



TEESDALE AND WEARDALE SEARCH AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM

Newsletter January 2019

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE

We at Teesdale and Weardale Search and Mountain Rescue Team hope you all enjoyed a wonderfully festive Christmas and excellent New Year. We certainly did.

We'd like to begin the New Year by saying a massive thank you to Christina Baker for composing this newsletter for the last few years. Christina moved out of the area about a year ago and has continued to create the Newsletter for us. As a thank you the committee have agreed to make Christina an Honorary Associate Member.

THANK YOU!!

Summer 2018

The Dales Challenge - Gabriel Damaszk



On the 23rd of June 6 of our Team members took part in Durham Dales Challenge, which is an annual event organized by the Long Distance Walkers Association, Northumbria Group. It was a great opportunity for walkers and runners to celebrate our beautiful Dales.

Traditionally there were two routes to choose from: a shorter one (14 miles) across Weardale and a more challenging one (30 miles) across Weardale and Teesdale. Both routes start and finish in Wolsingham. The weather was very good, which attracted about 300 of keen walkers and runners.

Some of our Team members walked both of the routes making sure nobody stayed behind or needed assistance. Others covered the area in a Team's land rover.

The Team responded to a nearby traffic accident, in which a motorcyclist lost control over her bike and tumbled about 40 m down the road sustaining multiple injuries. Our mobile team responded quickly and treated the casualty before the Ambulance arrived.

One of the walkers also happened to have a misadventure on his way back from the long route. While negotiating a steep ground near ruins of mine workings by Great Egglehope Beck above the Middle End Farm, he broke his ankle. Again, our Team found their way to the casualty and treated him accordingly.

The last walkers reported themselves back in the Masonic Hall in Wolsingham after 9 pm to receive their well-deserved badges and very welcomed pies and drinks. We also enjoyed the



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nice food, which made a good end to a great day outdoors we enjoyed with like-minded people.

We already look forward to the next one!

The 3 Peaks challenge – James Chilcot

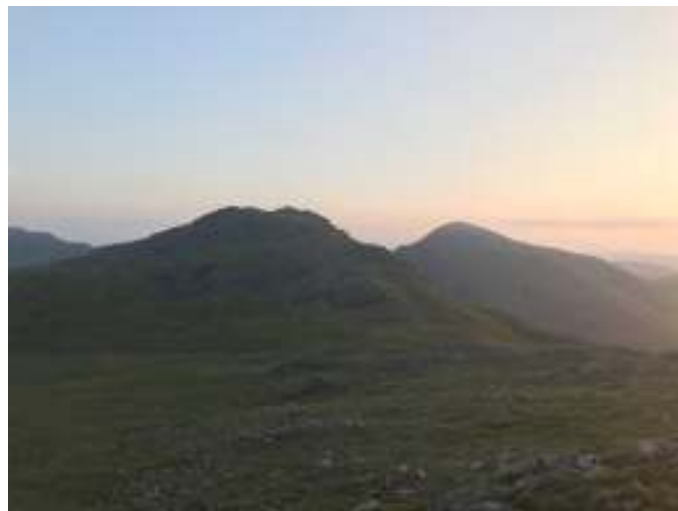
The National Three Peaks had 2 buses in the first weekend and 1 bus on the second weekend with valuable support from 11 current team members and 2 former team members. The event really does require a big commitment from the team members who give up their whole weekend. It has a fundraising element for the team but equally importantly it allows us chance to support local university students in a challenge they will remember for a lifetime. Taking on Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon in a continuous challenge event where the clock and effort starts at foot of Ben Nevis on Saturday and does not stop until back down at the car park in Snowdon on Sunday evening. The students that take part in the 3 Peaks event come away with a huge sense of achievement and pride and the members of Mountain Rescue team running the event enjoy providing some students their first introduction into the hills which we hope will continue for many years into their future.

The first weekend saw both buses starting around the same time but with some slightly faster walker's and kitting up efficiency in one bus there was a few hours difference by the time groups had finished Snowdon. The event is not treated as a race and we are not concerned about completing within 24 hours (minibuses which are restricted to 60mph means that 24 hour finish is almost impossible) but the aim of getting all students around is the weekend goal and all students were thrilled to be part of that.

