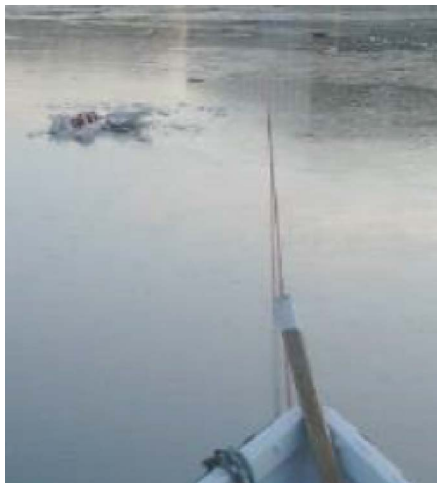


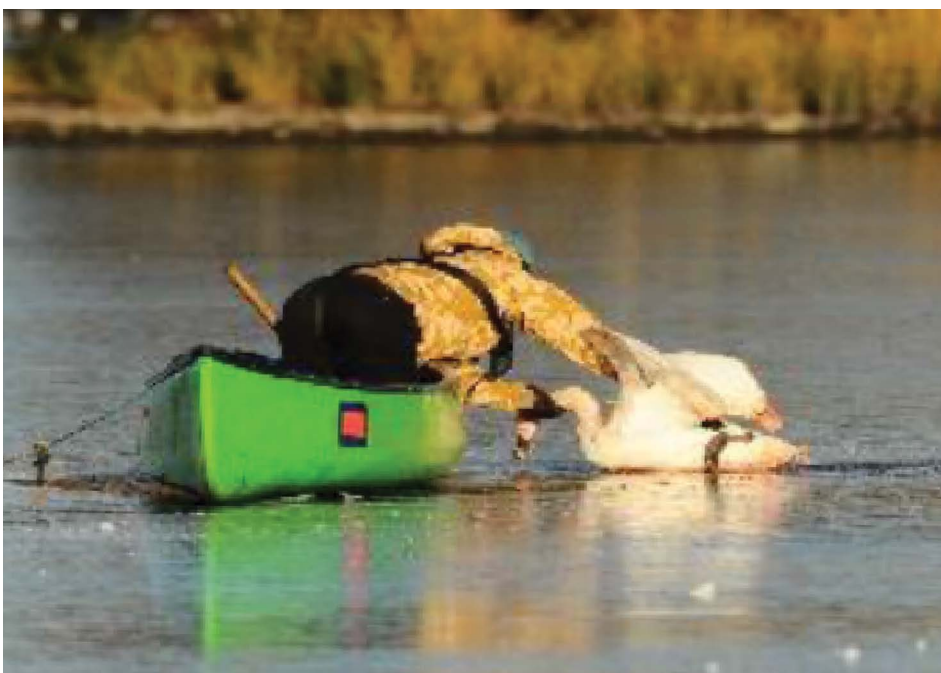
# ICE WORK if you can get it



Thankfully, I have never had to rescue anyone from ice. I have, however, had to rescue swans stuck in the middle of a pond or loch. Various methods were used, such as a flat bottomed Canadian canoe with somebody lying in the bow, using an axe with a spiked end which he used to propel the canoe across the ice. A rope was always attached to the stern of the canoe so the canoe could be pulled back at any moment. If the ice cracked, the canoe, of course, floated. If the pond was reasonably small a rope was attached to the bow of a flat bottomed glassfibre boat and a person with the bow rope walked round the pond, paying out the rope until he was exactly opposite the boat, with the swan to be rescued directly between the boat and the person with the rope. A second rope was attached to the stern to allow, if necessary, the boat to be pulled both ways. People on the bow rope then pulled the boat with someone in it across the ice to beside the swan. Again, if the ice broke, the boat floated.

If we were in a hurry, a rope was attached to the stern of a flat bottomed boat. We lay over the stern of the boat. We wore spikes (shoes). We could run fast pushing the boat which just slid across the ice and, amazingly, it was easy to steer. If the ice broke we just fell forward into the boat, used the ice axes to perform the recovery and then could be pulled back to the shore. I used a similar method to take someone off mud. A boat was launched at the nearest suitable place to where a person was with a rope attached to the bow. The boat was rowed with the rope being paid out and the person with the rope walking down the solid banking, keeping in line with the boat. When opposite the person on the mud, I sat in the back of the boat, lifting the bow, enabling it to be pulled across the mud to beside the person, lifted him in, then to be pulled on up the banking. Improvisation; folk wondered why I sometimes carried several hundred feet of rope.

**George Parsonage** of Glasgow Humane Society is more used to rowing a boat to pull people out of the Clyde. Rescue situations sometimes call for swift lateral thinking and use of equipment available. Ice and mud rescue techniques might also have application with quicksand.



George Parsonage photographs