks and food in a nearby chapel, the lifeboat went out again, this time to aid the Greek-owned Essar I, taking water 1½ miles out to sea.

Express air picture shows the Hindlea fast on the rocks, with heavy seas washing over her

Toriad o bapur newydd yn cofnodi'r digwyddiad
A newspaper cutting from the day after the rescue

sylw'r byd a hynny oherwydd dewrder y criwiau. Un achlysur o'r fath oedd yr hyn a ddigwyddodd ger creigiau Moelfre ar bnawn Mawrth 27ain o Hydref, 1959.

Cysgodi rhag y storm

Ddydd Gwener 23ain o Hydref, 1959 roedd bae Moelfre'n llawn o longau'n cysgodi rhag storm. Chwythai gwynt cryf Grym 9 o'r de-orllewin ar gyflymder o oddeutu 50-55 milltir yr awr. Yng nghyfnod y llong hwylio a'r llong fodern roedd hon yn olygfa eithaf cyffredin gan fod bae Moelfre mor gysgodol. Un o'r llongau a oedd wedi angori yn y bae oedd yr *Hindlea*, stemar 506 tunnell, oedd yn eiddo i ŵr o Gaerdydd, a oedd yn hwylio o Fanceinion i Gasnewydd yn Ne Cymru. Ar y dydd Gwener hwnnw daeth criw yr *Hindlea* i'r lan i nôl nwyddau, oedd yn arferiad digon cyffredin i longau a oedd wedi'u hangori yn y bae am gyfnod amhenodol. Bu **Evan Owens**, peiriannydd y bad achub, yn siarad gyda'r criw wrth iddynt lwytho eu nwyddau ar y llong a dywedodd rhai

Coxswain Richard (Dick) Evans S,G.M. B.E.M. R.N.L.I. 2 gold and bronze

Y Llywiwr Richard (Dic) Evans S,G.M. B.E.M. R.N.L.I. 2 aur ac efydd

Within twenty to thirty minutes, all the ships which had sought shelter in the bay were in danger. They were no longer in a sheltered weather shore but on a lee shore with mountainous seas coming in off the Irish Sea. The ships' masters immediately responded and the power ships were able to heave to and slowly move out to sea. The *Hindlea* was a different matter.

The Hindlea in danger

In the coastguard lookout was the Coastguard Volunteer-in-Charge **Captain Owen Roberts**, a retired master mariner of the highest calibre who had a wealth of experience. The *Hindlea* was just north east of the lookout and was between a quarter and half a mile off shore. Captain Owen Roberts, from his position overlooking the point where the *Hindlea* was swaying, could see clearly that every gust and enormous wave was pounding her and he thought it inevitable that she would be dragged closer and closer to the shore.

The *Hindlea* was swinging like a pendulum on its anchor chain in winds of 80-90mph. Gusts of 104mph were recorded at the RAF station in Valley and on other coastguard stations on the island. It was said that so ferocious was the storm that the distance between the trough and the crest of the waves was twenty-five feet and visibility was very poor due to flying foam and scud from churning water. Thus instead of finding herself in the shelter of the bay she was now trapped, fully exposed to the wind and relying on one anchor only. As the *Hindlea*'s anchor began to drag, it soon became apparent that she was in great danger of being driven on to the rocks.

At 11:50 a.m. **Coxswain Richard Evans** (Dic Evans to the people of Moelfre) was informed by Captain Owen Roberts of the potential disaster awaiting the *Hindlea*. Such was the imminent danger to the ship that it

o'r criw wrtho nad oedd yr *Hindlea*'n ddibynadwy iawn mewn tywydd mawr. Dywedodd y dynion hefyd eu bod yn bwriadu symud y llong i lecyn mwy cysgodol ger gwylfa'r glannau, a dyna a wnaed yn ddiweddarach y diwrnod hwnnw.

Yn gynnar y bore ar 27ain o Hydref roedd yn dywydd mor stormus nes bod yr holl bentref yn crynu i'w seiliau. Er bod gwyliwr y glannau a chriw y bad achub yn gwybod y gallai tywydd o'r fath greu problemau, nid oeddent yn pryderu'n ormodol. Ond buan y newidiodd y sefyllfa pan drodd cyfeiriad y gwynt yn sydyn o'r de-orllewin i'r gogledd. Ni fyddai hyn yn digwydd yn aml, ond pan digwyddai byddai'r llongau ar y môr mewn perygl mawr. O fewn ugain i dri deg munud roedd yr holl longau a gysgodai yn y bae mewn sefyllfa beryglus dros ben. Nid mewn llecyn cysgodol yr oedden nhw bellach, ond yn hytrach mewn bae oedd yn agored i'r gwynt gyda thonnau enfawr yn dod o gyfeiriad Môr y Gogledd. Fu'r Capteiniaid fawr o dro cyn ymateb a dechreuodd y llongau gyda'r peiriannau mwyaf pwerus frwydro'n erbyn y tonnau a symud yn araf allan i'r môr. Ond nid felly yr *Hindlea*.

Yr Hindlea mewn perygl

Y **Capten Owen Roberts** oedd yn digwydd bod ar ddyletswydd yn yr wylfa y diwrnod hwnnw. Roedd wedi ymddeol fel capten llong ac roedd ganddo brofiad helaeth o'r môr. Erbyn hyn roedd yr *Hindlea* yn union i'r gogledd-ddwyrain o'r wylfa, rhwng chwarter a hanner milltir o'r lan. O'i safle yn yr wylfa, gallai weld y llong yn glir ac roedd yn amlwg y byddai'n cael ei tharo a'i hysgwyd yn ddidrugaredd gan y gwynt nerthol a'r tonnau enfawr ac y byddai'n cael ei llusgo'n nes ac yn nes at y lan.

Roedd yr *Hindlea* yn siglo fel pendil ar gadwyn ei hangor gyda'r gwynt o gwmpas 80–90 milltir yr awr. Yn ôl yr hyn a gofnodwyd gan orsaf yr R.A.F. yn y Fali ac mewn ambell orsaf arall ar yr ynys, roedd cyflymder y gwynt cymaint â 104 milltir yr awr ar adegau. Yn ôl pob sôn, roedd y storm yn un mor ffyrnig nes bod y pellter rhwng gwaelod y tonnau a'u brig yn mesur pum troedfedd ar hugain ac roedd yn anodd iawn gweld gan fod ewyn a lluwch yn chwyrlio o'r tonnau gwyllt. Nid oedd unrhyw gysgod i'r *Hindlea* bellach, yn hytrach roedd ar drugaredd y storm, yn gwbl agored i'r gwynt ac yn dibynnu ar un angor. Wrth i angor yr *Hindlea* ddechrau ei llusgo, daeth yn gwbl amlwg ei bod mewn perygl mawr o gael ei gyrru tuag ar y creigiau.

Am 11.50 a.m. hysbyswyd y **Llywiwr Richard Evans** (Dic Evans i bobl Moelfre) gan y Capten Owen Roberts o'r trychineb posibl oedd yn wynebu'r *Hindlea*. Roedd hi mewn cymaint o berygl fel y lansiwyd bad achub Moelfre ar unwaith.

Y Watkin Williams oedd y bad achub ym Moelfre ar y pryd, bad

"Yn gynnar y bore ar 27ain o Hydref roedd yn dywydd mor stormus nes bod yr holl bentref yn crynu i'w seiliau."

Moefre lifeboat station
Gorsaf bad achub Moelfre

"The *Edmund and Mary Robinson* was a reserve 41ft Watson class lifeboat and had only arrived in the village a few weeks earlier."

was decided to launch the Moelfre lifeboat immediately.

The lifeboat normally stationed at Moelfre was the *Watkin Williams*, a 42ft. Watson class lifeboat, but as she was in the process of being refitted at Beaumaris, a temporary lifeboat was on duty in Moelfre. The *Edmund and Mary Robinson* was a reserve 41ft. Watson class lifeboat and had only arrived in the village a few weeks earlier. She was twenty-three years older than the *Watkin Williams* and had none of the modern navigational equipment which Coxswain Dic Evans was now used to. In addition, none of the crew had any knowledge of the reserve boat's strengths or weaknesses.

On the other hand, before being appointed full time at Moelfre, motor mechanic Evan Owens had been a relief mechanic for the RNLI. He therefore had an extensive knowledge of the specific peculiarities of different lifeboats' engines and also, fortuitously, knew a little of the *Edmund and Mary Robinson*'s history. She had undoubtedly been an excellent seaboat at one time but had obviously seen better days. Nevertheless, Evan Owens had given her a thorough inspection in preparing her for duty at Moelfre. Only the previous day he had spent hours putting in new spark plugs which he had ordered from London.

The lifeboat crew

Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of the *Edmund and Mary Robinson*, her crew responded to the call and she was launched at exactly twelve o'clock.

The two crew members mentioned above were the only two full time employees of the RNLI in Moelfre. Coxswain Richard Evans, a Moelfre man, formerly a sailor and village butcher had the experience necessary to lead the crew. Evan Owens had married a Moelfre girl , settled in the village and had been station mechanic since 1946.

The *Edmund and Mary Robinson* normally needed a crew of eight but could probably cope with seven. On that particular day, many men were working away from the village. The very nature of Moelfre had changed as well; many men no longer went to sea so there were fewer experienced

achub dosbarth Watson 42 troedfedd. Ond yn digwydd bod, roedd yn y broses o gael ei ailffitio ym Miwmares ac felly bad achub dros dro oedd ym Moelfre y noson honno. Roedd yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* yn fad achub dosbarth Watson 41 troedfedd wrth gefn ac ychydig wythnosau'n unig oedd ers iddi gyrraedd Moelfre. Roedd y bad yma dair blynedd ar hugain yn hŷn na'r Watkin Williams heb ddim o'r offer morlywio modern yr oedd y Llywiwr Dic Evans wedi arfer ag ef. Ar ben hynny, nid oedd gan y criw unrhyw brofiad o wendidau a chryfderau'r bad hwn.

