

THE OGWEN VALLEY MOUNTAIN
RESCUE ORGANISATION

44th
ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR 2008

Published by the Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation
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.

Argraffwyd gan / Printed by: Gwasg Ffrancon
Dol Dafydd, Bethesda, Gwynedd LL57 3LY

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Team AGM 2008

Chairman's Foreword

My second year as Honorary Chairman has flown by faster than the first. It seems like only days ago that I wrote my first foreword for the Annual report. So what can I tell you about the past year in the life of OVMRO?

2008 was the busiest year in the history of the team given the area it now covers. We had 71 callouts assisting 105 people and 2 dogs.

Given how busy the team has been over the last year a number of groups of people deserve thanks.

As I said in my last foreword, it is only when you sit as a committee member that you see the huge amount of work that the committee has to do over the course of the year. This year has been no different and the workload just seems to increase every year. Once again I have been supported by a dedicated and hard working committee, which has made my job as Chairman much easier. Before I took on the role I thought I would have to spend most of my time chasing people to get things done but this has definitely not been the case. Most times when I have asked for a 'progress report' on something I have been told it has already been done. I strongly feel all team members should serve at least a year on the committee to see how hard it is to keep the team fed, watered and trained to the high standards we aim to meet. So I raise a big vote of thanks to the committee without whose work my job would have been very difficult if not impossible. I am aware some of the current committee members are not standing for re-election and I am sorry to see them go and the members who stand in their place next year will have hard acts to follow.

Of course the team would not survive if it were not for the members who give up their time for the team. Not only for rescue but also for the huge number of training events we need to do to keep the team at the high standard I think it has set. A look at our events calendar on the team's web site will give an indication of the amount of training we provide to our membership. At one point there were over seventy events on the calendar last year. That's almost one event every five days!!! This not only takes time out of team members lives to attend these events but also for members to arrange and provide the training. As I write this I am covered in bumps and bruises from last weekends Swift water Rescue Technician course. This four day course provided by a member who is a 'Rescue 3 International' instructor required members to take time off work to spend a large part of each day in the freezing waters of the rivers around our area. Some great lessons were learned particularly modifications to our dry suits to keep our feet dry and more importantly warm. Due to demand for this course we have had to schedule another one in May. I must remember to choose the summer course next time.

There are a few team members that do huge amounts of work in the background which goes unnoticed by most of the membership some of who seem to think we have a full time cleaner waiting to tidy base for them and hang up kit after rescues and training events. I am sorry to disappoint them but it is team members who look after the team's kit. I will add that things have changed over the years and it is now not normal for members to dump kit at base after a callout or training event and run away from base leaving the same old faces to prepare for the next incident. I think some of this is due to the next group of people I have to mention.

We have a significant number of trainees / probationers / aspirants (I am not sure what the current PC term is) currently undergoing training to become full team members. I think we have never had so many in the team at one time. I also have to say what a superb group they are. I understand many of them knew each other before joining the team thus they are already ahead of the game with

working together. Many full members have commented on the enthusiasm, which I think is infectious, of this group. It has raised the spirit within the team to new levels and I cannot thank them enough for their dedication. These people are the future of the team and I can see it will be in safe hands. Of course their enthusiasm puts extra work on the older team members to keep up with them. I recently asked one trainee why they chose OVMRO and the reply was that it was a friendly and welcoming team where members wanted to help them. We should be very proud of that.

Thanks to all the team members who selflessly give their time on rescues. But more thanks to their long suffering partners and friends, who are regularly affected by the team's activities, whether on callouts, training days/weekends, committee meetings etc. There can be little consolation for being woken up at 3 o'clock in the morning by their partner going off 'playing' in the hills on a rescue or to be left hosting a dinner party. All I can offer is that the team members make me proud to be the Chairman.

Of course the team could not survive without funds and with the increased expectations of our capabilities we need to keep an eye on our finances. We would be in a much more difficult position without our supporters group '333'. At over 500 members they raise over a third of the money we need as a team. I thank you all and hope to see you more at Oggie base where you are always welcome.

What else have we achieved?

GPS Enabled Radios:

After two years of having a working system of real time tracking of radios whilst out on the hill we may finally be getting some more hill sets with which to use the system. So far we have only had two GPS enabled hill sets but we are aiming to equip each team member with such a set. The hill sets regularly transmit their location to Oggie Base where it is plotted on a mapping system developed by one of the Lakes team's members.

IT:

Our keen IT group continue to attempt to pull the team into the modern age of computing. Now we finally have broadband, albeit slow, into Oggie base we have been trying to maintain webcam and weather station pages on our web site. The weather data seems to work fine but we have an intermittent fault on the web cam, which is consuming a huge amount of time to fix.

Given that running the team and keeping track of training, qualifications etc is becoming more complex we are trialling a piece of software, again from the Lakes, to assist us. 'Team Manager' holds records of training attended and validity, rescue attended, equipment expiration dates, and much more.

There is not much more to say so once again I can only thank all those people that make the team what it is and make me proud to be their Chairman.

Russ Hore
Honorary Chairman

Team Leader Report

Commitment and determination. Two good words to describe the qualities we would like from our

Team Members and to be honest words which sum up the calibre of trainees we have attracted over the previous year. For all the Team Leaders, our biggest concern of late has been our ability to attract quality new Team Members. After all, none of us are getting any younger and the Team could not go on relying on the old hands to carry out the rescues.

Our fears for the future have turned into recognition that this year will probably see one of the strongest groups of trainees we have seen complete their training and become full Team Members. It is always interesting to see how new members regard the activities of the Team as the norm. People who have only been involved with OVMRO for a year or two don't question the fact that we are highly committed to Technical Rope Rescue and train extensively in Swift Water Rescue. For the newer members that is what they have always known and that is the way they think the Team has always been.

Similarly the full and comprehensive training provided at weekends and the excellent Wednesday evening programme (many thanks to Jed for this) has been accepted with enthusiasm and interest. Go back a couple of years and from the Team Leader perspective it was difficult to get people to attend training events. Now the situation is that courses are frequently over subscribed, even those that require Team Members to take time off work.

And what about the long standing Team Members? They too have been keen to attend the training events provided and the over whelming result is that the whole of the organisation has increased its skill base and is committed to maintaining and improving those skill levels.

It is difficult not to smile with a degree of pride, when you think about the direction the Team is going in and how in such a short period of time things have changed. Even last year I wrote about how many Teams were finding it difficult to attract new trainee members. At the time, I thought the same might be true of Ogwen, but thankfully you have proved us wrong. What a fantastic position to be in, up and coming Team Members who are highly skilled and all Team Members committed to keeping a greater range of skills up to date.

So we look forward to the current group of trainees completing their training and passing the final hill day. Actually it will be a relief because for some time now whenever the pager has been set off and a request for Team Members to attend base has been put out, it is the young guns that have been up front. Their keenness has given the Team Leaders the headache of worrying about rescue parties setting out which are predominantly made up of trainees. In terms of skill and training, we do not have anything to complain about as they have all been very active and have completed much of the training, which we now consider to be essential. No, our concern has been lack of experience and the judgement, which comes over a longer period of time spent in Mountain Rescue.

This is where we need the older, more experienced Team Members to play their part. They have the depth of knowledge and experience which can help newer members become fully rounded rescuers. It is important that we pass on and share the knowledge and judgement that comes with years of rescue. We are currently putting together a map of local place names, which Team Members have in the past used to identify specific locations. But it goes further than that, it's the routes used for evacuation which do not follow paths or routes into particular areas.

So just think while experienced Team Members are providing the newer members with the benefit of their years of knowledge and experience, the newer members can make sure us old ones are kept up to date on the latest techniques and skills. The combination of old and new will make this Team stronger than it has ever been. It is also true that we are better skilled and equipped than we have ever been. From the Team Leaders point of view it puts us in an excellent position to take the Team forward and continue to carry out rescues to the high standards, which our casualties deserve.

And for the future? Well, we have seen the latest crop of applications for next years trainees come through and lets say the future is bright (and orange?). From all the Team Leaders to every Team Member, thank you for the effort you have put in and for the commitment you have shown to this Team. We might not say it at the time of the rescues but your efforts are hugely appreciated. Give yourself a pat on the back.

Dave Worrall

INCIDENT REPORT

A total for 81 incidents during the year sees a large jump in the work load of the team. With no real pattern to the call outs September had the highest at 12, closely followed by March and December with 9 each. October weighed in at 7 with the least busy month being June with only three callouts. The usual areas shrugged off the unwary and the ill prepared. Again the uninjured, lost, ill equipped or lack of knowledge increased the number of people needing assistance.

Incidents in which the major injury was:

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:

Our thanks go to the other organisations who came to our assistance when called upon, while we have always tried to respond to calls for assistance by others.

It's a good job that I changed the method of recording by age to split those over 40. With a more active older generation, possibly with more leisure time and still a love of the hills, they made up 43.6% of the people assisted during 2008.

Neil Adam

Incident Narrative

January

6th 1015 hrs 1 hour Snowdonia

No injuries Lost ,stolen or strayed

Male reported by his wife as having come up to Snowdonia to walk on Friday 4th Jan. No contact since Friday when he was on a mountain top and coming down. A Team member started searching for his car or tent at roadside or campsites. Wife phoned he had been in contact, said he had no mobile phone signal.

4 Team members involved.

10th Conwy Valley and Capel Curig No injuries Stand-by.

Team were but on stand-by by the Police for flooding in the Conwy and Ogwen Valleys. Two members were taking a Landrover round to Conwy valley and were asked to assist with traffic control at flood at Capel Curig.

2 Team members involved

11th 1900 hrs 3 hours Y Garn

Male 66yrs. Mild hypothermia (temp 33.2C)

Party of three set off to go up Y Garn via Devils Kitchen. The daughter and boyfriend went ahead and met the father by the fence above Llyn y Cwn on his way up. He wanted to go to the top and they would meet up at the car at Ogwen. When he failed to meet them they returned to Cwm Idwal. It got dark and they returned to Idwal and called for help. A search involving Ogwen, Llanberis, SARDA and 22 Sqn was started. He was located and evacuated to hospital by 22Sqn.

29 Team members involved.

12th 2250 hrs 1.3 hours Crib Goch

2 groups cragfast (1 Group of 2 and 1 group of 3)

Llanberis put the Team on stand-by for possible assistance with the evacuation of the two group cragfast and benighted. They were able to walk down with assistance and Ogwen were stood down.

1 Team member at base and others on stand-by at home.

14th 1445 hrs 3.6 hours Bangor hospital area

Male 77 yrs Missing, last seen on CCTV

Found safe and well in Holyhead.

4 Team members & SARDA.

31st 1445 hrs Team on stand by for bad weather alert by North Wales Police.

No action needed

February

2nd 1435 hrs 2.25 hours North Ridge of Tryfan

4 Males 1x19, 2x22, 1x23 No injuries, lost.

Four friends tried to go up Tryfan with inadequate clothing, equipment or knowledge. They called for help when in the region of Cannon Rock. Spotters were used on the roadside to try and locate them. Members then went up to locate and escort them down. They were given friendly advice by the duty Team Leader.

13 Team members involved.

6th 1100 hrs 1.5 hours Eastern Traverse, Tryfan

1 male 46 yrs No injuries

Trying to go up Heather Terrace he strayed on to the North Ridge and then onto the Eastern Terrace and took a short fall into a gully. Uninjured but a loss of confidence so called 999. A delay of 90 min in NWP calling the Team. 22 Sqn. were able to locate and snatch him and his dog. Given a hot shower and food.

7 Team members involved.

10th 1615 hrs 2.6 hours Cwm Bochllwyd

Female 54 yrs Fractured right ankle.

She was descending from Bochllwyd with her husband when she slipped and injured herself. The Team went up to assist and were joined by 22 Sqn who had been training near Aber. The casualty, her husband and the Team were evacuated to Base as Bangor was fogbound. She was taken to Ysbyty Gwynedd by Landrover ambulance and the Helicopter was sent to Liverpool Airport for the night due to fog at Valley.

20 Team members and 1 SSSART.

16th 1610 hrs 1.6 hours Pen yr Ole Wen

Male 65 yrs No injuries

A party of 2 were descending the east ridge of Pen when they separated. One waited with out sighting his friend who suffered from occasional memory loss. He then alerted the Team. A party went up to his location and 22Sqn arrived as the Team were phoned by Idwal Youth Hostel to say he had arrived there. He did not know which was he had come down the mountain
13 Team members involved.

