

mountain rescue

ISSN 1756-8749

£5.50



AUTUMN 2023 **86**



THE ONLY OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN ENGLAND, WALES, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND



© 2023 - Roy D. Walker - Visuals - CNEAS/CRS Lannemezan

WELCOME TO
ISSUE 86:
 AUTUMN 2023
 Mountain Rescue is the **only**
 official magazine for
 mountain rescue in England,
 Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

Editor: Judy Whiteside
 07836 509 812 • editor@
 mountain.rescue.org.uk

Media & Communications
 Director: Andy Simpson
 07836 717 021 • media@
 mountain.rescue.org.uk

Ad sales: Caroline Davenport
 07726 933 337 • caroline@
 media-solution.co.uk

Proofreader: Gina Rathbone
 ginarathbone.com

NEXT ISSUE
ISSUE 87:
 WINTER 2024

Editorial Copy Deadline:
 Friday 10 November 2023
 Please supply editorial in
 Word and images as JPG,
 EPS or PDF (300 dpi)

Advertising artwork must
 be supplied as font-
 embedded PDF
 (300 dpi) unless otherwise
 agreed with the editor.

Cover story

Wasdale team working with HM Coastguard helicopter on a tricky casualty evac © Chad Dixon/Wasdale MRT.



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

MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND AND WALES IS A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION REGISTERED IN ENGLAND AND WALES NO: 1178090 REGISTERED OFFICE: C/O AZETS HOLDINGS LTD, TY DERW, LIME TREE COURT, MULBERRY DRIVE, CARDIFF GATE BUSINESS PARK, PONTPRENNAU CARDIFF CF23 8AB

inthisissue

conference 2024

To engage, educate and entertain

4 **Judy Whiteside** introduces the emerging themes for the conference plus a few of the speakers – including our pre-dinner speaker, ex-RAF helicopter pilot, Sarah Furness.



8 **Letting go, retirement and mountain rescue:** How to prepare yourself for the inevitable **Pat Holland** (MRI) guides you through the process



28 **Men's mental health:** In the run-up to Movember, Rescue Benevolent Fund partner organisation **Togetherall** talks moustaches...

what's in at a glance

INCIDENT STATS: 7	TEAMS & REGIONS: 33>
FOOD FOR THOUGHT: 8-11	OBITUARIES: 38-39
MREW: 13-24	SCOTLAND: 56-58
WELLBEING: 27-29	WHO'S WHO: 64-66



PETZL RESCUE SOLUTIONS

Every second counts in high-stakes situations — that's why technical rescue operations require skilled rescuers and the best equipment. While training in the Gave River in Gavarnie, France, the CNEAS and CRS rescuers from the town of Lannemezan know they can count on Petzl to provide the high-performance tools they need.



A technical rescue solution that includes the MAESTRO S descender with integrated progress-capture pulley, and SPIN S1 and REEVE pulleys. www.petzl.com



To engage, educate and entertain

conference 2024

Conference 2024: Where 'wellbeing' meets peak performance

JUDY WHITESIDE EDITOR

Being a team member might be voluntary, hugely rewarding but, my goodness, it can be demanding. 24/7 commitment, whatever the weather, whatever the time of day or night. The expectation you will drop anything and everything – work, play, family life – at the ping of a text, every incident just a little bit different to the last. That you will bring to bear an impressive array of skills: casualty care skills, technical rope skills, off-road driving skills, on-the-ground search and in-the-office search management skills, maybe swiftwater rescue skills. And let's not forget the interpersonal skills (even when frankly you're not feeling your most dazzling best – in the middle of a night-long operation, say).

That call comes in, you leave your desk, head out for who knows how long, to deal with who knows what. Perhaps it's a protracted, challenging crag rescue. Perhaps it's a fatality. The search for an extremely vulnerable missing person. Perhaps it's someone you know and love. Hours later you're back at your desk, picking up where you left off, with whatever it was you left off from.

Or maybe you left a family party. You get back and everyone's long since gone home to bed. And you can't sleep because that particularly gnarly rescue just keeps going round and round. So you have a few whiskies. And now you definitely won't sleep. And then you're back 'at your desk' with a thick head and, three hours in, that phone pings again...

Okay, so this might be something of a telescoping of your average 24 hours for narrative effect. But how many teams are edging closer to that scenario? In the busier teams, it's not uncommon to see several call-outs a week, maybe two or three in a day, sometimes quite protracted and challenging. Often back to back. Sometimes simultaneously.

The figures do vary around England and Wales – in fact a comparison between the figures returned by the end of June this year

and the same time last year suggests that some regions have seen a reduction in numbers, but those 'hotspot' numbers continue to mount. In 2022, team members recorded 110,368 hours over 3362 calls for mountain rescue support. Of those, 107 were recorded as dealing with 'fatalities'.

All this in a continually changing world where human nature and developing technology – along with 'casualty' and perhaps public expectations – keep driving us to improve in pursuit of marginal gains.

EVEN DURACELL BUNNIES RUN OUT OF STEAM

We like to think team members are a resilient and hardy bunch. Duracell bunnies. Many of you are triathletes, fitness fiends, regular visitors to the higher mountains and harsher environments of the world, mountaineering professionals. But ask yourself, what sort of impact is the increase in incident numbers, and the more protracted, challenging operations, having on your body. Your energy levels. Your mental health. Your libido even. What sort of effect is it having on your family and close friends? Your ability to earn a living?

How many team members are beginning to pick and choose which calls they can

make – simply because they have other commitments like work and family life. Or they're just too damned exhausted?

How many team members are losing enthusiasm for this voluntary extra 'job' they love, feeling over-stretched and frustrated by the demands placed on their team? How many teams are haemorrhaging volunteers, seeing an increasing turnover in membership? How sustainable is this situation for a mountain rescue service which relies wholly on the commitment, capability and good nature of its volunteers?

Of course, we can continue tweaking our operational procedures and pushing our safety messages. We can talk to the media, engage and collaborate with our commercial partners. And maybe, one day, we'll feel less like King Canute, commanding the rising tide not to touch our feet. But until that day arrives, what can we do to protect ourselves and support our own, and our fellow team members', wellbeing?

WHERE 'WELLBEING' MEETS PEAK PERFORMANCE

Okay, I said it. 'Wellbeing'. We hear that 'wellbeing' word a lot. But wellbeing isn't just about 'not being ill' or 'being happy'. Neither is it fluffy old woo woo. It's not even

necessarily about sharing values, being able to bend or lend a sympathetic ear, or let our hair down together socially – all hugely important, but all reliant on other people and things outside ourselves.

And why, you might be asking, do we need to focus on wellbeing at a mountain rescue conference? Well, the bottom line is, teams can have all the technical training in the world, be toggled up to the nines with high-tech kit, plugged into every passing satellite, but none of that matters if your people fall over.

So this conference is about recognising that our most valuable asset in mountain rescue is our people – the team members, supporters and fundraisers who make it happen – and the idea that we can harness our own physiology to 'unlock new levels of capability and performance'. It's also about building a cohesive team through trusting and developing the inherent qualities of every team member. It's about keeping this amazing organisation (by which I mean the wider community of mountain rescue) sustainable for the future.

And we already have a number of stellar speakers lined up to demonstrate just that.

LINED UP SO FAR...

Dan Scoular will be talking about how equality and diversity are the hallmarks of high-performing organisations. Dan is a Cleveland team member, Army Reservist, and a management consultant who helps organisations implement governance structures. He is an MSc student researching systems for allyship and diversity.

Oliver Patrick will bring his clinical experience as a physiologist to demonstrate how our individual biology affects our performance, including the importance of 'recovery'. Oliver was founder and professional lead of the physiology department at Nuffield Health and co-founder of the world's most advanced health evaluation service on Harley Street. He provides strategic wellbeing consultancy to



Above: Sarah Furness, our keynote Saturday evening pre-dinner speaker. Right, from top: Alan Littlefield, Oliver Patrick and Dan Scoular. Images supplied by respective speakers.



global organisations, affecting services delivered to more than 40,000 employees globally².

Through the concept of 'complete coherence', **Alan Littlefield** will explore the science behind managing physiology to improve performance under pressure, and how to build strong trusting teams. Alan has been a people developer for more than 25 years, and is a Senior Practitioner with Complete³. He's also a keen hiker!

And if you're still asking what any of this has to do with mountain rescue, our evening

keynote speaker is **Sarah Furness**, ex-RAF combat helicopter pilot turned mindfulness trainer and inspirational speaker. Sarah knows what it feels like to be on the frontline, where the skill of staying in the moment – and practising to stay in the moment – was absolutely key to hers and her crew's survival. 'Performance under pressure is NOT instinctive,' says Sarah. We must 'train hard to fight easy'⁴.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ➡



Born from necessity

First introduced in 2008 and used by over 70 rescue teams UK wide, the Kongur MRT Jacket is built with GORE-TEX Pro; for those moments when nothing else matters.



mountain-equipment.co.uk

MR CONFERENCE 2024 CONTINUED

LOTS OF OTHER STUFF TOO...

We will also be exploring some of the other topics currently exercising mountain rescue, including technical matters, insurance and legal concerns, human factors and training, the importance of incident data, digital fundraising and the future for mountain rescue vehicles. Sally Seed will be running media training workshops. We'll have a number of teams offering significant rescue stories and associated learning points. And, as I mentioned in the last issue, we hope to use the mock court room — once we can pin down a suitable 'culprit'.

We will announce further speakers and topics as they are confirmed — and plan to launch our dedicated 'conference' section of the MREW website in November. So you can plan ahead and even book in early. So watch this space! I guarantee you will be engaged, educated and entertained. ☺

REFERENCES

- ^{1,3} complete-coherence.com
- ² oliverpatrick.com
- ⁴ sarahfurness.com

A REMINDER OF THE TRACKS AND THEMES

- **The Frontline** (All things medical: Drugs, Techniques; Fatal Incidents; Dealing with Catastrophic Team Member Injury; Comms & IT systems; Train the Trainer...)
- **Building a Sustainable Future** (Preserving Our Outdoor Environment; Building Sustainable Bases; Clothing; Working with Government and Colleagues to Ensure Continuity; Change Management; Inspiring the Next Generation; Train the Trainer also fits here...)
- **Wellbeing & Human Factors** (Adaptability, Improvisation and Resilience; What Can Go Wrong; Building Coherence; Building a Stronger Team; Risk Management; Shared Values; Benevolent Fund; Mental Health Challenges; Assist Training...)
- **Safety Management, Indoors and Out** (Research & Development; Insurance; Technical Side of Rescue (eg. Rope Rescue, Swiftwater, Highline, Helicopter, Off-Road Driving; and Train the Trainer also fits here...)



email us at conference@mountain.rescue.org.uk for sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities

Incident Figures: National Status Summary: January through to 30 September 2023 *

* Sorted according to geographical region and by closed incident reports. Dog associations listed separately.

Lake District	North East	Peak District	South Wales
Cockermouth 59	Cleveland 39	Buxton 90	Brecon 64
Coniston 50	North of Tyne 29	Derby 60	Central Beacons 78
Duddon & Furness 52	Northumberland 64	Edale 121	Longtown 33
Kendal 41	Swaledale 36	Glossop 33	Western Beacons 30
Keswick 95	Teesdale & Weardale 28	Kinder 31	205
Kirkby Stephen 13	196	Oldham 30	
Langdale Ambleside 98	North Wales	Woodhead 65	South West England
Patterdale 44	Aberdyfi 42	430	Avon & Somerset 33
Penrith 21	Aberglaslyn 58		SARA 35
Wasdale 140	Llanberis 256	Peninsula	68
613	North East Wales 44	Cornwall East 19	
Mid Pennines	Ogwen Valley 135	Cornwall West 16	South West England
Bolton 41	South Snowdonia 44	Dartmoor Ashburton 35	Avon & Somerset 33
Bowland Pennine 45	579	Dartmoor Okehampton 22	SARA 35
Calder Valley 41		Dartmoor Plymouth 12	68
Holme Valley 60		Dartmoor Tavistock 23	South West England
Rossendale & Pendle 47		Exmoor 33	Avon & Somerset 33
234		160	SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England
			Avon & Somerset 33
			SARA 35
			68
			South West England

*As presented to the Mountain Rescue Conference 2022, in Leeds.

Letting go, retirement and mountain rescue*

PAT HOLLAND SOUTH EASTERN MRA, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

This is both a work in progress and a personal view and not the official view of my team or MRI, or any other body. You may disagree partially or totally with this, as you wish. If you think I have offended you, your team policies or culture, please accept my apologies. This topic is really focused on those of us in middle and later life, it may or may not be useful to those here who are younger. I am using my own experiences, training as a coach and reading.

My purpose is not to recommend anything to you but rather to simply put issues on the table. There are certain topics we tend to keep private in life, and in our team, but there comes a point when there's benefit in thinking about them and discussing them, semi-openly, tactfully and not personally. Some of the frameworks I outline may be of use, but personal change can be a challenge. It is so easy to be positive about change, like abseiling, when you are not faced with it yourself.

So where are you now in MR? Are you in your early stage, enthusiastic and able to run up mountains? Midway, perhaps, with the list of incidents attended beginning to blur. Or in senior stage? Is everything going well? Are you under pressure, beginning to think about your long-term future in mountain rescue? Are you nearing, you think, the last circuit of the race, due to other commitments or simply age? Have you occupied several senior positions, perhaps wondering now about what's next?

We're all getting older, and perhaps more sensible. We are less able to do what we used to, either physically or because of other commitments. Meanwhile, operations, technology and techniques change and we have to also, but is this beginning to become a bit of an effort? We have other responsibilities in life. Does being the call-out officer have to be accommodated with duties at home? Teams are getting busier and busier. Far more people seem to be heading to the hills. Is there a point at which the responsibilities and hassle become too much? Rescuing people is one thing, but what about the team administration and governance? At what point can we decide we've done our duty and we can let

someone else do it? Are we still fully committed to MR? Do we need to take a break? Do we need to step down or step away? How is it for senior office holders? What happens when you've done it all?

Ask yourself what's prompting this decision, what's changed for you since you joined the team? Why are you considering it now and, if it happens, how should it happen? What are your choices?

We can stay as we are in our team or we can try to change how we are in our team. We can design our own place and role by accepting or not accepting tasks and responsibilities. How are you with that? We can take a break from MR for a set period or purpose. Is this possible? As a senior officer holder, we can step down from that role and either take on another role or retire from MR totally.

While facing these choices there are any number of possible issues, emotions and thoughts which might occur to you:

- You love being part of mountain rescue (or not), feel a loyalty to your team (or not)
- You believe in helping people in trouble (or maybe get tired of repeated 'stupidity')
- You can't give it the time anymore or just don't want to. Perhaps work and family demands mean it has to go
- Something or someone in the team really annoys you, or you find yourself getting irritable with team members when they don't do as you want
- You feel side-lined, or want to move on to something new
- You're beginning to dread call-outs
- Is it time to make a change? How long do you stay in charge? When is it time to go? How do you do that?

WHY WOULD YOU STAY?¹

Questions to consider as you think about your future in (or out of) mountain rescue, might include:

- Will you continue to get whatever it is you want/need from MR, miss your friends and the camaraderie... the things you enjoy. Perhaps it gives your life meaning, status, learning opportunities, CV points. You feel needed, respected
- Perhaps you could find another role in the team, an intermediate position between 'Go' and 'Stay'
- Circumstances could change again... you've put so much in, why walk away?
- Perhaps you're feeling 'forced' out?!
- And what would you do if you left?

HOW DO YOU DECIDE?

Personal change can be a major challenge, and it is all very well to advocate a cool look at things, but emotion is bound to be involved also. There are lots of frameworks and tools to use, but the important thing is to use something that helps you to separate emotion from data. Both are important, but they tend to cut across each other. Use of tools such as de Bono's Six Hats² is recommended.

It is of course possible to step back a bit, by either slowly redesigning your commitment and deciding what jobs you take on or not. You can do it more overtly by discussing with the team leader but, as a senior member this is more difficult. Will your stepping back create a gap which might take time to be filled?

PROS AND CONS TO A BREAK, TEMPORARY AND PLANNED

Positives:

- A break relieves pressure for you, at home or at work, gives you space to consider what you've contributed — was it too much, too good? Maybe your work will be recognised more in your absence? Will you be told?
- Taking a break gives your body and mind time to calm down and relax. Remember, we get holidays from work, so why not from MR? A break gives you time to consider what is your best role in the team and maybe the wider world of mountain rescue in the future? It allows you to drop a particular job you've been 'trapped' in, maybe go on a long holiday to consider your plans.
- It gives others a chance to step up as deputy, knowing you will return.

Negatives:

- Will you come back once you feel the pressure gone and will there be a place to come back to?
- Will you get involved in something else, other things and values you'd put aside?
- Will you realise how much — too much — you were doing?
- Will you get a second chance to do more or better, or less?
- Will you be seen as having let the team down? How will you be regarded for having taken time off?
- You may currently not only be responding to call-outs but directing them, or responsible for an important function like training or vehicles or keeping team governance going. Who will replace you? How long will you be gone for? Will your task have to wait until you come back? Will you be faced with a pile of work when you do come back?

HOW WELCOME WOULD YOUR STEPPING BACK BE?

Does your team have a process, formal or informal, for people on short or long breaks coming back? Is there a rule or practice regarding set terms of office in your team? On the positive side, this can offer the chance for the rotation of skills, sharing of load, reducing stress and exhaustion. On the negative side, there's a pressure to having a finite term, getting it all done within the timescale, a developmental load in making change, the potential lack of candidates — perhaps there's no one left who hasn't already had the job!

Is the team and leadership sympathetic to people standing down for a while — or is it frowned on or regretted? What's happened when other people have taken a break before you? What terms, written or implied, did you join the team on — was taking a break ever mentioned?

Is there guilt, disappointment or other emotion associated with the move? As a senior team member, think about why you are taking the break: is it because of matters external or internal to the team and what will the effect on the team be?

LEAVING PERMANENTLY AND LETTING GO 'WELL'

Leaving for good can be a big step. What are family and friends, your advisers (medical, financial, whatever) saying to you? Maybe consider whether being a team member is good for you. What do you stand to gain and lose by letting go? What options do you have? Are you being realistic about your MR commitment? Is it personal to you or someone else, conflict or need? What is the real/deep reason you want to go? Are you letting something be too important or is it a principle you must respect? Do you care too much or too little about something?

Is now the right time or could it be gradual? Do you go on a high point, while the 'going is good' and what will you lose, as a senior member, if you leave the team?

Try to be dispassionate about it but understand your emotions and those of your teammates. Don't just walk out: give appropriate notice and finish up tasks as best you can. Thank the people who helped you and give them a chance to thank you — it's important for them and for you. Offer to do a handover (but don't be disappointed if it doesn't happen). Respect their concern for you leaving an important part of your life. Consider taking a long break, thinking about whether you want to keep in touch and how.

HOW NOT TO LET GO AS AN 'ORDINARY MEMBER'

Don't just crash out and disappear leaving no clue as to why, or walk out in the middle of a project. And resist the temptation to walk out after a row, sending emails to team members about the row or — worse — creating bad publicity for the team. Ask yourself whether this would be good for the casualty, the team or you.

By the same token, don't 'go legal' or

complain to other public bodies and funders without considering the consequences for all, including casualties. What will the end result of a public row be for you? Isolation? Systems tend to protect themselves and when you're gone you're gone, so think about why you're doing this, and who it is you are annoyed with.

Don't keep threatening to leave (eventually being asked to perhaps), or keep on pointing out how others are getting it wrong. Finally, don't leave then keep hanging about or coming back.

RETIRING FROM SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Perhaps you're senior leadership in a team or groups of teams, or national body, wondering about retirement. Think about how you got to this position. Where are you going and where do you want to be? Not to underestimate the impact of retirement on an 'ordinary member', do senior members lose more? I am assuming here that your retirement comes at the end of your career, in relation to age, but maybe not. What does it mean being a senior member when external circumstances force your retirement?

Being a senior office holder can bring many things: status, recognition, identity, information, power, achievements, influence, non-operational longevity, networking and mentoring opportunities. The downsides can be exhaustion, burn out, stress, 'drivers under pressure',³ possessiveness, life imbalances, cynicism, 'dreading the pager', MR becoming meaningless, less caring?

Is there someone in the team to give you advice or are you in the 'bunker' on your own? How long does your team expect you to hold that post? How long do you want to hold it? How long will you be able to? How do people tend to step down, or sideways, in your team — is there a process, or is it generally achieved through revolts, coups and plots? Or do people simply drop by the wayside, exhausted?

Positives of ending a senior career in MR:

- You get out on an achievement
- You'll have less stress and responsibility
- You can hand over to someone good
- You get time to think and do other things.

And some of the negatives:

- You don't want it to end, really enjoy being in charge — especially the operations — unsure what you will be once you've left

¹ Sharp, R., 'The Heroes of Mountain Rescue', *The Scots Magazine*, January, 2018, new series, vol. 186 ² mindtools.com/ajlpp1e/six-thinking-hats ³ One psychological theory sees us as having Drivers (Try Hard, Hurry up, Be Perfect, Please People, Be Strong) which are how we work. Under stress however, this can overpower us.



PLAS Y BRENNIN

NATIONAL OUTDOOR CENTRE

GET QUALIFIED

WITH OUR NGB & LEADERSHIP TRAINING

BOOK YOUR COURSE THIS WINTER



WWW.PYB.CO.UK

"I loved the combination of great coaching, accommodation and kit. I really liked Dave's coaching style. My skills improved and my confidence improved even more."

- PLAS Y BRENNIN COURSE PARTICIPANT



LETTING GO, RETIREMENT AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE CONTINUED...

- You've so much to give still, so much expertise and knowledge...
- Who do you hand over to? Is there a succession policy, an heir/heirress apparent?
- Is your leaving unwillingly forced on you by health issues?
- Was it a coup? Do you really want to fight to stay in office? Maybe this was done to your predecessor too... or are you being paranoid, hypersensitive, over-vigilant, defensive, hostile — or simply stressed? And will it get stronger as you stay on?
- Are you trying to create a monument, to yourself, or someone else — and why? Your 'legacy' might be painfully renounced by your successor. Will they dump your project, change it, or maybe even take it over and claim it as their own? Consider what would be wrong with them taking it on and making a success of it. Your successor can gear up in advance of their term and you might not appreciate it. Consider making a contract with them: 'You stay quiet before the election, and I will stay quiet afterwards'.

LEAVING SENIOR LEADERSHIP: PREPARATION, PROCESS AND DEALING WITH THE AFTERMATH

Prepare yourself to leave. Don't say anything about leaving until you are absolutely ready. Nor should you confuse exhaustion with a desire to retire. Get used to the idea first. Identify and mentor potential successors and identify markers eg. 'I will go when xyz happens'. Talk (and listen) to those who've done it already.

Maybe do a retirement course at work, start designing and implementing the 'new you': what will you do to age productively and happily? How and when will you go?

Once you've announced you are going, authority seeps away very fast. Day one is about you, day two about the team, day three or four you will be discounted or ignored in some way, you'll be a 'caretaker control' (no new policies or changes but operationally still in control), and you may have to work hard to keep even this in place. Your offers to brief your successor may not be taken up or appreciated. You may only get a few phone calls — or none at all.

Reality will hit as you walk out the door after the AGM, hand over keys, empty the car boot of gear, even more so when you wonder what to do with all your notes, records, whatever.

There are ways of 'letting go', and your team will have done this before. There may be a thank you ceremony, but this is about their needs as much as yours. Some people refuse it — it can unsettle the organisation, and you might regret it later — but it can also have a positive function. Have it three or four weeks later to give yourself time to have dealt with the immediate emotions and avoid giving a long detailed speech about every incident. Simply thank everyone. You can write a history later.