Ond roedd y Peiriannydd Evan Owens, cyn iddo gael ei benodi yn beiriannydd amser llawn ym Moelfre, wedi bod yn gweithio fel peiriannydd wrth gefn ar gyfer yr RNLI ac roedd hynny'n golygu bod ganddo wybodaeth helaeth am beiriannau y gwahanol fadau achub, ac yn ffodus, fe wyddai ychydig am gefndir yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson*. Heb os roedd y cwch wedi bod yn fad achub penigamp ar un adeg, ond roedd yn amlwg wedi gweld ei ddyddiau gwell. Er hynny roedd Evan Owens wedi bod

Criw yr *Edward and Mary Robinson* ar y diwrnod dramatig hwnnw. O'r chwith i'r dde, rhes gefn:
The crew of the *Edward and Mary Robinson* on that dramatic day. From left to right, back row:
HUGH JONES
HUGH OWEN.
Rhes Flaen/Front:
DICK EVANS,
MURLEY FRANCIS
EVAN OWENS

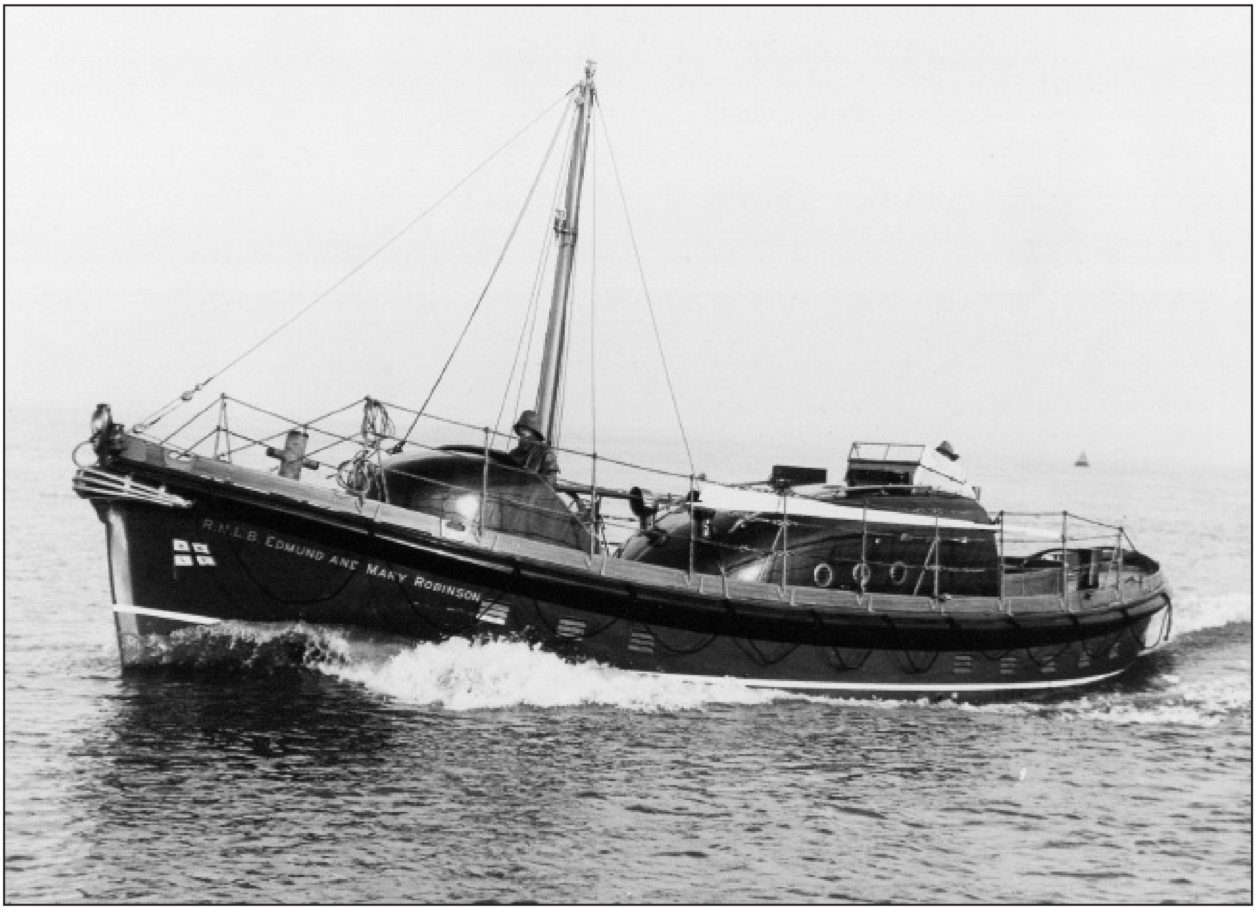
seamen in the village. Moreover, there was a tremendous sense of urgency by now since the *Hindlea* would soon be on the rocks. Thus the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* was launched not with a crew of eight, nor even with a crew of seven – but with a crew of five!

In addition to Coxswain Dic Evans and Motor Mechanic Evan Owens the other crew members that day were **Murley Francis**, **Hugh Owen** and **Hugh Jones**.

The 2nd Coxswain, Murley Francis, also a Moelfre man was an engineer fitter. He was working in Amlwch, around eight miles away when he heard that any auxiliaries or coastguards should proceed to Moelfre at once. He rushed there on his motorbike.

Hugh Owen, the bowman, another Moelfre man had been a member of the lifeboat crew for several years. He was a stonemason by trade but at this time was working for the county council. Coxswain Dic Evans knew where he was working that day and had gone to fetch him. With Hugh Owen was a fellow council worker Hugh Jones.

Hugh Jones was normally a



The *Edward and Mary Robinson*
Yr *Edward and Mary Robinson*

yn brysur yn ei archwilio'n drylwyr, a'r diwrnod cynt roedd wedi treulio oriau'n gosod plygiau tanio newydd wedi'u harchebu o Lundain.

Criw y bad achub

Er gwaethaf gwendidau a chryfderau'r *Edmund and Mary Robinson*, roedd y criw yr un mor barod eu hymateb ag arfer, a chafodd y bad achub ei lansio am ddeuddeg o'r gloch ar ei ben.

Dim ond y ddau aelod o'r criw a enwyd uchod a weithiai'n llawn amser i'r RNLI ym Moelfre. Roedd Richard Evans yn hanu o Foelfre ac wedi bod yn forwr ac yn gigydd yn y pentref ac roedd yn aelod gwerthfawr o'r bad achub. Ar y llaw arall roedd Evan Owens wedi priodi merch o Foelfre ac wedi ymgartrefu yn y pentref gan dderbyn swydd fel peiriannydd yr orsaf ers 1946.

Roedd yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* gan amlaf angen criw o wyth, neu saith o leiaf. Y diwrnod hwnnw roedd nifer o'r dynion i ffwrdd yn gweithio. Erbyn hyn roedd llawer llai o ddynion yn mynd i weithio ar y môr ac o ganlyniad roedd llai o forwyr profiadol yn y pentref. Pan lansiwyd yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* y noson honno, nid criw o wyth oedd arni, na chriw o saith hyd yn oed – ond yn hytrach criw o bump!

Yn ogystal â Dic Evans ac Evan Owens, y tri aelod arall o'r criw oedd **Murley Francis**, **Hugh Owens** a **Hugh Jones**.

Roedd Murley Francis, gŵr o Foelfre, yn ffitiwr peirianyddol ac yn ail lywiwr. Roedd yn gweithio yn Amlwch, tua wyth milltir i ffwrdd pan glywodd y newydd bod angen i unrhyw wylwyr y glannau a gweithwyr cynorthwyol fynd i Foelfre ar unwaith. I ffwrdd ag ef ar ei feic modur ar frys.

Roedd Hugh Owens, y bowman, hefyd yn un o wŷr Moelfre ac roedd wedi bod yn aelod o griw y bad achub am ddegawdau lawer. Yr oedd yn saer maen yn ôl ei alwedigaeth ond gweithiai ar y pryd i'r cyngor sir. Gwyddai Dic Evans lle digwyddai weithio y diwrnod hwnnw ac aeth i'w nôl. Yn ei gwmni roedd gŵr arall a oedd yn gweithio i'r cyngor, sef Hugh Jones.

Roedd Hugh Jones, fel arfer yn gwirfoddoli i gynorthwyo ar y llithrfa yng ngorsaf y bad achub. Pan gyrhaeddodd y dynion roedd peiriannau'r *Edmund and Mary Robinson* eisoes wedi'u tanio a chytunwyd i lansio'r bad heb oedi. Dyma'r tro cyntaf yn ei fywyd i Hugh Jones fod ar fad achub, ond cytunodd er hynny i fod yn un o'r criw. Dyma fedydd tân fel y dywedodd Evan Owens:

"Mi fydd gen i barch tuag ato fo hyd y dydd heddiw am yr hyn wnaeth o."

Y Lansio

Gwisgodd y dynion eu siacedi achub gan ddringo ar fwrdd y bad a chlymodd Dic Evans ei hun yn sownd yn y llyw. Dilynwyd y drefn arferol cyn lansio ond gwyddai pawb yn ei galon nad achlysur 'arferol' fyddai hwn.

"Roedd yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* yn fad achub dosbarth Watson 41 troedfedd wrth gefn ac ychydig wythnosau'n unig oedd ers iddi gyrraedd Moelfre."

volunteer slipway assistant in the lifeboat station. When the men arrived at the lifeboat station the Edmund and Mary Robinson's engines were already running and it was agreed to launch without delay. Hugh Jones had never been in the lifeboat in his life but he readily agreed to go as a crew member. This was truly a baptism of fire which earned him this tribute from Evan Owens: "I honour him to this day for what he did."

The launch

The men put on their life jackets and climbed aboard while Coxswain Dic Evans lashed himself to the wheel. They were following the usual routines before launching but they were aware that this, potentially, was far from being a routine rescue.

The conditions for launching were far from perfect with the wind blowing on to the shore. The lifeboat was launched with Coxswain Dic Evans in command. As soon as the boat hit the water, the crew set up the radio mast. Coxswain Dic Evans steered north into the gale, climbing up waves and then descending into the troughs, but the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* continued to plough through the seas, going up and down relentlessly. Although spray, foam and scud hit the boat unceasingly, the small screen in front of Coxswain Dic Evans offered some protection and visibility. The sea conditions were such that the crew was constantly thrown about under the canopy.

