

MRC NEWS

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THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE COUNCIL OF ENGLAND & WALES

ISSUE 4

JULY
2002

NEWS FROM THE MRC

Developments & discussions from MRC, May 2002

NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGIONS

VIEW FROM THE TOP TABLE

Anthony Rich, Honorary Legal Adviser

OUTDOORS SHOW 2002

Dave Little & Penny Brockman on this successful new venture for MR

A CLOSE THING

William Lumb on the use of Diversionary Therapy and Appropriate Goal Setting in self rescue

NATIONAL FUNDRAISING

Peter Panteli reports

A QUESTION OF JUDGEMENT

Bill Batson RAF Chief Instructor

MISSING PERSONS BEHAVIOUR STUDY

Ged Feeney, Dave Perkins & Dave Roberts

FAIRY GODMOTHER LANDS IN KESWICK

Find out more in the regional news...

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR...

Oxygen. Perhaps one of the most under utilised tools in the casualty care armamentarium. Clearly beneficial to all seriously injured or acutely ill patients and without any side effects or complications. Why then is there evidence of lack of appropriate deployment of this material?

Certainly, there has been a lack of education extolling its advantages in previous years. Hopefully, with improved and more universally available, in-house training, this has been corrected. Sometimes, it has simply been forgotten in favour of more obvious and pressing matters such as stretchers and vac mattresses.

And, of course, there has been the matter of the weight of the containers allied to the relatively short period of flow of gas. It seems to be a fairly common practice that, second only to the sac containing ironmongery, the oxygen cylinder(s) are going to be carried by the last person to turn up on the call out. Relaying a series of cylinders up the hill to support a prolonged rescue is a labour of love not often recorded.

Things are about to change. The use of lightweight cylinders has been in the process of development for some years and now that work has come to fruition. We have been looking at the feasibility of using these cylinders in mountain and cave rescue for several months and are now certain the time is right to invest in this new technology. Indeed some teams have individually tried and tested the equipment and have already purchased cylinders.

We believe that this is an area where use of national funding will be advantageous and, therefore, a decision has been reached that will put the purchase of lightweight cylinders for all

teams at the front of the fundraising agenda.

There will be financial advantages to MR as a whole to have a national contract, but other advantages will accrue. Firstly, it will mean that the cylinders will be standard throughout MR, with obvious gain as more and more teams work together on call outs. Secondly, the contract will take care of servicing, refilling and repair and thus remove from individual team members the responsibility for carrying out checks etc. The company with which we intend to deal use cylinders manufactured in carbon fibre which have been thoroughly tried and tested in terms of physical abuse. They are offering to collect and deliver to team bases, although some regional co-ordination would be very helpful.

Initially, the intention would be to supply each team with the same oxygen supply that is currently held. Clearly, the major weight saving may mean that teams will wish to carry more. We would hope to accommodate this as the service develops. The alternative, of course, will be for the last arrival to carry both the oxygen and the sac of ironmongery!

Entonox will also be included in the plan. It is not envisaged that more Entonox will be required but it might find its way to the site of accidents a bit more often.

The present estimate is that we should be entering into a contract for this towards the end of the current year.

David Allan. MRC Chairman & MRC Medical Officer



© DAVID ALLAN

I TOLD THEM TO BE CAREFUL WITH THESE NEW CYLINDERS

And that's not all... see inside for the latest developments in the new Cas Bag and the 540 Belay...

NEXT ISSUE

Issue 5 will be January 2003.
You can send articles, news items, photographs, anecdotes, letters... complaints even... hard copy or disc (in Microsoft Word/Quark XPress format for copy and JPEGs/Photoshop EPS or TIFF for scans, please) to the editors **Judy Whiteside & Andy Simpson** 8 Bridgefoot Close, Boothstown Worsley, Manchester M28 1UG via telephone/fax on 0161 702 6080 or via email to newsletter@mountain.rescue.org.uk
We look forward to hearing from you...

Every care will be taken of materials sent for publication however these are submitted at the sender's risk.

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Editor's Note.

Articles carried in the MRC News do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the MRC.

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

Mountain and cave rescue is undergoing widespread changes in many areas as we adapt to the 21st century. In many ways, the 'dead' year of Foot & Mouth will probably be looked on in retrospect as a dividing point between old and new. National fundraising is now underway and we will start to become something of a 'branded product'. Please do not be so unkind as to point out that branding is a rather offensive, smelly, unpleasant and painful process historically applied only to animals, criminals and slaves.

One area where the wider community's priorities are changing is the aftermath of accidents involving youth. The authorities are becoming increasingly ready to bring criminal prosecutions in the aftermath of accidents in the mountains. This applies not only to fatalities but to lesser accidents as well, especially when youth is involved or reference can be made to health and safety law.

This poses a problem for the mountain rescue community that we must address. Historically, we have been a voluntary service by mountaineers for mountaineers. In theory, we are called out by the Chief Officer of Police to

help him fulfil his responsibilities for rescue under his public order duties and powers.

To what extent, however, do we want to become involved in the enforcement process? Do we wish to be part of a process that will make us no longer a simple rescue service but part of authority's system for investigating the circumstances of accidents and bringing prosecutions where the relevant inspector or crown prosecutor thinks it appropriate?

If we do see a role in supporting the police or health and safety authorities by assisting in the assembly of evidence, how far should we go? Should we be giving expert advice or opinion evidence and, if so, how are we going to make sure that the quality of that opinion evidence is controlled so that it reflects not just one person's views but a full and careful analysis of the situation?

On what terms should such assistance be given? Should we be expected, for example, to fit in with the enforcers' other administrative problems or should we be making it clear that out support is available only on our terms?

I'm sure that there will be as many views as there are mountain rescuers but I am also sure that, in conjunction with the other interested parties involved, a solution can be found and a method of working agreed with which we can all live and which will not deter the organiser of a party in distress from seeking our help.

ANTHONY RICH
Honorary Legal Adviser

...AND FROM THE PRESS OFFICER...

Well it's started!! A combination of the web site, the handbook and the Outdoor Show are beginning to put the Mountain Rescue Council, and MR in general, firmly in the public eye. In addition, during the past year we've had articles published in Country Walking, the Independent on Sunday and various lesser known publications, together with a distribution at the Outdoor Show of around 10,000 leaflets explaining how MR works in England & Wales.

Arguably, much of this activity was generated from a need to support the work of Peter Panteli on national fundraising, the theory being that a corporate body is more likely to donate to a charity it's heard of rather than one it hasn't.

Nevertheless, almost daily I receive e-mails from people all over the UK asking for advice or information and, quite often, from television or national press

asking for stories from rescues so they can be included in programmes like '999' or so that people can be nominated for awards.

Now, I know how shy and retiring MR people are in general but I believe that we have an opportunity for this organisation to raise its profile and become a valuable, marketable brand in it's own right. Already we've had to take one company to task for inferring that their product was endorsed by 'mountain rescue' – they could see the value so why can't we?

Whilst I wouldn't advocate prostituting the MRC by endorsing any company who asked, I can see the value of judicious logo placement on certain products or advertisements, in return for suitable monetary or sponsorship return. This benefit, in turn, will cascade down to the teams in the form of free or subsidised training courses or kit – who knows, the MRC may buy your next Land Rover.

For that to work we need regular, accurate information and, more importantly, a willingness for that information to be brought to the public's attention. With that in mind I'd be delighted to hear from any team about any rescue they feel has merit. I can be contacted at: press@mountain.rescue.org.uk or 0161 273 7080 (fax) or 0161 273 4846 (office).

ANDY SIMPSON
MRC Press Officer

MRCNEWS

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD DOUBLE

May's MRC meeting saw two members of the Executive cited for Distinguished Service Awards. Chairman David Allan and Vice Chair Tony Jones were asked to leave the room while their citations were put to the vote – and supported unanimously.

David Allan joined Furness MRT as team doctor some twenty years ago, taking with him a respectable experience of climbing and mountaineering. His impact on the team's cas care abilities was radical and he quickly became involved in helping neighbouring teams working on the LDSMRA medical group. He was appointed to the MRC medical sub committee and, subsequently, its chair. 'With characteristic energy and leadership skills, he set about the task of modernising the medical sub committee and certainly stepped it up a gear!' states the citation, signed by Mike Margeson and John Barstow, FMRT Team Leader and Secretary, on behalf of their team. 'We have all seen and benefited from the high standards now set and expected by the host of positive initiatives in recent years.' David also contributes to the international perspective, representing the MRC on the IKAR medical committee.

When another challenge presented itself in the form of the vacant seat of MRC Chair, at a crucial time in the Council's own development and movement forwards, it was a difficult decision to make. A family man, busy professional and rescue doctor, he was strongly supported by his team and region, yet sought advice widely and wisely, including such local people as Sid Cross. 'Since David became Chair of the MRC, he has navigated us through times of significant change and development, making no mean call on his considerable leadership, diplomacy and communication skills.' Add to this the volume of work behind the scenes and it represents a considerable contribution to mountain rescue.

Tony Jones, proposed for the Award by Pete Smith, began his career in mountain rescue in 1954. Pete held up three key items by way of illustration. The first of these was a book written by Tony in 1973 – *Some Thoughts on the Organisation of Mountain Search & Rescue Operations*. He remarked that, though the last thirty years have seen MR become more professional, the book remains relevant and pertinent. Indeed, it forms the basis of our current methods of response and could have been written this year. Next was an MRC Handbook 1976, the year of the first MRC Conference at Plas y Brenin. Pete recounted how his predecessor as Calder Team Leader, a man normally regarded

with a combination of fear and respect, quaked at the prospect of sharing a room with Tony, whom he, in turn, regarded with the same qualities. Finally, we heard the story of a particular exercise in 1993 when, situated above Ogwen, Tony was signalling the landing of an incoming Sea King. Michael Aspel disembarked and removed his helmet. Realising that Tony didn't recognise him, he announced himself. More blank looks prompted him to point to the infamous Red Book. More blank looks still. 'You must have seen *This is Your Life* on television', says Aspel. 'I know nothing about you or your red book,' says Tony. 'I do not own a television.' 'Later, in the studio,' commented Pete, 'Tony was so quiet and polite that we thought we were watching a stand in!' Pete concluded by saying that it was a privilege to make the proposal and that it was extremely fitting that it was taking place in Tony's adopted homeland of North Wales. Both Awards will be presented in September at the UK Conference in Edinburgh.

PETER ANDREW AWARDED

Gaynor Andrew and her three sons came to Plas y Brenin to collect the Certificate of Distinguished Service, presented by Tony Jones. The posthumous award to Peter Andrew was agreed earlier this year, as reported in

January. Gaynor thanked Tony Jones and Ray Davies, in particular, for their support when Peter had fallen ill with angina and an urgent bypass. She told how, when Peter had received his MBE, he said that it was very much for the whole of MR. However, this would have been especially important to him because it was *from* his peers. 'We are all very proud and we say thank you very much indeed,' said Gaynor.

BMC CARE & MAINTENANCE BOOKLET

This booklet, which covers equipment standards, equipment wear and failure, and routine checks and care, is 'a must for every team', says Mike Margeson. Thirteen chapters written by specialists in their field – Ben Lyon on ascenders, Dave Brook on helmets, Neville McMillan on karabiners and the principal degradation mechanisms – effectively pull all the information into one resource. The MRC has bulk purchased, at a reduced price, one copy for each team, to be distributed through the Equipment sub committee. Copies are, of course, also available from the BMC – price for MRTs is £4.

