

# What the Sea Saw

## Audio Drama Trail

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## VOICES

**JIM “BATN’A DOWN” CRAWFORD** – a trawler skipper, older, hardworking and fearless to some extent. Something a bit mercurial about him and his daughter.

**MARGE CLARKE nee CRAWFORD** – JIM’S DAUGHTER. Marge always has a mischievous twinkle in her eye, smiley, happy, still something almost childlike and magical about her as an adult, she tells you things in a way that makes her sound like she’s telling you a secret.

Both the above have broad Scarborough accents.

**A CRAB STALL WORKER (LASS)** – Young, buzzing, works hard-plays hard, sense of having felt rebellious about the expectations within the fishing community/ upbringing but this battles with her pride of where she comes from.

**CHARLIE** – Not a fisherman but comes from a long line of seafarers and grown up in fishing family in a situation that could almost come out of a Dickens novel. Relishes telling stories of his youth.

**A FISHERMAN** – Bound by his superstitious upbringing and environment. Thinks a lot about the role of superstition and faith in keeping safe at sea.

**COBLEMAN’S WIFE** - A mature hardworking woman, tough exterior, sense of humour.

**SALLY** – Her father, a coxswain in the lifeboat, drowned in the 1954 disaster, and this tragedy has remained with her, (and the rest of the community) her emotions can be close to the surface at times, both dark and bright.

All the above have Scarborough accents. However, the speech patterns and rhythms and tone/register of individuals should be explored to help create distinct voices. All voices speak real testimony, therefore should be portrayed as naturally/ realistically as possible rather than performed except for female V/O which can be more theatrical.

## SONGS (ALL ACAPELLA)

### FEMALE VOICE:

- 1) Sea Fever
- 2) Somewhere beyond the Sea (first few lines only)
- 3) Unst Boat Song

### MALE VOICE:

A Drop of Nelson’s Blood.

## INTRODUCTION & LOCATION 1: The Butter Cross

### SF/X. SOUND OF GENTLE WAVES

FEMALE VOICE SINGING SEA FEVER ACAPELLA CLOSE. UNDERSCORE.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVXm9AwwxGk>)

MARGE                    Hello.  
                                 I'm Marge... and this is me Dad.

JIM                         Jim, ow'do.

MARGE                    He's a fisherman. Like all the folk down here in The Bottom End  
                                 We all belong to the sea.

JIM                         We come from a long line of fisherfolk, do Marge and I.

MARGE                    We've come to show you around. To take you on a time  
                                 travelling voyage inspired by and interweaving the first-hand  
                                 memories of Scarborough's fishing community-

JIM                         At each location one of us will always find you -

MARGE                    - to guide you.  
                                 Round every corner the voices of the past still linger on the  
                                 wind....you just have to listen.  
                                 Ready? Let's go...

SF/X. BRIEF WAVE MOTIF SOUND INDICATES START.

SOUND OF SEAGULLS OVER.

JIM (CLOSE):       The Butter Cross, where West Sandgate meets Princess Street, near Gambles Yard where our Marge was born.

Let's stand with our backs to the sea, the Butter Cross stone on our left and Wilson Arms on our right. And the cobbled street climbing up to St Mary's Church – do you see it?

Up on the hill, each December, a service is held there to remember those from The Bottom End lost at sea.

Funny old stone, this Butter Cross, isn't it? – marks the spot where Medieval market once was. But for us it means summat different, it marks the start of the Bottom End. Like a gateway to our community, to our own particular way of life, hidden away from the slot machines and candy floss down on the Front.

SF/X. FEMALE VOICE HUMMING/ SINGING ACAPELLA "BEYOND THE SEA"  
HER FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE SEA,  
BEHIND US.

JIM                    Listen! Do you hear that? A voice carried on the wind.

Turn around and listen.

A teenage lass, coming up from the foreshore.

A crab stall worker on her way 'ome to Bottom End.

LASS                 Oh, you made me jump! Lurkin' there around Butter Cross.

JIM (CLOSE)        She can see you, even if you can't quite see 'er.

LASS

*(To the listener)* You from outta town?

*(With humour)* If it's market you're afta, you're about ten centuries too late!

God, I stink to 'igh'eaven! Smell that -me 'ands all stained from dressing crabs all day. Need to get home to that kitchen sink quick and wash meself! Get rid o'smell, before me and me friend go back down' front "clickin'!" That's what me gran used to call it - "goin' clickin' down on foreshore." All the fisher lads'll be down there, all dressed up - no smocks or ganseys on a Saturday night, it'll be pressed shirt and kipper tie, suits and great big quiffs and us lasses strolling up and down foreshore pretending not to look' at'em. Not that they care much what *we* look like, some of 'em. All they want'a know is can you skein a bag o'mussels for bait. *(Laughing/sarcastic)* – if you can, who knows, you might get marriage proposal!

