

# Mintcake



Find us at:- <http://www.kendalmrt.org.uk/>

Reg. Charity No. 259539

May 2004

## This Month

Editor's Comments.....	1
Exercise Reports .....	1
What's On.....	2
Ops & Membership .....	3
Callouts .....	3
Collecting Boxes.....	3
Kendal Medieval Market .....	3
Work at Heights Regulations.....	4
Wheels Appeal Update .....	5
Working Groups .....	5
Heroes to the Rescue .....	5
2004 UK Mountain Rescue Conference .....	5
THE CLIMBER'S TALE .....	5
From Our Own Bushman .....	6
A Sick Climber's Confession .....	6
Interested in MR and Sheep?.....	6
Contacts.....	6

## Editor's Comments

Firstly, my apologies for dating last month's issue April 2003. What do you mean, you didn't even notice?

This month sees the standard mixture of information and requests for assistance/responses. We really do need people to come forward and help with emptying collection boxes, selling raffle tickets and rattling buckets on collection days. Please don't leave it to the same few people every time.

In addition, there is the opportunity to attend the 2004 UK Mountain Rescue Conference in September. Read on to find out how.

To lighten the tone a little, there is a poem assumed to be from the pen of Chaucer himself, which just goes to show that teams proudly celebrating 50-odd years of MR have a long way to go.

Thanks to my contributors this month. Want to change or add anything? It's an open forum so send me an article.

**Les**

## Exercise Reports

### Wednesday 14 April: Search Management

The exercise commenced with a PowerPoint presentation by Keith. This reminded us of many of the points made in his presentation on Sunday 28 March which were well reported by Pierre in the April Mintcake and I see little merit in repeating them here. We did, however, go a little more deeply into the points to consider about the person for whom we are searching, the weather, the terrain, the time frame and the additional resources available to the Team. We were also instructed on the principles of Search Management and the key learning points were:

- Gather and record information. Record facts and decisions.
- Consider the physical & mental condition and experience of the person lost.
- Interrogate family and friends for information.
- Note the Point Last Seen (PLS) or Last Known Point (LKP) and time.
- Calculate the distance they may have travelled.
- Consider the natural/manmade boundaries. Most lost people head downhill.
- Draw the area they are likely to be in on the map. Also draw the search areas.
- Consider the wind direction/strength and decide on search area priorities.
- Be aware of the benefits of using search dogs (and Les!).
- Allocate resources with consideration of transport, communications and maintenance (food, drink, etc.).
- Monitor progress and plan medium and long-term phases.
- Ensure all searchers are accounted for at the end of the search.
- If you play with it, your pager will go off – as ably demonstrated by Howie about one minute in to Keith's presentation. Amazing! How does your pager know??? The wonders of electronics I guess.

Trevor then split us in to 5 groups to undertake a "desk top" search management exercise. The scenario was that a walker had lost his companion in mist and approaching darkness between Harrop Pike and Sleddale Fell. The search was to take place over 4 hours but, for exercise purposes, this was condensed into 1 hour. Each group assessed the situation, settled on priority areas and deployed their search resources. Trevor and Keith fed us with information as the exercise progressed, and most of the learning points above were put into practice. Everyone seemed to struggle a little with the condensed

time but all groups felt that they would have probably found the missing walker, who was sheltering in a sheepfold close to Borrowdale Beck (about 4 km from his LKP). Key learning points were:

- Ensure that full records of decisions, progress and communications are produced (particularly important if we end up in the Coroner's Court).
- The search plan should be reviewed continuously.
- It is essential to develop medium and long-term plans and to manage all resources effectively.
- It's nice to go to the pub after managing a search (or at any time really, come to that).

**John Fitch, KMSRT**

### **Sunday 25 April: Scout Scar and the Incident of the Interrupted Lower**

On day 2 of the best weekend of the year so far, a group of hardy souls gave up a fantastic day out to go and play with bits of string. The day started with a short illustration of the day's techniques via Paul's photos of our resident supermodels. The order of the day was to rig up and hopefully demonstrate the system for stretcher lowering.

After the surprisingly brief PowerPoint, and remonstrations made about suitable footwear by Abby, we were off for the first adventure of the day, Scout Scar.