Bear in mind that although the constant floods of emails will end — so too will detailed insider knowledge about the team. You might accept that leaving will be an end of power, authority, role, status and other

things you have foreseen, but it might also mean the end of something you have not foreseen that you later miss. Once on the 'outside', you may go through the various stages of grief, perhaps with initial relief and joy. You will have to be gracious in response to various comments about 'taking it easy' or 'living the dream' when you are not. Change isn't easy, you will have to create a whole new set of habits, procedures and meanings: a new or partly new you.

There is a process, getting used to the idea of retirement, then getting used to retirement, making retirement work, despite possible disenchantment, boredom, feeling useless, being very busy with things you've avoided up to now. Travel, family, friends and big projects can help you make that break. Have a To Do list ready, things to keep you busy while your head settles.

The crucial issue is to age productively (as much as you want) and happily. Maybe a phased retirement or change of roles in MR would suit you better, using your knowledge and experience. It's about letting go in a dignified way, developing a new relationship with your team, whatever shape that might make, so consider your values. What do you stand for and what outcome do you want in MR? How can you express these values, in retirement and by agreement with the new post holder? What project is there that needs you or allows you to express those values? If you find a new niche, can you change to fit it and will you be happier with a lesser role? While you might like to be as you were before your last role, the results of your decisions will still be around. It's hard to leave the past behind totally.

THE CHALLENGES OF TAKING ON A NEW ROLE IN THE TEAM

You might miss the old confidence and authority but you'll have new skills to learn. It can be exciting, bringing old skills into a new area, allowing you to act as a mentor, coach or development worker, using your knowledge and experience and social skills, rather than power or physical skills — and having several 'careers' is now the norm.

All this depends on agreement with your new leadership but it can keep you in touch with the team at a level of work that suits you and gives you role after a detoxing break. And who knows what might happen in the future with other roles emerging? Being known as someone who has successfully let go and is in a 'good place' may open up new opportunities. On the other hand, in time, you may decide your new role is no longer fulfilling. You may not know new members of the team, won't be on the front line. There's no buzz. You will have to accept the authority of team leader who may have less knowledge of team affairs and beyond.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Self-awareness and honesty are required: **avoid being a bitter Elder Lemon!** Avoid being mean to younger members just because you can: they'll bite back eventually!

Respect the role of current management and don't cut across them. No leader is perfect, but we all try our best — some things work, some don't but the team still responds to the call-out.

Avoid rows with current management, even if it means ducking an issue, and avoid becoming the core of an opposition movement. Resist the temptation to say 'I told you so' or 'In my day...'

Be a coach, not a grouch: better to be respected as a mentor with good stories and advice than dismissed as a 'grouch' — but avoid becoming a 'strict teacher' or 'parent' as a mentor. And avoid being used by team members as the 'rescuer' in a row.

Elder lemons may be bitter because they're not well, or challenged by modern life... or perhaps they were always mean. Mountain rescue people are not always sweetness and light. Remember, that if we want the team to continue to need us, we may need to be less direct than in the past. Youth must have its day also.

Know when to stop riding your 'hobby horse' regarding some aspect of mountain rescue — make your point and then be part of the solution, not the problem.

IN CONCLUSION

- Do retirement courses several years ahead and just before
- Plan when and how you will go, don't let it just 'happen' to you
- Consider working with an independent coach or individual to plan the process and be prepared to have to deal with some
- Talk to friends in the team and other retired team leaders
- Go for a very long walk or similar to clear your head after, to detox and before taking on any new roles
- Let go, move on (maybe several times). ☺

REFERENCES:

Cloud, H, 2010, *Necessary Endings*, New York, 2010.

de Vries, M K, 2003, 'The Retirement Syndrome: The Psychology of Letting Go', *European Management Journal*, vol. 21, no.6, December, 2003, 707-716.

Sharp, R, 'The Heroes of Mountain Rescue', *The Scots Magazine*. January, 2018, new series, vol. 186.

pathollandchange@gmail.com 00 353 87 23 33 496.



PAT HOLLAND IS A PAST TEAM LEADER AND CHAIRMAN OF HIS TEAM, SOUTH EASTERN MOUNTAIN RESCUE, IRELAND, AS WELL AS PAST CHAIR OF MRI AND LEADER OF MRI LEADERSHIP COURSE. HE IS CURRENTLY PLANNING HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE 'DAY JOB' AND AS PART OF THE PROCESS THINKING ABOUT HOW WE DEAL WITH RETIREMENT IN MR.



Insurance that's ready to respond

Gallagher is proud to be the new insurance broker for Mountain Rescue England and Wales. We're ready to protect your organisation too.

For any insurance queries, please contact:

T: 0121 203 3128
E: MREW@ajg.com

AJG.com/uk The Gallagher Way. Since 1927.



Gallagher

Insurance | Risk Management | Consulting

Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registered Office: Spectrum Building, 95 Bythamwood Street, Glasgow, G2 7AT. Registered in Scotland. Company Number: SC109929. 19091-2023 Insp. 06.09.2024. © 2023 Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. | GGBRET627



LEDLENSER

NEW

TRULY HANDS-FREE


Dims and Focuses Automatically*

Introducing our all-new HF8R rechargeable headlamps with cutting-edge auto-dimming and auto-focusing technology. In critical moments, every second matters. Stay hands-free and focused on the mission with HF8R headlamps – the ultimate light for search & rescue. Check out the full HF-Series lights at www.ledlenser.co.uk

ADAPTIVE LIGHT BEAM
Patent pending

DIGITAL ADVANCED FOCUS SYSTEM
Patent pending

t: 01344 876 222
e: sales@ledlenser.co.uk
www.ledlenser.co.uk



NEW in the online shop

JIGSAW PUZZLES

Raising funds for rescue

WELLBEING **ADVENTURE** **WOMEN WALK**

TRUE STORIES **YOUNG READERS**

HEADING INTO AUTUMN NOW, AND THOSE LONGER NIGHTS, WHY NOT HEAD TO OUR ONLINE BOOKSHOP AND SUPPORT MOUNTAIN RESCUE?

Nothing better than a good book to while away those longer evenings. Why not check out our bookshelves for a range of titles including wellbeing advice, true adventure stories, women talking about women in the outdoors, and fun books to encourage younger readers – the next generation of hill enthusiasts – safely into the outdoors. We've also got a couple of books by those who took the lead in the Thai cave rescue operation. Plus there's still plenty of the usual titles on navigation, skills and mountain adventures. Or how about a good old-fashioned 1,000-piece jigsaw for those rainy days? Our stock of jigsaws puzzles, featuring Angela Harding's beautiful illustrations make the ideal (dare we say it?) Christmas gift. With each purchase you'll be making a donation of around 30-40% of the cover price. We promise. Go to shop.mountain.rescue.org.uk and see for yourself.

MEET THE VICTORINOX SWISS CHAMP

The Victorinox Swiss Champ wears its original Swiss Army Knife design with pride. Over 120 years after the iconic knife's inception, each piece in the Medium Pocket Knife Collection still possesses the DNA of its ancestors: inspired functionality and impeccable reliability. The Swiss Champ boasts 33 separate functions. Alongside the various blades, cutting tools and screwdrivers, you will find many unique features. The fish scaler, corkscrew, bottle and can openers are essential utensils for food preparation in the wild. The magnifying glass, punch/sewing awl, pliers and tweezers are ready for when you need to stitch in time. The key ring attachment allows you to keep even more of your accessories together in one spot. Victorinox pack decades of design experience into this handheld model, creating the most adaptable and functional version of their iconic Swiss Army Knife yet.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE VICTORINOX SWISS CHAMP FROM: SWISS-STORE.CO.UK

VICTORINOX



Review of the Mountain Rescue Casualty Care CPD weekend

ALISTAIR MORRIS MREW MEDICAL DIRECTOR

In early September, twenty healthcare professionals from the medical subcommittee (MSC) came together with sixty casualty carers for the MREW Casualty Care CPD weekend. The Casualty Care Certificate is a well-respected qualification for team members to enable them to give the best care possible in our environment. Our casualty carers provide the mainstay of treatment for our casualties so the decision of the MSC was to focus the weekend on training and professional development for their needs.



Above and opposite: The venue and some of the scenario and activity from the weekend. Images supplied.

Tariq Qureshi (Wasdale MRT) and David Lee (Western Beacons MRT) took the lead to develop the programme and did the heavy lifting of the organising for the weekend based at the Brockholes Nature Reserve, near Preston. The excellent location provided conference facilities for the initial couple of lectures, great food and good outdoor locations for the numerous skill stations and scenarios.

Aimed at casualty carers with some experience the programme focused on developing the depth of their knowledge and skills. Twenty healthcare professionals from around the country gave up their weekend to come together to deliver the training stations and scenarios. In the feedback this was hugely appreciated by the participants to have such a experienced faculty.

Bringing team members from different teams together also allowed for shared learning between participants as well as from the faculty. For example, some good practice included using wristbands to place on casualties so that medications, doses and times of dosing would be attached the patient and safely make that information all the way to hospital without any errors in communication between.

To get the perspective of a participant, Mick Smith, training lead at Calder Valley SRT gave me his view of the weekend.

'As I walked into the Brockholes Nature Reserve centre, I admit to being a little nervous at the prospect of performing skills

alongside MR members from all over the country. Whilst not a healthcare professional I have been a casualty carer for many years and gained some experience, but I was still nervous. As I looked at the MR logos gathered around it was clear that teams were represented from far and wide. Colleagues from Exmoor, some six hours' drive away, made me appreciate this was a local event for me and many had already made a great effort just getting there.

'Nerves quickly subsided inside the venue which was welcoming and relaxing with plenty of tea and coffee awaiting. The centre which was to be our base consisted of a lecture theatre and several classroom spaces set around a courtyard on a floating pontoon set in the lake. Large windows allowed the birdlife to drift up to the buildings and offer their voices to the proceedings. Picnic tables in the courtyard and the sunny weather made for a very relaxing start.

'Organisation and registration were efficient and soon we were ushered into the lecture theatre for introductions and a couple of indoor sessions on drowning and ROLE. During registration we had been divided into groups and it was now time to meet the rest of our cohort and move into the sunshine.

'Small group sessions followed as we moved easily and efficiently around the buildings and site to practical demonstrations learning topics such as use of a mechanical CPR device, safety and correct use of oxygen cylinders, triage, and many more.

'A down and dirty, hands-on session on how to stem catastrophic bleeding saw members packing a realistic squirting wound under the watchful eye of expert medics. The sessions flowed smoothly, and it struck me how quickly my group of members — all from differing teams — gelled as a team and created a safe learning space.

'A takeaway-style salad lunch in the sun was excellent. The quality of food was great on both days.

'Further sessions followed lunch with more great topics. It felt like I was covering the whole casualty care course in one day. I drove home excited to see what the following day would bring.

'On day two, we were again efficiently divided into new groups and briefed on our tasks — in sunshine and clear skies. Off we went as a new team, out into the nature reserve for various medical and trauma scenario stations. At each station we were briefed, and members stepped forward to lead in the various roles of casualty carer, scribe or support, to tackle the 30-minute session. Once again it felt like I was working alongside my own trusted team members as we all pitched in to support each other and resolve the challenges. We were guided and observed by medical professionals from teams throughout the country. Each session was debriefed, and learning reinforced in a very positive manner.

'Watching my colleagues perform I was



struck by the dedication of team members who were striving to be their best as casualty carers and deliver the best care possible. It was hard to remember that we were all volunteers. It was also really refreshing to observe how other teams performed and see their equipment of choice.

'I saw several examples of great practice used by others which I have carried away for use both personally and for my own team's development. It was a great weekend of learning in a supportive and relaxed learning environment and my nervousness was misplaced. Organisation and course content was well selected and delivered. It was a pleasure to work amongst colleagues from across the country and a privilege to receive such high-quality tuition from a cohort of medical experts from around the country. I recommend all casualty carers put this on their attendance list. Thanks to all those that funded, supported, delivered and organised this event. I thoroughly enjoyed it.'

I would like to give my thanks to Tariq and David for all the hard work in organising this excellent weekend, the faculty for making the weekend such a success, Langdale and Ambleside MRT for financially supporting the weekend for casualty carers across the country and finally all the participants for being happy to get stuck in to get the best out of the weekend.

The next weekend will be in 2025 — if you are casualty carer who wants to develop your skills then this weekend is for you. ☺

Update from Mike Margeson on operational matters

The recent sad and tragic loss of our Patterdale colleague and friend Chris Lewis reminds us all that the mountains are not benign and mountain rescue volunteering is not without risk. It highlights the importance of our work on risk management, in particular the sharing as widely as possible across teams of lessons learned from 'near miss' incidents. Although we have become much better at this there is still, in some teams, the silo or 'keep within the team' mentality when something goes wrong.

We have seen a very busy summer season across many of our regions with the first six months in the Peak District reporting ten percent increase on the same point last year. Teams in the Lakes and North Wales also reported a busy summer. Scottish Mountain Rescue too has seen a busy summer period.

There is clearly a year-on-year steady increase, so the work on safety messaging is vitally important. Significant progress has been made by the BMC Partnership group and there is a real will and support to put in place a Mountain Safety Forum mirroring the well-established equivalent in Scotland. An application has been made to Sport England and I was invited by the BMC Partnership to make a presentation to support that application. The group recognises the urgent need for more safety messaging and will hold the first meeting and set up of the Mountain Safety

Forum in early November, whether funding is successful or not. This is a very positive initiative for mountain rescue, if 20-25% of call-outs are what we classify as 'human error' and potentially avoidable.

Other work with partners includes meetings with the Met Office who are reviewing their mountain forecast and safety messaging. They will be invited to join the Mountain Safety Forum as they have specialist knowledge.

This is my last report as Operations Director as I am standing down as a national officer at the November meeting. Challenges for my successor will be to reinvigorate both the national Training Day and the Team Leaders Workshop Day — both of which have been very successful in the past; to ensure that the new Mountain Safety Forum receives our full support and that our Peer Review programme is reviewed and continued. ☺

MREW WORKS WITH MOUNTAIN HERITAGE TRUST TO CREATE HISTORY

TERRY TASKER MHT TRUSTEE



Today's happenings are tomorrow's memories and history! More than ever there is opportunity to record what is happening through written notes, digital pictures and videos, social media storybooks, oral interviews and so on. We often talk about remembering, describing artefacts and recreating incidents in time, but sometimes we lose sight of a rather important fact: today is tomorrow's past. More specifically, the happenings of today are the memories and the stories we want to capture for the future. A simple photograph can bring back rich memories, feelings and thoughts on a particular incident or activity. As Dr Seuss said, 'Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory.'

Just looking back at the MREW activities and projects, history is in the making and it needs to be captured as some are already doing. Mark Lewis is helping to set up a Vimeo site to host old films. Dave Freeborn has been sorting old rolls of photo film to be digitised, the MREW

website carries 'fact file' pages about aspects of mountain rescue and many individuals are acting as 'heritage ambassadors', capturing conversations with colleagues whilst the memories are still fresh in their minds.

At the Mountain Heritage Trust (MHT), we now have new, enthusiastic trustees with the right skills and knowledge who can help capture the heritage we are looking for which shows that we have such varied and interesting aspects of being in the mountains. The message, therefore, is to 'keep looking and keep recording' what you are doing as this will all become your heritage and history as we move into the future, and the Mountain Heritage Trust will be supporting this.

It is hoped in 2024 to start seriously combining the work done in capturing this MREW history with resurrecting the heritage project proposal, so watch this space. (For more information on MHT, go to mountain-heritage.org.) ☺



Above: Some of the MHT Trustees and Patrons at first new board meeting June 2023

Update from **Phil Ridley** on national training matters

It has certainly been an interesting and busy four months since taking over the national training officer role. The usual training topics continue to be undertaken and reviewed and new subjects are being considered as MREW looks to maintain its offering of relevant and appropriate training for all its members. The looming challenge for the organisation is still going to be how to finance this, especially as the LIBOR financial support which has been enjoyed over the last decade comes to an end.

The national strategic training review is underway — thank you to the regional training officers who have begun the process of canvassing their regions and teams. I've spoken to a number of regional and team training officers already, and hope to meet others over the coming months. It's encouraging to have the conversations with regions especially as training needs can differ. I've always believed that training is vital and constantly evolving as new challenges present themselves, which is why I'm looking forward to receiving feedback. Included with this is continuing the 'Duty of Care and Governance' project along with a wider proposal for training record keeping. The aim is to collate all the responses and to discuss further at the national training subcommittee meeting in November, where the next stage of the review will be to analyse and develop ideas/recommendations through a number of assigned working groups.

The Hill Member and Party Leader Guidelines, last issued in 2012, are currently being reviewed, with a draft update to be presented to the training committee in November before being put out to teams for consultation.

I can also confirm that progress is being made with SAR-H and Water MOD1, while other topics remain on the radar and will be actioned as soon as possible. Thank you to the officers and members who are actively involved (and to those who have offered), with reviewing and organising these particular topics. Just a few of the recent MREW courses:

- In August, an updated Media course was successfully held in Manchester. With additional interest and enquiries from some teams, plans are underway to organise another one next year. If anyone is interested in delegate places please let either myself or Sally Seed know (Sally via pr@mountain.rescue.org.uk).
- September's MREW Cascare weekend in Preston consisted of a number of workshop sessions, all well received. Thank you to all involved in its organisation and delivery. A full report from Alistair on the previous page.
- Thank you to all who continue to deliver the Search Planning Management courses (SPM1, SPM2, SFS). A number of regional courses have been delivered this year with several more still to happen before the year end.

As we all know, and hopefully agree, the nature of some training courses allows for networking and socialising across the wider organisation, sharing ideas and experiences that often may not happen at local level. While regional courses have their benefits, so too do some centralised ones, especially when you factor in logistics, accommodation, finance and maintaining the continuity of staff/instructors groups etc. The MREW Party Leader and PDMRO Foundation Courses are just two examples which allow mass engagement from all who contribute and attend. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any training-related issues: trainingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk ☺

TEAM LOGOS, UPDATED BRAND GUIDELINES AND MOODLE...

Reminder that you can now find all the logos – for those teams who use the MREW roundel within their own team logo – plus the updated Brand Guidelines, in a folder on Moodle, under Publications. These include Welsh language versions for those in Wales, plus Supporter and Fundraiser logos in both languages.

Moodle is an easy-to-access resource for medical, training and insurance information, in particular. Here's a quick tour of the key areas to see what you're missing plus guidance on how to register.

The key disciplines listed include **Medical, Search, Water, Safety, Technical Rescue, Leadership and Incident Management, Insurance and GDPR** and a few categories yet to be fully populated. Please note that some areas are restricted to those attending the actual course.

The **Medical** section addresses the legal and medical requirements for training and operations, and there's plenty of resources to download. You'll find stuff relating to the Casualty Care Certificate, a PDF of Casualty Care for Mountain Rescue Edition 2, Revision Notes for Casualty Care, and a section on Anatomy and Physiology containing materials to explain how the human body works and why we do what we do. There's a section devoted to Recognition of Life Extinct in MR, and you'll find meeting minutes here too.

The **Insurance** category is worth a check for the policies and schedules applicable to mountain rescue, and a list of frequently asked questions. And now you can also find a selection of the presentations from the **MREW Conference 2022**.

Finally, Moodle is going through a refresh so expect changes and improvements over the coming months to make it easier to navigate. Have fun! ☺

TO REGISTER



Go to <http://tiny.cc/Moodle4MR> or scan the QR code above and fill in the form **using a team email address** (not role-specific). You'll get an automated email within 30 minutes confirming receipt and, once you're approved, you'll be given a temporary password, which you can change at first log in. Easy peasy. Any issues, email moodlesupport@mountain.rescue.org.uk.

ACCESSING THE TEAMS-ONLY AREA OF THE MREW ONLINE SHOP

The MREW online shop currently allows teams to purchase Covid-19 specific PPE items as well as car stickers and badges. Access is available to all MREW member teams upon request. **Julian Walden** explains.

We would ask that all future PPE requests are submitted this way. As part of this process, we are updating team accounts to ensure that all teams have access to this area of the shop and that we have the correct shipping information on file.

To register your team, please email office@mountain.rescue.org.uk and include the details listed below for your team's designated purchaser, **using an official team email address**. An account will be created for your team and any further information regarding the setting up of this account sent directly to the shop user. The information we need is as follows:

- Full name of proposed team purchaser + team name
- Email (must be a team-specific address)
- Postal address (must be able to receive post/parcels during the working day).

ANY QUERIES OR HELP REQUIRED, EMAIL OFFICE@MOUNTAIN.RESCUE.ORG.UK OR CALL 0330 043 9101 BETWEEN 08.30-17.30, MONDAY TO FRIDAY (PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE IF CALLING OUT OF THESE HOURS).



ACCESS OUR DIGITAL BOOKSHELF



If you're reading the digital version of this magazine, just click on any of the front cover images above and it'll take you straight to that issue. You can also access the 2023 Annual Review by clicking the cover or scanning the QR code (left).

MREW PARTNERS WITH THE WORKPLACE COLLECTIVE

JON WHITE MREW WELLBEING OFFICER

Mountain Rescue England and Wales (MREW) is partnering with The Workplace Collective to undertake a pilot initiative to support the wellbeing of team leaders in MREW.

I am aware that teams use the term 'team leader' in different ways. For the purpose of this initiative, 'team leader' will mean the person in the team who takes overall operational responsibility. We recognise that sometimes this role can feel quite isolated, and we are hoping to develop support.

There will be a monthly online Leadership Support Group which will create an opportunity to share experiences and gain support from other MREW team leaders. The pilot will run two separate groups over a six-month period which will be facilitated by psychologist and therapist Prof Divine Charura and Kerry Slater.

These first two groups will aim to evaluate whether the benefits from membership of a leadership group can have positive therapeutic outcomes on the participants wellbeing and mental health.

In order to achieve this, each group member who voluntarily participates will be asked to undertake online surveys before, during and after the six-month trial and the data will be used to consider the efficacy of the model for the wider organisation's wellbeing strategy.

The two closed groups will have a maximum of eight members each, attendance will be flexible to reflect the challenges of the role in mountain rescue and the members will commit to confidentiality within the group. Leaders that volunteer for this trial will be allocated to groups with peers outside of their immediate geography to research the benefits of cross pollination across the wider organisation.

An online information event will be planned and this will give Charura and Kerry the opportunity to outline the benefits of reflective group work to support leaders and the format of the six-month trial. Thank you to those of you who have already signed up for this. If you would like to clarify or discuss further, please do email me via wellbeing.officer@mountain.rescue.org.uk. We will, of course, be updating on the progress and results in due course. ☺

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE WORKPLACE COLLECTIVE AT THEWORKPLACECOLLECTIVE.CO.UK

LINE-LOK®
The line tensioner to securely lock guy lines

Available in 4 sizes & 8 colours including **Glow in the dark**

Suitable for use in harsh environments from arctic cold to desert heat
Simply pull knee apart to release

cleats.co.uk

Leak Detection Spray

At the press of a button – GOTEC LDB is instantly ready to locate the smallest low pressure leaks from compressed air and every other gas – quickly, reliably, safely and conveniently.

