



# TEESDALE AND WEARDALE SEARCH AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM



Providing Search and Rescue throughout County Durham

## Welcome.

Let us start by thanking each and everyone who supports us as a Team, be it via Associate Memberships or by actively Fund Raising on our behalf, your time and efforts are very much appreciated. We hope that the contents of this newsletter will give you an insight into how the team has been operating and planning since the last newsletter.

## New Posts

As many will be aware, in November the Team held their Annual General Meeting, here we saw team members elected to post on the committee.



**Team Leader.** Former Team Leader David Bartles Smith handed over the post to Chris Roberts. We would like to thank David for all his hard work whilst in post. Welcome to Chris who has come up from Deputy Team Leader, so already has a good standing and a wealth of knowledge to continue to take the Team forward.



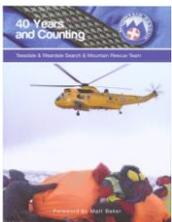
further develop our Team.

**Deputy Team Leader.** Welcome to Steve Owers, who has taken on the role, as well as his continuing efforts as the Press Officer. In this demanding role, Steve has already held many meetings with other members and outside organisations to



**Associate Members Representative.** Welcome to Izzy Barnes who has eagerly taken on this role, speaking to Izzy it is clear that she has some strong ideas for the role and look forward to meeting our Associate Members and keeping

them informed of upcoming events. There will be a meeting and open evening at the base on 30<sup>th</sup> March at 1930hrs for existing Associate Members and anyone interested in joining us.



**40 Years and Counting.** To help celebrate the Team's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Team published their book "40 Years and Counting" which contains the history and present day stories about the Team. All stories have come from members past and present. The book is available in shops within our County or direct from the Team. A worthwhile buy for all.

Available at £9.99 from [secretary@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:secretary@twsmrt.org.uk) (new updated list of callouts now included).

## Updates

**Donations.** Over the past 12 months the Team have been working on projects that will further enhance the ability to support the local community and those of our neighbouring counties. We are often sent donations from people in the post, and these are always gratefully received. We also have a large amount of collection tins around the county. Our book keeper often requires help with checking these tins; do you think you could help? If so please contact [secretary@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:secretary@twsmrt.org.uk) for information and guidance.

**Big Lottery Fund.** As some readers will be aware, the Team's ability to respond in support to other emergency services in time of flood has been greatly increased. This has been greatly supported by kind a donation from various organisations's which we are very grateful for. Recently we were granted funding from the Big Lottery Fund, which enabled our Swift Water Rescue Technicians to purchase two Rescue rafts. We look forward to bringing further updates on the rafts in the next edition.

**Durham City Young Farmers.** In December the club made a donation of £1000, which they have raised over the past 12 months. Team members Mark Davis and Izzy Barnes attended the club Christmas Social to receive the presentation. DCYFC have asked to have their donation put towards the ongoing Vehicle Project.

**Can you help?** As a Team, we have become increasingly busy with our Operational Callouts and the day to day running of the Team. As a lot of readers will know, all our members are volunteers, who give their time freely and are invaluable. We will shortly be asking if you, the reader, have any suggestions or feelings on ways that we can improve the information that is passed on. Do we have a budding Journalist that would relish the chance to write one of our Newsletters? For info [associate@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:associate@twsmrt.org.uk)

**Vehicle Project.** All proceeds from the sale of our book "40 years and counting" are going towards the vehicle project. We are currently perusing funding opportunities, but all suggestions are greatly received. If any readers have any thoughts or suggestions please contact [secretary@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:secretary@twsmrt.org.uk)

### Upcoming Fundraising Events.

Date	Event	Location	Remarks
30 March 2011	Associate Members Open Evening	Rescue Base	Opportunity to meet members and have input into how we run
02 May 2011	National Mountain Rescue Awareness Day	TBC	Watch for national coverage, please come and support your local team.
07 May 2011	Street Collection	Stanhope	All welcome
30 May 2011	Barnard Castle Meet	Barnard Castle	Join the team and walk in the procession, can you hold a bucket?
09 July 2011	Street Collection	Bishop Auckland	All Welcome
13 July 2011	Lanchester Agricultural Show	Lanchester	All Welcome
13 August 2011	Street Collection	Barnard Castle	All Welcome

The Fundraising team are currently reviewing our display and merchandise; we of course have a lot of ideas, but would welcome any advice and suggestions from our readers. Des Lee (Team Member) is seeking help and advice on items that you would like to see on sale at street Collections. Please forward any suggestions' to [secretay@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:secretay@twsmrt.org.uk) and head your email Fundraising.

#### Contact Details:

Izzy Barnes (Associate Members Rep)  
[associate@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:associate@twsmrt.org.uk)

Des Lee (Fund Raising Officer)  
[fundraising@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@twsmrt.org.uk)

Stuart Kime (Hon. Secretary)  
[Secretary@twsmrt.org.uk](mailto:Secretary@twsmrt.org.uk)

#### Recent Months

Over the recent months we have seen one of the coldest periods in over a decade, however we are pleased to report that both Durham Constabulary and Durham County Council were more than prepared for this, with an influx of suitable vehicles to the rural Police Stations and early periodic road closure of the A66, from a Mountain Rescue point of view, we saw no major incident, and although our usual call out requests were maintained, as a team we have had a quiet winter period.

