

# mountain rescue

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**57** SUMMER  
2016



THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE IN ENGLAND AND WALES



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## WELCOME TO ISSUE 57

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

## EDITORIAL

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## NEXT ISSUE ISSUE 58

Editorial Copy Deadline:  
Friday 9 September 2016

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).

## Cover story

A couple on the Coast to Coast walk were taking a shortcut via the tricky Sour Milk Ghyll when the lady fell, injuring her knee. Search Dog Isla swiftly located the lady, who was then stretchered down to the farm © Keswick MRT.

## PLEASE NOTE

Articles carried in Mountain Rescue do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Mountain Rescue England and Wales. We do not accept responsibility for advertising content.

# first Word

MIKE FRANCE



I am aware that some of what I am going to say was in my AGM report, but listening to some comments, from some members, I feel I need to try and reach as many of you as I can. I am also aware this magazine goes to non-MR members but it's also good for them to know that we aspire to be an open organisation.

I have now held the position of MREW chairman for two years and most of my views about the organisation have not changed. I continue to say this because I believe it: team members are the face of mountain rescue, you should and do decide how it's done at the front end. MREW is here to support you in carrying out that task, but sometimes we do need your help in doing that.

I believe it's about working together. I think we had a good AGM with some very positive things that are now being developed. I am very happy that you ask questions of us, your questions make us listen, reflect and ensure we are acting on your behalf. However, I don't think it's acceptable for members to be rude to officers just because we sit at the front, I am more than happy for you to disagree with any points made — we do make mistakes and the best way to deal with them is to learn, sort things out and put things right. Please remember MREW officers are just like all of you — volunteers. They are mountain rescuers who have offered to help at national level, so why would we no longer act or think like you about mountain rescue?

My other concern is that some of you think we would keep the difficult questions or information from you. Everything we do at national level is on the website for you to see. I hope by now you have seen the questions asked of us at this year's AGM. Following the meeting, I asked Dave Close to forward these on to you. Our learning here is that, before the next meeting in November, the new questions will be sent out with the paperwork. Being accused of only taking the easy questions is not true and is just not fair. The only reason for pre-questions is so that any research can be undertaken to give you the correct answer.

The good news from the AGM is you agreed to take the Operations Group forward. What we now need is someone from your regions to represent you at these meetings. Mike Margeson will chair the meetings and Elaine Gilliland will act as secretary. I think and hope

that these will be excellent meetings for developing good practice, cascading information from team to team through the people who will sit at that table. Remember these are new meetings for us, so they may take a little time to develop. Please help us make them work.

This is a good time to remind you there are some officer posts available. You asked for time limits on posts (rightfully so) but that only works if you are prepared to fill the vacancies. I do understand time is precious and balancing family life, work and then MR is all but impossible, but some of you have the skills to step up and help.

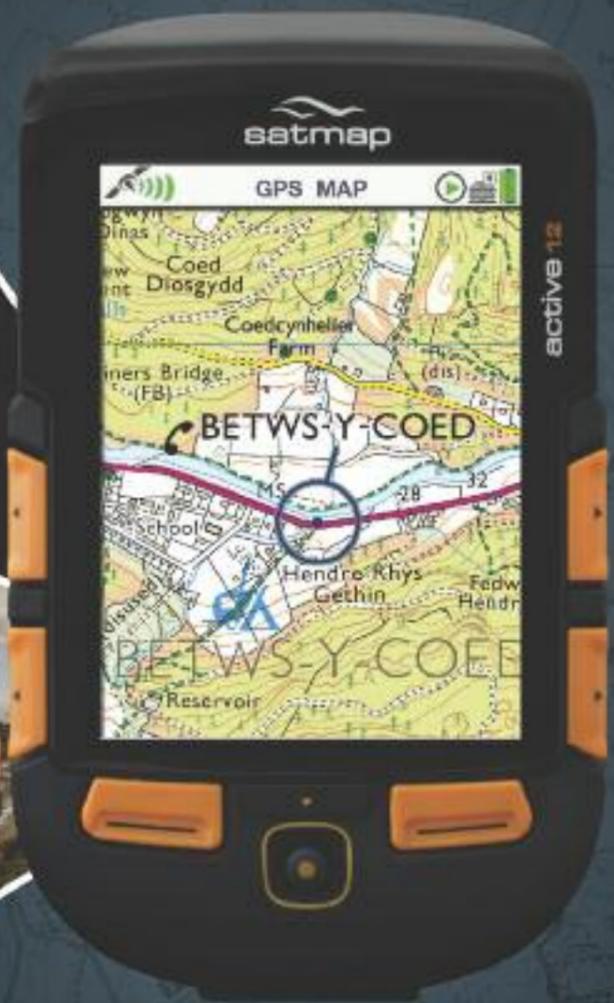
Julian Walden, Derby MRT leader has offered to act up and cover the water group for us as Andy Lee stood down as water officer in May. We still have vacancies for the fundraising manager, the press officer and a new post of communications and media manager. Please read the job descriptions — they are on the website, in full — and why not give it a go?

Insurance is a very important area of work for us and, with Neil Woodhead standing down from the role of insurance officer in May, we are thinking that this area of work should be outsourced like the legal role and the day-to-day finances. These areas can be very time consuming and they must be right. There has been a lot of pressure on individuals who have covered these roles, so I think it is now time to pay for these tasks to be done by companies.

The other great bit of news — which I guess you will all have heard about by now — is the support from JD Foundation. We need to embrace the offer and help them where we can. An important message for us is that, just because we now have this funding, we cannot sit back. Our insurance bill to cover your vehicles, the top-up of the accident policy and the public liability policy is around £100k per annum, so we need to keep fundraising. But this new money means we can look at things we only dreamed about in the past.

Like all our spending, you will be involved. We need to build our reserves — we don't have rainy day money. We need to look at what we really need to develop the organisation and communicate with you about that. If you have any good ideas, things we haven't done because we couldn't afford it, please let me know. ☺

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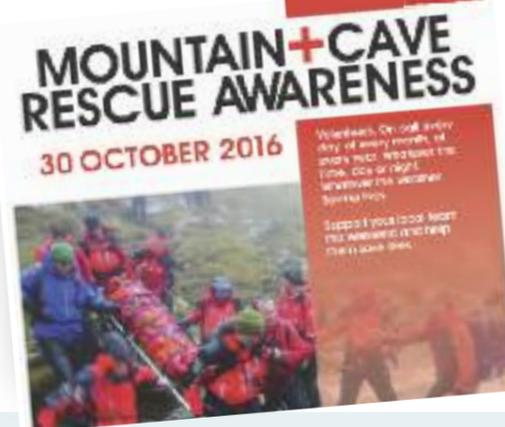
national news

meetings

**MREW BUSINESS AND COMMITTEES**  
Saturday 19 November 2016  
Lancashire Police HQ, Hutton

**MREW BUSINESS AND COMMITTEES**  
Saturday 20 May 2017  
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.



MREW PRESIDENT PETER BELL RETIRES FROM THE ROLE

To mark his retirement from the post, Peter was awarded a commemorative plaque at the MREW AGM in May.

Involved with mountain rescue for 56 years, Peter was a founder member of Ambleside Fell Rescue Team, formed to support the Langdale team (the two teams are now merged as Langdale Ambleside MRT), and has been involved both locally and nationally in MR for many years.



Probably best known for his eponymous stretcher — used by mountain rescue teams, through its various 'marks', since the early-1970s — Peter was his usual modest self, preferring to quietly retire without fuss.

'I didn't expect any sort of formal announcement,' said Peter, 'but the public thank you and presentation to mark my retirement was much appreciated. The role of president has been an enjoyable and not-too-arduous one and I have been pleased to be able to help mountain rescue in various ways during my ten years in the role'.

in this issue



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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.

## Using facts, figures and stats



News type © Spaceheader. Dreamstime.com

Have you had a chance to look at the new MREW Annual Review of the Year 2016? It's got a lime green cover with a flood rescue picture so it's hard to miss! If you haven't browsed it yet, I suggest that you do, not only so you know what's in it and can recommend it

or use it with supporters and stakeholders, but also because of some of the useful media gems in its pages...

- **Back cover map and summary.** A regional breakdown of MREW isn't necessarily the most earth-shattering source of facts and figures but there is a lot of useful information to be found here.
- How many teams are there across the country?
- Where do cave and mines rescue fit in?
- Which major urban areas fall into MR regions and does this create more search requests?
- And, an obvious but important one from the bottom of the page, how would someone in trouble call out mountain rescue?

• **Rob Shepherd's stats and incident records.** The spread on pages 6 and 7 is probably the most obvious source of media headline material and there is one stat that stands out from 2015. It's in the green box on the right hand side and I haven't yet found someone who isn't impressed by it.

It's not the big number, the 92,019 total of volunteer hours. **It's the fact that there were only 15 days in the whole of the year without a mountain rescue call-out.** That's a stat that immediately means something to almost anyone and it has an impact. It's easy

to grasp so it's also an ideal one to use in discussions with media or in communications with supporters.

The other useful message from the stats for media is about rock climbing and mountain biking. Basically, the decline in rock climbing incidents continues BUT incidents relating to mountain biking have increased alarmingly. It's worth looking at your own team stats and seeing if they're consistent with the trend and, if so, maybe making something of it with local bike shops or clubs — many of those involved in mountain biking will have no idea about MR and the trend in data could be a good hook for getting in touch.

- **Your end of things.** So how can you use facts and figures to add weight to your press releases, social media posts and your conversations with journalists?
  - Have your key dimensions up to date and in your head (or on a paper in your pocket). That's number of team members, how long the team's been active and number of incidents last year as a minimum. Some awareness of your 'hot spots' or local trends could be useful too, but it needs to be backed up by the figures if you can. For teams in traditional holiday areas, do you know how many collection boxes you have out and about and how many local businesses support you in this way?

- Make a note of the quirky figures in your team that don't make it to Rob. This might be how much vehicle fuel did you use last year? How many torch batteries? How much time dedicated to swiftwater training or medical updates? How many packs of biscuits consumed back at base? How many bacon butties during that weekend-long search? If you can quantify some of these then you've got them to hand to reinforce statements in press releases, or as the core of 'silly season' Facebook posts (with a photo) if there's not much else to say.

• Bear in mind the national context with your local activities. The Annual Review is a great summary of the numbers of incidents of different types and the scale of something like the December 2015 flooding activity. If you can establish your own team's or region's contribution to those bigger numbers, then that tells a stronger story too.

I hope some of these are useful when dealing with your media contacts. Journalists love facts and figures and MR has plenty of interesting potential to tell its story through a few key numbers.

If you have recent experience of this or something related to share, please get in touch with [sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk](mailto:sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk) or via the Editor. Thanks. ☺



HOW MANY PACKS OF BISCUITS CONSUMED BACK AT BASE? HOW MANY BACON BUTTIES DURING THAT WEEKEND-LONG SEARCH? QUANTIFY SOME OF THESE THEN YOU'VE GOT THEM TO HAND TO REINFORCE STATEMENTS IN PRESS RELEASES...

## ICT UPDATE: MARK LEWIS

I think it's safe to say that the last six months have been disappointing despite our best efforts with progress in some areas. The ICT committee had planned on a 'Mini Tech Day' updating teams on the new channel allocations, and demonstrating digital radios and their functions. Unfortunately, we're still waiting for the MCA and Ofcom to finalise the spectrum allocation so all the stakeholders can discuss operational requirements.



We have arranged with three manufacturers to loan us digital equipment. A small working group, which we hope will include some of our other SAR colleagues, will test the compatibility of the key functions we'll need to use. Tests will be carried out prior to the kit being made available for teams to loan. Despite the agreed digital standard being Tier III, there is still a lot for teams to learn on the compatibility between manufacturers.

Moodle online learning is now up and running, as Mike Greene demonstrated in May. Three regions have received training to help roll out and initially manage the application.

The next twelve months could be our busiest ever and I look forward to working with the expertise and support of ICT committee members, both locally and nationally.

## PUBLICATIONS UPDATE: ANDY SIMPSON

As Sally notes above, this year's Annual Review is now published. We've increased the print run this year in the hope that teams will also use it to augment their own material. It's a handy fundraising tool and conversation opener with supporters, colleagues in the emergency services and

government departments alike, so make the most of it. Teams can buy extra copies at a discounted £1 plus p&p (cover price £2) from Judy via [editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk).

We hope to launch the new website some time during the summer. As part of this, a series of downloadable info sheets have been produced which should be extremely useful for informing new (and old!) team members, the media and potential supporters.



## THE JD FOUNDATION PLEDGES GAME-CHANGING SUPPORT TO MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND AND WALES

At the MREW AGM in May, the JD Foundation — the registered charity of JD Sports Fashion plc which owns the Blacks outdoor group — pledged a level of support for MREW which will have a significant impact on mountain rescue over the next three years.

The money will come from revenue generated through the carrier bag charge scheme introduced by the government. An initial cheque for £218,273 was presented to MREW chairman Mike France by Traci Corrie, chair of the JD Foundation, at the AGM in May. This will be followed by regular donations of approximately £45,000 per quarter (depending on bag revenue), giving an anticipated £180,000 per annum for the next three years and amounting to nearly £750,000 over the period of the support.

'We spend a lot of time asking people to help us with our work,' says Mike, 'so for someone to come to us and offer support out of the blue is overwhelming and very much appreciated. To receive a cheque for a few thousand means we can sometimes make changes. To receive a cheque for this value is a game changer. It will give us the means to look at our long-term strategy. We are absolutely delighted'.

'Mountain Rescue is a vital commodity,' explains Traci, 'but, as a non-profit organisation, you are reliant on the generosity and support of the public to maintain this valuable community service. That's why we chose you as our environmental charity and we're delighted to be able to give our support and help with long term planning'.

As well as the funding from the JD Foundation, Blacks, part of the outdoor division of JD Sports Fashion plc — which also includes Millets and Ultimate Outdoors — will be working with MREW on a number of projects over the next three years.

'We'll be looking at designing specialist clothing together, featuring the MREW logo and information in stores and developing a longer-term strategy so that some of this generous support is invested in creating a more sustainable fundraising base for the future,' adds Mike

Top: Presentation of the cheque in May. Left to right: Bill Whitehouse, MREW fundraising officer, Traci Corrie, chair of the JD Foundation, Mike France, MREW chairman and Lee Bagnall, managing director, Blacks Outdoor Group

The party leaders' courses now include a section on media relations, delivered by Sally Seed. Hopefully, those most likely to come into contact with the media during incidents will now be better equipped to field enquiries and get their team's story across clearly and concisely.

## FUNDRAISING UPDATE: BILL WHITEHOUSE

The national fundraising team is very small and widely spread and many members are double — even triple — hatted, with commitments to other

committees, so it's not always easy to get together, and not all the avenues we go down show a return. Sadly, the relationship with Go Outdoors has faltered recently. They do still sell our pin badges through their



outlets but there appears to have been a loss of enthusiasm among senior managers to continue with the level of support we previously enjoyed. This may, in part be down to comments left on social media regarding an error in one of their catalogues. There's a lesson there: Please

do be careful about what you publish. That seemingly witty comment can do untold damage!

On a more positive note, we have had some successes this year (not least, of course, the news from the JD Foundation, reported above.)

Varta will be continuing their support for another three years. Last year, the second year of their initial two-year agreement, they lived up to its 'Proud to power mountain rescue' slogan by providing teams with 31,000 free or at-cost batteries. Each team also received a bundle of Varta products worth £200 to use in their own fundraising. Teams can now continue to buy

batteries, powerpacks and torches at cost using the existing arrangements.

Basecamp membership remains steady. Revenue from the film continues to trickle in too (currently at £3,436.36).

Elsewhere, watch out for the Dizzy Blonde this summer! In July and August, Robinsons Brewery will sell this seasonal ale in their 300 or so pubs in North Wales and the north west of England. Five pence from every pint will go to a charity selected by each pub and we're happy to say we're one of the recommended charities.

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## MEDICAL UPDATE: MIKE GREENE

Following last year's survey, we can now better understand the role played by healthcare professionals in MREW and how they can be supported. The provision of PHTLS courses and VLE will support some of these needs.

I'd like to remind teams of the need to comply with the legal responsibilities of keeping controlled drugs and the



importance of reporting any possible concerns to the MREW Medical Officer, who holds the licence for the organisation.