QUEEN'S GOLDEN JUBILEE MEDAL FLEECE JACKET

In recognition of the award of the Queen's Jubilee Medal to long serving members of

MRTs, the PDMRO has arranged for a suitable fleece jacket to be available for sale to any medal recipient. The newly cut black Keela Skye 200 jacket will be produced in Zetland 200 micro fleece and feature elasticated cuffs, 2 outer zipped pockets, shock cord in hem with adjustable cordlock and loops at cuff and collar for attachment to jacket. All at the knockdown price of just £15! Available in sizes XS to XXL, the jacket will have the MRC logo embroidered on the left breast, with the text 'Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal', or similar. Sample jackets are already available. Block orders are invited, from teams only, to John Edwards, Oldham MRT – jmemr@talk21.com or by post to John at 5 Valley Cottages, Manchester Road, Greenfield, Lancashire. Payment on delivery please. For further info, contact John via email or telephone 01457 870734.

NEW SYLLABUS

The new cas care syllabus has now been written and is expected to appear on the web site in early August.

WANTED – NEW MEDICAL OFFICER

David Allan has given notice that he intends to stand down as MRC Medical Officer – a replacement will be required. He believes that it is time for a change, some new thoughts and ideas.

You're miles from anywhere. It's cold, it's wet, visibility is down to zero and one of your party has had an accident. Who you gonna call – room service?

The Mountain Rescue Council of England & Wales is provided by around 2000 volunteers, a highly trained body of individuals available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year – whatever the weather.

The 117 rescue teams recruit competent, fit, weather mountaineers who are then trained in the practical skills essential to such a specialist service. Off-road driving, cliff rescue, first aid, casualty handling, communications, search management and navigation – all are taught to a high level.

So, should you be unfortunate enough to need our help, you'll receive a professional, world-class service – from people who willingly take on what most would describe as a very demanding, unpaid, part-time job!

The Mountain Rescue Council of England & Wales

To find out how your business can become a Mountain Rescue Business Partner or for more information about Mountain Rescue National Fundraising contact Peter Panteli at: nationalfundraising@mountain.rescue.org.uk or call 01943 607391

Registered Charity Number 222 596

Our first ad... in *Modern Management magazine*



slope, snow or slippery grass; front opening like medical bags rucksack to ease putting away; same or better insulation qualities due to new base surface and clip on extra to cover in very foul weather conditions.



DRIVING STANDARDS & BLUE LIGHTS

A Blue Lights Users Expectations document has now been produced (the full document can be downloaded from the Members area of the web site) setting out the core competencies required by drivers using blue lights and audible warning lights in emergency situations. The Blue Light Users Working Party responsible comprised representatives from Police, Fire, Ambulance and the Ministry of Defence, led by the Driving Standards Agency.

The core competencies identified divide into three key elements and include performance criteria, range statements and the required underpinning knowledge ie. relevant legislation, the Highway Code, roadcraft, radio procedures and the human aspect of police driving. Element One concerns the ability to assess the need for emergency response; Element Two the ability to drive the vehicle safely to emergencies; Element Three the ability to demonstrate the correct

NEW CAS BAG TO HIT REGIONS

More than a year down the line and, several prototypes later, the new cas bag has been launched with the help of Aiguille Alpine Equipment. The next step is the delivery of one to each region for field trials and feedback via the regional reps. 'I see this as a very important part of equipment testing and development and one of the strengths of our system of specialist sub committees,' comments Mike Margeson, MRC Equipment Officer, responsible for driving this project forward. The main points of the new bag are – all round access rather than down the middle; slightly longer and wider to allow better access for casualty in vac mattress; change of buckles, therefore easier with gloves or cold hands; see-through pocket in chest area for cas card and other documentation; rubber base to reduce sliding on

attitude when responding to emergencies. Advice received from various police forces as to what sort of course would be appropriate to achieve the necessary standards suggests 4/5 days' training. Chief Police Officers will, no doubt, be attracted to the contents of this document and teams could well find that discussions will ensue regarding the operation of any vehicles with blue lights.

IKAR REPS

The MRC will, in future, be sending three official delegates to IKAR, (two has been the norm to date) in order to cope with the intensive work load. IKAR has changed considerably over the years, along with the skills required to be a rep – when David Allan first went as MRC Medical Officer, an ability to speak German and a bit of French was essential. Now medical business is conducted in English and other Commissions have followed suit, with only the Helicopter group still reporting in German. Land Rescue is bilingual, Avalanche Rescue dominated by French speaking. Furthermore, what was once largely a European organisation is now truly international with countries as far afield as Australia and South Africa taking part. The reps will be David Allan, Mike Margeson and Paul Horder.

UK CONFERENCE 2004

Hopes of staging the 2004 UK Conference in

Northern Ireland have been dashed due to lack of accommodation – every available bed has already been reserved for an international youth athletic event. Dublin is now being considered as a possibility, with a venue in Wales as a back up.

ISLE OF MAN TO THE RESCUE

The Isle of Man Hill Search & Rescue Service has expressed an interest in joining the MRC. It was agreed to offer them affiliation as a non-voting representative with observer status.

540 RESCUE BELAY

This new, purpose-built mechanical belay device with load release handle avoids the need for a load release hitch or z rig. Designed by Kurt Mauthner of Rigging for Rescue, it is made by Traverse Rescue. The belay action is much like an Italian hitch, but it is designed for rescue load. The 540 was reviewed by Technical Rescue magazine, Issue 34 – Ade Scott concluded, 'Either way, in the right hands, the 540 is undoubtedly the belay device of choice at the moment. It isn't as intuitive as we would have liked, but there has to come a point when we accept that rope rescue is not a place for idiots, and if you can't learn to master a device as simple as this, perhaps you're in the wrong game.' The MRC has ordered some of these units to circulate in the

regions for teams to try. The full text of the Technical Rescue review is on the Equipment area of the MRC web site.

RIGGING FOR RESCUE 3-9 AUGUST

An unexpected opportunity has arisen for further training in Rigging for Rescue thanks to the generous donation by Keswick MRT of £2.5K. The MRC has agreed to support and subsidise this full week seminar enabling a significant reduction in the cost per head to £200. Real cost would be nearer £700. The course will run at the High Borrans Outdoor Education Centre, Windermere from 3-9 August 2002. Eight places will be available – one per region – and booking should come from the region in the first instance. Regions have until the end of June to book their place, after which those regions wishing more than one place will be offered. Kirk Mauthner will, once again, be over from

Canada to direct the programme. For further information on the course format and programme, contact Mike Margeson mmargeson@aol.com



MISSING PERSON BEHAVIOUR – A UK STUDY

This study has been developing since 1998 when Dave, Ged and Pete first presented their ideas at the Bangor MRC Conference. We have made presentations each year since then to detail the use and potential of a UK Missing Person Behaviour data base as an aid to SAR Incident Management BUT – we have always stressed that it will only ever be as good as the data that is sent in to Ged. Following the encouraging audience response to presentations given at the Durham conference last year, an Interim Report was published – this is available at www.mountain.rescue.org.uk/stats.html. We wanted to respond positively to the enthusiasm of those present but within the constraints of the data collected to date, constraints that are explained in the Interim Report.

The data collection has continued at an increased pace since the last conference, with contributions from Scotland, Ireland and Greater Manchester Police as well as reports from MRC teams and regions. This is an on-going study and its findings are strengthened and enriched by additional data. The database is possibly the largest, most comprehensive and contemporary in the world and with your help we can substantiate and reinforce this claim – you are all encouraged to get involved. If you do not have access to the computer program or the two-part forms, a copy of the form can be downloaded from the Statistics section of the Members area of the web site – www.mountain.rescue.org.uk/private/stats_sw.php.

The next stage for the study is to publish the first full report. The plan is to launch this at the September conference at Heriot Watt. The criteria used for reporting were set out in the Interim Study. Briefly they are – for a data set of 50 or more, a full report will be produced; for sets between 49 and 20, the report will be less detailed. At the time of this article, the categories of 'Despondents' and 'Vulnerable' will be reported in full and partial reports will cover the categories of 'Hikers' and 'Miscellaneous Adults'.

The data collected so far (365) exceeds that currently available for some categories, notably 'Children (7–12 years)' but does not yet provide enough for a full report under our restrictions for reporting the data (see Interim Report). There is also an additional category – 'Organised Groups', where no other data is available for comparison (though Ken Hill makes reference to the different behaviour of the 'Youth (13–15 years)' category when in groups).

The broad category of 'Vulnerable' contains a number of sub-groups. eg. dementia sufferers of 'Dementia of Alzheimer's Type', persons with 'Developmental Difficulties' and 'Psychiatric Disorders'. It is hoped to sub-divide this large category into these more precise groupings as the data increases. It is interesting to note that we can do this kind of analysis as we are dealing with our own 'raw data'. The preliminary work is now underway. We will produce a new Lost Person Behaviour Booklet that will incorporate the UK data with existing information as part of the training course 'Search Management for the Initial Response Incident Commander' run by The Centre for Search Research. (Contact details given below).

This brief article must end with another plea to get involved. Missing Person Behaviour data will undoubtedly help in planning searches and will contribute to finding missing persons. After any search please fill in a form – start to ask your team leadership if these are being submitted, if not, offer to do this for the team or region. The study relies on the enthusiasm of individual as well as users of the study's findings.

**Contact Details:– The Centre for Search Research, 9 Astley Gardens, Seaton Sluice, Whitley Bay NE26 4JJ
Tel +44 (0)191 237 0623 · e-mail dave@perkinsdj.freeserve.co.uk**

*Ged Feeney, MRC Statistics Officer. Team Leader Penrith MRT
Dave Perkins & Pete Roberts, Northumberland National Park SRT
& The Centre for Search Research*

BAPCO 2002. 22-24 APRIL. HAMMERSMITH NOVOTEL BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICERS ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

Around 1300 delegates and day visitors attended over the three days. In the large exhibition hall, the focus was mainly on command and control, TETRA and vehicle locations systems. Over the main two days, a series of seminars concentrated on various aspects of interest. Most of the delegates were from the police, fire and ambulance services. The mountain rescue ID label which I was wearing turned a few heads and raised a few eyebrows, but the attention was very much appreciative in nature and prompted quite a few discussions, not least with the exhibitors! The presence of MR, in this respect, was definitely a good thing. Apart from the benefits of attending, it has helped to register us even more among the rescue fraternity.

As I have said, the foci of BAPCO not surprisingly were improved linking of the IT and communication technologies, together with the use of GPS, particularly in command and control situations, and TETRA in all its forms. There was nothing relating to high band communications. My own particular interest has been, for some time as you know, the realisation of seeing individual searchers and rescuers moving around on a computer map in real time. For search and rescue management, this could be an amazing tool. Some may recall a demo of this system working a couple of years ago at the MRC meeting in Preston. The MRC also put aside some funds for research and development of the idea and we presented the concept to IKAR 18 months ago. This technology has been in use for some time, in vehicle tracking, and has become quite sophisticated in its application, but the equipment concerned is either too heavy or too expensive for use in MR, where it would be carried by rescue personnel.