- Non-inflammable
- With corrosion inhibitor
- Non-toxic and biodegradable
- Free from oils, halogens, soaps, metals & CFC's
- Propellant: Compressed Air
- Totally safe to use on equipment, environment & ozone layer
- Can with 360° valve – spray at any angle from upright to inverted
- NATO Stock No: 4910-09-050-4489
- For sub-zero ambient temperatures down to -45°C use GOTEC LT45

Gotec Trading Ltd
Boulton Road, Pin Green, Stevenage, Herts SG1 4QL
Tel: 01438 740400
Fax: 01438 740005
enquiries@gotectrading.com
www.gotectrading.com

SURF & TURF
INSTANT SHELTERS

Robust, light weight
Australian Shelters
for the Event, Exhibition,
Market, Volunteer and Leisure Industry

YOUR TEAM NAME HERE

POP UP SHELTERS
FLAGS • BANNERS • INFLATABLES & MORE

01925 819803
INFO@SURFTURF.CO.UK
WWW.SURFTURF.CO.UK

AVAILABLE IN 5 GRADES, 12 SIZES & RANGE OF COLOURS

PROUD TO SUPPORT MOUNTAIN RESCUE SERVICES ACROSS THE UK

DID YOU KNOW?

SCHILLER UK HAS PARTNERED WITH MOUNTAIN RESCUE TO PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY EMS SOLUTIONS FOR EVERYONE.

SCHILLER
UNITED KINGDOM

USER-FRIENDLY • PORTABLE • LIGHTWEIGHT • COMPACT

CONTACT US TODAY TO DISCUSS YOUR REQUIREMENTS
01333 372150
SALES@SCHILLERUK.COM

Slishman STS-C Compact Traction Splint

BRAND NEW TO THE UK MARKET

- Exclusively available at DS Medical
- One of the smallest and lightest traction splints
- Can be applied in under one minute
- Single connected device
- One size fits all (from small children to large adults)

DS MEDICAL
www.dsmedical.co.uk



WELLBEING INFORMATION

For the family and team members of mountain and cave rescue

Being a mountain or cave rescue volunteer can be mentally and physically stressful. Sometimes we can struggle to cope. It's important to seek help if you feel that you or one of your colleagues need it.

YOUR TEAM SUPPORT NAME AND NUMBER IF YOU NEED A CHAT:

Name:

Contact number:

Other useful contacts:

Togetherall offers anonymous, 24/7 online mental health support for mountain and cave rescue team members. To register, go to:

togetherall.com/joinnow/rescuebenevolentfund or scan the QR code

The Samaritans: Call **116 123** for confidential emotional support, 24 hours a day

Blue Light Together offers support if you're experiencing a personal crisis, feel unable to cope and need support. Help with urgent issues such as:

- Suicidal thoughts • Abuse or assault • Self-harm • Bullying • Relationship challenges

Go to BlueLightTogether.org.uk or call **0300 303 4434** 08:00–20:00 daily

Blue Light Crisis Text Line: Text **BLUELIGHT** to **85258**

CALM: National Helpline for Men: Call **0800 58 58 58**

17:00–midnight to talk about any troubles you are feeling

MIND Mental Health Charity: Infoline: **0300 123 3393** Monday – Friday 09:00–18:00

Information and access to support services for:

- Mental health problems • Where to get help near you • Treatment options available
- Advocacy services

The Rescue Benevolent Fund: Email secretary@rescuebenevolent.fund or go to rescuebenevolent.fund to find out more

For when you need more structured therapy — either physical or emotional — with a defined treatment plan from a professional therapist, you can apply to the fund for financial support

Go to mrew-wellbeing.org.uk for the MREW Wellbeing page



MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND AND WALES
BRITISH CAVE RESCUE COUNCIL

We can all need help sometimes. Don't be embarrassed to ask for it.

The importance of storytelling in charity communications

SARAH MYERS

When making decisions, do you tend to go with your head or your heart? Emotion or logic? You might think the answer depends on the situation or even your personality. In fact, studies have shown we make 90% of our decisions with our emotions. We might use logic to justify that decision, but the choices we make are, more often than not, determined by how we feel.

So, an effective way to get someone to do something is to make them feel something. It's why storytelling in charity communications works so well. A story can transform an intangible, broad or complex issue into something relatable, that connects with people on a human level.

Whether it's the hair-raising details of a cliff-side rescue, a cautionary tale of a lost walker, or a personal profile of a new volunteer, stories are vital part of any mountain rescue team's fundraising toolkit. Sharing stories can help people to understand the work you do, why it's essential and the impact it has on people's lives. In turn, this encourages people to support your work. Importantly, reading about mountain rescue teams in action also inspires new volunteers to join your teams.

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

If you're going to write a strong, emotive and inspiring story about your work, you'll need to talk to the people involved. Here are some tips to get the most out of an interview.

Make sure your questions are 'open' and will lead to more than yes or no answers. For example, instead of 'Do you like hillwalking?' try 'What is it that you like about hillwalking?'

Find the 'colour'. Ask people to tell you what things looked, smelt and felt like. What time of day was it? How was the weather? The more details you collect, the more raw content you'll have to make the story feel real and compelling.

Encourage people to talk about how they were feeling. For example, you might say: 'What happened sounds really frightening. What was going through your head when you realised you wouldn't make it back before dark?' and 'What was your immediate reaction when you saw the rescue team approaching?'

Ask for opinions. Give your storyteller a chance to share their opinions and offer their own views and advice. For example, you could ask: 'What would you say to someone who finds themselves in a similar situation?'

Find out about someone's motivations. You could ask a volunteer: 'What inspired you to join the team?' or 'Why did you decide to organise the fundraising event?'

Remember to chat about your charity. Your story should demonstrate the impact of mountain rescue teams' work, so you might want to ask things like: 'What difference did the team make to your situation?' and 'What would you say to someone thinking of

THINK, FEEL AND DO

When you're writing a story, decide what you want someone to think and feel when they've read it. For example: I want the reader to understand that mountain rescue teams don't just save people stuck up mountains and know about other aspects of our work. I want them to feel inspired by what we do and happy that we're here to help.

What do you want them to do next? For example: I want the reader to go to our website to find out more about becoming a volunteer. Or, I want them to come along to our fundraising event.

making a donation to the mountain rescue charity?' If there's a specific campaign coming up or a key message you'd like to focus on, find out what your storyteller thinks about that issue. For example: 'Do you have any thoughts on mountain rescue's #AdventureSmart campaign?'

LOOK AFTER YOUR STORYTELLERS

One of the most important aspects of charity storytelling is making sure anyone who shares their story with you has a positive experience. Here are a few tips to help you do that.

● **Get 'informed consent':** A storyteller needs to fully understand how you'd plan to share their story and the implications of doing so. For example, if their story is going to be on your Facebook page, they won't be able to control who sees and shares it. Ask permission each time you want to share someone's story somewhere new.

● **Aim to make a storyteller as relaxed and comfortable as possible:** If they're recalling an emotional event, it's important they feel in control of the conversation. Always reassure them that it's not a problem if they don't want to answer a particular question or if they want to stop at any point.



SARAH MYERS IS A FREELANCE COPYWRITER AND EDITORIAL CONSULTANT WORKING IN THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR. HER GUIDE TO STORYTELLING FOR IMPACT WAS PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN 2022.



PR consultant and media trainer **Sally Seed** looks at an aspect of publicity and PR and suggests ideas to build on for the future. This time: **Messaging ahead of the winter months**

I'm hoping that you'll be reading this in late October and, ideally, just ahead of the schools' half term, the clocks changing to GMT and Mountain and Cave Rescue Awareness Day on Sunday 29 October. There are reasons why I mention all three of those, even though the following ideas and suggestions are aiming to be useful throughout the rest of 2023 and into new year.

USING A DATE FOR AWARENESS

The Awareness Day used to be one of the May Bank Holidays but teams were often doing things on that day anyway (including several supporting other events and some with regular collections), and there was a discussion about changing to a date with more significance.

As many teams know, the clocks going back frequently creates problems on that Sunday as people head off into the hills without planning for darkness falling an hour earlier. Different aspects cause the problems: a lack of torches, poor route planning for the length of daylight, a later start than required for the route, or simply a lack of understanding of how dark dark can be in the outdoors.

Using the Sunday after the clocks go back (29 October in 2023), means we can use the hook to give useful safety advice at a key time and keep people safe while also raising awareness of mountain rescue. Cave rescue have used the same date, often targeting university clubs, because late October can be one of the higher risk times for them too.

THE MESSAGING AND TOOLS WE'LL BE USING IN 2023

This year, we're working with OS on some of the messaging, particularly the whole area of route planning and timing for walks. There should be a shared blog and associated social media planning but teams are welcome to create their own campaigns along similar lines, maybe highlighting call-outs at this time of year from the past, or focusing on particularly popular walks and the impact of shorter daylight hours.

Meanwhile, I'm also working on a series of 'What would mountain rescue do?' graphics for social media that focus on torches:



Top left: News type © Spaceheater. Dreamstime.com. Above: One of the graphics for use leading up to Awareness Day 2023 © with thanks to Sarah Harvey.

carrying more than one, using one with red light in dark conditions and avoiding using the torch on your phone to save battery power. Sarah Harvey (former Kirkby Stephen team member), is working on the graphics and I'm hoping you'll already have access to these via the members' group on Facebook since early in October.

Here again, feel free to use the national graphics or create your own — maybe even share relevant video in that group so that other teams can use your materials. If you can create something from a night nav training or from a late night call-out that shows real dark, it could be really useful more generally to get the message across.

LEAD UP TO AWARENESS DAY

Given that the week before Awareness Day is schools' half term holiday in many parts of the UK, it's worth thinking about your communications before the date. Many

families will be planning trips out and possibly holidays in that week so anything you can do to alert them to dangers and explain a few pieces of good advice will help them to stay safe and enjoy their adventures.

And, if you can do that in a 'show not tell' way by asking the right questions (#BeAdventureSmart) and explaining what's safe and how to do it, all the better.

A short and sweet column this issue but I hope it's useful and, if you or your team do something this year that could be shared elsewhere and maybe adapted for 2024, please tag me on social media — @SallySeed on Facebook, @CommunicatorSal on Instagram — and I'll do what I can to share more widely.

And if you'd like to discuss any aspect of this in more detail, please get in touch via sally.seed@stoneleighcomms.co.uk or pr@mountain.rescue.org.uk. Thank you. ☺

Technical Rescue Training for Search & Rescue Teams

AMANZI SAFETY & RESCUE

Training | Safety | Rescue | Advisory

Water Rescue Courses Include:

- Safe Working in Water
- Lifejacket Competent User
- Water & Flood Awareness (Defra Module 1)
- Swiftwater & Flood First Responder (Defra Module 2)
- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Technician (Defra Module 3)
- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Boat Operator (Defra Module 4)
- Management of Water & Flood Incidents (Defra Module 5)
- Water & Flood Team Leader
- Rescues from Vehicles in Water
- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Technician Advanced
- CPD, Refresher and Recertification Courses

Boat Rescue Courses Include:

- Rescue Boat Operator
- Flood Rescue Boat Operator
- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Boat Operator (Defra Module 4)
- CPD, Refresher and Recertification Courses

Rope Rescue Courses Include:

- Safe Working at Height
- Rope Rescue Operator
- Rope Rescue Technician
- CPD, Refresher and Recertification Courses

Instructor Courses Include:

- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Technician Instructor
- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Boat Operator Instructor

All our courses are accredited by Rescue 3 Europe. We offer generous discounts for Search & Rescue organisations and charities.

Amanzi Safety & Rescue Ltd.

Telephone: 08456 439499

Email: info@amanzisaftyandrescue.co.uk

Website: amanzisaftyandrescue.co.uk



Why am I 100 metres over there?

RUSS HORE

It may seem like an odd title but bear with me and I will explain. First, I will dispel two myths.

Myth 1: 'Every point on Earth has a precise Latitude/Longitude':

This may come as a surprise, but this is wrong. There are thousands of Latitude/Longitudes for a point on Earth, depending on how you measure it.

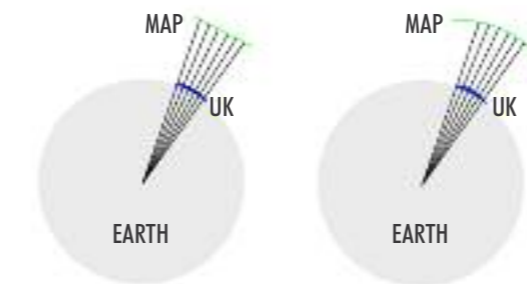
Myth 2: 'The Earth is a sphere':

No, it isn't. But it isn't flat either. It isn't a perfect shape, which is the start of the problem.

I remember sitting in geography class at school looking at the globe in the corner that had Lat/Long lines on it and believing these were definitive. Unfortunately, when you need to give a position on the Earth to a high accuracy, you find this is not the case.

Imagine you wanted to produce a map of the UK. In simple terms you might project lines out from the centre of the Earth onto a flat piece of paper and draw on the map what the line hits on the Earth to produce the map we know and love. You would soon find the further you are from the centre of the piece of paper, the more distorted the map became.

So, for your second attempt you decide to curve the map so it better matches the shape of the Earth. Now this is where the problems start. What shape should the map be curved to?



Contrary to popular opinion, the Earth is not flat. Neither is it a perfect sphere. Technically it's an 'oblate spheroid': a slightly squashed rugby ball shape.

The most used definition for the shape of the Earth is known as WGS84, which you may have seen listed on your handheld GPS. WGS84 is a general purpose definition of the shape of the Earth and is only accurate in certain locations, but it is a reasonable starting point. Your GPS unit will make its calculations of Lat/Long based on WGS84.

If we want to make higher accuracy maps of the UK, we need to modify WGS84 so it better fits the shape of the part of the Earth where the UK sits.

Imagine holding a rugby ball in front of you.



Above left: Map Data © OpenStreetMap contributors. Above right: Map © Google Earth



You have a hand at the top and bottom squeezing slightly to make it look like the WGS84 shape of the Earth. To make the shape better match the UK, you squeeze a little harder and rotate the ball slightly around its vertical and horizontal axis. This new shape is known as the 'airy spheroid' (or OSGB36).

As of today, there are over 8000 modifications to WGS84 to make it fit different parts of the Earth better. If you search around in the settings of your handheld GPS you will find a section where you define the 'Position Format'. On my unit, if you select OSGB, it automatically selects OSGB36. However, there are hundreds of other map datums I could choose. Each is given an EPSG code to identify it, and each is only accurate for a defined area of the Earth. If your GPS is set to the wrong datum, it may show your location up to 128 metres

out, which could be important as the picture shows (top right). If you use your GPS unit outside of the UK, make sure you set it to the local datum/spheroid.

So, we now have a much better approximation of the shape of the Earth that closely matches the bit where the UK sits. There are very complex formulae to convert from a Lat/Long on the WGS84 spheroid to a Lat/Long on the OSGB36 spheroid.

But we generally don't use Lat/Long for navigation, much preferring an Ordnance Survey grid reference. The OS publish equations to convert from a Lat/Long to an OS Grid Reference. These are updated infrequently but the original was OSGB36, followed by OSTN02 and the latest OSTN15. These equations have become more

complex with the aim of increasing the accuracy of the conversion.

So, to display an OS Grid, your GPS first converts from WGS84 Lat/Long to OSGB36 Lat/Long, then uses the OS formulae to convert to an Easting/Northing pair. The E/N pair indicates your position as so many metres East and North you are from a point west of the Scilly Isles.

In summary, the calculation steps would be as in the box at the foot of the page.

So back to the title 'Why am I 100 metres over there?' If you use a Lat/Long based on the WGS84 spheroid as input to the OSTN15 calculation, you will find the grid reference can be 128 metres or more out. Systems (for example SARLOC™ Technology) need to convert WGS84 Lat/Long to OSGB36 Lat/Long, then use the OSTN15 equations to convert to an Easting/Northing and then convert that to a grid reference.

So to summarise, if you are given a location as a Lat/Long, you also need to know what spheroid (or datum) it is on. As another example, if I took the two Lat/Longs from the table below and plotted them in Google Earth (which uses WGS84) I would get two points, 118 metres apart. I will let the reader discover who owns this relevant building. 📍

REFERENCES

A Guide to Coordinate Systems for the UK
www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/documents/resources/guide-coordinate-systems-great-britain.pdf

FURTHER INFORMATION:

WGS84 = EPSG:4326
 ETRS89 is a more accurate version of WGS84 optimised for use in Europe.
 OSGB36/Airy Spheroid = EPSG:27700.

1	WGS84 LAT/LONG	50° 56' 17.33'	-1° 28' 13.61'
2	OSGB36 LAT/LONG	50° 56' 15.32'	-1° 28' 08.45'
3	OSGB E/N	437305.297	115544.544
4	OSGB REFERENCE	SU 37305 15544	



Images supplied by Chris Jones.

The demise of the 'old' Defender and the vacuum left by its parting have left MR teams with a real difficulty. Pick-ups and 4WD vans have been pressed into service but they aren't the same. Now an all-electric and British alternative has entered the scene. **Chris Jones**, vice-chair of the MREW vehicles subcommittee and COMRU team leader, took it

At first glance the Munro EV looks very purposeful, its straight lines and boxy shape are redolent of early Land Rovers and wannabe kit car 4x4s, but it's bigger and altogether cleverer than any of them. It has a twin cab and lots of space in the back and yes, it will take a stretcher. Lots of modern tech and plenty of comfort items too, heated seats and heated windscreen among them. You can even hose it out (below dashboard level), so those muddy and wet boots aren't quite as hard to deal with. The best thing from an MR point of view, it's no 'Chelsea Tractor'. Everything is there for a purpose and although comfortable, it's very definitely utilitarian.

So, electric then? Will it work for MR teams? I would say for most teams, very definitely. It has a stated range of up to 190 miles. We know of course, that is very much down to what you do with EVs, but I would think that most teams would do very much less than that on a shout. They claim this drops to 113 miles when driving in 'adverse conditions'. It weighs in at 2,500 kg with a stated max payload of another 1,000 kg so it's within the 3,500 kg limit for an ordinary B Licence. In any case, EVs have different rules about who can drive them and currently it does require some extra training to go up to the limit of 4.25 tonnes, but this is by no means as much as a C1 licence. Charging can be accomplished with a 50 Kwh charger from 10%–80% in an hour.

The body is made of steel, coated with a special hard-wearing paint which gives the vehicle an even more utilitarian feel. Inside,

aluminium plate is used to cover everything such as the dash and the doors. Switchgear is large and well-spaced to allow for gloved hand operation. As you might have guessed from the name, the Munro is being built in Scotland where they know a thing or two about adverse weather. The running gear is very familiar and Munro have taken the view that they use as few specialist parts as possible so that in a breakdown, things are easily sourced to get it running again.

Interestingly, they also have a built-in upgrade system. As new technology and systems become available, they will take the vehicle back and bring it up to the latest spec. They also have a scheme for upgrading the batteries.

But what's it like to drive and be around? Well, it's surprisingly easy. If you've driven an EV you'll be used to quirky things like silence coupled to amazing torque. It had those and was also very comfortable. Masses of leg room for back seat passengers and lots of storage space (there's even some in the front as there's no engine). The dashboard is simple. Just the lever for drive and reverse is all you have to play with as it is permanent 4WD. Munro have minimised the display to only give you the information you need. There are locking differentials and live axles with excellent approach and departure angles.

The example we had to test was the prototype, so Munro were still changing some of the vehicle performance characteristics, but the production model doesn't seem much different.

To drive, the vehicle felt very planted and, certainly off-road — despite its weight — it was a solid performer, tackling climbs and mud with ease. Obviously having the battery weight low down helps this considerably. It was obviously capable of much more but then it's a possible MR vehicle not a competition off-roader. Everything was reassuringly familiar to an old Defender driver, but equally you were aware that this was something else, something much more modern and capable.

All in all, the MR members who came along to the test day up in Cumbria were very impressed by the vehicle and just as importantly by the team from Munro who were able to answer questions, take on board suggestions and provide an excellent test facility. They are keen to work with MR, and Lyon Equipment has been working with them to look at stretcher storage etc. This is one of the vehicle's strengths. It is easy to adapt for individual needs.

What about the costs? There are three vehicles in the range, each giving more range but the base model, which I have quoted above, is currently on sale for £59,994 (inc VAT). The vehicle is also available in a pick-up twin cab version.

Lastly, should you buy one? If you are looking around to replace an old Defender with a similar, more modern vehicle or are looking at the future and the demise of the internal combustion engine, then definitely! Contact the team at Munro and have a chat. You can also learn more by visiting Munro at munro-ev.com/mk1. ☺

THE MOUNTAIN IS CALLING

On or off duty, Monika of Squamish Search & Rescue is drawn to the mountain. She knows she needs the right gear, knowledge, and community to get the most from the outdoors.



ALIVE
SINCE / 1877

 TRUSTED BY PROFESSIONALS

MONIKA LDEVENMARK, SQUAMISH SEARCH AND RESCUE

News from the Rescue Benevolent Fund



Neil Woodhead Rescue Benevolent Fund

Whilst we're on our travels and talking to team members about how the Rescue Benevolent Fund could help them or one of their teammates, we often get asked for examples of cases we've dealt with. As confidentiality is one of our primary concerns we can't talk about specific cases unless an applicant is happy for us to do so. But what we can do is share some examples of the type of requests for assistance we receive — so here are a couple.

CAVE RESCUE SCENARIO

The first scenario might be where, during a cave rescue practice, a team member slips in the streamway and falls awkwardly, breaking the wrist of their dominant hand. They require a cast for two weeks, before an operation to repair the fracture and a further four weeks in plaster. The team member is self-employed in a manual job and, as a result of the injury, unable to work for four weeks, before having a gradual return to normal activity. They apply to the Rescue Benevolent Fund for support to cover the time that they are unable to work. By supporting the team member we are able to ease their worries and allow them to focus on getting better, getting back to work and getting back to cave rescuing with their team.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE SCENARIO

The next scenario might be a mountain rescue team member whose team is tasked with a search for a vulnerable missing person. Unfortunately, the missing person is found deceased by one of the search parties. Our applicant, one of the party first to arrive at the scene — to a casualty who has suffered catastrophic injuries — starts to develop flashbacks and nightmares six weeks later, which impact on their sleep and their ability to manage day-to-day tasks. They've been seen by their GP and referred for psychological counselling/support, but the waiting list is around six months. They contact the Rescue Benevolent Fund to see if any other support is available and whether we

are able to help fund private treatment. By supporting the team member we are able to help them return to mountain rescue call-outs sooner.

Hopefully these examples will help all team members understand that we aren't just here for a major incident. We're here for any team member who needs some straightforward assistance to help them through a difficult time they're experiencing as a result of their volunteering for a cave or mountain rescue team. If you need our help then please just ask. It's the reason we were formed and what we've been doing successfully for over a decade. 🙌

Please note these have not been actual claims and every application is assessed on its own merits and the information given.

PROVIDING COVER FOR WALKERS, CLIMBERS AND MOUNTAINEERS FOR OVER 22 YEARS

Summit Financial Services offer Life Insurance, Income Protection and Critical Illness Cover for a hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and those who enjoy active outdoor pursuits. Get financial peace of mind with appropriate cover for your life, family, house or income. Even if you have an existing policy in place we'd be happy to hear from you as we have a wealth of experience in negotiating improved terms on existing policies.

'The staff at SFS listen carefully and advise wisely. They provide a flexible and personal service which gives great reassurance that you've been offered the most appropriate cover for all the crazy things you do!' Libby Peter Mountain Guide and mother of two (pictured right)

SUMMIT-FS.CO.UK CALL TODAY 0345 565 0937 (QUOTING MOUNTAIN RESCUE MAGAZINE)

Endorsed by the OIA as the leading provider of financial protection for those engaged in outdoor activities





LOOKING AFTER YOUR **HEALTH AND WELLBEING** WITH ARTICLE COURTESY OF **TOGETHERALL** IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE **RESCUE BENEVOLENT FUND**

Men's mental health matters

Movember is an annual event involving the growing of moustaches during the month of November to raise awareness of men's health issues.



