

## **Beached Whale Dies**

### **By H Ammerhead**

Residents of Sutton Bridge, Lincolnshire, were distraught when a 23-foot Minke Whale, beached on a man-made island died yesterday. Rescue teams had fought to save the stranded marine creature but without success. The whale, which was confirmed dead at approximately 11am yesterday morning, had spent more than twenty-four hours marooned on a sand bank in the Wash off the Lincolnshire coast.

A spokesman, Jeff Flipper, 54, Manager of the local Sea Life Sanctuary, echoed the disappointment felt by everyone not to keep the whale alive. "It was a beast. The sheer weight of it made it impossible to get it off the sand. It must have been 15 and 20 tons." explained Mr Flipper.

Dozens of enthusiastic volunteers spent all day Sunday frantically trying to keep the whale upright so that its lungs did not collapse. Others poured water over the wretched creature to stop it from drying out; this also made it more slippery and manoeuvrable. The locals desperately hoped that the high tide would help move it back into the sea however it had the opposite effect – the animal was dragged fifty metres in the wrong direction by the current.

By yesterday morning, following an exhausting night for both man and beast, the length of time out of the water proved too long for the creature: unfortunately it died. Local man, Clyde Bank, was saddened by the event. "I'm well-gutted. We was all trying and trying – nothing worked."

Whales often get stranded on beaches but humans are generally able to help him. Unfortunately, on this occasion, the rescue operation was unsuccessful. Later today, the whale's body will be towed out to sea where it will come to its final resting place on the ocean floor.