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## WELCOME TO ISSUE 53

Mountain Rescue is the membership magazine for mountain and cave rescue in England and Wales.

Contributions should be sent to the editor at the address below. Every care will be taken of materials sent for publication however these are submitted at the sender's risk.

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### NEXT ISSUE ISSUE 54

**Editorial Copy Deadline:**  
Friday 4 September 2015

Editorial copy must be supplied as Word document. Images must be supplied as high resolution (300 dpi) JPG/EPS/TIFF/PDF.

Advertising artwork must be supplied, ready prepared on CD or via email as font embedded high resolution PDF/EPS/TIFF (300 dpi).

### FRONT PAGE

Derby team and Helimed working together © Derby MRT.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Articles carried in Mountain Rescue do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Mountain Rescue England and Wales. We do not accept responsibility for information supplied in adverts/advertorial.

# Word

first



MIKE FRANCE

I am aware that not everybody reading this will have had the opportunity to read the AGM reports from myself and other officers. These reports are written for team members and they contain some important points that you should be aware of — for example, information around peer review, training, our budget and hopefully the work we are doing to show better transparency. I am taking this opportunity to repeat some of my points, with apologies to those who have already read the reports.

I have now held the position of chairman for a year and most of my views about the organisation have not changed. Importantly, I believe that team members are the face of mountain rescue. You will decide how it's done at the front end and MREW is here to support you in carrying out that task. But we cannot do it with our arms tied behind our backs — it's about working together.

I've had emails from some of you saying you feel things are changing for the better, that you are confident that MREW is behind you, supporting. But I also know there are those who are frustrated with what we do, so we need to work at this.

We all make mistakes and the best way to deal with them is to learn from them, sort things out and move on. That said, I often feel MREW officers are not allowed to make mistakes. Please remember we are — like all of you — volunteers. The only difference is we have said we'd like to help at national level.

There are many changes happening, both within and outside mountain rescue. Many of the statutory organisations that we work closely with, while they know we have the skills, are now asking what standards we work to. There is nobody else to do the high mountain rescue work that some teams are involved in, but for many other teams there are other organisations who think they can meet and evidence the standards required and some of these organisations are ready to step in.

This is the reason we are undertaking a pilot of the peer review outlined by Mike Margeson in the last issue. It will show others what we can do and that our written documentation is in place. The review will provide the written evidence.

We are leading this rather than one of the services we work with commissioning someone to look at our standards for us. We feel it's better to do this ourselves.

It is important for us to have the same standard for each review. At the AGM, I was asked a couple of detailed questions about the process which I was unsure about. I could

have made something up but that's not my style. I said I would report back and I hope you have all now seen my feedback paper.

The success of the 'task and finish' model has got to be the way forward for new MREW projects; a small team with skilled reps, moving away from the need for representatives from every region. However, from some questions asked at the AGM, there appears to be some confusion. To clarify, the task and finish model is my preferred option but will not work for every project, for example the FPG will by its nature have more longevity.

I guess many of you, like us, were disappointed that the LIBOR funding had been locked down and that we cannot now apply until November this year. This does not help Al Read and his team putting the training programme together. As a result, we got permission to use some of the government grant, giving us a full and diverse training programme.

Money coming into the national body is tight at the moment. I have said we can only spend what comes in, so we are working closely to amend budgets. As a result, national fundraising is another area we need to focus on in the coming year. I want to be offering more vehicle insurance not cutting back, I want more national training, giving us the national standards mentioned earlier. Every year we spend what we bring in and every year fundraising gets harder, so we will be looking to see if anything can be done differently.

I am pleased to report that we now have a legal adviser in place, an outside company based in Yorkshire. To ensure their time is used wisely, our secretary will be the gatekeeper for all requests for legal advice.

The ICT and Publications groups are looking at how we can improve the website. We have budgeted to revamp it because I share your frustrations in finding things. I can confirm that the minutes of every meeting held by MREW are in the members' area of the website along with budgets, code of conducts for officers, and conflict of interest declarations.

With everything that's happening internally, we still have concerns about how we engage with teams and regions. At the suggestion of LDSAMRA, we are holding a meeting at the beginning of July of the nine regional chairs, with me and Mike Margeson, as my vice chair. This is one of those good ideas that you wonder why it has not been done before, it may just be the communication link we have been looking for. ●

meetings

**MREW BUSINESS AND COMMITTEES**  
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Saturday 21 November  
Lancashire Police HQ, Hutton

**MREW BUSINESS AND COMMITTEES**  
Places: 100  
Saturday 21 May 2016  
Lancashire Police HQ, Hutton

To book in, contact:  
**Dave Close**  
secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Or speak to the relevant officer for your subcommittee – contact details available on the MREW website.

**GED FEENEY STEPS DOWN AFTER EIGHTEEN YEARS AS STATS OFFICER**



Ged Feeney stepped down from the role of Statistics Officer in May, after eighteen years in the job. Only fitting that we should pay due respect here and thank him for all his work — and achievements — over those years.

When Ged took on the role in 1997, it was a very different world. During that year, there were 880 incidents reported to the Mountain Rescue Council, as it was called then. All those reports arrived by post, on paper forms. A number of these incidents were attended by more than one team, so the actual paper reports would be nearer 950.

By the time the 2014 report was published, incidents had risen to 1,475, each one reported via email and handled electronically. Again, there were a number of joint operations, with separate reports from the teams involved. He estimates the actual number of reports to have been about 1,600. This figure relates to incidents where MRTs were deployed but there were a further 148 reports of alerts/standbys where teams were contacted but not deployed.

We now have a database containing 30,000 incident records — dating back to 1995 for England and Wales and 1990 for the Lakes and containing nearly 28,000 subject records (ie. casualties or persons assisted).

'We are,' he says, 'in an enviable position. We have management data of a quality of which I am proud.' Thanks to Ged, collected data is no longer slowly rotting in damp garages. Paper reporting has been banished to the dark ages. He is keen that his successor should receive encouragement and support. 'Rob has plans for developments that I have been unable to persuade people to implement. I will continue to offer him my support and hope teams will do the same by submitting reports on a timely basis.'

in this issue

**06 SAR-H Migration update** : John Hulse explains how training is progressing



**20 Diary of an editor:** Facebook fury and website woes...



**34 The day the earth shook:** Chris Harling on the earthquake in Nepal — and, on page 37, how mountain rescue teams here are helping.



**42 Taking cave rescue to Tunisia:** Emma Porter travels to Tunisia

**46 Is there a doctor in the house?:** David Hillebrandt



what's in at a glance

<b>SAR-H:</b> 6-9	<b>DOGS:</b> 31
<b>NATIONAL:</b> 4-17	<b>FUNDRAISING:</b> 36-39
<b>TEAMS:</b> 18-27	<b>CAVES:</b> 42-45
<b>INCIDENTS:</b> 29	<b>CASCARE:</b> 46-49

First in this edition are some matters to keep in mind concerning the **liability insurance** we have in place. The main focus of this cover is for when teams are training and fundraising. However, many questions arise about the cas care cover and treating of casualties by cas carers, paramedics and doctors. When on a call-out, the calling authority having primacy for the incident — usually the police — should be covering the liability risks of the team and its members. Therefore, if anyone makes a claim against the team for damage to property or injury on a call-out, it should be referred to them in the first instance. The cover we have in force for call-outs is contingent only.

Much work has been done with our brokers over the last few years to make it clear what fundraising activities are covered and when you need to refer something to the insurers before arranging an event. There is a guidance note on the MREW website in the usual place. It is worth reminding yourselves what this says.

Remember that risk assessments are important and must be carried out. An audit trail must exist to confirm this and be retained on the team's file for a minimum of three years.

Some weeks ago one of our insurance brokers was watching television and the programme had the presenter and others undertaking abseiling activities under the guidance of a mountain rescue team. Whilst he found the programme good TV viewing, he couldn't recall the team notifying them in advance of the TV programme. Whilst insurers are pretty comfortable with this it is clearly best to give me advanced warning, so I can inform them just in case the underwriters voice any concerns. Of course, it may be that the team had arranged alternative cover but it is something to keep in mind whenever you get involved with something that is a little out of the ordinary.

Our centralised vehicle insurance scheme has now renewed and each team should have had its renewal notices for its vehicles. It is important to check these carefully to make sure you have the right vehicles covered and the appropriate cover for your team. You are under a duty to disclose any material facts to the insurers at renewal. Have you checked your drivers' licences for new convictions that will need disclosing? Have you informed them of any new drivers under the age of 25? If you have any queries concerning your specific vehicles, then please contact the brokers Perkins Slade direct and they will be able to assist. For those teams with more than three vehicles and one trailer, the team will be invoiced by MREW for the additional premium — but you still get the cover at the same great flat rates.

Last summer we arranged **team member legal fees cover** and many teams elected to purchase this for named members. The policy will be renewing shortly and those teams that signed up will be hearing from me to see if they want to renew and whether there are any changes to their named members. The email will be going to the contact I was given when this was arranged.

As a reminder, briefly the covers include: Motor Prosecution Defence, Criminal Prosecution Defence, Representation at a Public Enquiry or Coroner's Office and Attendance expenses at a Public Enquiry or Coroner's office — but please make sure you read the policy wording and key facts for full details.

Each team relies on its members to voluntarily give up huge amounts of time to dedicate to mountain and cave rescue. This insurance cover is another way we can look after their welfare. Is your team taking out the cover for your benefit? Why not ask them the question? If any team who didn't take out the cover last year is interested this renewal, then please let me know and we can let you have further details and get you signed up.

Copies of many insurance documents are available online in the members area of the MREW website. They can be found in the Resources section under the insurance heading. Remember that as always if you have any queries, please just send me an email and I'll give you what help and assistance I can. But please remember that I can't give individuals or teams professional advice — for that you must speak to your insurance broker. As always, any queries, email me via insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk ●



NEIL WOODIE WOODHEAD

INSURANCE MATTERS

**STRETCHERS: FIVE YEARS OR ONE HUNDRED RESCUES**

PETER BELL

Following the last MREW meeting, a number of teams have called Lyon asking about the 'Five years or one hundred rescues' requirement for servicing. Many question what is meant by 'one hundred rescues'.

In summary, count rescues only, exclude training. More than twenty rescues a year: recalibrate every five years. Twenty or less rescues per year: recalibrate after a hundred rescues. As the original manufacture, my intention was to recommend a realistic interval to suit a wide range of teams, each

experiencing different rescue workloads. The fundamental interval I had intended was five years between recalibration of the frame. Each stretcher I manufactured was given an issue date stamp as part of its unique serial number, to facilitate subsequent calibration dates. This five-year plan worked well for busy teams but a few stretchers were not exposed to the typical rescue workload so it seemed inappropriate that a hardly-used stretcher be recalibrated after only five years. The 'or one hundred rescues' was intended to allow those teams experiencing twenty or less rescues per year to extend (if they chose) this recalibration interval to a maximum of a hundred rescues.

The above count applies to operational rescues, training use of the stretchers should be excluded from the count. There was then — and I imagine this is still applied — a recommendation that any Bell stretcher which is damaged or exposed to abnormal loads be withdrawn immediately from operational status, inspected, repaired and recalibrated — or replaced. The recommended calibration proof test is directly related to the declared failure load of the stretcher. Figures were obtained from external university test observations. MREW hold the original papers. Maximum permitted distributed weight on a Mk3 Bell is 500kg and on a Bell Tangent is 420kg. The

maximum proof load is 1000kg and 840kg respectively (being twice maximum permitted applied weight). Deflection at centre is a function of frame rigidity and should not vary by more than 10mm from test to test. Typically there is 12-15mm total deflection of a Bell stretcher under full calibration load. The maximum permitted central deflection depends on the doctors' recommendations, not on the manufacturer. I recommend also that all Mk1 (painted) stretchers should by now have been replaced and that Mk2 (no built-in rings) stretchers should now be phased out at the earliest opportunity.



Things have moved on considerably since the last update, as **John Hulse** reports. The Bristow Humberside SAR-H base went live on 1 April – on schedule – and since then there have been a number of operations involving Peak District teams. These have included dealing with some very serious injuries from locations including Mam Tor, High Tor, Stanage Edge and William Clough. The very positive feedback from the Humberside S-92 crews is that MR manage the scenes very well.

However, despite the training exposure and all the warnings, the operational experience has shown that the downwash is very significant, especially when funnelled into gully features etc, resulting in gravel, dirt and water being circulated. This reinforces the absolute necessity for all team members to use the right PPE. Further feedback from operations is that the highline is being used and that the winch speed used is faster than the Sea King. As a result, it is essential to use leather gloves when high-lining.

**TRAINING WITH THE AIRCRAFT**

Through great cooperation between the Bristow crews and our Single Points of Contact (SPoCs) almost 400 people have now completed the Stage 1B and about 360 have partially or fully completed Stage 1C training. This training has been carefully organised at a regional level to maximise the number of people at each event with us typically getting thirty people trained in the morning and a further thirty in the afternoon trained to Stage 1B and much of Stage 1C, depending on aircraft availability. This work also helps people network and develops a stronger level of interoperability.

**ONLINE TRAINING**

The take-up of the Bristow iSAR online computer-based training package has been excellent. We now have 55 mountain and cave teams registered on the system. The vast majority of these have an iSAR administrator who will add and maintain team member data. There are now 1,493 team members registered and 936 of these have passed the Stage 1A online training for the S-92 aircraft.

This great success has all happened since January and we need to say a huge thank-you to Mike Park for linking so well with our Bristow colleagues at Aberdeen, together with nudging us all to keep making progress. In addition, a further massive thanks to the regional SAR-H link reps,



**Main image:** 'C' Flight 22 Squadron Sea King from RAF Valley flies through the Ogwen Valley during the S-92 Stage 1C training with NWMRA teams. End of one era, start of a new era © John Hulse.

team admins and team members who have supported our requests to complete the training and to patiently record their progress. Please keep these records in iSAR up to date as it is the only national method we have of measuring the SAR-H training delivery. If you have problems with iSAR, firstly please contact your regional SAR-H link reps who are a mine of useful information. We need to thank Malcolm Reavell and the iSAR support team at Bristow Aberdeen for working so well with us to deliver this national roll-out—their response to requests and support issues has been excellent.



Edale MRT reported a first for Mountain Rescue England and Wales on 23 April with Incident Number 42, with the new Sikorsky S-92 called into action.

Around 11.40am, the team was alerted to reports of a crashed paraglider on Mam Tor, prompting a full team response for Edale and Buxton. Due to the location and the severity of the man's injuries, a swift helicopter evacuation was quickly established as the best option. The aircraft landed near to the summit of Mam Tor and the casualty was loaded for onward transportation to the Northern General in Sheffield.

**Above:** New helicopter in action at High Tor, Matlock © Martin Gorman.



# active 12

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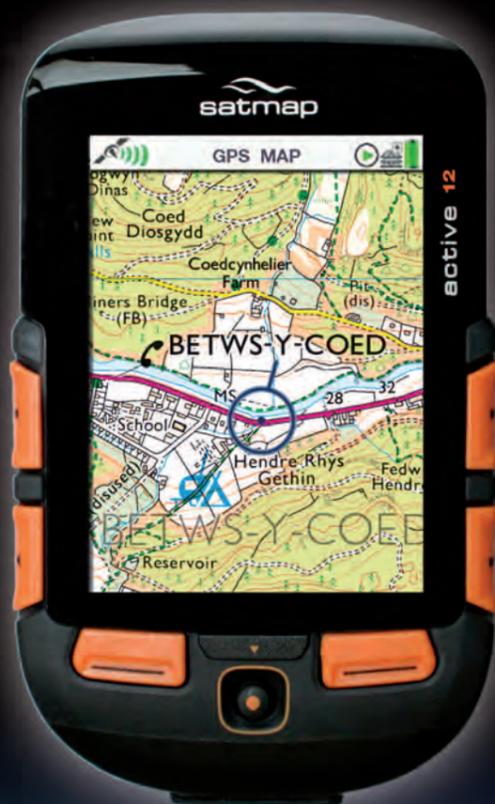
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PAGE 7 >

### NEW TRAINING VIDEOS

Whilst the recent focus may have been on the S-92 training, MREW and ALSAR are working together to support Bristow and a production company in the creation of the training videos for the AW139 and AW189 aircraft at Norwich Airport. This work is being led by Huw Jones from South Wales and Alan George from Avon and Somerset. We anticipate the new training material for these aircraft will be added to iSAR in the late summer.

### NEW SAR-H BASES

Since the start of operations in Humberside, there have been four jobs with the Peak teams. Martin Gorman of Edale MRT is the main SPoC for this base.

Caernarfon starts operations on 1 July with S-92 aircraft. Pauline Hallett, a team leader with Ogwen Valley MRO, is the main SPoC for the base and she is working closely with Bristow to build the relationship and get NWMRA Teams trained to the Stage 1B and 1C on the S-92. The first training events have been very successful and are the start of a new strong relationship. In common with the Humberside S-92 training, the events were attended by members of multiple teams in the region.

St Athan will start operations on 1 October, initially with AW139 aircraft. The SPoCs for the base are Huw Jones and Mike Lake from the South Wales teams.

Newquay will start operations on 1 January with S-92 aircraft. The SPoC is Alec Colyer supported by Roger King, both from the PenMaCRA teams.

Prestwick will start operations on 1 January with AW139 aircraft. The SPoC during the transition period is Mike Park of the SAR-H Migration Group. Mike is in contact with the chief pilot and training events are being discussed together with the NESRA, YDRP and LDSAMRA teams.

