



The Stretcher

The newssheet of Devon Cave Rescue Organisation.
Distributed free but please make a donation to Cave Rescue just in case you're the next one in need of the stretcher !!!



March 2003

Welcome to the third edition of "The Stretcher". This edition celebrates the opening of our new Rescue store, I am sure that all of you who have seen the store at the Buckfastleigh Fire Station will agree that we have been given a gem of a location; see the full report inside this issue.

Funding

I believe everyone knows that last summers fund raising event at Kent's Cavern was extremely successful. In total we raised a staggering £1665.08. This summer we have again been invited to Kent's Cavern. This will give us another great opportunity to increase our bank balance and to add to the equipment pool that we now have at our disposal. Another very important reason to undertake this fund raising is that we need to pay for the Rescue Store Insurance. This was £140.00 for the first year, and is unlikely to go down in price. Will you please book with your nearest and dearest a Sunday or even two when you can come to Kent's Cavern and help. At the present time we will be at Kent's for the following dates: 3rd August, 10th August, 17th August, 24th August and the 31st August. If you were not at last years fund raising days, talk to someone who was and I am sure that they will tell you that the days were both enjoyable and successful. It would be really good to see those people who appear on the supporters call out list; this is an ideal way that the supporters can actually help DCRO.

We are also going to need to explore other sources of funding – yes – I hear you say the lottery, but that's only one source – so any ideas and especially anyone who is prepared to organise and manage – please shout out loud. As an example we should be targeting all the Lion's Clubs, Rotary etc in our caving and club areas – please get involved – talk to the secretary if you have ideas.



THE STATION

The Story of the New Rescue Store

Back in late 2002, the question came up of where to store all of the DCRO equipment. Bill Tolfree was at this meeting and came up with a little idea, which in turn has turned out to be a fantastic idea, so a big thanks to Bill. Bill passed the idea Jon, who then went on the hunt. In fact all that Jon did was to pick up the phone and speak to the Chief Fire Officer of Devon Fire & Rescue Service – Paul Young. Jon explained the

situation that DCRO were in and asked if the Chief may be able to investigate the idea of DCRO having access to store it's equipment at one of the Devon Fire and Rescue Stations.

The Chief gave Jon a positive vibe that this may be a possibility and that he would be in contact in the very near future. As it happens everything moved at a pace. Jon very soon had a meeting set up with the Divisional Officer for Operational Safety – Ron Smerdon, and this meeting resulted in a provisional offer of a small cupboard. Next a site meeting was set up to look at the offered space, those in attendance being Keith Pearson, Jon Whiteley, Lee Woodward and Geoff Dommett, and all thought the space was adequate for our needs. The final part of the equation was arranging the insurance, a bit of painting, installation of electrics and some shelving and thanks to Mike Bond and your equipment officer – Geoff Dommett for assisting with this process. Tuesday 29th April sees the official handover of the keys by the Chief Fire Officer, a small number of team members and committee members will be on hand to accept the keys and to show the Chief some of our equipment.



TRAINING NIGHTS & RESCUE PRACTICE

Training is progressing well with training nights now being held at the Station. There has now been two sessions, and the space and facilities are possibly better than those available to most other Rescue Teams. We have covered a very good session on the new stretchers, which has helped everyone understand the benefits of the React Stretcher over the old Neil Robertson Stretcher. We have also looked at some aspects of Casualty Care. The next training night is on the 9th April, followed by 11th June, 13th August, 8th October and the 10th December. I hope to see as many of you at these events as possible – please remember that for us to operate as an effective and efficient team we do need to train together and be practised with our equipment.

The date of the next Rescue Practice has had to be moved and the new date is the 18th May, based at the Station, 10am start. Sorry to those who had planned for the 6th April? Unfortunately this date clashed with the British Cave Rescue Council AGM. We always try to have a representative or two at the BCRC AGM so it seemed wise to move the Rescue Practice and co-ordinate it with our own AGM, which has been in the diary since 2002. The AGM will take place immediately after the rescue practice. Please do try to be at our AGM - it is your chance to shape the future of DCRO.

If you attend either the Rescue Practice or the Training Sessions, I promise that you will learn something useful. One of the best bits is that there is always tea, coffee and some scrummy cakes – so if you like chocolate cake, turn up and train.....!



EQUIPMENT

The Rescue Store at the Station is now fully equipped with all our kit. We have recently added 4 Oldham lamps and two chargers, oversuits for medical personnel, a rescue controller's box and 4 thermos flasks. We have made a request to BCRC for another little Dragon and some SRT rope. We are also still trying to locate some rope for hauling, safety and SRT at a price that we can afford. We are also in the process of building a light weight loop antenna for the Heyphone, we will evaluate this prior to putting it into full use, but should be useful for when a casualty is being moved and there is no space or time to set up the full antennae. Hugh Browning and Jon Whiteley are also doing a number tests with some short range 446 frequency handheld radios. These would be suitable for shaft communications and by bastardising these - making them cave proof and via vox (voice operated only)- we should be able to prevent some of the communications problems encountered with the last rescue practice at Ding Dong mine, when the barrow boy was ascending the shaft with the casualty. Andy Rimming is busy making rope bags for us and we are always on the look out for more equipment. If anybody thinks they have a useful source for kit, or anything that they no longer require, please let Geoff Dommett know. We have also purchased three new larger waterproof boxes for the Heyphones. These are bigger and will enable easier packing of the kit. The aerals are now also on easy to use winders, a much better solution for quick and efficient deployment of the Heyphones. The existing boxes will be used for First aid equipment.

