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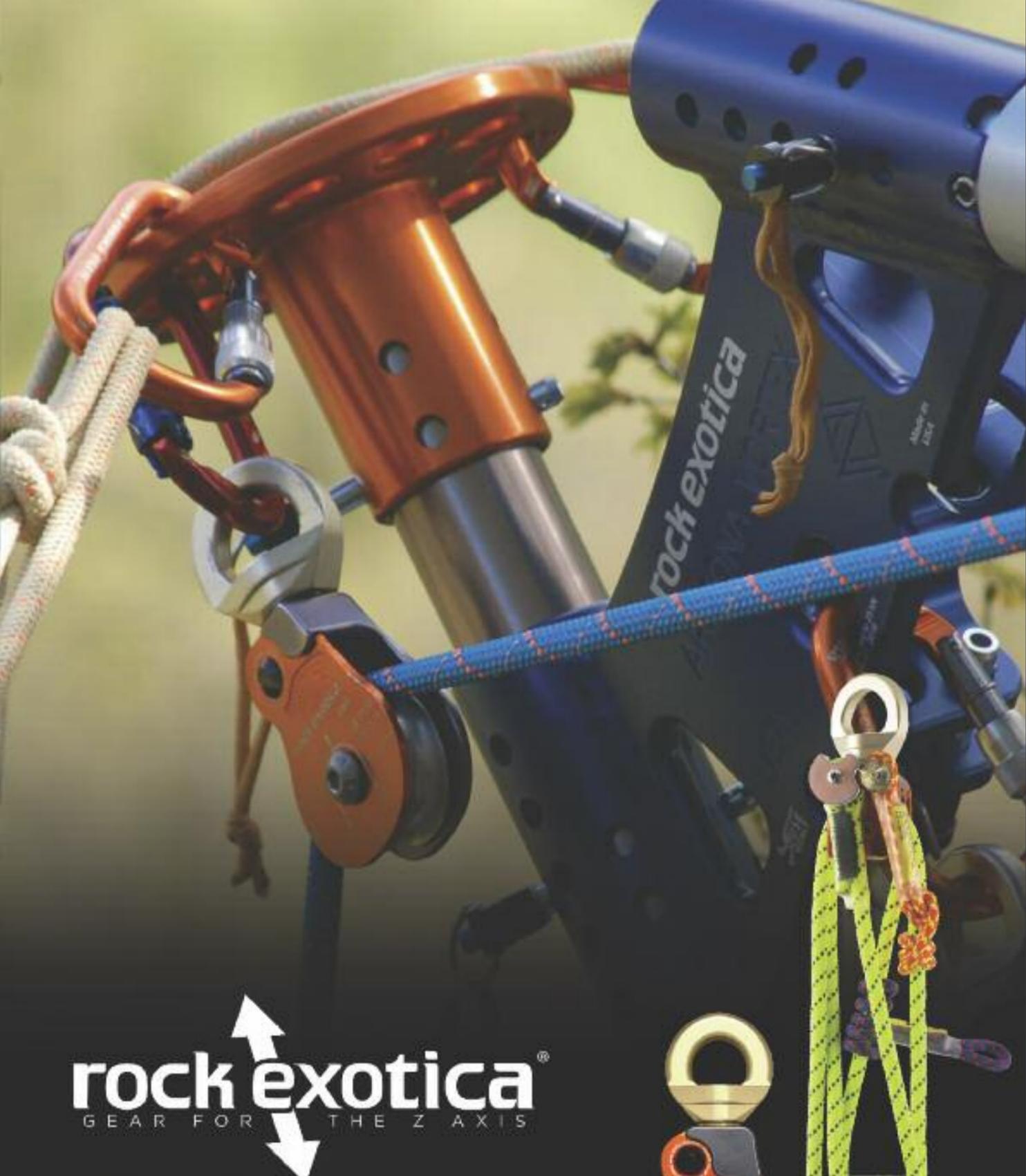


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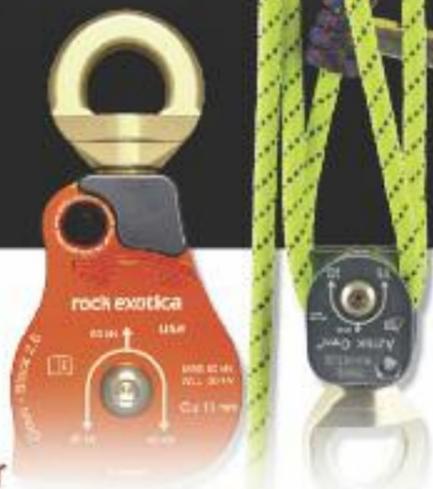
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ISSUE 70:
AUTUMN 2019

Mountain Rescue is the **only**
official magazine for
mountain rescue in England,
Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

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NEXT ISSUE

ISSUE 71:

WINTER 2020

Editorial Copy Deadline:
Sunday
8 December 2019

Editorial copy must be
supplied as Word document.
Images must be supplied as
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JPG/EPS/TIFF/PDF.

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supplied, ready prepared on
CD or via email as font
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Cover story

Buxton team member
Ed captured during a
rope training exercise
on Chrome Hill,
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inthisissue



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A LUCKY QUESTION...

HEATHER SIMPSON

A lucky question on laptops for teams, on the national fundraising group (NFG) online meeting a couple of months ago, has produced 21 refurbished Lenovo Thinkpads from a software house where a family member works.

The laptops are being offered to the smallest members first. So some regions, some cave teams and a couple of mountain teams who sit on the NFG are the lucky recipients this time. I am not sure there will be anything else but, sometimes, people and companies are just waiting to be asked.



Image © Derbyshire CRO.



SKYE HELMETS FOR SALE

A team's worth of helmets (Petzl Vertex Vent*) are shortly to be available from Skye MRT.

Bought in 2016. Visors included and marked 'Mountain Rescue'. £20 each ono. Approximately 40 available. Ideally to go as one lot. If you're interested, drop Tim Spencer a line at timspe@gmail.com.

*See www.petzl.com/INT/en/Professional/Helmets/VERTEX-VENT for more detail of the model.

INTEGRO LEAFLET NOW AVAILABLE

This comprehensive leaflet from Integro details the services and policies available from our MREW approved insurance broker, including vital information about what to do if you are involved in a vehicle accident. Hard copies were available at the recent MREW Conference and a PDF version has been circulated to MREW officials. It can also be found on the MREW Moodle site under Insurance).



View from the chair...

MIKE FRANCE MREW CHAIRMAN

One of the things I inherited and built on, as a newly-appointed chair, were the very skilled members who make up the MREW management team. They are a strong committed group giving many, many hours on top of their team and regional duties, trying to ensure MREW gives you good advice, good national training courses, good information. This group is also very fragile. I say this because since taking on the role in 2014 we have always had vacancies – so officers are always covering other roles.

So it's time for some cards on the table, if you want MREW to continue being a vocal partner at outside meetings, if you think MREW should have a voice at all the UKSAR subgroups, SAR-H and with the College of Policing, having input into their search courses, we need your help. We need YOU to step forward and consider being an officer of MREW.

Thanks to Dave Close for all the hours he gave as our national secretary before standing down this year. At the moment I am reviewing that role, now that we have an assistant secretary and an admin support person. I am also reviewing the role and expectations of the new SEO (our old 'chairman') – someone has got to stand up and take this on. I said I wouldn't be looking for my successor, eighteen months on but I now will be, so watch your phone! Your name may be on my list. We haven't had a national water officer for about two years now. I hope you and your teams haven't seen any major change in the training because we have covered the role. A big thanks to Paul, our national equipment officer, for what he's done over the last couple of years but a change of job means he is going to stand down, so we are now also wanting a new equipment officer please. If you are interested, drop Mike Margeson or me an email.

We also still need a new press officer. Thanks to Andy who continues to cover this role, along with managing the PISC group, and thanks to Penny who continues to cover the treasurer's role. Penny's job has changed over the last few years, she is now very much our Financial Director, the overview. We still want someone to help her with day-to-day actions. She continues to deal with many insurance issues, someone to help in this area would help her workload. I



understand the commitments you make to your teams, the amount of calls all teams get today gives some of you little time to help at national level but without someone somewhere stepping forward we will have a serious problem, and if you want mountain rescue people representing mountain rescue, we need officers. I can promise you other organisations are wanting to represent mountain rescue at national meetings if we aren't there.

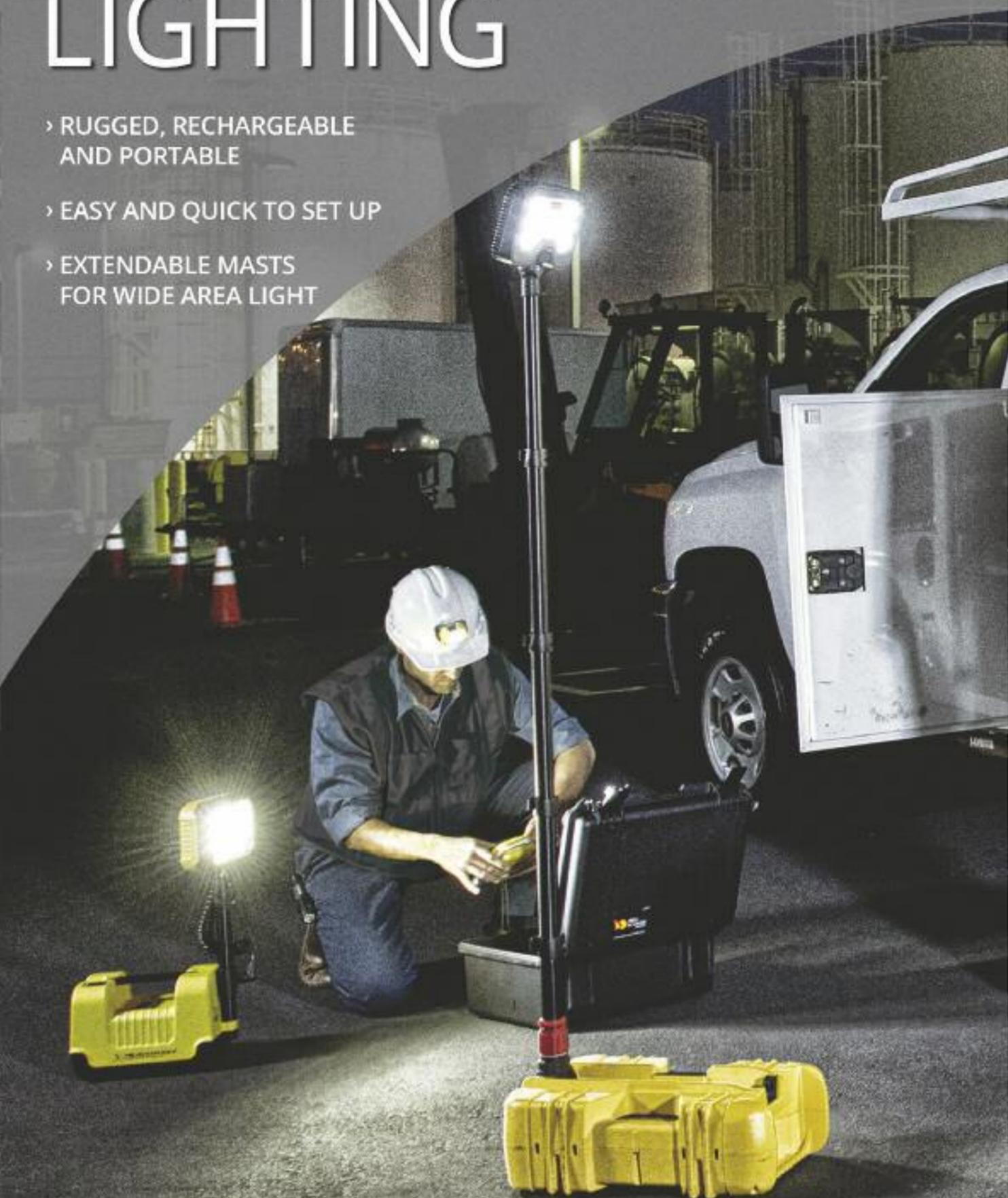
I'd like to say a few words about the conference. The helpers (too many to name) made the 2019 conference one of the best I have ever been to, and I've done a good few in my time. Now we have started the process again, we'd like to keep the ball rolling with the next MREW conference in September 2021. Having spent the last two days at the Emergency Services Show, I can confirm other services and the public still wanted to know what we do and how we do it. We have a great name out there, don't let's get complacent.

To finish with just a few words about the CIO (many of you will get the same feeling with this topic as you do with BREXIT, sorry). The membership pack has been finished off over the summer and sent out. A panel made up from two regional chairs, two from the operations group and two trustees will look at your returns. Please embrace the questions around your teams' paperwork, our questions and requests are there to help you as a team ensure you have all the correct documentation you require as a charity. For the members who attended the conference and listened to the opening speaker, you will know that legal people make their money around poor paperwork! ☺

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JUNE: ANNUAL PRINCES' CHARITIES DAY HAILED A GREAT SUCCESS

As has been the tradition for the a number of years, a mountain rescue region played host to a number of children's charities who share Royal patronage with MREW. This year, it was Peak District team members a the helm, at Lea Green near Matlock, to children and their families, from WellChild and Child Bereavement.

WellChild supports families who have a child or children who present with multiple illnesses. Most will be wheelchair bound and require 24 hour attention. Child Bereavement supports children who have experienced death in their family.

Lea Green put on a programme for the day, with instructors on site to look after all the activities. Twenty-four team members from across the Peak helped out at the various activities and — as is usually the case — enjoyed the day as much as the young people from the charities. There were ten youngsters from Child Bereavement and eight from WellChild. Lea Green did a fantastic job of entertaining us all with some pretty scary activities!! That said, all the youngsters couldn't get enough of the fun.

A brilliant and inspiring day, one which you come away from with a different view on life.



Images courtesy of Monty, Glossop MRT.



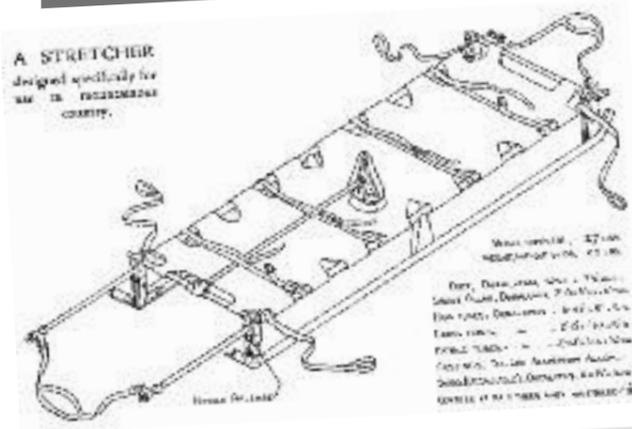
What's the point of keeping a load of old stretchers and first aid equipment?

The presentation was enthusiastically received by the audience at this session. Terry and I summarised what Mountain Heritage Trust (MHT) do to collect, preserve and exhibit the wonderful heritage from the climbing and mountaineering world, showing photographs of information, artefacts, clothing and items of significance from our collections. An oral history recording was also played featuring Muriel Sauer, a mid-20th century climber who was the first female member of Keswick MRT.

Mike outlined the project proposed by MREW which will be submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund early next year. The aim is to have a programme of oral history training so that individual teams have the skills to record the stories and memories of team members. Alongside this will be work to identify what physical items and digital records best reveal mountain rescue's rich history. If the bid is successful, MHT will offer support through provision of office space and joint management of a project officer. It is hoped this project will be just the start — once we know what we've got, we would hope to develop bids for further funding for exhibitions, education work and more. So, get into those garages, lofts and storage areas and start looking at what you have got and start making lists of those people whose memories are vital to the history of your team. ☘

The plans for an interesting partnership heritage project were unveiled at the MREW conference, during a presentation by Terry Tasker (Chair of Mountain Heritage Trust) and myself, alongside Mike Margeson.

KELDA ROE MOUNTAIN HERITAGE TRUST COLLECTIONS MANAGER



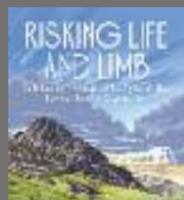
'You can't really know where you are going until you know where you have been'. Maya Angelou

As Kelda says, the project will focus on two key tasks: the filming and recording of our oral history and the cataloguing of what we have, both artefacts and photographs, whether these are at team bases or elsewhere. We know, for example, that there is significant historical material in a shipping container at a Peak District base and we believe Tony Jones placed many documents in the library at the University of North Wales. There is definitely material out there that we don't know about! A recent example is the earliest mountain rescue film to date — we believe from 1947 — which has been digitised thanks to Dave Freeborn. The film was found in the cellar of White Hall Outdoor Education centre when staff were tidying up and nearly thrown away. We need to fully catalogue what we have of local, regional and national significance.

So what next? Well, that comes back to you. We can start by teams and regions formulating a list of key people to speak to, interview and record. Teams can start looking and recording what historical material they hold (many may already have done this) and consider how it is stored or looked after. There was a thought-provoking moment from the Central Beacons team, who recently lost all their historical records in the fire at base. Imagine if that was your team history! Some things can't be replaced. ☘

MIKE MARGESON
MREW VICE CHAIRMAN

JUDY WHITESIDE
MAGAZINE EDITOR AND
AUTHOR OF **RISKING LIFE
AND LIMB** CELEBRATING
FIFTY YEARS OF THE OGWEN
VALLEY MOUNTAIN RESCUE



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...and what's the point of talking to a load of old team members?

Our heritage. That's the point. Appreciating (and occasionally marvelling at) the hard work our predecessors put in to create the mountain rescue service we have today. The blood, sweat, tears and, in some cases, legal jeopardy. (Wilson Hey springs to mind, and his long, long struggle with government to achieve the morphine license for mountain rescue). The achievements, the tragedies, the camaraderie, the sheer bloody-mindedness. The mistakes. The proud history of voluntarism. The going from 'make do and mend', beg, 'steal' and borrow, to state-of-the-art kit. The development of training and skills to today's expectation of high professional standards. All of that. Because, as Maya Angelou said, 'You can't really know where you are going until you know where you have been.' So talk to your older team members while they still have the will to talk to YOU! Keep their memories alive.

And, with apologies for the extreme delay in publishing this (but also proving that everything stays on file for future reference!), see opposite for one such chat with a team member of 40+ years.



A Lifetime in the Mountains: A profile of Tony Hood

ROB SMALL & NEIL RODEN EDALE MRT

Back in 2015 Tony Hood was presented with certificates marking 40 years of active service with Edale MRT. Four years later, with Tony still active, it seemed a good time to interview him and record some of his mountain rescue history.

Tony was introduced to the outdoors at a very early stage by his parents, both keen walkers and cyclists, and his uncle was part of the Kinder Mass Trespass in 1932. Living in Sheffield, the Peak District was very close by and he has fond memories of walking in the Peak at weekends and then catching the bus home. All this introduced him to a lifetime of fun and adventures in the hills and mountains.

In 1959, aged just fourteen, Tony was selected for a one-month course at the Outward Bound Mountain School in Patterdale. It was there he was first involved in mountain rescue when one of his party fell badly and needed a stretcher evacuation. At that time there was a stretcher kept in a rescue box on the Knott which the 'outward bounders' used. Ironically, once the casualty had been evacuated, the lads had to return the stretcher to the rescue box!

By the time he left school, the family was living in Burton on Trent — a great opportunity to explore the southern part of the Peak District and, further afield, Wales and the Lakes. A keen walker, caver, occasional climber and an active member of the Phoenix Mountaineering Club, in 1965, he was involved in a huge cave rescue in the Peak District with a long search and evacuation from Giant's Hole.

In 1967, a part-time paid Peak Park Ranger, his day job was as an engineer in Derby but, in 1971 he took a large pay cut to move to South Wales as a full-time countryside ranger, working with the then Bridgend Mountain Rescue Team. After four

years, he moved back to the Peak District as a full time Park Ranger and joined the Edale team. At that time, like most others, the team had no base, no team vehicles and very little in the way of equipment — just a Thomas stretcher, a rope and some very basic first aid equipment!

Through Tony's links with the Ranger Service, the team gained access to Brunts Barn at Grindleford as a base but still no vehicle. In 1983, he became team leader — a position he held for eleven years, during which time he influenced a lot of changes in the team. In 1986, he was responsible for acquiring two secondhand portable buildings, previously used as renal units, which were sited within Hope Valley Cement Works. These became the team's first official base and, from there, Tony secured the use of a garage on the same site which was converted into a small but functional base.

The next big step forward was in 1991 when the team were given an ex-Telecom transit van, affectionately called the Custard Bus because of its colour. That was the result of a rescue where the casualty was a Telecom employee and able to nominate a charity to receive a donation. Rather than hard cash, Tony opted for the first team vehicle and spent many hours fitting it out. In 1994, he stepped down as leader to become the team chairman, a post he held until 2000.

Tony's commitment to mountain rescue has not just been at team level. In 1991, he was appointed a regional controller — a

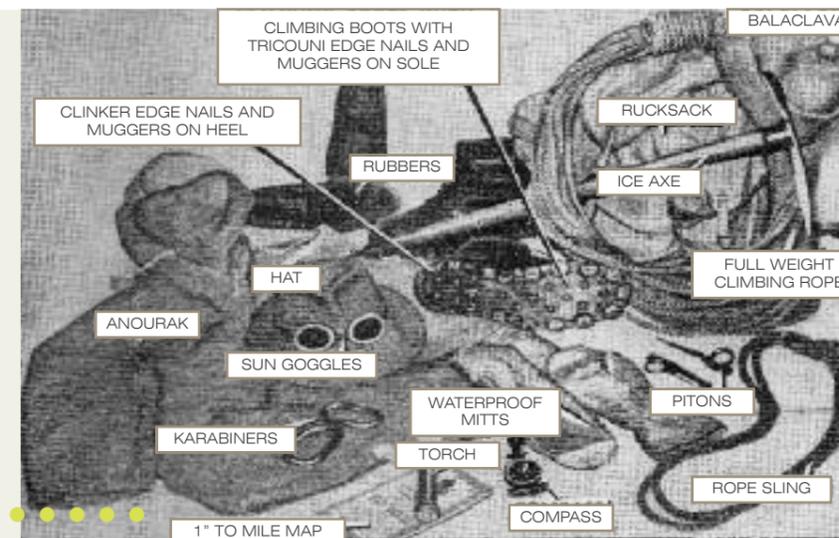
function unique to the Peak District and a position he held until 2014 when he was 70. Around the same time, he became regional helicopter liaison officer. He has also been a member of SARDA for 22 years often acting as a dogsbody.