16th 1830 hrs 3.5 hours Ordinary Route, Idwal Slabs
3 males (1x25, 1x26, 1x28 yrs) No injuries, cragfast & benighted.
Three friends arrived at the slabs at 1000 hrs but had to wait until 1400 hrs to start the climb due to other climbers on the route! They had very little experience of multi pitch routes and with three on a 50 m rope they made slow progress. Darkness came at the top of pitch 2. Although well equipped they asked for help. A party went to the bottom of the Slabs, two climbed up to the party and lowered them off.
16 Team members involved.

March

4th 1705 hrs 0.75 hours North Ridge Tryfan
No injuries Female 19 yrs.

A party of 2 were climbing on the Milestone Buttress and on the descent decided that the descent gully was too steep. They got lost and called for help. Advised on the route down and were met and escorted down. Lack of experience contributed to this probably unnecessary call out.
2 Team members involved.

5th 1715 hrs 1.6 hours Tryfan above the Milestone Buttress
1 Female 30 yrs, 1 male 30's No injuries

Very similar to day before. Walkers stuck above Milestone called for assistance. By the time the Team were on site they had been found by a passer by and were walking down with him. 18 Team members involved.

8th 1450 hrs 20 minutes Crib Goch Head injuries.

Llanberis asked for assistance with the evacuation of the casualty. 22 Sqn managed to snatch him in very poor flying conditions.

11 Team members involved.

8th 1625 hrs 1 hour Dolgarrog Gorge
No injuries Group of 10 people.

They entered the Gorge at 0950 to climb the Gorge and had not come out by 1625 hrs. It had been raining heavily all day. The operator at the Dolgarrog Power Station was concerned as the water level in the Dam was getting close to overflowing and flash flooding the Gorge. Parties went to top and bottom of the Gorge and contact was made with the group who were annoyed that there had been a call out. Our thoughts were a good call by the power station operator as any later and things could have been serious if anyone had been hurt.

16 Team members involved.

11th 1500 hrs 5 hours Bwlch Glas, Snowdon
Male 50 yrs Fatal

The Team were called to assist Llanberis and RAF Valley MRT in a body recovery. The weather was atrocious.

9 Team members involved.

16th 1300 hrs 3.5 hours Main Gully, Glyder Fach
Female 49 yrs No injuries Cragfast.

A party of two plus dog set off to scramble up Main Gully to Glyder Fach. After 30 m. the wife got

stuck and the husband got himself and the dog back down .He called 999 for assistance. 22Sqn dropped two Tam members at the bottom of the gully but could not get in because of the strong down drafts. Two mountain instructors assisted and the woman was extracted and walked to the road as the helicopter had been called to the Aber Falls area for another job.
4 Team members involved.

16th 1530 hrs 2 hours Footpath above Aber
Ankle injury Male 42 yrs.
Casualty slipped and injured himself. A passer by carried on until he had a phone signal and called 999. Unfortunately the location was not clear and 22 could not initially locate the casualty. Members were sent round to Aber and were searching up towards the Falls when 22 found him and evacuated him to hospital.
18 Team members involved.

30th 1510 hrs 2.5 hours West Face Tryfan
Cragfast, no injuries Female 50yrs.
She was walking alone and started up North Ridge Tryfan at 9.30 am. On reaching the North Tower she became uncertain of the route and strayed onto the West Face and became stuck. A party of Team members went up, located her and escorted her off the hill.
15 Team members involved.

April

6th 1155 hrs 2 hours Boulder fields, end of Llyn Idwal
Fractured right ankle Female 49 yrs.
Snow on ground. A group of 16 were training for a sponsored walk later in the year when she slipped and damaged her ankle. The Team were called out. A large exercise was taking place on the east Face Tryfan so 2 were sent from Base and 22 Sqn requested. She was located, treated and evacuated by 22 Sqn. The rest of the party walked out with the Team members
9 Team members involved.

11th 1015 hrs 1 hour North Ridge Tryfan
Male 27yrs No injuries
He descended the North Ridge in poor weather. Somewhere near North Tower he felt unable to go up or down and called 999. No map so no precise location. The Team were about to leave the road when he phoned to say he had been found by two others and was coming down with them. It turned out that none of the parties made the summit due to deep snow conditions and were retreating down the ridge.
9 Team members involved.

17th 1205 hrs 30 min Llanrwst
Distressed damsel (no age)
The Team was called to help with an incident in Llanrwst, which was resolved while the Team was en route. Recalled to Base.
14 Team members involved.

26th 0945 hrs 7.5 hours North Ridge Tryfan
Chest and head injuries Male 16 yrs
A party of friends were scrambling on the upper part of North Ridge when he took a tumbling fall of about 25 m. 22 and the Team were called. The Winchman was dropped away from the casualty due to high winds and ground parties sent in. RAF Valley MRT came in to assist. The lowering and carrying took almost 5 hours to reach an area sheltered enough for 22 Sqn to winch and evacuate.

25 Team members, 6 Valley MRT and 22 Sqn involved.

27th 1020 hrs 3hrs 25min Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor

Missing person Female 47 yrs

Missing person felt to be vulnerable was seen leaving the hospital at 0800 hrs. She was found on a train to Kent.

14 Team members involved.

May

2nd 1545 hrs 4 hours Above Llyn Melynlyn

Ankle injury Male 46 yrs.

Party of 4 descending a grass slope when he slipped and sprained his ankle. The Team drove up to Melynlyn and walked up to his location, treated him and carried down to the LR ambulance.

Brought down to the road and transferred to NHS Ambulance.

13 Team members involved.

4th 1900 hrs 2 hours North Ridge Tryfan

No injuries Female 31 yrs, Male 64 yrs.

They set off up North Ridge at 1330 hrs. Turned back just below the summit but drifted towards the top of Milestone Buttress and became trapped in a steep gully. They were located, short roped from their position and walked down to the road. The Team were told on the way up by a passer by that the father had leg injuries. Miss-information.

12 Team members involved.

10th 1830 hrs 2 hours 20 min Above Llyn Crafnant, stuck

Female 66 yrs No injuries

Casualty and son (with dog) were walking from Llyn Crafnant to Craigiau Gleision. After 7.5 hours they were descending and became stuck even with good visibility and a GPS. Were found and extracted. Walked out to Crafnant.

18 Team members involved.

12th 1810 hrs 20 min Cwm Idwal Unknown

A party of two were in Cwm Idwal when one started vomiting blood. His friend ran to Snack Bar at A5 and called an Ambulance. They responded and called the Team for assistance with a possible evacuation. In the meantime the casualty had walked down to Idwal Car Park and had found the Ambulance by the time the Team arrived there.

3 Team Members involved.

13th 1320 hrs 3 Hours Bristly Ridge

Broken hand and ribs Female 67 yrs

Ascending Bristly Ridge with 2 companions when she had a tumbling fall of about 7m. The Team requested assistance from 22Sqn. The Winchman was winched to the casualty and three Team members flown to the top of the ridge to escort the others in the party down the hill.

15 Team members involved.

17th 1605 hrs 3 hours 40 min Summit Moel Siabod

No injuries Male 22 yrs, Female 26 yrs

They called for assistance from the summit shelter cairn as they were lost. No map or compass and no idea on the way to walk down (they did have a spare cardigan). Although very cold they were not prepared to move before the Team arrived at their location. Walked down.

4 Team members involved

June

6th 1615 hrs 2.25 hours Geirionydd Mines

Possible spinal injury Female 10 yrs

The group were exploring the Gorge when she entered a Drift mine and fell down a shaft in the floor, falling about 8 m. The Team and Helimed attended and worked together to extract her and evacuate to hospital.

30 Team members involved.

6th 2000 hrs 1 hour Colwyn Bay area

Missing person Female 42yrs.

A vulnerable person missing from home since the previous evening. The first troops were being deployed when she was located in a house safe and well.

4 Team members involved.

20th 1700 hrs 6 hours

21st 0800 hrs 11 hours

Dolwyddelan and Ogwen areas Missing Person Male 82 yrs

Last seen 16th June. A search of home area of Dolwyddelan on the first evening. Search of Ogwen area on the Saturday after information of a possible sighting in that area. Nothing found. Police stood down search.

19 Team members Friday, 18 on Saturday, plus Llanberis, NEWSAR and SARDA.

July

17th 1140 hrs 3.25 hours Melin y Coed, Nr Llanrwst

Fatal Male 56 yrs

Had been missing from home since the 14th. His vehicle was found at Melin y Coed and his body found by SARDA. OVMRO called out to extract the body from a woodland gorge to the roadside.

16 Team members involved.

21st 1500 hrs 2.6 hours South Ridge of Tryfan

Hand and chest injuries Male 60 yrs

An organised party was descending the South Ridge when he slipped and took a tumbling fall of about 5m. One leader stayed with him while the other brought the rest of the party down. 22 Sqn retrieved the casualty after Team members had been flown in to assist with the move to a safer winching position.

15 Team members involved + 1 Llanberis.

22nd 1005 hrs 1.25 hours Moel Faban

Fatal Male 72 yrs

A fit hill walker who walked every Tuesday with friends, they were setting out on their walk when he collapsed without warning. CPR was administered by friends and then OVMRO. He was airlifted to hospital where it was confirmed that he had died. The friends were escorted down to Bethesda.

13 Team members involved.

23rd 1645 hrs 1 hour Silver Fountain Pub, near Betws y Coed

Fractured femur Male 44 yrs

A motorcyclist had fallen over a wall and down a steep bank after a road traffic accident. The Team was asked to give assistance but were given a couple of locations which delayed the arrival at the

scene. They assisted with the carry out.

12 Team members involved.

28th 1350 hrs 5 hours Moel Siabod

Soft tissue damage to big toe! Female 43 yrs

The casualty and her daughter were walking uphill when she experienced severe pain in her big toe and felt unable to walk any further and called for help. Her navigation skills were poor resulting in a wrong grid reference, which put the Team on the wrong side of Siabod. The Team then had to go over the summit and down to Llyn y Foel. The casualty now decided she could walk and was given pain relief and poles and managed to walk down to the head of the forestry road to meet the Team Land Rover. This was probably an unnecessary call out.

3 Team members involved

28th 1900 hrs 1 hour Gwern Gof Isaf camp site

Injuries not known Possible missing person

The owners of the camp site had reported to North Wales Police that the owner of a motorcycle and tent had not been seen for several days and that he had only paid until the 24th. Team asked to search tent and motorcycle for clues. Normal camping kit found but no obvious route intentions. No further action at this stage until Police had checked home address and made further investigations.

6 Team members involved

August

2nd/3rd 2200 hrs incident reported. Team involved 0830 hrs (3rd) 10 hours

East Face Tryfan

On the evening of the 2nd a member of the public discovered a rucksack on the Heather Terrace and brought it down, it was given to North Wales Police and amongst the contents was a broken mobile phone, which was confirmed as belonging to the missing person from 28th July. A search on steep dangerous terrain found other personal items from the rucksack. North Wales Police helicopter and 22 Sqn over flew the area. After 5 hours a body was located 200m below Heather Terrace in a fall line below North Gully. The Fatal Incident Protocol was carried out and the body recovered to the road and taken to Ysbyty Gwynedd.

18 Team members involved

9th 1300 hrs 1.6 hours Llyn y Cwn

Unwell Female 17 yrs

A party of Team members were making their way to Llyn y Cwn and were asked to look out for two groups of D of E as their leaders were worried about them as they were overdue and the weather conditions were atrocious. The parties had joined up and were at the top of the Devil's Kitchen. One of the party was poorly and the group were not happy with the descent route. A request for assistance from Base was made and one of the Team members acted as 'sheepdog' to shepherd the group down to meet the party from Base. The casualty turned out to have a chest infection, be asthmatic and cold.

8 team members involved

12th 2135 hrs 5 hours Above Milestone Buttress, Tryfan.

No injuries 2 Males 53yrs, 14yrs

A father and son intended to climb Direct Route on Milestone Buttress starting at 1600 hrs. They never found it but actually climbed Rowan Route reaching the top at 2010 hrs. By this time they were in cloud and rain and were not happy to take the normal descent route as it was pouring with water. They attempted to find an alternative route by traversing and ascending the broken ground. Darkness won the race and their torches were in their rucksacks at the bottom of the route. They found

shelter and phoned for help. They were difficult to find as their only light was their mobile phone and weather conditions were poor. They were reunited with their boots, rucsacs and taken to Base to warm up.

