

## The History of NCI Nare Point QAVS

On 14th July 2007 the Ex-MoD observation post at Nare Point on the Lizard was re-opened under new management.

The erstwhile derelict building had been taken over by the newly-formed NCI Nare Point Station. With help from the National Trust Enterprise Neptune Campaign, the MoD Veterans Challenge Fund, the Tanner the Gannet Foundation, The Kerrier District Council and a lot of elbow grease from the members, the building was completely renovated and the equipment installed. We gradually increased our number of volunteer watchkeepers and the number of watch days, so that on our 1st birthday we are able to open for four days per week. By our 10th birthday we were open seven days per week with two watches in the winter months 08:00 - 16:00 and three watches over the summer months 08:00 - 19:00.



### End of a decade for Station Manager

Nare Point Coastwatch Stations', long serving Station Manager for ten years retired at the Annual General Meeting held at Mawgan Village Hall in April 2019. The Rev Len Jepp was one of the founder members of the watch team in 1997 when the station, housed in an ex MOD building at the mouth of the Helford, was first opened. Len brought his commercial shipping and sailing experience to the role of watchkeeper and his business expertise to that of running the station. Trained as a watchkeeper at Bass Point, the first ever NCI station, he soon became the Nare Point Deputy Station Manager and in 1999 took on the ultimate role.

The MOD station, now owned by the National Trust, was being used to store potatoes prior to NCI taking out a lease. Len worked with others to make it habitable and useable as a watch station. In his early days as Station Manager only two watches were kept per day for four days of the week. This soon increased to seven days a week and three watches during the summer. Len was active in installing shutters on the seaward windows and has overseen the 2018 extension and equipment refurbishment programme and his company generously provided the station with a new radar.

Len's ten-year service as Station Manager, leading over 60 watchkeepers, was recognised by the presentation of a framed photograph of the station and a bottle of malt whisky. The presentation was made by Lesley Suddes, National Chair and Trustee of the NCI. Len's very large shoes are to be filled by Don Garman currently the Deputy Station Manager and Training Manager. Len will continue as a watchkeeper and will run the Stations 50/50 Club which helps to meet the annual running costs.

Nare Point maintains a watch over the entrance to the Helford and Falmouth Bay from Black Rock to the Manacles. This is a busy location and over 20,000 vessel movements are recorded each year. Since January 2019 there have already been three incidents which have involved the station: two drifting dinghies which required launching of the Falmouth RNLB and a commercial vessel with a dangerously loaded cargo. Watchkeepers also keep an eye on the Coast Path and wildlife and report sightings regularly to Cornwall Wildlife Trust. From Nare Point and thanks to our installation of a new observation window in the north side of the building, we have 290 degrees of vision taking in, Gillan Harbour, the mouth of the Helford River, Maenporth Bay, Falmouth's southern beaches and harbour entrance, St Anthony's Head light and the whole of Falmouth bay south to the Manacles



Station Manager Rev Len Jepp receives a framed photograph of the station and a bottle of malt whisky from National Chair and Trustee of NCI Lesley Suddes. Deputy Station Manager, Don Garman (right) looks on.