Nearly all the people that live down the Bottom End belong to the sea, you see. It's in our blood. Women as well as men. You're brought up this way, and it's in you... or so they keep telling me.

"Bag me some winkles" I can still 'ear me Mam saying and there's me as kid of five or six screwing up me face –

"Face of death" me mam calls it – cos o' the stench - and she's getting that mad wi'me...

"They stink" I'm saying.

"We all've to muck in to put food on table!"

She's a strong woman is me mam. Fisher wives 'ave to be. Work 'ard, to 'elp bring in a wage.

Rachel Jenkinson was saying it was one of 'er ancestors who

came up with the idea of having crab stalls when the fishing was bad.

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She saw all the gentry walking up and down on sea front where she lived and she took the window out of her 'ome, brought a box of crabs across from pier, boiled them, dressed them, put them in the window and that waa Scarborough's first crab stall!

Gentry went bananas! Couldn't get enough!

And we're all still down there, how many centuries later, down on front dressing crabs and lobsters for a livin!

And don't get me started on kippers. Smoked kippers. Posted kippers. We send kippers all over country. Barrow loads of 'em.

It's a "thing" you know – "Send us some Kippers from Scarborough!" All the famous stars want them. And him who's in charge of all BBC - Billy Cotton. Send him kippers.

'Undred boxes sometimes.

*(Laughing)* No wonder I reek!

But for all me pulling "face of death" there is a pride in what we do. It takes skill, dressing crabs, skeining and baiting.

#### SF/X. FEMALE VOICE SINGS UNST BOAT SONG SOFTLY UNDERSCORING

Starka, virna, vestilie

Obadeea, obadeea

Starka, virna, vestilie

Obadeea, monye.

Sometimes though, I envy me brothers going out to sea...lasses aren't allowed on boats, you see; the men say we'll bring bad luck.

Only Scotch 'erring girls are allowed to sail. Don't know why it's different for them.

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They say, me great grandma was a Scotch lass, sailed down  
with 'erring boats one summer and never went back.

Sometimes I catch me old Gran 'umming a song her mother  
taught 'er. With words neither of us understand, but at same  
time seem a part of us. A yearning, mebbe. A song of the sea.

*(She sings the last line of the song acapella)*

Obadeea, monye

*(A moment)*

Still, no good standin' round 'ere all day nattering, all that's  
calling me now is a good wash in kitchen sink and a Saturday  
night out clickin'!

Ta-ra!

SF/X. STARTS SINGING AS SHE MOVES AWAY FROM US AND BRIEF WAVE  
MOTIF.

END

**LOCATION 2:** The Bolts/ bottom of Custom House Steps looking down the alley at Alf Wade's cottage.

SF/X. WAVES MOTIF. SEAGULLS.

MARGE                   Psst! It's me – Marge! You're probably wondering why you're here! I'll explain. Come here- let's stand at the bottom of Custom House Steps. If you look up to the top of the steps you can see the Custom House still there. Perfect view for seeing all the ships coming in loaded up with goods.

And now turn so the steps are on your left.

The building in front of yer, to yer right, end of terrace is on the site of me grandad's old house, where me dad grew up with Granny Anna and dad's brother Bob and sister Eva.

It was all fisherman's houses along here.

They had to live close to the shore cos my grandad was in lifeboat.

If you look straight ahead – you'll see a passageway between the buildings, what they call The Bolts. And that's why you're here.

You're waiting for a man called Charlie, who grew up in that very tall black bricked building on the left of the passage. Can you see it? Look closer, its windows are all boarded up.

SF/X. VERSE FROM 'A DROP OF NELSON'S BLOOD' IS HEARD COMING TOWARDS US AND UNDERSCORES AS CHARLIE APPROACHES US.

*We'll roll the old chariot along*  
*We'll roll the old chariot along*  
*We'll roll the old chariot along*



*And we'll all hold on behind*

MARGE (CLOSE) Here comes Charlie now. He's got some funny stories to tell you.

CHARLIE Ah, now then! I'd ask you in for a cup of tea - but as you can see the old place is derelict.

MARGE (CLOSE) Remember, he can see you even if you can't quite see him.

CHARLIE Number 22, The Bolts.

Hard to believe looking at it I grew up here with me Grandad, a fisherman, Alf Wade.

Me Grandad was sunk and shipwrecked I think he said seven times in between 1914 war and the last war. The thing about him was, he was a sailor and he liked a drink...like they all do. He liked his rum. Nelson's Blood as he called it! And he used to have a little cupboard by the fireplace which he used to put his rum in.