19 Team members involved

19th 1240 hrs 0.9 hours Glyders
Lost, no injuries 2 Males Father & son

They called the North Wales Police, asking for assistance as they were lost in the cloud. They thought they were on Glyder Fawr but also mentioned the Cantilever. They could not be contacted by mobile phone so the Team were put on standby until further contact and information available. 30 min later they were contacted and they had been found by another group who were happy to bring them down. An unnecessary call from a badly equipped group.

3 Team members at Base plus others at stand by at home.

23rd 1610 hrs 1hr 20min West Face, Tryfan (above Wrinkle Slab)
No injuries Stuck then quickly unstuck! 2 Males 53 yrs, 19 yrs

The father and son pair was ascending the North Ridge but were unhappy on the upper section so decided to retrace their route but wandered off route onto the upper section of West Face. As the first party were setting off to find them they were unstuck by a passing mountaineer who offered to walk down with them. Another one!!

14 Team members involved.

24th 1310 hrs 3 hours Heather Terrace, Tryfan
Soft Tissue leg injury Male 51 yrs

Walking down Heather Terrace when he stumbled and his knee gave way. A passer by phoned for assistance as he felt he could not walk. The initial report was a head injury and he was light headed and faint (probably the pain). 22 Sqn were asked for assistance. The Team attended the incident site, splinted the leg and he was evacuated by 22 Sqn.

15 Team members involved.

30th 2145 hrs 5 hours Cromlech, Llanberis Pass
Benighted and stuck No injuries Male 49, Female 47 and 2 children 11 & 9.

They set off from Ogwen at 1100 hrs and did a scramble route to Glyder Fawr which they reached at 1700 hrs. They became disorientated on their way down and seeing Pen y Pass they turned again to the mountain to find Ogwen in the cloud and darkness. Again they were lost and when phoning said they could see a house and car lights on a road. They were convinced they were close to Ogwen Cottage. After much detective work they were located in the Llanberis Pass in a Gully by the Cromlech. He was amazed he was still in the Llanberis Pass. He did have a map & compass but was without the ability to use them. They also had no torches.

19 Team members involved

September

5th 1545 hrs 2.25 hours Above Milestone Buttress, Tryfan
No injuries, stuck Male 59 yrs, 2 Females 56, 46yrs

They set out at 1000 hrs to climb Tryfan by Heather Terrace and North Gully. They then descended North Ridge, wandered off to become stuck above Milestone Buttress. A small party of Team Members were sent out to locate and retrieve the group.

12 Team members involved

10th 2300 hrs 5.5 hours Gledrffordd
No injuries, stuck 2 males both 18yrs

The pair were well equipped and were attempting the 14 Peaks for the second time this year and

became lost on the ridge between Carnedd Llewelyn and Foel Grach in strong winds and heavy rain. A 999 call and they were advised to head towards Gledrffordd to more sheltered ground. The Team set off to meet the pair and bring them down. They were found at the top of serious ground having been drawn in by the lights of the spotter vehicle at Eigiau dam like moths drawn to a lamp. They were reunited with one of their parents at Trasbwl. They were late in setting off from Snowdon and had not paid enough attention to the weather forecast or their navigation skills.
13 Team members involved

11th 1530 hrs 2 hours Milestone Buttress
No injuries, stuck Male 39 yrs

He set off up Tryfan at midday. On the way down the North Ridge he managed to stray onto the top of Milestone Buttress and got stuck in a gully. An easy extraction for the Team.
14 Team members involved

13th 1600 hrs 2 hours The Band, Langdale
Fracture L Ankle Male 62 yrs

Members of the Team were camping in Langdale for a training weekend. They were asked to assist the Langdale and Ambleside Team with an evacuation of a casualty with a fractured leg. A short evacuation to the roadhead.
9 Team members involved.

15th 1710 hrs 5 hours West Face, Tryfan
No injuries, cragfast 2 Females 23yrs & 25yrs

The two had climbed Tryfan via Heather Terrace and South Ridge and intended to return the same way. After a short rest at the summit they were persuaded by two men to follow them down the North Ridge. This seemed a good idea until the two men disappeared into the cloud never to be seen again. They wandered around the upper ridge and West Face area before becoming stuck about 50m down North Gully. A number of parties were sent out to search a number of routes down. Once found they were assisted back to the ridge and short roped down Western Gully.
27 Team members involved.

16th 1730 hrs 3 hours Woods above Llanrwst
Injury to foot, very cold Female, 14yrs

The two friends were walking the casualty's dog up the river behind the Leisure Centre. The friend was climbing the river bank first when she dislodged a boulder which hit the casualty on the foot. They could not get her out of the river and woods unaided so the friend returned to Llanrwst to get help. Ambulance crew arrived on scene at 1700 hrs but were unable to evacuate due to the nature of the ground and swollen river. The Team were called and arrived on scene at 1800 hrs. The casualty was evacuated by stretcher along the river and through dense undergrowth to the waiting Ambulance.

16 Team members involved.

20th 1130 hrs 1.5 hours Summit of Tryfan
Laceration to scalp Male 47 yrs

Two fell runners had run from Aber over the Carneddau and up Tryfan to continue the 14 Peaks to Snowdon. One tripped on the summit of Tryfan, somersaulted and banged his head on a boulder resulting in a deep laceration of his scalp. A passer by applied an effective bandage and phoned for assistance. Ambulance service and Helimed (Air Ambulance) were tasked first, then a report of 22 Sqn on the way. Then OVMRO called. The Team Leader started a call out but after talking to the casualty it was decided that he would start down to be met by OVMRO members going up. Other agencies were stood down. The party were brought to Oggie Base for a check up and taken to their transport in Llanberis with the advice to attend the local hospital.

16 Team members involved.

24th 1115 hrs 2 hours Little Gully, Milestone Buttress, Tryfan
Head, pelvis, dislocation R elbow Male 33 yrs

A party of three friends were attempting the Grade 1 scramble up Little Gully when one slipped on wet rock and took a tumbling fall of about 80m. Two instructors from Plas y Brenin went to his aid and looked after him whilst alerting the emergency services. Helimed landed a paramedic near by. The Team arrived on scene and assisted 22Sqn. with the evacuation. Lucky not to be more seriously injured.

16 Team members involved

24th 1930 hrs 5 hours Trefriw Fatal Male 19 yrs

OVMRO were asked by North Wales Police to assist in the evacuation of a body from a riverbank. After the Crime Scenes Investigation unit had completed their investigation, Team members carried the body to the road for transfer to the undertaker.

24 Team members involved

27th 1400 hrs 2 hours Bristly Ridge

Dislocated shoulder, cuts to arms, shoulder and hand Male 46 yrs

Whilst ascending a gully on the ridge a party in front dislodged a boulder, which hit him in the face. He fell about 8 m. The higher party asked if someone was hurt, told yes and they left the area. The casualty started to walk off and was met by Team members, His shoulder popped back into place during the descent.

15 Team members involved.

27th 1800hrs 2 hours Heather Terrace, Tryfan

Fractured L ankle Male 14 yrs

The casualty and his father were climbing Grooved Arête when he fell about 10m. They down climbed to the Heather Terrace. Team were called and passers by assisted on site. Given the onset of darkness and the age of the casualty 22 Sqn were requested. They winched both son and father from the site to Base where he was examined by a Team member (a surgeon) who diagnosed a fractured ankle.

20 Team members involved.

29th 1250 hrs 4 hours 20 min North Ridge, Tryfan

Fractured R Ankle Female 49 yrs

A couple were climbing the North Ridge and had just reached the area where scrambling becomes necessary when the casualty slipped, sliding nearly vertically about 6m. She was lucky to have only damaged her ankle. Due to poor weather it was doubtful if 22 Sqn could assist so parties were sent out. The weather improved and after the casualty had been moved to a suitable winching site 22 Sqn evacuated them.

17 Team members and 4 RAF Valley MRT involved.

October

8th 1950 hrs 1.75hours Moel Siabod

No injuries Male 64 yrs, Female (no age)

He had been walking on Siabod when he met up with the female who was struggling to find her way down so he stayed to assist her. The resultant delays meant that they were caught by darkness. He had been reported as being late back by his B&B and a search for him had already been started. He phoned the Police to ask for assistance, as they were lost in the top of the forestry above Plas y Brenin. They were quickly found and escorted to the road. The male drove to his B&B, the female was taken back to her B&B.

16 Team members involved

11th 1430 hrs 4.5 hours Aber Falls
Dislocated R Shoulder Male 45 yrs

He decided to circumnavigate the Aber Falls but by cutting short and descending between the two waterfalls came on to the steep smooth tree covered slabs where he slipped and fell a fair distance (he could not tell us how far he had fallen) and dislocated his shoulder. The first call was to the Ambulance service who could not reach him and called OVMRO. Team members climbed steep wet ground to reach the ledge he was on, lowered him in a stretcher and carried him to the path. After discussions with the Ambulance Service he walked to the Ambulance. This rescue was complicated by the fact that the casualty was deaf and could not hear shouts to give information.
19 Team members involved

11th 1945 hrs 6.5 hours Nor-Nor Gully, Tryfan
No Injury, Cragfast 5 Males 20, 17, 17, 27, 17 yrs. 1 Female 17yrs

The group left the road at 1030 hrs to ascend the North Ridge. This took over 6 hours due to a very slow party member. They arrived at the summit about 45 minutes before darkness. After starting the descent they "lost" the North Ridge and decided that going down a steep gully was a good idea. Inevitably they became stuck, unable to move up or down. They were extracted with some difficulty in challenging conditions as the search for them involved ascending steep, wet, gullies at night. The night was made longer due to the very slow rate of progress of one party member. Poor party management combined with total lack of thought about the timing of the trip and the risks of descending into a steep gully in darkness.
17 Team members involved

18th 1205 hrs 2.75 hours North Ridge, Tryfan
Dislocated Shoulder Male 33yrs.

A group of five experienced friends were ascending the North Ridge when shortly before the summit one of them slipped on a wet rock and dislocated his shoulder. 22 Sqn were training in the area and tried to assist but were beaten back by the weather conditions having managed to drop two parties of Ogwen on the hill in different locations. They reached the casualty. A member of OVMRO (a Doctor) reduced the dislocation which improved the casualty's pain considerably and with some pain killers enabled him to walk down to the road. He was advised to attend hospital for a check up.
19 Team members involved.

24th 1445 hrs 1.25 hours Heather Terrace, Tryfan
No injuries, stuck Male 27 yrs

He was descending Tryfan when he lost the route and became stuck somewhere above the Heather Terrace. Team Members were just about to set off when there was a second call to tell us that he had been found by a group of walkers, talked down to the Heather Terrace and they were happy to bring him down to the road.
11 Team members involved.

25th 1235 hrs 1.25 hours Glyn Farm, Capel Curig
Faint possible medical problem Male 17 yrs

A well organised D of E group were on their 3rd day of an expedition in very poor weather. Wet and cold they were in the forestry above Glyn Farm when one member felt faint and collapsed. The group acted well and sheltered the casualty and called for help from the farm. Team members at base acted immediately as he was reported unconscious. He was taken to Ysbyty Gwynedd for checks. The rest of the group were taken to Base to dry out and meet up with their supervisors.

15 Team members involved.

27th 1350 hrs 3.5 hours Cwm Eigiau

Whistles heard. No one found or reported overdue or missing.

A member of the public phoned 999 to report what he thought were distress signal whistles from the Craig yr Ysfa area at the head of Cwm Eigiau. Two parties went in from Llugwy and Eigiau Dam and met up at the old mines. After extensive signalling and flares with no sign of a reply it was decided to end the search unless further information found.

15 Team members involved.

27th 2200 hrs 3.75 hours Cwm Tryfan

No injuries, benighted 2 Males 50, 15 yrs, 1 Female 50 yrs

The family left YHA Idwal Cottage late morning for a walk over the Glyderau via the Devil's Kitchen. They made slow progress and realised that the light was fading. They reached the Miners Track and could not continue in darkness with one small torch between them. They had tried to request help earlier but had no phone signal. A party of Team members located them and escorted them to Oggie Base to warm up. They had a group shelter with them.

November

1st 1605 hrs 1 hour 50 minutes Castell y Geifr

No injuries

A mix up cultures ended with a call to the Police reporting shouts for help. A party were sent onto the hill to investigate. They found a Russian party who had been shouting greetings to other parties on the hill these had been interpreted as calls for help. Once they realised that the Emergency Services had been alerted they forgot their command of English.

10 Team members involved.

9th 1700 hrs 2.25 hours Penmachno Bridge

No Injuries Male 18

A party of canoeists were on the Conwy River when one of them split off to portage his canoe around an obstacle about 1 km above his position. He lost his canoe as he relaunched and jumped in to retrieve it. He could not catch it so ended up 'wild swimming' and ended up at the bridge. He made the shore but could not climb the rocks to safety but was dropped a throw line to secure him until the team arrived. A lucky lad.

