

Mintcake



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Congratulations to Paul and Abby Astle on the birth of Libby Amelie on 29th December 2007. Best wishes from us all!

Editor's Comment

Happy New Year!
Kathy

100 Club

Correction for December's 100 Club, as follows:

1st:	47	Ian Hague	£10
2nd:	70	Temple Heelis	£10
3rd:	41	Rod Pilbeam	£5

The winning numbers in the January 100 Club draw are:

1st:	48	R. Wedderburn	£10
2nd:	25	D. Meredith	£10
3rd:	62	Mr. & Mrs. Gray	£5

Peter Clarkson

EGM

An Extraordinary General meeting will be held at 7.30p.m. on Wednesday 6th February 2008 to present for approval the proposals for the team becoming a Company limited by guarantee. Committee meeting will follow.

Seventy-five Years of Mountain Rescue

2008 sees the 75th anniversary of the foundation of Mountain Rescue. We hope to mark the occasion, in conjunction with Langdale and Ambleside Team, during the summer and any ideas or offers of support would be very welcome.

Trevor Cotton
Chairman

Callouts



27th December 16.50 hrs

The Team was called to assist the Langdale & Ambleside Team with the rescue of a 52 year old female who had slipped and sustained a nasty double fracture of a lower leg, whilst descending towards Scandale Pass from Red Screes. A rescue helicopter from RAF Valley made repeated attempts to access the scene but was thwarted by deteriorating weather conditions. Eventually the lady was stretchered off the fell to vehicles at the track end in Scandale, then transferred to County Ambulance for the onward journey to hospital. The other three members of her family were escorted off the fell to Team transport and then reunited with their own vehicle.

12 Kendal Team members were involved for some 6 hours, with our base being closed around 23.00.

30th December 11.49 hrs

While on a training exercise in the Whinfell area, the Team was called by the Police and asked to assist two sheep that had been cragfast near Sadgill (Longsleddale) for four days. Our new GPS tracking system allowed us to identify the location of some suitable team members and they were requested to meet up with one of our Land Rovers for transport to Sadgill. The sheep had clearly encountered our team members before as when they saw the lads abseiling down towards them they managed to make their own way safely off the crag! The good news was that the sheep rescuers managed to make it back to the pub in time for a New Year pint.

Exercise Reports

Wednesday 12th December 2007 - Night Navigation

I arrived at base for an evening of night navigation pondering the possibility, based on previous tales, of an adventurous night of snow and helicopter detours. Instead we were introduced to a hitch-free local exercise.

Kevin ran through use of the GPS tracking program, which enables base to locate and track the whereabouts of all the GPS radios in the area. After switching on a GPS radio and a quick call to base to let them know your identity and the code of your radio (printed onto a white flag at the top), the radio can be labelled as "you" for the entire callout. Also, the entire callout can be recorded to file, as long as file-new is clicked on at the start.

George continued with some reminders about good practice on night/low visibility navigation, the main points being to double check bearings and distance, and look around en-route. He also emphasized the need for knowing paces on various terrain. Itching to get out into the crisp, still night, we finally arrived on Scout Scar for a couple of hours of zigzagging under the stars. A prickly start for most, dog-legging and boxing (a.k.a. dodging and fighting) scratchy gorse and juniper.

About 8 zigs, zags and controls later we received a call from base requesting that we collect our nearest controls and return to vehicles. On hearing this, the fabulous four of Kath, John Fitch, Ian and myself "staged" a grand finale of getting lost – purely to highlight one of the practical uses of the GPS system (honest!). Having spun around a few times, become a bit dazed and confused and failed to find an elusive rock step, we eventually radioed base to find out our exact whereabouts and to ask the direction and distance to the control. After precise instructions from base, based on what they could see of us and the control on-screen, we found it in no time at all.

On whizzing back to base, we watched a rerun of the evening on the tracking system. It showed that GPS signal was lost from time to time, often when rucksacks were placed on the ground.

Selected learning points of the evening were:

- At the start of a shout: if at base, click: file-new on the tracking system; if on the hill, identify yourself and your GPS radio number to base.
- Make sure the microphone aerial is pointing skywards, as much as possible.
- It's hard to keep count of paces and listen to the radio at the same time.

Thanks for a useful evening!

