

Mintcake



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Editor's Comments

There are various items which touch on public relations this month. Don't knock it. This week I tried to get the phone number of Keswick MRT base via one of the new 118 directory enquiry numbers to respond to a SARDA callout.

The call went like this:

What name please?

Keswick Mountain Rescue Team

Can you spell that?

K-E-S-W-I-C-K

What town is that in?

Keswick

Sorry, I don't have a listing of that. Is it a shop?

Er, no, it's a mountain rescue team.

There are obviously still many people who have no idea of our existence so any assistance is welcome when it comes to raising our profile – whether at fundraising collections, the Beer Festival, helping the WI, rescuing missing soft toys or giving talks to groups of all shapes and sizes. I know you already give a lot but remember that we rely on the public for our continued existence when the next request for help with a particular event comes along. You might even enjoy it.

Les

Exercise Reports - 17 + 27 September

Wednesday's exercise was billed as a 'river rescue and working near water' training exercise. The usual pager message extolling the virtues of a spare set of dry clothes was not forthcoming so I wasn't quite sure what to expect as the limited light in mid-September seemed to rule out any meaningful practical activity but I reckoned without the experience and enterprise of Andy Dell. It was hard to believe that he'd been "dropped in it" only the week before and asked therefore to step in at the last minute to organise the whole session, such was the quality of the presentation.

After the briefest of intros we were told to respond to a water rescue on our doorstep--- I jest not as we ran approx. 200 metres to the Kent looking in vain for some press-ganged "volunteer". The proposed victim turned out to be a somewhat inanimate object whose ability to respond to any of our throw lines was distinctly limited, it being a small but nevertheless well marked plastic bottle! It didn't take long for the assembled throng to realise that 'placing' a throw line on a fairly exact spot on moving water is an extremely skilled operation and one which most if not all of us need to practise! However there is one essential that escaped one of our number - the need to hang on to the other end! However it's all too easy to 'find fault' as a spectator. It really is difficult to get your placement right - it needs brains and brawn so that leaves me out! At the debrief the plea for more training at a more sensible time of the year hopefully will be picked up. Nearly three weeks after the event the one statistic that is fixed in my mind (I hope I've got this right!) is that one third of all 'water' fatalities are people going to the rescue of someone else.

Andy managed to cram in a phenomenal amount of information in his highly professional PowerPoint presentation covering all aspects of water rescue including some very pertinent real-life scenarios but it is this piece of information that has really stuck in my mind. At the risk of stating the obvious this means that we really have got to look after ourselves first and foremost in any water rescue situation. Because we weren't on familiar 'terrain' our attempts to organise ourselves at the water's edge this Wednesday evening were a little disorganised and it was all too easy to get carried away with the moment. The crucial act of making sure that ALL personnel at the water's edge are wearing buoyancy aids must not be overlooked. It pays to realise that water rescue is not our forte. This session taught us to be very aware of our considerable

limitations. In a real-life situation a water rescue represents a potentially high-risk scenario for all rescuers. We ignore this at our peril.

Hil Fouweather, KMSRT

⌘

I was delighted to see once again that this **Saturday's** training was going to be just as exciting, loud and yellow as my first. The first exercise had been Helicopter Stage1 training, and I'd struggled with the concept of not getting flown to the casualty (and down again) ever since. You can understand the way my heart sank when I heard that there was not enough light to fly. It was the first night after a new moon and the sky was inky black. There was too little moonlight for the night vision goggles so we had to *walk* up and down. Where's the fun in that?

As it turned out, the dark did give the opportunity to practise a bit of navigation that has been lacking during such a beautiful summer, when maps/compasses have scarcely been used. So the change in plan provided the space to look at the logic, planning and ongoing thinking behind the organisation of a search.

Firstly we looked at the paging process and the events that lead up to the whole team being paged. Including the decisions that the Team Leader makes before we mere mortals get involved. This opened up into a discussion as to where the likely places for the casualty were and logical search patterns. Closing all the doors on the possibilities was critical. Hamish was selfless as ever in his immediate offer to search Passions for the casualty following the description of a "25 year old female, blond fell runner"

Soon we were all over the mountain and within hours, Kess, our SARDA colleague, had sniffed out the casualty. It had taken a fair few hours to find the casualty and certainly could have been a lot longer without Kess.