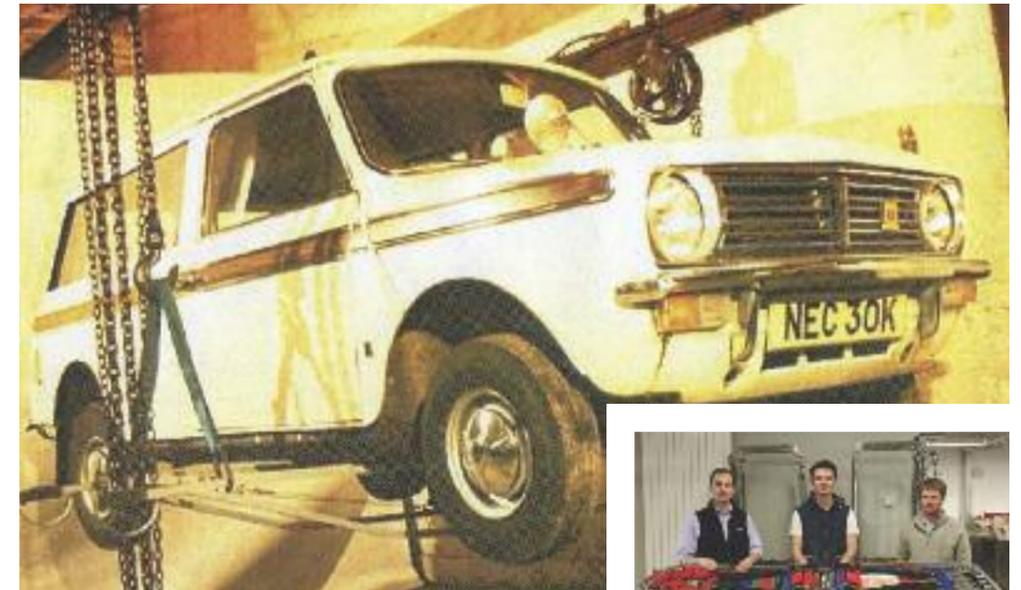
Three VLE Moodle modules are now available: Casualty Care Certificate Learners, Casualty Care Administration and Faculty and CPD. A series of 'Show and Tell' videos have also been commissioned. These have been produced in conjunction with DMRT and are now available on the VLE.

## TRAINING UPDATE: AL READ

The last year has seen a number of key areas develop with training, including the Water First Responder and 4x4 Off-Road Instructor training, as well as the continued delivery of the SAR-H S92 and AW139 stage 2B and 2C training at regional level.

I'm grateful for all involved in the different aspects — thank you for your ongoing support. Sadly, we've also lost a number of key people who helped develop, deliver and support many aspects of training over the years.

Training should not be an end to itself — it should come from operational requirements — and the role of an operations group and the peer review process will help frame our direction. Nationally-funded training, working to a national syllabus,



**Above:** Testing of the original Bell stretcher using a mini. **Right:** Key members of the Lyon production team directly involved in the new stretcher project.



## EQUIPMENT UPDATE: JOHN WEALTHALL

Following on from the MREW AGM in May, Chris Bagworth has kindly stepped forward as the new vice chairman of the equipment committee. He will also continue with his position as secretary of the committee too, so welcome Chris and thank you.

At the end of the last financial year, there was a certain amount of money left over from the last of the NHS grants. This has been used to purchase more casbags and vacmats via Aguille and Snowsled respectively and I'd like to thank both those companies for carrying on this work. They are available to teams, at no cost, if your current item is damaged beyond repair or has reached the end of its working life. Email me via [equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk), if your team needs one.

The new Bell stretcher is selling well, with nine now sold and the likelihood of two more orders soon. Bear in mind that half the cost of one of these stretchers is met by MREW and again, if you want one, get in touch. Please remember that any Mark 2 stretchers will no longer be serviced once their current certificates expire and will, therefore need to be replaced.

**Please contact me with any issues involving your current stretchers or a replacement one. Can I ask that you do not contact Lyon Equipment direct on this matter.**

has significant advantages when teams work together and one of the secondary benefits of regional delivery has been the greater interaction of teams.

Ongoing challenges include maintaining delivery standards, helping teams to access good quality training which meets operational requirements and ensuring that we meet the expectations of external agencies.

We received a significant training grant from Libor for

2016-2017 which will enable more national level training. Most of this will be delivered regionally, but sometimes there are clear advantages to bringing together team members to develop more advanced skills and abilities and this would be hard to do at a regional level. For example, the development of a 3-day Advanced Search Planning and Management module will maintain the knowledge and skills of search managers for



difficult searches, but this would be best delivered nationally, using experienced search managers. Likewise the Party Leader course had favourable

feedback — not least because it brought people from a wide range of teams together.

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# Peer review: Six months in

## OVERVIEW TIM CAIN

The third peer review finished in June with feedback to Kendal MRT sent to the team exactly three weeks later. The process of reflection and discussion between the reviewers after the visit has proved very worthwhile. Although somewhat time consuming, it ensures breadth, clarity and assurance in the feedback which would otherwise be difficult for individual feedback to achieve.



I hope the feedback distils, for the MR team whose review it is, a fair and accurate reflection of their situation, processes and self-assessed performance. The feedback itself has developed since Bowland Pennine conducted their review back in November. Reviewer comments and suggestions are now included, where appropriate to the observations, because teams were keen to hear what the visitors felt about aspects of team process. The peer review process remains, however, an opportunity for participating teams to gain greater self-awareness of their own situation.

The table below gives the state of play in terms of who has booked a review, whether the process has started and if feedback has been delivered.

Team	Review Date	Started	Feedback Delivered
Bowland Pennine	Nov 2015		
Wasdale	Feb 2016		
Kendal	May 2016		
Dartmoor Plymouth	June 2016		
NEWSAR	July 2016		
SARA	Aug TBC		
Woodhead	Sept 2016		
RPMRT	Nov 2016		
NNPMRT	March 2017		
Cleveland	July 2017		
Bolton	Sept 2017		

As we learn from the process, we are adapting to develop an optimum way of conducting reviews. Dartmoor SRT Plymouth will be using the latest form of review with the first day now split into four parts:

- Part 1. SWOT analysis, where the team states their perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Part 2. Discussion about processes and policies, operations and training. The whole review team explores these subjects with the team's key stakeholders.
- Part 3. Subgroup discussions exploring medical, equipment, TRiM and technical rescue. Individual review team members explore these subjects with the team's leads for each.
- Part 4. Open forum. The review team meet wider team members to get their views on the team's processes and performance.

Day Two remains a field exercise, where the team has the opportunity to demonstrate its operational processes and performance.

The current Peer Review pilot lasts until October 2017. There are, therefore, still opportunities for teams to take advantage of the process. Teams who are interested in conducting their own reviews should contact me as soon as possible. Currently 25 volunteers have said they are happy to help other teams with their reviews. Acting as a reviewer is an excellent way of seeing how other teams do business and deciding if the process might be good for your own team. Again, if you'd like to be a part of the review team pool, please contact me.

Looking forward, we hope to gather those who have been involved in the process to decide how best to exploit the learning for the benefit of all teams. Possible initiatives already under discussion include training for reviewers; team progress reviews, one year on from the main review, with the intent of helping the team achieve some of the goals recognised out of the review process; and short 'mini-reviews' looking at single subject topics ie. Medical. The outcome goal for the peer review pilot is to embed the process across teams so we have a system we can use as and when we want to 'have a look in the mirror'. ☺



## UPDATE BOWLAND PENNINE KEV CAMPLIN & TIM COX

Bowland Pennine MRT participated in peer review over the weekend of 6/7 November. This was followed by a feedback meeting with Tim on 17 December. Actions were identified at this meeting as needing the team's consideration and attention and these generally derived from the reviewers asking searching questions.

Following closely on the heels of the review, storms Desmond and Eva put the team's capability and resilience to the test and although we were able to respond very positively, it brought into focus many of the aspects highlighted by the peer review in terms of multi-agency working, interoperability and major incident planning. Quite a lot of water has literally passed under the bridge since then so what have we done in the six months since the review?

A Trauma Risk Incident Management (TRiM) training course has been arranged regionally, with four team members signed up to participate, and another planned for next year.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) attended a familiarisation visit to our base at Ray Lane and this is being followed up with a joint water training exercise. Although we work closely with the ambulance, air ambulance and police we haven't previously worked closely with LFRS.

A Water Incident Manager (WIM) has been identified for training in this coordination role.

A written major incident plan is currently being formalised, along with reviewing and updating our Standing Operational Procedures (SOPs). We are endeavouring to work more closely with our partners, and this includes major incident planning and training.

The team has not lost sight of the issues identified by the peer review and we are actively pursuing more improvement in our operational procedures. A number of initiatives have been formulated which will come to fruition in the next six months, so a further review after a year will see significant developments. This will not be the end of the process as it is not practical to do everything at once and some issues of a less pressing nature can be covered at a later date. ☺

## UPDATE KENDAL DAVE HUGHES

We're now one month post-peer review but I have to say the collective relief at the end of that weekend was almost palpable. 'We did alright, didn't we?'... 'Not as bad as I thought'... 'Couldn't have gone better, I think'... However, this is only the start.

We now have the reviewers' thoughts, and a mountain of notes captured on flip charts, to start making sense of. The next stage will be breaking down the review into a number of distinct areas so we can plan how to share good practice and improve our weaker areas. This will be the core of our improvement plan. Some areas will need more work than others and we may start polling other teams (initially probably via the Facebook group) about how they do things. Similarly we're happy to help others by sharing our best practice.

This process may take some time! However, no matter how long it takes, and whether or not there is a follow-up in future, the question set provided by Tim is an excellent framework for looking at how a mountain rescue team works. We can challenge ourselves against it as we see fit. Speaking personally, I'd be happy to go through the process again (in a couple of years, maybe), to see if we've improved as much as I hope.

The peer review itself will change over time, some aspects of our review were more comfortable than others and the process has some rough edges, which Tim is polishing all the time! I'm happy to talk to anyone about any aspect of our experience. Contact me via [chair@kendalmrt.org.uk](mailto:chair@kendalmrt.org.uk). ☺



'PEER REVIEW WAS A DEMANDING PROCESS BUT VERY WORTHWHILE. THE KEY... IS TO KEEP THE REVIEW ONGOING AND 'LIVE' AND NOT LET IT GATHER DUST IN A DRAWER AND THAT IS DOWN TO US. I CAN ONLY RECOMMEND THE PROCESS TO ALL TEAMS'.

## UPDATE WASDALE JOHN BAMFORTH

Three months after completing the main part of the peer review exercise, we invited Tim down to base to one of our committee meetings. The purpose was to clarify some of the points made in the response from the review team. I have to say at this point that the response to the questionnaire was very detailed, comprehensive and hugely constructive. Our queries were relatively minor in comparison. In the interim period between the response becoming available and this final wrap-up meeting we had collated some of the responses into themes to make the meeting more targeted.

As a team, we only have so much time and have decided to look at areas that represent the greatest risk to the team. One of the areas was having the right amount of skills in the team, which covers a number of facets from recruitment (we find this has been an issue for the last few years), to probationer training and dealing with training competencies as the membership changes and more skills are required to be retained. I am guessing many teams will also find this whole process to be an issue. We don't have all the answers yet but we've started to focus on building up crag and medical skills in the team and have agreed to set up a recruitment campaign.

All in all, peer review was a demanding process but very worthwhile. The key to getting the value out of it is to keep the review ongoing and 'live' and not let it gather dust in a drawer and that is down to us. I can only recommend the process to all teams. Good luck! ☺

The widespread flooding in Cumbria and York tested, on an operational level, some of the concepts being developed by the Major Incident Task Group. In the main it worked well, but we do have areas that can be developed further, and flooding is only one type of incident.

We do have to engage with others on a wider basis and we have re-established links with the College of Policing via the Police National Search Centre. We now have the opportunity to talk about what we do to the new Police Search Advisers (PoSAs) as they come through their courses, and to review proposed changes that affect police search training and capability, via the NPCC Search Governance Board.

There remain some challenges with SAR-H training — some regions had difficulty gaining access to the aircraft due to limited time, due to a number of the new aircraft being delayed in arriving during the work-up phase. The take up of Stage 1A training was good, but we need to maintain that level as we transition in to steady state. The SAR-H group is engaging with the MCA and Bristow to identify and address issues as they arise but the role of the group, the regional SPOCs and SAR-H link members is vital to make it all work.

The changeover to the ARCC being run out of the MCA National Maritime Operation Centre seems to have been relatively smooth but if issues do arise they can be directed to the SAR-H group to discuss with the MCA at the next user group meeting.

The future funding of training has some uncertainty. We can access Libor funds on an annual basis but that will eventually stop. It is difficult to provide a long term plan without a reliable funding stream — to develop and deliver training that a team member feels is useful, enjoys and has a positive impact to any casualty. ☺



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## SAR-H issues Downwash

JOHN HULSE

Photo © Keswick MRT.

The S-92A can create a higher downwash than the Sea King in a number of circumstances such as a 'still-air day', or when the downwash is funnelled down a gully or by other terrain features. This is due to the need to keep an eleven-ton aircraft in the air using a narrower rotor disk than the Sea King. This high movement of air is typically in a column/ doughnut shape below the aircraft.

### MITIGATION

The downwash has to be locally managed by the MRT on the ground; there is little the crew can do to influence the magnitude of the downwash apart from being somewhere else. The ten key steps you can take should include:

- 1 Ensure all team members who are interacting with the aircraft are current with their iSAR training which deals specifically with downwash management.
- 2 Ensure suitable eye and ear PPE is used by all team members when in or near the 'hot-zone'.
- 3 Ensure strong, clear and effective incident site management discipline.
- 4 Keep the number of personnel in the 'hot-zone' to the absolute minimum needed for that phase of the operation. Ensure unauthorised people do not enter the 'hot-zone'. Some teams implement a very effective path-blocking method when dealing with crowded locations.
- 5 The incident site lead call sign needs to clearly communicate with the aircraft to plan the operational phase and work around the incident site. If you are not ready for the aircraft, then say so and ask them politely to stand-off until you are ready!
- 6 Secure all equipment and personnel **BEFORE** the aircraft arrives on scene.
- 7 Do **NOT** try to walk around when the aircraft is overhead.
- 8 If unsecured equipment gets blown away in the downwash or winching process, do **NOT** try to run after it. Recover it after the aircraft has stood-off.
- 9 When being winched out onto hazardous ground, plan to secure yourself immediately to a suitable anchor point or equivalent. Do not come out of the strop unless you are absolutely sure you will be safe.
- 10 Be aware that:
  - a. On initial approach to the hover you can expect dust, snow, water, loose plant materials etc, to be lifted and blown around.
  - b. Downwash may well dislodge rocks etc, so try to work to one side of the natural fall-line. Avoid working in gullies if at all possible.
  - c. When working near trees with the aircraft overhead, downwash can break or dislodge large branches.
  - d. When working in snow-covered areas, the risk of avalanche may be increased by downwash.

### SUMMARY

Downwash is a generic issue when working near any larger civil or military SAR helicopter. However, by taking suitable precautions and carefully managing the incident site, much of the potentially hazardous nature of the downwash can be safely mitigated.

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## TONY JONES MBE 1939 – 2016

MREW vice president Dr A S G Jones (AKA Tony Jones) died on 6 May, aged 77 years, after suffering a degenerative illness for a number of months. **Chris Lloyd** looks back over his remarkable life and lifelong commitment to the cause of mountain rescue.

Tony was a major influence on mountain rescue in the UK. Born in India, the son of an officer of the British Indian Army, as a young boy he moved back to his mother's home country of South Africa. Childhood polio left him with a weak leg but, growing up in the shadow of Table Mountain he soon took an interest in the mountains and



Tony enjoying the snow and ice, ice axe ever at the ready. Photos © OVMRO.

joined the Mountaineering Club of South Africa, a membership which he kept for sixty years. Through this, he became involved with mountain rescue.

Having graduated in Marine Geology, he moved to the UK in 1963 to further his studies at Aberystwyth University, and joined the university mountaineering club.

In 1965 when Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation began, it was trusted groups of mountaineers who staffed the team. The Aberystwyth group was one of these and Tony's introduction to mountain rescue in the UK. Having gained his Phd, he moved to lecture in Marine Geology at

University College of Wales, Bangor and, in 1966, became a full member of OVMRO. He was subsequently appointed a team leader, an office he held until 1998 and, in 1969, he was elected chairman, a position he held for 21 years.

Being a single man and living in university halls, where he was warden, he could devote his free time to studies of mountain rescue. He was chairman of North Wales Mountain Rescue Association for forty years and became involved with the then Mountain Rescue Committee. Over thirty years, he was involved with several committees, including radio 'communications', was vice chairman for several years, and later a trustee.

Tony encouraged innovation. In his early days, his good friend, Dr Ieuan Jones realised that with better first aid at the accident site, the better the outcome for the casualty. Ieuan devised a series of first aid courses for both RAF and civilian teams. Tony was soon teaching these to team members around the country. Following a visit to the US, he helped bring the American style of search management back to the UK.

Through his contacts in the US, he established close contact with the USAF PJs (special forces medics) stationed in England who came to Snowdonia to train. In fact, Tony became an honorary PJ member, their motif of a pair of green feet proudly tattooed on his buttocks.

