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mountain rescue

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ISSUE 34



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LEFT: WOODHEAD MRT LAND ROVER CENTRE & RIGHT: BUXTON MRT LAND ROVER

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WELCOME TO ISSUE 34

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

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

EDITORIAL

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NEXT ISSUE ISSUE 35

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

Advertising artwork must be supplied, ready prepared on CD or via email as font embedded PDF/EPS/TIFF (300 dpi) or Quark document with all relevant fonts and images.

FRONT PAGE

Members of Keswick MRT training with Kirk Mauthner in Canada.
Photo: Nick Jones

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

mountain rescue



Any hopes that the increases in mountain rescue incidents experienced during the past two years was a temporary aberration have now been very clearly dashed. It is too soon to know whether a further significant increase has occurred but it is very evident there is no reduction. The major cause of the increase would seem to be the result of a large rise in the number of people venturing into the hills and there is some evidence the percentage of people coming to grief has actually fallen.

There are nevertheless areas where incidents could have been avoided with relatively little prior thought and knowledge, particularly with regard to weather and simple navigational skills. There is also some evidence that the transition from indoor climbing walls to the great outdoors is responsible for a number of falls. These are topics that should be addressed and we are pleased to have entered into a partnership with the British Mountaineering Council to form a new Mountain Safety Forum.

One of its principle roles will be to try to reach the people who venture into the hills with no preparation and hopefully eventually have an impact on the incidents generated by this group. It is impossible to know whether the number of untoward events will continue to increase before an attempted education programme takes effect. Predictions of this nature are notoriously fraught with traps. In the early part of the last century Alfred James Balfour forecast 'The motor car will help to solve the problem of congestion of traffic on the roads'.

It is rewarding to see that, despite this busy period, Centrepoint and WellChild children were provided with a memorable day out in North Wales. Ogwen and NEWSAR carried most of the weight of organisation and it's to their credit the day was so successful for all who took part. We are also indebted to the work that Mike

France puts in as the link between our organisations.

The Dublin Conference saw Peter Dymond address mountain rescue from an outside perspective. Those who were in Stirling will remember his critical, but fair, assessment of the position of mountain rescue. In Dublin he complimented the progress we have made in two years referring, for example, to the publication of team capabilities in England and Wales. There is still work to be done in respect of callout times and processes. It is pertinent to pay tribute to the tremendous work carried out by John Hulse in establishing the Sarcall system. It is pleasing to see it creep across the country and it certainly warrants universal deployment in all MR regions at the very least. There was also reference to the need for more discussion between MREW, MRCofS and IMRA with regard particularly to future plans and aspirations. I am pleased to report an agreement was reached in Dublin for the three organisations to start that process.

There has in some minds been the erroneous assumption, following the publication of the list of team capabilities, that ticking off this list was the only requirement for the existence or establishment of a mountain rescue team. Much more is involved and, above all, there must be a clearly demonstrable operational need for a team to exist within a particular geographical area and this need will be kept under review.

Mountain rescue in England and Wales continues to respond exceedingly well to all the challenges thrown our way but there are still interesting times ahead that will continue to exercise our skills and commitment.

'For every problem there is a solution that is neat and simple – and wrong' H.L. Menken

David Allan Chairman

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Comment

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Richard Terrell writes... It's been a busy few months on the equipment front. The lightweight casualty bag questionnaire has been sent out but, just in case it hasn't made its way to you, we've included a copy here on page 7. Please let us have your thoughts and comments as it's your feedback that will help us develop the bag you want. Please can you submit all feedback by the end of October. If you're wondering which casbag... two years ago, every equipment officer was asked to submit their name and address and the lightweight casbag was sent direct to them (in a yellow tackle bag labelled CASBAG). Next there was the organisation of the conference, in particular the nineteen trade stands. A big thank you to all who attended and helped make it such a good event. There

was a slight dampener on events, however, as it was reported to me that a number of items went missing from the trade stands. Not news you would normally expect for an MR event. On a brighter note, history was made when Peter Bell signed over the rights to his eponymous stretcher, free of charge, to Mountain Rescue England and Wales. This was made possible thanks to the hard work of Ray Griffiths and other officers and, if all goes to plan, the first run of MR produced Bell stretchers will be before Christmas.

BENEVOLENT FUND

The first meeting to discuss the proposed fund will be held at Statham Lodge, Lymm, Cheshire, at 10.00am, Saturday 23 October. All those interested are invited to attend – please email Huw to let him know you are attending – huw@birrell@aol.com

A HISTORIC MOMENT AS PETER BELL 'HANDS OVER' HIS BELL STRETCHER TO MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND AND WALES
LEFT TO RIGHT: DAVID ALLAN, RICHARD TERRELL, RAY GRIFFITHS AND PETER BELL



TRAIN THE TRAINERS COURSE
Places: 50
Date: Sunday 17 October (One day)
Location: NEWSAR HQ, Colomendy OPC
Loggerheads
Contact: Huw Birrell
01978 769188
huw@birrell@aol.com

MEDIA TRAINING COURSE
Places: 20
Date: Sunday 21 November (One day)
Location: Lancs Police HQ
Contact: Mike Margeson
01229 889721
mmargeson@hotmail.com

MR(E&W) SUBCOMMITTEES AND BUSINESS MEETING
Places: 80
Date: Saturday 20 November (One day)
Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton
Contact: Peter Smith
01796 862335
secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

TEAM LEADERS DAY
Places: 80
Date: Saturday 4 December (One day)
Location: Derby MRT HQ
Contact: Peter Smith

Dates for your diary...

PRINCE WILLIAM BECOMES A FULLY OPERATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE PILOT

Mountain Rescue patron Prince William has graduated from his Search and Rescue training course at RAF Valley in Anglesey. He will now join C Flight of Number 22 Squadron, remaining at Valley, as a fully qualified, fully operational Search and Rescue pilot flying the Sea King helicopter. Prince William will begin his operational service as co-pilot of a Sea King Mk3 helicopter working as part of a four-person crew. Search and Rescue (SAR) aircrew provide a life-saving rescue service to both military personnel and civilians in the UK, rescuing people from the sea, on mountains, from flooded regions or other areas on land, day and night and in all weathers.

Prince William, known as Flight Lieutenant Wales in the RAF, was presented with a graduation certificate and SAR Force badge by the Group Captain at RAF Valley along with six fellow students. The Prince will also receive his Squadron badge from the Officer Commanding 22 Squadron. Their graduation is the culmination of seven months of training with the Search and Rescue Training Unit and the Sea King Operational Conversion Unit. Prince William completed 70 hours of live flying plus 50 hours of simulator training and learnt how to manoeuvre the Sea King helicopter to the high standards expected of search and rescue helicopter pilots. The course ended with a series of assessed exercises designed to test the students' ability to work as fully integrated members of the Search and Rescue Force. Flight Lieutenant Wales said, 'I am really delighted to have completed the training course with my fellow students. The course has been challenging, but I have enjoyed it immensely. I absolutely love flying, so it will be an honour to serve operationally with the Search and Rescue Force, helping to provide such a vital emergency service.'



FLIGHT LIEUTENANT WALES
PHOTO: CROWN
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MOUNTAIN RESCUE GOING FORWARD

Neil Roden writes... A little over a year ago I was asked to chair a group to look at where Mountain Rescue wanted to be in five and ten years time. Representatives from each region were selected and asked to consult with the teams in their region for views of what every team member wanted and expected in the future. At the main meeting in

November three key objectives were agreed. Those were:

- To have a minimum standard of training across all teams
 - To work towards having a corporate image
 - To develop central and coordinated purchasing.
- On the first point Mike Margeson, the national training officer, has done a lot of work to determine training standards and that is moving forward. To some extent, areas like casualty care are well established, other aspects will require more thought.

The other two points are, of course, connected and those are moving forward too. I have recently been appointed as the person responsible for central purchasing. Obviously, with a limited amount of money we need to spend it wisely. A purchasing policy is being developed which will be robust enough to stand the scrutiny of both team members and the charity commissioners.

Although the Forward Planning Group has not met over the summer we will be meeting again soon. With our first three objectives agreed and moving forward we are keen to keep the momentum. If you have thoughts or opinions of how the organisation should move forward please get in touch with your regional rep and let them know. We need input from as many as possible to ensure we go forward in the right direction.

TRAIN THE TRAINERS DAY: PLACES LEFT

The course is on Sunday 17 October at NEWSAR base, 20 miles west of Chester – very accessible! There will be input from Plas y Brenin, the University of North Wales, Bangor, North Wales Police and others. Free accommodation available the night before the course, at the base. Call Huw Birrell for details – 07723 575527.

TRAINING NEWS

Mike Margeson writes... The Media Skills day will be held at Police HQ in Preston on 21 November 21. Please contact Richard Holmes (r_n_holmes@hotmail.com) or Mike Margeson (mmargeson@hotmail.com) for more details. Please note, a 50% subsidy has been agreed for this course so, although up front cost is £100, teams will receive a £50 per head refund for each booking.



NATIONAL TRAINING DAY, PYB 7 MAY 2011

This is open to any team member at no cost and has proved very successful in the past. The plan is to run four or five sessions in the morning, repeated in the afternoon to allow folk to get to two full sessions in the day. We hope to include medical, technical rope rescue, PPE checking and care of stretchers, swiftwater and bank rescue, vehicles and driving issues, technology and search management. I'd like to thank PYB for their help with this day

and also for their support for the Train the Trainers day.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND AND WALES ROPE RESCUE GUIDELINES

The final draft is now in circulation via the regional reps of the training committee. This is your chance to contribute and comment! We will be finalising, ratifying and implementing these guidelines at the November meeting.

IKAR 2010, SLOVAKIA

John Ellerton, Medical Officer, Mike Margeson, Training Officer and Andy Simpson Press Officer will be attending this year's international meeting in Slovakia – a full report in January from Andy Simpson.

CENTRAL FUNDING FOR NATIONAL COURSES

We have been discussing at executive meetings the use of national funds for training and pushing hard for an across-the-board 50% subsidy for all national courses. We believe this to be a legitimate and sound use of centrally raised funds. If you have view please speak to your reps.

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Aiguille Lightweight Summer Casualty Bag Evaluation

The casualty bag was sent out for teams to trial as a lightweight alternative to the full winter weight casualty bag. It is accepted that different teams will have had different experiences depending on the nature of their operations, the local terrain and the prevailing weather conditions. Please provide as much feedback as you can. Remember the questions are aimed at the casualty bag itself and not the carry bag. Many thanks for your help – your feedback will help to improve the equipment MREW supplies free to teams.

Person completing: _____ ...transferring a casualty into it? _____

Contact telephone: _____ ...transferring a casualty to a stretcher? _____

Email: _____ ...the ease of access to the casualty? _____

Date completed: _____ ...access to the zips and casualty card? _____

Role in team: _____ ...its compatibility with the stretcher? _____

Team: _____ ...its compatibility with other pieces of equipment (vacuum splints etc.)? _____

Region: _____ ...cleaning it in comparison with the full weight casualty bag? _____

Question One:
In order to get an accurate reflection of the advantages and limitations of the casualty bag it is essential we understand what environment the bag has been used in. For the purpose of the questionnaire, please consider winter conditions to be an air temperature below zero with ice or snow underfoot.

Where has the bag been used?
Please tick whichever is relevant:

- Mountain winter conditions
- Mountain summer conditions
- Lowland and urban
- Underground
- Call outs
- Training

Comments: _____

Question Two:
We need to know about the construction and use of the bag.

What did you think about...
...the length of the bag? _____

...the width of the bag? _____

...the warmth of the bag in summer? _____

...the warmth of the bag in winter? _____

Question Three:
As a user of the casualty bag – how did you find...
...the pack size and weight? _____

...transferring a casualty into it? _____

...transferring a casualty to a stretcher? _____

...the ease of access to the casualty? _____

...access to the zips and casualty card? _____

...its compatibility with the stretcher? _____

...its compatibility with other pieces of equipment (vacuum splints etc.)? _____

...cleaning it in comparison with the full weight casualty bag? _____

Question Four:
How would you rate the casualty bag in the following situations?

As a year round alternative to the full weight bag? _____

As a summer only alternative to the full weight bag? _____

As a first response bag? _____

As a backup bag for occasional use? _____

As a home for moths in a dark corner of the base? _____

Question Five:
Where is the bag now?
Please tick whichever is relevant:

- In pride of place in the Landy – where the big casbag used to be
- Beside the full weight casbag in the Landy so we can take it if we need it
- On the shelf back at the base
- In the back our equipment officer's boot still
- What casualty bag?!
- Somewhere else – please specify _____

Question Six:
Would you want another lightweight casualty bag?
Please tick one box:

- Yes, we prefer it to the full weight bag.
- Yes, we would want one in addition to the full weight bag.
- No thanks.

Question Seven:
Did you manage to damage the casualty bag?
Please tick one box:

- Yes
 - No
- If yes, please say how _____

Question Eight:
What improvements would you make to the casualty bag?

Question Nine:
Overall what did you think of the following...?

The zips? _____

The hood? _____

The waterproofness? _____

The warmth? _____

The handles? _____

The inside fabric? _____

The underside? _____

The casbag? _____

Any other comments _____

Many thanks for your time!

Please return completed surveys to Richard Terrell, MREW Equipment Officer
richard@rterrell.orangehome.co.uk.

LAKE DISTRICT

LDSAMRA READINESS FOR 2010 FLOODS?

Richard Warren writes... November 2009 brought devastation to Cumbria with the unprecedented rainfall on top of the already heavily waterlogged ground and the floods were comprehensively reported in the January issue of the magazine. The summer of 2010 may have seen very mixed weather with conditions ranging from hosepipe bans to weather warnings, but the one thing on the minds of many is what will the autumn and winter of 2010 bring?

A massive £42,000 was needed to replace damaged and lost equipment incurred by the Lakes teams over that 4-day period and replacement was completed very quickly to ensure teams were ready for whatever came their way locally. However, it was recognised that there was a pressing need for the teams to take stock of what resources they currently had and what they really needed to be a fully effective and coordinated water rescue service for the county. To this end the LDSAMRA Communications, Training and Equipment Working Groups pulled together a resources needs plan, to allow teams to be prepared and ready for similar major flooding events, wherever they might strike in the county. The list of needs was significant, ranging from specialist water rescue gear and personal protective clothing to improving radio communication infrastructure and training of MRT volunteers in the various levels of water rescue response. The cost of these improvements will be met from a number of sources which include existing specified donations, further targeted donations and grant applications. Progress on the implementation of our region's enhanced resilience capability will be reported in the next issue.

FATALITY PROTOCOL

The Lake District teams have been working with Cumbria Constabulary to produce a fatality protocol that will assist teams when they are involved in rescues involving fatalities. Protocols already exist between teams and their police forces elsewhere in the country and, in a similar vein, the Cumbrian protocol will be particularly important where the police need to carry out an in depth investigation into the circumstances surrounding an incident. Evidence gathering and scene protection will all be part of the protocol that will also cover, amongst other things, witness statements and managing third parties.

As part on the implementation, Cumbria Constabulary are holding (will have already been held by the time you read this) a one-day seminar on the topic at the Keswick Mountain Rescue base on 25 September 2010. The training day is designed for an audience of LDSAMRA leaders, deputy leaders and key personnel who may be first on scene. Senior representatives from Cumbria Constabulary will also be attending the seminar. The plan will be to cascade the training down to as many team members as possible in the months following the seminar.

SCOTTY AND THE WESTERN BELLE

Earlier this summer Ullswater Steamers kindly donated a charter on Raven to **Patterdale MRT**. The evening was a complete sell-out and a superb fundraising event and it wasn't long before team members were able to show their appreciation by providing safety cover for the launch of the company's latest steamer 'Western Belle'. On 12 July Patrick Scotty, manned by Dave Wattie, Gillian Minich, Sean Duffy and Simon Woodrow, had a 2.30am start on a still and bright summer's night. Simon was collected from the Outward Bound jetty as the main road had been closed overnight to allow the arrival of Western Belle by road. Simon



explains, 'We arrived at Falling Rocks as the first glimmer of daylight had appeared. The road was full of low-loading vehicles, a large crane and our first view of Western Belle, sitting on a low-loader. The first impression was that it appeared a small craft for all the effort involved in the launch. As we got closer it was apparent she only looked small because the crane was a huge piece of machinery. We could not have had a better day – as light broke there was virtually no wind and the lake was calm. The crane lifted Western Belle effortlessly into the lake and we were able to help a little with this process. Within a short time she was tethered alongside 'Lady Dorothy', Ullswater Steamers smallest boat. She was then towed along the lake to a dry slipway at Park Foot where she will be refitted prior to her official launch.' Patrick Scotty's role was primarily to provide safety cover for all involved in this complex operation. Simon adds, 'I felt the Patterdale team was playing a part in contributing to the history of the Ullswater Valley. I'm sure Western Belle will cruise up and down the lake for many years to come. As a new member of the team it demonstrated to me that the Ullswater lake community co-operate and work well together for the benefit of the local population and visitors alike.'

MID PENNINE

STUART DAVIDSON GETS 25 YEAR LONG SERVICE AWARD

Bowland Pennine MRT member Stuart Davidson was lost for words when surprised by Peter Bell MREW President wielding his 25 year



STUART DAVIDSON RECEIVES HIS LONG SERVICE AWARD FROM PETER BELL

Long Service certificate. Stuart, from Blackburn, was half way through his team briefing when team chairman Tim Cox interrupted him and introduced Peter, along with Miles Jessop the owner of The Scafell Hotel in Rothwaite Borrowdale, sponsors of the annual Borrowdale Fell Race. Every year a contingent of the team marshal over three hundred fell runners over the 18 mile course which takes in England's highest peak Scafell Pike. Team trainee members get first hand experience of radio work, control management and casualty care.



CASUALTIES AND RESCUERS MEET AGAIN, SAFE AND WARM IN THE PUB

The four men involved in February's dramatic avalanche rescue (reported in Issue 32 April) returned to Patterdale earlier in the summer for a reunion with some of those involved in their rescue. The two main casualties, Caed Parker, 22, and Stuart Nelson, 21, both of Redcar, Teesside, were swept about 750 feet from Pinnacle Ridge on St Sunday Crag and sustained serious multiple injuries in their fall. Both are recovering well although still suffering some of the effects of their accident.

The group met in July at team member Aily Howard-Carter's hostelry in the valley, The White Lion Inn, and several members of the team joined them for a chat and a chance to meet properly in much warmer, safer and relaxing circumstances than their first meeting back in February. 'This rescue was high profile in the media and a tough one for several of our members, especially those who had only just completed their training, said Martin Cotterell, Team Leader. 'Caed and Stuart were well-equipped and experienced but still had an accident; their rescue is exactly what the team trains for – we're just relieved they've made such good recoveries from their injuries.'



PHOTO: ANDY MCALEA

was given to set up a new region in the far South West of England and the new region of PENMaCRA held its inaugural general meeting on 28 June. Reps from the eight member teams, together with Devon & Cornwall Police as an Associate Member, approved a constitution and elected their first set of officers. The constitution has been created to ensure power remains in the hands of the member teams, with only the team reps having a vote.

Following the formal business, some time was spent looking at what member teams felt the priorities of the new region should be. Bulk buying schemes, regional training and seminars and regional forums were amongst the most popular ideas and will be taken forward.



Andy Brelsford, of Cornwall SRT, who will chair the new region, said, 'Given that this new region has a much smaller and more defined geographical area, covering Cornwall, Devon and part of Somerset (west of the River Parrett) it should be possible to engage more effectively with other emergency services and our local resilience forums. 'We're now in the process of setting up sub groups along the national themes and look forward to playing a full and constructive role in mountain rescue in England and Wales.'

The eight teams who make up PenMaCRA are: Cornwall SRT, Dartmoor SRT (Ashburton), Dartmoor SRT (Okehampton), Dartmoor SRT (Plymouth), Dartmoor SRT (Tavistock), Devon CRO, Exmoor SRT and SARDA. The officers are: Chairman – Andy Brelsford (CSRT), Secretary – Nicki Lyons (SARDA), Treasurer – Dave Shorthouse (DSRT Okehampton), MR Rep – Roger King (DCRO).

NORTH EAST

NEW 4X4 VEHICLE FOR TEAM

Northumberland National Park MRT has put into frontline service its brand new and long awaited Land Rover 130 ambulance, customised to a specification devised by team members. The vehicle cost in excess of £62,000 and was purchased through Lakeland Land Rover (Torver), modified by Crake International (Ulverston) and overseen by their Special Vehicles

The field hospital set up by the team on the finish field is usually inundated with numerous scrapes, grazes, lacerations, dislocations and associated injuries. An excellent training opportunity. This year's event – held on the first Saturday in August – took an unexpected turn towards the end of the day. A single runner was unaccounted for when bibs and tags were being counted up by the event organisers. Whilst plans were being made for a major search operation, a call to the runners home found him safe and well. His initial embarrassment at failing to register his premature retirement from the race with the organisers was compounded when told that his wife – who had accompanied him to Borrowdale earlier in the day – was still on the event field awaiting the return of the lonesome runner!!! No knowledge of their current marital status is available.