### ARRANGING EXERCISES

Once a base becomes live, the primary focus of the SAR-H crew is to support operations. As such, training with teams needs to be requested via the regional SAR-H link reps in consultation with the MR SPoCs for the base. There will continue to be Stage 1B and 1C training opportunities available at the SAR-H base, but obviously operational taskings will take precedence. Proposals for 'in-context' exercises in the mountains, within a moderate flight time of the base should be discussed with the regional SAR-H link reps and the MR SPoC for the base. The objective of such exercises should be to provide operationally relevant flying for the crew including searching, deploying MRT and casualty interactions etc, in addition to valuable training for the team members. The optimum design of such exercises is an important activity needing close consultation between all parties. In essence, everyone needs to be able to gain as much as possible from such exercises.

### STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS

It is vital that we work closely and positively with our Bristow and MCA colleagues. With so much change and so many stakeholders, as agreed with the MCA and Bristow, we have a tiered communication model to provide a structured process and to manage the potential avalanche of emails and requests. We ask that all teams communicate first with their regional SAR-H link reps then, if required, they will escalate to the MREW SAR-H Migration Group. If required, the group will then escalate the issue to MCA and/or Bristow at national level.

It is really pleasing that almost every team is fully supporting this agreed model which is working extremely well for us. Please continue to support this agreed process which greatly helps the workflow and professional structure agreed with our partners.

### TYPE APPROVAL OF STRETCHER AND STROPS

As Bristow need to use type-approved stretchers and strops, there has been a significant work stream lead by Rich Terrell to build the documentation and supporting data to achieve certification. In conjunction with Scottish Mountain Rescue, MREW have now received formal approval from Bristow to use the following stretchers and associated approved strops:-

- Bell Mk3
- Bell Tangent
- Ferno Titan
- MacInnes Mk6
- Troll Alpine Light
- Tyromont helicopter rescue bag

Please note that teams must implement an auditable process of inspection and maintenance in accordance with the stretcher manufacturer's instructions. The inspection, maintenance and test results must be recorded for each stretcher. The MREW equipment group is providing guidance on this important issue.



Winching into the new hell  
© NEWSAR.

### RECORD YOUR TEAM SAR INTERACTIONS

As we transition through the training into the operational phases with the new aircraft, it remains essential that teams record their interactions in the SAR-H report form in SARCALL. There are now 694 interactions recorded across the spectrum of military SAR, Bristow SAR, Helimed and National Police Air Service aircraft. This detailed dataset is very important to us. Your regional SAR-H link reps will be nudging teams to ensure we have the data.

### SUMMARY

There has been enormous progress this year, achieved through the hard work, 'can-do' spirit and tenacity of many people - including the teams, regional reps, SPoCs and the migration group all working closely together - a huge thank you to all concerned! The superb close support from the Bristow crews at the bases, together with the personnel at Aberdeen, has been instrumental in helping us achieve this progress. We are very grateful to them and look forward to the future.

Within the next six months, migration will be complete, with all bases live. Through the strong, professional and trusted relationships now being built between mountain rescue and the Bristow crews, our teams and casualties will continue to get a world-class search and rescue service. ●



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## PUBLICATIONS AND NATIONAL FUNDRAISING UPDATE

JUDY WHITESIDE

Now that the initial launch period is through, we're setting up for the next stage of our marketing campaign. Those first two months were very much about raising awareness of mountain rescue and we encouraged teams to share the film as far and wide as possible online. You certainly rose to the challenge, and it is gratifying that there were several requests from teams for a hard copy of the film to use alongside their own publicity material. For those who wish, we've now produced a limited number of hard copy DVDs of the film,



available for those teams who request one. If you're interested in, email film15@mountain.rescue.org.uk for details. There were also requests for us to consider altering the film titles to suit individual teams — but this was never the intention and certainly not budgeted for. What we have planned, however, is to produce a 60-second trailer, featuring (as trailers tend to) the 'best bits'. This will be squarely

aimed at fundraising, with the texting call to action on screen throughout, along with a suggestion that people view the full six minutes too. This shorter film will enable us to engage in a modest level of video advertising through social media — and hopefully raise us some funds. Once again, when you see this hit your screens, please support the campaign and help spread the word. So, that's the film sorted, now

for the website. Frustration with the website seems to be a recurring theme — not just out there in mountain rescue land but far beyond — and plans are now underway to make some changes. Initially, we plan to update the public-facing bit so it's brighter, lighter, social media, mobile and tablet-friendly, and hopefully, a lot easier to navigate. And by that we mean by those outside of mountain rescue who might want to find out a little bit more about what we do and maybe even donate. No set date for relaunch just yet but we'll keep you posted. Ultimately, the members area will get a makeover too but not within this first stage of the project so, for the time being, I suggest you revisit the article on page 24 and don't lose that password!



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## INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL PROCUREMENT OFFICER



Davie Thomson was appointed to this new role in May. He brings with him many years worth of professional experience in procurement and supply chain management. Professionally qualified in 1989, he holds the diploma and membership of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply. He has lectured in supply chain management at Sunderland University Business School and is a regular conference speaker on supply chain management topics.

Over the last twenty years he has worked with many organisations in a consulting role, developing supply chains and business relationships and delivering training in negotiation, finance and cost improvement and spends his time now in semi-retirement, running his first aid training business and hypnotherapy practice.

Explaining how he sees the role, he anticipates something of a juggling act. 'I want to ensure we spend our funds effectively across the needs of MREW as a collective — and effective purchasing doesn't have to mean 'one size fits all'. It's also important to understand the needs of the teams and categorise their requirements. Effective purchasing means different things to different people!

'I hope to be the voice of experience, representing our commercial interests in the procurement space, which might entail negotiating on behalf of the collective on a range of topics. I'd like to develop an online catalogue as an additional guide for teams and also training modules for equipment officers, operations groups or stakeholders in how to negotiate better deals in terms of cost, quality and delivery — particularly on major expense items.'

These are just some of Davie's initial thoughts but he's well aware everyone will have their own ideas. If you do,' he says, 'let's hear them!' You can email Davie on [procurement@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:procurement@mountain.rescue.org.uk).

## EQUIPMENT UPDATE

RICHARD TERRELL

You should by now have had a new equipment officer, but I am continuing in the short term — hopefully, a successor will be in place before November when I really have to go!

● We now have confirmation that the following stretchers are authorised for winning: Bell Mk2, Bell Mk3, Bell Tangent, MacInnes Mk6, Slix 100, SAR Alpin Lite (both the cave and mountain rescue versions), the Tyromont rescue bag and the Ferno Titan.

I have also received approval for the following winching strops produced by both SAR Products and Lyon Equipment. The approved strops are the ST007 1.2m adjustable stretcher lifting slings, ST016 2m adjustable stretcher lifting slings and ST008 1.2m adjustable basket stretcher lifting slings. Lyon have produced 4-point lift bridles for the Bell Mk2, Mk3 and the Split Tangent.

There is also an approved Lyon Equipment six-point wire lifting bridle for MacInnes stretchers.

Can I take this opportunity to remind teams that inspection and maintenance of the stretchers and winching strops must be carried out as per the manufacturer's instructions and logged as part of the team's equipment checking process. This paperwork must be available for audit purposes and kept with team records, and inspections must be carried out by a competent person.

● On the subject of Bristow, MREW will be closing the Bolle safety glasses deal at the end of July but we hope to negotiate a deal whereby

teams can get extra supply for new members direct, at the same discounts.

● As this year's NHS grant has been cut by half — and I have been informed that the grant will not be made to us next year — it was decided at the equipment committee meeting in May to spend the money on stocking up on vacmats and cas bags.

● Finally, we have also obtained seventeen ex-RAF Bell stretchers which are now all allocated to teams.

## GOVERNMENT FUNDING UPDATE

£160,000 has been allocated to MREW. The largest portion of the budget has been allocated to training (£63k), including equipment (PPE), incident management, media skills, medical, party leader and search management courses, Sarman MX and water training as well as the development of Moodle and the National Training Day. A sum of £15k has been set aside for eye protection (for use with Bristow helicopters) and a further £35k for refurbishing Bell stretchers. Around £5k has been allocated for the rebranding and any necessary repairs to the water kit given to the organisation by AASORT — the intention is to re-badge this as appropriate and supplied to the regions for use as shared training kit. Not included in the scope of this year's government grant are helo strops, two per team, which are to be paid for by teams, and a further £33k from LIBOR towards the off-road driving instructor course.

## online

### NEW TO THE MEMBERS AREA

**EQUIPMENT:** BELL MOUNTAIN RESCUE STRETCHER BRISTOW MANUAL V1

**EQUIPMENT:** BELL SERVICE AND 100 RESCUE DETAIL

**MEDICAL:** MREW MEDICAL RECORDS GUIDELINE ON HOW TO COMPLETE AND STORE CLINICAL INFORMATION.

Designed to put in place a safe system of working for MREW and to clarify the issues around clinical records. It provides support for members by describing good practice and gives practical advice on how that can be achieved.

**MEDICAL:** MEDICAL SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES NOVEMBER 2014 (AGREED)

A summary and critique of thermometers and their use in the MR environment.

**WATER:** WATER OFFICER 6 MONTHLY REPORT MAY 2015

MREW PR consultant and media trainer **Sally Seed** looks at an aspect of media coverage from the past few months and suggests things to be learnt for future media relations.

## Damage limitation, media hassles and when to say 'No'

Thanks to two Richards who got in touch when I appealed for media topics via the MREW Facebook group back in May. Rich Terrell of Central Beacons MRT suggested when to say 'No' to an interview request while Richard Warren, chairman of LDSAMRA and a member of Wasdale MRT referred to his recent experience where a constructive radio interview was 'adapted' to fit a political agenda in a national newspaper.

The adage about all publicity being good publicity isn't always the case — especially if it can spoil relationships with partner organisations, misinform the public or show mountain rescue in a poor light.

To take Rich's point first — is there a time to say 'No' to an interview? I'd certainly recommend putting it off rather than only saying 'No comment', but it is worth looking at the question in more detail.

Firstly, timing. Teams are quite right to say 'No' to an interview if they are aware of facts not yet in the public domain and that need to be confirmed and communicated to individuals first. For instance, in the case of a fatality or serious injury, it might be more of an 'I can't tell you yet', rather than a straight 'No', but beware of digging yourself a hole.

Recently a persistent journalist had picked up on what he saw as a delay in announcing the name of a casualty. There were perfectly good reasons for the delay — especially as it turned out to be a fatality — but he rang me to fish. I could honestly say that I didn't know the name but then the journalist threw in the possibility that it 'must be someone famous like Chris Bonington'. Could I say it absolutely wasn't when I'd just said I didn't know who it was? Thankfully, I could — the information in the public domain mentioned '69 years of age' and, with apologies to Sir Chris, he's a little older than that. But it felt like a close one!

Secondly, should you say 'No'? It may not be appropriate for you to talk when you know that another agency, team or organisation is either dealing with it already as the media lead or is preparing a statement. Jumping in with your own thoughts and speculations before the planned response is agreed can cause all sorts of problems. A journalist should accept this kind of 'No', especially if you can refer him or her to those in a better position to comment.

A final aspect to consider is the advantage of saying 'Yes', even to an interview that doesn't seem to have much value to the team. That may be true but it is still a chance to get to know the journalist better. You never know where they might be working in five years time and, even if they don't move on, you might need that relationship in future.

However, I think the example that Rich had in mind was an approach from a weekly women's magazine with a reputation for drama and shock headlines. In that context, I think MR needs to be careful and considered. If there are risks that people will be named and situations used in a way that's inappropriate or inaccurate, saying 'No' from the outset might be a reasonable option. Just be careful to say it in a way that burns no bridges and recognises what could be perfectly reasonable interest in a story.

Richard Warren's situation is a bit different as it started out as a perfectly reasonable and constructive radio interview ahead of Easter about rescue statistics. The reporter had spoken to Richard in the past (he'd moved on from Cumbrian local to national BBC radio), he knew a bit about MR activities and the radio piece itself went well.

The problem came with a couple of comments about the number of searches in the stats and whether the police were relying on volunteers more than ever. Put into a very different pre-election context by a national newspaper journalist, these same comments seemed to be criticising one of MR's key emergency service partners and making a political point.

'The mainly positive radio interview was turned into a negative for the police in the run up to the elections,' says Richard. 'It caused me some grief and required a fair bit of damage limitation over the Easter weekend.' Could it have been avoided? Not easily — and I don't think the risk of an occasional piece written with an agenda like this should stop MR spokespeople from taking most media opportunities when they arise — but there are maybe a few lessons.

• **Have someone you know listening in if you do a telephone interview** — something you say might ring alarm bells as they listen and there could be a chance (especially in a recorded interview) for you to have another go at answering that question without including any ambiguous comment.

• **Consider doing broadcast interviews live** — the downside is you might say something wrong but, if you're well-prepared, what you say is what gets broadcast — no edits after the interview that shift the emphasis or change the sense, however well intended.

• **Don't think chip paper, think Google** — it used to be said that today's news would be tomorrow's chip paper so don't worry too much. That's no longer true. Articles stay online for years and can be searched out and resurrected through the delights of Google et al. That's not a reason to refuse an interview, but every reason to plan your messages, consider your answers and not say anything that you wouldn't want to see in print.

• **Act local, think national** — if you're approached to give an interview by a freelance or a national journalist, let the MREW press team know so that they can make you aware of any national aspects that may not be obvious and can also support on any internal communications to MREW Exec members.

• **Think local too** — when faced with a question that suddenly asks for speculation or for you to speak outside of your local remit, say so and explain then bridge to something local. There's nothing wrong with an answer along the lines of 'I don't really know what happened there but we had an example here recently. In that case....' Definitely don't make it up as you go along!

To sum up, there are only three answers to a question: 'I know and I can tell you', 'I know but I can't tell you' and 'I don't know' — anything else is speculation or it's just not the right time. And, while 'No comment' should always be avoided, there are times to say 'No'.

If you'd like to share a recent media experience — positive or otherwise — and the lessons from it, please get in touch with [sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk](mailto:sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk) or via [editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk). Thanks. ●



THERE ARE ONLY THREE ANSWERS TO A QUESTION: 'I KNOW AND I CAN TELL YOU', 'I KNOW BUT I CAN'T TELL YOU' AND 'I DON'T KNOW'. ANYTHING ELSE IS SPECULATION OR IT'S JUST NOT THE RIGHT TIME.



## INCIDENT REPORTING: PAST ENDEAVOURS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

**Rob Shepherd** took on the role of Statistics Officer after Ged stepped down in May. A Llanberis team member, he's keen to continue Ged's good work and develop the way we collect our information.

My motivation to apply was driven by a desire to modernise the mechanisms by which rescue data is generated and disseminated. Shortly after being offered the post, I had the pleasure of spending an afternoon in the company of Ged and his wife at their home in Carlisle.

Ged guided me through the processes, practices and software he has developed over the best part of two decades. I saw the beginnings of the national collective statistics endeavour, copies of old Lake District incident report booklets, generated in the days before the computer and offering the local audience comprehensive information on the accidents and searches that had taken place the previous year. These flimsy old booklets don't compare to the volume of information arising from the hundreds of incidents regions now deal with each year: well over a thousand for England and Wales.

The numbers of incidents has, of course, increased as the years have passed and teams have naturally risen

to the challenge operationally. The systems used to collect the information have also grown, from a modest stack of handwritten notes (or anecdotes retold over a pint, months after the fact), to a sophisticated database detailing tens of thousands of incidents and their associated records of casualties, missing persons, injuries and other data.

The work done by Ged during his tenure has been formidable. It may seem like a burdensome task for teams to perform that final task of writing up the job for the stats officer, but that data isn't just idly deposited in preparation for the quarterly report. It is constantly mined to provide answers to the myriad of 'How many?' queries from any number of stakeholders and press contacts. You'll see the use of regional and national stats peppered through the magazine. But it doesn't stop there.

This large corpus of records feeds into other bodies of work such as the missing person behaviour handbook, a vital tool in performing a search. If not

for historic information, these wouldn't exist. It's at those times, when the derived works are put to use to locate the misper or apply an advancement in medical treatment to the injured, that those extra few minutes completing a report shows its true worth.

In addition to collecting and collating incident records, I plan to use my own skills and experiences in the realm of software development to develop a series of online tools to make the recording of incidents quicker and easier for teams. The use of these now-commonplace technologies will make accessing and reporting on the datasets (at team, regional and national level) much easier and quicker too.

These developments will need plenty of testers and I hope to attract some early adopters from a wide variety of teams. I welcome anybody who wishes to help in shaping the future of MREW incident recording to get in touch and feed in their ideas via [statisticsofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:statisticsofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk). ●

## WATER CONFERENCE

The conference is set to take place in the **Peak District** on **Saturday 3 October** with a number of speakers already confirmed in the programme.

- Professor Mike Tipton:** Professor in Human & Applied Psychology.
- Malcolm Weatherall:** Met Office adviser
- Alex Hanson:** CFOA Inland Water, Flood & Unstable Ground Technical Response Group
- Lorna Dennison-Wilkins:** Sussex Police Specialist Search Unit
- Matt Ward:** Consultant Paramedic
- Alan Heath:** ACPO POLSA Trainer, Search Techniques
- Josip Granic:** Head of water and flood rescue, Croatian MRS during the floods of 2014.

**Cost: £40 pp for MREW team members. £60 pp for non-MREW personnel.**

To book, go to [mountain.rescue.org.uk/shop/training](http://mountain.rescue.org.uk/shop/training).

Places on a first come first served basis.



Water training © Paul Burke.

How to get in touch with not just the officers and trustees but also some of the key specialist advisers who assist in running the organisation: producing the magazine, maximising PR opportunities, developing and maintaining SARCALL and securing insurance cover on your behalf.

# who?

## your management team



### CHAIRMAN: MIKE FRANCE

[chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Represents mountain rescue with Government, the emergency services, other SAR organisations and The Princes' Charities Forum. A member of Woodhead MRT.