In 1992, Tony's contribution to mountain rescue was recognised by TV's 'This is your Life'. Being a man who did not enjoy publicity, nor possess a television, there was some trepidation by the three Ogwen members who organised the event when the Wessex helicopter landed and Michael Aspel jumped out with the red book. As he walked up to Tony and said 'Dr Tony Jones, this is your life', it was fortunate there were enough good friends around to make sure Aspel wasn't told what he could do with his red book!

In 1995, Tony was awarded the MBE, a thoroughly deserved honour for years of dedication to mountain rescue. When he resigned as a team member in 1999, he was made an honorary member.

Tony was also a member of the Climbers' Club. For many years he was hut warden at Helyg, their Ogwen hut. He was also a member of the Alpine Club and, despite his weakened leg, he summited Mont Blanc, Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya.

Soon after his arrival in Bangor, Tony joined the local fire service. In 1970 he was able to put this experience to good use when the drying room of the Clachaig Inn, Glencoe, caught fire. When the fire engine arrived, he volunteered his expertise, using the hose to save the fine selection of malt whisky displayed behind the bar.

On 26 May his funeral, in Bangor cathedral, was attended by members of mountain rescue across England and Wales, alongside the RAF and 22 Squadron, the police, MCA and RNLI.

A number of eulogies demonstrated the huge influence and diverse contribution Tony made and the service ended with a small local choir singing a stirring rendition of Nkosi Sikele Afrika, the national anthem of South Africa.

A book should be written about this unusual and remarkable man: born in India, brought up in South Africa, with the Welsh surname of Jones, who



regularly wore a kilt of Scottish tartan! He led with single-minded authority. He was a generous man, always willing to help fledgling team members with his vast knowledge of mountain rescue. He was respected for that authoritative knowledge which had been gained by thorough research and the university of life. For those who knew him and worked with him, they will know that it was a privilege to have known Dr ASG Jones MBE. ☺

## CHANGING CHAIRS AROUND THE NATIONAL TABLE

We have vacancies on the management team so if you fancy getting involved at national level — or think you know someone who might fit the bill — email Dave Close via [secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk) for a full job description.

**Publications and Information** is changing its name, to reflect the huge expansion in areas of responsibility over recent years. Andy Simpson is currently continuing in the post as chairman, although his ten-year tenure was up in May.

'Marketing and Communications' will be led by a **Marketing and Communications Manager** who (pretty much as before) will keep an overview on all aspects of the group's activity, both internally and externally.

The role of **Press Officer** will now be separate. He or she will be responsible for raising the profile of MR through the media and other channels. These individuals will be expected to work closely with each other, external professionals such as the editor and social media, website and PR advisers, as well as the chairs of all the other departments.

Daryl Garfield will step down as **Vehicles Officer** in November, so this post will be advertised from then. Andy Lee stepped down as **Water Officer** immediately prior to the May meeting. Julian Walden, team leader of Derby MRT, will be caretaking the role until November, so any queries related to water, please direct them to him via [waterofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:waterofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk).

Bill Whitehouse is currently looking after the **Fundraising Officer** post, in lieu of a new appointment to the chair and we are also looking for **President, Vice President** and **Assistant Treasurer**.



## TRIP TO THE POLO 2016 MIKE FRANCE

Soon after the Duke of Cambridge became our patron, we were invited along to one of his polo matches, which raise money for his various charities. At the time we were told these were 'one offs'. But, thanks to the Duke, his polo manager Andrew Tucker and Beaufort Polo Club, we were asked back again this year and, if I am not mistaken, this is the eighth year running, so let's keep our heads down and our fingers crossed for next year.

Some of the money received has helped us fund the Princes' Forum charity days, which I think we would all agree bring as much pleasure to us as they do the children and young people we entertain. This year, it was a great opportunity to say thank you to the JD Foundation by inviting them to be our guests at this special day out, watching William play polo. Traci Corrie and Victoria Grimshaw joined Elaine Gilliland and myself, leaving at 7.00am to be in Gloucestershire for 11.00am.

This is one of those days when you don't wear your boots or your red jacket, so you do hope for sunshine. We may not have had the sunshine but at least it didn't rain. I did notice at the end of the day that Elaine had given up on her heels and was walking barefoot on the grass. Some people are born to wear boots.

Lunch at 12.15pm, was followed by the charity auction, with some great things to bid for (all out of my range) including tickets to Wales v South Africa, a day out with Maserati at Goodwood, a champagne tasting trip to France, thanks to Pommery and a Piaget Polo 'FortyFive' watch that went for £4,100. The Maserati Royal Trophy started at 2.30pm with Maserati versus Piaget. The Duke played in his normal number 4 shirt for the Maserati team. It was an action-packed game, watched by an enthusiastic crowd, and Maserati won 9 to 6½.

After the presentations and afternoon tea (more food), it was time for the next match, an international between Piaget Young England and the Young Ireland team (guess who Elaine was cheering on). Another action-packed match.

It's always a long day, but we were well looked-after and coming away with yet another large cheque makes it all worth while.

Top: William in action © Mike France. Left: Elaine Gilliland, Victoria Grimshaw, Traci Corrie and Mike meet William and Harry.

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.



### SECRETARY: DAVE CLOSE

[secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk) or  
Acts 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'.  
Vice chair: Paul Smethurst: [smethyp@gmail.com](mailto:smethyp@gmail.com)



### WATER: JULIAN WALDEN

[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. Julian is a member of Derby 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: [ian@sardogs.org.uk](mailto:ian@sardogs.org.uk)



### EQUIPMENT: JOHN WEALTHALL

[equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
John takes over from Richard Terrell, looking after all things equipment. He is a member of Duddon and Furness MRT.



### ASSISTANT SECRETARY: ELAINE GILLILAND

[assistant-secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:assistant-secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Assists Dave Close in the secretary role. Elaine is a member of Bolton MRT.



### 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

[bcrc@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:bcrc@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.

## external trustees



### 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.



### 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.

## internal



### 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 since 1990, during which time she has undertaken a variety of roles at all levels. She is also treasurer of the Benevolent Fund.



### 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.

## 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)  
Member of Kinder MRT and 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.



### STATISTICS: ROB SHEPHERD

[statisticsofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:statisticsofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Collects and collates incident information from the teams. A member of Llanberis MRT and North Wales CRO, he is also involved with SARDA Wales.



### PROCUREMENT OFFICER: DAVIE THOMSON

[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.



...turn to page 41 for BCRC contacts





## team news

LAKE DISTRICT REVIEW OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE RESPONSE TO FLOODING IN CUMBRIA, 5-7 DECEMBER 2015

MIKE GULLEN OPERATIONS OFFICER LDSAMRA

The debrief which followed the floods in December last year identified some common themes and key pieces of learning. A full version of the report, covering operational issues, infrastructure (including welfare facilities), tasking and SARCALL, resourcing and interaction with partner agencies, is available from Mike via operations@ldsamra.org.uk. The following is a summary of the recommendations and improvements suggested.

- Teams deploying outside their normal area should go with a level of self-sufficiency in terms of maps, decontamination, food and drink for at least the first few hours. Those attending command posts should go equipped with a suitable phone or other IT to provide WiFi where none is immediately available. Funding for phones used in this way might be considered by LDSAMRA.

- Support national efforts to develop a common way to mark cleared houses.

- Consider the provision of specialist equipment for evacuation of care homes or animals. Gain more familiarity with reception centre capabilities. Both might be incorporated in future pre-plans.

- LDSAMRA should consider further the potential for Bowland Pennine and other Mid-Pennine personnel to act as MR advisers at NWAS control room in Broughton during major incidents.

- Consider the following in any grant applications post-incident: small rafts for working inside houses, satellite navigation systems, floating torches, water radios. Also consider whether central purchasing would help improve equipment standards (and reduce costs) for the region.

- Consider undertaking a radio survey of Carlisle and other Cumbrian towns to determine optimum rebroadcast locations for MR radio and then present these in the team appendices to the MIP. This would facilitate using MR radio and GPS tracking in future.

- Highlight to police, NWAS and CFRS the need for facilities in their buildings to support MR cells in any future major incident, in particular IT and WiFi access.

- Publish each team's radio frequencies in the MIP and SARCALL regional/national contacts page.

- Review the LDSAMRA conference call facility.

- Agree the proposed SARCALL tasking system with police and NWAS. Present it in the MIP and include in future training.

- Identify SARCALL advisers, either inside or outside the region, at the start of a major incident.

- Establish a resourcing plan for Silver, Bronze(s), Police HQ and other key roles near the start of the incident that can be maintained for a period of days.

- Improve continuity for out-of-county teams by dedicated contact point from

departure through to tasking. Consider separate log for out-of-county deployments and improved welfare.

- When deploying water resources outside of a team's area follow the Defra Team Typing Scheme. Regional Silver will look to buddy people up where numbers dictate.

- Work with CFRS to improve operational relationships (where they are weak). Also consider recommending to FRS nationally about improving the awareness of tactical advisers of MR capabilities and limitations.

- MREW should develop a national protocol on how to request MR support from other regions (and potentially also Scotland).

- Another regional major incident exercise should be held and related training provided.

- A group of base operators and team leaders should be developed to help run such incidents, with enough capability to operate 24 hours for 2-3 days. The exercise might also include representatives from partner agencies. Alternatively, look to involve more MR personnel in countywide exercises.

- An LDSAMRA Task and Finish Group is needed to take forward these recommendations. ☺

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**MID PENNINE**

**QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR BOLTON TEAM**

The team was recognised in May for its service to the community, following a year which saw them dealing with 99 call-outs and playing a key role in flood rescue and support both 'at home' and further afield during December.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service is the highest award given to local volunteer groups in recognition of their outstanding work in their communities. Bolton was one of 193 charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups to receive the Award in 2016. The award was created in 2002 to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee and winners are announced each year on 2 June, the anniversary of her coronation.

The team will receive the award from the Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Warren Smith KStJ JP DLitt LLD later this summer. In the meantime, Garry Rhodes MBE, who retired as team leader in March this year, represented colleagues at Buckingham Palace in May.

'It was a privilege and honour to represent the team at the Royal Garden Party. The award is recognition of every member's contribution and service to our community and it is a particular honour to receive it in the Queen's ninetieth year', said Garry.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service Committee chairman, former broadcast journalist Sir Martyn Lewis warmly congratulated 'all of the inspirational voluntary groups who have been rewarded for their community work'. The judging panel, he said, 'were struck by the quality and breadth of all the successful groups' and 'the thousands of volunteers who give up spare time to help others in their community'.

**BOLTON'S GARRY RHODES STEPS DOWN AFTER 36 YEARS**

When Garry Rhodes MBE joined Bolton MRT — initially for two short periods in the early-1970s and then again in 1980, before rejoining yet again in March 1983 — no one could have imagined the impact he was to have on the team and its members.

But, having served 36 years, with 27 as team leader, he has stepped down from the post. Garry became the seventh team leader for Bolton in 1989, having previously served as deputy leader and team training officer. His commitment to the team is nothing short of phenomenal — as all who know him will attest — and he now ranks as one of the



**Top:** Bolton team members assembled. **Left:** 'One day, Alastair... all this will be yours...' **Above:** Left to right: MREW Chairman Mike France, Garry and his partner Ann, MREW Press Officer Andy Simpson. Photos © Bolton MRT.

longest-serving team leaders in MR across the UK.

When Garry took on the role, a call-out was an unusual occurrence but the team now regularly attend around 100 incidents a year. The biggest increase is due to the many 'ambulance assists', supporting NWAS in the treatment and evacuation of casualties, which often involves working alongside the North West Air Ambulance.

Since he became team leader, Garry has been involved in over 2,000 incidents, attended over 1,135 Wednesday evening training exercises and 325 standby rescue cover events, including involvement in the 2002 Commonwealth Games events held around Rivington, which forms part of the team's patch.

In May 2008, he was awarded the MBE for 'services to Bolton Mountain Rescue Team'. and, in December 2002, received the very rarely presented Bolton Civic Medal.

He may have stepped down, but his commitment to mountain rescue continues, as an 'ordinary' operational team member. He can also now spend more time with his

partner of twenty-four years, Ann, and their two grandchildren Megan and Oliver and has plans to travel the mountains at home and abroad in his motorhome.

On Saturday 11 June the team held a dinner to acknowledge Garry's dedication and commitment to Bolton MRT and the people it serves. Meanwhile, taking up the gauntlet as team leader is Alistair Greenough who joined the team in 2002.

**CALDER COMMEMORATIVE WALK**

On Saturday 30 April, members of Calder Valley SRT past and present, supporters, families and friends gathered for a commemorative walk as part of their fiftieth anniversary year.

The walk was particularly significant because it reflected part of the ill-fated route taken, on 29 November 1965, by Robert Akrigg, the reservoir keeper who set out in blizzard conditions with his son Donald, to



**Top:** in attendance were eight team leaders past and present, photographed for posterity and chronologically from the left to right: Current team leader Ben Carter, Al Day, Mick Smith, Graham Astley, Dave Kingham, Pete Farnell, Peter Smith OBE and Malcolm Proctor. **Above:** Team members and supporters gathered for the Commemorative Walk.

check rain gauges in the catchment area. Parting company at the junction between Reaps Water and Dicken Dyke, Robert set off towards Raistrick Greave. Donald returned to the rendezvous having completing his tasks, but Robert never arrived.

It is known that Robert checked the gauges near Raistrick Greave, but from there on, his route is not confirmed. From here, the commemorative walk followed footpaths to the point where Robert's body was eventually discovered on 6 February 1966, when the heavy snowdrifts thawed and severe weather abated.

Donald Akrigg and his wife were able to join the walkers for the whole route, along with Chris Ambler, who worked for the water board at the time. Chris, along with CVSRT president Bob Uttley and Peter Legg (one of the local landowners) all provided some additional information surrounding the area and initial search.

Also in attendance were eight team leaders (past and present), photographed for posterity and chronologically from the right: Malcolm Proctor, Pete Smith, Pete Farnell, Dave Kingham, Graham Astley, Mick Smith, Al Day and current team leader Ben Carter. There are some gaps due to previous team leaders being absent or sadly deceased.

On reflection, even following official footpaths on Saturday in spring weather (albeit changeable with bright sunshine to



**Above:** Team member Clive Green demonstrates the 'Nossac' stretcher and a Whillans harness at Heptonstall Quarry, near Hebden Bridge in 1974. The Nossac was named after the late Don Casson, who was a team leader in the early days. Don had set up a training exercise at Blackstone Edge where he placed himself in one of the narrow crevasse holes at the top of the crag. He was a big bloke and the team couldn't get him out! The stretcher was subsequently developed to extract casualties from inaccessible places that couldn't be reached with a conventional stretcher. Sadly, this piece of equipment history has been lost in time. Photo from the Calder archive.

hail), the conditions underfoot were difficult to negotiate, but helped all the walkers gain a better understanding of the difficulties Robert would have had finding his way in the blizzard conditions.

Eventually all participants made it back to

the starting point for some welcome refreshment at the Pack Horse Inn at Widdop. The perfect opportunity to recount stories from the past and remember the teams origins.



**Above:** BPMRT TL Kevin Camplin presents MREW 25 year Long Service Certificates to Paul Heap and Iain Nicholson. **Below:** Iain with Search Dog Mij, who retired in March 2012 having undertaken over 200 searches with 14 missing person finds in her seven years' service.



Derby team member and paramedic David Whitmore receiving his Queen's Ambulance Service Medal from Prince Charles at Buckingham Palace in June.

**CALDER ANNIVERSARY BOOKLET NOW ON SALE**

The limited edition booklet traces the team's origins, recounts numerous incidents from the archives and offers a unique glimpse of life then and now as part of Calder Valley Search and Rescue Team.

Team president Bob Uttley said, 'It's wonderful that the team has gone from strength to strength over the last fifty years and is now a respected emergency service operating over 400 square miles of West Yorkshire and working alongside the police, ambulance and fire service. During its existence, it has dealt with upwards of 900 call-outs. Most of these fall within Yorkshire, but we have also assisted other rescue teams outside this area'.

The booklet is available from the team's online shop at [www.cvsrt.org.uk](http://www.cvsrt.org.uk) for just £8 plus £1 p&p (UK only) or from any team member. Alternatively, donate £5 to the team via the link on the shop and they will send you a link to access the digital flipbook version. All proceeds, of course, go towards keeping the team operational.



On Wednesday 4 May, Kinder team members were honoured to be invited to provide hill-safety cover for HRH Earl of Wessex.

Prince Edward undertakes numerous official duties for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (which celebrates its sixtieth anniversary this year). On this occasion, he was walking from Lea House, Edale via Jacob's Ladder and Kinder Downfall to Bowden Bridge, Hayfield, in the company of a number of DofE groups. Members of KMRT escorted the Prince and the DofE groups along the route with, fortunately, no requirement for the team members to demonstrate their first aid and rescue skills! Even the weather played its part on the day and a fine outing was enjoyed by all including our Royal guest, who made a point of trying to speak with as many of the attendees involved as possible and who was generally noted to be leading from the front for the majority of the day.