Les managed the site, setting up a tricky radio relay and soon kit was being brought in. The site was not easily accessible, but everyone took on the roles necessary. The casualty's broken leg and other injuries were certainly very realistic including beginning to suffer from the cold. The first aid was carried out under the cover of a Kisu, whilst the rest of us brought kit and took on some food and water. By now it was late and the carry-off was thankfully shortened.

A lovely night and an excellent "standard" callout and search exercise, which was well organised and could easily be learnt from. Thank you to all those who took part and organised the event.

Learning points:

- SARDA dogs work on airborne, human scents. Don't confuse the dog by getting in front of it.
- Every individual should be carrying first aid protective gloves in preparation for being first on the casualty site.
- Insulate the casualty from the ground asap.
- Torch longevity was extremely variable and in many cases not up to a medium length search
- The evacuation route initially chosen was not suitable, and stakes and ropes could have arrived earlier. Knowing the whole picture of the casualty area is important.
- Colours are hard to see under a KISU so it is important to check the casualty's lip colour etc. outside of one.
- Tracking software linked to mapping software would aid the co-ordinator at base, with so many people on the mountain covering different areas. Does anyone have time to write something to help?!

Bits of invaluable individual kit:

- Emergency shelter (or Kisu). Significantly more useful than a Gore-Tex bivy bag
- Strobe light (300,000 candlepower, 60 flashes a minute for 12 hours and little weight)
- Latex gloves
- Chocolate and warm gloves, as ever

Jonathan Burgess, KMSRT

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

After every exercise or call-out the radio handsets and the vehicle radios should be left switched or switched back to Channel 1 (as well as making sure all the radios have transmit power in them). Newer members may not be aware of the need for the Ch 1 setting, i.e. Ch 1 is the default / initial channel. If it is done every time the radios / vehicles return to base it should prevent someone being out of comms if they fail to check (very likely with the old adrenaline rush) the channel when going on a call out.

Patient-carrying mats, formerly in the medisacs, are now kept in the cas bags. Makes the medisacs lighter, and the cas bags heavier. All makes sense.

Callouts



It's been another very quiet month – just one callout to report:

6 September

The Team was called out to assist L&A on Hem Crag near Grasmere. A solo walker had injured a leg and had to be carried off the fell. 14 Team members attended.

What's On



Exercises start at:
Wednesday 19.00 hrs
Sunday 09.00 hrs
unless otherwise stated.

Wednesday 15 October

Training: Take vehicles apart and play with kit

21-25 October

Training: Westmorland Beer Festival

Sunday 26 October

Training: Medical round robin

Wednesday 29 October

Equipment & Medical Working Group

Saturday 1 November

Morrison's Supermarket Collection

8-16 November

Kendal Mountain Film Festival

16 or 17 November

Children in Need rescue

Wednesday 19 November

Training: Defib

Wednesday 26 November

Equipment & Medical Working Group

Sunday 30 November

Training: Search TBA

Saturday 13 December

Christmas Charity Concert

Wednesday 17 December

Training: Hypothermia talk

Sunday 28 December

Training: TBA

Tuesday 30 December

Equipment & Medical Working Group

From Our Own Correspondent

Autumn draws on

A recent report in the *Westmorland Gazette* about a crop circle mysteriously appearing in a wheat field near Old Hutton was inconclusive as to the cause. An eyewitness saw some lights in the field and reported 'With the marks they've left in the field, you would think it was aliens.' If this is the case, then Northern Art has missed a trick. The artistic ability of the Cumbrian aliens is (light?) years behind that of their counterparts who regularly exhibit in Wiltshire. Maybe Ray (the Team's artistic consultant) should give them some advice about design. But I would point out two things (and ignoring the Dennis Aris theory that the circles are merely tyre marks from a Land Rover). Firstly, that the crop circles occurred immediately after the Team's 50th Anniversary Dinner. Secondly, that a certain Deputy Team Leader lives in Old Hutton. It is quite clear that a new nighttime search technique has been developed and we will soon try it out on an exercise, as the 'happy-juice' powered run-through appeared to be so successful. Of course it is possible that I have misinterpreted the facts and in reality the crop circles were created by non-artistic aliens.