Top: Movember's symbolic moustache © CatLane.
Above: Worried man © FSHH via Pixabay.



This article delves into the importance of addressing men's mental health, the barriers that prevent men from seeking help and how Togetherall provides anonymous, accessible and inclusive support for men.

According to Movember, a leading global men's health charity, a staggering two out of five men admit to experiencing regular feelings of low mood or anxiety. This statistic underscores the importance of addressing mental health needs among men and providing guidance on how they can seek help to feel better.

Men are often hesitant to reach out to friends or family due to fear of judgment or the misconception that they should be able to handle their problems independently. One organisation offering a solution to this is Togetherall.

Togetherall is an online mental health support community where members can anonymously support one another and benefit from other well-being resources. It offers a welcoming and non-judgmental space where individuals can interact anonymously, share their feelings and connect with others who understand their struggles. This anonymity is a crucial factor in overcoming the reluctance

many men feel when discussing their mental health issues.

Togetherall also provides round-the-clock support, ensuring that help is available after hours when traditional support channels may be closed. The platform is monitored by trained professionals, ensuring that the community remains a safe and supportive space.

One of the core strengths of Togetherall is its inclusivity. It recognises that mental health struggles do not discriminate based on gender, age or background. Men and women from all walks of life can find solace and support on this platform. This inclusivity fosters a sense of community and unity, breaking down the isolation that often accompanies mental health challenges. Often people who do not seek support from other channels find help from Togetherall.

Togetherall provides members with an accessible, anonymous and inclusive space to share their experiences and seek support. For those not ready to share on the platform, Togetherall also has self-paced courses on a range of wellbeing topics, like managing stress and worry, coping with mood, managing anger and many more. There is also an

opportunity to write about thoughts, feelings and experiences, in a journal within the platform that only you can see.

For those that are interested in learning more about this, Togetherall is free for all members. Find out more about how you can join and explore more in the panel on the right.

As we focus on men's mental health this November, it's important to consider men can be supported with their mental health and wellness. This might be in the form of exploring options that are available for support or by speaking to men you know about options that are available to them. Even speaking about these issues is an important starting place. ☺

**TO REGISTER, GO TO
TOGETHERALL.COM/
JOINNOW/RESCUEBENEVOLENTFUND**

**OR SCAN THE QR CODE, CREATE
YOUR UNIQUE USERNAME AND
PASSWORD, THEN LOG IN AND GET
CONNECTING**



WHY NOT AN INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY CELEBRATION FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE?

Why not indeed? After all, this year we celebrated the women's day, a much older tradition (perhaps surprisingly). **International Women's Day (IWD)** has been observed since the early 1900s, when the inequalities faced by women in society spurred a brave few to more vocally campaign for change.

International Men's Day began in Trinidad and Tobago in 1999, created by Dr Jerome Tuluck Singh to commemorate his father's birthday. Celebrated in over eighty countries, **19 November** is now dedicated to raising awareness of the contribution men and boys make to their communities, and the social issues they face, both mentally and physically. Movember – which we always recognise quite comprehensively through the Rescue Benevolent Fund social media channels – is, of course, built around that very date. Next year, perhaps, someone out there might volunteer to organise something for mountain rescue?

**FOR MORE ABOUT THE MEN'S DAY HEAD TO
INTERNATIONALMENSDAY.COM
AND CHECK OUT MOVEMBER.COM FOR MORE
ABOUT THIS AMAZING CAMPAIGN**

**FIND US ONLINE AT RESCUEBENEVOLENT.FUND
& VIA THE QR CODE OPPOSITE, OR ON FACEBOOK
@RESCUEBENEVOLENTFUND**



Mental health support online,
anonymous & 24/7.

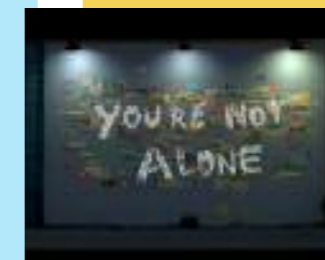
At Togetherall you can speak
to someone who understands
what you're going through,
anytime & anywhere.



**AS A MOUNTAIN OR CAVE RESCUE TEAM MEMBER YOU CAN
ACCESS TOGETHERALL FREE OF CHARGE**

The Togetherall digital mental health and wellbeing support service is a completely anonymous community where you can express yourself freely and openly. Professionally trained Wall Guides and clinical professionals monitor the community to ensure the safety and anonymity of all members. Once you're registered and logged in, there's a range of activities that allow you to work through what's troubling you. **Share your thoughts and join a Talkabout** with other community members to share and discuss what's on your mind, gain support and advice or even offer YOUR support to someone else who needs it. You can do this with the whole community or form your own groups, or even one-to-one chats. Alternatively, you can **make a 'brick in the wall' to express yourself and your feelings creatively** through drawing or by uploading your own images. Check out that wall and you'll see all manner of bricks: drawings simple and elaborate, poetry, heart-felt thoughts and feelings expressed, supportive messages, words of wisdom... one things you will know for sure is that you're not alone. In addition to Togetherall's online community, you will have **access to a wealth of useful resources**. Join self-guided support courses covering the key topics which affect all our lives:

everything from anxiety, sleeplessness, depression to assertiveness training and problem solving. Take **clinically-approved self-assessments** to help you understand more about yourself. And if this hasn't yet persuaded you to register, there's also an extensive library of resources to discover, to help you understand more about yourself, and how you're feeling, and enable you to set goals and track your progress. ☺



PARTNERING TO DELIVER PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING SUPPORT TO MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE TEAM MEMBERS



Hinkes thinks



Alone in the Lakes: The Enduro 214 Challenge:

The weather in northern England during August 2023 was mostly grim and the Lake District was especially grim. Wet and windy a lot of the time with clag enveloping the fell tops. I felt for any holiday campers, especially families on school holidays. 'Be Adventure Smart' was very pertinent: Do I have the right gear? Do I know what the weather will be like? Am I confident that I have the knowledge and skills for the day?

Even if you could tick 'yes' to all three August was, at times, a very testing challenge for even the most experienced person to venture on to the fell tops. Perhaps not the best time to attempt all the Wainwrights, but Enduro 214 set out to do just that: climb all the Wainwrights self-supported in one continuous round. Former Army Major Sip Powers set off in inclement weather at 6.00am on 1 August and finished at 3.00pm on 26 August, only the seventh person to complete the Wainwright round self-supported. He is probably the first person to complete the round in such heinous and difficult summer weather. Sip was also raising awareness and funds for Combat Stress, a military mental health charity that has been helping veterans and serving military personnel for over a century. Combat Stress helps deal with trauma-related mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and PTSD.

I joined Sip for his first Wainwright, leaving Keswick Moot Hall at 6.00am. We saw nothing but grey mist all the way to the top of Latrigg, took a photo and descended to the Keswick to Threlkeld railway path. I bailed out in the rain and returned to Keswick. Sip continued on into the grey wet gloom, with a heavy 25kg rucksack, up Douthwaite Head and the 213 remaining Wainwrights.

He had to conserve his phone battery as his solar panel charger was not providing much power in such grey weather. He would try to contact his wife regularly, which is not easy in a lot of the Lakes, with very poor cell phone signal coverage. On the third day, when it was still raining, his wife rang me concerned that she hadn't heard from Sip and should she call for mountain rescue. I put her mind at ease, explaining he was in the Borrowdale area where there's no mobile phone signal. I was confident that Sip wouldn't need Keswick MRT help — or any other Lakes team.

I've known Sip a few years now. He's a very competent and experienced hill person, very tough and determined. However, he does have extra challenges to overcome: as well as managing Type 1 diabetes, he has a stoma bag after having his bowels removed from anal cancer. Sip was self-sufficient and carrying the necessary meds as well as camping equipment and food. In July, I'd helped him stash seven replenishment caches, including dried food, medical supplies and stoma bags.

Despite all this, I knew he'd be having a tough time and, halfway through his challenge, met him in Patterdale to trudge up Arnison Crag together. I got soaked through and would not have fancied going on up Birks, St Sunday Crag and round over Helvellyn. I could hardly stand on Arnison Crag in the gusting gale force wind. Sip carried on and later said that if he had been working with clients he'd not have ventured out in such seriously wet and windy conditions. "There were times when I was constantly wet throughout the day. No respite."

One evening his inner tent was two inches deep with water like a paddling pool. He'd

stripped off naked to bail it out with his mug, using his socks to mop up before he could lay out his mat and sleeping bag.

During Storm Betty, he suffered sleep deprivation, staying up all night holding his tent poles to stop the tent being demolished. I've experienced conditions like that in the Himalaya, hanging on all night for survival. In the Lakes I'd have probably retreated to the valley and an FRCC hut.

'Mentally and physically — one of the hardest things I have ever done,' he told me, during a celebratory beer in The Wainwright pub in Keswick. 'There were long sections when I was totally alone. At one point, for four days, I didn't meet a soul, which is amazing in the Lake District.' Not surprising though if you remember how bad the weather was in August!

Sip walked 710km (440 miles) and ascended 43,528m in atrocious weather and conditions — an epic achievement, carrying a 25kg (55lb) rucksack and surviving this wet August mostly alone in the fells. And, thankfully, mountain rescue wasn't required.

Another Wainwright-related challenge I was involved in during August was helping eight-year-old Tony Hudgell get to the summit of Orrest Head. Tony has no legs after sustaining serious injuries from his parents as a baby. Orrest Head is the first fell Wainwright climbed. It has fabulous views north over Windermere to the higher fells. To quote Wainwright '...mountains in tumultuous array across glittering waters...'

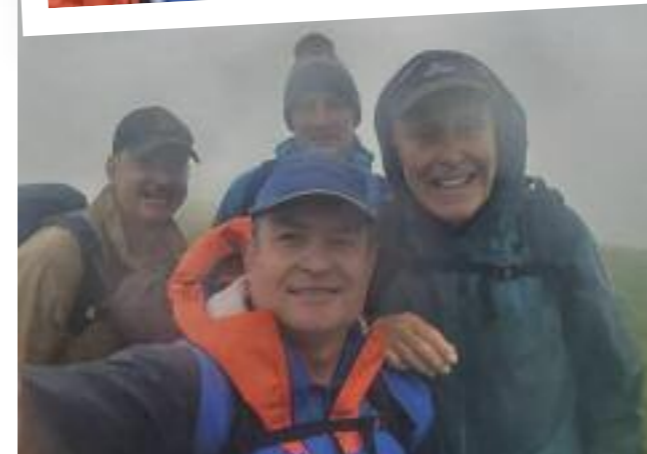
For Tony this was his mini-Everest and Hari Budha Maga, the ex-Gurkha with no legs, joined him with a surprise visit just before the top. We were lucky with one of the few dry days in August for this short ascent. A very memorable and fulfilling day for Tony. We were also joined by Chris Bonington, so Tony had three Everest summiteers with him on Orrest Head.

The Tony Hudgell Challenge had originally been planned to climb Loughrigg Fell to the trig pillar with Langdale and Ambleside MRT help. It was decided this would be too difficult for Tony at the moment but, after Orrest Head he's keen for a bigger fell in a couple of years time. ☺



Above: Tony Hudgell shares the summit of Orrest Head with three Everest summiteers: Chris Bonington, Alan Hinkes and ex-Gurkha Hari Budhar Magar.

Opposite: From top: The 'Enduro 214 Challenge'; Sip Powers with Alan at Keswick Moot Hall for the early morning start and his triumphant finish; Latrigg summit in the clag. Images supplied by Alan Hinkes.



Providing Technical Rescue Solutions

for the Emergency Services



Specialist Training and Equipment for Work at Height and Rescue Operations

Lyon Equipment offer class leading products and technical support to people who work in challenging environments.

We provide high quality training and consultation for work at height and rescue in vertical, steep and difficult-to-access environments.

LYON
WORK & RESCUE

Web: www.lyon.co.uk

Lyon Equipment Limited

Tel: +44 (0) 15396 24040

Email: info@lyon.co.uk

Using the most innovative techniques in design and development, with the added knowledge and experience of all things mountain, we produce the best clothing for harsh environments with minimal environmental impact.

PFC FREE

Dannah
www.dannah.uk.com

“In challenging environments, board certification means having the knowledge to deal with whatever comes your way”

Tom Mallinson, FAWM FRGS
Inverness, Scotland, UK

Learn more at IBSCertifications.org

Dr. Mallinson is an experienced Paramedic, Rural Generalist (MRCCP), Prehospital Doctor and the Co-Director of Prehospital Care and responder for BASICS Scotland. @MallinsonT

NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER: WAINWRIGHT SOCIETY HOSTS FUNDRAISER FOR LAKES MOUNTAIN RESCUE



Richard Warren, chairman of Lake District Search and Mountain Rescue Association (LDSAMRA), gave this year's annual Wainwright Memorial Lecture in late September. It proved to be a timely look at the work of teams across Cumbria, as 2023 shapes up to be one of their busiest years on record. The event took place at Rheged, on the edge of the northern Lakes and situated within the Penrith team patch.

The Wasdale team alone has reported 140 call-outs to date (see page 7), many to Scafell Pike and Piers Gill, both regular 'hotspots'. 'People often become lost and overdue and get themselves cragfast because they have deviated from the route,' says Richard. 'Many rely on smartphones for their navigation, with others just relying on blindly following the path or the group in front. Are they aware of the risk they take? I suspect not. For the last 30 years we have been saying people need to take a map, compass and torch and learn how to use them. Now we say, stay together as a group, take a power bank for your phone and prepare by asking three #BeAdventureSmart questions: Do you have the necessary knowledge and skills? Have you checked the weather? Do you have the right gear?'

The event was a near sell-out with around 180 in the theatre and only three seats left unsold. 'A huge thank you should go to Richard for encouraging us to have an organised presence,' says Penrith MRT's Paul Marginson. 'And the audience were a generous lot with £570 dropped into our buckets'. The Wainwright Society later confirmed that a donation of £1,500 would be coming to LDSAMRA from ticket sales. As the society's website noted, prior to the event, Wainwright was himself briefly a member of the Kendal team around 1958 and was even actively involved in call-outs. So it seemed fitting that LDSAMRA be the society's 2023 charity beneficiary. AW would surely approve!

Above: Left to right: Marc Lelliott, Kevin Dowding, Rob Grange, Sam Macdonald (Friends), Richard Warren, MREW ambassador Alan Hinkes and Paul Marginson, outside the entrance to Rheged © Alan Hinkes.

Raising funds for rescue

www.rescuenortheast.com

Water courses: (DEFRA Compliant)

- Swiftwater & Flood Responder
- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Technician
- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Advanced
- Rescue from Vehicles in the Water
- Water & Flood Team Leader
- Management of Water & Flood Related Incidents

Technical Rope Rescue Courses:

- Safeworking at Height
- Technical Rope Rescue Operator
- Technical Rope Rescue Supervisor

Medical/Trauma Courses:

- First Aid (Full range)
- Outdoor First Aid
- FREC Level 3 – 5
- Safe Administration of Life-saving Medicines

Instructor Courses:

- Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Technician Instructor
- Technical Rope Rescue Instructor

Rescue North East is a dedicated nationwide training provider delivering specialist training to the emergency services: Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Ambulance Services, Search and Rescue Teams and Mountain Rescue Teams.

We pride ourselves on our expertise and the quality of our training. Visit our website for a full range of courses.

Book Now with Rescue North East
Call: 01207 297175
Email: admin@rescuenortheast.com
www.rescuenortheast.com

OUTREACH RESCUE

Empowering professionals with the knowledge and skills to protect lives and ensure safety in challenging environments.

WE'VE TAKEN TRAINING TO NEW HEIGHTS

Following a successful merger, Outreach Rescue is now a formidable force in SAFETY, RESCUE and CLINICAL training.

outreachrescue.com



SEPTEMBER: TEAM MEMBERS TIE THE KNOT IN TYPICAL 'MOUNTAIN RESCUE' STYLE

Ogwen team members Tom Adams and Soraya Cherry were married at an intimate ceremony at Bodysgallen Hotel near Llandudno. In keeping with many a mountain rescue wedding, the bride and her mother were delivered to the ceremony in suitable style, as **Chris Lloyd** reports. Congratulations to Sy and Tom from your Ogwen team mates and, indeed, from the wider mountain rescue family.

Left: Sy and Tom with mountain rescue team vehicle © OVMRO.



THE LOWA PROFESSIONAL LINE: QUALITY AND SAFETY

Since 1923, shoemakers LOWA have manufactured excellent products and strived for perfect fit, quality, function and innovation, the cornerstones of our company philosophy and the foundation of our success. You can place your trust in these values. We are 100% 'made in Europe'. We know the value in good craftsmanship, comprehensive know-how and commitment to quality as well as in highly flexible production processes. As an outdoor brand, at home in the mountains, we know that safety and reliability are precious in the mountains. Which is why we have equipped top athletes for their expeditions for a very long time. These decades of experience have been built directly into the LOWA professional line. Our 'Task Force' collection is now the 'Professional' collection, perfectly suitable to different surfaces, climates and terrains. For real work situations, comfort and fit are deciding factors – and quality is of vital importance. Several of our products have become real classics, such as our ZEPHYR model, which enjoys an outstanding reputation beyond military circles. We are offering **15% discount for Mountain Rescue team members.**

E: SALES@TASKFORCEDISTRIBUTION.CO.UK
T: +44 (0)1752 344355 W: LOWAMILITARYBOOTS.COM

LOWA
simply more...



AUGUST: AN UNUSUAL METHOD OF CASUALTY EXTRACTION FOR EXMOOR SEARCH AND RESCUE

Exmoor Search and Rescue received a late-afternoon call from South West Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT) to assist with a fallen walker in the River Barle valley, near Tarr Steps, an Exmoor beauty spot. This is also a known comms blackspot for the team, so team members drove from their respective corners of their patch, knowing it was likely to be an interesting job for that reason alone. **Caroline Young** reports.

Our search manager sent a small party of team members who were first to arrive to locate the casualty and liaise with the Helimed and ambulance crews on scene with the casualty. As predicted, radio communications in the steep wooded valley were very challenging and the position of the walker near the water's edge was difficult to access. Devon Air Ambulance had made an initial assessment and packaged the casualty ready for transfer back to Tarr Steps. The discussion next was how best to execute that transfer.

The casualty had slipped on rocks down the bank from the path, breaking seven ribs and suffering some other chest injuries in the fall, so was feeling 'delicate' to say the least. The choices were three-fold. Option one was to take him back up the bank which involved a steep, slippy and narrow scramble, ropework and with the potential consequences of falling back onto the riverside rocks below. Option two was to stretcher him along the river bank which had overhanging and fallen trees, difficult manoeuvring and the consequences being falling in the water with the casualty in the stretcher. The third option was to float him downstream and, while this involved getting more kit to the scene and some interesting wading around the shallow bits of the River Barle, we all agreed this was the safest and probably most comfortable option for the casualty.

We had to resort to several relays to get the kit requests back to control: rope kits; (to revert to plans one or two, if option three failed), an inflatable water sled and Swift Water Rescue Technician (SWRT) equipment. Mustering all this kit the 2km from control and the road to the casualty site meant the light was fading as the casualty was first lowered in a stretcher

to the water's edge and then transferred into the sled. Once in the sled, the casualty was escorted down the River Barle by our SWRTs, one wading in front to guide around the obstacles and the others supporting the sled sides and reassuring the casualty. As we lost the light and the river shallowed, the casualty was removed from the inflatable sled to the now wider riverside path and then transferred using the stretcher with wheel to the waiting ambulance. From when the casualty's wife had walked out to get a phone signal to getting him into the ambulance had taken seven hours.

While this might not be the norm for our casualty extractions it proved an effective and controlled way to move him the 2km back to the ambulance, and he was certainly very thankful for the cushioning effect of the water. We were very thankful to the Tarr Farm Inn who then fed a very hungry team after the casualty was taken off to hospital. A good result all-round.



Top: The sled passes under a bridge; wading the casualty out. Inset: Arriving back at control © Exmoor SRT.



NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER

JULY: EXERCISE RAMBO JOINT EXERCISE IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

A cliff edge... Two missing children... Blood pouring out an injured leg... Someone stuck in a tree...

Not the latest blockbuster, but the précis of a joint exercise for Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA) and the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS). As might be the case on a real job, the Hazardous Area Response Team weren't available, so volunteer doctors and a paramedic provided the medical response. Simultaneous and coordinated activity was key in this multifaceted and time-pressured exercise at Woodcroft Quarry in the Wye Valley.

A team of SARA search team members hunted for the missing people, whilst GFRS and the SARA medical team dealt with the injured mother. There was constant communication to update the teams and use personnel effectively. GFRS and SARA then worked harmoniously to rescue the treebound casualty (Dad) from the branches and move them up the cliff, utilising an arachnid and people power to haul the stretcher over the cliff edge with an attendee.

Leadership roles were taken on by both SARA and GFRS with the teams integrating, particularly on the ropework. This fun exercise demonstrated the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) of co-locate, coordinate, communicate, jointly understanding risk and shared situational awareness. Furthermore, a better understanding of the skills of both teams and stronger relationships were built for future call-outs. 'Oh and a learning point,' adds Sophie Foxen. 'Always check if anyone is allergic to ketchup (especially if they are important people in the fire service team)'

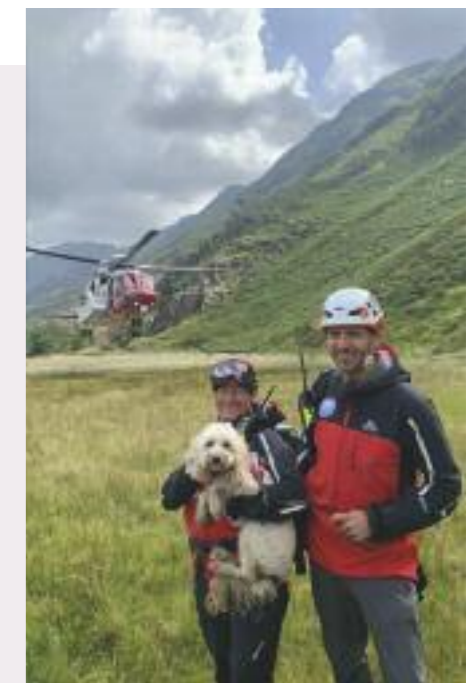
Top: The arachnid in action. Above: Clifftop comms; recovery of casualty in tree. Images © SARA.

AUGUST: LOST LABRADOODLE AMBER FOUND SAFE

Llanberis team members were called to assist a walker who'd taken a tumble and hurt her hip at Bwch Glas on the Llanberis Path. Due to the limited number of team members available and the potential seriousness of the injury they had requested the assistance of Coastguard Rescue 936 from Caernarfon.

Five team members were taken to the summit of Carnedd Ugain and walked down to assist the hurt walker. As the cloud descended and the casualty was being prepared for a stretcher carry down beneath the cloud level for helicopter evacuation, Amber was spotted running along the railway track. Two team members briefly attempted to give chase, but Amber evaded their attempts and focus returned to treating and evacuating the injured walker. The casualty and five team members boarded the aircraft after a short stretcher carry but, just as Rescue 936 prepared to lift, the crew noticed a member of the public carrying Amber towards the aircraft and attempting to get their attention. The Good Samaritan wisely maintained his distance from the aircraft and waited for the winch operator to collect Amber bringing her to join the rest of the team for what was likely to be her first, and hopefully last, trip in a Coastguard helicopter! Llanberis MRT don't routinely attend animal rescues except in exceptional circumstances, calling this a 'lucky set of circumstances where a Good Samaritan was able to catch her and flag us down as we were evacuating an injured person'.