(CHARLIE SINGS)

*A drop of Nelson's Blood won't do us any harm*

*A drop of Nelson's Blood won't do us any harm*

Anyway he was never ill, never saw a doctor and at the grand old age of ninety he said " I don't feel good" so he went and had a lay down in bed and his daughter went up the flight of stairs -she had a wooden leg, stiff with no joints, cut off below the knee - and he says "Just go and bring us a drop of

Nelson's Blood will you? A nice drop of Nelson's Blood."

So she hobbles downstairs, tips in the glass, took it him...and he says "You're a bit stingy aren't you lass? Go and put a bit more in it." So she goes back downstairs and puts a double in, takes it upstairs. He drinks it down. "That's better!" he says.

Lays back and *dies!*

She 'obbles out the 'ouse that fast, her wooden leg echoing down the Bolts, saying

"What 'ave I done? What 'ave I done?"

and she 'obbles to skipper's 'ouse on Foreshore to ring her sister, shouting

"Come down at once home cos I've just killed your father!"

*(Sings) A drop of Nelson's Blood won't do us any harm...*

*(Laughs)* Well, that was the end of Grandad.

Shortly afterwards the people from the town hall building inspectors and everything like that, said the house is "unfit to live in" cos it has no bathroom and just an outside toilet.

And they say to the old lady, me aunt "We're going to close this 'ouse. It's unfit."

There wasn't a lot of money in fishing, there never has been and never will be but he did own his own house did my grandfather. No 22 here in The Bolts.

And was the 'ouse me Aunt was born.

But they kick'er out just the same.

Cordon it off. "Condemned".

Me Grandparents brought eight children up in it and themselves and apart from the young boy that died of the flu, they all lived to eighty or ninety and yet council said it was unfit to live in.

Well! at least it 'ad an outside toilet! – in medieval times they'd open the upstairs windows and chuck their sewage down into the passage! Let the tide wash it away.

I wonder what the 'ousing inspectors would've made of

No 22 The Bolts then!

SF/X. SONG CAN BE HEARD / SOUND OF TIDE TAKES THE WORDS OUT TO

SEA

*Well a nice wash below wouldn't do us any harm*

*Well a nice wash below wouldn't do us any harm*

*Well a nice wash below wouldn't do us any harm....*

*And we'll all hold on behind!*

END.

**LOCATION 3:** Corner Steps of Sea Cadets, formerly St Thomas Church.

SF/X. WAVE MOTIF. SEAGULLS CIRCLING

MARGE (CLOSE): I don't know about you...I could do with a breather.

Let's sit on the corner steps of this church and look down toward the sea. Can you see Tunny Club down on the left-hand side? It's a fish restaurant now, but it's kept its name from when they used to go tunny fishing - all the film stars and posh people and that.

SF/X. WOMAN V/O (CLOSE) (whispering)

*A whistling woman, a crowing hen,  
Brings the devil out of his den.*

SF/X. SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS RUNNING FROM BEHIND – DOWN HILL.  
THEY COME CLOSE AND STOP SUDDENLY.

FISHERMAN (CLOSE) (*out of breath - to the air*)

Oh, thank you.

Thank you, thank you.

(*to us*) I thought for a moment you were the parson sitting here on the church steps.

Thought I was going to 'ave to turn around and go home... sail on next tide.

I never come this way down to sea normally- not with Church being just here....too much risk of bumping into the parson, but I'm late, you see. And I just caught you outta corner of me eye! Superstitious I know, but, but we're all the same down 'ere.

If you see a parson when you're on your way down to boat, it's bad luck, you turn back.

SF/X. WOMAN V/O (CLOSE) (whispering)

*A whistling woman, a crowing hen,*

*Brings the devil out of his den.*

*A whistling woman, a crowing hen..."*

*(Fades out on final line)*

FISHERMAN

We live by our superstitions. They're all around you.

You learn 'em as a kid from the older fishermen.

'Ere! I'll never forget Old Fred Normandale telling me about when he was a kid of fourteen, he says

" I was in boat wi' rest o' crew – we're going down to Hayburn Wyke area to our pots, and there's me and another fisherman stood for'ard, and all of a sudden I feel a tap on the shoulder.

When I turn round the skipper is with the tiller hitting me on the shoulder. He says " 'ey! Knock off whistlin'"

I say "What-what's the idea?"

"Doon't ever whistle in this bo-w-at agin!" skipper says,

"Because you whistle for wind. When wind comes, it comes too strong!"

I've never forgotten Old Fred telling me that.

