



Keswick Mountain Rescue Team

RESCUE REPORT 2023

Introduction

Welcome to the 2023 Rescue Report of Keswick Mountain Rescue Team.

The Report includes a record of the Team's activities throughout 2022.

The Team comprises up to 55 team members who live in the locality of Keswick. Team members are volunteers who come from many different walks of life and occupations. Team members are 'on call' 24 hours a day and 365 days a year, and in all weather conditions.

The graphs in the Report show how the incidents in 2022 have been spread across the days of the week, all twelve months, and across different times of the day. As in all years, the types of incidents vary greatly, and in order to respond to all these incidents Team members undertake on-going training in topics through the fields of, for

example, advanced first aid, rope rescue, water rescue, and driving, and so on.

A call-out will involve a variable number of Team members, and may last several hours.

This service is achieved through the dedication of all Team members.

The Team was founded in 1947, and so in 2023 the Team is in its 76th year of service. The Team is a charitable organisation that depends upon donations and the on-going support of the public.

We thank you for your help and contributions.

For more information about the Team

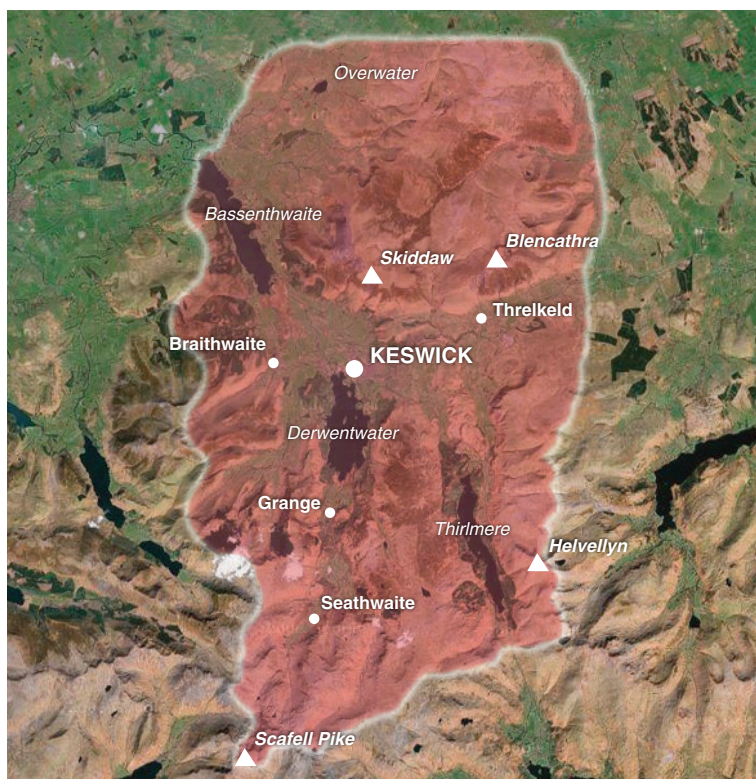
Please see www.keswickmrt.org.uk

and see the Team's presence on

facebook.com and **Instagram.com**

Front cover photo: Incident 72 Barrow

Keswick Mountain Rescue Team Area of Responsibility



Keswick Mountain Rescue Team



Email: secretary@keswickmrt.org.uk

Keswick MRT Headquarters,
Lakeside Car Park, Lake Road,
Keswick, Cumbria CA12 5DJ



Incident 88 - Seathwaite.

President Mick Guy
Chairman Gordon Barker
Team Leader Chris Higgins
Deputy Leaders Martin Bell
Tom Blakely
Craig Dring
Dave Hill

Treasurer John Hunston
Secretary Fi Boyle
Membership Secretary Jenni Whittaker
Member Trustees Peter Little
Paul White

Base Managers John Hunston
Robin Saxby

Collection Boxes Malcolm Miller
Paul White

Data Officer Craig Dring
Equipment Officers Jonny Hume
George Lloyd
Tom McNally

ICT Officers Richard Gale
Rob Grange

Medical Officer Tim Hooper
Radio Officer Alan Prescott
Report Officer Peter Little
Safeguarding Officer Chris Higgins
Social Media Officer Craig Dring

Social Officer Jonny Hume
Training Officers Phil Blair
Dave Hill
Dan Jordan

Vehicles Officers Adam Edmondson
Adrian Holme

Water Officer Dan Jordan

Gordon Barker Company Director
Alan Barnes Paramedic
Paul Barnes Firefighter
Pete Batey Optometrist
Matthew Bazire IT Programme Manager
Martin Bell Paramedic
Phil Blair Outdoor Pursuits Instructor
Tom Blakely Paramedic
Alasdair Boden Land Manager
Fiona Boyle Lecturer
Paul Cheshire Chartered Engineer
Craig Dring Retired Procurement Manager
Adam Edmondson Outdoor Pursuits Instructor
Donald Ferguson Rope Access Technician
John Ferris Emergency Medicine Consultant
Chris Francis Fire Service
Richard Gale Accommodation Provider
Chris Gillyon Company Director
Geoff Gilmore Leisure Pool Manager
Rachel Graham Doctor
Sarah Graham Paramedic
Rob Grange Photographer
Steve Hepburn Company Director
Chris Higgins Company Director - Outdoor Pursuits
Dave Hill Firefighter
Mark Hodgson Retired Project Director

Simon Hodgson Accommodation Provider
Adrian Holme Shift Team Leader
Stuart Holmes Photographer
Tim Hooper GP
Jonathan Hughes Rope Access Supervisor
Jonny Hume Teacher
John Hunston Retired Accountant
Andy Jones Retired
Dan Jordan Emergency Medical Technician
James Lamb Accommodation Provider
Peter Little Retired Pharmacist
George Lloyd Police Officer
Tom McNally Photographer
Malcolm Miller Retired Head Teacher
Duane Moran Outdoor Pursuits Instructor
Jeff Powell Davies Information Analyst
Alan Prescott Retired Engineering Manager
Lisa Price General Marina Manager
Jocky Sanderson Outdoor Pursuits Instructor
Robin Saxby Community Nurse
Paul White Papermill Chemist
Elly Whiteford Technical Specialist
Jenni Whittaker Doctor
Geoff Williams Outdoor Pursuits Instructor
Brad Williamson Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

Team Leader's Report

With the first incident of 2022 being on January 1st and the last rescue on December 29th, we squeezed in 124 rescues during the year. This included 11 days when there were 2 callouts on the same day. The team was obviously quite busy in dealing with all of these and the necessary 'backroom' support work to keep the team running. Whilst comments on our social media pages sometimes suggest that people should be charged for our services, particularly anyone who goes out ill-equipped or ill-prepared, Keswick Mountain Rescue Team would strongly disagree.

As you probably know, we are all volunteers who willingly give our time to help others, and we enjoy it. The high level of skill and professionalism of these volunteers is testament to their dedication and self-sacrifice (and that of their families), their eagerness to help others, their love of the mountains, their commitment to each other and to being part of the team. Getting a message to say that our help is needed is something we happily respond to and our families and friends are proud to be associated with the efforts of rescue team members.

The reality of mountain rescue around Keswick is not one of people undertaking foolhardy enterprises, but are genuine calls for help by people who have suffered a misfortune for one reason or another. Most of the people we are called out to have the correct clothing and equipment and have good levels of skill in navigating and generally looking after themselves in the mountains. Inevitably, on occasion there are those that are less equipped, skilled or experienced than others – but please bear in mind they did not go out with the intention of hurting themselves or becoming lost. Who amongst us hasn't undertaken something that upon reflection we think we may have done differently? A quarter of our rescues in 2022 were lower leg injuries such as broken ankles, fractures to a tibia/fibula (or both) or knee injuries. These injuries easily occur when walkers trip or slip on uneven or slippery ground and are things that can happen to even the most experienced.

We sadly lost a much respected team member in 2022 with the sudden and unexpected passing of Nuala Dowie. Nuala joined the team in 1988 and, as well as being the team secretary and social secretary during her time, was involved in



Incident 24 - Langstrath.

over 930 rescues. Living in Rosthwaite Nuala was very familiar with Borrowdale and often knew the 'shortcuts' or particular landmarks that helped us locate a casualty and get to them quickly. Nuala brought a great many things to the team other than her 'local knowledge', she had a great sense of humour, loved to explore things from a different angle, never took 'no' for an answer (if she thought she was right – which she usually did) and was incredibly supportive of her fellow team members.

Once Nuala 'got her teeth into something' she wouldn't let go – a particular example is a marked public right of way descending Nitting Haws from the High Spy-Maiden Moor ridgeline. The green 'public footpath' markings did not follow the path on the ground and took walkers into very difficult and dangerous terrain. Following a series of incidents at this location, some of them serious, Nuala decided to do something about it, with the full support of the team. Emails were sent, escorts to the site were arranged and attended, and gradually over time the various authorities and agencies accepted that change was needed, and have put measures in place to correctly re-route the line on the map. It is now foreseeable that

fewer people will become injured or stuck here thanks to Nuala (as long as an up-to-date map is being used!). Nuala, thank you for your service - you are sadly missed!

We also wished a fond farewell to Dave Pratt who retired after thirty-two years in the team. Over the years Dave's roles within the team included being the team Chairman, Training Officer, Water Officer and Membership Secretary as well as fitting in over 350 rescues. As another resident of Borrowdale, Dave knew the valley intimately, but was a particular asset to the team in that he lived in Seathwaite, at the far end of the valley. Dave would frequently head out alone to check the Styhead or Grains Gill paths for overdue walkers. He would often find them walking down slowly and not in any need of assistance from the wider team thereby saving the rest of us an unnecessary callout.

Many hillwalkers choose Seathwaite as their starting point to walk to the top of Scafell Pike and other Central Fells. As some of these inevitably become lost or overdue we are often called to head out and find them and Dave (and his long-suffering family!) were frequently disturbed at all hours to be asked whether he/they could check to see if a particular car was parked at the road

end near their house. When Dave was away, we would call his wife and she would wrap up and head out into the darkness and Borrowdale rain/sleet/snow to check things for us. Frequently they would find the car gone and that the people were no longer on the hill, or they would be just walking into the farmyard and not need any help. This saved countless hours of unnecessary driving to simply check for something for those of us living in Keswick and we are extremely grateful to them both for everything they did for the team.