Not long to go before the Kendal Mountain Film Festival is on at the Brewery. Will the quality of the films equal that of (no, I am not going to refer to the marvellous *Rock Farce* series) *Cliffhanger*, the action thriller starring Sylvester Stallone? Sly is an MR climber who comes out of retirement (after losing his nerve on a previous rescue) to answer a plane's distress call. On reaching the crash site, he discovers the passengers are a gang of criminals. Lots of bullets, ropes, blood and strength – are there likely to be a few additional training sessions for the Team in both the local gym and the Police firing range?

Anyway, plenty of things to watch at the Brewery – which may be useful taking into account the low number of call-outs over the past few months. I know I've asked it before, but what is happening? Are there fewer people going on the fell? Or is the message of preparation and prevention getting across, so the percentage of accidents is going down? And as to the significance of this quiet year or two – if this is the indicator of change then it may be time to revisit the Rescue 2000 report from a few years ago (which looked at the way Lake District MR should be going). Rescue 2000 identified the need for organisational change to enable more efficient working to service the likely demand. Two Outward Bound teams should go; also Furness and Millom teams should combine. This has now happened, but is it enough? Maybe it is time for just one Cumbrian team, based in Carlisle. Combine this with an upgrade of the new air ambulance to a Sea-King; the helicopter could do all the rescues whilst acting as a search dog transporter if an occasional bad weather search needs to be carried out. Existing MR members would then not be burdened by having to attend training sessions or equipment working group meeting (or indeed callouts), they would only have to do a bit of fund-raising to pay for the helicopter and the dogs' fluorescent jackets. On the other

hand, this quiet period may just be a minor blip in the 50 years of annually increasing number of callouts – so carry on training.

I was going to finish there, but the mention of films and 'carry on' has led my mind to an idea for a Kendal MR training video - *Carry On Mountain Rescuing*. Nominations to take on the roles traditionally represented by Hattie Jacques, Kenneth Williams, Charles Hawtrey et al would probably be very rude and I am sure the Editor would have to censor them! [Try me. – Ed.] So maybe I will just get out the well-used videos of 'Rock Farce'.

'Barbellate'

Communications

Sending a message to a pager from a PC

Forwarded by Nick Verrall, TL of Langdale Team, a method of sending Vodafone paging messages from the comfort of your own armchair and I, for one, definitely do comfort!

- Go to www.paging.vodafone.net and fill in the box with the number you want to page. Group numbers are accepted just as readily as individual ones.
- Precede the pager number with 07699 and add the pager number with no intervening space, as in 0769976543
- Press <Enter> and compose your message in the boxes presented. It's easier to put the whole thing into the 'Message' box rather than fill in the 'From', 'Subject' etc.
- Click on submit and away it goes.

I've tried it and it definitely works.

If you right-click on a blank area of the Vodafone page and select 'Add to favourites' and then right click again on the words 'Vodafone Paging', in your Favourites panel, this time select 'Send To'....'Desktop as shortcut' and it'll put a shortcut to the website onto your desktop which makes the whole process quicker the next time you come to use it.

Rob Brookes, KMSRT Communications Supremo

Training

Advance notice of the Scottish training weekend. This will take place on 5-7 March next year, based at Loch Insh near Aviemore. Anyone wishing to go should sign up on the list on the whiteboard in base. Contact **Andy Beavon** for more information.

POTY

Use of your eyes and ears needed

Every year (or so) a very prestigious title is awarded. It is known as Personality Of The Year (POTY) and is used to identify those associated with the Team who have done either 'good works' or 'something silly'. The award is presented at a suitable social occasion when there are enough people present to show their appreciation of the winner. For the award to be given there need to be nominations – and so far there aren't too many. The nominations need to come from you, so please keep your eyes and ears alert. The names of all nominators will be in total confidence (so you won't be blamed / thanked by the eventual winner). All I need is a brief word from you with a name and the reason for the nomination; a short note with a few facts would be better but not essential. Nominations can be for / from any Team member, their partners, or anyone vaguely connected with the Team. Don't forget the nomination can be for doing something silly (either in 'Team time', or not), or doing 'good works' (a 'one-off' or 'on-going') for the Team. If you are not sure if some action justifies a nomination, it probably does! Have a quiet chat when you see me, or give me a call at home on Kendal 721901 (or e-mail at keith.pittman@hse.gsi.gov.uk).