#### Recent Callouts

14.30 12/02/2011	Team callout	The Team were called to look for a missing female in the Middleton in Teesdale area. Once the Team arrived we found the missing person safe and well.
16.40 11/02/2011	Team callout	The Team were called out by Durham Police to look for a lone walker who had parked his car at Cow Green reservoir car park at 0700 on Friday morning. He had been walking all day in fog. At around 4pm he contacted his family by mobile phone to report that he was lost and would try to make his way to shelter. He was found safe and well at around 8pm by a search dog team, sheltering at Moor House bothy.
11.00 04/02/2011	Team callout	Search continued for missing 64 year old male. Missing person found in dense woodland near car park and evacuated to County Ambulance
17.30 04/02/2011	Team callout	Team called to search for 64 year old male missing for 24 hours in North End area of Durham City. Team searched open and woodland areas in wet and windy conditions for several hours before standing down for the night.
15.18 01/01/2011	Team callout	Motorist reported stuck in the snow by police and assistance requested from Team to locate and assist with recovery. Local Team member located motorist and with members of the public got vehicle back on the move.

**Breaking News:**

Mountain rescue teams across the UK appear to have won a long-running campaign to reclaim the VAT spent on equipment. The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Danny Alexander, told the House of Commons money had been put aside to help the volunteers with their costs. He said the money would be available from April and a detailed announcement would be made shortly. Mountain rescue volunteers have long said they deserve to get a VAT break. They also believe they should not have to pay car tax on mountain rescue vehicles. BBC political correspondent Arif Ansari said it was against EU law to directly refund VAT. But he said it appeared the government had found a way around the rules and had earmarked money in October during the Comprehensive Spending Review. The Treasury has confirmed it is an important issue for Danny Alexander, whose constituency in the north of Scotland is a busy area for mountain rescue teams. Last year, search and rescue teams in Cornwall and Devon called for an exemption for them and the other 60 teams. They said they require £20,000 a year in donations to keep them operational and pointed out the cost of paying VAT on kit was eating into their funds. A Treasury spokesperson said at the time that zero-rated specialist equipment and VAT-free medicine and equipment were available.

**Sudoku**

1	2			9	7		4	
7		6	4				5	
9			3			1		
	7	1		2				5
		3	7		4	2		
4				3				
		7			8			6
	8				1	3		4
	5		9	6			1	8

**My Story.**

I joined Teesdale and Weardale Search and Mountain Rescue Team (TWSMRT) as a C listed member, basically an apprentice, in Nov 2008. During my probationary period which lasted just over a year, I carried out rigorous training sessions, to ensure I can operate in any environment and not become a casualty. These training sessions cover search techniques, casualty care, crag rescue, swift water rescue techniques, communications and working with dog handlers. During our monthly training exercises, around 25 team members are given a brief, which is to find a person that had been hidden somewhere usually on the North Pennine fells. The main body of the team is then split up in to small groups, which are then assigned areas to search. Depending on the circumstances and available information they will adopt deferent search techniques to find the person ASAP. On Friday 4<sup>th</sup> Feb this year I put all my training in to action. The Team was called out to search for 64 year old male who had been missing for over 36 hours in Durham City. As a team member I was allocated to a group who were given a sector to search. After spending one and a half hours searching through wooded areas around County Hall, I found myself in woods near the DLI Museum. As I made my way through the wood I notice something unusual to my left, when I did a double take I realised it was a person lying face down on the ground. Due to the colour of his clothing which blended into to background it made it really difficult to see him. From there training just kicked in, I immediately assessed his medical condition and called for assistance on my radio. We then made sure the casualty was protected from the elements and started to warm him before the arrival of the ambulance service. It was really satisfying to find him alive, but on a personal note when I saw how fast and professional the team responded to this situation, I felt really proud to be a small part of the team

**Des Lee** (A List Member)



**Technical Rescue Group**, practice shaft rescues using a quad pod

## **Vehicle Project.**

The team have, over the past few years, been considering if we would benefit from purchasing another team vehicle. In 2009 a vehicle working group was formed to look at this in great detail, and the findings were brought to Committee in 2010. The working group, led by the Transport Officer, looked at all aspects of the project, from Vehicle Type to Cost Issues. It was decided and presented to the committee that the team do require a second off road capable vehicle, and that this should be designed around the passenger carrying purpose, with little modification to enable a stretcher to be loaded for casualty evacuation. The vehicle project was agreed by our committee, and we are now actively raising funds for the purchase. Already we have seen some large donations arrive to support us:

County Durham Foundations - £1700.70 – towards the medical equipment for the vehicle

Glaxo Smith Kline - £5000.00 – towards the vehicle purchase

DCYFC - £1000.00 – towards the vehicle purchase

As we have mentioned already, the proceeds from our book sales will also be put towards the project, also our fundraising group is working on ways to help further this project. Can you help?



## **Just For Fun.**

*In which year were Teesdale and Weardale Search and Mountain Rescue Team formed?*

*Can you name two pieces of equipment you expect a Team Member to carry on all searches?*

*How would you call out a Mountain Rescue Team in England and Wales?*

*Answers will follow in the next newsletter.*