We don't whistle down here.

SF/X CHURCH BELL STRIKES

SF/X. FEMALE V/O (CLOSE)

*(whispering): No turning mattress on a Sunday, or over the boat'll turn.*

FISHERMAN        Aye, we're a right superstitious lot down Bottom End, it comes down through the generations. Not surprising when you think of what they 'ad to face back then, in open boats on rough seas. Old Tom Rowley, he was born with what they call a cowl - you know a cowl over your face- like a veil? And whoever was born with the veil- if you were a fisherperson- you would never be drowned at sea. And this was a belief. They'd take it on board 'cos it was classed then as lucky. Or they used to sell them, to other fishermen, make a lot of money out of these things. And Old Tom believed that he'd never be drowned at sea, but funny thing was his mother, Old Mrs Rowley, once told me he never 'ad the veil with him on board because after 'e was born *his* father, sold it for ten shilling and went in pub! It were such a strong superstition you'd think he'd want to keep it, but, yeah, no, he went in boozer!

*(laughing)*

It's true!

SF/X. CHURCH BELL STRIKES ONCE

SF/X. FEMALE V/O (CLOSE)

*No winding wool on a Sunday  
or you'll wind'em over board.*

FISHERMAN

Me own dad, 'e never sailed on a Sunday.

He'd come in from sea on Sunday- we'd all go down to meet him. But we were never allowed to come down and see 'em off when they were going back to sea. Couldn't watch 'em sail out or you'd be waving 'em goodbye forever.

SF/X: CHURCH BELL STRIKES ONCE

My dad wasn't a churchgoer, but he was a good believer.

I'm sure he believed cos he always said, anybody who'd been at sea in a gale would know that there was somebody above us. Out there in 'orrendous gales.

But for all 'is belief 'e would never want to see a man o' the cloth on his way down to sea.

*(A moment)*

They say Parson was stood on wall of 'arbour the night the lifeboat overturned. 1954. Watching 'em sail out. And we lost three. Jack Sheader - coxswain, John Cammish. And young Frank Bayes.

SF/X: CHURCH BELL STRIKES ONE LAST TIME. GROWS LOUDER, THEN FADES. WAVES MOTIF.

END.

**LOCATION 4** - Sitting on Tom Rowley's / Fred Normandale's benches. Burr Bank, top of Long Greece Steps looking down over the harbour.

SF/X: WAVE MOTIF. SOUND OF SEAGULLS FURTHER AWAY

JIM (CLOSE) Burr Bank. Top of Long Greece Steps.  
Why don't you take a pew on one of these benches?  
You won't be on your own for long, someone or other is always coming up Long Greece Steps to and from the harbour.

SF/X. FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING. COBLEMAN'S WIFE SITS NEXT TO US.

COBLEMAN'S WIFE

Nice that they've put these memorial benches 'ere isn't it?  
For Fred and Dot Normandale, and for Tom Rowley.  
I always need a breather on my way up from Foreshore.  
'Ere! I remember Tom Rowley when he was a kid.  
Seeing 'im and his sister Shirley, right on this spot!  
This is going back some time, mind,

SF/X. (MEMORY) CHILDREN LAUGHING IN DISTANCE.

I'm walking down those steps to your right  
- Long Greece they call them - on my way  
down to meet me 'usband's coble coming in.  
Hell of a day...thick fog, wind is whipping round my face,  
and I suddenly 'ear this funny sound...a sort of ting, ting, ting...  
you know sort a like shells clattering on the shore?



Anyway, I look down 'ere, over Burr Bank and see 'undreds of shells, empty mussel shells tinkling in wind? What...?

Where did they come from?

So, I'm turning round, and up above on Overton Terrace - there behind us - I see what looks like two children, running off they were, pushing a barrow. I mean it were that misty but I swear to this day it were Young Tom and Shirley Rowley, you know? Come and tipped all their mam's empty mussel shells what they'd been skeining over 'ere! I can still hear their giggling voices disappearing into the fog.

In summer when I were their age, we always played games up 'ere on Burr Bank, me and Maud Hodds – 'er what married young Bob Crawford who was in the Lifeboat when it turned over... Women sitting out on the terrace behind and us kids playing on the bank 'ere in sunshine. 'Cos there's a lot of kids, up 'ere at that time. And we go in and out to one another you know. And everybody's Auntie This, and Granny That and none of them are me real auntie! Everybody looks after everybody's else's children, we're all one big family really.

In fact - and this'll make you laff- I remember Jim Sheader staying with 'is grandad, down there on Long Greece Steps - used to be lots of fishermen's houses there ...we're all out playing with Eves' gang, he's a fisherman is old Tom Eves, and e'as ten children, and nine o'clock at night Mrs Eves saying "Your grandad in from pub yet Jim?"