17 Team members involved.

15th 1200 hrs 35 minutes Cwm Idwal

Minor cuts to temple Female 28 yrs

The Park Warden informed the Team that a woman had slipped in Cwm Idwal and banged her head. Another Warden went to carry out First Aid and she was able to walk down with him. Team on Stand by.

4 Team members involved.

21s 1415 hrs 4.75 hours Afon Gam (near Aber Falls)

Fractured Ankle Female 62 yrs

A party were towards the end of a walk in the Aber area and were descending Afon Gam when the Casualty slipped. One of the party took about half an hour to get up the hill to get a signal on his mobile. The Team went in from Aber and reached the site as darkness fell. With the seriousness of the injury 22 Sqn were requested and the Casualty packaged for the heli evacuation in deteriorating weather. Had the precise location been given on the original call it might have been possible to take

the Land Rover to the top of Afon Gam for a quicker evacuation.

13 Team members involved.

29th 1110 hrs 2.25 hours Capel Curig to Crafnant path

Fractured Ankle Female 36 yrs

A slip on the Icy path. The party of three had planned a long day out in the mountains in beautiful weather. Unfortunately the casualty slipped 20 minutes into the walk. Unable to walk, assistance was requested. A party set out and 22 Sqn who were exercising in the area were asked for assistance. They arrived there first but the Team arrived shortly after. 22 Sqn. were alerted for another job before winching which highlights the need for a ground party to be available. Luckily for the casualty the other call was cancelled and she was flown to hospital.

10 Team members involved.

December:

6th 1820 hrs 3.2 hours Devil's Kitchen

No injuries, stuck on icy path Male 31 yrs, Female 21 yrs

A group of 4 friends set off for a walk on the Glyders. Having walked up to Cwm Idwal they set off up the side of the Gribin Facet and headed to Bochlwyd. At this point 2 decided to go back to the car while the others went on to Bwlch Tryfan, Llyn Caseg Ffraith, Glyder Fach, GlyderFawr and started the descent to the Devil's Kitchen as darkness fell. This slowed progress and although they had torches but no iceaxes or crampons they felt it was too dangerous to continue. Several texts were passed between the two sections of the group - the hill party then sending a ' Send Mountain Rescue' message. A small party was sent to escort them from the mountain. Another case of poor planning, a late start and lack of awareness of weather conditions.

14 Team members involved.

7th 1100 hrs 0.5 hours Eastern Traverse, Tryfan

No injuries Male 37 yrs

A well equipped male with ice axe and crampons left Milestone car park at 06.35 hrs to walk the North Ridge Tryfan and over the Glyders. Because of the icy conditions he diverted onto the Eastern Traverse as he had taken this route before. As he crossed North Gully and moved onto steeper ground he became anxious about the snow conditions and did not want to move. He tried shouting then phoned 999. 22 Sqn were training in the area and were able to snatch him from his precarious perch and deposit him at base for a warm up.

5 Team members involved.

7th 1420 hrs 1 hour Tal y Fan

Heart attack Male 62 yrs

He was walking on Tal y Fan with a group and was a known angina sufferer who carried a GTN spray. He developed chest pain and took GTN. With no relief after 20 minutes the party called for help. 22 Sqn was also tasked to help and arrived at the same time as a member of the Team. Given Oxygen and morphine and a rapid evacuation to hospital.

18 Team members involved.

18th 1600 hrs 4 hours Devil's Kitchen

No injuries, lost at night Male 37 yrs

He was out on his own and arrived at the top of the Kitchen but with no torch could not find the path but was able to give an accurate location with his GPS and could see Llyn y Cwn. He was told to go there and wait for Team members to arrive. He failed to do this and leaving his rucsac under a boulder he went walkabout and then could not find the rucsac. The Team had to find him and then his sac and escort him down. Poor preparation and lack of equipment contributed to this

unnecessary call out.

14 Team members involved.

18th 1730 hrs 0.75 hours Y Garn

No injuries, reported overdue 2 males 20 yrs

They left Ogwen at midday to climb Y Garn. They were due to be down at 1600 hrs. but reported overdue at 1730 hrs. Some members attending the previous incident were diverted to look for them. Luckily they turned up safe and well at the carpark.

11 Team members involved.

22nd 1511 hrs 1.15 hours Glyders / Y Garn

No injuries, Lost in cloud and requested assistance 2 males

A mobile phone call to ask for assistance. They were very vague about their route and were 'lost in cloud' and feared the onset of darkness. After some discussion they emerged from the cloud and could see a road. No general call out as they were now happy to descend on their own. They phoned when they were safe and well back at their car.

2 Team members involved.

28th 1200 hrs 4 hours Hafna Mine (Capel to Llanrwst Road)

A Border Terrier, dead.

The Team were called to the Mine to search for the dog which had entered the mine workings via a drainage pipe and not returned. The horizontal mine was flooded so three members in drysuits entered the mine and after extensive searching in the mine and surface the dog was not found. The following day the dog's body was recovered from the water near the entrance to the mine.

15 Team members involved plus 2 RSPCA inspectors.

29th 1445 hrs 1.75 hours Heather Terrace, Tryfan

Head Lacerations Female 27 yrs

A slip and tumble. There were icy patches when this well equipped couple were descending Heather Terrace and decided to go down a small gully to the lower path in Cwm Tryfan. The wife slipped and fell about 10 feet and hit her head with momentary loss of consciousness. As it would be dark by the time the Team got there 22 Sqn were requested and were training in the area. They did a quick snatch and dropped the husband at Oggie Base before taking her to Ysbyty Gwynedd.

14 Team members involved.

31st 1240 hrs 3 hours Tal y Fan

Fractured Ankle Female 62 yrs

A slip in icy conditions. Walking with friends she slipped near the summit. Several members went directly to the scene and were soon on scene with back up and equipment on the way from base. With a serious fracture a helicopter evacuation would be best. 22 Sqn were involved in South Snowdonia so Helimed was requested. Splinted and Ibuprofen (self administered) and Morphine, she was carried a short distance to the helicopter to go to Ysbyty Gwynedd.

16 Team members involved.

Equipment Officer

For me, deciding what to write for the annual report is always a bit of a conundrum, as not very

much changes. The Team obviously has lots of equipment and is very fortunate, due to sterling fund raising efforts to be able to replace or buy what we need as required. The lot of Equipment Officer has not changed; it's still very busy. The team members despite thousands of pounds worth of higher education and learning struggle sometimes to count up to four (the number of Karabiners in a personal kit bag) and I don't get annoyed with this very often these days!!

Luckily nothing has changed on the legal front and the systems we have in place allow the Team to follow best practises, which just takes time and effort (every safety critical item that the Team possess is inspected ever quarter whether it has been used or not).

As a Team we use our equipment regularly and in difficult conditions often leading to its early demise. So as always I must thank those manufacturers who support the Team by offering us trade accounts, advice etc. thus making our donated funds spread a little further. Also I have to thank those Team members who have supported me in lots of different ways over the last year.

It may come as a surprise to some readers that OVMRO is one of the very, very few Rescue Teams in the UK that invites independent external auditors to look at what we are up to. This year, as you will have read elsewhere, we invited Kirk Mauther to deliverer our Technical Rope Rescue training. As a part of his visit, we also asked him to audit our Technical Rope Rescue capability including the equipment we use. It was a nerve-wracking experience for me as Kirk is one of the most knowledgeable and respected Rope Rescue experts in the world. To my relief Kirk was very complementary about the Teams choice of equipment and how it is looked after. He did however have some interesting suggestions for the future.

I also decided to stand down from the post not because I don't enjoy it because I do, but because I believe that new blood is needed to take all things forward, as some one more famous than me once said " we are not the pillar that holds things up but the foundations for those who come along next". Luckily, a willing volunteer has stepped forward to take on the roll. I intend however to continue my involvement in equipment matters within the Team.

The Ogwen Team has always prided its self in being at the forefront of development in Rescue matters, be they equipment or technique. One of the things that has often frustrated me whilst being the Equipment Officer has been the lack of time to investigate new equipment and the techniques that go with it. As I said earlier that in Kirks audit report he has made some suggestions for the future, which hopefully I will be able to take forward as a support to the incumbent Equipment officer.

As a final note I ask the Team members to give all their support to the new Equipment Officer as he may not be as hard skinned as me, but knowing the stock he comes from he probably has it in him!!

Kevin de Silva

Stamps

Thank you to everyone who has saved used stamps for the team. We have received significant donations again this year. I would especially like to thank Country Cooks on the A5 for their efforts and to Mrs. Lydia Doig for getting them to us and for writing thank you letters. All the stamps were sold and all the money raised went to the team. Please continue to collect stamps for the team and if possible please try to keep all foreign stamps on the full envelope or card, as we get significantly more for them on cover. Please tear others off envelopes or cards but do not leave too much envelope attached as people are reluctant to buy with too much paper attached or if both sides of the

envelope is attached.

Also please don't spend money on postage - accumulate them and drop them into base.

Bill Dean

TREASURER'S REPORT

Last year I started my annual report by saying I was a little disappointed that I had not ended the year with that magic number I wanted in the Bank. I am very pleased to say 'eureka' this year! Thanks to everyone for your support and help in fund raising. Thanks also to the budget spenders for keeping well within budget or for being very close!

I mentioned last year the hope of running the 'Oggie 8' event as a fundraising event. I am delighted this event was a great success despite the appalling weather conditions. I would like to add my thanks to everyone - organisers, participants and donors. The £7000 raised was a significant boost to team funds. I would especially like to thank Mark Edwards and Dave Worrall for a major organising effort. They have also said they will do it again this year which is music to the Treasurer's ears! From the Treasurer's point of view it would be a very welcome annual event! If you read this how about entering a team?

Whilst talking of income I would like to thank everyone who supported us during the year. Special thanks as always go to our 333 support group. They have surpassed themselves again this year - well done. Together with the Oggie 8 event they raised enough funds to cover a third of total income! This was approximately 15% of the running costs of the team.

I would especially like to commend Mark Edwards in promoting sales of merchandise - so if you would like some mugs, buffs, teddy bears, pens, whistles etc. please contact him. Thanks also to Alan Ince for looking after most of the collecting boxes but Chris Lloyd was the winner of the best box - yet again - the Black Cat, Llandudno Junction. Altogether we have 60 collecting boxes, which are a useful source of income.

With the help of my friend Frank Gordon we are continuing to reap the benefits of 'Gift Aid'. We claimed for the back years 2002 and 2003 - yet again the revenue added interest to the claim, which

was very useful. As I write this we are preparing to make a claim for another couple of years.

There is a slight distortion to the income total this year as it includes all the money team members contributed for the kit issue of waterproofs, which had been paid for in the previous years accounts. It also includes team members' contributions to major training events etc. It's not cheap being a team member as they pay their own travel expenses to attend rescues and training as well as provide all other personal gear to keep them safe and warm during a rescue. All we contribute as an Organisation is part payment to an occasional piece of kit, free tea and coffee (but they pay for chocky bars) & maybe a mince pie at Christmas and other social occasions! If our financial position consolidates maybe we should consider contributing more.

As always we appreciate the many personal donations we receive but yet again I have had to record no less than 22 as 'unknown' which I find upsetting as we have not been able to thank the donors personally - some people may prefer to be just anonymous but I have a strong feeling a number of people are missing 'thank you' letters which they would appreciate but stupid bank entries such as "beech plastering" "GYE" or other paper administrative errors make it impossible for us to contact the donor. If you think you might be one of my 'unknown' entries please do contact us, meanwhile a general thanks to all of this group.

May I also add my personal thanks to our valiant secretary Pauline who writes almost all the "thank you" letters on my behalf. The donations from clubs this year has increased but sadly income from companies is significantly down. The income directly attributable to rescues is up this year but we have had a busy year. As always it is my very sad duty to report that our largest donations have been as a result the sad loss of loved ones. I would like to record donations in memory of the following :-

On the expenditure side we paid for the long anticipated team technical audit, which was very successful. The Training Officer also ran more than the usual number of events, which explains why he was slightly over budget - but I think we might forgive him! He keeps reminding me that team members made contributions to many events, which really means he came in under budget! First aid cost included new AED machines and a significant investment in training. The Equipment Officer completed the issue of waterproofs to new team members to standardise the kit issue. Base maintenance was more than anticipated due to the local authority insisting we installed a more modern water purification system! I have been drinking that water for over 40 years..... no further comment!