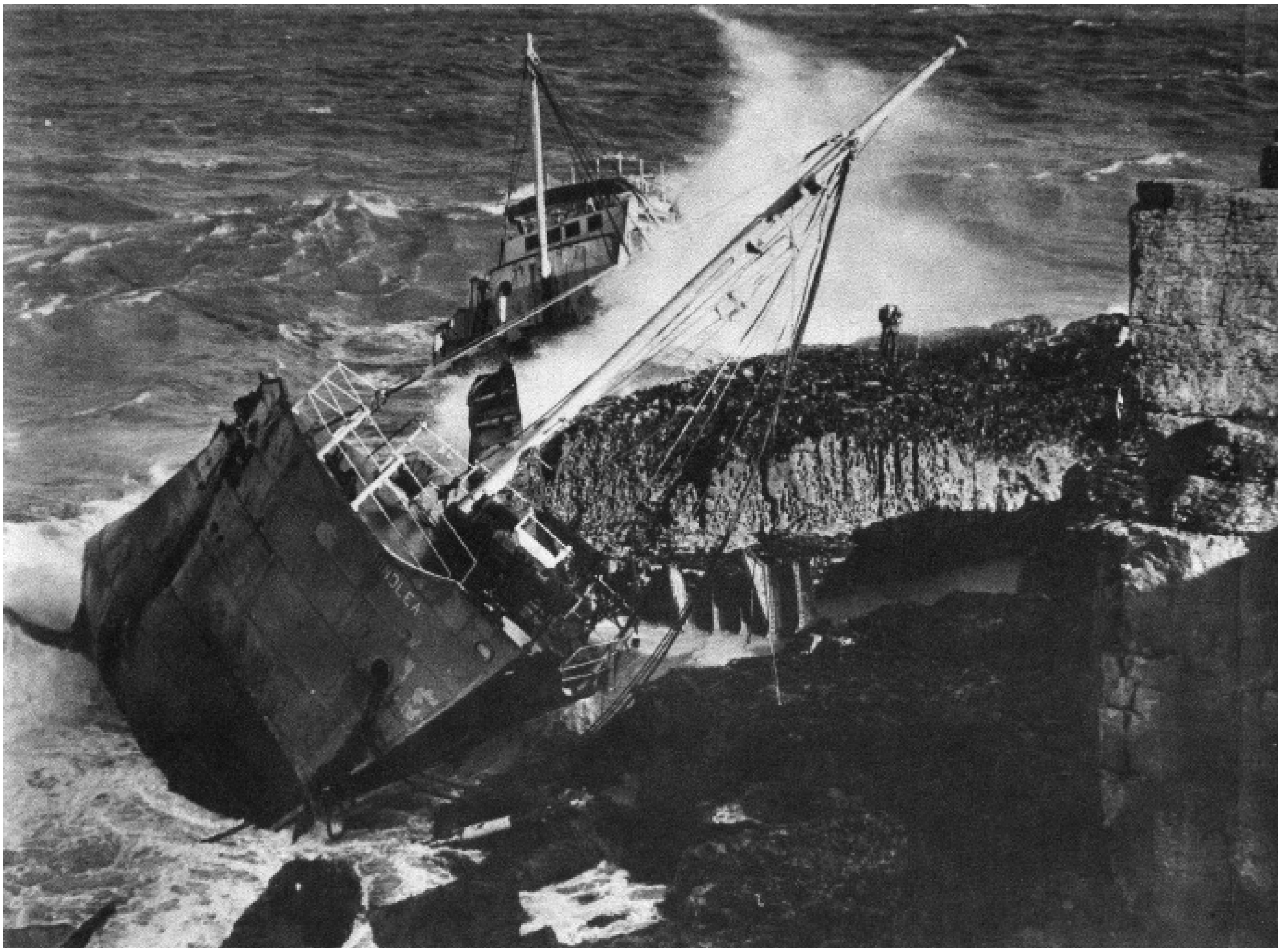
"Hugh Jones had never been in the lifeboat in his life but he readily agreed to go as a crew member… Evan Owens said: *'I honour him to this day for what he did.'*"

Nevertheless, despite the seas and her age, the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* had her strengths. She was an excellent seaboat, with a high forecastle, and despite climbing high seas of 35 feet and diving the other side, she was 'as dry as a bone' according to Evan Owens. The lifeboat's strengths and the skills and courage of her crew were soon to be tested to the full.

Abandon ship?

Having passed Ynys Moelfre (Moelfre Island), the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* headed directly for the *Hindlea* that was by now around one and a half miles north of the island. After half an hour of ploughing through heavy seas she reached the *Hindlea*. The ship's crew could see the lifeboat by now but only intermittently before the ship plunged into the next deep trough. By now the ship was lying to her starboard anchor in eight fathoms of water but this one anchor was not holding. Her engines were working flat out in an effort to take some of the strain off the anchor cable. With her engines on full ahead she was rolling violently from side to side and heavy seas were breaking over her.

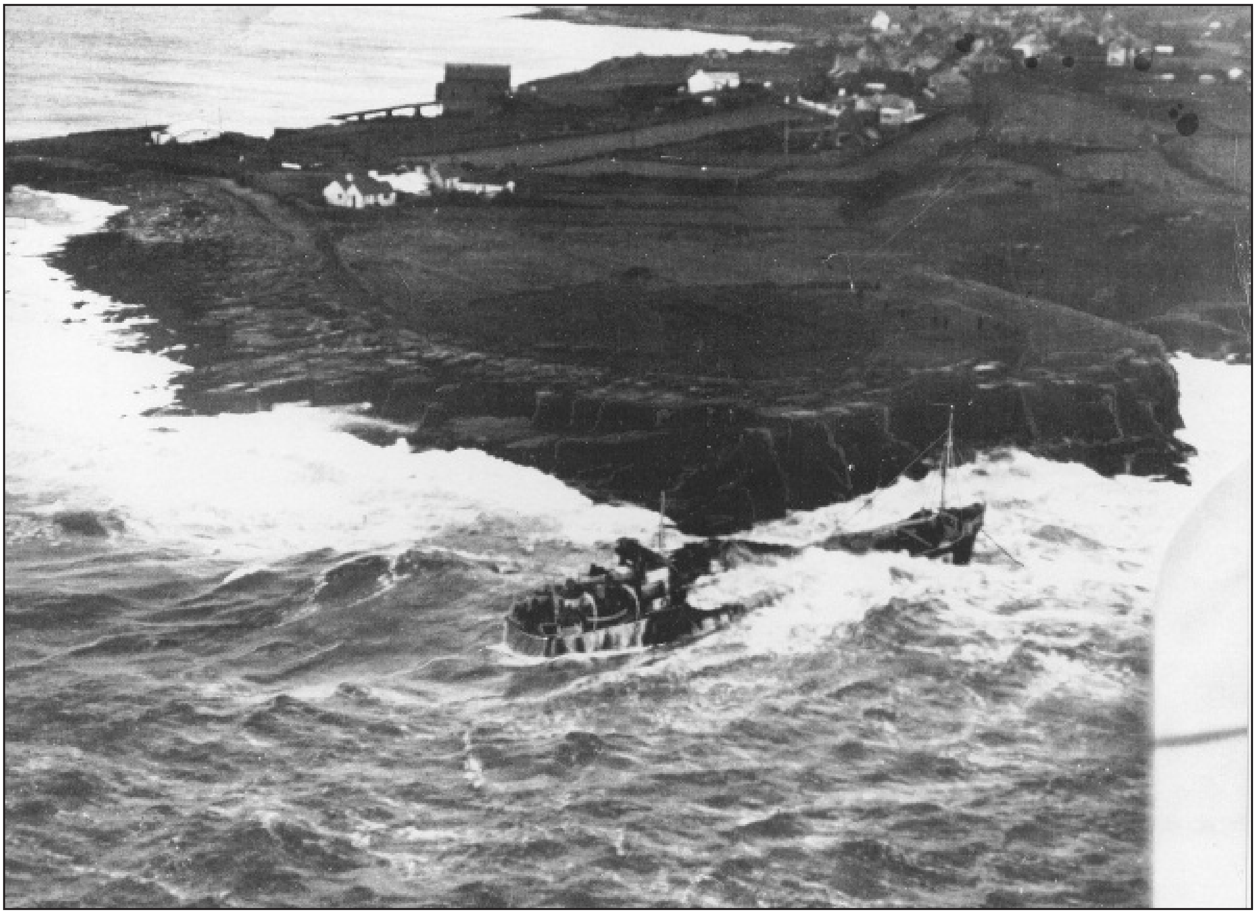
In the words of Aled Eames, "the coaster was yawing some 90 degrees and the engines were racing violently, which did little to reduce the weight on her cable. Because of the violent



Yr *Hindlea* ar y creigiau yn cael ei tharo'n arw gan y môr ar ôl achub y criw oedd arni
The *Hindlea* on the rocks being battered by the seas after the rescue

Gyda'r môr yn chwythu tua'r lan roedd yr amodau ymhell o fod yn berffaith, a dweud y lleiaf. Lansiwyd y bad achub gyda Dic Evans wrth y llyw. Cyn gynted ag yr oedd y bad yn y dŵr, aeth y criw ati i osod y mast radio. Llywiodd Dic Evans i'r gogledd i ddannedd y gwynt cryf, gyda'r *Edmund and Mary Robinson* yn brwydro'i ffordd drwy'r tonnau ffyrnig. Roedd y sgrîn fechan o flaen Dic Evans yn rhoi mymryn o gysgod iddo fel y gallai weld o'i flaen, ond er hynny roedd yn chwythu'n lluwch a dawnsiai'r ewyn a'r llwch dŵr gan ei daro'n ddidrugaredd. Roedd y tonnau'n chwipio a'r môr yn berwi i'r fath raddau nes bod y criw'n cael eu lluchio'n gyson o dan y canopi.

Ond er gwaethaf y môr ac oed y cwch, roedd gan yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* ei gryfderau. Roedd yn fad arbennig gyda fforcas uchel, ac er ei fod yn dringo'r tonnau uchel 35 troedfedd ac yn plymio drachefn, roedd y cwch, yn ôl Evan Owens, ☛



An aerial view of the *Hindlea* after the crew had been rescued
Golygfa o'r awyr o'r *Hindlea* ar ôl i'r criw gael eu hachub

motion the cable was constantly whipping clear of the rough broken water. Heavy seas breaking over the *Hindlea* made it impossible for her crew to come forward to let go of the second anchor."

As the ship slowly found herself moving towards the rocks and shallow water, **Captain Roland Chipchase** from Tyneside gave orders to abandon ship. The crew now moved carefully along her port side and assembled on the port side of the poop deck. The Moelfre lifeboat had been standing by for almost an hour and a half on the *Hindlea*'s starboard beam.

Coxswain Dic Evans knew that this delay would further endanger the rescue of the *Hindlea*'s crew. Had they been 500 yards further out then it would have been far easier to go to her aid.

