

THE OGWEN VALLEY MOUNTAIN
RESCUE ORGANISATION

42nd
ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR 2006

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Bryn Poeth, Capel Curig, Betws-y-Coed, Conwy LL24 0EU

Edited by Dave and Jo Worrall

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Please note that the articles contained in the Annual Report express the views of the individuals and are not necessarily the views of the Team.

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Team AGM 2006

Chairman's Forward

It is with a mixture of emotions that I write this Chairman's report, for this will be my last. I have decided to stand down as Chairman due exclusively to the work load that my daytime job imposes. I am finding it an increasing struggle to perform the duties of Chairman to a degree that I think is appropriate in the face of the requirements of making a living. This I am sure is a problem that is shared by many on mountain rescue committees up and down the country and indeed by mountain rescue Team members. It is a problem that is not new and will certainly not go away. The demands that mountain rescue makes on those involved are continually growing. Increasing number of callouts, augmented professionalism, collaboration with other services, expectation of the public and other issues are all combining to produce more and more work. In our Team we have experimented by trialling an (unpaid) administrator with a possible view to, for the first time in OVMRO, employing such a person and it has proved a godsend.

So I have some feelings of regret that I did not achieve all that I wanted as Chairman, coupled with pride that the Team entrusted the Chairmanship to my hands, satisfaction at trying to do the best I could, all mixed up with a sense of relief that soon I will be able to concentrate on doing those things I joined the Team to do ... go on the mountains and help people who are in need of it. Comfortable in the knowledge that someone else will have the responsibility of the Chair and Committee!

I must say that my time as Chairman has been an interesting one, many, many changes have taken place and many notable events have come and gone. Too many to even begin to list but most accompanied by substantial expenditure!

As I write I am reminded of the story covered on the BBC recently about funding. All the Teams in Scotland are now subsidised by the Scottish Parliament, but here in Wales we are still solely reliant on fundraising to be able to operate. Over the years the function of the Team has changed dramatically. Once upon a time (as many Team members will tell you!) the 'jobs' done were rescues of other mountaineers who had been injured or caught out by severe weather. However in recent

years the mobile phone has meant that we have been called out to groups of children, students, ramblers, mountain bikers and lone walkers. Though many of these incidents were not immediately 'life threatening' events - circumstances could change at any moment and the consequences too. Much has been said about the reliance on a mobile phone on the hill – that it is as much a part of the Backpack kit as a map or compass...however there have been occasions where the mobile phone has replaced the compass or the change of clothes, that they see the Rescue Team as a convenient insurance policy. Always pack the mobile phone 'as well as', not 'instead of'!

However, more and more we are being relied on by the Police for assistance. We have been called out on searches (both in the mountain and on low levels) and to recover evidence from scenes of crime that are inaccessible to many. This has meant more of our members being trained in Search and Rescue skills, Crime Scene preservation and management, recording and conserving evidence found at a scene. There was a time when training meant getting out on the hill – but the nature of our service is changing, and quite often training these days can be taking photographs at a crime scene or how to label evidence bags as well as how to drive our new boat, but that is another story.

We have often been called the fourth emergency service, however unlike the other three, we though professional, are merely volunteers. We are called out at unsocial hours, we are taken away from yet another family day out, or we have to cancel dinner plans at last minute because the pager has gone off. We don't work shifts, we are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. That is some commitment – on our part and on the part our partners and families.

This additional service that we provide does come at a cost. We opened the new garage extension this year, and believe me the money did not grow on trees! We have found it necessary to purchase specialised equipment for our increasing role in white water rescue for example. We are reliant on the funding of the public, and Triple Three (333) members to keep the Team going. We need to find approximately £30,000 every year just to keep the Team going – if there is a capital expenditure such as Team vehicles or new kit then that cost keeps increasing.

We always have desirable projects on hold for want of funding and a large part of Team committee business is prioritising to accomplish what is felt to be most pressing or desirable. I sometimes feel that there could never be enough finance! Having said that we have achieved enormous steps forward all funded by the continued generosity of the public and for that I have to say a warmfelt thankyou.

Finally I would like to thank the committee members and Team members for their unstinting support and encouragement to me in the past few years, at last you will be spared my appalling speeches!

I now look forward to spending more time on the mountains ... see you there!

Chris Cooksey
Honorary Chairman

Stamp Collection - for Team Funds

Can I remind all team members and members of 333 that for many years we have collected used stamps and have raised many hundreds of pounds for team funds over the years. Recently the supply has dwindled but we are very grateful to those who are still collecting for us.

If you have a source, can you please consider collecting used stamps for us - just tear them off the envelope with a small amount of envelope attached. Not too close as we sell them by weight!, but

equally not too large as this puts off potential purchasers. Just put them in a bag and accumulate them over a period of time and drop them into the box on the top shelf by the door in Ops. Room at Base. If you have any foreign stamps and you can keep them on the original full envelope, please do so as we get significantly more for full envelopes (an increase factor of may be x 10). If possible please keep all foreign separate from UK stamps as again this helps and we get many times more value for foreign than UK stamps.

If anyone can offer any special stamps or collections we can also sell these for the team. With your help we will be able to raise more funds for the team.

Thank you
Bill Dean

Team Leader Report

Well the first year completed as a Team Leader (on probation that is) and it certainly gives one a different perspective of the Team and the way it goes about its business.

The usual amount of Call Outs for this year, but with a little more diversity in the type of work we were required to carry out for those we helped. The increase in water rescue springs to mind. I sometimes feel that we all take it for granted with what we do, we don't necessarily need praise but when you stand back and see everyone doing their bit, getting on with it, asked or not, you suddenly realise what a unique band of people we are.

After the serious accident over a year ago involving a Lake District Team and a Royal Navy Seaking helicopter, (and a case ongoing against the Navy) it has become more important than ever that we as an organisation ensure that we provide the correct training for our members and just as importantly that it is recorded. It is the responsibility of all of us to make sure we are up to date with what ever job we take on inside a call out.

The Team Leaders have frequently met throughout the year and as a new boy I found these meetings to be extremely constructive, and a massive learning forum when discussing every aspect of recent jobs. Many other operational subjects were covered, trying to ensure that the very best operating procedures, criteria's, equipment etc are considered and above all that we are following best practice throughout our whole organisation at an operational level.

We have always been open in everything about our organisation, and more and more interest is being paid to us by official organisations and the public, and in this age of litigation there is far more scrutiny then ever before. Not only is it a case of keeping ourselves up to date with our personal Mountain Rescue skills, as an Organisation, we, in the future will have to prove to others that we have performed in a professional manner in providing and maintaining a minimum standard.

Major improvements have been made with our communications and we now have a far better system than ever before. Not bad as at one point it looked like we were going to have to resort back to smoke signals and flags (yes I can still remember how to do it). Some members have put in a tremendous amount of time and effort to achieve this and we are now reaping the benefits.

Once again this year we have interacted with other Teams and Agencies both in assisting them and them us, and with our policy of going equipped for the job, we have always fulfilled our role and

maintained our professional persona.

One point to be aware of is the increasing interest in us and other voluntary organisations by Government (especially in the present climate of things). This is bringing far more awareness at that level than ever before, and papers and plans involving us seem to be getting drawn up by various departments. These organisations do not deal at Team level they deal with our recognised National and Regional bodies, and it is becoming far more apparent, that if we do not represent ourselves with our views at that level (with regard to the future of MR) we could well be left out of the final decision making.

The future, well there will undoubtedly be changes, what they are who knows, as most things in life they will be dictated by what goes on around us and out of our control. However I know that due to the professional attitude of this Team we will most probably see them coming and be ready for them. If not I have no doubt we will face them head on.

It would be remiss of me not to mention our respective other halves and families, they are the part of the Team that is never seen by those we help and their support in our efforts has to be commended.

333 once again has proved to be invaluable, providing us with nearly half our yearly expenditure, what a tremendous effort by them and I know that we all respect their commitment to us.

It gives me great pride to be able to, on behalf of all the Team Leaders, to thank every one of you for your professionalism and commitment to the Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation.

Jed Stone

INCIDENT REPORT

The number of callouts has stayed roughly the same with an average of over one call out a week. As always the call outs happen throughout the year. The age range was well spread with the more mature again featuring well. I have split the Over 40 section of the last few years into 41 – 50, 51 – 60 and 61 plus. But combined this group has stayed about the same numbers.

Most jobs were within our normal catchment area with the odd one outside, assisting Llanberis on Snowdon, a search for a cyclist in Cerrig, a missing person in Bangor region and the recovery of a fallen DIY'er on the outskirts of Betws (at least he was a mountaineer who was carrying out work on their Club hut, and not only slipped from his ladder but also went over a steep area of ground). Of the usual areas Tryfan again featured highest with a good challenge from the Carneddau and the Glyderau coming in third.

Is the message getting through as the number of Lost, Stolen and Strayed has fallen to now nearer a third of the incidents rather than the half it has been for the last few years? With a bit of forethought and knowledge of equipment this could be reduced further.

Incidents in which the major injury was:

The age distribution of those assisted was as follows: %

Most of the Not Recorded involved those taken direct to Hospital by helicopter or when assisting other teams when they recorded most details in their reports.