The single greatest expenditure this year was the completion of a project talked about for so many years - so at last we have a super all weather track from the A5 to Base. Now completed it looks as though it has been there for years. Thanks to Chris Lloyd for all his effort in drawing up specifications and supervising the project. Thanks also to Hogan Group of Bangor who supplied a large quantity of cement and to Mini Muckshift for doing a good job. This will now save significant wear and tear to team members' cars but it has already been mooted that we might need a speed limit!

That I think completes my report. Please keep the donations coming and please think of entering as part of a team for the Oggie 8 event!

Bill Dean

Training Officer

2008 has been my second year as Training Officer and another busy year of training. OVMRO has completed over 500 person-training sessions in the period between January 2008 and January 2009. I have been able to delegate much of the core training to a small group of team members who have organised and run excellent events throughout the year. When organising training I have continued to work on the premise that the Team's strength lies in the fact that we are mountaineers conducting mountain rescue, and that training should be led by operational requirements. The following report is a summary of the Team's training in 2008 and some outline plans for 2009.

The 2008 / 09 rolling training schedule has been based on core training days being run on the first Sunday of each month and a much-increased Wednesday evening programme. A mixture of both weekend and weeknight training seems to allow different team members to access the team's training schedule. My thanks to Russ for assisting with updating the training events schedule on the website and a big thanks to Jed for his continued support in running the excellent Wednesday evening training series.

The year's training started with one of our core skills, a Casualty Care / First Aid training day in January 2008. The Cas Care group led by Paul Smith has continued to provide excellent first aid training for the Team. Cas Care is one of the committee nominated mandatory core skills areas, requiring all team members to attend a basic annual first aid refresher or equivalent. The Cas Care group has also provided training and support for Intermediate and Advanced first aiders.

Mandatory training is still one of the current 'hot topics' within the team, and although it has discussed making other core skills such as Technical Rope Rescue and Swift Water Rescue mandatory, on reflection I would urge caution before passing annual mandatory core skills training requirements. Some will have strong views on this subject. I am coming around to thinking that core skills might be refreshed every two to three years. These targets could be stated as guidelines and not rules, allowing Team Leaders to deploy team members without being constrained by 'use by dates'. Helicopter training is currently another core skill area that has a 12-month revalidation requirement set by RAF policy.

2008 was an important year for Technical Rope Rescue training, with Kirk visiting from Canada. Kirk ran a bespoke weeklong TRR course training approximately 40% of the team, and conducted an audit of our Tech Rescue procedures. In 2008 over 80% of the team attended TRR training.

Dave Jones (Conwy), has now taken up the lead of the Tech Rescue Working Group. Based on the solid foundations set previously and Kirk's audit recommendations, we have set a TRR training programme for 2009. Work continues on the long awaited Version Two of the TRR Field Guide, which we hope to publish early in 2009.

Swift Water Rescue Operations have again increased in 2008 with several water rescue call outs earlier in the year. Chris Onions and Tim Vollum have continued to provide excellent direction in training, running a very well received SRT1 course in January '09, which is to be repeated again in May '09.

The Team currently has a healthy number of active Trainee Members at different stages in their traineeship. Final hill dates have now been set for March 2009 and there are plans for others in the Autumn. I have recently set 19 April 2009 as an initial hill day for team selection and would welcome any nominations from team members.

In 2008 the Team has run both a successful Winter Training Programme in Scotland and a second Summer Skills Course in the Lake District. Both training events are aimed at improving personal mountaineering skills as well as rescue skills, and have the added bonus of being excellent team building events. Similar training is planned for 2009.

The Team has been further developing its links with the North Wales Fire Service during 2008, running Rope Rescue and Water Rescue multi agency exercise training days, which it is hoped to continue in 2009.

Many thanks to all the team members who have assisted me in the role as Training Officer in 2008, with special thanks to Pauline and the Committee for their support and encouragement.

Tim Bird

PRESS OFFICER

Once again we must thank the Daily Post, North Wales Weekly News and BBC Wales on line, for keeping the name of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue in the headlines. There are also a number of our customers who will have been surprised to find mention of their rescue reported in their local newspaper too.

Early in the year, Roger Pinney of the BBC took an active part in one of our swift water training days. No sooner had he mentioned, "Having a go" than he was launched into the icy torrent. Without rehearsal, he was swept downstream, brought to the bank and made his report to the camera crew standing on the bank. Hopefully, his hard hitting report highlighted the dangers of "swift water" as well as advertising the work of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue.

In contrast we have had our disappointments too. In the autumn of 2007, we assisted in the re-enactment of a rescue on Bristly Ridge for a film company making an episode for the BBC's "Accidental Heroes". The programme was shown during the summer of 2008. The aim of this episode was to highlight the heroism of a member of the public in assisting a fallen climber. The film showed the 999 call being made for "Mountain Rescue" and a yellow RAF helicopter coming in to scoop up the casualty. No appearance on the film of the team members who also worked on the casualty and who escorted the remainder of the party off the hill. No mention of Mountain Rescue as a voluntary service. No credit to OVMRO who not only were on the rescue but spent a couple of days filming, giving safety cover, providing radio communications and hospitality at Oggi Base. So no publicity for OVMRO. Lesson learnt!

2008 had its usual number of rescues and body recoveries (sadly, these always are more newsworthy than the "good news" successful rescues). The call outs cover the usual cross section from technical mountain rescue jobs, to river rescue, a crashed motor cyclist who was catapulted over the wall and 100 feet down the slope to the young girl who fell down a mine shaft. In addition,

the high cost of diesel and the threat of having to pay for radio licences have also received Press coverage.

Despite using the Press to publicise the need to carry more than just a mobile telephone, we (all mountain rescue teams) continue to receive 999 calls stating “We are lost.” Some of the message is getting through as we now get calls “We are lost at GPS grid reference -----.” So people are adding a GPS to their arsenal of electronic gizmos but still not carrying a map. Through the support of the media, we will continue to highlight some of the problems that MRT’s encounter.

Once again, thank you to all the reporters who have accurately reported the facts and maintained the name of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation in the media.

Chris Lloyd

IT Group

This year has been a mixture of success and frustration, but overall things are positive and we are still pushing forward and making improvements to the overall provision of IT within the team.

Website

As our portal to the world this has always been very popular. Behind the scenes a small sub-group has been working very hard to streamline the site and add a facility whereby team members can easily add their own content to the site. Our aim is for all aspects of team life to be represented on the site, whether it be technical rescue, communications or general administration. I know this will be of interest to team members and public alike. Some of the changes will be introduced gradually so keep watching the web site <http://ogwen-rescue.org.uk>. Thanks go to Mark E and Andy H for their help with this. Thanks also to Russ who continues to experiment with new ideas.

Twitter

We are always looking at ways to increase our profile in the world and our latest experiment is with Twitter. From time to time we are publishing informal updates about team activities, the weather, callouts or the occasional mishap. If you are a Twitter member why not follow us on <http://www.twitter.com/ovmro>? For those of you with an interest in web technologies you may not realise that we also have an RSS feed at <http://www.ogwen-rescue.org.uk/rssfeed/ovmronews.xml>.

Weather Station

The weather station is online and reporting but we are still waiting for a replacement anemometer. It is an Oregon Scientific WMR-918 that is getting quite old so it may be that we eventually decide to replace the entire weather station. Hopefully, this will be in place by the time this report is published. If there are any weather station suppliers out there who feel an urgent desire to donate one we would be very grateful.

Broadband

Although we are at a considerable distance from the local exchange in Capel Curig the broadband connection has been working remarkably well. It does drop out occasionally and can take up to a day to re-establish a connection but overall – and despite the dire predictions from the ISP and BT that it could never work – it has been successful...

Webcam

... unlike the webcam! Oh my, where do I start? This has been a great drain on time and resources

and as I write it is completely off line. Originally we had problems with the video card, the results of which were broken pictures or images made up of fuzzy lines. We had been using quite an old computer as the server so decided to upgrade it to a nice new shiny one with lots of memory and a more than capable processor. It turns out that this computer was “too fast” to quote our particularly unhelpful webcam supplier, whom I am sorely tempted to name and shame. So we abandoned that and purchased a USB video interface that worked fine until night fell when it would freeze. Simply logging into the computer remotely and looking at the image would wake it up again and this became almost a daily task. But it wasn't to last and eventually only rebooting the computer would solve the problem. A glimmer of hope emerged when we discovered and repaired a faulty wire in the camera power supply but now the camera itself has failed and has been removed.

We won't give up and intend to get a better camera – maybe even more than one – so your views of the valley will return. Thanks to Mark E, Paul S and Andy H for their help with this.

Computers

As mentioned above we have a new computer for running presentations and doing general admin work upstairs. The old upstairs computer is reserved for web server duties and is not-to-be-touched. We have also been fortunate to receive donated laptops, which are currently being used by the secretary and treasurer. Many thanks go to our benefactors.

Software

The big new project this year will be the implementation of the Team Manager software written by Samuel Carradice. This has been undergoing extensive testing (thanks John H) and when fully implemented within the next two months will help us to manage our equipment, personnel and training records.

From an IT point of view the year ahead will be full of interesting projects and is looking very promising.

Tim Radford

Casualty Care

This year shows a higher proportion of our incidents involving injuries. This is, in part, due to an end of year spate of slips on widespread ice during a beautifully cold and clear spell.

A notable incident involved the rescue of a young man who fell near the summit of Tryfan, sustaining multiple injuries. Due to bad weather, the Helicopter could not winch the casualty from the incident site and so a protracted stretcher evacuation followed. In all, the casualty was in our care for around six hours.

After lengthy application and evaluation phases, we have finally been awarded a grant from the British Heart Foundation for additional Automatic External Defibrilators. This was used to replace our old unit and purchase two much smaller and more portable units.

Training has been varied this year. We have run ‘mandatory’ first aid training, such that all team members are trained to a basic level. Also, the team hosted a regional First Aid course leading to the MREW Casualty Care certificate. As a result the number of casualty care trained members has increased significantly this year. Two Advanced trained members have re-qualified and we have one new Advanced trained member; congratulations Gerwyn!

A new training opportunity has arisen with the recent arrival of the SAR Force HQ at RAF Valley; all the medical training courses for the helicopter rear crew are conducted here by CoSARM, who have very kindly offered us observation places on the courses. This should be of great benefit as we are often working with the winchmen on the ground and a common approach will help the casualty receive a consistent standard of care.

As usual there are the many who have helped us as a team to help the casualties: the RAF Valley Search & Rescue helicopter, RAF Valley MRT, Ysbyty Gwynedd, North Wales Ambulance service and CoSARM.

Paul Smith
Casualty Care Representative

Bryn Poeth (aka Oggi Base)

If you read through the last few years worth of Committee Minutes, you will find several references to “the track” or the drive way up Oggi Base from the A5 road. Those team members who drive 4x4’s will not have noticed the deterioration in the surface of “the track” over the last 18 years (when it was last reconstructed). So in 2008 we decided to bite the bullet and reconstruct the track from the A5.

Our first move was to get advice from The National Trust as to what type of material they would accept. Concrete was the flavour of the month, so we progressed our design.

We sought assistance of a local concrete producer, The Hogan Group of Bangor. They generously offered two truckloads free of charge (worth about £1000). This would be enough to take the new surface down to our cattle grid. However, drivers still had to get from the A5 along the farmer’s piece of road before reaching our section. We asked both National Trust and the tenant farmer if they would assist with a contribution to the cost for this section. Alas, neither could assist, so OVMRO decided to “go it alone”.

In October, Mini Muckshift Plant Hire and Contractors of St. Asaph started the excavation and laying of concrete. We had thought that after such a wet Summer, there would be no more water in the heavens and so chose the Autumn. We were wrong. The contractors persevered and completed the works within three unsettled weeks. We must thank The Hogan Group of Bangor for their generous donation which helped Mini Muckshift to keep their price to below £8500.

Having improved the track, some team members felt that it was now up to Silverstone standard, so

we must thank Brookes & Sons (tarpaulins) of Penmaenmawr for the donation of the speed restriction signs. We must also thank the tolerance of our neighbours, the residents/tenant of Bodesi who were without vehicular access to the A5 road for a couple of weeks.

Because Bryn Poeth is open to paying guests (National Trust), the water must be of a certain standard. Conwy Council enforced the need for a filtration system, which Roger Jones installed this year. What we thought was crystal clear and sweet tasting mountain water now passes through three filters sited in the washroom. The three clear vessels have soon become blackened with the peat and poo!

