



Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue CIO

Newsletter November 2018



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Since the start of June we have had 30 callouts, taking us up to exactly 100 at the time of writing. This number is in line with what we are starting to consider normal for the Team. The types of incident have varied from a 79 year old lady who slipped on the Great Orme, to the usual types of job where people get in to difficulty on the steep ground of Tryfan. We are now working closely with MonSAR, a new lowland search team based on Anglesey, as they work to become an independent team. For the time being they are working with us whilst they gain operational experience. Hopefully we will soon be able to hand over the search jobs on Anglesey to MonSAR. We had our first joint search on the island recently (incident 100), and that had a successful outcome. It was excellent for us to work with MonSAR on this, both from a callout co-ordination and on the ground searching perspective.

In my last introduction I mentioned that we planned to undergo a Mountain Rescue England and Wales peer review. We ended up postponing this because of our not completely understanding what the process was about, and a number of key members being unavailable. We hope to spend more time on this process, and if possible complete the review next year.

Succession planning is always an issue for the Team. Constitutionally the Chairman is only allowed to stand for a maximum of 5 years, therefore I will be stepping down at our AGM in March. We are currently looking within the Team for a volunteer to take on this role. The main issue is that members have so many other commitments, in addition to training and callouts. 333 provides significant assistance with a number of administrative roles such as our Treasurer, Secretary and Merchandise Officer. Members also help with base support at the weekends, and fundraising events. As always I am grateful for your support.

Andy Harbach

333 NEWS AND EVENTS

We have had 43 new members in the last 12 months. The new leaflets have been distributed around Bewys Y Coed so hopefully this may lead to some more members in the future.

27th October AGM Caffi Siabod 18:00 for 18:30 (Last date for RSVP is 20th October)

3rd November Night Walk with Dave Worrall

Early Dec. Mulled Wine and Mince Pies. Time and date to be confirmed.

Jan. 6th Turkey and Cobweb walk. Near Blaenau Ffestiniog. Led by Dave Salter

Contact the secretary if you wish to attend any of these events

Chris Wycherley 333 Secretary secretary@333.org.uk

Calendars and Cards

The results of this year's photo competition, to find photos for a 2019 calendar and this year's Christmas cards, were announced on the Team's Facebook page on 4th July.

There were 236 stunning entries of an extremely high standard. The difficult job of choosing twelve for the calendar, five for general notelets (blank for your own message) and five for Christmas cards went to Dave & Carol Salter, Robin Trangmar and Matt Nobles. A very big thank you to them.



Congratulations to: Glenn Kirkham; Tom Laws; Lisa Wells; Ronnie George; Paul Ditcham; Stephen Bell; Susan Mascall; Jan Oakes; Allan Evans; Jan Roberts; Lee Sutton; Gareth Owen; Karl Lester; Andy Street; Nen Jones; Michael Ellis; Jim Jones; Paul Williams; Jan Knurek; and Chris Ellis.

The theme of the calendar is the scenic beauty of Snowdonia throughout the seasons, however as a bonus it includes a couple of dramatic action shots of the rescue team, taken by Karl Lester.

The calendar has been on sale in our online shop for some time now, priced at £7 plus postage and packing. The cards are now ready, and will be on sale very soon. Calendars, Christmas cards and notecards are now available online or at Cunninghams in Betws y Coed. Christmas cards and note cards will cost £4 plus postage and packing for a pack of five different designs. You are advised to get your order in quickly as the cards all sold out last year. Keep an eye on the website for details.

The calendar and Christmas cards are bilingual Welsh and English.

Alan Green

Fudge fundraising foolishness ...

Premium confectioners, Fudge Kitchen, select a charity every year to support. This year, they have chosen OVMRO. The decision came from personal experience of their life saving work by the manager of Fudge Kitchen's Bath shop, Ian McCluskey.

Back in October 2001, his brother Andy was walking in the Idwal Cirque area in Snowdonia when he tripped. Over a 200ft drop. His face torn apart and his breathing stopped, a passing hero gave him life-saving mouth to nose resuscitation and OVMRO and the Sea King helicopter was scrambled. In a hugely dangerous and dramatic manoeuvre, with rota blades whizzing inches from the rocks, he was winched up and taken to Ysbyty Gwynedd, for a long recovery and reconstructive surgery.