Incidents where we have worked with other teams or agencies:

That ends the nit picking of the records for the year in reading the following narrative of the rescues carried out and recorded by the team I hope that the reader will bear the causes in mind when venturing into our wonderful area and will not become another of our statistics in the future.

Neil Adam

Incident Narrative

January

5th – 7th The team were involved in a three day search on the Snowdon Massive to try and find a 43 year old male who's car had been left at Pen Y Pass car park on the 2nd January and was reported missing on the 5th. Llanberis, South Snowdonia and RAF Mountain Rescue Teams also involved. Nothing found.

14th . After additional information had been obtained by the Police in relation to the above, another search of the Glasllyn area was carried out. Nothing found. (His body was found in Fantail Gully in June and evacuated by Llanberis Team.)

16th 1920 hrs 3 hours Llyn y Cwn area No injuries.

2 Males The party of 2 set out at 13.30 hrs to walk to Llyn y Cwn with less than three hours of daylight left. Just before the lake they became lost and confused due to inexperience, lack of equipment (no map, compass, lights and poor clothing for the conditions). It was raining with low cloud. Phoned for assistance. Walked off.

17 Team members involved.

21st Stand by and investigation of flare sighting from Bethesda. Police informed base at 10.40hrs. A team leader talked to the informant. Flare was more over the Braichmelyn area rather than towards Snowdon. No further action. Incident closed at 11.13hrs.

2 Team members involved.

28th 1351 hrs 2hrs 40 min On path below Soap Gut climb on Tryfan Potts fracture. Male 29yrs Was walking up Tryfan when he slipped on Snow and ice. Treated on scene and evacuated by 22 Sqn.

21 Team members involved

28th 2005 hrs 2.5 hours North Ridge Tryfan Cragfast, no injuries.
Lost due to poor navigation and mountain experience.

29th. Search in the Conwy Valley. No details available.

February

4th 1640hrs 35 min Devils Kitchen to Nant Peris Area. No injuries.

A party of six friends were walking from Ogwen to Nant Peris. At the top of Devils Kitchen the others realised that one member of the party had gone on ahead and become separated. They continued on and arrived at Nant Peris and returned to their Hotel in Capel. After three hours and checking Nant Peris for their friend they called for assistance. The search was being arranged when he phoned from a taxi saying he was coming back to the Hotel. He had come down to the Pen y Gwryd, did not know where he had been.

10 Team members involved.

11th 1525 hrs 7 hours 5 min Tryfan No Injuries but very cold.
5 Males, 5 Females. Two completely separate parties (one from North Wales other from Liverpool area) went up North Ridge Tryfan. They joined up en route. When near the summit they split up, some to do a scramble and the others to do an easier route. The scramblers including the overall leader reached the summit. They were pointed in the direction of a descent and the leader set off to find his other party, who had now got stuck. The two males from the North Wales party reached the summit with no one there. They found the others in South Gully and they returned to the ridge and were brought down by a passer by. The leader found the stuck group who had already phoned for help. He phoned in to say he would bring them down but as he thought that Eastern Terrace was Heather Terrace he was told to stay put. Three groups went up and brought them down via Western Gully.
20 Team members involved.

11th 2317 hrs 4.25 hours Crib Goch, Snowdon.
Members went to act as back up for Llanberis Team on a serious incident .
5 Team members involved.

18th 1340 hrs 2.4 hours Base of Bristly Ridge No injuries
Female 32 A party of four set off to climb Bristly Ridge and cross the Glyders. They started up the stone chute gully when she got stuck about 20 m up at the main ledge. Her partner stayed with her and the other two retreated. The call for help appears to have been routed via the Coast Guard, ARCC, RAF Valley and then the Police. A party was sent up to lower her off the ridge and escort them both to their car.
10 Team members involved plus 1 National Park Warden.

19th 1453 hrs 2.75 hours Milestone Butress, Tryfan.
Fallen climber , no further details available.

March

4th 1440 hrs 2 hours Black Ladders, Carnedd Dafydd Broken Ankle
Male 34 The pair were ice climbing when the leader fell 6m onto an insitu peg which broke and he fell further 4m and broke his ankle. They managed to retreat off the climb but deep snow slowed them down and made movement difficult and they phoned for assistance. 22 Sqn evacuated the injured climber and the other was met by members who had been making their way up incase the helicopter could not make it. A tremendous effort from the party.
19 Team members involved.

5th 1130 hrs 2 Hours Back wall of Cwm Lloer Bruised possibly broken Ribs
Male 38yrs
The Party were Snow/Ice climbing when he fell and landed on a sharp piece of rock under the snow. Snow was over knee deep. He was evacuated by 22 Sqn. The rest of the party was led down by team members.
14 Team members involved.

5th 1700 hrs 1hour 20 min Carneddau No injuries Male no age given
He went for a walk onto the Carneddau with no map, compass or waterproofs. The rest of his clothing was inadequate for the conditions. He had his dog with him. Conditions were very deep snow, clear in the most part but getting very cold. He got lost when the cloud came down. A check on the location of the mobile phone gave it nearer the Conwy Valley rather than Bethesda. Given

advice and monitored until he was off the hill.

2 Team members involved.

17th 2130 hrs 6 hours Snowdon Fatality Male 63 yrs

Members of the team assisted Llanberis MRT with a search for the man who was missing after a walking trip. His body was found in Cwm Glasllyn at 0200hrs on the 18th. He had fallen from near the top of the Zig Zags. His body was recovered on the Saturday morning.

No note of number of the team involved.

18th 1509 hrs 1.5 hours Moel Siabod No injuries . Party of 3 males and 3 females The party of 20 + year olds phoned in to say that they were stuck on the summit of Moel Siabod. While on the phone another party appeared who kindly led them down.

1 Team member involved.

21st 1420 hrs 2 hours 10 min Carnedd Llewelyn No injury Female

Cloud level about 3000 ft. Got lost . After talking to her on the mobile phone she was found by the Police helicopter who was in the area.

2 Team members involved.

26th 1839 hrs 8.8 hours Summit of Glyder Fawr 1 male, 52 yrs No injuries.

A well equipped man gave a 999 call. He had gone up the Miners track from Pen y Gwryd and then over to Glyder Fawr. With the weather conditions getting worse he decided to descend to Idwal . He could not find the path to Llyn y Cwn and when the ground became too steep he returned to the Summit got into his bivy bag and called for assistance. He gave a GR off his GPS. The track from his GPS showed that he had gone down and up Seniors Ridge. 3 Groups set off to find him. One group by Bristly Ridge returned after a member was blown over another member who caught his feet. By now the weather was SW hurricane force winds, heavy rain and extensive hill fog. He was located about midnight and escorted down very wet and tired.

19 Team members involved, 2 SARDA.

April

8th 2000 hrs 8 hours Tryfan Sprained/ twisted ankle 1 Female 35 yrs

She was ascending Tryfan by the North Ridge with her boyfriend when she slipped and damaged her knee. They diverted onto the East Face (Eastern Traverse) hoping it would be easier. They got stuck near North Gully. 15 – 20 MPH winds, snowing at times, cloud 2500ft and descending.

Below freezing. She was raised by rope work up to the ridge and down Western Gully. The helicopter managed to snatch her from the lower part of the gully when they got below the cloud.

13 Team members involved.

9th 1715 hrs 45 Minutes Glyders above Gelli Farm, Capel Curig Fracture lower leg . Male 42 yrs

Diagnosed and treated by Ambulance Crew who had been called out by the party. The party were walking down the ridge from the Glyders to Capel when he slipped and injured himself. The party treated him and with assistance he hobbled down until he was nearly in Capel but the wet slabs and rough ground defeated him. With no phone contact, one descended to Capel and phoned for an Ambulance. They arrived and decided that they could not bring him down so called the Team. A short carry/ slide was made down to the Ambulance.

6 Team members and 3 333 members involved.

13th 1519 hrs 2hours 10 min Below Devil's Kitchen, Cwm Idwal Torn ligament in knee Female 40 yrs

A Group on a field study course around Cwm Idwal when this lady slipped and damaged her knee.

She was treated and sledged/carried down to the Car Park at Idwal Cottage. Only nine on the hill, a big effort by every one. It was very nice to receive an email from her giving her injuries and thanking us for the effort.

11 Team members involved.

15th 1230 hrs 1 hour South summit of Tryfan Fractured Kneecap 1
Female 50 yrs

A family group out walking when she slipped while descending hitting her knee cracking and displacing the patella (she was a Doctor). The Team were very close to the scene when she was snatched by 22 Sqn.

12 Team members.

21st 1006 hrs 2.5 hours Path on Glyder Fawr above Llyn y Cwn Male 55 yrs
Found semi conscious by a Party descending Glyder Fawr en route for Y Garn

A party set out for the scene as 22 Sqn were not available but ARCC made contact with a SARTU helicopter training in the area. They landed and took a member on board to direct them to the scene. He did not react with the helicopter overhead, but when roused said he had been out all night, on various medications and had lost his watch and his arm was tingling. He was evacuated to Hospital by helicopter, our party walked down.

11 Team members involved.

21st 1630 hrs 2.5 hours Summit of Tryfan Possible heart attack
Male 53 yrs

He had driven up to Snowdonia with his son to scramble up the North Ridge of Tryfan. Very good kit including rope. He was evacuated by 22 Sqn and a party of 4 Team members met the son and escorted him down. (3 were diverted to another job before they got down. The son later confirmed to the Team that his father had had a Heart Attack.