Gas boilers have a design life of about 20 years. Certainly since our boiler was installed in 1988, boiler design has come on leaps and bounds with energy efficiency and emissions. However, when the old girl on the wall in the kitchen packed up this year, someone miraculously found spare parts, to save her for another Winter or two. Perhaps we should now consider our carbon footprint. We have two South facing roofs begging for solar panels to heat our water.

Finally, Team members should thank their colleagues within this Organisation who regularly clean Bryn Poeth, ensure that there is a stock of toilet rolls, Mars Bars, clean tea towels, logs and that gas and electricity bills are paid.

Chris Lloyd

Transport Report

This year has seen no major expenses with the running of the two Land Rovers, other than the normal servicing and I am pleased to report that from May 2009, this will be sponsored by LAS Land Rover Ltd, Llandegai.

After two notable rescues in the Conway valley, which involved a lot of 'bush cutting' on an old road and riverbank, to reach a casualty, two saws and two short ladders, to assist team members who cannot climb trees and walls, have been added to the onboard kit. A second set of bolt cutters has been added to the kit on Mobile 2, after an incident above Bethesda.

The team has been called upon to make its vehicles available to the emergency services during severe weather and on one occasion to assist the Llanberis Team in the most horrendous conditions, to recover team members from Llyn Llydaw on Snowdon, after a long rescue.

At the opening of the new garage at Ogwen Base, the Chief Constable made the comment, 'what can I do for you', resulting in three members going 'back to school' – driving school, that is, for a five day Response Driving Familiarisation Course at the North Wales Police Driving School. Chris Lloyd, Jed Stone and I went on the course and we found years of bad habits hard to break. At the end of five gruelling days, I hope that the driving is of a much higher standard. No doubt the other two on the course will keep reminding me if I start to slip back into my old ways. As a result of this course, new driving standards are to be implemented in 2009.

I would like to thank North Wales Police and the Driving School for accommodating OVMRO with this tailor made course and hope that it will be a continuing process.

I wish to thank all the other team members who have helped me in keeping the two Land Rovers on the road and ready to go at any time of the day or night.

Roger Jones

Transport Officer

Driving Mountain Rescue Team Vehicles

“So you think you’re a good driver? OK, average. You are one of the members who drive the team vehicles delivering your team mates to Call Outs.

Consider this:

The pager or SMS alerts you to a “Call Out”. A walker with a suspected broken ankle has telephoned requesting assistance. Members to report to Base asap.

After a quick change into hill kit, you throw the rucksack into the back of the car and reverse out of the drive. What are you thinking about? Details of the call out? Will enough troops turn up? Will you be there to be on the first team vehicle or be late and end up making tea and sorting kit? Have you upset the family by leaving home just before the children’s bedtime and it was your turn to read the story?

The car in front delays your progress. You think, “Get out of my way. Can’t you see I’m in a hurry?” The other driver thinks “Does he think an orange and white check badge gives him the right to push me off the road?” You get an opportunity to overtake and progress quickly to the Base. “Great, one of the first troops.” You abandon the car, grab your sack and rush in. The Team Leader throws you the Land Rover keys and tells you to get the vehicle ready for departure in 5 minutes. You throw your sack in along with the other specified kit. Team members jump in and you are ready for the “off”. “All aboard? Let’s go”. “Shut the back door!”

Blues and twos help you progress through the busy town traffic with responsive drivers pulling in out of your way. Though there is one elderly driver who seems unaware of the Team vehicle. He suddenly stops in his tracks. You hit the anchors too, with the sound of jeers from your team mates in the back. You have to reverse a touch before you can start to pass this stationery car. A nervous driver comes in the other direction. You hold your ground, not wanting to force them off the road. You beckon them towards you. They panic and decide to mount the pavement and graze some street furniture whilst passing you. “Stupid fool. Don’t they know the width of their car?”

On you go trying to make up for lost time. The Pelican crossing turns red and the pedestrian starts to cross. She recognizes the Team vehicle; steps back and waves you through. At last an open stretch of road. 30, 40, 50mph up to the last roundabout. Down through the gears and braking hard. Your blues and twos give you a clear crossing. Accelerate hard, up through the gears, 50mph and past the National Speed Limit signs into the country. Sixty, 70mph before the roads begin to bend and dip. A section of double white lines. The car in front slows to 30mph allowing you to overtake. The Base is calling you on the radio for a sit.rep.

The road becomes more twisty and hilly. Down through the gears, double de-clutching as if you were driving an old truck. Accelerating like Lewis Hamilton with arms outstretched and leaning into the corners, you make up time. A bit of “Riverdance” with your feet over the pedals as you “clog and anchor” your way along the roads. You shoot into the car park, much to the relief of the casualty who has been watching your blues lights speed up the valley. As your nauseous team mates kit up and throw up, you are asked to sit in the back seat of the Police car that has followed you on your multi-law breaking drive.

Hopefully only a few of you might not see anything wrong with this account. Most of you could fill a very large Post Card with the answers. I suspect many of you know a driver like this in your team.

Unlike the paid professional emergency services, Mountain Rescue does not come under the strict

arm of the law in many aspects of our activities. The Law affects our controlled drugs and our use of radios. To a degree we self regulate our First Aid. Our Search Management, technical rope rescue and swift water rescue is not regulated. We regularly train in these activities either using Team expertise and standards or national and international techniques. We keep records and we review or training regularly insisting that members maintain standards.

Driving on the Public Highway is regulated and you are required to pass a test. For most of us, this is the last official training we did! Now, several years later (and several revisions of the Highway Code), you are driving a vehicle full of your friends.

Here in North Wales our nationally renowned Chief Constable, Richard Brunstrom, is aware of the abuse of speed on the roads on North Wales and the carnage it can cause. North Wales Police have a driving school, which is used by many police forces in England and Wales. After all, we do have some fine open and fast country roads for them to practice. Speak to any Biker. Just like the “Fatal Incident Protocol” with which you might be familiar, North Wales Police are now looking at “Driver Training” and assessment for mountain rescue team members who drive team vehicles.

Three of us have just spent a very wet week of intense driving through North Wales in a team Land Rover under the strict supervision of the Deputy Chief Driving Instructor, Colin Avery. We would spend nearly an hour at the wheel and then a couple of hours sitting in the back before taking to the wheel again. Sitting in the back was no rest. Passengers were quizzed about the drive and were asked to assess the driver. Colin has a photographic type memory recording every metre of the drive. “What didn’t he do on the third roundabout?” “What gear should he have used when...?” “Where was the double bend sign incorrect?”

And then there were the other questions. “When can you breach double white lines?” “How should you progress through traffic using “Blues & Twos”?” “Can you exceed speed limits or pass red traffic lights?”

Team Leaders or Transport officers should consider who drives Team vehicles. Does the driver have a license for the minibus? Unlike the older licenses, many new ones cover fewer groups. Anyone with just an “automatic” license?

What does your vehicle insurance really cover? Drivers with points? Rapid response and blue light driving? Off road driving? Any limits on passenger numbers?

How often are the vehicles serviced and by who? Is there a record and where is it kept? How often is the vehicle checked for fluids, lights, tyres, bodywork etc.? And by who and are there records? Is there any control on who drives Team vehicles? Do drivers have any specific training or just a spin around the block?

Do drivers have any official driving assessment or response driver training?

All awkward questions which could leave Teams, officers and members open to criticism and even prosecution. Perhaps Teams and/or Regions should consider official training before the long arm of the Law does.

Finally, thank you to North Wales Police, their Driving School and Colin Avery for a very intense, tiring and eye opening week of training.

Chris Lloyd

Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation
Registered Charity No.502442

TRUSTEES REPORT for 2008

The Aims & Objectives of this Organisation are “To search for and rescue people in difficulties in inhospitable terrain and in furtherance thereof to develop search & rescue techniques and to disseminate information about the activities of the Organisation”.

The Trustees have been appointed by members of the Organisation to safeguard and promote the values and mission of the Organisation. Also, they must ensure that the Organisation operates in an effective, responsible and accountable manner. Whilst the work of running the Organisation (Administration and Operations) is delegated to the Committee and the Team Leaders, the responsibility remains with the Trustees.

The Trustees must act with integrity and must avoid conflicts of interests, or misuse of the charity's funds and assets. They must also ensure solvency, ensure funds are used wisely and ensure funds are not put at unnecessary risk.

With the above in mind, the Trustees have been represented at most Committee meetings. They have also perused and read the monthly financial statements compiled by the Treasurer. The Trustees are in agreement with the two large items of capital expenditure, namely the Technical Rescue training week and the reconstruction of the drive. They are also pleased to see the success of the Oggi 8 fund raising day and the continued and growing support of 333 Support Group. The Trustees support the Treasurer in keeping about two years running costs in reserve. As income can never be guaranteed, especially in these troubled times, this is a prudent decision.

The Trustees noted the advice given by CAF bank that the £93K invested in Birmingham Midshires Bank was still a good investment in this current economic climate. The Trustees felt that, although this account does provide a good rate of interest, it would be prudent to spread the assets during these uncertain times and take the risk of the loss of such favourable interest rates. The Government will underwrite £50,000 of savings, so £50,000 should be invested in two accounts elsewhere.

The Trustees welcome the steady influx of new blood and are impressed by the quality and commitment of our Trainees. The commitment and dedication of the Full members remains to a high standard.

The Trustees note that members have attended the national MR (E&W) Conference and the international IKAR conference. Members have also supported fellow rescue teams in operations and training. The Organisation works closely with the professional emergency services, namely North Wales Police, C Flight 22 Squadron at RAF Valley, North Wales Fire & Rescue Service, The North Wales Ambulance Trust, The North Wales Air Ambulance and the RAF Mountain Rescue Team.

The Trustees thank the Officers, committee members, the Team Leaders and the many sub-groups for their hard and dedicated work for the furtherance of the Organisation.

We hope that Team Members and 333 members are proud to be part of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation and will continue to ensure that it can achieve its Aims and Objectives.

Neil Adam, Clive Hughes, Chris Lloyd, Mick Parsons (The Trustees)
17 January 2009.

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

I know we all say it, but where does the time go? It is twelve years since Treble Three came into being. I believe that it is truly one of the great success stories. Many years ago, in my then role as Police Search and Rescue liaison Officer, I remember suggesting that mountain rescue teams set up a support group similar the RNLI. At the time such a suggestion was considered to be an anathema. I could see the logic of those feelings, but over the years times changed. With the increase in Health and Safety Regulations and the consequential financial burden they placed on teams, together with the increase workload and diversity of tasks teams were called on to respond to, it became obvious that normal money acquisition was no longer sufficient.

I believe that Ogwen were the first team to consider setting up a support group. Since that date I have been privileged to have been selected to be your Honorary Chairman. Let me say however, and not just as a form of modesty, my task is easy, it is the dedicated work of the committee and some team members, both past and present that have kept and still keep 333 in what I believe to be the leaders in setting the standards of a support group.

To those 333 members, now reading this report, I would ask one favour. If you have skipped any pages before reading this, go back. I would ask you sincerely to read this report from the beginning. If you all ready have done so you will be aware of the excellent service the team provides and the standards set by the team to achieve them. The team is continually facing ever-increasing costs to maintain this excellence.

Recently OFCOM have threatened to charge the Emergency Services for the use of their radio channels; this would mean an additional cost running into the thousands of pounds. So, 333 members, I think you will appreciate the fact that without you the team would be unable to meet the challenges it faces.

This is why I repeatedly say each year that you are an integral part of the team, greatly appreciated by those on the front line. Don't forget to check the web page and see what is available for you over the following months; there are activities ranging from first aid, navigation and GPS weekends, tracking, scrambling, to name but a few. The team organise these to show their appreciation for your support. Make the most of them and try and spread the word about 333, which I believe to be the premier support group. Let's try and get some more members this year.

Finally, it goes without saying, I am proud to be your Honorary Chairman, but more so of the excellent support you give the team.

Clive Swombow
Honorary Chairman 333

Location of Collection Boxes

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

VILLAGE WAYS

Our last holiday may not appeal to the macho amongst us who enjoy cliff hanging by the skin of their teeth but for those of us with less extreme tastes it has a lot to offer. We went on a delightful walk in the foothills of the Himalaya in India, staying in rural villages and enjoying the hospitality of the locals.

We were first introduced to Village Ways through a newspaper article that reported the pleasures of mixing walking in a beautiful area with the opportunity of close contact with the people and way of life in the Indian villages through which we passed. Village Ways is a comparatively new enterprise based at Khali Estate in the Kumaon district of India, north east of Delhi and not far from the borders with Nepal and Tibet. Khali is situated in the Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary which is great for wildlife but which puts heavy restrictions on the villages located within its boundaries. In order to improve the lot of some of the villagers, as well as to offer a unique opportunity to visitors, Village Ways was formed.