Keswick team has attracted many new members in recent times and I'm delighted to report that six prospective team members joined us as 'probationers' in March of 2022. In March of 2023 the team gets to evaluate their performance through the year with a view to voting them to become full team members. Going through a probationary year with the team is often quite demanding but the team works with our probationers to 'transform' hillwalkers and climbers into rescuers and tries to give full support along the way.

As the team continues to evolve and we welcome applications from anyone with the right skill set and I'm wondering whether this could be you? The requirements are quite straightforward



Incident 15 - Ullock Pike.

Team Leader's Report



Incident 30 - Rigg Beck, Newlands.

- an ability to look after yourself in the mountains (in all weathers), have a caring attitude and want to help others, an eagerness to learn (we'll teach you the necessary skills), a willingness to work alongside others (in sometimes difficult and demanding situations), and a sense of adventure (we never know what we'll get called to, where it is or at what time of day or night). Oh – and be happy to carry a rucksack uphill as quickly as you can or wade across a knee-deep beck carrying a stretcher or head out at ten thirty at night knowing you might need to be at work at nine! All with something of a smile on your face (or maybe it's a grimace?!) If you live locally and of that all sounds appealing then please get in touch.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the volunteers of Keswick MRT are very highly trained and we need to be. Never knowing what's next we 'train for the worst and hope for the best' and given that last year we attended such diverse incidents as a walker stranded by rising flood water, several crashed cyclists, fallen/stuck climbers, over a dozen 'medical episodes', a couple of animal rescues and eight searches for people lost/disorientated as well as all those broken legs, we definitely used a wide range of skills. These skills

are maintained by a high level of training delivered 'in-house' by the many experts we have within the team as well as any external providers. My thanks go to everyone who has helped train us to be able to perform at the level we do.

I feel both very privileged and humbled to serve the team as its leader – it is unbelievably rewarding in ways I hadn't thought possible. Frequently, my role on a rescue is one of co-ordination and liaison (as well as carrying heavy bags up/down a mountain and/or a casualty once loaded onto the stretcher!). The practical parts of a rescue such as ropework, off road driving or first aid are done by other members of the team whilst I often seem to simply stand to one side with a radio or phone in my hand! However, seeing such a great group of people in action at the 'sharp end' is extremely moving at times and I get an immense sense of pride from being involved with such a 'professional' group of people. I also would like to thank every member of Keswick Mountain Rescue Team for their exceptional service and ongoing commitment – you all do a great job and I am happy to stand beside you whilst wearing the red jacket of the team – thank you all!

Chris Higgins

This year's financial position is good, as we have had substantial legacy income, together with a large one-off donation. Other income has held up well, with only slightly higher expenses, largely due to clothing and training costs. However, the value of our investments has dropped significantly, not surprisingly, and, overall, the annual surplus is on a par with last year.

However, with annual costs of about £150,000, financial stability is important to us. While the base building is now complete, work is still ongoing on internal fitting out, with a new climbing wall being built as I write this. We are currently looking at replacing one or two older vehicles that have become less reliable, despite having done relatively

few miles. All this requires money additional to regular outgoings. We also have a committee looking at sustainable practices, and I anticipate this requiring an upfront cost, albeit with the hope of reducing future expenditure. Our operation lends itself to electric vehicles, for example, as our journeys are all relatively short.

The current year is likely to be relatively expensive, especially as our training programme recovers to pre-pandemic levels, but we are well placed to handle these costs.

Finally, I'd like to thank Frances Clark, as ever, for her work in producing our accounts on a quarterly basis.

John Hunston



Incident 47 - Sharp Edge, Blencathra.

Collection Boxes 2022

2022 saw a return to our previous routines with the collection boxes. In November we had our annual count, something that had not happened over the previous two years. Takings from the collection boxes were back to a good level despite the disruption caused by Covid. At £22k the total amount for the year was not as much as in some past years, but a very respectful total nevertheless. Despite our fears, cash appeared to be back in circulation!

We have lost a few box holders during the pandemic. Understandably, many establishments

removed the boxes from display and quite a number did not make it back onto display. Happily, there have been almost as many new requests for boxes so hopefully things will balance out in the long run.

Many thanks to all of our box holders both locally and further afield. Thanks too for all donations in whatever form; remember the Team functions entirely on voluntary contributions to fund the many callouts each year.

Enjoy the outdoors safely.

Malcolm Miller and Paul White

Collection Box Coordinators

Please Support Us

There are many options for supporting the work of Keswick Mountain Rescue Team.

Donations, large and small, will be warmly welcomed by the Team at all times.

Please see the website page www.keswickmrt.org.uk/donate

Just Giving – follow the link from the webpage

Donr Text Giving – text KESWICKMRT 10 to 70085 to give £10 to us. This costs £10 plus a standard rate message. For any amounts between £1 and £20.

Cheque – details on our webpage.

Standing Order – details on our webpage.

Legacy/Will – details on our webpage.

Gift Aid – Provided that you pay Income Tax, the Team can reclaim the tax that you have already paid on the sum donated to the Team, from the Inland Revenue.

Please download the form from our webpage.

Collection Boxes – now have the QR code shown below, which links to the **MyGivingHub** website.



*Whichever way that you donate to the Team,
we thank you for every single penny*

Collection Box Sponsors

2 Windsor House
 Abacourt House
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 Allerdale House
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 Armathwaite Hall
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 Barclays Bank
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 Bean on the Fells
 Birch How G.H.
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 Borrowdale Caravan Club Site
 Borrowdale Gates Hotel
 Borrowdale Hotel
 Borrowdale YHA
 Braithwaite Court HPB
 Braithwaite Shop
 Bramblewood Cottage
 Brierholme G.H.
 Brookfield G.H.
 Brun Lea G.H.
 Brysons
 Caravan Club Site, Braithwaite
 Casa's
 Castle Inn
 Castlehead Medical Centre
 Castlerigg Farm Camp Site
 Castlerigg Hall Caravan and Camping
 Castlerigg Manor
 Cheese Deli
 Claremont House
 Clarence House
 Coledale Inn
 Cornish Pasty Shop
 Cotswolds
 Crafty Baa
 Craglands G.H.
 Cragside G.H.
 Crow Park Hotel
 Cumberland Pencil Museum
 Cumbria House
 Cyclewise Whinlatter
 Dale Bottom Farm Campsite
 Dale Head Hall Hotel
 Dalegarth Hotel
 Denton House
 Derwent Bank HF
 Derwent Club
 Derwent Hill Outdoor Centre
 Derwentwater Club Site
 Derwentwater Holiday Home Site
 Derwentwater Hostel
 Derwentwater Marina
 Dog and Gun
 Dollywagon G.H.
 Dorchester House
 Eden Green
 Edwardene Hotel
 Eel Crags
 Electric Shop
 Elm Tree Lodge
 Farmers Arms
 Fat Face
 Ferndene G.H.
 Fine Designs

George Fishers
 George Hotel
 Glaramara Outdoor Centre
 Glencoe G.H.
 Glendale G.H.
 Golden Lion
 Grange Bridge Cottage Café
 Grange Café
 Grey Goat Inn
 Greystoke House
 Greystones G.H.
 Hawcliffe House
 Hazel Bank Hotel
 Hedgehog Hill
 Herdwick G.H.
 High Lodore Farm Café
 Honister Mine
 Hope Memorial Camp
 Hope Park Mini Golf
 Horse and Farrier
 Jan's Lakeland Sandwich Shop
 Java
 Keswick Bike Company
 Keswick Brewing Co.
 Keswick Climbing Wall
 Keswick Cottage Hospital
 Keswick Golf Club
 Keswick Launch Co.
 Keswick Park Hotel
 Keswick Reach Lodge Retreat
 Keswick Rugby Club
 Keswick Site
 King's Head Hotel
 Kingfisher
 Kingstarn
 Kirkbride Eyecare
 Knotts View
 Kong Adventure
 Lairbeck Hotel
 Lake Road Inn
 Lakeland
 Lakeland Décor
 Lakeland Slate
 Lakeland Toys and Hobbies
 Lakeland View GH
 Lakeside House
 Lanehead Farm G.H.
 Langstrath Hotel
 Laurel Bank G.H.
 Leathes Head Hotel
 Littlefield G.H.
 Lodore Falls Hotel
 Love The Lakes
 Lynton Lodge
 Lynwood G.H.
 Lyzzick Hall Hotel
 Mae's Tea Room
 Maple Bank
 Mary Mount Hotel
 McKanesShop
 Middle Ruddings Hotel
 Mill Cottage
 Mill Inn
 Millets
 Moot Hall
 Namaste
 Near Howe
 Needle Sports
 New House
 Newlands Adventure Centre
 Nichol End Marina
 Nordic Outdoors

Norwegian Store
 Old Keswickian
 Oxleys Underskiddaw
 Packhorse Inn
 Paramo
 Parkergate
 Peathouse
 Pheasant Inn
 Poets Interiors
 Portland House
 Primrose Cottage
 Rathbones
 Ravenstone Lodge Hotel
 Ravenstone Manor Hotel
 Ravensworth House
 Relish
 Rickerby Grange
 Rivendell G.H.
 Rohan
 Roly's Fudge Shop
 Royal Oak, Braithwaite
 Royal Oak, Keswick
 Royal Oak, Rosthwaite
 Salisbury G.H.
 Salutation Inn
 Saw Mill Café Dodd
 Scafell Hotel
 Scales Farm Cottage
 Seatoller House
 Seven Oaks
 Shell Petrol Station
 Shemara G.H.
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 Skiddaw Croft
 Skiddaw Grove Hotel
 Skiddaw Hotel
 Skiddaw House Hostel
 Spar
 Star of Siam
 Strathmore G.H.
 Stybeck Farm
 Sun Inn
 Sunnyside G.H.
 Sweet Treats
 Swinside Farm Cottage
 Swinside Inn
 Swinside Lodge
 Swiss Court Hotel
 Tarn Hows G.H.
 The Beeches
 The Chalet
 The Heights Hotel
 The Keswick Boot Co.
 The Lookout G.H.
 The Pocket
 The Puzzling Place
 Theatre By The Lake Restaurant
 Thornleigh G.H.
 Thornthwaite Gallery
 Travis Perkins
 Trespass
 Troubeck Caravan and Camp Site
 Troutbeck Inn
 Twa Dogs Inn
 Wainwright Inn
 West View G.H.
 Wetherspoons
 Whinlatter Siskin Tearoom
 White Horse Inn
 Wild Strawberry
 Winchester G.H.
 Winfields

The First 50

How does someone try to describe being a member of one of the busiest mountain rescue teams in the UK for 50 years? I've got no idea! There's no manual for this one.

