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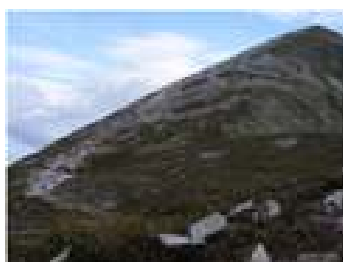
Calder Valley Search & Rescue Team

SUMMER 2008

31ST JULY 2008

CVSRT Help Irish MR Colleagues

By Al Day



Following an open invitation to CVSRT by Irish Mountain Rescuers attending this year's Fell Party Leaders course at Hebden Hey, Ben Carter and I travelled over to Co. Mayo to assist with the massive mountain rescue operation which takes place annually as

a result of the Reek Sunday pilgrimage.

On the last weekend in July each year thousands of pilgrims, many of whom are barefoot, ascend the rocky slopes of Croagh Patrick (764m) to attend mass on the summit. This tradition has its



roots in 441 AD when St Patrick fasted in exile on the summit of Croagh Patrick for 40 days.

The Calder Valley contingent travelled over to Mayo with friends from Dublin Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team arriving in Westport on Friday afternoon. On the Saturday the Irish Mountain Rescue Association had organised a training day focusing on casualty care, leadership skills and dealing with the media. We were delighted to be asked to help out and this first event was a great success.



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Top Photographic Honour

Team member Jefferson Hammond has been awarded the Licentiate'ship



Distinction by the Royal Photographic Society.

Jefferson was required to present a portfolio of work to the Society. This comprised of a sequence of monochrome images depicting the South Pennines landscape.

Jefferson said "I am pleased with the recognition for my work that the award represents and working on the portfolio has allowed me the opportunity to further develop my

photographic skills. I am particularly indebted in other members of RPS who have helped me achieve this award through their advice and support."

The Royal Photographic Society was founded in 1853 "to promote the Art and Science of Photography".

Jefferson has been a member of CVSRT for nn years, and is also a regular "body" at SARDA weekends.

CVSRT Help Irish MR Colleagues

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In the evening we went to one of the pubs in Westport for a barbeque and a few beers. Whilst we were eating, Dublin Wicklow DTL Kenny Roberts mentioned that IMRA had just bought a new radio repeater unit but unfortunately they would not be able to use it for the Reek as there was not enough time to program the handheld radios with the new frequencies. Talk about waving a red rag at a donkey! Ben whipped out his pencil and began making furious frequency calculations on a beer mat. Within a minute he announced he could make it work; " If we reconfigure the repeater unit to act as a rebroadcaster; ie an automatic link, we can make it work without reprogramming any hill sets." His confidence was enough for Kenny and we gulped down the remainder of our drinks and headed for the rescue base. Ben borrowed a laptop and made a start on the programming whilst I went to borrow a sheet of metal from the local farmer to mount the aerial on. When I returned triumphantly clutching a sheet of galvanised steel I was informed that it was no longer needed as they had managed to rig up an aerial on a pole, typical!

After about an hour, things were not looking good. Despite checking and rechecking every stage of the setup process, Ben could only get half of the unit to work. We returned to the digs deflated. When we got back, however, Ben was once again on fire! He had been speaking to one of his geeky mates on the phone and had the answer. " It's a software problem" he declared " all we need is internet access then we can download the latest version". Half an hour later I was stood on a wall, being devoured by midges, holding a laptop as high in the air as possible in order to maintain a connection to a wireless network whilst we downloaded the required file. After that it was plain sailing and Ben soon had the unit reprogrammed and properly working.

The next day the repeater unit was deployed by helicopter to a position on the

ridge to the east of Croagh Patrick. It proved to be invaluable late on Sunday afternoon when a fell party attended a casualty on the north side of the mountain with severe cardiac chest pain. For the first time ever the rescuers were able to talk direct to base and the patient was airlifted to hospital without delay.



We were on the hill at 7am on Sunday morning and many of the early birds had already reached the summit and were on their way down . Our first job was to attend the helicopter landing zone and transfer any casualties from the medical tent to the Army Air Core Augusta 139. Afterwards we made our way up the steepest section of the mountain with fell party kit and stretcher to provide rescue cover.