Our holiday started from Delhi by taking the Ranikhet Express train overnight to Kathgodam. Old Delhi station is itself an eye opening experience but the air conditioned sleeper was clean and spacious. At Kathgodam we were met and driven for four hours to Khali up an incredibly twisty road - I don't think there was a straight stretch of 100m in the entire journey - but up we went through numerous villages into the foothills.

Khali has a magnificent setting with fabulous views over endless wooded hills as well as a stunning panorama of the snow covered high Himalaya. We had a very relaxing and enjoyable afternoon and night in their comfortable circular chalets enjoying their hospitality. The next morning we were introduced to our guides, Sersingh and Harish and we set off on foot for our 5½ hour walk.

The level of walking could not be described as challenging although there were plenty of ups and downs as we walked along the paths, sometimes narrow, other times wide. A favourite expression of our guides was dheera dheera, slowly slowly, and they took great care to ensure that we were comfortable with the pace. The altitude was around 2000m. Binsar Sanctuary has a varied landscape with woods of chir pine and holm oak dotted with rhododendrons as well as open terraced hillsides planted with vegetables and, of course, the wide valley bottoms.

Most days were broken by visits to houses and small holdings en route. One very memorable meeting was with a 93 year old ex Indian army soldier who was delighted to sit and talk with us and practise his English. Another stop was at the home of a couple with 13 children and a very large herd of goats including some delightful 1 and 2 day old kids.

Throughout our walk Sersingh and Harish kept bird and plant books to hand and were very sharp eyed at spotting the black faced monkeys and the many birds - jays, magpies, bulbuls, eagles as well as lots of little brown jobs - that they were able to name. We were also delighted to see a marten and a barking deer but disappointed to only see the droppings of a leopard and the scrapings of wild

boar - what a sight that would have been.

Each night we stayed in a different village in a guest house built in local style with traditional materials by Village Ways. When we had first arrived at Khali, another guest who had just returned from her trek, said that the accommodation was "very basic" but I don't think that hot showers, flush loos and fresh food can be described as basic - simple, yes. Each house can sleep 6 guests in twin rooms. There is no electricity but solar panels gave us ample hot water and light, and wood fires were lit in the evenings. Generally we arrived in the village early to mid afternoon and were met with hot tea and often a fresh pastry. As it got dark and quite cold at about 6pm we tended to eat at around 6.30. Invariably the meals, always vegetarian, were delicious and plentiful. We had a go at making chapattis ourselves one evening - they made it look so easy!

After dinner we generally played cards, often with our guides and any of the villagers who wandered in, always finishing in hoots of laughter. I was totally confused by a game they tried to show us. Another evening Sersingh was making suggestions for words in our game of scrabble. Harish was a great yoga enthusiast and persuaded some of us to get up early for an invigorating session before breakfast. International cricket was another pastime at which they excelled, and not only on the world stage.

It was brilliant to have the chance to mix so freely with the villagers; to see their crops growing; to meet Harish's wife and baby son, Gollu, and to walk amongst their houses and cattle without feeling like an intruder. Village Ways has been really successful in fulfilling its ambition to create an enterprise that gives such pleasure to us, the visitors, whilst ensuring the future of the 5 villages in which we stayed. Before Village Ways made their proposals to Satri, one of the villages, there were only 3 families remaining and they had reached a compensation deal with the sanctuary to leave due to the damage being done by wild boar and monkeys to their crops, and their inability to scratch a living. Now 2 more families have returned. During our evening there, 6 gorgeous bubbly teenage girls entertained us with their laughter and dancing, in which we joined, of course.

Full marks to Village Ways. There is no doubt that what they envisaged and then achieved, is highly commendable. Details available from www.villageways.com

Pat Arlette

Avalanche

During the winter the news reported on avalanches in Glen Coe, which claimed the lives of several walkers. Well it doesn't just happen in Glen Coe, this short piece was written by a team member after he had been out on the hill.

I thought members might be interested to know of my experience on Y Garn last Wednesday morning following the three avalanche deaths in Scotland over the weekend. I was just descending from the summit carefully avoiding a surprisingly large cornice at the top of the walking route up Y Garn (north east ridge). Descending I noticed a 20 metre wide section of the cornice had collapsed leaving an impressive pile of debris littering the rocks above Banana Gully. 100m further down the ridge I saw a man descending. I continued down and was suprised to see him turn and head up towards me. We met and he explained as he was climbing the corniced section with his ski poles (no crampons or axes) he saw the snow ahead of him break and before he knew it he was heading back down as the slope gave way. He was thrown onto the rocky section, which must have broken the power of the avalanche, just before the drop into Banana Gully. He had lost his £200 camera in the process as well as sporting a ripped jacket and bruised legs. He was now wondering whether he should go in search of his camera! I explained I wasn't going to help as I had to go to work and that it might be dangerous to dig about in such a large expanse of unstable snow!! I added that I thought

£200 was rather a good deal to escape with his life or serious injury. He concurred thankfully and we enjoyed a nice amble back down the ridge.

Matt Sutton

Bill Deans' trip to Baruntse

Last year I was thinking of an interesting mountain place to go but due to a variety of reasons all my plans went pear shaped. Peter Popham and four other friends were organising a trip to attempt to climb Baruntse, a mountain over 7000 metres in Nepal, close to Everest. The thought appealed to me but it was expensive and worse it might be six weeks. I thought there was no way I could get a "ticket" out for that long! However Margaret agreed and Peter, Dick, Yeo, Jason and I left Heathrow on 21st April and arrived in Kathmandu the next morning.

We had a couple of pleasant days in Kathmandu staying in reasonable luxury at the Hotel Shanker, which I believe was the residence of a former Queen Mother. We sorted out our gear and met our sirdar who took us to the ministry who had insisted on seeing us in person before giving us a climbing permit for such a big mountain. After, of course we parted with a wad of cash!

The flight to Lukla was with Agni-Air, our departure was delayed due to fog but we took off a few hours later- only to fly straight into more dense fog. I only hoped the pilot's navigation skills were good and the altimeter was in good order as we had to fly over several high passes. Fortunately the fog cleared as we crossed the last pass and we could see the tiny runway of Lukla clinging to the side of the valley in front of us. Two other flights followed hot on our heels but none were Agni-Air which meant that some of our food and equipment was back in Kathmandu and it was not until the fourth day of the trek that it caught us up.

At Lukla we were soon introduced to our three climbing guides, the cook and his support team of 4 and all the porters making a total team of 29! The first days trek was little more than an afternoon stroll but our sirdar and some porters has to stay behind to await our missing items. The third campsite was below the Zetra La pass. The next morning was a strenuous ascent but fortunately it was clear of snow. I was expecting a long descent on the other side – but how wrong I was! We did start down but soon it was up again, followed by what seemed to me to be an unending series of up and down. Then there appeared a long downhill section with a small hamlet at the bottom.

As we approached the sun came out for the first time, it was pleasant and warm but I looked around and saw that we only had the guides and the kitchen crew with us. I was told we were going down to the hamlet for lunch but the porters had kept on a higher track – after lunch we would have to go back up! And what's more there was a lot of tedious ups and downs before a rather unpleasant downhill to our campsite for the night. I hoped there were not going to be many more days like that! The camp site was rather crammed in a gully with a stream running through it. I found it a rather charming place after the very strenuous day.

Thankfully the next day was mostly downhill and quite short. We set up camp in a small village and ate our evening meal in a tea house – it was a pleasant change to see what we were eating as we normally only had a couple of candles to see by. Regrettably however there were quite a few down points. We met members of a Spanish team who were planning an ascent of Makalu but sadly one of their porters had been killed by a rock fall and they had thus abandoned the expedition.

Steve was not feeling well and could not seem to keep his food down. He seemed to retch without good cause. It was interesting that I commented that I had seen a friend who had a nervous problem and retched when he was worried what lay ahead. I told this story to Steve and some time later he said he had thought about this and I am glad to say that he was not sick again! However Yeo was

generally feeling off colour and regrettably he got gradually worse. For a young very fit guy this is a real downer but altitude affects people in different ways. Pete's appetite was also becoming a problem for him.

The next day seemed a relentless but straightforward plod up a large riverbed or along the riverbank. We eventually reached a small settlement where we were to spend two nights, but no nice tea house to eat in! The following day was hardly a rest day as we climbed up a steep mountain shoulder to help with acclimatization. Somehow I don't think my body had that in mind as I think that was my most strenuous and painful morning! However late in the afternoon I went for a short stroll to see where a large lake had breached its retaining glacial moraine dam about twenty years ago causing severe devastation and loss of life. I was pleased to find that I felt a lot better and fortunately found the next few days OK but I realised I was very much slower than the others and this began to concern me.

The next obstacle was to get over the Mera La pass. We went up to the Mera Base camp and had another theoretical rest day during which we wandered onto the glacier. The following day we crossed the glacier leaving the summit of Mera only a short distance away and then descended into another valley system. It took another two days to walk up this valley until finally on day 12 we arrived at Baruntse base camp. By this time Yeo and I were lagging behind and as I did not want to impede the progress of the others higher on the mountain and as Yeo was not feeling very happy coupled with the thought of hanging around base for another 12 days, it was decided that Yeo and I would leave. The only opportunity to do this would be the second day after arrival at base camp when we could have a guide take us over the Ambulacha La pass.

I had wanted to see the route ahead on Baruntse especially the famous west wall and so the first day at base camp Peter and I wandered up close to the west wall to have a look. Thus the next day Yeo and I together with a porter as well as the guide and a cook walked to the base of the Ambulacha La. As we approached the guide became concerned and it turned out that the old route over the pass had changed significantly since he was last there. The new route was quite a major undertaking. After a little scramble there was a vertical ice wall then 3 full lengths of jumaring up fixed ropes followed by another section of ice and snow until we reached the ridge.

Standing on the ridge was like a knife edge and in front of us we could see Everest. I wondered where the route would go and after turning a rock we descended on a very steep section before an exposed traverse with a safety rope followed by an abseil and other fixed ropes until we arrived on relatively safe ground. Yeo did incredibly well on this pass and when we were on safe ground he asked about the safety ropes and what would have happened if he had fallen as there seemed to be some shortcomings. I told him not to even consider the problem – it would have been a long way down.

From here it was quite a long walk to the first village of Chuckhung where Yeo and I and the porter enjoyed the relative comfort of a tea house bed and breakfast. The guide and the cook had returned from the pass back to the others at base camp.

Yeo and I then walked for 2 days to Everest base camp which was an amazing sight with probably over a thousand people scattered in country expedition groups higgledy piggledy in multicoloured tents on the convoluted glacier. It was remarkably clean and tidy with lots of blue barrels situated under small tents and porters carrying these barrels to the valley below. Also at base camp, there was a bakery tent, which sold apple pies to us tourists. We also went up to Kalapatat where we were lucky to be rewarded with a magnificent view of Everest and the surrounding mountains on a beautiful day. From there it took us just 3 days to get back to Lukla – we had the advantage of acclimatisation and moved fast. We were lucky to get a flight the next day back to Kathmandu and

even luckier to get a flight out to the UK 2 days later.

Meanwhile back on Baruntse base camp our friends went up the West wall on the 4th day and found it quite strenuous. They just visited camp 1 that day and returned to base camp. A few days later they went back up the west wall finding it more difficult this time and stayed at camp 1 followed by an exhausting trek up the glacier to camp 2. Again just to visit then it was back down to camp 1 for a night and back to base camp – all part of the acclimatization.

This time they found it even more exhausting because their bodies were now starting to deteriorate from the time spent at altitude. After a night at camp 1 they made progress to camp 2 and finally made their summit attempt the following day. Progress at nearly 7000 metres was very slow, there was a very difficult narrow ridge shortly after the camp and this took many hours.

It was corniced on each side and occasionally a gap revealed a drop of over a 1000 metres to the valley below. Unfortunately Dick and Jason found they were exhausted and turned back near the end of the ridge. Peter and a guide continued on for another hour or so but realised that they still had another hour and a half or so to get to the summit and Pete was just too exhausted. Bearing in mind that they would still have to cross the nasty ridge on their return to camp 2, so sadly they did not quite reach the summit being just a hundred metres short but they did crack the 7000 metre barrier. They had done very well but wiser to turn back as the weather deteriorated later in the day.