EAST LANCASHIRE'S MARK BENEVOLENT FUND OFFERS CASH BOOST TO TEAMS IN THEIR AREA

Three Lancashire teams were celebrating in August, with the news that a £40,000 donation was coming to each of them, thanks to the East Lancashire Province of Mark Master Masons, a subsidiary order, who were giving out the cash to celebrate their 100th anniversary. The money will go towards new Land Rover vehicles for **Bolton, Rossendale and Oldham MRT**.

Bolton team leader Garry Rhodes said, 'The donation from the Freemasons is the sort of boost we needed to replace our vehicles – it's such a considerable amount of money and it's gone a long way.'

Over in Rossendale, team leader Andy Simpson said, 'This cash has brought our vehicle replacement schedule forward by at least two years, enabling us to replace our aging ambulance with a brand new one.'

George Davis, secretary of the East Lancashire Mark Benevolent Fund, said, 'We considered how we could help East Lancashire, and we all live in rural areas, so the mountain rescue was very prominent.'

PEAK DISTRICT

KINDER TEAM OPEN NEW BASE

After years of fundraising, **Kinder MRT** has finally managed to extend and refurbish their base, in the car park of The George Hotel in Hayfield. Work was accomplished with much help from local businesses who sponsored some of the equipment, and many team members worked long hours to see the project through to fruition. Thanks go to Steve and Gill Nagy, who run The George, for their support over the years. Also to Marston's Brewery for their continued support and generosity. The base will be officially opened in October by Ted Burton OBE.

PENINSULA

PENINSULA MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE ASSOCIATION FORMED

At the Mountain Rescue meeting in May, approval

Ordnance Survey mapping update by Ewan Thomas

For several years, Mountain Rescue has benefited from free use of the 1:25,000 scale mapping and, through our collaboration with Mapyx, every member of every team is able to use the mapping at zero cost.

1:25,000 scale mapping is probably the most appropriate scale for general MR activities, though there are occasions when perhaps 1:50,000 or 1:10,000 would be more appropriate. In extreme circumstances (such as house by house searches in flood environments) it might even be useful to have access to even larger scale mapping.

Recently, Mark Lewis, Peter Howells and I, supported by Mapyx Chairman Steve Wood, met the OS Director General and its board to make a pitch for free access to digital mapping at various scales. This followed up on preparatory work undertaken by Steve Wood and our treasurer. After presenting our justification for needing digital mapping at different scales, the OS said it was investigating a mechanism to combine our requirements into its local authority and emergency services contract (which is paid for centrally by government).

Ordnance Survey has now confirmed that this has been achieved and, as of next April, when the contract becomes live, we will have access to all scales of mapping at no cost to us.

Access to very costly materials at no cost to us is cause for celebration, and the efforts of all those involved from MR, the OS and Mapyx should be recognised. This is however the first step. In order for OS products to be viewable in a geo-referenced manner (with the grid references accurately shown as the mouse crosses the map) they have to be converted. This is not an issue for the 1:50,000 scale mapping as they are already converted to Quo format, but the larger scale mapping will require quite some effort to get them into a readable format. OS has kindly agreed to give us 'preview' access to its data so we can investigate with Mapyx how best to convert formats.

Until next April, teams will see no additional mapping for the Quo system. Please don't phone OS for any maps as they will have to decline your request. We will work with Mapyx to ensure the 1:50,000 is released to MR teams as soon as possible after the contract starts in April. We should have an idea by then of how the larger scale mapping might best be used in SARMAN and Quo and likely timescales for its conversion. The size of the dataset will also need us to think carefully about how we store and use the large scale mapping.

In the meantime, please continue to use the 1:25,000 scale mapping on Quo, SARMAN and MRMap. Over time, the scope of the program will be increased and the mapping available to us is also now set to increase.



Manager, Colin Todd. The team is very grateful to The Reece Foundation who provided a major financial contribution alongside the team's own fundraising activities. The interior of the vehicle was designed to hold a Bell stretcher without compromising the driver or navigator and it provides seating with direct access to the casualty for the attending medic. Other items include a three way crew/casualty heater, access to the roof rack via an independent ladder (available for emergency use off the vehicle), a remote control roof search light and pneumatic radio mast, run lock and the conventional ambulance warning systems and reflective markings. Richard Holmes said, 'There are many people in the team who were involved in various roles during the fundraising stages, design and purchase of this vehicle, so a very big 'thank you' to you all for your hard work!

SOUTH WALES

TWENTY YEARS' SERVICE

Back in September, 1990, a mere slip of a lad joined **Longtown MRT**. On his first exercise he was tasked with carrying the 'head end' of the Bell stretcher and upon leaving the other members standing, he was immediately accepted.



That mere slip of lad, Mark Nicholls, moved up the ranks to team leader, a position he has held for some years. During his term in office, the team has thrived, acquiring a base in Abergavenny, two new vehicles, a variety of new kit and a strong membership. Congratulations Mark on this achievement. Here's to the next twenty!

YORKSHIRE DALES

PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR CRO

The **Cave Rescue Organisation** is one of 103 UK volunteering groups to win this year's Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the MBE for volunteer groups. The prestigious National Honour recognises outstanding contributions made to local communities by groups voluntarily devoting their time for the benefit of others. It sets the national benchmark for excellence in volunteering, with the work of those awarded being judged of the highest standard.

CRO received the award for outstanding and exceptional service rescuing fell walkers, cavers, climbers and animals for the last 75 years. Formed in 1935, they are the oldest constituted cave rescue team in the UK, saving lives above and below ground in the Yorkshire Dales.

Winners of this year's award were selected from 341 groups nominated by members of the public who have been helped personally or witnessed the benefits of a group's work in their community.

The team will receive a certificate signed by the Queen and an exclusive commemorative crystal, presented by Her Majesty's representative in North Yorkshire, at a special ceremony. The group also received an invitation for representatives to attend a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in the summer.

Speaking of their success, Jack Pickup, CRO Chairman said, 'We are extremely honoured and proud to accept this prestigious award in recognition of our long-standing and dedicated service to the community. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all the volunteers past and present who make up our team, plus everyone who has supported us over the past 75 years.'

Award committee chairman and former broadcast



journalist Martyn Lewis CBE said, 'Outstanding volunteer groups across the UK all too often go without recognition for the truly amazing work they do, despite the vital part they play in helping bind our communities together. It's a great pleasure to celebrate the efforts of the Cave Rescue Organisation with The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service and help raise awareness of all they do for the benefit of others.'

More than 850 groups around the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man have now won the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, over the eight years since it was created by Her Majesty to mark the occasion of her Golden Jubilee in 2002. For details of all this year's award winners, and information on how to nominate a group, visit www.direct.gov.uk/thequeensawardforvoluntaryservice, where a nomination form can be downloaded.

ALSAR UPDATE



● ALSAR units have had a busy few months, so it was impressive that 65 searchers from ten different counties came together for a vulnerable missing search in Surrey. What is more remarkable is that none of the searchers were locals, as Surrey does not currently have an operational ALSAR unit. The search was managed by ALSAR vice chairman and Sussex SAR search controller Steve 'Scoobie' Bavin,



▲ ALSAR MUSTER, SURREY

and ALSAR secretary and Isis search controller Jennie Webster. This huge search effort came about in response to a request for support from Sussex Search and Rescue. Sadly, the misper was found deceased, late in the day but the search demonstrated how consistent training practices, and processes, allowed people from all over the country, many meeting for the first time, to work together smoothly and efficiently.

In a letter of thanks, sent on behalf of Surrey Police, Detective Chief Superintendent Helen Collins said, 'Your willingness to assist in searches outside of your own counties was gratefully received. Without your assistance the searches of the area would have taken significantly longer to complete, and would have delayed the finding of the misper quite considerably. These delays would have added to the anguish already being felt by his family and friends due to the uncertainty of his whereabouts and condition.'

A Surrey search and rescue team is currently being set up, with the sponsorship of Sussex search and rescue.

● Adrian Edwards, ALSAR chairman, has given a presentation to the Northern Ireland Mountain Rescue Coordinating Committee. Whilst there, he also took the opportunity to visit the Community Rescue Service, who are hoping to join ALSAR. This was Adrian's second attempt to reach Northern Ireland, as his first trip was cancelled due to the ash cloud. During the visit, he also assisted in a callout involving both the Community Rescue Service and mountain rescue.

● ALSAR is delighted to welcome Isis Search and Rescue as a full member. Isis SAR, which provides search and rescue throughout Oxfordshire, was recently assessed by a panel made up from various ALSAR member units. They work alongside SEBEV (Berkshire Search and Rescue) and Buckingham Search and Rescue supporting Thames Valley Police with vulnerable missing person searches.

European Cave Rescue Meeting, Austria

by Peter Allright British Cave Rescue



CORNELIA GRUBER AND ING. HELMUT OBERMAIR FROM AUSTRIAN CAVE RESCUE TOGETHER WITH ME AND WILLIAM LUMB

A European cave rescue meeting was held in Saalfelden, Austria between 14 and 16 May 2010. British Cave Rescue was represented by Dr William Lumb (BCRC Medical Officer and Swaledale MRT) and Pete Allwright (BCRC Secretary and CRO).

The flight out was uneventful other than the queues at Frankfurt Airport and we were collected immediately on arrival at Salzburg for the one hour drive to the conference venue. There was a warm welcome on arrival as, together with the Hungarian representative Dr Peter Temesvari, we were the first to arrive. Other representatives arrived later that afternoon or evening having driven varying distances.

The formal conference began early on Saturday with the theme being 'Medical Treatment Inside Caves'. Presentations were made by delegates from various countries represented describing the treatment they provided and the problems incurred. To summarise some of the presentations:

● Dr Wolfgang Farkas opened for Austria; here medical emergencies are considered as not treatable. Further, for injuries incurred, they put no medication onto open wounds, nor do they reduce dislocations. For Austrian teams, the vacuum mattress is their 'gold standard' in patient handling.

● The Romanian representative, Dr Adrian Borcea explained that only doctors are allowed to provide medical aid outside of first aid procedures. He described the training system to entice medical students into the mountain and cave rescue world.

A camp is held each August, where attendees are trained in the additional techniques they would require when called out.

● In Croatia, Dinko Novosel reported team members receive some 80 hours of medical training as recommended by IKAR. They have some very deep caves and it was reported they are now seeing a significant increase in incidents and about half of these are proving to be serious. The Croatian cave rescue teams use the Little Dragon.

● Dr Ulrich Nägeli and Thierry Boillat described how Spélé-Secours Swiss operated in eight regions and have to contend with three languages (German, French and Italian). Their medical equipment is concentrated in three bases and includes general and doctor level kits. They use thermo-plastic splinting when necessary and, in their experience, this requires working quickly during the process. The chemicals involved seemed to have a long shelf life. Cave rescue members are allowed to administer morphine if they are fully trained.

● Representing German cave rescue, Stefan Allich explained how they operated in three regions, where there are a mix of legislation applying. All team members hold a basic first aid certificate, which can be furthered over a weekend involving some sixteen hours of training. The next step is an advanced certificate requiring some 80 hours of training.

● Dr William Lumb described the training used in the UK and overviewed the interactive training DVD offered by NESRA. He reviewed a number of the more serious rescues carried out in the UK and the medical interventions undertaken.

● Dr Peter Temesvari outlined the situation in Hungary. He said the cave rescue service there had problems in recruiting doctors, with only three or four being available nationally. He cited the difficulty in retaining their services over time. The teams use the KED evacuation stretcher together with a vacuum mattress. Tympanic temperature measurements are preferred and opiate analgesia can be administered by trained rescuers.

He explained the bubble wrap insulation method from Norway – a specially engineered use of the technology that the Hungarian teams find quite effective.

● Christian Dodelin and Eric Zipper described the present situation in France. They are also suffering a problem recruiting doctors. Team members are not normally allowed to administer opiate analgesia, which requires a doctor or nurse presence.

During the presentations there was some debate. For example, in Romania, having trained the students in mountain and cave rescue techniques, it was queried how often the graduates then went underground. Here in the UK we would have grave concerns since we would have to dedicate significant resources to supporting personnel unfamiliar with an underground environment.

There was a significant interest in the Little Dragon. A number of the teams present expressed an interest in buying it when the next production run occurs. Negotiations after the conference resulted in just such a production run being planned.

Overall an excellent weekend, due in no small part to the effort of the organisers. Much was learnt with more to come, as two further events are planned for next year:

● The Cave Rescue Commission conference in Bulgaria 8-15 May 2011. The second circular for this has been circulated – if you want a copy contact secretary@caverescue.org.uk.

● A follow up medical meeting on the Croatian Dalmatian coast end of September next has also been pencilled in.

As mentioned, the flight out was uneventful. The same could not be said for the return. On arrival at Salzburg airport, Dr Lumb found that Manchester Airport was closed due to the ash volcanic ash cloud. We contacted the airline and the representative booked our flights back to the UK. This was the flight to Frankfurt and the onward section to Manchester. He also booked seats on the flight to Heathrow as a precaution. On arrival at Frankfurt it was confirmed Manchester remained closed. At the desk for the Heathrow flight, we checked and indeed had possibly the last two seats – meanwhile behind us a queue of over 40 stood-by in hope. So we arrived at Heathrow. Okay, not Manchester, but we were in the UK and able to make our way home the day after.

Distinguished Service Award for Paul Horder

Paul Horder received his DSA from the MREW Chairman, David Allan, at the conference in Dublin, in September. The 'audience' heard that Paul has served mountain rescue at all levels for many years, first with Cockerthorpe MRT before moving to Keswick MRT, where he continues to be actively involved. He has filled the roles of secretary, deputy team leader and archivist whilst continuing to turn out for incidents. At regional level he took on the role of secretary for LDSAMRA and proved to be both wise council and hard working for several years.

At national level Paul made a major contribution to discussions and decisions at management meetings. In the early years of the development of GPS tracking he provided valuable information. Some will recall the ground breaking occasion at a team leaders' meeting in Preston when Paul went walkabout and we watched his progress with an element of astonishment. He also represented MREW at IKAR for a number of years and presented his GPS work to an IKAR meeting: the first UK presentation there. His depth of knowledge of mountain rescue at all levels has placed him in a unique position to give valuable advice on endless occasions.



Technical Rescue Training Canada

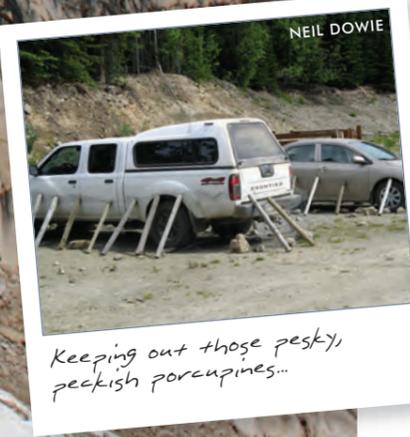


PHOTOS: MAIN SHOT: RICHARD GALE. INSET: PAUL CARTER



by Steve Hepburn
Keswick MRT

As you may already be aware from the article written by Mark Hodgson in the July edition of MR mag, ten Keswick team members were to travel to Canada in early July to attend a seven day advanced technical rope rescue course run by Kirk Mauthner. Prior to the course one team member due to attend was unfortunately injured whilst climbing and his place was offered to our neighbouring team, Cockermouth, who quickly accepted the spare place!



NEIL DOWIE
Keeping out those pesky, peckish porcupines...

The course took place in the Bugaboo Mountains, based at the Conrad Kain Hut – at an elevation of around 2250m, with a two hour walk-in, and approximately 800m of ascent from the road head up some steep, rough terrain, one ladder and a grizzly bear. All our equipment for the course, including sleeping bags, personal clothes and food, had to be carried in and all rubbish carried out – enough for potentially nine days. This was to be impossible for most of us to do in one go. Fortunately for us, Kirk managed to get some kit and food flown in by helicopter – a massive relief for all of us, as some of us were not looking forward to this particular moment!

The objectives of the course were:

- To become more confident, slicker and safer
- To improve current practices and the speed with which we carry out rigging
- To be able to rig on any crag in any conditions
- To improve team work and communications in rigging situations
- To pass on what we learned to the rest of the team back home and others

The aim of the above being combined to result in the best possible care for the casualty, with team members working together to provide the safest environment possible for the casualty and team members in rigging situations.

We met with Kirk Mauthner en route, at Radium Hot Springs at 7.00am after a two hour drive from Canmore, taking in the stunning scenery and wildlife consisting of bears and coyotes. We then followed Kirk into the Bugaboos National Park and on to the road head where we made sure the cars were securely wrapped in chicken wire so the porcupines couldn't eat the tyres and brake cables while we were away! We then carried our heavy, some lopsided, loads up to the hut ensuring we sung or talked loudly through the area of vegetation that had been uprooted by a large grizzly bear, hoping we were too scary to be considered for the next meal.

Once at the hut we grabbed a brew and quickly lay our sleeping bags on what was believed at the time to be the best place on the long sleeping platforms, ie. a corner, hopefully far enough away from any snoring beasts.

After spending a few days in the Canmore area (near Calgary), where the temperature averaged around 30 degrees celsius, upon our arrival at the hut the temperature hovered around 4 degrees celsius and looked like snow... which it duly did.



PAUL CARTER

So, on with the salopettes and out for our first training session. Working not far from the hut our aim was to reacquaint ourselves with the rigging techniques we'd learned from previous courses and had been practicing for the last six months.

As many people will be familiar with, the basis for the systems we use in a rope rescue situation is to have two independent belays, one for a main line and one for safety. This follows though in any crag work we undertake, whether it be a simple pick off or a more complex high line or guiding line. What we worked on in the first instance was to set up two separate scenarios of a pick off, consisting of an uninjured crag fast casualty being dealt with by one rescuer and basically repeated the process, rotating positions as many times as possible.

During the next few days we were subjected to low temperatures, blizzards and poor visibility. These conditions emphasised the need for clear communications, speed and careful team structure. A team leader was selected for each situation to oversee and allocate roles to each team member such as attendant, main line operator, edge person etc. We all had an opportunity to gain experience in each of these roles and switching between them in itself was incredibly valuable as this improved our efficiency no end.

Upon realising it was hard to keep track of our equipment, as the snow was burying it before we could pack it away, we decided it was time for a spot of theory... inside... with tea! At this point Kirk covered the theory behind the rigging systems we were using already and introduced us to techniques we had not seen before, many of which would prove to be very useful and appropriate to our working environment on crag rescue at home.

Sleet and rain followed the snow and eventually gave way to sunshine and perfect alpine days which, during the second half of the course, enabled us to do a huge amount of work on the bigger crags in the area. It was the proximity and sheer size of these crags that allowed us to carry out ten to fifteen pitches of lowering, simulating rescue situations on each one, some days ending in a guiding line set up to move a stretcher, casualty and attendant over undulating ground.

The guiding line system uses a tensioned line, a main line and a safety and is most useful in a situation where the ground covered varies so much it is not possible to carry a stretcher over or undertake a straightforward crag lower. The main line and safety are used as normal to lower the stretchered casualty and attendant, both of whom are also attached to the tensioned line which runs from the top of the crag to the bottom. The lower end of the tensioned line has a pulley system attached to it which enables the tension to vary, slightly raising and lowering the stretcher and attendant so they can pass the difficult ground with ease.

In the final days of the course we basically repeated similar procedures with slight changes in each situation, ie. more quick pick offs and stretcher work using a pulley system

attached to the stretcher allowing it to be lowered vertically, then raised back into the horizontal by the attendant(s). On some occasions the lower was started with two attendants where it was necessary to manhandle the stretcher, and then having one attendant abseil off the stretcher as the angle of the crag changed – the lower attendant could then use his abseil rope as a back rope to guide the remaining attendant and casualty when this was required.

There is no doubt that having the chance to do this kind of training, where you are able to rotate positions and repeat the process, leaves the rescuer, in whatever task is required of them, feeling hugely confident, and able to do their job quickly and efficiently. Not only are technical skills and teamwork significantly improved, but the camaraderie involved, the gelling together of team members who naturally look after each other in any situation, combined with the concentrated learning environment was an experience I would recommend to anyone.



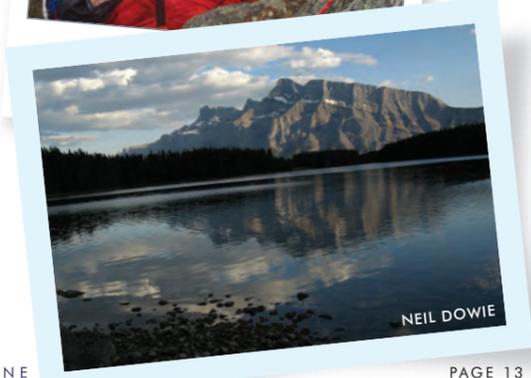
ELLY WHITEFORD



PAUL CARTER



PAUL CARTER



NEIL DOWIE



LLANBERIS VEHICLE WITH TRYFAN IN THE BACKGROUND PHOTO: JUDY WHITESIDE

A day of adventure for WellChild, Centrepoint and Mountain Rescue

by Chris Lloyd, Ogwen Valley MRO

The five teenage girls and one boy from Centrepoint, and their carers, drove down from Durham on the Thursday arriving at Wolverhampton's outdoor pursuit centre, The Towers, Capel Curig, in time for supper. Team members entertained them with a briefing on mountain rescue and the day ahead before going out into the grounds for some via ferrata in the dark. Suddenly, this small group of tired and bored teenagers were coming to life and helping each other over obstacles!