- Should it be about all the rescues undertaken, probably in the region of 2000? Possibly.
- Should it be about how all things 'rescue' have changed over those 50 years? Possibly.
- Should it be about being part of an amazing group of people who will, at the drop of a hat, leave whatever they are doing (and I do mean whatever) to go and try to help someone in difficulty on the fells, no matter the time of day, no matter the weather and no matter the circumstances? Probably.
- Should there be some reference to 'how it was then' compared to 'how it is now' and some recollection of some of the rescues that spring to mind? Probably.

So, here goes;

I first got involved with the Team at the age of 16 or 17. I was in the Scouts at that time and working toward my Chief Scouts Award. Part of this included doing some voluntary work. As it happened Mike Nixon, my uncle, was a member and Deputy Leader of the Team and it ended up that my voluntary service was to help sort out equipment and tidy the garage, wash the vehicles etc after rescues. This very quickly morphed to me going on rescues; the first rescue I can actually recall was in September 1972, at age 17, to a fatal rock-climbing incident on Gillercombe Buttress. That probably wasn't my first rescue but is the first I remember. A graphic introduction.

I very clearly remember the way the team was called and assembled in those early days of my involvement. The team leader would be contacted by the Police and then there would be cascading land line phone calls to contact some members. One of the team vehicles would drive from its garage



Mark Hodgson (in light-coloured jacket, middle of back row), on one of his early rescues, with the Team at Sprinkling Tarn.

location around to the Police Station on Bank Street with the two-tone sirens on; this would 'collect' a few more members and the incident would go from there. The team had Landrovers by then and I recall some hairy journeys to rescues with the vehicle full of team members and sometimes a couple also standing on the back of the vehicle and travelling something like a side-car rider! Equipment at that time was indeed the most modern equipment available for our limited finances but bears no comparison to what we now have.

This has changed to what we have now. The full team is now messaged by the Police or North West Ambulance Service, team members start arriving at the base within minutes and we can have the first vehicle away from our base as quick as 10 minutes from receiving that first call. We have a state-of-the-art headquarters building, initially built new to our own design some 27 years ago and recently extended and upgraded by way of a £1 million extension. We have garaging for 6 vehicles and all our ever-increasing array of equipment plus training facilities that are second to none and an area specifically designed to operate as a Silver Control centre in the event of a major incident in the town such as flooding or the like.

As for rescues, in my early days in the Team we did perhaps 40 to 50 rescues each year, now we regularly get up to 120+, with the highest ever recorded of 140.

The level to which we now train team members has also massively increased. All training used to be done internally and locally. Thanks to our progressively much-improved financial position since the '70s this has enabled us to train professionally and to a much wider 'syllabus.' We use class leading and world-renowned experts to ensure team members are trained to the highest standards and to standard procedures where we can; the last place we need to have a debate on how to do something is on top of Great End at 2am in the morning in white-out conditions. In no way is this a criticism of what we did before, it was the best available at the time; it's just a reflection on how things have changed and developed over 50 years. A big strength of the Team is the constant development of what we do and how we do it, applying to everything: equipment, training, technology, medical skills etc.

What hasn't changed though is the camaraderie of team members; the total trust team members have in each other and the absolute commitment of all team members to do whatever they can to alleviate the suffering of our casualties. Backing this up is the huge support team members get from their families. Members past and present reflect on their membership of the team with pride – because it was, and is, a Team that sets standards and lives by them.

Whilst primarily being a team member I was privileged to be elected as a deputy leader for 3 years and then leader of the team for a further 20. Annual votes are held for all positions to confirm (or otherwise!) the ongoing support of the team members to undertake these roles. I followed Mike Nixon, George Fisher and Rusty Westmorland into the leader role. What a trio to follow; I am very grateful for the massive support I received from everyone in the Team (well I think mostly everyone, most of the time, !) during these roles.

As for rescues, with something like 2000 undertaken over my 50 years, many of them are now no longer in the memory banks but there are some of course that do stand out.

These rescues include:

- Many fatalities, including some casualties that I and other team members knew.
- They include many rescues in absolutely awful weather conditions which, in a bit of a masochistic way, can be 'enjoyable.'
- They include accidents to youngsters or accidents to parents accompanied by youngsters.
- They include searches for lost and missing people, some of which extend to multi-day incidents and involve many many rescue team members (200+ on the largest) from several teams.
- They include: the number of (often very serious) accidents on Sharp Edge, Blencathra; the growth of hang-gliding and later paragliding accidents in the early days of those sports; the growth in mountain biking incidents (including a callout to my son).
- They also include a rescue where I was taken ill whilst on a rescue and needed the team and the Great North Air Ambulance to treat me and get me to hospital.



Mark Hodgson (far right) - Patrol Leader, 1st Keswick Scouts, October 1967, Ashness campsite: Mark's first-ever "mountain rescue".

- They include perhaps what remains my most vivid rescue when we were called to assist with the tragic fatal A66 coach crash involving local school children – and then the next day we were called to a casualty with a dislocated finger.
- They also include the many hundreds where we've been supported by RAF helicopters and more recently Coastguard helicopters, Air Ambulances and by neighbouring teams.

Throughout all these rescues the Team have always chosen not to criticise. Yes, we occasionally have a quiet chat following an incident, but we would never publicly criticise. Let's face it no-one sets off at the beginning of the day thinking 'today I'm going to have an accident.' Sadly, a reflection of our times is the willingness of people to become 'Facebook Warriors' or the like when we report incidents on our social media. The team exists to help people who need our help and does not get involved in such 'debate.'

As I approached the end of my 20 years as leader, I was hugely humbled and extremely proud to be awarded an MBE for services to mountain rescue; to get such an award for doing something you love doing is just the icing on the cake. That award would not have been possible without the support and commitment of the Team and all its members; in my mind my MBE is for the whole Team.

Almost 9 years have passed since standing down as leader and handing over to "Chiggs", I'm now just one of the foot-soldiers. I still hugely enjoy each and every rescue I go on. I still get a buzz when the pager message comes in and the satisfaction that I'm part of a team doing its best to help our casualty and I'm still frustrated if I can't get to rescues. Once one, several or all of the above fade then that will be the right time to reconsider but, in the meantime, here's to the next 50!

Mark Hodgson MBE



The Team was shocked and saddened to hear the news in July of 2022 that Nuala Dowie had passed away.

Nuala was a long-serving Team member. She joined in 1988, and was then fully active in the Team until her sudden death. During those 34 years she had attended over 930 callouts.

A local, born in Carlisle, she was a highly committed and valued member of the Team, putting her knowledge and love of the outdoors to very good use. In particular, she loved the Borrowdale valley, where she had lived, at Rosthwaite, throughout her time with the Team.

Nuala served as Team Secretary from 2001 to 2005, and in recent years had also been Social Secretary for the Team. With a bright and cheerful, exuberant personality, and with a teaching background, and then as a hotelier, she was adept with her “people skills”, whether it be with Team matters, or with casualty care on a callout.

Truly a “force of nature”, Nuala was never one to shy away from arguing her case, with a passion and an enthusiasm. Often, or indeed usually, this included wit and a sense of humour!

In 2023, as the Team looks forward to the completion of all the work associated with the Base extension, it is appropriate to remember, too, that

Nuala played an important part in the development of the Base prior to the recent extension works. In 1995-1996, Nuala was the Appeal Secretary for the Team’s new base, to be built at the Lakeside Car Park. With support having been denied from the National Lottery, the Team made progress raising the large sum of monies needed with the generous support of many individuals and organisations. It was acknowledged that Nuala had put in hundreds of hours in running the Appeal so successfully.

Nuala always found time to engage with all Team members, and is greatly missed by all, being, it should be said, an act that it is impossible to follow.

At the service of thanksgiving at Borrowdale Church, a large number of Team members, present and retired, were present. Together with her family, and with a large number of friends, local and from away, including to do with her other passions, such as classic car motor rallying, this meant that the church was packed! Total recognition of all the respect felt about Nuala.

She leaves behind her ex-partner and her two children, and other family members.

Continuing thoughts and sympathies of the Team are with all her family.

A tribute to search dog Bracken

Search Dog Bracken

January 2009-November 2022

Lakes Search Dogs and Keswick MRT

In early November, my beautiful Search Dog Bracken padded peacefully over rainbow bridge after being with me for over 12 years. He was nearly 14 years old. I like to imagine him now running free as he used to with his fellow search dog companions.

Bracken was a big beautiful dark brown tri colour fluffy collie with a happy smiley face and has been called the collie with the teddy bear face which I think suited him well.

He had a lovely soft flowing coat, he was gentle and affectionate – sometimes in a ‘full on bounce on you way’ but also in a very gentle way-just a slight nudge, raise of the paw or deep unfaltering gaze straight into my eyes. He loved people and would lean against them for attention. He was steady and trusting, though stubborn and awkward when he didn’t want to do something but most of all fun loving and playful.

In August 2010, Bracken came home with me from a farm, he was just over 18 months old. I was supposed to help find him a home and as I already had two search dogs I felt I was safe enough from acquiring another. However, Bracken had other ideas and as soon as I met him I felt we bonded and I couldn’t tolerate the thought of anyone else having him.

Following a walk, he jumped into the boot of the car after the other two like he knew that was where he was meant to be and came home. Away from the farm he was timid and it took time to build confidence in the big outside world with all the new places and noises. He wouldn’t come into the house to start with and peeped round the kitchen door from the porch-his temporary home.

With two other confident collies, he soon came out of his shell. He came out with us and played the search games which he loved, especially when I ran around and then hid so he would race to find me and bark then roll around on the ground playing tug where he liked to have several toys all at once. He quickly became very good at searching for articles giving the other two a challenge and could even find my mobile phone, pager and keys which came in handy several times.

When Meg developed a repetitive strain injury and I was unsure if it would resolve, it was a natural progression to train Bracken as a search dog and he passed his introductory obedience test in May 2012. He loved searching and was so excited when he found, he would bounce about and bark to get his toy reward.

After steady progress and a few glitches, Bracken qualified as a Search Dog in July 2014 following a gruelling final mountain assessment that took us to the tops of the Coniston fells for nearly five hours.

Bracken loved being out in all weathers, just being out anywhere though especially in the high fells. He loved water, swimming and just lying in it, any stream or boggy puddle would do. He also enjoyed accompanying me to talks to the WI and schools where he would do search demonstrations and received lots of fuss and has featured in Cumbria Life and Country Living Magazine.