9 Team members involved.

21st 1820 hrs 2 hours 10 min Devil's Kitchen Leg and head injuries.

He tripped and fell while descending at the Devils Kitchen. Hit his face heavily and twisted his knee in the boulders making it impossible to walk. He was treated and prepared to evacuate when 22 Sqn returned to evacuate him.

8 Team members involved

22nd 1610 hrs 8 hours East Face of Snowdon Fatal Male

Team were requested to assist Llanberis MRT on the location and recovery of a man who fell and was lost out of sight of the rest of his party of four.

16 Team members involved.

May

6th 1546 hrs 2.45 hours Above Llyn Cowlyd Damaged lower leg
Male 18 yrs

They were descending to Cowlyd when he slipped in wet conditions.

A combined operation with the Ambulance Service, RAF MRTs(9 members), West Beacons MRT (4 members) and Ogwen (18 members) with the assistance of a local farmer in getting near to the casualty.

8th 1000 hrs 5 hours North Ridge Tryfan Pelvic or Spinal injury
1 Female

She took a 30 m. tumble on the North Ridge. No further info available.

21st Gwydyr Forest near Bettws y Coed Male 64yrs Tib and fib fracture
As the weather was bad the Club were working on maintenance of their hut near Bettws y Coed. He came down off a ladder and slipped and fell about 30 m. The Ambulance Service was called but with no road access they could not evacuate him and called the Team. The A5 was blocked due to an RTA which made things more difficult and the casualty was lifted by 22 Sqn.

24th 1155 hrs 3.5 hours EXERCISE Coety reservoir, Conwy Valley
A Joint exercise with Innogy, Police, Fire Brigade and Ambulance Services
Workers trapped in a valve system with two personnel trapped/injured. A good exercise with good interaction between the various services.
14 Team members involved.

25th 2057 hrs 10 min Betws Forestry Missing 1 person
Called out for a missing Person. Within 10 minutes of the general call out the person turned up unhurt.
2 Team members up at base.

26th 1140 hrs 1 hour North Ridge, Tryfan Chest pains and difficulty breathing, possible Heart Attack Male 42yrs
Casualty evacuated by 22 Sqn.
11 Team members.

28th 1703 hrs 1 hour Bristly Ridge Injured 1 male
The party were abseiling down Bristly Ridge when their top anchors failed resulting in a 15 m fall. Team members arrived on scene as 22 Sqn arrived to evacuate him.

June

2nd 2045 hrs 1.5 hours Top pitch Grooved Arete, Tryfan Ankle injury.
1 Male 32 yrs

The pair had been climbing for about a year and were climbing Grooved Arete. First one tried to lead the final pitch but failed, the other then tried and took a leader fall pulling the other off their feet and injuring his ankle. They sorted themselves out and lowered and abseiled down to Heather Terrace where he found it too painful to 'bum shuffle' down and the Team was called. With night drawing in 22 Sqn airlifted him to hospital.
13 Team members involved.

10th 1531 hrs 1.5 hours Heather Terrace 1 person injured.
No further details available.

10th 1615 hrs 1 hours Snowdon.
Called to assist Llanberis MRT with an incident .

13th 1700 hrs 3 hours Heather Terrace Head injuries Female 61 yrs
The party of two went up Tryfan via the South Ridge. They became confused on the summit and descended via the Gullies on the East Face. She fell 20m. just before reaching Heather Terrace. She was evacuated by 22 Sqn.
11 Team members involved.

20th 1020 hrs 2.5 hours Tal y Bont area, Bangor Fatality Male 40 yrs
Called in by Police to assist with a search for a missing person.
6 Team members involved.

July

8th 2040 hrs 6 hours 45 mins Craig yr Ysfa No injuries Party of 4

The party started climbing at 1130 hrs. The route was Great Gully from 'Classic Rock' 3 managed to climb past the chockstone on the Cave Pitch when the fourth member slipped and had to be lowered down. He tried again and tried to prussic out, failed again. They tried again to haul him out and failed. They called the team out who extracted him and walked him down by 0330 am
17 Team members involved.

9th 1200 hrs 5 hours Eastern side of North Ridge, Tryfan

Overdose of Sedatives Male 46 yrs.

Was found by a group of walker's semi-conscious. He had left the A5 the day before. The initial call had gone to the Ambulance service that had relayed it to the Police; the team got the call at 11.55 hrs. He was initially treated for hypothermia given the past and present bad weather. As he could not give his details his wallet was checked and letters to the police and the rescue team giving evidence of him taking an overdose of sedatives were found. 22 Sqn. evacuated him after good flying in bad conditions.

23 Team members involved.

11th 1820 hrs 2 hrs 40 min North Ridge Tryfan

No injuries, crag fast while walking Female 27 yrs.

A party of 2 failed to reach the summit of Tryfan and ended up on the West Face just below Cannon Rock. They were visible from the road and were directed down by using the mobile phone and a pair of bino's.

3 Team members involved.

16th 1720 hrs 2hrs 10 min Above Soap Gut, Tryfan

No injuries 2 males 31 yrs & 21yrs.

They were practising multi pitch abseiling before going to the Alps and their rope jammed. They tried to dislodge the rope but saw that their rope was damaged and called for assistance while belaying themselves to a tree.

14 Team members involved with 3 on stand by at home.

16th 1910 hrs 3 hours Milestone Buttress car park, Tryfan

No injuries Male 20 yrs.

He and his wife were visiting his brother in Flint from Lithuania. They had stopped at the car park and the brother went for a swim. He became bored and after a slight disagreement with his wife he walked off at 1530 hrs. At 1900 hrs the other two became concerned and called the Police. They did not see which way he went. He had in fact been to the top of Tryfan where he was advised to go down by a passer by who was concerned enough to tell the Team searching near the car park. He was spotted, collected and taken to Base and reunited with the others. He was quite worried about getting into the Team Vehicle.

22 Team members involved with 3 more on standby.

August

5th 1315 hrs 2.25 hours Cwm Idwal

Dislocated wrist, sprained neck and bruised Female 62 yrs.

She was walking round Idwal with her daughter and son in law and dog. She slipped in the marshy area at the end of the lake. Taken to Base where the Team Doctor saw her.

9 Team members involved.

12th 2100 hrs 9 hours Nor Nor Gully, East face Tryfan

No injuries, cragfast 3 Males 46, 42 and 11 yrs.

They set off up Tryfan as part of the training for one who was to do a charity walk in Africa in the near future. They got lost in cloud at 2000 hrs and decided to descend and got stuck in the steep gully. As it started raining they called for help. They were lowered to Heather Terrace and walked off. Poor equipment especially the 11 year old who had no waterproofs. No Torches.

11 Team members involved.

13th 2100 hrs 3 hours South Ridge, Tryfan

No injuries 3 males 43, 19 and 12 yrs.

They left the road at 1400 hrs to ascend via Heather Terrace and the South Ridge and descend the North Ridge. In the area of the North Tower they could not find their way due to the low cloud and decided to retrace their route. They got to the South Summit and got lost and called for help. They were found and walked off.

9 Team members involved.

23rd 1602 hrs 2 hours Llwytmor

No injuries, lost Male 53 yrs.

Was walking above Aber when he got lost in the cloud. Although he managed to contact the Police his battery went flat before the team could speak to him. He was found and walked off.

15 Team members involved.

September

1st 1345 hrs 2 hours Near summit of Pen yr Ole Wen

Fracture nr ankle Female 59 yrs.

A well-organised group were ascending Pen when she tried to catch up with the person in front and slipped and injured her lower leg. The group put her in a group shelter and called for help. The helicopter snatched the casualty before the hill party reached her due to a window in the cloud.

9 Team members involved.

9th 2115 hrs 1.25 hours East Face Tryfan

Lights seen by Campers and Farmer.

A Team Leader investigated and had no response to his signals with Flares and Hand lamp. No callout but members asked to be on standby at home in case it developed.

1 Team member on site.

11th 1754 hrs 26 hours Drosgol

1 Fatal, 1 Multiple Injuries 2 Males 51 & 73 yrs.

Light Aircraft Crash. A Light Aircraft crashed in the cloud, which was down to approx 500 m. This was a multi service incident with M.R., Police and Fire Service on scene as one of the occupants needed extracting from the aircraft and it was possible to get vehicles close to the crash scene. The Team also provided assistance to the Aircraft Crash Investigation Team who used Base as their base for the investigation.

19 Team members involved.

17th 1742 hrs 3.75 hours Above Milestone Buttress, Tryfan

No injuries. Cragfast whilst walking 2 Males 63 and 38 yrs.

They were descending from Tryfan when they were caught in extremely heavy rain, they strayed off route and became stuck in the bad lands above Milestone. Their torches were spotted from the road and a party went up and assisted them back down to the road.

10 Team members involved.

22nd 2215 hrs 2 hours North side of Llyn Ogwen

No injuries. Misplaced! 2 Females 45 & 40 yrs.

They had spent the day walking on the Carneddau and were descending down the front of Pen yr Ole Wen when they missed the path and ended up near the center of the North Side of the Lake. It was now dark and with no torch they walked round for a while and ended up by the weir at the end of the Lake. They could see the lights at Ogwen Cottage (which they thought was Capel Curig). That tired, they decided to call for assistance. Two Team members located them from the road and walked to them and led them the 200 m to the road. One torch would have avoided this incident. 3 Team members involved.