On Friday morning the sun shone on Snowdonia. The Centrepoint group left The Towers in two mountain rescue Land Rovers for Bryn Poeth (Oggi base), in the shadow of Tryfan. After a tour of the base, and then getting kitted up, they were taken to Tryfan Bach (Little Tryfan) for a morning of rock climbing and abseiling. Later that morning they walked back to Oggi base with smiling faces, thrilled with their achievements. Again, the nervous and reserved soon changed face, enjoying the challenges and encouraging each other.

Meanwhile back at The Towers, the WellChild families, five from Merseyside and one from Birmingham, were gathering. The Towers has good facilities for letting disabled people enjoy some of the thrills of the outdoors. They also have very well motivated staff who excelled to make this a special day, not only for the disabled children but their siblings too. There were rope swings, zip wires and abseiling for all.

After lunch at The Towers, the convoy of WellChild vehicles was escorted by a mountain rescue Command vehicle to the Ogwen Valley. At the bottom of a long tarmac drive to a reservoir, they were handed over to NEWSAR who escorted them up to Ffynnon Llugwy. This reservoir nestles in a cwm below Carnedd Llewelyn and affords superb views across the valley to Tryfan.

At the road head all the children were able to take part in a search and rescue exercise given by the dogs of SARDA and members of Llanberis and NEWSAR teams. The North Wales Police helicopter came in to assist before landing on and everyone was able to get a close look at the helicopter. When the small press corps arrived, they were met with beaming smiles from all the families who were really enjoying their day in the sunshine in the mountains.

Meanwhile back at Oggi base, the Centrepoint group had just taken the last bites of their lunches when 'Callout! Call out! Injured walker somewhere in Cwm Idwal. We need everyone to help.'

They jumped into the two Land Rovers and sped down the valley. They were then loaded up with the stretcher, casualty bag, oxygen and Entonox cylinders, splints etc and off they went up onto the mountain. Fortunately, the casualty was found on time (because he was at the location he had been told to go to!) The Centrepoint youngsters could watch the whole process of examination, diagnosis and treatment of the casualty, the communication back to base and the planning for evacuation.

It was felt that, in the best interests of the casualty (and the stretcher bearers), that a helicopter might be a good idea. Within minutes, the big yellow Sea King from RAF Valley was hovering overhead having been guided in by a smoke flare held by one of the youngsters. The winchman came down the five metres of wire to the casualty, made his checks and both were winched aboard for a brief flight to Oggi base. The much windblown and deafened youngsters then walked off the mountain to the Land Rovers.

Almost on cue, the WellChild families and the Centrepoint group arrived together at base for a symbolic stretcher carry up the drive way. One of the disabled boys volunteered to be the casualty. His young brother helped the Centrepoint youngsters carry the stretcher up the hill to Oggi base

arriving to applause and cheers from the waiting adults.

The sun continued to shine. Tea and refreshments were served to about 100 people and the chairman of OVMRO, Tim Radford, presented all the children and youngsters with certificates of achievement and goody bags.

Parked behind Oggi base beyond a boulder strewn piece of boggy ground was 22 Squadron's Sea King helicopter. Members of OVMRO and NEWSAR ensured that everyone from the two charities was able to get up to the aircraft to have a look. Yes, heavy wheelchairs were carried and lifted into the aircraft, much to the delight of the children and their parents.

By about 6.00pm, the day had to draw to a close but smiles still beamed from all those tired faces. The WellChild and Centrepoint people had long drives home. Team members would have to tidy up and prepare for the next 'call out'.

There were several memorable quotes from various corners. From a Mountain Rescue executive member, 'That will be a hard act to follow for next year.' And from the Centrepoint girls, 'When I get home I'm going to do a sponsored walk for you and the dogs,' 'I'll give you my dole money to help out,' 'This has been the best day of my life'... and 'I don't want to go home.'

The selfless caring ethos of mountain rescue excelled that day with all team members



Rigging the wheelchair ready for abseil



Tackling the climbing wall...



PHOTOS: JUDY WHITESIDE AND MIKE FRANCE

giving their best to put smiles on the faces of the disadvantaged. And by achieving that, they were able to put smiles on their own faces too. In abundance.

Initially, members of OVMRO felt it a privilege to be selected to host the 2010 event. Our minds wavered when we realised we had a totally blank canvas to fill. Gradually, and with a lot of hard work from a few dedicated team members, the picture took shape. Piece by piece the jigsaw revealed the potential for a special day. Finally that day arrived and the last few pieces slotted into place: the MRT members were on time, the members of the two charities found the Ogwen valley, the catering team arrived, both helicopters were available and the sun shone. By the end of the day everyone was smiling and once again OVMRO felt it was a privilege to host this day.

Numerous people deserve a vote of thanks, too numerous to mention. Apart from all the teams mentioned, the staff of The Towers OEC, North Wales Police helicopter crew, the crew of 22 Squadron, Lin Naylor for the catering, North Wales Police and Gwasg Ffrancon for printing, Blizzard for the goody bags, Dwr Cymru for use of their reservoir access road, and many other local organisations to help the day happen.

NEWSAR's bit...

by Huw Birrell

We planned. Oh yes, we planned. We had meetings, meetings and a meeting as well. We timed the travelling from different parts of the event. Then we measured distances and wrote a stunning 'operational order' (I liked it, but then, as author, I would!)

The day arrived and at the right time, in the right place, we all turned up. This is going well... We held an on-scene final briefing and scrapped all the planning and winged it, which in

hindsight was a stroke of madness or genius, possibly both.

Then we were nervous. A mini bus arrived and we thought this is it. Wrong, it was an august body of representatives of Mountain Rescue. We had some plastic whistles for the kids, so we duly 'piped aboard' our 'elders'. Not to be outdone, Admiral France of the Derbyshire Navy got out (no resemblance to the uncle off 'Fools and Horses') and inspected the troops. Parade over with, we were now getting a bit more nervous and worried that mountains and handicapped children might not mix. Yet again we were so wrong.

The children and their families arrived and within twenty seconds mayhem ensued. They were so up for it. We started by giving them all NEWSAR shirts and our MR radios - for the day they were all team leaders and it just snowballed. What was heard on the radio that day would probably lose

us our licence and will probably never be repeated! In brilliant sunshine, the only good day that week, we demonstrated search and recovery, guided by our new team leaders and their families.

Next came the search dogs. How can we, as mere mortals - albeit dashing and handsome ones - compete with dogs? Sally Armond and her dog Spin were providing the action and Roland Layland the commentary. As the strike sequence was described, the dog struck from two miles (bigging you up there Sally - realistically about 250 yards) and set off like a rocket, all this was exactly textbook. And, of course, Geraint Strello had arranged for other dogs (and their handlers) to be present to be patted, stroked, and loved.

Then came the time to put volunteers in stretchers, bandage them, vacmat them, generally lark around and then, right on cue, the North Wales Police helicopter arrived to much excitement. We in MR work with helicopters all the time, we take it

for granted (especially in North Wales) that we can get an air asset on the strength of a phone call but, to most people, this is a once in a lifetime experience. My abiding memory of the day will be a young lad who has to have suction every ten minutes to breathe properly, and has his legs held straight by braces. He wanted to get to the helicopter under his own steam and it was up a 40 degree bank of heather and 200 yards from the road. Supported by Mum and his own nurse on each arm, he gritted his teeth and went for it. A thought went through my mind, we have done it, we have given them a great day. I was in tears and had to walk away, he is my hero.

Sgt Scott Gallagher and the crew of NW01 gave the guys a great time and



PHOTOS: MIKE FRANCE AND JUDY WHITESIDE



Centrepoint guide in the Sea King, with a little guidance, in turn, from Jed Stone



Winchman lands to pick up the 'casualty'



Fun and games on the hill...



...and then some more...

NEWSAR PHOTOS: GERALD DAVISON

WELLCHILD

One of Prince Harry's charities, WellChild is committed to helping sick children and their families throughout the UK as they deal with the consequences of serious illness and complex conditions, through a programme of care, support and research. WellChild Children's Nurses work with the children and their families to ensure that children with complex care needs can leave hospital and return home. They are vital in the prevention of frequent re-admissions. The WellChild Helping Hands scheme enlists the support of volunteers from companies and organisations up and down the country to tackle individual home development projects.

WellChild has also invested more than £20million in ground-breaking children's health projects, including providing funding for the development of the Neonatal Research Laboratory at Evelina Children's Hospital in London, the WellChild Pain Research Centre at Great Ormond Street Hospital, and the Children's Research Centre at Birmingham Children's Hospital. To find out more about WellChild, go to www.wellchild.org.uk

CENTREPOINT

Centrepoint was founded in 1969 by Ken Leech, vicar of St Anne's, Soho. Concerned about the number of young people sleeping rough in the West End of London, he and a group of local volunteers opened up the basement of the church as a temporary night shelter. Forty years on, the charity continues to work and campaign to give homeless young people a future. Every year they provide over 290,000 nights' accommodation to Britain's young homeless. They work directly with more than 800 young people each day. Since 1969 they have helped more than 73,000 young people, almost all between 16 and 25 years old. 'When we first meet them' explains their website, 'all are homeless or at serious risk of becoming homeless; many are on a downward spiral. Almost half say they have slept rough at some point in their lives.' To find out more about Centrepoint, go to www.centrepoint.org.uk

then a big yellow helicopter approached and out went smoke flares. Low flying and derring do followed. The kids were bursting with excitement. I was bursting with pride and the dogs were obviously bursting for a wee, sorry it peed on your helicopter Scott!

All adjourned to Oggi base where the hospitality was excellent: tea and sticky buns etc. I would say to any region thinking about holding this event, just do it! It's a truly wonderful experience. You see mountain rescue people at their best. We do the rescue stuff as a matter of course but this was where I saw the kindness and big hearts of the guys I work with - it was fantastic.

Thank you to all who helped, too many to list really, from MR troops, RAF, police, landowners and more besides. An also my son, Sam, who was a big help throughout and told all my secrets and generally took the **** out of me in front of all my mates in the great night in the Tyn Y Coed Hotel that followed. Great day. Great night. Great kids.



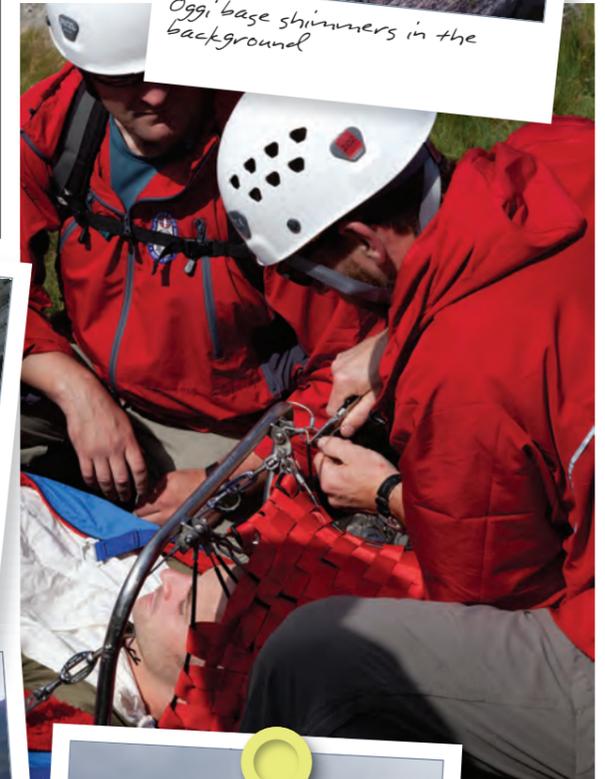
Getting to grips with Little Tryfan...



Perfect end to a perfect day...



Oggi base shimmers in the background



Look! No hands!...

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Understanding the British weather

by Geoff Monk
Mountain Weather Information Service

Coastal weather around the British Isles can often be very different, sometimes just a mile or two inland. It is the complicated coastline, especially the peninsulas and areas of semi-enclosed water such as the Irish Sea and Bristol Channel that impact local weather.

To those climbing on particularly west coastal cliffs, a very familiar pattern on a fairly sunny morning, with the wind blowing in off the sea, is to see cloud initially forming just above coastal headlands, but not nearby bays. Through the day, the cloud often disappears progressively inland, leaving the cliffs fine and sunny. There are several intertwined reasons for this – all due to sea breezes. Cloud first forms on headlands as thermals preferentially start where sun facing slopes (particularly rocks) are warmed by the early sun. The warmed air is a little less dense than the surrounding air, and tends to rise (and is quickly found by soaring birds). As the air rises, typically fairly humid early morning air soon saturates, and trains of low cloud start to form, these moving inland with the wind.

Unheated air sitting over the nearby sea then begins to make a bee-line toward the sun-heated cliffs, is then itself warmed, and becomes the next rising thermal. The process repeats itself. But a second consequence is that, where there is a series of bays and headlands, air from neighbouring bays converges on the intervening headlands. Leaving that aside for the next paragraph, as a typical day progresses, the land warms, the

individual headland effect diminishes, but the sea air still moves inland, replacing the less dense heated air to, on some days, a distance of 40 or 50 miles inland.

Lets look at a real example – Devon and Cornwall – when a gentle wind blows from the south west (more or less along the spine of the peninsula). Initially every little headland will have its thermals, and cloud may form. Gradually coastal cloud is restricted to the more major coastal headlands (where the air significantly converges), until into the afternoon, the south west peninsula acts as one headland. Unbroken sunshine may well result on the beaches and cliffs, whilst along the spine of the peninsula it is cloudy and, should it be a day on which showers form, one shower after another will take the same track. Now the interesting case.

The Boscastle storm occurred due to converging sea breezes – but it's on the coast! Suppose the wind isn't quite blowing along the peninsula, but is a little more southerly. Quite simply, the developing cloud and shower line lies closer to the north Cornish and Devon coast (technically, because the progress of the sea breeze inland is impeded by the general wind direction, but near the south coast is aided by the wind). Thus, the line of showers – or, on the day of the storm, thunderstorms – lies very close to the coast. Interestingly, once formed, the shower line can penetrate hundreds of miles. There was a case with local flooding in Oxford due to a succession of heavy thundery showers – their origin, thermals near Land's End! The effects are often mirrored on other major peninsulas. So the moral is, if you are climbing on a major peninsula in summer, for most sunshine and lowest

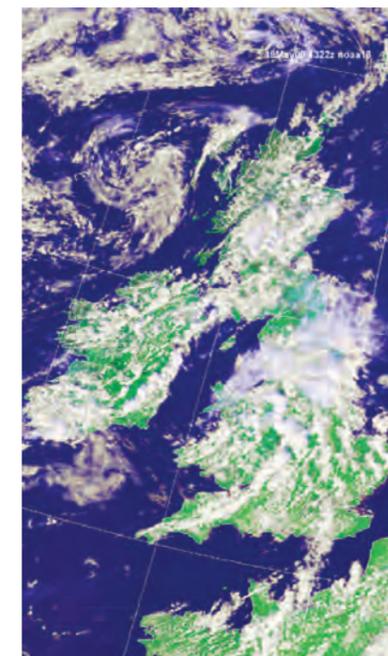
threat of rain, keep to the coast where the wind is more

likely to be coming in off the sea. Even in Scotland, you can sometimes see cloud (or shower) lines emanating from major bays or peninsulas, but the Scottish topography is so complicated that the cloud lines are often temporary and rarely extend far inland.

In passing, the opposite can happen in winter, when we get what is called 'Lake Effect' convection. Take the Irish Sea. Winds say blowing from the north or north west undergo convergence as cold air streams out of major bays on the Irish coast, and particularly the North Channel. Showers at this time of the year tend to form over the warmer sea rather than the land, and resulting shower lines can often give almost persistent rain (or hail or snow) on some coastal areas of Wales and south west England.

There's been a couple of occasions when major roads in south west England have been blocked by localised heavy snow – due entirely to showers developing south all the way from the North Channel.

Frustratingly, arrival on coastal cliffs from an inland location can be greeted by strong winds or on occasion by damp rock due to sea fog. Particularly in the winter, fairly strong winds over the sea (on occasion) near gale, may make only a few miles progress inland and then appear to fall calm. In fact, a climb up a local hill will reveal where the wind has gone – a couple of hundred metres (sometimes less) above the ground. On these occasions, the forecast chart, with the isobars, will reveal that, in fact, there are likely to be windy conditions. More difficult to forecast is local strengthening as



SATELLITE PICTURE SHOWING CLOUD LINES STARTING AT MANY COASTAL HEADLANDS, AND PARTICULARLY ON THE MAJOR PENINSULAS. HEAVY SHOWERS DEVELOPED WIDELY. NOTICE THAT AS IS OFTEN THE CASE, THERE ARE COMPLICATIONS, WITH MORE EXTENSIVE CLOUD OVER N ENGLAND AND SW IRELAND, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY DAMPENING THE COASTAL EFFECTS. (COURTESY BERNARD BURTON, WOKINGHAM WEATHER)

winds blow around major coastal headlands, again mainly in the winter. Those sailing offshore are very aware of stronger winds near headlands when the wind is blowing approximately along the coast.

Finally, sea fog can be difficult to anticipate. Often it forms overnight, and is difficult to spot on satellite images until after dawn. It can easily lift into very low cloud that can give very fine, but still damping drizzle. However, in almost still air, as greeted a group from Edinburgh University climbing The Old Man of Hoy, it can result in amazing conditions, with the rock more or less dry.

This article first appeared in The AMI Magazine and is the first in a proposed series of articles about the Great British Weather and how to read it. For more information about MWIS go to www.mwis.org.uk



A SHALLOW LAYER OF SEA FOG AS SEEN FROM THE OLD MAN OF HOY, JANUARY 2008. (COURTESY BECKY STEADHAM)

Lost dogs

*The dog will usually return to the place it was last seen and stay there

by John Coombs

Mountain and cave rescue teams are sometimes asked to search for lost dogs and to rescue those who are injured or stranded. A trawl through the annals of most teams will reveal the occasional 'dog story' usually involving a SARDA handler or vet as the 'experts'. It is usually done, using MR skills, by 'the seat of the pants' method! Unfortunately, there are no sets of detailed statistics that can be analysed to find patterns of incidents or lost dog behaviour.

For missing dogs in rural and mountain areas, my own experience and anecdotes from colleagues who know dogs – a simple common pattern emerges. The dog will usually return to the place it was last seen and stay near there for some time.

One explanation for this is that, in unfamiliar territory, a dog's instinct is to get back to its pack – home is not a 'place' to a dog – but a set of scents from its family.

Whenever any dog is taken out it thinks it is going hunting as a member of a family group and, if separated from the others, believes its survival depends on getting back to them.

There are some sad parallels in the well

(Most dog handlers have been there – I know I have!) The path the canine hunter takes depends on the 'prey' animal it is chasing, its primary sense is smell – so although the sight of fleeing prey is a trigger, the fresh scent trail is just as exciting.

Animals or birds that do not get caught, fly away, or retreat underground are the most likely to be pursued for long distances – deer and mountain hares are the most common. If you know their behaviour, it might be possible to guess where the dog went. Sometimes an errant dog will end up in a mine shaft or hole – springer spaniels seem particularly prone to this.

All dogs eventually give up if the pursuit is not successful. Either way, the tired hunter will then try to get back to the rest of the hunting group. If it can't hear or smell them, the now lost dog will follow its own trail back to a point where it can detect their scent. The canine hunter will almost always turn up 4-6 hours later at 'the place last seen' or, if it is within a mile or two, eventually at home.

Strangely, unless in well-known country, most do not follow their owner's track away from this place where they first rediscovered scent of their pack, and may remain close by for days or even weeks. Perhaps the first contact with familiar scent is enough to satisfy the dog's homing instincts.

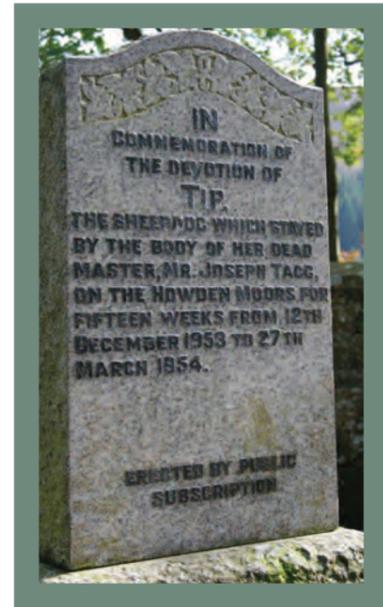
It could help to leave an item of clothing carrying the smell of its owner near to the place they lost the dog, to attract and 'hold' it there, so it can be picked up later.

After a day or two when hunger takes over from the need to be with the pack, dogs often make their way to the place their owner's car was parked, home along the familiar paths of regular walks or, if they can, join another family.

Sorry if this bursts the 'faithful canine friends' bubble! It seems to me that their behaviour is mostly to do with their individual drive to survive by belonging to a pack.