Captain Chipchase's reluctance to abandon ship earlier was understandable. He was directly responsible for the ship, the crew and her cargo. He owed his allegiance to the ship's owners. He did not wish to abandon ship lest the wind changed, thus diminishing the danger; he considered the possibility ☛

WILD COAST TOUR OF MOELFRE
TAITH ARFORDIR GWYLLT MOELFRE

- **Length of walk - 3 miles along coastal path**
- **Care should be taken on uneven footpaths and near the cliffs.**

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1 OLD LIFEBOAT STATION

There has been a lifeboat in Moelfre since the 1830s – the early boats were sail and oar boats which demanded brave men to sail them.

2 NEW LIFEBOAT STATION

All types of lifeboats have ben launched from here. There have been many famous rescues – including saving the Excel in 1927 and the Nafsiporos in 1966.

3 PORTH LYDAN

During the 1920s a ship called the John Ewing went aground here. The villagers took advantage of the situation by unloading her cargo of coal. Coal was hidden everywhere around the village!

4 Y SWNT

Oral tradition tells us that two old women who lived in a cottage on Y Swnt were kidnapped by a foreign vessel.

5 HINDLEA

Site of the rescue of the crew of the *Hindlea* in 1959. The crew were saved by the bravery of Coxswain Dic Evans and his crew in winds of over 100 mph. Dic Evans was awarded the RNLI's gold medal and the rest of the crew were also decorated. The remains of the ship can still be seen at low tide.

- **Pellter y daith - 3 milltir ar hyd llwybr yr arfordir**
- **Dylid cymryd gofal ar lwybrau anwastad ac wrth y clogwyni.**

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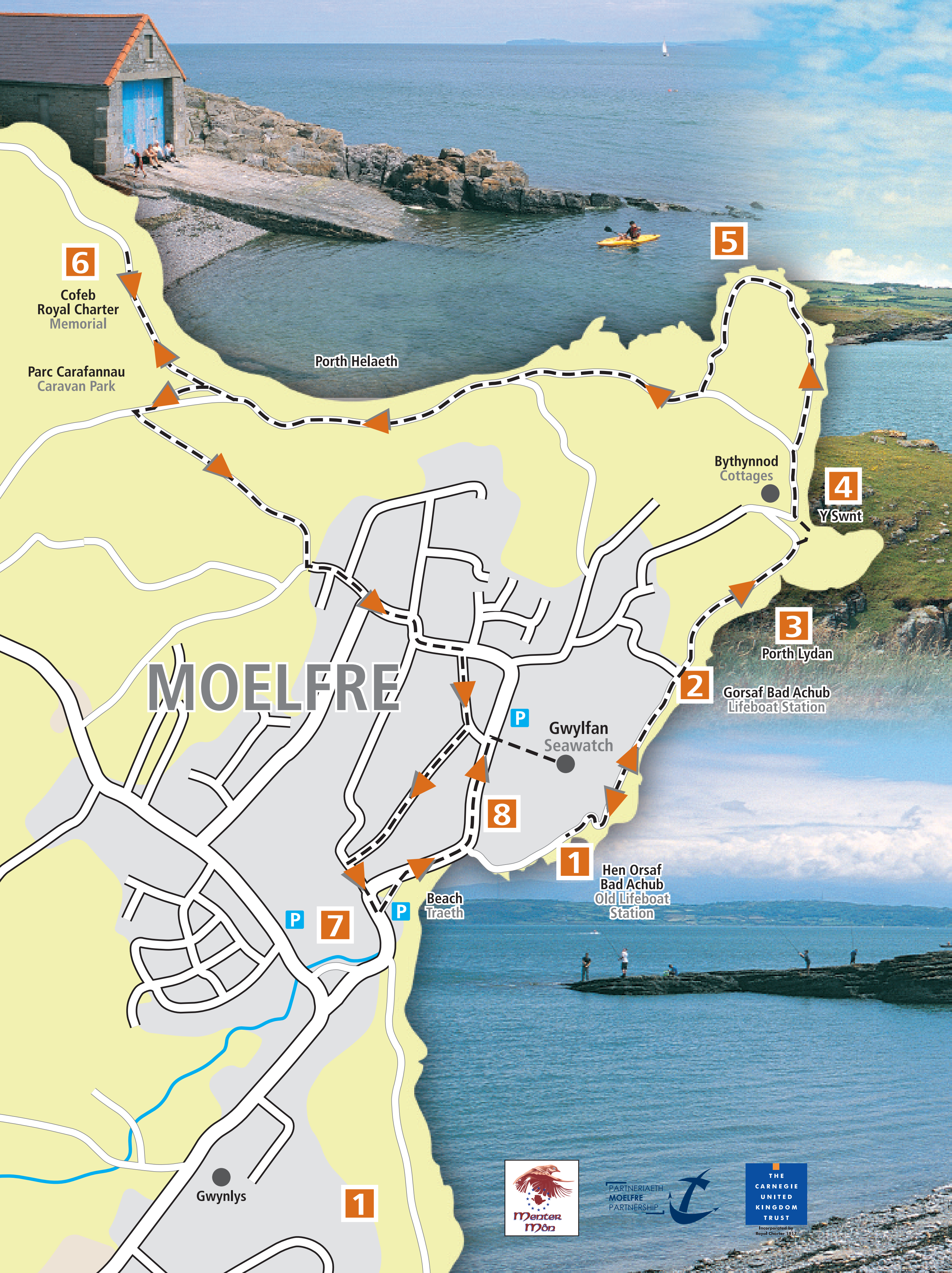
1 HEN GWT BAD ACHUB

Mae bad achub wedi bod yn y pentref er y 1830au – llongau hwyliau a rhwyfo oedd y rhain a oedd yn gofyn am ddynion dewr i'w hwylio.

2 CWT BAD ACHUB PRESENNOL

Mae badau achub o bob math wedi hwylio oddi yma. Bu sawl achubiaeth enwog – achub yr Excel yn 1927 a'r Nafsiporos yn 1966.

Teithiau Treftadaeth
MOELFRE
Heritage Walks



6
Cofeb
Royal Charter
Memorial
Parc Carafannau
Caravan Park
Porth Helaeth
5
Bythynnod
Cottages
4
Y Swnt
3
Porth Lydan
2
Gorsaf Bad Achub
Lifeboat Station
MOELFRE
P
Gwylfan
Seawatch
8
1
Hen Orsaf
Bad Achub
Old Lifeboat
Station
Beach
Traeth
P
7
P
Gwynlys
1
Menter Môn
PARTNERIAETH MOELFRE PARTNERSHIP
THE CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST

Teithiau Treftadaeth

MOELFRE

Heritage Walks

WILD COAST TOUR OF MOELFRE

TAITH ARFORDIR GWYLLT MOELFRE

WILD COAST TOUR OF MOELFRE
TAITH ARFORDIR GWYLLT MOELFRE

6 ROYAL CHARTER

The Royal Charter sank off the rocks below in 1859 with the loss of over 400 lives. One journalist who came to report on the tragedy was Charles Dickens. The story of his visit, in his own words, can be found in his book The Uncommercial Traveller.

7 MEMORIAL

The memorial opposite the beach reminds us of the dangers faced by sailors in two world wars. Although most Moelfre men were merchant seamen there were some who served in the Navy.

8 PEN STRYD

The home of Thomas Lewis 'Twm Penstryd – one of three to survive the Cospatrick tragedy of 1874 by cannibalism.

Teithiau Treftadaeth
MOELFRE
Heritage Walks

3 PORTH LYDAN

Yn ystod y 1920au aeth llong o'r enw John Ewing ar y creigiau yma. Manteisiodd y pentrefwyr ar y sefyllfa trwy ddadlwytho'r glo oedd ar ei bwrdd. Roedd y glo yn cael ei guddio ym mhobman o amgylch y pentref.

4 Y SWNT

Yn ôl traddodiad llafar cafodd dwy hen wreigan a drigai mewn bwthyn ar y Swnt eu herwgipio gan long dramor.

5 HINDLEA

Safle achub criw yr *Hindlea* yn 1959. Achubwyd criw'r llong gan ddewrder y Coxswain Dic Evans a'i griw mewn gwyntoedd o dros 100 milltir yr awr. Derbyniodd Dic Evans fedal aur yr RNLI a gwobrwywyd gweddill y criw yn ogystal. Ar lanw isel gallwch weld gweddillion y llong o hyd.

6 ROYAL CHARTER

Suddodd y Royal Charter oddi ar y creigiau isod yn 1859 gyda dros 400 o bobl yn colli eu bywydau. Un o'r newyddiadurwyr a ddaeth i groniclo hanes y drychineb oedd Charles Dickens. Mae hanes ei ymweliad, yn ei eiriau ei hun, i'w weld yn ei lyfr The Uncommercial Traveller.

7 COFGOLOFN

Mae'r gofgolofn sydd gyferbyn â'r traeth yn ein hatgoffa o'r peryglon a wynebai llongwyr mewn dau ryfel byd. Er mai yn y llongau masnach roedd mwyafrif dynion Moelfre roedd rhai hefyd yn y Llynges.

8 PEN STRYD

Cartref Thomas Lewis – 'Twm Penstryd' - un o dri a oroesodd trychineb y Cospatrick yn 1874 trwy ganibaliaeth.

yn 'berffaith sych'. Cyn pen dim roedd cryfder y bad achub a sgiliau a dewrder ei chriw yn cael eu profi i'r eithaf.

Pawb o'r llong?

Ar ôl pasio Ynys Moelfre, anelodd yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* i gyfeiriad yr *Hindlea* a oedd erbyn hyn tua milltir a hanner i'r gogledd o'r ynys. Ar ôl hanner awr o frwydro'n erbyn y tonnau uchel, fe gyrhaeddodd yr *Hindlea*. Gallai criw y llong weld y bad achub erbyn hyn, er y diflannai o'r golwg bob hyn a hyn wrth i donnau enfawr gau amdanynt. Erbyn hyn roedd y llong yn gwyro i'r chwith mewn wyth gwrhyd o ddŵr ac nid oedd un angor yn ddigon cryf i'w dal. Roedd ei pheiriannau'n gweithio i'w heithaf er mwyn tynnu peth o'r pwysau oddi ar gadwyn yr angor. Roedd yn rowlio'n ddireolaeth o ochr i ochr ac roedd tonnau enfawr yn torri uwch ei phen.