Little Jim shakes 'is 'ead.

"No"

"Get in with that lot then!" she says.

Well, they're only two bedroom 'ouses round 'ere and there's er and Old Tom Eves in one room and their ten kids in other bedroom -

"Get in with that lot!" (*Laughs*).

We was in pub the other night with one of Eves' lasses, and Jim comes in and sees 'er and says,

" 'Ello! I used to sleep with you!"

She were mortified! (*laughing*)

(*beat*)

But yeah, everyone looked out for each other and each other's kids. It were wonderful looking back on it.

In winter Nan 'ad a big table in the cellar with a big iron tray on it, a bag of mussels turned up - still does - she and me mam'll be skeining the mussels at one side, and me grandad'll be baiting the line at the other side of the table, cleaning the lines – taking the old bait off hooks. Three o'clock in the morning, down in the cellar. Freezin' your fingers off. Skeining and baiting, ready for me dad's boat. Me up before school to 'elp, skeining mussels, scraping them outta shells with a knife – to put onto hooks.

"You have to get the lines so that all the hooks are one side."

Nan's saying.

Oh, and then teatime and me mam'll say,

"Go on Burr Bank and watch for your Dad".

And there's me and Maud and little Doris Sheader and Joycie Walker, oh and little Dilt Jenkinson, Rachel's husband - all from fishing families, and we're all up on the terraces, freezing cold, looking for our dads coming up these steps.

They all 'ave their sowesters on, see?

And the thigh boots, all a similar build, faces crusted in sea salt, coming up from boat- half a dozen tiny voices shouting "It's me dad! ,It's me dad"...cos you see, they all look same coming up from sea... we've no idea really whose dad it is coming up!

"Mam! Get a pan 'o shackles on, me Dad's coming!... I think!"

And no sooner 'ave you 'ad your tea than it's

"Get your coat on and get rid of them empty shells for me, lass."

We kids then have to take the barrow all the way down to Marine Drive and dump them by the sea...bags and bags of empty mussel shells.

*(laughing)* I should've 'ave done like young Tom and Shirley Rowley...tipped 'em 'ere over Burr Bank when no one's looking, saved me little legs the long journey!

#### SF/X WAVE MOTIF

END.

**LOCATION 5** - Castle Gardens. Olive Quick's bench facing away from sea and onto Castle Gardens.

SF/X WAVE MOTIF. SEAGULLS IN DISTANCE

JIM                      Hello again, a great spot this for watching who's coming in to shore. But this time we're going to sit with our backs to the sea, and look onto Castle Gardens. See if you can find Olive Quick's memorial bench and tek a pew there.

Hard to imagine this as a bomb site, people being dug out of their 'ouses.

SF/X: FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING.

SALLY SINGS THE VERSE OF SONG "HANG OUT THE WASHING..."

SALLY                      *We're gonna hang out the washing on the Siegfried Line*  
*Have you any dirty washing, Mother dear?*

JIM                      I'll let Sally tell you the rest. Jack Sheader's lass.

SALLY (CLOSE)        *(She hums a couple more lines before breaking her thought.*  
*She is sat next to us now her voice is gentle, bright)*

I'd 've been what... I don't know, 9 years old when war broke out? I remember that day clear as a whistle. I can see all the boats coming in now. All the men coming in. Going down to meet me Dad.

And this one night, moonlit night it was, Germans were coming over, dropping parachute mines, trying to blow the pier up and one landed up 'ere on Castle Gardens – what was Potter Lane then.

No 2, where we lived, was the only 'ouse still standing – well,'alf standing...

Me dad was a fisherman in cobles and 'e was in lifeboat. Coxswain actually.

I used to 'elp with the lifeboat in wartime. Even though I was just a kid. Don't think anybody knew that. You couldn't send rockets up in wartime, the maroons as we call 'em – you know, to call the lifeboat crew – 'cos of the flash of light. So, me and me mam would 'ave to go knock crew up in middle of night, climbing over rubble, down bombed steps to Quay Street. I was just a little girl. Me 'ands were so small and cold I used to take a toffee apple from kitchen cupboard to knock on doors with!

We 'ad to launch lifeboat quite a lot during war – not more or less for fishing, it was for aircraft. It was even more dangerous trawlers and lifeboat going out in wartime, cos o' the mines and that. Fishermen'd get them caught up in their nets. Sometimes though it'd be parachutes or a pair of German leather boots or something.

Sometimes, it'd be a body.