The experience of being immersed in the constant stream of pilgrims struggling their way up this unforgiving mountain is difficult to describe. The pilgrims path up to the top of Croagh Patrick is no walk in the park, especially the upper section "the cone" which consists of treacherously steep rocky scree. Despite this the pilgrims continue undeterred clinging to their staves and each other, with the barefoot leaving blood-stained footprints on the rock.

When we left the mountain at 2pm the rescue teams had evacuated 14 casualties, fortunately none of them too serious. The rescue cover continued well into the night and it was estimated that over 25,000 people climbed the Reek that day. From our perspective the weekend was fantastic, and the hospitality of our hosts was incredibly generous. We will return next year.



Mayo Mountain Rescue Team was founded in the late 1980s as part of the Western Mountain Rescue

Team. Since then the team has gone from strength to strength with a core group of long serving members and a waiting list of new applicants to join each year.

The team responds to callouts predominantly on Croagh Patrick with up to 80% of all annual callouts being focused on the pilgrimage mountain as well as their main annual focus of Reek Sunday where MMRT coordinate the activities of all MR Teams attending for the pilgrimage of up to 20,000 people climbing on this one day at the end of July.

Ted Stott 1931—2008

Ted Stott was the farmer and land owner at Green Withens, Rishworth. Ted has always been a supporter of CVSRT and the police, allowing access to his land and providing assistance for many years. Nev Sharp has written the following tribute:

Ted Stott will be just a name to some but to many members past and present he was a very well known hill farmer at Rishworth Moor with land surrounding Green Withens, up to Blackstone Edge.

I met Ted one summer's day forty years ago working his dogs on the fell close to Rishworth Moor. He was a typical Yorkshire Pennine hill farmer whom it probably takes at least twenty years to be called 'a friend' by such. We shared many a story together about working dogs and through my early membership with the Team he started asking questions about what we actually did. Eventually confidence was such that I asked him one day if we could use his land to carry out training exercises with the Team. The answer, a firm hand shake, and a bold Yorkshire statement, "So long as tha keeps e'm in order lad, that'll be fine".

As a Team we have honoured that invi-

tation to this day and a few days before his premature death, whilst visiting him at his farm at Blackwood, Ted spoke about the work you do and always joked, "It might be me tha's comin lookin for one day".

Together with team training on his land, the Police and Air Ambulance have also been privileged to engage in training exercises with their helicopters. Many such events of course involved the Team. On many of these occasions I invited Ted to join us at Green Withens for a brew and some will recall those visits including the day he met our late Chief Constable, Colin Cramphorn. Ted became fascinated with our work and the helicopters and not too long ago I arranged for the Police crew to land at his farm one summer's evening. It was a magical moment for Ted and his family, especially his grand children. Photographs were taken and a good time was had by all. Ted never forgot that visit and held everyone in high esteem. It was a 'Thank You' to Ted for his support over four decades.

If it's story you like, I can tell you that one night I visited Ted at his farm by prior arrangement. He knew my young Collie pup was showing a keen interest in sheep. As a potential Police Search Dog this was not allowed. Ted was

hopefully going to help me stop her showing interest in some fifty ewes he had in a nearby field. I nervously walked into the field with Ted, knowing full well the dog would give chase at the first opportunity. I slipped the lead and – GONE- fifty ewes gathered and nearly penned before our very eyes!

What would Ted's advice be I thought? He took his cap off, looked at me and said, "Best thing tha can do lad is put that dog in that kennel over there and be on tha way home. That dog's far better than any of mine".

A shrewd and honest Yorkshireman who had a simple answer to the problem.

His funeral cortege could not have been more fitting, taken to Rishworth Church on his tractor and trailer for a service attended by almost 300 mourners. He continued his journey in style on the tractor and trailer to Boan, Ted's other farm on the edge of Rishworth Moor where he had been born and where he was finally laid to rest.

Ted was a much respected member of our community, close friend of mine and to everyone the sad loss of a true Yorkshire gentleman.