He can recount many special rescues and memories of his time not just in mountain rescue but the mountains generally. Perhaps the biggest and highest profile search was for April Jones when he travelled to mid-Wales to help, but there are many others. He estimates he has been involved in more than 2000 rescues during his lifetime and remains as active today, at 75, as in the past.

For Tony, mountain rescue has been a family affair. Hazel, his wife was a call-out officer for sixteen years and their son Matt joined Edale at the first opportunity. All told, a family history going back at least three generations of enjoying the hills and mountains and doing what they can to help and support others. ☘



Top: Tony Hood. Above: The Custard Bus. Images courtesy of Edale MRT.



News Chronicle, March 1951:

'Equip yourself well and dodge danger — and don't forget the chocolate!' wrote Alfred Pigott, one of the founders of the mountain rescue service we have today. Although much of the advice remains sound, the recommended kit may well horrify today. In the matter of boots (expected cost between three and ten guineas), he suggests walking in the rain 'to soak them to the shape of the foot', before fitting them with edge or tricouni nails. Two pairs of 'greasy wool' socks, with 'any old pair of trousers' tucked in, a gaberdine wind jacket or hooded 'anourak', topped off by his favoured 'old felt hat with a wide brim' complete the picture. Along with the essential rucksack, ice axe, maps, torch, rope and compass, he recommends the use of pitons (although 'our climbers' feel their use as bad 'as shooting a fox') and a supply of chocolate and sugary foods as a reserve. All for '£10 to £15'!

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EXCEPTIONAL SITUATIONS CALL FOR EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNICATIONS EXPERTISE

When the dam at Toddbrook Reservoir in Derbyshire was damaged (see article page 14), 1,500 residents were evacuated from the town of Whaley Bridge. Meanwhile a task force of civilian and military personnel worked round the clock to avert the threat to the historic town. The time-sensitive and highly complex nature of the emergency repair operation meant reliable communications were vital. The existing communications infrastructure lay directly in the path of any escaping floodwater.

Derbyshire Police deployed their KA Satellite Flyaway System supporting VoIP phones, and enabling reliable and secure communications across Bigblu's KA Satellite network. Bigblu and their partners specialise in rapid deployments often in challenging physical locations, and offer clients the option to purchase only utilised air-time, as well as standby services. Bigblu is an AIM-listed organisation, based in Bicester, Oxfordshire delivering remote communications to MoD, police and broadcasters across Europe.

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Sally Seed introduces the idea of issue management guidelines for the tough media questions about those topics common to all mountain rescue teams

Recent experiences with media training and MREW positions on a couple of key issues have reminded me of issues management processes in industry. I think it's worth explaining what this means and how it might apply to mountain rescue. I'd also like to recruit your support and help in ensuring we're all better prepared for media questions on tough or sensitive topics.

Background

Earlier this year, I was one of those delivering a media training course for MR in the Lake District. I was struck by the lack of clarity on a couple of issues, including government funding. The message still seemed to be 'we get absolutely no funding from government at all' and this simply isn't true anymore. There's been the LIBOR funding for training in recent years, the Department for Transport grants for water rescue equipment and the VAT rebate changes. So, while it's still true to say that MR is **reliant** on donations and fundraising, that's in the context of **limited** government funding.

But how can we best communicate and share a more accurate position and statement?

So what can we do?

One approach to improving the situation would be to have agreed wordings available that can be used as the response to media questions (and those from other key stakeholders too) about a few key issues. These wouldn't be press releases as such — they'd never be distributed as a complete document to a group of journalists.

From past experience of so-called issues management processes, I know it's worth putting these down on paper, including a bit of background, anticipating questions (with brief answers) to help in interviews, having a

succinct statement that emphasises a key message or two on the topic and then making sure these documents are reviewed and revised regularly. Only the statement part of such a paper would ever be sent, word for word, to a journalist — the rest is background for the spokesperson.

Basically, such Issue Briefing Papers would be the common 'hymn sheet' if a topic got into the news and MR was being asked for its standpoint.

Differing views, shared focus

The first objection to developing common answers is that teams vary and have different opinions on lots of topics — who decides which view is the right one? In practice, this means there should only be an MREW-wide statement or position when it is important for teams to have a common answer nationally. That could be something like the funding of MR (see above) and there are probably just a handful of other topics where a national view would be expected, should be feasible and could help in avoiding controversy.

For instance, the what3words system, explored on page and at conference in September, cropped up as a media topic at the end of August. Scottish MR put out their statement and I worked with Mark Lewis, Mike Margeson and Andy Simpson to use a simple Issue Briefing Paper format to create an MREW statement that could be used in response to the media enquiries that were coming in one after another.

The process for approving and distributing that first one was rushed and certainly not ideal — with thanks to Julian Walden for his help and apologies to Steve Owers for the early mistakes — but that experience certainly helped fine tune the process for the future!

What we aimed to do with the MREW

position statement was focus on the messages from #BeAdventureSmart and the elements that we DO agree on across the country — the value of mobile phones for communications in an emergency and the need for non-battery-powered navigation tools and skills.

That has to be the approach — where do we have agreement and how is that best put into words?

What next?

I'm working on a couple of other issue briefing papers at present, each one involving MREW officers or other experts: one is on the funding situation, including the government funding aspect, one is on the support requested by the paid emergency services from teams of MR volunteers, and we're considering one to update on developments in the helicopter rescue services. That could end up as the full set — just four topics.

Media requests about safety advice, outdoors equipment and major incidents need to be handled at all levels — team, region and national — and there's little likelihood of significant differences. Varying terrains, incident numbers and histories mean that slightly differing statements from different teams are not a problem and give local media a local response and voice. And there are only a few topics where the need for a consistent national MREW position and statement could be anticipated — or agreed — anyway!

That said, if you think there's a gap in awareness of MREW's standpoint on an important issue, this process might help and we could add a couple of topics to that list. Please get in touch via the email address at the back of the magazine and we can at least consider suggestions. ☺

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Toddbrook in August



Timeline of an emergency response (taken from Derbyshire Police press reports and briefings)

Thursday 1 August 12.26

Reports of badly damaged wall of the Toddbrook Reservoir during heavy rain and thunderstorms...

Thursday 1 August 14.05

Evacuation of Whaley Bridge begins...

Thursday 1 August 20.09

Further evacuations downstream of Toddbrook as work continues to be done to ensure the structural integrity of the reservoir wall... a small number of properties lie within the flood risk area outside Whaley Bridge now evacuated... A number of roads closed in these areas... All residents in the area of Whaley Bridge at highest risk of flooding, should the reservoir give way, have been contacted by officers and asked to leave their properties.

Thursday 1 August 23.09

Multi-agency taskforce in place – involving the Environment Agency, Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service, the Canal River Trust and many others and a plan drawn up to secure the dam wall:

- 400 tonnes of aggregate to divert water from entering the reservoir and into other surrounding watercourses designed for this purpose.
- Water pumps to remove water from the reservoir to relieve pressure on the dam wall.
- Once water level reduced to safe level – work to begin on the dam wall itself.

Emergency services from across Derbyshire, the region and across the country on hand to support. Ten specialist high-volume pumping fire appliances and specially-trained fire and rescue flood advisers brought in from around the UK, utilising fire service national coordination arrangements... Chinook helicopter tasked to move the substantial amount of aggregate into place – to allow precise placement and divert the flow of the water...

Deputy Chief Constable Rachel Swann: '...the future of the dam wall remains in the balance and I would remind people of the very real danger posed to them should the wall collapse... rest assured that all the agencies are doing everything humanly possible to bring the incident to a conclusion... there is a real prospect the dam could fail and if it fails, it is catastrophic. People would die if they were in that evacuation zone'.

Friday 2 August 07.50

Overnight, RAF crews move more than 50 tonnes of aggregate into the reservoir wall... work to continue to further shore up the reservoir wall including dropping aggregate into other parts of the reservoir, to stem the flow of water going into it... 16 high-volume

water pumps installed to reduce the water levels provided by fire services from across the country and the Canal and River Trust.

Friday 2 August 15.23

200 one tonne bags of aggregate in place, a further 200 bags left at scene to be added through the day... ten fire service pumps on scene, further pumps to be installed through the day.

Pumping has lowered water level by half a metre... structural integrity of dam wall still critical and substantial threat to life should it fail.

Friday 2 August 19.26

Residents able to return home for 15 minutes only for vital items and family pets...

days and ongoing risk of the Toddbrook Reservoir breaching.

Sunday 4 August 09.58

Residents no longer allowed back to their homes in Whaley Bridge as further heavy rain forecast from around 1pm with potential to increase flow of water entering reservoir.

Sunday 4 August 15.11

Water level now reduced by just over three metres... pumps continue to remove water at a rate of around 10cm an hour... once a level has been reached and able to be maintained engineers to view damage to wall... further rain forecast and levels of reservoir being closely



'I'm a resident of Furness Vale, the next village down the River Goyt. There was a real risk that part of my own village could be flooded by 30ft of water. One of my team members lives on the road leading to the reservoir and was evacuated. We should never forget the welfare and wellbeing of our own volunteers, who may be directly impacted by such an incident.' Neil Woodhead, Kinder MRT

Saturday 3 August 14.16

Residents allowed to visit their homes throughout day to collect medication and stranded pets. Assistant Chief Constable Kem Mehmet: '...this still remains a critical incident. The structural integrity of the dam wall is still at a critical level and there is still a substantial threat to life...'

Saturday 3 August 18.51

A further 55 homes evacuated due to potential increase in risk of adverse weather to come

monitored for impact this is having on the wall and surrounding infrastructure... dam wall now packed with 530 tonnes of aggregate being cemented into place to reinforce the structural integrity of the spillway... Environment Agency monitoring flow of water into the River Goyt and surrounding water courses...

Above: Prime Minister Boris Johnson visits Toddbrook Reservoir. Images thanks to Carney James Turner/Buxton MRT & Derby MRT.

Monday 5 August 19.27

Water level now reduced by six metres...

Tuesday 6 August 16.08

Water at Toddbrook Reservoir continues to be pumped out... level now down by 8.4 metres and significant progress made...

Tuesday 6 August 19.09

Residents in the 55 homes in the Horwich End area of Whaley Bridge able to return to their homes...

Wednesday 7 August 14.12

Environment Agency confirms the measures in place at the dam will be able to manage the

levels of rain forecasted, modelling against a number of scenarios... police confirm it is safe for people to go back to their homes...

Thursday 8 August 17.31

Canal and River Trust continue to monitor water levels in reservoir...



A dam collapse with a town caught in its path. It's the stuff of fiction, of bad 1980s disaster movies, but it doesn't happen in real life... except it nearly did! Who can forget the news of the imminent collapse of Toddbrook Reservoir at the Peak District town of Whaley Bridge on Thursday 1 August 2019? **Mike Potts** reports on his own team's experience and the wider Peak District mountain rescue picture.

Kinder MRT, within whose operational area Whaley Bridge lies, was alerted to the damage to the dam spillway, around midday on that fateful day, following exceedingly heavy rainfall the day before; initially a standby for the water team, then for drivers, one of the team's Swiftwater Rescue Technicians (SRTs), who lives in New Mills, relatively local to Whaley Bridge, went to assess the situation. Then followed a full team standby as the potential seriousness of the situation became apparent, followed shortly after by a call-out to the water team and then a full team call-out as the shocking news of what was happening started to seep out. The town of Whaley Bridge, population approximately 6,500, lay directly below the dam, hugging the banks of the River Goyt as it flowed away towards New Mills, Marple and Stockport, eventually to join the River Mersey. As the seriousness of the situation became apparent, neighbouring teams were called out and three PDMRO Duty Controllers managed the incident, two at Whaley Bridge and one off-site.

task was to carry out search and rescue operations in the aftermath of a dam failure — it was calculated that, should the dam fail, the surge of water would take approximately 60 minutes to reach New Mills, the next significant habitation downstream. Local roads that crossed the Goyt were closed for days on end with occasional heated exchanges between the police and frustrated drivers. For those involved, it was a tense few days.

'It really brought it home to me what a role mountain rescue had played when I found a thank you note and gift on my doorstep, left by neighbours to show their appreciation.'
Neil Woodhead, Kinder MRT

As we all now know, disaster was averted and the water level was reduced sufficiently to prevent a dam collapse and to allow engineers to inspect the damage to the dam. No doubt, in the coming months, questions will be asked and, hopefully, lessons learned. Not in recent history has a potential disaster of this magnitude occurred for MR and

The team was initially involved with Buxton MRT in setting up a rope safety system to allow safer access to the walkway over the damaged spillway. We then worked with the police team to fill and then drop sandbags to help divert the flow of water away from the damaged section of spillway. The police started to evacuate Whaley Bridge. A vast, multi-agency operation was soon in full swing with desperate attempts being made to reduce the water level in the dam by fully opening the sluices, clearing the outflow, diverting the inflow past the dam and by the installation of high volume pumps. On Day One, torrential downpours in the dam's catchment area added to the sense of urgency and forecast heavy rain in the following in the days did not bode well for the emergency services involved.

Eventually, as we all know, a Major Incident was declared and a military style, multi-agency operation was in full swing with RAF Chinook helicopters bringing huge bags of sand to shore up the damaged section of the dam wall, work to divert the streams and rivers feeding into the dam, and multiple heavy-duty pumps being brought from across the country to pump water out of the dam. This created its own problems with elevated water levels in the Goyt downstream, causing a further localised flood warning to go out. The press scrummage commenced and this little town was suddenly front-page news.

Eventually, all seven Peak District Mountain Rescue Association (PDMRO) teams were directly involved in the operation, with other teams across the region on standby. For the PDMRO teams, SRTs and Mod 2 Water First Responders were deployed on 12-hour operational standby downstream. Our



Left: Mike France (left) explaining the situation to John Halstead (Woodhead MRT).

Below: Design student Hannah Webb from Whaley Bridge drew the picture above of the rescue efforts to save her home and set it up to purchase as an A4 print on her Etsy shop with the proceeds donated to PDMRO.



we, as all other agencies, have much to take away. However, it is clear that, following the initial and inevitable chaos and confusion, the various agencies worked effectively and cooperatively to bring the situation to a satisfactory end. We were touched by the support provided by our fellow mountain rescue teams, all the agencies involved and by the local community, who provided food, drink, words of support and donations to our team and the others involved in this incident.

Full MREW statistics are not yet available but Kinder team alone put in over 500 volunteer hours, eventually being officially stood-down from the incident at 9.20 pm on Wednesday 7 August, seven days after the initial call-out.

'It quickly escalated from the early reports implying localised flooding to the high chance of a catastrophic dam failure threatening thousands of lives, livelihoods and property.'

'We were operating in a very difficult and confusing situation. The conflict between the need to take urgent action and managing the risk to the team was a constant challenge. Team members quickly responded to what needed doing, from technical rope work and water to the mundane filling of sandbags.'
Dave Eustace, Kinder MRT

By 6 August, the reservoir water level had been reduced by over nine metres to 17% of its full capacity, and residents of Whaley Bridge started to be allowed to return to their homes; 20 submersible pumps were eventually installed, with well over a kilometre of associated pipework; more than 1 billion litres of water were pumped out of the reservoir over the 7 days of the incident; over 1,000 1-tonne sandbags and 600 1-tonne bags of aggregate were dropped by Chinook to shore up the dam. Over the following two weeks, an estimated 30,000 fish (about 5,000kg) had to be captured and rehomed, mostly to Upper Bittell Reservoir, near Birmingham.

Toddbrook Reservoir is managed by the Canal & River Trust. Built in 1831 and comprising a clay core with soil mound overlay and concrete spillway on its front face, the 24 metre-high dam provides water to the Peak Forest Canal. It has a capacity of 1,238 million litres, equivalent to 495 Olympic-sized swimming pools and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), providing a habitat for herons, ducks and other animals and fish.

This incident is the first time a significant threat of dam collapse in the UK has occurred since the Ulley dam near Rotherham suffered severe damage during the floods of 2007. The last fatalities caused by a dam failure in the UK occurred in 1925, when two dams burst in the north Wales village of Dolgarrog, killing sixteen people. ☹

Buxton team was one of the seven Peak District teams to respond to the incident at Toddbrook. **Clare Holdcroft** adds some notes from Buxton.

Buxton team members helped set up rope systems on the dam, placing sandbags to prevent any further water draining over onto the slipway causing further damage on the first evening, supported the structural engineers and ensured a safe zone was maintained around the dam to enable the Chinook to continue its valuable work uninterrupted.

The incident highlighted the need to have water rescue trained personnel with specialist safety equipment on standby in the event of the dam breach to enable a rapid response.

In the afternoon of 2 August, Prime Minister Boris Johnson visited the site to see for himself the ongoing work of the multi-agency response to the emergency and to thank all those involved with the incident.

Many kind offers of help and donations of support were received from the surrounding local community. This included local businesses providing donations of food and other goods to both the voluntary and statutory emergency services, and to residents who had been evacuated. The team was overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity of the local community following the incident. Messages of thanks were received, and the community spirit in helping to raise funds to support all seven Peak District mountain rescue teams involved in the incident has been amazing. ☺



Social Media guidelines updated

SALLY SEED, JUDY WHITESIDE & OLIVER ROBINSON

Six years on from the last set of guidelines, things have moved on apace in the world of social media. Hard to believe that back then, not every team boasted a social media profile of any description. How times change! These updated guidelines, put together by the Publications group, are designed to assist teams in the management and control of social media activity.

The guidelines cover the opportunities and threats of social media use and general advice for teams including the use of photographic and video content and how to deal with trolling and criticism below the line. This latter also takes in the revised protocol on the use of photography and film in and around helicopters — based on confirmation sought by Al Read, from Rebecca Binstead at the Maritime Coastguard Agency. We've also included advice for team members in the use of their personal profiles with reference to their team activity.

OPPORTUNITIES

Improved communication — social media enables teams and team members to communicate effectively with supporters, encouraging interaction and enabling the public to share team news and support with other contacts.

Enhanced fundraising — Online giving is a rapidly growing channel for team fundraising. Facebook now also offers a 'Donation' button.

Ability to share key safety messages, weather updates, news, events and

fundraising activities — Facebook and Twitter are ideal vehicles for weather warnings and updates on dangerous conditions, safety information, details of fundraising events and other activities.

Increased engagement through Pages and Groups — enables teams to inform the public about their activities and grow a supporter base beyond their locality.

THREATS

Use of social media comes with responsibility — It's a vast communication channel, easily accessible by everybody. It carries the same dangers as any other broadcast medium and these usually relate to bad timing and lack of clear briefing or close management. Posting to social media is equivalent to making a TV or radio broadcast — the same checks and controls should be applied. If team members post confidential or inaccurate information — either via their team's official channels or their personal profiles — before approval within the team, there is a danger of:

- Breaching casualty confidentiality
- Interfering with and affecting either the progress or outcome of an incident
- Upsetting any partner organisations (including the emergency services)
- Putting the reputation of the team and mountain rescue in jeopardy.

SOME GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Make posts intelligible to people unfamiliar with mountain rescue, avoiding jargon or acronyms that may be familiar to us, but not to the wider public.
- Aim to make posts self-contained and self-explanatory, so someone casually browsing your page can quickly and easily comprehend the context and content.
- Keep content lively and interesting, providing a general impression of life in your team but avoiding precise details.
- Mix team activities with other content that's consistent with MR and local messages such as weather reports,

local events, safety information and offline activity such as fundraising events, to drive foot flow and build support.

- Share positive media coverage of your team — this rewards media outlets who report well on mountain rescue stories by sending them additional traffic.

- Don't post anything that will attract undue media interest or reveal the identity of a casualty. Offline media routinely scan social media for news, so only release details on social media in line with, and after, your official news release/debrief.

- Share content from other teams and MREW adding a local angle, and encourage team members to share from your team's social media rather than create their own.

- Create a hashtag for your team and use on any tweets.

- Ask questions or share content that provokes discussion but be careful to remain neutral.

- Check social media channels daily including direct messages and posts. Engage with questions and provide appropriate answers.

- Monitor your performance and know your audience. To do this **on Facebook**, go to 'Insights' in the admin menu for useful metrics. Click 'People' to see the demographics of your audience. **On Twitter**, the Admin menu appears when you click your logo in the top right. Go to 'Analytics' for similarly useful metrics.

- Make sure all team members are aware of your team's own Social Media Guidelines and their responsibilities as team members on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other channels.

TROLLING & CRITICISM

Critical comments beneath team posts generally fall into three categories.

1. Negative comment about a post — keep a watch on the post. Often your supporters will deal with negative commentary on your behalf, correcting misguided or misinformed comments.



Updated Brand Guidelines also available!

2. Negative comment about a casualty following a post about an incident — beware the 2.00am post after a long, hard rescue!!

- Comment as a team is not appropriate
- Write your initial post so others can learn from an incident, NOT as a criticism of the casualty involved. Make this explicit, if it helps.
- Hide or delete negative comments
- If necessary, block the person(s) from commenting.

3. A casualty self-identifies on your page or friends and family post on their behalf in a positive way or to thank you and then people pile in with negative comment — as for 2, but keep in touch with the casualty/friends and family to let them know why you have hidden/deleted their post or blocked comments.