A tour was had along the top of the edge trying to identify alternative descents to the climbing crag; looking at the possibility of suitable anchor points on top of the crag (the team Land Rover is still the best) and the potential difficulties in lowering a stretcher through the scrub and scree to an evacuation point. The usual climbers' path took us through some interesting ground to the main crag face, and the likely incident areas were pointed out by Mr. Dell. For those of you who don't know the area, it is a bolted limestone crag with most of its routes in the low E grades. As a consequence the easier routes tend to be at each end of the crag on more friable and poorly protected rock. This is where a fall would be more serious and as a consequence more likely to involve us!

Onward to Crag X (otherwise known as Farleton Knott) to turn training into practice. A disappointing journey was had mainly due to some navigational difficulties involving locked gates and the lack of ice cream vans en route. The team was split, and the black art of gear placement was introduced to the uninitiated. Various belays were demonstrated and discussions held on their merits and disadvantages. This led on to a demonstration of the techniques for the equalisation of loading on multiple belays, and pre-loading of a multiple belay system. The A team then broke off for a spot of Egyptian PT and lunch whilst waiting for the B team to finish.

Then for the real thing. Belays and the Alpine Tube were rigged, Safety ropes with a haul pre-rigged were attached via French prussiks, the stretcher put into place, barrow persons of indeterminate gender were attached; it was all going smoothly when a sudden shout came from Andy, "pack up and go, we have a call out from L&A". Gear was

rammed into sacks and a high-speed convoy set off down the A591 only to be stood down as we passed Low Wood. So, it works, in theory, but we will have to put it to the test another day...

All in all, another horrid day out in the sun, and all involved got a good feel of the techniques involved.

**Dave Ritchie, KMSRT**

## **What's On**

### **Wednesday 12 May**

Training: splint/defib

### **Sunday 23 May**

Exercise: steep ground evacuation

### **Saturday 15 May**

Collection: Tebay services, both sides  
Birdcage, Finkle Street – selling raffle tickets, 9am-noon

### **Saturday 22 May**

Collection: Westmorland shopping centre  
Birdcage, Finkle Street – selling raffle tickets, 9am-noon

### **Wednesday 26 May**

Equipment Working Group 19.30 hrs

### **Saturday 29 May**

Collection: Westmorland shopping centre  
Birdcage, Finkle Street – selling raffle tickets, 9am-noon

### **Monday 31 May**

Kendal Medieval Market – selling raffle tickets

### **Wednesday 9 June**

Training: 1<sup>st</sup> aid scenarios

### **Wednesday 23 June**

Equipment Working Group 19.30 hrs

### **Saturday 26 June**

Collection: Asda

### **Sunday 27 June**

Exercise: TBA plus – we hope – a team photo in the morning in some new kit courtesy of *Lakeland Limited*.  
Pencil the date in your diaries now.

### **Tuesday 6 July**

Base clean – HELP NEEDED

### **Saturday 31 July**

Collection: Asda

### **Saturday 28 August**

Collection: Asda

### **Saturday 4 December**

Collection: Morrisons



## Ops & Membership

While membership news recently has focused on a number of new members of the team it is sadly time to report that Martin Campbell has left the team. Martin was a member for some 13 years, holding the posts of both membership secretary and newsletter editor in the past. He has decided that his busy lifestyle, involving extended periods away from home leading walks etc., no longer permits him to fulfil his training and callout commitment to the Team. We wish both Martin and Mary well in the future and thank them for their many contributions to the Team and its work.

## Callouts



### 2 April

16 members of the Team responded to a call from a man whose wife was stuck on the Garburn Road with sore feet towards the end of the Kentmere Horseshoe. By the time the 1<sup>st</sup> vehicle reached Kentmere, we found the lady safely ensconced in her car, partaking of refreshment.

### 3 April

A call for assistance was received from Langdale & Ambleside team on Saturday afternoon. A 15-year-old girl from a well-equipped group had slipped on wet grass in Far Easedale and had broken her ankle. 13 Team members helped with the long stretcher carry. This incident emphasises just how long a callout can take. The fall occurred at 3.15pm, but it was 9.45pm before the casualty reached Westmorland General Hospital. First question from the unfortunate teenager once she was released from the stretcher: "Can I go to the toilet now?" It's those little things you sometimes forget...

### 19 April

The Team was asked to assist an ambulance crew at Devil's Bridge, Kirkby Lonsdale. The first vehicle had just left when the stand-down call was transmitted.