Training

As you may know CVSRT has a monthly routine which involves two training evenings—the first two Tuesdays of each month. This quarter has seen no exception to this, with members of the team taking a turn at organising an exercise for their colleagues.

In recent months we have found ourselves working with our neighbours Holme Valley MRT on several callouts, so a joint exercise was organised in July. This was to practice stretcher handling techniques and to get to know each other. The weather started out great, but for the majority of the evening

it absolutely poured down! Nonetheless a worthwhile and enjoyable evening.



CVSRT & HVMRT practice stretcher handling techniques on a joint training exercise

In June we spent an evening refreshing our rope rescue techniques, and the following week put them into practice with a reenactment of a recent rescue.

The exercise was conducted in the valley of Hardcastle Crag. The main learning point of the evening being midge protection is essential!



Myself, Jefferson Hammond, Paul Coleman and several thousand midges!

Recent Callouts

This quarter started off busier than ever, with the unprecedented event of three callouts in one day! As the weeks have gone by, things have quietened off again—could this be the calm before the storm?

Here are the details of the callouts:

9th May, Woodhouse Scar Crag, Halifax.

1424hrs Team called to assist Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) to evacuate a male rock climber who had fallen 1 metre whilst bouldering. After treatment by YAS staff for a suspected lower leg fracture, he was carried by team members to a waiting ambulance.

11th May, Grimescar Woods, Birkby Huddersfield

0128hrs Team called by YAS to assist with the treatment and evacuation of a youth with breathing difficulties in woodland. Incident carried out jointly with Holme Valley Mountain Rescue Team.

11th May, Eaves Wood, Hebden Bridge

1452hrs Team called by YAS to evacuate a 60 year old male who had fallen about 40 feet from a path along the top of a steep drop. The casualty was

placed in a vacuum splint and hauled up the slope using rope rescue equipment. He was then transferred to the Air Ambulance. He was flown to Huddersfield Royal Infirmary where his injuries remarkably were minor.

11th May, Stoodley Pike, Todmorden

1500hrs Team called by West Yorkshire Police to an injured mountain biker. Air Ambulance was in attendance but was unable to evacuate the casualty due to the steep terrain. An RAF helicopter was called to winch the casualty off. As CVSRT were committed to the incident in Eaves Wood, Rossendale and Pendle MRT were called in to assist with the incident. The casualty was flown to hospital where his injuries were found to be minor

31st May, Heptonstall

1404hrs Team called to assist a YAS crew in evacuating a patient from a remote cottage with only 4x4 access. At the time of the call, team members were actively involved in the MR(E&W) National Fell Party Leaders Course at Hebden Hey. Response to this incident was made direct from the course utilising delegates representing MR Teams

from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Evacuation involved a short stretcher carry to the waiting ambulance.

09th June, Nr Great Rock, above Eastwood

1225hrs Team called to assist a YAS crew and Clinical Team Leader in evacuating a female patient from an inaccessible farmhouse. The patient was in a poorly condition and needed urgent hospitalisation. The ambulance was only able to reach the bottom of the access track over 0.5km away. The patient was evacuated by the team on a Bell Stretcher and transported down the rough track to the waiting ambulance in our vehicle.

13th June, Jagger Woods, Bradford Rd, Northowram, Halifax

2352 Hrs Call from YAS to assist with the evacuation of a 16yr old youth who had fallen from a tree swing in steep woodland sustaining head and suspected spinal injuries. He was evacuated to the ambulance using the vacuum mattress and rope restraint equipment.

And Finally (almost).....

This editions note from me is promoted from the bottom of the back page, to make way for the first installment in Fiona's round the world trip.

This has been an eventful and busy quarter for CVSRT.

In May we provided rescue cover for the Todmorden Boundary Walk, on a very wet Sunday. A couple of weeks later we provided 24 hour cover for the South Pennine Challenge. We finished off May by hosting the National Mountain Rescue Fell Party Leader's Course. This included a callout which was at-

tended by English, Welsh, Irish and Scottish personnel, travelling in vehicles from Calder Valley and Dublin & Wicklow teams!