USE OF IMAGES AND VIDEO FOOTAGE

Use effective visual media — a good image can help draw attention to a post. Uploading videos directly to Facebook and Twitter can also create good engagement, but try to avoid overly long introductions or title sequences. However:

Do not post images or videos without the permission of all those involved, including team training activities. There may be valid personal and professional reasons why a team member or casualty wishes not to be identifiable in this way.

Live streaming on anything is a huge risk (and not one to be taken) for a number of reasons: confidentiality, identification of the casualty and any team members involved and the nature of the incident. Identifying the location in photos and videos while an operation is still underway also has the potential to attract onlookers and/or premature press interest.

GUIDELINES FOR TEAM MEMBERS

As a mountain rescue team member, you are in a position of trust and responsibility, with access to information and details of a sensitive, personal and confidential nature and it is important to be constantly aware of this, particularly online.

- **Treat all social media as broadcast media** — if you wouldn't say it on TV or radio, don't say it online.

- **Refer to your team leadership regarding what is appropriate to post and when** — before social media, the general rule was that only those in leadership positions should speak to the media. This principle still applies.

- **Do not post details** of the call-out, your location or RV points, or any content that references where you are whilst you are involved in the incident.

- **Good practice** is to share the content from your team's official social media presences, retrospectively.

- **Adding content/comment to your team's official profiles** — remember these are the official presences of your team, read by and pushed out to non-team members, across the UK (and beyond), and WILL BE monitored by other media.

- **It is not good practice, nor is it appropriate, to share or comment on team business on official public team pages and channels.**

THE UPDATED SOCIAL MEDIA AND BRAND GUIDELINES ARE AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD FROM 'PUBLICATIONS' FOLDER IN THE MEMBERS AREA OF THE WEBSITE. OR EMAIL EDITOR@MOUNTAIN.RESCUE.ORG.UK TO REQUEST A COPY.



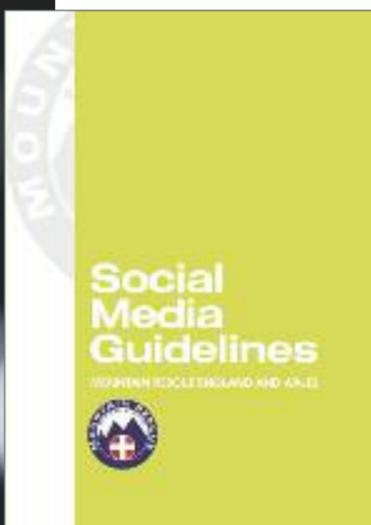
GUIDANCE FOR TEAMS AND THEIR MEMBERS FOR PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM IN THE HELICOPTER ENVIRONMENT

The official guidelines for use of mobile phone, radio, camera and recording devices during HMCG Helicopter SAR training and operations have been in place for some time. However, there have been instances where a particular crew has given different advice to teams in a specific situation.

To avoid further confusion, via MREW Training Officer Al Read, we sought written confirmation from Rebecca Binstead, at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Her response is as follows:

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE AGREED PROTOCOLS WITH BRISTOW, COASTGUARD:

- Any pictures which may have been allowed as a personal memento must NOT be posted on personal or corporate social media sites
- Interior photos and videos taken with rotors running (airborne or on the ground) are NOT permitted
- Interior photos and videos taken when the aircraft is shut down MAY be posted on personal or corporate social media sites providing that the crew have given permission and are aware of the photos (no posting of sensitive material).
- Photo and videos from outside an aircraft are allowed, subject to safety advice from the crew.





conference 2019

Mountain Rescue

JUDY WHITESIDE EDITOR

Well, after much collective and metaphorical nail biting on the part of the conference team, the event appears to have been — indeed, WAS — a resounding success. In no time at all, thanks and accolades were tumbling in: *Fantastic weekend! I've come back with so many ideas! Superb event, great speakers, good trade show, generous sponsors, flawless organisation... A BIG THANK YOU to all concerned...*

Sure, there were a few niggles expressed online, not least the walk back through time to student accommodation reminiscent of the early-1980s — but at least it provided a talking point. And a benchmark for improvement perhaps. The consensus was that this had been a great weekend and 'here's to the next one'!

This was the first conference organised by Mountain Rescue England and Wales for some years. The last time we were in Leeds it was a UK Mountain Rescue Conference, co-organised by representatives from all four countries, magnificently led by the late Peter Howells (and Penny Brockman, whose hand still gently rested on the financial tiller for this one). So quite a bar to match. Julian Walden took up the mantle and — with the support of a strong conference team — delivered an event to be proud of.

Three hundred delegates and speakers (many of them team members too) converged on the Headingley Campus, from Scotland, Ireland and Lowland Rescue as well as England and Wales. There were representatives of the statutory agencies, fire and rescue, the police and government and just under fifty exhibitor staff, many of whom attended the sessions as well, fully engaging not just with the membership but the essence of mountain rescue.

MREW approved insurance broker Integro were mainline sponsors of the event, with Simoco sponsoring the delegate pack of goodies and Helly Hansen giving away a free base layer to every attendee — not to mention providing conference team members with suitably branded, great quality kit. A huge thanks to all of them.

The decision to return to Leeds proved the right one. 'It's central to the UK,' says Julian. 'There's a good communications network, train plane and rail access. But, more importantly, we went there because of their

enthusiasm and the shared ethos and culture of the Carnegie team. Being outdoor specialists, they understood our community and dovetailed well into our own team.

'From the beginning, they met with us regularly to plan the event and they also did a deal with Diageo for the free whisky tasting — which proved quite popular!! [something of an understatement].

'They were joined by other key contacts over the weekend and another 60 or 70 people were involved behind the scenes over the two days, making sure everything ran smoothly.

'Special thanks should go to Ben Carter (Calder Valley), who made sure everything worked on the IT side, and to Paul Barlow (Derby), who looked after the bulk of the admin, planned the dinner and looked after signage etc. Then there was Caroline Davenport, who did a sterling job with the advertising sales (ensuring the published programme more than paid for itself) and Paul Smith, who oversaw the exhibition stands'. And thanks too, of course, to the advertisers and exhibitors who supported us — we couldn't do it without you.

Long before the actual weekend, team members had been invited to throw in ideas and, supported by various officers, the team

about (respectively) digital security, legal awareness in documentation and risk management. Did anyone there not go home wondering just how exposed we can be — as individuals, teams and a national organisation?

Just when you thought you'd heard and read everything there was to hear and read about the rescue last year of those young footballers from a flooded cave in Thailand, Jason Mallinson came along to prove you wrong with a fascinating talk delivered in a very croaky voice, thanks to an altercation while caving with some caustic acid. Thank you to him for persevering with his presentation, despite his very evident personal discomfort.

Dave Bunting MBE captivated the after-dinner crowd with his tales of leading in extreme environments and Loel Collins had some interesting Sunday morning thoughts on training for competency.

Plans are already brewing for the next one — hopefully in September 2021 so I asked Julian how he thought he and the team might improve and build on the success of this one.

'The conference needs to grow,' says Julian, 'and reflect whatever issues are important to the members, mountain rescue

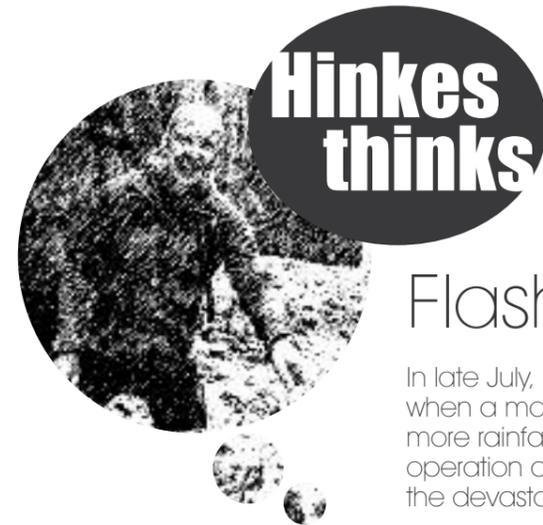


Conference images © Cameron Walden | cam@waldenphotography.co.uk
Conference identity image (top): UWFR in training © Sara Spillet.

pulled together a speaker programme incorporating a wide range of topics, across four tracks: Training, Working with Other Agencies, Medical and Governance. The latter track in particular proved salutary, with some stark messages from Neil Sinclair, David Burrows-Sutcliffe and Chris Jones

and the wider SAR community. So, as with this one, we will go out to the membership, asking for their input then craft a conference which reflects the wishes and concerns of our team members'.

So, keep those ideas flowing and watch this space! 📍



**Hinkes
thinks**

Flash flooding in Swaledale

In late July, a bridge collapsed as flash flooding hit part of North Yorkshire when a month's rain fell in just four hours and the region braced itself for more rainfall. Swaledale team members were involved in the clean-up operation and **Alan Hinkes** was at home in his native Yorkshire to witness the devastation.

The sky to the west was nearly black with huge cumulonimbus clouds piling up, an ominous sign of an impending thunder and lightning storm. I was heading north on a new Azuma LNER train between York and Darlington. It was a lovely sunny summer's day as we sped through Northallerton at 125 mph. To the east, the North York Moors was basking in summer sun under a blue sky. In Darlo there was a warm easterly wind blowing and the clouds to the west were still building up in a dark threatening sky. One of my friends, who like a lot of us is into weather watching, rang me to tell me he'd never seen such a strong radar return for intense rainfall and lightning strikes over upper Swaledale, Teesdale and the North Pennine area.

I could see lightning and it was raining towards Richmond and Barnard Castle. Reports were now coming in on social media and local radio of flash flooding in Leyburn and Bellerby in Wensleydale.

There was also a report of a minibus stuck in floodwater in the Grinton area and Swaledale MRT was responding to evacuate the passengers. I had a look at the River Tees below Barnard Castle and it was in full flood with whole trees floating downstream. Next, I went to Richmond Falls on the River Swale, which was also in full flood with the falls nearly washed out and the riverside road flooded. There were quite a few locals amazed at how quickly the river Swale had risen. It had come up in less than half an hour. In the spray and mist from the roaring falls I could smell kerosene fumes, which I realised later was from the heating oil tanks and cars washed away upstream.

Some of the Swaledale team members were now in the eye of the storm as the flash flood five-feet deep hit Reeth, Grinton and Arkengarthdale. It was quite localised and it was mainly Gunnerside Gill, Arkle Beck and Grinton Beck that turned into raging torrents. Upstream in Swaledale, villages such as Gunnerside and the Tan Hill Inn were not badly affected.

Team members battled into the night along with the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service. Essentially the area was cut off at the height of the flash flood and the main road from Richmond was washed away and a bridge collapsed on Grinton Moor.

The following morning, I managed to drive over to Reeth and behold the devastation. It reminded me somewhat of Storm Desmond in Patterdale. Near the Dales Bike Centre, battered cars and huge black polythene wrapped bales were piled up against each other. Drystone walls had been washed away and debris and gravel piled over meadows. Many sheep had been drowned. Thankfully, no human lives were lost, although a few had very close escapes. The Reeth Show field was strewn with boulders, rocks, bales and various detritus, with the show only a couple of weeks away. Team members were still digging out flooded properties and generally helping clear the mess. People were contacting me asking how bad it was in Yorkshire! The storm was very localised, on the evening of the storm,

This was a classic example of how MRTs help not just in acute situations — such as during the storm or on a rescue in the fells, but also in a more 'soft' manner, helping and supporting the local community. Perhaps this sort of work is not as glamorous or exciting as a rescue, but it is always highly appreciated and good for PR and profile.

Many team members gave up hours of their time over the days following the flash flood and, along with Young Farmers, the Reeth Show field was cleared ready for the annual show.

A lot of businesses such as Dales Bike Centre and the Copper Kettle Café were soon cleaned and back in action, but some householders may be out for a few months as the clean-up continues. The roads were dug out and repaired and the collapsed



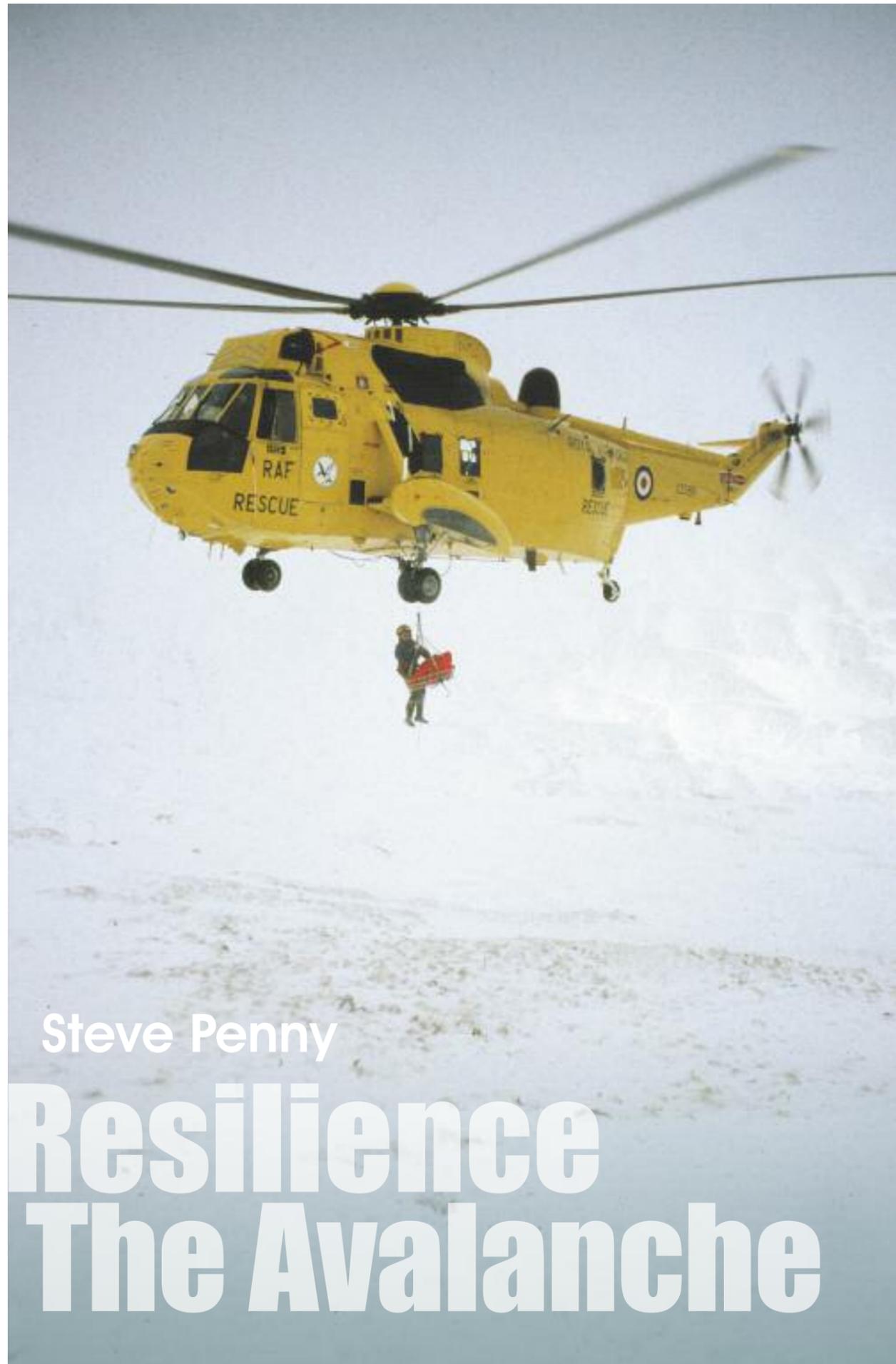
Images © Alan Hinkes.

some friends were rock climbing in the sun on the North York Moors further east.

Two days later I returned with Swaledale MRT to help coordinate the recovery, checking all properties in the area, as well as distributing food parcels, and other essential items. We were documenting some of the damage to see what further help may be needed as a flood response effort had been set up in Reeth Village Hall and the local MP was visiting. Lots of TV, radio and press were still in the area some transmitting live broadcasts.

bridge replaced ready for the UCI cycling race. Later statistics showed that the total rainfall was greater than the Boscastle flash flood of 2004 in Cornwall.

It was a gloriously sunny hot day for the Reeth Show and Swaledale team members were there as usual with a couple of vehicles and a display. Lots of people were thankful of the team's efforts, happy and grateful to have such dedicated volunteers based in the area. ☺



Steve Penny
**Resilience
 The Avalanche**

A personal story of dealing with a traumatic event

The winter of 1995 was described by Blyth Wright as The Black Winter in his book *A Chance in a Million?*¹. I was a newly qualified dog handler in SARDA and was called out to help search for a missing lone walker. At the time, there had been a considerable amount of snow but the weather had changed and slopes had become very unstable.

I was searching areas along with two other dog handlers when we came onto a huge avalanche (about 500m crown wall). We agreed we would spread out and move over the area from one side to another. I was in the middle and, within a matter of minutes, Tarah was digging in the snow and coming back to indicate. She had located the body of the missing walker buried beneath the avalanche debris. What I experienced in the hours and days following that incident were things I had not had to deal with previously. This story is also found in the book *Mountain Rescue*² by Bob Sharp and Judy Whiteside.

In this article, I will try to explain the reasons why it took almost 25 years to speak out openly and publically (via social media channels) about an event that had a profound impact on me in my early years of mountain rescue, and why being comfortable to speak out and normalising such conversations is so important for us, not least to help break down the stigma often associated with our mental health in general.

First of all, why did I choose to speak out in a short film? The answer to that one is quite straightforward. In March 2018, Scottish Mountain Rescue was approached by a newly qualified doctor, Matt Walton. Matt explained that he had made a film about his experiences of dealing with a traumatic call-out when on placement with the air ambulance in England and this had been received well. He was keen to make a second film relating to an avalanche incident, exploring the potential reactions to dealing with that from a volunteer responder perspective. However, he was based in Newcastle and needed

to do any filming within the following week — and this included trying to film outside as well as an interview. As it happened, the story of my experience of finding a buried casualty with my search dog Tarah, and the impact that had on me, fitted the bill. In addition, I was only an hour from

Over the last 25 years I have had to deal with many incidents that have involved dealing with death and a few that have been high risk. Some of these have had a minimal impact on me but some have had much greater impact. And for others in the team this will have been the same — but not



Newcastle and we still had some snow on the ground following 'The Beast from the East'!

The answer to the second question — why did it take almost 25 years to speak out openly and publically? — is trickier.

In the film I describe the reactions I had in the hours and days following that call-out and the fact that at that time we had never been trained in these issues, so the reactions were confusing and worrying. I do remember it was important to be clear in my mind that I had done everything I could have done and was reassured to learn we could not have done more. I took no further action at the time.

necessarily in relation to the same incidents. This is why incidents can be described as 'potentially traumatic' for an individual — we won't all react to the same incident in the same way. It could be that we then don't speak out if we feel we might be the only one experiencing effects when everyone else seems to be OK.

More recently, a couple of years ago, I had to deal with an issue in my personal life that seriously challenged my mental health. After years of dealing with potentially traumatic events in mountain rescue I knew I would benefit from help and yet I could not bring myself to seek that help. I know this is not uncommon in those of us who focus on helping

Opposite page: Sea King evacuation from the scene.

Above: Screen capture from the film; Tarah at work on the avalanche. Images courtesy of Steve Penny.

¹Bob Barton & Blyth Wright, 2000, ISBN 0-907521-59-2; ² Bob Sharp and Judy Whiteside, 2005, ISBN 1-904524-39-7

others! Two things happened that changed my position.

The first was that I made an appointment with my GP in relation to physical symptoms that were becoming difficult to ignore and he quickly understood that there was more to this. The second was listening to an interview with someone who had taken years to ask for help and their turning point was that feeling well (or unwell) is not a competition. How many times do we all say to ourselves — why should I be feeling bad, so-and-so is in a far worse position? The truth is that we all have a right to be safe and well — it's not a competition with others. So, having spoken out and reached out, I started to receive the help and support I needed.

And this explains why I chose to speak out now about my own experiences. It has been shown that stigma is a barrier to us speaking out — that might be self-stigma (our own willingness to verbalise the issues); institutional stigma (the culture and/or barriers within an organisation or team); and public stigma (how do the

public at large and/or media react). Featuring in the film gave me an opportunity to show to others, using a personal experience, that taking the step to speak out is incredibly valuable — it's OK to talk! It was an opportunity to help normalise such conversations. Often, just having a listening ear from someone you trust can make all the difference and may be all you need.

The film was launched at the Emergency Services Show in September 2018 and circulated via various Twitter and Facebook accounts and was commented on by Stephen Fry who said, 'Understand how trauma affects our emergency service personnel by watching this incredibly moving and important film'.

Speaking out in the film strengthened my resolve to support other mountain rescue volunteers to stay safe and stay well — **#staysafestaywell** — and to challenge barriers caused by stigma in its various guises. It is largely the reason I have been actively involved in the work of the UKSAR Wellbeing Group and development of the

Wellbeing Framework*, as well as a range of initiatives in my role as Wellbeing Officer for Scottish Mountain Rescue.

I hope you can find five minutes to watch the film — you can find it at <https://youtu.be/qabCvFwmNyo> or search 'Resilience — the avalanche') and I hope you might find it of interest and use. If it helps just one person, it was worth speaking out publicly about my experiences — even if it took almost 25 years! 🙌

**Note: I explained a little about the current wellbeing initiatives in Scottish Mountain Rescue in MR Magazine Spring 2019. The Wellbeing Framework has been slightly updated and is copied below. A printed text explaining the use of the framework is currently being prepared.*

STEVE PENNY IS WELLBEING OFFICER FOR SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE. YOU CAN CONTACT HIM VIA WELLBEINGOFFICER@SCOTTISHMOUNTAINRESCUE.ORG

The new Wellbeing Framework image.