I went to BAPCO 2002 with two interests in mind. One was to look at high band technologies and, as already explained, this was a non-starter. The other was to exploit the GPS/GIS idea for MR. In this respect, there were some interesting leads which might not have been unearthed had an effort not been made to attend the event.

Firstly, there was the Terrafix Micro(μ) Tracker. This little device is a quarter the size of a typical mobile radio. It has a GPS receiver built in to it and a GSM (mobile phone) card. It logs the GPS data and sends it via the GSM card whenever a signal is available (every 10 seconds or so if required!) I am currently investigating this potentially useful device further.

Then there was aerial imaging (photographs), over which the GPS tracks could be laid on the computer screen, as an alternative to maps and, as the mouse floated over the photo, it showed a grid reference. It was possible to zoom in to a remarkable degree without appreciable loss of quality. Most areas of the UK are already photographed. The Lake District is being covered later this year. The product is called Geoviewer.

Finally, Key Radio Systems were keen to investigate the possibility of integrating GPS technology into high band radios so that we could achieve real time GIS mapping as part of the normal radio communication system. The MRC should certainly endeavour to be represented at the annual BAPCO seminars. Who knows, the presence of MR in this arena could prompt technological developments for the benefit of us all.

Paul Horder Keswick MRT



Members of Keswick MRT, Edale MRT, Kintail MRT & North of Tyne MRT outside Keswick HQ



Keswick MRT's new fleet of vehicles
Boat for lake and river rescue; County conversion
4WD Ford Transit ambulance/people carrier; and
two new Land Rover rescue vehicles.

FAIRY GODMOTHER LANDS IN KESWICK

On Sunday 9 June, **Keswick MRT** formally commissioned two new rescue Land Rover 110 Td5 Station wagons, a purchase facilitated by the recent significant bequest from Miss Olga Iredell, a former Keswick resident. These vehicles cost £30k each and were supplied and customised by Lakeland Land Rover (Torver) Ltd. The renewal of older vehicles (13 & 11 years old) had previously been postponed beyond their scheduled replacement because the team had to ensure that the new HQ was fully funded and the vehicles were actually still in good repair. Then there were fund raising concerns due to visitor shortfall during Foot & Mouth. The team was delighted that the size of the bequest allowed the older, well maintained and still serviceable, vehicles to be passed on free of charge to **Edale MRT** and **Kintail MRT**. However, the benefits of such co-operation don't end there. Edale are, in turn, handing their LDV Crew Bus to **North of Tyne SRT**. At a short ceremony at Keswick HQ, the new vehicles were proudly displayed and keys handed over. Several team members from the teams involved took the opportunity to meet one another, share a beer on the Saturday evening and exchange a story or two. Neil Dowie, Keswick Team Secretary, commented that the team 'are keen to demonstrate that parochial attitudes have no place in a modern, and evolving, mountain rescue service, and hope that the benefits of such inter regional co-operation will be noted and, where possible, emulated by others.' North of Tyne team members were able to test drive their new piece of kit before Edale whipped it back down

south whilst they prepare the ex-Keswick vehicle. An official ceremony of the keys will then ensue (excuse for another bash.) Suffice to say that they are eager to take delivery of their new vehicle. Said Stuart Jones, Team Leader, 'It is amazing how, through the kind bequest of one person, a total of five teams are seeing the benefit. For our part, although the Edale LDV vehicle was not ideal for them, it will be perfect for North of Tyne. As we cover the vastness of Northumberland, we will be able to transport equipment and personnel to the search area with ease, and then use the vehicle as a field control point. We are grateful to both Keswick and Edale teams for their kind assistance.' Though, off the record, his reaction to the acquisition might more accurately have been described as 'gobsmacked'. Edale Team Leader, Trevor Lawton, was equally delighted. 'On behalf of Edale MRT, I would like to thank Keswick MRT for donating their vehicle to us and sharing their good fortune with both us and Kintail MRT. I would also like to thank those who have worked hard to make this happen. We are pleased to be able to pass on our vehicle to the North of Tyne team. This is an excellent example of teams working well together across different areas – it's a win/win situation all round.' Kintail Secretary Jamie Kean agrees. 'We are really impressed with the Land Rover's features and condition and are all delighted with it.'

Edale MRT's LDV Crew Bus



LAKE DISTRICT

GPS AIDS POLICE HUNT

The Keswick MRT GPS/GIS Project has been instrumental in helping police locate a missing person. Garmin Etrex GPS receivers with some Garmin 12 receivers were used in conjunction with Memory Map's Navigator program version 2.6 (versions prior to 2.6 cannot display OS grid references). Area identifying codes were positioned at the bottom roadside corner of each area displayed. When a search was completed, the GPS was uploaded into a field laptop. Data was first displayed in MMNav for confirmation and then transferred to floppy disc which was transported to the main control station for archiving on a second laptop. Some data processing was also carried out at this point. Close spaced tracks can be recoloured to distinguish them from their neighbours and an anomalous track connecting individual areas was removed from the record for clarity. The final maps were handed to the police for use in the murder enquiry. Each individual area searched is identified by a letter-number combination. A search pattern was devised by the police, with the areas prioritised by the police tasking officer to searches commencing. All areas tasked were recorded by GPS receivers in each party and all tracks were transferred to a laptop computer in the field. The body was subsequently found by police cadaver dogs in woods. Finds of other potential grave sites were made by the search teams involved but on further examination were found to be animal/stock remains and not connected with the police investigation.

It is possible that a refinement of this application would be of value in future search management. A spokesman for South Yorkshire Police said, 'Our force work closely with our local teams

from PDMRO. We recognise the skills of the teams and, by bringing expertise together, we are more effective in finding subjects lost, be it on the mountains, moors or, as in this case, a murder victim. The development of GPS/GIS is in its infancy but the potential for recording and controlling of large scale searches is evident. Further development of the use of such systems will show us their full potential for use in search in the future.'

NUDISTS & RAMBLERS 1: COUNCIL 0

A small press item in May claimed victory for the naturists who have fought a legal battle for months to prevent rambles and their binoculars from roaming past their sand dunes. However, Mick Leverton reminds us things are not always as they seem. 'It made a good tale but the reality is that the Town Council wanted to get rid of the nudists and proposed a path through the site. The Ramblers proposed a route bypassing the nudists. The enquiry said no to the Council but the farmers are going to put a new path in as a bypass. Nudists and Ramblers win. Council loses!'

GRAND AUCTION FUNDRAISER

Efforts by **Wasdale MRT** to raise funds for new vehicles are already well underway with a raft race, medieval fair and fell race held so far. Future events include a sponsored bike ride by Rob Scott around all the Lakes MRT HQ, for which moral support from each base would be much appreciated. This year's Kern Knotts Crack anniversary will comprise a busy weekend of orienteering, treasure hunts, hare & hounds races and a beer festival, culminating in a grand auction of brand new shiny outdoor gear. So far, they have managed to scrounge over £10k worth of gear to sell off in the Wasdale Head Inn on September 7. Lots range from a Summer Alpine course in Chamonix, courtesy of Icicle Mountaineering, to a road bike from Orbit Cycles, with other lots including waterproofs, Paramo, rucksacks and climbing gear. Further details from Guy on WasdaleMRT@hotmail.com or on the website www.wasdale-mountain-rescue.org.uk. There are also posters available advertising the event should you wish to display one. Earlier this year, the team was disappointed to hear that Flt Lt Rich Wood was to retire from the service. Over the years, he has made a significant contribution to the very good working relationship between RAF Search & Rescue Boulmer and the Lakes teams. 'The times when a quick call to Rich from the Team Leader or a Wasdale committee member to sort out an issue or arrange an impromptu practice are numerous,' said Guy Newbold, Team Secretary. 'With Rich's co-operation,

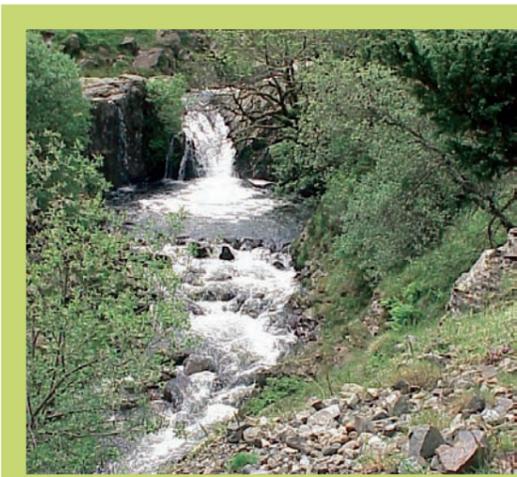
experience and contacts (and good humour) we always managed to resolve our needs as an operational rescue unit.' Rich flew on, literally, his last day of service on 4 May, supporting the Wasdale team with an evacuation of an injured climber with a suspected broken foot on Great Gable, below Tophet Wall. It was particularly helpful because the team had four call outs on that day so it saved a tiring carry down. 'We in the Wasdale team would like to put on record our appreciation and best wishes for Rich and his family and hope he will keep in touch'

ADVENTURE TRIP DEATH

It was just another team training Sunday, or so it seemed, until a call was received that two people had fallen in Glenridding Beck, near Patterdale. The initial call indicated that one person had got out but it was quickly followed by the news that a fatality had occurred. Fortunately two members of **Patterdale MRT** were still at Base and on scene within a few minutes. The remainder responded from Grisedale, the adjoining valley, arriving soon after the first party. The initial report indicated that the two casualties were on opposite sides of the beck and about 100 metres apart. As the beck was in spate the team split into two and, in effect, the situation was treated as two separate incidents albeit under the same overall control. It quickly became apparent that this was a school group who had got into difficulties at the Plunge Pool, a popular haunt of activity groups. Here the water flows over rocks and has formed a deep basin of water before reaching a shallower area from where it is possible to exit on to dry land. A ten year old boy had got into difficulties – he was, in fact, too young to be a member of the school but had been allowed to attend the trip as his mother was an assistant member of the staff. Rescue efforts by the school group failed and, during the attempt, his mother had jumped into the pool to save him, also becoming a casualty, suffering from hypothermia. Sadly, the boy was confirmed dead at the scene by the team's doctor.

The local Ambulance Control had notified their HeliMed, based at Blackpool, which arrived on scene in 20 minutes. This was the first occasion that Patterdale had used a civil helicopter having only seen a demo by its crew a fortnight earlier. The mother and another pupil, who also needed treatment after his rescue attempts, were flown to the Barrow in Furness Hospital and released later the same day. Meanwhile, some members were redeployed back to the accommodation used by the children who, having returned, were now trying to telephone their parents. It was important, if at all possible, for the boy's father to be properly informed of the tragedy.

Fortunately, mobile phones do not work at Greenside and it was possible to control the situation, but clearly this could be a problem in other locations. It is not possible to comment in detail on the incident as a police investigation is ongoing. What is worth stressing is the intense press interest which emerged over the next 36 hours. Said Dave Freeborn, Team Leader, 'We anticipated that the death of a child on a school trip, following similar tragedies elsewhere, would attract national interest. We prepared a press statement and hoped that a briefing by the police would reduce demand on us. By 0730 the next morning, live television broadcasts were taking place near the scene and one local car park alone was filled with television and radio vehicles beaming signals back to their studios by satellite dishes. I handled about 15 interviews for both radio and TV as well as statements to national and local newspapers. We explained our policy that we would stick to facts surrounding the rescue and not express opinions or criticisms that might impair the police investigation. Some respected our stance. Others made attempts at carefully worded but loaded questions. A number sought local residents and approached outdoor pursuit establishments for their views. Many media crews made unescorted visits to the scene, some of which were not equipped for the terrain. This clearly is a potential hazard and is worth considering as part of any contingency planning. 'Finally where a team anticipates high media interest we would recommend announcing a press briefing with a specified time and, if suitable, a photo opportunity. This might reduce both the number of separate interviews and the considerable time span involved (we were still receiving new requests at 10pm the following night with further information requests during the following two days).'