Sarah Nield

What's On

Wednesday 9 January

Training: Avalanche talk/Winter Kit

Sunday 27 January

Training: Kit Familiarisation, Round Robin

Wednesday 30 January

Equipment evening: 19:30h

Wednesday 6 February

EGM followed by Committee Meet: 19:30h

Wednesday 13 February

Training: Water Incident Command Structure

Sunday 24 February

Training: *Swiftwater Technicians Only*

Joint exercise with Fire and Rescue Service

Wednesday 27 February

Equipment evening: 19:30h

Friday 29 February – Sunday 2 March

Winter training – Scotland

Sunday 30th December 2007 - Social

The final training session of 2007 was sold to us as a social walk, with a guarantee of enjoyment! Consequently we had a good turn out given that it was in the middle of the festive period.

Although a social walk was top of the enjoyment list there was an important underlying exercise agenda. We were to be testing the new GPS radios on the hill but this time with a lap top set up in the rear of Mobile 2 tracking our every move.

Our location for the exercise was around the eastern end of the Borrowdale valley. This is part of our team area, but an area that we do not visit on a regular basis. This was a good opportunity to gain some familiarity of the area. It's always good to visit these places in daylight with reasonable weather, so that when the pager goes off on that dark rainy evening with the clag down, we have an idea of the lay of the land.

Before we set foot on the hill, we were reminded of the importance to do a radio check with control to confirm that the radio is in working order and for those with GPS radios, to log the number of the radio with control. This enables the personnel working control to be able to follow the radios and know which team member it is with! Radio numbers can be located on the base of the Aerial.

After completing the radio checks as requested, we set off in small groups on a couple of routes around the local tops and valleys. It was a great opportunity to walk at a civilised pace up a hill as opposed to rushing up when on a callout! Even though it was a social walk and visibility was on the whole good (some low cloud came in periodically) there was a lot of attention given to the map reading, more for the purposes of familiarisation rather than the need for navigational purposes.

At the outset of the walk, we were informed of the importance of transmitting from the GPS radios on a regular basis to enable them to be continually tracked. We found ourselves radioing control to give our location (as we have done for years) but now, control were able to confirm that we were actually there!! The improvement in technology over the last few years has been, in my opinion, staggering. This system offers us far more security on the fells.

For this system to help us however we must make sure we follow the guidance given from the technical bods who have worked hard to install this system. Logging the radio with control, regular contact with control for the radio to poll, keeping the mic in an upright position and making sure it's not buried under multiple layers of clothing will all help the system work better.

During the walk, we were alerted to a possible callout. Typically we had just reached the furthest point from the vehicles on our walk! We descended into the valley and promptly lost all communications with control. We therefore had no idea if the situation was leading to a full callout or otherwise. We upped the pace along the valley bottom back to the vehicles. Once back in contact, we found out it was a sheep rescue and the most suitable personnel were selected and sent to deal with the task; I didn't ask what criteria had been used for this selection!!!!

The sheep callout was instigated by Sadgill Farm. It was also brought to our attention (via a team member who had read it in the Gazette) of the recent death of Mr Fishwick.

On returning to Mobile 2 we discovered a very cold Pauline who had been operating the lap top in the rear of the vehicle. Thanks also to Dagmar who greeted us with mince pies!

The debrief was held in a very suitable location – the pub! (Cross Keys). The food provided was excellent and for those of us lucky enough not to be driving, the beer was also in excellent condition, (if you were driving, it was horrid, you wouldn't have enjoyed it!!)

At the end of the debrief, we were given the good news of the birth of Libby Amelie to Abby and Paul the previous day. Congratulations from all of us!

Finally, can I say thank you to all the people concerned in the organising and running of the session. It was a great social day out with important and informative training.

Simon Thorn

Fundraising

Bucket Collections

I am hoping to have the year's programme in place by the end of January. Remember new supporters would be very welcome!

Other Donations

After the AGM, Les Telford and my wife, Jill, went to collect at the Brigadoon concert at the Town Hall at the invitation of Kendal Amateur Operatic Society and collected £115.64. Well done!

On a cold Sunday December 16th, we had a great turnout for the Kendal & District Lions Club pre-Christmas collection with a total of 16 Team members and Supporters. We're expecting a cheque any day now for about £270. I'd like to thank everyone involved for their support.

Peter Clarkson
Fundraising Co-ordinator

Training

Scotland Winter Training – 29th Feb, 1st & 2nd Mar 08 (Nights of the 28th, 29th Feb & 1st Mar).

Accommodation is now confirmed as Feshiebridge Lodge and the cost is £10 per night. Sign up on the list at base. The deadline for receiving payment has been extended to 27th January to allow the task of collecting to be allocated to someone getting more sleep than Paul! Cheques should be made payable to 'Kendal Search and Mountain Rescue Team' and cheques or cash put in the Training Officer's pigeonhole.

