

Mountain MAGAZINE Rescue



ISSUE 15

INCORPORATING MRC NEWS

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN ENGLAND, WALES & IRELAND

JANUARY 2006

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Kit crit Mardale range

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A personal view by
Alan Woodhead
Bowland Pennine MRT

ADVERTORIAL

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INCORPORATING MRC NEWS

EDITORIAL

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NEXT ISSUE

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Front page pic

Cave Rescue

Picture courtesy of Peter Allwright

Thank You

to everyone who has submitted news, articles and photographs for inclusion in the Mountain Rescue Magazine. If your contribution isn't here, don't worry. Everything is kept on file for future consideration, so please keep up the good work.

Editor's Note

Articles carried in Mountain Rescue Magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the MRC. Further, we do not accept responsibility for information supplied in adverts/advertorial.

...A WORD FROM THE TOP TABLE...

MRC Roadshows... a curate's egg?

The first of these events in the South west was deemed to be a success on both sides of the equation but the second and third did not take place.

The first was well attended by both team members and MRC officers. We tried to deal with a long list of topics for discussion and, throughout the day, some lively and interesting exchanges of views and ideas took place. Although there were areas on which total agreement was impossible to achieve, I believe that we all came away with a clearer understanding of the problems that we face and the different perspectives that local factors place upon these.

The issues particular to the south west will be better understood at national level and I hope that the challenges faced by the council are perhaps appreciated better by the teams.

The officers were made most welcome by

both the regional officers and the team members and I am especially grateful to Alan George for the effort and enthusiasm that he applied to make the day successful.

At the end of the day we were invited to make a return visit and we look forward to this.

I am unsure what to say about the other to events which both followed an identical pattern in that the number of team members intending to be present did not reach double figures.

Perhaps it means that team members in these regions are well informed about council matters and have no issues with the direction of travel. If this is true then we should take comfort and presume that the voices previously raised were not representative.

It may also be that there is an absence of interest in matters at national level. This would be disappointing after a period in which many changes have been made and continue to be planned. Perhaps also this is a compliment to the regional representatives in that they have the complete confidence of teams to be contributing and informing between national, regional and team level.

David Allan Chairman
Mountain Rescue (England & Wales)

...AND FROM THE PRESS OFFICER...

At the risk of repeating the sentiments of some of my more eloquent colleagues (see 'A Word from the Top Table' above, and letters page) I feel bound to respond in some way to Duncan Massey's letter regarding the South West Regional Road Show.

Having detected a somewhat chilly, some would say hostile, feel during the morning session it was a real pleasure to note that the previously empty seats at the front of the auditorium were almost all full during the afternoon, the icy morning having visibly thawed.

One of the reasons for the thaw, I believe, was that those of us representing the MRC were beginning to be perceived as working for the overall good of mountain rescue and not, as the pre-meeting chatter would suggest, working to our own agenda. Indeed we hadn't taken an agenda to the meeting, something for which we came under fire until it was pointed out that the meeting had been called in order for the MRC to hear, comment on and take on board the views of ordinary team members, not to pontificate from on high as some would seem to think our role is.

I left the meeting feeling that the South West was anxious to be involved on a national level, with much to contribute and eager to learn from elsewhere in the UK. It was a real disappointment then to receive Duncan's letter, disappointment which quickly turned to confusion over whether or not he'd been in the same meeting.

Duncan states that the South West will regard the MRC as a 'harmless, leaderless organisation that can supply us on request with some useful services'. Speaking personally, it's quite some time

since someone has been that condescending to me or my colleagues, either in MR or professionally. However, in some ways he's right. The MRC is harmless, because that's the way the members want it to be. If you want a governing body with teeth, then vote for one. As for being leaderless, if I was chair I would take that as a personal insult. Fortunately Dave Allan, who probably spends more useful time on mountain rescue than most I could name, is more diplomatic than I am. And as for the 'useful services' the MRC provides, if some of those services weren't there neither Duncan Massey's teams nor any others in England and Wales could legally do what they do, and nor would they be as well trained as they are if people like John Ellerton hadn't spent months preparing courses which, magically, appear from nowhere.

Despite appearances, I have great respect for Duncan Massey, I just feel he's missed the point. As I've already said, the meeting was there for the MRC to listen not to dictate and I believe that's what we achieved – and I'm not on my own, as attested by other correspondence from the South West regarding the meeting.

Finally, regarding the missing 'future vision' referred to in Duncan's letter, Tony Jones' regular reports on the activities of UKSAR show that MR has been at the forefront in the development of the civil contingency plans – another of the things that 'magically' appears in the regions after much of the hard work has been done!

Unfortunately the two subsequent planned meetings were cancelled – real opportunities missed for both the MRC and ordinary team members. If the opportunity arises in future I would urge regional officials to honestly consider whose agenda is really dictating things and let ordinary team members have their say.

Andy Simpson Press Officer

PETER AND PENNY TIE THE KNOT

Well we threatened to tell the full story in this issue, so here goes. Eve Burton reports, 'The morning of 2 July broke damp and misty, but the spirits of the guests staying at the Glen-yr-Afon House Hotel, at Usk, were on a high in anticipation of the nuptials to come. For the wedding of Miss Penny Brockman to Peter Lyn Howells, two members of the MRC Executive Committee, must be a first in these circumstances – to my knowledge. The wedding took place at St Mark's Church, Newport, with Don Cooper – who UK MR Conference goes will know as a regular speaker – as best man, and the bride's two nieces made charming bridesmaids. After the service Mr and Mrs Howells left the church under an archway of ice axes manned by members of the Central Beacons team. The happy couple were driven away to the reception at Usk in the team's Land Rover. 'The celebration started with a five course meal for 90 plus guests, which was excellent. After numerous



NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL A WEDDING CAR...

humorous speeches, the cake was cut and the relaxed side of the day began with a band playing live music for those with the energy to dance. The rest caught up with friends from all over the UK discussing all the latest in MR. A sumptuous buffet was served later in the evening and the celebrations continued until the early hours. All good wishes for the future and a big thank you to Penny and Peter for a day to remember.'

PETER BELL FOR PRESIDENT

Mike Margeson reports:– 'When I was asked to write a few words about Peter I was as genuinely delighted as when he agreed to be our president. For over 20

years, he has been my colleague, mentor and friend. When I began to put together Peter's achievements and track record in mountain rescue, the real magnitude of his lifetime commitment became clear. 'Peter started his career in mountain rescue as a teenager. He was out walking in Ireland and came across a walker who needed help and thus began a lifetime in MR. He was a founder member of the old Ambleside team and then became its leader before it amalgamated with the Langdale team. After amalgamation, Peter became a deputy of the new Langdale Ambleside team, of which he was a very active member for many years and still is a vice president.

'To mountain rescue folk the world over, Peter is synonymous with the workhorse 'Land Rover' of mountain rescue stretchers that bears his name. He has continued to develop and adapt the design with ingenuity to retain the integrity of the



original's strength and durability. However, he is just as proud of the development work on the Reviva – the original Little Dragon – which he did in conjunction with Dr Evelyn Lloyd. Ever thinking of new ideas, Peter was responsible with BT for the first automated telephone call system for pagers. He also installed the whole of the Lake District teams' radio system including relays and repeaters when we moved over to the new Philips radios a couple of systems ago. 'Peter was awarded Mountain Rescue's Distinguished Service Award in 2000 and was also made an Honorary Fellow of the University of Central Lancashire in 1997, for services to engineering. I am sure he

will continue his distinguished career in mountain rescue as our president and I look forward to continuing to work with him, especially as Peter assures me that he intends to be an active president and not just a nominal figure head!

EQUIPMENT NEWS

And more from Mike:– 'A new stretcher has been approved. The equipment sub committee have added to the approved list the Traverse basket stretcher distributed by Ferno. This comes as a split or one-piece model in stainless or the lightweight titanium version, the Titan. See the equipment area on the website for details. The FPE/PPE equipment checking courses have been well received and it is planned to run two more in 2006. 'A further issue of fifteen new Little Dragon units has been made to teams who had placed orders. 'Lyon Equipment have recently undertaken some tests on belay devices holding a 280kg rescue load. We should soon have a copy of the full results and these will be placed on the web site equipment area.

'Heating Entonox cylinder bags. Tracey Binks and Dr Mick Leverton of DFMRT are working with a company called Inditherm who specialise in insulation products to prototype heating of the Aiguille gas sacks. This might also be possible for the AED as well, via a 12v plug in system. 'Equipment input National Training Day at PYB 2006 It has been decided to have a stretcher session with as many models available as possible including the new Titan traverse Basket.

FIRST RESPONSE...



TEAM WEBSITES

As a regular visitor to all the English and Welsh team websites, and sometimes to those of our colleagues in Scotland, Ireland and ALSAR (yes, I am an anorak, but one genuinely interested in what we all get up to) I have observed that many, whilst informative and generally well laid out, are often not up to date – sometimes years adrift. Not to mention using the old logo. I am very closely involved in my own team's website, so know only too well the tremendous amount of time commitment required to keep a site current but, nonetheless, there are teams out there not capitalising on the full potential value of their websites. And the PR value of all our combined websites is devalued. I realise I am at risk here of muttering on about a relatively minor issue when, in the scheme of things MR there are much more important demands on our time, but I do feel that a well presented and regularly updated website is a magnificent tool to showcase your team. From personal experience, such a website can and does generate valued support from visitors, which often results in financial support. Perhaps by taking a less parochial view – if that still exists amongst teams – team members with aptitude, interest and the necessary IT skills could offer their services to other teams, who perhaps do not enjoy such skills, to help keep their websites current? Garry Rhodes Team Leader Bolton MRT

REGIONAL ROADSHOWS

To Whom It May Concern It was a great pleasure to welcome the MRC (England & Wales) to Portishead, where the 'top table' met with the grass root members from the south west of England and south Wales. It would appear from the discussions during the day that the top table sees itself as 'Mountaineers rescuing other mountaineers in wild and remote places.' The main out takes of the day, from our point of view, was of an organisation that is functionally well equipped to provide legal services, liability insurance, a well presented glossy newsletter and the option of search management training and casualty care training. However, there is a complete absence of any leadership or movement towards a future vision. With the world of rescue and civil

resilience changing at an unprecedented rate it is almost beyond belief that the MRC cannot see a way forward, to change itself and adapt to the needs of the police in England and Wales. With this in mind, it is our intention to regard the MRC as a harmless, leaderless organisation that can supply us on request with certain useful services. We will continue to pursue our relationship with our own police force with vigour and continue meeting their demands with our usual high standards and professionalism. We feel obliged to distance ourselves from any mission statement that contains the sentiment 'wild and remote places.' We will however continue to use the phrase 'saving lives', as this is the sentiment that best represents our teams' purpose. Thanks to all who worked hard at supporting the event, especially Helen and Jenny, and to the Avon and Somerset Police for allowing us to use their premises. Quote from Nicholas Negroponte: 'The future is not what older people think but what young people do.' Yours faithfully Duncan Massey Chairman Avon & Somerset CRT

On behalf of Exmoor SRT, I would firstly like to thank the members of SWERA involved in setting up the event to meet the MR Exec. Well done! As the day progressed, I felt communications got better as it was evident by lunchtime that people were sitting nearer the front than all trying to get in the back row! Exmoor SRT does not share the same view as the chairman of ASCRT (above) and I would like to officially put that on record as so! Whilst we all have separate views on how things should be done, I think more of what has occurred can only improve relations rather than sour things. Mike Long Chairman Exmoor SRT

From an entirely personal viewpoint, which may not necessarily reflect those of her MRC colleagues, the Editor replies: Ouch! Duncan's open letter landed in my inbox with a resounding thump only five days after the regional roadshow to which I had travelled with eight of my colleagues – Tony Jones, Tony Rich, David Allan, Penny Brockman, Peter Howells, Andy Simpson, John Ellerton and Paul

Holder. I have never considered myself as a member of the 'top table', merely as the person who strives four times a year to put together a magazine which will be not only informative and entertaining, but a conduit for information between the national body and individual mountain rescue team members. I was invited to join them in the 'firing line' and saw it as an ideal opportunity to meet my readership, maybe answer some questions and tout for the odd storyline. And what a 'firing line' it was. You know, I really thought things had moved forward on the communications front, not least of all because of this rag but, in matters mountain rescue, banging heads and brick walls occasionally spring to mind. The nine of us sat blinking in the metaphorical spotlight, all in a row at the front of a lecture theatre, a gulf of empty seats (about six rows if memory serves me) between 'us and them' – as a number of pre-meeting overheard mutterings had labelled us. If ever there was a symbolic frozen waste between the national and local bodies, then this was it. And the questions came full tilt, some trampling over ground I am sure I have seen trampled many times. (Which suggests that either nobody reads the magazine or participates in the newsgroups, or that the regional reps and observers to the national meetings are neither reporting back to their teams, nor asking their members what they want taking to the national body – which I don't believe for one second. As a regular ear at national and regional meetings, and my own team's 'pub talk' – sorry, but you know who you are – I sometimes think there's an element of selective listening going on). Blue lights, child protection, orange chequers, the new logo, the strapline, the cas care certificate, advanced first aid training, insurance, comparisons with the RNLI... quick fire and furious. But then a strange thing happened after lunch when, incidentally I found myself defending the design of a mountain rescue logo which was designed and accepted by your regional reps six years (ish) ago, because it didn't suit the

purposes of one team member. And, yes I know there have been several skirmishes about the name changes but I'm talking about the basic roundel and guidelines for its use, which have remained the same. Come on guys! Either you accept the logo as it is or you design your own from scratch – as a good few teams have successfully done – to use alongside the MRC badge. But please stop attempting to bastardise the logo we have. Try changing the branding of any other organisations and see how far you get in the law courts. As I was saying, a strange thing happened... as people filed back into the theatre, they began to take up seats closer and closer to the front... the ice was melting, the 'gap', it seemed, was breached. Could it be that 'them' (the audience) had actually softened towards 'us'. Certainly, the nine of us sitting at the front felt that the day was productive, that a fresh channel of communication had been opened, and some issues laid on the table for future discussion – as Mike Long points out – and I have heard other feedback which indicates that the event was useful and welcomed by many of the sixty or so gathered there. So I was shocked and disappointed to read Duncan's letter. There isn't the space here to argue the MRC case, nor is it my place to do so – I only wished to express my own feelings about the day. But, as Dave Allan pointed out at Portishead – and over which benefits Duncan flashes quicker than a Sea King on a mission – without the MRC we wouldn't have a morphine licence, a cas care certificate, a cas care book, a seat on UK SAR, a seat on IKAR (at which, by the way, we are ahead of the mountain rescue game in many fields), research and development capabilities for key items such as stretchers and casbags, representation at ACPO, representation with the ambulance service and coastguard, links with other organisations, a voice in Whitehall... and, last but not least, this 'well presented, glossy newsletter'...