Several days later they left base camp, crossed the Ambulacha La which they also found quite entertaining and then the long walk out back to Lukla. It was a great experience and I was very grateful to have been invited on the trip.

Bill Dean

This was sent to us by Mr John Bradshaw. The text is from photocopies of an article from a relative in Canada, she inherited them from her mother who lived in Northop.

Two climbers deaths in Snowdonia
Frozen after fall into mountain tarn 1927

Heroism by one of the victims

An ordeal, more pathetic and grim than any known in the chequered history of the hazardous sport of mountain climbing in Snowdonia, occurred on a north-eastern spur of the Snowdon range on Sunday night. Four young men tied themselves together and set out on a Sunday morning to climb Craig yr Isfa, one of the shoulders of Carnedd Llewelyn. Their expedition was ill-fated. There followed a sad chapter of accidents, and two died on the frozen mountain.

One was Norman Stott, the younger son of Mr James Stott, of Ravenscraig, Conway, a young man freshly down from Cambridge. The other was his friend Arthur Taylor, of Hollywood, Llostock, also in his early twenties, and who resided in Manchester. The survivors were Francis Waldron Giveen, Campbell House Road, London, and William Henry Preby-Taylor of Clifton on Teme, Worcestershire. The dead man, Stott was an experienced climber. Taylor had little knowledge of the sport. The 2 survivors also had climbing experience but not knowledge of the topography of Carnedd Llewelyn.

Story of the Climb

“We started out on Sunday at 10am” said Mr Giveen. “It was our intention to climb Craig yr Isfa, which is about 2900ft up, and lies near Lake Eigiau and on the shoulder of Carnedd Llewelyn. We

knew before we started that darkness would come before we reached the top.”

“We took with us a lantern, some candles and several boxes of matches, and a compass. We reached the foot of the north crag shortly before midday. Cloud was covering the mountainside, but in spite of the bleak condition of the rock and the delay caused by our rope becoming entangled we reached the spot within ‘two pitches’ of our objective at 4pm. It was then that darkness set in. Our destination was only half an hour away in ordinary circumstances, but our rope again caused trouble and the remainder of the climb, instead of taking 30 minutes, was completed, by means of the light from the lantern, in a little under two hours. It was pitch dark.”

Compass Lost

“We decided to start back almost immediately, but another unfortunate incident occurred. We were deprived of the most essential part of our equipment, the compass. Taylor had put it on the ground outside the arc of light thrown by the lantern, and I trod on it in the dark. Had we had that compass I am sure we would have got down successfully. That incident, therefore, made it most difficult to find our way through the clouds, because even the orthodox way down caused a lot of scrambling.”

“However, we made our way laboriously down to the east side of Ffynnon Llugwy, a mountain tarn which feeds Lake Eigiau. It was then that the lantern began to give trouble. When near the south eastern corner of the tarn the wind began to blow in sixty miles an hour gusts, and finally the light went out. We had to resort to matches, but as soon as they were exposed they became too wet for use.”

Fall into tarn

“We then roped ourselves together and groped our way through the dark along the east side of the lake. After travelling a short distance the clay gave way underneath Stott and Taylor, and they slithered thirty feet down into the icy water of the little lake. We went to their assistance and succeeded in handing a rope to them. By this means we hauled both out. Stott told me afterwards that he swam out a second time to bring in Taylor, who he could hear, but not see, struggling close to him”.

“We had no more dry matches, and therefore, could not relight the lantern, so we untied the rope and continued scrambling around the lake holding the rope between us. Stott and Taylor were not injured by their fall, but they were frightfully cold. In fact both were numb and exhausted. They were failing fast and eventually Stott became unconscious and Taylor only semi-conscious. We had to keep rubbing Taylor to revive him, and we tried carrying the men but were unaware of our direction we felt the situation had become hopeless. Taylor did not seem to be in pain.”

The Inquest

The Coroner’s Inquiry took place on the night in the Helyg hut, the rendezvous and headquarters of hundreds of members of the Alpine club. It is situated near the top of the Nant Francon pass and is hidden in a gorge, which runs below the mountain road. The living room was crowded. The depositions were taken by the light of a small oil lamp.

The Coroner found that death was due to exposure and said it grieved him to think that two young men were cut off in the flower of their lives.

Sympathy was expressed with the relatives of the dead men, and Major Douglas Porter who represented Mr James Stott, congratulated the volunteers who made the climb in search of the bodies.

Mountain climber saved after cigarette lighter flame is spotted eight miles away

Mount Snowdon:

A climber who was left clinging to a ledge after a fall on Mount Snowdon was saved when the flame from his cigarette lighter was spotted by a rescue crew eight miles away.

The 25-year-old man, from Bangor in North Wales, had plunged 370ft in the snow but escaped with only cuts and bruises before the emergency services were alerted. He was winched off the ledge by a helicopter hovering only 20ft from the cliff face and flown to Bangor Hospital after he was spotted with night vision equipment. A member of the helicopter rescue crew said: "He had flicked the lighter so that he might be spotted, and the flame was seen through our night vision goggles. At the time we were near Bangor. The alarm had been raised on Saturday night when two men in a party of four were reported to have plunged from the notorious Clogwyn Coch pathway and disappeared. One of them plunged 1,000ft - but remarkably survived.

When members of Llanberis mountain rescue team got to the scene they discovered he was only 30 yards from a dead walker, the victim of an entirely separate and unknown accident. Police said the man who died was 27, from Shrewsbury and had been on a lone weekend walking expedition. He and the dead walker were lying close to where two brothers from the West Country had died a week earlier after falling from Clogwyn Coch.

Sincere Thanks

Please can you pass on my sincere thanks to all members of the team who were involved with my evacuation from Carnedd Dafydd on 10th January 2009.

Just to let you know that my dislocated and shattered elbow has now been operated on and screwed back together... yes, there was a good reason why it hurt! After being taken to Bangor they dealt with the dislocation before transferring me back home to Crewe where they had the "spare parts" and surgeon to do the op.

We always knew that you guys did a great job, I'm just sorry I had to find out first hand. Many, many thanks from me personally and I'm sure the other members of my party as well.

Kind Regards

Suzy Firkin

PS. I'm avoiding walks on a blustery day for the foreseeable future!!

A tale from the States

Wander off the trail in Chugach State Park. Pull out your cell phone. Dial 911 to report you're lost.

Then, just sit back and wait. A whirlybird will show up shortly to give you a lift.

Nothing against rescuing anyone, but this scenario is starting to develop way too often in this the age of ubiquitous cell phones and rare woodcraft. Most of you are probably unaware, because most

of these rescues go unreported.

There is a legitimate reason for that. Most of them are as insignificant as they are costly.

Somebody gets lost close to a trail. They call for help. Park rangers, Anchorage Police, Anchorage fire-fighters, Alaska State Troopers and volunteers from the Alaska Mountain Rescue Group scramble.

The lost individual is found. They are fine. Everyone goes home. "It's not very newsworthy" as one park ranger observed of a rescue that took place last week. No, no it's not. It's just an unseen drain on money and human resources.

Granted, hillside rescues might be a welcome relief for fire fighters, who spend significant parts of their lives hanging around firehouses waiting for something, anything, to happen. But Anchorage Police, State Troopers and Chugach State Park rangers already have more things to do than they have time.

They don't really need to be tied up rescuing people who shouldn't need to be rescued. Or maybe these people do need to be rescued. You decide.

Here's the complete trooper press release explaining a representative rescue that happened last week on the Anchorage Hillside:

"Early in the evening on Monday, Jan. 26, Marie Sussek was walking her dog near Flattop Mountain located on the edge of Anchorage. She soon realized she had lost the path in the darkness, was getting cold and needed help. She used her cell phone to call for assistance and a ground search involving Anchorage Police Department, Anchorage Fire Department EMS and Alaska State Parks was initiated.

At about 5:40 p.m., APD contacted the Department of Public Safety and requested assistance from Alaska State Trooper Helo-1 to help locate the lost hiker. With the temperature well below freezing, helicopter pilot Alaska Wildlife Trooper John Chiri and volunteer spotter Scott Horacek launched in Helo-1 and headed for Chugach State Park.

Conditions were right for a night time aerial search; the sky was clear and the starlight increased the effectiveness of the night vision goggles. We could see people walking all over the place. We were going from light to light trying to figure out which person was lost,' Chiri said.

After about 15 minutes of sweeping the mountain, one light finally stood out. Horacek and Chiri saw a light being waved around by a person below. It was obvious to them that it was a signal and the person intended for them to land. The man that was waving the light happened upon the cold woman and gave her his coat while he signalled for help.

Chiri and Horacek transported Sussek and her dog to the Flattop recreational area parking lot where she was checked out and cleared by medical personnel on scene. After the rescue Trooper Chiri commented: 'This is the kind of search and rescue I like -- very quick recovery.'

The Department of Public Safety is very appreciative to the agencies that helped in this search and to the Good Samaritan that took the time to help a person in need. Everyone should be happy Sussek was found safely and guided back to civilization. I know I am.

I've been lost. It's unsettling. Some might say frightening. And I certainly don't want to embarrass

some poor woman who got scared and called for help, but someone needs to ask: Whatever happened to the idea of personal responsibility?

Rangers said Sussek got lost after she left one of the trails leading out of the Upper Huffman parking lot to go snow shoeing through the woods. Nothing wrong with that, but if you're uncomfortable finding your way around in the woods, shouldn't you stay on the trail? And if you are going to go roaming around in the woods and risk getting lost, shouldn't you take at least minimal survival gear say, maybe, an extra layer or two of clothing, a headlamp, a water bottle, a couple energy bars and some matches?

There are a lot of dead spruce trees up around the Huffman trailhead. If you got lost, it would be very easy to make a fire, sit down by it, warm up and decide what to do next.

Of course, it's quite probable you wouldn't have to decide anything, because the fire would attract somebody. Either some other hiker would come to investigate the smoke, or someone would call the Anchorage Fire Department and a fire-fighter would show up on a snow machine.

Then you could get a snow machine ride back to your car. I don't begrudge anyone getting a snow machine ride. Snow machines are cheap to operate; helicopters are expensive. And the expense should be an issue of concern to everyone given troopers' limited budget for search-and-rescue operations.

Don't we all bear some responsibility to see that money is saved for truly necessary operations? OK, maybe this one was truly necessary. I'll leave that to each of you to decide. Sussek obviously thought it necessary. I wanted to talk to her about that, but she has no phone number available. She is reportedly new to the state and got lost wandering in circles looking to find her tracks to follow them back to where she began.

This is not the way you escape the Anchorage Hillside. Look downhill, and you will see a lot of city lights. Walk toward the lights and within minutes you will stumble into homes. Go to one; knock on the door; explain your problem; and ask if you can warm up.

Or, if that's too embarrassing, note the name of the first street you stumble onto and call a friend to come get you there.

Or, maybe, just start yelling for help as soon as you decide you are lost. On any given evening, as the troopers noted, there are people skiing, snow shoeing, hiking, mountain biking and dog walking or just plain hanging out all over the upper Hillside. Sussek, it's worth noting, did yell, according to a park ranger. That's how the so-called good Samaritan found her.

The man had earlier been stopped by fire-fighters on snow machines who asked if he'd seen a lost snowshoer. He hadn't. But having been alerted to be on the lookout, he kept his ears open as the snow machines roared off.

He heard yelling and went to assist. Why the man and Sussek didn't just walk back to the trailhead is unclear, although a ranger said the efficiency of the helicopter played a part. A helicopter is the easy way to grab someone and deliver them to the Glen Alps trail head.

That's where the trooper waited who had to drive in from Girdwood to coordinate the search and rescue. He was at Glen Alps because he was directed to the "upper" parking lot in the park.

Glen Alps is above Upper Huffman on the Hillside. The two are connected by trail. There is a map

available from the park.

If you snowshoe, ski or otherwise recreate in this area, it might be a good idea to get a copy and study it so you don't get lost and become the subject of a trooper press release sure to make a lot of reasonable people ponder the question of whether the time has come to start charging for rescues in Alaska.

Personally, I've never been a fan of that idea. I've always thought search and rescue should be one of those public services -- like policing or fire protection -- provided in the interest of public safety. But I'm starting to wonder.

The old year ended with an Alaska State Trooper and a former trooper calling for a helicopter because they were running low on gas for their snow machines along the Susitna River. The New Year is beginning with a woman calling for a helicopter because she's lost between the many Hillside trails with the city lights of Anchorage clearly visible just a short hike below. What next? Maybe someone gets lost and calls for a rescue in Kincaid or Russian Jack parks?