The second weekend also enjoyed a great weekend with a strong bunch of students who were very capable of completing all three peaks. Ben Nevis had gone well despite a downpour in the last 30mins of the descent which left the group soaked through just before getting back on the minibus. The night-time walk up Scafell is the most enjoyable part of weekend and we timed it perfectly for sunrise just as we hit the summit. Unfortunately, after 90mins of descending that morning along the corridor route back to Seathwaite one of the students picked up an injury which significantly delayed the return. With the extra time spent on hill getting back to the minibus it meant that it was now too late to continue onto Snowdon as would be too late in the day for returning to Durham after climbing Snowdon. The drivers and hill leaders were equally saddened as the students were because we feel the same sense of challenge. However sometimes that is just the way it works out with hill walking or a challenge and we need to know when to call it a day and try again another time. We hope that the students who did not get chance to do Snowdon this time will complete that final hill in the future or perhaps go for a full three peaks weekend again with us. The photos below are from the second weekend group on Ben Nevis and Scafell



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Autumn 2018

Technical Training – Pete Morrison

Over the last few years lots of team members have come and gone, leaving us in a situation where all the technical rope training was left to just a few people.

So when we found out that MREW was to fund some rope rescue instructor training, it couldn't have come at a better time.

Our team were allocated to places, which were taken up by Pete Morrison and Marc Tomlinson, both experienced team members and both are group leaders.

The course was run by Lyon equipment, but was run from our base at Durham, The training covered lots of things from theory to practical, But the emphasis was on our teaching ability and our ability to teach lessons to the rest of the course. The course was run over two weekends the first being a little theory Then lots of practical, it was interesting to work with lots of other Mountain Rescue teams seeing how they worked picking up lots of new skills. The second weekend was all about us teaching lessons back to the rest of the course we were each given a subject that we have to teach.

The course was very informative and has left the team in a stronger position. Now we have a few more people to help take the technical training sessions under the careful guidance of our technical lead.





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Assessment Day for New Trainees – Holly Story

On the 10th of November a group of 10 eager faces gathered at the Durham base to hear Steve give a short introduction to the TWSMRT.

For some of us who had applied to join the team, it was our first opportunity to meet members of the team and ask some questions -

How do call outs work? Who delivers team training? How many call outs do you get in a year? And what exactly will this 'assessment day' involve?

The last question was soon answered - we split up in to small groups for a kit check and a written navigation test, then it was time to put our boots on and head up into Weardale for a navigation exercise and a mock rescue. It was a fine, clear day, with quite a chilly wind - great weather to enjoy a few hours out on the moors.

Despite friendly encouragement from the team, we got off to a nervous start. It seemed easy to remember my rusty navigational skills while I was sitting in front of the fire, or pacing out distances across the office car park, but counting to 65 while ploughing through heather and chatting away to Pete and Ian about work, running and maps was harder than I expected! After a short stop to eat our sandwiches, we all worked together to conduct a mock rescue, which included stretchering the 'casualty' (Anne) a few hundred metres across rough ground to the support vehicle. It was only a short taste of what a real rescue would be like, but it was enough to give us an idea of what we were letting ourselves in for!

Later on, as we all waited for our interviews back at the base, we had the chance to compare notes on how the morning had gone and what had led us to apply to join the team. We come from a big range of professions and places, from medicine to farming, and we all have our own reasons for wanting to join the team. But I think for a lot of us one of the biggest attractions of volunteering with TWSMRT is the chance to be part of a team of dedicated, knowledgeable people, who not only give up their time to conduct searches and rescues, but even find the patience to train new recruits like us. Thanks for having us - I'm looking forward to the (steep) learning curve!



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Winter 2018

The Christmas Exercise – Jen Burrows

The last exercise of the year was of course on theme. Two Elves from Santa's workshop were test driving a sleigh before the big day and crashed it at Bollihope. The two Elves and all their wrapping paper (they were from the wrapping division and were practicing in the sleigh) were thrown from the sleigh, one Elf was found hypothermic on the hill side and the other had a broken ankle.

Our search dog Sam found the missing Elves and brought the team across to them where they were checked over. One Elf was stretchered off the hillside and was very confused that people were pulling the stretcher and not Huskies or Reindeers. The stretcher was lit up with fairy lights and they only threatened to drop the elf once when she wouldn't stop singing Jingle Bells.

We assume the Reindeer found their way back to the North Pole ready for the big day as they were no-where to be seen on the hillside [they must have had just enough magic to get back]. The team were heart-broken to find that the Elves weren't the only ones on the hillside but Santa himself had also been involved in the crash. Santa was located and sent back home ready for Christmas Eve.