Judy Whiteside Editor



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LAKE DISTRICT

Richard Warren (Secretary, LDSAMRA)

writes... In February 2006, the supply of domiciliary oxygen is changing from local to regional contracts. This has been the impetus for the Lake District teams, several of which were piggy backed on to these, to enter negotiations into the supply of lightweight oxygen cylinders. The negotiations are in their final stages but it is worth noting that, by using the joint approach of multiple teams together it has been possible to negotiate a much more competitive price. More details and the final conclusions in next issue. The Lake District contact for these discussions is Charles Brett, Chair of the LDSAMRA Medical working group – cbrett66@hotmail.com

A regional working group has been formed to discuss and develop a protocol for working alongside the fire and rescue service. Recently Cumbria Fire & Rescue service requested details of the capabilities of the Lakes teams in their response to floods and swift water incidents. There are five teams within Cumbria that can respond to water rescues, four of which operate rescue boats for use either on the lakes, rivers or shores. These discussions will continue and a working framework will be agreed covering such topics as insurance, communication, control and possibly training exercises.

Thermal imaging cameras are currently being fitted to RAF Sea Kings. The Boulmer craft will be the last to be fitted out, scheduled for the end of December 2005. This will provide an additional asset for supporting team leaders on incidents and assist crews during night flights. Other RAF flights already have the cameras fitted and RAF Watersham recently used their installed system to assist the Wasdale team with a difficult winching operation on Great Gable during remembrance weekend last November. Training with the new equipment alongside the mountain rescue teams will be taking place during January/February 2006 in order that the aircrews can become skilled with this new piece of equipment.

Working alongside non mountain rescue support personnel can sometimes cause problems. A recent search for a missing lady in the Kendal area involved a number of agencies including Kendal MRT, the police, a police helicopter and SARDA. Unknown to the Kendal team who were controlling the incident, a non-mountain rescue group were asked by a local police officer to assist in the incident. Not adequately equipped or trained for searching in a crag or off-road environment, the small volunteer rescue group was eventually tasked to search a relatively safe area however the inclusion of this group did become a bit of a distraction. The incident had a happy outcome with the lady turning up safe and well. The agreed working arrangements between the Cumbria Police and the Lakes mountain rescue teams place responsibility with the team leader when it comes to requests for additional assets and resources. As we all know, command and control and effective communication is

essential in all search and rescue situations and it was unfortunate, that in this particular incident, additional resources had been brought in without discussion. However, following the incident, the matter was quickly resolved following discussions at regional level. The regional police liaison officer followed up the matter and took action to ensure that agreed working arrangements are effectively communicated and followed. This demonstrates the importance of having regular discussion, good relationships within the region and most of all effective communication with clear lines of responsibility.

If you have any questions on this article or indeed any of the Lake District articles or statements made then please contact me and I will ensure you receive a response.

LANGDALE OCTOBERFEST

Once again, Gaynor Sports of Ambleside ran a very successful fundraiser for **Langdale Ambleside MRT** in the form of Octoberfest. Now a well established outdoor festival over the October half term week, it includes in-shop demonstrations, displays, guided walks and talks by various outdoor folk. This year's lectures included Leo Holding, one of the world's best climbers, Kevin Thaw, a North Face sponsored climber and Alan Hinkes, presenting his first ever UK lecture of completing the world's 8000m peaks. The event raised around £5000 for the team, with over £3000 of this being raised by LAMRT team members themselves, selling merchandise and asking for donations outside the store.

MID PENNINE

NORTH WEST FIRST FOR BOLTON

The new Air Ambulance – nicknamed Katie – hit the news in mid-December, and members of **Bolton MRT** were amongst the first in the region covered by Helimed 08 to exercise with this brand new EC135 helicopter. Twenty eight



NEW AIR AMBULANCE FOR THE NORTH WEST

team members, along with search dog Chi and trainee trail dog Sniff, assembled in Lever Park, Rivington for a familiarity exercise. They were joined by the United Utilities area ranger, Hazel Gannaway and a GMAS on-duty operational manager and team chairman Tony McNally acted as landing zone marshal upon Helimed's arrival.

The NWAA air crew were more than pleased to show team members round their new aircraft, and outlined the essential differences between this EC135 aircraft, and the Bolkow Bo105 that we are more familiar with.

Team leader Garry Rhodes said, 'For us, the main difference will be the ability to side-load the aircraft with a stretcher, and a totally enclosed rear rotor system, both of which will increase personnel safety aspects working around the aircraft.'

CUMBRIA STORMS DEBRIEF

Chris Moody, as representative of Bolton MRT, attended a debrief on the Carlisle storms of earlier this year, hosted by Lancashire County Council Emergency Planning. The full day event was held at the Lancashire Hub, Longridge, near Preston and involved many representatives from emergency and voluntary organisations working in Lancashire who may benefit from a debrief on the incident. Chris reports, 'The Cumbria storms of early 2005 were, according to both the local and national press 'unprecedented', and resulted in flooding of the city centre affecting hundreds if not thousands of residents and the population of greater Cumbria. The truth is that Carlisle has been similarly flooded in living memory.

Local authorities and the emergency services plan for civil emergencies and those in Cumbria are no exception. When weather conditions brought the possibility of excessive rainfall and flooding to northern England a Flash Message was sent out to local authorities. During the following few hours, water levels rose and with



DOUG SCOTT ACCEPTS DONATED RESCUE EQUIPMENT FROM MIKE MARGESON

In July's issue of MR magazine we heard about the building of a porter shelter and rescue post at Machhermo in Nepal. Back in December 2004, it was just a pile of freshly quarried rock waiting for the ground to thaw out enough for work to start. Building got under way in March this year and the results speak for themselves, the rescue post is now nearing completion and is ready for handover to the people of Machhermo. The funding for the building came from Community Action Nepal (CAN) at a cost of some £45,000 and, once completed, will be run by locals under the expert guidance of the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG). Mike Margeson of **Duddon and Furness MRT** organised the collection of some very useful kit including stretchers, vacuum mattresses and cas bags. The official handover of some of the equipment took place at this year's Kendal Mountain Film Festival, where Doug Scott CBE accepted the equipment on behalf of CAN. Mike also helped co-ordinate equipment donations from North of Tyne and Northumberland National Park teams and this equipment is being flown over to Kendal by the RAF from SAR Boulmer.

Paul Robley, a volunteer worker for CAN first contacted Mike almost a year ago following a visit to the area and asked him for some help to locate a second hand stretcher. 'Mike's response was wonderful,' said Paul, 'I never expected such a large amount of useful equipment to be donated.'

The first piece of equipment (an emergency roll-up stretcher) has already left for the area with another volunteer worker Ian Wall, who is visiting the completed shelter for the official handover. Both the IPPG and CAN cannot thank UK Mountain Rescue enough for their assistance in locating this much needed life saving equipment for the porters and Sherpa's of the Everest region.

THE COMPLETED RESCUE POST AT MACHHERMO 4500 METRES ABOVE SEA LEVEL



• ADVERTORIAL •

WHITE KNIGHT WK-5 TRIO

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"The team's used Páramo kit for six years. Our Alta jackets and trousers, coupled with Mountain Shirts, have proved so comfortable and protective in the foulest weather...when it came to replacing them it was clear we wouldn't be happy with anything but Páramo."

Geoff Crowther

Team Leader – Kinder Mountain Rescue Team



Photo: Courtesy of Kinder Mountain Rescue Team

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NICK MATTOCK OF BOWLAND PENNINE MRT COLLECTS THE IANMIC SHIELD ON BEHALF OF BOWLAND, ROSSENDALE & PENDLE AND BOLTON TEAMS

for a period of time and allowed emergency services to respond to the normal range of calls. 'On Friday 28 October, Lancashire CC acted as hosts to their Cumbrian colleagues. A presentation on what had, or had not, been effective during the emergency, and thereafter, was delivered to organisations involved or interested. Communications difficulties, inter-agency relations, the role of volunteers, effectiveness of procedures and other topics were discussed and commented on.

'As part of the same day the Lancashire Major Incident Co-ordinating Group, comprising local and county authorities along with the emergency services, presented awards to representatives of several organisations or services identified as having made significant contributions to the people of Lancashire, as part of the 'Year of the Volunteer'.

'Nick Mattock of Bowland Pennine accepted the award to 'Mountain Rescue' on behalf of the three teams - **Bowland Pennine MRT, Rosendale & Pendle MRT and Bolton MRT** - based and/or operating in the county in recognition of support provided over many years. Other organisations recognised included the RSPCA, Victim Support and the British Red Cross.

HOLME VALLEY PILOTS DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD COURSE

Holme Valley MRT has been teaching Duke of Edinburgh Award youngsters vital skills - the first time a mountain rescue team has been involved in the Huddersfield region. The course,

which gives an insight into how teams operate, is taught by Stuart Milner, assistant team leader, who is also a volunteer with the Duke of Edinburgh and leads expeditions for them. The Holme Valley team has a junior membership from sixteen, so participants can join on their insurance and get in their hours. The expeditions involve trekking 15 miles over two nights with one night camping out, with information about finding casualties and how to care for them.

The course is loosely based on the team training programme, including mountain rescue and a history of the team; search planning with a simple table top exercise; casualty site management, based on what to do if something happened on their expedition; personal, search party and vehicle equipment; a practical first aid session appropriate to their skill level; and, during the summer evenings, a trip to the local park for a mini spot pickup exercise.

Stuart said, 'I enjoy all I do with the award - it's good to see young people take an interest as they don't often realise we are there and they may just be our future members. And, if you want to look at it another way, it helps with grants for the team, as I can prove we put something back into the wider community preventatively, with the evaluation and feedback from the young people themselves.

If anyone wants to get involved, I suggest two things. Either get in touch with me - mprosec@yahoo.co.uk - I will be glad to help or answer questions, or have a chat with the award officer for your operating authority. You should get details from the D of E website.'

CALDER COME OF AGE IN 2006

Calder Valley SRT will celebrate 40 years of service on 17 June 2006. Plans are under way to mark the event with an open day attended by local civic guests followed by an evening social gathering. The team are already busy compiling details of team members from yesteryear and trawling through team archives. It is hoped that members old and new will come together to share memories and stories of the teams long history. Past members or associates are asked to contact the team secretary, Ann Ogden on 01422 882579 or email whitelee@ntlworld.com if they wish to know more about the event.

LIFETIME OF DEDICATION

RECOGNISED

The dedication of retired team leader Nev Sharp BEM of **Calder Valley SRT** was formally recognised by his peers in October, when he received a prestigious Citizenship Award, presented by Mr John C Williamson the Mayor of Calderdale. The



NEV SHARP BEM

award, one of only two awarded each year recognises the tireless work and dedication by individuals to their communities. Nev's 38 years of service with the team, many as team leader, were rewarded with the presentation of a beautifully crafted scroll citation on parchment and a private lunch with the mayor and mayoress. Sadly for Nev, the award does not bring many local perks such as free beer or parking and he cannot take it easy in the team as he continues to support the team as operations support manager. No rest for the wicked...

NORTH EAST

FORTY UP!

At the beginning of 2005, the fortieth anniversary for **Scarborough & District SRT**, team members anticipated a busy year thanks to the many events and exhibitions arranged to raise awareness, raise much needed funds and, of course, celebrate their anniversary.

Although the early part of the year was relatively quiet - the number of callouts took off once spring arrived, as did the anniversary events. 'The feeling amongst the team,' reports team leader Andrew Priestley, 'was, I wonder if we'll make forty callouts in our fortieth year. As the year went on it was no surprise when the phone rang at 12.35hrs on the 9 November for call out number forty.

'Although this may not seem many to some teams in the country, it's a big leap in numbers for a team more used to dealing with only twenty or so a year. Why we have had such a leap in numbers is difficult to explain, but I am sure the hard work team members have put in to raising awareness with both the public and emergency services has contributed.

'Not only have team members worked hard throughout our anniversary year, but our fundraising group has worked exceptionally hard. On at least two occasions they were left holding the fort on high profile events when the team were called away to incidents.

'The main celebration took place on the 9 July when a black tie dinner brought team members past and present together at the St Nicholas Hotel, Scarborough. Although the evening started formally enough it did become somewhat less formal as the evening wore on and the beer flowed. I will never again be able to listen to Tony Christie's 'Amarillo' without a smile!

IAN FINDLAY RETIRES

Ian Findlay MBE has retired after 32 years with **Teesdale & Weardale SRT**. Steve Owers reports on his mountain rescue career.

'Of northern farming stock and following two years National Service in the army, Ian moved into teaching at Plumbton Agricultural College in Sussex. His speciality at the time was livestock and conservation and this was to play a major part in his future career and beyond. In early 1974, he moved to Forest in Teesdale and took up a post of conservation officer for upper Teesdale with the Nature Conservancy Council. His main

aim was to work with the farming community to encourage conservation within an internationally renowned botanical area of Great Britain.

'Ian's membership of the then Upper Teesdale & Weardale FRA came via an unusual route. "Living in the upper part of the dale, I was often called by either Don or Marion Robinson, the wardens of Langdon Beck youth hostel, when parties of school children were overdue. At the time, many enthusiastic teachers were taking school parties onto the fells totally unprepared - it got so bad that I personally went to County Hall to highlight the problem to the education authorities. Initially, I was met with some indifference but with the backing of the fell rescue team, things started to improve."

'The rescue team then was very different to the team today - although everyone was still very enthusiastic - we only had one vehicle and two portable radios, and dealt only with incidents on the fells.

'High Force waterfall played a big part in Ian's time with the team, beginning with a rather unusual request. He was asked to advise a TV company who wanted to do an advert promoting Ford cars at High Force. This involved the company constructing an imitation rock above the falls and helicoptering the car onto the top of the rock. To make this easier, they wanted to cut down a number of trees. Ian quietly explained that those trees had been there hundreds of years and they were not going to be cut down for a thirty second advert!

'He was often called by the landlord of the High Force Hotel when anyone was in trouble near the falls. In 1986, when a father and son fell into the water above the falls, the father miraculously ended up on a ledge twenty feet below the lip of the falls. When Ian arrived, he swam across the river, upstream from the falls with two climbing ropes, abseiled down to the man and assisted by passersby, the man was hauled to the top of the cliff before Ian walked him back to his family - probably the most traumatic incident he had to deal with in his time with the team. All the time during the twenty minute walk the father was asking Ian if he felt his son would be okay but, tragically, the child did not survive. For Ian's actions on this day he was later awarded a bronze medal by the Order of St John.