Still, that's exactly what I like about working dogs – they need us just as much as we need them!

Thanks to Trev Lawton, Ian Bunting and Tony Hood for their help, advice and experience.



known tales of Greyfriars Bobby or the sheepdog, Tip, who stayed next to her dead master's body on the Howden Moors until found, still waiting there, fifteen weeks later.

Our experience in the Peak District is that, if a dog gets separated from its owner, it is because it has become absorbed in a pursuit to the extent it has ignored attempts to call it back.

If you have any experiences or stories that can help to build up information on dog search or rescue please feed back to Mountain Rescue Magazine – editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk. We hope to build up a database and publish some case studies that will help teams and the owners of dogs in distress. The author is aware that one or two embarrassing anecdotes could surface as a response to this appeal. Any stories about lost SARDA dogs will be treated with the utmost confidence and actual names only mentioned in the pub...

Some ideas for finding lost dogs:

1. Leave an item of the owners clothing near to where the dog was lost.
2. Return to the 'place last seen' after 4-6 hours.
3. If the dog was hunting mountain hares or deer it could have gone a long way. Rabbits or rats will go to ground nearby. Ground nesting birds will entice a predator away from their nest.
4. Gamekeepers, and especially sheep farmers, are the real dog experts – they will know if their stock has been disturbed and about dangerous shafts and holes.
5. Dogs in familiar territory will return to a car parking spot or make their own way home.
6. SARDA teams can help to locate hidden dogs. Dog handlers and vets can be helpful in catching and treating wayward dogs.
7. If there is a chance the dog has been kidnapped, distribute posters and internet information with a reward that reflects the dogs value.
8. Some smaller breeds – particularly terriers, can get stuck in burrows – they might be found if another dog takes an interest in the hole, combined with the use of a drain inspection camera. Fortunately many reappear after a few days having starved, lost weight, and wriggled free.

Penny grades her fourth search dog with SARDA Lakes

Penny Kirby of Wasdale MRT successfully graded with Ollie at the SARDA Lakes Coniston training weekend in July, after nine days of assessment over four months – in every sort of weather and a large variety of terrain.



PENNY AND SEARCH DOG OLLIE

Ollie joined Penny's current Search Dog Pippi on the callout list, after a final day of four and a half hours of assessment in poor visibility, steep crags, huge boulder fields and deep wet bracken – everyone's favourite ground! He has shown himself to be a strong rangy dog, who can cover large areas of hillside, and maintain his performance for long periods. He will be a valuable asset to Lakes teams. There aren't many handlers in the UK who can boast to having successfully trained four search dogs in a mountain rescue career, and Penny's achievement is a major landmark.

From its outset in 1992, SARDA Lakes has maintained a system of continuous assessment of any search dog team, over a number of weekends, in a number of environments, producing search dogs which are both highly trained and reliable in the mountains. The demanding nature of the mountain assessment requires more of dog and handler than any other UK search dog assessment.

The Association has also focused on producing air scenting dogs for the mountain environment, rather than developing different standards of search dog for different landscapes. There is one grade – Search Dog – and it is expected that a dog team grading at that level will be proficient in working in a variety of environments – mountain, moorland, forestry, rural and winter, as well as being able to line search with other dogs.

The Association's reputation extends outside the UK – its training expertise is often requested by search dog associations in Norway and Iceland and Lakes handlers have recently been to Slovenia, Poland, Croatia, Korea, Eire and the USA to assist with training and assessing. It has also attended the IKAR Rescue Dog Seminar, where its presentation on free ranging search dogs was received with considerable enthusiasm and led to requests for opportunities to visit Lakes courses.

Search Dog Dynamite takes retirement

Dynamite, believed to be the longest-serving mountain rescue search dog in Cumbria, has retired – a veteran of hundreds of callouts. Handler David Watt's second search dog, she was the daughter of Search Dog Jack, who was once presented to the Queen. David has been a member of Kirkby Stephen MRT for over 30 years.

'Without going through all the annual reports, I can't say exactly how many searches Dynamite and I have done together. SARDA Lakes carries out over 50 each year (73 in 2009) and we've attended about half of these. That makes between 200 and 300 searches over her working life.

'In terms of usefulness, each dog is worth ten humans! Dynamite will range freely, and it doesn't matter whether it's pitch black. She has never failed me.'

David relates that Dynamite has had several finds during her career, once discovering a freezing schoolboy hiding under rhododendron bushes after he had absconded from an Eden school, in an area which had been previously searched by the police and school staff. The most memorable incident was finding two secretaries trapped under the debris of a collapsed building in Glasgow. More recently, Dynamite found a man who had taken his life in a dense forest. 'Clearly we could not alter the outcome, but at least the man's relatives could accept that the search was over. These incidents can go on for days and that's extremely stressful for everyone involved.'



JULIA BRADBURY WITH SEARCH DOG DYNAMITE AND DAVID

New to the Buff® collection of multifunctional headwear for autumn

Buff, world leader in tubular headwear, has always been known for its product innovation, and this season the brand takes product development one step further with the introduction of **Reversible Polar Buff**. More than just a tube, it's two tubes – so it's doubly good! The product combines two of the most well-loved Buff fabrics in a continuous tube and can be worn in over 30 different ways, making it the most versatile, chill-killing accessory on the market while offering fantastic value for money to the consumer. A two layer piece made using the Original Buff polyester microfibre sewn top and bottom to a cylindrical piece of Polartec 100 fleece, it's perfect for all kinds of outdoor and cold weather activities. The continuous double layered tube creates an air cushion, giving extra protection to maintain body temperature and prevent heat loss. RRP £24.

The **Wool Buff** is comfortable, seamless, multifunctional and made from 100% Merino wool – a must-have accessory for winter, it is stylish, warm and comfortable. This natural and highly technical fibre is well-known for its inherent odour resistance and natural microclimate, keeping the wearer cool when it's hot and warm when it is cold. And this season, new patterned styles extend the range. RRP £22.

The **Reversible Polar Headband Buff** is a two layer garment with the original polyester microfibre fabric sewn to a high loft Polartec thermal fleece. The headband protects the ears against the cold and is available in either matt or shiny fleece. RRP £21.

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PRIZE DRAW COMPETITION

We have five Dog Buffs to give away. All you have to do is pop your name and address details on an email to editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk – first five out of the hat win!



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(make and reg no, tyre size (including speed rating) and the terrain on which each vehicle is likely to be used.

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Any queries in relation to the above, please contact the Treasurer Penny Brockman via email – treasurer@mountain.rescue.org.uk or telephone 01633 254244 or mobile 07775 851737.

Or the Publicity Officer Andy Simpson via email – press@mountain.rescue.org.uk or telephone 0161 764 0999 or mobile 07836 717021.

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Supporting Mountain Rescue

The Longest Climb IN AID OF MOUNTAIN RESCUE delayed but not forgotten!



Some of you may remember many moons ago, two young men were attempting to set a new Guinness World Record in aid of mountain rescue by scaling a 12m wall 738 times each, in a race to become the first person to climb the height of Mount Everest on an artificial climbing wall. Some may even remember that the date of the attempt was 26 June 2010!

Tom Lancaster and

Jonny Briggs haven't yet attempted the climb. For various reasons they've had to push it back and push it back, firstly due to injury, then due to building works at the Westway Climbing centre in London the original venue for the climb, and then finally because, for reasons known only to themselves, the Westway decided they did not want to be a part of the record attempt, leaving then without a venue.

'But I can tell you,' writes Tom, 'that all of this is going to work out for the best in the end. We have a new venue, and what a venue it will be! I am extremely pleased to announce that The Longest Climb will now take place at The British Leisure Show in Windsor, March 11-13, where we will also be involved in other activities and challenges over the weekend - more details announced soon!

'We aim to raise £10,000 for mountain rescue, as well as our other two charities, Heart UK and Amnesty International. So far we've raised just under £1500. We're pushing ourselves to the limit on this one, and we hope people will recognise that. For more information or to donate, please go to thelongestclimb.net, or you can find us on facebook and twitter.'

Facebook fan count: 1155

Some of the stories that got you chatting last quarter (and a bit of a gripe from the Admin!)

...in September, a novel fundraising idea from the bride and groom in Whaley Bridge who generously asked their guests to donate to Buxton MRT rather than buy them presents, resulting in over £1100 to the team, after Gift Aid. Could this be the start of a trend? John Lewis might see a drop in toaster and towel sales but hey...

...then there was journalist in Cumbria who thought she'd make a hoax call to mountain rescue during what could safely be called one of the busiest periods in Lake District team history just to, er, 'test' the system. The 27-year-old was found guilty of two charges of sending false messages to cause annoyance or anxiety and was jailed for three months in September. Nuff said.

...Nick Owen posted news of Langdale Ambleside's book 'Light on the Fell' and film of the team's work, 'Between the Stones' launched to celebrate their 40th anniversary. Proceeds go to support the team so dig deep readers. Reviews on page 29.

...Alan Hinkes walked (and jogged a bit) round the 39 old 'county tops' in England to raise awareness of mountain rescue. One or two team members joined him at various points so good effort all round - thanks Alan!

...and then, oh dear, there were the Facebook fans who didn't take too kindly to my deleting their comments. It may well have made the thread 'meaningless' (to them) as they later retorted with a wry 'ha ha' (although the initial story remained on the page so I didn't quite get that) but, I'm sorry, name calling (and for that matter, expletives and poor grammar) on the Basecamp page just bug me. **JW**

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► for more Support News turn to page 29

A HADRIAN'S WALL ADVENTURE

Members of the Workop and District U3A Walking Group (University of the Third Age) set about walking the 84 mile Hadrian's Wall path in aid of mountain rescue in September, raising an estimated £1200 so far. Robert Fearn takes up the story...



HADRIAN'S SOLDIERS

Our 40 or so members generally meet for planned walks on the second Wednesday and fourth Friday of every month. Nine of us, along with one driver of a support vehicle, decided to tackle something a little stronger - the youngest lady being 60 and the oldest man 70 years old. They were Alan, Ann, Barbara, Bob, Catherine, Christine, Iris, Keith, Lynne and Susan. Planning began in February 2010 and it soon became clear the most economical way was to supply our own transport, to plan how and when cars (we had three) and luggage would be moved to the various locations, and to book our own B&B accommodation. Points along the path were noted where the support vehicle would be able to

meet us with refreshments, food, drinks, and any other requirements anyone may need. It was during this planning I began to call the group 'Hadrian's Soldiers'. There would be nine days of walking, with one day set aside for sightseeing at Roman Vindolanda and the surrounding area. On the 5 September our adventure began, as we travelled to Wallsend for a visit to Segedunum Roman fort, baths and museum, where there was a Roman. The following four days would take us to Newburn (11 miles), East Wallhouse (9 miles), Chollerford (11 miles), then on to Steel Rig (12 miles) - half way to our destination. The first day was warm and sunny and, specially for us, the Millennium Bridge raised on the

Newcastle waterfront. Along the route we saw salmon jumping the wier at Chollerford, and met ex-England footballer Jackie Charlton at Chesters Roman Fort. Friday was the sightseeing day, then on to Gilsland (9 miles), Walton (7 miles), Carlisle (11 miles), then to Burgh by Sands (7 miles), arriving at the official end of the Hadrian's Wall Path at Bowness on Solway (7 miles) on the 15 September. During this section we met a few bulls actually standing on the pathway, around which we carefully and quietly made a quick detour. We were also amazed and grateful for the number of honesty boxes we came across, filled with drinks, snacks and the money box. And let us not forget the barefoot walker, whose

wife insisted he carried a pair of flipflops for when they entered a shop or pub!! The scenery was amazing, amazing, amazing; the weather was reasonable, only one full day of rain, a couple of morning showers and a very windy day to finish. Everyone completed the walk safely, no serious injuries, but a few aching limbs and blisters. In places the terrain was easy walking, but with some very steep climbs and sometimes the descents were quite scary. Why did we choose to do it for mountain rescue? We felt that, as it was a challenge to us, we should do it for a good cause and mountain rescue was suggested. (We hoped, we wouldn't need you!!) It was a fantastic experience and achievement.



39 county summits 7 days

by Alan Hinkes



...and all in aid of Mountain Rescue

Topping out on the 39 traditional English County high points was a mini challenge I had been meaning to do for quite a few years. This year I got the chance when Casio Pro Trek sponsored the event so I could do it in record time and help mountain rescue. My idea was to create more awareness of Mountain Rescue England and Wales as a charity, and the varied work the teams do – not just mountain rescues – as well as raising money. And emphasising that all team members are not only dedicated, skilled professionals, but also volunteers. I have a lot of friends and acquaintances in mountain rescue teams and have been involved and helped in a few incidents over the years.

It's no secret I have always been up for a hill challenge – managing to bag all fourteen 8000m peaks in the Himalaya. But that is another story!

The traditional English Shire Counties have historical significance as far back as 1066, and even before in some instances. They were only changed or 'messed' up in 1973/4 boundary changes, though strong county ties remain with many people. Climbing the high point of each of the post-1974 current 'counties' would mean such delights as the highest point in Stockton, Hartlepool, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands, Wirral etc. It would mean only one high point in the Lake District, in what is now Cumbria. With the proper old counties there are three in the Lakes: Scafell Pike in Cumberland, Conistone Old Man in Lancashire, and Helvellyn in Westmorland.

The official launch day of my challenge was Friday 28 August in Northallerton, North Yorkshire, my home town (of which I was made an Honorary Citizen after climbing all fourteen 8000ers.)

Skoda supported the challenge with a red Yeti 4x4 and, that evening, along with a driver, I headed to the County of Northumberland ready to start the next morning with Cheviot. We arrived at Langleeford around 11.00pm. Luckily the gamekeeper knew me and it was okay to flip up the tents for a bivvy. It was a clear moonlit night and I nearly set off there and then, but decided I would have a kip and get an early start on the Saturday!

Sadly, on Saturday morning the top of Cheviot was socked in with hill fog. No dramas though as the route follows the fence to the top on Cheviot, with a nice sandstone flagstone path through the notorious summit bog to the trig point.

I jogged back down and set off for Mickle Fell, the highest in Yorkshire. This giant fell, not often climbed as it's on an MOD range and private estate is now in the current county of Durham. As a Yorkshire man I only accept this is for administrative purposes!

Mickle Fell is a long yomp and the weather had turned inclement, lashing, cold rain, the

wind chill on top was below freezing in August. Nothing new there then!

I had only been up Mickle Fell once before. It was a late autumn afternoon and on the descent in the dark I jogged into a sphagnum moss swamp, I was alone and nearly disappeared, sucked in and drowned in the morass.

This time I had Dave and Steve from Teesdale and Weardale MRT to keep me out of trouble. They also had a nice 110 to take us a bit higher up a track. Amazingly, even in the horizontal freezing rain, we actually saw two other people on the summit, (it was the Bank Holiday MOD open weekend) which has a large cairn and no trig pillar. On the descent, Dave and Steve took me over to the remains of a Stirling Bomber, before sheltering in the 110 from the rain.

Back down at the road it was only a few miles drive to Burnhope Seat the highest in County Durham. This is a straightforward walk up the Yad Moss ski tow, the only permanent tow in England, with the ubiquitous North



DAVE AND STEVE OF TEESDALE & WEARDALE MRT WITH ALAN AND THE BOMBER
PHOTOS: TEESDALE & WEARDALE MRT

Pennine black bog on the top protecting the OS trig pillar.

Things were looking good, three big ones knocked off on the first day and we drove down the A1 to bivvy in a hotel near Doncaster.

Sunday the weather started settling down as a high moved over the country, the first top was the highest in Lincolnshire, which is a trig pillar in a field. No CROW access to this one.

Silverhill Country Park was next and the highest in Nottinghamshire, which is a landscaped pit heap; it has good views from the top and pleasant woodland. Leicestershire is not too far along the M1, Bardon Hill also has good views, as well as a 'big hole' working quarry and transmitter masts.

Rutland was next and then the lowest high point, which is in Huntingdonshire known as Boring Field 83m. I arrived about 10.00pm to 'climb' this one in the dark. It's along a farm track and the highest point is probably a scramble up a railway embankment. Just to make sure, I borrowed a 1:25 000 OS Map from a local who was miffed when I informed him it was known as Boring Field. He was proud of the high point and said he liked the field and said it had nice views. It did seem a bit Nebraska cornfield-like in the moonlight, a real idiosyncratic, esoteric 'summit'.

Monday and the first high point was Norfolk. Beacon Hill near Cromer is a Roman Fort with great views and you can drive right to it.

Suffolk, Cambridge and Essex were next

and interesting in a lowland sort of way.

Dunstable Downs is the high point of Bedfordshire and a great viewpoint. I remember going there as a child. The National Trust have now built a visitor centre and car park there – all a bit urban really. We were on a roll and bagged Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire – the highest point in the Chilterns; up to Arbury Hill in Northamptonshire, a hill fort, and back down the M1 to Middlesex and Bushy Heath High Road where a set of traffic lights is the high point!

Tuesday was Kent, Surrey, Hampshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire and Oxfordshire.

Wednesday was Sussex, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall, Brown Willy on Bodmin Moor was a glorious evening walk with the sun setting in the sea.

Thursday started with Somerset and Gloucestershire before a sortie through Wales and the Brecons to meet James from Longtown MRT. With James's local knowledge I made the summit of Herefordshire, a point on Offas Dyke just as it was getting dark. A quick descent in the dark and a welcome sleep over at James's set me up for Friday. Worcestershire was first in the mist, then Warwickshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Cheshire, before a night in Hayfield.

Saturday I met Kinder team members for their local knowledge of the high point on Kinder – a spot in the black bog beyond the

trig pillar. Luckily the bog was still fairly dry from the summer and thanks to the lads I got there unscathed.

The last Lake District three remained and I had the Ace card to play.

It was the last run in the Skoda Yeti up the M6, through Borrowdale to the Honister Slate Mine at the top of Honister Pass. Here, at 4.00pm, I set off on the last three in a helicopter, courtesy of Honister Slate Mine – a supporter of mountain rescue. Scafell Pike, Conistone Old Man and finally Helvellyn for an end of the County Tops Challenge summit photo shoot. Here we met and picked up the Lakes National Park Chief and flew back to Honister.

It had been a hectic non stop eight days of navigating, driving, walking, talking to the media about mountain rescue, and hills large and small, culminating in a spectacular finale flight on the three Lakeland big ones. I would do it again, perhaps extend it to Wales and Scotland.

Thanks again to mountain rescue teams for all your great work in the hills and more. Also thanks to Casio Pro Trek (www.pro-trek.co.uk) and Honister Slate Mine (www.honister-slate-mine.co.uk) for all their support.

Alan Hinkes OBE is the first Briton to climb all 14 of the world's highest mountains – each over 8,000m high, where human survival rate is measured in hours. Only twelve people alive today have achieved this feat – more people have stood on the moon.

In addition to his climbing and mountain guiding work, Hinkes writes for magazines and lectures on his exploits. He is an accomplished cameraman (filming eleven documentaries) and photographer.

A keen environmentalist, he was awarded the OBE in the 2006 New Year's Honours and has also received the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Royal Institute of Navigation and the President's Award for Outstanding Voluntary Contribution to Water Aid. In addition, Hinkes is involved in charitable work for Water Aid, the Cystic Fibrosis Trust, Duke of Edinburgh's Award and Outward Bound. He also works closely with the British Mountaineering Council.



MEMBERS OF KINDER TEAM WITH ALAN COMING OFF KINDER SCOUT AND AT THE SUMMIT
PHOTOS: KINDER MRT

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Supporting Mountain Rescue REVIEWS

BASECAMP

Update from Neil Roden...

One of the great things about the Mountain Rescue Conference is that it is a great opportunity to meet old friends from teams around the country and talk through what is happening in different areas. This year was no exception and the one consistent theme was the increase in call outs every team is experiencing. It seems a lot of teams had done as many call outs by mid-September as they did in the whole of the previous year. That kind of increase makes huge demands on team members in terms of attending call outs, helping maintain equipment, training and, of course, fundraising.

I know if you are reading this you are either a team member or a supporter of mountain rescue. Please spread the word about the work mountain rescue teams do, not just on the mountains, hills and crags of England and Wales but also in urban areas assisting the police with searches for vulnerable missing people and with other emergencies like floods and train crashes. As we commonly say, we do so much more than mountains! If you can encourage anyone to join Basecamp please do so. There is information on the website or you can contact me direct at neilroden@tiscali.co.uk

Christmas is approaching and enrolling someone to Basecamp as a Christmas present is a great idea. It really does help make a difference.

Join Basecamp for just £24 per year for a single membership or £42 per couple. You'll be supporting mountain rescue teams across England and Wales – and, in return, you'll receive a supporter's badge, car sticker and, best bit of the lot, an annual subscription to Mountain Rescue Mag!