The 'Plunge Pool' above Glenridding

221 OF MOUNTAIN RESCUE SERVICE

Seven members of **Millom FRT** received Long Service Awards in February, in recognition of over 200 years of membership. The awards were presented by Mike Margeson, who noted that these were the first in the Lake District. Four were founder members of the team which formed in 1967 after a plane crash on Black Combe.



L to R: Ray Batten, Peter Jackson, Ann Jackson, Frank Dearden, Stephe Cove, Dave Hughes, Graeme Park

MID PENNINE MONEY FOR OLD INK

Bolton MRT have found a way of cashing in on all the old ink cartridges making their way into corporate rubbish bins – recycle and raise funds for the team. Their Toner Appeal, which began with a modest £500 profit in its first year, netted a staggering £7k last year. Not bad for a bit of old ink. Fundraising Officer, Mike Thomason reckons that businesses are only too happy to hand over their old ink and laser cartridges, which the team then sells on to a specialist company, who will also recycle old mobiles phones. It's worth noting that the team was required to register with the Environment Agency for the purpose of the appeal. For further information, contact Mike on 0161 793 5047 or mt@boltonmrt.org.uk.

NORTH EAST

AND THE CHINESE LADY SAID 'DON'T FIND ME, I'LL FIND YOU'

A cold, miserable February night. Northumbria Police call out team leaders Steve Old **Northumberland National Park SRT** and Stuart Jones **North of Tyne SRT**. They've got a missing Chinese female despondent in the Choppington area of mid Northumberland. The lady in question had attempted to harm herself during the afternoon. Her injuries and distraught state caused concern when she appeared to collect her daughter from school at the end of the day. Police and ambulance

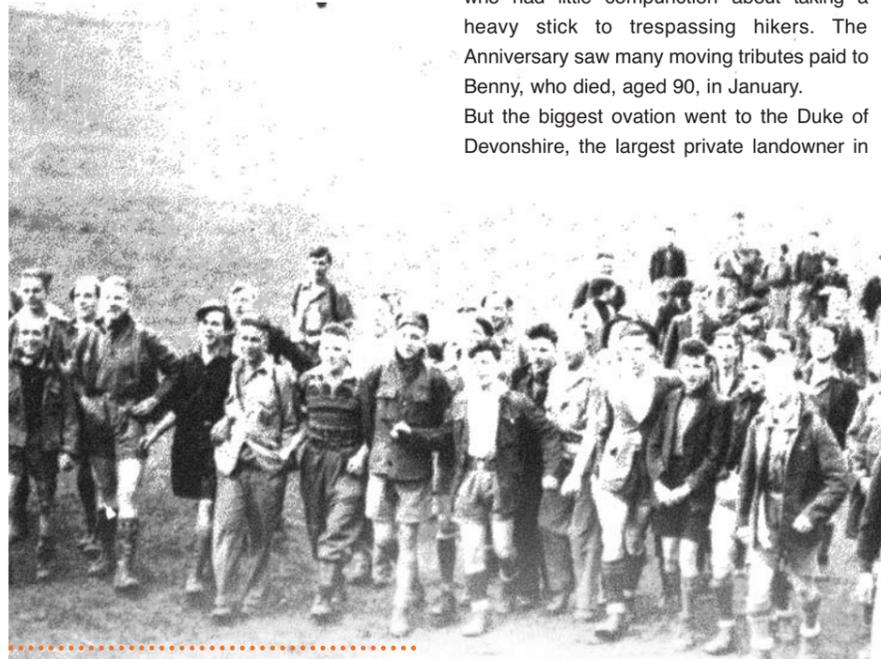
were called and the lady was taken to hospital but, on arrival, she ran off. Several hours later, a sighting was made near to her home village and the teams were brought in. Police checks of relatives, friends, local pubs, B&B, taxis etc. had drawn a blank. Her house was being watched should she return to it. Search dogs were called out and a search of farmland and woodland between the PLS and the village was instigated at 02:00 hours. It was decided to control the incident from the car park of a small motel close to the PLS. (Police had made enquiries here soon after the sighting.) Search dogs were deployed and police TSG set off to search the local cemetery. Stuart and Steve settled down to manage the incident. 30 minutes into the search, the door of chalet number 3, which was directly in front of their vehicle, opened and a small lady appeared and began to approach them.

Stuart: 'Oh hell we've disturbed a resident.'
Steve: 'She's wearing a jacket like our missing lady.'

Stuart: 'She's Chinese.'

Steve: 'It's her.'

Questioning and inspection of her wrists confirmed – it was indeed their missing Chinese lady.



Original trespassers



Ray Manley

PEAK DISTRICT

KINDER SCOUT MASS TRESPASS 70TH ANNIVERSARY

Over a thousand ramblers from all over Britain joined leaders of all the major countryside conservation bodies at a rally to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Kinder Scout Mass Trespass at Hayfield, in the shadow of the mountain, on Saturday April 27. **Kinder MRT** provided First Aid cover to the event at Bowden Bridge and safety cover for the guided walks onto the lower slopes of Kinder Scout in the afternoon.

On Sunday 24 April 1932, Benny Rothman, a 20 year old unemployed motor mechanic from Manchester, was one of 400 ramblers to set out from Hayfield Recreation Ground to walk across Kinder Scout. He addressed the crowd before they set off and, after scuffles with gamekeepers above William Clough, he was one of five people arrested and charged with various public order offences, including riotous assembly. Sentences ranged from 2 to 6 months' imprisonment. The Kinder Trespass brought the access issue to a head – there were no National Parks or Countryside Rights of Way Acts in 1932. Kinder was a jealously preserved grouse moor, patrolled by keepers who had little compunction about taking a heavy stick to trespassing hikers. The Anniversary saw many moving tributes paid to Benny, who died, aged 90, in January.

But the biggest ovation went to the Duke of Devonshire, the largest private landowner in

the Peak, who made a dignified public apology for the conduct of his own grandfather in 1932. 'I am aware that I represent the villain of the piece this afternoon,' he said. 'But over the past 70 years, times have changed, and it gives me enormous pleasure to welcome walkers to my Chatsworth estate today.'

'The trespass was a great shaming event on my family, and the sentences handed down were appalling. But out of great evil can come great good. The trespass was the first event in the whole movement of access to the countryside and the creation of our National Parks.' The leading speaker was Environment Minister, Michael Meacher, who insisted that one thing should not be forgotten about the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, which he introduced in 2000. 'It is not the seizure of the privileges of the great landowners,' he said. 'It is the restoration of the normal, historic rights of access to the finest and wildest areas of moorland and mountain which, prior to the Enclosure Acts of the 18th and 19th centuries, had always been common land, open to all.'



Ray Manley

What this is about is reclaiming our common heritage.' Other speakers included Sir Martin Doughty, chairman of Peak District National Park Authority and English Nature, whose father took part in the Trespass;

Kate Ashbrook, director of the Open Spaces Society, who paid tribute to Mr Meacher's support of the Act, and Jim Perrin, campaigning outdoor journalist, who made an emotional tribute to the memory of Benny Rothman.

Two surviving trespassers – 90 year old Bill Keen from Topley, Sheffield and 85 year old Jimmy Jones from Northenden, Manchester – received a tremendous acclamation from the assembled ramblers.

Mike Harding, vice-president of the Ramblers Association, was master of ceremonies and led a rousing rendition of Ewan McColl's walkers' anthem *The Manchester Rambler*. More music was provided by Sheffield folksinger Sally Goldsmith and the local Thornsett Brass Band. Later guided walks, led by National Park rangers and National Trust wardens, took ramblers along the trespass route, where they were 'accosted' by actors from a local theatre group playing the part of gamekeepers. Another walk was led by Harry Rothman, son of the Trespass leader.

OLDHAM WEEKEND

This year's Oldham Weekend went down well again, with delegates attending from RAF MRS, Buxton, Western Beacons, Scarborough & District, Derby, Longtown, Donegal, Holme Valley, Bucks, Ogwen Valley and Teesdale & Weardale teams. Despite horrendous hold ups

on the motorway network on the Friday evening, everyone had arrived by midnight.



Stan White

Many in the Mountain Rescue community will now be aware of the sudden death in February of Stan White, one of the longest serving members of the Teesdale & Weardale Search & Rescue Team.

Stan, who was 57, leaves his wife Lyn and two sons, Paul and Graeme. While he will, of course, be a tremendous loss to his family he will also be a great loss to mountain rescue not only in County Durham but across the whole of England and Wales.

Stan has been a member of the Teesdale & Weardale Team for 26 years, the last 17 as Hon. Secretary. For the past few years, he has been the team's main Land Rover driver which was affectionately nicknamed 'Stan's Van'. Thanks to an understanding employer, but mainly due to his own dedication, he has missed very few of the team's call outs over the last 26 years. He also represented the team on the North East Search & Rescue Association and was a representative on the Mountain Rescue Council where he played a major part in organising the MRC Conference held in Durham last year.

Stan's commitment to helping others is highlighted by Brian Wright, organiser of the annual Mountain Rescue Advanced Casualty Care Course in Carlton, Cleveland. 'Stan came 12 years ago to act as a body for the advanced casualty carers to practise on. He was so good we made him 'Body Shop Manager' with responsibility for organising all of the casualties on the 8 day course. He even persuaded Lyn, his wife, to come and cook for sometimes up to thirty of us, a role

SOUTH WALES

BIG BLACK MOUNTAINS CHALLENGE

Longtown MRT based in the Black Mountains are of the Brecon Beacons National Park held its annual major fundraising event on Saturday 18 May, 2002. The Big Black Mountains Challenge offers something for both young and old, serious walkers, strollers or mountain marathon runners. The event consists of three routes – 43km, 27km or 16km, taking in fifteen summits over 660 metres. Over 650 took part, despite poor weather conditions. Organiser, Len Harbottle, hopes the team will raise approximately £9,500 through this event. He sends thanks to all team members and to everyone who made the event a success.



she has happily carried out for the last nine years. He will be a great loss not only to me as a personal friend but to the whole of mountain rescue'. It is fitting that Stan's close friends joined his family to scatter Stan's ashes on Roseberry Topping at the start of this year's course.

Alan Best, Team Leader, of the Teesdale & Weardale SRT said, 'At recent call outs, training and committee there is always someone who refers to what Stan would have said or done. For me there will always now be spaces where I expect a humorous comment, a bit of banter, or to be corrected and 'put right'. My memory is for someone who always spoke his mind, to give clearly his views as to what he felt was in the best interest of the team, and of someone who worked so hard in so many aspects of mountain rescue'. Almost £1500 has been donated to the Team in Stan's memory, the bulk of which will be used to start a fund to replace Stan's Van. Stan is probably best summed up by Gari Finch, Chairman of NESRA. 'Stan was always a forthright contributor in his own inimitable style. Mountain rescue in the North East will find itself trying to replace the irreplaceable.'