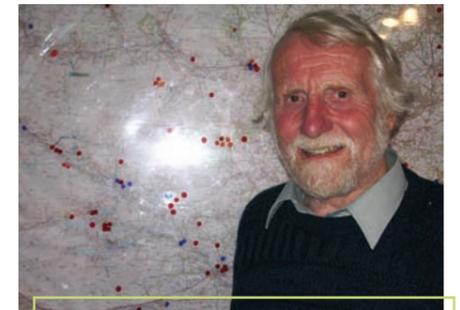
'In 1979, the team was called out for the first time, but not the last, to an incident away from the fells. Large amounts of snow had fallen over the dales leading to drifts over six feet high. A van driver was reported overdue in the Eggleston area. Ian was part of a group which went out and searched many of the roads in the area but the body of the man was only discovered by a snow plough a few days later.

'Just before Christmas 1988, the team was tasked to search large areas of Kielder Forest and southern Scotland following the explosion of the PanAm plane over Lockerbie. Ian, with other team members spent three days searching the wooded areas. In his own words, "This was a grim do. We

CLEVELAND TEAM CELEBRATES 40

Cleveland SRT celebrated 40 years in November with a do at Redcar Racecourse (but not on the racecourse!) attended by almost 150 guests. Past and present team members, along with wives, husbands and partners were joined by their president Lord Crathorne, who presented two awards. The first award went to Bryan Snowden, a founder member and still on the callout list, who received the 40 years Long Service Award - and there aren't too many of those about. The second went to David Little who has been with the team for over 30 years and has been, amongst many other things, national treasurer. Dave was presented with the Distinguished Service Award. Congratulations to both.

Gari Finch, team secretary said, 'Our thanks also go to our sister (brother?) team, Scarborough, who looked after the whole North York Moors for us on the night. They did a good job, for when we woke up the next morning, the moors were still there! 'It was an excellent night, full of old stories, and old friends and colleagues, even the occasional beer was drunk. We look forward to our 50th!'



IAN FINDLAY MBE, RETIRED AFTER 32 YEARS WITH MOUNTAIN RESCUE

found many personal items including passports, money and clothing. To look at the picture of a child in the passport was especially difficult. Six months later, I received a call from a young man in America - the boyfriend of one of the eleven people whose bodies were never found. I'd found his girlfriend's passport and somehow he'd got my name and managed to trace me, desperate for information. I was able to put him into contact with people who could assist him."

'Local hill farmers will certainly miss Ian's expertise - he has rescued 91 cragfast sheep throughout Teesdale and Weardale. His rescue technique involves leaving the sheep for two to three days "to hunger" then abseiling down to the crag. Once he manages to get the animal on its back, he ties a rope around its horns, attaches it to his harness and lets the sheep hang between his legs, lowering himself and the sheep to the ground. "This may sound uncomfortable for the sheep," he said, "but I remember one time when I looked down between my legs to see the sheep chewing the grass within her reach as she passed a ledge!"

'He recalls one or two lighter moments with the team. "I remember going to the aid of a lady in her sixties who had broken her ankle below Cauldron Snout. We put her on a stretcher and started to carry her to the top of the waterfall. She told me it



MOUNTAIN RESCUE CHAMPIONSHIPS

From Climber & Rambler 1976

Mountain rescue teams from all over the country gathered at Glencoe for the third annual championships of this fast growing sport. A dearth of casualties in this normally well supplied area led to a growing tension as teams gunned their Land Rovers up and down the glen, flashing their lights at each other and stopping occasionally to beat up a passing reporter or cameraman.

One unit, the Isle of Wight Freelance Mountain Rescue Team, was disqualified for planting a notoriously incompetent life member of the SMC on the top of Bidean. At last, a genuine callout came and the race was on. The final winners of a close context were the Lincolnshire MRT with a fine performance which received a maximum 5.10 from three judges. They also did well in the dressage.

had been 50 years since she had last been there and it looked like she would not see the falls again. So we diverted the carry out towards the falls and lifted the head end so she could have a view of Cauldron Snout. Despite being in some pain she insisted we hand her camera so she could take a photograph.

"Another time, the team was involved in rescuing a stranded motorist in upper Teesdale. When we found the elderly man it was possible to reverse the car out of the drift. The man was nervous and said he could not see out of the back to reverse properly. I put my arm through his open window in order to steer the car. We had not moved very far when the man inadvertently closed the electric window trapping my arm which caused the car to veer off course, knocking one of my colleagues over a wall. The car eventually stopped and I ran over to find out if he'd been hurt. All I saw were the bottoms of two Wellington boots – my colleague had fallen head first into a five foot snow drift! He was completely unharmed but it took us ten minutes to dig him out."

'In 32 years, Ian has attended more than 350 exercises in all weathers. Many present and former team members owe a great deal to his training skills.

'Although he is retiring from the team he will not be sitting at home with his slippers on watching the TV. A keen photographer, he is currently compiling a video of wildlife and farming methods in all seasons within the dale. He is chairman of the parish council, chairman of the independent monitoring board at Deerbolt Young Offenders Institute and still carries out various conservation surveys.'

Team leader Dave Bartles-Smith said, 'My overriding memory of Ian is his commitment to ensuring the team is able to deal with and operate in the harshest of terrain and conditions. Long stretcher hauls and navigation on high fells in the poorest of weather and visibility would always make Ian's day, and so it should. Over the years, his knowledge, intimacy of the land, and leadership in the North Pennines has often left me and others in awe and inspired. You can teach the basics of mountain sense, but it is only through experience that anyone gains real skills and knowledge, and Ian's many years of High Pennine adventure will be a miss to the team, but must surely leave us all with something to strive to emulate.'

PEAK DISTRICT

PDMRO FOUNDATION COURSE

The Peak District Mountain Rescue Organisation held their successful Foundation Course at Scout Dike Activity Centre, Penistone, for the third year running. Though down in numbers, the quality of the attendees more than made up for this fact. Eve Burton believes the new intake bodes well for the future of mountain rescue. There was a mixture of indoor lectures and hands-on sessions

THANK YOU TO RAF SAR 202 SQN E FLIGHT LECONFIELD

In November, we were hoping for an exercise with the RAF. I say hoping, because the last two we have arranged have fallen through for different reasons, so it is well over two years since our team have trained with the RAF. Anyway, this exercise was a familiarisation day. The guys had seen the video and been told all the 'dos' and 'don'ts' by the training officer but being around the aircraft is a very different experience. After 36 years in MR I still get a buzz when a ten ton Sea King hovers a few feet over my head. The new guys need to experience this too.

So, back to the training day, I could not have asked any more of the air crew. They landed at our base and shut down. We're lucky our team base is a rented farm house owned by a local company. It's a very quiet site with fields around the building. The new members were split into two groups, each given a 30 minute briefing by the crew, before splitting into smaller parties of three for winching. Every new member was winched, taken off the winch in the aircraft, made to sit in a seat and strap in and then the process was reversed. I'd put my experienced members out on the edges so, when that the crew had finished with the new members, we had two winches for them. I didn't know they would spend well over two hours with my newer members, so my experienced members were frozen – you know what it is like sitting around out of the winter sun. The crew had been briefed about the winch sites on the edge of Bleaklow, so on their way to cas site one they took all the new members in party one and dropped them off on the moor before starting the lift. Once the casualty was on board they returned, dropped him off, picked up the second party of new members and dropped them off by the second cas site.

The crew could not do enough for us. I know long term we will all gain from this. I also know they did not have to give as much as they did. Sometimes we may take things for granted, so from all the members of Woodhead MRT – and I think I speak for the entire membership in mountain rescue – thank you to RAF Search & Rescue for your help and support in helping train our members.

Mike France Team Leader Woodhead MRT

on the Saturday, given by members of MR as well as guest speakers from organisations such as Derbyshire police, the RAF, GMAS and the NHS. On Sunday morning there was an outdoor Round Robin, followed by a hill exercise Sunday afternoon, which all made for a very varied course. This has mainly evolved from constructive criticism from the previously held courses. Eve concludes, 'The attendees give up a weekend, so we try to make it as interesting and beneficial as we can. We hope to run this course again next year – in October – and, if any team or team member from other regions wishes to attend please contact PDMRO training chairman Dave Morgan (014567 862847) or PDMRO training secretary Eve Burton (01663 750371).

SOUTH WALES

ANOTHER TEAM CELEBRATES FORTY

Longtown MRT celebrated its fortieth year with an open day at their Abergavenny headquarters. There were various static and live displays, and slide shows of the team in operation and training over the last forty years. VIP guests – including David Davies, MP for Monmouthshire and Welsh Assembly Member, the Major of Abergavenny Ray Hill, Mayor of Hereford Councillor Marcelle Lloyd-Hayes and the Mayoress Mrs Sandie Taylor, representatives of Gwent Police and local emergency planners – joined members' friends, families and the public as well as several founder team members, past team leaders and several casualties who have maintained links with the team.

The team originated in the early 1960s from Longtown Outdoor Pursuits Centre in the Black Mountains, on the border of England and Wales. From its early days, when all the team kit fitted

into a trailer towed by a member's car, Longtown MRT has grown to become a sophisticated operation in keeping with the modern requirements of search and rescue. As well as their main headquarters, they maintains a vehicle depot on the Herefordshire side of the border to ensure a fast response to a wide variety of incidents in any area.

SUGAR LOAF TRIG POINT

Despite typical Welsh weather, members of **Longtown MRT** recently made their way to their adopted trig point on top of the Sugar Loaf in the Black Mountains, South Wales to carry out maintenance work, apply a fresh coat of paint and renew a plaque. The new plaque had been engraved with the name of team member Bob Wilson, who sadly died two years ago. Despite the inclement weather, the team was delighted to be accompanied by Bob's wife, Carola and their two daughters, Jenny and Victoria. Also in attendance was Val Hatherill whose husband Jim was already listed on the plaque since his death in 1999 for his services to the team.

Longtown adopted the trig point over five years ago and has proudly maintained it since then. The Sugar Loaf mountain dominates Abergavenny, where the team has its main base. As is typical of mountain days, on the descent from the summit the clouds finally cleared giving the family a glimpse of the elusive view across the Black Mountains.

SOUTH WEST

NEW NAME FOR CORNWALL

Cornwall Rescue Group is now Cornwall Search & Rescue Team. Leader Jim Gallienne hopes this will reflect their role a little better 'as

Teesdale & Weardale SRT and Durham Police - A blueprint relationship?

Team Leader David Bartles-Smith explains...

The responsibility for land based search and rescue falls upon the police. Mountain and hill incidents, missing from home searches, major incidents, inland water etc, etc... This responsibility is managed across the full time emergency services and, where appropriate, includes the assets of other services, RAF, MCA, Air Ambulance, Mountain Rescue, Cave Rescue, RNLI and so on. The Civil Contingencies Act has further aligned a wider provision of support, particularly in dealing with the aftermath of a major incident.

So, in the case of MR, what is this relationship? What can we expect and what can the police expect? The minimum requirement might be that the police control room have the telephone number of their local MR team, and that's it. This is how it all started and it is interesting to note how the relationships in the UK have developed over the years, and specifically the contrasts that now exist.

In County Durham, we have over many years worked hard at our relationship with the police. Land was provided for building our base and, in the last three years, the service we provide has been fully embraced. The team was, at the outset, written into the Airwave bid to the Home Office. Vehicle sets, gateway sets, handsets and permanently allocated sets to the team leader and deputies now provide a unique level of integration with the police. Funding has been provided for fuel costs and we have been included on a police pager contract, saving us over £2,500 per year. Currently, the police are looking at buying in a specific Insurance policy to meet all our needs. Logistical support has been given from many departments and officers regularly attend exercises to assist in developing their understanding of what we provide, and also contribute to our knowledge. The team attends POLSA meetings and finds a readiness to assist in all

its contact with the police. In respect of blue lights, we have a proven, working agreement in force. A police produced leaflet aimed at all officers explains in detail our remit and operation.

The origins of this relationship stem from the constitutional inclusion of a police inspector on our committee. This has enabled the full complexity of our organisation to be better understood and the police to be more aware of the demands being placed upon us, as volunteers. This has in many respects been the key. The police have an agenda to enhance community links and MR fits into this nicely, as well as providing a specific resource to the police. Our call-outs have increased, not because we have diversified our role, but because we have achieved a level of confidence from the police which has in turn identified a need for our services in a wider range of incidents. Our call-out profile has not changed, only the greater readiness of the police, to consider MR.

Mountain Rescue is not being diluted, it is being recognised and valued. The upside of this means we can, in our team, further develop our operational methods – incident management databases, breadth of training and police liaison etc.

The autonomy and voluntary ethos of the team will not change and, if anything, it is the voluntary nature of our role that is driving the continued police willingness to support and recognise the role we provide.

The police perspective is quite simple – Since 2000, we have responded to 224 callouts, contributing over 9,400 hours to SAR. That can be equated to cash savings and significantly assists the police in keeping officers on core crime and disorder duties. This point, in equating our role to monetary terms and police resource spread, might be arguable, but that's the world we live in. We can't just go along 'expecting as a right', there has to be a

case to support MR, and this is the case perspective adopted in Durham. If we in MR believe that 'helping walkers and climbers' is the sole message, then our national audience in terms of funding and emergency service integration will always be small and largely ineffectual.

The advent of police force reorganisation has, I believe, presented opportunities. The reorganisation process is focused on achieving more effective major crime/incident infrastructures, but also it will seek out best practice, community enhancement and be making budget reviews. Now is the time to lobby your force. If MR is not 'written in' locally now, in the reorganisation plans, it will miss out long term.

In Durham, we have already made our views known to the chief constable and have gone public in this, with significant press and radio coverage. We have underlined how valuable our relationship with Durham police is. Not just in the resource support we receive, but the extent of our payback to the community on behalf of the police and, crucially, the voluntary nature of this. We have received very positive assurances from the police and firmly believe that any new regional force in the North East will not only embody the relationship we have in Durham but enhance it further. MR is firmly on the agenda.

To quote Chief Constable Paul Garvin from press articles, 'We would not wish to see any diminution of that support in the future... would seek to further enhance our engagement with communities and with TWSRT... The rescue service is part of a long term plan for local neighbourhood policing in the North East and that will not change...' Police Inspector Kevin Tuck adds, 'The way ahead is to spread the positive partnership we have with TWSRT to other search teams across the region, building on what they have in place.'

Looking ahead, we feel confident our position will not just be protected but will, indeed, be enhanced. This blueprint relationship has been vocalised by both parties in the public arena and MR will find itself embedded into a new regional force as a recognised and valued partner. This is not just down to TWSRT, but will be down to Durham police's vision and subsequent commitment to our cause.

So what of the national picture? Now is the chance to lobby your position locally. MR has no written right for any support, but ask your force to consider the perspective here in Durham, and any refusal to engage would no doubt be not only going against some basic tenants of modern policing, but will be of great public interest as well!