Bracken particularly loved winter, on the hills in the snow, he was in his element and accompanied me skiing and snowshoeing. On our winter training, he was a strong digger using his big paws to dig down for people buried under the snow and then using his weight to barge into the hole in eagerness to get his tug toy.

He has been on boats, on chairlifts and flown in helicopters, all which he took in his stride, so long as he was with me, he trusted me to look after him.

In spring 2016 he suffered a major setback where an injury in training led to the fusion of his left wrist and I thought he wouldn’t work again. He recovered very well and being a big, strong dog, following a vet assessment he began search work again in December the same year.

On his second callout following becoming operational, after five and a half hours of searching in west Cumbria on a cold Sunday in December, he found an elderly gentleman who had been missing since the Friday lunchtime. The gentleman, who was in a severely hypothermic state, but alive, was airlifted to hospital and to be with his family. It is an amazing feeling when your dog finds, I was so proud of Bracken.

He has had a wonderful, exciting life, working as a search dog with Keswick Mountain Rescue team, accompanying the team and teams across Cumbria, out in all weathers searching for missing



people. Bracken retired in December 2020 after being operational for six and a half years. He taught me patience and working as a team, each dog is different, and you have to really work together to get the understanding and the subtle communication needed to work the fells in all weathers.

I have many wonderful memories of all we did together, the places we have been and the adventures we have had, and even though you know the time is coming, it feels unreal and unimaginable to even consider saying goodbye. Having no physical presence or feeling him close

to me, his quizzical and loving looks, the paw, the gentle nudge of his nose and not being able to stroke him is the hardest part.

Having been such a big part of my life for so long, to just be gone is devastating and which only time can heal. He was my constant companion and partner, treading the fells with me, on mountain rescue callouts and searches for missing people.

Our bond was deep, he was my heart and soul. I miss him and he will always be with me.

Rest in peace my beautiful Bear.

Elly Whiteford

A Probationer's Account

After 15 years in the South of England I moved back to the Lake District, upheaving my entire family from the Isle of Wight (one of the warmest and driest place in the UK) to Keswick (one of the coldest and wettest). For nearly ten years of my time in the South I was part of Cowes RNLI, rising to the rank of Helm (inshore coxswain) of the lifeboat. With a decade of SAR experience, and being a keen mountaineer, I decided to apply to join Keswick Mountain Rescue. It was more challenging to join than I expected, but equally one of the most rewarding years in rescue organisations I've done.

It's not as simple as rocking up and joining the team. We had to demonstrate that we can not only be a vital participating member of the team, but not take the place of a better candidate or worse, be a liability and potential danger.

The probation year took a rocky start. I missed the assessment day due to a family illness, then missed the second assessment day due to catching Covid the night before. Thinking my Mountain Rescue career was over before it started I was a bit distraught, but was very grateful to get a third-time lucky assessment day. It was a real test, but also a lot of fun and thankfully passed.

One of our first callouts was a real eye-opener, rescue #29 to a stranded couple of sharp edge. Thankfully it was a beautiful day, the sun was out, no clouds in the sky and barely a whisper of wind, a perfect fell day.

The adrenaline was pumping from the first message and we jumped into the land rover buzzing with excitement. Zooming along the A66 we looked out the window and reality kicked in. With the casualty location we had to run to the top and belay down to pick them up. "Don't worry lads, it's just 800 metres" came the chuckle from team leader Chiggs.

I had carried a 100m rope for the assessment day, but now under the pressure of the rescue, it wasn't a fast-paced walk, but a straight sprint up 800 metres with a 10-15kg pack.

I've done fell races, marathons, triathlons and even the odd ultra distance race, but this was tough work. Soaked in sweat from the blistering sun, legs weighed down and heart pounding like it's never done before, we made it to the top in just 45 minutes, not bad going for a sailor. But, no time to take in the stunning views; a belay was set up and we made a quick extraction of the casualties who had just wandered off the path and found themselves crag fast.

The rescue was so well organised and coordinated. Everybody had a job and got on with it in a very calm collected manor. It became evident that within the team is an immense amount of knowledge, skill and experience (some stretching over 50 years). I just had to sit there and soak in as much as I could.

For the next nine months, I took part in nearly 40 rescues, you lose track fairly quickly. It's tough, not just on ourselves, but on our families and I am very grateful to my wife, Heather, for allowing me to run out at a moment's notice. I tell her it'll be a quick one and back in an hour, but they're generally the ones that become a double rescue and last eight hours.

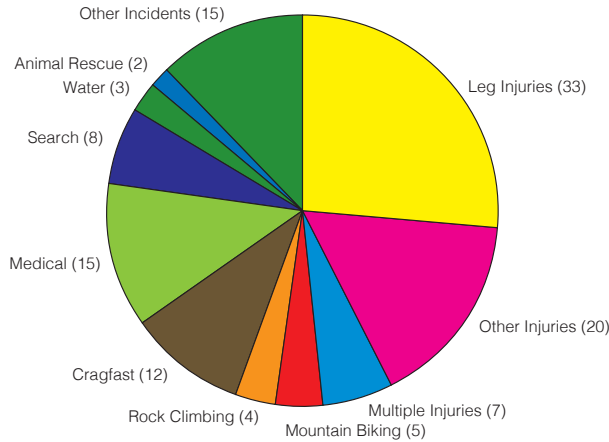
I am also very grateful to KMRT for all the meticulous training they have offered. It's been an incredible year of learning, from casualty care practises to international avalanche rescue techniques. However, it has recently been topped with a weekend winter skills training course amongst the highest mountains in the UK learning everything needed not just to survive in the harshest of winter environments, but also to assist in the rescue of others.

Anybody can have an accident on the fells. It takes a simple trip or miscalculation of a step. But, this year has given me confidence that if something happened to me I would be in incredibly safe hands. Although I'm sure they'd never let me forget it!

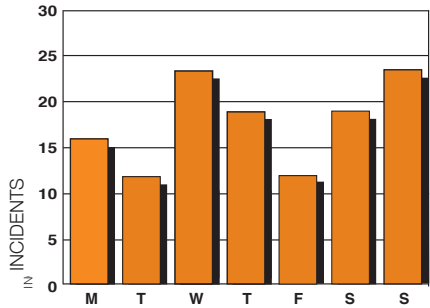
Alasdair Boden

INCIDENT TYPES 2022

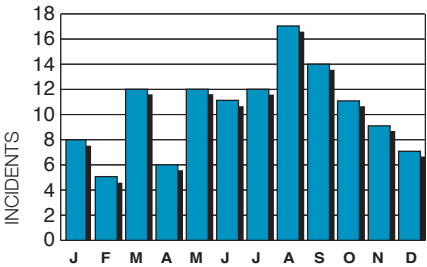
Figures in brackets refer to number of incidents, not percentage of incident types



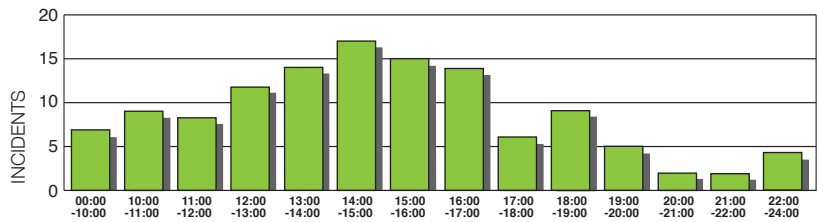
DAYS OF THE WEEK 2022



MONTHS OF THE YEAR 2022



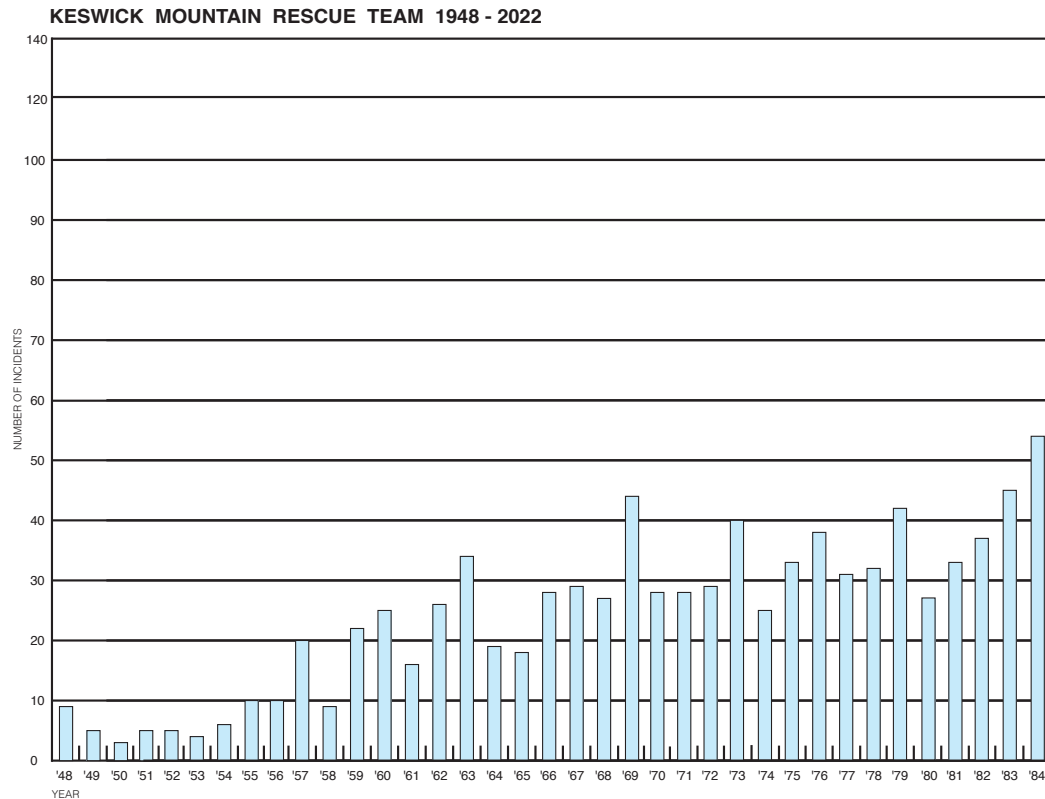
HOURS OF THE DAY 2022

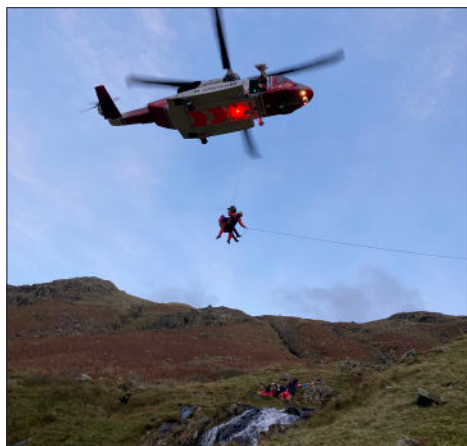


Number of Incidents Per Year



Incident 111 - Stonycroft Gill.