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CONFERENCE SESSION

#staysafestaywell

Elaine Gilliland & Steve Nelson

wellbeing@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Firstly, a huge thank you to those who either came to the Wellbeing session at the conference or chatted to us afterwards about wellbeing – this programme of work will not progress unless we have people who really understand what is needed and how we can push for the right support.

We've made considerable progress. It is a long, steady process (and needs to be) to ensure the support required is available and appropriate to our team members and their families. As we have stressed, this is a community of people and we need to encompass everybody.

With Scottish Mountain Rescue, we've progressed the initial framework diagram to reflect the community philosophy (the updated version features in Steve Penny's article on page 26). At the conference, we were able to explain the Wellbeing Framework and what has been achieved so far and, although difficult to put in text, I think the following allows us to outline progress and give confidence to teams that we are striving to work with the appropriate agencies and organisations to arrange access to support.

Shout Crisis Response — already advertised to members via the MREW Facebook page. We will ensure every team has this texting service number on posters. (Also, see right for more details about Shout).

Oscar Kilo — this Police Wellbeing Framework incorporates resources, tools and best practice including a collaborative system to discuss and debate wellbeing (due to access problems with our emails, we cannot fully access this at present, but we have the support of Chief Superintendent Glen Mayhew, Commander of the Alliance Operations Department of the National Police Chiefs' Council to ensure this is overcome).

Hopeline — the Papyrus wellbeing support line (see Kelly Thorpe's piece, opposite, for more on Papyrus).

The Fire Fighters' Charity — Access to three centres across the UK with trained psychologists.

TRIM Training — ensuring we continue to provide access to TRIM training as TRIM Officers/Assessors can and will continue to offer signposting support in teams.

Mental Health First Aid — we hope to have a training syllabus in place soon.

ASSIST — the World Health Organisation accredited Suicide Prevention Training. We are working with Papyrus to deliver regional weekend workshops.

Integro Insurers Employees Assistance Programme (EAP)

The Rescue Benevolent Fund — set up six years ago by MREW and BCRC as a separate charity to support mountain and cave rescue team members and their families, the fund has treatment agreements in place, with both the Fire Fighters' Charity and the Police Treatment Centres across the UK. (see page 29 more details).

This is but a small focus on the work being progressed. The Wellbeing group hopes to have in place soon posters and wallet cards detailing support services, and a signposting flow-chart, to ensure members and their families are given the appropriate support.

We will be working to develop the framework to represent MREW within each area, so this reflects better the needs of teams and team members and their families.

We will encourage MREW to develop a wellbeing platform on the members area of the website and hope to have wellbeing social media established within the next three months. ☺

SHOUT FOR SUPPORT IN A CRISIS

In early September, Shout announced a partnership with the emergency services Blue Light community to provide 24/7 crisis text support to frontline emergency responders across the UK. The partnership launched as HRH The Duke of Cambridge visited the Fire Fighters' Charity Centre at Harcombe House in Chudleigh in South Devon, where he met with First Responders and Shout crisis volunteers.

Anyone can text **BLUELIGHT to 85258** any time, day or night, to be connected to a trained and supervised crisis volunteer who will chat by text. The crisis volunteer will listen, help the texter think more clearly, and can help signpost further support where relevant.

Shout can support with a wide range of issues — whether it be anxiety, stress, relationship issues, depression or other topics which might cause mental health concerns. It is confidential, and for most mobile phone networks is free, and won't show up on a phone bill. All conversations take place via text, so you can message whenever and wherever you need, knowing the conversation will be in private and silent.

Shout is the UK's first 24/7 crisis text support service, it was researched and developed with The Royal Foundation as a legacy of the Heads Together campaign. It is delivered by Shout and powered by Crisis Text Line.



KEY MESSAGES

- A new 24/7 crisis text support service for the First Responders community.
- You can text **BLUELIGHT to 85258** any time, day or night, to be connected to a trained and supervised Crisis Volunteer who will chat by text.
- We can support with a wide range of issues. It is confidential, and for most mobile phone networks is free, and won't show up on a phone bill.
- It is all via text, so you can text whenever and wherever, as it is private and silent.

CONFERENCE SESSION

Papyrus suicide prevention



Kelly Thorpe is head of Helpline Services at Papyrus Prevention of Young Suicide and has been employed by the charity for four years. She shared the Saturday morning Wellbeing session with Elaine Gilliland, MREW Wellbeing Officer, Steve Nelson and Steve Penny, Scottish Mountain Rescue Wellbeing Officer.

I first heard of Papyrus around five years ago when my 16-year old son was struggling to stay safe from acting on his thoughts of suicide. To this day I consider myself very lucky to get advice and guidance from Papyrus Hopeline UK, in order to better support him through a very difficult time. This advice and guidance is a lifeline for many and for those that love them.

Suicide remains the elephant in the room, a dirty word, yet it is the biggest killer of young people under the age of 35. In fact recent statistics indicate that the suicide rate for all ages across the UK is the highest it has been since 2002. I am passionate about smashing the stigma and taboos around talking about suicide and our unique emotional resilience in the hopes the avenues of support continue to open up for those who are vulnerable. It is also important to create suicide-safer communities where the dialogue is sensitive and open, remembering that those bereaved by suicide should have permission to grieve and receive support not to feel disenfranchised.

Papyrus provides confidential support and advice to young people struggling with thoughts of suicide, and anyone worried about a young person through our national helpline Hopeline UK, via free telephone, text and email services. We are all trained to use a particular suicide intervention model (Pathway to Assisting Life) that is recognised globally by the World Health Organisation. It is this particular model that helps us all to feel competent and confident to use verbal suicide first aid skills in all kinds of different scenarios.

It is part of my role to ensure we meet growing demand for our services across the UK whilst balancing a safe working environment for our advisers. I am passionate about advocating for all our service users and making sure their voice is loud and clear in our decision making

processes at Papyrus and in our wider campaigns that influence national social policies. I am proud to also be part of a training team where I facilitate suicide prevention workshops like Applied Suicide Intervention Skills (ASIST) empowering our personal and professional communities to become suicide safer.

During my links with mountain rescue, I have been incredibly humbled by the increasing level of work volunteers engage in across the UK, true life savers indeed. I have also come to appreciate that this impacts on many and I have huge respect for everyone involved in supporting you to do the work you do. What has struck me is the amount of pain and trauma life savers can endure, often around those in crisis with suicidal.

It can sometimes be so hard to acknowledge this but it is normal to talk when we feel emotionally overwhelmed and reach out for support, in my opinion this is a huge strength and far from a weakness. It's important we look out for one another, if you're worried for a colleague call us for some advice in order to talk with them openly — offer yourself as a safe space, we all need that at some point in our lives. After all, we can't save lives if we can't save our own.

Thoughts of suicide don't have to end in suicide attempts or death, there is help and hope that circumstances and situations can change — sometimes we just need a little help to see that when all we see is darkness. My son still struggles with feeling overwhelmed sometimes, there is no magic wand to take that away but the support around him is crucial and the fact he is living his best life playing guitar all day at university helps to keep him safe.

Be someone's light by lending an empathic ear. Take care of each other and know that I fully support the work you do every single day of the year. Utmost respect and love for you all. ☺



Busting a few benevolent fund misapprehensions

Judy Whiteside
Rescue Benevolent Fund

Six years on from the launch of the Mountain and Cave Rescue Benevolent Fund (working title, the Rescue Benevolent Fund) and the misapprehensions persist. This becomes clear during national gatherings, where either mine or Shirley's 'benevolent fund trustee' hand will invariably shoot upwards at some point during any discussion about wellbeing.

Perhaps the biggest misapprehension rests in the name of the fund itself, and that particular misapprehension leads to so many others. So, please excuse the grumpiness but, AT NO POINT have we EVER been called the MREW Benevolent Fund. Fact is, the fund was set up by MREW in collaboration with BCRC (as our registered title reflects) and we're most definitely here for the cave rescue family as much as we are for the mountain rescue family.

Second misapprehension is that the money in our bank is 'MREW money'. It's not. In terms of financial assets, the fund began life thanks to an initial donation which was, in turn, kindly match-funded by MREW. Since then, we've benefited from substantial donations from regions, teams and individuals far outweighing that original investment. Our understanding is that any donations we've received are given to support those who need help, irrespective of regional, team or individual affiliation. Nothing is ringfenced. And, incidentally, **MREW plays no part in, nor is it privy to the detail of, benevolent fund applications, possibly a third misapprehension.**

Which brings me to misapprehension number four, that we are part of MREW. We're not. It became clear from the start that to protect and secure any monies donated for benevolent purposes and to ensure independent, objective assessment of any possible claims, it should be set up as a separate charity, with its own bank account, operating procedures and policies. So that's what we did. We set up a separate charity. Number 1152798.

Don't get me wrong, our very *raison d'être*, enshrined in our Declaration of Trust, is to look after mountain and cave rescue team members and their families, to help alleviate hardship suffered as a result of official mountain rescue activity. So far, we've supported claims for both physical and psychological rehab as well as helping out in cases of financial hardship.

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Available in two models, offering the latest in LED and optics technology, choose from the HawkStar 2500 lumens or HawkStar-X 4200 lumens, with a maximum run time of 4 hours 30 mins on the highest boost setting and long lasting run time of 12 hours 30 mins on its lowest setting. Two beam settings are available, the narrow-angled beam is ideal for

searching, especially with its high intensity, long-distance 600 metre beam, while the wide-angled beam is perfectly suited for use on scene whether it be an emergency or more general use. Using the handle-mounted switch, a choice of nine modes includes Boost, Search, Flood, available in full, low and dimmable settings, also Strobe and SOS for signalling/emergency situations. There's an inbuilt adjustable stand for use as a work light.

The HawkStar is IP67 rated and so is suitable for outdoor use and has rubberised protective covering to ensure it is impact resistant and has a high visibility yellow body. The lightweight rechargeable Lithium-ion battery is fully charged in 6.5 hours, from full discharge. When the unit is switched on or charging, the battery indicator will illuminate battery and charge status LEDs.

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LETTER TO
THE EDITOR

Don Robinson obituary took me back fifty years...

I noted the obituary to Don Robinson in the last issue. It reminded me of a period in my life almost 50 years ago when a student at Leeds University.

From 1971 to 1974 I was a doctoral student in the Physical Education Department. It was a rather strange creature. On the one hand it offered postgraduate research degrees in sport science (unique in the UK) and on the other, it provided an opportunity for students to play squash, table tennis etc in a relaxed social environment. I recall there were six members of staff. Four were dedicated to academic study and two managed the programme of sports activities. One of these was a rather mysterious character who was into potholing and other 'strange' outdoor activities including rock climbing. This was Don Robinson. He didn't appear very often and when he did, was always seen wearing a brown jacket and brown 'Jesus' sandals!

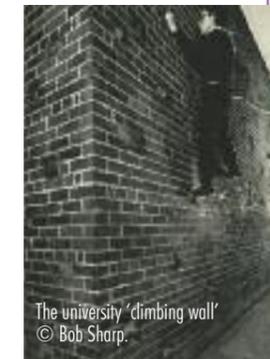
I had little contact with Don during my time at Leeds and didn't realise he was involved in climbing wall design. One of his key achievements in the department was to reshape the brick walls in the corridor. The resulting climbing wall was a simple affair – bricks missing, some protruding and the occasional lump of granite stuck on the wall with cement. I recall vividly dodging falling students as I made my way along the corridor from my own room to the departmental office.

Sometimes the walls would be festooned with students scaling the walls. It seemed to be a highly popular activity although I had no time for the hairy creatures that wasted their time on such trivial pursuits! One student was ever present – the legendary Alex McIntyre. Alex went on to become a climbing legend but was killed on Annapurna several years later. He sported a mass of shaggy hair and became an iconic climbing figure during his time as a student.

I met Don later in 1976 when climbing the Cuillin Ridge in Skye. It was a very hot day and our group was tackling the ridge in a single day. I came face to face with Don at a section known as the Kings' Chimney. I was climbing up and he was abseiling down. We recognised each other, shared a few quick words and quickly moved on. Some years later, Don went on to establish DR Climbing Walls, one of the first (if not THE first) commercial companies in the UK to design and build climbing walls.

I had the good fortune to chat to Don a couple of years ago when I came across the photograph of him, taken in 1972. I sent him a copy and we reminisced about the early days of the Physical Education Department and how it led the world in so many ways – outdoor education, sport science and fitness training. That conversation encouraged me to raise the matter of his climbing wall with Leeds University and remind it about its iconic role as a climbing venue. I suggested to the university secretary that some kind of plaque be installed to remind visitors of its place in climbing history and also of Alex McIntyre who bought such credit to the university and the world of climbing. I received a simple, dispassionate reply to say the building had been demolished to make way for student accommodation! Sad to see such history wiped away without a second thought.

Bob Sharp



Mike's Greene's Sunday morning conference session, The Health of Rescue Volunteers, detailed the findings of a survey carried out by himself, Dr J Badly and Dr K Greene. Mike admits that the survey and its results have limitations but they make salutary reading nevertheless. This survey is likely to under-report both physical and psychological 'injury'. There were 20% of MREW team members who replied, 33% reported at least one injury or problem, and the great majority of these were physical injury. These were largely sprains or strains, sustained through a fall or stumble, or whilst carrying a casualty. Indeed, all the physical injuries the benevolent fund has dealt with to date have been sustained in this way.

The worrying statistic, however, is that 20.3% of these reported have not made a full recovery and a substantial number of working days have been lost in the process. The survey identified 25 volunteers losing up to 14 days from paid employment (15 more than this figure) and 38 volunteers not available for mountain rescue call-outs for up to 14 days in the ten year period.

If this sample is representative of the organisation the total burden of all types of injury could be 85 physical and 15 psychological problems each year.

The Medical subcommittee has suggested that as an organisation we should identify 'best practice' for moving stretchers and share practice on minimising heavy loads and, as Elaine and Steve detail on page 28, the Wellbeing group is considering an extensive range of support options in support of mental health and wellbeing.

Sometimes, all we can do as organisations is point someone in the right direction – but if that signposted trail to the overworked GP surgery ends in a several week-long wait to see a specialist, be that psychological or physical, or commitment to an expensive course of private therapy, the Rescue Benevolent Fund may be the route to take.

All you have to do is fill in a form, and provide as much detail as possible relating to your injury – including a letter from your GP, therapist or consultant. It could mean the difference between waiting for weeks – and never quite recovering from injury – and getting fit and well in timely fashion. Wellbeing restored.

We can help by covering the costs of your rehabilitation, with agreements in place with both The Fire Fighters' Charity and the Police Treatment Centres. One way or another, we've got physical rehab services covered across England, Wales and Scotland. These centres offer mental health services too, but we can also work with local counsellors and TRiM personnel to help team members who need mental health support.

So what next? **If you think the Rescue Benevolent Fund might be able to support you, contact me via secretary@rescuebenevolent.fund.** It could make all the difference.



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#itsoktotalk



ANDY ELWOOD
CHATS ABOUT
MENTAL HEALTH,
LANDIES AND
STAYING WONKY

I asked for help with my (exhaust) problem and got a new perspective

Let me start with a BIG 'thank you' to everyone who reads this blog and who has engaged with the message 'it's OK to talk' about how you are feeling after a call-out or in relation to your normal life outside mountain rescue.

The response and support for my Wellbeing tour during the summer, around '999' bases in northern England and Scotland has been immense — beyond my wildest dreams. Wow! It really seemed to grow arms and legs as the tour progressed, meaning I had extra stops and detours to coordinate along the way. Thank you to everyone who turned out, got involved, fed me and put me up in their homes or bases.

I really am humbled by your generosity and support. You folks really deserve a pat on the back for the commitment to yourselves and your teammates. Thank you to the couple of people who made petrol contributions and especially to Steve Penny for encouragement and support throughout. Lifelines Scotland were amazing and if you are not aware yet of the amazing work they do, you are missing out. They have just secured more funding for supporting '999' teams in Scotland — look them up online and check out the free resources available!

Mountain rescue volunteers in Scotland were the first group to implement the new UKSAR Wellbeing and Resilience framework, which has been received very well. My tour was to highlight the importance of the issue around as many bases as possible and offer an opportunity to highlight the message to folk in other teams around the country also.

Reflecting on my tour, I'm pleased with my planning of the route and my estimated timings for travelling between bases, however, I totally underestimated how much time I

Thank you to everyone who agreed to take part in a conversation with me in the Landie about wellbeing and mental health and the great work that is going on in each team I visited, supporting each other through thick and thin. I'm still working on editing the film I have from the Go-pro camera and my mobile phone, so the release date for November this year may have been a little optimistic!

The journey was always going to be a great challenge for the vehicle, but hard work, planning and preparation paid off. Sorting out the electrical issues was key for the vehicle and fitting more supportive, comfortable seats for the 2,000+ miles in two and a half weeks was key for me. An engine oil change kept her running well but I've discovered that I really need to sort the leak as I was topping up oil rather too frequently. I know Land Rovers are 'designed' to leak but this one needs to be investigated when I get a spare moment.

I was blessed with an amazing spell of weather throughout my journey, so I wore shorts and sandals most days. It was especially hot in the Landie as I usually had the heater on to cool the engine, especially when I was caught in slow-moving traffic. It was a challenge to drink enough water some days and I had a few fume-induced headaches, especially when the exhaust blow-out developed fully. At worst, I had a cloud of blue smoke into the cabin each time I started the engine, which was just about manageable for an afternoon, until I got a chance to repair it that evening.

Just like in life, reaching out for some



Above: Just a wee exhaust problem...

would need on each base to talk to people and hear what they had to say on the subject. So many people wanted to share stories and open up, once we quickly established safety and trust on my visit in Andy's Landie.

help was key to getting my problem sorted and 'back on the road'. By calling someone I knew and trusted, who was able to pick up some repair kit and meet me, the job was much easier and faster than if I'd tackled it



Left: Border Search and Rescue 4x4 team members ready for a chinwag.

myself. That first bodge-job was a temporary fix and enough to keep me going until the back box completely blew apart a day later, which meant another more substantial patch-up until a new exhaust could be delivered further down my route at Scone airport. (Special thanks to Angus).

One thing I did learn on the exhaust problem was that admitting I had a problem and asking for help brought out enthusiastic support and help from people who had been there before, who brought a different perspective and experience, which made things a lot easier.

I had been struggling to get a spanner or socket onto a couple of manifold bolts — my approach was to stand at the front of the car and lean over into the engine bay as far as I could and then bend my arms and hands into a series of knots to attempt to get onto the bolts. This was really awkward and meant straining my hamstrings, back and wrists. Angus slid in from underneath with a long extension bar on a socket and was straight onto it from a comfortable position. I was blown away by how simple this was and felt so silly for not having thought of it...

How often is this true in life? 'Can't see the wood for the trees.' Sharing a problem is a chance to sort it out with some help and gain the benefit of someone else's experience. Isn't it a good sign of a leader to seek council and have advisers offering expert knowledge, which can be considered before deciding on a course of action? Why do we consider it a sign of weakness to ask for help? We would gladly help out a friend or teammate but why sometimes do we find it difficult to accept or ask for help ourselves?

What I loved about the trip was meeting up with old friends again and

having the ability to pick up exactly where we left off, even if it has been a few years. Meeting new people and connecting was also fantastic for me and kept me buzzing along the route, as I never had a dull day. I heard some amazing stories of support, resilience and mental strength and understanding over the years, from teams all around the journey.

Who haven't you spoke to for ages? Why don't you drop an old friend a line or give them a call soon to have a chinwag and catch up with what's been going on? It would do you both good.



Above: Left to right: Ochils MRT, Moffat MRT and Galloway MRT © Andy Elwood.

One thing I had reinforced on my trip by Rose Fitzpatrick at St Andrew's house in Edinburgh, was that it's essential to talk about suicide with someone who you think is considering taking their own life. By creating safety about the subject and not judging the individual in crisis, you create a greater likelihood of talking about it and the person moving away from these ideas. Suicidal thoughts are common, with 20% of our population having considered it, however, these thoughts are temporary and they will pass. We do not have to act upon them. 75% of suicides have not had contact with mental health services, so starting this conversation with someone is the first

step to encouraging them to gain professional help and other support. Talking about suicide saves lives. Watch this short video to learn more — vimeo.com/338176393

I learned how resilient individuals and teams are in MR, having survived and supported each other through some major events over the years. This is especially important in rural areas, which can be very isolating, leading to the formation of the Rural Mental Health Forum in Scotland (heavily promoted at the Royal Highland Show).

My personal observation on the journey was that lone workers are especially at risk as they have no-one to debrief with after an incident. I can empathise with this as I deployed to Afghanistan and returned as an individual, when I was a MERT paramedic in the RAF. Please look after any lone workers who attend an incident with you, whether they are ambulance, police, coastguard, MR or off-duty personnel who happen to be passing, depending on the incident. Please open conversations with them and offer them a brew and chance for a chat before they get on the road again. Perhaps have a think, who might most be in this category in your

TEAM TALK



AUGUST: ONE OFF THE BUCKET LIST!

Teesside's local landmark, Roseberry Topping, isn't very big but it might as well be as high as Everest if you are, like 68-year-old Paddy Cronberry MBE, a wheelchair user from birth with no legs and only one arm.

Over a drink in a pub, Paddy's friends Ian Wood and Paul Ralston were discussing their recent walk up Roseberry. Paddy remarked that he wished he could get to the top and also enjoy the view. The seed was planted in the minds of the two friends and they contacted Cleveland MRT. The rest, as they say, is history!

The team arranged that one of their regular Wednesday night training sessions would be adapted to carrying Paddy up Roseberry instead of their usual activity of carrying casualties down. On 28 August, around twenty of the team, along with thirty of Paddy's friends and family, met at Aireyholme Farm on the slopes of Roseberry Topping. They fixed him into a casbag and onto a Bell stretcher and set off up the 320-metre hillside, arriving at the top 30 minutes later. Paddy was then transferred to his wheelchair (also carried up!) for him to take in the view over the valley of the Tees.