Keith Pittman, KMSRT

AGM

The following posts fall vacant at the AGM in November 2003:

- Treasurer
- Fund Raising Officer
- Deputy Team Leader (Steve Kelley)
- Newsletter Editor
- Vice Chairman

Nominations for these posts should be sent to Pauline Speak, preferably before 20 October 2003 to assist admin. However, nominations up to the start of the meeting can be received. Any nomination must have the agreement of the nominee and must be proposed and seconded by any FULL MEMBER.

Only Operational Members can be elected to posts as Team Officers and only Members in the Operational Hill-Going category can be nominated for the post of Team Leader, Training Officer, Deputy Team Leader and Membership Secretary.

Pauline Speak, KMSRT Secretary

Why I Am In MR

Why *am* I in MR?!

I really, really wish that I could claim motives, incentives, 'reasons for joining the Team', including the draw of a short bloke's 'flow of consciousness' type jokes, like Dagmar. If only I could claim a new high and noble ideals that would bear sharing: 'giving something back; the hills have given me so much'; 'the camaraderie of like-minded mountain folks'; 'doing something that matters, that makes a difference'; 'lusting after a female Team member'. But I can't.

I wish I could claim that I was a card-carrying Christian with a latter-day male version of Mother Teresa's vision of getting my hands dirty, going in where it hurts, while saving poor lost souls in the hills. But I can't.

I wish I could confess that I needed and got 'Operational (Hill-going) Member of Kendal MR Team' on my thin CV so that I could launch myself into a decent job. (Some say I do, but I didn't.) But I can't.

I wish I could say that my life was totally unfulfilling, leaving me with a chip on my shoulder and a compensatory drive to inflate my ego by strutting around limelighting during the rescue of people who look on me as a demigod. (Anyway, being prone to corpulence, and a founding member of the Team's 'Teletubbies', 'strutting' is not something I can do with panache.) But I can't.

I wish I could say that I had met, or seen, team members in other roles and was impressed. I did stand near a tall, lanky guy in our 'classically taught Tai Chi class with no talking', (say that fast and you sound Chinese). No talking as 'the way that can be named is not the true way'. He was as desperately poor at Tai Chi as me, uncoordinated, falling over as often as me, and from which I gained some considerable comfort, and not a few laughs.

So, when later I went to meet the then Membership Secretary at Base, and I discovered he and 'Tai Chi beginner' were one and the same, it did *not* inspire me to join the team. I thought, 'in the hills they probably *all* fall over on steep, complicated, wet ground'. (For the record, 'Tai Chi beginner' became a sound friend who is utterly safe and coordinated, whether canoeing Grade 4 rapids, together re-rigging a shelter in Knoydart in a gale, or climbing steep rock; but don't let him cook!) But I can't.

So why am I in the Mountain Rescue Team?

Whisper this very softly, keep it to yourself, as befits a confessional:

I was bored. I wanted no more responsibility. I enjoy drinking beer.

Ahh! There, I've confessed; thank you, thank you; my soul is cleansed from this nine-year burden. I need to explain to complete the catharsis.

For about 14 years I had led groups in the hills. Usually 13-16 year olds undertaking winter journeys in the Lakes and multi-day self-sufficient expeditions to the Ben Alder area, Torridon and the Letterewe Wilderness at Easter. Walk in via a beautiful route, set up a camp and climb the mountains by elegant routes, move on, another camp and more mountains, then out the other side. Then I trained leaders of youngsters for three years. Then I found I had done it for too long and was losing my appetite; it was no longer a challenge. So I resigned. Nine months later I took voluntary redundancy from the organisation I worked for, and six months on *I was bored*. For 15 months I had enjoyed walking and climbing for me; but now I was bored. But also I had 'done my time', 'put the hours in', 'paid my dues', of being responsible 24 hours a day for youngsters in some of the most potentially dangerous and remote mountains in Britain. I wanted no responsibility, relatively speaking.