### VICE CHAIRMAN: MIKE MARGESON

[vice-chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:vice-chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Works on operations and governance, supporting the officers in their roles. Currently developing a peer review process. Team leader of Duddon and Furness MRT.



### ACTING SECRETARY: DAVE CLOSE

[secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk) or [assistant-secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:assistant-secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Dave has temporarily stepped into the secretary role, acting as an interface between teams, regions and the MREW management team. He is a member of Dartmoor SRT (Ashburton).



### FINANCIAL DIRECTOR: PENNY BROCKMAN

[treasurer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Penny continues in the role in lieu of a new appointment. She manages MREW finances and the administration of grant monies and continues to review the financial systems. Penny is team leader of Central Beacons MRT.



### MEDICAL: MIKE GREENE

[medicalofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:medicalofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Represents mountain rescue in medical matters to the Government, the emergency services and IKAR, and maintains the morphine licence. Mike is a member of Wasdale MRT.



### PRESS OFFICER: ANDY SIMPSON

[pressofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:pressofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Deals with the press, TV and radio, and supports teams in their own publicity, chairs the communication group (PISC) and is also chairman of Rossendale & Pendle MRT.  
Vice chair: Judy Whiteside: [editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk)



### VEHICLES: DARYL GARFIELD

[vehiclesofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:vehiclesofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Works with the police, Government and teams in all matters 'vehicles'. A member of Penrith MRT.  
Vice chair: Paul Smethurst: [smethyp@gmail.com](mailto:smethyp@gmail.com)



### WATER: ANDY LEE

[waterofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:waterofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Works to establish the necessary guidance and standards to ensure the safety of members in a water environment. Andy is a member of Edale MRT.



### ICT: MARK LEWIS

[ictofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:ictofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Develops comms technology across mountain rescue. Mark is a member of Western Beacons MRT.  
Vice chair: Iain Nicholson: [iain@sardogs.org.uk](mailto:iain@sardogs.org.uk)



### EQUIPMENT: RICHARD TERRELL

[equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Richard continues in the role until November, in lieu of a new appointment, liaising with suppliers and manufacturers. Rich is a member of Central Beacons MRT.  
Vice chair: Ray Griffiths: [raygriff@btinternet.com](mailto:raygriff@btinternet.com)



### FUNDRAISING: NEIL HAYTER

[fundraisingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:fundraisingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Develops revenue opportunities and sponsorship deals to benefit all teams. A member of Edale MRT, Neil also oversees the MREW social media presence.  
Vice chair: Bill Whitehouse: [billrhw@aol.com](mailto:billrhw@aol.com)



### TRAINING OFFICER: AL READ

[trainingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:trainingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Develops training and guidelines for team members at all levels across a range of disciplines. Al is a member of Ogwen Valley MRO.  
Vice chair: Tim Cain: [tim@timcainleadership.co.uk](mailto:tim@timcainleadership.co.uk)



### BCRC: BILL WHITEHOUSE

[brcr@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:brcr@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
As chairman of BCRC, Bill represents the interest of cave rescue and supports the management team. He is also a trustee of the Benevolent Fund.

## internal trustees



### MREW CHAIRMAN: MIKE FRANCE

[chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Part of Mike's remit as MREW chairman is to represent the interests of the organisation at trustee meetings, to ensure the smooth running and continued governance of the organisation.



### SHIRLEY PRIESTLEY

[shirley.priestley@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:shirley.priestley@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Shirley has been a member of the Scarborough and Ryedale MRT for 24 years, during which time she has undertaken a variety of roles at all levels. She is also treasurer of the Benevolent Fund.



### MARK HODGSON

[mark.hodgson@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:mark.hodgson@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Mark has a wealth of mountain rescue experience, with one of the busiest teams (Keswick MRT), and an impressive attendance record over many years. Team leader for twenty years, he stood down in 2013 but continues to be involved with rescues.



### CHAIR OF TRUSTEES: PAUL AMOS

[paul.amos@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:paul.amos@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
An Emergency Management and Leadership Development consultant, Paul also lectures on field operations at Coventry University and teaches flood rescue management at strategic level. He was with Hereford and Worcester FRS for fifteen years.



### STEVE WOOD

[steve.wood@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:steve.wood@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Steve is well known within the SAR community through his work at Mapyx Limited which has long been a supporter of all charitable rescue organisations.



### PHIL PAPARD

[philip.papard@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:philip.papard@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Phil has been a member of the Cave Rescue Organisation for over forty years, serving as controller, training officer and chairman. He retired as Principal Inspector in the HSE in 2012, after 25 years.



### PETER DYMOND

[peter.dymond@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:peter.dymond@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Peter's professional background is with the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) and the Coastguard Rescue Service, the volunteer emergency response arm of the MCA.

### PRESIDENT: PETER BELL

[president@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:president@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

### VICE PRESIDENTS: TONY JONES & PETER HOWELLS

## external trustees



### STATISTICS: ROB SHEPHERD

[statisticsofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:statisticsofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Rob takes over from Ged Feeny. He will continue to collect and collate incident information from the teams but he's also got some new ideas for the future. A member of Llanberis MRT and North Wales CRO, he is also involved with SARDA Wales.



### PROCUREMENT OFFICER: DAVIE THOMPSON

[procurementofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:procurementofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Davie will be looking to establish an effective purchasing policy, including an online catalogue and training modules in how to negotiate better deals at team level. He is a member of Swaledale MRT.

## specialist advisers



### EDITOR: JUDY WHITESIDE

[editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Provides design and editorial services for the magazine. Outside her role as editor, she assists in a number of areas in communication, publications and marketing and supports the fundraising group. Judy is also secretary of the Benevolent Fund.



### INSURANCE: NEIL WOODHEAD

[insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Woodie is a member of Kinder MRT and also chairman of the Benevolent Fund. He is consulted by the management team and other specialist advisers on insurance matters, helping to manage the insurances we have in place. He will also offer basic help and assistance to teams with their general queries.



### SAR-H: JOHN HULSE

[SAR-H@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:SAR-H@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
The creator of SARCALL and a team leader of the Ogwen Valley MRO, John continues to lead on the SAR-H migration process.



### PR SUPPORT: SALLY SEED

[sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk](mailto:sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk)  
Supports Andy Simpson and Judy Whiteside in their roles and provides PR advice and support to MREW and teams where required, seeking to improve communication both internally and externally. Sally also helps deliver media skills training.



...turn to page 44 for BCRC contacts





## NEW BASES GALORE: FOR ROSSENDALE AND PENDLE IN BURNLEY...

At an open day in April, the team's brand new base was officially opened by former team leaders Dave Barrington and Peter Durst, who spoke about how the team has grown and developed since fundraising had begun, thirty years before.

'It's thanks to the hard work and commitment of team members, past and present, said chairman Andy Simpson, and the kind

donations from members of the public over this period that we've been able to make this purchase, which will supplement our Haslingden base.

'This new base gives us a secure environment to house equipment and vehicles, and a larger training area to keep our skills up to date and improve our response times to the northern part of our operating area.'

## ...AND HOLME VALLEY IN MARSDEN

The Holme Valley team also hosted an official opening ceremony for its new headquarters building in Marsden in April.

The day marked the culmination of many years of fundraising and work on the part of team members to secure a permanent home. The Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire performed the opening ceremony.

In early June, the team held a dinner to celebrate fifty years 'in business', attended by team

members past and present, including eight of the founding members. Long service certificates were also presented to various current members, for landmark periods of volunteer service, ranging from ten to forty years.

This has proved to be a seminal year for Holme Valley and a new mini-documentary about the team, it's 50th anniversary and the purchase of the new HQ is available at <http://bit.ly/1JCDQLh>.



## LONG SERVICE AWARDS IN BOWLAND

Peter Bell presented the MREW certificates in April.

Left to right: Jack Foley (40 years) was team treasurer for 24+ years, after taking on the role pro tem; Andy Binstead (25 years), current DTL; Crispin Myerscough (40 years) team chairman for fourteen years and currently team secretary.



## LAKE DISTRICT

### QUILTING AND KNITTING FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Thanks to the creative efforts of their local quilting and knitting group, Kirkby Stephen team received a £476 donation in April. The cash came from a quilting and knitting exhibition at the King's Arms in Kirkby Stephen. Treasurer Peter Miller thanked the group on the team's behalf. Denise Bryan, the team's fundraising officer said, 'There was some fabulous, skilled work on display and members of the group were on hand to explain the craft involved. We feel very lucky to be the recipients of the Quitters' generosity.'



Left to right: Peter Miller, Sue Bradley from the Quitters and Denise Bryan.

## PEAK DISTRICT

### OLDHAM TEAM MEMBERS HELP OUT WITH MOORLAND FIRE

Team members helped out when fire spread around the Pots and Pans area. The fire started around 2.00pm and quickly spread across dry moorland from Greenfield towards Uppermill. Twenty-five firefighters were helped by the team, RSPB and the National Trust.



### WARWICK DAVIES ESCAPES TO DERBY FOR A WEEKEND OF FUN

Life certainly wasn't too short for comedian Warwick Davis — thanks to Derby team members who 'rescued' him from what could have been a rather tricky spot on a Cromford cliff face. The big movie star, who's acting credits include Return of the Jedi, Harry Potter and Willow, and the TV sitcom Life's Too Short, was visiting the Dales with his family to film an episode of his 'Weekend Escapes' series. First stop was the Peaks

and Dales, where he managed to get stranded forty foot up a pole before the team stepped in to rescue him.

Kevin Corcoran, the team's press officer, said, 'Warwick was a real trooper, even though the filming had overrun and he was very tired. He was up for anything and such a great guy. I've been a big fan of Warwick's work, especially Life's Too Short. He always comes across as a really good guy when you see him on the television and I'm really pleased to say that's exactly what he was like in real life.'

## NORTH EAST

### ARCHBISHOP OF YORK DROPS IN TO CLEVELAND

'It was one of the more unusual phone calls, during my time as team secretary,' says Pete Mounsey. 'It was Julie, the bishop's secretary, asking if John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York, could visit us during his tour of the Cleveland area. Do what you like with him, he'll be staying about an hour were her instructions. But what do you do with an archbishop?'

'The plan was that he would call on us between visiting a college in Redcar and travelling to the Bishop of Whitby's palace on the outskirts of Middlesbrough. In true



mountain rescue team fashion we immediately came up with the idea that he would appreciate food and drink followed by a tour of the base showing the equipment we



### QUALITY KIT AND EXPERT ADVICE YOU CAN TRUST

We understand the importance of kit you can rely on, which is why each of our products is carefully selected and tested. Our expert trained staff can help you to pick the best kit for your next trip. They share your passion for the outdoors so you can trust their free, impartial advice.

**FREE BOOT FITTING:** There are many factors to consider when choosing the right pair of boots. Our staff will examine your feet, take detailed measurements, discuss your choice of socks and consider any issues which may have caused you discomfort in the past. Combining their measurements and checks with your feedback, they can make any necessary adjustments to the fit of the boots before you take them. If you need to bring them back for further tweaking, feel free — it's all part of the service.

**FREE RUCKSACK FITTING:** Everybody's a different shape, so the layout of shoulder straps, the hip belt and chest straps needs to be right for you. We can make simple adjustments so your rucksack sits comfortably and disperses weight evenly. Most packs will be comfortable when empty, so once we've measured your back and adjusted the bag, we'll try it on you with weight in. We recommend you load it up again at home to try it out and you're very welcome to bring it back in for fine tuning.

**CONTACT YOUR LOCAL STORE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND DON'T FORGET, WE OFFER 20% DISCOUNT\* FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE MEMBERS IN STORE AND ONLINE. STORES NATIONWIDE. COTSWOLDOUTDOOR.COM \*T&Cs APPLY. OFFER EXPIRES 31.12.15.**



Above: The bishop checks out the team's water equipment © Cleveland MRT.

PAGE 19 >

carry and the role mountain rescue teams up and down the country carry out!

'Using the visit to launch our fiftieth anniversary by the ceremonial cutting of a birthday cake seemed a good idea and, usefully, we have a fully-trained pastry chef on the team. With a phone call to York, he soon discovered that the archbishop appreciated rich fruit cake and local produce. The result was a cake in the shape of a local rock face, complete with a Land Rover and Sea King — all served in true Yorkshire fashion with cheese. Wensleydale, of course.

'With Archbishop Sentamu were the Bishop of Whitby, Paul Ferguson and the archbishop's chaplain, Richard Caraw.'

## NORTH WALES ANNIVERSARY ANTICS CONTINUE APACE IN THE OGWEN VALLEY

April and May saw two very different events to celebrate fifty years of rescues for the Ogwen Valley MRO. The first of these was the Tryfan Skylight. John Rowell, who took the spectacular images of the event in April, describes how it all came about.

'The team is well known to us in the Moel Siabod café, which hosts our photographic gallery 'Soul of Snowdonia'. We regularly raise funds for the team with talks, quiz nights and by donating prints. A few months ago, team member Jim Langley told me he had a vision to place people with head torches on the ridge of Tryfan, one of Britain's most recognisable mountains. His inspiration was a YouTube clip of a similar project on the Matterhorn. Did I think it feasible and would I organise the photography? It was yes on both counts.



Top: Tryfan as you've never seen it before. Left: Organiser Jim Langley (right) and fellow team member Geraint Jones celebrate a spectacular success © John Rowell.

'With two weeks to go, we went for a dummy run. Two people went onto the ridge while we went to one of the designated places we'd decided to shoot from. Our first problem was that, although they thought they were on the ridge, they weren't — they were at least five metres below. Another quite unforeseen problem was that Warner Brothers was making a movie in the valley and large areas were closed off! We went to see them in a mountain rescue vehicle and, thankfully, this seemed to exempt us from any closures. The dummy run had proved a worthwhile exercise. Jim worked out a strategy to ensure that people were actually on the ridge and the other point to come from it was the decision that each team would carry a powerful rescue torch so that all light sources would not be the same size.

'As the event was nearly on us, a team was charged with cooking a stew for over a hundred hungry people. It was agreed that a final decision would be made on the Wednesday prior to the event, based on weather forecasts for the area. The original date was a goer. Texts went out to all participants to arrive at Oggi base at 5.30pm for a briefing at six, before the groups were despatched onto the mountain at their allotted time.

'When we arrived, it was overcast and cold with a promise of clearing skies around dusk. There was intense excitement as people began to arrive, all keen to make Jim's vision happen and be involved in something that would be very special. At the briefing, Jim was quite emotional — this had

taken months of organising and now it was about to happen.

'Petzl provided torches for anyone who wanted a more powerful one. The first groups began to leave and the skies began to clear. We made our way to our selected shooting point, nervous but excited. The plan was to shoot in three phases at 8.30pm, 8.45pm and 9.00pm. All participants were asked to stand pointing their head torches to the Land Rover headlights after the first flare went off and to make sure they could see clear sky behind them. Reports began to filter in that they were experiencing a fantastic sunset to the west and all were in good spirits. Then, problems... Jim set off the flare, the lights lit up the mountain and the smoke engulfed us, ruining our shots!

'Radio contact was made asking people to continue to point their head torches at us and we were blown away by the sight in front of us. Then, a frenzy of activity as we captured what would be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. As promised, the Sea King came into view and sat just above Adam and Eve, the two upright plinths that mark the top of the mountain. The light show could be seen for miles around. People were stopping their cars on the A5 to take pictures. We knew from the banter that people were enjoying it.

'As we returned to base, teams started to filter in, huge smiles on their faces. It was dark now and streams of head torches were making their way down the mountain. Without doubt, it was a huge success. I was privileged to be part of it and an evening I will never forget.'

Prints and cards of the images are available in the gallery with all proceeds going to the team, so if you're passing Moel Siabod, why not drop in and have a look?

Below: RAF Sea King pops over to join the fun © John Rowell.



## EXTREME DINING, OGWEN STYLE

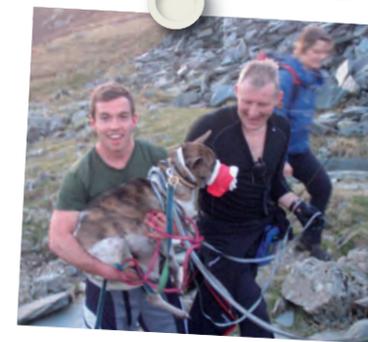
Barely a month later, team members were back up the hill again, this time dressed in their finery for an extreme dining experience. About thirty team members, along with wives and partners, carried everything to the 918m summit for the black-tie event. And, lest anyone think they were off-duty, there was even a brief interlude to carry out a rescue.

A call came in that a local man in his fifties and part of a well-organised hillwalking

group, had pulled a leg muscle whilst descending the South Ridge. He had tried to continue but found the pain too great so OVMRO was called. A hasty party was preparing to deploy when the familiar yellow Sea King flew into the valley and winched the casualty and his partner from the mountainside to deposit them at Oggi base.

