



THE DUDDON AND FURNESS MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM

Affiliated to The Lake District Search & Mountain Rescue Association and Mountain Rescue, England and Wales

Registered Charity 1173246

President: Peter Jackson MBE

Vice President: Doug Scott CBE

Supporters' Newsletter – 2018



Busiest Year Ever. 2017 has been a very busy year for Lake District teams. DFMRT had a 50% increase on our previous high with 64 call-outs, continuing a high level of cooperation with other teams (Wasdale 24 times, Kendal 6, Coniston 4, Keswick 2 and Langdale/Ambleside 1). We can see no particular reason for the increase and the variety of call-outs has been notable, along with the regular calls to the Upper Esk or Scafell Pike. On three occasions in one week we searched for walkers who had lost their way coming off Scafell and found them all in the same area. (Lost walkers will tend to walk downhill with the wind behind them, channelled by natural features, giving a clue to their possible location.) Other calls included: a young mountain biker; a parachutist; a canoeist with epilepsy; assistance to the Ambulance Service; drivers caught on high icy roads; searches for dementia and despondency sufferers; and flood and coastal search incidents.

Training. A third call in recent years to rescue people stranded on the Barrow-in-Furness Slag Bank led to our instigating an exercise with other emergency services: Fire, Police (with a drone), Ambulance and Coast Guard (illustrated). Our Leadership Team has also been involved in Major Incident Training, involving multi-level controls (Bronze to Gold) as would occur on a major flood or multi-casualty incident; and an active involvement at regional and national level continues. We accept some specialisation and members attended courses for hill-party leaders, rope rescue, swiftwater rescue, driving,

equipment and avalanche awareness as well as the major commitment to maintain a high level of medical training, in this case to meet a national revamp of the medical exam. A recent real-time search and rescue exercise is illustrated opposite.



Strength. This year we celebrated Pete Jackson and Dave Hughes reaching the remarkable hurdle of 50 years of continuous mountain rescue membership – from the age of 19 to 69. An initiative to take new members twice a year has enabled us to keep numbers on target with 35 active members, 4 probationers and 2 level-3 non-operational members. We now have 5 doctors in the Team – probably an unrivalled capability. Three of them will leave on completion of their hospital training but be replaced by others we hope. 2017 finished with the usual Christmas social at the Prince of Wales at Foxfield (illustrated).



Representatives from Black Combe Runners joined us and presented a cheque for £569, being 50% of the income from their recent Mountain Festival. As we go to print the award of MBE to Pete Buxton in recognition of his services to Mountain Rescue and the community in Cumbria has just been announced. We all add our congratulations. Pete has spent 26 years in Mountain Rescue including a close involvement in our fundraising.

Looking Forward. At the next AGM Mike Margeson will stand down as Team Leader after 33 years, as well as Tracey Binks as a deputy. Both will remain members and will facilitate a healthy throughput into management and leadership roles. 2018 will also see the introduction of digital radios enhancing our technical facilities, which are linked to the Police and Ambulance services, allowing for live details of attendance, deployments and reports.



Change to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). A major change in 2017 was the re-designation of the Team as a CIO. This makes us a charitable company, but still answerable to the Charity Commission rather than Companies House, with greater protection for trustees. The only outward change is a new charity number. The effect of this on many readers is that we will need to change all our standing orders and online donation arrangements to reflect the new status. We hope that supporters will renew their standing order and perhaps review their existing donation.

New Base. One of the reasons for the change to a CIO is the ongoing plan to build our own base and the resultant increase in the financial value of the charity. Our present two garages, which are unheated apart from a small control room, mean that we do not have the facilities to host a major incident, and training in the winter can be extremely cold comfort. After several years of telling you about this we regret that progress remains slow, due to access issues. The delay has enabled us to raise significant funds for the project and we remain confident of major grant providers matching this. However, further funds in this area will enable us to complete the project.

Funding. Our annual funding needs are therefore for running costs and vehicles (eg a new command vehicle/people carrier in 2017) at a level of £40,000 and to continue to supplement the new build. We run fundraising events roughly monthly and a recent collection at Morrisons raised £1335 (illustrated). Our most successful event financially remains the Fred Whitton Cycle Challenge where we man Kirkstone, Hardknott and



Wrynose Passes. Last year riders were encouraged to raise funds through direct sponsorship and thanks go to the riders who chose us and in particular Fraser Johnson, Karl Shaw and Martin McShane (illustrated) who raised £3000. Stephe Cove, our chair of Trustees, and I give regular talks on both Mountain Rescue and a variety of other subjects and in 2017 raised £6000. If you need a good speaker, relatively locally, do contact us.



Data Protection. Finally, you may be aware of the changes to the data protection regulatory regime. For our policy see our website or contact us direct for clarification. In summary your details will be retained securely, never be passed on and you will only be contacted on an individual basis. If we do not hear from you for a couple of years we shall cease to trouble you again (life supporters excluded).

Top Tip – Using a Survival Bag.

Cut 2 inches off a closed end corner. Pull the bag over your head, whilst standing up, then sit on a rock or your rucksack with the open end of the bag tucked under your feet and the small hole in front of your face. This will provide protection against the weather until help arrives. At a push two people can get into one bag with greater warmth but you may need to be good friends!

Thanks. As usual many thanks to all of you for your financial and active support – as a result of which we remain in a strong position, well equipped, well trained and with an ethos that many organisations can only aspire to. We attract people with a mountain background but equally importantly with a high level of leadership, discipline, fitness, enthusiasm and selflessness. We are always on the lookout for other people with these qualities.