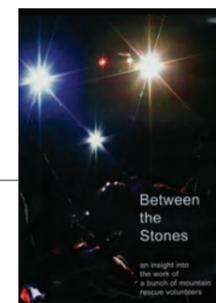
COMING UP... EGG AND SPOON ON SNOWDON

Ben Davenport, an outdoor instructor and a student at Keele University, has organised an Egg and Spoon Challenge up Snowdon for Saturday 9 October. The plan is that fourteen participants will make their way up the mountain in two groups, carrying their eggs and spoons before them. Ben stresses that this is a challenge, not a race, with the emphasis on getting to the top and how many times you drop the egg (using tally counters) so as not to rush people and risk accidents! The eggs will also be wooden to reduce impact and avoid the mess of real eggs splattered all the way to the summit! We hope to have a full report in the next issue.

BETWEEN THE STONES AN INSIGHT INTO THE WORK OF A BUNCH OF VOLUNTEERS

by Joy Grindrod

Reviewed by Judy Whiteside



My plan had been to pop up to Zeffirelli's Cinema in Ambleside for the premier of this film, in September but, as often happens, life got in the way and I didn't make it. Pity, I thought... wonder whether it'll be available on DVD... Well someone must have been listening because the following week the very DVD landed on my doormat with a request I review it for the mag. Result! (And thank you Joy for sending me a copy!)

So, this morning, when I really should have been working for a living, I settled down at the computer to watch a movie. (What is it that Ken Bruce says about graphic designers who work from home?) But I digress. This film, made by film maker and team member, Joy Grindrod, tells the story of two years in the life of Langdale Ambleside MRT – set beautifully to music by team member and musician, Mike Fearon. It's atmospheric, it's frank, it's professionally filmed and put together, it's got some cracking views of Langdale, lots of snow and torch-lit night, a bit of rain (!), plenty of doggie aah! factor – and it should probably be required viewing not just for the mountain rescue community (who will inevitably lap it up) but for every single person who ever put one foot in front of the other. And not just the walkers and climbers, who venture into the high hills, but the dog strollers and view-catchers – not to mention the tree-climbers (now I've got you intrigued...) – who amble the lower paths, never imagining they too could be 'at risk'.

'Between the Stones' takes you through a variety of rescues (I could list them all but I really think you should see for yourself!) starting out with the walkers, lost and benighted in snowy conditions below Crinkle Crags (I was wondering, they ask the incident controller, 'whether we should try walking uphill again.' 'No', comes the firm reply, 'don't go trying to find Crinkle Crags again.' I imagined the look which might have passed over that controller's face...)

Then there's the fallen climber, found on a ledge, on his stomach – to turn him over to examine and treat him would be to turn him into thin air (not an option!) but team members nevertheless manage to examine and make him comfortable, before attaching him to the stretcher (somehow magicked and secured in that very thin air) ready for extrication by the helicopter.

We see Ollie Benson, who provides much of the voice over through the film, take Border Collie Kitt from initial training, playing with squeaky toys and nervous about the forthcoming assessments, to successful grading as a search dog team whose pager goes off 'every other day on average.'

But the most moving piece must be Roger Pickup's reading of the letter from the family of Leo Pyle for whom the team searched and found, sadly a fatality. 'Thank you,' ends the letter, 'for giving him dignity in his death... for being his last companion. Your work magnifies the beauty of the hills. Thank you.'

Your work magnifies the beauty of the hills. Wow! Follow that! And I can't, except to say please do support the team by buying this DVD – it'd make a great Christmas prezzie and, at just £10 mail order including p&p, it's a snip. And all proceeds go to the team. Send your order and cheque to Langdale Ambleside MRT, Lowfold, Lake Road, Ambleside, LA22 0DN.



LIGHT ON THE FELL LANGDALE AMBLESIDE MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM: THE FIRST FORTY YEARS

Edited by Phil Taylor

Reviewed by Judy Whiteside

...and then there's the book... (I'll do some work in a minute, honest Ken! [See earlier comment, above]). 'Light on the Fell' is a hard-bound glossy book, published to celebrate the team's fortieth anniversary. It takes you from the early days of grainy black and white photography, minimal training and equipment and a mere 31

callouts a year, to the high-viz, colour-coordinated, highly trained and professional presence on the fells that is now Langdale Ambleside team (at the time of writing 118 rescues and still counting). The book is an interesting barometer of how things have changed in those forty years, not just in mountain rescue but in the wider world. In the early days, your 'harness' was a 'thin rope tied round your waist several times' and women were categorically not accepted in this fiercely male environment (Mo Richards actually started going out on rescues with the team in 1970, but it was three years before she could become a team member and another fifteen before she had a female colleague!) Now, I believe, there are nine full team members and two trainees who are female. In 1972 team member Peter Bell designed his eponymous Bell stretcher, funded by a donation of £100, thus creating mountain rescue history, had he but realised it at the time. Equipment developed, technology changed, computers cranked up, vehicles got sexier, helicopters hovered, lottery funding landed and a brand new base rose like a phoenix from the rubble of Low Fold, team members dealt with air, train and coach crashes, and foot and mouth ravaged the fells... and it's all here in the words and pictures of those who've made it what it is – team members past and present. Altogether an interesting and entertaining read.

Light on the Fell edited by Phil Taylor is published by Langdale Ambleside MRT. www.lamrt.org.uk. ISBN 978-0-9566433-0-8. Price £19.95.

A week in the life of a chairman

by Andy Brelsford

Everyone knows what the team leader does. And most people have a good idea of what the treasurer's role involves. But what about the chairman? He or she just turns up at important occasions, right? Oh, and I suppose they chair some meetings?

Well, that may be a fairly typical view but, out of interest, I had a quick whiz through a week in my diary as chairman of Cornwall SRT.

Monday: Mid-morning, I'm at my desk in work when the phone goes. The local radio station want someone to do an interview about the press release we submitted over the weekend about the impact of the credit crunch on team fundraising. They know I work just down the road – could I pop in to the studio for the lunchtime programme? I can't get hold of the PR Officer so I reluctantly agree.

Monday evening: After dinner I go over the agenda for tomorrow night's trustee meeting. Have I read everything I should have read? Are there any areas of potential conflict I need to be aware of? I decide a quick call to the treasurer for an update on the financial situation is required and an hour later I put the phone down having had a far-ranging (but very valuable) discussion about life, the universe and everything. But at least the finances are looking okay – apart from an overspend on the equipment budget! The treasurer has his own views on that!

Tuesday: I meet the team leader ahead of the trustee meeting at 7.00pm so we can fit in an 'appraisal' – a review of the performance of the team leader and ops team against the published plan for the year. Overall, we're making excellent progress against the targets we set ourselves but there is the difficult issue of equipment spending to be tackled. I need to raise it without sounding too critical, but budgets are there for a reason and expenditure MUST be managed. Fortunately, the TL is ahead of me on this one – and has a plan!

The meeting progresses well, the trustees are in a positive mood as everything is progressing according to our plans – until the issue of budgets is raised. I hand over to the team leader who explains the situation and the rather complex budget juggling which means actually, that money came from the rescue budget so everything is okay. Phew! Hell hath no fury like a treasurer scorned!

Wednesday: A couple of action points from last night for me to follow up on but nothing urgent. I contact the team patron to ask if she can attend our next fundraising event as suggested last night. She can! And she has a contact she thinks might be interested in sponsoring the team. I thank her and pass the info on to the fundraising officer.

Thursday: Team training night – and a chance to do what I originally joined for. Tonight we have a search and rescue exercise and, as a cas carer, I end up as medic on the finding team. My casualty has suffered a heart attack whilst on a fun run. The make-up team has done such a good job that when I first see the casualty, I wonder if he really is having a heart attack. Later, in the debrief, as we are discussing the differences between MIs and angina, a team member wants to 'have a quiet word after training.' It is about personal relationship problems and the impact it will have on their attendance. I offer sympathy, discuss options and refer them to the team leader.

Friday: I reply to an email exchange from the National Fundraising committee and copy a few emails from work to various team officers I think will benefit or be interested. I also speak to a fellow chairman from our Devon neighbours about some regional issues and we agree a common approach at the next regional meeting. (I quickly make sure I have remembered to write it in my diary and haven't double-booked myself).

Saturday: Weekend. A rest at last? Not likely.

I'm half way through doing the dishes when the pager goes. Missing person search near Bodmin. Yes, I can attend. Yes, I can pick up the Landy on route. I abandon the housework for 'later' and make my way to the RV point.

Six hours later I return home after a successful find. The search only took four hours but I stayed behind to thank everyone and congratulate them on a job well done then help the ops team with the aftermath of kit sorting and replenishing.

Can I catch the supermarket in time? I could if I hadn't stopped to answer the phone. It's the TL. Was I aware the Landy's turbo is on the way out? And doesn't that prove the case for a third vehicle? And could I suggest some possible trust funds to whom we could apply? And I know what's coming next... And could I help write the bid? I smile and remind myself that I volunteered for this role.

Sunday: I go for a walk on my local beach. It's one of my favourite places (nothing to do with the fact that it also has no mobile phone signal). It's a long walk! It helps me re-charge my batteries ready for another week of... well, that's what I like about it... who knows what next week will bring? It's never the same thing twice and that's what keeps me coming back for more.

Okay, I used a bit of poetic licence in the diary thing – it all happened, just not necessarily in the space of a week.

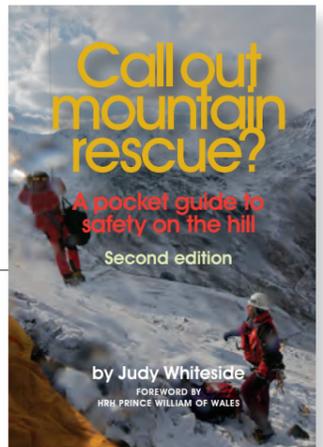
The role of chairman will, of course, vary from team to team. Sometimes it's simply a figurehead, other times it is a combination of leader, manager, diplomat, spokesperson, arbitrator and all-round dogsbody.

But if you thrive on challenge and aren't afraid to shoulder the burden of responsibility, next time your team is looking for a new chairman you could do worse than sticking your hand up and giving it a go!

New pocket handbook promoting safety on the hill

CALL OUT MOUNTAIN RESCUE? A POCKET GUIDE TO SAFETY ON THE HILL

Written (and reviewed here, totally objectively, it goes without saying) by Judy Whiteside



Two years after the launch of the Call Out Mountain Rescue pocket handbook (yes, I know, big pockets!) stocks were getting a bit low in the garage. Cordee has done a sterling job getting the little book into bookshops across the UK and sales have been steady. David and Chris Stewart at Walkingworld have also been a huge supporters, using the book as an incentive to subscribers to their website – many thanks to them. And, of course, there have been team sales, Outdoors Shows, web links and Facebook and, it goes without saying, the occasional unsuspecting friend or family member only barely resisting their arm bent gently up their backs to part with a tenner!

Which is another way of saying we thought we'd better go for a reprint. That's not the Royal 'we', by the way. It was definitely a PISC committee decision. Swiftly followed by 'Better get on with then, Jude.' No probs. I'll just have a read through, check out the websites and update any relevant information. Couple of hours. Tops. Ha ha! No really, ha ha ha ha ha...

While I'm at it, I thought, perhaps I'd better take the opportunity to revise the countryside section – especially the bit about dogs, as Trail magazine's stalwart and dog lover GT had pointed out a couple of discrepancies in my original interpretation. And perhaps we should revisit

edition with a revised foreword, especially given his recent joining of the search and rescue ranks in the form of helicopter training with the RAF... check out that new region, the one down at the pointy bit, edit the team listings then redo the map accordingly (and considering this very, and I mean very, graphic representation of a map consists of me basically going click, click, click with the mouse in a very arbitrary and zig-zaggy fashion round the contours of England and Wales, whilst actually looking out the window and sipping on Sauvignon Blanc, I was amazed quite how much email correspondence ensued getting this approved by all parties)... and after all that there's the necessity to revise the index (my favourite form of torture)... Anyway, you know I love it all really. Only kidding. It certainly took a little longer than anticipated but here it is. There's a new front cover – not just a new pic (thanks to Andy McAlea) but a clever 'half-Canadian cover' which means we now have the benefit of a spine with some words printed on it (easier to spot on the bookshelf!) but retain the chunky

wirobinding which characterised the first book. There's a revised countryside bit (hopefully improved!) and a new 24-page first aid section (aimed at the non-medically trained) including a step by step guide to CPR. Plus, a few tweaks here and there. And Prince William did very kindly agree to write a new foreword. Oh and I've even popped a question mark at the end of the title. Talk about added value! And it's still yours for only £9.99!!

As before, the book will be available to buy at all good bookshops and outdoor shops (if it's not there, let me know) or through me via editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk. The latter option will cost you post and packing on top of the cover price. Teams can buy the book at a discounted rate of £7.99 plus post and packing but there is a minimum order of ten – with no exceptions.

Call Out Mountain Rescue? A Pocket Guide to Safety on the Hill by Judy Whiteside is published by Mountain Rescue England and Wales. www.mountain.rescue.org.uk. A6 wirebound paperback. ISBN 978-09501765-9-8. Price £9.99.



a simple first aid section – a what-to-do-while-you-wait for the team sort of thing – how to make the casualty more comfortable, give the best information possible about the nature of injury, bit of CPR, recovery position... oh and, of course, that'll need illustrating... Mmm, might as well review the picture content too, get some new images which better represent what teams have been up to in the last two years... see if Prince William would be happy to support the new

Mountain Rescue calendar 2011

This year's Mountain Rescue calendar is all about mountain rescue – designed by me (this time prompted by a National Fundraising meeting discussion and the expressed desire to produce our own this year. Cue me, without thinking where it might lead, 'Well I already have quite a library of images'. Swiftly followed by 'Well, better get on with it then, Jude!' Think you might be getting the picture now...); with pictures of real mountain rescue people and situations courtesy of mountain rescue team members. Printing was funded by Mountain Rescue England and Wales and forty copies of the calendar will be going out free of charge to rescue teams in England and Wales, to use as a fundraiser (RRP £5 each) for their own team purse. These free copies will be coming out to teams shortly, so if you haven't had your quota yet, please do get in

touch with me (Judy Whiteside) via editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk to arrange delivery. Any teams wishing to raise even more funds through calendar sales, can buy extra copies at the discounted price of £2 per copy (includes post and packing/delivery) so there's still a profit margin in it for you. Individual copies can also be bought at the cover price of £5 plus post and packing – again, please email me to order. Any proceeds of sales through me will go into the national pot – which, of course, ultimately makes its way back to all the teams in one form or another. Please support mountain rescue locally and nationally by either helping your team to sell this gorgeous calendar (okay, I am a teensy bit biased...) or buying direct from me. **JW**



A FEW SAMPLE PAGES...



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QUARTERLY INCIDENT REPORT FOR ENGLAND AND WALES APRIL-JUNE 2010

The following is a listing of the number of incidents attended by MR teams in England and Wales during the period from 01/04/2010 to 30/06/2010. It is grouped by region and shows the date (day/month) the incident began. It is not comprehensive as many incidents have yet to be reported.

Lake District

Cockermouth	02/04, 09/04, 10/04, 10/04, 18/04, 21/04, 23/04, 25/04 09/05, 09/05, 09/05, 17/05, 20/05, 22/05, 23/05, 24/05 26/05, 31/05, 31/05, 2/06, 04/06, 09/06, 10/06, 10/06 15/06, 22/06, 27/06, 27/06, 28/06
Coniston	04/04, 20/04, 21/04, 24/04, 24/04, 25/04, 07/05, 02/06 02/06, 08/06, 13/06, 28/06
Duddon & Furness	04/04, 12/04, 03/05, 02/06
Kendal	13/04, 17/04, 26/05, 26/05, 02/06, 28/06
Keswick	02/04, 02/04, 08/04, 09/04, 10/04, 10/04, 10/04, 13/04 15/04, 17/04, 21/04, 22/04, 01/05, 01/05, 05/05, 08/05 11/05, 13/05, 16/05, 16/05, 16/05, 20/05, 22/05, 22/05 25/05, 26/05, 30/05, 01/06, 02/06, 03/06, 04/06, 08/06 10/06, 10/06, 19/06, 24/06, 27/06, 27/06
Kirkby Stephen	23/04, 02/06
Langdale Ambleside	02/04, 03/04, 03/04, 04/04, 07/04, 11/04, 13/04, 14/04 28/04, 09/05, 13/05, 15/05, 18/05, 23/05, 26/05, 26/05 27/05, 29/05, 31/05, 31/05, 02/06, 02/06, 02/06, 02/06 07/06, 07/06, 12/06, 12/06, 21/06, 24/06, 25/06, 26/06 28/06
Patterdale	08/04, 16/04, 17/04, 29/04, 21/05, 02/06
Penrith	05/04, 05/04, 23/04, 18/05, 20/05, 02/06, 30/06
Wasdale	01/04, 03/04, 04/04, 23/04, 29/04, 01/05, 02/05, 07/05 10/05, 12/05, 15/05, 16/05, 24/05, 26/05, 31/05, 02/06 08/06, 10/06, 25/06

Peak District

Buxton	02/04, 02/04, 03/04, 04/04, 04/04, 05/04, 09/04, 14/04 15/04, 20/04, 24/04, 15/05, 15/06, 16/06
Derby	01/05, 02/05, 03/05, 10/05, 14/05, 17/05, 05/06, 19/06 21/06
Edale	02/04, 02/04, 03/04, 04/04, 05/04, 05/04, 07/04, 09/04 11/04, 14/04, 15/04, 15/04, 17/04, 18/04, 20/04, 22/04 22/04, 24/04, 24/04, 27/04, 01/05, 05/05, 08/05, 09/05 15/05, 15/05, 16/05, 22/05, 22/05, 30/05, 30/05, 15/06 16/06, 17/06, 20/06, 26/06, 28/06
Glossop	03/04, 03/04, 14/04, 16/04, 22/04, 22/04, 02/05, 02/05 01/06, 28/06
Kinder	02/05, 23/05, 23/05
Oldham	01/04, 05/04, 07/04, 11/04, 13/04, 16/04, 18/04, 26/04 01/05, 02/05, 02/05, 09/05, 01/06, 25/06, 25/06
Woodhead	03/04, 03/04, 15/04, 22/04, 22/04, 24/04, 25/04, 01/05 02/05, 27/05

Peninsula

Cornwall	24/05
Dartmoor (Ashburton)	25/05, 18/06
Dartmoor (Plymouth)	24/05
Dartmoor (Tavistock)	20/04, 19/05, 24/05, 25/05, 18/06
Exmoor	04/04, 04/04, 11/04, 19/06

South Wales

Brecon	09/04, 09/04, 10/04, 12/04, 15/04, 17/04, 17/04, 24/04 27/04, 30/04, 02/05, 02/05, 03/05, 03/05, 05/05, 18/05 23/05, 30/05, 22/06
Western Beacons	09/04, 24/04, 27/04, 30/04, 03/05, 03/05, 18/05, 22/06
Central Beacons	10/04, 13/04, 24/04, 27/04, 02/05, 03/05, 18/05, 22/05 22/05, 22/05, 23/05, 29/05, 30/05, 10/06, 12/06, 22/06 22/06, 22/06
Longtown	09/04, 09/04, 27/04, 02/05, 02/05

Yorkshire Dales

CRO	24/04, 23/05, 30/05, 02/06, 06/06, 06/06, 12/06, 16/06 19/06, 28/06, 29/06, 29/06
Upper Wharfedale	01/04, 11/04, 24/04, 19/05, 24/05, 05/06, 12/06, 14/06 19/06, 19/06

SARDA

England	02/04, 11/04, 15/04, 15/04, 14/05, 15/05, 22/04, 01/05, 08/05, 22/05, 24/05, 25/05, 02/06, 18/06, 12/06, 28/06
Lakes	23/04, 02/06, 10/06, 12/06
Wales	04/04, 15/04, 16/04, 14/05, 15/05, 04/05, 31/05, 31/05 07/06, 08/06, 26/06
South Wales	13/04, 27/04, 03/05, 03/05, 10/06, 22/06

RAF

Leeming	22/05
Valley	08/05, 26/05

Non-specialists

	04/04, 18/05
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24 January 2009: Danger: Unexploded bomb

by Wayne Thackeray

'CALL OUT: UXB!' read the page...

UXB? UXB?... 'Whats a UXB?' I hear you ask. Well, dear reader, for those not au fait with the term UXB, it means unexploded bomb!

Now I know what you're thinking, what the heck would a mountain rescue team have to do with UXB's? My thoughts exactly! Especially as I was sat here with those three letters displayed clearly on my pager, at the end of the message it said, 'If you are available, contact Duncan.'

Duncan, it had to be Duncan! I thought he might have something to do with this! (Duncan has a reputation for being at the right place at the right time!) I was on my way back from dog training at Houndkirk Moor near Hathersage when the call came in, and I had to pass the rendezvous so I phoned in to let the team leader know I was en route.

So about 15 to 20 minutes later I arrived at the end of Dukes Drive, expecting to see blue lights, police tape and TV cameras, but no, nothing! No flags, whistles or bells, just Duncan's 4x4. Bit of an anticlimax I thought.

Boom, Boom, Boom!