### 25 April

As reported above, the Team's assistance was requested by L&A during the monthly exercise. The 16 members on exercise set off for Ambleside but were turned back when the incident resolved itself..

*SARDA had a quiet month in April, with only one callout paged to all the handlers, and even this was resolved within minutes, without the need to set off.*



## Collecting Boxes

The many collecting boxes located in and around Kendal in shops, pubs, guest houses and the like play a vital role in ensuring a steady flow of revenue for the Team. Some are lucrative, others less so. They are only of use, however, if the money finds its way from the boxes into the Team's bank account. A small number of volunteers currently undertake this task.

A recent request for more volunteers apparently fell on deaf ears. Admittedly, it's not a very glamorous contribution to the Team, but who said mountain rescue was about glamour? Without the income received in this way, the Team wouldn't even be able to buy the clothing for us to pose in, should we be so inclined!

You would need to empty maybe 10 boxes about three times a year, then count and bank the money. Not too arduous, but you would make a significant contribution. I make no apologies for appealing in particular to newer members of the Team to demonstrate their commitment in this way.

How can you help? Contact Eddie Harrison on 01539 724410.

Unable to get to the shops etc. during working hours because of your own work commitments? We also urgently need someone to coordinate the overall box emptying system. Again, please speak to Eddie in the first instance.

## Kendal Medieval Market

The Kendal Medieval Market takes place on Monday 31 May. As mentioned in last month's issue, the Team is the beneficiary of the raffle tickets at this year's Market. However, the responsibility is on us to sell them. This will take two forms: Liz will gladly pass on books of tickets to those who wish to sell them to friends, family, colleagues etc. In addition, we have the opportunity to sell tickets to the general public on the following three Saturday mornings, i.e. 15, 22 and 29 May between 9am and noon at the Birdcage in Finkle Street. As the Team is involved in collecting at Tebay Services on 15 May and the Westmorland Centre on 22 May, we obviously need as many people as possible to help. Please contact Liz Parkes on 01539 729323.

## Work at Heights Regulations

This has been the subject of a great deal of debate recently, much of it rising no higher than a tabloid Europhobic level, see the contribution below from Christopher Booker in the Sunday Telegraph on 11 April:

### ***“Climbers to be shielded from perils of heights***

*There could be no more vivid example of how our law-makers have lost touch with reality than the extraordinary battle now being fought by Britain's leading climbing organisations. They are resisting a plan by the Health and Safety Commission to subject them to an EC directive wholly inappropriate to mountaineers and which Brussels never intended should apply to them in the first place.*

*This month saw the end of a two-year-long 'consultation' with the 'adventure activity industry' over regulations that the HSC plans to introduce by the end of the year, to implement the EC's 'temporary working at height directive', 2001/45. The directive's intention was to introduce new safety rules for 'workplaces', where builders and others work with scaffolding, ladders and ropes. No other EU country thought this applied to climbing, yachting and other adventure activities. But HSC officials insist that, since these are 'work activities' under UK safety law, the EC rules must apply.*

*The results of trying to apply rules to something they were never designed for are pure Alice in Wonderland. One HSC proposal that caused problems was the insistence that rock-climbing parties must use two ropes instead of one. This might be relevant to window-cleaners on tower blocks but for climbers, as is explained by the organisations co-ordinated by John Cousins, the president of the World Climbing and Mountaineering Federation's training and standards group, the need to fix two ropes would make climbing more dangerous rather than less.*

*Equally daft is the ruling that no one should be allowed to 'work at heights' in adverse weather conditions, such as snow and ice. Applied to mountaineering this is ridiculous, as is the requirement that a 'work plan' should be drawn up in advance, to show exactly how a climb is to be attempted and where ropes are to be fixed.*

*Most obviously absurd, however, is the HSC's insistence that signs must be erected to warn of any dangers from fragile, brittle or slippery surfaces. As Mr Cousins and his colleagues point out, this would mean covering mountains with signs to indicate every patch of loose rock or snow. The HSC's response is that it would be difficult to draft the regulations so that climbers were exempt from such rules, without exposing other workers to the risk of falling through a snow-covered skylight.*