Kevin Tuck adds, 'Nationally, there is a drive to encourage community volunteering in support of policing and safer communities. TWSRT are a fine example of this. During the last year, we have called on their services 60 times for rural, urban and river searches to help locate missing persons. On five of these occasions the situation ended with the discovery of a body. I believe this illustrates how important their role is in helping to secure life and limb. When these situations arise, they are always at short notice and put an immediate drain on available police resources.

'By being able to call upon the team and their expertise, we can rationalise and limit the number of police officers we have to pull away from front line duties. This has meant that, in the last year, there were 60 occasions where the team's actions kept police officers on the streets, dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour. For this reason they deserve the full support of both the community and Durham Constabulary, and this is why this indirect link to crime and disorder is an impressive form of community volunteering'.



MEMBERS OF LONGTOWN MRT TOGETHER WITH CAROLA, JENNY, VICTORIA AND VAL ON THE SUMMIT

previously people have thought we rehomed cats and dogs!

'We have also started our base appeal. The first step is trying to find land and we are looking for somewhere between Truro, St Austell and Newquay with good access to the main A30 road. We have approached many different landowners including the Duchy, but with no luck just yet. Currently team equipment and vehicles are at members' houses and training is done at a rented scout hut.

'The team have developed a working arrangement and joint mobilisation procedure with Cornwall County Fire Brigade for rope rescue incidents. Mountain rescue as I see it is a transferable skill, and if the equipment and expertise we have can be applied to other emergencies to assist casualties then that can only be good. The type of incidents will vary from cars over cliffs, persons trapped down holes and confined space rescues, which all crop up every now and again and we will be assisting medically and technically. HM Coastguard have now come on board too and have 'beefed up' their procedures to call out the team during times of peak demand or for extra manpower or equipment during searches and rescues.

'In November, Cornwall SRT were called out by the police Gold control room after they received reports of 1000 motorists stuck on the roads on and around Bodmin Moor due to heavy snowfall. After joking about the 'cold white stuff' that

Cornwall never sees only a week earlier at the MR meeting, the team were fully deployed to a number of incidents including an overturned fire appliance, medical emergencies, searches and

evacuations. Saving lives in wild and remote places, teamwork, communications, navigation, casualty care, and other search and rescue skills all had their place on the night, even on Cornwall's main and busiest road. Team controllers worked from Silver control to deploy team members to different incidents. This was really useful as, although we all know what mountain rescue and search teams can do, sometimes the other emergency services don't. 'Finally, the brand new website should be up and running from 1 January 2006, and we have also been awarded £35k for a new control vehicle. The vehicle, a Peugeot Boxer long wheel based, hi-top will appear in the next edition of Mountain Rescue magazine.

SARA SWAPS WATER FOR ICE

Monday 28 November was an eventful night for a team of three from **Severn Area Rescue Association**, who more normally provide inland water and land search and rescue skills from their station at Sharpness on the Severn estuary. At approximately 17.30 the SARA launch authority received a call from Gloucestershire Ambulance Service who were experiencing extreme difficulties around the county attending 999 incidents because of a sudden downfall of snow making numerous roads impassable. SARA raised a team of two fully trained medics and a trained blue light driver and tasked them with a Land Rover loaded with a defibrillator, oxygen therapy kit etc. together with anything else they could think of to assist in aid of the call.

They were immediately tasked to an incident to

the east of Tewkesbury in the Cotswolds – and those who know the geography of the county will realise this was not going to be a five-minute job. Conditions were worsening rapidly, so progress was severely hampered and, through the course of the night, they attended many incidents working alongside county ambulance paramedics, at one stage working as far away as Banbury in Oxfordshire.

'Many things came out of these events' said Stu Friday. 'Comms were very poor in the area, with virtually no phone signal, so the tetra radios came into their own; the first aid training and equipment recently supplied and donated by Gloucestershire Ambulance Service was invaluable; and it was a pleasure to go out on a call with other category one agencies and be treated with total respect, as equal co-responders. It proves that MR teams have what it takes when the chips are down.'

GRANT FOR RIVER RESCUERS

Still with SARA, the team has been given a £20K to improve its base in Monmouthshire. The money, from Gloucestershire County Council, will pay for a secure lifeboat shelter, a boat maintenance facility, storage and a new operations room. It will also fund a new training room and visitor facilities at Beachley, near Chepstow, to raise public awareness of river safety.

Chairman Alan Stanley said, 'This funding will definitely be filling a need, enhancing the station by bringing everything under one roof. At present we have one vehicle at the Ferry Inn car park and the other at the police station in Tutshill, which is obviously not the best solution.

'It will also have educational value as we will be inviting members of the public, especially youngsters, for water safety talks and giving them examples of the sort of work we do.'

FAREWELL BERNIE PROBERT

In the last issue, Ken Ringwood, former chairman of **Dartmoor SRT Plymouth**, talked about his long time colleague Bernie Probert, and his positive approach to life in spite of his illness. Sadly, Bernie died soon after. By all accounts he was a much loved and valued member of his team and community and will be sorely missed.

JOINT FOUNDATION COURSE IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE



With a history stretching back seventeen years to 1982, when such courses were held and organised annually by the MPSRO, this year's joint foundation course had its origins with Bolton and Rossendale & Pendle. Instructors from both teams – who had a long association with the MPSRO course – wished to continue the tradition, and the last five years have seen successful courses run with other teams being invited along.

The residential weekend is aimed at team members with between six to eighteen months team experience, and serves to consolidate such experience by a well proven

lecture and practical exercise format, utilising the services of very experienced and enthusiastic instructors. This year's course was held over the weekend of Friday October 21-23, at the excellent venue of the Bolton Scout Trust's brand new Bibby's Farm Scout campsite and activity centre, at Heath Charnock, Lancashire. Trainees from Bolton MRT (6), Rossendale & Pendle MRT (4), Calder Valley SRT (2) and NEWSART (9) attended, with instructors drawn from all four teams, whilst Bolton MRT provided full logistical support for the course throughout the weekend. Topics covered included professionalism and personal requirements in mountain rescue, CPR and casualty care primary survey practicals, lines of responsibility in MR, the differences between lowland and upland SAR operations, MR stretcher types, search theory and techniques, radio usage, spot pick-up operations, and search planning exercises – all involving much active group participation. Outdoor practical scenarios built on the indoor sessions and introduced steep ground work and exercise round robins.

Special mentions must be made of the NWAA Helimed 08 involvement for over two hours on Saturday morning, only leaving to attend a motorway RTC barely two minutes flying time away – such was the interest (from both sides) present. Or was it the copious amounts of tea and bacon butties on offer to the air crew that kept them with us for so long?

An interesting evening lecture on how the ambulance service views MR and what their expectations are, came courtesy of an ex-GMAS paramedic emergency control dispatcher – now serving on GMAS ambulances herself – and a GMAS technician paramedic. It turns out we've got it right here in Greater Manchester. A wider view of MR came from the MRC's Publicity Officer, Andy Simpson, who presented an excellent overview on 'What the Executive MRC Council does for you.' This too generated widespread interest.

Absolutely atrocious wet weather met the Sunday morning round robin scenarios, with some excellent and all too convincing play acting from the exercise casualties, who braved both the weather, and the investigative prods of the various trainee groups.

Catering was provided throughout (almost on demand) by Bolton's catering officer and Bolton support group members. Toast, cheese butties and eggy bread was still being offered at 02.30 in the early hours of Sunday morning (it helped wash down the beer). The whole course was sponsored by Batemans Breweries of Lincolnshire, who very kindly supplied 120 bottles of their excellent Combined Harvester Ale, and a large barrel of the same and, given the historical nature of the weekend, a large barrel of their special Victory Ale (brewed to celebrate our victory at Trafalgar). With so much ale – including our own supplies – about, the pumps never ran dry. Unlike the MR conferences and despite the best efforts of NEWSART!

A very comprehensive training manual was presented to all participants, along with other instructional material. Thanks to those at Bolton MRT who slaved over the photocopier for a full day to produce such. The course concluded with a presentation of certificates of attendance, following which the techies who had been following the entire course with digital cameras (they even got Helimed to provide their in-flight photographs) presented an excellent slideshow (hastily edited) of the entire weekend.

The total course cost per trainee was £37, inclusive of on course transportation, all catering including lunches and, of course, the excellent accommodation. Special thanks are extended to all the instructors and helpers who freely gave of their time and experience, to Helimed 08, Batemans Breweries, and the staff of Bibby's Farm Scout & Activity Centre, who not only put up with the course but were co-opted to join in as exercise casualties. Next year's course is set for the weekend of October 20-22, at the same venue, with participation expected from the same four teams.

Some final comments from the trainees taking part...

'Improved awareness of team disciplines and how they evolve within a small group, from a group of strangers. In the space of two days we became a cohesive team.'

'Interchange of ideas helps develop your knowledge base, and can contribute to the future development of the individual teams.'

'Accommodation good, informative and enjoyable with good team cross bonding.'

'NEWSART 2005 Foundation Course drinking champions!'

'Good to work with other teams, mentoring system worked really well.'

'We enjoyed the Maltesers trick!'

'Fan-flippin-tastic.'

Garry Rhodes Team Leader Bolton MRT

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DIARY DATES FOR 2006

EQUIPMENT INSPECTION DAY

Places: 24
Date: Spring
Location: Merthyr Tydfil
Contact: Richard Terrell
07971 191942
richardterrell2@aol.com

MR (ENGLAND & WALES) AGM

Date: Saturday 20 May
Location: Plas y Brenin
Contact: Pete Smith
01706 852335
secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

NATIONAL TRAINING DAY

Places: 50
Date: Sunday 21 May
Location: Plas y Brenin
Contact: Pete Smith
As above

PARTY LEADER COURSE

Places: 30
Date: Weekend 7-9 July
Location: Rishworth
Contact: Mike Marsh
01204 696383
mjm@boltonmrt.org.uk

SEARCH FIELD SKILLS

Places: 30
Date: Friday 1 – Sunday 3 September
Location: University of Wales, Bangor
Contact: Dr A S G Jones MBE
3 Maes Tyddyn To, Menai Bridge
LL59 5BG
01248 716971

SEARCH PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

Places: 40
Date: Monday 4 – Friday 8 September
Location: University of Wales, Bangor
Contact: Dr A S G Jones MBE

SEARCH PLANNING & MANAGEMENT REFRESHER

Places: 30
Date: Saturday 9 – Sunday 10 September
Location: University of Wales, Bangor
Contact: Dr A S G Jones MBE

UK MOUNTAIN RESCUE CONFERENCE

Date: Weekend 22-24 September
Location: Lancaster University
Contact: Peter Howells
01633 254244
plhowells@plhowells.fsnet.co.uk

EQUIPMENT INSPECTION DAY

Places: 24
Date: Autumn
Location: Oldham
Contact: John Edwards
01457 870734
jmemr@fsmail.net

MR (ENGLAND & WALES) MEETING

Date: Saturday 18 November
Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton
Contact: Peter Smith
As above

TEAM LEADER'S MEETING

Places: 50
Date: Saturday 18 November
Location: Derby area
Contact: Peter Smith
As above

INTERNATIONAL RESCON 2005 CAVE RESCUE IN POLAND

Over the week of the 19-25 September, the International RESCON was hosted by the Polish Cave Rescue in Morsko in the Polish Jura region, some 50 miles north of Krakow. This was a seven day event with delegates from Japan and Mexico joining those from a number of European countries.

The cost of the conference week was some 40 Euros (about £33 after bank charges), whilst accommodation and food for the week was offered at some 190 Euro (£135). Remember this is for the full conference. A small group of four from CRO attended – Jim Davis, Roy Holmes, Harvey Lomas and Pete Allwright.

Cave rescue in Poland is organised within the Polish mountain rescue GOPR. The member teams cover all aspects of rescue and have many calls to deal with skiers, and those skiers on the nursery slopes help make up a large workload. There are employed members within GOPR responsible for administration and for equipment and depot maintenance.

Members of GOPR receive formal training in all aspects and are required to have succeeded in all these before becoming operational. So those wishing to join cave rescue undertake a much wider training schedule than here.

The conference was largely practical with sessions at the local training cliffs and in local caves. The programme was designated 'Safety Point' and was supported by Hilti (Poland) who demonstrated the latest bolt fixing techniques using modern resins. After curing, testing methods demonstrated the impressive relative strengths of the different methods used.

Pitch hauling techniques were demonstrated by the Polish team; the British team then showed their method of solving the same problem. One thing we noted is the tendency to deploy the Tyrolean traverse at every opportunity whereas we would usually use a releasable belay in similar circumstances.

The conference culminated in an international cave rescue practice where the delegates were split into two groups to effect rescues at different locations involving one or more casualties. We were sent to Jaskinia Korolowa (Coral Cave) (see http://panda.bg.univ.gda.pl/~dbart/jura/koral_p.html but beware this is in Polish) and of course drew the short straw, having two casualties. The cave comprises a short entrance pitch of about ten metres leading to a large chamber and a bolted climb of fifteen metres to a high level crawl. This in turn leads to another short seven metre pitch and a chamber and the cave shuts down shortly after this.

Our job was to spearhead the operation and we were joined by one of the Mexican delegation, Enrico, and Grzesiek Micha_ek to take the photographs and two of the Polish team.

The two Polish lads went in ahead to locate the casualties – and being a



relatively small cave, even by UK standards, it did not take long to find the first at the top of the bolted climb. The first casualty played his role as a concerned hypothermic to the full and was calmed down and made ready to be escorted out. The Polish teams use electric warming blankets and one of these was quickly deployed.

Meanwhile, the second casualty was located in the passage below the next short pitch. Jim went ahead to assist with the casualty whilst the rest of us rigged the short pitch, the first casualty being handed onto the follow-up team to be lowered to the chamber and on out of the cave.

The second casualty proved a problem as he was a big lad and would not easily fit in the TSA stretcher provided. This was solved, the lift up the pitch completed and the casualty lowered to the awaiting Polish team and out of the cave.

We were told the overall practice was completed in about two hours when both casualties had been successfully recovered – less time than estimated – so we adjourned for a well-earned drink. We did however question just how they measured the time as it seemed longer to us.

The social side of the conference had its ups and downs, the main problem being the bar's location in what became known as the 'fridge' – where it was often too cold for serious drinking. However, relocating nearer the chalets and lighting a bonfire overcame some of these problems. And another problem was the tequila supplied by the Mexicans, which had run out by mid-week. Wednesday saw a visit to the Salt Mines at Wieliczka followed by a few hours in Krakow. But seriously, the warm welcome we received was typical of cavers with a common objective.

Thanks to GOPR Poland for organising the event and especially to Tadek Widomski, the Conference Chairman and to Jarek Gutek, the secretary.

And we must pass on an immense thank you to Grzesiek Micha_ek, who acted as the translator for much of the week. This was an exhausting task as English acted as the lowest common denominator through which the different nationalities could communicate.