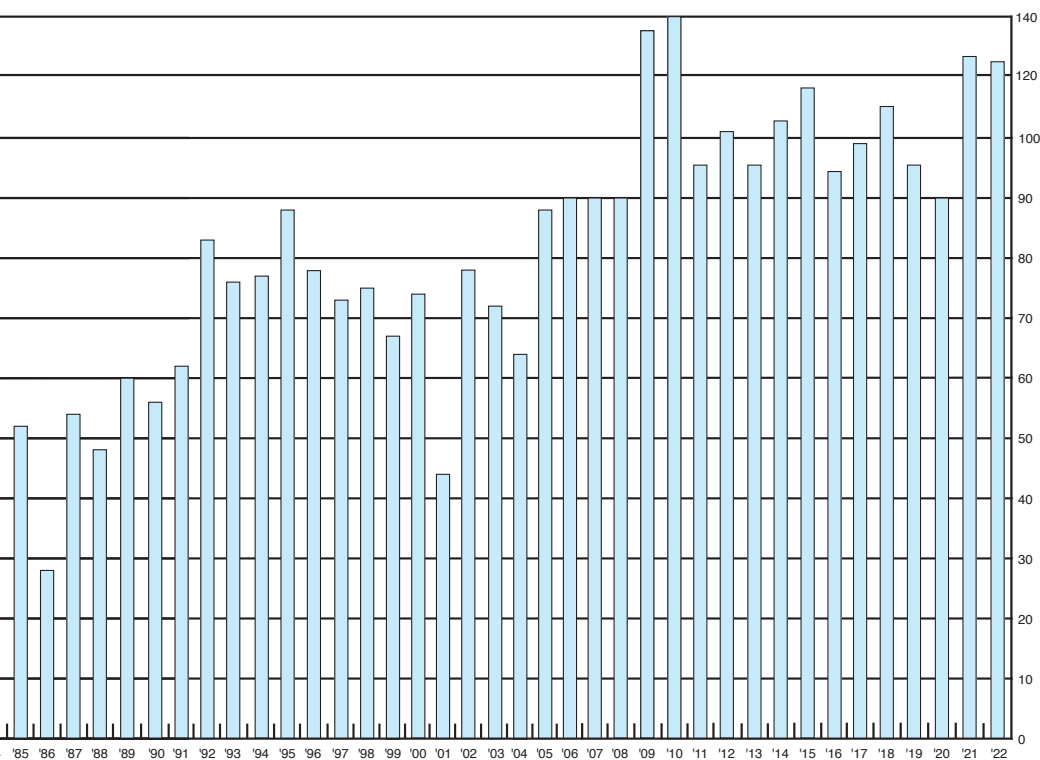




Incident 117 - Langstrath.



Incident 118 - Dock Tarn





Incident 10 - Rosthwaite.

1. **1st January 2022 15:15 Glaramara**
A woman had become disorientated in thick mist.
2. **6th January 2022 17:23 Halls Fell, Blencathra**
A fell runner had a 'delirious episode' whilst descending Hall's Fell. He was unable to continue. The Team provided medical attention. A Coastguard helicopter took the casualty to hospital. Penrith MRT provided support for this incident.
3. **7th January 2022 23:43 Raven Crag, Thirlmere**
A man injured his leg with an axe whilst collecting wood for a campfire.
4. **13th January 2022 16:04 Blencathra**
A man had become lost, after getting disorientated in cloud.
5. **22nd January 2022 11:14 High Doat**
A man had started to suffer chest pains and shortness of breath. An Air Ambulance arrived at the scene at the same time as the Team. After being assessed by team doctors, the man was able to be walked off the hill and down to a waiting ambulance.
6. **23rd January 2022 14:55 Stonethwaite**
A woman slipped on a rock and fell. The fall exacerbated an existing lower back injury.
7. **29th January 2022 13:20 Whinlatter Forest**
A mountain biker crashed on the Red South Loop trail. When the Team arrived, he had regained consciousness. After a thorough check over by a team doctor, the man was able to walk to the team vehicle and was driven down to an awaiting ambulance. A RAF MRT helped the Team in this incident.
8. **31st January 2022 09:48 Little Narrowcove, Scafell Pike**
The Team was asked to support Wasdale MRT, who were dealing with a callout in the Little Narrowcove area. Team members reached Esk Hause, but were then given the "all clear" to return to base.
9. **5th February 2022 10:25 Sharp Edge, Blencathra**
A group of four men asked for assistance. On arrival the Team could not locate the four men on the ridge, and it transpired that they had self-rescued by scrambling down the tricky north gully.
10. **8th February 2022 12:43 Rosthwaite**
A woman had slipped and twisted her knee, while walking towards Castle Crag.
11. **23rd February 2022 14:26 Skiddaw**
Two walkers asked for assistance in extremely windy conditions on the summit ridge. With some encouragement over the phone, they made their way back along the ridge, linked up with a couple of other walkers, and self-rescued. The Team was stood down when it was learnt that the walkers were in safe and less exposed terrain.
12. **25th February 2022 19:01 Blea Crag, Robinson**
Two women became benighted on difficult ground, and called for help. They were assisted to safety using a short rope, before being walked off the fell.

- 13. 28th February 2022 12:10 Gate Gill, Blencathra**
Two walkers followed what they thought was the path down Hall's Fell but, in poor visibility, instead found themselves on steep ground leading into Gate Gill. They felt unable to either proceed or retrace their steps, so they asked for help. The Team guided them around the steep fell back onto the path on the lower part of Hall's Fell.
- 14. 1st March 2022 10:20 Cat Bells**
A man had collapsed on a path on the lower slopes of Cat Bells. He recovered significantly, and after an assessment by a Team doctor, he was able to be walked off the fell, down to an awaiting ambulance.
- 15. 5th March 2022 15:40 Ullock Pike**
A woman had slipped and injured her ankle.
- 16. 6th March 2022 10:03 Sourmilk Gill, Seathwaite**
A woman had slipped at the top of the path, and injured her ankle.
- 17. 7th March 2022 15:29 Helvellyn**
A man had taken a 200m tumbling fall from near the summit of Helvellyn. The Team was deployed to Swirls car park at Thirlmere. The GNAAS Air Ambulance crew was first on scene and they advised that the man was located by Red Tarn on the east side of Helvellyn. The incident was therefore passed over to Patterdale MRT. The Air Ambulance took the man to hospital.
- 18. 21st March 2022 19:35 Grains Gill, Seathwaite**
Two walkers had run out of daylight after one of them developed a sore knee that slowed progress. They were found part way up Grains Gill and were walked down to Seathwaite.
- 19. 22nd March 2022 18:15 Seathwaite**
The Langdale and Ambleside MRT requested support to help with a casualty suffering abdominal pains in the Angle Tarn area below Esk Pike. Keswick MRT deployed a small team to help the friends of the casualty back to their vehicle at Seathwaite. However, the party was equipped and capable and assistance was not required.
- 20. 23rd March 2022 15:01 Skiddaw**
A woman had tripped and taken a heavy fall onto her leg.
- 21. 23rd March 2022 16:04 Scope Beck, Newlands**
A woman had suffered an ankle injury. Cockermouth MRT helped the Team with this incident.
- 22. 24th March 2022 17:34 Stonethwaite**
A man had started to feel very unwell, on the Dock Tarn path. The Team helped to support him down to Stonethwaite. He was checked over by Team and ambulance medics before transfer to hospital.
- 23. 25th March 2022 16:23 Scales Fell, Blencathra**
A woman had tripped and hit her head, causing a deep wound and smashing her glasses. Although conscious, the walker was shaken by the experience, and requested assistance. After an assessment and treatment, she was able to walk down with the Team. Penrith MRT had been on stand-by to help with this callout.
- 24. 27th March 2022 15:04 Langstrath**
A man suffered head and ankle injuries, while rock climbing on an outcrop above Black Moss Pot. An Air Ambulance was able to land close to the casualty. After treatment, the casualty was stretchered to the helicopter, which took him to hospital.



Incident 24 - Langstrath.

Incident Reports 2022

25. 29th March 2022 12:49 Robinson

A couple were descending the north east ridge of Robinson when one became crag-fast on a rocky outcrop. The Team was able to rope the person in difficulty down to safe ground.

26. 3rd April 2022 16:25 Raven Crag

A woman suffered a lower leg injury.

27. 20th April 2022 15:40 Ladder Brow, Borrowdale

A man had taken a tumble and had banged his head.

28. 23rd April 2022 14:20 Low Snab, Newlands

A man slipped on a wet patch of ground below Goldscope Mine, and fell, sustaining an injury to his ankle. Some members of the Lake District Mountain Rescue Dog Association happened to be training close by, and were able to quickly come to his assistance, in advance of the Team's arrival.

29. 28th April 2022 15:58 Sharp Edge, Blencathra

A couple went off-route on the final climb of Sharp Edge, and became stuck on steep and tricky ground overlooking Scales Tarn. A ropework system was set-up by the Team, so that the couple were able to scramble up the crag, with the safety of ropes and support from Team members.

30. 30th April 2022 13:19 Rigg Beck, Newlands

A woman suffered an ankle injury while taking part in a fell running event. An Air Ambulance took her to hospital.

31. 30th April 2022 14:54 Seathwaite

A woman tripped on the path between Seathwaite and Stockley Bridge, and broke an ankle. Members of RAF Valley MRT helped the Team.

32. 6th May 2022 21:50 Wren Crag, High Rigg

The Team was alerted by the police regarding an "emergency" at the south end of High Rigg. No more details could be ascertained. Team members searched the location from where the 999 call had been made, then the rest of that part of High Rigg. At 23:30, after a discussion with the police, the Team called the search off due to lack of information. The full story emerged the next day: a couple's car had broken down, and the man had to walk to the top of Wren Crag before he got a phone signal, and from there he called the police. Then, however, almost immediately the call cut off. Repeated attempts failed until his phone battery died. He had meantime managed to get hold of the RAC, who came to the rescue.