I put my boots on and wondered out onto the bleak landscape that is the Dark Peak, and after 20 minutes of slow walking and a couple of phone calls from Edale members reciting Baldrick's War Poem (you know the one, BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!) I found Duncan stood on the moor. We exchanged pleasantries and then I went to look at the bomb. There before me sat a rusty object looking very much like a wine bottle, but with a few obvious differences, like the fuse at its front and the rifling marks to the rear!! IT'S A SHELL!!! Quick lets get some photos. No cordon, just a perfect excuse to get a few piccies. I will let Duncan pick up the story from here...

Generally on a Sunday afternoon I go for a local walk. This particular Sunday I'd decided to go along Dukes Drive and over to the shooting cabin above Ewden. We had an exercise coming up in the area and I thought I'd do some 'revision.' As I pulled up I noticed, an unattended police car parked in the



same layby. Setting off up the track, and wearing my team jacket, I was accosted by two walkers who asked me was I there to defuse the bomb?

What bomb? They explained there was a policeman further along the track waiting for

assistance. Sure enough, as I walked along the track a policeman was coming towards me.

A couple of mountain bikers had been riding off the track and one had ridden over a 'bomb.' They'd called the police, and this officer had been trying to get assistance but the bomb disposal team were still hours away. I was asked if the team could guard the location until bomb disposal arrived. After getting an incident number I contacted our team leader who issued the call out pager message. I was left alone by the bobby who was cold and hungry, and just wanted to go off duty.

Feeling lonely...

Left alone with the bomb I took a close look, leaving all electrical equipment well away. My limited experience confirmed it was an artillery or tank shell. I guessed it had come from the WWII range at North America near Langsett, but some gunner had missed the target by a wide margin. The ranges, I understand, were mainly used by the Americans practicing for D-Day. Many of these shells are blanks or smoke, so I retreated 50m and waited. The pager message led to many team members phoning wondering what was going on. The response generally was 'walk along Dukes Drive for 30 minutes till you see me - we are babysitting a bomb until the army arrive.'

Every new team member to arrive obviously wanted a look, but we maintained what we believed to be a safe distance and set up a perimeter cordon. Whilst the shell was some 30m off Dukes Drive a small path cutting from the shooting cabin at Ewden to Dukes drive came within 10m of the shell.

Eventually our team 4x4 arrived, complete with two police officers and army bomb disposal experts from the Royal Logistic Corps (RLC), and then it started to get interesting. The collected past experience was that they would blow it up in situ - but this was not the case.

Chemical Alley...

The army could not positively identify the shell, and from their file, which I was asked to cross check, the most closely resembling photograph was for a 'chemical shell MkII' circa 1916 to 1950. There was no reason to fire chemical shells on this part of the Peak but all the team members gradually moved further away. The x-ray did not give a positive result; the soldiers even sent a photo of the shell taken by phone to HQ to try to identify it, but no luck.

By now it was becoming dark, the army said they were going home to identify the shell (were they really frightened of the dark?) after telling the police that public safety was a police, not an army matter. The police had better things to do, so they asked, 'Could Woodhead look after the shell overnight?'

It had been alone on the moor for the last 60 years it will not get upset for one more night! Sense finally prevailed, and two of us - Tony Sturdy and myself - stayed until after dark, marking the location, and arranging for other team members to come back with the army at first light. Back to Wayne...

Reveille... NOT!

So after our 'chemical' or should it be comical four hours on the moor it was off home for tea and crumpets until morning. I had arranged to rendezvous with Ian (one of our trainees), the police, and the Army at first light the next day. Now then first light obviously doesn't mean the same as it did when I was in the mob and the police and the army finally sauntered up about an hour later than planned!

Our little roadside RV had begun to create interest from passers-by in cars and several accidents were narrowly avoided by people rubbernecking at the sight of three emergency vehicles, one with BOMB DISPOSAL written on the side parked on this quiet country backwater.

The RLC Sergeant made up his charge of four coils of detonation cord, a remote detonator and an initiator (the box that makes it go bang) and we drove out onto the moor in Mobile 2. I looked in the rear view mirror at the very nervous looking bobby sat in the back, he must have heard about my driving, I thought. Really it was because he had the detonating charge sat in an ammo box between his feet!

We set up a cordon (with three people!) to ensure no one could get within 300 metres of the shell, and waited for the RLC guys to do their thing. Shortly after, the RLC Sergeant walked with his oppo about 100 metres from the shell, waved a Hi Vis waistcoat, and Ian disappeared from view like a rat down a drainpipe (he had been told to duck, though!) and then BANG !!!

BOOOOOOOOOOM!!

From my vantage point, about 200m away, I could see the plume of smoke and a little upheaval of peat as the shell detonated as intended all those years ago. I also saw the bomb disposal guys duck too! Strange, I thought. On their return to our position though it became very obvious by their white faces, and nervous laughter that not all had gone according to plan, and the reason they had ducked was that a large piece of shrapnel had whizzed over their heads at close range.

So all's well, that ends well? So it would seem. Until time turns up the next shell!

All in all a very interesting break from the normal call out for a rescue team, certainly one befitting the 'So much more than mountains' tag, and definitely one of the memorable ones to tell the grandkids.

NB. Another did turn up on 14 July this year!

Rock UK expands to South Wales

Rock UK is delighted to announce its fifth adventure centre, its first in South Wales. The new centre will be known as Rock UK Summit Centre and is located south of Merthyr Tydfil in the South Wales valleys. Currently known as the Welsh International Climbing Centre, it is built on the site of the former Trelewis drift mine which closed in 1989. The Taff Bargoed Development Trust redeveloped the site into a climbing centre in 1997 turning it into an international climbing centre. The climbing walls are up to



eighteen metres high with over 180 climbing routes in the main climbing centre plus an additional bouldering area. The centre also has a world-class manmade caving system with a waterfall inside.

Rock UK has extensive expansion plans for the centre during the coming year, including developing the land to accommodate exciting outdoor adventure activities such as an extended high ropes course, low ropes and archery, as well as developing the already substantial residential accommodation. Off-site mountain biking, climbing and walking will also be offered, making use of the extensive natural

resources in and around the South Wales Valleys and the Brecon Beacons. Rock UK also plans to run water based activities at the Taff Bargoed Millennium Park including open canoeing, kayaking and raft building.

Mark Heasman, Group Chief Executive of Rock UK said, 'This is such an exciting development for Rock UK. The acquisition of this internationally acclaimed climbing centre and its proximity to some incredible adventurous locations in Wales gives us a fantastic opportunity to bring the Rock UK adventure offering to Wales for the first time.'



The climbing wall reopened to the general public on 2 October. For more information about Rock UK please visit www.rockuk.org.

'Rock UK are Christians passionate about developing young people, bringing adventure into learning and using the outdoors to transform lives.'



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A brief dip into eponymous medical terms: 9

David Allan continues his examination of what's in a name

Blummin typical - dogs and foxes carry it too but who gets the blame eh?



Valsalva Manoeuvre

This procedure is probably less well known than in earlier years. It involves forced expiration against a closed airway. Closing the mouth and the nostrils is followed by a maximum effort to breathe out. This results in a rise in intra-thoracic pressure which in turn impedes venous return to the heart and causes a fall in heart rate. Carrying out this manoeuvre in a squat position and then standing up is an almost certain way of inducing a faint. (Do not try this at home!)

The manoeuvre has been used in patients with cardiac arrhythmias and episodic tachycardias to bring them under control. In the absence of any other medical facility it is certainly worth trying.

It is remarkable how accurately Valsalva described the physiology of this process in 1696.

Antonia Maria Valsalva was an Italian anatomist born in Bologna in 1666 and died in 1723 from a CVA. He became professor of anatomy in Bologna but also studied physiology and practiced surgery. He was the first person to recognise arterial aneurysms and to attempt surgical treatment.

His classic work was the understanding of the structure and function of the middle ear and his treatise 'De aura humana tractatus' was the standard text on the subject for the next 150 years.

Weil's Disease

Weil's name is irretrievably linked to severe leptospirosis, an infection caused by any one of a number of leptospiral organisms. The commonest one to cause human disease is leptospira haemorrhagica.

The organisms are carried by rats and secreted in their urine and faeces. They are also found in foxes, dogs, cattle and skunks. Human infection arises when they come into contact with water that has been contaminated. The bacteria can enter through cuts on the surface, form inhalation or from being swallowed.

In many cases the infection is very mild resembling an episode of influenza and it is probable that many such cases are never diagnosed. The more severe cases begin with headache, fever, muscle aches and jaundice. They go on to develop a bleeding tendency with the development of spontaneous bruising and bleeding under the skin. The liver and spleen are involved and become enlarged. There is a significant death rate in untreated cases. An incubation period of 4-9 days occurs between exposure and the appearance of symptoms.

Diagnosis in the early stages is difficult because of the similarity of the symptoms to those of other common virus infections. It is essential that persons who may have been at risk make this known to their doctor at the outset so that antibody testing and treatment is carried out immediately. Early treatment with antibiotics results in a full recovery in almost all patients. Penicillin in large doses is the antibiotic of choice.

There have been a number of instances of Weil's disease in this country affecting cavers and canoeists.

Adolf Weil was born in 1848 in Heidelberg and died from tuberculosis in 1916. He became Professor of Medicine in Berlin but also was an Honorary Professor in Estonia. He recognised and described leptospirosis in 1881.

Circle of Willis

This is the vital communication ring of the arterial supply to the brain that enables cross over circulation in the event that the supply from one side is compromised.

It lies on the under surface of the brain. (Figures 1 and 2). The inputs from the carotid arteries and the vertebral arteries are linked together and distributed to the brain through a large number of offshoots from the circle.

The existence of this communication link means that, in the event of one supplying artery being occluded, usually from arteriosclerosis but also on occasion from trauma, the input from the remaining vessels is equally distributed and no one area of the brain is deprived of a blood supply. If this circle did not exist then damage to one carotid artery, for example, would result in severe brain damage.

Thomas Willis was born in Great Bedbury in Wiltshire in 1621 and lived until 1695. He studied medicine first in Oxford and then in London. He pursued an interest in neuroanatomy leading to his work on the circle bearing his name but he had many other accomplishments and published the first scientific book on pharmacology.

He achieved some fame in 1650 when he attended the hanging of Ann Gunn, aged 22 years, in the Castle Yard in Oxford. Following

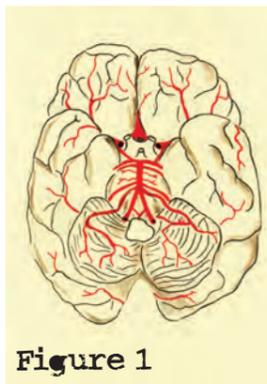


Figure 1

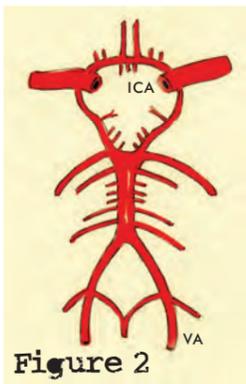


Figure 2

the execution she was found to have a pulse and Willis carried out a successful resuscitation following which she was freed and lived a long life.

MRC Pain Relief Audit

John Ellerton

This two year study came to an end on 1 September. The cases are now being correlated and results should be published in early 2011. I would like to thank all those teams that have responded to the study and asks that any outstanding cases where the casualty had a pain score of four or greater be sent to him in the next four weeks.

We have sufficient cases to form reasonable conclusions on the effectiveness of some of the analgesia techniques used by mountain rescue teams but a few more would make the study more robust. Please look at your cases from the summer and see if you have any to add. If you have any doubt or questions, please contact me by email (ellerton@enterprise.net) and thank you for all your hard work over the last two years.

Living with epilepsy and mountain rescue



When Joanne McLure, of Cheshire SRT, began experiencing seizures as a child they were dismissed as 'simply strange behaviour'. By her twenties, the diagnoses had moved through 'diabetes' and 'stress' to an 'allergy to alcohol!' A lifeguard at a local pool, she had to leave because of her seizures then, in 2000, she began working with special needs adults with challenging behaviours. Watching a video about epilepsy, it became clear this was exactly what was happening to Joanne. So, after a year of wondering why she felt so unwell, she was referred for an EEG test and finally diagnosed with epilepsy. She was advised to join MedicAlert as she has absence seizures daily so, if she can't remember any details about herself, even her name, the MedicAlert Emblem provides a safe and reliable identification system.

After the initial diagnosis, Joanne admits to going off the rails, not wanting to do anything or go anywhere, confidence at an all time low. But, in January 2004, life took a turn for the better when she joined the Cheshire team. 'I was afraid of rejection after my previous experiences, so decided not to declare my epilepsy but then I had a seizure during training. I was more worried that a large amount of members were A&E staff, NHS staff and, even worse, paramedics! 'How could I ever go back to the team after that? When I did return, weeks later, it was as though nothing had happened! Before long, I was asked to be a team training officer. Success! But with that came a review of the medical forms and declared medical conditions. Feeling yet again defeated, I read the medical form put in front of me. Where I'd indicated 'none', it read 'epileptic'. This was a nightmare. I wanted the ground to swallow me up. 'But a warm comforting hand was suddenly there on my shoulder. "We knew from the day you started... I looked after you in A&E six months ago." I didn't know whether to laugh, smile, cry or scream... "Stay with us, you'll be safe and we'll make sure it's kept between those that need to know only." The tears streamed in relief.' Since then, Joanne has become a team leader, mentored on training courses, and continued abseiling and rock climbing. As a search manager she works closely with Cheshire Police and has also received the Chief Constable's Commendation. 'And, just in case I wasn't busy enough,' she adds, 'I now have a four year old daughter.' There are minimal limitations in-situ to ensure Joanne doesn't endanger herself or others. Coping mechanisms are for everyone's safety and members are aware of her limitations. 'I couldn't have achieved all this without the support of organisations such as Epilepsy Action, MedicAlert and mountain rescue - especially Bolton (thanks Garry), NEWSAR and Rossendale & Pendle, ALSAR and Cheshire Police Vector Unit. Not to mention Cheshire SRT and my family and friends!'

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The tales behind the stats...

**14 April 2010:
Birchens Edge rescue**

by Ian Bunting
Team Leader, Edale MRT



On the 14 April, Tony Brock and his friend Sam were climbing at Birchens Edge near Baslow when Tony fell and sustained a very significant head injury. To say he was unlucky is an understatement as he was wearing a helmet and was being top-roped up a route. Unfortunately, he had strayed off route when he fell, which caused him to pendulum across the rock face and into a small outcrop of rock. Inspection of his helmet later revealed very little visible damage considering the seriousness of his injuries.

A 999 call was made to the ambulance service who, in turn, contacted mountain rescue. Birchens Edge falls within Edale's area but, due to this being a midweek call, Buxton team was called as well. The two teams have had this midweek working arrangement in each others' areas for many years to ensure an adequate response is available during the working day.



Our closest team member, Trev Lawton, lives less than five minutes from the RV point and happened to be at home, so an initial quick response was made. When he got to the RV he met up with Matt Hood who was also in the area, and a responding East Midlands Ambulance Service crew. Together they made their way up to the base of the crag with Trev and Matt getting there a few minutes in front of the EMAS crew (as you would hope!) On arrival they found Tony slipping in and out of consciousness and starting to fit. All this was compromising his airway so airway management with C-spine control became the priority.

This was done by means of manual C-spine immobilisation with a jaw thrust to maintain the airway. In the short period of time that followed the EMAS crew arrived, along with Steve Rowe our medical officer. Soon after, an air ambulance also landed at the top of the crag – a welcome arrival, especially as we were unsure whether they were flying due to the ash cloud which was floating around at the time. Steve was able to give intravenous diazepam to stop Tony fitting. However, his airway was still threatened at this point and being maintained by meticulous attention and a healthy jaw thrust from Trevor. Due to trismus (jaw clenching), a nasopharyngeal airway was also

inserted at this point.

By this stage it was apparent that Tony was suffering from a very serious head injury that required getting him to hospital as soon as possible. As he was being packaged on the stretcher we asked the air ambulance paramedic to contact the aircraft to get it to move and land in a field below the crag. Whilst it was possible to negotiate a route up the crag without rigging ropes it would require more people than we had on scene to carry out a hand over hand safely up the crag.

The message got through and the aircraft started to move at the same time as the stretcher party. Frustratingly, it didn't land where we wanted which meant prolonging the carry off, admittedly only by a few hundred yards but it added precious time onto the evacuation. Likewise we requested that the pilot let us hot load Tony into the aircraft to save time. As is the pilots prerogative, he declined and wanted to shut down before we approached. Whilst we fully understood his reasons it added more precious minutes onto the time that it took to get Tony to hospital.

As the helicopter disappeared over the horizon and we started sorting our kit out, much of the talk revolved around Tony's prognosis. It would be fair to say we did not think he would survive his injuries and, if he did then, would be severely brain damaged. Over the coming weeks we kept in touch with the hospital. Most of the time there was no change with him being sedated and unconscious for a number of weeks. Then we found out he was being transferred to a hospital closer to home, which is when we lost touch.

Some three months later we were all very pleased to hear from Tony with a request to meet up with us to say thank you. We were even more pleased when he walked through the door of our base looking as fit as a fiddle and fully compos mentis. Indeed the only sign of his ordeal was the skull cap he was wearing to protect his head. Tony had been unconscious in hospital for the best part of a month with the surgeons having to remove part of his skull to let his brain swell (a decompressive craniectomy). He was now waiting for them to fit a titanium plate in place of the bit they had removed and the skull cap was to prevent any potentially fatal blows to his brain that was currently only covered by skin!

In what was a very rewarding experience for all involved, we spent a good couple of hours speaking to Tony, his partner and his climbing partner and explaining what had happened on the day. Tony for his part was obviously very appreciative for the actions of everyone involved in his rescue and care. He has already been back to the hospital to say thanks to them and is also making arrangements to meet the ambulance and air ambulance staff involved.

It means a lot to the team to meet those whom they have rescued and who have made a good

recovery due to the team's work. Like all team members up and down the country we train hard and spend a lot of time maintaining team equipment and vehicles. Sometimes this can seem like a thankless task but visits like this help remind people what its all about and recharge the 'enthusiasm supplies'!

As with most jobs, we looked at how we could do things better and quicker. Most of our climbing crags are not far from the road (one of the reasons they're so popular) and we pride ourselves on the response time and level of medical care we can provide. We aim to get a casualty into an ambulance or air ambulance within an hour of getting the call and ensure every full team member is a casualty care certificate holder. In this instance it took us 75 minutes and there was a period of time when team members were left to deal with a seriously injured casualty with very little equipment until we got a team vehicle there. This has spurred the purchase of a number of snatch trauma bags, which have been issued to team members who live in close proximity to some of our accident hotspots. These contain airway adjuncts, oxygen, bag and mask, and suction. There is also a box of team issue drugs from the MREW list, plus dressings etc. This means we can start giving more advanced and potentially life saving medical care prior to the arrival of the main team kit.

Hopefully we will not get called to something as serious as Tony's accident for a long time but if we do then we are better equipped to make a difference.



ABOVE: TONY BROCKMAN MEETS THE TEAM
BELOW: SNATCH TRAUMA BAG



24 January 2009: Accident in Black Clough

by Terry Bennett

I'd set off to the Peak around 9.00am on a cold and blustery day. My girlfriend Ruth knew I was heading to Black Clough in Bleaklow Moor, and I'd promised to call once off the hill. The three Black Cloughs branch off from each other like a trident from a beautifully wooded area. I planned to ascend Middle Black Clough and descend via Near Black Clough, a route which would take me about five hours.

Following the river uphill, I crossed over stepping stones to its east side and continued up, clambering over slippery boulders and rocks as I went. Further into the ravine, staggered staircase-like waterfalls cascaded around me. It's a peaceful and wonderful place; you're never far from the road, but the feeling of solitude is always present. And there was nobody else around that day – I was entirely alone.

At times the path comes very close to the edge of the ravine in a succession of narrow ledges. I'd manoeuvred a couple of these by grabbing the thick heather gorse to the left of me but, on the third precipitous ledge, the gorse came away in my hand. I lost my balance and started to fall backwards into the ravine. Instinctively, I jumped outwards, falling vertically into the ravine. It all happened in a split second. I don't know how far I fell, but I'm told it was between twenty to forty feet!

I fell in silence, facing a wall of rock. My left leg landed flush on a large boulder with such force the knee seemed to explode from inside. My right leg was cushioned on impact by two feet of water. I stumbled, rather than fell, into the water, then grabbed my knee, lifting my leg. It swung lifelessly from side to side as the knee made horrible grinding noises. Ridiculously, I tried to put my foot down, causing indescribable pain.

You never know how you're going to react in a situation like this until it happens. The likelihood of seeing anybody up there was slim and there was no way I could get myself off the hill. Ruth knew roughly where I was, but I knew she wouldn't raise the alarm until late afternoon. I was likely to be there for several hours and hypothermia was a real concern.

First I had to get out of the flowing river. It was boulder strewn and greasy underfoot – treacherous with two feet never mind one! And I'd lost my trekking pole. I discarded my soaked gloves and cautiously edged my way across the river, clinging to the rocks, trying to keep my balance without knocking my leg any more than necessary. There were pockets of deep pools to manoeuvre – a slip could spell disaster – then my last obstacle, a massive boulder, on one side a big drop, the other rushing water. The only option was to climb over it. I jumped to a handhold but lost my grip and slid painfully back into the water. At my next attempt I managed to clamber on top of the rock, flopping exhausted on to the heathery bank.