The Labradoodle had gone missing near the summit of Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon), leading to an appeal for help from her frantic owner Davina Smith. The family searched for two hours before returning to their car before nightfall. Pleas for help were shared widely across social media, with members of the public getting involved in the search. Amber was duly reunited with her grateful owner, in the area from Essex, who later posted her thanks on Facebook. 'I'm so grateful to the kindness of strangers. The community spirit is so heart warming. I'm grateful to every one of you for your kindness.'



Above: Llanberis team members with Amber © Llanberis MRT.

JULY: BODY ANNETTE COMPLETES 100 KM RACE FOR SEARCH DOGS

The 100km trail ultra over two days was Annette's third Threshold series event. In 2021 it was Race to the Castle 100km for search and rescue, then Race to the Tower double trail marathon for Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind (SRSB) in 2022. This year she was running to raise funds for her 'beloved Mountain Rescue Search Dogs England'. At the time of going to print, her efforts had raised £860.



Raising funds for rescue

WAINWRIGHT CALENDAR RAISES FUNDS FOR LAKES TEAMS

The Wainwright Society will donate all profits from the sale of their 2024 calendar to the Lake District Search and Mountain Rescue Association. Priced at £12 for UK orders (including P&P), it can be purchased from the society's online shop:

WAINWRIGHT.ORG.UK/MERCHANDISE/WAINWRIGHT-SOCIETY-CALENDAR-2024



SEPTEMBER: TEAM MEMBERS TAKE PART IN THE FIRST OFF-SITE SAFETY MANAGEMENT COURSE

Members of Northumberland National Park team completed the Royal Geographical Society's Off-Site Safety Management Course, the first time the team has worked with the RGS. The course was designed in response to concerns about safety in off-site activities in the outdoor sector and addresses the legislation in this area and provides an opportunity to explore the application of the legislation in practical situations.

The training looks at supporting participants in planning, managing and evaluating off-site safety policies, procedures and activities. It was delivered by NNPMRT member Will Close-Ash, a fellow of the RGS and qualified OSSM trainer. 'The course has always been traditionally delivered to those working in the outdoor sector and leading activities. It was clear to me that the skills would be hugely beneficial to team members who were planning and leading team training sessions and who were responsible for others whilst on the hill.' Will worked alongside fellow team member Paul Freeman, who is also an RGS fellow, to adapt and modify aspects of the course. 'We focused on scenarios and examples that were practical in an MR context whilst keeping the original course structure.'

In addition to eight NNPMRT members completing the two-day course, Neale Connolly from Cockermouth Mountain Rescue Team also took part. 'I really enjoyed the course,' says Neale. 'It was great that it was tailored to an MR audience and addressed wider expeditions and outdoor education.' Will plans to deliver feedback on how the course went to Royal Geographical Society members in November.

Above: Team members on the two-day off-site safety management course © NNPMRT.



SEPTEMBER: TEAM GOES TO ASSISTANCE OF TRACTOR DRIVER

Rossendale and Pendle team members were called to assist the North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust (NWAS) following reports that someone had slipped whilst exiting a tractor in a field near Coldwell Reservoirs, Nelson.

The casualty was reported to have suffered a deep laceration to their thigh and the team was contacted due to concerns about access issues and getting medical attention to the casualty. Team members made their way to their Burnley base to collect the response vehicles, while some headed directly to the scene. Two team members arrived first on scene to find the casualty had been transported back to the road in a quad trailer and were able to provide some immediate medical attention, before very soon after being joined by the NWAS crew. The laceration was very deep and the casualty was very lucky for it to have missed femoral blood vessels.

The casualty was assisted by the crew into the back of the ambulance and the remaining team members and vehicles en route to the incident were stood down. The casualty was assessed by the crew before transfer onto hospital for further medical attention.

Above: NWAS ambulance at the scene © RPMRT.



NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER



AUGUST: DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER VISITS LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM AGENCIES IN NORTHUMBRIA

The Deputy Prime Minister, Oliver Dowden, spent a morning with Northumbria Local Resilience Forum partner agencies at Thrunton Woods. Other local dignitaries were in attendance too.

The visit marked the launch of the government's new National Risk Register in Northumberland. Mr Dowden heard first hand how Northumberland County Council, Northumbria Police, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, Northumberland National Park, Forestry England, mountain rescue teams and other resilience partners work together to prepare for everything from wildfires to major storms like Storm Arwen. Thrunton Woods, the venue for the visit, had only recently reopened to the public after the devastation caused by Arwen in 2021. Northumberland National Park MRT was represented by team leader, Iain Nixon, and one of the team's duty controllers, Andrew Miller. Both have worked closely with Northumbria Local Resilience Forum partners since its inception and have been heavily involved in coordinating mountain rescue's involvement in extreme weather events such as Storm Desmond, Beast from the East and Storm Arwen.

'The visit provided a great opportunity to raise awareness of how all the agencies work in partnership to prepare for and respond to resilience incidents, and the role mountain rescue, as a volunteer-delivered emergency service, has to play in such incidents,' says Iain Nixon.

Top left: Deputy Prime Minister, Oliver Dowden, during his visit to Northumbria. Top right: Members of the Local Resilience Forum. Left: Dowden chats to NNPMRT team leader Iain Nixon and one of the team's duty controllers, Andrew Miller. Images © NNPMRT.



JULY: HANDFUL OF HOT DOGS HELP IN RESCUE OF DOG FROM HISTORICAL NORTH WALES MINING ATTRACTION

Aberglaslyn team members were called following concerns that a dog required some help at Sygun's old copper workings, a historical mining attraction that's open to the public. With the information suggesting it didn't look like the usual underground rescue operation, the team was asked to investigate further.

A number of members happen to be very experienced in dog-handling skills. One of them managed to make friends and comfort the dog sufficiently to lead it out of the mine thanks in part to the deployment of some specialist technical equipment: a handful of hot dogs!

Images © Aberglaslyn MRT.



the final send away

**CHRIS LEWIS
PATTERDALE**



A member of Patterdale Mountain Rescue Team, **Chris Lewis** was critically injured in early February 2021, during a deployment on Red Screens above Kirkstone Pass, near Ambleside. Sadly, following a long and challenging recovery, and after a very short illness, he succumbed to pneumonia and died in hospital on 4 September, aged 62.

Chris Lewis above Red Tam
© Patterdale MRT.



Chris's funeral was held on Monday 18 September at St Peter's Parish Church in Far Sawrey, a short walk across the fields from the home he had shared with his wife, Carol. The funeral was exceptionally well attended by family and friends, with many drawn from the business, charity and mountain rescue communities where Chris was hugely respected as a colleague, fellow trustee and team member respectively.

As a significant mark of the respect in which Chris was held, Cumbria's Lord Lieutenant Mr Alexander Scott, accompanied by his wife, Cumbria's High Sheriff Mrs Samantha Scott, also attended, as did Supt Gill Cherry, representing Cumbria's Chief Constable, and representatives of Cumbria Fire and Rescue Services, the North West Ambulance Service, and the Great North Air Ambulance Service. Mountain rescue personnel attended in great numbers, with representation in particular from Patterdale team members and trustees, the Lake District Search and Mountain Rescue Association and its teams, the North East Search and Rescue Association (who represented the six other mountain rescue regions), and Mountain Rescue England and Wales. Patterdale team members provided a guard of honour with ice axes crossed over Chris's coffin as it entered the church. Team members also acted as pall-bearers, along a path to the church lined with other uniformed mountain rescue personnel.

A well-attended reception followed at the nearby Tower Bank Arms where Chris and Carol were popular visitors. The service and addresses reminded everyone that although Chris ultimately died as a result of his volunteering to mountain rescue, his life was much more than that, and that as well as being Carol's much-loved partner in life, he had made very significant and highly valued contributions elsewhere in his professional career and charity work. 🍷

SEARCH DOG BEN SARDA WALES



It was with great sadness that SARDA Wales announced the passing of much-loved Search Dog Ben in August. Their thoughts were very much with his handler and long-time companion Alex.

Ben had an unfortunate start to his life. Being a trainee sheepdog that didn't really much care about sheep meant he found himself in a dog rescue looking for a new home. Fortunately, he was found by Alex who rescued him and gave him a home and a purpose: exploring mountains and finding people. That 'can't really be bothered' attitude to sheep suddenly became a great asset helping him through the sometimes tricky stock training and putting him on track to be a search dog. He had a fantastic work ethic and learnt the search game quickly, before working on training Alex to be a handler, saving his embarrassment on numerous occasions, and winning the admiration of many. Ben was a great dog to hide for and a real character at training. If nobody would play fetch with him he would often take himself to one side, pull up some grass or a small plant, and use it as his toy, throwing it into the wind and chasing it repeatedly until it was his turn to do something!

In October 2017, while still a trainee, he became a bit of a social media sensation. While Alex was away, he gave his dog sitter the slip while they were exploring Snowdon. Despite an internet appeal and hours of searching by Alex, team members and friends, over many hours in atrocious weather, there was no sign of him. Until Kes, the team vet, popped out for a very early morning walk before work one day and, just as she stopped for a quick break, Ben found her! Much to everyone's relief he was quickly reunited with a very happy Alex. By March 2018, Alex and Ben had managed to train each other enough to make a successful dog team, passing their first assessments and joining the call-out list as a Lowland Open Area Search Dog team — their first of many call-outs just an hour after earning that red disk. In March 2020, they successfully upgraded to Mountain Open Area Search Dog. During their years of service, Ben and Alex completed many searches all over North Wales and had multiple finds. When Ben wasn't working or training he could usually be found around mountains. Having climbed Idwal Slabs and most of the gullies on Tryfan, the Welsh 3000s in summer and winter, as well as mountains around Great Britain and the Alps, he was truly a mountain dog who had a great life. He will be very much missed, especially all those who had the absolute pleasure of hiding from him and seeing his happy face when he found them. Goodbye Ben, you had a great life. Time now to run with all your old search dog friends and play fetch forever. 🍷

PAUL HICKSON SOUTH SNOWDONIA



In July, South Snowdonia team members were saddened to hear of the death of their deputy team leader, following a brief illness.

Paul Hickson was an integral part of the team, who quickly rose to the rank of deputy. Always a dynamic and friendly presence, he was instrumental in the development of training new recruits, overseeing the team's equipment and kit, and representing the team at national meetings and beyond. Thanks to his involvement with South Snowdonia, he touched many lives, and a few more people are walking around today thanks, in part, to his hard work and dedication.

'His passing is an enormous loss to us, both as a team and personally, as a dear friend and colleague. We will cherish the memories we have of him and keep him in our hearts in the shouts to come.' 🍷

NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER



AUGUST: TEAM RESCUES THREE-MONTH-OLD CALF WITH SUSPECTED BROKEN LEG

Upper Wharfedale team members were called to Barden, near Skipton, to assist with the rescue of a three-month-old calf that had fallen 15–20 metres down a steep bank suffering a reported broken leg. The team met at the farm and helped the farmer and a vet to access the calf. Once it had been sedated, it was recovered back up the bank and taken to the farm for further assessment by the vet.

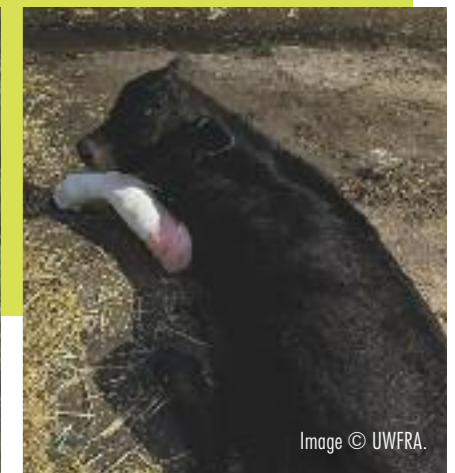


Image © UWFR.



AUGUST: NEW SATELLITE WIFI FOR SWALEDALE TEAM

Swaledale team offered a massive thank you to safenetics.eu who donated a new satellite WiFi dish and related hardware – meaning the team can now use the SARCALL online incident software anywhere!

Left: Swaledale team vehicles with the new satellite dish in the foreground © Swaledale MRT.



AUGUST: PROTRACTED CALL-OUT TO RESCUE STUCK WALKERS IN PIERS GILL

Wasdale team was called by Cumbria Police after two walkers were reported to be stuck on steep ground inside Piers Gill. A walker on the path on the east side of the gill had heard them shouting for help.

Duddon and Furness team was called in for additional crag support, knowing this could be a difficult technical rescue. Both teams met at Gavel Neese to make their way up to the likely access point. As any rope access into Piers Gill is inherently hazardous, helicopter support was also requested. Rescue 199 (R199) from Prestwick duly attended but was unable to effect a winch rescue due to the weather conditions requiring high power, and the resulting significant downdraft creating a real risk to the walkers below. A rope rescue system was subsequently rigged and team members descended to the walkers. Once on scene it was quickly realised that their condition was more serious than initially thought. They had been stuck for about 24 hours and suffered injuries from slips and falls. Helicopter support was again requested for a swift evacuation from the scene, once the walkers had been evacuated by rope from the gill. R199 returned and, with some tremendous flying, were able to land close by for a short transfer. The first casualty was flown down to the valley for a more thorough assessment. After extraction, R199 received the second casualty on a stretcher, flew down to the valley, picked up the first casualty and flew both to hospital. Team members on the hill then derigged and returned to their respective bases to reset the vehicles. Huge thanks to Duddon and Furness MRT and the Rescue 199 crew for their support (twice!) in this call-out.

Left (and front cover): Tricky flying (and landing-on) from Rescue 199 © Chad Dixon/Wasdale MRT.

NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER



JULY: REACHING THE PARTS OTHER COMMS CAN'T REACH

A substantial grant from the Cumbria Community Foundation and funding from Electricity North West Ltd has enabled Penrith team to invest in more effective comms for key parts of its extensive north east Cumbria region. The Primetech mobile satellite communication system will now be used in searches, rescues and major incidents whenever standard communication networks are not available.

The satellite equipment will come into its own in several parts of the extensive area covered by Penrith MRT where a mobile phone signal is weak or absent and where radio communication is difficult. 'We have significant comms challenges in a couple of key areas for call-outs,' says the team's comms officer, Dale Longson. 'For instance, around Mardale Head has poor signals but we are frequently called out to the Coast to Coast path above Haweswater. Similarly the back, or eastern, side of Cross Fell and the North Pennines is notoriously bad for communication signals but is another regular incident location for the team. This new equipment will improve the comms amongst the team members on the ground and also back to our Penrith base or mobile incident control.'

It's hoped that Primetech's mobile VSAT system will also fill the breach during major incidents, such as flooding and severe storms, when mobile phone masts are damaged and the normal signal goes down, as happened during Storm Arwen, in November 2021. By ensuring a continued signal, the new system will enable the team to continue to operate effectively. Team member Gerry Rusbridge put together the grant application. 'Everyone involved in the team would like to thank Electricity North West and Cumbria Community Foundation for the generosity that has funded this step up in our operational communications capability. It will help us work more safely, be a huge benefit for our casualties too, and in major incidents improve critical wider community communications.'

Above: Penrith's Dale Longson with the Primetech mobile satellite communication system set up at Mardale Head near Haweswater.

JULY: THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES TAKE PART IN ROYAL CHARITY POLO DAY

HRH The Prince of Wales took to the polo field to play in the Out-Sourcing Inc Royal Charity Polo Cup at Guards Polo Club, raising £1,000,000 to be shared by eleven charities supported by The Prince and Princess of Wales, including Mountain Rescue England and Wales.

The Prince played as part of the US Polo Association team, alongside Aiyawatt Srivaddhanaprabha, Amr Zedan and Mark Tomlinson. The opposing Standing Rock Polo team was formed by Philipp Muller, Ivan Rubinich, Malcolm Borwick and Clarinda Tjia-Dharmadi, with the BP Healthcare Polo team made up of Garvey Beh, James Beh, Henry Porter and Steve Cox. In an exciting round-robin format, it was the US team who won, with the Princess of Wales presenting the cup to the winning captain Aiyawatt Srivaddhanaprabha.

This year's event provided a unique opportunity to support and raise funds for eleven of Their Royal Highness's patronages, comprising MHI (Shout), Wales Air Ambulance, Centrepoint, The Passage, Mountain Rescue England and Wales, Foundling Museum, Forward Trust, East Anglia Children's Hospices, Baby Basics, Little Village and AberNecessities.

Out-Sourcing Inc's David M. Matsumoto said he was honoured to support the charity polo match, knowing the event would raise much needed funds for ten incredible charities. Charity representative, Victoria Hornby, CEO of Shout/MHI spoke on behalf of all the charities, saying that they all 'support people in some of the most difficult and testing moments of their lives'.



Above: HRH The Prince of Wales playing in the Charity Polo Match. Below: TRH The Prince and Princess of Wales with the teams and others. Images © Chris Jackson.



Raising funds for rescue



JUNE: BENCH PLACED IN NATURE RESERVE AS THANKS FOR RESCUE

In 2022 Calder Valley team members assisted in the rescue of a casualty who is an employee of British Recycled Plastic (BRP). One of the products BRP produces is benches and, as a gesture of thanks, the company kindly donated one to the team.

In agreement with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust the bench was installed at Broadhead Clough nature reserve, Cragg Vale. Team members were joined by Helen Pedley of the YWT to complete the installation. 'Thank you to BRP for the kind donation and to YWT for allowing us to place the bench in the nature reserve. We hope everyone visiting the area can make good use of it.'

Above: Calder Valley team members with the bench and Helen Pedley © CVSRT.



Raising funds for rescue

This year marked the 50th anniversary of the founding of the organisation that started out as Outward Bound Sea School Aberdyfi MRT (now Aberdyfi SRT). To celebrate, the team ran a prize-draw for a remarkable piece of furniture.

Standing just shy of a metre tall, the Idris Chair was created from hardened plywood by team member Matt Young. Yorkshire-born Matt went to Aberystwyth University in 1995 for a degree in Environmental Earth Studies, a path which led to a long career in conservation and forestry-related activity. He learnt the craft of building log houses in Finland and brought those skills back to Wales to set up business. Finding himself the proud owner of a CNC routing machine, a computer controlled wood-cutting device, he recently started to explore the artistic possibilities of the materials he was so familiar with. The chair took three days to create: half a day for the cutting, the remainder in the assembly and finishing. When asked about the creative process, true to his straight talking, no-nonsense Yorkshire heritage, Matt reported that 'sanding the internal angles was a pig'. However, when asked what was it about wood that made it his life's work he was much more effusive. 'Each plank is different, with its own visual character, and that's before you start thinking about different species with their own individual smell, texture and properties. It's the complete sensory experience.'

Intrinsically linked to this passion for forestry is a love of the outdoors and wild places. As an experienced mountaineer, Matt can be found in the mountains whatever the weather, and has been an Aberdyfi member for around three years. It's a neat circle: from mountain rescue to mountain chairs, to chairs to wood, to trees to mountains, and back to mountain rescue again!

But before we get to the winner, who was the eponymous Idris? Idris was a mythical Welsh giant who, in between spitting to create lakes and flicking gravel out of his sandals to create boulder fields, used a glacial bowl in the mountain above Dolgellau to sit and ponder the stars. This range of peaks is to this day still known as Cader Idris or 'Idris's Chair'. As the majority of the team's rescue activities take place on the slopes of this particular mountain, it was an irresistible choice.

The draw was held in early September, and the prize was duly delivered to the lucky recipient. Altogether, the draw raised over £3,600 for the team. Diolch yn fawr.

SEPTEMBER: ABERDYFI TEAM MARK 50 YEARS WITH A DRAW FOR THE BEAUTIFULLY CRAFTED 'IDRIS CHAIR'

Above: The Idris Chair © Aberdyfi MRT.



NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER: PENMACRA MEDICAL CONFERENCE 2023

On 23-24 September, PenMacRA held a medical education weekend conference for the mountain and cave rescue Casualty Care community across Cornwall, Devon, Avon and Somerset. The first day of the event was hosted by University Hospitals Plymouth and held in their postgraduate centre, the second day on Dartmoor, near the Warren House Inn. **Craig Scollick** reports.

Day one comprised a morning of lectures and an afternoon of scenarios where clinical skills could be practised. The lectures, delivered by expert clinicians from Plymouth and Torbay Hospitals, included pre-hospital handover and how this affects decision-making, a deep dive into respiratory issues, a briefing on BASICS Devon and the Devon Air Ambulance Trust, update on toxicology and common overdose, and the downstream work when patients enter the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). These lectures reinforced the importance of the high-quality pre-hospital clinical skills which are carried out by team members. The afternoon saw practice in primary survey, intramuscular injections, management of opioid overdose, burns and packaging for trauma including spinal, pelvic or femur injuries, and management of an unwell pregnant female.

Sunday was outside on Dartmoor and involved teams finding individuals with a variety of simulated injuries. These scenarios included cave rescue extraction of hypothermic casualty with fractured femur, a hypothermic casualty with seizures and a simulated fall from height with traumatic lower limb amputation by chainsaw. The 30 attendees are indebted to Dr David Hutchins, from Dartmoor SRT Ashburton, and James Bartlett, from Exmoor SRT, who worked so hard to organise such a successful weekend.

Above and left: The PenMacra Casualty Care Medical Weekend. Images supplied.



AUGUST: TEAM TRAINS WITH RAF AND NAVY

East Cornwall team invited nurses from The Joint Hospital Group, Princess Mary RAF Nursing Service Association, and the Queen Alexandra Royal Navy Nursing Service, who are all currently working at Derriford Hospital. Split into two teams, they had the opportunity to experience working with the specialist mountain rescue kit and to learn a few of the rope rescue skills used in search and rescue. To finish the day, they joined forces to complete a mini search and rescue exercise to locate, treat and extricate a casualty with a lower leg injury.



Above and opposite: Nurses from the Princess Mary Nursing Service and the Queen Alexandra Royal Navy Nursing Service with East Cornwall team members © East Cornwall MRT.

AUGUST: NEXT GENERATION OF POLAR SCIENTISTS MEET DARTMOOR TEAM

Something a little different for Dartmoor Plymouth team members, helping the next generation of Polar Scientists with the principles of searching and survival. The visit included a demonstration of the capabilities of drone versus dog versus hill team. 'Dartmoor might not be the poles, but it is one of the most challenging areas to navigate in the UK. We wish the students every success with their studies and future careers.'



Above: Next generation of polar scientists learn about search and rescue with team members on Dartmoor © Dartmoor SRT Plymouth.

NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER

JULY: CLOSE CALLS ON CAMERA

A number of teams have featured in the most recent series of the BBC's 'Close Calls on Camera', hosted by Nick Knowles. One of them was Cleveland MRT who supplied the production company with some video footage and photographs taken during a rescue in July 2022 which proved to be one of the team's most awkward rescue extractions.

A man had fallen down a steep embankment near Lealholm in the North York Moors and sustained multiple injuries. It was a big team effort also involving the Yorkshire Ambulance Service, Great North Air Ambulance and a Coastguard helicopter, culminating in a tricky stretcher carry over difficult terrain (also featured in the Autumn 2022 magazine). The production company had filmed with the team earlier in 2023, conducting an interview at their base with team member Craig Sewell, the first team member on scene on the day, along with the paramedics. More recently the casualty, Martyn Clark, visited the team to thank those involved in the rescue. He was accompanied by his dog Suki who featured prominently in the rescue having alerted some walkers as they were passing along at the top of the 200-foot embankment.

Top: Left to right: Gary Clarke, Duncan Craig, Andy Pearson, Martyn Clark & Suki, Craig Sewell, Sid Bollands & Rachael. **Left:** Craig Sewell interviewed at base © Cleveland MRT.