**Left to right:** Pete Roberts, Dave Blyth, Oli Pratt, Prince Edward, Ken Blakeman and Dan Highway © Kinder MRT.

PEAK DISTRICT



## TED BURTON MBE 1932 – 2016

It was with great regret that Buxton Mountain Rescue announced the death of honorary team member Charles Edward (Ted) Burton MBE in March. **Ian Hurst & Roger Bennett** write about his life.

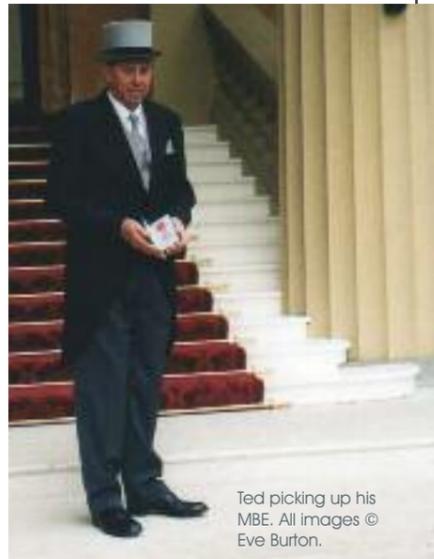
Ted joined the team in the early 1970s and was appointed team leader in 1975, and the next few years saw massive changes and developments in mountain rescue within not just the Buxton team, but the Peak District Mountain Rescue Organisation and the Mountain Rescue Committee (now MREW). During his tenure as leader, the team was invited to become a division of the St John Ambulance Brigade, unique in England and Wales at the time. Further achievements included establishing a team base in a disused quarry building at Dove Holes, which provided the team with a meeting room, equipment and vehicle storage. This led onto a programme of fundraising to improve and modernise the team's equipment and vehicles and is recognised as the beginning of the modern team we see today.

Ted stood down as team leader in 1989 and took on the role of team president for a while. He was also appointed a PDMRO incident controller,

working with all the Peak District teams. In the 1999 New Year's Honours List, he was awarded the MBE for 'his services to mountain rescue in the Peak District'.

Ted became ill earlier this year and was admitted to Stepping Hill Hospital, Stockport. He passed away on 20 March 2016, aged 84 years. His funeral was held at the Methodist Church, Chapel-en-le-Frith on 6 April. The church was full with family and friends and all mountain rescue teams in the Peak District sent representatives. A sea of red jackets lined the church drive for Ted's arrival, a wonderful tribute. Buxton team provided the pall bearers and his coffin was carried in with dignity. Mike France, MREW chairman, gave a fitting eulogy, followed by two of Ted's grandsons — a moving and enlightening experience.

His final journey was to the Macclesfield Crematorium for a private service for family and close friends. Buxton Mountain Rescue Team sends



Ted picking up his MBE. All images © Eve Burton.

its deepest condolences to Ted's wife Eve, who was also an active team member for many years, and to her family. Rest in peace Ted. ☺

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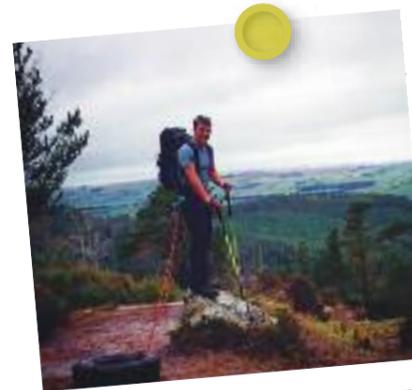
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## NORTH EAST

### THE ICE MAN COMETH

Northumberland National Park MRT announced in May that team member Jamie Pattison had become 'an Iceman', having won the inaugural Berghaus Iceman Polar Race. This extreme, self-sufficient 100 km race over remote arctic Greenland is billed as the world's toughest arctic race. Jamie's team for the event included Natalie Taylor, a British Army doctor and Scott Webster, a professional Mountain Guide.

During the event, Jamie and his team had to fight with their surrounding environment before they could even think about the race. They had to avoid polar bears, deal with temperatures down to minus 30 degrees Celsius and blizzards from polar arctic storms that prevented any movement from their tents for two days.

On day one, Jamie's team finished the leg in seven hours and three minutes, an hour and sixteen minutes faster than the team in second place. It wasn't without its challenges, however. 'Quite early on during the first day, I realised my ski boots were a little too tight and slightly uncomfortable. I rather quickly loosened these off in an attempt not to slow us down when I really should have spent more time on this to get it right. After a couple of hours of skiing, the sun was high in the sky and it was a glorious day, which made balancing pace and managing one's personal needs such as eating, drinking and staying on the right side of chilly very challenging'.

The event organisers prevented the competitors from racing on day two and three due to the arctic storm which went in Jamie's favour. 'I was slightly pleased about this as it gave me a day's grace to catch up on managing my feet and my intake of food and fluids.'

Left and below: Jamie Pattison in training and then the real thing.

On day four, Jamie's team finished in six hours with the second place team 58 minutes behind. On the last day, again the team came in first place with a time of nine hours and nineteen minutes — an amazing four hours and one minute ahead of the next placed team — winning the race as the only team to complete the course within the allotted time.

To safely undertake such a feat, prior planning and preparation was essential. With all his food and equipment being dragged behind him in a pulk, only the bare necessities could be taken, in order to minimise weight. To train for the event, Jamie spend many days in the Northumberland National Park dragging an old tractor tyre behind him, in addition to trips to Norway and the Cairngorms in Scotland.

### FAREWELL AND THANK YOU TO PC JON RUSHTON FROM THE NORTH YORKSHIRE TEAMS

Ian Hugill writes: For the last nine years of so, PC Jon Rushton has been the single point of contact between North Yorkshire Police and the five volunteer mountain and cave rescue teams in North Yorkshire.

As a serving police officer, Jon's day job is a lead Police Search Adviser and trainer and much of his work with the teams has been over and above this, frequently in his own time.

It would be an understatement to say that when Jon took over, there was work to be done to develop relationships with the voluntary sector and he took to this with gusto, quickly establishing a quarterly police liaison meeting. Early meetings were fractious and protracted, however, they soon developed into a meeting of minds and building of trust.

Over the years, the scope and attendance has expanded to include Yorkshire



Above: Jon Rushton pictured with Gari Finch of Cleveland MRT © Ian Hugill.

Ambulance Service, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, Yorkshire Air Ambulance and Cleveland Police. This is in addition to police representation from operations, legal, communications, emergency planning, the dog section and the force control room.

The meetings are now mainly informative and, where issues are raised, they are balanced and quickly addressed to the point where Jon now arranges a meal in the force canteen prior to the meeting, allegedly to bribe us into attendance.

Jon routinely attends the quarterly North East Search and Rescue and Yorkshire Dales Panel meetings along with regular visits to individual teams.

The five teams are now regular speakers at sergeant and inspector promotion courses and POLSA refreshers. We have also benefited from input into our training programmes with subjects as diverse as JESOP, working with and around police dogs, negotiation skills and emergency planning, all of which Jon has initiated.

Jon is quiet spoken and mild mannered. However, senior officers and the teams all know when he has corrected us. Many a senior officer has had 'advice' from Jon (Sir, with all due respect...). Equally, teams have been 'reminded' more that once that the police have primacy for inland search and rescue when we may have exceeded our remit. In receiving this advice you know you have 'been told' without any bad feeling and as such it is well received.

Jon retires later this year and, knowing that the June liaison meeting was the last he would chair, the teams took the opportunity to present Jon with a token of their gratitude to see him on his way.

All from the Cave Rescue Organisation, Cleveland MRT, Scarborough and Ryedale MRT, Swaledale MRT and Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue Association wish Jon and family a long and happy retirement.

It will not be the last time we see Jon, as the annual North Yorkshire Police Search and Rescue Awards Dinner will be held on 1 July at Tennant's Auctioneers function rooms where, along with esteemed guests, we will get the chance to say goodbye to Jon at a more social gathering. Yes the well-established awards dinner is another of Jon's initiatives to recognise the work of the teams and raise their profile across the county.

Jon, you will be a hard act to follow but we are reassured that you are 'on the case' to ensure the right volunteer from the force steps forward.

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## team news



### PENMACRA

#### TEMPLAR WAY CHALLENGE EVENT RAISES OVER £10,000 FOR ASHBURTON TEAM

The annual 18-mile sponsored walk, from the Haytor Information Centre in Dartmoor National Park to Shaldon on the Devon coast, is Ashburton team's largest fundraiser, bringing in around a third of their annual running costs.

'We get called around 30 times a year,' says Craig Scollick, 'not just on the moor, but the lost, missing, injured and vulnerable across Devon and sometimes further afield to major incidents like the recent floods at York. We rely on public donation for over 90% of our funding, so everybody who has taken part or supported this year's event has effectively helped to save lives'.

The event has become increasingly popular, with many familiar faces returning and plenty of new faces too. Bovey Tracey's Mayor, Ulli Arnold, set the walkers on their way for the event, now in its sixth year.

The main sponsor this year was Plastic Surgeon, a nationwide surface repair specialist with headquarters in Bovey Tracey. The team at Plastic Surgeon contributed £5,358 of the £10,000 total with the staff raising funds that the firm then topped up to add to the total.

'We'd like to extend a very big thank you to all the participants, their supporters, team members, Plastic Surgeon and Sibelco who have also sponsored the event again this year,' said Alan Pewsey, the team's fundraising officer. 'Early feedback from participants and team members alike is that they thoroughly enjoyed the day and we'll definitely be looking to run the event again next year!'

#### CHALLENGING TIMES IN MAY AS TEAMS PROVIDE VITAL SUPPORT FOR TEN TORS

Mike French writes: Started in 1960, the Ten Tors challenge is organised by the British Military to offer expedition style walking for 14



Dartmoor Ashburton team members on duty for the Ten Tors © DSRT Ashburton.

to 21-year-olds who cover a combination of 35, 45 and 55-mile routes over Dartmoor. The weather on Dartmoor can bring challenging conditions that the participants have to navigate through whilst crossing the difficult terrain, and all the Dartmoor teams play a pivotal role in the event.

DSRT Ashburton team members were based at Sittaford Moor Gate on the edge of Fernworthy forest from the Friday to Sunday. The event requires constant presence from the teams, should a participant get in to difficulty. With the camp set on Friday evening, a number of team members were settling down for the evening when a call-out came through, separate to the Ten Tors, which required a number of members from all the Dartmoor teams to meet at Meldon Reservoir and search for a missing person. At 2.00am, all were stood down with members of other Dartmoor rescue groups redeployed at 7.00am the next morning. The missing person was located two hours later, after being spotted by a member of the public and was evacuated by mountain rescue personnel.

The unexpected call-out meant last minute alterations to the patrol deployment on the Saturday morning. The event is now restricted to the north moor so, by putting smaller foot patrol teams around areas of expected participant routes, we're able to react quickly to any casualties.

As participants started to filter through from their Okehampton start it was only a matter of time before a number of minor injuries required assistance but it was mid-

## EMERGENCY CARE OUTDOORS

Emergency care in the outdoors is a challenging task that is faced by rescuers in a diverse range of environments. These environments demand a range of skills and attributes from those involved in the provision of such care. Technical, clinical, intellectual and ethical decisions must be made if the casualty is to receive high quality care,

and rescuer alike. Think of it this way, we should always aim to provide the highest level of care that can be achieved whilst recognising the constraints place upon care delivery by the environment and other factors.

### THE GOLD STANDARD IS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF CARE WHEN THE WORLD ISN'T PLAYING FAIR!

When you add other, non-environmental elements into the mix – logistics, communications, team skill mix, ergonomics and other agencies – the potential for 'human factors' adds even more fuel to the fire.

High quality care – the Gold Standard – can only be achieved through teamwork and a greater understanding of how those teams work.

Many rescue organisations have recognised the need for a patient-centred approach when dealing with the injured and ill in outdoor environments. There are some excellent providers of clinical education catering for outdoor environments, ensuring their knowledge, experience and skills are reflected in the courses they deliver.

Outreach Rescue Medic Skills (ORMS) aims to join this community of practice with the launch of its new range of courses catering for this niche area of clinical care.

ORMS has drawn upon over 35 years experience of mountain rescue, helicopter search and rescue, emergency care and our experience in dealing

with all emergency services, to create a training programme that is appropriate to the environment, evidence based and skilfully delivered. This helps ensure that when organisations are working together, they don't just have an understanding of each other's technical capabilities but also have a common understanding of their clinical capabilities as well.

Emergency Care in the Outdoors (ECO) is a series of courses that gradually build upon each other. The courses enable the student to enter with little or no clinical skills and progress to the same level as entry level winch operators employed across the UK on helicopter search and rescue (equivalent to Emergency Medical Technicians).

Final point, the level of clinical capability counts for nothing unless the care provider can contextualise that care in an appropriate manner.

*Outreach Rescue Medic Skills is based in North Wales, and is currently supports students from non-governmental organisations, UK and overseas SAR-H services, the MoD, RAF MRS and civilian mountain rescue.*

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sometimes known as the 'Gold Standard'. The concept of 'Gold Standard Care' should be explored. It's tempting to assume that the Gold Standard is defined by what can be read in a textbook or a journal. Whilst this is an excellent starting point, as it ensures that care provision is evidence-informed, this fails to recognise the fact that outdoor environments are dynamic, ever-changing and often hazardous to casualty

# TRAUMA 2016

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# team news

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afternoon before a more significant deployment was required. With fine and sunny weather, dehydration was always going to be a prevalent factor. A number of participants started to suffer, with one requiring helicopter extraction in the afternoon.

As the foot patrols started to make their way back to the forward operating camp and Sittaford Moor Gate, the weather began to cool and some low level cloud rolled in. This ensured the teams remained on high alert as some participants were still active on the moor. A number of the newer trainees made a sterling effort, preparing the evening meal. Cooking in any tent is always tricky but cooking a delicious meal for a large group of hungry search and rescue team members with limited resources is no easy feat.

The search managers remained alert listening to the radio link with the Okehampton operations but finally got the call to stand down at 10.00pm on Saturday. Twenty minutes later, we heard that a participant required assistance in the White Ridge area, near to Ashburton team's location. Valiantly, team members climbed into the Land Rover and made their way down through the forest tracks to the ridge. It was agreed that this individual needed to be removed from the event but, after liaising with the military in Okehampton, it became clear that transport back to the base wasn't going to be available. Instead, police transport was organised and the participant was delivered safely to the Okehampton base in the early hours of Sunday.

Team members made their way back to Sittaford Moor Gate and prepared the vehicles and kit ready for another day of foot patrols before quietly slipping into their sleeping bags at about 3.00am.

All the team members, including those out in the middle of the night, met at the Control Vehicle at 7.00am in the morning to be assigned patrol coordinates. Local 4x4 rescue volunteers provided additional vehicles to move the patrols to their locations and, shortly after 7.30am, all the teams where mobilised and en route.

Sunday proved quieter, with many of the teams observing the participants from a distance. With Sunday being the return leg back up to Okehampton for all participants, the numbers began to thin with just a few of the 45 and 55-mile groups putting in the last efforts to reach the finish line before the 5.00pm cut-off. Once everyone was safely off the moor, team members made their way back to their respective camps to pack up and head for a well-deserved carvery meal.



## TEAM STALWART LEAVES UPPER WHARFEDALE

Upper Wharfedale FRA said a very reluctant goodbye to Chris Booth in April, as he prepared to depart for life in the US.

## YORKSHIRE DALES

Over forty years with the team, Chris has helped save many lives, both above and below ground, and has served as assistant surface leader, chairman and controller – all whilst holding down a very demanding and senior position with his day job.

A surprise celebration dinner at the Gamekeeper's Inn at Long Ashes, Threshfield, saw Chris presented with a MREW 40-year Long Service Certificate and UWFRA's Life Membership Award. Doing the presentation, UWFRA chairman Peter Huff stated that only twelve other members had been honoured this way during the 67 years the team has been in existence and this clearly showed just how much respect Chris has in the team.

Chris, who is moving to Kansas USA with work, had a great evening recounting tales of his time in the team. 'I've had the most amazing experiences with so many highs, when we save people's lives, to the lows when tragedies have had to be faced, but the greatest memories have been the camaraderie and the wonderful life-long friends I've made over the forty years. I may be relocating far away but I will continue to follow the team's every move and wish them continued success in all they do'.

Above: UWFRA Chairman Peter Huff presents Chris with the MREW Long Service Certificate © Upper Wharfedale FRA.

## NORTH DARTMOOR TEAM GETS OFF TO GOOD START WITH CROWDFUNDING

The team launched a crowdfunding campaign in May, hoping to raise £10,000 towards a new training facility. Twenty-eight days on, they had 35 backers and £1,900 in the bank, a great start to their fundraising efforts. They did it through Crowdfund Cornwall, billed as 'the world's first regional crowdfunding campaign enabling Cornish projects to unlock funds from the crowd'.