PAGE 23 >

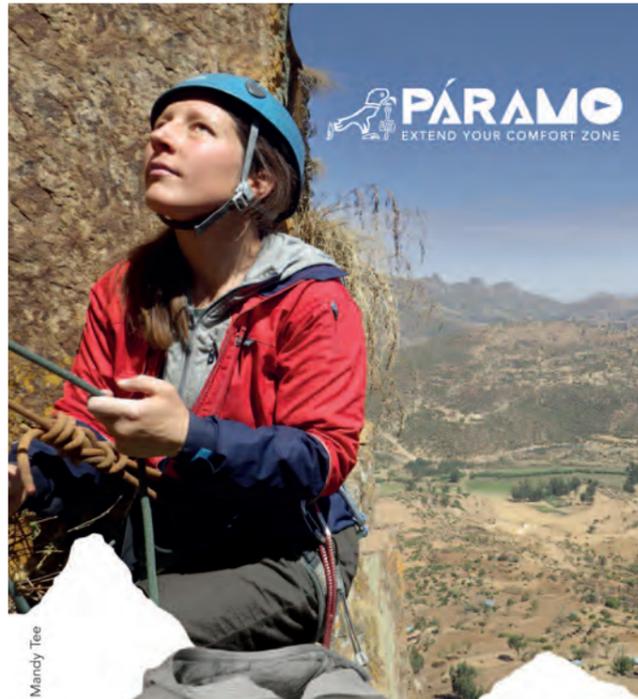
## LAKE DISTRICT



## TIGER ON THE LOOSE CAUSES HAVOC ON HAYSTACKS

Team members knew it was a Mr Bailey. What they didn't realise was that this was Mr Bill Bailey of Never Mind the Buzzcocks fame. As it turned out, Tiger had already jumped from his ledge and headed for the fells by the time the team arrived. Two hours and one team leader with a bitten hand later, Tiger was finally reunited (suitably muzzled) with his owner. A delighted Bill Bailey has now pledged to hold a special show in aid of all the Lake District teams, as a thank you. 'They did such a fantastic job, I was very impressed with them and their operation. I am very grateful to them for responding the way they did'.

When Cockermouth team got the call to rescue a missing Tiger with a sore snout, close to Buttermere, they could hardly have imagined they'd be running around for two hours trying to capture Bill Bailey's dog.



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Photo: Mandy Tee



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## A PERSONAL PLEA FROM NICK BROWN, FOUNDER OF NIKWAX: PLEASE HELP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST PFC POLLUTION!



**What are PFCs?** Perfluorinated compounds (PFCs) are chemicals that combine carbon and fluorine and are widely used to provide water repellence on outdoor clothing. They're also found in food packaging, carpets and many household chemicals. **PFCs are persistent and can be very toxic** Damaging effects to health have been highlighted within many scientific studies, but the public are generally unaware of the risks.

**Who is fighting against this PFC pollution?** Greenpeace has taken the lead and recognised that textile manufacture is creating terrible water pollution around the world, including PFC pollution, and it is their intention to do something about it. To that end, they created their Detox campaign. Read more on this at [greenpeace.org/detox](http://greenpeace.org/detox)

**Who does NOT use PFCs in outdoor clothing?** Paramo is the only UK outdoor brand to have excluded PFC water repellent treatments from their production.

**Who does not use PFCs in care products?** Nikwax is the only established outdoor brand never to have used PFCs in their products. **Does the Bluesign label on some outdoor clothing mean PFC-free?** The Bluesign standard does not require the elimination of PFCs. **How can I learn more?** Earlier this year Nikwax held a conference with Greenpeace to highlight and explain the problem of PFC pollution in the outdoor industry. You can watch the video at [www.nikwax.com/PFCconference](http://www.nikwax.com/PFCconference).

Please spread the word about this issue so we can protect our environment and continue to enjoy the great outdoors!

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## PAGE 21 >

'Meanwhile,' explains Chris Lloyd, 'the rest of the casualty's party made their way down the mountain, passing heavily laden mountain rescue troops heading up Tryfan carrying tables, chairs, stoves and dinner!'

Staff from the Conwy Falls Café prepared a slap-up meal of Welsh lamb with fresh vegetables, mint sauce and gravy followed by an 'Ogwen Mess' of fresh summer fruits, and a cheese course complete with fresh grapes and coffee with personalised after-dinner mints, made by a local confectioner with the outline of Tryfan on their face.

'Being a formal dinner, the Ogwen lot were in black tie and the RAF chaps were in mess dress, complete with medals. The ladies wore long dresses — though they did need a fleece or two in the cool breeze.

'A couple of hillwalkers were surprised to top out on the evening summit, to find a formal dinner party in swing. They were welcomed to join in the feast and liquid refreshment.

'After prizes for the most imaginative table, complete with candelabra, the tables were cleared and packed up once more. It was the end of the day, the end of dinner and [with the ending of our long relationship with RAF helicopters], the end of an era.'

Below: RAF SAR and Ogwen team members, all scrubbed up and for a spot of extreme dining © Ogwen Valley MRO.



Above and left: Damage caused by vandals to Llanberis team vehicles © Llanberis MRT.

## STOLEN KIT AND DAMAGED VEHICLES STUN TEAM MEMBERS

North East Wales Search and Rescue made a desperate appeal in May, when their team doctor Tom Beach had his vehicle broken into and a rucksack containing £1,300-worth of equipment stolen, just hours after he had taken part in a rescue on Moel Famau. 'It was obvious that the red Grivel 45l rucksack, first aid kit and their contents belong to a member of a mountain rescue team,' said Becky Waudby. 'While some of the items are standard things you'd find in any rucksack, such as a climbing harness and head torch, others are clearly labelled with mountain rescue livery, including Munro and Fitzroy jackets and a Petzl helmet.'



Above: NEWSAR team members in action on Moel Famau © NEWSAR.

Despite the appeal, the kit was never returned, presenting the team with the prospect of replacing it with team funds already 'earmarked for other items'. They

also spoke of their gratitude at the public response to their news, as donations to the team rose sharply soon afterwards.

If theft of a rucksack wasn't bad enough, over in Llanberis, vandals surpassed themselves in early June, effectively putting one of the busiest teams in the country out of action thanks to three damaged vehicles. Two of the team's Land Rovers and another vehicle were vandalised while parked at the rescue base in Nant Peris.

Only days before, team members had been praised for their exceptional bravery when they put their own lives at risk to save swimmers in difficulty during an incident in which two men died. How disheartening to then report that all three vehicles had been disabled after an attempted theft of the vehicle doors. The perpetrators also cut through a number of wiring looms in an attempt to disable the alarms.

However, once again, what happened next was an amazing response from so many people 'out there'. Within days, the team reported having received huge support: financial donations, parts, vehicles, repairs and time. A long list of thank yous includes Land Rover (locally and nationally), local garages, fellow mountain and cave rescue teams (both neighbouring and further afield), CCTV experts and many individuals.

North Wales Police offered vehicles and garaging and help with the press. And, needless to say, social media proved its worth in spreading the news. A still-growing list of those the team wishes to thank can be found on their Facebook page. 'Thank you,' they post, 'to everyone who has helped us remain operational. Thanks also to the many volunteer team members who gave up their time to fix the damage done and organise the logistics of further repairs.'



# Diary of an Editor

## Luddite at Large *Loosely translated as:* The Things I Do For Mountain Rescue



Judy W xx

## Facebook fury and website woes...

It's six (admittedly very long) months since we talked about all this but, working on the principle that we've since gathered new members with no knowledge of either the website or the Facebook group, and the occasional older member with no memory of their password, it's worth revisiting — with a few more observations flung in. So, here goes...

Facebook first. Most of you know me as the mag editor but, in my spare time, I'm also an admin on the closed group, along with Neil Hayter. Six months ago, we were talking about the edges getting blurred, with the group profile barely distinguishable from the average FB profile. Sorted that one but sadly the landscape appears to have shifted again — and not for the better. We now seem to be attracting the odd troll (sorry, but that's what they are), verbally attacking others in the group, derailing meaningful dialogue and seeking to steer our conversations to their point of view. Sadly too, they often seem to attract their like, eager and ready to pile in, safe behind their keyboards, and in the knowledge that the individuals they attack are unlikely to respond in kind. Indeed, what would be the point?

Thankfully, there are also a good number of people who actively try to defuse these situations through humour or by simply posting something else to push the drivel down the page.

I'd like to suggest that members of the group continue to defuse the power these trolls obviously believe they have, by ignoring their comments and continuing to discuss whatever is the grievance in hand in a reasoned, more articulate manner.

Why not simply delete them? Frankly I'd rather let people see them for what they are, although we DO have a social media policy in place (and yes, in this case, it's a policy), so there may be occasion when we feel the need to delete posts and block people. We certainly do it on the public page, when we feel a comment to be inappropriate, blasphemous or slanderous. We often receive requests from members to remove posts — from both the public and the private pages — so please continue to do that if you feel someone has overstepped the mark.

And if you've got a grievance, why not try picking up the phone and speaking to the people you have the grievance with?

There might be a risk that your viewpoint changes with a wider understanding of whatever issue it is that's bugging you, but hey, there might also be a chance that theirs does too.

To join the closed group, go to Facebook, find 'Mountain Rescue England and Wales Members', then click 'Ask to join'. I will ask you to confirm which team you are a member of, but beware. Depending on your privacy settings, my message to you may find itself marooned in your Facebook inbox in a folder labelled 'Others'.

We do get a number of non-eligible applicants who clearly don't read what the group is about before clicking on the 'join' thingie. So, if you do apply, first please check that you are still a team member, keep an eye on that 'Others' folder and be prepared to explain who you are. Any doubts, we'll check it out with the relevant team leader. Once you're in, join in. Share information, make comment, solicit advice or opinion... and watch out for passing trolls.

We'd also appreciate it if you kept an eye on the membership list. If you see someone in there who you think shouldn't be, let me know. We will remove them if appropriate.

Anyone can post and upload files, but please, if it's stuff that's really more suitable to your team page or personal profile — maybe think about leaving it there? And, as I said, the use of abusive language or defamatory comments is unacceptable. Inappropriate posts are removed and persistent offenders will be blocked.

Website next. I have it on good authority that whenever we publish instructions in how to access the members' bit, there's a distinct reduction in the number of 'lost passwords' out there, so here we go again.

Following the last article (those six long months ago) we had a bit of a cull, which upset some people — despite the fact they hadn't logged on for some years. Yes, years. At all. Since they first registered.

Perhaps they've been told to register with the area by their team and then never given it another thought? But if they've never logged on, they've certainly never downloaded any of the resources 'hidden' in there in plain sight of all who remember their password.

We also have a regular problem with 'team admins' leaving the team, taking with them their admin rights and passwords.

So, first things first, before you can do anything in the members' area, you must first be a team member (obvs), sign up to the site and then be approved.

Approvals are administered by a team 'admin' who has been delegated by his/her team to approve, block or delete his/her own team members as appropriate. If any team member is unsure who is their own team's delegated approver, I have a list of all the contacts — although this doesn't help much when someone has left the team in a hurry without transferring 'adminship'!

To register, go to the home page at mountain.rescue.org.uk. Click on 'Sign up', towards the foot of the left-hand navigation column, then 'Team Member Sign Up'.

Fill in the relevant boxes and complete the Captcha code, then click 'Submit'. You must enter your full name here — it is this and not your log-in username that's displayed on forum postings, should you dare to venture there. The full name is also relevant for identification — signing up as 'hunkymonkey' might seem cool but your team admin won't know who you are and cannot approve you easily (apologies if there is actually a 'hunkymonkey' out there. I expect you're gorgeous).

An email will be sent to your team contact, informing them that you've signed up and inviting them to either approve or block your application. Once approved, you will receive an email with a gobbledegook username and password. You can now log in using this username and password. Once in, there is a facility to change your password to something more personally memorable.

Downloading hardly needs explaining, but just in case: click on 'Download', to the left of the file in question, and watch magic happen.

And, incidentally, if you wish to search for something on the site, you MUST be logged in as a member for that search to cover the members area — because, by definition it's not for public viewing. You'd be amazed how often people complain that the search facility doesn't work, when all they needed to do is log in.

If you're an MREW officer, you can

upload documents to Resources but first, the web editor has to give you access. Then, all you have to do is log in as a member, go to Resources, then your own area folder. Click on 'Upload a new resource', fill the required fields, browse your computer for the relevant file, then click 'Submit'.

Now for the team admins... When a team member asks to join, you should receive an email showing their full name and including a link to the website.

Click on the link and/or sign in as a member and go to 'MREW Team Admin Area' then 'My Team Members', where you will find a list of team members existing and prospective. Click either Delete, Block or Approve. If a team member leaves, delete them. If they've simply moved teams, just email webeditor@mountain.rescue.org.uk and let us know.

As a team admin, you can update 'My Team Profile' with the team name, region, web address, phone number and email. But please be aware that whatever phone number you choose to put in here will be displayed publicly. If you don't want calls to a particular number during the working day, for example, probably best not to publish it.

The team admin can also transfer adminship to another person so, if you're about to leave the team, do this before you sever all contact. To make the change, go to 'Change Team Administrator' and select a new admin from the list of members displayed. You will lose your admin rights when you log off or shut down your web browser. Only one team member can be admin at any one time.

And, last but not least, LOST PASSWORD — thorny subject of many a frustrated email. Before you contact us, click on 'Forgotten Password'. You will receive an email with a new bit of gobbledegook — sign in using this and remember to clear your computer's cache of any previously stored password!

Hopefully that's covered most of the stuff which regularly bugs you. You can still download the original 'How to Guide to the Website' from the Members area — if only you could remember that password — just go to the 'Website' folder in 'Resources'. Happy browsing!



## LONGTOWN TEAM HORSE AROUND

The Abergavenny-based mountain rescue team became the subject of a four-page feature in a national equestrian magazine in May.

## SOUTH WALES

Team members took part in a photoshoot and feature for Horse magazine, to teach riders about the work of mountain rescue and how to stay safer while hacking. It was the idea of team member Marc Ashton, whose partner is a keen rider. Using her equestrian contacts, he arranged a training day in the Black Mountains, in the Brecon Beacons. Two riders brought their horses and acted as casualties for the day and a reporter and photographer from the magazine were on hand to record it all. Team leader Luke Lewis said, 'It was a bitterly cold day with the peaks covered in snow. The exercise simulated a rider falling from a horse and suffering suspected spinal injuries and a compound leg fracture. The difference between a riding accident and other call-outs is that members also need to deal with the injured rider's horse. The horse may also be injured, scared or restless at having to wait while its rider is treated. It was an excellent exercise for the team and enabled us to tell the reporter how mountain rescue works and also give safety advice to riders. And we have to give special mention to one of our casualties on the day who went above the call of duty by allowing us to cut off the leg of her jodhpurs to treat her 'broken' leg.' The feature appeared in the magazine's May edition. Jo Browne, the editor added, 'The feature gave readers an insight into who to call if they run into trouble in a remote area and offered useful safety tips. It's reassuring to know that if an accident should occur, such specialised teams are available to come to the aid of riders. What an amazing job they do.'



Above: Rachel Wesley, the 'casualty' rides on the left. No name for the other rider.

Left to right: Glyn Jones, a team doctor, 'casualty' Rachel Wesley and Steve Banner.

Images © Horse Magazine, courtesy of Jo Browne.



## AMAZING WHAT YOU FIND ON THOSE WELSH HILLS

One Aberdyfi team member happened on a baby Bristow helicopter sheltering amongst the rocks opposite Oggi base, during training in June. And, like all good naturalists, once he'd had a good look, he gently returned it to its natural habitat.

## NORTH WALES



## ADAPTIVE CONTROL

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## SOUTH WEST

### TEAM DONATE JACKETS TO NORTHANTS

Members of Exmoor SRT were pleased to be able to support Northamptonshire SRT by donating their outgoing jackets when they were being replaced. Although the outgoing jackets were of various ages they were still very serviceable.

Steve King, chairman of the Northants team, had visited Exmoor's base in South Molton while on a holiday a couple of years before. At the time, he was in the early days of setting up Northants SRT and was looking for ideas about team set-ups. 'Thank you,' wrote Steve, 'for the kind donation of your surplus jackets. These will be put to good use by team members who at present purchase a large proportion of their own clothing for operational use.'



## LAKE DISTRICT

### INNOVATION AWARD FOR LAKES TEAMS

Lakes teams were delighted to be announced as winners in this year's Cumbria Tourism Awards in June, at a glittering ceremony in the Castle Green Hotel in Kendal. The evening is a celebration of the very best of Cumbria's tourism industry.

There is an award category to suit everyone across Cumbria's vast and diverse range and this year the judges took the unusual step of deciding to award an outright winner in the Award for Innovation category. The award recognises the 'dedication and innovation of the Lake District Search and Mountain Rescue Association in the development and adoption of state-of-the-art technologies. These key technologies have been wholeheartedly embraced by Cumbrian mountain rescue teams and have greatly improved safety, speed of response and communication, benefitting Cumbrian residents and visitors alike.'

**Left to right:** Chris Brammall, the sculptor who produced the award (and whose father used to be a LAMRT member), Nick Owen team leader of Langdale Ambleside MRT and Sean Collins, a Canadian comedian.



## YORKSHIRE DALES

### CHRIS BAKER AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE, SIXTY-ONE YEARS ON

When Chris Baker joined the Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue Team he could never have envisaged he would still be in the team some sixty-one years later and that he might be considered to be amongst a rare breed of long-serving members of a mountain rescue team in the country.

Chris, from Grassington, joined way back in 1953 and, had it not been for getting his call up papers for National Service in the Army just as he was about to start training, he would have had a further two year's service. He went from basic army training straight out to Egypt at the height of the Suez crisis.

The team had planned a celebration dinner to mark his sixty years of service but it took over a year to pin him down to a date due to his many other Dales activities and his global travel adventures. For as well as his remarkable UWFRA service, he has also been an active member of Wharfedale Rugby Union Club as a player and official for some sixty-five years, as well as the local church choir, including twenty-six years as church warden.

The celebrations eventually took place at the Gamekeeper's Inn, Long Ashes, Threshfield where sixty members and retired members saw MREW president Peter Bell present Chris with his sixty-year certificate. In his address, Peter thanked Chris for his outstanding service and referred to him as the 'engine that every organisation needs to be successful'. A further presentation came from North Yorkshire Police.