AUGUST: ROYAL VISIT TO SOUTH WALES INCLUDES MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE

South and Mid Wales CRT were invited by the First Minister for Wales to attend a reception for the King and Queen, to celebrate community and service to the community. They were joined by colleagues from Brecon MRT, alongside guests from environmental organisations, civil service leaders and teachers.

The Royal visitors spent the day in Brecon, first in the cathedral then visiting a celebration of the Brecon Show before a reception at Theatre Brycheiniog. The representatives had the chance to talk to the King about cave rescue in general, the teams involved, the volunteer membership and the geographical area covered. King Charles recalled the major rescue of George Linnane in 2021 from Ogof fynnon Ddu and Mr Drakeford joked about his experience of going caving and getting stuck behind a fellow young caver in his youth. There was also an opportunity to meet the leader and chair of Powys County Council, the chair of PAVO (a Third sector support organisation), the senior chief fire officer for Dyfed Powys and both the chair and interim CEO of Powys Teaching Health Board. It was also an important opportunity to promote cave rescue and build relationships with Brecon team members and other partner organisations.

Top and above left: King Charles meets visitors. **Top right:** Gary Mitchell, Sue Goodhead, Tom Ford and Ali Garman (SMWCRT). **Middle right:** Left to right: Tom Ford and Sue Goodhead (SMWCRT), Ashley Stamford Plows, Dominic Turpin, Claire Key and Geoff Key (Brecon), Roger Thomas (Chief Fire Officer, Mid and West Wales FRS), Gary Mitchell and Ali Garman (SMWCRT). **Inset:** First Minister for Wales, Mark Drakeford with Queen Camilla and King Charles. Images supplied by South and Mid Wales CRT.



JULY: THREE CALL-OUTS AND A PARROT BEFORE MID-AFTERNOON

The first day of the summer holidays saw the Ogwen Valley team called out no less than three times before mid-afternoon. Newsworthy in itself, but one particular incident really tickled the tail feathers of journalists around the world, with one team member subsequently interviewed on BBC Radio 5 Live, and enquiries flying in from as far afield as Canada, the New York Insider magazine and Hindustan Times.

The team was alerted to a female stuck high on the cliffs of Glyder Fawr above Cwm Idwal. One of a group of parrot owners from Derbyshire, walking in the area, they were flying their birds in Cwm Idwal when a peregrine falcon attacked them, causing one to fly off. The owner's tracker showed it to be high on the upper cliffs of Glyder Fawr and she climbed up to retrieve it. Unfortunately the parrot decided freedom was great and flew back down to the group unassisted, leaving the owner and her second bird now stuck. To a barrage of parrot jokes from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and teams in North Wales Mountain Rescue Association, a hill party climbed up to the base of the cliffs and belayed a team member up to her location to make her safe. In the best tradition of situational comedy, Jeckyll, the second parrot — perched on her owner's rucksack — was heard to greet the Oggi team member with a parrotty 'Hello!' Once safely on belay, both parrot and owner were lowered to safe ground before being guided down off the mountain.

Above, left to right: Jeckyll with owner Molly and team member Rick; Jeckyll and Molly with Chris Campbell (OVMRO team leader); Jeckyll with Llyn Idwal below © Dave Brown, Ric Potter and Robin Woodward.



CLEAN AND WATERPROOF: EXTEND THE LIFE OF YOUR OUTDOOR GEAR

Nikwax have been outdoor industry leaders in producing sustainable aftercare since 1977. Nikwax produces PFC-free aftercare and waterproofing solutions that extend the life and performance of outdoor footwear, clothing, and equipment. The exceptional waterproofing products allow water to bead up and run off fabric instead of absorbing into it, increasing breathability and preventing water absorption. Nikwax is renowned for its sustainable practices and environmentally friendly product range. As part of the continuing commitment to people and planet, all of Nikwax's operational carbon emissions are balanced and 1% of turnover is pledged to social and ecological causes. The Nikwax mission is 'to enhance the enjoyment of the outdoors whilst protecting and preserving the natural environment; with sustainable treatments that extend the life of gear and elevate performance.'

VISIT THE NIKWAX WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION: [NIKWAX.COM](https://www.nikwax.com)



NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER



SEPTEMBER: NORTHUMBERLAND RESCUER DEPLOYED TO MOROCCAN EARTHQUAKE RESCUE EFFORT

Northumberland National Park team member, Jamie Pattison, deployed to Morocco with 62 other search and rescue specialists, to assist the rescue effort, following the 6.8 magnitude earthquake in the Atlas Mountains.

Jamie is a paramedic, member of UKISAR and USAR and NNPMRT deputy team leader. He was amongst those providing medical assistance and taking part in the search for survivors. Conditions on the ground were described as 'devastating'. UK Defence Secretary Grant Shapps said: 'This is a devastating time for the people of Morocco, particularly those with loved ones they have lost or are missing. The UK has taken a leading role in the international effort to enhance search and rescue operations, moving quickly to deploy our unique strategic airlift capabilities, expert personnel and aid. We stand firmly by Morocco as they get through this terrible event.'

The UK International Search and Rescue team (UKISAR) responds to disasters on behalf of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. They have specialist search equipment including seismic listening devices, concrete cutting and breaking equipment, propping and shoring tools. The specialist kit gives the team the capacity to lift, cut and remove concrete and rubble to reach people under collapsed buildings.

Top: The Moroccan rescue effort in process. Left: Jamie (left) with some of his UKISAR colleagues, shortly before returning to the UK. Images © Jamie Pattison/NNPMRT.



SEPTEMBER: FIONA STEPS DOWN AFTER 23 YEARS

Northumberland team member Fiona Thompson stepped down after ten years with Buxton team and thirteen with NNPMRT.

'I still vividly remember one of my first training sessions with Buxton team. It was a crisp, cold evening in January and we were training. I ended up at the head end of the stretcher and we rehearsed sledging our casualty over snow in crampons in the dark – one of the many skills I've learned over 23 years! I have so many memories, some happy, some tragic, some very funny, some I don't want to talk about. I've had plans cancelled or changed; nights of sleep disrupted; days out curtailed, called in child care favours and school/club pick ups from friends, been unwaveringly supported by family and friends because Mountain Rescue teams are there for the public all day, every day. We all do it because we know that one day it could be us in need of those reassuring red jackets and lights in the darkness coming over the horizon in our hour of need.'

Right: Fiona during a stretcher carry on snow, in the dark © NNPMRT/Buxton MRT.



Raising funds for rescue

SEPTEMBER: INTENSIVE CARE NURSES WALK THE EDALE SKYLINE TO RAISE FUNDS

The ten nurses, based at Wythenshawe Hospital Cardiothoracic Intensive Care unit, were walking in memory of Dr Giles, a colleague who sadly passed away while out mountain biking. Despite the best efforts of the mountain rescue team who responded to the incident, they were unable to resuscitate him. The money raised will go to Kinder team to serve as a thank you for their efforts and contribute to the much-needed funding.



BCRC members at the medical weekend © Brendan Sloan.

JUNE: BCRC MEDICAL WEEKEND

Brendan Sloan, BCRC Medical Officer reports on the third BCRC Medical Weekend, hosted by CRO in Clapham which saw 35 delegates from across the UK and Ireland converge on Ingleborough Hall for a combination of talks, practical sessions, underground scenarios and discussion.

We were delighted to be joined by some of the MREW regional medical officers. Paul Lethebee and Jim Davis assembled an excellent classroom programme on the Saturday, with sessions including hypothermia management, crush injury and the practicalities of delivering and assessing advanced first aid training. We were also privileged to have a very insightful talk by Kevin McLoughlin, HM Senior Coroner for Wakefield, about the process involved in a coroner's investigation. In the evening we were treated to an absolute feast courtesy of the outstanding CRO logistical support, aided by excellent weather and some fine local beer.

On the Sunday the team had laid on a round robin of scenarios in and around Yordas Cave, where the various skills and equipment discussed the day before could be used in more realistic and challenging situations. There was, almost inevitably, a small diversion for a surface call-out, but this was soon concluded. Feedback from attendees was extremely positive, and my thanks go to all those from CRO who assisted in preparing, cooking, cleaning, acting, transporting and organising.



Image © Bash the Barn.

JULY: BASH THE BARN RAISES VALUABLE FUNDS FOR CLEVELAND

Cleveland MRT received a significant donation of £5,500 from North Yorkshire rural charity organisation 'Bash in the Barn', following an evening event in support of the team and two other charities, the Yorkshire Air Ambulance and UK Cancer Research. Five hundred people attended the event – and, judging by the photo, a good time was had by all!

AUGUST: SPECIAL DAY FOR SIKH COMMUNITY AND CONISTON

A beautiful sunny day saw around a hundred Sikhs congregate at the car park at Walna Scar, their plan to walk together up the Old Man of Coniston.

Beautifully dressed in traditional attire they set off, accompanied by a few Coniston team members who were there, not as guides, but to support the community and provide an insight into the area and also what mountain rescue is about. The walk was a success and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Coniston Old Man certainly had a very special day.

Above: Sikh community members walking on Coniston Old Man © Coniston.



ACTION PACKED ADVENTURES
 Indoor & Outdoor Activities in the Brecon Beacons!
 Rock Climbing • Horse Riding • Sky Trek • Challenge Course • and more!
 0333 600 20 20
 www.activityuk.com

TO ADVERTISE:
CALL: CAROLINE DAVENPORT:
 07726 933337
OR EMAIL:
 caroline@media-solution.co.uk



cave rescue



JULY: RACE AGAINST HYPOTHERMIA IN GOYDEN POT

Upper Wharfedale team went to the assistance of a young man with a leg injury in Nidderdale, working against the clock to avoid the casualty developing hypothermia.

CRO and Swaledale teams were also alerted, but later stood down as UWFRA had sufficient numbers to provide swift medical attention to the injured caver as well as technical rope experts to facilitate the extraction. They thanked local cave leaders and teachers who had also helped, as well as the casualty 'who was a true stoic'.

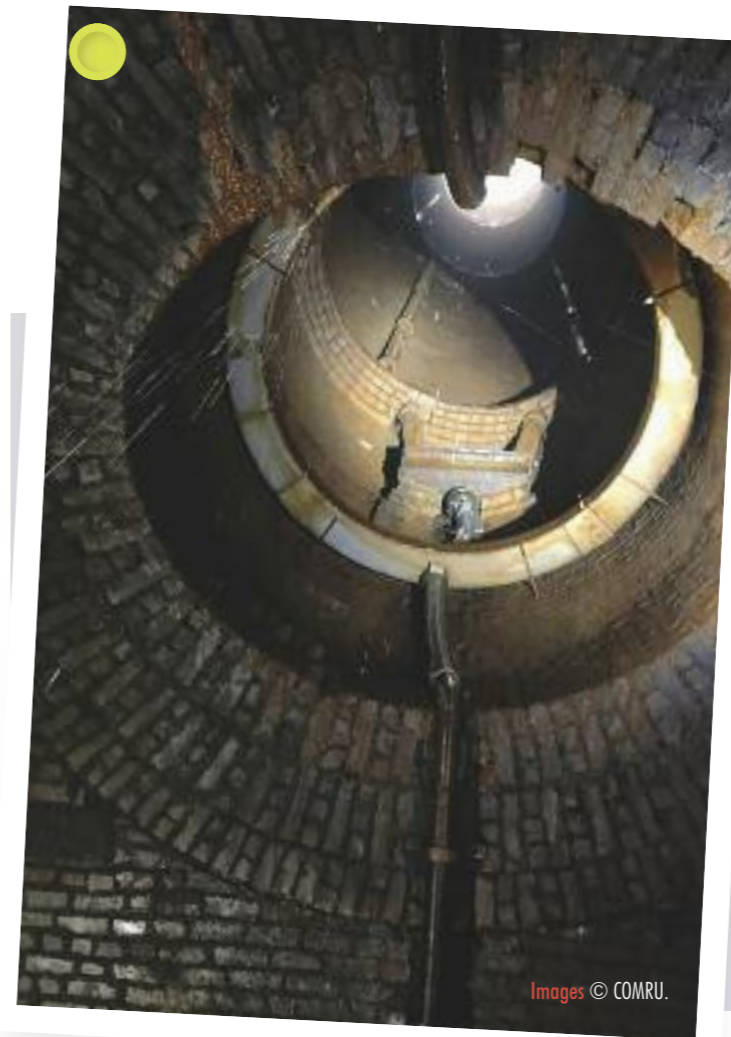
The medical emergency occurred 1,050 metres underground in Morca Cave, in the Taurus Mountains of Türkiye. Given the cave's depth and complexity and the prospect of a lengthy stretcher evacuation lasting many days, the European Cave Rescue Association (ECRA) requested that BCRC prepare to assist teams from across Europe (including Hungary, Italy, Croatia, Bulgaria and Poland).

British teams were asked because of their expertise in technical rope rescue, and doctors with the necessary underground trauma skills and experience. BCRC coordinated the team and prepared for a formal request from the Turkish Ministry of Interior. ECRA informally coordinates an international response amongst cave rescue teams of its member organisations, to assist the national bodies in the country an incident occurs. Between 4-7 September the casualty was provided with urgent medical treatment, to stabilise and prepare him for extraction. Communications were through a fixed-wire telephone from the entrance to a depth of -500m, assisted by runners carrying messages. A CaveLink wireless system was later set up and greatly facilitated comms throughout the system. The BCRC team was asked to stand by should more rescuers be required to complete the operation. However, the extraction proceeded swiftly with no significant medical relapses requiring further personnel or specialist capability and the casualty, an American male, was brought out of Morca Cave at 22:39 BST on Monday 11 September.

'We extend our best wishes for a rapid and complete recovery following essential hospital treatment, and congratulate the European teams who completed medical treatment at significant depth and a very impressive, technical extraction of the casualty. There were very technical and long, vertical hauls to rig and operate, combined with constricted passageways to prepare on the way back to the surface from very deep underground. Thanks also to the cave rescue team members across the UK for their willingness to deploy to Türkiye at short notice - there were many who spent considerable time sourcing and preparing essential team rescue equipment. Thanks too to the staff of the British Embassy, Ankara and FCDO London for official support, and to Gallagher's for insurance cover. Finally, thank you to colleagues in MREW for access to insurance and offers of material assistance, and to the British Caving Association and for help with media relations.'

SEPTEMBER: BCRC ON STANDBY FOR TURKISH CAVE RESCUE INCIDENT

Images © European Cave Rescue Association.



Images © COMRU.



JULY: CHANGE OF SCENERY FOR TEAMS IN CUMBRIA

COMRU team members, along with colleagues from Kendal and Kirkby Stephen teams, were involved in the consultation for the emergency planning around Blea Moor Tunnel, the longest tunnel on the Settle to Carlisle Line, part of which is in Cumbria.

The 2,404-metre tunnel was built over four years, completed in 1875. There were originally seven shafts used in construction but only three remain for ventilation. It was clear that, if necessary, the COMRU Mog could drive inside. Railway workers assured everyone that the room cut into the rock was a stable from when the tunnel was first cut and the horses were kept underground.

JUNE: BCRC VISITS NORWAY

Brendan Sloan reports: Over the course of the last few years, a BCRC team, led by Ian Peachey (UWFRA) and Beth Knight (Derbyshire CRO) have been busy developing and making the next generation of caving casbag and warming jackets. After seeing them at the ECRA meeting in 2022, the Norwegian Cave Rescue Group asked if we could supply them with some, accompanied by an invitation to visit Norway and train them on the use.

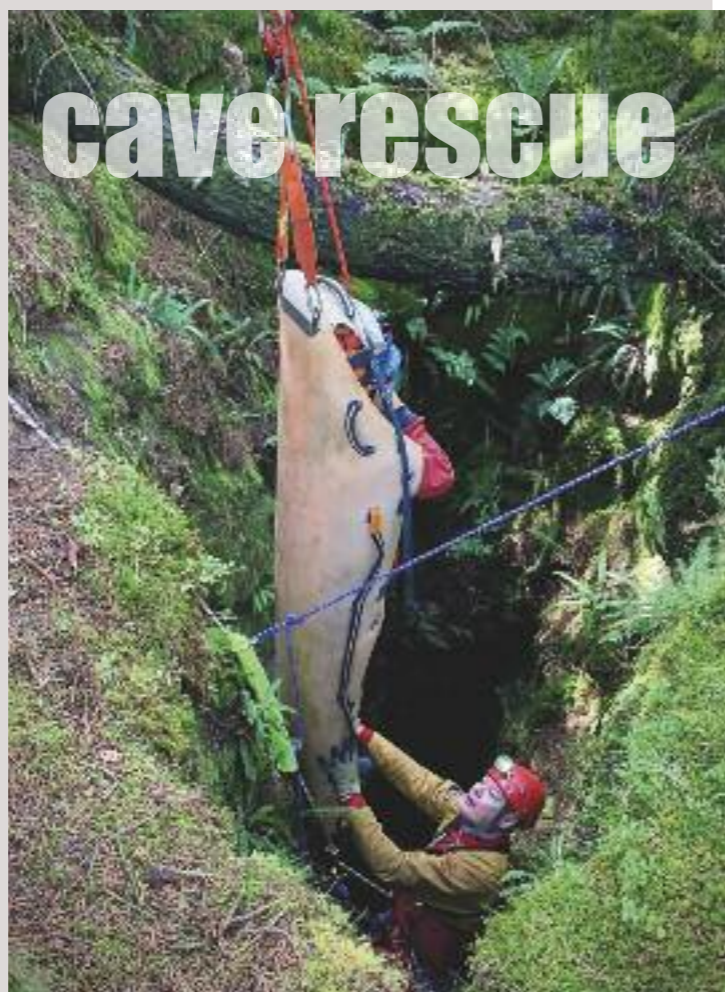
This seemed an offer too good to refuse, so four of us headed over in early June, taking the bags. The hospitality was outstanding, and we took in a surprisingly large amount of the country. Starting in Oslo, where many of the cavers are based, we undertook some surface training on a very warm weekend. We then flew up to the principal caving area, near Bodo, north of the Arctic Circle. Their main cave rescue base is in the military part of Bodo Airport, and we were given a tour, including seeing their brand new, and very shiny rescue helicopters, which provide SAR and medical transfer services for the region. We then participated in an underground practice using the new bags. They performed excellently, being thoroughly tested in Kvanndalsgrotta, a cave with sheet ice throughout the entrance and a meltwater streamway.

As well as an opportunity for some stunning sightseeing and caving, it was a great way of fostering closer relations with the Norwegian team, who are somewhat short on numbers, but not lacking in significant caves. The slow train back to Oslo, complete with stunning views of fiords, snowcapped mountains, and the actual Arctic Circle was also one to remember.



Right: Pitchhead in Kvanndalsgrotta. Inset: Surface above Kvanndalsgrotta. Images © Brendan Sloan.





cave rescue

SEPTEMBER: DEVON CAVE RESCUE TRAINING EXERCISE ABOVE AND BELOW GROUND

The training exercise involving locating, initial treatment and then a stretcher haul from a mine. This involved single rope technique to locate the 'casualty' followed by assessment then rigging. Initially to aid extraction up a steep incline then a vertical haul out of the mine shaft. This session was very well received by the team.

Above: Devon CRO exercise. Underground pictures © Craig Holdstock (DCRO team doctor); Surface pictures © Paul Johnson (DCRO controller).



AUGUST: MOUNTAIN AND CAVE TEAMS WORK TOGETHER IN SEARCH THROUGH MINE COMPLEX

North Wales Cave Rescue Organisation (NWCRO) received a call from North Wales Police that two persons were reported overdue from a through trip in the Croesor-Rhosydd mine complex in Eryri (Snowdonia). Over twenty team members responded from across North Wales.

Split into two groups, one group was tasked with walking to the incident site from Tan y Grisiau, while the second organised equipment and drove up from Croesor village with Aberglaslyn Mountain Rescue Team. During the course of the incident, one of the missing persons managed to exit the system and was able to provide further details to the team. They explained that an in situ boat used for one of the lake crossings had become jammed and they were unable to retrieve it, forcing them to retrace their steps. During this, the second person had become exhausted and was unable to climb the final pitch out of the system, but was otherwise uninjured. An NWCRO team was dispatched to assess and assist this person up the pitch and to surface. Equipment and some team members returned back to Croesor with the remaining team members walking back over to Tan y Grisiau.

Above: Team members in the mine complex © NWCRO.



NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER

JULY: SELFIE TAKER SLIPS AT THORNTON FORCE WATERFALL

Thornton Force is a roughly 50-foot (14 metres) high waterfall which features in the Ingleton Waterfalls Trail, where the river flows over tree-lined limestone rocks in a wide cascade into the rocky pool below.

Cave Rescue Organisation (CRO) were called when the visitor slipped while taking the 'selfie' on the ledge running behind the waterfall. He fell and slithered the 3+ metres down onto rocks below, and was held there temporarily by the force of the waterfall. Aided by a friend, he was able to stand and escape the water. He was standing and 'seemed happy' when the first CRO team member arrived, but they instructed him to sit down and remain still until assessed by a healthcare professional. He then experienced pain in his back and elsewhere, so was carefully placed into a vacuum mattress, then onto a stretcher and carried to a team Land Rover. This took him to the road ambulance for the journey to hospital and a full assessment.



Above: Thornton Force © David Dixon/Creative Commons Licence; CRO team members during the stretcher carry © CRO.

Below: Breaking out the big tools © Derbyshire CRO.



JULY: BREAKING OUT THE BIG TOOLS

Derbyshire CRO broke out the big tools and headed to a quarry for some engineering training. A suitable asteroid sized rock was moved to ground using remote winching techniques, before team members had a go breaking it down using 'plug and feathers wedges', a rarely used but important skill for the team to maintain.



JUNE: CAKE CUTTING AND LONG SERVICE CERTIFICATES IN CLEVELAND

Cleveland team welcomed Mark Webster, Chief Constable of Cleveland Police, to present Long Service and other awards to a number of team members. They were also joined by their team president Peter Scrope, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire. **Gary Clarke** reports.

The chief constable was given a tour of the base and discussed the wide range of mountain rescue work, including the medical, technical rope rescue and water rescue capabilities. He showed a keen interest in it all, spending a good deal of time talking with those who were demonstrating the facilities and kit. Our support members were also on hand to chat about their vital work as part of the team, especially fundraising. Next up was presentation of certificates along with two Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medals to team members who had been unavailable at last year's ceremony. The certificates covered ten, twenty, twenty-five and thirty years — well over 300 years of service to the community between them! One of the 25-year service certificates, to Carolyn Gallagher, was the first of that duration to a female member of Cleveland MRT. After the awards, there was time for a group photo and light refreshments, including a cake prepared by team member Mike Lincoln. Everyone was grateful to the chief constable for taking so much time out of his busy schedule and for taking such a keen interest in their work.

Top: Cleveland team with Mark Webster, Chief Constable of Cleveland Police. **Left:** Cake cutting under the watchful eye of cakemaker Mike Lincoln; tour of base prior to the award presentations. Images © Cleveland SRT.

Raising funds for rescue

AUGUST: £2,000 FOR OBAN FOLLOWING RESCUE

Oban team members had helped rescue Morven and Alessia, with their aunt, in 2022, after they became disoriented in bad weather on Beinn Achaladair. They visited the team's base to hand over a cheque for £2,000, raised following their West Highland Way challenge earlier this summer.