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# team news

## SOUTH WEST

### SWERA TRAINING EVENT WEEKEND 7-9 OCTOBER 2016

DEAN FIELD STUDIES CENTRE, PARKEND, NR LYDNEY, FOREST OF DEAN, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

SWERA is running a training event with both on-site and off-site activities. There will be bunkroom accommodation (bring your own sleeping bag) and limited camping in the grounds. Breakfast at the cafe, 50 metres down the road, will save you having to cook. During the day, lunch and an evening meal will be available and there will be a bar on site serving a range of real ales and cider, wines and a variety of soft drinks.



#### On the programme:

- PPE inspection
- Scenes of crime
- Introduction to boats, launch & recovery.
- Introduction to throw bagging and wading techniques
- Demonstration and practical Larkin Frame
- Cave Link underground text messaging
- Aggressive searching
- Fingertip searching
- Rock Splitting
- Stretcher hauling

**Cost:** Early bird discount price (if booked before 10

August) of £45 for the weekend, including indoor accommodation and evening meal on the Saturday evening (veggie options catered for). Lunch and breakfast extra

Rises to £55 after 10 August, (£40 and £50 if camping).

If you would like to see some of what the venue has to offer and what rock splitting is all about, see [youtube.com/watch?v=19g3ZMFecPQ](http://youtube.com/watch?v=19g3ZMFecPQ), from last year's BCRC Conference.

Full details and booking form is to be available via the SWERA website in the near future. In the meantime, contact SWERA secretary Pete Turier via [secretary@swera.org.uk](mailto:secretary@swera.org.uk).



Photo © UWFRA.

### MARCH: UWFRA GORGE RESCUE

An eighteen-year-old man had fallen into How Stean Gorge, sustaining leg and pelvic injuries.

He was first treated by Yorkshire Ambulance Service HART paramedics, then stretchered out of the gorge, to a road ambulance.

## Small Group Leadership Course in Mountain Rescue or 'Party Leader Course'

ELAINE GILLILAND

The first weekend in June saw the delivery of the second updated Party Leader Course at the Kingswood Centre, Colomendy, North Wales organised by Elaine Gilliland, Steve Nelson, Iain Ashcroft and Becky Waudby.

Supported by the Libor funding, the course enables teams to develop people within their own environment after they have come together with other individuals to identify what leadership is, how it impacts on search and rescue operations, how it may be applied and how it can be developed locally.



The weekend follows a programme of development from Friday evening through to Sunday late afternoon and consists of participative lectures, learning sessions and workshops with practical sessions to apply learning to operational scenarios continuously through the weekend.

The issues faced by party leaders in search and rescue are unique in that each situation can potentially be life and death, not only for themselves, but for that of their team of operational volunteers. The idea is to encourage individuals to reflect on situations and enable them to make appropriate decisions considering themselves, the team and the casualty.

The course teaches participants to stand back and overview the situation (if enough team members available) and if not, to be able to take on a role in the team that allows them to continue to overview the delivery of effective operations within the incident site.

Friday evening is an introductory session where participants are introduced to the instructors and mentors placed in their respective groups for the weekend and asked

to reflect on what their expectations of the course are. There's also a session on police expectations of MR to initiate the understanding of what we are expected to do, and the increasing demand on voluntary search and rescue. We conclude with a networking session in a local watering hole so participants can get to know each other.

Saturday commences with rotating workshops focusing on motivation and performance in operations; incident site mix (cascares); task allocation and briefing and reporting. These are participative sessions where individuals are asked to contribute to discussions and presentations are provided for the groups.

After lunch, the practical scenarios allow individuals to practice, with guidance, party leadership in operational scenarios including water, challenging situations with public and media involvement, dynamic risk assessment, fatalities, search and triage. Each participant in every group is required to be a party leader in at least one scenario.

After dinner two presentations give participants the opportunity to learn and discuss the helicopter requirements and how to lead the team through fatalities. By 9.30pm, participants, instructors and mentors are ready again to network and discuss the day.

After an early breakfast, Sunday commences with two interactive sessions, one being social media and public and team control, and the other being crime scene forensic protocols.

The parties are immediately put into five operational scenarios outside and for the next five hours rotate around the scenarios allowing each member to practise their learned skills. The groups are debriefed after each scenario to allow ongoing encouragement, confidence building and learning.

Finally, at around 2.30pm, the groups come back together to reflect on what they have learnt and whether their initial expectations have been met.

The June 2016 course enabled individuals

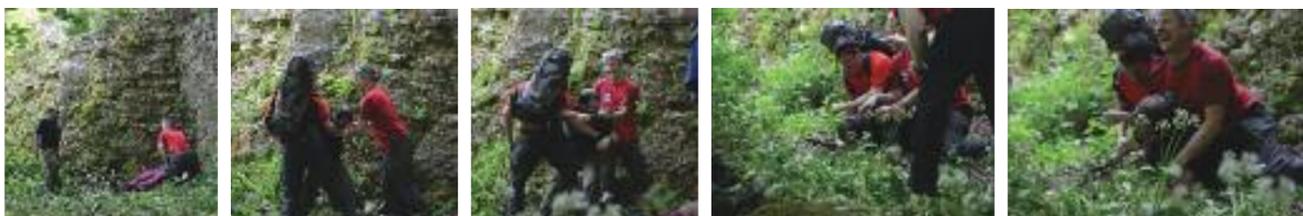
from Exmoor, Dartmoor, Ogwen, Aberdyfi, Aberglaslyn, Kinder, Woodhead, Calder, Brecon and North East Wales to come together to learn and discuss local variations to delivery. Given expert tuition and mentorship by very experienced and time-served members of teams including Llanberis, North East Wales, Kinder, Bolton, Penrith and Calder.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the instructors and mentors for their time,



commitment and expertise and all participants for their fantastic participation over the weekend. The course would not be as successful if the participants did not interact so well with instructors, mentors and other course delegates.

Once again, the feedback has been exceptional and we expect to run the next course in November 2016. The actual date of the course will be distributed via team secretaries and advertised on the website within the next four weeks. ☺



Photos: Some of the scenarios, including (above) dealing with an awkward member of the public (beautifully acted by Simon Thresher). Images © Elaine Gilliland.

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## MREW and the 'new' BELL stretcher development and manufacturing story

Mike Margeson (MREW) & Paul Witheridge (Lyon Equipment)

Many will have heard that new BELL stretchers are now available from MREW, but few will be aware of the work that has gone in to make that simple statement a reality.

When Peter Bell announced he was to retire from stretcher manufacture, a stretcher 'succession plan' became a priority. An overwhelming majority of teams use the Bell and appreciate its robustness and functionality. They made it clear that if production could continue in some way, they would be keen to see it happen – it would reduce training issues and remove any need for expensive modifications to vehicles already specially adapted for the Bell.

The rigorous load testing and certification of the Bell stretcher, immortalised by the famous mini load test photo (see page 9), needed to be continued and developed. From the earliest days of the Mark 1 mild steel stretcher, Peter had worked with mountain rescue colleagues to develop functionality.

The considerable work that had taken place through the MREW equipment committee, to survey stretchers in use and look at future development, had to go on hold as production of the present product had to be made a priority. Peter kindly handed over to MREW the intellectual property and production rights for the Bell Tangent stretcher, for us to continue production for rescue team use for as long as we see fit.

One of our key aims was to ensure that a 'new' Bell would be CE-marked and medically approved, making acceptance by external stakeholders much easier.

The MREW equipment officer carried out a significant amount of research and gathered advice from a number of companies who specialised in CE approvals. There was considerable work undertaken by Richard Terrell and Ray Davies with a number of companies to seek a suitable manufacturer. Various engineering companies were approached and frame samples manufactured for trials. Unfortunately, issues with consistency, certification and pricing finally led to the small company we were using going into liquidation.

It became clear that to get a CE-marked MREW Bell stretcher would require a third

party who would agree to manufacturer, test, certify and maintain small quantities of the stretcher exclusively for MREW. No small ask.

For many years, all the existing Bell stretchers used by mountain rescue had been serviced and tested by Lyon Equipment Ltd. During that time, Lyon had built up a comprehensive knowledge of the stretcher, its strengths and weaknesses. They were aware of the MREW project from the start and had provided significant advice and technical support in the background. The intention had always been that Lyon would assemble supplied MREW frames with beds and head guards as a subcontractor. Now, with the project at a dead end, they were approached to take on the whole task.

Lyon has had a long association with mountain rescue. Members of staff are directly involved as team members and there is a strong desire from them not to leave mountain rescue in the lurch.

Lyon's specialist manufacturing area of business had grown in recent years and, with the additional resources available in their design and prototyping teams, complete stretcher manufacture was technically achievable.

Once again, contractual agreements had to be worked out, intellectual property use negotiated, timescales agreed and small matters like creating complete specifications and manufacturing drawings for every single component, designing tooling jigs and welding fixtures addressed.

Say it quickly and it sounds simple. The reality is months of detailed work, discussions, trials and revisions. To make certain the new stretchers would be simple to service and maintain, parts would have to be made to fine tolerances, ensuring interchangeability and allowing stock of spare components to be held.

Various CNC machining and fabrication companies were considered and samples of each part made for evaluation. A potential supplier would be found only for them to withdraw when they realised the difficulties involved, or on one occasion go into receivership! This sourcing process even included the tiny stainless steel shackles used

to hold bed and handle screw wires in place. The original supplier no longer made the part so new tooling had to be commissioned to produce an improved version.

At the same time, the CE certification process began. Technical files were created containing component specifications, technical drawings, work instructions, bills of materials, clinical evaluations and destructive testing reports. Product instructions had to be written and essential accessories such as lifting bridles considered.

Eventually, nearly two years after starting, Lyon was in a position to confirm manufacture of a 'standardised' Bell Tangent MR stretcher, named the MREW Bell stretcher. The first production run started in November 2015 and, after formal acceptance by MREW, deliveries began in March 2016 with Glossop MRT receiving the first stretcher of a production run of twenty.

Has the effort been worth it? MREW is now in the position it set out to be in. It has the vast majority of team's stretchers within a regular, formalised servicing and testing regime and detailed records of servicing and maintenance are held. Now, as stretchers become due for retirement, there is a supply of new CE-marked ones available.

A huge thank you must go to Richard Terrell and Ray Davies (MREW equipment committee), and Mike Margeson (former MREW equipment officer and currently operations lead) for keeping an executive drive going; to Lyon Equipment manager Paul Witheridge and all the team at Lyon Work and Rescue, perhaps most importantly, for their huge effort; and, finally, to Peter Bell for allowing MREW to keep the Bell stretcher alive. None of this would have been possible without his continual advice and support.

What next, you ask? Work on the stretcher review can be taken forward, now we have construction secured. A new joining system of the two halves, telescopic carrying handles, and perhaps round tubes for the upper rail. The CAD drawings will allow engineering development and modelling to take place. So, it's over now to the new equipment officer and subcommittee! ☺



**Opposite:** Formed frame top rails fresh from the CNC bending machine; joints TIG-welded ready for alignment checks; welded frames before inspection and media blasting; and precision fabrication company owner with first production run frame.

**Left:** CAD drawings and renderings for product instructions.

# Jan•Feb•Mar•2016



**Q: What do Adele, Coldplay and SARCALL have in common?**  
**A: They have all appeared at Glastonbury 2016!**

JOHN HULSE



Glastonbury is just huge. The largest annual public music event in the UK, visited by about 180,000 people over four amazing days. Situated on a large 900-acre Worthy Farm site between Bristol and Yeovil with a perimeter fence some 11km in circumference, this annual festival attracts some of the biggest names in contemporary music. This year, we were treated to Coldplay, Adele, Ellie Goulding, ZZ Top, Squeeze, ELO, Muse and Laura Mvula, together with more than a hundred other big-name acts.

The SARCALL involvement at Glastonbury all started during a casual discussion with Chris Onions of Ogwen Valley MRO, whilst we were descending from Tryfan after the casualty had been flown to hospital. A few months and lots of emails later, with the support of the MREW Exec, the SARCALL team had agreed to fully support the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (DSFRS) with the use of SARCALL for their Glastonbury Festival operation in 2016.

We took the opportunity for several reasons, including enabling us to field-test a range of new SARCALL features in a high-intensity major event and strengthen relationships with our key partners, together with learning more about how large multi-agency operations really work. And all this feeds directly into the MREW Major Incident Task Group.

It is really pleasing that the link between the mountain and cave teams within PenMaCRA and DSFRS has been growing over the years with some recent very kind donations of vehicles to all the teams in the region.

Jon Whiteley, who is team leader of Devon Cave Rescue, regional chairman and also one of the system admins for SARCALL, kindly offered to lead the project. Paul Cross of DSFRS was the lead contact and the generous assistance of Alex Hanson of DSFRS and vice chairman of the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) Water Rescue Group was instrumental in the success. Alex is also a long term friend of mountain rescue and a full member of Dartmoor SRT Plymouth.

The operational requirement met by SARCALL for Glastonbury was to enable robust, secure remote communication between the DSFRS personnel at the Exeter Fire Control Room and the DSFRS on site Fire Desk (local control), as well as

interacting with the DSFRS Silver commanders, together with response to incidents. All low level fire events at the festival were managed by the on-site Glastonbury Fire Limited. Throughout the festival, calls for assistance came via two routes: requests by the festival event organisers or direct 999 calls needing DSFRS support.

These were routed through to the festival fire desk and appropriate assets dispatched. Due to the size of the festival, and the sheer number of people, all tasks (incidents) were notified to DSFRS Silver at the festival using SARCALL. The response was managed by the fire desk and Silver commander in the multi-agency Silver room, in one of the big barns on site, with SARCALL tracking and reporting progress.

To ensure SARCALL was used efficiently at this major event, Jon Whiteley provided training and close support to the point that he was embedded in the fire service team — a great opportunity not just to learn more about the very impressive multi-agency Silver operation for the event, but also to fully experience the ocean of mud and enjoy the Adele set on Saturday night!

The key new feature tested at Glastonbury was Task Manager, developed following feedback from the MR Silver and Bronze experiences at the Cumbria and York Floods last December. Those debriefs identified that the SARCALL Incident Log design could be improved to simplify the management of complex wide-area operations. Task Manager delivers a hierarchical means of breaking the SAR operation into numerous tasks and then enabling the users to progress each task through a managed workflow. Given the likely requirement of MR to support more wide-area flood operations or challenging larger searches, Glastonbury proved an ideal opportunity for us to field-test this new

feature in a complex and high-intensity environment.

The SARCALL operational statistics for the festival are being processed and will be provided during the next few months. However, we can safely say that, with all the features, including SMS messaging, logging, Task Manager worked exactly as we expected. We are now confident it is ready for live MR operations.

Teams and regions interested in understanding how to use Task Manager should contact their regional SARCALL admin for support. We will be providing training opportunities in the next few months in addition to introducing the facility in the Exercise Triton and Exercise Deluge events during July.

Finally, we would like to sincerely thank our numerous colleagues in the Devon and Somerset Fire And Rescue Service for their wonderful collaboration with the SARCALL team, enabling us to field-test key new features of the platform at the highest profile public event in the UK. It was a pleasure to work with you. ☺



Photos © Jon Whiteley.

Lake District	
Cockermouth	6
Coniston	10
Duddon and Furness	11
Kendal	7
Keswick	18
Kirkby Stephen	4
Langdale Ambleside	9
Patterdale	13
Penrith	5
Wasdale	9
(Last quarter: 149)	<b>92</b>

Mid-Pennine	
Bolton	31
Bowland Pennine	9
Calder Valley	9
Rosendale & Pendle	1
(Last quarter: 26)	<b>50</b>

North East	
Cleveland	10
North of Tyne	9
Northumberland NP	10
Scarborough & Ryedale	4
(Last quarter: 26)	<b>33</b>

North Wales	
Aberdyfi	6
Aberglaslyn	7
Llanberis	22
North East Wales	16
Ogwen Valley	29
South Snowdonia	2
(Last quarter: 72)	<b>82</b>

Peak District	
Buxton	15
Derby	5
Edale	6
Kinder	8

Oldham	13
Woodhead	6
(Last quarter: 93)	<b>53</b>

Peninsula	
Cornwall	5
Dartmoor Okehampton	3
Dartmoor Plymouth	6
Dartmoor Tavistock	6
Exmoor	1
(Last quarter: 13)	<b>21</b>

South Wales	
Brecon	12
Central Beacons	8
Longtown	6
Western Beacons	4
(Last quarter: 5)	<b>30</b>

Yorkshire Dales	
CRO	11
Upper Wharfedale	7
(Last quarter: 21)	<b>18</b>

Search Dogs	
England	10
Lakes	3
Wales	3
(Last quarter: 14)	<b>16</b>

RAF	
Leeming	1
Valley	3
(Last quarter: 9)	<b>4</b>

<b>Total</b>	<b>399</b>
<b>(Last quarter: 428)</b>	

## JUNE: EVERY LITTLE HELPS AS SWALEDALE CALLED TO HELP TESCO DELIVERY MAN

When a Tesco delivery van careers off the road in Leyburn, before rolling 20 metres down an embankment, who do you call?