Steve Owers. Teesdale & Weardale SRT

SOUTH WEST

10 TORS EXPEDITION

For those who don't know what 10 Tors is – 2500 youngsters aged 14 and 20, in teams of six, undertake an expedition on Dartmoor. Those aged 14 to 15 undertake a 35 mile route, 16 to 17 a 45 mile route and those 17 to 20 a blistering 55 mile route. All over two days! This exercise, sorry, expedition, involves visiting ten tors, decided by the organisers (the Army) not the teams, moorland navigation, overnight camping and teamwork. **Dartmoor Rescue Group** was joined by **Exmoor SRT** and **Woodhead SRT** to provide sufficient cover – thanks to all who helped! The weekend begins with a scrutineering exercise in which all the kit used by the 'contestants' is closely scrutinised, in part, by DRG members. There is a defined list of kit which teams must carry and this is strictly adhered to. There is usually the odd amusing moment – the tent with no poles (or pegs), the rucksack full of Mars bars (and little else), the cooker with no fuel – often met with pleas of 'Let me off...' We don't! This year was relatively quiet with only 20 incidents ranging from the 'too tired to continue' and 'team lost' (navigationally challenged), to the 'suspect broken ankle' and 'head injury'. 'A tiring weekend for all involved – not least of all the participants!' says Mike Pesterfield, DRG Secretary. 'The sense of achievement these youngsters get is huge and should not be understated. Here's to the next event!'

TENTH BIRTHDAY

Exmoor SRT celebrates its 10th birthday this year. Despite Foot & Mouth, which literally closed North Devon, the team report one of their best years for new recruits and some innovative training sessions. Later this year, they will take delivery of a new ambulance/control vehicle and Pet Plan are to provide two year funding for two team members undergoing their SARDA training.

CAVE RESCUE

HYPOTHERMIA HIBERNATION?

In a recent rescue from Diccan Pot a caver suffered a 30 metre (approx 90ft) uncontrolled abseil. In very difficult conditions, with a lot of water going down the first pitch, the casualty was recovered and flown to Leeds General Infirmary. He had suffered serious injuries and 1.5 litres of blood was drained from his chest. Further, with a BP reading of 50 over 0, his core temperature was measured at Leeds General to be 24°C – the coldest ever recorded by CRO in a cave rescue. The question presently being asked is to what extent did his hypothermic condition facilitate survival. Did

he go into some form of hibernation that reduced his metabolic rate? We invite comments.

ALSAR

NEWS UPDATE

It's all change at the top. Following the AGM in May, the new committee is Kris Manning (SEBEV SAR) Chairman; John Dutton (NorLSAR) Vice Chairman; Andy Williamson (SEBEV SAR) Secretary; Bob Barrett (BSAR) Treasurer; and David Hughes (WiLSAR) Training Officer. A two year development plan has been adopted which will guide the organisation in its development. Two new teams have been taken on as probationary members – Essex SAR and Sussex SAR. Sponsored by existing ALSAR teams, they will be fully operational within 12 months. Full membership has been granted to Wiltshire SAR, after the successful completion of their training and passing a full team assessment. Talks are also going on with Hampshire and Surrey and it is hoped to have a fledgling team in each county soon. ALSAR hosted its first Search Controllers Course this year at Sulhamstead Police Training College, attended by most teams and including officers from the Police National Search Centre. The course was taught by Dave Perkins (Centre for Search Research) and proved to be a great success. Finally, ALSAR has revamped its web site and will be developing this over the coming months – www.alsar.co.uk.

My Experiences Joining A Lowland Search & Rescue Unit

As I was entering my local climbing wall one day, a poster on the reception wall stopped me. SEARCH, it said. What was this, has someone misplaced a karabiner, lost the routes book or, shock horror, had their cat gone missing? But no, on closer inspection this proved to be something quite different. 'Bucks Search & Rescue are holding a Public Search Course, if you are interested in attending please fill out the form or go to www.bsar.org.uk.' Hmm, I thought, Bucks Search & Rescue, surely they mean Mountain Rescue? This was odd, as after many years living in the area and a geography A level, I came to the conclusion that there were no actual mountains in Buckinghamshire. True, we have the dizzying heights of Coombe Hill at 260m, summited only by the most fearless of dog walkers and intrepid ramblers but, still, calling it a mountain would doubtless offend those at the Oxford English Dictionary. So I resolved to sign up for the course and see what these obviously deranged people were talking about.

On receiving my joining instructions I proceeded to their HQ. This was more difficult than you might think. The instructions said that the HQ was downstairs – stairs, what stairs? I was at the end of an alleyway and the only way to go downstairs would be to go underground? Now it all made sense. I went through a large steel door and down some concrete steps realising, with a little trepidation, that I was in a nuclear bunker, with all the associated architectural flair!

Now, after watching the whole series of Rockface, sorry Rockface, I knew to expect the crack team of grizzled Action Man lookalikes and daredevil, female sports climbers. On turning the corner I was presented with something slightly different. A tatty sitting room, strewn with the widest range of people I have ever met. Everything from primary school teachers to IT workers, students, shop owners. The short, the lanky, the young, the old, the thin and the not so thin were lounging around on the old sofas drinking tea. Any preconceptions I had were quickly abandoned including the one about the beards.

Over the rest of the evening it was explained to me why there was a need for a search and rescue team without even the merest hint of mountains nearby. It doesn't take mountains for people to get into trouble and it doesn't matter whether that 50 foot drop is off Ben Nevis or the High Wycombe multi-storey car park. It will still hurt if somebody falls. Walkers can and do get lost in the Chilterns, and hypothermia or a medical condition is a

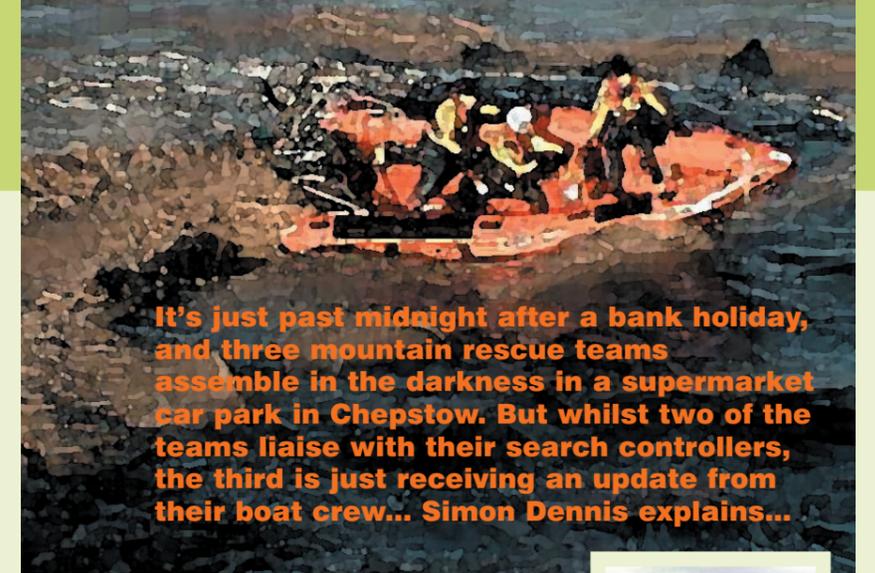
killer, whatever the altitude. And if the emergency services are overstretched, or something really bad happens, as they say, who you gonna call? Also let's not forget the thousands of vulnerable people who go missing every year. Is it any consolation to the family if police tell them 'Sorry, we are not a mountainous area and therefore don't have a search and rescue team to look for your loved one'?

The training sessions that followed formed part of the ALSAR Basic Search Course. Search magnets, critical separation, purposeful wandering, PLS – I had never realised that wandering through some cold, wet woods could be so complicated! This is because searching for someone in a lowland environment has many attributes not applicable in the mountains. The Misper (I was picking up the jargon already!) has the ability to move at a far greater speed than if they were slogging up Scafell Pike, especially when they have access to public transport or a car. This means that speed is of the essence and a psychological profile of the Misper has to be drawn up to ascertain where they might have gone. This calls for a proficient search manager prioritising search sectors and making decisions that could prove to be critical to the well being of the Misper. Finally, someone who went down to the shops and not returned was unlikely to file a route plan! All of these intellectual pitfalls make up for the decreased physical effort of scaling peaks, though you won't be thinking that at 3am when you have been on a shout for the past four hours!

The inclusion of 'rescue' in our title goes far beyond conveying the Misper to hospital once found. We are much more likely to come across the Misper trapped in an RTA or a building collapse in Aylesbury. This is what we have to train for and many of the things that would have been traditionally associated with the Fire Brigade or perhaps cave rescue teams could be delegated to us. I have been able to work with both the Police and the Fire Service, training together as part of the wider emergency infrastructure, in some of the unlikely but still potentially devastating scenarios that have been hypothesised.

With regular training sessions and exercises my confidence has grown, especially in one of the crucial areas of any team member's skills – the ability to react to a situation positively, and manage it before it gets out of control. BSAR's expertise and inventory are expanding rapidly from our long heritage of S&R work, to the extent that, during 2001, we had the most callouts of any S&R team in the UK. I have become part of a team of dedicated, professional volunteers and, as such, we are almost indistinguishable from any mountain, fell or moorland search and rescue team. We just don't do mountains!

Jon Wickham. Bucks Search & Rescue



It's just past midnight after a bank holiday, and three mountain rescue teams assemble in the darkness in a supermarket car park in Chepstow. But whilst two of the teams liaise with their search controllers, the third is just receiving an update from their boat crew... Simon Dennis explains...

...yes, their boat crew. Not many mountain rescue teams operate a fleet of seven boats – but then not many teams operate across five counties from three bases, either. From almost every angle, members of SARA, the Severn Area Rescue Association, seem to do things a bit, well, differently.

This call was one of around 60 handled each year by SARA. Founded in 1973, to provide lifeboat cover in the Severn Estuary, an area not served by the RNLI, the organisations first base was just outside Chepstow, South Wales, at a private house. Over time, a purpose-built rescue station was opened by a nearby slipway, directly under the old, then M4, Severn Bridge. A tragic incident in 1986 led to the opening of a second rescue station upriver at Sharpness, in Gloucestershire, and the third base came on line at Upton upon Severn, near Worcester, in 2001. Each station handles different types of incident, with very different terrain. The organisation is affiliated to the MRC through SWERA, and is also a Royal Yachting Association teaching establishment. Across the organisation, over 100 people are involved as crew, fundraisers and support teams, with about 40 active lifeboat or MR personnel.

The original MR involvement came about through climbers in the Wye Gorges requiring assistance. A cliff rescue team was formed, with many evacuations being from crag directly into a waiting boat. This has evolved over time to a land search and rescue team, able to operate in support of or independently from the boat teams, with specialist training being delivered both in house and via external courses for search managers and leaders.

The boat fleet is impressive – Chepstow operates a 7 metre Delta rib, similar to those seen in RNLI stations, and one of the very few D Class inflatables in service outside the RNLI. A rigid hull flood boat completes the fleet,



whilst Sharpness have just taken delivery of a new, £40,000 Delta 5.5 metre, supported by a 4 metre Avon inflatable for inland and low tide work. Upton operate an all rigid Polycraft, for urban flood work, with a smaller inflatable for difficult access areas, such as quarry searches. A small armada of windsurfers, dinghies and other boats completes the training resources for RYA courses.

