



# Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue CIO

## Newsletter October 2019



FROM THE CHAIRMAN : **Andy Harbach**

First I would like to thank you for your continuing support of OVMRO.

Summer is the time of year when a lot of people go on holiday. A large number now go away in the U.K. and this means a busy time for rescue teams such as OVMRO. During the two months of July and August there were 31 callouts. Of course Team Members also go on holiday during this period, which means there is more work for those who are available. During times when we have limited members available we need to request the help of other teams. Although this is rare, we are extremely grateful for the support of RAF Valley MRT who are always willing to assist when possible.

Of course the Oggie 8 Challenge took place on 10<sup>th</sup> August. The weather was extremely poor, to the extent that the runners' event was cancelled, and only the first half of the course was completed by the walkers. Despite this we received positive feedback from the participants, a number of whom would like to return next year. Thanks go to Jen Edwards who put in a lot of time to organising the event, and made the difficult decisions on the basis of the weather. Also thanks to everyone who supported the event at base, on the hill, by providing sponsorship, and taking part. The event has raised £5200 to date.

Finally, as we head in to Autumn the Team starts to think about members and supporters who will take on administrative responsibility from March 2020. If you have any specific skills that you feel could be of benefit to the Team, please email [chairman@ogwen-rescue.org.uk](mailto:chairman@ogwen-rescue.org.uk). Next year it is likely that we will be looking for at least one Trustee, and it is always helpful to have a pool of potential helpers for any roles that come up. People with financial and legal knowledge are always extremely useful to have on board. There are lots of jobs that do not involve going on the hill!

### Oggi 8 Experience - Chris Lloyd

This year, Jen Edwards volunteered to organise the event. She looked at some of the issues which have arisen since the "friendly fun day" for both experienced and less experienced hill walkers became a competition for the mountain runners. One of the issues was the variable completion times of the two schools. The runners needed the marshals to be in place at an earlier time. This resulted in some marshals being in situ for 8 hours or more whilst they awaited the slower of the hill walker groups. It also meant that the end of event celebration party had to start earlier and it too became stretched. Another issue was that the aim of the event was to raise funds for OVMRO rather than provide a very well monitored race complete with en route refreshments, goodie bags, prizes and a party with free food and drinks at the end. However, despite the best endeavours of the hill walking parties to get sponsorship, runners were not so keen. Jen therefore organised a delayed start for the runners so that all participants would arrive back at Oggi Base over a shorter period of time and she raised the entry fee to £45 to cover all costs and to raise some money for OVMRO.

As always, there was a strong team of support for the event fielded by Team Members and 333 Supporters. On the penultimate day (Friday), Oggi Base was buzzing with activities whilst poor Jen was fighting her way through bad weather and Friday traffic on a long haul from Exeter. She managed to arrive early evening to start Registration. Fortunately, she had everything logged on her laptop/tablet thingy.

**Saturday, 05.00: Oggi Base.** A few of the support team had spent the night at Oggi Base and arose to note that the weather looked "poor" as per the forecast. Robin Trangmar (333) drove four team members up to Ffynnon Llugwy, two bound for the summit of Carnedd Llewelyn and two for that remote, exposed, barren out-lier, Yr Elen (*where only the Bad Boys are exiled*).

**07.20: Geraint Jones and I** arrived on the barren summit of Yr Elen. The visibility was about 30 metres, the strong South Westerly battered the summit from all points of the compass. There is no summit shelter stone. There is no shelter. There is no level turf to take a tent and tent pegs. There is no mobile phone reception. There is no direct radio communication with Oggi Base. We were in the hands of our colleagues on Carnedd Llewelyn and Carnedd Dafydd. If they chose not to hear us, we were doomed.

