

## Jane Anne

An important survivor from Irvine's maritime past, and a rare example of her type in Scotland, *Jane Anne* is a double-ended, self-righting, pulling and sailing lifeboat, who in her time based at the town's RNLI station was manned mainly by the locally renowned Sinclair family and participated in seven rescues, saving 12 lives.

Built in 1898 by the Thomas Ironworks Co in Millwall, London, *Jane Anne* began operating out of Irvine shortly afterwards and remained in use there until the station closed in 1914. The fourth and final RNLI lifeboat at the station - and the fifth lifeboat to serve Irvine, as there had previously been an independently owned vessel - *Jane Anne* was built for the RNLI with the legacy of a Southgate man named Mr Nicholls, who requested that she be named after his mother.

*Jane Anne*'s design meant she was open to the elements and relied entirely on the strength and skill of the crew who rowed her, relying on wind and muscle power. Crossing over the sand bar at the entrance to the harbour could be hazardous in certain conditions, and rescues would have proved extremely dangerous and exhausting work for the crew in bad weather. However the construction of the hull, using diagonal cross planking, made her very strong and the enclosed ends provided buoyancy.

There had been a lifeboat station in Irvine since 1834, situated at the mouth of the harbour close to where the pilot house now stands, but it was closed in 1914 after it was decided that the lifeboat station at Troon was able to operate more easily in bad weather.

*Jane Anne* was taken to Falmouth in the south of England and stayed in service with the RNLI until the 1920s, when she was withdrawn following the introduction of motor boats. Sold at auction to a Mr E F Cooper for £35 in September 1928, she was later converted to a cabin cruiser, but little is known about her from this time.

Discovered in a wood near Taunton, Somerset, in the 1980s, *Jane Anne* was transferred to the Scottish Maritime Museum in her present state in 1989.