Crew have to be versatile – very few are land based alone, with some also specialising in Swiftwater work, first aid and communications. At Chepstow, the primary base for the land team, a mixture of boat and land skills is common, with crew from other stations supporting land search teams when required.

Each station has a Land Rover vehicle primarily for boat towage, with the land search team also operating a Land Rover supported by a lighting trailer with floodlights, generator and radio/light recharging facilities for night searches. Equipment across the boat fleet includes Ferno stretchers, marine radios, drysuits and lifejackets, with the land team operating SRC channel radios as well as those on SARA's own private land and marine frequencies. Steep ground and casualty equipment for the land team includes Bell stretcher, casualty fleece bag and the usual array of GPS and navigation gear.

Crew operate on pager call, with DLA (Duty Launch Authority) or Search Managers initiating call outs, usually in response to requests from Coastguard or Police. Calls can range from a purely lifeboat type response to a craft in difficulties, through land and river searches, often search for possible suicide jumps from bridges, to a wide area missing person search in conjunction with neighbouring MR teams from Longtown or Central Beacons. Prolonged involvement in times of severe flooding is not unusual, either. The organisation's area covers the counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Gwent, Worcestershire and parts of Shropshire, with fundraising part of the commitment – like most MR teams, SARA receives very little grant funding and is totally independent from the RNLI for boat funding. The organisation as a whole requires around £80,000 a year to operate, with this figure being increased with current plans for three Land Rover replacements and a second building phase at Chepstow.

However different to our colleagues in 'pure' MR teams though, many things remain the same – the team spirit, the black sense of humour but, above all, the willingness to respond at any time to someone else's problem. Just don't be surprised if we decline to walk if we can see a river instead!!

Simon Dennis is the Executive Treasurer and a search manager for SARA. He can be contacted on 01453 751724, or at sara@mountain.rescue.org.uk.

Outdoors Show 2002



Thanks to Paul Baxendale for the photos

Well, I'd never heard of it. That is until one boring, dull, wet afternoon last November. A guy called Andrew Strachan, from a company called Brand Events, bubbled with enthusiasm down my telephone about some event they were staging at the NEC Birmingham in March 2002. The main thrust of his conversation was how great it would be if mountain rescue could be at the Show. Not another commitment! But then fond memories flooded back of the time a few of us represented the MRC on the Blue Peter stand at the BBC Children's Big Bash in 1995. Then I remembered being driven crazy by the Coca Cola jingle being played continuously at 100 decibels on the next stand for three days. It took weeks before my tinnitus resumed its normal pleasant tunes, bangs and crashes. I couldn't go through that again.

Andrew was quite quick to promise that Coca Cola would not be there. So I listened on. Eventually, he came up with the magic words which were of interest to me – FREE, FUNDRAISING and MONEY. I was hooked.

The next step was to persuade the Finance Sub, PISC

'Can I put the record straight that the selection of mainly pretty young female volunteer members of the public, that so kindly gave of their all and assisted as casualties on the demo wall, was in any way due to their looks or demeanour... selection was purely done to the technical parameters of the rescue system, the wellbeing of the rescuers and the available costumes... well that's our story anyway...'
Alan George. Avon & Somerset CRT

Our presence at this, the biggest non-trade show for the outdoor enthusiast would never have been possible without the dedication of a small number of people, especially with the tight deadlines involved. Our stand rivalled any of the companies there – and some were big names in the outdoors market. As Dave points out, a survey at the show indicated that we were the second most popular stand there and, no insult to any of the other stands, but we had no raffle or freebies to give away – we were asking people to donate to us!!

From the outset, it was important that we had the correct brand and balance between Berghaus and the MRC, including portraying the correct image of those representing MR.

Brand Events were providing a demonstration wall for us – this had to be both functional and present an image of the MRC. Other requirements were to produce a promotional leaflet, select personnel to provide the display, obtain legal permission to use videos on mountain rescue, draw up contracts of liability and source a Land Rover and equipment (which would then not be available for rescue operations for four days – thanks to Patterdale for their vehicle).

The event was more successful than anyone possibly imagined – on Saturday, because of safety, they had to close the doors and turn away visitors. Each day we performed a number of demonstrations which proved very entertaining as we were able to persuade various people to dress in different costumes to be rescued. It was also an opportunity to collect money,

and the MRC that it was a good idea to be represented. It was not difficult, just like pushing jelly down a hill. So we came away from the November MRC meeting with a mandate to go if we thought the terms were acceptable. Shortly afterwards, again on a dark and wet afternoon, I met Andrew and his boss, the Event Director, on Darlington Railway Station to sort out the details.

From then on, the hard work started under the direction of our appointed project manager, Penny Brockman from South Wales. A team of volunteers was tasked for the various aspects relating to our attendance and, almost entirely with the aid of emails, pulled the package together. A triumph for those who believe we should use information technology more.

Just one slight hiccup with our sponsor, Berghaus, which was sorted (although it took another meeting on an appalling wet January afternoon on Darlington's draughty and dismal station yet again. I only hoped it wasn't an omen for the event.

As it turned out, the Show was brilliant although it was a wet weekend. Well, what did we do?

With representatives from every region, we talked to thousands of people about mountain rescue, collected money, demonstrated rescue techniques – which got national television coverage and then even with the Director General of the Ordnance Survey – and we explained the use of vehicles and equipment. Berghaus was extremely supportive of us and we had those mountaineering legends Doug Scott, Chris Bonington and Alan Hinkes sharing the stand with us.

Were we successful? Yes, I believe so. But more than that, the people who attended voted us the second most interesting feature at the Show – well there was no way that we would ever be better than the Great British Pub! So congratulations and thanks to all who took part and, just as importantly, those who supported those who went to the Show.

Would we do it again? Andrew has already been on the phone – they were so pleased with the success of the Show they have booked three bigger halls for next year. And yes, they want us there!

David Little. MRC Treasurer

Thanks to the members of Avon & Somerset CRT who did some fine acting!

You may remember that, at the time, Rockface was showing on TV. I know there has been a lot of debate about this series and its impact but I do believe that its timing was positive to what we were trying to achieve. The public were interested in finding out about us and how true to life the series was. They were inquisitive and this can only raise the profile of mountain rescue.

We weren't looking for a quick win, more a long term strategy of raising public awareness of our work. The leaflets provided the opportunity to incorporate Gift Aid information and networking at the Show resulted in a number of contacts for the national fundraising project.

Our success was the result of teamwork and professionalism. I believe that we would have not been able to do it without the skills that people were able to contribute – negotiation, contracts, PR, graphic design, project management and networking to name a few. The realisation is that although we provide a service based on mountaineering skills, if we as an organisation are going to move forward, we have to recognise that we need to identify members with these business skills and that they, in themselves, play as important a role as those operationally. These skills were paramount in taking the conception of an idea to the successful output of a highly professional display.

Penny Brockman. Central Beacons MRT

First Response... your comments...

A FLAG FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE

At a recent MRC meeting at Plas y Brenin, it was raised by David Allan, at my suggestion, that Mountain Rescue should have a flag. At recent events over the last few months, seeing other emergency organisations similar to ours (RNLI, Coastguard, Police & Fire Service) with identifying flags flying at their respective HQs, either at half mast in mourning or full mast in celebration, I asked why we don't have a flag. Even the Boy Scouts & Girl Guides have one. It is the hope of the MRC to raise the profile of mountain rescue and to do this we have to have an identifying symbol. We have the new badge which has turned out to be very successful. Perhaps it's time we went a step further. After all, we are being recognised with the award of the Queen's Jubilee Medal. And a last thought – should we also have a motto?

Eve Burton. Buxton MRT.

MEDICALS & EYE TESTS

Things are clearly happening with ambulances if our new (double) insurance premiums are anything to go by. In your piece on advanced driving, you mention that 'even medicals and eye tests as standard' may be needed. May I remind members, with hope of supporting MR from draconian regulation, that the medical subcommittee of the MRC, and the MRC, introduced 'medicals' for drivers of MR vehicles in May 1997. This happened when it became clear that guidance had been published which incorporated the MR situation. Basically, all drivers need to meet the Group II medical standards ie. the old HGV standard. Many teams do use these standards to confirm medical fitness to drive. It is clearly good practice and should help a robust support for the continued use of blue lights.

John Ellerton. Patterdale MRT & MRC Medical Sub Committee

OH GEAR, OH GEAR, OH GEAR!

In MRC News Issue 2, Mike Margeson introduced us all to a device called the TRE (not the TVE as printed) (*Sorry, that was my mistake! Editor*) distributed through DB Outdoor Systems. Over the past few months, members of Bowland Pennine MRT have been playing with the device and here are some of our thoughts. For those of you who missed Issue 2, it is a single or double rope auto locking belay/abseil device for ropes ranging from 7.5mm to 11mm. The TRE is designed to be an autolocking device similar to the Petzl Gri-Gri but working on double or single ropes, the sprung double cam traps the rope under the load of a falling climber with a braking force of 300-400Nm, or allows hands off safety for abseiling. Sounds great, so what's the catch? As with all new items of equipment

ROCKFACE

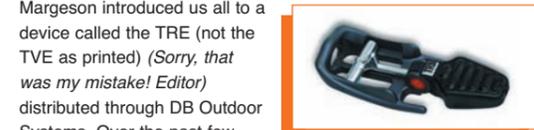
So... snappy dialogue, attractive female doctor from a Manchester based hospital TV drama (A&E) relocated to the Scottish hills to melt the deputy team leader's heart, suspect

casualty care... artistic license on full throttle. Rockface, that whimsical tale of mountain rescue folk was dissected with heartfelt indignation over many a frothy pint, so there's probably nothing more to be said about the technical faux-pas and the tenuous plot lines but I really must make one more observation. Say what you like, all you hunky chaps out there (oh and you are all hunky) about helmets and ropes and helicopter protocol and non existent drug packs, as far as I could see there was one significant point which nobody else appeared to pick up on and which single handedly wins the argument as to the authenticity (or not) of this dramatic representation. Not a scrap of facial hair on those handsome male chins! No, not even so much the faintest suggestion of five o'clock shadow. Good Lord, the aforementioned deputy team leader was even seen shaving!!! But then that was a subtle dramatic device against which the aforementioned-girlfriend's-positive-blue-line plot could unfold. I mean, without the razor, he'd have been out of that bathroom before she could say nappies! And, while I'm on the subject, where were all the check shirts?..

Judy Whiteside. Editor.

OH GEAR, OH GEAR, OH GEAR!

there is training required as the TRE is different in its rigging to a standard belay plate. The small attachment hole is karabiner specific, a standard HMS can cause the device to twist and crossload the gate. A small Offset D karabiner appears to work well. We found that when belaying the 'racing snake climbers' it was difficult to pay out rope fast enough, but this can easily be overcome by adapting belay technique. BPMRT conducted over 400 fast ascent/descents using the same TRE during a climbing event – the device showed no sign of wear and tear. To conclude, the old hands who were used to belaying on a standard plate found it slow and difficult to rig. Persons with little belay experience found it reassuringly controllable. I personally feel that it will be a welcome challenge to the Gri-Gri, ideal for groups at climbing walls or crags. Well worth a look. Many thanks to Dave Brown and Richard Chambers at DB Outdoor Systems for the supply of the TRE and their support.