We have found some web sites – but beware these are in Polish – www.gopr.pl/ and www.gopr-jura.pl/

The following site has an English option – <http://gopr.karkonosze.net.pl/>

Pete Allwright British Cave Rescue Council
www.caverescue.org.uk

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NEW MILLER® REVOLUTION™ HARNESS

Miller®, the fall protection specialists and part of world leading PPE manufacturer Bacou-Dalloz, has introduced a totally new concept in full body harness design. The Miller Revolution™ – developed after extensive research to identify specific needs for better comfort, fit, styling and ease of use – exceeds current expectations for durability, compliance, flexibility and convenience, through seven innovative components, unique in the marketplace.

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- Clip-on web finials safely organise webbing after wearer has adjusted the harness. Made from durable, high impact resistant polymer, they provide a positive

gripping surface for easy adjustment.

- Easy, one-handed release cam buckle allows simultaneous adjustment of shoulder straps for a comfortable fit that will not slip or misadjust and can accommodate seasonal clothing with independent adjustments for the upper and lower torso. The high tech polymer, lightweight aluminium and stainless steel construction resists rust and corrosion from the elements.

- Self-contained label pack neatly holds all information labels and inspection records, and is conveniently positioned on the chest. Its tough, polymer construction protects from the elements, minimising damage or loss. It also incorporates oversized, pull-free lanyard rings.

- ErgoArmor™ back shield minimises impact from wearing heavy snap hooks and self-retracting lifelines. Its self-adjusting channels and padding conform to a variety of body shapes. The knitted mesh membrane minimises moisture absorption; maintains optimal air circulation; helps position the back D-ring correctly for 95% of wearers.

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- R2: Miller Revolution Comfort – a quick fitting harness with protective back

shield • R3: Miller Revolution Premium – like the Comfort with an additional work-positioning belt

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Other features include shape retention memory webbing, engineered to provide a more comfortable fit; unique circular tack for greater strength while contrasting colours make inspection easier; tested to 3,100kg (7,000lbs) minimum tensile strength. All models to conform to EN361, while the Telecoms & Utilities harness also conforms to EN358. For further information on the Miller Revolution Harness and the complete range of Miller Fall Protection equipment and customer support training, go to www.bacou-dalloz.com



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The product range that would provide key interest in this field would be casualty simulation and casualty recovery. It is no longer acceptable to place 'live' casualties at risk during training exercises – our products are designed to give realism to training scenarios.

Rescue manikins

Our casualty extrication manikins are available in a range of weights and heights to cover most eventualities. Rescue Randy was developed for lifelike adult or juvenile victim handling, transportation and extrication training. Constructed from highly durable plastics over 1850kg test plastic-coated cables providing the internal structure, they can be safely used in situations too hazardous or uncomfortable for human volunteers. This range features articulated joints and a weight distribution according to human weight distribution chart. Agencies across the world to use this product include US military, fire and police departments, safety teams and emergency personnel for rescue and extrication from heights, confined spaces, collapsed buildings, smoke rooms and ladder carry-down protocols worldwide. We also have Rescue Jennifer which fits the profile for the smaller casualty.

Water Rescue Manikins

Our water rescue manikins are available with or without CPR facility – in adolescent and adult versions. They are reasonably portable when on dry land, weighing in at approximately 20kg but in the water take up a more realistic weight of around 50kg. Additional equipment and clothing can be added to conclude the scenario. An excellent feature is the ability to equip the manikin for dive scenarios and rescue. On removal from the water, the manikin quickly drains to enable easy handling after the exercise. The range is concluded with infant and child manikins.

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The extensive range of advanced life support manikins features many skill challenges such as defibrillation and airway management. The medical range offer many aspects of patient care. For full details please contact us.

With products of this nature it is difficult to view a picture and assess the application performance suitability, so we adopt a try before you buy approach to sales. We carry a varied range of demonstrators for all potential customers to carry out valuable pre-purchase assessment. Where there are comments and concerns that prevent purchase we look into these in detail with our research and development team to accommodate any viable changes. We are currently assessing a possible amendment to the Rescue Randy to accommodate waist flex to enable the manikin to be more suitable for the traditional fireman's lift. We understand the challenges of professionals in all aspects of rescue and patient care and rely on feedback from our existing and potential customers to include the modifications and improvements the market place demands.

Simulaids training models are designed to enhance your speed and expertise and improve your training process, and are manufactured to exacting quality standards. Every effort is made to provide you with affordable, lifelike and durable training equipment for years of reliable use. If you ever have a question, comment or special request call or email us. You can find us at: Simulaids Limited, EMP House, Telford Way, Coalville, Leicestershire LE9 4DW

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Albert and the Carthorse

(based on Marriot Edgar and Stanley Holloway's 'Albert and the Lion')

There's a famed gritstone crag known as Stanage,
As is noted for fresh air and fun,
And Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom,
Went there wi' young Albert, their son.

A fine little climber, were Albert,
In his Stone Monkey vest, quite a swell,
He'd a new pair of boots, and a harness,
The finest that Cotswold could sell.

Well, he didn't think much of the gritstone,
The holds were all rounded and small,
There were no gear, and some chance of falling,
In fact, nothing to laugh at, at all.

So seeking for further amusement,
And for something exciting to do,
He went to climb Helfenstein's Struggle,
That's a Diff (although it should be E2!)

Well he shinned up the bottom right easy,
Like a monkey goes straight up a pole,
But the upper part gets a bit narrow,
And it swallowed the little lad whole.

Well, he twisted and turned in his prison,
And he tried to get out with an edge,
But no matter how hard he wriggles,
The poor little lad couldn't budge.

Now Ma, who had seen the occurrence,
And not knowing what to do next,
She said, 'Pa, yon climb's ate our Albert!
And Father said, 'Ee, I am vexed!'

Well they couldn't extract little Albert,
By tugging the end of his line;
Then someone said, 'Call mountain rescue',
So they went and they rang 999.

Now the rescue weren't too sympathetic,
When they heard about Albert's mishap,
In fact, most of them fell about laughing,
And one fellow started to clap.

'Oh, won't you come quickly?' cried Mother,
Who was now in a bit of a state.
'Nay, there's no point in coming this weekend,
Not until the young lad's lost some weight!'

So it wasn't until the next weekend
That the rescue team turned out in force,
With lots of cold beer and jam butties,
And a long piece of rope – and a horse!

Now the name of the carthorse were Wallace,
He were worth every penny o' t'hire:
He'd won every prize going for pulling,
He were best horse in all Derbyshire.

So they tied end o' t' rope onto Wallace,
And he pulled like he'd sommat to prove,
But in spite of his very best efforts,
Young Albert, he still couldn't move.

Wallace pulled, and he kept on pulling,
But it seemed they were right out of luck,
'Til Wallace were nearly exhausted,
And the team leader muttered, 'Oh, bother!'

Then he gathered the team all around him,
And said, 'Now lads, come listen to me,
Someone must go down to Buxton,
And come straight back here wi' Plan B.

When the man came back, some hours later,
They all knew this would be their last hope,
He'd a bucket of green Fairy Liquid,
Mixed with old engine oil, and soap.

They emptied the bucket on Albert,
And they greased him from bottom to top,
Then they tied the rope back onto Wallace,
And the team leader shouted 'Gee-up!'

Then Wallace, he strained every sinew,
This were no Sunday afternoon stroll!
With a noise like an elephant farting,
Young Albert popped out of his hole.

He flew through the air, quite some distance,
And came down to land on some grass,
With nothing to show for his mishap,
But a nasty black bruise on his elbow.

Then Albert he turned to his mother,
Who was still looking rather perplexed,
And said, 'Eh Mother, that were right smashing,
Can I do Right Unconquerable next?'

At that Mother got proper blazing!
'This climbing's too dangerous a game!
Next weekend, we're going to Blackpool –
You can play with that lion again!'

*Howard Jones from 'The Owl and The Cragrat
Climbs and Rhymes – An Anthology of Climbing
Poetry'. Reproduced with kind permission of
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SP OPEN DAY SUCCESS

The first ever SP Services Open Day, on Saturday 30 October, was a massive success with nearly 100 visitors. Initial feedback is that everyone had a great time and most people managed to pick up a number of discounted products and bargain buys. The whole event grew to be a lot bigger than first expected – only four staff had originally been pencilled in to take care of the event but, after huge response to the flyers, it became clear that more would be needed to ensure that everyone got that personal touch. In the end, nine staff were on hand to cope with the demand. Steve Bray commented, 'At 12 noon, I thought to myself that there were more people in my warehouse than had visited us at Ambex earlier in the year. We were very pleased with the day and I'm sure we will be doing another one in the very near future.' Many product demonstrations took place – comments suggested these were incredibly useful and many new helpful tips and tricks were picked up. During the Saturday, SP staff and customers also raised nearly £150 for a local charity, the Hope House Children's Hospice in Oswestry, Shropshire. SP Services would like to thank everyone that came along for helping to make the day such a success.

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IKAR-CISA 12-16 OCTOBER 2005 CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, ITALY

A personal view from Paul Horder

The Conference was attended by 28 organisations from 18 countries. Mike Margeson (MRC Equipment Officer), Dr John Ellerton (MRC Medical Officer) and Paul Horder attended, as well as Dr David Syme from MRC of Scotland. It was also good to have Flt Lt Mike Holman and Sgt Andy Rowland from RAF Boulmer as delegates to the Air Commission. There were visits and a multitude of presentations. There was also a trade show of various types of European mountain rescue equipment. The four main Commissions were Terrestrial Rescue, Avalanche Rescue, Air Rescue and Mountain Emergency Medicine.

- The focus of this year's deliberations was on search and rescue. Perhaps in the future the **problems and benefits of the use of cell phones** should be discussed. In Chamonix, 50% of calls are received from cell phones. In the US there are problems with correct routing of 911 calls for mountain rescue. Perhaps the whole mechanism for calling for help in the mountains should be addressed internationally? Perhaps a way forward should be found of filtering the calls for real help from those where there is no real danger (eg. unhurt or in danger)?

- Dominik Hunizer of Switzerland highlighted a **concern over rope burns when handling ropes** (eg. holding a fall or using a lowering device). At the very least gloves should always be worn. Perhaps there is a something here for rope manufacturers to consider? When to replace ropes was also touched on but the subject was not opened up because of limited time. It would appear that we, in the UK, are well ahead with this issue.

- There was a presentation from the Swiss army outlining a **new mountain rescue training programme** which attempts to bring the Italians, Swiss and Austrians together in a joint understanding of rescue needs. The differences of equipment and of language were making this a challenging project. The reason for the venture was to make cross-border operations easier to organise.

- On 31 December 2004, on the Spanish side of the eastern Pyrenees, after a day which started off with beautiful weather, many people were involved in accidents and searches after a forecast but sudden deterioration in the weather.

Initially, two firemen received the call but the events resulted in five helicopters, mountain rescue teams from both sides of the border being involved for seven days, and nine out of fifteen people losing their lives. The winds had been up to 150kph with temperatures of -10°C. The debrief indicated that improved cross-border co-operation and better communications needed to be developed. After all, 'borders' don't exist any more and we ought to have caught up with the times!

- If I understood this one correctly, **112 as an emergency for mountain rescue in Switzerland has been superseded with 144**. 144 calls go directly to a mountain rescue call centre which then deploys the appropriate assets and keeps the police informed. It also acts as the go-between for the search and rescue operation and the informants and families concerned. This one reminds me of the Polish parallel where, in the Tatra region, there is a dedicated cell phone number (sponsored by a phone company) for help in the mountains.

- Air Zermatt had devised some **guidelines to assist in helping the decision on whether or not to fly in hours of darkness**. The session was entitled 'Risky Business'. *I thought there were some parallels for team leaders trying to decide whether or not to respond to an 'iffy' night job!* Too many factors resulted in missions being launched too readily – often for the wrong reasons. Out of 66 night flights in 2002/3, only 23 were felt to have been justified, leaving 43 where the risk could have been avoided. Some reasons for the wrong decisions included...
 - Stubbornness, obstinacy or unreasoned

determination or rescuers (no rationale)

- Seduction – a perception that others might feel that a response should have been made.
- Competency – a feeling that you are experienced and capable enough to do the job.
- The greater the risk, the greater the action – the 'buzz' factor.

Also there was the 'Hot Potato' syndrome where the informant did not want the responsibility of what he had witnessed, so he called the rescue agencies. The call operator did not want the responsibility of the decision so he called the police. The police didn't want to decide so they called the MRT.

There were also pressures on team leaders – how they might be perceived. The tendency may be to act on the cautious side – but not to respond to an incident might not have been seen as the best option by his team members.

'Don't rely on good sense in an emergency.' Always ask someone who is not involved (maybe another team leader) or at least another member of the team.

- Around **1000 people are killed each year worldwide by lightning**. Ken Zafren, a doctor from Alaska, gave an interesting presentation on lightning injuries. Of those injured by lightning, 70% are usually not fatal. Mostly, the heart having an inherent mechanism to start up again will do so, but not always the lungs. Ventilation and/or CPR should, therefore, if necessary, be continued for hours! ('Resuscitate the dead!')

- Davos in Switzerland reported an incident which turned out to be a false alarm but had caused much upheaval and disruption. It turned

out that the distress call had apparently originated from a doctor but the precise location of the incident was not known (except that Davos lake could be seen) and it had not been possible to return the call. It later transpired that a similar call (also from a doctor) had been received on a previous occasion in another part of Switzerland and this had been a false alarm.

The discussion focused on the **location of people from mobile phone signals**. In most countries, the only people able to request this data were the police and even then there were legal obstacles to receiving the information. A French company, in conjunction with mountain rescue has developed a receiver system for use in helicopters which can detect signals from the ground. The cost was about €100,000!

- A French company demonstrated a **multifunctional stretcher** which has been designed over four years to cope with situations on rock, in canyons, on snow, on scree etc and could readily be used with helicopters. It used new materials and revolutionary thinking and weighs 13kg. Mike Margeson is obtaining a sample for trialling in England and Wales.

- We (the MRC) made presentations in 1999 and 2000 on our early trials with **GPS and computer-based GIS mapping**. At the time, eyebrows were raised, as the concept had not really reached most of our European colleagues. Since then, we have seen an increasing interest in the use of GPS and GIS mapping for managing search and rescue operations and various different attempts have been made to utilise this technology. As with us, a practical generic solution is still being sought and it is unlikely that one answer will fit all needs. The point was made that despite all these various technological advances, they can never totally replace man, his skills and instincts.

- The Medical Commission has issued **Recommendations Concerning Viper Bites and Lightning Strikes**. If you would like copies of these, please contact me or Dr John Ellerton if you can't get them from the IKAR website, as some areas are password protected. A training DVD has also been produced and this should be available for distribution some time in November.