During his time, Chris has served as team secretary, chairman and operations controller, and he currently holds the titles of company secretary and assistant treasurer. He has seen many changes, having joined the team in its infancy with a handful of volunteers, a stretcher, some hemp ropes, a first aid kit and many ex-WD items, to the team it is today with some eighty highly trained members using state-of-the-art equipment.

When asked why he joined, Chris (this most modest of men) stated that being so fortunate to live in the countryside belonging to a volunteer rescue team was a way of putting something back, adding that 'there are many highs and lows, of course, and even after all our experiences, nothing still prepares us for the tragedies we have to face, be it people or animals. The highs are the many, successful rescues and the great camaraderie and friendships you cannot buy. Everything is a team effort and even when we are not out on a rescue we practise, walk together and socialise'.

Image © Penrith MRT.



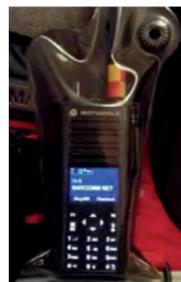
## JUNE: ISLAND SHEEP RESCUE

When a Lakeland sheep panicked and swam to an island while being gathered, the farmer and United Utilities were keen for its health and safe recovery. Penrith team members were called in, to work out a plan of action.

It was a simple plan: Five team members would paddle across to the island to gently encourage the sheep to a position where they could secure it in the boat. The hope was that it may be exhausted and therefore compliant. However, it was clearly far from exhausted and evaded all efforts to capture it, eventually leaping into the water and swimming back to shore. It was pretty evident it would get tired and waterlogged very quickly, so one team member used his advanced paddling techniques to hook a paddle under the sheep's horns and grab hold until they returned to shore. As soon as it was being towed, it became completely compliant and even seemed to enjoy the ride. Back on terra firma, it went straight to the nearest bushes and began eating, very soon making its way down to Mardale Head. But it didn't end there. Once the team had departed, the farmer went to pick up the sheep to take it back to the farm, whereupon it promptly jumped back in the water and swam back to the other side!

## 'COMMAND CANNOT CONTROL A BATTLE WITHOUT COMMUNICATION'

Wet radio sets that failed, garbled signals, different systems, messages that were not passed in time, or to the wrong person. There is nothing new in this, as the transcript above refers to the failed attack by British Commando units on targets in Dieppe in 1942. Today we can do better! No matter what the scenario. Sarcomm can provide a secure radio network for the volunteer SAR community, based upon tried and tested Motorola military spec equipment, which not only provides a reliable platform backed up by its own microwave links in most cases (which are themselves backed up by renewables) but offers a means of interoperability between participating groups. The current emergency services TETRA system is being replaced (starting the end of 2016) by a PDA data biased system based on a 4G network. As yet there is no provision for volunteer groups to have voice based communication to the blue light services over this system.



FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL CHRIS OR ADAM ON 0845 642 5337  
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## MREW PARTY LEADER COURSE RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND

**Date:** 27-29 November 2015 at Colomendy Centre for Outdoor Education, Loggerheads, Near Mold, Denbighshire, CH7 5LB  
**Cost:** £30:00 per delegate, including catering.

For the development of MREW/BCRC members who are managing or progressing into management of small parties on the hill/underground on operational call-outs. This is a centrally-run course that brings together MREW and BCRC leadership expertise to share good practice between teams and enhance team members skills in managing small parties on the hill or underground.

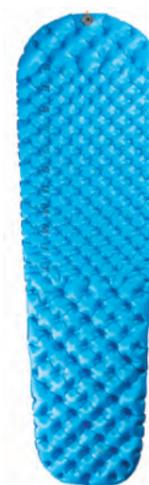
### Aims and objectives of the course:

To provide confidence and competence to operationally manage a small group of volunteers in a call-out situation. Includes:-

- Understanding human factors, motivation and performance
- Briefing and reporting, situational awareness and problem solving
- Understanding interoperability
- Understanding control of media and social media
- Dealing with fatalities and forensics
- Safety skills in an operational situation

**Note:** This course is subsidised 80% by the Government grant to Mountain Rescue England and Wales. For further details, contact: [Elaine.gilliland@gmail.com](mailto:Elaine.gilliland@gmail.com). TO BOOK go to the MREW online shop, then log in using the email address and password previously issued to the team to enable access to the discounted team price list.

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## Jan·Feb·Mar·2015

Lake District		Peninsula	
Kinder	13	Dartmoor Ashburton	2
Cockermouth	11	Dartmoor Okehampton	10
Coniston	1	Dartmoor Plymouth	5
Duddon and Furness	6	Dartmoor Tavistock	5
Kendal	6	Exmoor	1
Keswick	13	(Last quarter: 19)	23
Kirkby Stephen	13	(Last quarter: 111)	86
Langdale Ambleside	24		
Patterdale	2		
Penrith	2		
Wasdale	8		
(Last quarter: 51)	59		

Mid-Pennine		South Wales	
Bolton	14	Brecon	19
Calder Valley	8	Central Beacons	7
Rossendale & Pendle	2	Longtown	8
(Last quarter: 18)	24	Western Beacons	4
		(Last quarter: 28)	38

North East		Yorkshire Dales	
Cleveland	1	CRO	9
Scarborough & Ryedale	11	Upper Wharfedale	9
Swaledale	1	(Last quarter: 17)	18
(Last quarter: 47)	13		

North Wales		Search Dogs	
Aberdyfi	8	Lakes	1
Aberglaslyn	4	England	9
Llanberis	15	Wales	5
North East Wales	10	South Wales	3
Ogwen Valley	16	(Last quarter: 27)	18
South Snowdonia	5		
(Last quarter: 48)	58		

Peak District		RAF	
Buxton	14	Leeming	3
Derby	5	Valley	2
Edale	6	(Last quarter: 5)	5
Glossop	12	(Last quarter: 375)	342

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GEAR INSTITUTE BEST NEW GEAR OUTDOOR RETAILER SUMMER 2014

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It was back in 1965 when Hamish MacInnes first brought the idea of search dogs to Scotland, to help the mountain rescue teams find mountaineers that had been lost in snow avalanches. Many then were sceptical about using dogs to find lost people, but now dogs are as integral a part of mountain rescue as ropes, stretchers and first aid kit.

HAROLD BURROWS

Rather than just sit back and bathe in the good work of the search dogs, the National Search And Rescue Dog Association (NSARDA) kept on looking for new ways to use the search dogs to locate lost people, returning them back to their loved ones. After the work achieved by the search dogs at Lockerbie finding people in the urban setting, handlers discovered that with a little bit of extra training the dogs coped well.

NSARDA CONFERENCE 18-19 SEPTEMBER LANCS POLICE HQ, HUTTON

The police began to ask the search dogs to help in the urban areas, and the lowland search dog standard was developed. Handlers with the same thought process as Hamish began to consider that we needed different types of search dog for different types of searches.

For the urban areas, we soon found that a scent-specific trailing search dog was just what we all had been looking for. Led by Tom Middlemas and SARDA Wales, work began to develop a national standard for these dogs, and most teams will now have seen this type of search team in action. The ability of a scent specific search dog could cut in half the search area by giving the direction of travel of the lost person. At the same time, the drowned victim search dog was being set in motion by Neil Powell in SARDA Ireland North, and a national standard has now been developed here too.

Top: The first search dog course in Glencoe, 1965. Left to right: Kenny Mackenzie with Fran, Sandy Seabrook with Rory, Willie Elliot with Corrie and Catherine MacInnes with Rang and Tiki © Hamish MacInnes.

With all this development, the rest of the world began looking to NSARDA and the high standards the dogs were able to achieve. We had written standards for all the different types of search dogs deployed, and we train search dogs around the world with our international instructors.

Fifty years on from that small group of people led by Hamish, we continue to develop both as an organisation and in terms of the skills of the dog handler. Over the weekend 18-19 September 2015, we are holding a special conference where national and international speakers will talk about dog training and behaviour, from pup to adulthood. David Ryan will be talking about when things don't go to plan, and there will be practical sessions on the 'Foundation of a happy dog'.

Above: Harold Burrows with his dog © Harold Burrows.

The NSARDA Conference takes place at the Police HQ at Hutton. For more information and booking please go to the website at NSARDA.org.uk.

Dear editor



I was alarmed to see the website of my outdoor activity centre listed as a reference in an article on equipment failure due to poor staff training at an unnamed outdoor activity centre, [the BMC Technical report] in issue 51 of Mountain Rescue. Upon investigation I have found that the author of the report reprinted in edited form in the magazine had used a photograph copied from my centre website (without permission) to show a typical Postman's Walk obstacle. As this photo was not included in your version of the report but the reference was it may cause readers to believe that my centre was the one where poorly trained staff had an accident with an incorrectly constructed and operated (tape slings for cows tails!) ropes course.

I would be grateful if you could arrange to include in the next issue of Mountain Rescue a clarification stating that the edited version of the article did not include the photograph from my website and that there is no connection whatsoever between Kingsway Adventure Centre and whichever outdoor activity centre had the snapped rope incident.

Adam Hearn, Kingsway Centre



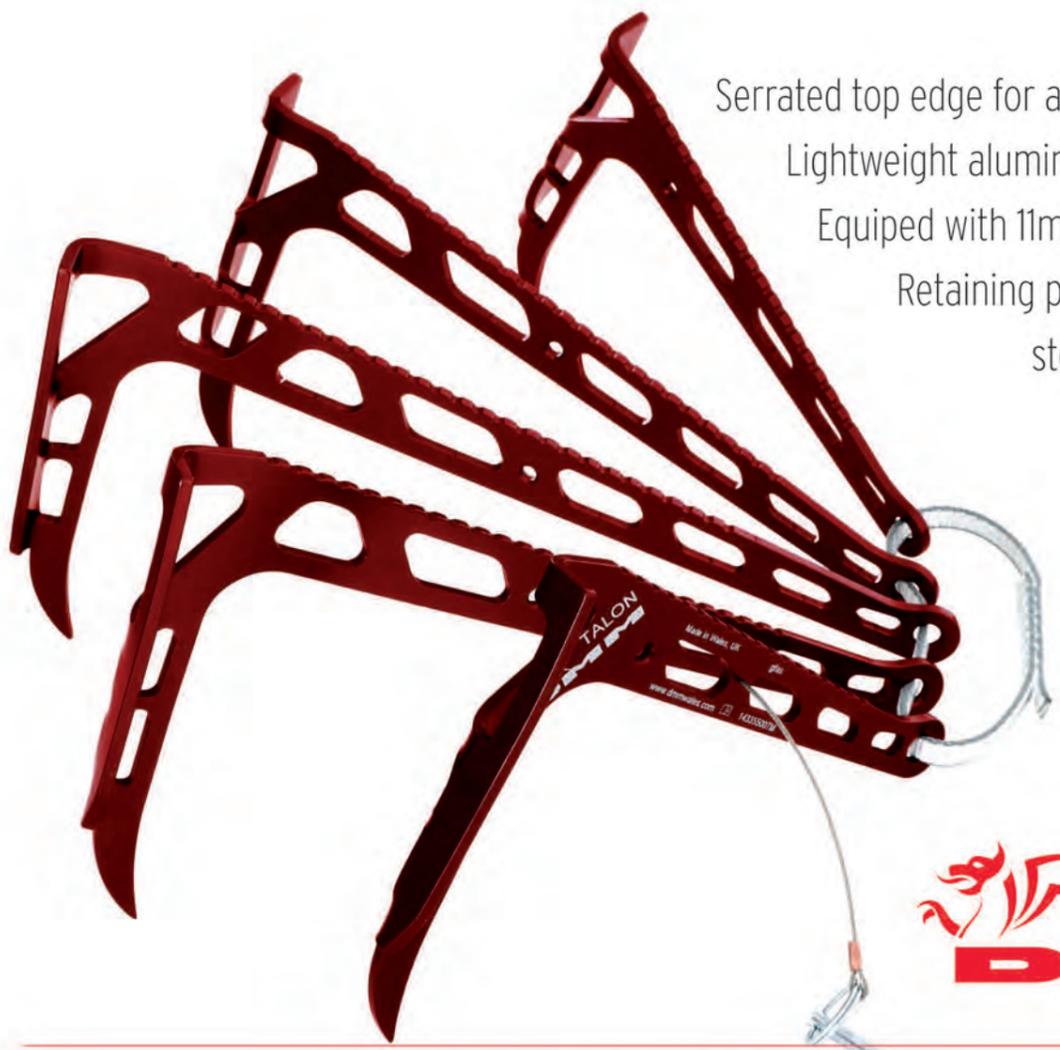
Steep earth anchor, providing protection and inspiring confidence in sparse terrain.

Serrated top edge for additional security <

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Equipped with 11mm Dyneema sling <

Retaining pin for uncluttered storage and racking <



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## JUNE: MONTY THE BORDER TERRIER HELPS FIND ARTHUR, THANKS TO FACEBOOK

There appear to be an ever increasing number of dogs getting lost and recovered by mountain rescue teams... or is it just that with modern methods of communicating news, appeals about them are more easier available to the public? **Dave Torr** reports on the impact of social media and yet another successful dog rescue.

I was reading the team's Facebook page when up popped a request from a gentleman to keep a look out for a Border Terrier answering to the name of Arthur, lost between Edale and Jacob's Ladder earlier that afternoon.

Neil Hayter and I planned to go out the following day to look, as both he and I are Border Terrier owners. Alas Neil realised he had double-booked himself and had to pull out at the last minute.

Lost animals always pull on my heart strings as I wonder if they have been picked up by some unscrupulous person or injured as they wander around lost and frightened. Being a Border Terrier owner myself this hit a little deeper than normal and as I turned around from my computer to look at Monty laid behind my chair, I thought just how would I feel if the same happened to him. I know I'd be distraught and would do anything in my power to get him back safely. I decided there and then that our usual walk on Big Moor tomorrow would now be focused on the area that Arthur had been reported missing.

Now the only thing in the back of my mind was how much of an area could I search? Still recovering from a full knee replacement thirteen weeks before, this would be my first potential big hill walk if I was to wander up Jacob's Ladder and onto the plateau of Kinder Scout. The first thing to pack would be my walking poles and a spare lead and collar just in case I was lucky enough to find Arthur.

As I drew the curtains on Monday morning I was relieved to see a sunny if not slightly overcast sky which bolstered my enthusiasm and chances of seeing Arthur.

I managed to park at Upper Booth farm after receiving permission from the camp site owner. This made the walk in easier as it help to miss most of the tarmac road section from Tips car park. How the hell was I going to find this little dog in this vast expanse of countryside. I scanned the hillsides and looked for unusual features amongst the slopes of Horsehill Tor and the lower sections of

Crowden Tower. In the distance I could make out a faint noise unlike the usual animal and livestock noises around these parts. Not a bark but something that made me think. Then I saw a shape on the upper slopes of Horsehill Tor, brown and about the size of a dog. My mind started to race — could I have located Arthur so easily? As I picked up the pace and kept my eye on the shape, it eventually dawned on me I must be looking at a clump of old bracken. I managed to smile to myself. This wasn't going to be that easy.

I carried on trying to work out a system of walking safely with two unwieldy walking poles and a terrier sniffing every spare inch of ground his lead would allow, criss-crossing my path and frequently getting himself wrapped up in the poles. Again, this was not going to be easy. Monty was no search dog.

In the distance, Lee House was coming into sight and I wondered if anyone would be around. A thought went through my mind — had Arthur been shot for worrying livestock? Knowing what dogs are like around sheep in particular and the fact that he would be very hungry by now, has he attacked any lambs?

The footpath goes straight through the old farmyard of Lee House and there were a couple of cars parked there. Monty suddenly gave a bark out and started pulling on his lead whimpering and strongly pulling in the direction of the blind side of the car. As I let him have his way a dog came into view which happened to be a Border Terrier. I could see that it was clearly frightened but when I called out the name Arthur nothing, no interest at all. This dog must live here and it's just a coincidence, I thought.

I decided to tie Monty up away from this dog and try and get him to come to me with some food. Eventually, with me being very passive toward it and feeding it treats, I managed to gain the dog's trust. I noticed its underbelly was quite wet and dirty. Surely, this must be the dog? Just then, I noticed a lady working

in the garden of Lee House and I asked her if this was her dog. No, she hadn't even realised it was there. My heart soared — this is Arthur! He had a collar but no name tag so I slowly put the spare lead on him and gave a sigh of relief that, by a stroke of good luck, we had found him quite easily.

Lisa (the lady) gave him some food. He wolfed it down but we realised that any more and I was likely to have a vomiting dog on my hands. I asked Lisa to contact me if anyone came looking for Arthur and set off back to our base to contact the owner via social media. No sooner had I arrived, I received a phone call from Arthur's owner Diego who, under strict instructions from his children, had promised to go back and look for Arthur. Diego arrived at base to pick him up and a more relieved and happy man I have never seen. Clearly he was Arthur's owner.

He explained how Arthur had gone missing at 2.30 the previous day. Ascending Jacob's Ladder, Diego had become concerned that sheep were just below in the valley bottom so decided it would be wise to put the dog back on the lead. But Arthur was nowhere to be seen. After constant calling and returning to the edge path asking passers-by if they had seen a dog wandering around, he sadly realised his dog was lost on one of the most inhospitable high areas of the Peak District. He eventually gave up at around 8.00 that evening.

His friend had put it on to his own social media page and also posted it on to the team's page and that's when we became aware of it. The story went kind of viral with 15,152 people reading the story of Arthur's safe return and 500 likes. The appeal by Arthur's owner reached 3,250 people.

I must give Monty the credit for finding Arthur because without him smelling and seeing Arthur behind the car I may have walked straight past the little fella.

**Above:** Dave Torr with Arthur and Monty © Edale MRT.

# The day the earth shook...



situation is complex, some Sherpas (and team members) are still up at ABC yet to contact families in Nepal — to find out their wellbeing. They must be given time and space, to push aside their role on Everest.