14th 1155 hrs 3.5 hours Cwm Lloer/Pen yr Ole Wen area

No injury, Lost, stolen and strayed 2 males 45 & 49 yrs.

The two brothers set off from Jackson's Farm to walk over the Carneddau to Rowen. They were well experienced having visited the area many times. While scrambling up the back of Cwm Lloer they became separated in the mist. 1 brother spent about 1.5 hours going up and down looking for his brother then called the Rescue Team. (He could not raise his brother on his mobile phone). He was found (by this time he had managed to contact his brother who was OK and continuing with the walk) and escorted back to Base. When the Team contacted the brother he had become disoriented and was walking towards Bethesda. It was suggested he continued and he was picked up in Gerlan and reunited with his brother. (A team member who lives fairly close to Rowen took them round there by road.)

10 Team members involved plus 3 on standby at home.

16th 1635 hrs 2 hours Cwm Tal y Braich on path by the leat

Sprained ankle Female 34 yrs.

A party including the casualty and her husband were walking from Ogwen to Crafnant along the leat. While climbing over a stile she slipped and badly sprained her ankle. After being examined by her husband (a doctor) she was able to hobble along the leat with help from the Team to where it was possible to drive the Land Rover. An unfortunate accident to a well organised party

13 Team members involved.

24th 1540 hrs 2.6 hours Cwm Tryfan near the fence line

Damage to ankle Male 48 yrs.

A party of 4 were descending Tryfan and on the lower slopes just above the fence above Little Tryfan he slipped and damaged his ankle. He tried to continue but had to give up with the pain. He was met above the fence and with a lot of assistance he managed to hobble and was rope chair carried down to the road.

16 Team members involved.

24th 1722 hrs 1.25 hours Bwlch y Brecan, Glyderau

Lower leg injury Male 48 yrs.

A slip on wet ground on the descent from Foel Goch to Bwlch y Brecan caused a lower leg injury. The casualty was evacuated by 22 Sqn and the other 4 leaders were able to bring the rest of the school group (18 pupils) down safely. A well organised party with an excellent leader to pupil ratio. 2 Team members involved.

25th 1510 hrs 3.5 hours North Ridge Tryfan

No injury 2 Females 29 & 26 yrs.

They set off up Tryfan at 9.30 am but turned round at 1210 hrs when between the North Tower and the Summit as the weather had deteriorated. But they made a route finding error above the Milestone and were unhappy in the atrocious weather. They called the Police for assistance at 1410 hrs. The Team was not called until 1510 hrs. They were found and escorted down to Base and given hot drinks to warm them up. They were well equipped for being on the hill.

11 Team members involved.

October

9th 1430 hrs 1.2 hours High Pastures in the Devils Kitchen area

Lower leg injuries Male 19 yrs.

The casualty slipped in the stream bed and damaged his leg. A passer by phoned for assistance and could not be contacted because of low battery power on his phone. The casualty was airlifted to hospital by 22 Sqn. before Team members reached him.

13 Team members involved.

November

3rd 1730 hrs 6 hours Gully to the left of Idwal Slabs

No injuries Collie Bitch.

North Wales Police received several calls about a distressed dog barking in the area in Cwm Idwal. The Team were asked to investigate if there was an owner attached to the dog as no replies were heard to any shouts. She was spotted on a small ledge with a dead sheep on the rocks below her. A Team member was lowered 80m. down to her and with a bit of effort she was put into a rucksack and brought up the cliff. We suppose she was grateful in that no attempt was made to bite the rescuer.

She stayed in Base overnight with one of the Team and in the morning it was found that she belonged to one of the local farmers who was on his way up the hill with a rope to try and find her. 17 Team members involved.

10th 1530 hrs 3.2 hours North Ridge Tryfan

Fracture ankle Female 47 yrs.

They had turned back from their route up Tryfan due to bad weather coming in and were about 10 min from the road when she slipped on a wet slabby rock and fell awkwardly onto her leg. They called for assistance and got her into shelter. A short carry down to the road.

20 Team members involved.

18th 1740 hrs 6 hours Ordinary Route, Idwal Slabs

Cragfast, no injuries 2 Males, 1 Female

They started late and only had one rope which made for short pitches and got caught out by it getting dark (it was November!!) No Guide Book as one had done the route before and only 2 torches made things harder but they did have their walking boots with them and not at the bottom of the Slabs. Recovered and brought down.

14 Team members involved with 3 on standby at home.

25th 1515hrs 2.5 hours Conwy Falls, Stuck on rock in River

1 slight facial injury 3 males 26, 21, 20

Three members of a university Canoe Club were canoeing the River Conwy and were to exit above the Falls. But came out of their boats before reaching the exit point and two gained a boulder in the river, the third was swept further down stream but managed to get to the bank before the Falls (he was the one with the facial injury). The other two were extracted by the Team with assistance from some PYB instructors who were passing. Only one canoe was recovered by the Team. There were so many there as there was a North Wales Basic SAR course in progress when the call out came.

Ogwen 20, Llanberis 3, NEWSAR 2, South Snowdonia 1, PYB 2. 4 more Team members were on standby at home.

December

5th 1634hrs 7 hours Idwal Slabs. Cragfast

No injuries 3 Males 19, 18 & 20.

The three decided to climb the Ordinary Route on the Idwal Slabs They started late, ignored the weather forecast, had very little equipment and one torch between them. The predicted heavy rain,

wind and hailstones arrived and due to their lack of appropriate winter clothing (theirs was more appropriate for summer weather on the road) they were reduced to a shivering mass. Cragfast they called for help on their trusty mobile. Team members climbed up to their location in very poor weather and lowered them 100m to safety.

18 Team members involved.

22nd 1650hrs 1.75 hours Glyder Fawr

No injuries Male 42, Female 9. Lost.

The father and daughter were walking over the Glyders setting off at 11.30 hrs. Their equipment was more suitable for summer. The weather was dry but with icy patches. They thought about descending the Gribbin ridge but decided it was too hard. From the summit of Glyder Fawr the father took a bearing on Llyn Idwal thinking he could go directly down to the lake. They were very lucky in that they hit the Idwal stream and got down the side of the series of waterfalls in the dark where the Team met them and escorted them down. They got away with it and were very lucky.

9 Team members involved.

Equipment Officers Report

It was not me officer, they crept up on me in the dark! So here I am back after 5 years letting the world go by, I am not quite sure how but back none the less. Things have changed a bit, Base has got bigger, there is a bit more kit on the shelves and some of it's in different places. That said things remain much the same. The Team uses the kit, breaks it or leaves it behind when they need to be safe. So I service, repair and replace it. Along with a little group of Team members who regularly turn up to assist, many thanks chaps. The casualty care equipment and radios are ably looked after by Paul Smith even if he does look like gadget man at times.

This year I have been able to visit some other Teams to see what equipment they have and how they look after it. I came away with a few ideas which may be implemented in the future. I also attended the Lyon Equipment Seminar on behalf of the Team. This is a two day seminar of practical testing and lectures related to working at height. Ranging from rescue to rigging stages. It is I believe extremely important to attend such events so that we know what's going on in the greater world.

I also visited the IKAR meeting in Slovenia (at my own expense). This was a real eye opener. IKAR is the international Mountain Rescue Organisation, I had read of it but did not know much about it. It was fantastic to be able to talk to so many people from Teams around the world, it's surprising how many of us have the same problems. It was particularly interesting to look at rescue equipment from the European continent, as we tend to focus on the UK and the Americas. Indeed attitudes are very different and during a practical demonstration I was asked by an Austrian delegate which type of battery drill we favoured for putting in bolts for rescue belays! He just would not believe that we did not have such a thing or that putting in bolts was not the done thing in the UK. That I suppose is the difference between rotten limestone and the quality rock we have in North Wales. However our Croatian friends did support me when I told him that the rain came out of the ground in Wales.

So as always a big thank you to everyone who has supported me over the last year and the manufactures and suppliers who have supported the Team.

Kevin de Silva

TREASURER'S REPORT

I started the year with a treasurer's worst nightmare. I would have to break into our reserves to pay for the new garage extension and a significant payment for new communications repeater stations as well as general running costs.

The garage was already started and was completed by the summer. As is usual with building costs they were slightly higher than estimated but fortunately not excessively so - thus my contingency fund was not affected.

The New Garage

Communications, which are at the heart of our work, were not in a good state at the beginning of the year and we went ahead and installed a new repeater at Llandonna on Anglesey, together with a dedicated phone line. This was a substantial investment of well over £4000 but it did improve communications as well as allowing access for other Teams in North Wales. I was holding my breath for a similar outlay for another repeater at Capel Garmon when fortunately the Chief Constable of North Wales police stepped in and helped us out. He appreciated the valuable contribution we make to his responsibilities for the public on the mountains and felt he should help where he could. Thus the Capel Garmon repeater was installed without further cost to us - wonderful! That meeting with the chief had occurred when he opened our new garage extension. On the same occasion the Chief of Ambulance Service was present and they also agreed to take over the rent of our oxygen and entonox cylinders and provide some other first aid consumables - another saving to the treasurer. The nightmare year was beginning to look rosier!