- After waiting for four years patiently in the wings and wisely getting a feel for his entrance, Kirk Mauthner of **Rigging for Rescue** fame was finally able to give a short but succinctly hard-hitting presentation of the dangers of using the wrong sorts of rope in mountain rescue situations. As a result, IKAR will be publishing a new 'Recommendation' – once the international interpretations of 'dynamic', 'static' and 'low stretch' have been understood.

IKAR contacts:-
Paul Horder paul@theorders.co.uk
Mike Margeson mmargeson@hotmail.com
Dr John Ellerton ellerton@enterprise.net

Team Leaders Meeting 3rd December 2005 Swaledale MRT HQ near Richmond

Peter Smith reports

Swaledale's purpose built HQ is spacious, impressive and built to a very high specification. It was lottery funded after many years of repeatedly submitting an application, having it rejected and then overcoming the disappointment to restructure the application. A most interesting programme attracted an audience of 34. Of those, 29 were team leaders, deputy leaders, assistant leaders or incident controllers representing thirteen teams.

The host team opened with a comprehensive presentation on 'our team' covering incidents, typical terrain, training plans, insurance doubts, and recruiting problems.

Sgt Dave James, a dog handler with North Yorkshire police, captured the attention of the meeting when he voiced his concern about 'Use of police dogs in search and rescue.' At a recent search for a suicidal MFH the mountain rescue team appeared to be reluctant to deploy an experienced police dog handler. Dave explained that police dogs are ideal for tracking as they are trained to follow the freshest track from the point last seen. This is natural for dogs as they search on body scent. A good search plan will prevent any conflict with SARDA trained dogs. Set up some good training sessions to reinforce this philosophy.

Contact dave.james@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk

'Recent research on Missing Persons Behaviour Statistics for the UK' was presented by Dave Perkins and Pete Roberts of Northumberland National Park SRT. It is important to keep on building up the statistics for UK searches so that they become more meaningful for UK operations rather than trying to interpret imported results. What goes into it determines what we get out of it. This exciting study still has a lot of work outstanding. Teams are urged to overcome 'incomplete reports' and to emphasise the outcomes for open ground searches.

Contact www.searchresearch.org.uk and perkins@perkinsdj.freeserve.co.uk and peteroberts@brinkburn.net

David Watt of Kirkby Stephen MRT, in conjunction with pilot Tony Cowan MBE, enlightened us regarding 'The potential for light aircraft to perform aerial searches quickly and efficiently using Sky Watch.' Tony has flown Nimrods, police helicopters and air ambulances. Throughout England there are 100 licensed pilots of light aircraft including microlights, helicopters and autogyros who give their time and aircraft freely to 'observe and report'. The pilot can direct a camera at heights of 800-1000ft. A mountain rescue team member on board would need a portable radio and could expect good visibility at low altitudes travelling at low speeds. This additional resource is ideal for searching fields, buildings, rivers and coastal areas between dawn and dusk. Teams are recommended to set up a training session. Contact www.skywatch.org.uk and skywatch21casu@tiscali.co.uk

Dave Gallivan impressed us with his presentation on CRO. Founded in 1935 to rescue injured and trapped cavers the team has developed to undertake surface rescues. Dave showed some slides of a well trained and well equipped team extricating cavers from difficult situations where the physical requirements are compounded by the exhaustion, injuries and medical conditions of the cavers.

Andrew Priestley and Andy Crossley of Scarborough SRT informed us about a web-based database for logging and recording team members' training in conjunction with a core competency based training scheme.' By logging in to the members' area of the team's website anyone can check the currency of their training and take steps to correct any deficiencies. The target is that 95% of core competencies should be covered over a period of two years. Contact dru.priestley@btinternet.com

The next meeting for team leaders is scheduled for Saturday 2 December 2006. Steve Hilditch of Derby MRT has undertaken to arrange a venue in his area.



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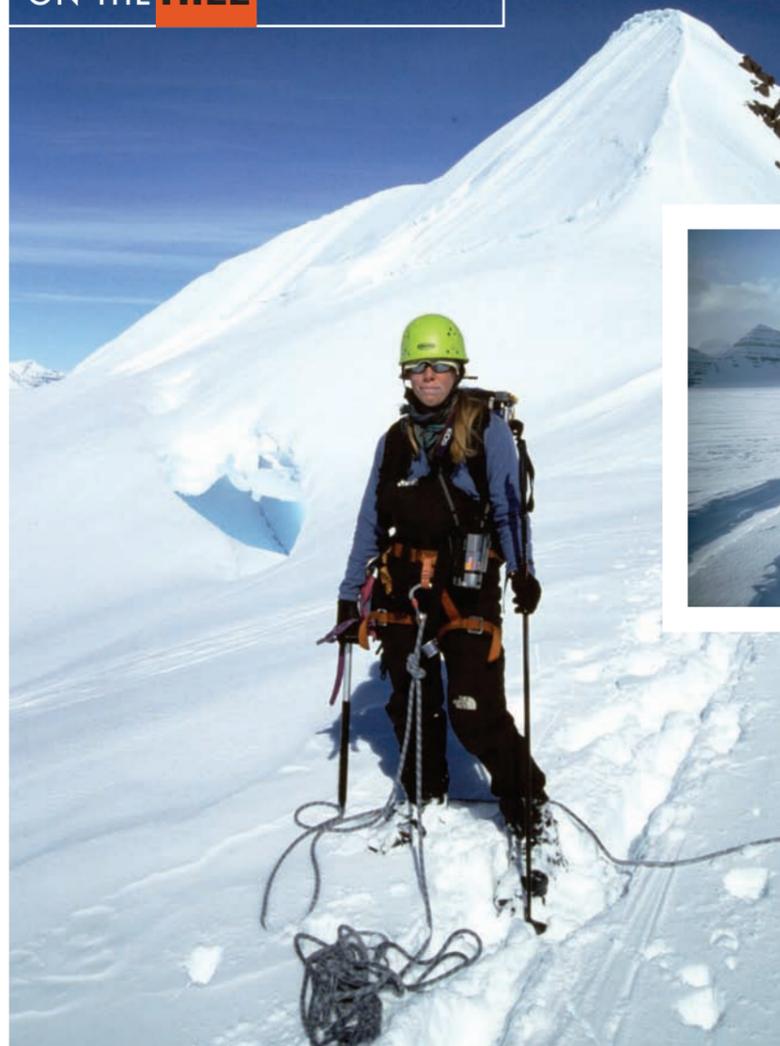
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Bob Kerr on going where the red wine leads you

Drinking red wine over a meal at a friend's house in Inchnadamph, near Lochinvar, Sutherland, the conversation turned to places in the world we'd like to visit and experience. Greenland was mentioned – a place three of us were very keen to go to. A bit more wine and we'd decided that instead of talking about wanting to go to these places, let's just go there! Be warned, alcohol can lead to some expensive but worthwhile decisions.

In the following weeks, the three of us began to find out more about the country and tried to define what we wanted to achieve over there. We settled on trying to organise an expedition to the Watkins Mountains in East Greenland. By going to this region, we hoped we'd be able to make an ascent of the highest peak in the Arctic, and also get the first ascent of some unclimbed peaks.

After a bit of phoning around, we had a total of six people interested in the trip. But the expedition team size soon dropped down to four when people were asked to commit financially. We felt

our team of four was still suitably strong and diverse enough to go ahead. The main disadvantage of two people pulling out was the increase in costs by about 50% for each of the four remaining members. You know you have a committed team when the costs soar from around £3000 to £4000 (excluding any equipment you might need) and they still want to go!

The expedition and training trips were all completely self financed. We'd applied for funding to the Mount Everest Foundation (MEF), the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) and the Mountaineering Council of Scotland

(MCofS). The MEF and BMC recognised our Greenland plans as a formal expedition but did not release any funds to us. Unfortunately, recognition meant we had to submit a formal expedition report to them afterwards with no financial return for our efforts! We had no response from the MCofS – not even an acknowledgement!

Our applications had stated our key objectives in the Watkins Mountains – to make an ascent of the highest peak inside the Arctic Circle, Gunnbjørnfjeld (3693m) and to make

ascents of previously unclimbed peaks in Greenland.

To safely achieve these, we would need to spend a considerable time travelling on skis; pull pulks to move base camp; be up to speed with crevasse rescue; be able to assess avalanche potential and hopefully avoid them; be able to quickly and correctly locate buried avalanche victims; be happy to climb at about Scottish Winter Grade II; brush up on our arctic survival skills; undertake firearms training; have sufficient medical skills and equipment available; be able to contact external assistance if required; and take enough

appropriate food and fuel with us.

We had a diverse range of experience between us but there were definitely some key skills which needed to be improved or taught to each of us. One team member had less than six months to learn to ski.

My experience as training officer in the Assynt MRT helped me to refresh the others about avalanche transceivers, probing and avalanche hazard assessment. I upgraded my first aid skills with the BASP Emergency Medical Technician course at Glenmore Lodge.

Through an ad on the bulletin board at work, I managed to get some firearms training through the local army cadets. I'd previously instructed them in rock climbing and abseiling, so they were happy to return the favour. I'm glad to say they were very thorough in teaching me good firearms conduct.

In our team of four we had little ski mountaineering or cross-country skiing experience. We decided we would need some before spending two and a half weeks in a remote part of the world, so we nipped over to Geilo in Norway for Hogmany on a cheap Ryanair flight.

Unlike Scotland's green Christmas of 2003, there was more than enough snow in Geilo for us to play with. We had an excellent time in Norway, learning to telemark ski. We covered fairly large distances every day and did some off piste ski mountaineering. One day, when we set off from the chalet, it was -18°C so, when the temperature rose to

-10°C , it felt tropical in the sun. The coldest temperature we experienced was -20°C on Hogmany, when we soaked up the atmosphere of a Norwegian new year. (Warning – alcohol is expensive in Norway! £7.50 a pint in a night club in Geilo – and, unfortunately, it was my round!) The trip demonstrated that the kit I use for a windy Scottish winter was suitable for low temperatures.

Following on from this, we decided to participate in the Manchester based Rucksack Club's annual igloo building meet. In March 2004, all four of us ascended Ben Macdui in the Cairngorms to build igloos with the members of the club.

Ten participants built three igloos. In mine, three of us had a very comfortable night's sleep after a seven course dinner and some wine. Not bad for a cold, blizzard night above the 'F15 car park.' The igloo building meet ensured we had some experience of building shelters – in case one of our tents burned down in Greenland – and tested our new sleeping bags and Thermarests.

By now, we had all identified the equipment we needed to get or upgrade to. All of us needed skis suitable for ski mountaineering, which could also cover large distances cross country. In the end, two of us opted for telemark ski equipment and the other went for alpine touring ski equipment.

The key differences in the two types are that the alpine touring skis allow you to ski with locked heels (easier for skiing down hill, I think); the bases of the telemark skis can be waxed to ski up hill with less effort (skins need to be used on the alpine skis and this gives more drag). You can also cover greater distances, more quickly, using waxes instead of skins, due to increased glide.

We had identified that it would be best to test all our equipment before going out to Greenland, so we could resolve any issue that might arise. Two of the team were unable to get any more time off work, but two of us drove off to the Alps to test our kit.

The trip was very worthwhile. The quick trip gave me some altitude experience as I hadn't been mountaineering much above 2000m previously. It also allowed us to

vigorously thrash/test/break our new ski equipment.

In choosing the Alps we had chosen a location more suited to experienced ski mountaineers (ie. not us!). We operated outside our comfort zone – changing underwear on numerous occasions – but this gave us the advantage of being more comfortable with the ski mountaineering in the Watkins Mountains of Greenland when we were there.

Ten months after deciding that I definitely wanted to go to Greenland, it finally happened! There had been a lot of preparations before our departure. We needed to work out the logistics of actually getting there; get the necessary time off work and try to fund it; organise an expedition permit from the Danish government; obtain maps and plan our objectives in more detail; organise a rifle and ammunition, plus smokes and flares; organise emergency comms equipment (satellite phone, emergency satellite beacons, UHF radio); prepare an expedition first aid kit, including for reasonably foreseeable conditions such as diarrhoea, dehydration, burns, blisters and the like; ship our equipment to Iceland and plan and pack the necessary food and fuel required. Etcetera!

As the four of us were all very busy with work and other commitments, we decided to use Tangent Expeditions, in Cumbria, to sort out a number of the logistics. This proved to be very successful and kept the costs down by co-ordinating flights into and out of Greenland with other expeditions.

Paul Walker of Tangent Expeditions, flew out to Iceland with our group and a commercial expedition of his own. During the flight, we managed to pick his brains for the last minute pieces of information we hadn't had time to research, such as how deep a latrine should you dig for your wastes?

On arrival at Isafjordur airport, in north west Iceland, we were glad to see that our expedition equipment had arrived safely. After unpacking the shipping boxes, we loaded up a baggage trolley with all our kit, then acted as our own baggage handlers loading our twin otter aircraft for the

journey to Greenland. With no passport control, no security checks, penknives in pockets, no tickets being checked, we took off to Greenland.

This two hour each way, international flight is the closest I think I will ever be to having my own private jet. There were four of us on the plane and two pilots. No wonder the trip was so expensive! But we'd paid for it and we thoroughly enjoyed the flight in. If you ever get the chance, it's well worth flying at low level over and between the peaks of Greenland. Some amazing mountain landscapes are there and a lot of the peaks are still unclimbed.

We gradually descended between the mountains, landing on the Upper Woolley Glacier. I was surprised how soft and pleasant the landing was on the snow. The pilot then drove the aircraft around on the glacier to form a runway before switching off the engines to let us off. It was clear he wanted to fly back out fairly quickly because we could see a frontal system moving in.

At the Upper Woolley Glacier International Airport, we met a Royal Navy expedition who were flying out

took off and our first Greenland blizzard hit as we pitched tents on the runway.

So we had a brew and redefined our objectives for the trip. The snowstorm soon passed and we had settled weather for the next week or so. During this time, we explored the mountains of the Upper Woolley Glacier and of a side glacier – which we called Fleece Glacier.

We didn't bother doing second ascents of those mountains that had been our original objectives. As we were on skis, we were able to cover larger distances from our base.

In the first week, we achieved the first ascent of a 3020m peak at $68^{\circ}51'N$ $29^{\circ}17'30''W$ by its north ridge, having approached its north western col from the south side. The expedition team referred to this peak as Afternoon Peak after our afternoon ascent. The next peak to the east was Midnight Peak.

We also made a first ascent of a 2908m peak at $68^{\circ}53'45''N$ $29^{\circ}16'45''W$. This peak we referred to as Wyvis Beag because it sort of looked like Ben Wyvis in Ross-shire. This was ascended via its south west ridge. This was my first experience of



on our aircraft. Before they left, we managed a quick discussion about their trip.