So, out of boredom and to have hardly any responsibility while in the hills, and to drink a few pints with friends (actually, rather a lot of pints), I became a 'hod-carrying member' of the Mountain Rescue Team. I have such a feeling of irresponsible bliss when I am told to: 'carry this stretcher/splint bag/oxygen etc. up there/down there/somewhere'. Or, in the middle of a wet and windy day or night, being told to 'search that sector of the hill with Rod and John', and the blissful relief of knowing that the casualty is 90% sure to be over near Haweswater so we can all get on with the crack of catching up on each other's news, or taking the, or agreeing 'no, I don't know where we are, either', or listing to others' bons mots over the radios and laughing like drains.

So, no great vision or high ideals. I joined the MR Team because **I was bored, I wanted no more responsibility, I enjoy drinking beer**. And I've had a hell of a lot of fun.

Therefore, can you image the profound sense of guilt I have for receiving the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for services to Mountain Rescue? Please don't tell her.

Ray Green, KMSRT

Kendal Mountain Film Festival



This takes place in the period 8-16 November, primarily at the Brewery Arts Centre and Kendal Leisure Centre, though some events are also being held at Rheged. For further information visit www.mountainfilm.co.uk or phone (01539) 725133

Public Relations

Kentmere WI Community Project

There has been so much publicity about the WI calendar girls, so when the *Westmorland Gazette* phoned and asked if we could do a photo shoot, we thought, it's been done before, so as Mountain Rescue are involved with our project, it must be their turn!!!

Off we go up to Kentmere to meet the press, Hazel (our president) Jean (our treasurer) and Kathy, one of our members, plus Rob & Eddie. The photographer arrived and we suggested that the men should drape themselves over the bonnet of Mobile 3 with their kit off, but as luck would have it they refused and kept their T-shirts on!

On a more serious note, we are grateful to Rob & Eddie for having given up so much time to help us with our Community project which involves grid-referencing every property in the Kentmere Valley. Our ultimate aim is to supply every property in the valley with a laminated card containing the property name, telephone number, post code and grid reference. This hopefully should help emergency services to locate a property more quickly if needed. A map and relevant information will also be supplied to the necessary services. As many of the properties in the valley are holiday homes, we hope that the community will find this a valuable asset.

The grid-referencing has now been done and the task of collating all the information has yet to commence.

Once again we would like to pass on our many thanks to Rob and Eddie for their contribution.

Footnote: Could someone teach Rob which side of the gate he should be on when shutting it behind the vehicle!!!!!!

Jean Harrison



Kendal Torchlight Carnival took place on 12 September. To celebrate the Team's 50th Anniversary our float was on a birthday theme featuring a large cake and a stretcher laden with presents. What was inside the cake? Hamish's offer to emerge scantily clad at strategic intervals was passed over in favour of a more high-tech approach, namely a computer and projector which projected a slide show about the team onto the rear wheel of the trailer. Not as sexy, but more representative of what the Team does! Thanks to all who gave up a lot of time to plan and decorate the float.



Team members attended the Lunesdale, Grayrigg and Westmorland County Shows this summer. These gave us an opportunity to raise a little awareness of who we are and what we do among both the farming community and the general public. A number of people pressed money upon us, even though we weren't particularly trying to raise funds. The number of "You do a great job" comments was very heartening. If you fancy a relaxing day next summer, make sure you join us!



Forthcoming callout

I know we sometimes get a little advance warning of a callout – for example for a search the following day. But how often do you get 5 weeks' notice? Get it in the diary now!

Asda have been very good to us this year and I hope that the relationship will continue to flourish. The Events Co-ordination Team at Asda have asked us to support their Children in Need effort this year by rescuing Pudsey Bear off the Helm. This will take place on the weekend of 16/17 November. I hope that all of you will try and be available on that weekend as the cause is a good one and I am sure we will reap further benefits from Asda in the future. There will be a further announcement nearer the time. Thanking you in anticipation of your continuing support.