Dyma eiriau Aled Eames *"The coast was yawing some 90 degrees and the engines were racing violently, which did little to reduce the weight on her cable. Because of the violent motion the cable was constantly whipping clear of the rough broken water. Heavy seas breaking over the Hindlea made it impossible for her crew to come forward to let go the second anchor."* [2]

Wrth sylweddoli eu bod yn symud yn araf tua'r creigiau a'r dŵr bas, gorchmynnodd y **Capten Roland Chipchase**, o Tyneside, i bawb adael

Jabez Francis, brawd Murley Francis, yr ail lywiwr, oedd ar ddyletswydd fel gwyliwr gwirfoddol pan achubwyd criw'r *Hindlea*

Jabez Francis, brother of second coxswain Murley Francis, who was on duty as volunteer coastguard during the rescue

y llong. Symudodd y criw'n ofalus ar hyd ochr chwith y llong gan ymgynnull ar ochr chwith pen ôl y llong. Roedd bad achub Moelfre wedi bod yn aros gerllaw ers dros awr a hanner ar ochr dde'r *Hindlea*. Sylweddolai Dic Evans y byddai oedi fel hyn yn ei gwneud yn llawer peryclach achub ei chriw. Pe baent 500 llath ymhellach allan i'r môr yna byddai wedi bod yn llawer haws eu hachub.

Pam nad oedd y Capten yn fodlon gadael y llong? Roedd yr ateb yn syml. Ef oedd yn uniongyrchol gyfrifol am y llong, y criw a'r cargo. Roedd capten y llong yn driw i berchnogion y llong ac nid oedd am fod mewn sefyllfa lle gallai'r gwynt newid cyfeiriad, gyda'r perygl yn cilio a rhywrai'n mynd ar fwrdd y llong ac yn ei hysbeilio y diwrnod canlynol. Roedd y Capten mewn cyfyng gyngor – roedd yn rhaid iddo bwyso a mesur y risgiau a gwneud penderfyniadau ar fyrder dan

"Pam nad oedd y Capten yn fodlon gadael y llong? Roedd yr ateb yn syml. Ef oedd yn uniongyrchol gyfrifol am y llong, y criw a'r cargo."

of the ship being boarded the following day by salvagers staking their claims. The captain was in an impossible position – he had to weigh up the risks and make snap decisions under extreme pressure. Thus valuable time was wasted as he discussed his situation and awaited his orders from the ship owners.

In effect, it was Evan Owens who had the final say – he reported on the lifeboat's radio to the captain, "if you don't leave her now, I'm afraid we can't take you off. It will be too late."

Watching from the coastguard lookout was volunteer coastguard **Jabez Francis**, brother of second coxswain Murley Francis. He had relieved Captain Owen Roberts at one o'clock and had a panoramic view of the *Hindlea* and the *Edmund and Mary Robinson*. Jabez Francis was aware that both ship and lifeboat were now very close to the rocks and that the coastguard might have to attempt to rescue the crew from the rocks. Moelfre had permanent life saving apparatus in the village and this had been brought down to the coastguard lookout in case the heavy seas prevented the lifeboat from reaching the *Hindlea*. However, such was the strength of the wind that an attempt to reach the ship by lifeline from the shore would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible.

"The captain was in an almost impossible position – he had to weigh up the risks and make snap decisions under extreme pressure. Thus some time was wasted by talking to the owners of the vessel in order to report on his situation and await orders."

The rescue

At approximately two o'clock Captain Chipchase gave the order to abandon ship. By now the sea around the *Hindlea* was described as a 'boiling mass of confusion.' She was now around 200 yards from the rocks.

Coxswain Dic Evans realised that sea room astern of the stricken vessel was very limited and therefore decided to bring the lifeboat in close round her stern in order to come in on her port quarter. Coxswain Dic Evans had to use maximum engine revolutions in order to bring the boat's bow round into the wind for as soon as speed was reduced, the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* was thrown back by the seas. It was a tremendous strain on Coxswain Dic Evans' arms to maintain control of the wheel and prevent the lifeboat being thrown back by the seas. As Coxswain Dic Evans steered round the *Hindlea* the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* found herself in great danger as she was now very close to the *Hindlea*'s thrashing propeller. The propeller was nine feet in diameter and so far out of the water that it was above the heads of the lifeboat crew!

Then the lifeboat was struck by an enormous wave and was thrown over on her beam ends with her mast under the water. The great strength and skill of Coxswain Dic Evans ensured that the lifeboat recovered and a second smaller wave righted her.

At this stage Jabez Francis, in the coastguard lookout, feared that the coastguard's rescue apparatus would be

CHWITH I'R DDE / LEFT TO RIGHT: Idwal Owen Figin • John Richard Roberts, 3 Pen Rallt • Dafydd Evans, Nant Bychan • Wyn Owen, Consuello • Jabez Murley Francis, Bodawen • Robert Gwilym Rowlands, Bryn Tirion • Captain W.J. Francis M.B.E., Bod Awen • Reverend Mr T.H. Smith BA, Bd, Bryn Myfyr • William Jones, Pant y Gaseg • David Owen, Seibiant • Ifan Hughes, Ffordd Lligwy • Captain Owen Roberts M.B.E., Treflys • David Jones, Seiriol View.

Criw Offer Achub Bywyd Moelfre
Moelfre Life Saving Apparatus Crew

bwysau mawr. O'r herwydd fe gollwyd peth amser tra bu'n siarad gyda pherchnogion y llong er mwyn adrodd ar y sefyllfa a disgwyl am orchymyn. Yn wir, Evan Owens gafodd y gair olaf pan anfonodd neges i'r capten ar radio'r bad achub.

"Os na adewch chi'r llong rŵan mae arna i ofn na fyddwn ni'n gallu eich achub chi. Mi fydd hi'n rhy hwyr."

Roedd **Jabez Francis**, brawd Murley Francis, oedd yn gwneud gwaith gwirfoddol fel gwyliwr y glannau, wedi bod yn gwylio'r cyfan o safle'r wylfa. Roedd wedi cyfnewid lle gyda Capten Owen Roberts am un o'r gloch ac roedd ganddo olygfa arbennig o'r *Hindlea* a'r *Edmund and Mary Robinson*. Gwelai Jabez Francis fod y llong a'r bad achub erbyn hyn yn agos iawn i'r creigiau ac y byddai'n rhaid iddo o bosibl geisio achub y criw o'r creigiau. Cedwid offer achub bywyd bob amser yn y pentref ac roedd hwn wedi'i ddanfon i'r wylfa rhag ofn y byddai'r môr tymhestlog

The calm after the storm - the *Hindlea* is pictured lying on the rocks some weeks after the rescue
Yr *Hindlea* ar y creigiau rai wythnosau wedi'r storm enbyd

needed to save the crews of both vessels. Fortunately, this was not the case.

Eventually, Coxswain Dic Evans manoeuvred alongside the *Hindlea*'s port quarter. He approached at an angle of 25 degrees and one man jumped into the lifeboat and was immediately grabbed by Hugh Owen who had dashed out from under the canopy to pull him to safety. The lifeboat then went full astern in order to bring herself clear of the propeller.

As the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* was carried away by the sea, Coxswain Dic Evans realised that this was the key to rescuing the crew. He would have to return under the propellers and hope that he could hold the lifeboat by the ship's side long enough to allow every man on deck to transfer to the lifeboat.

The lifeboat now moved in again but by this time the vessel had yawed so far that her port side was fully exposed to

yn atal y bad achub rhag cyrraedd yr *Hindlea*. Ond gan fod y gwynt mor gryf byddai ymgais i gyrraedd y llong gyda rhaff o'r traeth wedi bod yn anodd dros ben, os nad yn amhosibl.

Achub

O gwmpas dau o'r gloch gorchmynnodd Capten Chipchase i bawb adael y llong. Erbyn hyn roedd y môr o gwmpas yr *Hindlea* yn 'un berw gwyllt'. Roedd y llong erbyn hyn tua 200 llath o'r creigiau.

Sylweddololdd Dic Evans nad oedd llawer o le rhwng pen ôl y llong a'r lan, felly penderfynodd lywio'r bad achub yn agos rownd pen ôl y llong er mwyn dod at ei hochr chwith. Roedd y peiriannau'n gweithio i'w heithaf wrth iddo frwydro'n erbyn y gwynt ond cyn gynted ag yr oedd yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* yn gostwng cyflymder câi ei daflu'n ôl gan rym y tonnau. Roedd yn straen aruthrol ar freichiau Dic Evans wrth iddo geisio rheoli'r llyw i atal y bad achub rhag cael ei daflu'n ôl gan y môr. Wrth lywio'r bad achub o gwmpas yr *Hindlea* sylweddololdd ei fod mewn perygl mwy fyth gan ei fod erbyn hyn yn agos iawn i bropelor yr *Hindlea*. Roedd y propelor yn naw troedfedd mewn diamedr ac mor uchel uwchben y tonnau nes ei fod yn uwch na phennau criw y bad achub!

Yna trawyd y bad achub gan donnau enfawr ac fe'i taflwyd ar ei ochr ac aeth y mast dan y dŵr. Ond trwy nerth a medrusrwydd Dic Evans llwyddwyd i sefydlogi'r bad pan ddaeth ton arall i'w lwybr a'i daflu'n ôl.

Yn y cyfamser, roedd Jabez Francis yn yr wylfa yn ofni y byddai angen yr offer achub bywyd i arbed bywydau'r criw ar y llong a'r bad achub. Ond yn ffodus, nid felly y bu hi.

Yn y diwedd llwyddodd Dic Evans i lywio'r bad achub at ochr chwith yr *Hindlea*. Nesaodd ar ongl o 25 gradd a neidiodd un dyn i'r bad achub. Rhuthrodd Hugh Owens allan o'r canopi a chydiodd ynddo. Yna heb oedi llywiwyd y bad achub yn ôl ar frys yn ddigon pell o'r propelor.

Wrth i'r *Edmund and Mary Robinson* gael ei dynnu allan i'r môr sylweddolodd Dic Evans mai dyma oedd yr ateb os oeddent am achub y criw. Byddai'n rhaid iddo fynd yn ôl dan y propelorau a gobeithio y gallai gadw'r bad achub wrth ymyl y llong yn ddigon hir i bob dyn neidio oddi ar ei dec i'r bad achub.