I always remember one time me Dad e' ad to pick these two Germans up – their aircraft 'ad crashed and they was stranded at sea. Police were supposed to meet 'im coming in and pick Germans up at pier. But when 'e gets there, no sign of police.

What does 'e do? Comes up Dyke Path with them, brings 'em home! Here! Oh my gad! Well, there's only me and me mother in...*(laughs nervously)*, me and me mother!

I'm 'olding onto me mother, cos we're frightened of Germans, see? Me dad's saying

"Give 'em a bit o' summat to eat!"

Me mother's trembling, trying to give 'em something on toast.

But they were lovely 'as it appens, just young lads.

Anyway, then policeman come to collect 'em. And 'e starts shouting "Come on!" shouting at 'em. And me dad says

*(Quietly, but with emotion)*

"Oh no Bob, no, no. They're somebody's sons."

And the soldiers get up quietly, a nod to me mother, and they follow police out.

*(Wistfully)* Me two older brothers were away at war, you see?

And we'd no idea where.

"They're somebody's sons."

They moved everybody out up'ere, whose 'ouses were blown up. Out of the Bottom End. All my friends. Families who lived this end of town for generations. Fisherfolk. They were moved out. To different parts of Scarborough. And they couldn't settle. Couldn't settle. I mean Jocksy Scales, they moved his lot out to uh, somewhere off Dean Road, and well, he thought they were the other side of the world.

*(She sings softly)*

*We're gonna hang out the washing on the ...Siegfried Line.*

Four people were killed that night. I'll never forget.

*Have you any dirty washing....?*

*(Almost speaking) Mother...dear*

One of them was just a baby.

SF/X:WAVES MOTIF

END.

**LOCATION 6** - Lighthouse Pier – the Frederick William Booty painting.

SF/X: SEAGULLS OVERHEAD

MARGE

I don't know about you, but I could do with a breather.

This is what we call Lighthouse Pier, its proper name is St Vincent's.

See the Lighthouse? That's where a lot of the old fishermen end up working, when they finish going to sea. That and making crab pots. Always summat to do with the sea.

Here on your left, in the water, all the wooden fishing cibles would be tied up.

Me grandad, Johnson Crawford, 'e was in lifeboat crew during World War One, as well as fishing.

When it was bad weather, me gran used to say to me grandad, "Don't go away, the lifeboat guns'll be going off."

She thought e'd be in danger fishing. 'E was a fisherman, see? They lived over there on Sandside, backing on to the Bolts. Near to lifeboat.

Me dad and his brother used to 'elp 'aul the lifeboat down the slipway for 'im when they were kids. That's when men used to row lifeboat, this'd be early nineteen hundreds.

The haulers got 2'6 but not them, not me dad or his brother. Grandad would've been slaughtered if 'e'd given them a ticket.

Me grannie Anna, used to do the paying out for them all, you know, the haulers and crew used to go to me Grandma's for their wages. She'd be in charge of paying 'em all, she was like the Paymistress! Not that she got paid 'erself for it.



Me dad's sister, Aunt Eva, remembered me grandad taking the lifeboat out to a ship called Rohilla...it was a hospital ship. During World War One this is. It ran aground off Saltwick Nab during a severe gale and for eighteen hours in violent seas they say me grandad and the rest of the crew tried to reach those on board.

For days Grandad never went to bed. Never got changed, 'cos the weather was so bad, no sooner had they got in with Lifeboat they were out again. My gran was keeping warm fires going to dry his clothes.

A month later he died of pneumonia.

Me Gran struggled after that, she still had me dad and Aunt Eva and Uncle Bob to bring up, but not a penny did she get from Lifeboat to see 'er through because he didn't die on board.

And you see she was stone deaf. So things were against 'er.

Me dad told me she tried to make ends meet tekning people's cases in, that'ad to be out the boarding houses at ten o'clock.

And they wanted to stop the day in Scarborough. Chargin' them tuppence or summat like that. But it weren't enough. Me dad 'ad to leave school at twelve to go to sea, to'elp keep 'em all.

They 'ad a real 'ard life.

Grandad 'ad dedicated his life to saving his friends at sea, and it 'ad been the death of 'im...but not a penny did Grandma get from lifeboat. Me Dad never forgave lifeboat for that.

It's all swanky yachts moored up 'ere now but can you imagine standing here the night of the lifeboat disaster in 1954, seeing the Lifeboat turning over coming in. That must've been 'orrible. Well, you don't expect it to 'appen when they're coming in do you?

They say lifeboat was supposed to be self-righting, but when she righted herself, there were only two still inside...

young Bob Crawford and...Tom Eves.

Somehow, they'd hung on.