Meanwhile the valuable contribution from 333 members and their associated events continue to be an important backbone of finance. At the end of the year they have yet again increased their income revenue and provide more than one third of the basic running costs of the Team. We are particularly grateful to some members who have given generous extra contributions but I would particularly like to thank 3 members, Mr. Watson, Mr. & Mrs. Todd and Ray & Ruth Greenhall who gave us stamp collections which were sold and raised a significant amount.

We are also grateful to others who organised events to raise funds for us including climbing the height of Everest on a climbing wall, marathons and fun runs. Dave Worrall raised well over £1000 with “buy a brick or slate” appeal for the new garage. Many thanks to all who bought one. We also much appreciate the generous donations from friends of the Team, many of whom donate annually including various clubs, and businesses.

My thanks also to the key ‘budget’ holders in the Team – most were very frugal and were well under budget, thus helping the overall financial position. The I.T group continued to raise money via the web site with “on line” donations. This was particularly popular when the web cameras were working but regrettably the cameras have had to be removed until BT connects Broadband, with a corresponding drop in donations. This was promised (and we were billed for it) but has never materialised in practice despite us paying for a trench to be dug from base to the road for the cables. I hope it can be made to work soon so our cameras can be re-connected. Last year the web site had at least two commendations from BBC2 as ‘best website’. It would be good to get that again.

It is always a sad part of the treasurer’s report to acknowledge the contributions made in memory of lost loved ones. This year there is a particularly long list, many were lost outside our area but relatives and friends wished us to receive a contribution in their friend’s memory and their appreciation and love of the mountains.

With condolences to all family and friends I wish to record the following in memoriam.

Colin Blundell	Chris Turnbull	Paul Fergus
Marion Brewer	Roland Deakin	Dafydd Arthur Jones
Stuart Kingsbury	David Brammer	Stuart Evans
Matthew Watkin	Tracy Smith	Dave Somerville

Members of 333 are also very active and helpful in other roles including looking after the Collection Boxes around the area. I thus wish to pay particular thanks to Alan Ince, Chris Lloyd and others. During the year we have been making significant progress in contacting members of 333 and any others who have given donations, requesting them to gift aid their contributions. Mick Parsons has been especially busy in this respect and many people have had the dubious pleasure of interesting and possibly unusual conversations with him. I hope you enjoyed the experience but more importantly I wish to thank you very much for saying YES. The Revenue have sent me the money for 2000 and 2001 (plus interest) and will be trying to finalise all the remaining years during this year. Some of you still have the pleasure of speaking to Mick to come - when he does call, please say YES too!

I also wish to pay tribute to Roz Hulse who has taken a load of work off my shoulders by replying to all our kind donations with “Thank You” letters. She had also been a great help as the “office organiser”. She kept a record of the time she devoted to Team business which worked out at over 112 hours since June, all of course voluntary but if calculated at the minimum wage would cost £600 plus travel costs. I also did a brief calculation of the number of hours I spend keeping the books in order and was astonished to realise it was over 140 hours over the year. If you then add the time spent by everyone else it would be a staggering figure. Thank you to everyone for all the hours you give to the Team.

To conclude the Treasurer is a much happier Treasurer at the end of the year. Next year I would hope to replenish some of our. Projects ahead include a new issue of reflective 'rescue' vests. The track to base has still not been improved despite hopes that if the new garage had come in on budget it would have been done - so maybe next year. It is also several years since Team members received any contribution to their personal kit used on rescues - maybe we can look at this in 2007.

Bill Dean

Transport Officer's Report

This last year has been a busy one, with rescues over on the Snowdon side and the Land Rover being used for moving teams around and as a forward base on two occasions. Also, with the increase in popularity of the east side of the Carneddau, the call-outs are becoming more frequent for that area. Requests for the vehicles to be put on standby for adverse weather conditions were received.

As regards maintenance, both vehicles are running well with just the normal run of repairs.

The in-house driver training is on-going at the off road facility at Dolgarrog Power Station. The course is of great value in the training programme and also good fun.

The running costs are similar to last year at £5,000, made up of £2,300 insurance, £2,000 fuel and about £700 for maintenance.

It is now 6 years since Safeway/HM Bennett and Welsh Lamb sponsored the Land Rover for us and now that Morrisons have taken over Safeway, we are no longer in their group of charities. It is time to remove the 'Safeway' logo and hopefully, there may be someone out there to take its place. Sponsorship can come in many forms, such as fuel, insurance or the Team in general.

Roger Jones

Training Officer's Report

Team member training continues to be a significant demand on our member's time but it is essential to ensuring that we have Team members who are competent, confident and able to deal with an increasingly different variety of search and rescue tasks where we are asked to attend.

Each year, we typically run 25 days worth of training that has to cater for new Team members all the way through to senior Team members who have a wealth of experience and training behind them. What we actually train is driven by the nature of the incidents we attend.

Over the last few years the Technical Rope Rescue training has been successfully rolled out and it is at a level now where we are much less dependent on a limited number of people with the key skills. The publication of our Technical Rope Rescue Field Guide has also had an impact on Team members and it is gratifying to see the small booklet being looked in a variety of different

situations. There are plans for a version 2 of the Field Guide and a number of other UK rescue Teams have expressed interest in obtaining copies.

However, the infrequently used Technical Rope Rescue (TRR) skills still require more practice so that we can be fully effective; we held a useful Guideline and Hi-line training session late in the year that a member of North Wales Fire Service attend as a guest. It is useful for us to foster these types of meetings because there are occasions when we have to operate together.

TRR consolidation days have also proved very valuable, it allows Team members to take the relatively controlled training in to a more realistic environment. This is also an opportunity to build pre-plans for technical incidents and these are an area that should be expanded. The pre-plans capturing important knowledge held by Team members and learning from operational and exercise experiences for particular scenarios, such as a stretcher evacuation from the Heather Terrace.

Swift water training was conducted earlier in the year and a small group of us enjoyed going to the Tryweryn for two days of higher skills training. Traditionally the Team has always been involved with swift water rescue but this year has seen an increase in the number of incidents attended and the training has been put in to use alongside Teams from the Fire Service.

Our working with RAF Valley, C Flight means that we have to maintain a good level of training with the Flight. Visits down to RAF Valley are very worthwhile and help ensure that we meet the Crews. Training with aircraft out of Oggi Base allows us to put a mountain aspect in to the training that is very realistic for us.

A highlight for the year was the joint training that we conducted with the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service. It gave us a chance to demonstrate the methods and ideas that we use to them. They are very receptive to ideas and often ask probing questions but the days training were very instructive for all involved.

Early in 2006 the Team was involved with an extended search on Snowdon, this saw very extensive use of GPS receivers recording the tracks of search parties. In February an interesting and very useful training day was run, that covered the use of GPS as an aid to search party management.

The Team also hosted the North Wales Mountain Rescue Association's Basic Search and Rescue Skills (BSAR) training in November. This training event gives an insight into the work of the Teams and what is required of its members. A long day was interrupted by a major swift water incident but there is tremendous value in holding the event.

At a national level Team members gave presentations to the Mountain Rescue – England and Wales Conference, John Hulse gave an insight into the nature of operations on Tryfan and I gave a talk on the Team's response to flooding in the Conwy Valley. Team members attended a very wide range of sessions and it was good to meet with members from other Teams.

The number of callouts that we attended has steadily increased and there is a very high training burden that has to be managed against all the other aspects of life. There is a move to greater inter-agency working that can only be for the benefit of the people we rescue, but we will have to work hard at developing good, sound operational relationships. There may be plenty of opportunities to learn how other Teams and agencies do their business and we should work towards a clear understanding of what we do and how we do it.

I would like to express my thanks to all the people who, over the years, have assisted in providing and supporting training. We are always looking and learning for better ways to help the casualty but without the support from the wider community we would not be as effective as we are today – but we could always do better to help the casualty.

Alistair Read

PRESS OFFICER'S REPORT

The reporters on the Daily Post (North Wales's regional daily newspaper) and the BBC News on line have kept the name of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation in the media. In addition live interviews with Team members have been heard on BBC radio and BBC Wales TV.

2006 saw a number of high profile rescues and events. The year started with Team members going to Croatia to train with members of the Croatian emergency services. Amongst the squad was a BBC cameraman who was not only able to report on the joint training but report on a dramatic

winter rescue too.

Tragic accidents and subsequent deaths always attract more media attention than the “good news” stories. This year started with the search for a prominent lecturer from Bangor University. Sadly, he had died after a short illness whilst walking in the Conwy Valley. Team members were called to assist Llanberis MRT during a busy day on Snowdon. An experienced Irish mountaineer had been blown off his feet and to his death. During the hot Summer, a 16 year old local boy drowned in the river at Capel Curig. Since this high profile incident, his parents have maintained good publicity for their water safety campaign and support for OVMRO. Shortly after this incident, a light aircraft crashed whilst flying in low cloud. Whilst the pilot survived, the passenger did not.

Good news happens too. The Chief Constable, Richard Brunstrom, officially opened the new garage extension at Bryn Poeth. Labour MP, Betty Williams, sang our praises after attending our Annual Dinner. And whilst Roger Pinney of the BBC was reporting on new radios at Oggi Base, the Team was called out so he could report on both subjects.