Symudodd y bad achub eilwaith ond erbyn hyn roedd y llong wedi cael ei hysgwyd cymaint gan y gwynt nes bod ei hochr chwith yn agored i holl rym y corwynt. Gan ei bod erbyn hyn mewn dŵr bas roedd y tonnau hyd yn oed yn uwch. Codwyd yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* gan y tonnau nes iddo daro'n erbyn yr *Hindlea*. Bron na allai criw y bad achub gydio yng nghriw y llong, ond buan y plymiodd y bad achub i waelod ton arall. Yn ffodus ni wnaed unrhyw ddifrod difrifol a llywiodd Dic Evans y bad achub yn ei ôl er mwyn gwneud ymgais arall i

"Symudodd y bad achub eilwaith ond erbyn hyn roedd y llong wedi cael ei hysgwyd cymaint gan y gwynt nes bod ei hochr chwith yn agored i holl rym y corwynt."

the full force of the hurricane. As she was now in shallow water the waves were even bigger and lifted the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* so she struck the *Hindlea*. The lifeboat crew could almost touch the ship's crew before the lifeboat fell into another trough. Fortunately the collision caused no serious damage and Coxswain Dic Evans withdrew in order to make another run.

The poop deck offered some shelter for the lifeboat but only when the vessel yawed to port. Moving in to rescue the crew under such conditions required great skill, courage and timing. Evan Owens described the rescue: 'We opened and closed the controls to keep the lifeboat alongside the ship, rising and falling, sometimes above her deck, sometimes under her bilge. At times the boat was thrown against the ship's side with a terrific crash, but each time we were at deck level, one of the *Hindlea*'s crew jumped and were helped aboard by Hugh Owen and Hugh Jones.'

When Captain Chipchase went under the canopy of the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* he was certain that they would not get out alive. Despite being an experienced seaman, he was not yet aware of the strength and determination of the crew. Motor mechanic Evan Owens calmly informed him that the lifeboat would, indeed, get them out alive.

As the original RNLI report states: 'By 2.11 when there was only a hundred yards between the stern of the *Hindlea* and the shore, the whole crew had been taken off.'

The rescue operation took only sixteen minutes and the only casualty of note was a broken ankle suffered by one of the rescued men.

Approximately twenty minutes later those in the coastguard lookout heard a tremendous cracking sound as the *Hindlea* broke her back on the rocks.

Tears of joy

The ordeal of those on board the lifeboat was not over yet. The *Edmund and Mary Robinson* was an old boat after all and had taken a hammering and was now on the lee shore.

Having saved the crew of the *Hindlea*, Coxswain Dick Evans had to head from near this rocky outcrop towards the shelter of Ynys Moelfre (far right)

Ar ôl achub criw yr *Hindlea*, anelodd Dic Evans am gysgod Ynys Moelfre (ar y dde yn y cefndir)

achub y dynion.

Roedd angen medrusrwydd, dewrder ac amseru arbennig i lywio'r bad dan y fath amodau. Dyma ddisgrifiad Evan Owens o'r digwyddiad: "Mi wnaethom ni agor yr offer rheoli er mwyn cadw'r bad achub yn gyfochrog â'r llong a dyma ni'n codi uwchben ei dec ar adegau a disgyn o dan ei phyllau sbydu wedyn. Ambell dro mi daflwyd y cwch yn erbyn y llong gyda choblyn o glec a phan oeddem ni yr un lefel â'r dec fe neidiai un o griw'r *Hindlea* oddi arni a chael help llaw gan Hugh Owen a Hugh Jones."

Pan aeth Capten Chipchase dan ganopi yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* teimlai'n siŵr na chyrhaeddai'r un ohonynt y lan yn fyw. Roedd yn llongwr profiadol, ond ni wyddai am gryfder y bad achub a phenderfyniad y criw. Dywedodd Evan Owens, y peiriannydd wrtho y byddai'r bad achub yn gofalu eu bod yn cael eu cludo'n ôl yn ddiogel i'r lan.

Fel y dywed adroddiad gwreiddiol yr RNLI: *"By 2.11, when there was only a hundred yards between the stern of the Hindlea and the shore, the whole crew had been taken off."*

Cwblhawyd y gwaith o achub y criw mewn un munud ar bymtheg. Nid oedd unrhyw un wedi'i anafu, er bod un o'r dynion a achubwyd wedi torri ei ffêr.

Tua ugain munud yn ddiweddarach

Y criw gyda'u gwragedd y tu allan i San Steffan ar ôl iddynt dderbyn eu medalau
The crew with their wives outside Westminster after being presented with their medals

The gold medal awarded to Dic Evans
Y fedal aur a gyflwynwyd i Dic Evans

Coxswain Dic Evans' waist was raw and bleeding as the ropes which tied him to the wheel had cut into him. His hands were frozen and the lifeboat was low in the water with the sea threatening to engulf her any minute. The *Edmund and Mary Robinson* had to head for the east side of Ynys Moelfre which would offer some shelter. She ploughed through the rough seas, with her drogue playing a vital part, and eventually reached the other side of the island.

The lifeboat then reached the relative calm of her moorings. As was the usual practice, the crew and survivors were taken to the vestry of Capel Carmel (Moelfre's Independent Chapel) where they were provided with hot drinks and food by the women of the village.

Coxswain Dic Evans them returned to the slipway. As he sat there, tears of joy ran down his face as he realised what he and his crew had just accomplished.

"As he sat there, tears of joy ran down his face as he realised what he and his crew had accomplished"

Heroes all!

The bravery and dedication of the entire crew was recognised by the RNLI and by the world. Such an operation had required courage and the crew of the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* had provided it that day. Just as vital was Coxswain Dic Evans' boat

clywodd y rhai a wyliai yn safle'r wylfa sŵn dychrynllyd wrth i'r *Hindlea* daro'n erbyn y creigiau a chael ei dryllio.

Dagrau o lawenydd

Er hynny nid oedd y cyfan drosodd eto. Wedi'r cyfan roedd hen fad achub yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* yn dal mewn sefyllfa beryglus ac yn gwbl agored i'r tywydd. Roedd canol Dic Evans yn gignoeth ac yn gwaedu gan fod y rhaffau a oedd wedi'i glymu'n sownd yn y llyw wedi torri i mewn i'w gnawd. Roedd ei ddwylo wedi fferru ac roedd y bad achub yn isel yn y dŵr gyda'r môr yn bygwth ei lyncu unrhyw eiliad. Doedd dim amdani ond anelu tuag ochr ddwyreiniol Ynys Moelfre lle byddai mwy o gysgod. Llwyddodd i frwydro'n erbyn y tonnau ffyrnig nes cyrraedd tir.

Yn ôl yr arfer aethpwyd â'r criw a'r rhai a achubwyd i festri Capel Carmel lle'r oedd merched y pentref wedi paratoi bwyd a diodydd cynnes iddynt.

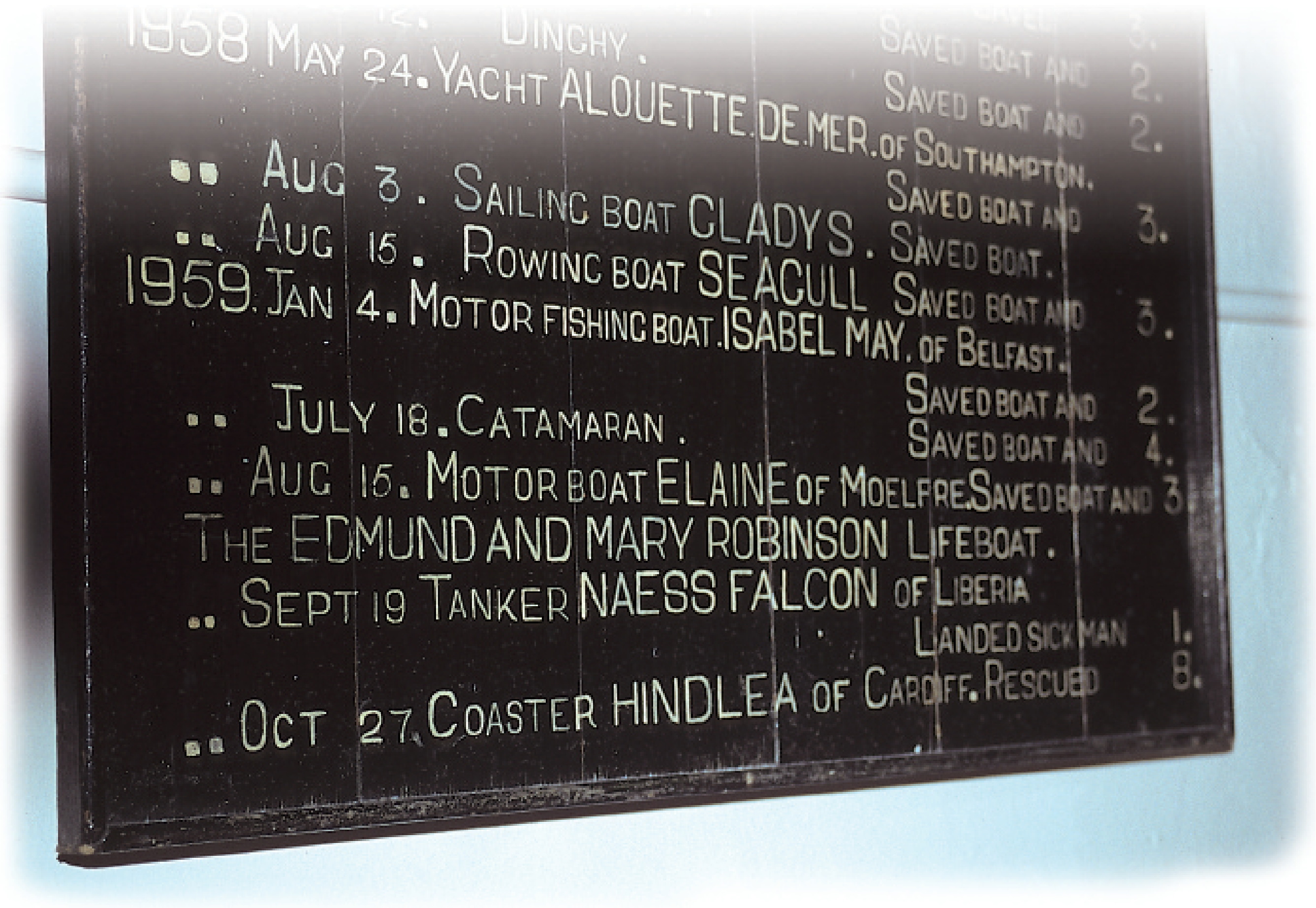
Yna dychwelodd Dic Evans i'r llithrfa. Wrth iddo eistedd yno, llifodd dagrau o lawenydd i lawr ei ruddiau wrth iddo sylweddoli'r hyn yr oedd ei griw ac yntau newydd ei gyflawni.