June saw us providing rescue cover for the Overgate Hospice Mountain Bike Event, and celebrating 75 years of mountain rescue at Ogden Reservoir. Some dedicated team members finished off the same day by supporting the Hebden Bridge Cider Fest, as they were raising funds for the Team.

A welcome additional to our equipment are some 1 metre aluminium ground anchor stakes to replace the very heavy steel ones. For these we owe a

thank you to Chris Hart at **ThyssenKrupp Materials (UK) Ltd**

During this quarter the Team decided to invest in a third vehicle, in the form of a Land Rover from Penrith MRT. This is due to arrive in August, so more of that in the next edition.

If you have any comments on this newsletter, the Team, or any relevant matter, drop me an email at newsletter@cvsrt.org.uk

Neil Anderson
Newsletter Editor

The Prodigal Returns

At the beginning of 2007 Fiona Wright, formerly of Edale MRT, came to join the nine month probationary training programme of Calder Valley SRT. However, Fiona had other ideas for summer 2007.

In 2005 Fiona took part in the Fastnet campaign and became addicted to sailing. By 2007 she had sold her house, moved to Calderdale, quit her job, learnt to sail and was all set to go around the world as a crew member of the Hull & Humber clipper in the Clipper Round The World Yacht Race.

In July 2007 Fiona's dreams were nearly dashed on a training voyage in the North Sea. In rough sea the boat lurched unexpectedly and flung Fiona across the cabin and into a horizontal metal pole, ironically part of the hospital bunk. She sustained a tension pneumothorax and ended the trip in Rotterdam hospital.



Undeterred, Fiona managed to regain enough fitness to start the race in September, but didn't achieve full fitness until they reached Brazil!

The race is 35,000 miles, involves 10 boats, and is divided into seven legs:

1. Liverpool to Salvador Da Bahia
2. Salvador Da Bahia to Durban
3. Durban to Fremantle
4. Fremantle to Qingdao
5. Qingdao to Santa Cruz
6. Santa Cruz to Jamaica
7. Jamaica to Liverpool

Fiona tells the story of Leg 1:

In August 07 I moved to Gosport for a

training week before getting the boat ready and delivering it to Liverpool. All of that was a good test as to whether I'd be fit for the race start in mid-September. I wasn't 100%, but at that time it really meant a lot to me to do the whole thing, so I was absolutely determined to be there and pull my weight.



Fortunately for me (I think), I hadn't raced with my skipper before the start of Leg 1, he didn't realize quite how below par I was. I managed to avoid any further injury and get back to full strength by the time we reached Brazil.

I didn't enjoy it much at first - most of my friends on the H&H crew were doing later legs, I hardly knew any of the other round the worlders and I really didn't like being shouted and sworn at by my skipper. There was a fair bit of larking about as well but that just made me feel worse because I was sore and grumpy and not on the bow or up the mast much.

We won the short race from Liverpool to La Rochelle but were too tired, disorganized and unlucky with the wind on the race from La Rochelle to Salvadore. Sitting about in wind holes near the equator does wonders for your suntan but is agonizing if you're racing. We eventually managed to crawl across to the Brazilian coast and into Salvadore de Bahia - the first time I'd been outside Western Europe.



Salvadore was quite a mixture: lovely old buildings with no glass in the windows next to beautiful, gilded churches; cobbled, narrow streets in the old town; big wide roads in the rest of the city. I was fascinated by the kids on rollerblades in the supermarket, not so fascinated by trying to identify provisions with zero Portuguese language skills. My worst mistake was confusing tomato puree and tomato juice. In my defence the tins did have pictures of tomatoes on the label! It was quite sobering trying to day-bag our food with Brazilian street children begging on the other side of the railings

One of my favourite meals of the whole race was the oyster moqueca I had in the market in Salvadore.

I got a round of applause from the hotel reception staff who'd seen me coming and going in board shorts and vest most of the week when one night I put a dress on to go out for dinner. It's close, but I think my favourite cocktail of the race was the Brazilian caipirinhas.



More of Fiona's adventure in future newsletters.

But what of Fiona's CVSRT probationary training? Well, this was put on hold. Fiona returned to her probationary training in July 2008, and will be completing the training to the assessment at the end of September.