*Even more astonishing is that the requirement for signs does not appear in the directive at all. When the HSC first made its proposals, three of its officials were invited to north Wales to be shown how inappropriate they were to rock-climbing. They left seemingly convinced that mountaineering should be exempted. Such is the rapid turnover of HSC officials, however, that all those engaged*

*in the consultation have repeatedly moved on. The only consistent factor has been the HSC's insistence on doing something so crazy that, in another context, those responsible would be sacked.”*



Sources close to the Health & Safety Executive pointed **Mintcake** in the direction of the HSE's response:

*“Christopher Booker's piece 'Climbers to be shielded from perils of heights' is a lopsided and unfair criticism of the consultation and proposals for the new Work at Height Regulations. Had he observed normal journalistic courtesies of seeking to balance his reporting he could have had the following facts:*

- The draft proposals do NOT insist on double rope working or propose a ban on single rope working. They do not ban working on fragile surfaces or work in poor weather conditions, neither do they require signs on mountains. From talking to the sector we know there are specific issues like fragile surfaces in the natural environment that need to be addressed and we are already committed to looking again at the draft proposals.*
- The Regulations, like the Directive, apply to all workers (not workplaces) as you inaccurately report.*
- How other member states implement the Directive is for them but we have no evidence to suggest that working guides etc are being excluded in the rest of Europe; and*
- We take consultation very seriously. Staff moves in no way undermine the fact that we have listened and will continue to listen to the concerns of this sector. Mr Booker may be unaware of the successful meeting between HSE and the Outdoor Adventure Activity Industry on 31 March at which most of these issues were resolved. A copy of the joint statement and position paper are on our website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/falls/wahr.htm>.*

*Clearly the moral of the tale is why let the facts get in the way of a good 'knocking job'.*

*Yours faithfully*

**TIMOTHY WALKER**

*Director General”*

€

Europophobic conspiracy theorists will no doubt have noticed that WAHR, the acronym for *Work at Heights Regulation*, is the German for “true”...

## Wheels Appeal Update

Kevin Knowles and Kath Kirby have returned from their trip to Nepal. Kevin was delighted to have reached the summit of Island Peak (or Imja Tse). A report on the trip will appear in next month's Mintcake. In the meantime, however, Kevin is looking forward to collecting the £700 or so which was pledged to the Wheels Appeal for our new vehicle.

## Working Groups

### Equipment & Medical / Communications

Rob Brookes has finally hung up his aerial as the Team's Radio Officer. Kevin Knowles (who still seems unsure how he got the job) is to take over, with the assistance of John Fitch.

So what is Rob going to do with all the, er, spare time on his hands? Well, there is the small matter of co-ordinating the entire new radio system on behalf of LDSAMRA. The words "out", "of", "frying pan", "fire" and "are you insane" come to mind, in no particular order. The team owes Rob a huge debt of gratitude for all his work as Radio Officer. I think his is a Guinness if he ever surfaces from work on the new radio system.

## Heroes to the Rescue

This was the title of a letter in the January 2004 issue of *Country Walking* magazine from a Merseyside reader recounting an incident last summer when his wife slipped and hurt her ankle on Loughrigg. Two runners almost immediately appeared on the scene, one of whom declared that he was a member of Kendal Mountain Rescue Team and that his friend was a doctor. Their assistance was clearly much appreciated, and the writer stated that he and his wife intend to raise money for the team "as a small token of our esteem". But who was the mystery runner? No posing hero, he! Answers on a postcard, please.

## 2004 UK Mountain Rescue Conference

This year's conference is to take place at the University of North Wales Bangor. Registration is on Friday 10 September, followed by two days of conference events and a trade show on both Saturday and Sunday, 11-12 September. The Team is prepared to pay the Conference fees for up to 4 members. Anyone wishing to be considered for one of these places should contact Andy Dell by 23 May at the latest.