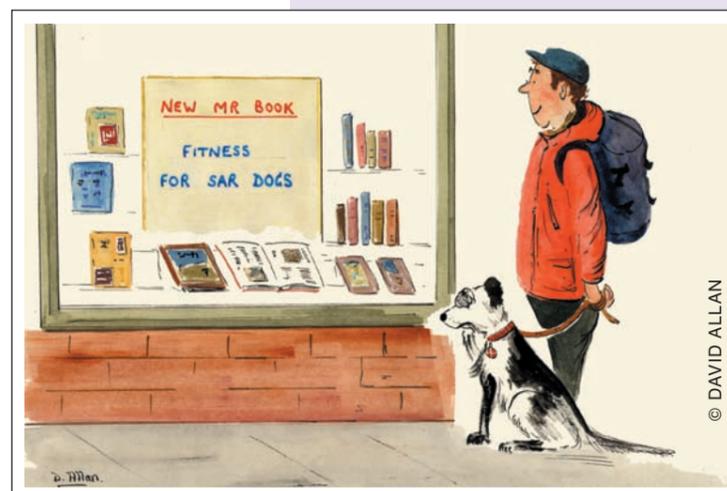


Alan Woodhead. Bowland Pennine MRT.
 Technical info: Available in the UK from aboutdoor@supanet.com.
 Weight 150g
 Price approx £50
 Made in Germany by Krimmer Outdoor Systems
 Rope Size 7.5mm – 11mm
 CE marked
 This is a personal item of technical climbing equipment and is not designed for rescue sized loads.

During the afternoon it RAINED and RAINED and RAINED... but, in the true tradition of MPSRO training, as we packed up the ropes, the sun came out!! A smelly and damp group of MR personnel returned to base for debrief. The feedback was positive enough for MPSRO to offer a further follow up weekend towards the end of summer (summer = rain but more daylight!)

Thanks must go to all the teams who attended and supported this session, to our two guest speakers, to the tutors and to Rossendale for the use of their base. Information on the MPSRO course is available from Barry Robinson (barryrobinson@beeb.net) or Alan Woodhead (awoodhead@lars.co.uk)

Alan Woodhead. MPSRO



© DAVID ALLAN

Following last year's Rigging for Rescue Courses, the desired process of cascading information down through the teams has begun. Mid Pennine began with a one day introduction session.

Andy Milner (Calder Valley SRT), Alan Woodhead (Bowland Pennine MRT) and Chris Moody (Bolton MRT) returned from the MRC Rigging for Rescue courses laden with information and enthusiasm. It fell to me, as Regional Training Co-ordinator to facilitate some training in order to cascade this new found wealth of ideas to team members.

A couple of meetings and a site visit later, the training was arranged to take place at Rossendale HQ and the nearby Troy Quarry in June (a date picked in the hope of reasonable weather – ho-ho!). Some ten team members from across the region attended along with Mark Taylor, as an observer from the BMC, and Simon Beck, from Xi Training, as guest speaker on PPE.

The day's debrief proved we probably all have something new to learn and there is always room to learn more. Please read on for a report on the day itself but I would like to close by thanking all those that took part, especially the instructing team and, particularly, Ben Pollard and James Maddock, two Venture Scouts who are currently working toward their Queens Scout Award and who were willing 'stretcher fodder' for the day. They now claim they will never be dry again!

Barry Robinson. MPSRO Training Co-ordinator

The day started with rain and an overview of the thinking behind RfR and its association with the MRC and RAF MRS. This was followed by a series of sessions looking at various RfR systems analysis, techniques and protocols. Simon Beck from Xi Training presented a very interesting session on the current role of Personal Protective Equipment from the Industrial Rescue sector.

During the morning, it rained! After lunch we moved to Troy Quarry where four sessions covered:-

- Evacuations from ground up to 45°
- Raisers using tandem prusik belays on ground over 45°
- Lowers using tandem prusik belays on ground over 45°
- Use of lowering devices with very useful input from Mark Taylor

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Alan Woodhead. MPSRO

A CLOSE THING

Recently, our under ground rescue leader had the distinct lack of fortune in that whilst pushing leads deep inside a mixed cave/mine, a microwave sized lump of rock fell about 10 feet from the roof of the level. This caught him on the back near the right shoulder blade causing extreme pain and immediate shortness of breath, both of which significantly worsened with any effort. At this point he was some 4 hours into the maze of passages, 2-3 miles from the entrance. It was immediately obvious that ribs were broken and, with an odd feeling of his skin crackling on moving the right shoulder, he reasoned correctly that the right lung was punctured (confirmed on reaching hospital).

There were three individuals in the party, each having a detailed knowledge of the system and how to negotiate it safely. Both fit members assisted the casualty through a series of climbs. Then one went out to prepare for extra assistance if the casualty's condition deteriorated. The casualty was then accompanied out of the system by the remaining party member, a person of considerable under ground and rescue experience.

This real life situation raises a number of issues in the management and retrieval of casualties deep under ground. As it happens, he exited the system under his own steam taking six hours, sometimes being limited to one or two moves, or several steps at a time, by the pain and shortness of breath. He had neither supplemental oxygen nor analgesia in that time. That he managed this is a testament to his fitness, level of skill, technique of self rescue and some luck (limited size of lung collapse and no pressure build up in the void). Otherwise, there would have been a major, multi-team rescue. Attempting a carry out would have necessitated multiple loading and unloadings, manoeuvres without any stabilisation equipment and all the inherent problems associated with medical care underground for the casualty and the rescuer.

Morphine is the only analgesic available in the BCRC formulary suitable to relieve the pain from such

injuries and improve the chance of self-rescue. Following the knowledge that it can depress respiration (usually large amounts directly into a vein) current teaching suggests that chest injuries preclude administration. In reality, giving small amounts eg. 3 to 5mg in single doses, repeated until relief is achieved will improve chest expansion, gaseous exchange and mobility. One would have to be careful not to give too much, although several broken ribs are a fairly good stimulus to prevent a reduced level of consciousness.

Ketamine would be another suitable drug with the advantage of no respiratory depression but we don't have it currently - it is more expensive and getting a general licence to use underground will be difficult. There is a role for the use of an anti-inflammatory such as Diclofenac along with the opiate analgesia, working on the bone/skeletal muscle pain. For isolated rib injuries, nerve infiltration with local anaesthetic may be useful.

If our man had elected to wait for rescue, the minimum response time to the casualty would have been some 12 hours, the access period for cavers unfamiliar to this system being at least 6 hours from the entrance to the casualty site. Man-handling the equipment along with food, heat and shelter would have been a significant undertaking. In this situation feeding, warming and hydrating the casualty is of prime importance, even if it causes a limited delay at the initial pick up, given that exit time as dead weight would have been another 8-10 hours. By any definition, this is extended care and monitoring of the casualty re temperature, radial pulse and respiration along with facilitation of waste product expulsion, is important.

Luckily the lung collapse in this case did not one-way seal internally causing a raised pressure in the chest cage (tension pneumothorax), though there was no perforation of the chest wall. Such a situation may well develop and being able to use a needle to decompress this gaseous build up would be life saving. If the lung collapse had been much bigger then independent movement would have been impossible. In this situation,

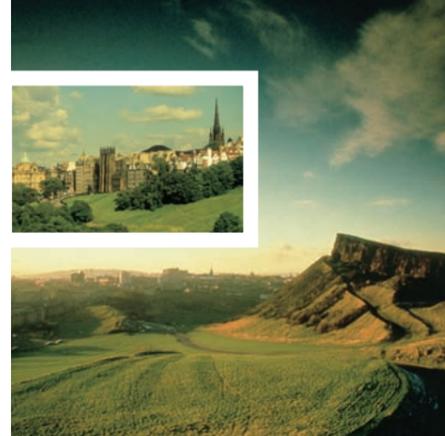
inserting a chest drain, exhausting through a one way valve (cut end rubber glove) and then strapped to the chest would facilitate lung expansion and improve exercise tolerance without increasing the diameter of the casualty and so promote self rescue. One can demonstrate that, in selected areas, specific advanced skills can be performed underground, if they speed up extraction from an inherently hostile environment.

A major component of his successful self rescue was the appropriate use of Diversionsary Therapy and appropriate goal setting. For many, this may sound false, contending that physical ability is independent of soundness of mind and mere thoughts cannot block out or soften unpleasant and painful stimuli. In this situation, any thought of the eventual goal. ie. exit was ignored, concentrating on the more immediate achievable tasks such as a difficult move, so many paces along a level etc. This fits in with current thinking on goal setting, ensuring a sense of achievement but also making sure the task chosen is achieved thus bolstering confidence. Using this, along with powerful past experiences (multi-sensory, principally sexual) or fantasies allowed a certain dissociation of reasoned thought from the physical situation of the body.

Such techniques in combination promoted the possibility of self rescue, so that it may be worth other teams, in a semi-formal sense, spending a little time learning some basic psychological skills. In truth, many of us either instinctively do this or have learnt to do so by experience, although spending a couple of hours now and again has to be well spent if you can keep the casualty on their feet, even with considerable physical injury.

We felt it worthwhile publicising this incident as it inherently has interest, raises numerous issues and shows an alternative take on the relationship between speed of extraction and casualty care. This was almost the major rescue we all train for but feel sure will never happen. It is intended as a starting point for discussion and in no way would I suggest that any proposals contained here should be automatically adopted by teams.

**William Lumb, Medical Officer
Swaledale Fell Rescue**



Pictures courtesy of Edinburgh & Lothians Tourist Board. Photographs by Harvey Wood, Douglas Corrance & Marius Alexander



This year's UK Mountain Rescue Conference promises to be a stunner. Quite apart from the spectacular Scottish landscape, rolling past your window as you head up to Edinburgh, and the charms of the big city itself - you will love the venue. The Edinburgh Conference Centre, set amidst the parkland campus of Heriot Watt University, houses some impressive facilities - not to mention an awful lot of blue carpet - which should make lectures and workshops a treat. Sorry, I'm waxing rather lyrical here, but I was impressed.

The conference will focus on a very practical hands-on approach, from training to communications and the latest equipment. In a varied programme, yet to be fully confirmed, we hope to see visiting speakers from the USA, New Zealand, Turkey, Norway and Hong Kong joining a good few from closer to home in four separate tracks. Topics range through casualty handling by ski patrols, snow anchoring, tracking and clue awareness, cas bag research and TETRA to work shops in the practical management of spinal injuries, web design, pyrotechnics, avalanche technology and the new 540 belay. Steve White from the Seattle Police Department will be running an all day work shop focusing on the three worst mistakes a dog handler can make. And Saturday should round off nicely with Dan Carroll, RAF Leuchars MRT, and Dave Whalley, RAF Kinloss MRT, recounting the story of last May's successful attempt on Everest by a single service expedition.

This conference will build on the success of the Millennium Conference, with over 500 delegates anticipated, representing mountain rescue and search and rescue organisations across England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Eire. The James Watt Centre II Exhibition Hall, with its adjoining bar and coffee lounge, will house a variety of exhibitors, including outdoor clothing specialists such as Lowealpine and Paramo, footwear, navigation and climbing equipment manufacturers and the Meteorological Office. The conference runs from Friday to Sunday, 13-15 September. You can keep up to date with developments as they appear on the MRC web site, where there is now a direct link to the UK Conference 2002. Telephone enquiries should be directed to Peter Howells on 01633 893447.