I was surprised to hear they had gone to Greenland with snow shoes instead of skis, which meant they couldn't cover as much distance every day as they'd hoped. They'd been out there for about a month, and had changed their objectives whilst there which meant three of the unclimbed peaks we had identified as our objectives had already been done. You wouldn't believe how much of a blow that was. We then

climbing on snow in baking hot sunshine (10°C). We were all a bit wary of the snow conditions on this narrow ridge – didn't relax until we got back onto our skis that day!

A subsidiary top (2750m) of Wyvis Beag was also ascended by its south west ridge. This was referred to as Point Minaret.

There were two unsuccessful attempts at an attractive mountain, 2725m, at the head of the Fleece Glacier. On the first occasion, we were defeated by a weak snow bridge streaming with water, at 10°C

in the sun On the second occasion, by trying to climb the peak in the midnight sun, we got past the snow bridge but decided against doing a long knife edge exposed arrête of unconsolidated snow.

Another major disappointment was turning back after midnight at -14°C, close to the summit of Julia (seventh highest in Greenland at 3455m) because of cold feet (literal and metaphorical). Julia has only received one ascent to date and the first ascensionists were not sure whether or not they had reached the summit due to poor visibility.

After a week on the Woolley Glacier, we decided to move our base camp around to the base of Gunnbjørnsfjeld. This is the highest peak inside the Arctic Circle and in Greenland. We were proud we managed to move all our equipment by pulk in the oner – more than 20km of skiing with estimated loads of 80-100kg – in about eight hours.

At this point, our adventurous activities were impeded by a deterioration in the weather. Low cloud and fresh snowfall diminished our motivation to go onto the mountains. At the first improvement, we climbed GBF (3693m) and Qaqqaq Kershaw (aka Dome 3682m) by the normal (easy) routes. The ascents each took around eleven hours round trip from the GBF base camp at 2153m, even though Dome required 32km of ski mountaineering. There then remained only sufficient time for sorting and packing gear before the twin otter's arrival.

Overall, we didn't climb above Scottish Grade II during the trip. Using telemark ski boots and crampons did cause problems during the ascents and descents. On one short ice pitch on GBF, my right crampon decided to come off on the ascent, and the left crampon on the downclimb. As I was only using one ice axe, a lightweight mountaineering

one, this made for an interesting time.

Thankfully, our expedition was incident free. Our closest encounter with a polar bear was in our imaginations. There was a commercial expedition to the Watkins Mountains at the same time as us and they were less lucky. One member of their team received severe burns filling his thermos flask with boiling water and another came down with suspected appendicitis which turned out to be a kidney infection.

At the end of our eighteen day stay, we were glad to see the twin otter aircraft arrive to collect us. A Glenmore Lodge instructor, Rosie Golden, got off the arriving aircraft and tried to acquire (or was that buy?) two camera batteries from us. One of this arriving party did not have appropriate glacier glasses, just clip-on sunglasses.

Having had eighteen days undisturbed by world events, it was strange to hear these new arrivals telling us the latest news. Our expedition leader, Jim Hall, from Newtonmore, was disappointed that Rosie was unable to tell him the latest shinty results of the match between Kingussie and Newtonmore! We had a pleasant flight back out to Iceland over the pack ice and eventually got to Iceland's capital for a few well deserved beers. At £6 a pint, they had to be well deserved!

Before flying back to the UK, we had a couple of days relaxation in Iceland including an afternoon at the Blue Lagoon. It was a major shock to the system when we finally did have to go back to work!

To summarise my thoughts of the expedition... Greenland is an amazing place and I would go back again if I could afford it. The worth of applying for expedition grants should be carefully considered – the time and effort required to make the application and write formal expedition reports is quite extensive. In our case, this yielded poor return. It was so nice to be really out of contact with the outside world. It was the most relaxing trip I've ever had to date, because the only stress in the day was lighting the stoves and not getting avalanched. The sense of achievement getting to the top of an unclimbed summit is hard to describe but very, very worthwhile

And the final conclusion is that I need to stop drinking alcohol because it leads to expensive life changing decisions!

READING MATTERS

YORKSHIRE TRANSVESTITE FOUND DEAD ON EVEREST

BY MIKE HARDING



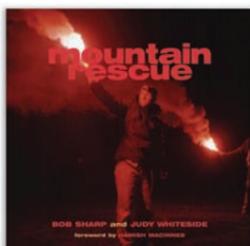
Many will have come to know Mike Harding's works as he has a considerable number of strings to his bow; folk musician, writer, poet, comedian. And most will have formed an opinion of him and/or his work. Reviewing this latest work has been quite a difficult task as I too have an opinion and was conscious of this fact whilst reading this anthology.

For anthology is just what this latest work is – a collection of short stories or notes, with a common thread, previously published over a number of years in 'The Great Outdoors' periodical. Perhaps the best place for shorts such as this are in a periodical so one is able to dip in, have a chuckle – as they are all undoubtedly comedic – and move on to the next, unconnected, article. To lump over 50 of these articles together in one volume seems to be a little intense. The articles are indeed humorous, (although appreciation of the many different strands to humour is a very personal commodity), and yet to me, somewhat spoiled by the occasional barbed remark relating to others' use or appreciation of the outdoor environment. He obviously holds strong opinions but an opinionated view doesn't seem to sit comfortably when couched in throwaway, slapstick humour. One or the other, please Mike! Mike Harding's latest would probably survive on my coffee table if received as a gift. I couldn't imagine it finding its way there by any other means.

Barry Robinson
Yorkshire Transvestite Found Dead on Everest by Mike Harding.
ISBN 1 904524 42 7
Published 2005 by Hayloft. www.hayloft.org.uk. Price £16.95.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE

BY BOB SHARP & JUDY WHITESIDE



I'd heard about this book in its early stages and, like most I suppose, was aware of the request for stories. But, as always, there was something else more pressing on my time. I was immediately (and rather cleverly!) tempted into ordering the book by the simple act of one of the authors showing me the rough printer's proofs.

But I was not disappointed when I collected my signed copy (thanks Judy and Bob). I dipped into it straight away, then realised I

couldn't put it down! In 25 years in mountain rescue I've been privy to many a story and many hundreds of incidents which, combined with being a self-confessed anorak for anything MR, led me to view this book alongside the other literature I've read and collected over the years. And I'm very impressed. It's a book I'd recommend to new and long serving team members alike – there really is something for all.

It isn't a technical manual (it didn't set out to be) but refreshingly fully covers what we are all about, with many case histories to illustrate the point, from high mountain drama to the mundane urban fringe search, with a large emphasis on personal anecdote. What is good is the comprehensive telling of our history, something that nowadays seems to very much take a back seat to the latest technique we should all be using this year! I've dipped into this book in all parts – it's that type of book – with everything I've read up to the same interesting and informative standard. Comments from casualties mix with the thoughts of our colleague rescuers, which is an interesting aspect of this book. I've recommended it to all my team membership, with those who have followed my advice being equally impressed with the content.

In fact, believe Mountain Rescue should be issued to new team members as a matter of course, to give them the fullest insight into what we are actually about. At the very least, a copy for the team library is a must. I'm sure it will also appeal to a much wider audience, be it the support group member who wants a little more insight into what we get up to, or the public, who would have their many questions about our role in the wider community fully explained.

Is it worth the money and is it a good read? I'd say a big yes to both.

Garry Rhodes Team Leader, Bolton MRT.
Mountain Rescue by Bob Sharp & Judy Whiteside.
ISBN 1 904524 39 7
Published 2005 by Hayloft. www.hayloft.org.uk. Price £20.00.

A to Z of MR

Gary Foo of Oxfordshire Search and Rescue team continues his own personal glossary of terms, moving through B into C...

- **Back Bearing** The 180° opposite of the azimuth or bearing. Also known as a back azimuth.
- **Base** The location at which primary logistics functions for an incident are co-ordinated and administered.
- **Basic Life Support A** combination of emergency responses which maintains the ABC priorities Airway, Breathing and Circulation.
- **Bastard Search** A search for a subject not in the area – same as Bogus Search.
- **Bearing** The direction of travel from your current position to a landmark of destination expressed in degrees from 1 to 360.
- **Belay** To use rope or ropes attached to a secure position to steady movement of stretchers or facilitate the secure movement of searchers up or down a slope.
- **Bench Mark** A permanent object that is either natural or man-made and is a known elevation that can be used as a reference when navigating.
- **Binary Search Method** A search strategy that involves sending sign cutters in a direction perpendicular to the subject's assumed direction of travel, in an effort to narrow down the size of the search area.
- **Body Recovery** The retrieval of human remains following a fatal incident.
- **Briefing** The process of providing searchers with the information they need to adequately perform their task.
- **Call out** The executive command to mount an operation whereby personnel are required to deploy.
- **Carabiner** An oval or pear shaped snaplink usually made of aluminium or steel that connects different elements of a rescue chain such as a rope to an anchor, or two ropes.
- **Cardiac Arrest** Heart action has ceased and the blood no longer circulates.
- **Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)** The mechanical pressing of the chest to beat blood around the body in an attempt to restart the heart or keep the person fed with blood to their brain or elsewhere.
- **Cardinal Points** The four main points of direction on a compass – North, South, East and West.

FINANCE UPDATE

from Penny Brockman

Insurance

- Since the insurance group was re-launched we have corresponded with over 2,000 emails.
- We have now created an insurance area on the members' area of the website – please have a look at the information. You can obtain a copy of the insurance policies and the application form for trustee indemnity insurance as well as much more.
- As the Mountain Rescue (England & Wales) trustee indemnity policy does NOT include regions or teams, we have negotiated preferential terms with our insurers Market for teams and regions wishing to buy a policy from them. It is averaging a cost per team at a premium of £250 plus insurance premium tax at 5%.
- A questionnaire has been sent to all the teams on personal accident insurance.

Area of concern

- Not many teams have taken out their own trustee indemnity insurance.

What's next?

- Updating the website with FAQs based on emails received.
- Producing a presentation that can be used by teams for their training programmes to team members.
- Continue work on obtaining a national personal accident insurance policy.

To contact members of the Insurance Group an email address has been created which can also be accessed via the website insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk

National Fundraising

We have concentrated on four areas:- technology (website), public awareness, trust funds/grants and government.

Website

- Research on over 50 web sites to develop our capability for fundraising opportunities.
- Built framework to be used for development.
- The legacy area for the web is under development.

Public Awareness

- Sponsored events forms produced and are now being used.
- Trail Magazine auction.

Sponsors/Grants Letters

- Researched and developed an appeal letter.
- First 100 sent and have received the first amount of money.

Government

- Through UK SAR, MR gave evidence before the Transport Select Committee with very good recommendations made by Transport Select Committee to support Land SAR.
- Government response to the recommendation was disappointing and further research is now underway to raise issues and challenge the response.
- The work of the All Party Working Group and ourselves was held up because of the general election
- Due to the chair of the All Party Working Group not being re-elected as an MP the group has had to be reformed. A new chair is now elected in place.

Area of concern

- Currently national fundraising has to concentrate on a low cost solution owing to the financial situation where the national body finances have been declining for over five years.

- It must be stressed that government funding is not going to happen overnight – it's going to be a slow evolving process with a number of hurdles. We do need to keep promoting government funding, and here's a reminder of where you can help.
- Keep the lines of communication open with your MPs. Continuous campaigning will help them realise the importance of joining and supporting the All Party committee.
- Promote the good work of mountain rescue through your local press and, where possible, the national press. Keep Andy Simpson, MRC Press Officer, advised of any stories. This not only keeps us in the eye of the government but with the public as well.

What's next?

Website

- Sponsored events on line.
- Look at other fundraising transactions done online.

Public Awareness

- Commissioned a promotional video.
- Look at introducing a member's subscription.

Government Funding

- Produce a considered response to the government response.
- Continue working with the All Party Working Group.
- Lobby hard until we get the answers we want.
- Continue to campaign and work with other bodies within the government.

Sponsors/Grant Letters

- Review appeal letter and send further letters.
- Look at government grants and funding bodies.
- Look at initiatives to help teams.

To contact members of the National Fundraising Group

– the group has expanded in the last few months with a number of new members stepping forward to join us. We are still looking for people especially those skilled at writing content for the web. If you are that person, please contact me at treasurer@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Other Initiatives

VAT

A number of members of the finance sub-committee are looking at the area of VAT, particularly the discrepancies which can arise when teams contact their local VAT office and how we can resolve these.

New Training Course

In 2006, we will be running a pilot for a new national course looking at the non-operational areas of mountain rescue. The objectives of the course are to:-

1. Equip area and team officers with significant administrative responsibilities (president, chair, secretary, treasurer or PR officer) to carry out those duties more effectively.
2. Assist in developing, sharing and maintaining best practice in the governance of MR teams and areas.
3. Offer team leaders, and others whose roles are primarily operational, an insight to the opportunities and constraints that arise from various administrative solutions.

If you have any ideas of what you would like to see included in this course please contact treasurer@mountain.rescue.org.uk

On a final note, thank you to all who have worked so hard in 2005 – we have achieved a lot. Of course, not everything is visible as very often a lot of work is done to lay the foundations for the future.

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Qualifications in Walking and Climbing

By **Mal Creasey MLTE**

Who needs awards?

The short answer is no one! Unless that is, you are going to be involved in taking beginners into the hills, and being responsible for them. The whole ethos of mountaineering in Britain for generations has been that beginners or novices have learned from more experienced climbers and mountaineers has worked for generations! Long may it continue! Beyond that there are a series of awards in the UK aimed mainly at those who wish to take youngsters onto the hills and crags in a more formal or professional capacity. These are often teachers or youth workers, or are involved with other organisations taking novices or youngsters into the hills and crags of the UK.



MAP READING ON THE MOUNTAIN LEADER TRAINING COURSE

Although these awards generally work very well within the framework of what they were designed for, like everything else in this world, there are drawbacks. They cost money and require time, commitment and a good deal of experience before registering on any of the schemes. Finally, and perhaps more importantly, most people will require two to three years before completing the assessment process.

What are these Awards?

Currently we operate three basic awards, these are the Mountain Leaders Award (MLA), the Walking Group Leaders Award (WGL) and the Single Pitch Award (SPA). Beyond that there is the Winter ML, the European (International) Mountain Leader (IML), the Mountaineering Instructors Award (MIA) and the Mountaineering Instructors Certificate (MIC). I mention these higher awards only to put the whole structure into context and many who hold these higher awards will operate professionally.