## THE CLIMBER'S TALE

*A Chaucerian gem recently rediscovered by Howard Jones, and reproduced with permission from "The Owl & The Cragrat", 2004, ISBN0-9547107-0-3:*

Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote  
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,  
And from the Ynland Revenue we here  
To welcome inne the new financial yere;  
Then alle the clymbers they have hadde enough  
Of clymbinge onne the artificial stufte,  
Atte the Foundry or the North West Face,  
And they are all fulle sicke of Rope Race.  
But soone, whyle alle the people lye aslepe,  
Bright Phoebus forward in his course doth leepe  
To summon inne the British Summer Time,  
And itte is then thatte folks go forth too clymbe;  
From far and near they go on pilgrimage  
To Stoneye Mideltonne and Hathersage,  
Whyle somme do turn their faces forth west,  
To Cloggy, Tryfan, Idwal and the reste.  
But tho the shoures swete falle on the toun,  
Upon the hilles itte generally pysseth down.  
A manne there was, in Manchester did dwelle,  
Who liked to climb upon the rocks fulle welle,  
This manne, of whom I tell to you my tale,  
His clymbinge loved, but better loved hys ale,  
For even tho the sunne was past the prime,  
He still would notte bestir himself to clymbe;  
Butte satte alle inne the tavern supping beere.  
He had no monnaie left to buy his geere,  
Some tatty slynges, a rope from longe ygo,  
Thre Rocks he hadde, four hexes, and namo,  
But tho of clymbinge gere he sore did lacke,  
A vow he made that he'd clymbe Kern Knottes Crack.  
And so onne daie he walked up to the route,  
Altho he was as sober as a newt,  
And tho he hadde a bellyful of beere,  
He started on the climb without a fere;  
Butte when he cam unto the tricky bitte,  
He could notte ffynd a piece of geere to fitte,  
And he was so befuddled by the booze  
That hys balaunce he very soone did lose.  
And so before too longe itt came to passe,  
This manne fell doune, and landed on his arse.  
He lowd did groan as onne the grownd he layed,  
And piteouslie did crye out for first ayd;  
He loudlie called for somebodie to come,  
And putte some stickinge plaster onne hys bumme.  
And before verie longe, I'm gladde to saye,  
The Mountayne Rescue carried him away.  
The moral, if a moral there shold bee,  
If you wold clymbe, then always sticke to tea;  
For iffe onne bere or whisky you shold sup,  
You may fynd that your lucke is alle used up.  
But iffe you cannot do without the pubbe,  
Thene joyn Innominata Mountain Clubbe.

## From Our Own Bushman

### News from the Kalahari – 29 April

Illusions of a leisurely pace spotted with idyllic days spent drinking mai tais during the first phase of this expedition have been rudely shattered. Running an expedition with 150 people spread over 9 project sites across 3000km of desert ain't a holiday - a little late to discover this fact, I suspect. My days have been filled with arranging medical evacuations, chaperoning trek teams through lion country, sacking the odd local staff member, counselling emotionally fragile staff and venturers and looking for escape routes out of this place! Visions of the Watermill on a Sunday afternoon spring to mind, however tomorrow I depart for the Kalahari Desert to spend a week with the bushman people in a place far, far away from pubs and rolling hills. Adios!

**Hamish Wilson, KMSRT**

## A Sick Climber's Confession

I have eaten

the Kendal Mintcake  
that was in  
your rucksack

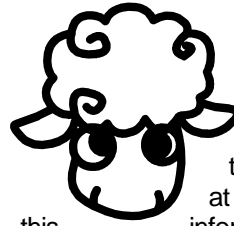
and which  
you were probably  
saving  
for the summit bid

Forgive me  
I couldn't resist ...  
so sweet ...  
so bloody sickly ...

yuck

© Marc Chrysanthou 2004  
also from *The Owl and the Cragrat*, see above  
Any similarity to William Carlos Williams' *This is just to say*  
is hardly surprising.

## Interested in MR and Sheep?



Good, now that I have the attention of 80% of the readership you may be interested in the Lakeland Sheep & Wool Centre, just off the A66 at Cockermouth. The MR interest is in the permanent display (and a good one at that) that Cockermouth MRT have in this information & visitor centre. We could do with a similar facility, so any suggestions as to where we could get this in our area would be welcomed by Liz. Definitely well worth a visit, if only to see a sheep suspended in a climbing harness (or did I dream that bit?).

**Keith Pittman, KMSRT**

## Contacts

E-mail

[les.telford@dial.pipex.com](mailto:les.telford@dial.pipex.com)

or

on +44 (0)1539 727051

or

Editor's pigeon hole in base

or by mail to:-

**Newsletter Editor**  
**Kendal Mountain Rescue**  
**Busher Walk**  
**Kendal**  
**Cumbria**  
**LA9 4RH**

**Copy deadline for next issue: 31 May 2004**