

FRIDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER

A lesser known aspect of the 9/11 attacks on New York which happened 25 years ago today was the boatlift which **evacuated** 1000s to safety.

As thousands of people ran from smoke and dust covered Manhattan Island that morning their geographical reality became clear as they reached the waterfront.

Bridges, tunnels and trains were being shut as officials feared they may also be targets of attack so a signal went out on marine radio channels “*All Available Boats*”.

Within 20 minutes 100s of boats of all sizes; ferries, tugboats and private vessels headed towards the danger. There was no plan, Captains and crews simply loaded people onto their boats and took them across the Hudson or New York Harbour, then they went back for more. One ferry captain did 20 round trips in 9 hours. Between 400,000 and 500,000 were taken to safety. The largest water-evacuation in history. At Dunkirk in WWII 338,000 were evacuated over 9 days. On 9/11 it was over a single day.



- If you had owned a boat nearby that morning would you have sailed towards the danger?
- Can you think of other examples of people heading towards danger rather than running away from it?
- Does emergency always bring the best out of people?

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Around 450,000 were taken to safety in one day. More than Dunkirk, in a single day.

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