Judy Whiteside

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Peter Howells (Chairman) Asst Hon Secretary MRC •
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RAFNEWS

A QUESTION OF JUDGEMENT

Members of the RAF Mountain Rescue Service spent a tense week in court last December in answer to claims that the Service (and, therefore, the MoD) had been negligent in the care and supervision provided to one of its team members and that the team had failed to carry out a proper risk assessment of the weather and climbing conditions or to provide a safe system of work. This article presents a brief summary of the incident and the issues raised during the subsequent trial. I hope it is of interest.

On Saturday 4 March 1995, two members of the RAF Mountain Rescue Service set out to climb on the Red Tarn face of Helvellyn. Both 'Chalky' and 'Stormy' were members of RAF Stafford MRT, on exercise in the Lake District, with Stormy being the designated Party Leader. Having recently completed the RAF MRS Winter Mountaineering course in Scotland, Chalky was eager to climb some English snow and ice. The forecast for the day was not promising and their plan was to make a quick ascent before the weather arrived. Having elected to make a solo ascent of a short buttress they made their way without incident to the top of the buttress and were looking for a way off when disaster struck.

What we now consider was an avalanche from high above knocked them both off their feet, carrying them some way back down the mountain. The fall carried Chalky further than Stormy and caused initial confusion as to his whereabouts. Help was quickly on hand from two further members of the RAF Valley MRT, who were climbing nearby and who summoned further help from the other RAF and civilian MRT personnel in the area. Patterdale MRT were also called out. Although there were no external

signs of injury, Chalky had in fact suffered a severe intra-cranial injury, from which he has sadly never made a full recovery.

From this point on, the rescue went relatively smoothly, despite rapidly deteriorating weather. The gravely injured Chalky and Stormy, who had received minor injuries only, were flown to Barrow in Furness hospital by Rescue 122 from RAF Valley.

A subsequent RAF Board of Inquiry concluded that the avalanche was an act of nature and that all reasonable precautions had been taken to negate risks, that there were no specific human failings in the incident. Hence blame could not be apportioned to any individual.

The issues addressed during the trial in December were as follows:-

Risk Assessment. Had the RAF MRT made a proper assessment of the weather conditions and the risk of avalanche?

Was the risk of avalanche so great that no part of the Red Tarn face should have been climbed ie. was the decision to climb on the Red Tarn face negligent?

Where did the accident happen? There was some confusion and debate as to the exact whereabouts of the accident.

Was Stormy's choice of where to climb on the Red Tarn face negligent? Was the decision to make the climb unroped negligent?

After deliberation, the Judge decided in favour of the RAF Mountain Rescue Service on every issue. Significantly, on risk assessments, he commented, 'I conclude that the Defendant's (MoD) system of risk assessment involved the gathering and pooling of information from various different sources and that the risk of avalanche was expressly considered and assessed. The training of mountain rescue teams has to be carried out with proper systems of work and supervision in force but that does not require an inflexible formulaic observance of codes or rules. Formal in this context means that the risk of avalanche is expressly not impliedly considered.

'What is required is that adequate information is gathered on each and every occasion before the climbers set out so that express and proper consideration of the risk of avalanche can be made and that such an assessment is expressly made.'

Although no 'formal' written assessment had been made, the judge was satisfied that the procedures followed, which included

considerable information gathering before the event, was sufficient. We were also able to prove, largely through evidence in the form of Training Records, Log Books, course syllabuses and diaries that each individual was sufficiently trained to make an accurate and informed assessment of the likely climbing conditions.

We are all, of course, deeply saddened at the severity of Chalky's injuries and the subsequent effect it continues to have on his life. However, it is refreshing to receive acknowledgement that, even in today's litigious society, our procedures have passed scrutiny and that we do indeed do our very best to provide a safe system of work for our team members. The accident and subsequent trial also served to remind us, however, that the mountains always have been, and will continue to be, a potentially dangerous environment and by the nature of the job for which we have all volunteered, we will ultimately be exposed to risks beyond our control.

'Should one therefore give up wonderful trips into the mountains? Of course not, but one must try to act after consideration of all the factors in order to reduce the risk to a minimum. Nevertheless, even experts will be surprised again and again by avalanches.' André Roche, Swiss Federal Institute for Avalanche Research.

**Bill Batson, Chief Instructor
RAF Mountain Rescue Service**

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Following a cartoon in Issue 3 featuring 'New Beard-Gro For that authentic rugged look', we have received the following testimonial...



*This is amazing stuff and exceeded all my expectations. After five weeks, I was able to hold my own in any gathering of mountain folk. Indeed, I am hoping to audition for the latest version of the 60s hit musical 'Hair'. Beard-Gro has changed my life. However, I must warn you to apply the treatment with industrial rubber gloves. The small tear in the ones I used have led to an unsightly growth and everyone knows what hairs in the palm of the hand mean...
 Stephe Cove. Millom*

FUNDRAISING NEWS

Twelve months since the MRC took the landmark decision to embark on the path of national fundraising, we would like to take this opportunity of bringing all team members up to date with the progress that we have made since then.

Who is working on National Fundraising?

UCS Consultants began preliminary work in January this year to develop national fundraising. The work is managed, on a day to day basis, by Peter Panteli who has over twenty years of experience of working with the voluntary sector. His main focus is on driving the national fundraising strategy forward, looking at issues concerned with branding (in fundraising terms) and negotiating with major companies and business organisations with an interest in the work of the MRC. Considerable progress has already been made in this area, with negotiations at an advanced stage with a major national outdoor clothing manufacturer, a vehicle company and a leisure organisation. Each negotiated proposal will be approved by the MRC sub committee which has oversight of national fundraising.

Peter expressed great optimism at a recent National Fundraising sub committee meeting. 'I seem to be getting a very warm welcome at very senior level within business. Once they start to talk, their interest develops and they are utterly astonished to discover that Mountain Rescue has no paid members of staff at all.'

Peter is assisted by Sally-Anne Bennett, an Associate with UCS since the early '90s. She started working in the voluntary sector in 1988 and has considerable experience of appeal management – working with voluntary groups, developing fundraising materials and events management. Her particular skills lie in making applications for grants from trusts, foundations and statutory sources, a key development for the MRC in the future.

What control does MRC have?

The National Fundraising Steering Group, headed by David Little, with reps from all regions, meets monthly in Huddersfield to discuss progress and approve any new ideas, plans, trust applications etc. Reports and minutes are circulated by David to regional reps for onward reporting to regions and teams. It's worth remembering that the information contained in these documents has been paid for by the MRC and should be treated as confidential to mountain rescue. Currently, day to day contact is mainly with David but this is slowly changing as the relationships develop with other officers and teams.

What was the purpose of the questionnaires?

A key early task was to draw up a detailed plan that would take us through the first twelve months of fundraising. Questionnaires were issued to all teams so that we could assess three things in particular.

- First, to see what teams needed by way of vehicles, equipment and premises so that MRC could assess what help might be required in the future.
- Second, to see if any teams needed specific help with their own fundraising plans.

• Third, and perhaps most important reason, was so that we could see what relationships local teams had with companies and trusts so that we would not adversely affect any links that you have already established.

Thanks to all those teams who did respond. To those who have not yet returned their questionnaires, we do urge you to do so as soon as possible. Our fundraising has now moved into a very active stage and we may run the risk of approaching organisations where you already have strong links.

National fundraising will overwhelmingly focus on raising new money from the kind of national sources that are not appropriate for individual teams and regions but there is bound to be some overlap, even with the very best of intentions. UCS recently discovered a brand new trust with a mountaineer settlor that is almost certain to give to mountain rescue locally. This was passed on to the region concerned and a local bid is being prepared.

What is the money being raised for?

In addition to ongoing negotiations with major national companies and organisations, UCS has been focusing on the core needs of the MRC in a number of areas. A document has been produced that details the work of the MRC and of mountain rescue teams, highlighting a number of core funding requirements as set out in the MRC Development Plan. This is already being used as the basis of making an approach to grant making trusts and highlights a number of key needs that include:–

- **Equipment provision** so that the MRC can provide greater direct assistance to teams in terms of equipment, medical supplies and other needs.
- **Equipment development** so that the Equipment sub committee can commission research and development work with major manufacturers.
- **Training courses** available at a subsidised cost so as to allow more members to attend.
- **Increased international participation** by the MRC with other groups in Europe.
- **Communications** needs such as pagers, radio equipment and IT developments to help local teams communicate more effectively between each other, regions and the MRC.

Protecting Mountain Rescue

The ethos of mountain rescue is very special and well worth protecting. Being associated with it is something that many businesses and individuals aspire to. It is the job of National Fundraising to try to ensure that mountain rescue is associated only with donors, sponsors and partners who deserve that association. Therefore, we are preparing a draft formal policy on ethical fundraising that the MRC may wish to consider and adopt.

National Fundraising believes that it is necessary to protect the charity against the misuse or loose use of the Mountain Rescue association, name or logo. Although local team partnerships will be unaffected, national advertising proposals and agreements will be vetted by National

Fundraising in relation to at least the following measures:–

- The ethical fundraising policy.
- Existing partners involved with mountain rescue.
- The cultural 'fit' with mountain rescue.

The Team is already taking up one recent example of the use of an association with mountain rescue to advertise a commercial product without MRC agreement.

Peter Panteli commented, 'As fundraising develops, the MRC will establish contractual relationships with sponsors and commercial partners. Some of these may involve sector exclusivity. So a harmless, small scale national advertisement could jeopardise a major partnership and cost mountain rescue tens of thousands of pounds which could have been used for equipment or training.'

'If you are in any doubt at all about the appropriateness of a public link with a commercial organisation, please contact National Fundraising directly, or David Little, to talk over the issues.'

What support is available for local teams?

The initial focus is on raising central funds nationally so that the MRC can provide greater levels of assistance to local teams. However, support is also available directly to MRTs in a number of ways. Based on the responses to the questionnaires and the requests for help that they contained, up to four MRTs will be selected by the National Fundraising Steering Group who will be offered more intensive fundraising assistance on a 6 to 12 month basis.

Support will also be available to all MRTs through the provision of ongoing advice and assistance with fundraising issues such as Gift Aid, rules governing public collections, advice on specific events and queries etc. Many MRTs have good skill and knowledge of fundraising but it appears that some do not. National Fundraising is committed to building basic skills and to help MRTs with fundraising skills to reach full potential.

Two specific funding applications have been submitted that, if successful, will mean that detailed fundraising guidance manuals and training courses will become available, free of charge, to all volunteers. UCS will also produce a monthly funding newsletter delivered by email to any team that wishes to sign up.

In time, teams will also have access to UCS's Grants Online facility and access to DSC's Online trusts database which will be up to 18 months more up to date than the books and CD Roms most teams use.

We intend to keep you up to date with progress by regular articles in MRC News and by setting up a fundraising section on the website. In the meantime, if you have any specific queries or issues, please do contact us directly. See below for address, telephone and email details. The new National Fundraising dedicated number will be up and running shortly.

MRC National Fundraising
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01943 607391
email • nationalfundraising@mountain.rescue.org.uk