Jack Sheader - Sally's Dad - and John Cammish, were washed out and drowned. But the young lad with them, he got hit with something as she turned over – knocked unconscious – and he wasn't picked up here till a few hours later and when he was picked up, he was dead.

Frankie Bayes from Princess Street.

SF/X: SEAGULLS AND WAVES FADE

END.

**LOCATION 7** – Lighthouse Pier, black & white building close to Sidney Smith Bridge.

SF/X: WAVE MOTIF. SOUND OF SEAGULLS. WATER LAPPING

JIM

You know, they say old fishermen spend most of their time looking out to sea. But sometimes it's the view from here across to the foreshore that they like to remember. Coming home. Landing a good catch. Your kids standing there waiting to greet you.

Close your eyes. It's a summer evening 1931.

Sun is setting on the 'orizon. A gentle breeze. Smell of brine in the air. You're coming into shore. The 'arbour is packed!

Here on Lighthouse Pier they're landing the tunny, hanging them on big gantries, these massive fish, measuring them...

"Who's caught the biggest tunny fish?"

All summer, keeping the winner in a hut on Pier, the famous Tunny Club...putting it on show, packed in ice. 'Oliday makers queuing up.

*(Street seller voice)* "Tuppence to come in and see tunny fish!"

*(Incredulous)* Tuppence! No need to pay to go in, you tell 'em, you can smell it all the way from Bethel!

A lovely site that, to see the Bethel there waiting for you as you come in to harbour. There on foreshore - open your eyes, can you see it - the words Bethel Mission Chapel painted over an arch of red brick?

Set up to 'elp fishermen and their families. If you lose all your kit, you'll get fitted out again by Bethel Mission.

There's a man in there, most marvellous 'e is, caring for fishermen coming in from sea...cos your 'ands and neck are all cut from 'auling the lines as the boat chops through water, miles of lines, a thousand baited 'ooks. Once you're onshore and your catch is landed, go in there and he's running ointment on your open wounds.

A hot cup of tea while 'e works on you.

Aye, there's lots of memories. Especially when you've spent your whole life fishing. You can get a good yarn on with some of the old fishermen down'ere....one that springs to mind is when some of them were arguin' what's the worst enemy of fishermen?... and one of 'em says

"I'll tell you what is. First time I went line fishing, one, two o'clock in morning, was in open coble. In those days things were good - they're catching turbot, lings, whittings, anything that swam fishermen are catching 'em, one at a time on a 'ook, but this pa-tic-ular night we're 'auling lines and ...nothin'! Not a single fish. Next night, same again. Skipper starts throwin' coins in sea and shouting "I'll pay yer! If yer won't give me the fish, I'll pay yer for'em!" - It's an old belief yer know, like a charm or superstition, that one - and all of a sudden, / feel I've got a good fish on, and then a bigger one! And I'm that excited, just a young lad, trying to 'aul my line of fish in, when, mebbe ten yards away, this seal pops up outta water with a big cod in its mouth, more or less laffin' at me, teks a big bite out of it, then let's it go- and that's that! What's left of it goes down for crab meat! And that 'appened first time I went line fishing, but it weren't the last..."

Seals! They're fishermen's worst enemy, no two ways about it!"

I remember Old Fred when he gave up fishing saying  
“My father was a fisherman. My grandfather, his father. My  
son’s a fisherman. Fisherman all me life. What am I gonna do  
now?”

Sometimes our Marge’s mam says to me, isn’t it about time *you*  
finished with boats?

*(Laughs)*

You won’t keep me away from sea, I say. The sea, it’s in me.  
I belong to the sea.

SF/X FADES OUT

END.

**Location 8** - End of Lighthouse Pier, looking out to sea.

SF/X: WAVES MOTIF. SEAGULLS ABOVE & AROUND.

WATER GENTLY LAPPING.

MARGE

So here we are, our final stop on our voyage.

Outside the lighthouse, by the statue of the Bathing Belle.

This is where me dad says he'd like to end up, sitting here looking out to sea.

Well, there's plenty of memorial benches over 'ere - on the left a lot of them dedicated to fishermen, and other sea-going folk.

Come and 'ave a look.

One of these benches is dedicated to me mam and dad, Jim and Madge Crawford and to me and me husband Les.

We can have a sit down if you want to.

Find a free bench. One looking out to sea.

You know I was telling you about me dad 'auling the lifeboat when he was a kid? His sister, Eva, she wrote a letter all about when they were kids, describing this one extraordinary night. December the eleventh it was, 1911.

I thought you might like to hear it....

SF/X: GENTLE LAPPING TURNS TO WAVES CRASHING AGAINST THE PIER.  
SOUND OF PANICKED VOICES.