Although the Press Officer is meant to be the spokesman for the Team, he cannot always be there. I would like to thank the Team Leaders who have stepped in for live interviews, Pete Douglas for constantly supplying the BBC with film footage and news, and Team Members who have given interviews in their native Welsh tongue.

Chris Lloyd

Communications Report

Dragged Screaming Into The Twenty-First Century !!

For many years the Team operated using low band VHF and we managed reasonably well by using our local area knowledge and careful operating practice. As part of national spectrum re-allocation, Mountain Rescue needed to move up to high band VHF, which due to the laws of physics immediately resulted in far worse operational communications. I estimate that we had radio coverage of less than 25% of our area from Oggi Base. At times, we could not reliably talk from Idwal to Oggi Base!! Tempers quickly frayed and teddy-bears were flung far and wide from Team vehicles... This level of coverage was totally unacceptable and was degrading our operational effectiveness and safety.

The best way to explore new options is to see how other Teams were coping and we visited Langdale-Ambleside and Keswick Teams in the Lake District. It was very interesting to see that they had the same basic problems with communications but had successfully implemented networks of repeaters and sophisticated aerials to achieve acceptable performance.

Last year, things began to change during a special meeting with our Chief Constable, Richard Brunstrom, who was more than surprised to hear about the dire state of our operational communications. We were soon directed to talk with Keith Williams of the North Wales Police Information Management Group and the NWP communication technical support provider, Arqiva. The series of meetings held with Keith and Mark Gould of Arqiva have resulted in near-miraculous improvement in some of our radio communications. This has made a major difference to our effectiveness.

Mr. Brunstrom recommended and agreed to supply advanced Airwave/Tetra radios to all Mountain Rescue Teams in North Wales. This is greatly appreciated and we are the first Teams in the UK to have this tremendous facility to link into the Police networks. These new radios have already seen good operational benefit and enable the Team Leader at the scene to talk direct with the Police Control Room and other officers over a secure network.

Our bread-and-butter communications is based on the legacy analogue VHF network. To enable operation over far wider distances, North Wales Police have kindly funded the provision of two new repeater sites. These new repeaters now provide radio coverage over more than 95% of our area

resulting in far higher operational efficiency and improved safety. A further 4 repeaters are expected to become operational within the next 3-4 months to provide good radio coverage over most of North Wales. This will be a major asset for all North Wales Teams. Again, we are the only region in the UK to have this type of network mostly funded by the Police.

Aside from the new Airwave radios and repeaters, a lot of steady background work has been done to improve the reliability and effectiveness of the radio network. We have invested in external aerials in addition to experimenting with cases, different headsets and microphones etc.

There is still a lot of work needed to take the comms network forward and I hope that the next 12 months will allow the rate of improvement to continue. We are heavily dependant on North Wales Police to implement and fund the network changes and on behalf of the Team, I am very grateful to them for all their support. As with most Team activities, a number of people combine to make the changes and I am very grateful to Paul Smith for his wonderful attention to detail and covering the numerous issues that I forget.

John Hulse

IT Officer's Report

Another year has flown by and the Organisation's IT Group has seen some significant changes.

The most significant change is that Pete Douglas has decided it is time for him to leave the Team. I would like to offer my sincerest gratitude to Pete. He was the biggest contributor to the progression of IT within the Team. Always willing to pop up to Oggi Base to make sure all the systems were working. There is a huge amount of work that Pete did in the background that most Team members are not aware of, most only complaining when things didn't work but forgetting the effort other Team members put in to keep them working. Pete also spent many months paving the way to the excellent repeater system we now have for our radios. Pete never wanted thanks for any of his work but, sorry Pete, thanks for all your hard work. Your input to the group will be sadly missed.

So where do we stand with IT within the Organisation ?

The training room in the loft at Oggi Base continues to be put to good use. We now have an

excellent set up with an LCD projector connected to the computer which has been used for both training events, Team socials and displays to visitors. We would like to extend the system with a better sound system to complete things.

The computer in Operations Room is really proving its worth. More people are getting used to the facilities it offers and some are starting to realise that a computer can possibly contribute to both operations and the day to day running of the organisation. Even those members who are 'scared' of computers are starting to use it.

One of the areas I am looking at outside of the Team for NWMRA (North Wales Mountain Rescue Association) is a facility to automatically track where our radios are. Some radios contain a GPS receiver and the radio can broadcast its information to the base computer where the location of the radio, and hopefully our search parties, can be plotted using a mapping system. This has been a long "work in progress" but we are starting to see the system come together.

The disappointing part of the year is that we have been unable to connect our weather station and base camera to the organisation's web site. Being so far from the exchange and with the telephone company's cables stretching almost 11km through rivers, over walls etc we can not currently get a reliable data connection from Base. We did attempt to persuade the 'phone company to provide broadband but we are just too far from the exchange. The webcams and weather data proved a big attraction for the website and we have seen hits on the site drop from 800k to just over 260k per month. The web site's online donation facility which continues to provide much needed income for the Team but with hits dropping off (see below) we are possibly losing valuable income. We are actively trying to resolve this issue.

Where do we want to be in the future ?

- The Administration of the Team is now almost a full time job. A solution is being developed to ease the burden on the Committee.
- Better sharing of information between Team members. The Team invests significantly in training its members. Training materials developed by these members often lies on their home computers. We are slowly building an archive of Team documents to allow all Team members access to these valuable resources.
- An improved sound system for the training area at Base rather than using the computers own speakers.

Russ Hore

Casualty Care Report

When the format of training, its curriculum and progression pathway has been established, one would expect to relax and allow the training to self-steer, within reason. Not so, and this will never occur whilst the operational demands remain fluid and the demands on Team members' time and commitment increase. The latter encompasses the expectations of each member's participation and logging of core aspects such as cas care, aircraft safety procedures, white water awareness, rigging for rescue, all of which aspects are no doubt covered elsewhere in this annual report. Such variety and emphasis on each rescue element is of course correct and there is always a requirement to

provide not only the best rescue methods but also optimal safety techniques and awareness.

Such skills require appropriate training which places an increasingly high time demand upon members. It is therefore not surprising that over the last 18 months the number of members progressing the full casualty care pathway has reduced.

Levels of training

It remains a requirement for all full Team members to obtain the one day in-house training covering Basic Life Support techniques and fundamental aspects of mountain rescue first aid. This programme includes the use of AED (Automated External Defibrillator) and CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation). The few members who are unable to attend the day's training, that runs twice a year, are offered appropriate similar training during weekday evenings by advanced trained "casualty care" members.

Seven members retain the ECMR (Emergency Care for Mountain Rescue) Intermediate Level / MRC 'qualification'. The adherence to the MRC curriculum and later success in standardised theory and practical assessments, (assessed by external medical doctors), is a requirement to practice casualty care under the cover of the MRC Insurance.

Six Team members work at the ECMR Advanced Level, which also incorporates the MRC syllabus and assessments. This number is 50% below the considered maximum number and 25% below the number with which the Team has operated over the last decade.

The total number of higher trained members is approximately 30% of the operational membership. The aspirational target is 50%.

Equipment review

Over the last twelve months there has been no major change in the type of equipment held. The Sam Pelvic Splint has gained increased recognition for its ease of use and appropriate pressure application. Its weight and compact design makes it compulsory kit when responding to a major trauma event where the possible reduction of internal haemorrhage due to skeletal pelvic injury may be needed.

A chance meeting with a senior ambulance manager during our 40th anniversary event initiated a welcome closer liaison with the Welsh Ambulance Service and progressed to excellent cooperation and support through the supply of casualty care consumables and gases. This (re)supply plus the record keeping of Team and personal equipment is facilitated by the efforts of casualty care members and the Team's equipment officer.

History

The training during the mid 1970's was available to whoever wished to attend. Very few members progressed to an advanced level, no data is to hand regarding the number of advanced trained members (I will probably be proved wrong immediately this report is circulated) but memory indicates five members trained with possibly only two or three actually acting as providers of care on the hill.

The training courses incorporated 4¾ hours of theory lectures over 2 to 3 days, was dependant upon the previous level of training, and invariably extended exhaustingly late into the evenings. Such training / educational methods may be frowned upon today, but they worked well at the time. The advanced level not only utilised advanced techniques but also a mountain practical session on ropework; stretcher attachment; stretcher loading and jockeying, and was overseen by staff at the "Brenin".

By late 1980's the reduced availability of the 'Ieuan Jones' advanced level course meant a search for alternative high level training courses. This resulted in attendance at Sheffield University hospital for the advanced level ENB course. This was a truly hospital based course with very little pre-hospital components and incorporating theoretical invasive techniques such as peritoneal lavage and management of cardiac tamponade. These were interesting components, but would rarely be used by the medical expert with all the necessary 'field' facilities let alone the volunteer rescuer in interesting weather conditions and terrain. However we were able to abstract appropriate elements from the course to adapt and use in our own environment. Again, it worked well at the time.

During 1997, whilst the Team was assisting with a 'Children's Day' event at the Countess of Chester hospital, we chanced upon a conversation with their A & E medics who were conversant with pre-hospital care. Our quiet persistence and their interest in providing assistance provided the opportunity to request and subsequently establish an alternative training course dedicated fully to mountain rescue, and to the highest level attainable to the volunteer provider, and retainable by reasonable and continual training. There followed a 'draft' course at RAF Valley 22 Squadron's section, utilising many medical faculty and experienced mountain rescue personnel from which developed the ECMR courses. These have gained some national recognition in the UK and Ireland.