Trevor Cotton, KMSRT Chairman



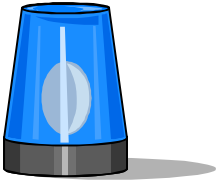
Keith and Les gave two talks to pupils at Castle Green School this month. Highlight? The young lad who got quite agitated when Keith didn't originally select him as one of the volunteers to get inside a kisu and sing. "I didn't know it was going to be as exciting as this!" It must be the way he tells them.

Westmorland Beer Festival



The dates for this year's festival are 21-25 October at Kendal Town Hall. The Team is this year's official charity so assistance will be needed with manning a stand at the event. Ian and Dagmar will be able to give you more information.

Driver Training



With driver training about to resume, it's worth looking at an article entitled *When is an emergency vehicle not an emergency vehicle?* from the July/August 2003 edition of **Emergency Services Times**. You may remember the controversy in May this year when an ambulance service driver from South Yorkshire was prosecuted by Lincolnshire Constabulary for exceeding the speed limit while transporting mountain human tissue for transport although Cambridgeshire Police had been happy to let him exceed the speed limit within their county. The article points out that the UK has some of the most complicated road law in the world, which creates confusion for drivers of emergency service vehicles and for the enforcement authorities. Remember that getting behind the wheel of a team vehicle with blue lights on does not give you carte blanche, so try and keep the red mist under control!

If you can't, then perhaps another contribution in the same issue is for you. St. John Ambulance Service has been given a mountain bike for use as a quick-response vehicle, complete with blue flashing light and siren, equipment panniers, on-board radio and headset, oxygen cylinder, full medical kit and the capability of carrying a defib. Get to the top of Kentmere Pike on that and there are no prizes for guessing who the oxygen and/or defib are intended for!

Fund Raising



A sharp-eared Training Officer managed to "earn" £100 for the Team when he responded to a message on Lakeland Radio, then hot-footed it from his shop to Plumgarth's to collect a cheque and have his photo taken.

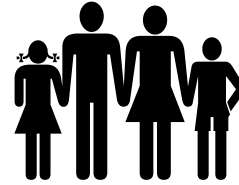
The Treasurer has also received a cheque for £155 from team supporter Jane King who swam with some sharks for her own enjoyment (I hope) and on our behalf.

Thanks to both of the above.

Don't forget the collection at Morrison's on 1 November. Contact **Liz Parkes** to volunteer your services.

Your Chance For Fame

Failed to make it onto Big Brother? Voice not good enough (when did that ever stop people?) or too old for Pop Idol or Fame Academy? Got any children? Are you completely mad? Have you answered 'yes' to all the above? Then this one's for you:



*I hope you don't mind me contacting you. I am an Assistant Producer for the BBC. We are making an exciting new series for BBC 1 called **Britain's Toughest Family**. We are looking for active, adventurous families to take part - people who are looking for an exciting challenge and incredible experience!*

I have contacted most of the fire, ambulance and police forces around the country, and they have kindly emailed out thousands of our posters to their regional forces - as I thought they might have some active families who might want to take part! I thought that mountain rescue teams might have families that would be interested in our programme - it's going to be great fun and the experience and opportunity of a lifetime for the right families.

I hope you don't mind me getting in touch and look forward to hearing from you soon. ..

*Sophie Mead
Assistant Producer
BBC - Documentaries
Tel: 0117 974 7408
Fax: 0117 974 7583
E-mail: Sophie.Mead@bbc.co.uk*

If interested, please contact Sophie directly!

Caption Competition

Last month's photo of Keith obviously struck a chord, to judge by the number of people who sent in suggestions.

Sadly, not all are printable, but buy me a pint and I'll show you the others!



The winner comes from Ray Green:

"So," I sneered, "it is time to die, Mr. James Bond!"

Runner-up is Martin Wyness:
"In my day we'd have belayed the stretcher off this finger."

And joint bronze medallists:
"It takes more than wearing silly shorts to get one of these."
(John Everett)

"I bet mine's shinier than yours."
(Barbellate's mate)

See what you can do with this one. All entries to the Editor via your transmission method of choice.



As ever, the Editor's decision is final.

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