I crawled and dragged myself up the heathery banking, screaming out in pain, to a small flat clearing about twenty yards away – a good spot, I

hoped, for a helicopter to see me. I made myself as comfortable as possible. I knew I had to get warm but couldn't remove my soaked boots or tracksuit bottoms, and especially my knee support, as my leg had swollen significantly by this time, so I pulled on my waterproof trousers and jacket, layered my baseball cap on top of the fleece hat, then tied a waterproof hat snugly round the lot and struggled into my big orange survival bag.

My survival pack consisted of a plastic whistle, which I placed around my neck; head torch fixed in position and hand torch in my jacket pocket; waterproof gloves; two small silver flasks filled with tea and coffee, a bag of chocolate brazils, some flapjack, a banana and some chocolate coins!

I made myself as comfortable as possible, lying on my side and lifting my broken leg and placing it on my good leg to support it – but not without screaming out in agony! With no reception on the mobile, I typed a message anyway. 'Broke leg, middle Black Clough, Bleaklow Moor' and my GPS grid reference '11524 98545' then tried in vain to send the message to various people. I started to feel quite lonely but, determined to keep my spirits up, I blew my whistle – three blasts followed by a pause, then repeat – although it seemed unlikely anybody would hear.

Beyond my feet, in the distance, was the agonising view of the road – cars and lorries passing by. So near, yet so far away! Torture! Everything seemed so calm and beautiful and, surprisingly, I was quite relaxed. I kept on blowing the whistle and trying to text – anything to keep my mind occupied, all the while monitoring myself, moving my toes and fingers, checking my feet and legs for numbness. Every half hour or so I'd have a sip of tea or coffee, and a bite of chocolate.

The hours went slowly. I could easily have drifted off to sleep but didn't dare for fear of not waking up again. My mind played tricks hearing voices and helicopters flying above. I gave up trying to send the text but decided to write a message to my loved ones, in case I didn't make it out of this alive. Not that I'd given up. I knew help would come...

Dusk came, then darkness. I was pretty sure the alarm would have been raised. The temperature had dropped significantly and my rucksack, which I'd been using as a pillow, had iced over. It was a clear night, apart from the odd drifting cloud and the stars were out aplenty. Was that star moving towards me? Was it getting bigger? Was it a helicopter?

By 8.00pm, I was filled with a mixture of excitement and anxiousness. Surely my ride should be in the air by now? Then, right on cue, my prayers were answered as an unmistakable bright light began to make its way in my direction.

But I still had work to do. I switched my headtorch to flashing mode and waved the little hand torch frantically in the air. As the helicopter approached, its giant beam of light shone first into Near Clough



then Middle Clough. As the light shone directly at me, I waved at them triumphantly!

Confusion then as the helicopter rose out of the ravine and circled the cloughs, throwing its great beam of light into all three, then flying off into the distance as if still searching. Doubt crept in – I couldn't understand what was going on. Why didn't it come get me? Hadn't it spotted me?

I heard later that the police helicopter had spotted my torches and scanned me with thermal imaging. They could see I had plenty of layers of clothing, and a survival bag, and that my body temperature was okay. And because of my movement they deduced my condition wasn't life threatening. If they'd thought I was in immediate danger they would have found a safe place to land and climbed down to me with a stretcher (they don't have a winch). The safest option was for a Sea King to winch me out of the ravine.

As the helicopter circled, I continued with the whistle blowing. Call it intuition but within a few short minutes I heard faint voices in conversation. Was my mind playing cruel tricks again? I started to blow for all I was worth! The voices seemed to be getting louder and my hopes were undoubtedly confirmed when I heard those immortal words, 'We've got you!' My first human contact for a long lonely time. My nightmare was over! I flopped from my raised position onto my back with utter relief. The whistle still firmly on my lips, I gave one final prolonged victory blast as the fear and pain subsided. It's hard to describe how I felt at that moment, a thousand emotions all at the same time.

A bright light shone in my face from the other side of the ravine and I heard dogs barking. I looked across to see a line of mountain rescuers hurriedly moving towards me. The lead rescuer had what seemed like a massive headlight in the middle of a circle of smaller lights, which threw out some serious light! I felt the dog sniffing around my head and I heard a friendly voice shout, 'Leave him alone girl.' I grabbed the rescuer's gloved hand firmly, it was great to have human contact. 'Thanks mate,' I said, gratefully. 'You're alright,' he said reassuringly. 'Are you ok?'

He was Andy Plumber and was I glad to see a friendly face! Andy made me as warm and comfortable as possible, wrapping a blanket around me and throwing some sort of sheeting over both of us, whilst asking me lots of questions and checking my responses so he could relay information to his colleagues. In the car park below, team leader Mike France and the police had set up a base where Ruth, Robyn (my eldest daughter), and Ruth's sister Angela, anxiously waited for news.

I apologised to Andy for all the trouble I'd caused. 'Don't bel!' he replied. This was a 'real rescue', the

reason he and the rest of the lads loved this job. To see somebody who was as well equipped and organised as I was (as he put it), made it a pleasure to leave his pint of John Smith's on the bar of his local on a Saturday night!!

Andy was with the Woodhead team. There were two teams out looking for me that night, the other being Glossop, as well as South Yorkshire Police and an RAF Sea King. Of the many people who've helped me along my journey including consultants, doctors, nurses, physio and hydrotherapists, and many family and friends, who have all been absolutely fantastic (and I can't thank them enough) I really do admire those mountain rescuers. They do an absolutely remarkable job at a moment's notice – and for the love of it.

As the helicopter hovered Andy continued to monitor my condition and keep me informed. He told me a man had been found carrying a torch in Near Black Clough. Turned out to be my close friend and walking buddy Howard Beattie, whom I met in a youth hostel in Killin a year or so earlier. He'd been in a pub in Barnsley with friends, when he got a call from a very worried Ruth, telling him I was missing. He calmed her down, gave her directions to the car park and told her to meet him there. Then amazingly, with no thought to his own safety, he set off into the ravine on his own in total darkness to look for his mate. A fantastic gesture of friendship!

Andy told me the Sea King was preparing to lower a winchman but they were having difficulty because of the high winds. While we waited he kept my mind occupied exchanging walking experiences, which really helped ease the stress and pain.

When at last the winchman was lowered, Andy told me to prepare for the downdraught. I was pleasantly surprised when an attractive woman climbed under the sheeting announcing she was Tammy – the winchman about to winch me up into helicopter!

After setting up the Entonox to give me some pain relief, they took a closer look at my leg, cutting me out of the survival bag, removing my waterproof trousers, and cutting off my tracksuit bottoms as carefully as she could. Andy was there for support and reassurance. Tammy cut off my boot, then my knee support.

I could hear the voices of concern when my knee was exposed. Tammy told me it was quite badly swollen but there was no compound fracture so I hadn't lost any blood. She told me they were going to try straightening my knee a little so they could get me into the stretcher properly – more pain! They lifted me into the stretcher with great care and, as they strapped me in, I shook Andy's hand and asked him to thank everybody for their fantastic efforts. He said I was welcome and, when I was back on my feet, he would arrange for me to meet the team.

They were ready to winch me into the Sea King. Despite my very real fear of flying, I didn't have a nervous bone in my body that night. Still sucking on the Entonox, I didn't notice the dreadful weather conditions and, like everyone else, the pilot did a fantastic job. Apparently a blizzard was about to hit and the ground on which I'd been lying for such a long time would be completely snowed over by morning – a chilling thought!

I'd been through a traumatic ordeal but I can't help feeling how very lucky I was that day. It could all have ended tragically, but I think I coped pretty well really, and can be proud of myself. I know I was an extremely lucky guy. Someone up there was indeed looking after me on that extraordinary day!

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Water news update

by Ewan Thomas, MREW Water Officer

Water awareness

Howie Crook has developed a comprehensive water awareness instruction resource, available to teams to use for in team awareness training. Based on a Powerpoint presentation, it is supported by a DVD provided for all the emergency services. Howie's awareness material tailors the awareness syllabus to make it MR specific and can be obtained directly from him at Rethink training.

Water awareness DVD

The DVD 'Water Awareness for Rescue Professionals' is used as the method of awareness training by most fire and police services. We have purchased a copy of this for each team to complement the awareness material developed by Howie. This will be distributed to teams at the November meeting.

Bank team DVD

I have had many requests for a copy of the bank team training DVD shown at the conference. Between now and the November meeting I will get a narration put over the video and produce it for distribution to the teams.

Flood response

The MR response to a national flood emergency will be focused firstly on teams

who are local to the incident and secondly to those that have declared their assets and willingness. Since writing to teams, a total of eighteen have offered their assets – some in a support role and some in a technical water rescue role. If your team has assets and wishes them to be available and you haven't already done so please contact me at water@mountain-rescue.org.uk.

Water incident management

Andy Lee and his team at Edale have put together a one-day conference on water incident management. A host of nationally recognised speakers are giving us their time to show their experience and wisdom. The water technical group fully support this meeting and I recommend one person from each team's leadership and a water specialist from each team attends, as well as anyone with an interest in our response to water incidents. See below left for booking details.

Flood rescue concept of operations

This document guides the response to flood events in England, and is likely to be a template for the response in Wales. We have had input into the document and it has now been issued. It will be placed on the DEFRA website probably before this issue of MR Mag is published.

Water training equipment

Bank team training has many required elements in the water, including swimming and self-rescue skills, wading and assisted rescue. This training is more comfortable when dry suits and good PPE is used but I am aware this is not easy to access for teams just embarking on their water training. Safequip, a key supplier of water PPE has offered to help with some loan kit for courses. Those instructors providing bank team training can take advantage of this offer by contacting me in the first instance. A central pool of training equipment will be considered by the next water technical group meeting.

Syllabus

The MREW bank team syllabus is available electronically on the website. The MREW water team syllabus will hopefully be finalised in the next meeting and this will then be posted to the website too.

Water safety uptake

In 2008 my first audit of water safety in mountain rescue revealed that eight teams (of 56) had formalised water safety training in place. Happily, the latest audit earlier this year revealed that only four teams do not have formalised water safety training. Well done to all who have taken up this very important part of preparing MR personnel to work close to water. If any team is finding difficulty getting appropriate training to bank team level please contact me and we will sort it out as a priority.

SARMAN development

It is now almost a year since we first sat down with Mapyx and suggested an application to help incident controllers record and manage incidents and searches. SARMAN was developed by a small team over last winter and after some initial testing and dry runs it was released to all mountain rescue teams in May. During the very intense day's training on the system I asked for feedback so that the development team could plan the next release. I asked for bugs, inaccuracies, miscalculations and errors to be reported as you might expect. But I also asked for feedback on functionality – is there anything else you would like to see it do, or is there anything you would like it to stop doing?! The more feedback we get, the better the next release will be.

As with all administrative things I suggested a timescale for feedback. The conference seemed like a good date – quite some time in the future and an opportunity to collect final comments. We have not been disappointed – there have been many reports made back to the SARMAN site and these have been forwarded on to the development team. We will shortly be sitting down to work through all of the feedback – we will prioritise fixes, bugs and errors and then attempt to incorporate as many of the modifications as we can. I would like to request any final feedback you might have by the November meeting. Anything after this might not be considered until release 3!

SARMAN training

We recognise that SARMAN was pushed out to teams with very minimal training. When software development moves at the pace it did, it is difficult to keep up when writing training material. However, training material is now in production, some of it written, some for face to face presentation and some for on-line tuition. Please be patient with this development – we will unroll a training scheme as soon as we can.

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Mountain Rescue National Water Conference

Saturday 22 January 2011
Edale MRT HQ
9.00am – 5.00pm (TBC)

Speakers to include:
DEFRA – Resilience Water Project
National Fire and Rescue Advisers
Mountain Rescue Members
Experienced Medical Adviser
Water Rescue Instructors

- Full day seminar highlighting roles and responsibilities when attending water incidents
- Water rescue framework document, including team typing, medical considerations and an introduction to water incident management

During lunch, information stands with experienced staff will provide an opportunity to seek advice and guidance on training and equipment. Team members involved in national flooding incidents will also be on hand to share their experiences.

Cost £30 per person
Refreshments and buffet lunch provided

email: nwc@edalemrt.co.uk for a booking form
Two places reserved per team until 5 November. Remaining spaces will be available on a first-come first-served basis.

For latest conference news visit www.edalemrt.co.uk/nwc

National Conference hosted by Edale MRT in conjunction with the Water Rescue Committee for Mountain Rescue England and Wales



Flood water exercise Avon and Somerset

by Alan George

Clare Crow is nine years old. A fairly average girl but, despite her young age, she's already been rescued from water twice now. The first time from a dew pond on a windswept moorland plateau; the second from rising flood waters caused by an abnormal tidal swell over topping the waters of a normally tranquil tidal estuary. This second occasion was whilst in the company of her father. On both occasions, the rescues have resulted in strategically pivotal moments for Avon and Somerset Search and Rescue (A&SSAR).



FLOODING IN THE SOUTH WEST
SUMMER 2007

But back to the first incident... 'Target located casualty found' was the first positive radio call to control, and the first point of contact for Clare with A&SSAR. She was found on Black Down, a large heathland area within the Mendip Hills. Yet despite there only being one pond, poor Clare was unfortunately discovered floating in it – following an extensive search of the high probability areas. The police arrived and laid down a cordon and also taped the incident scene off. The ambulance service arrived and broke through the police cordon tape to get to the casualty.

This seemingly innocuous moment in very early in 2006 challenged everyone's thinking. Was she dead or alive? Who was going to get her out and find out? Was this an 'incident

scene' or a dynamic SAR rescue? At what point does, or should, the search and rescue team formally hand over the casualty to the ambulance service, and/or hand the incident scene or fatality to the police or the coroner. In short, how do we all interoperate and fit in this scenario. The more important point is – luckily, Clare survived.

Four years later our search party was being briefed. 'Father, mid 30s, with nine year old daughter. Trapped by rising flood water.' This road and its adjoining ground to the hard boundaries are to be searched. The third causeway is the western limit of your search area. The water is rising fast and predicted to continue for some time. Opps Comms with Sit-Rep every ten minutes max... everyone knows their roles, tasking done, kit checked, buddies checked, escape strategies... questions? Right, go!

A minimum of six in a team were required. One at the front checking for submerged hazards. A navigator, comms, a member to carry 'Titch' – the team's smallest (although still large and heavy, but backpackable) inflatable two-man dinghy, search party leader and a second 'safety' at the back. This means only two can search totally effectively. Water margin and flood area searching is slow and also quite labour intensive if it's to be done effectively.

The water was up to ankle deep in places when we started. We all had full water PPE and also wading poles principally to be able to feel for submerged hazards, holes and missing manhole or gully covers, along our way, but also to act as third leg for extra stability should we need it. We were all too

aware that even just stepping off the edge of the road, where it was submerged under the flooding waters, would mean sinking into soft silt and mud or falling/stumbling down the unseen verge into the flooded roadside ditches. You could still feel the cold through your dry suit and life jacket, despite the base layers and the self generated warmth of your own exertions against the relentless drag of the current and flow of the ever rising and gloomy waters.

Overhanging vegetation on the dry bank to our north concealed many dry pockets that a casualty, both lost and scared could scramble into for refuge. Each had to be painstakingly searched. Forty minutes later we'd searched barely 500 metres of this water margin. Slow going but this was to be nothing in comparison to the effort required in getting ourselves and the casualties safely back.

Clare and her father were located soon after, the dinghy was deployed and they were helped into Titch. The water was still rising: in places it was now nearly up to our waists. Three of us were now required to control the dinghy. A safety up front, one behind us, with the party leader circulating and filling in, as and were needed. The depth and resistive flow of the water slowed us down immensely. With ever more flotsam, floating and submerged debris underfoot and drifting around us now adding to the hazards, we pushed on. The urgency in getting the two casualties back to the RV control point had to be balanced against the team's principle of 'Self. Team. Casualty.' You look after them in that order.

We took over double the time to get back.

Nearly two and a half hours of pushing yourself to the limit was starting to show and be very apparent to all. This was no gentle paddle at the seaside, we were all very aware of the fact that the water continued to rise evermore hampering our efforts and the clock was ticking ever faster. This was without spending time searching or stopping as we had on the outward journey. A lesson to be learnt for us all, but particularly for the search management adviser and incident controller. Normal land based projected, search and/or recovery times for search parties hold as little more than a guide figure on which to multiply when in this sort of environment.

The relief of eventually getting back safely and the transfer of the casualties to the waiting crew was to prove the greatest of shocks to us all. As it transpired, this was when Clare's hand was unfortunately and accidentally amputated.

'Look what you've done!' In absolute horror, I held the severed hand up. Life's essence-like straw was cascading and haphazardly falling everywhere. Time went into slow motion, floating all around us like lazy pool sticks, just gently and placidly rolling and drifting about on the wet tarmac.

It might be fair at this point to mention that Clare Crow is a very real, and traditionally made, child size scarecrow, built by the team for training. The father, conversely, is a manufactured fully articulated and anatomically correct rescue dummy, weighing in at 80+kg!

This was A&SSAR's first real time flood exercise for its current flood/water margin trainees. Set in conditions as real as we could find to replicate the raising flood water conditions encountered by the more seasoned and experienced A&SSAR members in the city of Gloucester, the Royal Forest of Dean and at Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire during their search and rescue involvement in the early lifesaving stages of the floods of 2007.

The only difference this time around, for us, was we did it in the knowledge we had the fullest levels of safety backup standing by and shadowing our every move. With every event preplanned, tested, receded, re-evaluated and fail-safe protected.

The venue was a slightly less than common, estuarial, tidal tarmac road. One that whilst it could be predicted to be minimally flooded on many high tides, could be totally inundated under large spring tides and with the additional helpful push of a kindly weather-dependant tidal swell. This venue option had been identified by the team's trainers, near Salcombe in the South Hams area of Devon just after the floods of 2007 and, after much discussion and investigations, the exercise had been two years in the planning.

Following lengthy negotiations for the acquisition of permissions of access, grants

of use and with the extensive local knowledge and help and support of many locals, businesses, landowners, bodies, authorities and all the relevant agencies it had come to fruition. Amongst the many things working against us was Mother Nature – sometimes she gives little in the way of help, with only about four suitable tides a year, two being in season (too many tourists and little or no hope of the permissions); one in the depth of winter and generally in the wee small hours (no matter how you view it, it's not going to be a good learning environment or the safest time for trainees); leaving one per annum at most if everyone's happy for you to do it then. So we already have it penciled in and have started the planning for the next few opportunities.

The debrief revealed everyone's personal take on the training exercise. A deep shock to many was how much longer it takes to search effectively in such conditions, the use of escape routes, back to dry land or further into the water to access the waiting rescue boats, or by air; the different types of kit used including its alternative applications and limitations; a call for a better laminating machine in the control vehicle to better seal maps; and, of course, praise

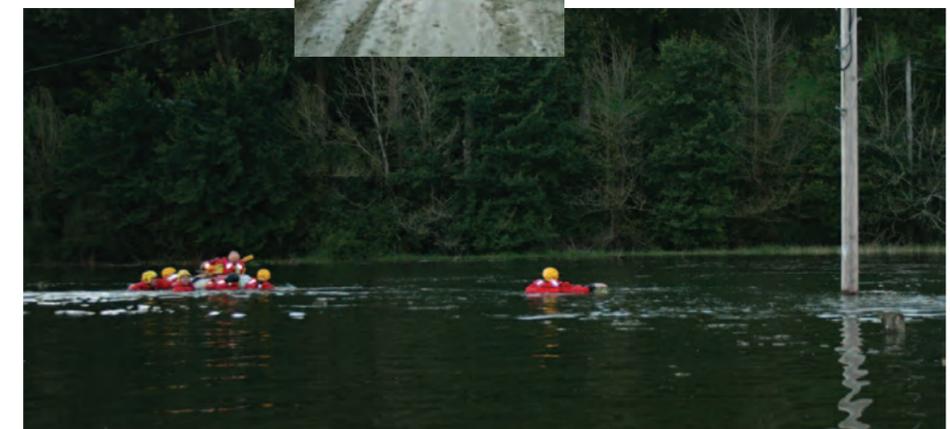
invited by the coxswains and crew members to Salcombe RNLI station for a tour and demonstrations of both inshore and off shore boats and the kit and capabilities.

Avon and Somerset might not have mountains but we sure have floods and very variable water courses, fresh, tidal and marginal water areas. The traditional role of the recognised search and rescue professionals like us (mountain rescue teams) is evolving. An ever greater range of search and rescue techniques, skills and abilities – all at the highest levels of competence – is being asked of us. A&SSAR has first hand experience of inland water and water margin search and rescue in both local environments and wide area floods. We've had to learn a lot (sometimes the hard way) and that has fed back into the current and ongoing training programmes. We've taken our training, resilience and preparedness to a new level now.