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TEAM CALL OUTS

mm/yr- mm/yr



12.34 26/12/2018	The Team was called out this afternoon to assist NEAS crew in locating a walking who had fallen in Gibbneese Plantation nr Copley co. Durham. 11 Team members were involved. The casualty was located and was able to walk out to the ambulance with assistance and taken to Darlington Memorial Hospital.
17.00 19/12/2018	The team were called to assist with the rescue of a dog stuck down a mine shaft. Thankfully the dog was rescued whilst the team were en route.
13.00 19/10/2018	Team called to assist NEAS evacuating a mountain biker in Hamsterly Forest who'd come off his bike and suffered serious head injuries. Cyclist evacuated down to NEAS ambulance for transportation to hospital.
18.30 11/10/2018	Team was contacted by Police at 1830 yesterday. A vulnerable male from Peterlee was last seen at home address 2am on Friday morning. It was agreed with Police that a small group of Mountain Rescue volunteers would check out a limited number of locations in Castle Eden Dene on Friday evening and a full search would commence at 0900hrs Saturday including 1 TWSMRT and 3 regional SARDA dogs. We were contacted by the Police at early this morning to say the missing person had returned home in the early hours safe.
19.30 23/09/2018	Team called by NEAS to assist with evacuation of walker on Edmondbyers Fell who had fallen and broken his arm. The walker was located by paramedics as Team members arrived on scene. The injured walker was evacuated in a farmers landrover. 12 Team members responded.
09.00 14/09/2018	Team continued to search for 30 year old male missing from Shiney Row along side 3 SARDA dogs and North of Tyne MRT. The search covered



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	large areas of woodland to the east of the Lambton Estate. A body was found by a team search dog and the search was stood down.
08.30 07/09/2018	Team called to assist Northumberland Mountain Rescue Teams on the 3rd day of a search for a 70 year old male in the Heworth area of Newcastle. The missing person was not located.
18.00 24/08/2018	The team were contacted by NEAS Control with a request for assistance at Hamsterley Forest for a mountain biker with a dislocated shoulder. Team members were en route when the ambulance crew managed to resolve the problem and we stood down.
16.00 13/07/2018	Team called to treat and evacuate a Scout who had tripped and injured his leg while taking part in a Scout competition. The injury was dressed and the boy assisted to the Team vehicle before being transferred to the Scout minibus for transfer to hospital.
19.03 25/06/2018	Team were put on standby to search for a walker with a medical condition who had become separated from his walking companion. Last seen near Low Force. As the Team were about to be callout the walker was found by a member of the public and given a lift back to his friend.
18.00 22/06/2018	The Team were called to deal with a 59yr old male walker who had slipped while descending a steep slope as part of an organised challenge walk. The casualty was located in the Great Egglehope Beck area before having his ankle splinted and being transported to hospital.
09.00 22/06/2018	One of the Team's doctors and extended skills medics came upon a motorcycle rtc that had just occurred on one of the upland roads crossing between Weardale and Teesdale. In this case a 25yr old female motorcyclist had lost control while cornering and had been thrown from her machine some 40-50m down the road. She was stabilised at scene and treated for multiple trauma including limb and pelvic injuries. The casualty was handed over to a NEAS ambulance crew for transport to a regional trauma centre.
09.00 16/06/2018	The Team cancelled their monthly training to continue their search for the missing 86 year old male from Durham City. The Team re-searched the large area of steep overgrown land adjacent to the missing mans house and then also searched in the Hollingside Lane area of the City - an area the m,issing male was known to frequent. Unfortunately again, nothing was found. Missing male was found the following day at Darlington Station.



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12.00 15/06/2018	Team called to search for 86 year old male missing since 8.30am from the Neville's Cross area of Durham City. The Team searched a large area of steep overgrown land adjacent to the missing mans house and the Canoe Team searched the river Browney from the Stonebridge pub to the Croxdale. Nothing was found.
04.00 07/06/2018	Team were called at 4am to search for a missing 50 year old despondent female who's car had been found at Middleton One Row (near Darlington) and near the River Tees. Soon after the search commenced evidence was found about 1km from the missing ladies car that suggested that the missing female may have entered the water. The Canoe group continued to search downstream and located a body in the river a further 1km downstream. After formalities were completed by the police the Team recovered the body from the water up a steep embankment.
12.35 19/05/2018	While on exercise in Hamsterley Forest the Team was called to assist with a 52 year old male who had fallen from his mountain bike at speed while negotiating a corner. He was assessed and treated by team members qualified in extended skills casualty care before being forwarded to hospital.
07.00 03/05/2018	Team called to rescue a 9 month old Labrador puppy (called Riley) which had slipped down a very steep bank above the River Tees at Cotherstone. The team lowered 2 team members to the dog and after a quick check over put him into a large bag to safely lower him to the bottom of the bank. After a more extensive check by our senior dog handler we confirmed Riley seemed none the worse for his adventure and was safely returned to his grateful owner.
21.h0 20/04/2018	On Saturday night the team spent a number of hours searching for an elderly gentleman missing from home in Chester or Street. He was not found that night but fortunately as the team prepared to go out again on Sunday morning he was found safe and well by the police.
15.30 14/04/2018	Team called on Sunday afternoon to an elderly walker collapsed on the Pennine Way south of Middleton in Teesdale. The casualty and the remainder of his party were transported off the fell, a distance of approx 1.5km and handed over to ambulance personnel.