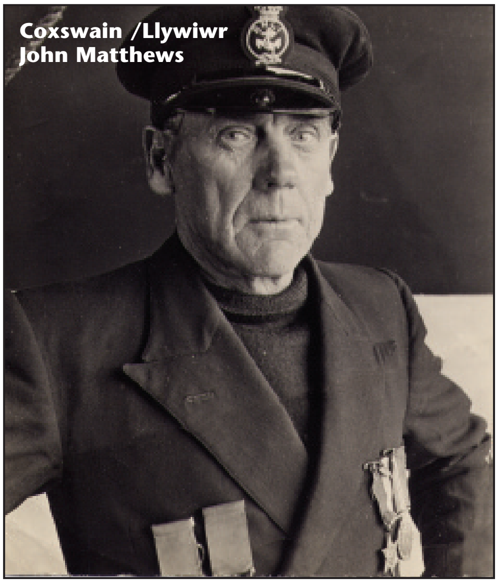
Arwyr Moelfre!

Cafodd dewrder a dycnwch y criw cyfan ei gydnabod gan yr RNLI a ledled y byd. Dangoswyd dewrder

Nid yw'r cofnod am achub yr *Hindlea* yn cael sylw amlycach nac unrhyw gofnod arall ar y bwrdd swyddogol yn yr orsaf, sy'n nodweddiadol o wyleidd-dra'r criw

In keeping with the modesty of the crew, the *Hindlea* rescue is afforded no more emphasis than any other on the official board at the lifeboat station





Coxswain /Llywiwr John Matthews

The *Hindlea*'s anchor now has a permanent home in the centre of the village of Moelfre
Mae angor yr *Hindlea* heddiw i'w weld yng nghanol pentref Moelfre

handling and the years of working with experienced lifeboat men such as his predecessor **Coxswain John Matthews.** A key aspect was the skill of motor mechanic Evan Owens. Whilst being thrown around within a very confined area of the lifeboat, his timing and control over the engines had to be perfect. Also, of course, the seaworthiness of the *Edmund and Mary Robinson*, despite her age, was vital. Traditional technology played its part in the shape of the drogue – but such was the strain on the drogue rope that the screws holding it had been drawn out of the solid deck, but the rope had not parted.

Coxswain Dic Evans was awarded the RNLI's Gold Medal for Gallantry, the service's highest award. Often referred to as 'The Lifeboat VC' it was the first time in ten years that the award had been presented. It was also one of the two occasions when Dic

Dick Evans & Evan Owens

diflino gan griw yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* y diwrnod hwnnw. Roedd y modd y meistrolodd Dic Evans y bad achub yn allweddol i lwyddiant y pnawn hwnnw, a'r feistrolaeth honno'n deillio o'r amser a dreuliodd yn gweithio gyda chriwiau bad achub profiadol a'r cyn-lywiwr **John Matthews**. Rhaid cydnabod hefyd fedrusrwydd Evan Owens, y peirianny-dd. Nid yn unig yr oedd wedi gweithio mewn lle cyfyng gyda'r bad achub yn cael ei daflu o don i don, ond roedd hefyd wedi dangos rheolaeth lwyr o'r peiriannau ac amseru perffaith. Wrth gwrs, roedd y bad achub ei hun, y *Edmund and Mary Robinson*, o gofio ei oed, hefyd yn allweddol. Roedd siap y drôg yn cydfynd â thechnoleg draddodiadol, ond oherwydd y straen ar y rhaff arbennig honno, daeth y sgriwiau'n rhydd o'r dec solet, ond ni wahanwyd y rhaff.

Derbyniodd y Llywiwr Dic Evans Fedal Aur yr RNLI am Ddewrder, sef y wobr uchaf y gellid ei chael. Cyfeirir ati'n aml fel *'The Lifeboat VC'*, a dyma'r tro cyntaf mewn deng mlynedd iddi gael ei rhoi. Dyma hefyd un o ddau achlysur lle derbyniodd Dic Evans y fraint hon.

Derbyniodd Evan Owens y Peiriannydd, y Fedal Arian.

Derbyniodd yr Ail-lywiwr Donald Murley Francis (a oedd yn ail beirianny-dd ar yr achlysur hwn) y Fedal Efydd. Ef yn ddiweddarach a olynodd Dic Evans fel Llywiwr bad achub Moelfre.

"Cyfeirir ati'n aml fel *'The Lifeboat VC'*, a dyma'r tro cyntaf mewn deng mlynedd iddi gael ei rhoi."

Evans received this honour.

Motor mechanic Evan Owens was awarded the Silver Medal.

Second Coxswain Donald Murley Francis (who acted as Assistant Mechanic on this occasion) was awarded a Bronze Medal. He became Coxswain of the Moelfre lifeboat after Dic Evans.

Hugh Owen was awarded a second service clasp to the Bronze Medal he had received for his part in the saving of the crew of the *Excel* in 1927, thirty years earlier.

Hugh Jones, who had been transformed from a helper on the slipway to being a member of a lifesaving lifeboat crew in less than three hours, also received a Bronze Medal.

The medals were presented by the President of the RNLI, Princess Marina, the Duchess of Kent. In 1961, the five were presented with the Silver Medal for Gallantry at Sea by Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace.

In the line of duty ...

Despite the incredible experience that the five men went through in saving the crew of the *Hindlea*, most people are unaware that the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* answered the call of duty again that same afternoon.

"Coxswain Dic Evans was awarded the RNLI's Gold Medal for Gallantry, the service's highest award."

Having transferred the crew of the *Hindlea* to safety, Coxswain Dic Evans had reported the condition of the *Edmund and Mary Robinson* to the RNLI and was told categorically that she was not to be taken out again until she had been thoroughly inspected. The grim reality of lifesaving, however, offered the lifeboat crew no such luxury.

That afternoon Coxswain Dic Evans and motor mechanic Evan Owens were in the boathouse repairing whatever they could and ensuring that the lifeboat was ready for service once more.

The tanker *Essar I*'s engines had stopped in almost the same place as the *Hindlea* but due to the tide she found herself in Moelfre Bay. She had lowered both anchors but she had no power to assist herself.

When the lifeboat was called out to stand by the *Essar I*, the following morning, the 28th October, until the Beaumaris lifeboat arrived, all those who had been involved in the previous day's heroic rescue were aboard once more. In the evening a tug came to tow the *Essar I* away. It was not until 5 p.m. that day that the lifeboat's work was over and the men could finally go home.

Earlier that same day Jabez Francis had been greeted in the coastguard lookout by an insurance assessor who had come to confirm that the *Hindlea* was wrecked. Confirming the loss of a ship was the harsh reality of the shipping business. The captain of the *Hindlea* had done all that was expected of him: he had attempted to save his vessel, but when that had proved impossible, his priority was to save his crew. The Moelfre lifeboat then did all that was expected of her. •

Derbyniodd Hugh Owen glasb i'w Fedal Efydd a dderbyniodd am ei ran yn y gwaith o achub criw yr *Excel* yn 1927, dri deng mlynedd ynghynt.

Derbyniodd Hugh Jones, a newidiodd ei rôl fel cynorthwydd ar y llithrfa i fod yn aelod o'r criw mewn llai na thair awr, hefyd Fedal Efydd.

Cyflwynwyd y medalau gan lywydd yr RNLI, y Dywysoges Marina, Duges Caint. Yn 1961 derbyniodd y pum Fedal Arian am Ddewrder ar y Môr gan y Frenhines Elizabeth II ym Mhalas Buckingham.

Dim llaesu dwylo ...

Er gwaethaf y profiad anhygoel a ddaeth i ran y pum gŵr wrth achub criw yr *Hindlea*, ychydig a ŵyr i'r *Edmund and Mary Robinson* a'r criw gael eu galw allan eilwaith ar ddyletswydd y pnawn hwnnw!

Ar ôl gwneud yn siŵr bod criw yr *Hindlea* yn ddiogel, hysbysodd Dic Evans yr RNLI o gyflwr yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* a dywedwyd wrtho i beidio â mentro allan i'r môr gyda'r bad nes ei fod wedi'i archwilio'n drylwyr. Ond ni fu'n bosibl cadw at y cyfarwyddyd hwnnw.

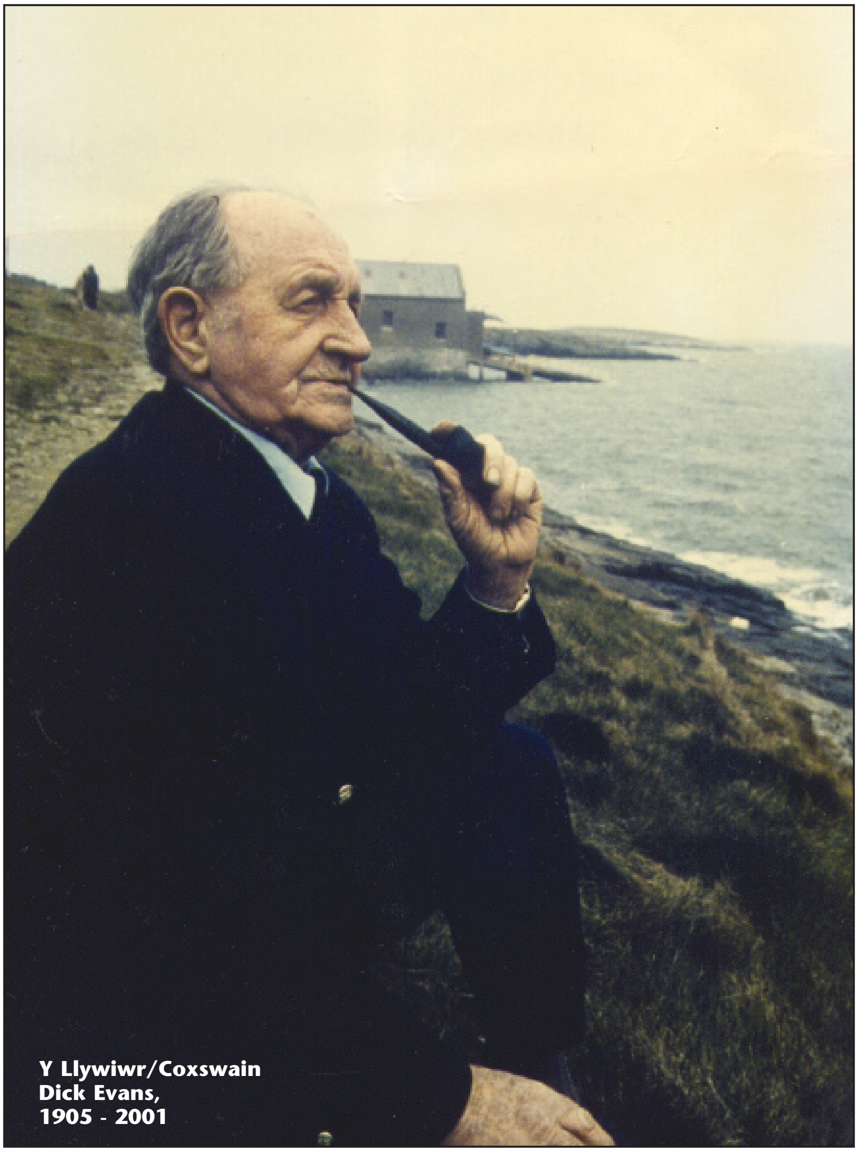
Roedd peiriannau'r tancer *Essar I* wedi stopio bron yn yr union fan â'r *Hindlea* ond oherwydd y llanw cafodd ei hysgubo i fae Moelfre. Roedd wedi gollwng y ddau angor ond nid oedd ganddi ddigon o bŵer serch hynny. Aeth yr *Edmund and Mary Robinson* allan ati nes y cyrhaeddodd bad achub Biwmares.