OVMRO's 40th anniversary report provided a brief overview of casualty care and reflected upon the general change in 40 years. This author's reflection of 30 years at advanced trained level would obviously endorse similar changes. The casualty's attitude and expectations have also changed. There is the increased demand for and expectation of a 'professional' response, with treatment provision at any time, place or in any weather condition (no doubt we would expect the same given the change in circumstance). Our response to such changes in attitude has been to mirror the expectation by increasing stringency in our training methods.

For so many years many of our casualty care members have been instrumental in providing training at various levels, with direct support and/ or as faculty. Many have since left the organisation for varying reasons, and it is fitting to recognise them for their important and considerable contribution to our current format of training in casualty care. In no order of preference, thank you to: Tony (ASG) Jones; Stuart Dethick; Adam Charlton; Mike Hendry, amongst others.

And to the future?

The operational direction, preferences and requirements need to be determined by our Team Leaders, engaging directly with the casualty care group to ensure that all aspects of care are attainable. There is a need to recognise that those involved in the higher levels cannot afford any reduction in their training regime as this could directly and detrimentally affect casualty care. Comparing OVMRO to other rescue and emergency services there may be a rationale, aside from fundamental and core rescue techniques, in members being assigned and dedicated to higher levels of training and operation as specialist providers, e.g. in casualty care and rigging for rescue. Understandably this will depend on members' own skills, interests, their availability and the numbers needed by the Team.

It is all too easy to attain the highest levels of training during training courses if the appropriate faculty and facilities are available, but considerably more difficult to retain such standards and it is this 'retention' that allows the provider to deal with the casualty at all / any times.

And the next 30 years?

Is it not inevitable that the personal demands and individual accountability will increase? New equipment, in particular for the more advanced skills will be developed and improved. Health and Safety regulations are creeping into an area which used to be recreational and "rule-free". All challenges need to be met head-on, especially if it makes rescue in difficult terrain safer for the rescuer as well as the casualty.

Why bother training - again?

We so often hear the question "Why keep on training with the same equipment and using the same techniques year after year?" – Skill and knowledge deterioration are obvious and so often noted by the faculty of our training events during the first practice sessions. Equipment such as the AED or Traction Splints may hardly ever be used, but each has the potential to save a life. It would certainly spoil the providers' day if the equipment was available but was inappropriately used resulting in an avoidable death or long term disability (scary, but possible). We must not forget that the next time it may not be a 'training' casualty on the ground but a real casualty in real need.

When the training really counted....

As in most voluntary rescue services, and in particular those with limited number of operational providers, the annual patient contact for each trained care provider may be very limited indeed. However, many members will recall their experiences when our training did make the difference, or when survival was unfortunately not the outcome but we know we gave the casualty the best possible opportunity for survival. Incidents such as:

- The casualty with spinal injury and neurological damage on a narrow ledge of the Milestone Buttress.

- The 120' fall on the main cliff of Glyder Fach that required urgent and prolonged airway maintenance due to haemorrhage and debris.
- The maintenance of life on the crag of Tryfan Fach.
- During the difficult carry-off from Craig yr Ysfa.
- The realignment of the lower leg from approximately 70° angulation, (not life threatening but limb threatening)
- The survivors of two aircraft crashes, on Elidir and the Carneddau.

The list continues.

“Cross training”

To some Team members, the casualty care pathway may not appear attractive, possibly due to the required commitment and the need to be subject to periodical external assessments. The casualty care group has therefore an interesting future, in maintaining (even increasing!) their own skills and knowledge, and also in encouraging colleagues to progress to the Intermediate and Advanced levels. Only by so doing can we provide the best care at the highest level. The support is available in-house, from the MRC medical sub-committee, and from our medical faculty / colleagues who somehow appear to find strange satisfaction in providing support and guidance to mountain rescuers.

There has been immense personal satisfaction in experiencing the progression / increase in the standard of care delivered by so many Team members, not only within this organisation but also by those in neighbouring Teams, to whom we hope we have given some guidance and assistance.

Thirty years ago, Teams trained in an insular way but we have all benefited from sharing training opportunities and experiences. The “cross training” with neighbouring Teams is progressing well, initially starting with the advanced level providers and soon, to extend to all levels.

One can but respect the commitment and enthusiasm demonstrated during such training events. In the dark, sodden, cold, micro-environment within the group shelter where each Team member awaits their turn to suture pigs' trotters (the suture needles flashing like micro sabers in the headtorch light and in concerning close proximity to the faces of 'assistants'. Or the nervous smile whilst awaiting your colleague to find the best vein to insert the venflon – “Yes, of course I've done it before (2½ years ago in a warm, well lit lecture room)”. “Will it hurt?”, “No, just a scratch” (penetrating a sharp metal rod deep into the body!! Stupid question). This is not only vital training but also a rather good 'bonding' process.

And in conclusion

There are too many names to thank individually, within this organisation and those from many external agencies. So a simple Thanks to all, not just for this year but also the last 30! Diolch yn fawr am pob cymorth.

Clive Hughes

BRYN POETH - The Final Stone

For the second time in twelve months, we were entertaining at Bryn Poeth (home of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation). And for the second time, the sun shone down on Ogg Base, its VIP's and guests. In 2005 we were celebrating our 40th Anniversary. In August 2006 we were opening our new garage extension.

The day went well. VIP's Lord Dafydd Ellis Thomas, Betty Williams MP, and senior officers from the Fire and Ambulance services watched the Chief Constable of North Wales Police, Richard Brunstrom, cut the ribbon (or should that be Police exclusion tape!). Everything went more or less

to plan and included a discrete “call out” for a lady who had tripped whilst walking in Cwm Idwal.

It was a good ending to the long drawn out process of building an extension. In 2003 we started scheming. The original concept was to construct the garage behind the existing one. Although this would incur the costs of breaking out bedrock, we would save on a set of garage doors and not moving all the mains electrical supply. In addition, the new structure would not be so noticeable from the road. Our landlords were not so keen, believing this to spoil the “footprint” of the building. So back to the drawing board and place it on the side.

Architects Ed Rowlands and Terry Potter of DMS Architects, kindly prepared the drawings. Geraint Owen of Shepherd Gilmour checked that the structure would withstand the Ogwen weather. Snowdonia National Park Authority approved the plans and Conwy County Borough Council granted Building Regulation Approval. By Autumn 2005 we were able to go out to Tender. Mick Stevens, a local builder, won the contract.....and then the heavens opened. It rained and rained and did not stop until one day the concrete went plop.....into the water feature which had been excavated adjacent the existing garage. Like rice growing in a paddy field, the blockwork rose from the depths. The concrete slab was cast, blockwork continued, roof timbers fitted and felted. Shelter at last! MacAlpine Slate kindly donated slates for the roof. Then the finishing touches, the hardwood doors, the diverted electricity supply, a coat of paint and an official opening date.

And that is the Final Stone. No more building at Bryn Poeth.....until we get our helicopter!

Chris Lloyd

Including the kitchen sink

Say hello to Chris Lloyd. He has kindly volunteered to model the personal kit that many of the

Team members use when we go out on rescue. Chris has been in the Team for over 20 years and has probably seen the trend in hill clothing change from the moleskin breeches, woolly jumpers and dachstein mitts of the early days (hands up those still hiding these items in the actic), through the tracksuit bottoms and Helly Hansen fibre piles and finally onto today's hi tech activity trousers and windstopper soft shell jacket. Thank goodness the hills don't have fashion police roaming around. Whatever the style and type of clothing we have owned, the main criteria for each and every Team member is that it works and keeps us dry and warm. There is no doubt that the clothing and equipment available to us today is remarkably good.

Up until fairly recent times it has been up to each individual within the Team to pay for and choose his own gear. Now for many of us that meant using what we would normally wear on the hill but in the rescue context. This has meant that in previous years the Team would turn up in a multicoloured mass to an incident. The standard and suitability of kit could vary somewhat and it was decided to try to present more of a "Team" image to the hill going public. Hence the Team adopted the orange blue colour scheme currently used. I believe that when approaching a casualty the vision of a Team is important to their confidence and well being. Some may differ from this view.

Less than 10 years ago the Team took what was considered at the time the unprecedented step of providing kit to Team members. This didn't go down well with all Team members who considered it to be uniform by the back door. Don't forget that until recently Mountain Rescue considered itself more a loose organisation of keen mountaineers rather than a highly organised voluntary group. We had until then paid for all our own gear but let's not get carried away. In order to maintain our limited resources the issue of kit was subsidised. We began with a set of waterproofs from Vango. By comparison to today's waterproof these were heavy jackets and not as versatile or waterproof as we had perhaps hoped. Next the Team made available funds for the important safety kit such as climbing helmet and harness. Individuals were allowed to choose the harness and helmet that they felt most comfortable with. Others used the money to replace equipment damaged on rescue or that was "past its sell by date".

And now back to Chris. In this first picture we see him sporting Team issue Marmot Champ pants and Marmot Windstopper fleece. Modesty prevents us from going right back to bare essentials. Suffice to say that Chris will have started the layers of clothing with base garments that are quick drying and wicking. Paramo gear has found lots of converts within the Team but more of that later. Experience has taught us that no matter how much you spend on waterproofs, hours spent out in torrential rain and howling wind will eventually find a chink in the waterproof armour and it will start to soak your clothes. If they are of cotton they will never dry and you are in for an uncomfortable rescue. So the answer is start with good base layers.