DESCENDING SLOPE

As far as the three basic awards are concerned, they all require experience before attending a training course. Either twenty quality hill days for the ML and WGL and at least fifteen lead climbs on naturally protected routes for the SPA. In simple terms the WGL syllabus deals with all things Derbyshire to Dartmoor, in other words hills without any pointy bits to fall off or fall on your head! The MLA deals with all areas including the Highlands, the Lakes and Snowdonia. It must be stressed that both these awards train and assess candidates in summer conditions! The SPA is not designed to train and assess candidates on anything other than non-serious, non-tidal single pitch venues, which offer easy access and have little objective danger. Training courses are not designed to teach the basic of the activity but introduce the skills required for leading and being responsible for others, that is why a certain amount of experience is required before attending training. Courses generally last between two days for the SPA, three days for the WGL and six days for the ML (five for assessment). There are variations within this as some courses may run over a series of weekends. Requirements before attending an assessment course are that you have completed training (or gained an exemption from the office); completed, as an absolute, minimum, at least 40 quality days in the appropriate terrain for either the WGL or ML and at least 40 lead climbs, some of which must be of severe grade for the SPA. All those attending assessment courses must also hold a current First Aid Certificate. Before attending any courses all participants must be registered. The assessment process is in reality a 'snapshot' of your performance at a given time and all award holders should continue to log their experience to demonstrate currency, and retake their First Aid Certificate every three years.

The Way Forward

By all means register if you are committed to taking beginners into the hills and being responsible for them over a longer term. However it is important to bear in mind that an ML training course will generally cost between £250/£350 and assessment costs may be higher. As I said earlier, the idea of the more experienced team members taking responsibility has worked well for generations and is very effective as long as it is done in a responsible manner



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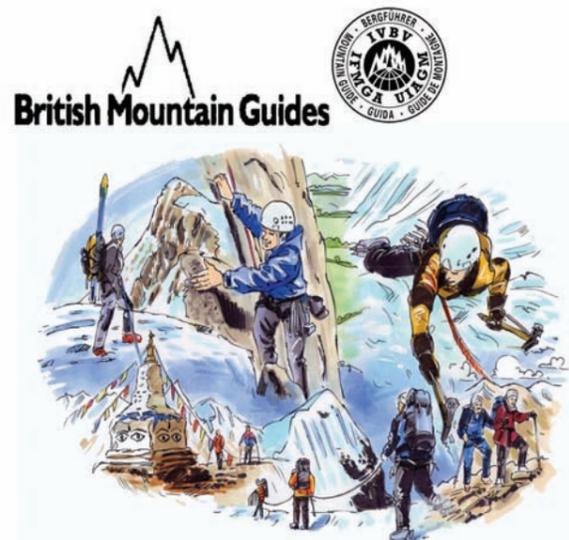
Formed in 1975 the British Mountain Guides now has over 170 members with aspirants working their way through the qualification process. We have close links with the British Mountaineering Council and the Mountaineering Council of Scotland and work closely with Mountain Leader Training UK.

Many of our members also hold Mountaineering Instructor qualifications and are equipped for all levels of instruction, advisory and consultancy work in climbing and mountaineering. Over the years many British Guides have been involved with several MR teams throughout the UK, and have a deep understanding of the way that mountain rescue operates in Britain, and respect that what we have in the UK is unique.

I have no doubt many team members will be familiar with the way British Guides operate, and the level of skill and expertise they have. However, if you don't, and you happen to be on the hill and spot someone displaying either of the two logos below, they may not be a team member but, rest assured, they will be a highly skilled and competent mountaineer.

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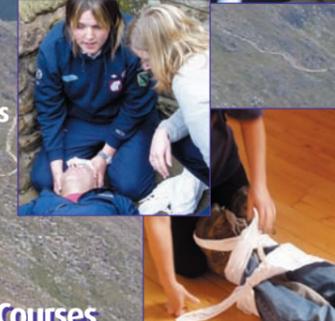
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PARADISE FOUND

By **Stewart Hulse**

Some years ago, I was contacted by the editor of a glossy magazine to contribute a series of articles to be published on a monthly basis. Well known people from all walks of life, most with international reputations, who resided in the Lake District, were asked to recall their favourite and most idyllic place on earth, their 'Paradise Found.'

I gracefully declined but was contacted again by the editor. 'We want someone like yourself who calls a spade a spade,' he said, 'who's had a rough but good upbringing to recall some personal titbits...' And so I agreed...

A product of industrial Lancashire – black pudding town of Bury to be precise – my ambition as a boy was to play football for Bury, as my father had before me in the 1920s. This I did in the early 1950s. With mediocre success, I hasten to add. But, like most people of that age, I thought I had untapped talent and an abundance of common sense.

The latter was in question as I succumbed to wayward females and the temptation of Elsie Ramsbottom, a creature of untold beauty, a Samantha Fox in clogs. This distraction seriously affected my dedication to training. During this period of torment, I knew football would come second best to the shapely Elsie, who was starting to apply matrimonial pressure. Fortunately for me, hovering in the background was Elizabeth, a lady not to be trifled with. It was time for a quick decision. Should I elope with Elsie or would Elizabeth offer me more? In the end, I was persuaded by the seductive and smooth talking Elizabeth. She applied very heavy pressure, the promise of free travel throughout the world, four star accommodation and a generous yearly salary. This was too good to miss. She was a woman of substance, I thought.

The next thing I knew I was all in khaki and off to Cyprus for two years. Elizabeth had not come up to my expectations. She had led me up the garden path. In fact, I found more in the way of

compassion from Two Fag Lil from Famagusta, a woman who would do anything for five Woodbines and a tin of compo sausages. Mind you, it was an six bottles of squaddies droop (local beer) for a conducted tour of the Salamis ruins.

But, to be honest, she had very favourable and competitive terms for thirty minutes of personal counselling – I must confess, I am confused at counselling these days. People just seem to talk and keep their clothes on!

It soon became evident that Elizabeth and I were drifting apart so, in the late 1950s, we parted company and I returned to England. It was then I was made aware that Elsie had done a runner with the 'black pudding stuffer' off Bury market. There was now only one thing left to do, emigrate to the Lake District – a boyhood dream of mine, ever since I'd set foot on the fell above Scandale Valley.

Since that day, I can honestly say that my greatest place on earth is the Scandale Valley and the surrounding fells, closely followed by the Rydal cricket ground and the relaxing Carlisle racecourse – not a classic as racecourses go, but who wants to see men dressed up like a two bob salad in top hat and tails or women in clothes better suited to the Saggermakers and Bottom Knockers Annual Dinner?

In fact, wearing clothes of that ilk does not command good jockey club etiquette if one is seen to be calling the losing jockey a 'useless little fart' or similar terms of endearment.

If that kind of terminology is to be used, then one has to be dressed in the appropriate garb – a trendy bush hat and jock strap might just fit the bill. God above knows what the men might wear.

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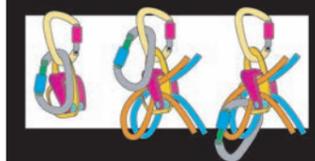
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SHOULD MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAMS UNDERTAKE MORE THAN BASIC FIRST AID?

A personal view from **Alan White**

Do MRTs do more than respond to the traditional remote mountain incidents and has the role changed in recent times for mountain rescue teams? Is there a higher expectation to deliver more than just basic first aid? If so, is it time to look at a new approach in the way teams are trained in pre-hospital care?

For many, the attraction of the great outdoors is that wonderful feeling of remoteness and isolation. But people do suffer accidents and illness while undertaking such pursuits and because of the remote environment will generally require the assistance of a mountain rescue team.

Some team members would argue their traditional role has changed somewhat in recent times and teams are no longer restricted to remote environments. It's not uncommon for them to provide assistance to local authorities in rural areas or to support the emergency services in searches, flood relief, land slips or similar civil disasters. Some teams now actively seek and regularly provide safety cover to sporting and/or mountain styled events to raise team funds. In providing safety cover, organisers often expect first aid to be provided by adequately trained team members should it be required.

There is no doubt that significant numbers of seriously ill and or injured casualties are being rescued and treated by teams around the UK. Many of those expected to render treatment are in the main not healthcare professionals, but volunteer team members who have undertaken some form of first aid training. If the traditional role is changing, with a likelihood of increased exposure to medical problems, then there is also a need for an improved higher standard of training which is formalised and carries national recognition and professional approval. The argument for this is further borne out by research carried out in the pre-hospital environment. It has long been accepted that deaths at scene of accidents or prior to arrival at hospital can be reduced by up to 39% if treatment is supplied by a suitably trained responder.

It is important to accept that first aid in a remote environment can never be the same as a typical industrial/office First Aid at Work course. Furthermore, it is obvious that if you are a member of a professional rescue team and providing medical assistance and/or medical cover then you will be carrying out more medical interventions than would normally be expected of you are in the workplace. You will certainly be carrying more equipment to deal with those interventions. So by definition team members need to be skilled to be able to deal with the types of illness and injury they are likely to become involved with.

Teams are already responding to this growing trend of change and ensure that individual team members are trained to a reasonable standard in first aid and certificated to show that standard of competence. This is generally a minimal standard. To put team members in a position of extraordinary responsibility, rendering actual medical assistance

or medical/safety cover in a remote setting, can present a very daunting prospect. There's nothing quite like a bad trauma situation getting worse to catch out the unprepared team member and destroy their confidence completely.

So what can be done to help the individual team member feel comfortable with his or her role when dealing with an incident that may involve casualties?

Training and actual exposure is the key to confidence but is training the individual team members to basic first aid level good enough or should teams, because of their expanding or changing role, consider providing training to more advanced levels of first aid? I personally endorse the latter and would go one step further to suggest that selected and suitable team members would benefit by training to a higher level still, achieving competence in recognised Advanced Life Support Skills (ALSS).

Advanced Life Support Skills are not difficult to learn but they can offer so much toward a positive outcome to the sick and injured. Having a team member with such knowledge would give the team as a whole a great deal more confidence in dealing with serious illness or injury. Training is very much a rehearsal for the future and is the only effective way of preparing for the inevitable. Such skills instil confidence and ensure evidence based best practice is observed by team members and may just tip the balance and ensure a good outcome on the day for someone whose very life may depend upon them.

What type of training is then required? Behind a desk in the RNLI's training department at Poole was a sign that read, 'If you think training is expensive, consider the cost of ignorance.'

Well good training need not be that expensive but ignorance in this litigation-aware society is likely to be so (I understand some teams have already experienced this). So I believe it to be a very good investment to ensure all team members are adequately trained in first aid at least and to the right skill level and specific to the MRT role. Once this is achieved, training some team members in Advanced Life Support Skills may be the next sensible step.

This raises two other points that should be borne in mind when discussing any type of medical training. The first is to choose a training provider carefully. The fact that a training organisation may carry impressive credentials and approvals is no indicator of competence and experience. It is important to ensure that your team receive good credible training delivered by the right people and to your satisfaction. Too often today, comments are made by rescue personnel (MRT and others) expressing concerns and some dismay that some first aid courses they have attended have been disappointing and appear to actively 'dumb down' this rather important skill, rather than 'skill up'. This is all very well when you have an option to dial 999 and receive immediate professional assistance, but not in a remote area incident, clearly such an approach to training

shows little understanding of the role of MRT and rescue activities generally. No one benefits from this type of negative training. It does not inspire nor does it give the confidence required to deal with the seriously ill or injured.

Of equal importance is ensuring team members are adequately trained and competent to use the medical equipment they carry. Some rescue organisations insist upon standardisation of equipment in order that training can also be standardised. Experience with MRTs shows you will rarely find two teams with the same equipment. It is difficult to find any attempt at standardisation, for instance, some teams may carry defibrillators and oxygen, whereas others may not. Some teams place priority on equipment such as scoops, KEDs and traction splints, whereas other teams may prefer lots splints, entonox and spinal boards.

No one would dispute a team's right to equip itself with equipment of their choice and which they deem suitable for their specific environment, but there is a danger that such differences in equipment may encourage training to be adapted solely to the equipment carried, rather than what is actually 'best practice' in casualty management.

In summary, I believe rescue organisations today are very professional and there has been a departure from the perceived traditional roles normally associated with rescue teams. If those roles are changing then perhaps the way first aid training is undertaken should also change. Members of rescue organisations deserve to have access to good training which should be evidence based and encompass the latest research and recommended treatment protocols, whatever the level of course. It is vitally important for a team member to feel as if they are confident in acquired skills and consider themselves 'fit for role', furthermore to understand what they are doing and why they are doing it.

It is not enough to just jump through the obligatory hoops during a first aid course to possess yet another piece of paper. A qualification gained without understanding means very little in reality and may prove quite disastrous on the hill to the end user. There is a refreshing thirst for knowledge these days and rescue folk have enquiring minds maybe the time is right for ALSS training.

Alan White is currently senior training officer for Capita Health Solutions based at the Medical Training Unit in Montrose. His 34 year career in remote medicine has spanned 24 years in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, with the last twelve years in the offshore industry on projects in Siberia, Caspian Sea, Africa, India and others when not involved with training. Alan has also spent two years as an instructor for the RNLI training lifeboat crews around the coasts of UK and the Republic of Ireland and is also a crew member of the Montrose Lifeboat. He has had a training involvement with Scottish MRTs, and was invited to conduct a spinal injuries workshop at the UK MR conference in Edinburgh.

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Energy conservation mode
The ability to reduce brightness levels to save energy. Battery life of up to 24 hours on 25% brightness setting.

Patented LUXE N™ LED
Up to 15 times brighter than a standard LED.

Standard LED

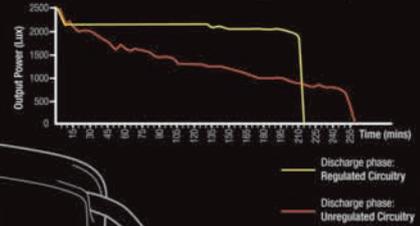


1.8 Lumens

High Intensity 1 watt LED



Up to 30 Lumens



Fully adjustable straps
Elasticated for maximum comfort.

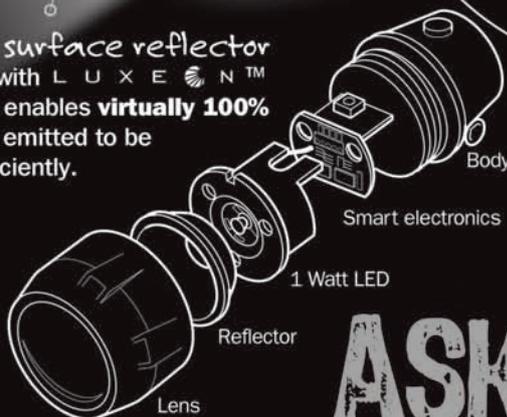
Water resistant
Light unit and battery pack.



Ratcheted head
Adjusts through 90° to direct light where it is needed.

Complex surface reflector
Combined with LUXE N™ 1 watt LED enables **virtually 100%** of the light emitted to be utilised efficiently.

Indestructible light source
Solid state LUXE N™ light source is immune to shock and vibration, eliminating the need for bulb replacement. No fail on the trail, burn time up to **100,000 hours** or **11 years** of continuous use.



ASK FOR CYBA-LITE

SMART TECHNOLOGY - SMART CHOICE



One day all torches will be made this way

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Model shown: Cyba-lite Xtreme (RT5090)