Bu farw'r Llywiwr Dic Evans yn 96 oed ac yn addas iawn mae ei fedd ym mynwent Llanallgo, lle mae beddau nifer o'r rhai a fu farw yn llongddrylliad enwog y *Royal Charter*

Coxswain Dick Evans died at the ripe old age of 96, and is aptly buried at the same churchyard, Llanallgo, as many of those who perished in Moefre's other world famous shipwreck - the *Royal Charter*

Y noson honno aeth Dic Evans ac Evan Owens i gwt y bad achub i drwsio'r bad achub er mwyn gwneud yn siŵr y byddai'n barod i fynd allan drannoeth. Pan alwyd y bad achub i sefyll ger *Essar I* y bore canlynol, yr 28ain o Hydref, roedd pob un a fu'n gwasanaethu arni y diwrnod cynt yn bresennol. Gyda'r nos daeth tŷg i dowio *Essar I* i ffwrdd. Ni ddaeth gwaith y dydd i ben tan 5 o'r gloch pan aeth y dynion o'r diwedd adref.

Yn gynharach y diwrnod hwnnw daeth aseswr yswiriant at Jabez Francis i'r wylfa i gadarnhau bod yr *Hindlea* wedi cael ei llongddryllio. Roedd cadarnhau bod llong wedi'i cholli yn ergyd drom i'r busnes llongau. Roedd capten yr *Hindlea* wedi gwneud popeth o fewn ei allu: roedd wedi ceisio achub ei long, ond pan welodd fod hynny'n amhosibl, y flaenoriaeth oedd achub ei griw. Yna daeth bad achub Moelfre i'r adwy a'u hachub.•



Y Llywiwr/Coxswain
Dick Evans,
1905 - 2001

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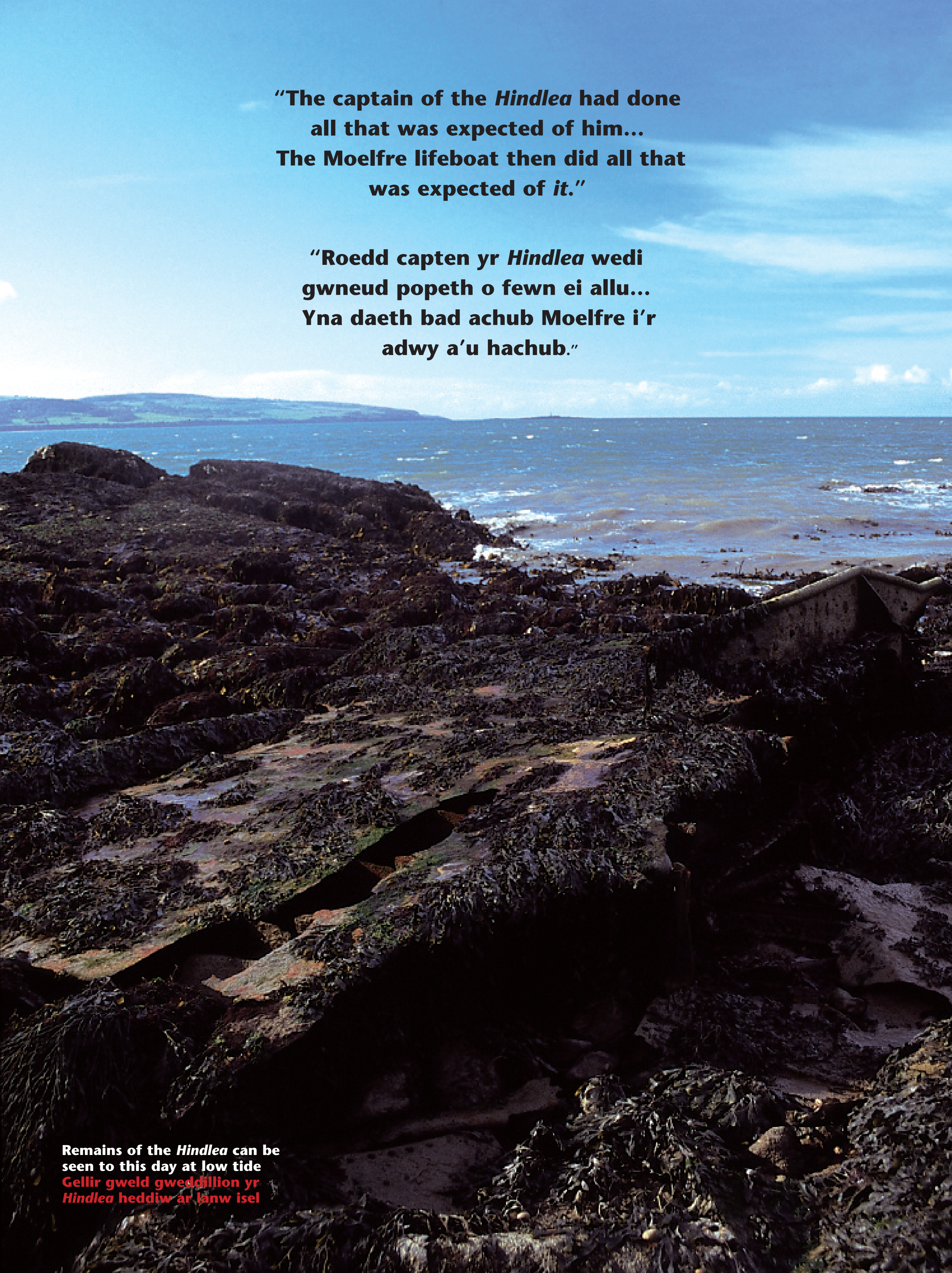
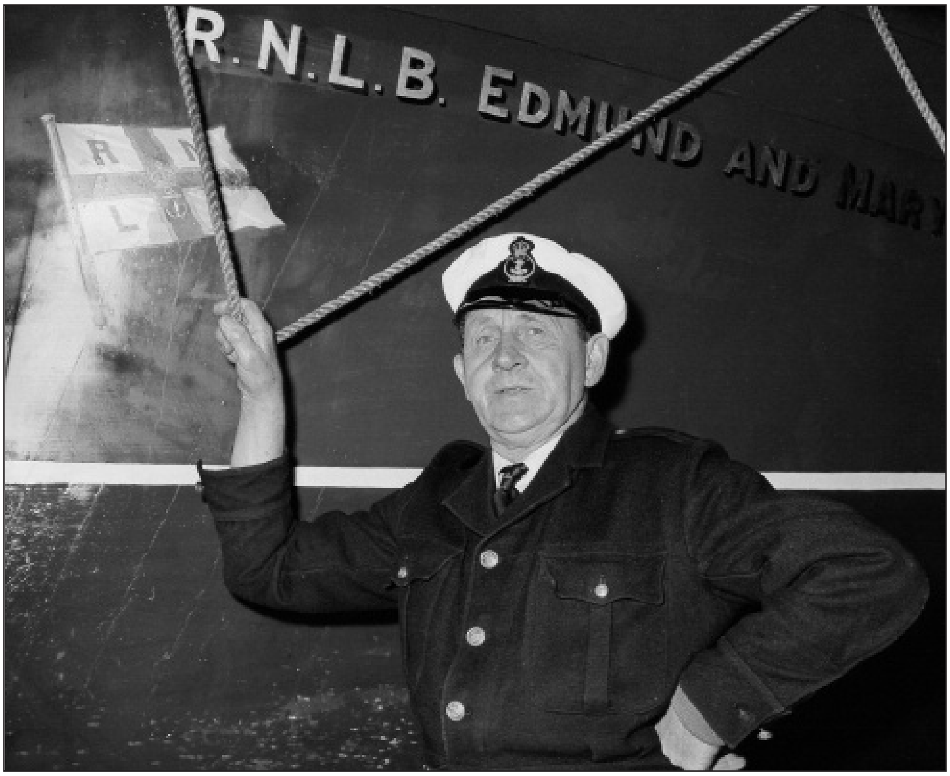
Papurau Teuluol Evan Owens Family Papers



"The captain of the *Hindlea* had done all that was expected of him… The Moelfre lifeboat then did all that was expected of *it*."

"Roedd capten yr *Hindlea* wedi gwneud popeth o fewn ei allu… Yna daeth bad achub Moelfre i'r adwy a'u hachub."

Remains of the *Hindlea* can be seen to this day at low tide
Gellir gweld gweddillion yr *Hindlea* heddiw ar lanw isel



"Ond pan fo'r hen wynt a'i gyffro yn chwipio'r tonnau a'r coed,

Mi fydd criw cwch Moelfre yn effro, dyna'r traddodiad erioed.

Profasant eu hunain drwy lawer hynt yn feistri ar sgol y tonnau a'r gwynt."

(Pennill allan o faled Percy Hughes i'r *Hindlea*)

"When the ancient wrath of the wind whips the trees and lashes the sea,

The lifeboat of Moelfre and crew, all ready for action will be.

Steadfast in storms, masters of strife, tradition and service - their life."

(A verse from Percy Hughes' ballad to the *Hindlea*)

Menter Môn

PARTNERIAETH MOELFRE PARTNERSHIP

THE CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST
Incorporated by Royal Charter 1917

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
National Assembly for Wales