All too soon, after an hour at the top watching the sunset, the team reversed the operation and carried Paddy back down to the farm. His words: 'Speechless, awesome!' From the point of view of Cleveland MRT, says Pete Mounsey, 'it was a pleasure to help Paddy get to the top of this small peak, something team members often take for granted'.

Top: Paddy in the stretcher, ready for the off. **Above:** On the way UP Roseberry Topping © Cleveland MRT.

SEPTEMBER: FIFTY YEAR AWARD FOR BOLTON'S GEOFF SEDDON

Geoff has held many positions over the years including deputy and team leader, team and regional chairman, and current team vice-president.

He's also gained recognition through a number of awards including the Horwich Civic Medal in 2003.

'Geoff is a very well respected member of the team,' says Martin Banks. 'His wealth of knowledge is selflessly shared with his colleagues in Bolton and further afield. He continues to be an active team member and has specialised in water rescue – despite two new knees. We were thrilled to celebrate his contribution to Bolton MRT and mountain rescue in general, at our annual dinner in September.'



33 Andy Elwood #itsoktotalk piece continued...

area or has attended previous jobs with you. Even if they are full-time professionals, they still can benefit from this offer of support. We just never know which job may be the straw to break the camel's back, as the cumulative effects of this work over long periods can really build up to a mountain.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Andy's Landie is just home after being on a stand at the NEC with the Emergency Services Show, where I also did a presentation. It was great to see some of you there.

#MenDoLunchDay 14 November — save the date and get involved! Wherever you are on that day, please invite a man out to lunch. Ask him how he is and tell him how you are. Take a selfie and use the hashtag to promote that men talking about how they feel is normal and healthy. I started this initiative last year and hope it grows a lot in 2019.

The Landie will also be at the **Peak District SARDA training weekend** in early October, where I'll be acting as a 'dogsbody'. It may be to late by the time you read this but if not, come along and say hi!

You may see the Series III around the country also at other speaking events — **World Mental Health day 10 October** and travelling to various corporates, who have received Mental Health First Aid training. Please wave and toot if you see me on the road! Look after yourself and those close to you until next time. Stay wonky. ☺

satmap
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PETE BAKER AVON & SOMERSET SAR 1965–2019

It was with immense sadness that the team announced Pete's death in August. Pete died very suddenly at home of natural causes, aged just 54, writes **Leon Troake**.

Pete will be missed immensely by all the team members. Our thoughts and condolences are with his family who we will support through this difficult time and honour Pete in the best way we can. His life was far too short but he had a huge role in ASSAR since 2008, attending hundreds of call-outs to help people. He was involved in all aspects of the team — technical rope rescue, a qualified Swift Water and Flood Rescue Technician and he was requalifying for his Casualty Care certificate alongside the non-operational fundraising and ordering equipment.

Ron Thomas, chair of ASSAR said, 'Pete's sudden death has come as a real shock to us all. He was very fit and technically skilled, enjoying mountain biking, mountaineering and kayaking outside of the team. I know fellow members will remember him for his big grin, his sense of humour and willingness to get involved. He'll be sadly missed.'

Right: Pete Baker training with Avon & Somerset Search and Rescue in Avon Gorge.



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TEAM TALK SUMMER



JULY: BUXTON TEAM UNVEILS MEMORIAL TO PAST TEAM MEMBER

A memorial to a past team member is always going to be a delicate, sensitive and possibly controversial subject, writes **Roger Bennett**. How do you judge worthiness? Is it length of membership? Achievements on the hill? Achievements off the hill? A one off deed or just being one of those bread and butter members which every team depends on? Views are going to vary widely and at the end of the day, whatever the decision about providing a memorial for an individual member, someone may feel aggrieved.

Many years ago in Buxton, an unofficial and undocumented policy was adopted which was designed to limit the potential distress of discussing personal memorials and which would treat each deceased member equally. It's very simple: Anyone who had been a member of the team in any capacity for a reasonable period of time would be entitled to have their name appended to a Role of Honour, a board depicting an ever-increasing list of names of past team members who gave what they could to help those in distress in the great outdoors.

So, when a small group of the friends of a team member who died at Christmas wanted to mark the passing of someone they thought deserved something special, they had to think long and hard about what to do without creating a precedent or causing offence.

The challenge was to find an appropriate memorial which would have to be privately funded, needed to be in a position befitting the memory of someone who loved hills and crags and where it could be seen by everybody but without being obtrusive.

Visitors to any part of the Peak District or the Pennine and Lake District areas will be familiar with the green footpath signs of the Peak and Northern Footpath Society and seeing these signs sparked an idea.

The PNFS traces its origins to the Manchester Association for the Preservation of Ancient Public Footpaths of 1826 which, after many reincarnations finally became The Peak District Footpath Preservation Society in 1984. Its first task was to fight for the reopening of the Snake Footpath over Kinder Scout, which it eventually won after a long battle with the Dukes of Devonshire estates.

The society is a group of volunteers whose principal aim is to fight illegal closures of Rights of Way. Over 100 volunteer footpath inspectors patrol, looking for problems or investigating reports of obstructions. The society then reports and encourages the appropriate local authority to deal with the problem.

The PNFS now has a network of nearly 600 signposts marking rights of way which will be protected for all time. It's an expensive task even for volunteers, especially as it has now widened its role to include providing bridges and footpath repairs. To raise funds in order to carry on, the society encourages individuals and groups to sponsor a sign which can then bear a small commemorative plaque to a loved one. This was just the memorial we had been looking for.

This particular memorial was to John Mayer, a founding member of Buxton MRT whose obituary was printed in the Spring 2019 edition of this magazine.

To sponsor our sign we had to raise £300 but the target was easily doubled in a short space of time and the surplus donated to the footpath society. The funds were raised from John's family and personal donations from his friends many of which were serving team members who knew what he had contributed, not just to the team, but to mountain rescue in the Peak.

Positioning a footpath sign on a famous gritstone crag seemed a most appropriate memorial to John and between the Roaches and Hen Cloud climbing crags in Staffordshire was ideal (SK 0070 6207). Of course, we had to get permission from the landowners, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and from Natural England, as the area is an SSSI. Both organisations were very

supportive, as was the PNFS, so following a site meeting of all parties plans were put into action resulting in the signpost being erected about three months later.

The sign bears a small memorial plaque which will be there for all time as the PNFS promises to maintain the sign in perpetuity. Fittingly, and quite by coincidence, these signs are manufactured at a foundry in Dove Holes just a stone's throw from the team's base. It was unveiled by Julie, John's widow, in late June, just before a team training event on the crag and in the presence of his family and friends.

It is appropriate to say a special thanks to Staffordshire Wildlife Trust for granting permission and for erecting the sign without charge. I also need to thank David Morton, PNFS Signpost Officer, for his significant help and guidance.

If you think sponsoring a footpath sign may be appropriate to commemorate someone you've lost or you just want more information, go to peakandnorthern.org.uk.

We perhaps don't give much thought to land access problems now the CROW Act is in force but the public footpath network extends far beyond the boundaries of open country and I'm sure we all know one or two difficult landowners who'd prefer not to see walkers on their land. The Peak and Northern Footpath Society does sterling work on behalf of us all and is a very worthy cause to support. ☘

Top: Team members unveil the memorial post.

Right: The plaque in memory of John Mayer (John's widow) and Steven (John's son) in front of the memorial © Carney James Turner.

Roger Bennett is an Honorary Member of Buxton MRT.





Fundraising update...

The last couple of months have been steadily getting busier as ideas and plans start coming together. We are now having weekly hangout calls to allocate tasks and the great people on the grandly titled MREW Fundraising Subcommittee are all throwing in ideas and offers to get things done. We have adopted a few online tools to make collaboration a lot easier.

We've been to the Outdoors Trade Show and spoken to most of the exhibitors about closer working and discounts. More of that later. The group is working to ramp up our charity supporters with a list of 'Runners and Riders' events which will allow independent fundraisers to sign up for a variety of events including the London Marathon and The Spine Challenge if they commit to raising a minimum figure. This year the five London Marathon runners raised about £10,000 between them so the bar is being set high. MR team runners will still be welcome to enter the Spine independently, of course.

We are hoping to put out an MREW event support team complete with flags and banners to give the runners and riders and their families a focal point as well as raising our profile. We recognise that some of these races will be on team patches so will always check in before the events, (and probably ask for help!).

CALL TO REGIONAL MRT FUNDRAISERS

We're still asking for someone to represent the Lakes, South West and South Wales regions on the committee. It would be great to have your support on national fundraising events but more importantly to help pass messages and questions to and from your own region. Please contact me via fundraisingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk

CALLING ALL BASECAMP MEMBERS

We're keen to hear from Basecamp members and other supporters around England and Wales whether they would

RICHARD CARRATU MREW FUNDRAISING OFFICER

be interested in helping out with national fundraising events. Nothing is scheduled yet but it would be great to have a few people on the books.

ELLIOT BROWN WATCH UPDATE

Elliot Brown has released the latest version of the MR limited edition watch. It is based on the same model as before, with a few technical upgrades based on customers' comments.

GEAR AND DISCOUNTS

Paul Smith, MREW Equipment Officer, has also been working on developing contacts with suppliers and in the process has secured some great member only offers. Contact him via equipment@mountain.rescue.org.uk for details.



Above: Matt Dooley, Steve Nelson, Elaine Gilliland in the polo hospitality tent © Rich Carratu.



MOUNTAIN RESCUE ATTENDS ROYAL CHARITY POLO DAY

Princes William and Harry took to the polo field in July, to play in the 2019 King Power Royal Charity Polo Day, raising awareness and over £1 million pounds for fifteen of the charities they support. Mountain Rescue England and Wales was one of those charities. The event took place at Billingbear Polo Club, in Berkshire and brought together distinguished guests from around the world.

Other charity guests included African Parks, the English Schools Swimming Association, Fields in Trust, Henry van Straubensee Memorial Fund, Invictus Games Foundation, the Household Cavalry Operational Casualties Fund, the Irish Guards Appeal, Map Action, the Queen's Commonwealth Trust, the Royal Marsden, Rhino Conservation Botswana, the RFU Injured Players Foundation and the Welsh Rugby Charitable Trust.

Rich Carratu (MREW Fundraising Officer), Elaine Gilliland (MREW Wellbeing Officer) and Matt Dooley (PDMRO Chair) attended on behalf of mountain rescue.



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OBIT



BILL JENNISON SARDA SOUTHERN SCOTLAND & LOMOND MRT

Bill died peacefully, at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, on 4 July, after a short illness. **Bob Sharp** knew him well for many years, as a friend, team colleague and co-author and looks back here over Bill's life.

When Bill Jennison joined the Lomond team over 30 years ago, I was unaware he was one of those 'curious' people who trained and worked search dogs! In my ignorance I knew little about the role of SARDA and even less about how dogs become so skilled at finding people in poor weather, but I showed interest and he encouraged me to join him on a training session. At the end of the day, everything was so much clearer and I became sold on dogs and their role is searching for missing people.

It was obvious that Bill was an outstanding teacher, committed to ensuring my day was a rich and rewarding learning experience. In fact, Bill was a qualified biology teacher of many years standing. His last position before retirement was Head of Biology at the Lomond School — a private school in Helensburgh. Notably, in a previous life, back in the late-1960s, both he and I were at the same school in Carlisle. He was a pupil at Carlisle Grammar School whilst I was a teacher.



Above: Bill with Jay in 1981, and the highly prestigious Best Novice Shield they shared with another dog handler.

At the time, our paths never crossed and 25 years were to pass before a chance conversation revealed our earlier connection.

Bill was involved in mountain rescue for over 40 years. He occupied a unique position having served as a team member with three different teams and as a member of SARDA in both England and Scotland. There can be very few

people with such a width of experience. In 1978 he joined the Cave Rescue Organisation (CRO) and attended his first dog training weekend later that year. In 1981, with SARDA England, he qualified Jay, a German Shepherd Dog, and shared the highly prestigious Best Novice Shield with another dog handler. Following promotion within the teaching profession, Bill left CRO in 1983 and joined Rossendale Fell Rescue Team, and quickly became the SARDA rep on the Mid Pennine Mountain Rescue Police Liaison Panel. Further professional promotion meant a move to Scotland in 1987, when he joined the Lomond team and SARDA Southern Scotland. Over the next 23 years, Bill trained and qualified two more SAR dogs Jake and Jennie — both Border collies.

In addition to making a substantial contribution to mountain rescue in Central Scotland, he had a long-serving influence on the organisation and development of SARDA at local level. He held many posts and responsibilities with SARDA Southern Scotland and SAR dog associations beyond Scotland. As training coordinator for SARDA Southern Scotland, he completely reorganised the way in which dogs are trained and assessed, and also introduced new training and call-out logging systems. He also undertook the unenviable task of organising all training and assessment venues, accommodation and catering, external assessors, access permission and liaison with landowners. He represented SARDA Southern Scotland on the Central Scotland Police mountain rescue liaison committee and also served as its secretary — tasks he continued until very recently when ill health meant he had to take a back seat.

Bill was one of those special people who saw the bigger picture in mountain rescue. Not content with just operating locally, he had a wider vision and was interested in spreading knowledge and expertise across the UK. He was a lead figure within National SARDA (NSARDA) serving in several administrative capacities and helping the organisation develop national standards for training and assessment. He was a national approved assessor for the assessment of air scenting mountain rescue dogs, lowland rescue dogs and avalanche dogs, and had been the SARDA Southern Scotland representative on the NSARDA committee for many years.

Most significantly he developed a new grade of Lowland Search Dog, which is now recognised across the UK. His knowledge and authority within the profession generated invitations from fellow organisations to assess summer and winter courses in Iceland, as well as courses in Wales, England and the Lake District. In 2015, he was appointed a committee member responsible for the organisation of the NSARDA 50th anniversary celebrations. Significantly, Bill was the inspiration and guiding force behind two highly respected books on search and rescue dogs. Search and Rescue Dogs [pictured below], published in 2012, has become a standard text. One reviewer commented, 'This will become THE reference and inspiring read for all aspirant and novice handlers'. Another remarked that, 'Anyone seeking an insight into the life and work of search dogs and their handlers should read this book'.

As a mark of his wide and sustained contribution to mountain rescue, Bill was presented with the Distinguished Service Award by Scottish Mountain Rescue in 2016.

In summary, Bill Jennison's sustained contribution to mountain rescue and SARDA at local and national levels is an exemplar of selfless and highly respected voluntary service. Bill's innovation and creative talents has delivered lasting results. During periods of conflict and change, when others might have left the organisation, his commitment and drive always won the day. He had clear views on most things and was never backwards in expressing his feelings. Indeed, you could always rely on Bill having a good 'grumble' whenever you met, but there was never any malice in his words. His critical approach simply reflected his passion for perfection. So much so that his enthusiasm and standing within the SAR dog fraternity was exemplary. His passing leaves a gap that will be very difficult to fill. ☹️



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JULY: HIGH SHERIFF PRESENTS AWARDS TO SCARBOROUGH TEAM MEMBERS

During her visit to the team's Open Day, Linda Fenwick, High Sheriff of North Yorkshire, presented High Sheriff Awards to the two longest-serving team members, Andrew 'Drew' Priestley and Ned Roberts in recognition of their service and dedication to the Scarborough team.

The team wishes to thank Linda for the recognition and kind words. She was also invited to cut the ribbon on the team's new incident control vehicle. Ian Hugill, team PR officer said, 'with the size of our patch, there's a need for a versatile mobile command, control and communications asset. The new vehicle was designed from the ground up to meet those criteria. However, it can also function as a front line first aid post at the many events the team is asked to cover. While a significant investment for us, we believe we have true value for money in this vehicle.'

'Getting to this point has been a real team effort but worthy of mention are vehicle officer Neal Ingram and equipment officer Adam White who pulled the whole project together. We'd also wish to thank all our sponsors, supporters and those who donated to the vehicle, without whose generosity we could not have done it.'

In the spirit of Reuse and Recycle we have gifted the old control vehicle to neighbouring Lowland Rescue team Yorkshire Lowland Rescue and we asked Linda to formally hand over the keys while she was with us. As a relatively new team we know our friends at Yorkshire Lowland Rescue will have many conflicting demands on limited funds and we hope this donation will go some way to help'.

Top: Left to right: Team chairman Roger Hartley, Drew, Linda and Ned. Below: Yorkshire Lowland Rescue vehicle at the ready.



TEAM TALK



SEPTEMBER: KESWICK TEAM VEHICLE WRITTEN OFF IN OFF-ROAD ROLL

An instructor from a local outdoor adventure company asked for help from the Keswick team, to a 61-year-old man who had been ghyll scrambling in Stoneycroft Beck in Newlands. The normally fit and healthy man had a potentially serious medical condition.

A team Land Rover with five members on board set off from base and a number of others went direct to the scene. Driving up the Stoneycroft track, the Land Rover slipped a wheel off the dirt road and rolled over itself (several times) down the steep slope, landing back on the Newlands Road on its wheels. Fortunately, thanks to the design of the Land Rover and its fitted roll cage, the five occupants escaped with relatively minor injuries.

Meantime, the team members who'd gone direct, along with a team paramedic and an emergency doctor, were able to attend the casualty who was evacuated back to the valley to an air ambulance.

The team Land Rover performed faultlessly in protecting its occupants but was left in a rather bad state with all external equipment, including a stretcher and telescopic radio mast, destroyed. The equipment inside survived but the vehicle itself is beyond economic repair, and thus considered a write-off.

Images from Keswick MRT Facebook page © Keswick MRT.

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There is no greater feeling of satisfaction for an explorer than revealing somewhere no other human has been since the dawn of creation. It crowns his curiosity and contributes to geographical knowledge. It is the basic driving force for cavers everywhere coupled, naturally, with all the fun of strenuous athletics such territory demands. The absorbing task of following mountain streams from sink point to emergence engages mind and muscle, trending as much to science as pastime. Sometimes however, curiosity kills the cat. It is undeniable that cave exploration throws up hazards of a particular nature that can only competently be dealt with by experienced cavers. Even casual expeditions underground may involve almost total immersion in cold water, often with a passage roof only centimetres above one's head, sinuous routes through boulder piles threatening movement if kicked by the unwary, or vertical descents, frequently drenched by stinging waterfalls. Immediately it will be obvious that even the most trivial of injuries, say a badly twisted or broken ankle, really nothing more than an inconvenience on the surface, will have serious consequences below ground, where an immobile casualty has to be carried through such obstacles and risks of exposure multiply as time goes on. Weather conditions too affect rescue operations: downpours feed streams that can trap parties beyond low, tight sections and impede rescue efforts.

Dedicated cave rescue teams were first created in Yorkshire before the Second World War and as the sport expanded, other regional teams came into being, covering the whole of England and Wales. Scotland was slow to catch up. Caves are common here, mostly coastal or 'historical' in nature; 'proper' mountain limestone systems have really only been explored properly since the late 1940s. Geographical enclaves are found principally in western Argyll, Skye, Applecross, Assynt and Durness and, despite their being smaller than their English and Welsh cousins, the caves pose just as great an extraction problem should the unthinkable happen. Thanks to persistent work by native caving

clubs and resultant publicity, visits to Scottish caves are on the increase. All the usual threats to well-being will be encountered — exposure, flood risk, boulder movement, falls, becoming lost or benighted due to equipment failure — and it was perceived that a cave-experienced rescue team would inevitably be required at some point.

In the mid-1960s therefore, Edinburgh-based cavers founded the Scottish Cave Rescue Organisation (SCRO) — making it, incidentally, one of the oldest extant rescue teams in Scotland. Although initially based in the capital, it was prepared to go anywhere to deal with a shout, and today involves active cavers from all over the country. The first two decades were reasonable quiet. In the central belt there are large numbers of abandoned stone and metal mines, the former by design extremely complex mazes of square stone columns covering thousands of square metres. Several call-outs dealt with parties of schoolboys predictably lost in such mines, the searching of which is an artform not yet perfected.

However, Scotland is a sizeable bailiwick for one small team. Time is always of the essence, and obviously first call should go to the relevant local mountain rescue team. Simple incidents can thus be dealt with speedily — much to the relief of the casualty! Cave rescue can be put on standby and will attend, by air transport if necessary, to tackle underground operations where specialised equipment and knowledge are required. This, incidentally, quashes the public perception that 'other people's lives are put at risk in cave rescues'. Only experienced cavers go underground — to rescue their own. They are accustomed to territory they visit for recreation and thus competent to operate in it safely without hindering fellow team members.

Technology and custom-made equipment have transformed how cave rescues are performed. The old-fashioned stretcher lift and carry can be facilitated by rigging sophisticated rope works, and casualty care has been greatly enhanced by new medical procedures. Cave stretchers are now a streamlined wraparound design for

easy movement through narrow, awkward spaces, even if spinal injuries are suspected. However, all this improvement demands practice. SCRO holds two major exercises each year and ancillary training where appropriate. One of these exercises usually involves an abandoned mine working. The team prefers to work in partnership with local mountain rescue teams and arranges joint exercises to familiarise them with equipment, methods and, crucially, cave systems in their territory so they can intelligently assess what needs to be done and alert cave rescue accordingly or deal with the matter themselves.