'The scientists predicted a second big quake around 24 hours after yesterday's. It came 25 hours later. From within the comfort of our mess tent, subtle tremors were noticed, rapidly followed by the now familiar wave-like motion of the ground and the equally rapid exit of the tent by our clients. Through the cloud and snows, once again we witnessed the cliffs above BC begin to disintegrate and spew huge boulders towards our island of safety. Again, they never gained the energy or direction to reach us — we are thankful for a well-chosen site and that no one is hurt.

'Stood still, the effect is strange — the sensation of wave-like motion, in the absence of sound or other visual cues. Team members feel dizzy, even a little nauseous.

'Back inside we finish lunch and digest our thoughts of the power of nature, how small we feel, as aftershocks continue to punctuate our



This Spring I had the privilege of leading an excited and motivated team of climbers on an expedition to climb Everest's North Ridge. I often explain to clients that they are paying for the opportunity to climb a big mountain, not necessarily to actually get to the top. The usual reasons for not summiting are many — lack of fitness, poor motivation, insufficient acclimatisation, illness, injury, poor preparation, insufficient calorie or water intake, lack of tolerance to suffering adverse conditions — not dissimilar to the reasons mountain rescue casualties may resort to calling for help on UK mountains. The 2015 season added a new cause to the list.



**CHRIS HARLING**  
DEPUTY TEAM LEADER  
KESWICK MRT

The general Nepali public never saw this coming, the expeditions on Everest didn't, but it was predicted — a group of scientists arrived in Kathmandu only seven days before the disaster to begin planning for the earthquake they knew was due, but didn't know when.

Our climb had been progressing well. We'd established our Advanced Base Camp (ABC) at 6400m, we had acclimatised well, most of the team had climbed to, or close, to the North Col at 7000m. Allowing further acclimatisation and quality recovery time means teams descend back to BC at 5100m for several days in between climbs. This time is normally spent reading, eating and relaxing as much as possible. As it turned out, our first rest period was not particularly relaxing, as I wrote at the time.

'Here in base camp we initially felt a slight trembling followed by a more violent rocking back and forth — then the ground began to feel like jelly as horizontal waves passed through the rocks beneath our feet. Climbers appeared from tents all over camp to try to comprehend what they were feeling. As the movement became more violent I expected the loose and precarious rocky slopes above the camp area to start shedding huge boulders — it was extremely alarming wondering if we were about to be buried by rockfall. Sure enough, an area of steep cliffs did break off sending car-sized boulders hurtling down only a few hundred metres from our tents. We are still feeling aftershocks hours later. Our thoughts are with any local staff working on Everest who may have been affected by

losses in today's quake.'

We knew it was a significant earthquake, but initially had no idea of its scale or how widely it had been felt. Within a few hours, however, news came through about its affects on the south side of the mountain where an avalanche was triggered high on Pumori which tore through south side BC causing deaths and injury to many climbers and Nepali staff. We also became aware of the devastation in the Kathmandu valley where deaths were initially counted in hundreds.

Summarising the following day, after realising the potential for north side expeditions to be effected:

'Update on second day of Everest's worst loss. We spent the morning gathering news, opinions and feelings from the other teams at North Everest Base Camp. The

conversations and fool our senses.

'We think of the tragedy of our mountaineering colleagues — the relative few who died on the slopes of their prized mountain — and of the many who died in their homes and cities going about their everyday lives.'

As we reflected on our predicament, the statistics grew — news gradually filtering down from more remote areas of Nepal, 'hundreds' of fatalities were now counted in 'thousands'. Our all-consuming expedition to climb the world's highest mountain, a dream many months or years in the making for some, suddenly became insignificant. We were in the midst of a huge disaster.

'Nepal 'quake day three. The tremors continue and are familiar now — lying here they are like the rumblings from a silent truck driving past. We are still at our Basecamp with no immediate desire to move from here — we are safe.

'I rarely get emotional climbing mountains — happy and joyful yes, but teary, no. Today I was teary. Our wonderful, vibrant and ceaselessly working team of six young Sherpas were tied between continuing our progress up the mountain and returning somehow to Kathmandu to support their families and help rebuild damaged lives. The relief and emotion were palpable in their eyes when we passed on the news — we were going to abandon further progress up Mount Everest. I felt and shared their emotional release and the tears came. And I thought I was a toughened, seasoned mountain man who just guided climbers up big hills. Not today.

'The Chinese authorities effectively closed the mountain today, on safety grounds. Ice cliffs have moved, slopes have shifted, crevasses have yawned open. The experts are predicting new earthquake activity within two weeks or so. It's time to pack up and find a way home. For many, many Nepalis they must find a home, make a home.'

The media interest was intense, taking over much of my time for two days — I knew it was important to get the news back to worried family and friends at home and to reinforce to the public the nature of the disaster and how many people in Nepal and Tibet needed their help. I had never done a so-called 'media training course', but having been interviewed live on three national television shows and recorded interviews for virtually all national

BBC radio stations and many regional and local commercial stations, I eventually got the hang of it.

Getting home became our next problem, a small problem in the scheme of the disaster, yet it turned out to be far from easy. Roads back to the Nepali border were blocked, the roads from the border back to Kathmandu were damaged beyond immediate repair. Kathmandu airport at the time had cancelled all non-essential flights. Besides, more overseas climbers and trekkers returning to the capital would only add to the risk and drain on precious resources. In addition to this we had a huge amount of equipment at ABC and all the clients' high altitude clothing and climbing equipment.

At the time we were one of the few teams to declare our intention to abandon our climb — others playing the waiting game initially, to see if the Chinese authorities would 'reopen' the mountain. I wanted to get our Nepali Sherpas home as soon as possible and organised a train of yaks to bring our ABC gear back to BC. We judged it safe to make the long climb back up to ABC and with a couple of keen clients and the Sherpas, we packed up ABC ready for the yaks to bring it back down. Sorrowfully turning our backs to Everest for the final time we descended back to BC, each of us immersed in our own feelings.

Since there was no sensible overland route for the two hundred or so Nepali staff and Sherpas to be able to return home to their families, the Chinese had been persuaded to store all the expeditions' equipment and charter a flight for them back to Kathmandu. However, this would not happen for a week or so. Reluctantly we would have to leave behind our good friends, our Sherpa team, when we left.

Finally, we had our own transport organised and our personal kit packed and ready. Eight days after the earthquake, we left BC bound for Lhasa, the nearest international airport and a two-day drive away. Leaving Everest was disappointing but we were safe, uninjured and had our families, friends and comfortable western world to return to. For many Nepali staff on Everest returning home, life would be not be same again.

If you are able to, please support the aid work in Nepal. Even with overseas aid, it will take many months and years for this impoverished country and its people to recover from this disaster. ●

**ELLIOT BROWN  
LAUNCHES SPECIAL  
EDITION WATCH IN  
SUPPORT OF  
MOUNTAIN RESCUE**



As people who live for hills and trails, it's been a quiet goal of co-founders of British watch brand Elliot Brown, Ian Elliot and Alex Brown, to give something back to those who volunteer to keep the outdoors safe and enjoyable.

'We contacted MREW,' explains Ian Elliot, 'and pitched our idea of a special edition watch to raise funds and awareness of mountain rescue in general. We were asked to present our idea and explain why Elliot Brown and mountain rescue would be a good fit. Given that the recommended kit list for members includes a robust, reliable watch, we were quietly confident and once we'd explained the features and standards to which we build and test every watch, the proposal soon gained support.'

It was agreed that the finished timepiece had to be fit-for-purpose yet desirable, something those lucky enough to own would cherish. Not too obvious and, of course, with the sort of rugged dependability you expect from all your kit. This is the result. An Elliot Brown Special Edition Mountain Rescue watch – the Canford 202-012.

The shock and water resistant watch has a wealth of subtle detailing, including an internal rotating bezel for timing duties. The Swiss movements are encased in a floating steel housing, suspended by special shock absorbing elastomers, to help reduce the effects of harsh vibration and knocks. Effective resistance to water and dust is achieved courtesy of a unique triple sealing system with every model tested in water at 200m.

The case back is beautifully engraved with the mountain rescue logo and special edition wording. A subtle grooved dial with high contrasting Superluminova hands and red tipped seconds hand have been included to reflect the colours associated with mountain rescue.

Each watch comes fitted on an oiled, full grain leather deployant strap with contrast white stitching. Also supplied with the watch is a custom black ballistic nylon webbing strap and two screwdrivers, enabling the wearer to change the straps depending on the occasion.

They are available now and sell to the public for £360. For every watch sold to non-MREW members, Elliot Brown donates £36 or 10% of the retail value to MREW. For MREW team members, the watches are available to buy at the considerably discounted price of £160 once full membership has been confirmed.

'It's a meaningful donation,' says Ian, 'but compared to the commitment of the team members, who drop everything and leave loved ones at home when conditions are often at their very worst, we felt it was the least we could do.'

MREW Fundraising Officer Neil Hayter, said, 'We're delighted to be working with Elliot Brown in the development of this exclusive mountain rescue-inspired watch. We recommend that anyone venturing into the hills and mountains carries a reliable watch as an essential piece of kit. This design fits the bill perfectly, whilst also enhancing our mountain rescue brand with a beautiful piece of design. We look forward to many years of successful collaboration.'

The Mountain Rescue Special Edition watch is available in selected branches of Snow and Rock, online and all authorised Elliot Brown Stockists. A full list of stockists can be found at [www.elliottbrownwatches.com](http://www.elliottbrownwatches.com).

**TO ORDER AN ELLIOT BROWN SPECIAL EDITION MOUNTAIN RESCUE WATCH AS A FULL MREW MEMBER PLEASE CONTACT IAN OR ALEX ON 01202 338 600 OR EMAIL: [INFO@ELLIOTBROWNWATCHES.COM](mailto:INFO@ELLIOTBROWNWATCHES.COM).**



Ian Elliot and Alex Brown

**EVEREST CHALLENGE**

**LEE HARRIS RAISING FUNDS FOR CONISTON MRT**

Coniston team member Lee Harris completed fourteen climbs of his local mountain, with his friend and fellow scout group leader Lesley McCartney, in a determined effort to raise funds.

The pair began their ascents of Coniston Old Man on 11 May and celebrated clocking up the equivalent of Everest's height less than a week later. Both are leaders with the 1st Hawkshead Scout Group, and proceeds will be split between the youth group and the rescue team.

A Coniston team spokesperson said, 'Lee and Lesley were joined on various ascents by friends and colleagues from Coniston MRT. The final ascent saw the intrepid pair set off with a few other team members, and others meeting them on the way and a few more colleagues and supporters waiting at the summit, where they enjoyed a glass of bubbly to celebrate.'

So far, the challenge has raised £1,380, surpassing the pair's goal of £1,000. Donations can still be made through Virgin Money Giving at <http://tinyurl.com/ob3v2f8>.



**EDALE MEMBERS RUN WITH STRETCHER**

**HALF MARATHON CASH FOR EDALE MRT**

In April, seven members of Edale team ran the Yorkshire Half marathon carrying a team stretcher all the way round the 13.1 mile course.

The aim was to raise as much money as possible whilst pushing themselves at the same time. So far they're not far shy of their hoped-for total with £1,589.50 in the bank. Check out their JustGiving page at [www.justgiving.com/EMRT-YorkshireHalf](http://www.justgiving.com/EMRT-YorkshireHalf).



Photos © Swaledale MRT.



**SWALEDALE TEAMS UP WITH GHURKAS TO RAISE FUNDS**

**RAISING FUNDS FOR NEPAL WITH SWALEDALE MRT**

Following the terrible earthquake in Nepal, members of Swaledale team and Gurkha soldiers serving in Catterick Garrison set about climbing the equivalent height of Everest (8,848 metres) in under twelve hours to raise cash towards the recovery and reconstruction effort in Nepal.

The challenge took place on Saturday, 30 May on an indoor climbing wall at Vimy Barracks, Catterick Garrison. To achieve the Everest equivalent, the climbers would need to make 738 ascents of the wall in the twelve-hour period, working out at one ascent per minute.

The team of more than twenty climbers hoped to raise enough money to help rebuild lives in remote Nepalese hill communities. Their chosen charity was the Gurkha Welfare Trust, because of the team's links with the British Army Gurkhas here in North Yorkshire and also because the Gurkha Welfare Trust have an intimate knowledge of the remote hill communities where the damage has been most severe.

'The scale of the two earthquakes in Nepal has been absolutely devastating,' says Tim Cain. 'We knew many people would have already donated to national charities but by setting ourselves this major challenge with the Gurkhas we hoped to help directly in Nepal and show support for the Nepalese people in our local communities.'

The summit was reached shortly before 3.30pm, well ahead of schedule. A massive well done to mountain rescue volunteers and Gurkha soldiers for climbing Everest from sea level in under seven hours!

With £2,135 raised by Friday 19 June, the JustGiving page is still open for donations at <http://tinyurl.com/omadtry>.

**NEPAL**



**COLLECTING KIT FOR NEPAL**

**EDALE MRT LEADS A MERCY MISSION IN THE PEAKS**

The weekend of 12 May was a busy one for Edale team but not for the usual reasons. The Nepal earthquake prompted fundraising officer Dave Torr to find a charity that would be able to ship out vital supplies to help in the relief effort.

Through Bob James, a retired Peak District Park Warden the charity Nepal in Need was willing to fly out anything the team could collect. Working with James and Rob Turnbull, directors of Outside in Hathersage, and the other mountain rescue teams in the Peak District, a joint collection of tents, sleeping bags, clothing and footwear was duly organised.

The response from team members and families, and Outside customers, was overwhelming. RAB also heard about the collection and donated a fantastic one hundred down jackets. A transit van was driven from Brecon to the Peak, by Bob James but there was such a mountain of gear the team's own Mercedes Sprinter was also pressed into service — minus its seats and with two team members on board — to deliver the remaining gear.

'A huge thank you,' says Dave, 'to a lot of people that made this all happen — Outside staff and customers, Tom Richardson, RAB Outdoors and all the Peak teams and last, but not least, Bob James who does a fantastic amount of relief work around the disaster areas of the world.'

## TRAINING: THE KEY TO SURVIVAL

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Taylor Made RF was founded by Chris Taylor, having spent 33 years in the radio, communications and RF field, gaining experience across a wide area of technology. Since 1980, Chris has worked with a vast cross section of RF related products and holds a full amateur radio license (Call sign GOWTZ). He has now branched out with his own company offering a greater breadth of products including receivers, antennae and amplifiers. **Taylor Made RF is happy to offer 40% discount from the retail prices of Panorama antennas**

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## SEVERAL SMALL STEPS FOR OWAIN BRING CASH BOOST FOR HIS DAD'S TEAM

### CLIMBING PEN Y FAN FOR CENTRAL BEACONS MRT

On May Day this year, one amazing young man climbed to the summit of Pen Y Fan (886m) in South Wales with his dad, and other members of the Central Beacons team. But this wasn't just any young man, and it wasn't just any achievement.

Eight-year-old Owain Terrell is the son of Richard Terrell, long-standing member of Central Beacons MRT and MREW Equipment Officer. He has spina bifida, a congenital birth defect which makes it difficult for him to balance and walk. He completed the walk with his parents and three younger brothers in just five hours, whilst carrying collection buckets and fundraising for a new Land Rover to replace the one lost by the team on a call-out earlier this year. Bucket donations totalled £250 on the day.

Video footage of him reaching the summit, on both the Central Beacons website and Facebook pages, resulted in a massive spike of interest for the team. At the time of writing this has been viewed over 23,000 times and has helped the team raise a further £1220 through JustGiving and cash donations. Richard and his wife Natalie would especially like to thank fellow team members Arthur Smith and Kevin Windmill, as it was their particular support and encouragement that enabled Owain to achieve his dream of climbing a mountain, just like his dad. Well done Owain!



## VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON

### SALLY, HUW, DARREN AND NEALE RUN FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND AND WALES

Once again this year, Mountain Rescue England and Wales had four runners in the London Marathon. **Sally Barnett** fundraising and PR person for Kinder team, was one of them. It was her first ever marathon attempt and she stormed home in 4:44:52 hours. She describes the experience here.

I'd watched my dad run numerous London marathons as a kid and always had an urge to follow in his footsteps. So when I got the chance to run for mountain rescue, I jumped at the chance. I was under no illusions it would be easy but I felt sure I could do it.

The months past extremely quickly with hours out in the Peak District, pounding the tarmac in good old British weather, endless training sessions in the gym and on the treadmill at home. I soon built up a great relationship with fellow runners Darren Hunt (Buxton), Huw Jones (Central Beacons) and already knew Neale Pinkerton (Kinder) as we shared progress and excitement for the big day. And then it arrived.

I travelled down by train on the Saturday morning and made my way the Expo to collect my race number. The atmosphere on the tube was buzzing with runners. I quickly collected my number and met up with Darren and his family. Time for a quick trip to St Paul's Cathedral and a quick prayer whilst to wish all the runners well — the perfect pre-race chill out experience.

Then it was off to Greenwich to meet

It was then I started to feel nervous — but excited.

With only a ten-minute walk from Greenwich Park, I didn't have far to go. It was wet and cold but the atmosphere was already building up. I didn't get the chance to meet the other runners at the start as we all had separate start colours. I ditched my bags in one of the many lorries, kept my bib bag on to keep warm (top running tip of Dad!) and made my way to my start. I don't think I've ever seen so many colourful people in my life — everyone there for a special reason, being raising money for a charity or in memory of a loved one. We all had our reasons. Then before we knew it, 'Bang!' We were off!