Then out of the gloom came a voice: "Cheer up, things could get worse." So we cheered up....and things did get worse. After the first four or so hill walking parties fought their way to find us on this remote and exposed summit, a decision was made back at Oggi Base that our check point was to be omitted due to the weather conditions. We did note a long period of time without visitors. However, it did give Geraint time to fry up some welcome sausages and bacon. Things nearly took a step for the worse, when Geraint and his camping chair were blown over. Fortunately, I was able to jump to the rescue.....of the frying pan so that nothing was lost. A few minutes later, the chef returned to the summit, to complete the cooking. Having awaited for some period of time without any visits, we tried to make contact with our colleagues on Llewelyn and Dafydd. After much blowing rainwater from the radio microphone and speaker, we received a message to return to Base.

After the washing up and putting away, we headed into the cloud, driving rain and battering wind to join our colleagues on Llewelyn. Arriving at the summit, we quickly found the summit shelter.....empty! Feeling unwanted and lonely, we continued the long walk of shame down to Oggi Base.

Back at Base there was a hive of activity. The Oggi 8 had been reduced to the Oggi 4 and eventually the Oggi 3. This meant that entrants were arriving at Bryn Poeth at lunch time not tea time. Fortunately, Heartland Coffee Roasters of Llandudno were already in situ from the previous evening. Also, home made cakes from Karl Lester's wife, Tracey and Mike Hobby's wife were available, plus ten loaves of Bara Brith, kindly made and donated by friend, Sue Sopala of Llandudno. Before the last of the rain soaked, wind battered entrants arrived at Base, the Wild Horse Brewery road show had arrived complete with OVMRO badged cans of beer. The Little Hut burger truck arrived too with loads of "yummy" burgers which were cooked to perfection.

After everyone had been very well fed and watered, and had wandered off home for a hot shower and dry clothes, a rescue party was deployed onto the Glyders to search for a father and 10 year old son who were lost in cloud and very strong winds. Once located and carefully escorted down Gribin Ridge, they were brought to Oggi Base. The young boy could not believe his eyes seeing remnants of numerous delicious cakes.



Finally, I took to a bunkbed at Oggi Base knowing that once more the Oggi 8 Mountain Adventure had been a success once more.  
Well done Jen.

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333 News & Events : **Christine Wycherley** : 333 Secretary : secretary@333.org.uk

Sat 19 Oct 2019	18:30	333 AGM	Siabod Cafe	
Sat 9 Nov 2019	<b>TBC</b>	Night Walk	<b>TBC</b>	Dave Worrall

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#### Mountain Rescue Conference 2019 - Headingley University Leeds - Chris Lloyd

Three members of the Ogwen team drove to Leeds on Friday 5<sup>th</sup>. September, arriving at the Halls of Residence shortly after 21:00. Registration was slick and we were soon in the bar for some networking and meeting familiar faces.

After the opening address by the Chairman, Mike France, on Saturday morning, we received the opening lecture on Legal Awareness in Documentation. This presentation was fascinating. The speaker, David Burrows-Sutcliffe, spoke for over an hour without notes or teaching aids. His frequent humorous quips kept our attention too.

Following this presentation, we split into four tracks: Training, Working with other agencies, Medical and Governance. I chose the latter and I enjoyed a further hour of David Burrows-Sutcliffe. He rammed home the importance of good and accurate documentation. Even the smallest error, such as an incorrect date, will put the validity of all the works in doubt.

Meanwhile, my team mates went to talks on Well being and Suicide prevention; and Drones, the future challenges and their usefulness.

Following lunch on the lawn, I attended "Managing Risk in Mountain Rescue". Topics included: Managing Safety, Duty of Care, Reducing and eliminating Risk, the need for written Risk Assessments. Dynamic/verbal Risk Assessments are not good enough.

This talk was followed by the Importance of Branding. We need good branding so that people who support charities will support our charity.

The final 2-part talk of the afternoon was about Paraglider rescue. The speaker opened with a story of a good friend who crashed, ending up on a barn roof with two broken legs. His rescuers quickly got to him and cut him out of his harness. As a result he fell another 40 feet suffering severe and permanent spinal injury. The second part was about Suspension Trauma and the importance of getting the casualty out of the vertical position and getting the legs out horizontally.