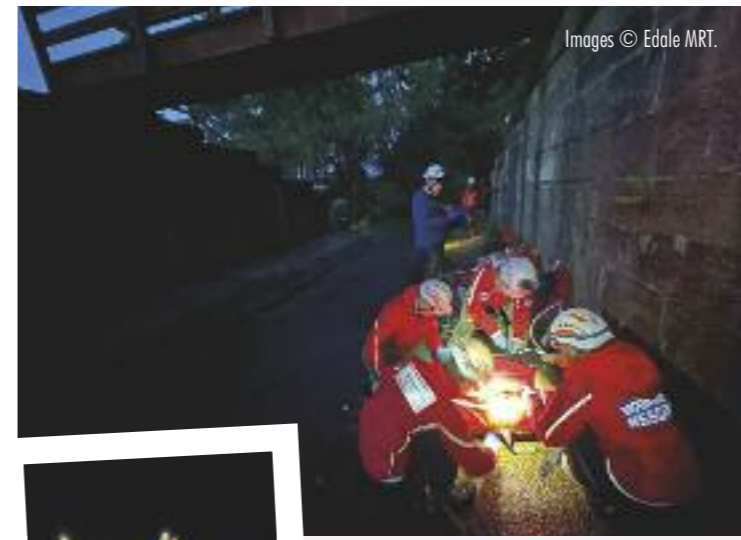
Above: Morven and Alessia with Oban team members and the cheque © Oban MRT.

Mountain Recreation
 Norway Ice Climbing
 Winter Skills Scotland
 MI, RCI and CWI
 Navigation Skills Training
 Rock Climbing and Scrambling
 Alpine Walking and Trekking

Mike Margeson
 mike@mountainrecreation.co.uk

active
 first aid training

CANINE FIRST AID
 EMERGENCY CARE FOR YOUR DOG IN THE REMOTE LOCATION
 www.activefirstaid.co.uk



NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER

JULY: EDALE RESCUE FALLEN CASUALTY AT RIVELIN RESERVOIR

Edale team was called by Yorkshire Ambulance Service to assist a casualty who had fallen some considerable distance off a structure into a spillway of Rivelin Reservoir sustaining multiple injuries and becoming rather chilly, having fallen in the water and become immobile.

Local team members were rapidly on scene to assess and treat the suspected pelvic injuries. After strong analgesia by a team doctor, and splinting of the injuries, the casualty was placed into a vacuum mattress and onto the mountain rescue stretcher for a short-rope haul out of the spillway. The stretcher was then carried up through woodland onto an access track and back to the waiting ambulance. This was a challenging rescue, made all the more so troublesome by all the midges who insisted in joining in! Once handed over to the ambulance service team members returned to base to sort out lots of wet muddy kit and ropes.

JULY: CASUALTY RETURNS FOR LUNCH WITH TEAM MEMBERS WHO RESCUED HIM

It's not every day team members get to find out the outcome for their casualties. Incident 37/2023 was 'a nice exception' for Scarborough team.

It was a Sunday afternoon when a male walker was reported to be incapacitated with abdominal pains while walking the Coast to Coast path, west of The Lion Inn, Blakey Ridge, where he and his wife had planned to spend the night. On examination, the team suspected appendicitis, administered pain relief and arranged swift evacuation for Wayne. His wife Sue takes up the story: 'So many thanks and accolades to the team who rescued my husband. We are on holiday from Australia, walking the Coast to Coast. Wayne was admitted to James Cook University Hospital, where the appendicitis diagnosis was confirmed. The appendix, which had ruptured, was removed on the Monday — evidently it was pretty messy. We are both incredibly appreciative of the skills and care from the team, particularly Jess and Roger initially, and Neil later. We are also grateful for the banter that kept our spirits up, the cricket score updates and suggestions of what might happen to Wayne if he kept making Bairstow cracks! Thanks. The work you do is invaluable.' Sue contacted the team when Wayne was released from hospital. The couple had planned to finally get to the Lion Inn for lunch and asked whether any team members who might be available to join them. By sheer coincidence, a number of the team were out driver training and they jumped at the opportunity. 'We were delighted to see Wayne looking much more comfortable than when we last saw him, are very appreciative for his kind donation to the team and for treating those attending to lunch. Wishing Wayne and Sue a happy continuation of their holiday and safe travels back home with a good tale to tell.'

Right: Wayne and Sue with some of the Scarborough team members who helped rescue him © Scarborough and Ryedale MRT.



SAR

20 Years
 2003-2023

Specialist Access & Rescue Products Ltd.
 Celebrating 20 years of supporting Mountain Rescue

0161 621 0309 — sales@sar-products.com — sar-products.com



AUGUST: BODIES OF THREE HILLWALKERS RECOVERED FROM AONACH EAGACH RIDGE IN GLENCOE, SCOTLAND

The three mountaineers were discovered by rescuers after they failed to return from an outing on the ridge. Glencoe team and the RAF Mountain Rescue Service were joined by the Inverness Coastguard helicopter after the alarm was raised shortly before nightfall.

Police Scotland said they had been made aware of concern for the group shortly after 9.05pm on the Saturday evening. The bodies of a woman and two men were recovered from the ridge, with the Prestwick Coastguard helicopter assisting in operations on Sunday. Two of the three were subsequently named as Graham Cox, from Southport on Merseyside, and Dave Fowler, an experienced Fort William-based mountaineer and director of West Coast Mountain Guides. The third casualty, a 64-year-old woman, was not available at the time of writing. Mr Cox's family remembered him as 'a much-loved husband, father, son and brother... the kindest, loveliest man'. Dave Fowler had more than 25 years' experience climbing, fifteen working in the outdoor pursuits industry. He had climbed in countries across the globe. A joint statement by the Association of Mountaineering Instructors (AMI), Mountain Training, Mountaineering Scotland and the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) said: 'We were deeply saddened to learn about the tragic accident that took place in Glencoe, which resulted in the untimely loss of three lives. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the families and friends of the individuals who were tragically taken from us in this devastating incident. At this time, we are aware that three people, comprising one woman and two men, were tragically lost on the Aonach Eagach. Out of utmost respect for the families' wishes and due to the ongoing nature of the police investigation we are unable to provide any further comments or details. Please know that our thoughts are with all those who have been affected by this heartbreaking event. We would also like to recognise and thank the efforts of the volunteers of Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team, the RAF Mountain Rescue Team and the Coastguard for what would have been an incredibly difficult call-out.'

The high, narrow ridge and exposed Aonach Eagach, running along the north edge of Glencoe, is considered one of the most challenging scrambling routes in Scotland with few opportunities to escape once a traverse has begun. The ridge links two summits: 953m (3,127ft) Meall Dearg and 967m (3,172ft) Sgòrr nam Fiannaich. Its name means 'notched ridge', a reference to its jagged, rocky terrain and traversing the Aonach Eagach can take up to nine hours to complete, according to mountaineering guides. Much of the challenging route involves scrambling.



Images thanks to Wasdale MRT & Basia McMillan.

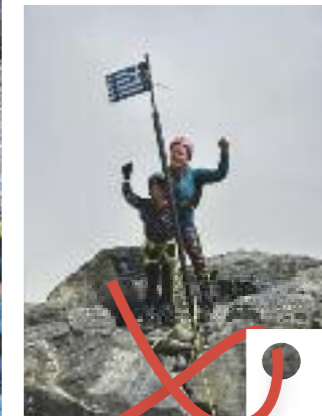
NEWS ROUND

JULY > SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER: FRANKIE AND MUM CLIMB MOUNT OLYMPUS FOR THE WASDALE TEAM

Seven-year-old Frankie and his mum, Basia, returned home to Cumbria, following Frankie's epic challenge to become the youngest British person to climb Mount Olympus, the highest mountain in Greece at 2,917 metres (three times the height of Scafell Pike) – just weeks after finishing his 214 Wainwright Peaks challenge on Lingmell.

Frankie wanted to raise money for the team and promote #BeAdventureSmart safety awareness. Challenges complete (for now perhaps), he visited the team's Gosforth base to meet some of the team members and his eyes are now firmly set on joining mountain rescue when he gets to eighteen: a true mini-mountaineer with a life of adventure ahead! And his efforts have achieved a very impressive £3,055 and counting (at the time of writing).



Raising funds for rescue



AUGUST: BODY OF A WALKER FOUND ON THE CARNEDDAU

Ogwen Valley MRO was asked to search for a missing walker, later named by North Wales Police as Daniel Adams, from Selby in North Yorkshire. Initial searches had targeted parking areas in the local hotspots until the walker's vehicle was located in Gerlan, leading to the search to being concentrated on the Carneddau.

An initial search focused on the Llech Ddu spur on Carnedd Dafydd. The Coastguard helicopter R936 was able to lift multiple mountain rescue hill parties to the top and bottom of the ridge. Meanwhile, additional parties, including search and rescue dogs, were tasked with searching the walk-in. Sadly, the young man's body was found on steep ground below the ridge of Llech Ddu spur.

Scenes of recent fatalities in the mountains. **Top:** Aonach Eagach ridge © Eirian Evans/Creative Commons. **Below:** The Carneddau © OVMRO.

SEPTEMBER: TEAM MEMBERS ATTEND SOUTH WALES SEARCH FIELD SKILLS COURSE

Two Bolton team members, Andy and Becky, travelled to South Wales to take part in the MREW Field Search Skills course, covering search theory and practice as well as tracking techniques over the two days. Using a mixture of classroom and outdoor sessions, they covered everything from sketching search areas to fatal incident protocols.

Right: Just a few of the search field techniques explored © Bolton MRT.



SEPTEMBER: PARTIALLY SUNKEN BOAT RAISES CONCERNS AND PROMPTS TEAM CALL-OUT

Cumbria Police received a call from a member of the public who'd seen what appeared to be two men stranded on the lake shore, at the Rough Crag area of the reservoir, next to a partially sunken boat.

The informant advised the possibility of the men having been in the water. Keswick MRT dispatched a vehicle to Armboth car park (north of Hause Point) to gain lake access for the team inflatable. Due to the road closure either side of Rough Crag, a second vehicle had to partially circumnavigate the reservoir to gain access from the south, and as near to the incident location as the detritus on the road would allow. Fire appliances and the ambulance service also deployed. Contact was made with the two men who it turned out were not in any trouble. They had been trying to recover their boat after an issue the previous week. The boat had been secured to the shore but the recent storm had caused damage to the hull and caused it to partially sink. With this information the various teams stood down. The call to the police was made with good intent by the informant.

Right: Partially sunken boat on the shore © Keswick MRT.



Getting to know our Scottish Mountain Rescue colleagues...

Focus on Moffat MRT



Moffat Mountain Rescue Team was founded in 1969, bringing together a group of local police, doctors and shepherds who would often find themselves called upon in the event of a missing person in the area. After one such rescue of a walker from the Loch Skene area, carried out by a group of

outs to this day. The hill rescue service gave recognition to those involved in the searches and provided a structured system for search and rescue in the region. The service slowly expanded to include other outdoor enthusiasts and, in 1995, became known as the Moffat Mountain Rescue Team.



ill-equipped volunteers in challenging conditions, Moffat police sergeant Bill Farrell and Dr Hugh Sinclair chaired a meeting to propose the formation of a formal rescue service and the Moffat Hill Rescue Service, as it was then known, was born.

The first team leader was Howard Taylor, an experienced local climber who soon put the team to work passing on his mountaineering skills with structured training. These skills were put to the test when the first formal call-out came at the popular local landmark of Grey Mare's Tail, one of the UK's highest waterfalls and somewhere we continue to frequent for call-

cover Tinto hill in Lanarkshire, down to the Solway Coast and the English border and Gretna in the South, across to Dumfries and Sanquhar in the West and Langholm in the east. We have a wide range of historical and recreational areas in the region including the Moffat and Lowther hills, Criffell and the biking trails at Mabie and Ae forests. We are also involved in local resilience operations in poor weather conditions such as flooding or severe winter weather — helping the local health board reach remote locations or even providing aid to those on the M74 motorway.

Perhaps our most recognisable incident was on the evening of 21 December 1988

when a Boeing 747 exploded above Lockerbie town. The team gathered at Lockerbie police station that night and were involved in searching the hillside for survivors. Sadly there were none to be found and instead the team continued in the search and recovery until Boxing Day when the search was scaled back. The team, however, continued their involvement in searching the local area to aid the ongoing investigation. In 2006 the team was awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service by Groups in the Community for 'Rescue Service for people injured, immobilised, lost or in distress in Moffat and the surrounding hills'.

There are a few regular events in the Moffat MRT calendar to keep us busy outwith the call-outs. Every year we host a Charity Challenge, a series of four way-marked walks around the Moffat hills designed by our team members in order to raise funds for the team. We've had to contend with all weathers over the years but this year was by far the most challenging with the event taking place during the June heatwave. Despite the heat, the walkers still came and we were able to raise a significant amount of money for the team. We also host a joint training exercise every autumn bringing together the southern mountain rescue teams and Police Scotland. We base the weekend around a central theme; hosting workshops and a social event on one day with a hill exercise the next. With planning in full swing for this year's exercise, it's certainly one not to be missed! 📌

FIND MOFFAT MRT ON FACEBOOK @MOFFATMRT OR VIA MOFFATMRT.ORG.UK

SUPPORTER STORIES

Left: Photo © Matt Woodthorpe.



MATT WOODTHORPE: FROM MOUNTAIN RESCUE CASUALTY TO MOUNTAIN RESCUE FUNDRAISER

We'd like to share Matt's incredible journey: from suffering a 'catastrophic' knee dislocation on the hill in 2020 to fundraising champion, having recently completed the Castle Howard Triathlon to raise over £700 in support of Scottish Mountain Rescue.

Yorkshire-born Matt has had the pleasure of calling Scotland home for the past seven years, and could often be found exploring the hills near Stirling where he lives. A freak accident in November 2020 saw him slip from a path while descending one of the Beinn a' Ghlo munros, resulting in a catastrophic knee dislocation with all four knee ligaments rupturing, the head of his fibula breaking, and the nerve which innervates the foot and lower leg becoming damaged. With the help of two nearby hikers, mountain rescue was called and assisted Matt safely off the mountain. He was transported by helicopter to hospital in Inverness. Matt had successful surgeries to repair the ligaments in his knee and screw the fibula back into place, but still has nerve damage known as 'foot drop' which means that half of his lower left leg remains paralysed. With the use of an ankle-foot orthotic and extensive knee rehabilitation, this tenacious man has pushed hard to get back to his previous activities nonetheless. In July this year, he successfully completed the Castle Howard Triathlon. Atrocious weather on the day of the event meant that the cycle stage had to be cancelled but, ever resilient, Matt carried on, completing a very muddy trail half marathon and 1.9km swim. An incredible journey of persistence, dedication and endurance — Matt's is an inspiring story for us all. With the generous donations of his family and friends, he has raised an incredible £721 for Scottish Mountain Rescue. In his own words: 'Accidents happen, and when you are in vulnerable, exposed situations, it is incredible that a team of volunteers, mostly funded by public donations and from their own pocket, will do their best to come to your aid. Fundraising for SMR has been my way of saying thank you for the support I was given, and to ensure that SMR have the resources to continue to support people who need their help.' Thank you Matt!

BILL REPRESENTS SMR AT HONOURS OF SCOTLAND EVENT

SMR Chair, Bill Glennie, represented Scottish Mountain Rescue at the presentation of the Honours of Scotland to King Charles III and Queen Camilla. Part of 'Royal Week' in Scotland, the National Service of Thanksgiving and Dedication was held at St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh on 5 July 2023.



Summer Snapshots...

Summer saw a number of teams supporting various events with safety or first aid cover, from the famous Bog Slog run/walk/bog snorkel on the island of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides to the cross country biking section of the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships in the south.

Border SAR have had a busy summer, providing safety cover at a number of running, biking and horse-riding events from local hill races at Yetholm and Earlstone to the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships, where the teams covered the mountain bike cross country section at Glentress. Tweed Valley were also involved with a number of community events, including the Threepwood Rideout in May, the Eildon Hill Race, Melrose Festival Rideout, Selkirk Common Riding and Durty Events Hop Run in June, and the Braw Lads gathering in July. In August, while covering the Philiphaugh Hill Race, one of the team ingeniously showed how a drone could be used to monitor the runner's progress and scout for incidents.

Aberdeen benefited hugely from some Basic Life Support Skills training delivered by the NHS Grampian Resuscitation Department in June. In September, the teams' annual fundraiser, a 10K hill run, took place in Glen Tanar (above right). The weather gods smiled kindly upon everyone who took part and a good time was had by all.

Arran partnered with Arran Active to launch a T-shirt featuring Goatfell, the highest hill on Arran (right). Proceeds are donated to the team.

Meanwhile, Kintail members grew their skills at river rescue (left), training in extraction techniques from hard-to-access riverside locations. Their patch has some wonderful stretches of river, flowing out from Loch Ness all the way to the sea, and previous rescues have involved having to evacuate injured kayakers from inaccessible gorges.





SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE WELLBEING INFORMATION

Looking after your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others in your team

STEVE PENNY SMR WELLBEING OFFICER

Scottish Mountain Rescue (SMR) aims to support teams to embed an understanding of personal resilience into the volunteer experience from recruitment to retirement, including how to support colleagues and what to do following incident trauma exposure. The Lifelines Scotland (NHS project) model of informal peer support reflects the evidence that early and ongoing support such as reassurance, information and kindness, ideally from people who know us — family, friends, and colleagues — helps to challenge stigma, normalises reactions and promotes the expectation of recovery. Most responders, most of the time, cope well.

Lifelines Scotland: lifelines.scot provides emergency service staff and volunteers with the knowledge, understanding and skills to look after themselves and their colleagues, allowing them to function well in their roles and for this experience to be both positive and rewarding. There are resources for family, friends and others (eg. employers who have staff who volunteer as responders). Lifelines runs facilitator-led learning opportunities for emergency response volunteers.

If you are looking for resources to support someone, it will help to try to listen carefully to them and explore what type of support will best suit their needs. You can also call/text the helplines for advice when supporting someone. You can call on someone's behalf with their permission since making that first call can be very difficult.

The SMR Team member wellbeing pages include a number of useful links as well as those signposted in this summary. You will find phone, text and web links as well as SMR specific support videos. There are also details of the SMR Benevolent Scheme. (Password available from your team): scottishmountainrescue.org/team-pages/wellbeing-support

SPEAK If you, or the person you are supporting, wish to speak to someone:
Information and access to support services for:

- **999:** Call 999 if there is immediate threat – especially if taking own life has been attempted
- **NHS:** Call 111 for urgent medical advice (or contact/advise GP if less immediate urgency)
- **Samaritans:** samaritans.org or call **116 123**
- **Breathing Space:** breathingspace.scot or call **0800 83 85 87** (Also piloting a web-chat option)
- **Police Scotland Employee Assistance Programme (EAP):** Call **0800 011 6719**
- **Working Health Services** (for self-employed and small organisations): healthyworkinglives.scot/workplace-guidance/Pages/Healthy-Working-Lives-services.aspx
- **Able Futures:** able-futures.co.uk provides up to nine months of support: see website for details. Call **0800 321 3137** Monday to Friday 08.00 – 22.30

TEXT: If you, or the person you are supporting, prefer text support:
• **SHOUT:** giveusashout.org Text the word **BLUELIGHT** to **85258**

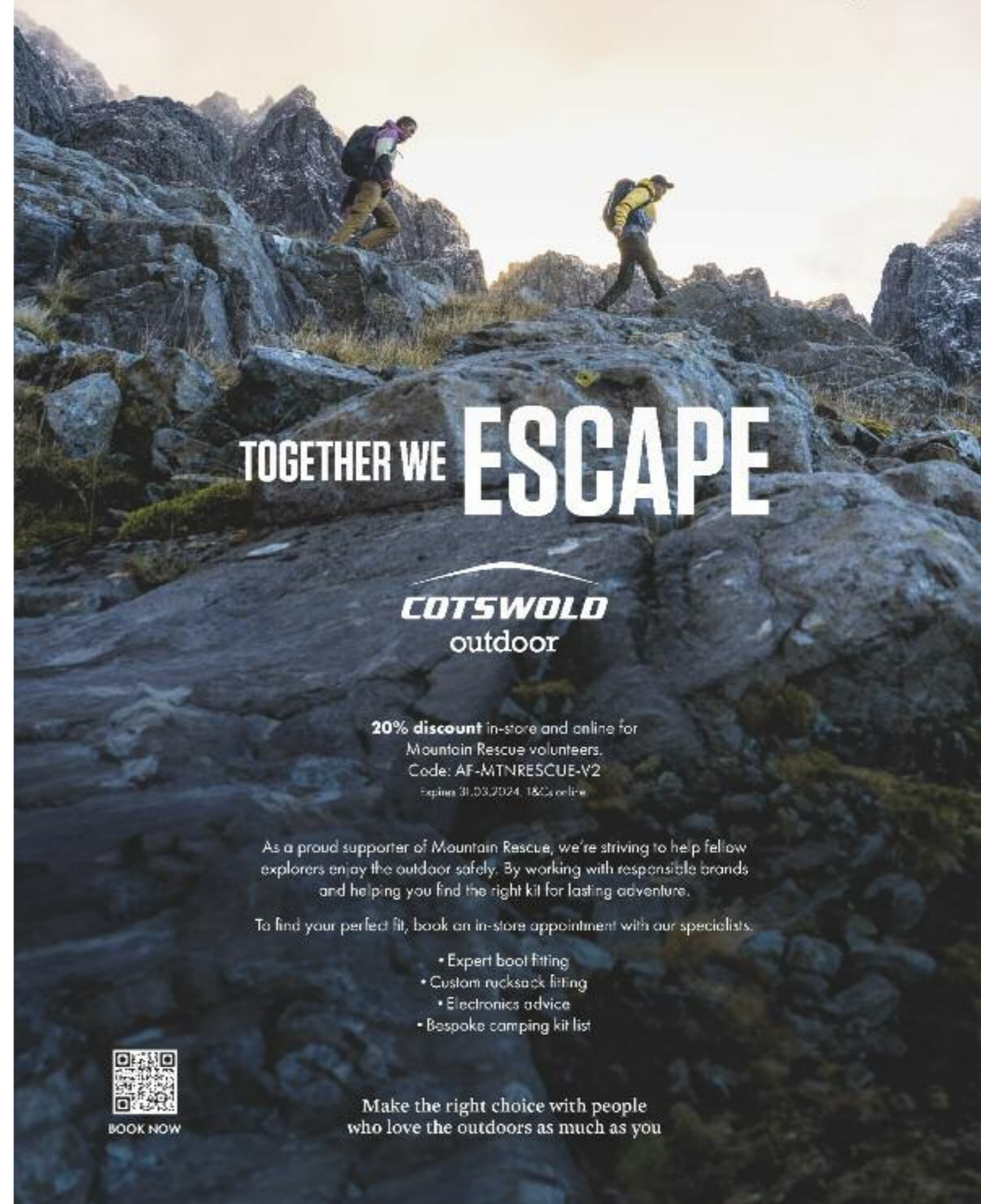
READ/WATCH/LISTEN: If you, or the person you are supporting, wish to access online resources:

- **Lifelines Scotland:** www.lifelines.scot (An NHS project specifically for the emergency service community in Scotland)
- **Police Scotland EAP:** besupported.helpeap.com
- **National Wellbeing Hub:** wellbeinghub.scot (Aimed at Health and Social Care sector in Scotland)
- **NHS:** nhs24.scot Links to NHS Inform and NHS 111

Please address any questions regarding this page to: wellbeingofficer@scottishmountainrescue.org

John and Jordan
MOUNTAIN LEADERS

Proud to support



TOGETHER WE ESCAPE

COTSWOLD
outdoor

20% discount in-store and online for Mountain Rescue volunteers.
Code: **AF-MTNRESCUE-V2**
Expires 31.03.2024. T&Cs online

As a proud supporter of Mountain Rescue, we're striving to help fellow explorers enjoy the outdoors safely. By working with responsible brands and helping you find the right kit for lasting adventure.