Over the last 50 years, SCRO has, thankfully, not been employed at too many serious incidents. There have been fatalities — mostly due to exposure to cold water — and at least one party has been trapped by



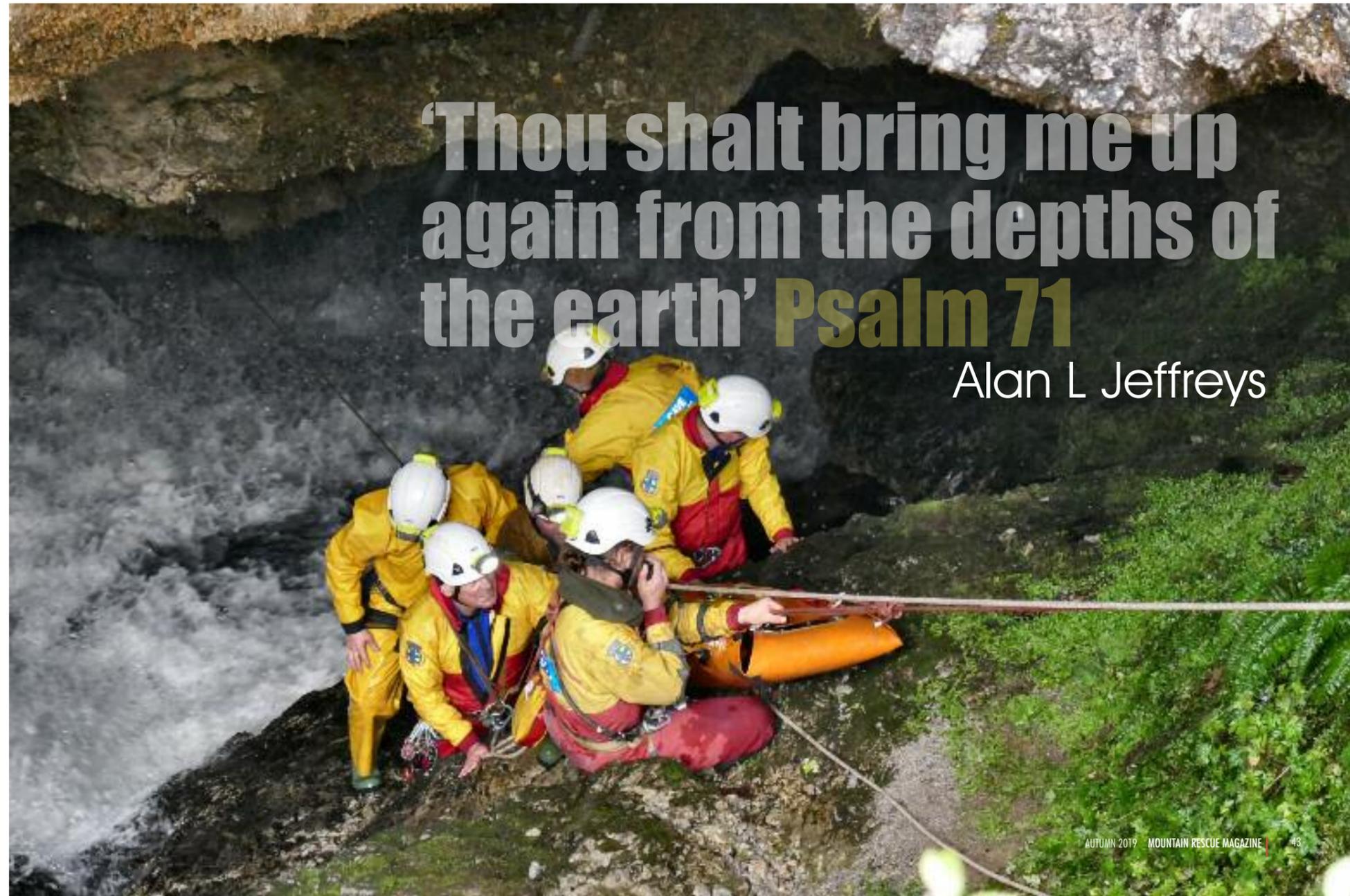
Above: SCRO team members at work. Top left: Clai-ionn rescue. Below: Underground water slide rescue. Images supplied by Alan L Jeffreys.

floods. Lesser events have involved twisted ankles, injuries from falling boulders and small falls. In any cave accident it is immensely preferable if a casualty is able to walk under his/her own power. It saves time and effort, boosts morale and keeps the subject warm too. Team members

have also been employed in missing person searches — stream culverts, drains, old wells and mine shafts are all locations cavers are comfortable examining. The tragic fatality down a Galston mine shaft in 2008 illustrates how accidents can occur in the most unlikely places, but where caving expertise could be employed. In fact, the only places specifically excluded by cave rescue are deep collieries and shale mines where instability and foul air are present by definition.

Caving is generally a safe, enjoyable pursuit, so long as participants use the underground environment with care. Scotland's limestone caverns provide a wonderful natural landscape of rock, calcite formations and water, but they have to be treated with respect. Nobody invites injury but accidents do happen and if/when they occur, SCRO is here, ready to help. ☘

ALAN L JEFFREYS HAS BEEN EXPLORING CAVES FOR 60 YEARS. HE FOUNDED THE GRAMPIAN SPELEOLOGICAL GROUP, SCOTLAND'S PREMIER CAVE EXPLORATION CLUB IN 1961 AND HAS DISCOVERED NEW CAVE PASSAGE IN MANY PARTS OF THE UK AND ABROAD. IN 1966, HE CO-FOUNDED SCRO AND WAS, UNTIL VERY RECENTLY, ITS CHAIRMAN. HE HAS ALSO SURVIVED A FEW INJURIES INCURRED WHILST CAVING HIMSELF.



'Thou shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth' **Psalm 71**

Alan L Jeffreys



Mountain Rescue Casualty Care and the Undergraduate Medical Elective

DR NEIL CHAPMAN

As we all know, mountain rescue is undertaken in our spare time and once those commitments are fulfilled we fit our families and work life around it. Sometimes we may even get this sequence in the correct order... Occasionally, however, opportunities arise when work and mountain rescue overlap.

In my case, I am an academic in the University of Sheffield Medical School. For twelve years, I was also an active member of Edale Mountain Rescue Team (EMRT), serving as its vehicle officer, deputy team leader and a brief stint as team leader. Given the close proximity of the University of Sheffield to the Peak District National Park, the team was approached with increasing regularity by Sheffield medical students wanting to gain experience in mountain rescue through the school's medical elective programme. To facilitate this, a clinical colleague and I designed a mountain rescue based elective placement and a narrative describing that work has recently published.¹ This article is a precis of that work.

The Medical Act (1983) views a medical degree as a qualification for professional practice and this carries the concomitant requirement that placement supervisors are expected to continually monitor student attendance and professional behaviours. This programme was no different and an example of professional behaviours would be respecting confidentiality.

Patient medical details are afforded special protection under the various Data Protection Acts. Indeed, the regulatory bodies for many NHS professionals, including the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and General Medical Council (GMC), highlight the importance of respecting patient

time, one day with me as a medical school academic, the other with a clinical colleague (usually giving up their day off). Tutors focused on the primary survey and AMPLE history because students would, as junior doctors, be expected to regularly use these principles clinically. Essentially, this was a suitable juncture for students to revise their knowledge of normal physiology. This would help them understand the cause of the various clinical signs and symptoms arising from injuries and illness seen by mountain rescue teams.

The placement also allowed the introduction of cases with apparently conflicting medical needs. A salient example being the unconscious patient with a potentially unstable cervical spine injury with the concomitant need to secure the airway. This challenged many students (many mountain rescuers too!). The MREW drug formulary also facilitated students' engagement with the pharmacology of commonly prescribed medications and associated adverse effects. Again, they would need this knowledge as a junior doctor.

As part of team training, students would observe exercises as well as acting as casualties. This was important because it illustrated how vulnerable a casualty can feel when they are encased in a vacuum mattress and secured to a stretcher. Consequently, this reinforced the value of clear communication skills.

Given the voluntary nature of mountain rescue, self-directed study time was factored into the placement schedule. As part of this, students could prepare review articles on a pre-hospital topic of their choosing. Interestingly, two students opted to help with collecting research data for a short paper looking at the effectiveness of mountain rescue casualty bag insulation.² Such publications are useful for their later career progression.

This placement worked because, as a member of university academic staff and EMRT, I was able to offer regular student supervision as part of my own work plan in the medical school. Other team members were then able to help as their own time commitments permitted. The close proximity of the placement to the university

confidentiality at all times in their respective Codes of Conduct. Failure to respect this is poor professional practice and is simply not acceptable. Any student guilty of doing so would be disciplined by the medical school. Equally, team trustees would be expected to deal with similar ill-discipline by its membership. Fortunately, students had the professionalism to respect confidentiality.

In terms of placement supervision, students received two full days of contact



Above: There are worse classrooms... **Opposite page:** If we resuscitate this one, we'll never have to practise medicine... Images supplied by Neil Chapman.

The placement was designed to give medical students a full experience of all aspects of a voluntary mountain rescue team. Students received tuition in a condensed casualty care course. This was supplemented with other expertise from within the team to give a broader picture of mountain rescue, including cold-induced injuries, fundraising, public engagement work, standard team training and search dog training.



also helped as it meant students did not need to hire extra accommodation for the six week period. Such financial considerations are important.

The medical school elective placement offers a simple mechanism by which student doctors can be exposed to the community healthcare resource that is mountain rescue. This placement was in keeping with The Edinburgh Declaration³ which, in an effort to enhance medical education in the UK, suggested medical schools consider widening the range of healthcare settings that medical training is undertaken to include all health resources in the community. This placement offered an example of how that could be achieved.

Acknowledgements: I'm grateful to my co-authors of the narrative for their input into this project: Jenny Larsen, Hannah Blagnys, Ben Cooper, Chris Press, Neil Sambridge, Matthew Livesey, Cat Watt and Chris Allewell. I should also thank John Coombs, training officer for Mountain Rescue Search Dogs England, for allowing students to train with search dogs, and Ian Bunting, chairman and past team leader of Edale MRT, for his support of this project. 📍

DR NEIL CHAPMAN IS A SENIOR TEACHER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD MEDICAL SCHOOL (SHEFFIELD.AC.UK/MEDICINE#) HE WAS A MEMBER OF EDALE MRT FOR TWELVE YEARS, SERVING AS VEHICLE OFFICER, DEPUTY LEADER AND TEAM LEADER. HE RESIGNED FROM THE TEAM IN 2018. COPIES OF THE FINAL PRE-COPY EDIT VERSION OF THE TEACHING NARRATIVE ARE AVAILABLE FROM NEIL CHAPMAN AT N.R.CHAPMAN@SHEFFIELD.AC.UK

¹ Larsen et al., (2019), *Wilderness and Environmental Medicine* 30(2):210-216; DOI <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wem.2018.12.010>
² Press et al. (2017), *Extreme Physiology and Medicine*, 6:1. DOI 10.1186/s13728-017-0055-7.
³ World Federation for Medical Education (1988). *The Edinburgh Declaration*. *Med Educ* 22 (5):481-2.



TEAM MEMBERS SWAP NORTHUMBERLAND FOR THE SWISS ALPS

Northumberland National Park (NNPMRT) took team training to the Swiss Alps over the summer when six of them hooked up with their counterparts in Air Zermatt as part of a week-long climbing trip.



They had a tour of the Air Zermatt base as well as an in-depth look at their rescue helicopters and the medical equipment they carry. The exploits of Air Zermatt, which have been famously covered in the TV series 'The Horn', regularly carry out rescues on the 4000m peaks surrounding Zermatt, including the Matterhorn. Each flight crew consists of a pilot, team doctor and HEMS paramedic as well as a local mountain guide, if required. 'We deal with 2-3 call-outs per day during the summer, but this can rise to up to fifteen a day during the winter months,' said Dominik Imhof, one of the team paramedics.

In addition to revenue from rescues, Air Zermatt's main source of funding comes from logistical support for local mountain huts, farms and industry located in the Valais. Like UK MR teams, they rely on donations too, but most of their income comes from privately contracted work.

After their visit, the team spent some time acclimatising and practising crevasse rescue techniques. 'It was interesting practising rope rescue techniques on a glacier,' said Sue Mitchell. 'There was a lot of crossover with our technical rope rescue skills, but we were applying them at altitude, which made things a bit more complex.'

Once they were happy their skills and knowledge were secure enough to keep them safe, the team set out on climbing three 4000m peaks above Zermatt. Two peaks were climbed as part of the Breithorn massif, Breithorn west and Rocca Nera. However, due to the prevailing conditions, the team were unable to summit a third peak, Castor.

'The week was a huge success,' said expedition organiser, Will Close-Ash. 'We developed our technical skills, liaised with a local mountain rescue team, climbed two peaks over 3000m and two over 4000m. It was great for team morale and we'd be keen to get as many other team members out to the Alps to experience this trip in the future.'



Aide Memoire supports safe drugs administration on the hill

SALLY ARMOND OGWEN VALLEY MRO

The MREW Drugs Formulary (2017-2020), used by mountain rescue team members with a current Casualty Care Certificate, is currently distributed by the MREW Medical Subcommittee as a detailed A4 document. While meticulous thought and careful consideration goes into its development, the current presentation of the Formulary means teams need to adapt and modify it into a 'hill fit' resource suitable for operational use.

Within OVMRO, I have recently led a project to refresh and update our operational Drugs Formulary Aide Memoire with the help of a local 'MRT friendly' professional graphic designer. Specialising in the design of outdoor guidebooks and technical manuals, the designer understood the need for content to be easily accessible and clearly legible in poor conditions and under torchlight. With valuable input and feedback from team health care professionals and casualty carers alike, we have developed an easily portable and user-friendly resource available in print booklet format, and for smartphone.

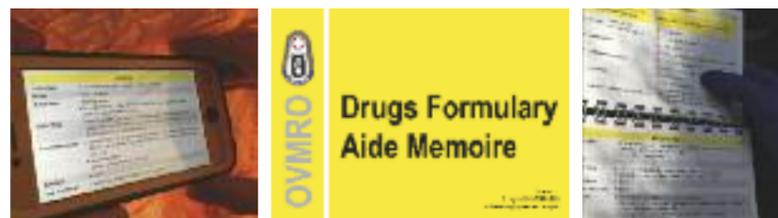
The OVMRO Drugs Formulary Aide Memoire includes clear, concise adult and paediatric guidelines, protocols and drug doses for a select range of medicines listed within the MREW Drugs Formulary. Additional content has been included in the OVMRO version to align guidelines closer to the latest JRCALC pre-hospital standards, which help to improve clarity whilst enhancing casualty safety.

The resource provides clear safe-practice prompts to remind casualty carers to record an AMPLE history and check essentials such as dose, route, indications and contraindications prior to any drugs administration. An adapted MRT Early Warning Score chart (by kind permission of Langdale Ambleside MRT) supports the meaningful interpretation of a casualty's clinical observations, and a range of simple acronyms are also provided to aid incident reporting, trauma assessment and casualty handover.

The A6, pocket-sized booklet is printed on tear-resistant, waterproof paper and is spiral-bound with a tough plastic cover. One printed copy is kept in each drugs kit ready for hill deployment, as well as in the Ops room for communications support during incidents. Many team members keep a copy on their smartphones. Its development has greatly enhanced confidence in our team members' ability to manage casualty care situations during training and live deployment.

Several teams in Wales and England have shown interest in our new aide memoire and it makes good sense to share resources. We are currently considering the benefits of offering the OVMRO template free of charge for other teams

OVMRO Advanced Paramedic team member Sally Armond suggests a different approach to the development and dissemination of the MREW Drugs Formulary.



to download, edit and adapt to suit their own team's needs. There are, however, clinical governance issues with this in terms of document tracking and maintaining version control in line with the latest guidelines.

The MREW Drugs Formulary is due for review in May 2020. This is an ideal opportunity for the MREW Medical Subcommittee to reconsider how the MREW Drugs Formulary is presented and distributed to teams. The adoption of a new 'hill fit' format would avoid teams having to develop their own resources. ☺

For more information contact sally.armond@ogwen-rescue.org.uk

Adult Vital Signs Interpretation					
	Normal	Concerning	Normal	Concerning	Serious
B (Resp. Rate)	12-20	21-24	25-30	31-35	36-40
C (SpO2)	94-100	92-93	90-91	88-89	85-87
D (HR)	60-100	101-110	111-120	121-130	131-150
E (BP)	90/60-120/80	121/81-160/100	161/101-200/130	201/131-240/160	241/161-300/200

Paediatric Normal Vital Signs			
Age	Temp (oral)	Heart Rate (b/min)	SpO2
1-11 years	36-38	80-150	94-100
12-17 years	36-38	60-100	94-100

Drug Administration Checklist	
A Always record AMPLE on Cas Card prior to a drug administration	Always check visually with a second Cas Card:
A Allergy - is this drug?	1 Drug name
M Medications	2 Drug supplied to correct cas
P Past Medical History	3 Expiry date
L Last meal	4 Check packaging, label & drug unambiguously
E Events - looking for other injury	5 Dose to be administered
	6 Route of administration
	7 Volume
	8 Contraindications
	9 Record drug, dose, route, time administered & initials of drug administrator on Cas Card and make this visible to all

SALBUTAMOL (via Nebuliser)	
Indications	• Asthma attack where there is no response to inhaled beta2 agonist inhaler
Route	• Nebulised with O ₂ at 6-8 L per min
Adult Dose	• 5 mg in 2.5 ml ampoule. Breathe to empty • Seek medical advice if repeat treatment needed • Repeat twice with a 15 minute interval between each dose
Side Effects	• Tremor, fast pulse, headache
Contra Indications	• None known
Contraindications	• Repeat more than once medical advice
Use in children	• 4.5 mg in 2.5 ml ampoule
Notes on administration	• 4.5 mg in 2.5 ml ampoule (Baxter) • Repeat twice with a 15 minute interval for severe asthma

MALINDRONE PROTOCOL (Orbren rescue)

Check ABCD

1 Airway and Breathing

• Check airway (patent, clear, in line, jaw thrust, oropharyngeal airway if required)

• Check breathing (rate, depth, effort, cyanosis, chest rise, auscultation)

• Administer oxygen at 15 litres

2 Airway and Breathing

• Check airway (patent, clear, in line, jaw thrust, oropharyngeal airway if required)

• Administer oxygen at 15 litres

3 Airway and Breathing

• Check airway (patent, clear, in line, jaw thrust, oropharyngeal airway if required)

• Administer oxygen at 15 litres

4 Airway and Breathing

• Check airway (patent, clear, in line, jaw thrust, oropharyngeal airway if required)

• Administer oxygen at 15 litres

5 Airway and Breathing

• Check airway (patent, clear, in line, jaw thrust, oropharyngeal airway if required)

• Administer oxygen at 15 litres

ETHANE	ATMIST	TWELVE FLAPS
E Location of incident	A Age	T Tidal Volume
T Type of incident	T Time of incident	W Work of Breathing (normal, laboured)
H Hazards to you or the casualty	M Mechanism	E Energy (type of force, duration)
A Access & egress routes	I Injuries or illness	L Laryngeal Swallow (normal)
N Number & severity of casualties	S Signs & symptoms	V Voice (normal, hoarse, stridor)
E Emergency services required	T Treatment given, previous needs	F Feet (normal, asymmetrical, edema)



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Lyon Equipment MREW Rope Rescue Training 2019

BILL BATSON

In 2017/18 MREW asked Lyon Equipment to provide rope rescue training to members of MR teams. Four courses were delivered, each run over two weekends and a total of 48 MR personnel from 24 teams were trained and assessed in the skills required to cascade single pitch vertical rescue training to the other personnel on their parent teams. (See Summer 2018, issue 65, Mountain Rescue magazine for a full report).

The courses received universally positive feedback and so it was with great pleasure that we (Lyon) were again selected to deliver the next round of training in June 2019.

The emphasis was to be slightly different this time. Just two courses would be delivered — each over a single weekend — with one based at Lyon Equipment's Training Centre in Cumbria and the other in Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales. The remit provided by MREW was also different. Training was to consist of operator training in the use of guiding line technique and basic cableways/hi-lines only, with no formal assessment taking place.

The courses were delivered by myself and Mark Davies of Lyon Equipment, both of whom had been closely involved in the design and delivery of the first round of courses. Each day of training began with a brief theory/whiteboard session where the techniques were explained and analysed, supported by underpinning knowledge to develop knowledge and understanding. This included a review of anchor systems, safety factors and the fundamental differences between rigging and operating a guiding line and a hi-line, together with the limitations of both techniques and equipment/component options. On completion of the theory

sessions, course personnel deployed to the practical training areas for the remainder of the day.

Practical training for the Tebay course took place at nearby Hill's Quarry and at Lyon's very own gorge on the River Lune. Morlais Quarry was used for practical training on the South Wales course. Each of the venues was ideal for the planned training and we are grateful to Central Beacons MRT for arranging the availability of Merthyr Tydfil Fire Station and Morlais Quarry.

With the main theme of the courses being the setting up and operating of a guiding line to move the load away from the vertical — and in so doing avoid hazards and obstacles both on and below the crag face — each Saturday's practical session involved the application and practising of this highly versatile technique.

Vertical and horizontal movement of the load is achieved by the application — and controlled release — of in-line and transverse tension in the guiding line itself. Force-limiting devices are used at either end of the guiding line, in combination with restricting the mechanical advantage and number of haulers applying tension (the 'Rule of 12'). Together, these control measures provide a number of important

safety features in that the full unknotted strength of the guiding line is preserved, accidental over-tensioning is avoided, force to the anchor is limited and a Static System Safety Factor of 10:1 is maintained.

The technique allows the rescue load to be held just clear of the rock face, with the stretcher guide's feet having no more than light contact with the rock as they are lowered or raised. Should an obstacle or hazard be encountered, tension in the guiding line is increased to 'float' the load over the obstacle. Once clear, tension can be partially released to return the load to its previous proximity to the face. In the event that a large obstacle — such as a tree or large rock pinnacle — needs to be negotiated, it may be possible to apply transverse tension to the guiding line and in doing so temporarily move the load sideways to avoid the obstacle. Again, once the obstacle has been safely passed, tension can be released to bring it back to its original line.

A correctly set up and operated guiding line should allow a rescue load to be manoeuvred in 3-dimensions during its journey up, down and across the crag, to deliver the casualty to their destination. Course participants were unanimous in their

acknowledgment of the technique as a potentially highly useful addition to their team's crag rescue skills.