LEFT: THE DRY (ISH) ROAD ON THE OUTWARD SEARCH – NOTE THE TELEGRAPH POLE AND THE ROAD EDGE MARKER POSTS OF THE FIRST CAUSEWAY WHICH CAME IN HANDY FOR LOCATING THE NOW HEAVILY FLOODED ROAD IN THE FAILING LIGHT ON THE WAY BACK AND GIVE AN INDICATION OF THE DEPTH IN PLACES

BELOW: SEE HOW THEY CAME IN HANDY (THE ONES STILL ABOVE THE SURFACE)



for a fantastic 'welfare support officer' who was ready and waiting to supply hot drinks and get the fish and chips! Prior to a very welcome night's sleep at what must be the area's premiere and most hospitable caravan and campsite.

This was not to last, as time and tide wait for no man so up with the lark, a quick breakfast then off to catch the early morning tide for A&SSAR's swiftwater rescue techs to practice their rescue boat handling and shallow water operations skills in a different environment, whilst the rest of us enjoyed the beautiful Kingsbridge and Salcombe estuary, and a chance to reflect on the previous evening's exercise. Lastly, before leaving, we were

For all their kind time, help and advice, the sharing of years of wisdom, support and backing, and for accommodating, hosting and generally letting us into their lives, our most grateful thanks to (in no particular order):

Severn Trent Water; Duchy of Cornwall and the staff; Evans Estates and the staff; Salcombe Harbour Authority, Harbour Master and the staff; Bantham Harbour Authority, Harbour Master; HM Coastguard Hope Cove; RNLI Salcombe and the coxswains and crews of RNLI Lifeboats; Baltic Exchange III and IRB Joan Bate; Bolberry House Farm caravan park and campsite; Salcombe Boat Hire; Salcombe Powerboat School; Environment Agency.

A watery theme to conference

by Howie Crook

Our involvement and best practice when operating around water has increasing become a topic of conversation within mountain rescue over the last couple of years. At the recent Mountain Rescue Conference in Dublin there was a distinctly watery theme with four consecutive speakers encouraging debate, sharing knowledge and providing an update on national training initiatives.

Jaz Hepburn invited us to look at the facts and predictions in terms of our changing climate, leaving us with the inevitable conclusion that we can expect to be hit by more episodes of intense rain, and the first place to be hit will be... the hills.

Mike Park's lecture showed that Jaz's predictions were already upon us. In the Cockerthorpe floods it was mountain rescue who took a leading role in the coordination and effort in a major national incident. Mike provided a moving account of the combined effort that went into helping a community in crisis, emphasising the importance of water training and the difficulties of operating in these extreme conditions. It's important to realise we have a choice regarding our involvement, teams need to discuss to what extent they are prepared to

by a awareness input/module which can be delivered in-house using the stock of materials we now have available. The session should take about 2.5 hours, and is intended for everyone, including search managers and those who might be coordinating from base, given an appreciation of the key dangers we face around water and best practice. I'll be the first to admit it's taken longer than expected to develop the resources for the delivery of the awareness programme but we can now move forward with this training. I took the opportunity to outline the syllabus and run through the awareness module – pretty tough in 90 minutes!

Training officers can choose to deliver the training via a DVD format which will be distributed in November (at last I hear you say!), or via PowerPoint available right now. Please feel free to develop your own sessions as long as the key areas are covered.

It's great to see how far we've moved forwards in the area of water safety and awareness. Real concerns I had two years ago regarding working practices are fading. It's great to see teams operating as skilled units and with the right equipment. Sure, there's still progress to be made and we are at a time of change with national guidelines being introduced across many agencies. It will take time to create consistency and to bed in our new training and there will no doubt be many, many questions in the short term. It is however important to see how far we've come in a very short time, leading to mountain rescue are being viewed as a dependable partner and lead agency, both nationally and regionally, within the area of water rescue.

Many thanks to the organisers of the conference for giving us a platform to discuss issues and good luck with your on-going training.

Resources and syllabus will be placed on our watery web at www.mrwater.org.uk if anyone needs further help with resources for awareness training please drop me a note at howardcrook@rethinktraining.co.uk

Howie Crook works as a Development Trainer, Outdoor Instructor and Swiftwater Rescue Instructor. He has worked extensively with mountain rescue teams and has, for the last eighteen months, been helping to develop Mountain Rescue's water training programmes and resources.

commit in these situations if at all. However when it's your town flooding it might be a hard decision to stand down when we are very well positioned to help the very public we rely on for support and funding.

Ewan Thomas used recent video footage to bring to life the bank training programmes now being cascaded out nationally. So far, feedback from these has been very positive, providing a powerful reminder of the key hazards when operating around the water margin and best practice for safe working. It is hoped teams will train their operational members to this level as a minimum standard, with the programme covering essential knowledge for searching safely around the water margin, and providing a reminder of the dangers and strategies for wading/shallow water crossing.

Bankside training is intended to be preceded



BANKSIDE TRAINING PHOTO: HOWIE CROOK

The National Flood Rescue Concept of Operations document, published by DEFRA can now be download from: www.defra.gov.uk/environment/flooding/documents/planning/20100801frco.pdf Various sections were contributed by members from Mountain Rescue.

Exercise WATERMARK

This is a national flood exercise that may/will have input from mountain rescue. There is a Welsh add-on to the national exercise. More details can be found at www.exercisewatermark.co.uk The primary objectives are to exercise:

- The overall coordinated response to a wide-area flooding emergency, including the national, regional and local tiers, and public, voluntary and private sectors' roles and responsibilities (and in particular the National Flood Emergency Framework)
- National flood rescue arrangements – command and control and national capability
- Emergency plan activation arrangements (triggers from weather alerts and flood warnings given to emergency services from the National Flood Forecasting Centre)
- Communication arrangements at all levels – speed of information between local, regional and national resilience tiers including COBR; as well as the functionality of the National Resilience Extranet and other arrangements such as the COI, BBC, Connecting in a Crisis, regional media forums
- The wider media management issues arising from an emergency
- Business continuity arrangements of essential service providers and critical infrastructure operators (infrastructure resilience and sector resilience plans and arrangements could be tested)
- Mutual aid arrangements across LRF and regional boundaries
- Mass evacuation and sheltering arrangements – including health and social care during a severe flooding incident and evacuation of prisons/detention centres (tested through linked tabletop exercises at the same time)
- The implementation of relevant recommendations from Sir Michael Pitt's review that were accepted by the Government following the Summer 2007 floods.

by Paul Whiting,
MRI Development
Officer

After two years preparation, the conference was finally upon us. Over the two days before the conference began, members of the organising committee started arriving at Dublin City University (or DCU as it is known locally), to put the final touches on the preparation.

Over the next two days, 321 people would come together to make the conference possible, including:

- 109 Irish delegates
- 95 English delegates
- 20 Scottish delegates
- 27 Welsh delegates
- 14 exhibitors
- 33 speakers (including a number from the US, Hong Kong and Iceland)
- 23 conference staff.

The activities began on Friday afternoon with a civic reception for mountain rescue held by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Gerry Breen at the Mansion House, home of the Lord Mayor for nearly 300 years. Over 50 delegates enjoyed the hospitality on offer including various conference speakers, exhibitors and representatives from Ireland, England, Scotland



and Wales and two SARDA Ireland dogs – Lilly and Bono with their respective handlers, Catherine Kelly and Mick Grant. During the reception, Derek Keegan, who was on the organising committee in 1996 when the conference was first held in Ireland, welcomed all and thanked the Lord Mayor. Seamus Bradley, chairman of Mountain Rescue Ireland also presented a Mountain Rescue Ireland plaque to the Lord Mayor to mark the occasion.

There were no other planned activities for the Friday night to allow people to arrive, register and catch up with acquaintances old and new in the bar.

Conference opened on Saturday morning in the Helix – dubbed Ireland's most impressive multi-venue arts complex. Besides welcomes from the Irish Conference Chairman, Kenny Roberts, Seamus Bradley, and Assistant Garda Commissioner for Crime and Security, Noirín O'Sullivan, the opening included a short segment of Irish dancing to set the flavour of the weekend. (See www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOMjLxC6MI0 and www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGwWUblWj6Y). Seamus also took the opportunity to present a



Mountain Rescue Ireland plaque to Assistant Commissioner O'Sullivan. This was followed by David Allan presenting Paul Horder, of Keswick MRT, with a Distinguished Service Award for his service in a variety of roles at team, regional and national levels. The final part of the opening session was the plenary, delivered by Peter Dymond and titled 'Mountain Rescue: Moving forward to the future.'

Through Saturday there were four parallel streams of presentations. To name or highlight any of the talks would be unfair to any of the presenters but categories of presentations included wilderness medicine, looking at how other agencies and other mountain rescue organisations work, water rescue, computer and communications technologies, developments and support for mountain rescue. There were periodic breaks for coffee and lunch to allow delegates to wander around and view the displays from the various vendors attending including APB Mobile Installations, Lyon Equipment, Satmap Systems, Augmenta (ViewRanger), Páramo, Snowsled Rescue, Bound Tree Medical, Rescue 3, Keela International, Mountain Training Ireland, Consolidated Enterprises, Cotswold Outdoor, Decisions 4 Heroes, Specialist Access & Rescue Products, LedCo, and the three national mountain rescue organisations.

The formal Saturday programme finished at 5.45pm and the delegates got a short break before dinner at 6.30pm. An hour later, Ollie Geraghty from Mayo MRT, gave a talk on the team and its involvement in the annual local pilgrimage which can see anywhere between 20,000 to 35,000 people climb Croagh Patrick on the last Sunday in July. What started back in the 1980s as a local event for the team to cover, has developed into a national operation for all Irish MR teams and, recently, even further afield as the PSNI SAR and Calder Valley teams. Ollie's talk concluded with an invitation for other teams to come and visit and about five teams from outside Ireland signed up on the spot. Everyone then retired to the upstairs bar at the Helix for the social part of the conference and the much anticipated raffle. A small band played traditional music in one corner of the bar for those lucky or close enough to hear them! The evening wound up at about 12.30am when the bar was shut and an impromptu sing-song took place before everyone was sent back to their digs by the security staff.

At breakfast on Sunday, it became apparent a number of 'floor' parties had taken place in various accommodation buildings according to rumours flying around and the number of people nursing sore heads. Sunday's programme was more relaxed with four parallel sessions of workshops available and each workshop was offered in two time slots to give delegates the best opportunity to visit as many of their preferred workshops as possible. The workshops were:

- A demonstration of Irish emergency vehicles including incident control vehicles from various services including Mountain Rescue Ireland and helicopters from the Irish Air Corps (the AW-139 and the EC-135). For a video of the helis arriving visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pAit6DxQro
- Software demos from 'Decisions 4 Heroes' and Mapyx
- Water safety
- GPS technologies and applications
- Teaching rope systems
- The SARMAN application on Mapyx

A quick lunch, then everyone came together for the end of the conference and Lyle Brotherton's presentation titled 'A Paradigm Shift.' Lyle's message was to encourage and challenge us to work more closely with other emergency services, and for the three national MR bodies – Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland (MRCofS), Mountain Rescue England and Wales (MREW), and Mountain Rescue Ireland (MRI) to work more closely together. Kenny Roberts and Peter Howells thanked everyone for coming, including speakers, exhibitors, delegates, and the conference and university staff for making it all possible. Kenny presented a Mountain Rescue Ireland plaque to Peter Howells to mark the occasion of the conference being held in Ireland. And, finally, Leeds was announced as the 2012 venue. Conference concluded with a highlights package set to music of still photos taken during the three days of the conference.

It was hard work, and often challenging, but feedback suggests it was all worthwhile. All the conference staff deserve a special mention for their hard work. We hope those attending enjoyed the weekend and took away many new ideas.

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Blue lights and sirens

by Daryl Garfield, MREW Vehicle Officer

In my capacity as Driving Instructor for Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service, and as MREW Vehicle Officer, I recently attended the National Blue Light Users Conference. I have also spoken at length with both the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and Department for Transport (DfT). These activities have now clarified and confirmed my understanding of the use of blue lights and/or sirens and exemptions for mountain rescue purposes.

The combined message from both the DfT, (confirmed by their Legal Department) and ACPO is that mountain rescue **does not have any rights to driving exemptions**. The exemptions specifically are:

- Proceeding through a red traffic light
- Travelling the wrong side of a keep left/right sign
- Speed.

Mountain rescue **does** have the authorisation to display blue lights (under the Road Vehicle Lighting Regs 1989) and use sirens fitted to vehicles (under the Road Vehicle [Construction & Use] Regs 1989). This authorisation is granted as MR is a specifically named organisation within the two acts (amended January 2010). This allows us to fit both lights and/or sirens to mountain rescue vehicles and make safe progress through traffic, **although abiding by all traffic law** at all times.

The confusion arises in that the fitting and use of the lights and/or sirens is a separate issue to the use of exemptions when driving a vehicle, VAT and Vehicle Excise Duty exemptions.

Mountain rescue has previously used (and currently continues to use) its registered 'Ambulance' status on vehicles to exercise the exemptions (for ambulance purposes). This, according to DfT and ACPO was, and is, not the intended use for which the legislation was written and that for a vehicle to be using exemptions as an Ambulance, that vehicle must be acting solely at the behest of an NHS authority

With regards to team members who are (or have been) employed in one of the three statutory services (Police, Fire, Ambulance) and are authorised Emergency Response Drivers within that organisation, they cannot

transfer their use of exemptions to MR. Also they cannot respond in a work vehicle (under exemptions) to their mountain rescue base or directly to the incident when called out for MR purposes.

Additionally, there have been instances of individuals within MR fitting lights and/or sirens to their personal vehicles. This **should not be, and is not**, condoned by MREW, DfT or ACPO. Only vehicles that are owned, maintained, insured etc by the team are authorised to carry such equipment. Persons who fit and use lights and/or sirens on personal vehicles will not have the backing of MREW, could face prosecution and find their insurance invalid if involved in an incident.

I am in the process of forming a vehicle subcommittee to look at a number of vehicle related matters - this committee will have input from both ACPO and DfT.

In summary, there are two specific statements issued by MREW, which concur with that of DfT and ACPO:

• 'Mountain rescue may have blue lights and sirens fitted to its official vehicles and can utilise these to make safe progress through traffic and for protecting a scene. Mountain rescue cannot use exemptions (ie. Red traffic lights, Keep Left/Right signs and exceeding speed limits)'.

• 'Mountain rescue team members should not under any circumstances fit blue lights and/or sirens to their own personal vehicle or any vehicle not specifically owned, maintained and insured solely for mountain rescue purposes.'

The guidance issued by MREW is given to protect mountain rescue drivers when using lights and/or sirens. It should be noted that the legislation is open to interpretation, which

means that each police authority could interpret this differently; secondly, there is currently no stated case law to refer to. However, it is not the intention of MREW to have an MR driver become the first stated case to test the legislation, with the driver possibly facing a custodial sentence - particularly when both ACPO and DfT have made their opinion clear.

Although not stated in legislation, it is the recommendation of MREW that MR drivers undergo some level of basic training, including practical and theoretical defensive driving; and if drivers are to respond under emergency conditions utilising lights and/or sirens to an incident, should also undergo further appropriate training. It is imperative teams are able to demonstrate driver competency, through formal training and must maintain auditable records, including an official register of trained personnel. It is recognised that many teams already adopt this good practice.

It is further recommended that Teams adopt a Driving Policy which clearly states the terms under which their drivers will operate, and this policy must be clearly communicated to team drivers.

I am currently in the process of liaising with police authorities with regards to their interpretation of the legislation.

I hope this has clarified matters, but if you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at vehicles@mountain.rescue.org.uk.

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For more information or to arrange a meeting please contact Phil Cannell our National Accounts Manager on 01926 649490 or email him at pcannell2@jaguarlandrover.com

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who's who?

My life led to this: Neil Roden

by Tom Richardson

Thanks to an inspirational PE teacher Neil Roden began climbing and hill walking in his early teens with his brother Kevin whilst at school. Later, with David Wright, another school friend he joined the Peak Climbing Club and climbed with great enthusiasm throughout the UK. At 18, as another way of getting out into the hills Neil joined the Edale Mountain Rescue Team.

When he was 29, however, almost without warning he contracted psoriatic arthritis, which is a very painful and disabling condition that severely affects mobility of the hands, feet and joints and causes severe inflammation of the skin. Amongst other things, within two months he had lost all movement of his hands except one finger. He was prescribed potent painkillers, given regular gold injections and steroid injections directly into his joints and UV treatments which continued for years.

When his GP said he should try to keep active perhaps using a bike, he meant an exercise bike, but Neil typically then took up mountain biking!

Determined to 'keep active' he rose to the challenge of his condition and drew up a lengthy and urgent list of Unfulfilled Lifelong Ambitions, which included trekking in Nepal and visiting Everest Base Camp and crossing the Anoch Eagach ridge. When the list was completed, he drew up another, which this time included giving up all his medication. Three years later, this second list was also achieved.

In 1993 he happened to meet his old friends in the Edale MRT, training on Froggatt Edge and volunteered himself for any suitable limited and light duties that might be appropriate. This was not to be because, by 2000, having been a team member and the team training officer he was elected as chairman. His impressive achievements included securing their new HQ, raising the profile of the team and making the financial arrangements more secure.

In 2004 he became the regional representative to Mountain Rescue England and Wales and in 2008 was elected as chairman of the Peak District Mountain Rescue Organisation and also took on the Basecamp support group.

He is still 'keeping active' and, with support from

his wife Lorraine, continues rock climbing, hill walking, mountain biking, running, adventure trekking throughout the world and training in a gym. For his day job Neil works for the Department of Revenue and Customs.

Neil's typical day, in his own words...

My day began typically at 5.45am today. I got up and got myself sorted for the day and we (Lorraine and I) left home at about 6.20am to drive from our village in Derbyshire to the gym in Sheffield. I did a Fitness Challenge class at 7am. It was as usual extremely tough. I then had a quick shower and headed for the office which is not too far away. I had tea and fruit for breakfast at my desk.

I work as a team leader for the National Minimum Wage Team within the Department of Revenue and Customs. I really enjoy my job and like the people I work with. Even when the psoriatic arthritis was at its worst years ago I never took a day off sick from work concluding that, if I did, I might take the rest of my life off.

This morning I began by dealing with a whole load of emails accumulated since yesterday. This always takes time. The next task was a series of one-to-one discussions with each of my team members about progress on individual cases we are working on at the moment. Later in the morning I had to read a series of technical papers on various current cases in the UK.

I nipped out and bought a jacket potato and I took my lunch in the staff room in the office. Over lunch I read the Mountain Rescue Team Incident Reports for 2007 and the Annual Report. I was particularly interested to see the patterns of common injuries and incidents happening in partner organisations.

My lunch breaks are usually taken up with dealing with something to do with mountain rescue or fundraising events. It's about the only time I get to read a lot of the paperwork. In the afternoon I made arrangements and preparations for the staff appraisals and annual forecasts for the forthcoming year end and next year. I left the office at 4.00pm (I work flexi-time) to visit my Mum who is now 78. I try to call to see her on three days a week after work. She doesn't live very far away.

At 6.00pm I was back at the gym. It's pretty unusual for me to visit twice in a day as I tend to have meetings to do with mountain rescue on three or four evenings, and often whole day events at the weekend. This involvement can range from chairing or attending a variety of meetings with other representatives or corporate sponsors, to fundraising events and recruiting new members to Basecamp.

It is even rarer I have a free evening. When I was appointed chairman of the PDMRO I suggested to

Lorraine I might have more free time. She doubted it and she was right!

Despite all of this time I still prefer mountains to mountain rescue and still take every opportunity to get out in the Peak, or away with friends climbing and walking in the Lakes or Scotland at weekends and for short breaks!

At some point between work and the gym I grabbed my dinner, which today just consisted of a sandwich and some bananas. This evening at the gym I did a Light Stretching Class session followed by Lorraine and my first introduction/trial to scuba diving for an hour in the swimming pool. We both thought it was great, but I'm not sure whether we will take it up. The session ended around 10.00pm and we were home just after 10.30 in time for bed and another early start tomorrow!

And for the future?

As one of the original members on the National Fundraising Group I took on responsibility for setting up and administering Basecamp but, happily, I have now passed that responsibility to Lorraine, my long-suffering wife.

My other national responsibility is chairing the Forward Planning Group, looking at where we as an organisation want to be in five to ten years.

Although I climb far less than I used to, very little gives me more pleasure than being out in the hills walking, mountain biking or running. My other passion is travel. I'm fortunate to have been able to spend time in a lot of mountain ranges around the world and experiencing some fascinating cultures.

My new role will present fresh challenges. I see the main part as developing a way of central and coordinated purchasing. Central purchasing will very much be driven by the funds we have available and I will be working closely with other interested parties to ensure what we buy is in the very best interests of the organisation. I hope to put into place a robust tendering process so we get the best possible deal for the specifications we want and don't leave ourselves open to favouritism. I'm acutely aware I won't please all the people all of the time but in my experience people are very forgiving if the price is right.

Coordinated purchasing is also in my plans. From speaking to suppliers, they often have a supply rate of 200 items beyond which they can give very significant discounts. Bulk buying isn't an option many teams have but, by bringing teams together, we can move toward far better deals. There's quite a bit of work to be done on that but I think in time it will be a benefit to all teams.

Tom Richardson's article first appeared in Climb Magazine.

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