North Yorkshire Police asked Swaledale to help recover the driver. The 56-year-old was pulled to safety by the team and it is thought he suffered injuries to his ribs. Tesco later organised recovery of the van. The driver had actually managed to get out of the van but was then stuck on the sheer cliff edge. According to Steve Clough from Swaledale MRT, the recovery was exactly the type of rescue they train for.

'We were called at 11.45am, were at the scene by 12.15pm and had brought the driver to the safety of the Yorkshire Ambulance Service by 12.45pm. We used ropes to lower a stretcher to the man, then pull him up the very steep embankment, which was 20 metres below the road level.'



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Simply email your needs to [Panorama@taylormaderf.co.uk](mailto:Panorama@taylormaderf.co.uk) and you will receive a quotation. We can supply brackets and antenna hardware as well and will be happy to quote with competitive prices. We currently have the Motorola DM-4600 in VHF or UHF at £250 plus VAT while stocks last! Call for availability. The Panorama catalogue is very extensive and while Taylor Made RF try and keep a good selection of popular products in the range please try to avoid last minute orders as we do not like to disappoint

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Editor's note: Please note that numbers quoted may not be precise for any given period. Stats should be returned to the Statistics Officer, not to the Editor.

## Recovery Board

Our Brand new Recovery board is a compact inflatable stretcher that is extremely lightweight and can be packed down into a small rucksack. Once inflated the stretcher is able to safely carry a casualty to safety. This stretcher is good for use within confined spaces and mountainous areas.



## API Stretcher

Our inflatable API Stretcher is ideal for difficult to reach areas. It can be lifted by a helicopter, carried or dragged over snow, ice, sand marsh and mudflats. Once deflated it is easy to transport due to it being lightweight and compact.



## APRIL: MARATHON RUNNER COMES TO THE RESCUE

MREW London Marathon runner Nigel Atkins proved himself a knight in shining armour in April when he came across fellow competitor Fran Brown losing her voice whilst screaming at people to keep clear of her wheelchair.

Fran contacted MREW to let us know about Nigel's good turn. 'I'd just about lost my voice and was getting quite fed up as it was my first race. I really, really appreciated the fact that Nigel took time out of his race to clear people for me, including changing his pace on the ups and downs to match mine. I hope it didn't hurt his time too much. I got my target time in the end — a personal best.'

Fran is quite a formidable lady. A C4 incomplete tetraplegic following a spinal cord injury, she has competed as part of the GB para climbing team and is a two-time World Para Climbing Champion.

For his part, Nigel describes running a few miles with 'the most inspiring person I have ever had the pleasure of running with on the way'.

Right: Fran Brown with Nigel Atkins © Fran Brown.



## MAY: SELFIE-RESCUE GOES VIRAL FOR EDALE

A couple stuck on steep ground at Winnats Pass, a Peak District beauty spot, were able to guide rescuers by sending them a selfie showing their position.

Edale team members made their way to the pair, using the photo to pinpoint their location. The incident was one of five incidents in a busy bank holiday weekend for the team, which saw them clock up their fiftieth rescue of the year.

The selfie couple called for help shortly after midday when they got stuck scrambling up a steep bank to the left of Winnats Pass. Team leader James Stubbley said, 'They were uninjured but very much stuck on a ledge near the top of the pass. We were able to access them and assist them to safer ground with the aid of a rope system.'

'What made the job slightly more interesting was this was possibly our first call-out initiated by a selfie. The stuck couple had the presence of mind to send an earlier picture they had taken to the duty leader, as the position they were stuck in could be clearly seen in their earlier selfie. This allowed the team to access their position rapidly.'

The incident clearly struck a chord with the media too, as news of the selfie-rescue quickly went viral.

Above: Winnats Pass © Edale MRT.



## APRIL: 'SMALL GROUP' OF 43 CHILDREN LOST ON THE NEUADD RIDGE

Central Beacons and Brecon team members got slightly more than they bargained for in April, when they discovered that the small group they'd set out to search for were actually forty-three schoolchildren from Brussels.

There was further confusion over the actual number of school students in the group. A Central Beacons spokesperson said, 'We were called to what looked at first to be a very simple call to assist a small group that had got themselves lost on the Neuadd Ridge. Just as we were slowing our response down, because we thought they'd got themselves to safety, the message came through that there were actually 43 children unaccounted for. But, once we got to the Old Barn Tea Rooms in Pontsticill, we only counted 42'.

Left with the prospect of a lost child, they managed to get a definitive list sent through by email, which was then printed off at the nearby Welsh Water offices. Meanwhile, team members were sent out, assuming they had a major search for a missing child.

Once the list arrived and each child's name was carefully ticked off, it was agreed there must have been a miscount at the start of the day. Relieved smiles all round!

There was further relief for the school teachers when they heard there was no charge. Coming from Brussels they expected to have to pay for the services of the rescue teams.

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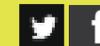
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### NEW TO THE MREW MEMBERS AREA

**Insurance for casualty care**  
An update on the current position on insurance.

**MREW CD Licence** Copy of the current MREW CD Licence.

**Cumbria floods debrief** from Mike Gullen.

**Review of Pentrox**  
A comprehensive review of Pentrox, by Dr Les Gordon.

**First aid scope of practice 2016**  
Essential document on the scope of practice within MREW.



For the final part of the three-year government grant to mountain and cave rescue, we bought nine Larkin Frame units, to go out to those cave rescue teams which requested one.



**PAUL TAYLOR**  
CHAIRMAN  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
CAVE RESCUE  
GROUP

For anyone who has not seen or used a Larkin Frame they are manufactured in Australia from a very high grade and very accurate aluminium tube. With the addition of various connecting pieces, this tube allows it to be assembled to form two triangular frames with a connecting tube that pivots around two base plates as can be seen in the photograph (opposite page, top left).

The purpose of the frame is to provide a high level belay point for a pair of pulleys, out over the edge of a crag or, as can be seen in the example shown, being used by the GCRG to provide a hauling point over

the top of the entrance shaft to Miss Grace's Lane Cave, where no natural anchor points exist.

In the past, the group has used a tripod but this had to be positioned on the lower ground level. As a result, a good proportion of the height advantage is then lost. The tripod is of steel construction and very heavy to load onto the group's Land Rover. And, once on site, it requires a number of people to move it into place. Pulleys and ropes need to be attached before it is erected as its height makes this difficult afterwards without splaying one of the legs. Considerable care is required when using a tripod to ensure the load exerted when hauling is transferred downwards and not sideways, causing the tripod to tip over.

In this exercise, the Larkin Frame has been positioned to the right of the shaft on a raised section of ground. Prior to hauling, the casualty tests were carried out to ensure correct positioning so that, when pivoted over the shaft, the pulleys were located directly over the shaft. This forward position is maintained by a rope secured to the right-hand end of the top tube and adjusted for position using a Petzl Rig from a suitable belay point — in this example a sling around a tree (left).

Two additional hauling ropes are set up using Z-Rigs with Petzl Rigs. These pass through the lower part of the frame via two large pulleys (bottom left), and then up and over a further double pulley located at the

left-hand end of the top tube, and then down a 31-metre shaft (opposite page, centre) where they are both secured to the stretcher.

Due to the restricted diameter of the shaft the stretcher has to be hauled vertically-orientated with a barrowboy (advanced first aider) accompanying the stretcher during the ascent. For additional security, the base plates have been pinned to the ground using 300mm-long pins. In a larger shaft or open, hole the stretcher can be brought up horizontally-orientated.

Once the stretcher and casualty reach the top of the shaft, the Larkin Frame is gently tilted backwards. This brings the stretcher out of the shaft (opposite page, top right) and well away from the shaft, where the stretcher and casualty are lowered to the floor (opposite page, bottom left and right), an operation that is not possible when using a tripod — it would require a greater level of handling and care to ensure the tripod doesn't tip over at this point.

Although not the first time the group had used the Larkin Frame, it was the first time at this particular cave site and it proved to be extremely successful. It will now be tested out at a number of other cave and mine sites where similar shortages of high level anchor points cause a problem to the hauling teams.

Our thanks to the BCRC equipment officer and to MREW. This is a fantastic piece of equipment which we are very pleased to have. ◊







## DOWN JACKET NO GOOD IN THE RAIN?

If it was water resistant would you wear it more? Well, for just £7.25, you can convert your down jacket into a hydrophobic use-anywhere piece. Down jackets are invaluable for keeping you warm on the hills: their high warmth-to-weight ratio makes them that year-round go-to piece of kit. But anyone who's been caught in a downpour wearing a down-filled garment will be all too aware of the soggy mess it becomes: heavy, clingy and body-warmth zapping. Did you know that water conducts heat away from the body up to 25 times faster than air?

Enter Nikwax Down Proof, a PFC-free, water-based solution that has been designed to proof your down products. It's as easy as 1-2-3. Step one: clean your garment in Nikwax Down Wash Direct. Step two: add Down Proof to your detergent dispenser and give your garment another cycle in the washing machine. Step three: Tumble dry on a low setting until clumps have disappeared and loft is restored. You're all set!

If you have a hydrophobic down product already, keep it in tip-top condition by just using award-winning Nikwax Down Wash Direct (£6.49). It's formulated to clean and revitalise insulation, whilst restoring water repellency of water-resistant down apparel and sleeping bags and has the same ethical credentials as Down Proof.

NIKWAX IS AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD OUTDOOR STORES AND ONLINE RETAILERS.



## PÁRAMO WINS THE GUARDIAN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS AWARD

Páramo was announced winner of the 'Bold Move' category in the 2016 awards, recognising the significance of the British company's sign-up to the Greenpeace Detox Commitment earlier this year. The first outdoor company to sign up, they are leading the outdoor industry in ensuring hazardous, persistent pollutants are excluded from textile production.

The Guardian explains: 'Páramo is one of the few PFC-free outdoor brands currently on the market. In a demonstration of industry leadership, the apparel company came out publicly this year to support Greenpeace's call for an end to the use of this toxic chemical in outdoor gear.'

Páramo demonstrates that waterproof performance does not require PFC pollution. The sign-up coincided with professional climber, David Bacci, successfully summiting Mount Fitz Roy in Patagonia, wearing PFC-free Páramo clothing. He chose the exposed East Pillar, the most challenging of routes, and endured brutal weather, demonstrating that PFC-free clothing can take on the toughest mountain conditions. A Greenpeace spokesperson said, 'Páramo is setting the highest standard in the outdoor sector and this example should encourage bigger brands to take the lead for a toxic-free future'.



Left: David Bacci in PFC-free Páramo clothing summiting Mount Fitz Roy, Patagonia, January 2016.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DETOX AND PÁRAMO'S COMMITMENT TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT, GO TO



Photo © Stu Harper.

## MAY: NO CROCODILE TEARS AS DESMOND GOES HOME

So, after a long stay with the Penrith team, Desmond the Crocodile went home at the end of May. Team members delivered him back to his rightful owner, who is now back in his own home in Carlisle.

His owner will be glad to know that Desmond has been well fed and watered — and not a single team member lost in the process. Almost seven months on, many of those hit by the floods across Cumbria have returned to their homes and businesses, but many have still to do so. Hopefully this is one more happy ending.

FACEBOOK.COM/PENRITHMRT



Photo © Rob Grange/Keswick MRT.

## APRIL: BORROWDALE BLAZE

More than 40 firefighters and mountain rescue team members from across Cumbria spent more than five hours tackling a wildfire in Borrowdale which investigators suspect could have been started deliberately.

A police helicopter from Newcastle was also sent to the scene while the National Trust had a second helicopter on standby ready to douse the flames from the air. Firefighters were met with a wall of flames up to a mile wide. Many walked up wearing specialist backpacks and equipment. Others were taken up by the farmer on his quad bike.

The blaze was spread across 10,000 square metres of grass and gorse, on Grange Fell, between Watendlath and Rosthwaite.

Seventeen Keswick team members provided support, local knowledge, navigation, logistics and welfare, and emergency back-up in the event of any injuries. One team member was also airlifted by the police helicopter to help plot and track the fire. A command centre at Keswick team base was coordinated by senior fire officer Adrian Holme, who told how physically demanding it was for all involved.

NEWSANDSTAR.CO.UK 20 MAY 2016

FACEBOOK.COM/KESWICK-MOUNTAIN-RESCUE-TEAM

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Photos © Swaledale MRT.

## MAY: LUCKY SHEEP RESCUED FROM BUTTERTUBS

We love a good animal rescue and never a month goes by, it seems, before teams are dealing with a hapless sheep or two. In May, it was Swaledale's turn. A training evening, with one group focusing on some indoor rope work and the other heading out to get wet at Richmond Falls, turned into a real-life rescue for team members, when a lone sheep fell down a shaft in the Buttertubs.

The animal appeared uninjured, despite its predicament. 'We undertake animal rescues not just to alleviate the suffering of the creature, but to prevent passers-by from trying to rescue the animal and getting into danger,' said a team spokesman.

THENORTHERNECHO.CO.UK 18 MAY 2016 FACEBOOK.COM/SWALEDALEMRT

THANK YOU TO ALL THE SUBSCRIBERS, SPONSORS, SUPPLIERS AND MANUFACTURERS WHO SUPPORT US.





# The future of mountain weather forecasting

**GEOFF MONK** MWIS

When I developed the Mountain Weather Information Service in 2002 and 2003, I felt there was much room to improve mountain forecasts. My mission was to provide forecasts, initially across Scotland, covering areas – more or less – where mountain rescue teams operate. The forecast had to be meaningful to the person standing on a summit.

From the outset, a key issue was the understanding that weather conditions on the mountains are often outside those experienced by 'city dwellers', and thus it was crucial to state clearly the likely impact of exposure to the conditions.

a series of warnings — when conditions are benign, there is little written. We are committed to writing as specifically as we can, yet also presenting the uncertainties. This has led to the charge that MWIS forecasts can appear pessimistic. That could

graphics may be best used in initial planning. Inspecting different websites every six to twelve hours over a day or so can help in establishing confidence. Are the forecasts used very different or changing quickly with time? If so, confidence may well be low. Of course, the danger is finding a website that gives the weather conditions you are hoping for, and then taking that forecast as gospel! In the immediate run up to the period on the mountains, text-based interpretations such as MWIS will continue to provide detail and state as appropriate the uncertainties in the forecast.

In 2015, SportScotland commissioned market research, in which a range of users of mountain forecasts were asked questions in order to gain a better understanding of the use of the current weather forecast services in Scotland. There were some 2,000 respondents (far more than anticipated), many of whom also added valuable comments. The level of response demonstrated the importance attached to mountain forecasts. The vast majority of respondents saw the provision of detailed forecasts as essential and used MWIS as their main authoritative source. This was particularly true of those who would consider themselves mountain leaders.

So what of the future? The survey was an early but crucial part of a review of the provision of mountain weather information in Scotland. The review is taking account of the increased availability of automated information and the requirement for reliable and authoritative weather forecasts — so that the public can continue to make informed judgements, and so that mountain activities can be safely enjoyed. SportScotland, MWIS and the Met Office are together exploring ways of working together to secure the future of MWIS, but also to ensure that the skills and strengths of each organisation will together provide more comprehensive mountain weather forecasts. In February 2016, the Met Office and MWIS had a lengthy session following detailed extraction of the key responses to the survey. MWIS has led in the provision of specific impact driven mountain forecasts, whilst the Met Office are leaders in the provision of automated graphics.

For example, most of us sense 50mph is very windy, but how many of us really know whether we will be able to stand up, walk with difficulty or be forced to crawl? With precipitation, on windy days on windward coastal mountains, showers are often so frequent, the rain rarely ceases. Paths are wet, sections run with water, and waterproofs are worn almost all day. Thus the description should be 'rain', perhaps prefixed by 'almost constant'.

The language used must work, whether the climber, skier, walker or even mountain biker or stalker is a rare or frequent visitor to the mountains. Thus the bold headlines (for all), followed by detailed comments for those able to assimilate additional information so as to enhance their day on the hill. The format, essentially a series of answers to key question, means that the forecast is in effect

be a conclusion for the second and third day forecasts. For example, a small risk of severe conditions needs to be stated (there will be those going back-packing who will not have the opportunity of seeing another forecast), but with restriction on the total length of text available, the most likely, less severe outcomes may in comparison appear understated.

Technology-wise, automated graphics, available on computer and mobile phone, were becoming available when MWIS was developed, but have since improved in quality as weather forecast models have improved. However, in mountain environments, where severe weather can set in very suddenly, we believe there remains a requirement for text based forecasts that include comment on the impact of the weather and the uncertainties. Automated



rain clouds © Dreamstime.co.uk

The two-page PDF format of MWIS will remain the core product. From my perspective, early research in 2002/2003 led to the format — at a stage when it wasn't clear what MWIS would become. At the February meeting, we spoke briefly about the phrase used for the Highlands: 'How windy on the Munros?'. This question will suit the many 'Munro baggers', but not, for example, those visiting the iconic summits in the NW Highlands, many of which don't make 3,000ft. Our aim was never to exclude these summits — but we had to start somewhere. Thus there are tweaks to incorporate.