Having covered guiding line technique, each Sunday of the courses concentrated on horizontal and sloping cableways/hi-lines. Following the short classroom session, set up, anchor systems, and rigging were all put into practice. Options for establishing an initial 'tracer' line across the 'void' were discussed and demonstrated. These included use of a simple paddler's throw-line, arborists Dyneema® jet line system, a Big-Shot® catapult and a cheap and cheerful dog-ball chucker. Needless to say, the jet line and catapult raised most interest!

Both horizontal and sloping cableways were set up and operated, including the additional rigging requirements for a sloping system. Anchor systems involved the use of trees, ground stake anchors and vehicles. A Tribus tripod and an Obelisk quadpod were used to provide 'artificial hi-directionals' at each end of the cableways, making edge transition much easier.

In summary, both weekends were considered a great success by the course participants and trainers alike. In total, some 25 team members from eighteen MR teams from throughout England and Wales

attended the courses and we are grateful for the high levels of enthusiasm and interest — not to mention personal skills — shown by course members. While never intended to be overly prescriptive in terms of rigging and/or equipment, important shared principles were introduced and applied throughout the training to ensure that the rescue techniques covered meet the two most fundamental requirements of any rope

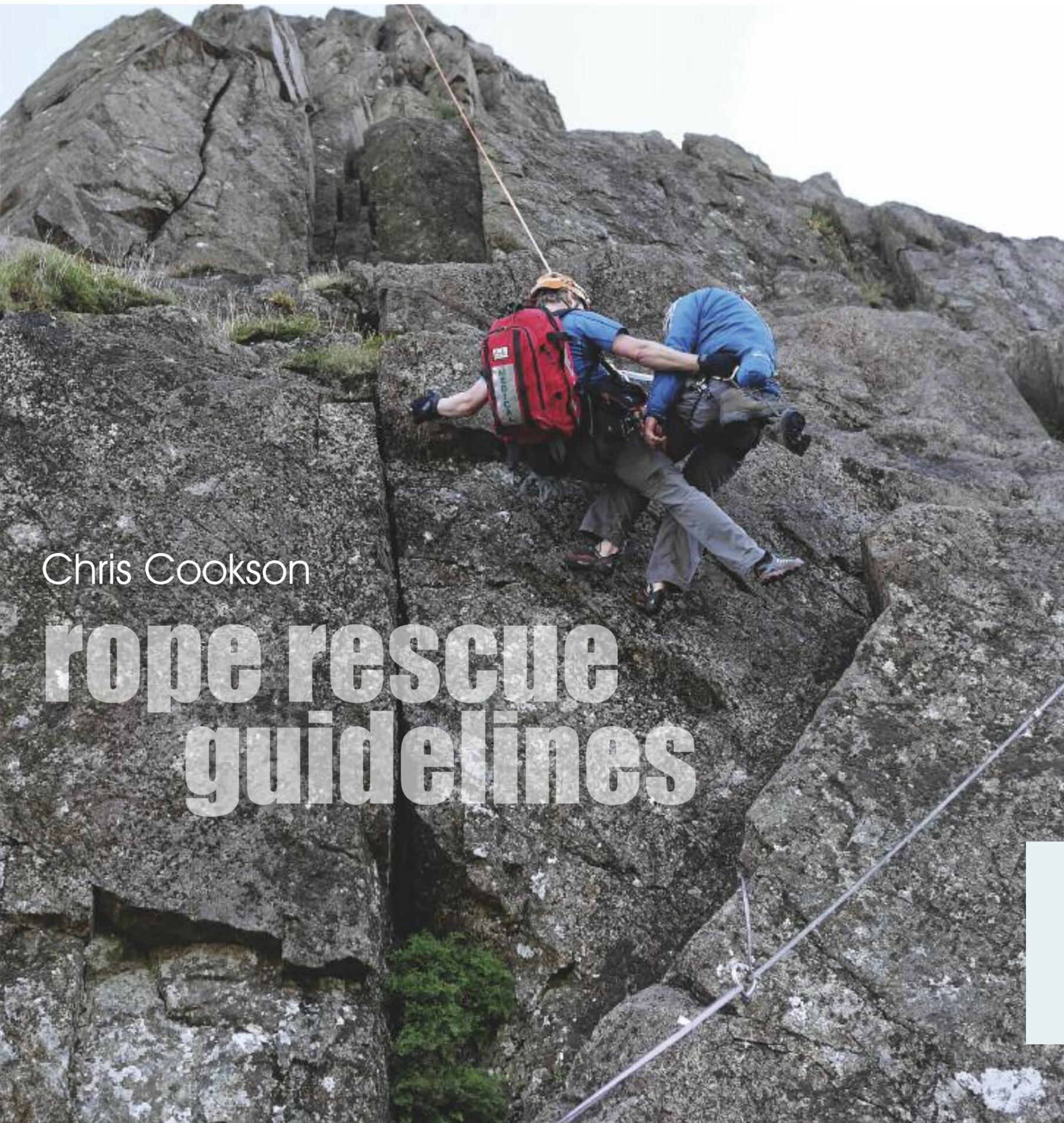
rescue system in that they were both SAFE and EFFECTIVE. Did the training achieve the aims set out by MREW? Based on the feedback received both during and on completion of the courses, we think so. 🍌

Top left: Morlais guiding line. Above: Lune gorge, Tebay. Below: Team members in Morlais. Images © Lyon Equipment.



technical rope rescue





Chris Cookson

rope rescue guidelines

CONFERENCE SESSION



Process and progress to date...

Chris Cookson (Cockermouth MRT & LDSAMRA Training Officer) and Al Read (MREW Training Officer) presented an update of progress made so far and future plans for the MREW Rope Rescue Guidelines.

The conference was a good opportunity to present the draft Rope Rescue Guidelines to team members, ie. those who will hopefully use them and help develop them further in the future. A big thank you to those that attended the session and for the feedback they provided.

It was good to find out, via a straw poll at the start of the session, that the majority of delegates attending the session indicated they were either conversant with or at least had heard of the existing guidelines. A similar number were aware of the update and had seen the final draft. The final draft was sent out to team leaders, secretaries, and chairs on 14 May, ahead of the MREW Business Meeting on 18 May, where it was due to be put forward for approval. Unfortunately, it didn't make the agenda and is now expected to be put forward for approval at the November MREW meeting.

The session covered the following:

- Reasons and aims of reviewing the guidelines
- The process that has taken place
- What the guidelines are and the format of the guidelines document
- A step through each of the guidelines with the opportunity to ask questions.
- The next steps
- Any final questions.

It's been a few years since the Rope Rescue Guidelines were introduced and equipment, along with research, thinking and current practice has moved on. Like other areas of rescue work, the impact of human factors on safety has come to the fore and rope rescue is no exception. For me this is the biggest change since the original guidelines. Whilst undergoing the review we wanted to engage with as many team members as possible and make the guidelines themselves as short

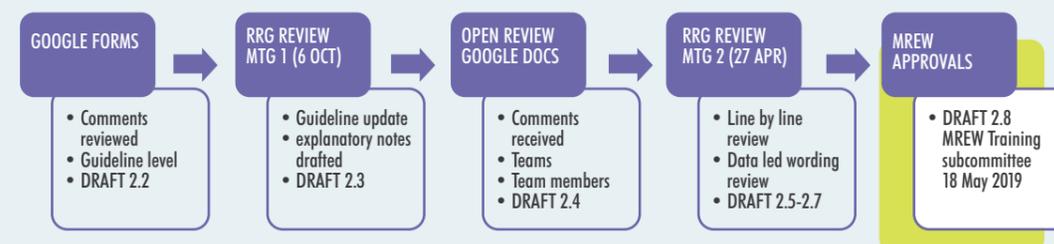
and succinct as possible to help make them usable. I'll let you be the judge as to how well we've succeeded! The guidelines document has the following sections:

- Introduction — details what the guidelines are/are not about
- Version record
- Documents review process — when and how it should be reviewed.
- MREW Rope Rescue Guidelines — the guidelines themselves
- Explanatory Notes — explanation of the context of the guidelines
- References
- Glossary.

Picking up on a couple of the points raised at the conference, the first being that the guidelines are mostly common sense. That may well be true, and having them documented helps with communication and forms a platform or benchmark from which to improve. The second point suggested the guidelines help document the organisation's safety attitude and culture and I think was prompted by the previous point (that they are mostly common sense) and an earlier presentation, from David Burrows-Sutcliffe, on Legal Awareness in Documentation. Both points, to me, are well-grounded and support the ethos behind the guidelines. The next step is hopefully the approval of the guidelines at the November meeting.

The purpose of the guidelines is to help us manage the risks in rope rescue and thereby operate safely, whilst being effective and efficient. They should also aid in demonstrating our hazard identification and risk management decisions are both justifiable and defensible, should we be in the unfortunate position to need that. We hope you'll support their approval, use and future development. ☘

MREW ROPE RESCUE GUIDELINES PROCESS 2018-2019



Opposite: A recent rescue with Cockermouth MRT, involving a 100+ metre lower down Pillar Rock © Steve Brailley.

Any feedback on the guidelines and/or the review process or anything else we as members of MREW can do to advance our technical rope rescue capability and competence is welcome. Please email me via training@ldsamra.org.uk, Al Read MREW Training Officer, via trainingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk or Richard Quinn via richard.quinn@cvsrtf.org.uk.



Can what3words help mountain search and rescue operations?

Last year, when a fire broke out at a campsite in the South of England, the callers had no way of describing their location. They gave the call handler their three-word address, and Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue was able to accurately locate the caller and efficiently attend the scene. Since then, the system has been rapidly rolled out by many emergency services in the UK.

MAKING IT EASY TO TALK ABOUT LOCATION

Founded in 2013, what3words has divided the entire globe into three-metre squares and given each square a unique three-word address. ///soap.licks.lorry, for example, refers to a three-metre square in the Peak District National Park, while ///officers.barrel.uncouth is the starting point of a popular walking route from Grosmont to Whitby.

what3words is available in over 36 languages and used by thousands of businesses, government organisations and NGOs in over 170 countries, across a diverse range of industries including automotive, navigation, logistics, e-commerce, post, travel, drone-routing and disaster response. Mercedes-Benz was the first car company to integrate what3words voice into its navigation system, enabling drivers to say three words to get accurate directions to a specific 3m square. Other partners of what3words include Ford, the UN, the Philippines Red Cross and the postal services of nine countries to date.

UK EMERGENCY SERVICES RAPIDLY ADOPTED THE SYSTEM

With over fifty services now officially using what3words, reports of its effectiveness are emerging every day. It's been particularly useful in locating vulnerable missing people, for example, a ten-year-old boy went missing near Barnard Castle this August

Bank Holiday. His parents called 999 and, having already installed the what3words app on their phones, gave Durham Police the three words for their exact location as well as their son's last known location. Meanwhile, a walker found the boy and also used the what3words app to report his location, enabling Durham Police Officers to find him at ///honestly.easily.gifted. The boy's mother praised both the police and the app for helping to find him so quickly.

A key feature of the what3words app is that once a three-word address has been selected, people can tap 'Navigate here' to get directions to that exact location using the navigation apps on their phones like ViewRanger, Google Maps or Waze. This is why many emergency services, including West Yorkshire Police and Durham Constabulary, have added the what3words app in all their standard-issue smartphones.

WHAT3WORDS FOR MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE

Despite the many success stories surrounding the system, opinions vary within mountain rescue. Some see sat-navs and user-friendly systems like what3words as detrimental to important map reading and navigation skills, which might be seen as less essential as new tech becomes more available. Nonetheless, a growing number of teams believe it is useful to embrace a selection of tools that can help those in need, with what3words complementing already available resources.

Alan Pepper from Rossendale and Pendle MRT initially introduced what3words to his team during a training exercise which tested a multitude of different location tools. Pleased with the accuracy of human-friendly three-word addresses, the team has started using what3words in call-outs.

'OS Grid is still an essential component but, as an engineer, I feel you can never

have enough tools in your toolbox. For us, what3words is an especially useful tool for team members who want to use a smartphone as their primary satnav to provide an important ETA', said Alan.

In one incident, a woman sustained an injury while out running. Her friends gave a descriptive account of their location, which was found by a skilled member of the team with extensive local knowledge. As soon as he arrived on the scene, he shared the location's three-word address over WhatsApp, enabling other team members to find them efficiently. In another high profile missing person case that lasted several days, Alan's team used what3words in the ViewRanger App to identify different search areas.

Although there is no debating the importance of map reading skills, members of the public today are likely to carry a smartphone around with them but won't necessarily have a map, compass or a competent understanding of how to use OS coordinates. Ian Hugill, from Scarborough and Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team said, 'We come across a good number of sightseers, horse riders and mountain bikers who do not naturally carry maps but feel comfortable using what3words. The system is also working for police and ambulance, so we want to support their efforts by understanding and accepting what3words as another tool to help those in need.' 📍



PATRICK ARBUTHNOT
MANAGES INTEGRATION WITH SOFTWARE PROVIDERS AND HAS HELPED FIRE, COASTGUARD AND RESCUE CREWS AROUND THE UK TO ENABLE WHAT3WORDS IN THEIR CONTROL ROOMS.

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Autumn is the time to get the winter wardrobe out, especially if you are planning to spend time out in the mountains. Many of us turn to our faithful down jackets when the temperatures drop due to their insulating properties. But, if you put away your down jacket or gilet over the summer with last year's winter dirt all over it you'll struggle to keep snugly and warm. Simply because dirt attracts water, so when dirt and body oils build up on your down items they start to attract water. When that happens, the down clumps together, leaving you somewhat chilly and miserable. Clumped, wet down can't trap air effectively. In fact, wet down loses its insulating properties because water conducts heat away from the body up to 25 times faster than air. The answer is to treat all of your down products with Nikwax Down Wash Direct, a simple, quick, environmentally friendly treatment which revitalises the insulation and restores its durable water repellency (DWR) in the washing machine.

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MISPER-UK: Web-based Missing Persons app released

PETE ROBERTS & CARL HAMILTON

The Centre for Search Research (TCSR) is pleased to announce the release of a web based app we have developed. MISPER-UK has taken over a year to create and is based on our long established and much used, paper-based, UK Missing Person Behaviour Study. This study is based on a database of incidents compiled from reports from mountain rescue teams who have been called out by the police to search for a missing person or persons and covers a period of nearly twenty years.



The app uniquely interrogates this database, which is regularly updated to produce statistics, based on different categories of missing persons to show typical locations where they have been found, condition when found and distance travelled from where they were last seen or known to be, so the information provided will always be the most up-to-date available.

It puts UK missing person behaviour statistics in the pocket of the search manager for the first time, giving them immediate access to the information whenever it is required and there is internet access via smartphone, tablet or other connected device. Though the app is readily available, it is intended to be used by experienced search managers and will be

used extensively in The Centre for Search Research's Managing the Initial Response training course.

The use of missing person behaviour statistics is fundamental to the planning process that underpins a typical response to a search for a missing person. The statistics, in conjunction with a subject profile, the incident history (where, when and how they

Opposite page: Tables, clockwise from top left: Distance table; By location found pie chart; By outcome pie chart; Location table.

Left: Pete Roberts and Carl Hamilton.

became missing) and a detailed map analysis of the area, combine to construct likely scenarios to explain where the missing person might be. These scenarios are then translated into tasks for search teams to action.

MISPER-UK will help speed up the planning process and make contemporary UK based statistics more readily available. And this will, hopefully, lead to a speedier outcome for the missing person and lives will be saved. It is aimed at the police who have statutory responsibility for responding to missing person incidents and to volunteer mountain rescue teams who they call in to assist.

'It will be a game changer in the search for missing persons, many of whom are vulnerable and can succumb to the elements if a speedy response is not made,' said Gordon Millward, a trustee of The Centre for Search Research and a retired Chief Superintendent with Northumbria Police. Gordon has extensive experience of working with mountain rescue teams in the search for missing persons.

We believe this use of contemporary technology is a significant development on how missing person behaviour statistics are accessed. Launched in late September, the app will be available free from <http://misper.uk>.

The Centre for Search Research is a registered charity and is actively fundraising to develop the app further and also produce a 'native' app, removing the need for an internet connection. It will be a powerful tool in the search manager's toolbox and we hope to make it fully available, again at no cost, by the end of the year. For further details of this and other work, go to www.searchresearch.org.uk



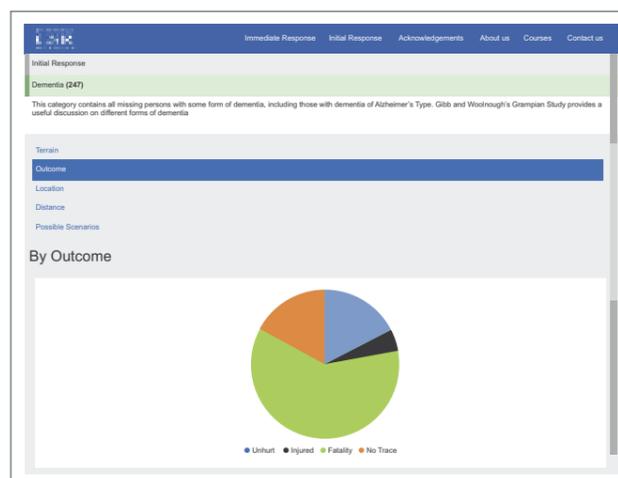
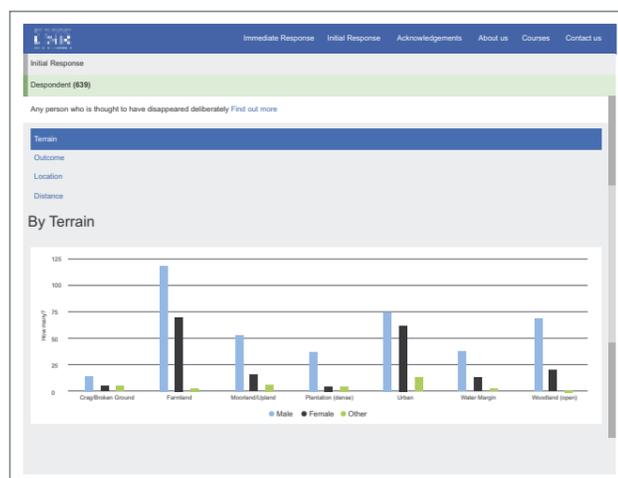
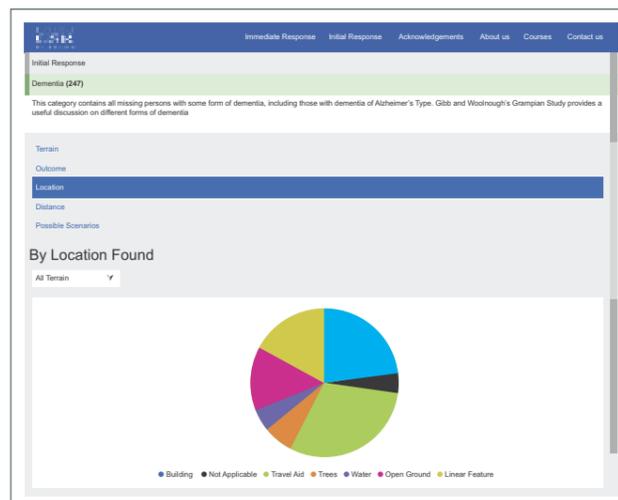
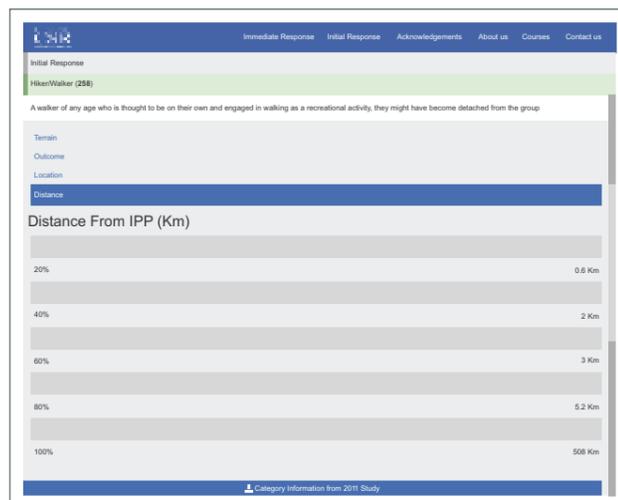
JUNE: WHAT3WORDS: ANOTHER TOOL IN THE BOX IN WEST YORKSHIRE

West Yorkshire Police has initiated the roll-out of the what3words location system into their operations in June, allowing callers to give a three-word address when they call for help.

The roll-out is part of a move away from the old style of questioning: 'Where have you come from?', 'Where are you going?', 'What can you see?' Questions which take time and aren't always particularly accurate. To help promote the use of what3words Calder Valley team members and West Yorkshire Police spent some time filming with BBC Look North senior reporter Ian White for a piece which went out on 30 April and is still available to view at www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9won5Er3GI

The what3words address for the Calder Valley base, is germinate.pixies.comedians!

Calder Valley team members worked with West Yorkshire Police in the filming of what3words BBC news item. Images supplied by CVSRT.





TEAM TALK

SUMMER 2019: MOUNTAIN HIGH RESCUE COVERAGE

It's been a busy summer of peak time TV coverage of mountain rescue as several teams featured on ITV's *Rescue: River Deep, Mountain High* series. The eight-part series included teams from England and Ireland along with Cairngorm MRT from Scotland and Humber Rescue and the Irish Tow Surf Rescue Club. Broadcast nationally at 8.00 pm on ITV on Friday evenings (with a very late night repeat over the weekend), the series has used Go-Pro and similar video footage plus interviews with rescuers to tell the stories of a range of incidents. **Sally Seed** provides an overview.

'We became aware of the fantastic work of the volunteer rescue teams from a story that we saw from Kinder MRT,' said series producer and director at Goldhawk Media, Bernadette Bos, 'and realised there hadn't been a television programme made solely about mountain rescue around the UK and Ireland.'