The evening ended with an excellent dinner where all team members were seated away from their team mates on the same table. I thoroughly enjoyed the company of Brecon, North Tyne and Cleveland MRT members.

The formal part of the evening ended with a fascinating talk of an expedition to climb the West Face of Everest. Success was denied due to heavy fresh snowfall and the threat of the oncoming Monsoon season.

Sunday's presentations started with Leol Collins talking to whole conference about Training for Competency. He talked about training techniques, looking for a few Absolutes and having variety in training not just repetition.

Whilst there was one workshop on drones, one on Search, one on Diabetes, I chose a talk about the Mountain Heritage Trust and Mountain Rescue Archives. Whilst formal Mountain Rescue might be relatively new, we are losing valuable information with the deaths of members from the formative years. An accurate history can be quickly lost unless they gather and store interviews, documentation, equipment. The Mountain Heritage Trust now has an exhibition centre at Threkeld on the slopes of Blencathra and is willing to help Mountain Rescue teams with their archiving

The final talk of the morning was given by Irish Mountain Rescue Team Leader, Pat Holland. He talked about the importance of the Party Leader training scheme, the differing styles of leadership, the line of command and the clarity of command.

Just before Sunday lunch, Conference was given a fascinating talk about the world famous cave rescue in Thailand of the 12 boys and their teacher from the flooded cave system. Jason Mallison gave a detailed and humbled talk on the technicalities of the rescue and difficulties of dealing with multi-agency lack of leadership.

A very intense and very interesting two days.

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#### Calendars and Cards - Alan Green

This is a good year for calendars. Local photographer Gareth Owen has published and sold his own 2020 calendar and donated all the proceeds to OVMRO. He has raised a total of £996. Gareth's photographs illustrating the calendar are amazing. If you have bought one of our own 2019 calendars, you will see one of Gareth's photos illustrating December.

Don't forget that the 2020 OVMRO calendar is on sale in the shop on our web site, priced at £6 plus £1.50 postage and packing. It features thirteen beautiful photos taken by the winners of our open competition earlier this year. The calendar was formally launched at a small gathering held at Bryn Poeth on the evening of 20th July. Around 20 people, including several of the photo competition winners, attended a talk by John Rowell of the Soul of Snowdonia Gallery. John talked about his approach to landscape photography and explained how the mountain photographer is always "chasing the light". He illustrated his lecture with some stunning images from his trip to Patagonia. Following an interval for refreshments, John showed the thirteen winning images from the calendar competition and explained why they had been chosen. Artistic and technical merit, suitability for the season, and variety all had to be taken into account. The judging of the competition was demonstrated to have been entirely fair and unbiased, in that Dave Foster of the NEWSAR Team has succeeded in getting his photograph published in the Oggies' calendar.

This year's Christmas cards have been collected from the printer and will be on sale on our web site shortly. We are offering two different packs, each containing five different designs. The winners of the open art competition have delivered a set of jolly, colourful Christmas-themed pictures with relevance to mountain rescue. Thank you Elliw Williams, Ceris Williams, Susan Hilton, Sarah Mills and Helen Mills. For those of you who prefer snowy mountain landscapes on your Christmas cards, we offer a set of five cards including the 2020 calendar photos by Marcus Williamson and David Lloyd, plus one by Alun Williams and two by Andy Harbach.

All the cards and the OVMRO calendar are bilingual Welsh/English.

The newsletter relies on contributions from the membership so please think about writing an article or providing a picture.  
**Please email [heather.beale@ogwen-rescue.org.uk](mailto:heather.beale@ogwen-rescue.org.uk) if you would prefer an electronic version of the newsletter in the next copy**

Russ Hore - [russ.hore@ogwen-rescue.org.uk](mailto:russ.hore@ogwen-rescue.org.uk) - Editor