In an increasingly safety conscious society, it is important there is an efficient mechanism for amendment of forecasts. Our post-7.00am updates to forecasts are too late for those setting off at 5.00am to get to the hills, or in the summer, dawn ascents. MWIS is too small to have 'round the clock' forecaster coverage. It is already evident that particularly younger people repeatedly check the latest weather graphics before setting off, or where mobile phone signal allows, in the car park or even on the hill. For MWIS to provide this form of service alone would require significant investment.

However, MWIS has been and will continue to be a success. Over the years we have received in excess of 4,000 emails, almost all appreciating the service. I am repeatedly struck by the number of people who say to the effect 'I am on the website nearly every day'. Checking MWIS forecasts has become a fixture in preparation for days on the hill. The present discussions are clearly about Scotland. Yet MWIS has after many requests gradually extended forecasts to England and Wales — albeit we have never nearly covered our costs. It is vital we also consider the requirements (primarily on the basis of mountain safety) of those on the mountains elsewhere; and find funding to cover the costs. I am therefore very keen to hear views, particularly from the MRT community, on the value of MWIS. Whatever changes and enhancements are made in Scotland, would most sensibly be extended to the mountains of England and Wales.

Thus, we are very keen to hear the views of the mountaineering community in England and Wales. If it is the will of the users, how can the future of MWIS be secured 'south of the Border'? We look forward to responses from across the community. ☺

TO CONTACT GEOFF AND SHARE YOUR VIEWS, EMAIL [GEOFF@MWIS.ORG.UK](mailto:GEOFF@MWIS.ORG.UK)



## JUNE: THE THINGS WE DO FOR FUN...

Upper Wharfedale team were out in their water kit in early June, providing safety cover for the Knaresborough Bed Race, billed as a 'wondrous spectacle' which is 'part fancy dress pageant, part gruelling time trial over a 2.4 mile course, ending with a swim through the icy waters of the River Nidd'.

First staged in 1966, the Bed Race pits teams against their fiercest rivals, their erstwhile friends or even against themselves with 90 teams of six runners and a passenger — 630 people getting wet and sweaty. Apart from one stretch down an almost vertical drop, now deemed too dangerous, the race follows the same challenging course as in 1966 with the last stretch the notorious 20-yard swim across the fast-flowing Nidd.

The fastest teams finish an amazing fourteen minutes — sometimes quicker — and even the slowest come in well under 30 minutes. Runners have to be fit, fanatical and frankly a bit mad, while the passengers have to be light, be good swimmers and be able to shout loudly! The perfect description of a water-going mountain rescuer if ever we heard one!



Photo © CRO

## APRIL: JACK CLIMBS PEN Y GHENT BY MOUNTAIN TRIKE FOR CRO

A man who was paralysed from the chest down in a fall five years ago made it to the top of one of Yorkshire's Three Peaks in April, using a self-propelled mountain trike.

Jack Morgan said it was physically tough going up but the downhill was more worrying. 'The chance of losing control was higher, and made it a bit more fraught.'

His effort has so far raised £1,776 for the Cave Rescue Organisation, considerably more than his original £500 target.

**DONATIONS CAN STILL BE MADE VIA [JUSTGIVING.COM/FUNDRAISING/JACK-MORGAN3](http://JUSTGIVING.COM/FUNDRAISING/JACK-MORGAN3)**

## WATER RESCUE SLED

Water Rescue Systems is proud to announce the launch of their eagerly awaited Water Rescue Sled. Technical rescue instructor and former British rafting team captain, Lawrence Harris, together with accomplished kayaker and whitewater designer Andy Laird, have combined their wealth of experience to establish Water Rescue Systems Ltd. The Water Rescue Sled, the first in a series of products for water rescue professionals, developed by this technically innovative British company, boasts a host of design features aimed at improving safety and performance on swift water. The sleds have received enviable compliments from technical training organisations and are approved by R3 SAR and North Wales based Outreach Rescue. Their new rescue sled features:

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Photos © Sara Spillet



### MAY: CRICKET BALL INJURY

Patterdale team are more used to dealing with trips and falls on the higher fells but an incident in May called them to somewhat flatter ground, when a spectator at a local cricket match was hit on the head by the ball.

The call-out was one of three fielded by the Patterdale team on the same afternoon, with more conventional outdoor incidents also keeping them busy. The initial call was to help a walker coming down from Caudale Moor, who had severe cramp and was unable to make the descent.

While team members were dealing with this incident, they were called to the aid of a woman who had been hit on the head by the cricket ball. The match was being played close to the team's base, so the woman was treated by team members who then handed her over to the ambulance service.

Meanwhile, a third request came in, when a 13-year-old boy fell and hit his head. He was with a group on Oxford Crag, who managed to walk him to the road where he was seen by a team member before being taken to hospital.

Multiple incidents aren't unusual, of course, but often require neighbouring teams to lend a hand. In this case, it was Penrith team members who helped out during all three incidents.



CHECK OUT THE SHOP AT [MOUNTAIN.RESCUE.ORG.UK](http://MOUNTAIN.RESCUE.ORG.UK) FOR MERCHANDISE AND SUBSCRIPTION OPTIONS



Photo © Langdale Ambleside MRT.



### MAY: TWO TEAM MEMBERS BITTEN BY INJURED JACK RUSSELL

Two Ogwen team members needed medical treatment after being bitten in a rescue involving a man and his dog, who fell whilst scrambling up the North Ridge of Tryfan.

Both man and dog suffered serious injuries in the fall and the team was only alerted after cries for help were heard. Team members were already at their base training when police contacted them.

'Two team members went to meet the informant,' said Chris Lloyd, 'but by then, the shouts had stopped. However, a second call reported a seriously injured walker and injured dog in a gully on the west face of Tryfan.'

'A couple had scrambled up the North Ridge with their Jack Russell but the dog was struggling on the multiple rock steps so they retreated, carrying the dog. They probably lost the usual path and wandered too close to the West Face. The man took a tumbling fall with the dog which was on a leash.'

'The woman was able to scramble down to the casualties then shouted for help. These shouts were heard by people descending to the car park in the floor of the valley and they made the initial call, and also by a small party under instruction on the mountain. The instructors made their way to offer assistance and made the second telephone call.'

Members of the training party descended with the wife and the dog to the sanctuary of Oggi base, just five minutes' drive along the road. Unfortunately, the dog — in pain and shock — inflicted some nasty bites to the hand of his rescuer then continued to bite the top of the finger of the receiving team member.

The man, who was still conscious, was treated for multiple injuries and flown to hospital in Bangor where he was treated for broken bones and internal injuries. 'We should thank the instructors from the National Mountaineering Centre at Plas y Brenin and a passing member of North East Wales Search and Rescue,' adds Chris, 'for their valuable assistance.'

Tryfan from the Glan Dena footpath © Terry Hughes under the Creative Commons Licence.

### MAY: FASTEST BOAT ON THE WATER!

Langdale Ambleside repurposed a few old maps in May, fashioning them into a boat.

Their efforts — christened 'Map 2' — brought them a first in the 'Low Wood No Wood Cardboard Boat Race' with a speed of 47 seconds. Not sure whether that's one end to the other or time before it sank, but well done all the same!



Photo © Brecon MRT.

### JUNE: TEAM LAND ROVER BOASTS, LITERALLY, A 'ROLL CAGE'

Brecon team found a whole new use for their roll cage when they helped out with the WAAT4 Challenge in June.

The WAAT4 is an annual map reading and navigational event over the Brecon Beacons. In June of each year, across a 30 or 40km route, to raise money for charity. And, for one competitor, the event was more than a navigational challenge, it was another step on the way to his dream of Everest. The previous year, Jamie McAnsh could hardly walk a few steps, but this year saw him donning leg callipers and a back brace and, with the assistance of some off-road crutches, attempting the 30k hike 'on his own two feet'. Wheelchair-bound Jamie had attempted the event last year but was disappointed to only manage 19k. His childhood dream had always been to climb Everest so this, he said, was the start of that journey. You can follow Jamie's blog at [seenobounds.co.uk/2016/06/21/journey-everest-starts-waat4/](http://seenobounds.co.uk/2016/06/21/journey-everest-starts-waat4/)

[FACEBOOK.COM/BRECON-MOUNTAIN-RESCUE-TEAM](http://FACEBOOK.COM/BRECON-MOUNTAIN-RESCUE-TEAM)



### JUNE: LAND'S END TO JOHN O'GROATS FOR HOSPICE

Congratulations to North of Tyne team member Chris Francis, who has just completed Chris Francis's Big Walk, walking from Land's End to John O'Groats to raise funds for Tynedale Hospice.

He achieved it in just 63 days. You can find out more about his walk at [chrisfrancisbigwalk.wordpress.com](http://chrisfrancisbigwalk.wordpress.com).

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/NORTH-OF-TYNE-MOUNTAIN-RESCUE-TEAM](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/NORTH-OF-TYNE-MOUNTAIN-RESCUE-TEAM)

### MAY: KINDER TEAM SAY THANKS TO MICHELLE

Local supporter Michelle Ryan has run two marathons and undertaken other fundraising on behalf of the team, amounting to an amazing £960.

Team members were very pleased to welcome her to base to receive the donation from Michelle and show off their newest, cutest recruit!

Left: Michelle with team members © Kinder MRT.



DON'T FORGET, YOU CAN STILL DONATE TO THE MREW FILM CAMPAIGN (CURRENTLY AT £3466) GO TO: [JUSTGIVING.COM/FUNDRAISING/MOUNTAINRESCUEFILM15](http://JUSTGIVING.COM/FUNDRAISING/MOUNTAINRESCUEFILM15)



Every team has its loyal supporters, without whom they couldn't operate, and such a man was Brian Bate. He joined the team as a support member in 2010 and constantly turned out in all weathers, at all times of the day and night, to help during searches by driving, brewing up, clearing up and generally sorting out. He frequently worked behind the scenes, sorting land permission and generally helping team members maintain readiness for their next call-out. His smiling face, they say, will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

### JUNE: TEAM SAYS FAREWELL TO LOYAL SUPPORTER

Cleveland team members said goodbye to a team stalwart in June.

[FACEBOOK.COM/CLEVELAND-MOUNTAIN-RESCUE-TEAM](http://FACEBOOK.COM/CLEVELAND-MOUNTAIN-RESCUE-TEAM)

raising funds for rescue



# News from the Mountain and Cave Rescue Benevolent Fund

**JUDY WHITESIDE** BENEVOLENT FUND SECRETARY

Significant news, this month, is that we have finally now appointed a fifth trustee to the Mountain and Cave Rescue Benevolent Fund, in the shape of Huw Birrel. Huw, some of you may recall, was one of the original instigators – back in 2011 – for a national benevolent fund, along with Dave Allan, so it's great to have him back on board.

Huw is a familiar face to any who attend national meetings, conferences and party leader courses. He has been a trustee of MREW since 2006 and was vice chairman of the MREW training group for five years until 2013. He also represents the North Wales teams at national meetings.

the way. The Twirlies on Tour (you'll have to read the blog for an explanation!) raised £3312 and this was the first donation to the fund, even before we'd sorted out the legal stuff. Believe it or not, you can still read all about it at [twirliesontour.blogspot.co.uk](http://twirliesontour.blogspot.co.uk). In fact, you can still donate ([justgiving.com/fundraising/twirliesontour](http://justgiving.com/fundraising/twirliesontour), if you're asking)!

So that's the trustees. We'd hoped to introduce you to all our regional reps in this issue but gathering information and photos from one or two coy individuals hasn't proved easy, so the rogues' gallery of trustees will have to suffice! I give public warning, however, to those who have evaded publication — next time we meet, I WILL be armed with notepad, stubby pencil and a camera!!

## IN OTHER NEWS...

...I'm pleased to report that a number of teams and regions have now contributed to the fund, and with repeat donations. However, there remain a few teams and regions who have not done so. The regional reps have been asked to go to their regions and to both encourage donations and enquire why there is a reticence to donate to the Benevolent Fund from some quarters, and to then feed that back to the trustees. Are we getting something wrong? If so, please do tell us. The fund is here to support you as team members and your families, where appropriate, so it's important that the process works for you. And we can't do any of it without funds.

Certainly, the feedback from those who have so far benefited from the fund — and from the teams and regions who supported their cases — is extremely good. Since its start, the Benevolent Fund has dealt with four applications for support. Two of these have been for physical rehabilitation, one for counselling and the fourth for financial support. Both rehab cases were dealt with by the Fire Fighters' Charity at their Jubilee House treatment centre in Penrith and it would seem that the care received was found to be both beneficial and comprehensive.

We need to note — lest this is deterring anyone who lives further afield from applying — that there is a second treatment centre in Devon which would be more accessible for

those members in the south of the country.

We are also looking at ways rehab and mental health care can be accessed across England and Wales including accessing local providers, existing telephone helplines and the services offered by the police rehab centres. So still very much a work-in-progress, adapting to the needs of those who have asked for our help thus far and anticipating future need.

## REVISED APPLICATION PROCESS

As we suspected at the start, the logistics of organising meetings between all the regional reps and trustees at very short notice, in order to discuss a claim — and the obvious need for decisions to be made swiftly and efficiently to best help the claimant — has prompted us to revise the application process with regard to claims for physical rehab or counselling.

The current process is that the regional reps consider the details of all claims, by means of redacted documents (no personal/identifying details disclosed) which are handed out at the meeting and collected up at the end.

The reps are unable to take papers home with them. They discuss the case without the trustees present, then make a recommendation. The trustees make a final decision about the claim and how much and what sort of support should be offered to the claimant.

In future, rehab and counselling claims may be discussed via conference call. The regional reps will be supplied with a summary/briefing note of the relevant points so everyone has a reference point during the discussion, devoid of any personal/identifying details, thus continuing to protect the confidentiality of the claimant.

The Immediate Support Grant has also been increased to £1000 from the original level of £500. This will take time pressure off the logistics of organising a quorate meeting. Documents relevant to these changes will be amended in due course.

We would encourage teams and team members to keep in mind the service offered by the fund. If you think you could benefit from our help, speak to your regional rep or drop us a line, either through Neil Woodhead

([neilwoodhead@btinternet.com](mailto:neilwoodhead@btinternet.com)) or myself. If you contact me, please do it in this instance via my [judy.whiteside@zen.co.uk](mailto:judy.whiteside@zen.co.uk) address.

## WHO CAN CLAIM?

It's simple — you may make an application for benevolence if you are a member of any England and Wales mountain or cave rescue team and injured on a call-out, training exercise or any other official activity or event which was undertaken with, approved by or under the direction of a mountain and cave rescue team. A family member may also apply, if their claim is directly related to a mountain or cave rescue activity, provided this was undertaken with, approved by or under the direction of the team.

If NOT authorised by the mountain or cave rescue team, you are NOT eligible to claim. Applications must be approved and signed by a team official before they will be considered.

## HOW YOU CAN DONATE TO THE FUND

Finally, I thought I'd take the opportunity to remind people that anyone can give to the fund. That includes individuals as well as teams and regions. The best way to donate is via BACS transfer to the Benevolent Fund CAF Cash account (clearly marked with who you are!). It's also worth dropping me a line to let me know your intention to give so we can keep an eye on the bank account and confirm receipt. The details are: Sort code: 40-52-40. Account Number: 00023601. Charity number: 1152798.

Thank you for your support thus far! ☺

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SCURR (YORKSHIRE DALES),  
PETE ALLWRIGHT (CAVE  
RESCUE).  
\*SWERA: NO REP



## JUNE: INTRODUCING MOUNTAIN RESCUE (AND A LAND ROVER CALLED WILL) TO THE NEXT GENERATION

Patterdale team has been working with former team member and freelance writer, Anja Phoenix, to create a pack of materials to introduce the team's work to primary school-aged children. This was launched with the handover of the first pack to Mrs Liz Stewart, head teacher, and all the children from Patterdale CofE Primary School, at an event in June.

Using a character based on one of the team's vehicles, Will, the Land Rover, Anja has developed the pack and is now excited to see it out and in use in local schools. 'I've been writing and creating family walks with my Tale Trails maps for a couple of years now,' she says, 'and got a great response when one of those, Eric the Curious of Hallin Fell, featured a mountain rescuer.'

'The Patterdale team hosts several visits each year for local children, from school groups to Cub Scouts and others, and we have some really committed young fundraisers too, so we know there's lots of interest in what we do, but it's sometimes hard to explain. The idea of the pack is to explain what mountain rescue does in a really fun and informative way and to encourage children and their teachers to ask lots of questions, explore the ideas and use the pack as the basis for creative writing and other projects.