I stuck with the pace I'd trained with and the first few miles flew by. By now, the weather was perfect. I was drinking loads and felt fantastic. Before I knew it I was at the Cutty Sark, then Tower Bridge. The atmosphere was just amazing with people shouting your name and smiles from so many strangers just spurring you on. When I hit my big milestone of sixteen miles, I cried a sigh of relief. Just ten miles left to go. I could do this!

Mile twenty-five and the atmosphere picked up again. I felt good, my feet were sore but otherwise great. Everyone started helping each other, in encouragement, stopping and helping other runners and the crowd were doing their bit too, handing out sweets, oranges and Jaffa cakes, spraying water over us. I was thankful for that. You really need that support to get you through.

Eight hundred metres to go, it was time to kick for the finish. I had a target time of four hours forty-five minutes and I knew I was around that. Time to run like the wind. I will never forget running round the corner and seeing Buckingham Palace and the finish line and, having seen

my dad finish many times, the tears began to flow. I was going to finish the London Marathon! Not quite believing I was there, I grabbed another runner's hand and we crossed that famous line



Top left: One happy Sally! Above: Huw, Sally and Darren show off their medals.

together. Four hours forty-four minutes and fifty-two seconds!

I was over the moon. A few emotional moments and phone calls then I slowly hobbled my way to BAFTA in Piccadilly for our runners after-party. Darren and Huw were there too. It was an emotional reunion. A massage, food, beer and a good old chat — a great finish to an unbelievable day.

A couple of weeks after my race I received a call from my dad who had been in Wales on a walking weekend with friends, when he had to be rescued by the Ogwen team. One of the party was taken ill and had to be airlifted off the hill and the rest of the party were escorted off the hill by the team. It just reinforced for me why I had done what I did to raise funds for mountain rescue. My dad and his friends were okay, but you never know what can happen. I can never thank the team enough.

Running the marathon was the hardest thing I have ever undertaken but also the most enjoyable and inspirational. If you've ever thought about doing something challenging, something outside your comfort zone, put the effort in and do it, don't let it be next year, or the year after that. It is so rewarding and worth every moment. I now have a Virgin London Marathon medal, and memories of that day will stay with me forever.

Thanks to all who supported us that day with texts, calls, emails and sponsorship. A big thanks to Neale, Huw and Darren for your amazing efforts on that day and throughout the last few months, Mike Woodcock for his fantastic hospitality and Neil Hayter for his constant support the last few months. It is greatly appreciated and I will continue to fundraise for MREW as long as I am able to.

raising funds for rescue



Top: Medal 2015.

Above: Darren Hunt, happy to have completed this year's London Marathon.

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In the last issue, I wrote about my trip to the New Zealand LandSAR conference last October. While I was there, I had a long discussion with an NZ police inspector about their move away (a police directive) from maths-based approaches to search management and, in particular, Probability of Detection (PoD). I commented that they were in danger of throwing out the baby with the bath water and PoD as mathematical concept could not be 'un-invented', as it were. We did agree, however, on how the idea has been presented and taught, particularly in the last ten years.

His presentation at the conference explained why NZ Police, as a SAR coordinating authority, 'do not support the inclusion of PoD as a mathematical equation in the land SAR Formal Search Planning Guidelines of New Zealand'. However, he went on to say that debriefing of field teams was important and this was echoed by other presentations at the conference that looked at techniques for this. Qualitative feedback is more important than quantitative — answers to what was your PoD are generally guesses based on how difficult conditions were, so why not say what the terrain was like. PoD is affected by many variables, some of which a searcher will have control of and some not.

This resonated a lot with how TCSR has developed its current stance on PoD. We first embarked on our understanding of the concept back in the late 1980s and we

WHAT DOES LIKELY LEVEL OF SUCCESS (POD) DEPEND ON?

SIZE... COLOUR... CONTRAST WITH BACKGROUND... MOVEMENT... SOUND

EXPERIENCE... HOW THEY ARE SEARCHING... SPACING... PURPOSEFUL WANDERING

CHANCE... LUCK... GOOD FORTUNE

DAY OR NIGHT... WEATHER... DIRECTION OF SUNLIGHT... HOW EVEN IS THE TERRAIN... VEGETATION

SEARCHER FATIGUE... SEARCHER MOTIVATION... DO THEY EXPECT TO FIND ANYTHING?

IT DEPENDS ON ALL OF THESE

Figure 1: PoD 'variables'

published work on the concept of Critical Separation (CS). The theory stated that two searchers are at CS if an object placed between them is at the furthest distance for

each searcher at which they can see the object. The distance from each searcher to the object is referred to as Critical Distance (CD), so  $CS = 2 \times CD$ .

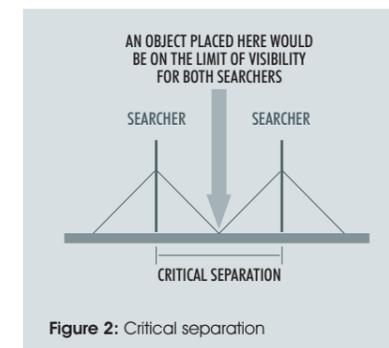


Figure 2: Critical separation

The 'theory' was tested and found to work during the evidence search of parts of Northumberland post-Lockerbie. Teams from around the country came to help and on one day we had in excess of 400 searchers out in the field. Training for what was then a new idea was simple and straightforward and could be achieved in about 30 minutes. Critical Separation is an 'elastic' measure that is determined, crucially, by the searchers in the field, by the nature of the terrain, by the ambient conditions and by using something to represent the missing person eg. a rucksack with colour to represent the searching data that the search managers will have. Each searcher will then have a 'corridor' to search that they are responsible for.

Some sixteen years ago, a group in America started to publish work linking search theory, a mathematically-based approach to searching based primarily on a marine environment, to the land-SAR world. They suggested that the traditional ideas

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

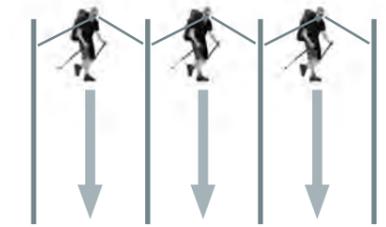


Figure 3: Grid searching at Critical Separation in open ground

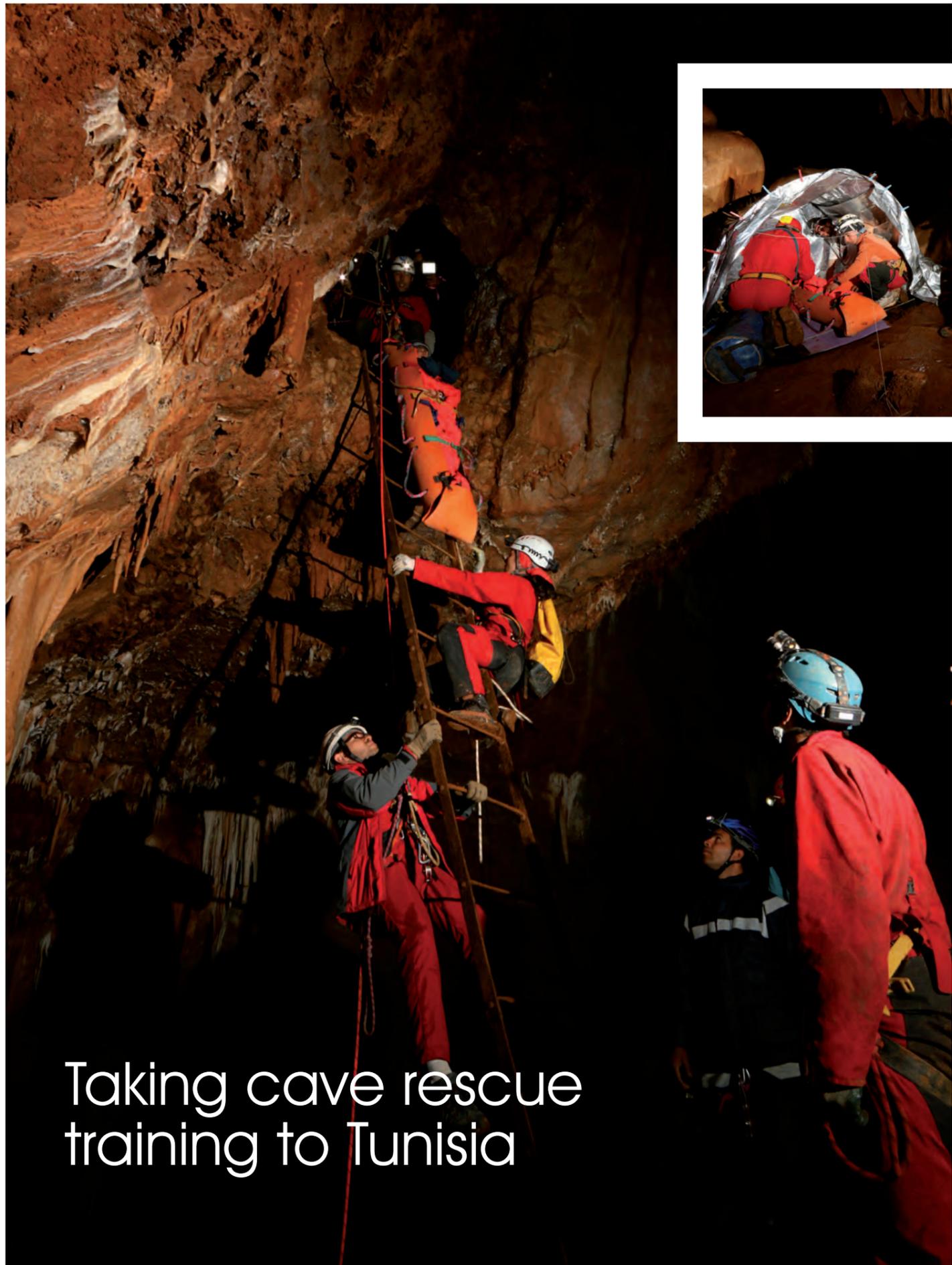
based on CS and CD were not mathematically sound and should not be used. A whole new lexicon followed, for example, Average Maximum Detection Range (AMDR), viz 'the furthest distance for each searcher at which they can see the object', and Average Range of Detection, viz 'the furthest distance for each searcher at which they can see the object'. There is no fundamental difference between AMDR and CD. The introduction of the new terminology is merely a rebranding exercise.

Dave Perkins of TCSR has shown that search theory can be used to determine PoD in a land environment and is based on the relatively simple concept of Critical Distance (CD). The paper 'PoD for the Search Manager' available free of charge from [www.searchresearch.org.uk](http://www.searchresearch.org.uk) explains how this is done.

For searching a clearly defined route, for example, during the initial response phase and using two searchers, one either side of the path or track, then search theory says they will have a PoD of 63% for a corridor extending out either side of the track. If there are three searchers then their PoD would be 73% and for four searchers 78%.

This theory has been shown to be empirically accurate following our observations and recording of results from some 50+ field search skills courses over ten years or so. Extravagant claims? Can I recommend the paper referred to above — it works, and if you'd like to see it discussed theoretically and demonstrated practically then we will be teaching our Field Search Skills course on in November in Northumberland as a precursor to our Managing the Initial Response course. See our ad for details. ●

**PETE ROBERTS** IS MEMBER OF NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK MRT. IN 1997, HE AND DAVE PERKINS FORMED A REGISTERED CHARITY — THE CENTRE FOR SEARCH RESEARCH (TCSR) — THROUGH WHICH THEY HAVE TAUGHT SEARCH MANAGEMENT COURSES THROUGHOUT THE UK AND IRELAND. CARL HAMILTON OF NNPMRT HAS ALSO NOW JOINED TCSR. THEY CO-AUTHOR THE UK MISSING PERSON STUDY WITH GED FEENEY, EX-MREW STATS OFFICER. DETAILS OF THEIR COURSES AND RESEARCH CAN BE FOUND ON [WWW.SEARCHRESEARCH.ORG.UK](http://WWW.SEARCHRESEARCH.ORG.UK)



# Taking cave rescue training to Tunisia



**EMMA PORTER**  
MIDLANDS CAVE RESCUE

**Main image and inset:** Inside Mine Cave © Bartek Biela.

**Below, left to right:** Group shot and a stunning welcome © Mike Clayton.

**PS:** The BCRC Conference on 12-14 June, organised jointly by GCRG and MCRO, was a resounding success. The weekend saw the highest number of attendees ever for a BCRC Conference. Full report in next mag.

We arrive in Tunisia, a bustling sea of white and red flags and scarves. Strangers greet and kiss us, have photographs with us, interview us. Army snipers are on the top of each building, military tanks encircle the area, armed police line the streets. There's a real buzz in the air, a sense of unity, defiance with a slight foreboding which soon dissipates as yet another local thanks us for coming to Tunisia and being part of the march against terrorism. 'We are all Bardo.'

Ten days after the Bardo Museum tragedy shocked the world, and after some deliberation, our group of six arrived in Tunisia to be warmly greeted by some of the local cavers. Our friendship with the cavers in Tunisia began in 2009, when Mike Clayton and I drove across North Africa, the Middle East and back through Europe (before the Arab Spring) on their Cave Now Work Later! expedition\*. Since then, we've had several return trips and, in March 2013 we provided three days of cave rescue training to cavers from all over Tunisia.

This time, the training was to be slightly different. With one of the main caving clubs situated in a mountainous area, and the caving club diversifying to be a joint caving and climbing club, interest had been expressed in doing some surface search, an important skill for mountain rescue and cave rescue teams alike. Our team comprised five cave rescue team members, who each part of the training in 2013 (Bartek and Paulina Biela, Mike Clayton and me, from MCRO, Dave Appleing of GCRG), and we were joined by John Dutton from SARA. The relationship between GCRG, MCRO and SARA has been developing over the last few years, so our cave rescue teams can provide additional surface search resources that SARA can call upon.

After a whirlwind tour to the Sahara and Kerkennah Islands with two of the local cavers, we were greeted by our 24/7 armed police escort 'for our safety', before we'd even got off the boat from Kerkennah Island onto the mainland. After dashing through the city of Sfax, having the traffic stopped for us at every roundabout, blue lights and a change of shift later and we were soon in the Sarj Mountains for the training. The police became part of our entourage for the week, even guarding the cave entrance whilst we were underground, which left us feeling like a target, rather than blending into the background!

The Sarj Mountains are located in the middle of Tunisia, in the Siliana region and it is in these mountains that Mine Cave can be located. This is the longest and deepest cave in Tunisia, so very popular, and was the chosen venue for the rescue training, comprising both mine passage and cave, SRT (Single Rope Technique) and fixed ladders, entered after a 60-minute, steep walk up to the entrance.

The scenario had been prearranged by the

Tunisians. The aim was to locate and stabilise the casualty, undertake first aid and stretcher packaging, haul the casualty up three pitches and carry the stretcher down the mountain if time allowed. We were there to oversee the exercise. With John observing surface control and comms, Mike, Bartek and Dave headed up the mountain to shadow the rigging teams, whilst Paulina and I spent a couple of hours focusing on stretcher packaging before heading up to the entrance.

Progress was good, particularly considering some of the cavers were sharing SRT kit, and the casualty (a doctor, who had been persuaded to find out what it was really like to be in a stretchered and hauled out!) was soon moved from the emergency shelter and heading out. The rigging on the pitches took a little time to prepare but the casualty was hauled up steadily and then carried into daylight. Unfortunately, time didn't allow, but it would have been as difficult a challenge to carry the stretcher back down to the base camp, as it was to exit the cave.

It was fantastic to see that the team has come a huge way since our first training session two years ago, when chaos reigned at control due to the over enthusiasm of all concerned. Since we first sowed the seed of Tunisia having its own cave rescue team during our first visit in 2009, a strong core of cavers have embraced the idea and have been thirsty for knowledge. As well as the training we provided, they have also had cave rescuers from Italy, Bulgaria and France deliver training, and two of the officers have visited the UK.

It was encouraging to see that some of the team are really developing within certain key roles and the roles of surface control and comms were taken very seriously. The effect of different rescue techniques from various countries (all of which vary slightly) has led to some uncertainty and a lack of confidence in rigging, and a need for more personal kit still holds some of the team back. It is great though to see that the team are developing their skills, trying ideas and working together, and planning their next visit to the UK, inshallah!

Thanks to the cavers of Tunisia for their hospitality, the Tunisian Police Force and the kind and welcoming people of Tunisia. ●



◀ ...turn back to page 17 for MREW contacts

Brief introduction to the British Cave Rescue officers and how to find them...

# who?



## CHAIRMAN: BILL WHITEHOUSE

[chair@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:chair@caverescue.org.uk)

Represents cave rescue with Government, the emergency services, UKSAR and MREW, including fundraising and forward planning. An executive trustee of the Mountain and Cave Rescue Benevolent Fund and chair of Derbyshire CRO.



## VICE CHAIRMAN: DANY BRADSHAW

[vicechair@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:vicechair@caverescue.org.uk)

Assists the chairman in his role and represents BCRC at MREW. Currently taking the lead on the team assessment process. He is chairman of SWERA and Warden for Mendip Cave Rescue since 1979.



## SECRETARY: EMMA PORTER

[secretary@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@caverescue.org.uk)

Currently involved with revamping the BCRC website. Represents BCRC at the British Caving Association and lecture secretary for the national caving conference and the 2015 BCRC conference. Member of MREW forward planning group. Emma is training coordinator of Midlands CRO and member of Gloucestershire CRG.



## TREASURER: PAUL TAYLOR

[treasurer@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@caverescue.org.uk)

Manages finances and coordinates fundraising and conference secretary for the BCRC Conference. Represents BCRC at the MREW vehicle committee. Paul is chair of Gloucestershire CRG and a member of South & Mid Wales CRT.