Base layers £95

Marmot Champ Pants £140

Windstopper Fleece £150.

Sometimes these layers will suffice on that rare occasion when a rescue takes place in the dry. If the weather looks at all suspect then you may as well start off dry so we come to the next layer. Chris is sporting the waterproof layer of top of the range Marmot Goretex Waterproofs and Salopettes. These were issued some years ago now and newer Team members have been issued with Paramo system clothing. The jury is still out on the Paramo gear, some people swear by it others find it too hot. One interesting aspect is that Paramo works on the principle of the body effectively setting up a pump system which moves condensation and moisture to the outside of the garment. Some Team members have said that this works up until the point when you stop producing heat. Often during a rescue you can be stood setting up stretchers, rope systems etc.

During this inactivity the mechanism for removing water in the Paramo is not as effective. As for the Goretex waterproofs, well it doesn't matter how much you spend most Team members will tell you that we have never come across anything that is totally waterproof. I think the adage is warm and wet is the best we can achieve. Unless somebody can convince us that they know of a make of clothing that will do the job any better.

Mammut Goretex waterproofs £345

Footwear is again down to individual choice and we all have our own preferences. A casual inspection of Team members car boots will probably reveal several pairs of boots. Some go for lightweight boots during the summer with an alternative pair for winter, which can take crampons for that rare occurrence when we get snow. Other Team members seem to wear 4 season boots whatever the time of year. It must also be remembered that we need to be able to climb steep rocky ground in these boots, so they must provide a good level of support. Again waterproofness of boots is important but if you step in a stream or boggy ground where the water comes over the top of your boots then be assured waterproofness goes out of the window.

Boots £120-£150

On any steep ground and where there is any danger of rockfall Team members will wear harness and helmets. It's too late to put this kit on when you're half way up a rockface, so again this is done in plenty of time before we reach the scene of the rescue. Harnesses are now inspected on a regular basis and if our Equipment Officer has any doubts about the condition of the harness it will not be allowed and we will be expected to buy a new harness. The length of time we can be expected to dangle in these harnesses make it important that they are a comfortable fit.

The helmets are identical for every Team member, these are the lightest strongest helmets we can find that will stand more than one impact before being written off. There are many helmets on the market that are lighter but one impact on them and you can consign them to the bin.

In a situation where a helmet is going to get hard use you need it to be capable of absorbing more than one impact. We also have on the helmet our radio call sign, this is placed right at the front. Also we have a chevron right on the top to show the rescue helicopter which way we are facing.

Helmet £55

Harness £60

Carrying on the blue and orange theme, the Team have provided a subsidised issue of rucsacs. Some Team members have a Craghopper rucsac others a Mammut sack. One thing is for sure, that these rucsacs will need to carry weight. It has been said before now but the thing that the Team needs to do is shift large amounts of gear around. We are all good donkeys, taking heavy loads up steep mountains, whilst getting very hot and sweaty. However before we consider what equipment the Team needs to carry out the rescue what else is it that as individuals we will pack into our sacks? Stand by, this is a long list and there may be one or two items I may forget but in general I would be surprised if most Team members don't carry these items in their rucsacs as a matter of course. First Aid kit (Team issue), Personal rope tech kit (Team issue), hats and gloves (lots of), map, compass and whistle, emergency bivi shelter, spare clothing, food (the famous "white" chocolate), head torch (often more than one), spare batteries (for head torch, gps etc) oh and the proverbial kitchen sink.

Large Ruscac £125

Various items of personal kit £195

Chris also has attached to his ruscac a Team radio. These are issued to us by the Police and are a very important means of communication. It has probably been mentioned elsewhere that the coverage offered by the radios has been problematic but we now seem to be winning the battle and the all important communications are getting back to a reasonable level.

Radio Supplied by the Police hurrah!

So that's it! That's what we carry in our ruscacs when we go out on a call out. It hasn't included any of the rescue kit that we need to carry out our role its just the stuff we ourselves have put together to make life more comfortable. With few exceptions it has come out of our own pockets one way or another and whilst the Team will replace items of kit damaged on rescue, we are not yet at the stage where we can afford to buy all this kit for Team members as well as the very necessary technical kit the Team owns. You may argue that as a keen hill walker, I would probably have this kit anyway as part of my normal hill walking gear. However if you open the boot of my car you will find 2 ruscacs, one for the Team and one for my own days on the hill. Now lets have a look at the magazines and see if there is anything new that I need!

Chris Lloyd ready to go on the hill £1315

Nola Thomas

A Bouquet of beautiful memories,
Sprayed with a million tears,
Wishing God could have spared you,

If just for a few more years.
You have not really left us,
Nor have your gone too far,
Just walked ahead to heaven
And left the door ajar,
Our family chain is broken and nothing seems the same,
But as we are called one by one our chain will link again.

Ginge Farrar, Oggie 271

Treble Three
The Support Group of the
Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation

Five years and going from strength to strength, no I am not stuck in a time warp, but it only seems like yesterday since I wrote those words at the start of the 2002 Annual Report. Here we are now in 2007 and celebrating 10 years of what I honestly believe to be the finest mountain rescue support group in the UK. It is gratifying to note that not only are the members fulfilling an invaluable role in assisting the Team to remain financially viable, but that they are also an integral part of the OVMRO and actively encouraged to participate in joint ventures with full Team members.

Often the term 'actively encouraged' is used to merely create an impression of being a part of the main body, however, OVMRO cannot be accused of that, for as well as many combined social events throughout the year, such as the January Turkey and Cobweb walk, or the November and December bonfire and mulled wine evenings, 333 members have actively participated in camping weekends, climbing days and technical inputs such as GPS, first aid training, search management, track and clue aware inputs, even rigging for rescue courses. I believe you will agree when I say that is active participation.

2006 saw me elected as Honorary Chairman again. I thank you for putting your trust in me and for giving me the honour of holding that position during this landmark year. My role is easy because I am privileged to work with a Committee who are dedicated to ensure that 333 and OVMRO remain as an example of what can be achieved in mountain/search and rescue; to them I say Thank You. Also at this time I believe that it is appropriate to thank all past members who were not only instrumental in creating 333 from its conception but they also created the foundations on which the current success was built.

It would be remiss of me not to mention those people who are not members. I am certain that there will be some who read this report who aren't. To you I say 'please consider joining' you may no longer be fit enough to be at the sharp end of rescue, or may live too far from the mountains to be a Team member, but you can still be a valuable contributor to our endeavours to maintain an active Team, and at the same time enjoy the rewards of not only knowing that you are helping to sustain mountain rescue, but also joining in the many activities as part of the Team. For a list of forthcoming activities and joining details please visit our web page at <http://www.ogwen->

rescue.org.uk It is planned that this year will be commemorated with a special event, details of which will appear later on the web page.

Finally, it is my sincere hope that the next decade will see 333 and OVMRO continue to be at the vanguard of Mountain Rescue, that 333 will continue to grow not only in membership, but also in active membership. This will ensure that it continues to be an organisation with not just members but friends, joined by a common love of the mountains and the camaraderie that they create.

Clive Swombow
Honorary Chairman 333

Location of Collection Boxes

Abergwyngregyn, Aber Falls Hotel

Anglesey, HMS Indefatigable

Bangor
Bangor YHA Students Union

Bethesda
Douglas Arms GLSW Scout Hut Idwal Youth Hostel
Ogwen Bank Caravan Park Ogwen Falls Snack Bar

Betws Y Coed
Pendyffryn Stores Ultimate Outdoors Bryn Bella B&B
Stewart Cunninghams Ultimate Clearance The Stables Bar
Pont Y Pair Chip Shop Pont Y Pair Hotel Tan Dinas B&B
Cotswold 'Royal Oak' Cotswold 'Rock Bottom' Rose Hill B&B
Maes y Garth B&B Hawkshead Judges
Gwydyr Hotel Glan Aber Hotel Londis

Waterloo Hotel	Shell Service Station	Bryn Llewelyn B&B
Chester		
Soldier of Fortune Field & Trek	Ellis Brigham	Great Outdoor Shop
Capel Curig		
Pinnacle Stores	Joe Brown's	Plas Y Brenin
Cobdens Hotel	Tyn Y Coed	Bryn Glo Cafe
Youth Hostel	A5 Services	Ellis Brigham
Conwy Valley		
Princes Arms, Trefriw Cafe, Llyn Crafnant		Pwllanu Farm, Tal y Bont
Conwy Outdoor shop	Trefriw Wells Spa	Black Cat Service Station
Dyffryn Conwy Leisure Centre, Llanrwst		
Dinas, Caernarfon Airport		
Llandudno		
Blacks	Llandudno Junction Leisure Centre	
Miscellaneous		
The Griffin Inn (Shustoke)	Jacksons of Old Arley (Coventry)	
Escape 2 (Warwick)	The Outdoor Shop (Stoney Stratford)	
Oggie Base	Country Cooks (Ty Nant)	
The Eagles (Penmachno)	The Walls Climbing Wall (Liverpool)	

Many hanks to those who empty the boxes, both Team and 333.