MARGE (CLOSE) We're racing down to water, me father and brothers ahead of me. They're launching lifeboat to assist several cobsles in. Hauling it by rope across the foreshore. I'm carrying all me dad's gear – his oilskin, his scarf and mittens. Mother not far behind.

I'm only young.

I see me dad is up in the boat handing out life belts and someone shouts

“ I was 'ere first, I want a belt!”

Dad's yelling

“Just get the bloody belt on- never mind who was on first - I want to get this bloody boat out!”

Hear me Mam whisper to herself

“Oh God, they would risk their lives for three'n six to buy a loaf of bread.”

Three'n six is what the crew get paid. And believe you and me, they'll earn every penny.

It's a violent sea, waves 'igh as cliffs. But the rocket's gone off and they must go.

Time passes, looking out into the darkness for them to return. What was a south easterly wind is now blowing a gale.

They're escorting one coble safely in, safe in 'arbour, and they're heading out again... and just as they clear the end of the pier, we see this wave rise up. It's like some kind of mythical giant, the height of a cliff and it picks up the lifeboat and tosses it over like a cat with a mouse.

The Coxswain John Owston and another member of the crew are being washed overboard.

Me dad, who's second coxswain, is miraculously still inside, trying to bring the lifeboat round, trying to reach the men.

Owston is unconscious when they bring'im ashore, must've 'it is 'ead on summat when 'e was going over.

"Get'im to'ospital," my Dad's shouting.

And no sooner 'as 'e been lifted out boat, than me dad is launching lifeboat again, going back out there with the remaining crew- all fishermen.

SF/X: ROUGH SEA FADES. GENTLE LAPPING.

Me Aunt Eva said It was the longest night waiting.

Waiting, watching.

SF/X: SEAGULLS OVERHEAD. FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING.

Here's me dad, now.

*(To her dad)* We were just talking about that terrible night you 'elped 'aul lifeboat as a kid, you know, when that rogue wave struck? Grandad risking his life along with the crew to bring cobbles in.



SF/X: JIM JOINS US

JIM                   Aye, well, just shows, you must never underestimate power of the elements.

MARGE               But you still went to sea in all weathers Dad! That's 'ow you got your nickname isnt it? "Batna' Down"  
*(To us)* His crew said it was really rough weather one day and they were waiting for it to pass but he gets tired of waiting and jumps up and says –

JIM                   Bat-n-a down! We're going to sea!

MARGE               So fishermen called him Batna' Down after that.

JIM                   All the fishermen 'ave nicknames, not just me!  
There's camaraderie with fishermen - if anyone's in trouble...

MARGE               I remember Tom Rowley talking about his dad and saying  
"One thing my father's generation taught me is you have respect for the sea.  
That generation..." he says,  
"Were Iron Men in Wooden Ships, risking their lives in 30-foot open boats."

JIM                   Aye, in seas the size of cliffs.  
*Beat*  
We all go out to sea and do the same job, and I'm afraid some don't come back, and...and that's what a fisherman's life is.  
*Beat*

JIM                               Going back to that night, me Dad and the lifeboat crew managed to escort every one of them missing cobles safely 'ome, you know.

It was like a miracle.

I'll not forget that night.

MARGE                           Owston and me grandad were awarded medals, weren't they Dad?

JIM                               Aye. I well remember that day too, the fuss, and dad being picked up, the Hanson Cab coming to take them to the station, from where they'll 'ead to Buckingham Palace!

All of Scarborough must have turned out to cheer them on.

I remember me sister Eva saying

*(incredulously)* "That's our dad... going to see the King!"

Aye, that was a good day.

MARGE                           Everyone always turns out to support each other round 'ere don't they?

#### SF/X: UNST BOAT SONG UNDERSCORES

Like when the womenfolk make pie and peas downstairs in the Bethel after service on a Sunday night for the Herring Boats, and all of us come together with them lassies and sung our 'earts out.

MARGE                   And like the night of the lifeboat disaster in '54, when everyone from Bottom End was down here ...on the beach, on West Pier, on Lighthouse Pier trying to help find the three washed out you know, and anyone who 'ad a car brought it down on to the Foreshore and turned lights on toward the sea to help find them. There wasn't anybody didn't try to throw some light on that sea that night, try to save those three.

JIM                       Aye, we're a tight community down' ere aren't we. You ask for one neighbour's help and they all come runnin'!

MARGE                   Aye, it's a lovely place to grow up, to belong, to be...  
the Bottom End.  
I wouldn't change it for the world.

SF/X UNST BOAT SONG CRESCENDOS. WAVE MOTIF

END.