"Naturally I owe an awful lot to OVMRO," reflects Andy. "Without them, I expect I would have died on that ledge; and they rely completely on charitable donations to get the equipment, radios and access to helicopters (which I think is crazy). Without the chopper and OVMRO, the outcome would have been markedly different ... the risks they take to protect others, as volunteers, is astounding and something that I think needs more recognition."

Which is where Fudge Kitchen's fundraising foolery stepped in. In June, their seven shops dedicated National Fudge Day to raising funds for OVMRO, creating and selling a limited edition Bara Brith flavour fudge in honour of these Welsh heroes. And in August, two teams raced from Oxford to Windsor – one pair by foot (Ian and Toby, the Bath and Oxford managers) and one by kayak (Windsor manager, Matt and Tia) - gathering sponsorship and blisters over two days and stoking debate over which team would win the Fudge Wacky races!

In spite of a shaky start, involving "a hasty scramble to discover the location of what (I've been told) is quite a large and important river" (says Ian McCluskey of their hunt for the River Thames), four plucky Fudgesmiths finally set off, with the walkers powering ahead at a pace of such over enthusiasm - 60,000 steps in 13 hours - that it would leave them crippled for the second day.

Meanwhile, the paddlers found themselves in constant troubled waters, firstly skulling in ever decreasing circles with a broken fin, followed by a case of near-hypothermia that reduced the team to one very game Matt, who would eventually end up rowing whilst pumping water from a punctured vessel, resourcefully, if hopefully stuck together by a bike repair kit; before finally having to abandon ship at Henley and catch a train for the final leg to Windsor.

Team Walk's Ian McCluskey, however, heroically completed the epic 70 mile walk in two days, across 150,000 steps. "In conclusion," he says, "while not everyone finished the race, we all suffered equally and gave it our absolute best!" Congratulations to all four of them on an incredible feat / feet.

And the important bit? They have raised £1,305.00 for OVMRO so far, with their charity page still open for business at: <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-display/showROFundraiserPage?userUrl=fudgeraces&pageUrl=1>

(www.fudgekitchen.co.uk) 

What's in a Name?

In March 1971 I had just turned 22 years old, and was halfway through my graduate training year at the Main Works of electrical manufacturer GEC in Stafford. Also undertaking his training programme was a fellow student from my university engineering course, a young man by the name of John Francis.

One Friday afternoon that month, John went off with his then girlfriend Jenny Irvine to stay with friends for a weekend in Wales. I didn't know then, and don't know now, exactly where they went. I don't think it was Snowdonia.

John had a lovely weekend, and felt most disinclined to go back to the daily grind of the factory on Monday morning. He decided to extend his stay in Wales a little longer, and 'Throw a Sickie'.

That same weekend a young man called John Francis fell off Spiral Stairs on Dinas Cromlech whilst climbing with his girlfriend, and sadly suffered fatal injuries. The incident is described in Judy Whiteside's book 'Risking Life and Limb', Chapter Three, page 101, 'Slips and trips'. The accident made it on to the national news.

When my mate John failed to turn up for work on Monday morning, 'The Shit Hit The Fan' big time at GEC. John's colleagues went frantic with worry. I was contacted and asked to find out more. I began efforts to contact John by phone. This wasn't an easy business in those days. STD (Subscriber Trunk Dialling) was a relatively recent innovation, and mobile phones were the stuff of science fiction. Eventually I managed to speak to Jenny and asked whether John was all right. She replied, sounding slightly puzzled, "He's perfectly well, thanks. Why are you asking?"

As I recall, the roasting that John might have expected from the management for sneaking an unauthorised day off work was somewhat tempered by their relief that he wasn't the casualty.

Alan Green, August 2018

Navigation Day. Dave Worrall 22nd July 2018

Four members joined Dave for a short, but very informative theory session in the morning then out on the hill to put our skills to the test. The following comments were received from members of the group.

Dave gave us many hints on how to take the chore out of navigation. Dave seemed to simplify the whole process, pointing out the relevant points and not dwelling on the often complicated areas that confuse many of us. His method for teaching grid references is hard to forget. Even after hillwalking and navigating (in a fashion) for about 30 years I still learned a lot of new and interesting ways to do things. Thanks again to Dave for taking the time to do this.

Thank you so much for a great day today! Lovely to meet everyone, I came away armed with lots of really handy tips 😊



The newsletter relies on contributions from the membership so please think about writing an article or providing a picture.

Russ Hore - russ.hore@ogwen-rescue.org.uk - Editor

Please can you email heather.beale@ogwen-rescue.org.uk if you would prefer an electronic version of the newsletter in the next copy