33. 7th May 2022 16:53 Grains Gill, Borrowdale

A man took a tumble and fell, sustaining a minor head injury.

34. 9th May 2022 18:14 Derwentwater

A couple were on a canoe sail trip when a strong gust of wind caused their canoe to capsize, leaving them in the water, with the canoe and contents drifting away downwind. Fortunately, they were close to Rampsholme Island, and they were able to swim to the island. Keswick MRT was able to make use of the Derwentwater Marina rescue boat. The canoe and contents were also salvaged.



Incident 34 - Derwentwater.



Incident 38 - Bram Crag Quarry, St Johns in the Vale.

- 35. 11th May 2022 17:16 Lining Crag, Greenup Gill**
A man was injured at the top of Greenup Gill. It seemed that the problem was a pre-existing soft tissue injury that was triggered by the steep rocky descent on the path by Lining Crag. The man had tried to continue, but was in so much pain that a call for help was made.
- 36. 12th May 2022 16:23 Lonscale Fell**
A walker on the Cumbria Way path under Lonscale Fell had fallen, and broken her arm. The Team learnt on the way to the incident that the casualty had 'self-rescued', and had been given a lift by passing walkers to Keswick Hospital.
- 37. 17th May 2022 14:50 Doddick Fell, Blencathra**
A mountain biker crashed a short distance above the fell wall, dislocating his elbow.
- 38. 18th May 2022 14:33 Bram Crag Quarry, St Johns in the Vale**
A climber slipped whilst trying to clip her rope into bolt protection near the top of a sport climb in Bram Crag Quarry. There was an impact against the rock which caused her back and rib injuries. An Air Ambulance took her to hospital.
- 39. 22nd May 2022 16:53 Sharp Edge, Blencathra**
A walker had become lost in cloud, and descended towards Sharp Edge. He slipped, and slid a short distance into a gully. The Team set up a rope system on Sharp Edge, and lowered the man to safer ground below, from where members of Penrith MRT guided him down the fell.
- 40. 23rd May 2022 12:52 Great Wood, Walla Crag**
A man had fallen, sustaining a large cut to his scalp.
- 41. 24th May 2022 13:37 Knotts, above Rothwaite**
Two men had lost their way on steep ground, and were unsure of their ability to retreat. The Team helped them down to Rothwaite.
- 42. 28th May 2022 11:06 Hall's Fell, Blencathra**
A man slipped while descending, tore a thigh muscle, and was unable to continue.
- 43. 31st May 2022 11:43 Stockley Bridge, Seathwaite**
A woman had slipped and injured her ankle at Stockley Bridge.



Incident 45 - Greenhow Knott, above Stockley Bridge.

- 44. 1st June 2022 14:11 Great Crag, Watendlath**
A teenager dislocated a knee after tripping on the descent path from Dock Tarn towards Watendlath.
- 45. 3rd June 2022 19:29 Greenhow Knott, above Stockley Bridge**
A woman suffered an ankle injury.
- 46. 5th June 2022 13:02 Raven Crag, Glaramara**
A man and his daughter were climbing on Raven Crag above Combe Gill when the man fell some distance. A mountain guide abseiled down to the man to offer assistance, having called for mountain rescue. In the light of the circumstances the Team asked for a Coast Guard helicopter as well as an Air Ambulance to attend. The Team was greatly assisted by members of RAF Leeming MRT. The rescue teams approached from below and were able to reach the man in Raven Crag Gully. Despite the best efforts of everyone, tragically the man died from the injuries sustained from his fall. The daughter was located at the bottom of the crag, and was examined by the Team and the crew of the Air Ambulance. She was flown to hospital by the Coastguard helicopter. Keswick and RAF Leeming MRTs then evacuated the man by stretcher to the valley. Our thoughts are with the family and friends.
- 47. 8th June 2022 12:35 Sharp Edge, Blencathra**
A walker became crag fast on the slabs. A Team was despatched to help him down. A couple, who were also attempting to climb Sharp Edge, reached the crux steep section and decided it was too dangerous, and reversed the ridge. On their return, they met the stuck man. The man of the couple was able to continue down to meet the Team, and indicate the location of the now two stuck people. A safety line was set up and the two were safely brought down.
- 48. 11th June 2022 00:49 Derwentwater**
The Coast Guard received a 'Mayday' message from an unidentified vessel, via the Derwentwater mast, with no more information. Keswick MRT, the Fire Service and the Coast Guard were tasked to search all parts of the lakeshore, while a Maryport Inshore Lifeboat searched the lake. A Coastguard helicopter carried out an aerial search. However, nothing was found, and the search was called off.
- 49. 16th June 2022 11:58 Shepherds Crag, Borrowdale**
A woman and her dog had become stuck on a ledge after following a wrong path. The Team helped the woman to walk off using a back-up safety line, while her dog was assisted close behind.
- 50. 17th June 2022 12:40 Sharp Edge, Blencathra**
A Labrador dog had fallen some distance off Sharp Edge, towards Scales Tarn. The dog's owner, along with two Penrith MRT members, who were in the area, went to assist, and improvised a stretcher to carry the dog. Keswick MRT met the party, and stretchered the dog down to the road. The owner took the dog to a veterinary practice for checks and treatment.
- 51. 18th June 2022 02:52 Seathwaite**
Two men were on the Corridor Route, between Sty Head and Scafell Pike, when one tripped and fell, and sustained head injuries. After making a call for help, the two made their way down towards the Seathwaite valley, where the Team met them and was able to assist.
- 52. 22nd June 2022 23:46 Skiddaw**
The Team was deployed in the early hours of the 23rd to help a woman descend from the summit of Skiddaw, after concerns were raised for her well-being.
- 53. 23rd June 2022 10:50 Knott**
A man slipped and suffered a calf injury which prevented him from continuing.
- 54. 25th June 2022 15:42 Watendlath**
A man tripped and fell, while walking on the path from Watendlath to Rosthwaite. He became slightly confused, unsteady and complaining of chest pains. The Team and an Air Ambulance attended the incident. The casualty was taken by land ambulance to hospital for treatment of a suspected cracked sternum.

55. 4th July 2022 15:45 Scafell

A search was launched by Wasdale MRT, with the help of the LDMR Search Dogs, for a missing man in the Scafell range. Keswick MRT was requested to help extend the search area. The search was, unfortunately, unsuccessful and Keswick MRT stood down from the incident the next day.

56. 6th July 2022 13:03 Hall's Fell, Blencathra

A walker and his dog had become cragfast on steep ground beside Hall's Fell Ridge. A ropework system was used to recover the pair back on to the ridge path.

57. 7th July 2022 16:28 Watendlath

A student on an expedition fainted on the bridgeway above Watendlath. The expedition leaders called for help. On arrival, the Team assessed the casualty, and heat illness was ruled out. The casualty was able to walk with assistance back to Watendlath.

58. 9th July 2022 17:09 Great Calva

A woman had slipped on steep ground and injured her ankle.

59. 10th July 2022 15:38 Scales Tarn, Blencathra

A teenager, who had been swimming in Scales Tarn, became unwell, cold and weak after getting out. An Air Ambulance crew was able to land nearby and provided initial treatment. The man recovered so that he was able to walk down the fell with the Team.

60. 11th July 2022 22:45 Glaramara

A couple became lost on their route back to Seathwaite. One of the pair had Type 1 diabetes and, since they had been out longer than they were prepared for, was by now overdue their insulin. The couple asked for assistance. The casualty was assessed and it was determined that they could be walked off the hill without treatment.

61. 12th July 2022 15:48 Cat Bells

The Team was asked by the police to help with a search for a man suffering from dementia who had not returned to meet his partner at their arranged time. The man had set off to walk up Cat Bells. A search of the area was made, expanding outwards to cover additional paths as necessary. After nearly three hours the man was located safe and well at Buttermere.

62. 13th July 2022 11:28 Corridor Route, Scafell Pike

The Team was contacted by Wasdale MRT for assistance in helping a vulnerable person. Wasdale MRT had helped the man down from the Corridor Route to Sty Head. Keswick MRT members then walked with him down to Seathwaite.

63. 13th July 2022 14:07 Brundholme Wood, Latrigg

A man on the old road, in Brundholme Wood, had fallen from his bike, suffering injuries to his shoulder and knee, and was unable to bear weight.



Incident 58 - Great Calva.