To find your perfect fit, book an in-store appointment with our specialists.

- Expert boot fitting
- Custom rucksack fitting
- Electronics advice
- Bespoke camping kit list



BOOK NOW

Make the right choice with people who love the outdoors as much as you

Team membership never stays constant. People come and go whilst some stay for long periods and others only briefly. On the plus side, change brings new energy, leadership, skills and ideas and is clearly very healthy.

But a downside of an ever-changing membership is that those who once made a significant contribution are soon forgotten and their impact is lost in the mists of time.

Bob Sharp Bob Sharp looks at one particular stalwart of early Scottish mountain rescue: Ben Humble.



The life and legacy of Ben Humble: Scottish Mountain Rescue icon

Whilst some may be long forgotten, their influence can be extraordinarily enduring. One such person is Ben Humble. Ben made a significant contribution to the early development of mountain rescue and safety in Scotland, laying the foundations for subsequent procedures. His involvement with mountain rescue was quite unique, spanning well over forty years, beginning well before the civilian service was established when rescues were organised essentially by local worthies.

He witnessed the coming of the nationwide system of Rescue Posts in 1935 and the provision of rescue spearheaded by mountaineering clubs. He was active when civilian teams began to form in the 1960s and when the Scottish national body was established in 1965. By the mid-1970s when most of civilian and police teams were fully operational, he remained active, collecting accident statistics and promoting mountain safety. Despite such a long-serving and significant impact on mountain rescue, he will be unknown to most of today's members. But his legacy lives on. Here's why.

Benjamin Humble (Ben to colleagues, friends and family) was born in Dumbarton in Central Scotland in 1903. Although his family background was engineering, he qualified as a dentist in 1924 and later became a dental radiologist responsible for significant advances in dental radiology and forensic odontology. Unfortunately, he was forced to give up practising as a dentist in 1935 due to rapidly progressing deafness (otosclerosis), abandoning dentistry for journalism and photography, and becoming a knowledgeable botanist. Within a short time he was completely deaf. However, this handicap did not inhibit his enjoyment of the Scottish mountains to which he increasingly turned, nor did it prevent him making a marked impact on mountaineering right to the end of his life in 1977.

Ben had boundless energy. For such a vital person, his deafness must have been a sore burden, but the effect only made him work harder. His handicap seemed to have an uncanny knack of knowing what had just been said. For example, at an AGM of the Scottish Mountaineering Club (SMC) he stood up and floored his opponent without even having read the notes passed to him!



His capacity to understand through the expressions and body language of others was remarkable.

Douglas Scott was a life-long friend of Ben and gave a eulogy at Ben's funeral. They first met in Skye in the 1920s. Douglas reflected on the day they met. It had been a blazing hot day and Ben's face was shining to match the setting sun. He had just come down from the Storr ridge after climbing all the tops and his glowing account filled Douglas with envy. At that time neither Ben nor Douglas knew any climbers, so they joined forces, sharing their inexperience. On looking through their old diaries after Ben's passing, Douglas commented it was a wonder they had no serious mishap on their many adventures. However, he noted also that having no other contacts possibly made them more than usually cautious.



Above: Ben Humble (left) and Eric Langmuir (fourth from left) at the opening of the first display of the Donald Duff Memorial Exhibition — Adventure in Safety. **Inset:** The booklet which accompanied the first display of the exhibition; *Tramping in Skye* by Ben Humble; news story from *The Glasgow Herald*, 1970. **Opposite:** Ben Humble in his native environment and sporting his distinctive moustache © Dr Roy Humble.

Ben had an enormous capacity for research which led to a treasure trove of features and letters published in the SMC Journals. In 1931, he joined the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland, laid aside his shepherd's crook and bought an ice axe. He was interested almost from the start in the reasons for mountain accidents and rescue organisation. On his first visit to the Cairngorms, he recorded seeing the cairn by the Shelter Stone: 'Where Ellis the English student died of exhaustion.'

Ben always kept a diary of his excursions which Douglas said had all the freshness of real adventure and a feeling for a good story. His writing was prolific, with innumerable articles and letters sent to friends, others and the Press. Also books, illustrated by his own photographs. Here is a glimpse of Ben's style from his diary of a vintage weekend in the Arrochar hills:

'5 June 1930. Terribly cold, but visibility at 4.00 am was glorious. The best view we have ever had from the Cobbler. Shortly after, we started to see mist coming down over Ben Ime. That was only the beginning ... everything blotted out ... colder and colder. We missed the map now but thought we could get to Ben Ime without it ... soon hopelessly lost. Walked about for two hours in dense mist.

'At last we got clear, 9.00 am now and eight miles from Arrochar. Passed through the village at 11.30, hadn't even the energy to make a cup of tea... slept for two hours and felt better. Our intention ... to get the bus at Inverbeg ... started to run and were within twenty-five yards of the road at 7.15 when the last bus passed. Just had to hoof it another six miles to Luss.'

Ben's deafness may well have been the root of his remarkable character — an absolute commitment to involvement and communication. He became well known as an author and photographer, contributing articles to magazines such as *The Scots Magazine* and *Climber and Rambler* and writing a number of books which included *On Scottish Hills*, *Tramping in Skye*, *The Songs of Skye*, *Wayfaring around Scotland* and *The Cuillin of Skye*.

demonstrated Civil Defence procedures, showing the rescue of people in fallen buildings, methods of first aid and reenactments of various dangerous situations. These films are, in fact, the only record that exists of Glasgow's Civil Defences operating during WWII. He also filmed and produced a number of climbing films. As a resident of Arrochar he knew the area well, which prompted him to produce *A Cragman's Day* in 1946 and *Holidays In*



The latter was a painstakingly researched and well-illustrated mountaineering history of the Cuillin Ridge, now long out of print and much in demand by collectors. Skye was one of his greatest loves and in 1930 he helped to organise the first 'Skye Week' which became a well-established event in the island's calendar for many years.

Ben was also a competent film-maker. During the war he produced several films to assist the war effort. These variously

Arrochar in 1949, both films featuring many of his climbing friends. *A Cragman's Day* was an award-winning instructional history film of John 'Jock' Nimlin, Harry Grant and David Easson climbing the peaks of The Cobbler. Another film, *In Days Of Old*, featured female climbers on the Campsie Fells.

Ben was a prominent member and officer of the SMC. From the 1930s onwards, he was a prolific contributor to the *Journal*,

writing on many topics including climbing expeditions and environmental matters. Indeed, his canvas of mountain interests was wide and his energy and involvement did not diminish with advancing years. He was the only club member for whom the president and journal editor were well advised to maintain an individual correspondence file for Ben's writings! His letters came on all subjects — dinners, AGMs, huts, publications, politics, etiquette and, of course, accidents and rescue. Ben was into everything right up to the end of his life. It was uncannily fitting that a letter from him appeared in *The Scotsman* on the day of his funeral. As somebody said: 'Ben always had the last word!'

Ben was probably best known for his contribution to mountain rescue and his concern about mountain accidents. This extended over some forty years or more. He was influential in founding the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland in 1965 and, whilst he applauded the role of climbing clubs in providing rescue personnel as well as the availability of rescue equipment through the nationwide system of Rescue Posts, his views ensured that with the passage of time, the provision of mountain rescue became the responsibility of the rescue teams rather than the climbing clubs. He was adamant that the control of mountain rescue should remain in the hands of those who actually do the job: the volunteers. And, as we all know, that remains the case today.

His first discourse on mountain rescue was published in 1946 when he summarised all the recorded mountain accidents from 1925 to 1945. His survey highlighted common causes such as the 'simple slip', inadequate equipment, unsuitable clothing, poor navigation skills and bad planning — problems that continue to the present day. Over the years, he concluded that the vast majority of mountain accidents were avoidable and could have been prevented had those involved been more aware of the

risks involved. His accounts of needless deaths was a recurring theme as he argued the importance of mountain safety and training. With prevention as the overriding theme, he constantly reiterated the necessity for inexperienced hillwalkers and others to know and abide by simple common sense rules. There was little disagreement over his insistence that safety must be focused around prevention. He made this very point in a letter to *The Glasgow Herald* in 1970.

Over the years, he concluded that the vast majority of mountain accidents were avoidable and could have been prevented had those involved been more aware of the risks involved.

Ben had already established a system of recording mountain incidents by designing a report form to be used by clubs and teams. Interestingly, his form included personal details of casualties such as age, gender and birthplace, which allowed him to profile those at risk. A recurring finding was that over half of those involved in mountain accidents in Scotland hailed from England — often referred to as 'Humble's First Law'!

Ben's extensive work on mountain accidents led naturally to his appointment in 1965 as statistician (then referred to as the 'accident collator') for the newly formed Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland. He was clearly the right person for the position. Meticulous and persistent by nature he put pressure on all teams to submit annual reports that were accurate, complete and submitted on time. He was not reluctant to remind those who failed to meet these criteria, a position guided by a philosophy that only complete information could provide a fully accurate picture. When he passed away in 1977, Ben had amassed over forty years' experience collecting and collating mountain incident statistics, all of which were published in the SMC's annual journal. Over the years he modified his report form in ways which better reflected the changing

nature of incidents and resources available. The one shown below was his final version.

Obviously committed to the cause of mountain safety and its promotion based on sound accident information, he was the moving force behind the highly successful Duff Memorial Exhibition: Adventure in Safety, which opened in Glasgow in 1968 and was subsequently held in London (1969), Edinburgh (1970) Aberdeen, Fort William (1972) and numerous other locations in Scotland. The Duff Exhibition (named after another stalwart of Scottish Mountain Rescue, Dr Donald Duff), gave large numbers of young people the opportunity to see at first hand the need for skill and care in their hillwalking ventures. This was especially important to Ben

who had a profound concern and enthusiasm for ensuring that young people were introduced to the hills in the best possible way.

This was also reflected in his long association as a volunteer instructor at Glenmore Lodge. The photograph shows Ben with students of Dunfermline College of Physical Education in 1955. He worked as a voluntary instructor for over fifteen years and was well known for one particular lecture he gave regularly to student groups at the Lodge. Other instructors called it 'the blood show', for it was interspersed with slides from his large collection of photographs taken at the location of mountain incidents. For some, these talks were something of an ordeal and it was not unknown for a member of the audience to faint on seeing a particularly gory slide! His talks were often accompanied by typical pithy comments, particularly when the unfortunate victims were other than Scottish! Indeed, he enjoyed referring to those from south of the Border with some acidity.

'No ice axe,' he would say, pointing to the screen. And, after a suitable pause, finish with, 'English!' When the original Lodge buildings were replaced by the current ones in 1959 Ben had the idea of planting a

heather garden near the entrance. What he eventually created was a garden containing Alpine plants and heathers. It remained his pride and joy which he tended up until his death.

Small, bespectacled and gnome-like, he could be bad-tempered, stubborn and awkward, but he was a great character with a lively sense of humour and a penchant for practical jokes, very committed to the hills and the outdoor life. His impact on Scottish mountaineering, particularly mountain rescue and mountain safety, is without equal. He was a multi-talented individual: a prolific writer, climber, photographer, film-maker, statistician, botanist, instructor, forensic scientist and qualified dentist. A true polymath.

Dr Roy Humble (Ben's nephew) reminds us that Ben had another string to his bow; that in all of his different fields of involvement, his views were always reinforced by time. This was a pattern that remained constant even down to his very last communication, which focused on the use of ice axes by walkers and climbers. Ben's thoughts on this subject were published in *The Glasgow Herald* on the very day of his death. Here's a summary of what he said:

'Possession of an ice axe when climbing the hills in winter does not necessarily mean safety. Indeed it becomes a liability if one does not know how to use it. Records show clearly that the main cause of winter accidents is slips on snow slopes or ice and the inability to control such. Slips can be controlled according to one's instant reaction and proper use of an ice axe, but far too many carry ice axes with no idea of how to use them. Our committee again and again repeat the rule that all who seek the mountains in winter, and particularly beginners, should have had at the beginning of each winter season one or more days' training under skilled instruction on the proper use of the ice axe on safe lower slopes before going high. Were this followed in Scotland there would be a much lower accident and fatality rate on our hills.'

Ben's views on this particular subject and the need for proper training remain relevant almost fifty years on. He would be delighted to know that his wise words were heeded and that training in the use of an ice axe for all winter hillgoers, along with the other skills he highlighted such as good navigation and proper planning are now standard practice.

In a nutshell, Ben was one of the founding figures of Scottish mountain rescue as it is known today and a trailblazer in promoting the importance of mountain safety based on sound evidence. That he achieved so much and was involved in so many aspects of Scottish life is quite extraordinary. And one of the remarkable things about Ben was that his opinion was always worth listening to and frequently later proved to be accurate; something which did not go unnoticed by Eric Langmuir.

'I often took his advice on matters concerning mountain rescue. On those few occasions when I acted against his advice, I was always proved wrong. When you really get down to it, Ben's life was one of unstinting service. The material rewards he obtained for his work were trifling compared to what he contributed.'

In 1971, Ben was awarded an MBE for his contribution to mountain rescue. His untimely death in 1977 left an enormous void in the organisation. ☹

Ben Humble's Legacy in a nutshell

INCIDENT REPORTING

Ben initiated the system for recording mountain incidents which is standard practice today. Writing in the *SMC Journal* in 1961, Ian Maitland commented, 'The recording of such happenings accurately has always been a difficult task and has been undertaken from the beginning by B H Humble. He has done this most thoroughly and few incidents have escaped his notice. It is very important that a factual account should be made of these happenings so that any lesson which it may provide is not lost.'

Ben was resolute that all teams (and clubs) should provide information about every single incident. Initially, simple narratives were submitted, but Ben then designed and developed a report form that standardised information, improved objectivity and ensured completeness and ease of analysis. One thing this did was to demonstrate that well over 50% of all mountain incidents are avoidable. This was something that had never before been appreciated.

MOUNTAIN SAFETY

Ben was convinced that promoting mountain safety should be based on reliable and accurate information gained from mountain incidents. In this way, common causes of incidents (both summer and winter) could be accurately publicised and appropriate training measures devised.

As early as 1946 he commented that as 'greater numbers flocked to the mountains, it was good to see organisations such as the Central Council of Physical Recreation offering training in mountaineering which newcomers to our sport will take advantage of; in that lies the best hope for a reduction of absolutely unnecessary hill accidents in the future'. He was convinced that the best way to promote mountain safety and reduce incidents was through prevention — a sentiment echoed in the words of his nephew Roy Humble. 'Ben seldom backed away from a firmly taken position. There was little disagreement, however, over his insistence that safety must be focused around prevention. This message formed the core of the Adventure in Safety Exhibition which he helped co-ordinate in 1968.'

MOUNTAIN RESCUE PROVISION

The voluntary nature of mountain rescue in Scotland, both at national body and local levels owes much to Ben Humble. Ben often commented that because it was the rescue teams that did all the work, it was they that should have chief control.

In his eulogy to Ben, Douglas Scott said that 'Ben was influential in the founding of an independent Mountain Rescue Committee for Scotland, his views ensuring that this work became the responsibility of the rescue teams rather than the climbing clubs. In this, his work is of lasting importance as he has helped ensure that the control of mountain rescue work remains in the hands of those who actually do the job'.

Tom Weir said much the same. 'The lasting value of his contribution in this area, publicly recognised by the award of the MBE in 1971, stemmed from his long and persistent fight during the 1960s to maintain the independence of the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland as a voluntary body.'

Today, it is impossible to think of things being any different. It may be this is only through Ben's vision and passionate involvement in mountain rescue from the very start.



Above: Ben Humble's final Incident Report Form © Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland; Ben with students of Dunfermline College of PE in 1955 © Glenmore Lodge.

KEY REFERENCES

Douglas Scott. *In Memoriam – Ben Humble. The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, 303-306, Vol 31, No 169, 1978.

Ian Maitland. *Mountain Rescue in Scotland 1935-1960. The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, 130-135, Vol 27, No. 152, 1961.

I.D.S. Thomson. *A History of Glenmore Lodge (Chapter 6). The Scottish Mountaineering Trust, Glasgow, 2003.*

Roy Humble. *The Voice of the Hills - The Story of Ben Humble MBE. Bishop Auckland: The Pentland Press. 1995.*

Ben Humble. *A Survey of Mountain Accidents in Scotland 1925-1945. The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, 325-332, Vol 23, No. 137, 1946.

Ben Humble. *Mountain Rescue Problems. The Scots Magazine*, 242-249, June, 1966.

<http://www.arrocharheritage.com/BenHumbleMBE.htm>

MREW team

 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER & TRUSTEE: MIKE PARK MBE Cockermouth E: CEO@	 FINANCE DIRECTOR & TRUSTEE: PENNY BROCKMAN Central Beacons E: financedirector@	
 OPERATIONS DIRECTOR & TRUSTEE: MIKE MARGESON E: opsdirector@ Duddon & Furness	 MEDICAL DIRECTOR & TRUSTEE: ALISTAIR MORRIS E: medicaldirector@ Calder Valley	
 TRAINING OFFICER: PHIL RIDLEY Kinder E: trainingofficer@	 PRESS OFFICER: ANDY SIMPSON Rossendale & Penale E: media@	 ICT DIRECTOR : MARK LEWIS Western Beacons E: ictdirector@
 VEHICLES OFFICER: SIMON THRESHER Calder Valley E: vehicleofficer@	 WELLBEING OFFICER: JON WHITE North Dartmoor E: wellbeing.officer@	 EQUIPMENT OFFICER : PAUL SMITH Oldham E: equipmentofficer@
 WATER OFFICER: WILL OLIVER Western Beacons E: waterofficer@	 STATISTICS OFFICER: PAUL BRAIN Bolton E: statisticsofficer@	 DRONES OFFICER : BRENDAN O'NEILL Derby E: dronesofficer@

MREW office team


JULIAN WALDEN
CAMERON WALDEN
& **EMMA COLLIER**
E: office@



president/vice president

 PRESIDENT: RAY GRIFFITHS Patterdale E: president@	 VICE PRESIDENT : PETER DYMOND E: peter.dymond@
---	--







MREW trustees

CHAIR OF TRUSTEES: MATT DOOLEY E: matt.dooley@ Glossop MRT	INTERNAL TRUSTEES PHIL BENBOW E: phil.benbow@
MIKE PARK (CEO) PENNY BROCKMAN (FINANCIAL) MIKE MARGESON (OPS) ALISTAIR MORRIS (MEDICAL)	INDEPENDENT TRUSTEES VICTORIA PICKLES victoriapickles@

MREW ambassadors

 PAT PARSONS	 ALAN HINKES
--	---

Rescue Benevolent Fund trustees

 CHAIRMAN/TRUSTEE: NEIL WOODHEAD E: chairman@	 SECRETARY/TRUSTEE: JUDY WHITESIDE E: secretary@	 TREASURER/TRUSTEE: SHIRLEY PRIESTLEY E: treasurer@
 TRUSTEE: BILL WHITEHOUSE E: bill@	 TRUSTEE: BRENDAN SLOAN E: brendan@	 TRUSTEE: HUWBIRRELL E: huw@

Rescue Benevolent Fund ambassadors

KEITH GILLIES (MID PENNINE), CARL FAULKNER (NORTH EAST), BECKY ASHCROFT (NORTH WALES), ROB JONES (PEAK DISTRICT), ROGER KING (PENMACRA), BOB SCURR (YORKSHIRE DALES), CHRIS JONES (CAVE RESCUE)

supporting mountain and cave team members



Find us at rescuebenevolent.fund
To donate, go to rescuebenevolent.fund and click 'Donate'



MREW specialist advisers (non elected)

 EDITOR: JUDY WHITESIDE E: editor@	 PR & MEDIA SUPPORT: SALLY SEED E: PR@	 PEER REVIEW: TIM CAIN Swaledale MRT E: peer.review@
--	--	---

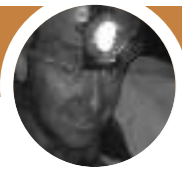
specialist advisers (elected)

 LIAISON OFFICER: MIKE FRANCE Woodhead MRT E: mike.france@	 SAR-H LEAD: NIGEL HARLING Patterdale MRT E: SAR-H.lead@
---	---

TO ADVERTISE IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE MAGAZINE:
CALL CAROLINE DAVENPORT:
07726 933337
E: caroline@media-solution.co.uk

who?

British Cave Rescue @caverescue.org.uk



CHAIRMAN:
PETER DENNIS
E: chairman@

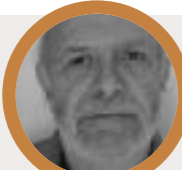


VICE CHAIRMAN:
BILL WHITEHOUSE
E: vicechair@



ASSISTANT CHAIR:
GARY MITCHELL
E: assistantchair@

TREASURER & INFO:
ROGER KING
E: treasurer@
informationofficer@



MEDICAL OFFICER:
BRENDAN SLOAN
E: medical@



SECRETARY:
EMMA PORTER
E: secretary@



EQUIPMENT:
MIKE CLAYTON
E: equipment@



LEGAL:
TOBY HAMNETT
E: legal@



COMMS:
TONY HAIGH
E: communications@

TRAINING OFFICER:
JIM DAVIS
E: training@



DIVING:
CHRIS JEWELL
E: diving@



Scottish Mountain Rescue @scottishmountainrescue.org



CHAIRMAN:
BILL GLENNIE
Tweed Valley
E: chair@



VICE CHAIRMAN:
DONALD MACRAE
Dundonnell
E: vicechair@



SECRETARY:
IAIN BRYDON
Tweed Valley & SARDA
Southern Scotland
E: secretary@

TREASURER:
MOIRA WEATHERSTONE
Arrochar & SARDA
Scotland
E: treasurer@



DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE:
YASMIN HARROWER
E: yasmin@



HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT:
ELSIE RILEY
E: elsie@



Mountain Rescue Ireland @mountainrescue.ie



CHAIRMAN:
JONATHAN SHIELDS
North West
E: chair@



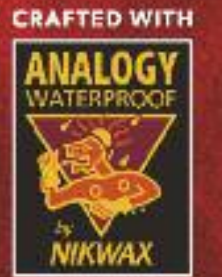
SECRETARY:
KENNY ROBERTS
Dublin Wicklow MRT
E: secretary@



TREASURER:
EVA MARIE O'BRIEN
Dublin Wicklow
E: treasurer@



CHOSEN BY PROFESSIONALS



Our Velez Pro is a lightweight waterproof jacket designed for multi-agency SAR and MR activities. It provides excellent protection, warmth and comfort during rescue operations in the worst conditions. Multiple ventilation options also maintain temperature when working hard in warmer weather.

Nikwax® Analogy™ Waterproof fabric mimics the action of mammal fur to protect you from sweat, condensation and rain whilst also protecting your insulation.

The fabric has a two-layer construction that stops you feeling clammy and cold in your Velez Pro by moving moisture and trapping still air to keep you warm, dry and comfortable:

- Pump Liner™ pushes moisture outwards by transferring liquid water from one side of the fabric to the other to protect you from sweat and condensation
- A closely woven microfibre outer is also hydrophobic for durable water repellency

To order your Velez Pro email: contract.sales@paramo.co.uk or call 01892 786446



WATERPROOF DIRECTIONAL DURABLE

Ambleside: info@climbers-shop.com Tel: 01539 430122

CLIMBERS-SHOP.COM



The Climbers Shop
Est. 1989

Proud to be Retail Partners for:



Rab

MONTANE



SCARPA

Black Diamond

Proud to support Mountain Rescue Teams
Discount available for MRT Members



JOE-BROWN.COM

Llanberis: mail@joe-brown.com Tel 01286 870327
Capel Curig: capel@joe-brown.com Tel 01690 720205