Lakes Winter Skills

Due to the unpredictability of snow (!), winter skills training will take place one weekend day if the conditions are right. A pager message will be put out a few days beforehand.

On behalf of the Training Officer

General Team Notices

- **Could everyone please have a clear out of their pigeonholes!**
- There will be alterations to the fire alarm system at base going on during January
- The new stretcher lowering gear will need to be stowed in two sacs due to weight. This is currently being organised. Training in January will include looking at the kit and trying out the new harnesses.
- If you are organising an event or exercise please check the wall planner and check with working groups that it will not affect operations.

Sports Report

Kendal MS&RT put a strong (if aging) team out for the Langdale Christmas Pudding 10k Road Race. John 'Whippet' Hall put in his usual fast performance and at the finish stated, "It was merely a warm up for next year's Keswick to Barrow". Scottish member Liz Parkes (just back from her high-altitude training in Nepal) won the prize for the first woman over 60 to finish; well-done Liz. Keith Pittman, trailing in a few minutes behind Liz, looked ~~was~~ tired and exhausted; obscurely he blamed his poor performance on LAMRT! Apparently, Nick Owen and Phil Green had been looking after the halfway drinks point; Keith claimed that the orange juice they gave him "tasted funny", he seemed reluctant to admit he was just out of condition. Former Team member Phil Latham was spotted out on the course, but clearly the lack of training with the Team had a negative impact on his finishing speed. However, all finished and received the traditional Christmas Pudding; ideal training food for the next run.

From Mintcake's Sports Correspondent

Sheep Shout Special

Call-out Report – Sunday 30th December 2007

It started with Larry. Not the young tup who's been chasing me and Isabelle around since September. No, the old one. It was Larry who spotted those humans in red outfits planting the juniper bushes a couple of years back. The do-gooders may want to tart up the countryside, but don't they realise what juniper does inside a sheep? Obviously not. It turns to gin, of course.

It killed Larry. He managed to nibble a few berries at the edge of the crag, but the further up he went the more legless he got, until....Poor Larry. He fell thirty metres ending on his back in six pieces, four legs and two rolled shoulders. He was brave, Larry, brave but headstrong. Well, that's rams for you. Isabelle had a shine for Larry. She'd been tuppued often enough by him, I suppose, but she also got a taste for gin. And ever since then she's been wandering about Longsleddale looking for juniper.

It must've been last Thursday she scurried over saying she'd found some on a little crag opposite the old farm. "Some what?" I asked. I'd spent the last week trying to avoid young Larry who still can't remember who he's tuppued and who he hasn't. By the end of December, I ask you. I'm getting too old for this annual event, especially as Larry seems to prefer the more experienced among the flock. "Juniper, of course!" snorted Isabelle, "What else is there?" How does she avoid Larry? Anyway I followed her up onto this ledge halfway up the crag, only to find a few chewed stalks and a small patch of grass soaked in sheep pee. While Isabelle was trying to work out who in the flock could've gazumped us (of course prime suspects were the Texels – she's never liked foreigners), I was wondering how we were going to get off the ledge, particularly Isabelle with her fear of heights. When I pointed this out to Isabelle she had a right hissy fit, dancing up and down on the spot. It took all my wits to calm her down.

That night was stressful. Well, have you ever been stuck on a ledge stinking of wee with an old sheep suffering from vertigo? I thought not. The next day the old man brought his dog up; not the young one we run rings round, but that mean old bitch with the glint in her eye who snaps at your heels. She was meant to chase us off the crag, but she scared the wits out of Isabelle. Then the rain came, so they left us.

By Sunday we were beginning to give up. Then, and this all may sound a bit woolly, my eyes seemed to focus on a bunch of juniper planters in their red suits heading straight for us. By the time I'd gathered my wits, one of them appeared above our heads on a bit of string. It gave me such a start I jumped straight off the ledge, and before I knew it I was scuttling off down the hill. Poor Isabelle was still a bit woozy from the grass with the urine aftertaste she'd decided to eat for breakfast. Pointing in the wrong direction, she looked as if she was going to hit the juniper planter. But he soon turned her round and she followed me down the hill, only stopping to relieve herself on one of their bags.

That was yesterday. Today? I've forgotten all about it. As for Isabelle, Larry caught up with her last night, and gave us all a bit of peace.

Doris the Sheep was interviewed by Ian Johnson

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