Incident Reports 2022

- 64. 29th July 2022 18:39 Seathwaite Fell**
A teenager was on a walk with his family, but he wandered off on his own. The boy managed to phone for help after getting into difficulty. Unfortunately, contact was lost. The Team searched on the paths leading from Seathwaite, before heading up Seathwaite Fell. Eventually the boy was spotted crag-fast on a ledge on Aaron Crag. He was guided to over the top of the fell, and down a safe route. Contact was later made with the family, and the boy and family were re-united.
- 65. 31st July 2022 05:28 Northern Fells**
This was a search for a missing man who had gone for a walk in the fells in the Caldbeck area, on the 30th. A wide area of the fells north of Skiddaw and Blencathra was searched, with Keswick and RAF Leeming MRT team members, plus the Lakes Search Dog Team. A police helicopter was also tasked. The man was located at Skiddaw House.
- 66. 31st July 2022 15:59 Threlkeld Knotts, Clough Head**
A paraglider pilot suffered a heavy landing, causing a lower leg break. An Air Ambulance was able to land close to the casualty, and provided treatment. Keswick MRT provided stretcher support to the aircraft, which then took the casualty to hospital.
- 67. 1st August 2022 16:35 Brown Cove Crag, Helvellyn**
A woman slipped, and suffered an injury to her ankle whilst descending towards Swirls car park.
- 68. 1st August 2022 18:26 Raven Crag, Grey Knotts**
A walker had heard convincing cries of help. When attempts were made to hail the caller, no reply was heard. A solitary figure was seen stationary on the crag, but it wasn't possible to ascertain if that was related to the cries. The Team made a search of the area where the reported shouts were heard. There was no evidence of anyone on the crags, nothing was seen or heard.
- 69. 3rd August 2022 14:46 Hall's Fell, Blencathra**
A teenage boy had wandered ahead of a family group of walkers. After some time of not seeing the boy and shouting to no effect, the family asked for help searching for the boy. On arrival at the base of the fell, the team spotted the young man low on Gategill Fell, and the rest of the family could be seen descending Hall's Fell. The family were reunited.
- 70. 3rd August 2022 18:54 Dollywaggon Pike**
A man had become lost in mist and rain. Initially his call for help went to Patterdale MRT. A 'phone-find' put his position close to Dollywaggon Pike. He was instructed to continue on southwards, and down towards Grisedale Tarn, then turn right, (westwards). The Team met the man as he was descending Raise Beck, towards Dunmail Raise.
- 71. 4th August 2022 18:22 Barrow & Stile End area**
A walker, descending Barrow towards Braithwaite, had heard calls of 'help me' 5 or 6 times. Owing to the wind direction, she believed the calls to be coming from the lower slopes of Grisedale Pike. The Team investigated, but, after a search of the area between Barrow and Stile End, then along the Coledale track to Force Crag, nothing untoward was seen or heard.
- 72. 5th August 2022 21:18 Barrow**
A mountain biker came off his bike near the top of Barrow, breaking his lower leg.
- 73. 6th August 2022 10:38 Carl Side**
A woman slipped on scree and suffered an ankle injury.
- 74. 7th August 2022 12:54 Jenkin Hill, Skiddaw**
A walker had heard cries for help from a child in the ravine of Whit Beck. More information arrived from the police concerning a child who had run off up Skiddaw. A passer-by managed to help the child out of the ravine, from where they made their way across Lonscale Fell, to be met by Team members, who then escorted the child back to his mother at the Gale Road car park.
- 75. 9th August 2022 14:01 Galleny Force, Stonethwaite**
A man had slipped, and fallen, resulting in a head injury.
- 76. 10th August 2022 14:13 Shepherds Crag, Borrowdale**
A man fell a short distance, causing an arm fracture.
- 77. 14th August 2022 16:16 Blackmoss Pot, Langstrath**
A girl sustained suspected serious head and neck injuries. An Air Ambulance landed close by. The Team stretchered the casualty to the Air Ambulance, and she was taken to hospital.
- 78. 17th August 2022 15:27 Grisedale Pike**
A fell-runner tripped, and fell. She suffered severe cuts.
- 79. 17th August 2022 17:18 Beckstones Gill, Barf**
On the path south of Beckstones Gill, a woman had injured her ankle.
- 80. 22nd August 2022 16:54 Sharp Edge, Blencathra**
A couple had become crag-fast on a lower-level traverse. The Team set up a rope system to bring them on to the Edge, and to help them scramble to safe ground.
- 81. 26th August 2022 18:09 Surprise View**
A woman had fallen from Surprise View, overlooking Derwentwater. A KMRT member and an Air Ambulance doctor were lowered from the top to the woman, whilst a group of Team members made an approach to the base of the cliff. Tragically, the woman died from her injuries in the fall. Our deepest thoughts and sympathies go to the woman's family and friends.



Incident 77 - Langstrath.

82. 27th August 2022 14:19 Hall's Fell, Blencathra

A woman tripped and suffered an ankle injury.

83. 29th August 2022 13:31 Crow Park, Keswick

A woman had collapsed in Crow Park. The casualty was assessed, and carried by stretcher to the KMRT base for further assessment, and to await the arrival of an ambulance.

84. 1st September 2022 15:31 Bramcrag Quarry, St-Johns-in-the-Vale

A man was rock climbing in Bramcrag Quarry. His belayer on the ground felt a weight come onto the rope as, without warning, the man collapsed unconscious. The casualty was just above a ledge, and it was not possible to lower him to the ground. The ground party managed to get up to him by re-climbing the route, and as he wasn't breathing, started CPR. On arrival the Team assisted in the lowering of the man to the ground, where he had immediate medical attention.

Tragically, the man had no signs of life. Our thoughts and deepest sympathies go out to the friends and family of the man.

85. 3rd September 2022 13:36 Castle Head

A woman slipped near the top of Castle Head, resulting in an ankle injury.

86. 4th September 2022 09:55 Sail Beck

A teenager had slipped, and sustained a head injury. Upon arrival on scene, a Team doctor assessed the casualty, and she was deemed to have recovered sufficiently to be able to walk out.

87. 5th September 2022 12:17 Thornythwaite Fell, Glaramara

A couple had become crag-fast on Thornythwaite Fell. Team members searched various locations on the fell, but the Team was later informed that a couple of climbers had helped the couple to safety.



Incident 93 - Brundholme.

88. 5th September 2022 14:46 Ruddy Gill, Seathwaite Fell

A man suffered a serious medical condition, near the top of Ruddy Gill. An Air Ambulance managed to land close to the casualty, and took him to hospital.

89. 8th September 2022 12:41 Fisherplace Gill, Thirlspot

A woman slipped on a wet path near Fisherplace Gill, and suffered an ankle injury.

90. 8th September 2022 13:52 Whinlatter Forest

A woman had fallen from her mountain bike, and suffered a shoulder injury.

91. 14th September 2022 19:11 Angle Tarn

A mountain biker fell from his bike and dislocated his shoulder, near Angle Tarn east of Esk Hause. A Coastguard helicopter took him to hospital.

92. 16th September 2022 23:55 Honister Hause

A man had failed to show up after a walk over Great Gable. Apparently, a light could be seen, from Honister Pass, that may or may not have been moving on the Drum House path. The Team went to Honister Pass to investigate, but by the time they reached the Youth Hostel there, the overdue person had turned up.

93. 20th September 2022 13:47 Brundholme

A man slipped and fell down a slope, near to the old railway line at Brundholme Wood, causing a possible broken rib.

94. 21st September 2022 19:46 Ruddy Gill, Borrowdale

A small group were descending, and were overtaken by nightfall. One walker stumbled and fell, sustaining injuries to their elbow and leg, which slowed their progress. Team members assisted the walkers down to Seathwaite.

95. 25th September 2022 12:16 Scaley Beck, Blencathra

A man slipped on the side of Scaley Beck, resulting in a deep laceration to a knee. One of the man's companions applied a wound dressing, and helped the man descend, before the Team arrived. One Team member, who lives locally, was able to help the man back to his vehicle.

96. 26th September 2022 15:00 Ashness

A woman fell while walking above Ashness Bridge, and suffered a leg injury.

97. 30th September 2022 20:24 Lord's Seat

A woman had lost her way while descending Lord's Seat. The Team located her and returned her to her vehicle.

98. 6th October 2022 13:12 Ashness

While walking the path between Walla Crag and Ashness Bridge, a woman slipped and suffered an ankle injury.

99. 9th October 2022 11:09 Scafell Pike

A man had become separated from his party, shortly after leaving the summit of Scafell Pike. In cloud and in windy conditions, they had not been able to locate him. Wasdale and Duddon MRTs searched overnight, without success. The search resumed in the morning of the 9th October, with other MRTs involved. Keswick MRT searched the Grains Gill and Sty Head areas. The man was located near the summit of Scafell Pike. Sadly, he had not survived. Our thoughts and deepest sympathies go to the man's family and friends.

100. 12th October 2022 20:49 White Side

Patterdale MRT asked Keswick MRT for support in a search for a couple of overdue walkers, on the Helvellyn range. Keswick MRT searched the main paths on the Thirlmere side of the Helvellyn ridge, and after hearing that the missing persons were found on White Side, went to help with the re-

warming effort, as they were both in various stages of hypothermia. A Coast Guard helicopter took them to hospital.

101. 13th October 2022 10:00 Beckthorns Gill, St-John's-in-the-Vale

A sheep was rescued.

102. 16th October 2022 16:40 Styhead Gill

While descending the Corridor Route from Scafell Pike, a man slipped and fell around 5m, causing deep cuts to his head, and hand and knee injuries. Despite this, he continued his descent towards Seathwaite, until some passing walkers raised the alarm. The Team met the man on the Styhead Tarn path, dressed his wounds and stretchered him to Seathwaite.

103. 18th October 2022 16:45 Cat Bells

A man tripped and fell, causing a deep cut to his head with heavy bleeding.

104. 21st October 2022 16:04 Hind Gill, Seathwaite

A walker fell from a rocky step at the top of Glaramara, and injured his ribs. He was able to descend the fell, but it was difficult to establish his exact location. The Team began a search up Glaramara from Mountain View, and a search from Seathwaite. He was located on the Hind Gill path above Seathwaite.



Incident 102 - Styhead Gill.

Incident Reports 2022

105. 22nd October 2022 13:42 Haystacks

Cockermouth MRT had a callout in which they were attending to a man with a knee injury. Keswick MRT helped Cockermouth MRT in this incident.

106. 23rd October 2022 14:01 Beck Wythop

A woman had suffered a leg injury.

107. 25th October 2022 14:53 Castle Crag

A woman had fallen near the summit of Castle Crag, landing on her hip and banging her head. She had back and leg pain and couldn't continue.

108. 27th October 2022 18:20 Corridor Route, Scafell Pike

Two separate parties of walkers were unsure of the route to follow, and became benighted. The Team found the group, and escorted them down to Seathwaite.

109. 2nd November 2022 18:16 Newlands Beck, Thornthwaite

A man got into trouble in rising water near the confluence of Chapel Beck and Newlands Beck. The Team went out with swift water rescue capability, and located him. After swimming across one swollen, but slow-moving, stream to reach him, Team members were able to walk him, in much less deep water, along a track to Bog House, 1500m south east, from where he was evacuated.

110. 3rd November 2022 10:52 Castlerigg

A walker came across a man who was feeling dizzy and going in and out of consciousness. A Team doctor assessed the casualty, and after treatment the man was stretchered down to Springs Road.

111. 3rd November 2022 13:51 Stonycroft Gill

During a gill scramble a woman suffered a knee injury and was unable to continue.

112. 6th November 2022 14:30 Barrow

A woman had suffered an ankle injury.

113. 12th November 2022 09:40 Scales Fell, Blencathra

A walker was ascending Scales Fell when she suffered a wrist injury.

114. 13th November 2022 13:54 Stockley Bridge, Borrowdale

A man slipped on wet ground above Stockley Bridge, sustaining an injury to his knee.

115. 21st November 2022 10:24 Lingy Hut, Caldbeck Fells

A man suffered a head injury. An Air Ambulance landed close-by. Medical treatment was given before the man was flown to hospital. The Team had driven up the Mosedale road and were preparing to walk in, but was stood down once the casualty was in the helicopter.



Incident 107 - Castle Crag.

**116. 27th November 2022 10:37
The Benn**

A woman suffered a suspected broken arm after falling on a slippery wooden footbridge.