'Once we started filming and collating the Go-Pro footage of the numerous rescues undertaken in ghastly weather conditions and night-time situations, we were astounded and deeply moved by their generosity, heroism and tenacity, and I was moved to tears on many occasions seeing the struggles they undertook, the time it took to rescue unfortunate climbers and walkers, and to see the gratitude and relief of those who were rescued. I admire all the rescue teams greatly.'

At least one Peak District team, usually Kinder, Buxton or Edale, was featured in each programme and Dr Steve Rowe of Edale MRT has appreciated the opportunity. 'It's fantastic we've been able to share our work, done at all hours of day and night, in all weathers, and not seen by the public,' said Steve. 'This series has demonstrated the real human stories behind the rescues, and the challenges faced by rescuers. That we have such a provision of voluntary rescue in the UK is a real testament to all those individuals involved, and their families, friends and employers who have to endure the disturbance of routine, interruption of family time together and impact on the rest of their lives. Every single rescuer does it willingly, and has a real drive to help those in distress when they need it the most.'

Meanwhile Patterdale MRT featured in three programmes: the first showed a rescue on the Howtown side of Ullswater and involved the Rigid Inflatable Boat as the best means of getting team members over the lake, while a second featured the rescue of a lost walker on Dove Crag. The final one was the complicated rescue of one of Patterdale's own, Ed Dowcra, after he fell from an ice climb.

'That particular rescue, in December 2017, also involved Penrith and Kirkby Stephen MRT personnel,' said Mike Rippon, Patterdale team leader, 'and the Go-Pro footage clearly showed the challenges of stretchering a badly injured casualty on steep ground in winter conditions. The TV crew interviewed Ed for the programme too and it was great to see him on screen talking about being on the receiving end of rescue.'

Across the Irish Sea, rescues featuring Mayo and Kerry MRT's were also included and the series has been broadcast there on ITV+1 on a Saturday evening.

'The awareness of the role of the mountain rescue teams in Ireland has been put on general display, thanks to this programme,' said Cameron Clotworthy of Mayo Mountain Rescue. 'Like all voluntary emergency service groups, we rely on fundraising to assist us throughout the year in providing this service and featuring in this programme will help mountain rescue teams in this respect. We always get asked by people 'What is it really like on a call-out?' Thanks to this coverage, people can see first-hand how easily accidents can happen to anyone and what it takes to help someone out in a rescue situation.'

All in all, the series has done a good job of promoting mountain rescue as a whole to a wide audience. As Peter Shanahan of Bowland Pennine MRT has commented, 'During fundraising in Lancashire, members of our team — which wasn't featured in the series — heard from the public how they enjoy the series and seeing what teams actually do. It was a real boost for our day and we've joked about having an 'As seen on TV' sign up next time!'

The last word goes to Mike Potts of Kinder MRT. 'The series has been a fantastic showcase for our work and the response on social media has been overwhelming. It's been great to show people what we do, how we do it and to get across the message that this level of professionalism and dedication is provided by entirely unpaid volunteers. Thanks to Berry and her team at Goldhawk for the work they've put into this and we continue to film our call-outs in the hope of a future series of the programme.' 🙌

IF YOU MISSED **RESCUE: RIVER DEEP, MOUNTAIN HIGH**, THERE ARE PLANS TO BROADCAST IT AGAIN ON ITV4 IN ENGLAND AND WALES FROM SOME TIME IN OCTOBER.

Screen grabs provided by Goldhawk, Mountain Rescue Ireland and Patterdale MRT include shots of Kerry, Mayo and Patterdale team members in action during filming.



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SEPTEMBER: FAMILY OF RESCUED TEENAGER RAISES FUNDS FOR TEAMS

The family of Harry Weatherhead has raised £1000 for two of the north east's mountain rescue teams, Northumberland National Park and North of Tyne.

Harry had a lucky escape in the summer when he fell over 30 foot from Crammel Linn waterfall near Gilsland. Both teams responded to the call-out and, given the complexity of the rescue, requested a helicopter to airlift Harry to hospital. Team members were involved for over four hours and despite the seriousness of the fall, Harry received only minor injuries.

Earlier last week, Harry along with family members presented a cheque for £500 to each team at Pegswood Community Fire Station, the Northumberland team's base near Morpeth. A spokesperson for both teams said, 'We are delighted that Harry is on the mend. We'd like to pass on our thanks to his family and friends who've raised these much needed funds, this will help ensure we can continue to respond to call-outs and contribute to saving lives.'

Top: Team members with Harry and his family outside NNP MRT base © NNP MRT.



NEW RESPONSE VEHICLE FOR NORTHUMBERLAND

The team announced the arrival of their third response vehicle in September. The brand new Toyota Hilux was converted by Pickup Systems in Burnley to meet the specific needs of the team. 'Curlew Echo' is now fully operational and has already been deployed on call-outs. Team leader, Iain Nixon is delighted with the new addition to the fleet. 'We are very grateful to those who've helped fund the new vehicle, in particular the Northumberland LEADER and the Northumberland County Council Community Chest Fund. Echo gives us even more flexibility in terms of response and means we are able to deploy team members over a much wider area.'



SEPTEMBER: BUXTON TEAM MEMBER MARRIES IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE STYLE

'You might as well wear your boots and jacket, as on the few times you have been to church, you've been called out halfway through the service'. Such were the words of bride-to-be Alyson to her team member groom-to-be, Neil.

'Skip forward seven weeks,' says Neil, 'and it's a sunny Sunday morning and I have just got married to my lovely wife, Alyson. The church, in the village of Hayfield, is full. The venue is perfect, beautifully decorated, plenty of food and drink and excellent company. Our close family relations, life-long friendships are there and two other groups that are close to our hearts: Alyson's church fellowship and members of the regular congregation and, for me, members of mountain rescue.'

'For anyone who has just joined MR, you have not only joined a team, but a family. So I was honoured to have members of the mountain rescue family, from Glossop, Edale and Buxton mountain rescue teams, and Mountain Rescue Search Dogs England attending the ceremony.'

'Now, people that know me, know I am not a tie and suit man. It's so not me. Boots and an MR Jacket is more like it. As for transportation to the church, Buxton MRT provided Mobile 1 response vehicle. Not your first choice for wedding transport maybe, but it was exactly what Alyson wanted. Alyson and I'd like to thank St Matthews and the mountain rescue community for making our day so special.'

Above: Alyson and Neil with their mountain rescue pals © Carney James Turner/Buxton MRT.



JULY: TRAGIC FALL FOR FAMILY'S PET DOG

The 5-year old German Shepherd slipped down the slope, then plunged into the river, just below Pecca Falls in Ingleton.

CRO team members searched for the dog. Three of them, wearing drysuits and with swiftwater rescue kit, abseiled in to the gorge and searched the pools, as best they could in the high water conditions. and, sometimes, heavy rain. Sadly, the dog was not found.

Image © CRO.



Mountain rescue safety message spreads far and wide

Always good when there are requests for our safety leaflets from outside the team and mountain rescue community – especially when it's groups or individuals taking on their own outdoor fundraising challenges for good causes (not necessarily our own!) and wanting to stay as safe as possible. Before heading out to Pakistan, this particular group did just that, not just asking for a stock of our leaflets, but seeking our advice on training and hiring local Mountain Guides for their trips to the UK mountains. **Shafiq Rafiq** sent us this thank you and report on their inspirational success.



Images © Imran Khan Cancer Appeal.



AUGUST: LIVE BANK HOLIDAY WEATHER DIRECT FROM SNOWDON'S SUMMIT

Just in time for the Bank Holiday weekend, travellers to the beautiful Snowdonia National Park were able to check live weather conditions and information directly from the summit of Snowdon/Yr Wyddfa, thanks to the BMC, AdventureSmart and various partners.



With over half a million walkers each year, Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) is by far the busiest mountain in the UK, with people from all corners of the globe travelling to enjoy its paths, peaks and cliffs. However, part of the price of its popularity

is the increasing number of avoidable call-outs to mountain rescue teams, often initiated by ill-prepared or inexperienced first time hill-walkers who may have underestimated impact the weather may have on their plans.

The BMC already provides live Winter Weather Conditions Information for winter climbers, mainly to help winter climbers be better informed when conditions are suitable for winter climbing and to help avoid damage to internationally important alpine vegetation. These projects are now live at Cwm Idwal in Snowdonia and Helvellyn and Great End in the Lake District.

THE MREW/ADVENTURESMART SAFETY LEAFLETS ARE SPONSORED BY CICERONE AND FREELY AVAILABLE TO TEAMS, GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO REQUEST THEM. EMAIL JUDY WHITESIDE VIA EDITOR@MOUNTAIN.RESCUE.ORG.UK FOR DETAILS.

All 26 trekkers returned from our Pakistan challenge with no injuries or broken bones, just amazing memories. Our trek would not have been possible without our advance training in the UK, climbing the National Three Peaks and endless weekends in Wales. Thank you for your support and advice to help make our charity mission a success. Our target of £150K, to help support cancer patients in Pakistan, is now achievable.

Our team of trekkers from the Imran Khan Cancer Appeal, from across the UK, went to Pakistan to take on the challenge of a lifetime: hiking to the base of 'killer mountain', Nanga Parbat, as well as hiking to Rush Lake, the highest alpine lake in Pakistan, and Rush Peak, nestled at an altitude of 5,098m. We were a mix of men and women from 14 to 72.

Ikhlaq Ahmed, manager of the Appeal said, 'We were really pleased to complete the challenge. We wanted the world to see that Pakistan is a place where charity thrives and meets in literally breathtaking locations, a land rich in natural beauty, and that the generosity and hospitality of its people are second to none. We look forward to arranging more trips for overseas Pakistanis in the years to come and hope this inaugural challenge will be a source of inspiration for many more supporters to come forward and join us on future treks.'

Last year, the Appeal undertook their first overseas challenge to Everest Base Camp, raising in excess of £60,000, with a further £61,000 raised by a couple from Leicester who returned from the challenge to organise a spectacular fundraising event for the charity.

This year's group has undertaken to raise individual targets using various methods of fundraising, from organising family and friend picnics to one woman baking as many as 2,000 cupcakes in Ramadan and raising more than £13,000 by her own efforts.

'This trek was a challenge for all of us,' said Halima Nawazwe. 'We were camping in the wilderness, with the night beside Rush Lake being the coldest but with all the challenges of the mountains, glacier walking and contending with the harsh elements. But we reminded ourselves of our purpose every morning in our daily prayers, that we are here by choice and that we are blessed with health. None of our struggles compare to those who need cancer treatment but cannot afford it.'



Image © Buxton MRT.

SEPTEMBER: NEW VEHICLE STAR ATTRACTION AT CHATSWORTH

Buxton team's BMRT1 attracted quite a bit of interest at the Chatsworth Country Fair – from the team's younger supporters and one or two grown-ups too.

MIKE MARGESON OPERATIONS UPDATE

With the busy summer period behind us, there is no shortage of items to reflect on and review but, operationally, two areas about team members' personal safety stick out.

SAR-H training: Mike Park (SAR-H lead) updated the July operations meeting on recent meetings with MCA and Bristow. Despite progress and agreements about training we still have large numbers of team members who have not taken part in on-the-ground training. In the last month, in my own region there were ten training sessions planned with only three actually taking place. At a recent meeting when discussing helicopter training, I commented to a senior police officer that they would not put any of their officers in such a hazardous situation of working with helicopters not fully trained. Clearly we need to address this at UKSAR, with the MCA and with the police.

Mike raised the issue with Glen Mayhew (the new police lead) on the floor at the MREW conference, as did Mike France and I at a separate meeting. Team leaders have indicated their concern to me, and this is shared by the operations group. The winchman supervising activities is not some sort of panacea, we need the training and it is what we should have.

Land Rover accidents: The second area of concern is the recent accidents involving Land Rovers rolling during off-road driving on call-

outs. Very thankfully, these have not resulted in serious injuries. Speaking with both the teams concerned and Simon Thresher, we are keen that any lessons learned are shared from these accidents. One point was obvious: the presence of a full roll bar and wearing of seat belts helped prevent more serious injuries.



What 3 words: This is an issue that has dominated my inbox as much as it has social media and teams operationally and it is clearly being used widely by the public and not going to go away. We have issued

an MREW position statement and are talking to both Adventure Smart and W3W to ensure the right safety messages get to the public.

Vacant officer posts: Paul Smith — who I would like to thank for all his hard work — is standing down so we are looking for a new equipment officer. Anybody interested in taking on this national role and the work Paul has been doing with the equipment group should initially speak with either Paul or myself. He has agreed to cover the post until his replacement is found. The vacant water officer position will hopefully be filled at the November meeting.

SOME ITEMS THAT CAUGHT MY EYE AT THE MREW CONFERENCE

There was quite a theme on governance and for me, the key operational issue is around our Home Office licence. Mike Greene has spoken many times about the importance of this. The head of Home Office licencing, Angharad Thomas, spoke about the unique nature of our licence and made the responsibilities required clear — and the potential outcomes to us all of any non-compliance.

Other medical items: John Ellerton spoke on the international work on suspension trauma and getting casualties horizontal quickly.

Technical stuff: The new stretcher wheel looks really good. Lyon have been testing and working on this for some time and it will be good to get operational feedback. Ditto the Maestro, the new rescue load belay device from Petzl.

Next Operations meeting is scheduled for 11 January 2020 where feedback on many of these points can be discussed.

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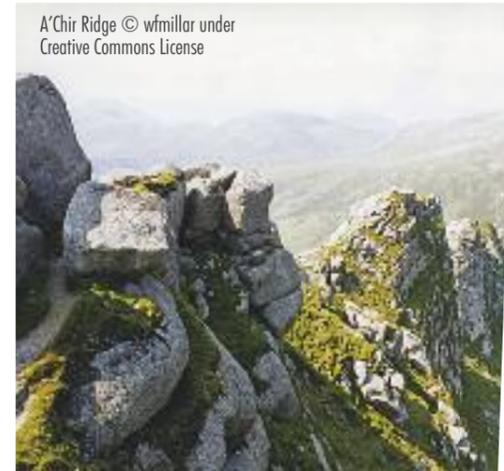
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TEAM TALK



JULY: INJURED WALKER FOUND ALIVE AFTER TWO DAYS ON A' CHIR RIDGE

Miroslav Novak's wallet gave rescuers the vital clue to his location after he was reported missing, heading out for a hiking trip on the Isle of Arran. He was found on the 2,444-ft high A' Chir ridge.

A'Chir (the comb) is the pinnacled ridge leading to the summit of Cir Mhòr (the big comb), a rock climb (graded Severe) on the formidable granite buttresses. Arran team members were called out to search for the 23-year-old, who was believed to have travelled by train to the Arran ferry on Wednesday. A police mountain rescue team joined the search and the Prestwick Coastguard helicopter flew to the site.

'A wallet was found belonging to the missing person by a member of the public on the bypass path on A'Chir ridge and handed in to local police promptly which helped to confirm that the missing person had been or was still on the hill somewhere. After a few hours, Rescue 199 spotted someone to the north side of the A'Chir ridge. This was confirmed to be the missing person and thankfully he was still alive after falling and being out in the mountains for approximately 48 hours.'



JULY: TEESDALE & WEARDALE GO TO THE RESCUE OF SHEEPDOG

The sheepdog had fallen into a deep hole below the summit of Mickie Fell, the highest point in County Durham. Shepherd James Fletcher had been out gathering sheep with two dogs when suddenly two became one!

After scouring the area, the two-year-old collie called Brooke, was located in a deep hole with an entrance of only about one and a half feet in diameter. She'd fallen around 12 foot onto the muddy floor of the hole. It wasn't until later in the day that James realised he couldn't reach her and called the rescue team.

Five team members met with James and the head gamekeeper of Strathmore Estates, and they were led along a five-mile track across Mickie Fell. The team then transferred their kit onto an Argocat for the mile and a half journey across the fell to the incident site. A rig was set up and the hole made larger by clearing away heather and moss, making it large enough for a person to be lowered through. After reassuring the dog and placing her in a bag for her safety, both dog and rescuer were hauled to the surface where Brooke was reunited with James, seemingly none the worse for her ordeal of being in a hole for almost fifteen hours! By the time the team left the fell it was 10.00pm and dark. Apart from being a little muddy, everyone was very happy with the outcome.

Above: Brooke the sheepdog and her rescuers © Teesdale & Weardale MRT.



AUGUST: FIFTY YEAR MILESTONE FOR THE FOUR DARTMOOR TEAMS

Team members from the four Dartmoor teams (Ashburton, Tavistock and Plymouth and North Dartmoor), originally the Dartmoor Rescue Group, celebrated their 50th year anniversary this year.

To commemorate the anniversary, the National Park Authority hosted an exhibition showcasing the work of the Dartmoor teams throughout September, at the Princetown visitor centre. Team members went along to visit (left).



Ride Kirklees goes out training with the Holme Valley MRT

Ride Kirklees is a mountain bike advocacy group. Our aims are to share ideas and plans for developing and repairing bridleways, and to promote good trail etiquette. Over the last ten years or so, there's been a huge increase in such groups countrywide, working to be a positive influence for the sport. If a mountain bike rider takes a fall in Kirklees, it'll be the Holme Valley team who'll help them out. So, in an effort to return this favour, we offered to provide some 'casualties' for a training exercise in June.

Top: Mal sleeping, and well-camouflaged, at the bottom of the slope. **Right:** Gordon being rescued. **Opposite:** Full-face helmet treatment and team members going about their tasks. All images © Holme Valley MRT.



HVMRT wanted a scenario with multiple injured mountain bikers so three of us (Steven, Gordon and myself) volunteered. In many years riding we've amassed numerous injuries so we're well-placed to pretend to be injured. The other Ride Kirklees member was Don who, more importantly, is also in mountain rescue so he was the go-between for the exercise.

The training site was the top of Magdalen Road near Meltham. Well, we knew that, the rescue team had no idea, they were all at the base in Marsden. At 8.15am we made our way up to the 'crash' site. Don gave us all our instructions for the exercise: Steven had taken a fall and injured his leg; Gordon had had a big smash, broken his collarbone and was dazed and confused (some would say no change from normal there), I was unconscious with a suspected broken pelvis. I felt that unconscious was achievable with my acting skills. The sneaky bit to the exercise is that the other two had no idea where I was. They'd crashed and hit the deck but weren't sure whether I'd been ahead and was unaware anything had happened. In 'reality', I'd come smashing around the corner to find them both on the deck, blocking the path, and veered off the trail to miss them... unfortunately, down a steep slope and mostly out of sight.

We all got in position then Steven made the call to mountain rescue to inform them of the incident. They pinged him a Phonefind text message, which gave away our location, and they were on the way. I made my way down the slope and settled down for a long wait. Due to the weather forecast I'd put my full wets on, and also had a full-face helmet so I was warm and toasty. I was going to be found last so I just made myself comfortable in the heather, tucked away out of sight at the bottom of a steep slope.

I'll cut the story short as the events of the two separate incident sites come together as one. The first two casualties were located, triage identified a priority casualty, ascertained information on what happened, casualty treatment, realising a third rider was somewhere, planned search for that rider (me), planning casualty extraction for the first two. Then I was woken up by someone shouting 'Rider, if you can hear me raise your arm!' Emm, I'd fallen asleep lying in the heather. I was just about to raise my arm when remembered I was meant to be unconscious. Then it was over with me for triage, treatment and extraction.

The processes and procedures were impressive to be part of, however, it was only when we were discussing it on the ride back to MRT HQ that it fully struck us how good it was. We all had an identical experience highlighting the consistency of approach. As a layman I may not have the terminology correct, however:

- Initial contact and triage. Top to bottom assessment.
- A lead carer responsible for each of us.
- Communication — everything that was

going to be done was explained to us. If anyone new came to help they introduced themselves and again explained what they were going to do. Even more assuring for me as I was wearing a full-face helmet so had a limited field of vision.

- Calm reassurance.
- Regular monitoring of vital statistics.
- Bothy cover.

Every so often there'd be a break in the exercise, primarily so the crew members could chat about what they were doing and the reasoning behind all the decisions being made — an excellent reflective practice that we should all carry out to stay on top of our game. Whilst the lead carer was away on those discussions, other team members used those breaks to practise on us, or check out we were OK. Also, let me check again if I was still meant to be unconscious. Wearing a full face helmet prompted some interesting discussions that are most likely mountain bike specific: Would you leave the helmet on or take it off? How would you take his temperature as his ears are covered? He's unconscious, how do you know if he's swallowed his tongue or not? And so on.

I've been to many events in support of mountain rescue but thankfully so far have never needed your service so this was the first time I'd been a customer. The efficiency and teamwork was very impressive.

To rescue us there was the best part of thirty HVMRT members involved in the exercise. It was only in the training debrief we realised how team members almost take it for granted. The training ensures that within the different areas of concurrent activity (patient care, rope teams, incident site leader, control vehicle) everyone knows their tasks, and it's practised until it becomes second nature. Chatting with team members, they were all very understated, almost 'Well it's what we do'. It was the opposite polar opposite of ourselves, blown away by the professionalism and skill. What I'm trying to say is ever so often you should take a step back and appreciate what you do for everyone, it's a remarkable service you provide.

We're trying to spread the message about supporting mountain rescue around our local mountain biking community and encourage other MTB groups to assist their local teams in the same way. Still not many people are aware of the voluntary nature of mountain rescue. It turns out it was just the start of a very positive relationship with Holme Valley MRT as we're now trying to rouse the mountain biking community for MRT fundraising.

It's reassuring to know that if we get into bother in the hills, mountain rescue will sort us out. Now we've got to know a few members of the team, it's almost reassuring to know that if we do get rescued, it'll be a source of amusement for a long time to come. And I wouldn't want it any other way. ☺



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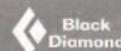
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