Patterdale team leader, Mike Blakey is also involved in work with children in his 'day job'. 'Having someone like Anja involved with the team is a brilliant resource, says Mike, 'as she's got the expertise and experience to write something like this at exactly the right level and depth for primary school-aged children.'

'The pack is colourful and cheerful but also has some strong messages about the range of skills on the team and the voluntary nature of what we do. It should be a great resource for teachers in local schools and we're looking forward to seeing the ideas and work that come out of it in the next few years.'

The pack was launched during a visit to the team base by the schoolchildren, with the presentation of the very first pack to Mrs Stewart. 'Our children are familiar with mountain rescue,' she said, 'but they still had lots of questions during their tour and enjoyed finding out more, especially about the Land Rover ambulances, the special stretcher and the team's boat. The education pack should be really useful in helping lots of other schools, not as local to a mountain rescue team as we are, to find out more about how this brilliant service and its volunteers work.'

Printed copies of the education pack are now being distributed by team members to other local primary schools and the materials are available to download from the Patterdale MRT website at

[MOUNTAINRESCUE.ORG.UK/EDUCATION-PACK](http://MOUNTAINRESCUE.ORG.UK/EDUCATION-PACK).

**Top:** Head teacher of Patterdale CofE Primary School, Liz Stewart (centre left) and the children from the school are presented with the very first Patterdale MRT Education Pack by creator and author, Anja Phoenix (centre right) and representatives of the team, Andy Peacock and search dog Corrie (front left) and Berni Gilmarin (back right) © Patterdale MRT.



**Above:** Huw with a rain-soaked Judy Whiteside, Benevolent Fund secretary, (left) and Gail Todd, in Robin Hood's Bay, at the end of the Coast to Coast. Photo © Judy Whiteside.

**Below from left:** A somewhat eccentric capture of Benevolent Fund chairman Neil 'Woodie' Woodhead, trustee Bill Whitehouse and treasurer Shirley Priestley.



He joins Woodie, Shirley, Bill and myself at the helm. Woodie, most will know as the erstwhile MREW insurance officer. Based in the Peak District, he is a member of the Kinder team. Shirley is a member of Scarborough and Ryedale team, is a financial bod by profession, as well as looking after two still small children. Bill has recently stepped down as chairman of the British Cave Rescue Council but continues to work with MREW as chairman of the fundraising committee.

As for me, I somehow landed the job of secretary after Gail Todd and myself devoted a two-week break to walking the Coast to Coast, raising awareness and funds along

# AFTER THE ICE

John Gordon

Around 14,700 years ago, the climate warmed rapidly from full glacial conditions and the last ice sheet wasted away, ushering in a period of rapid changes as the landscape readjusted. These changes add significantly to the geodiversity of Scotland's mountain landscapes.

Periglacial processes were active on the mountains, while rockfalls and landslides modified unstable slopes, and upland rivers transported large amounts of glacially derived sediments.

Although the climate deteriorated again 12,900 years ago at the start of the Loch Lomond Readvance, this was a brief cold interlude. Around 11,700 years ago, warming resumed and the last glaciers disappeared from Scotland. This

**Mountains are the beginning and end of all natural scenery.**

*John Ruskin (1856)*

marked the beginning of the present interglacial, the Holocene. During the early part of the Holocene, the climate was generally slightly warmer, drier and less variable than today.

A succession of tree species spread back into the glens and straths and by 8,000 years ago, birch and Scots pine forest had expanded over a large area from Wester Ross to Strath Spey. After about 6500 years ago, the climate became more variable, with the onset of abrupt shifts to wetter conditions and longer periods of higher precipitation and cooler temperatures, interspersed with shorter, drier periods. Wet heathland replaced woodland

in some areas, and blanket bog and peat became extensive in the uplands.

The last few hundred years have seen an apparent increase in slope instability and soil erosion. Increased frequency of storms or extreme rainfall events during the so-called 'Little Ice Age' of the mid-15th to the mid-19th centuries were the likely triggers, but human activity and especially land-use changes probably contributed to slope susceptibility in many places.

## PERIGLACIAL LANDFORMS

Although glaciers were the main agent that shaped Scotland's landscape during



with coarse sand. Finer-grained rocks, such as schists, break down into a mixture of stones, silt and sand. The weathered debris has been modified by frost sorting in the surface layers and by solifluction.

Frost sorting has produced patterns of coarse and fine material, forming sorted circles on flat or low-angled slopes and sorted stripes on steeper slopes. Large inactive sorted circles occur on some summits (eg. Ben Macdui, Beinn Fhuarain north of Conival in Assynt, and Sròn an t-Saighdeir in the Western Hills of Rum), but smaller active features, particularly sorted stripes, are more common on slopes free of vegetation (Figure 1). On more vegetated ground, the soil has sometimes been heaved up into low mounds that become elongated downhill into ridges and furrows (Figure 2). These nonsorted forms are well developed on Ben Wyvis and Glas Maol, but are probably inactive.

On many mountain slopes, the rock debris has moved downhill to form solifluction sheets, terraces and lobes (Figures 3 and 4). Where the weathering of the bedrock has produced very coarse debris, for example in the Cairngorms and on Lochnagar, Creag Meagaidh and Mount Keen, large boulder lobes are common. Such features probably formed at the time of the Loch Lomond Readvance and are now inactive. Higher slopes also frequently display 'ploughing boulders'. Many are active and creep progressively

downhill in the spring when the soil is saturated with meltwater.

Wind activity is a feature of Scottish mountains, producing accumulations of sand particularly on the Torridonian sandstone hills (eg. An Teallach, Ben Mór Coigach and Cùl Mór), on the Trotternish ridge and on Ward Hill on Hoy in Orkney. Where the surface vegetation cover has been broken and the underlying soil exposed, these sand accumulations are being actively eroded by the wind. It is unclear whether this recent erosion has been initiated by natural processes, grazing pressure or a combination of both. The resulting deflation surfaces typically occur on exposed plateau surfaces, cols and ridges, with excellent examples on An Teallach (Main image) and Ben Mór Coigach.

Wind activity is also associated with a variety of vegetated patterned ground forms on exposed slopes. Wind stripes comprise bands of vegetation and bare soil and are particularly well developed in parts of the Cairngorms (Figure 5) and on Ronas Hill in Shetland. On steeper slopes, wind exposure

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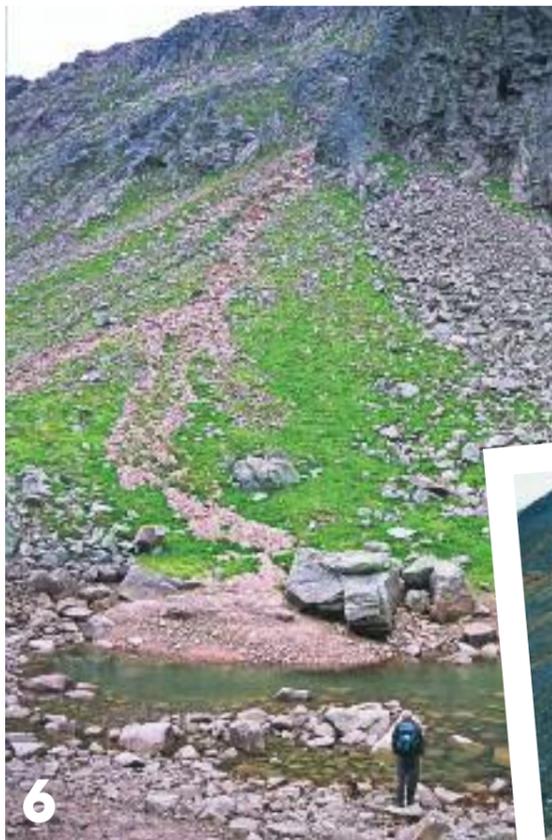
**Main image:** Extensive deflation surface covered with a lag of frost-weathered debris, An Teallach.  
**Figure 1:** Sorted stripes. **Figure 2:** Nonsorted stripes. **Figure 3:** Solifluction lobes, Cairngorms.  
**Figure 4:** Solifluction terraces, Ward Hill, Orkney.



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**Figure 5:** Wind-patterned vegetation, Sròn an Aonaich, Cairngorms. **Figure 6:** Debris flow, Coire an Sneachda, Cairngorms. **Figure 7:** Rock slope failure, Lost Valley, Glencoe. **Figure 8:** Rock slope failure, Mullach na Dheiragain, north of Glen Affric. **Figure 9:** River Feshie, a wandering gravel bed river with braided and meandering channels.

You can download the previous articles in this series, from [mountain.rescue.org.uk/mountain-rescue-magazine/back-issues](http://mountain.rescue.org.uk/mountain-rescue-magazine/back-issues). Look for Issues 33, 35, 39, 45 and 50.

and solifluction often create small terraces running obliquely across the slope.

Scree slopes commonly occur below glacially steepened cliffs. As a result of intensive frost weathering and rockfalls, many scree slopes accumulated in ice-free areas at the time of the Loch Lomond Readvance. Generally, these are large and stable compared with screes formed during the Holocene, which are often active today as debris from intermittent rockfalls continues to accumulate. Many scree slopes have been modified by debris flows (Figure 6).

These are typically triggered by intense rainstorms and comprise rapid flows of saturated debris. Particularly good examples occur along the flanks of the Lairig Ghru, Glen Docherty and the Pass of Drumochter. Over time, repeated flows from the same source areas have built up cones of debris at the base of the slopes, with some of the largest below Aonach Eagach in Glen Coe. There is some evidence that debris flows may have been more frequent in the last 300 years. Possible causes include more intense rainstorms, woodland clearance and increased grazing pressure affecting slope stability.

## ROCK SLOPE FAILURES

Rock slope failures, the deep-seated failure and downslope movement of large masses of bedrock, are common on glacially steepened mountain sides throughout the Highlands. When the glaciers melted, the release of stress in the bedrock resulted in the opening of deep-seated fractures, with slope failure possibly triggered by seismic events associated with crustal rebound and uplift of the land following removal of the great weight of the ice.

Most large rock slope failures are thought to have occurred

soon after deglaciation, but some happened as recently as 4000 years ago. The largest clusters occur around Glen Affric, Kintail and Knoydart, in the Mamores and Grey Corries, and in the Southern Highlands. In a few cases, rock slope failures have led to the collapse of whole sections of mountainside, producing spreads of large boulders on the lower slopes and glen floors below. Particularly good examples occur in the Lost Valley in Glen Coe (Figure 7) and on Beinn Alligin.

In the latter case, a large part of the rock face collapsed below the summit of Sgùrr Mhòr, leaving a scar that can be seen from the south shore of Loch Torridon and forming a tongue of bouldery debris extending over 1km down Coire Toll a' Mhadaidh Mòr. In a few places, including the Trotternish Peninsula on Skye, and parts of Raasay and Mull, large-scale landslides have occurred where thick beds of Palaeogene basalt lavas overlie weaker Mesozoic sedimentary rocks. The Trotternish escarpment is the site of the largest continuous area of landslides in Britain, with two of the most spectacular at the Storr and Quiraing. Here, weathering of the slipped blocks of lava has produced dramatic pinnacles, most notably the Old Man of Storr.

The results of rock slope failure have usually been less spectacular, however, and the rock masses have moved only a short distance downslope rather than failing catastrophically (Figure 8). This has resulted in split ridges and distorted slopes. The largest example is on the southern slopes of Beinn Fhada, above Gleann Lichd, where rock slope deformation extends over a distance of 2.5km. Here, the upper and middle slopes are crossed by a remarkable series of asymmetric ridges several hundreds of metres long and up

to 10m high. These features run approximately parallel with the contours, with their steeper slopes facing uphill. The whole hillside has deformed downslope under the effects of gravity, but rather than failing catastrophically, it has bulged out. The long mountain ridges on either side of Glen Shiel have also been modified by rock slope failures, which have created notches and narrow ridges at Saileag and Aonach Meadhoin, and split the ridge of Sgùrr na Ciste Duibhe. Similarly, in Arrochar, The Cobbler owes its remarkable triple peaks to an extensive rock slope failure on its south-west slope.

## RIVER LANDFORMS

The glaciers had a major influence on present-day river valleys, variously deepening them, forming rock steps along their floors and infilling parts of them with large quantities of till and outwash deposits. River courses in the upper reaches of Highland glens typically alternate between steep boulder-bed torrents and bedrock reaches with gorges and waterfalls. These streams may be able to shift their bouldery bed material only during extreme floods, but can produce dramatic effects when they do so. For example, the Allt Mòr washed away part of the access road to the ski slopes on Cairn Gorm during flash floods in 1960 and 1978.

Further downstream, bedrock channel reaches frequently separate wider, lower gradient, alluvial reaches developed on infilled glacial valley floors and basins (Figure 9). The rock sections often include impressive gorges, sometimes following lines of geological weakness (eg. Corrieshalloch Gorge near Ullapool). Many such gorges were probably initiated by glacial meltwaters during successive episodes of deglaciation. The alluvial reaches are typically occupied

by wandering gravel-bed rivers flowing in meandering or braided channels that shift backwards and forwards across the floodplains, leaving behind abandoned channels and forming suites of river terraces. Modern floodplains are often bounded by the bluffs of older terraces along the margins of the glens. Erosion and reworking of such terrace deposits provides a continuing supply of sediment for the rivers to form temporary, shifting bars.

## CONCLUSION

This series of articles has explored the geological and geomorphological processes and events that have shaped the mountain landscapes of Scotland. The remarkable geodiversity of the latter reflects the interactions between the geological foundations of the landscape, long-term changes in global climate and the processes of weathering and erosion by rivers, frost and glaciers over many millions of years. The effects of glaciation, in particular, have left a distinctive legacy that has since been modified to varying degrees by slope, periglacial and river processes.

Like biodiversity, geodiversity is an integral part of nature. The geodiversity of Scotland's mountains has great value not only for its intrinsic qualities as part of our geoheritage, but the variety of different rock types, landforms and surface deposits, through their influence on soil development, topography, drainage and micro-climate, has also provided a diversity of habitats for plants and animals. Moreover, the aesthetic qualities of mountain landscapes, as clearly recognised by John Ruskin, are due in no small part to their geodiversity and have been a source of inspiration for art, literature, poetry and music.

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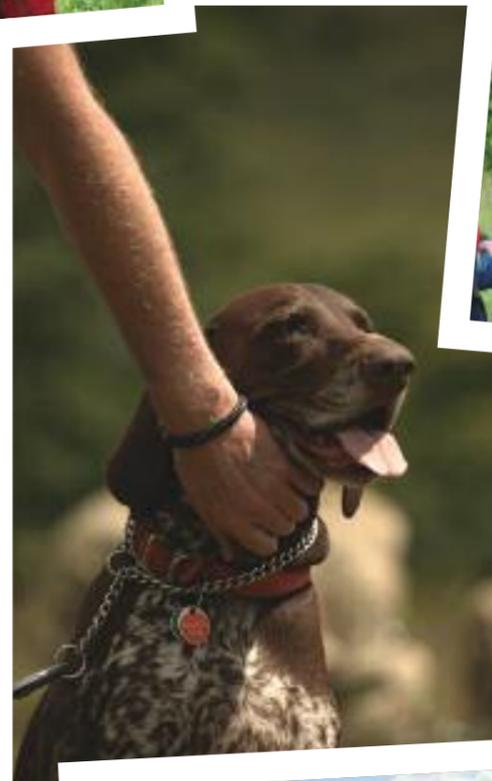
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Saturday 26 June saw 45 children and young people from WellChild, Child Bereavement, Centrepunkt UK and Place2Be, together with their parents and carers, attend this year's Princes' Charity Day, hosted by Bolton, Bowland Pennine, Calder Valley, Holme Valley and Rossendale & Pendle teams.

Held at Holcombe Moor Army Training Camp, the guests were entertained during the day with a zipwire, search dog demonstrations, an off-road driving experience, a mock search and rescue and a visit from the police helicopter. Hard to tell who had the most fun — the guests or the rescuers, but the pictures speak for themselves...



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This year's BASICS and FPhC Conference will be held on 14/15 October at the stunning Woodland Grange Hotel, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. The packed programme will have updates on all that's new in the pre-hospital world, including latest research studies, consensus statements, clinical decision making and trauma guidelines. There will be sessions on retrieval medicine in Antarctica, pre-hospital care in rural Scotland, crush injuries and farming incidents

to name but a few. There will be practical workshops, a student poster competition, a student and junior stream and sessions on revision for the FPhC Diploma in Immediate Care. We are also delighted to announce that Dr Kevin Fong will be delivering this year's

FPhC Myles Gibson Eponymous Lecture. Kevin is a consultant anaesthetist at UCL Hospital, and is Anaesthetic Lead for both the Patient Emergency Response Team and Major Incident Planning. He is best known for his television appearances, particularly as an occasional presenter of the long-running BBC2 science programme, Horizon. In 2015, he presented the Royal Institution Christmas Lectures, broadcast on BBC 4.



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