**117. 27th November 2022 14:00
Langstrath**

A man walking in the fells near High Raise had become unwell. Without a phone signal, and realising his best hope of finding someone to help was down in the valley, he started to make his way towards Langstrath. When he was unable to continue, he started blowing his whistle. His distress signal whistles were heard by a couple, who then climbed up to find the man. With no mobile reception, one of the pair ran down to Stonethwaite, from where they called for help, before returning to the casualty. An Air Ambulance responded quickly, and a Coastguard helicopter was also tasked. The Air Ambulance was able to land near Brown Crag, leaving just a short climb for the crew to get to the casualty. KMRT members arrived shortly after, followed by the Coastguard helicopter. The man was winched from the side of the hill by the Coastguard helicopter and taken to hospital.



Incident 124 - Path for Helvellyn, near The Swirls.

118. 4th December 2022 12:49 Dock Tarn

A walker slipped on the path near Dock Tarn. She suffered a lower leg injury.

119. 9th December 2022 07:20 Keswick

A woman had gone missing in the early hours of the morning. Cumbria Police requested help in searching the lowland and rural areas in the immediate vicinity of Keswick. The search took most of the daytime, and support was provided by the Lake District Search Dog team, Cockermouth MRT (including their drone operators), Cumbria Fire Service, and a Coastguard helicopter. At approx. 22:00, news was received that the missing person had returned to her home safe and well.

**120. 11th December 2022 17:58 Ruddy Gill,
Borrowdale**

A man had become benighted.

121. 14th December 2022 11:55 Latrigg

A man slipped and fell on an icy path, suffering a dislocated shoulder.

122. 18th December 2022 12:45 Latrigg

A woman slipped on an icy path and suffered a shoulder injury.

123. 28th December 2022 13:39 Crag Hill

A man was walking with a couple of friends near the summit of Crag Hill. The man sat down tired, then collapsed unconscious. The man's friends called for help and commenced CPR. Keswick MRT approached via Force Crag mines and Coledale Hause. Cockermouth MRT was also called to assist with the rescue, as well as a Coastguard helicopter. The weather and visibility did not allow the helicopter to approach, so it was forced to return to its base. MRT members arrived on scene, but, tragically, there was nothing that could be done to save the man. Our deepest thoughts and sympathies go out to the man's family and friends.

**124. 29th December 2022 11:19 Path for Helvellyn,
near The Swirls**

A woman suffered an ankle injury. RAF Valley MRT helped the Team in this incident.

What a difference a year makes!

On the 6th of January last year (2022) I was travelling to the Lakes with my mate Max so that we could complete the start of the Bob Graham challenge in readiness to complete all of it sometime in the summer months. It was to have been an easy run for the both of us as the previous summer, along with another friend Sam, we had run the three national peaks: Ben Nevis (Scotland), Scarfell (England) and Snowdon (Wales) within a 24-hour timescale.

My memory is a blank of the drive from Manchester to Keswick, the actual run and what happened until I woke up in a hospital bed in the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle thinking that I had been in a car crash as the last memory I had was of spending Christmas and the New Year at my parents' and watching a movie with one of my elder brothers. I had no recollection of leaving there on the Wednesday afternoon, playing a game of basketball in the evening, stopping over at Max's before we travelled to Keswick on the Thursday morning. I

do have a memory of parking the car in Keswick. Max, my friend and fellow fell-runner, has had to fill in the blanks for me about what happened once we started our ascent from Keswick.

We began our ascent of Skiddaw at a steady and easy pace. Between Great Calva and Blencathra Max took a photograph of me with the camera on my mobile phone. In the valley before our ascent of Blencathra we had to cross the river which was up at our shins, and it was at this point that the weather worsened too. Shortly after this I began to become rather incoherent saying that I couldn't feel my legs. Max kept encouraging me to keep moving and when he thought I was going to give up, he had me hold on to his hydration vest and he helped pull me to the summit of Blencathra, this is when Max knew we were in a bad situation as I told him "We should turn back because I felt I couldn't go on". This in itself was irrational as there was more wilderness behind us and carrying on was the logical thing to do as we were only two



Incident 2 - Halls Fell, Blencathra.



Incident 2 - Halls Fell, Blencathra.

miles to Threlkeld. Once we were on the top of Blencathra Max knew he had to get me down Hall's Fell Ridge for the descent he kept on encouraging me to keep moving, even though by this point I had to slide down on my backside because I was unable to walk. As I was doing this my leggings, short, boxers and jacket were torn to shreds and there were blood trails left in the snow. It became obvious to Max that I couldn't go any further as my legs just locked solid, so he put me into my survival bivvy, placed me in a crevice just below the ridge to protect me from a -15 windchill and the sleet, and ran down to the nearest farmhouse, raising the alarm and calling Mountain Rescue.

When the first responders arrived, they found my empty survival bivvy, as I had crawled out of it and started to climb up the mountainside. On finding me, they were faced with a lifeless body in the snow, as my body temperature had dropped to 18 degrees and my heart had stopped. They tried to get my heart beating with a defibrillator but to no avail. Thankfully, they didn't give up on me and carried me down the mountainside to a place where I was winched up into a helicopter and flown to a Newcastle Hospital attached to a CPR machine, with Dr Ferris alongside me.

What I do know is that I owe my life to my friend, Max, who went for help; the Keswick

Mountain Rescue team who never gave up on me when they found me in cardiac arrest and no life signs whatsoever; the North Wales Coastguard helicopter crew who air-lifted me and Dr Ferris to hospital and the medical staff from The Freeman Hospital who were waiting for my arrival with the equipment that they used to save my life at The Royal Victoria A&E Department and the staff there who were involved in my care before I was taken, by ambulance, to The Freeman Hospital until my discharge on the 25th of January. These incredible people were and are amazing, as without them, I would not be here today.

Although I can never truly repay Keswick Mountain Rescue for saving my life, I was determined to raise as much money as I could for them so that they can go on saving others, and on Sunday 2nd October 2022, some nine months after they found me lifeless on the mountainside, I was able to run in the London Marathon to raise money for the, raising £8,153.20 (£6,848.15 + £1,305.05 Gift Aid) with the help of family, friends, and people I don't even know. At the time of writing, I'm short of my £10,000 target I set myself, but there's still time to donate if you would like to support these great volunteers, who often put their own lives at risk to save ours.

Tommy Price

The campaign for sheep rescue recognition!

When is a callout not a callout? Answer: when it's to rescue a sheep (or two). Of the four sheep rescues (5 sheep saved) in 2022 only one, referred to as 'the woolly jumper,' was counted as an official callout. Why is that? It does seem prejudicial against sheep especially when you compare with dog rescues that get every resource thrown at them and in a very timely manner. The public response on social media to any animal rescue (including sheep) normally far outweighs any rescue of the human kind? Surely therefore saving sheep deserves more official recognition?

Sheep rescues are rarely straightforward. Some advice recommends leaving sheep stuck on their ledge for a number of days to get hungry so they are less feisty when rescued, that really doesn't work in my experience. Even very tired and hungry sheep manage to muster the energy to attempt to

resist capture. Team members treat these rescues seriously, the risks can be greater with animals than people, human casualties rarely fight back whilst being rescued!

Two of this year's four incidents were however relatively easy. In May a dog walker reported seeing a sheep stuck on a ledge in the Wythburn Fells above Harrop Tarn on two separate visits a few days apart. A small team went and performed a simple extraction with the aid of a walking stick. Then in November a few team members went to the aid of a Borrowdale farmer who had reported a crag-fast sheep on Seatoller Fell. If there was a textbook this rescue could be thus described!

Callout 101, the woolly jumper: In October a farmer from St Johns in the Vale was gathering his sheep when one fell and landed on a ledge part way down a steep and narrow part of Beckthorns



Incident 101 - The Woolly Jumper.

The campaign for sheep rescue recognition!



Newlands sheep rescue (December 2022).

Gill. Unable to get to the sheep the farmer called for help. The team arrived, fought their way up through the chest-high bracken then rope-rigged from a large boulder and a tree to lower a team member down to perform a single sheep pick-off. When rescuer Dan arrived at the ledge, for whatever reason the sheep decided that self-rescue was the preferred option and promptly launched itself off to land in the pool below. The sheep seemed to suffer no ill effects from its hasty escape and swim.

In December a farmer from Newlands asked for help with two sheep that had become crag-fast above Littletown. It's the 21st Century, time to use technology to solve this small problem. A drone with a speaker was flown up to the sheep ledge. To the astonishment of passing walkers three team members, grown men, then barked like dogs into the drone controller to try to shepherd the sheep across the ledge. A few seconds of delay then hilariously we could hear the barking on the drone speaker a few hundred metres above us. The sheep were not impressed and stayed put. Damn! Back to the old ways then.

The rescue took two afternoons, on the first day one sheep was caught and manhandled off to one side before being hauled out to safety on a rope. The next day the second sheep, a particularly

athletic example of the ovine breed, first evaded capture by expertly side stepping to avoid being grabbed. On the second attempt it leapt right over the head of one of the rescuers and landed on a ledge below before being chased off the crag by the two rescuers. Hoorah!

In an aside, sheep are likely indirectly responsible for other callouts too. On two separate occasions in August 2022, callouts 68 and 71, walkers heard distinct shouts of 'help' or 'help me' multiple times but couldn't find the source of the cries. The team attended on both occasions and searched extensively finding nothing. The conclusion was it was most likely the 'MEHHH, MEHHH' calls of sheep. False alarms with good intentions.

Ever since its inception the team has been involved in animal rescues. In 1961 alone 18 crag-fast sheep were rescued and in 1963 a fixed charge for sheep rescue was even considered. In 1964 the team received the RSPCA Certificate of Merit for animal rescues when it was estimated that over 200 animals had been rescued. What the current tally is is anyone's guess, in the case of sheep these rescues generally go unreported. Hence the call (mehhh!) for sheep rescue recognition. I rest my case.

Stuart Holmes



Incident 35 - Grogmup Gull.



**In an emergency for Mountains/Rivers/Lakes
Rescue call 999 (or 112) and ask for Police
and then Mountain Rescue**

Be prepared to state:

- **Your name, and the number of the telephone from which you are ringing, and its location**
- **The nature of the incident, and its accurate location, with a Grid Reference if possible**
- **The time of the incident**
- **The number of casualties**
- **The details of any injuries**
- **STAY BY THE PHONE** so that the Team can contact you