## TRAINING COORDINATOR: JIM DAVIS

[training@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:training@caverescue.org.uk)

Addresses national training needs and works closely on the team assessment process. Represents BCRC at the MREW training committee. Jim is a member of the Cave Rescue Organisation.



## EQUIPMENT OFFICER: MIKE CLAYTON

[equipment@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:equipment@caverescue.org.uk)

Liaises with MREW regarding the Government grant and runs PPE inspection courses for teams. Represents BCRC at the MREW equipment committee. Secretary of Midlands CRO, he is a member of Gloucestershire CRG.



## COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER: JON WHITELEY

[communications@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:communications@caverescue.org.uk)

Seeks to enhance ICT for cave rescue and is BCRC rep to the MREW ICT committee and also PenMaCRA comms rep. One of three MREW SARCALL administrators and a rescue controller for Devon CRO.



## INFORMATION OFFICER: HEATHER SIMPSON

[informationofficer@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:informationofficer@caverescue.org.uk)

Maintains contact details for the fifteen teams. Part of MREW fundraising group and also manages MREW collecting tins from Stratford-upon-Avon — as far as you can get from a cave or mountain! Heather is a member of North Wales CRO and Midlands CRO and a new recruit of the Derbyshire CRO.



## LEGAL ADVISER: TOBY HAMNETT

[legal@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:legal@caverescue.org.uk)

A solicitor by profession, focuses on pragmatic solutions and believes in communication to ensure legal risk is minimised. If a case requires specialist knowledge outside his area of expertise he can assist in ensuring the right expert is identified.



## DIVING OFFICER: CHRIS JEWELL

[diving@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:diving@caverescue.org.uk)

Advises on cave diving issues and liaises between the Cave Diving Group and BCRC.

## MEDICAL OFFICER: VACANT

[medical@caverescue.org.uk](mailto:medical@caverescue.org.uk)

Advises on medical matters and keeps teams aware of medical issues of concern to cave rescue. Represents BCRC at the MREW medical committee and represents BCRC at UKSAR.

## Taking cave rescue training to Tunisia continued...

# SURFACE SEARCHING AND SLEEPING UNDER THE STARS

JOHN DUTTON

So how did I end up here? Half-way up an Tunisian hillside, with a strong wind blowing making me wish I'd packed another fleece, not having had a decent cup of builder's tea for a week (although Earl Grey was growing on me), darkness falling and wondering where my cave rescue compatriots were. Inevitably the blame could be laid firmly at the feet of cave-rescue!

It all began several years ago, meeting Paul Taylor (GCRG), Emma Porter and Mike Clayton (MCRO/GCRG) at LRF meetings. This led to an exchange of training, with SARA Tewkesbury delivering surface search sessions to MCRO and GCRG. In return Mike and Emma gave us an introduction to rope rescue techniques and equipment inspection. This relationship developed with surface search trained members of GCRG and MCRO being called to support SARA on a couple of taskings by GlosPol in 2014 and more joint training planned.

I knew of the previous cave rescue trips to Tunisia, partly through Emma's article here, and partly as I'd bribed her and Mike (with food) to share their slides of their overland tour of the Mediterranean. They explained the background of the cave rescue trips and I idly suggested that if they ever wanted someone to accompany them to instruct on surface search I'd be interested. So I was pleasantly surprised when I received an email early this year asking me whether I was still interested in joining the forthcoming training trip to Tunisia. Having double checked that this was a serious proposal and the Tunisians were actually interested in having surface-search training I was, as they say, 'up for it'.

The pre-training trip was an adventure in itself. An unexpected 24 hours spent in Frankfurt, mainly at the airport and hastily booked hotel, due to delayed flights and missed connection, failed to impact on the trip. Then arrival in Tunisia in the midst of an anti-terrorist protest, where we were made to feel very welcome despite the crowds and plethora of armed police, and on to a road trip to some spectacular parts of the country, many apparently seldom visited by western tourists. During this several unexpected police escorts materialised, making us more obvious, as the local police had been told to ensure the safety of any tourists.

The tourist part of the trip ended at a fantastic plantation-come-guesthouse and my first introduction to talking through an interpreter, my long-perfected buffoon-style teaching/lecturing style soon came crashing

down. Apparently you need to do short sections and allow the interpreter to interpret before carrying on!

Next day, we decamped en masse to relocate halfway up the Tunisian hillside, the plan for the day was the cave rescue exercise. To our surprise the 8.00am start was almost adhered to, +/- an hour or so, and the convoy of vehicles, if not conspicuous enough on its own, was escorted by several police vehicles. Of course, we shouldn't have got overly excited about timekeeping — once on site, camp had to be pitched and kit sorted, and the inevitable discussion about who was to do what.

As a non-caver, I was tasked with overseeing the management process to provide feedback and input where required. The previously donated T-card system was put to good use, although the laborious preparation of T-cards delayed the deployment of teams for the exercise, that and the ongoing discussions between various individuals and groups. Good comms between the cave entrance and control was maintained by personal radios, although at times the quality of the information relayed was frustrating for the search controller.

Ultimately the exercise came to a close, everyone reported back into control and we could relax and chill out. Darkness had fallen but I guess to cavers that is less of an issue! Fires were lit, food was cooked and talking continued into the night. As in the UK, the craic is as important as the training. The moonlight bathing the valley and hillside made sleeping under a tarp well worthwhile, despite the chill, and will remain with me for many years.

The following day it was time for surface search training, but only after camp had been broken and all kit taken back down the hill to where the vehicles had been left. Somewhat unsurprisingly, the start of the session was delayed. Rough tracks, fire breaks, woodland and scrubland made this an ideal location for such training. With no mains power, laptop, digital projector or PowerPoint in sight, nor indeed any flipchart or white board, necessity



Photo © Mike Clayton

was the mother of invention and the galvanised tanker and some charcoal made a relatively decent substitute.

A brief overview of search theory in terms of detection variables, search cube, purposeful wandering, searcher spacing etc, was delivered via the same long-suffering interpreter as before. My ability to talk in short succinct sentences, with a suitable pause to allow interpretation was greatly improved, much to her relief. Occasional interruptions by eruptions of French/Arabic would occur as one or two of the audience who also spoke English would add comment, explanation or argument on what the interpreter had said.

Once the theory was done brief practical exercises were set up. Emma, Mike, Dave, Bartek and Paulina made ideal bodies, with Emma and Mike also assisting with the organisation of the Tunisians. Both hasty and efficient search skills were covered and all mispers located. For ease of understanding a more formulaic search process was delivered than would be used in the UK. Interestingly some of those who had perhaps taken less of a roll during the cave rescue exercise became more involved in the surface search training and vice-versa. Unfortunately the time we had was shortened so less training was delivered and reinforcement of skills wasn't possible — not all those present had an opportunity to do all the mini exercises. However, some good basic surface search training was delivered and without a doubt those present are better equipped to locate any misper requiring assistance.

Then it was piling back into vehicles with the trip back to Zaghuan and then on to Tunis, a final meal, bed and then the flight home. For me the outcome of the trip was that an introduction to surface search was successfully delivered, albeit briefer than I'd have preferred. The company of cave rescue friends was very good and some unique sights seen — I hope to be invited back if another training mission is arranged. Oh, and as far as I'm aware I'm the only person to capsize a camel... ●



'Is there a doctor in the house?' or 'I'm a doctor, can I help?'... words you want or do not want to hear  
**DR DAVID HILLEBRANDT**

Thirty candidates on the UK UIAA/IKAR/ISMM Diploma of mountain medicine course were sitting in the Llanberis MRT base below Snowdon when one dared to ask the question that had been in everybody's mind: 'Does it help to have a doctor offering to help?' The room went quiet. A slow deep breath from the ever diplomatic Pete Robertson and the reply was sensible but realistic. 'It depends on the doctor.'

The non team doctor who quietly introduces himself, explains his experience and says, 'I am here and can offer advice and assistance if you feel it would help' is a real asset. But the inexperienced mountain doctor who blusters trying to take control will be treated with suspicion and may need gentle control, adding complexity to an already difficult situation.

After twelve years of running the UK Diploma of Mountain Medicine we now have over 200 qualified holders in the UK. There are another hundred in the pipeline who are slowly completing the four-module course. These doctors, paramedics and nurses come from all specialities and cover all ages from junior hospital doctors only recently qualified to some seeking a qualification to enable them to find work through semi-retirement. All are united by a love of the hills and of mountaineering in all its forms.

So if you are on mountain rescue team and a passing doctor introduces him or herself as holding the UIAA/IKAR/ISMM diploma of mountain medicine what are you being offered? The person will have completed the course which consists of four one-week residential modules plus exam questions covering all topics of mountain medicine. They will have done an introductory Theory One course at Plas y Brenin in Snowdonia covering three days of practical and theoretical trauma and medical management in remote areas, lectures on physiology and altitude illness. The next module is normally undertaken in the Fort William area in winter and includes winter navigation, snowpack training and avalanche rescue, snow and ice belays and rope techniques, some easy climbs, snow shelter construction and medical scenarios on the hill in full Scottish conditions. We then have another theory course in the spring, back in Wales, involving travel medicine, medico legal discussion, media relations and management of death in the hills, plus the psychological aspects of sport climbing. It is during this course that the students get assessed on their night navigation and the next day

sample the work of an active rescue team. All students finish with an Alpine course in Arolla in Switzerland where all the skills come together during ascent of a couple of alpine peaks with crevasse rescue skills and several increasingly complex scenario assessments.

Fifty per cent of the syllabus is practical mountain skills to ensure candidates have insight into the mountain environment in all weathers and seasons. All candidates must be relaxed in the environment in which they are going to operate and be capable of looking after themselves in the hills and on steep terrain. Their mountain skills are taught and assessed by a team of UK-based international mountain guides. The faculty which runs the diploma all have extensive mountain and medical skills. Some are active MR team members, some have experience on 8000-metre peaks and exploration in remote areas and several have enjoyed first ascents in the UK and abroad on rock and ice.

We hope everybody who qualifies will have an insight to their own limitations in terms of mountain and medical skills. If they offer to help during an incident we would hope they have an understanding of how a rescue team may work so they become a useful additional resource, capable of assisting in patient assessment and possibly treatment. They should have an understanding of the value of good efficient patient packaging and transport. Above all, they should be able to look after themselves and not be a liability to the team.

They may be carrying credit card-sized ID in several European languages to aid identification as a holder of this international diploma but it is also possible that it has been left in the car at the bottom of the hill. One would hope you could identify them by their quiet, professional but competent approach to an accident scene and their desire to contribute to patient care by sharing skills!

For details of the UIAA/IKAR/ISMM Diploma of Mountain medicine and a list of holders see: [www.medex.org.uk](http://www.medex.org.uk).



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**Main image:** Doctors in training.

**Below left:** Dr Mike Greene teaching at Plas y Brenin.

**Below centre:** Libby Peters scrambling day at Idwal.

**Below right:** Avalanche scenario Aonach Mor. Images © David Hillebrandt.



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For over twenty years, the Cave Rescue Organisation and Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue Association have joined forces to deliver an annual Casualty Care course.

To the uninitiated, here's the confusing bit — both teams undertake rescues below and above ground, collectively covering a wide area from Harrogate to Kirkby Lonsdale. This can be a little confusing for our casualties eg. a fell-runner on the Three Peaks being rescued by 'cave rescuers' or an injured caver in Dow Cave or Providence Pot being treated and extricated by 'fell rescuers'.

The course is delivered at both teams' headquarters — 'The Hut', at Grassington, for UWFRA and 'The Depot', at Clapham, for CRO.

For many team members, it's a chance to catch up with friends as they take the course for the second, third, fourth or even fifth time! Such a depth of experience is invaluable — always ensuring that the training delivered remains down-to-earth and practical. The joint team approach has also improved relations between the teams with increased familiarity of each team's personnel and equipment. This makes large rescues involving both teams run more smoothly.

CRO and UWFRA are fortunate to have members

from a wide variety of medical backgrounds to deliver the training. GPs, anaesthetists, nurses, physiotherapists, off-shore medics, paramedics and first aid trainers all join together to keep the course interesting and welcoming for new and old members alike. Some of the training team have been there from the start but, as the years have gone by, the team has grown, with new people and ideas always welcome.

This year's new idea has been an online course evaluation for candidates. It has highlighted some common themes with a request for more 'hands on' and scenario based training. Acting on this, our course dates for next year include an additional evening of training.



All images © Sara Spillet, UWFRA.

The highlight of every course is the practical exam on Friday evening, which takes place underground to ensure situations are as realistic as possible — darkness and water are common to both surface and underground rescues. Over the years, five different locations have been used, including two show caves. Recently, we have forged an excellent relationship with the management of White Scar Cave, near Ingleton. Good parking, loos and changing facilities for 'casualties' and candidates plus easy underground access (unlit, of course), ensure a swift setting up of scenarios in the far reaches of the cave. Additional members assist with comms and equipment, ensuring that candidates find their way to the various scenarios within the cave. Casualties for the exam are often offered from neighbouring teams — most recently from Swaledale MRT and Calder Valley SRT. In addition, friends and relative are also 'encouraged' to get involved.

To maintain the integrity of the course, we actively seek examiners who have not been course instructors. These doctors and paramedics are all 'outdoor people' with experience in outdoor medicine through their training with the RNLI, Coastguard and Military.

The exam night ends with piles of muddy wet kit being taken back to the depot at Clapham. Whilst team members get stuck into washing the kit, the examiners retreat upstairs for a debrief and discussion of all the candidates and scenarios, with the all important pass or fail being given. It is usually well past midnight by the time deliberations are complete and all the equipment is in the drying room.

All too soon, Saturday morning arrives and the task of contacting all of the candidates gets underway — hopefully with good news that they have passed!

## EXAMINING IN THE DARK: CASUALTY CARE UNDERGROUND STYLE! RAE LONSDALE



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Speakers include Prof. Sir Keith Porter (Professor of Traumatology, Birmingham), Dr Tim Nutbeam (Consultant in Emergency Medicine, Plymouth), Dr Andy Smith (Technical Director & Senior Medical Educator and Rugby World Cup England 2015), and Dr Paddy Morgan (Anaesthetic Consultant in Bristol and Critical Care Doctor with Great Western Air Ambulance). More details of the programme and speakers are available on our website.

The FPhC Myles Gibson Eponymous Lecture will be The International Response to Ebola in Sierra Leone given by Dr Amy Hughes.

FOR MORE DETAILS, AND TO BOOK YOUR PLACE PLEASE GO TO [WWW.BASICS.ORG.UK](http://WWW.BASICS.ORG.UK) OR CALL 01473 218 407



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### MAY: MOUNTAIN RESCUE FEATURES ON NEW MET OFFICE BLOG

May Bank Holiday saw the start of a regular series of short safety briefs from Mountain Rescue England and Wales, on the Met Office website.

Following the introductory post in May, when the project launched, each blog post will be attributed to a different officer. The initial post focused on how to call out mountain rescue and the second post in June featured vice chairman Mike Margeson discussing the sort of kit hill-goers should pack in their rucksacks. PR guru Sally Seed put the blogs together for the Met Office in what we hope will be an ongoing relationship.

[METOFFICE.GOV.UK/PUBLIC/MOUNTAIN-BLOGS](http://METOFFICE.GOV.UK/PUBLIC/MOUNTAIN-BLOGS)

### JUNE: RESCUERS RISK THEIR LIVES TO SAVE SWIMMER AS TWO DIE IN LLANBERIS RIVER

Two men died after getting into difficulties while swimming in a Snowdonia river and two others were taken to hospital after the incident at a Llanberis waterfall.

Llanberis team chairman Rob Johnson said three of its members had been exceptionally brave and risked their own lives in rescuing one of the swimmers from the river. The team was called at 8.35am to the incident, a few hundred metres upstream from Llanberis on the Afon Arddu. The report was that 'two persons were drowning in the waterfall'. Within five minutes, three team members had reached the location and were able to rescue one person from the water. 'In doing so,' says Rob, 'they showed exceptional bravery and skill and put their own lives on the line.' North Wales Police later reported that a 33-year-old man had died and the body of a man, aged 21, was found after a search.

[7 JUNE GROUGH.CO.UK](http://7 JUNE GROUGH.CO.UK)



### JUNE: WORKING TOGETHER

Lowland search and rescue team members worked alongside Mountain Rescue England and Wales team members in June to produce a training video and materials for the new Bristow SAR-H resource. Spot the difference!

[3 JUNE FACEBOOK.COM/LOWLANDRESCUE](http://3 JUNE FACEBOOK.COM/LOWLANDRESCUE)



### MAY: CALDER VALLEY RUNNERS JOIN IN THE CALDERDALE WAY RELAY

A team of 'enthusiastic' runners from the Calder Valley team competed against some of the region's best club runners in May, egged on by their less-energetic team mates who were providing rescue cover for the event.

Britain's biggest club-run off-road event is organised by Halifax Harriers Athletics Club and this was its thirty-first year with £1,800-worth of prizes up for grabs for record breaking teams and pairs. We can't claim they broke any records but they did have the smallest pair of runners in the entire race...

[18 MAY FACEBOOK.COM/CVSRT](http://18 MAY FACEBOOK.COM/CVSRT)

### JUNE: QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUERS

Three mountain rescuers are due a trip to Buckingham Palace after being recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours this year. All three have been awarded the MBE.

John Hulse, of Ogwen Valley MRO, will receive his honour for services to mountain rescue in Wales, England and Northern Ireland. Dr Geoff Bowen, a member of Langdale Ambleside MRT, received his award for services to the team. And Stephen Hilditch, team leader of Derby MRT, was recognised for services to mountain rescue in the Peak District and scouting in Derbyshire.

[12 JUNE GROUGH.CO.UK](http://12 JUNE GROUGH.CO.UK)

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