The Bosch Battery Drill is now in the store, along with the drill bits etc – we need to find a “friendly and suitable” box/bag for the drill and batteries to be kept in and transported underground – any ideas please let Geoff know – especially if it's free.....

Roger King is just finishing making a charger for the Heyphone batteries and the Bosch Drill batteries, this will ensure all batteries are always charged ready to go. Thanks go to Roger for helping with this.

REACT STRETCHER No. 1



CONTENTS:

1 x Outer Stretcher.

1 x Spinal Splint.

1 x Lumber Pad

4 x Horizontal Lift Straps

2 x Vertical Lift Straps

3 x Delta Maillons

4 x 'D' Krabs

1 x Blizzard Blanket

1 x Neck Brace

1 x Goggles

1 x Tackle Bag

LEAVE THIS CARD WITH CONTROL



By the time you read this we hope to have “contents tags” and “confidence seals” (see above) on all the main equipment bags and boxes that are in the store (see example below). When on either full rescue or practice these laminated tags should be removed and handed to control / equipment officer - this will help us ensure that all equipment taken into a cave or mine will come out.

Please always try to remove the tags without damage.

CALL OUT LIST.

Please remember to keep Jon Whiteley (address and phone number on contact list – back page) informed if any of your details change. The police have just been issued with a copy of the current call out listing, but it is vital that we hold the most up to date details on our team members. If you were not at the last rescue practice at Ding Dong mine, then you more than likely didn't get a copy of the most up-to date call out list and your free DCRO car sticker – these car stickers are not just a trendy bit of car windscreen kit, but we were asked by Devon Fire and Rescue service to be able to identify our cars when parked on their property – so please ensure that you have received one – call Jon Whiteley and let him know if your missing this posh but of car decoration.

A RECENT AND SAD LOSS

It is with deep regret that I have to inform you of the sudden death of Peter Leudeke-Welch. Peter died on Monday 3rd March at his home in Torquay. Peter was the Senior Guide at Kent's Cavern, and was extremely knowledgeable and informative, he will be sadly missed by Nick Powe and the staff of Kent's Cavern. Peter was a member of the DSS for many years and also was a member of the now defunct SWAG, although Peter was not a DCRO team member, he was a great supporter of our activities, especially last summer at Kent's Cavern, where he went out of his way to make us feel welcome and promote our efforts with the tour groups. Mike Bond, Bill Tolfree, Dave Millin, Richard Green and Jon Whiteley attended Peters Funeral on the 13th March. A section of Kent's Cavern is to named in Peters memory.

“LIFE ON A LINE” IN THE STORE

“BCRC” IN THE STORE

“HEYPHONE” IN THE STORE

The above three titles are of three books / files that are now held in the Rescue Store at the Station.

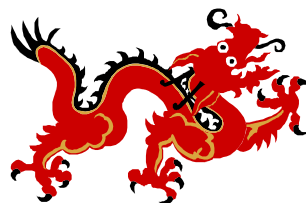
“Life on a Line” – this is a printed copy of the work of Dr D.F. Merchant who has done a lot of work and study with relation to rope work directly related to cave rescue in the UK. This book is well worth a read.



“BCRC” – this is a copy of all the previous newsletters and general information with regard to the activities of the BCRC

“Heyphone” – this is a copy of all the documentation for the building and use of the Heyphone – any one interested in how to build a version of the Heyphone should read this.

THE LITTLE (DRAGON)



Enclosed are the current instructions for the Little Dragon, please read, this is a vital piece of equipment that we own and all members should be confident in its use.

Please do not be afraid to use an item of equipment like this, even if we are only on a practice rescue – it is critical that we understand the benefits and draw backs of our equipment.

FOR SALE

Colin Smith has recently found these details (again)

Just tidying my desk and found the phone number of the Denbigh Army Surplus Store from whom I purchased two Petzl Stops last year. I called them and they are still selling them for £15 (+ £2.50 p&p). Caving Supplies say the list price is £39.95. They are unused/virtually unused but no guarantee. Of the two I bought, both were unused, (one was for Tom Miles). They are of the ‘Old Stile’ i.e. a metal sprung gate not the plastic one on new ones.

The phone number is 01745 814978. If ten are ordered at once the unit price drops to £12.50 (+ £8.00 p&p).

If anyone is interested either call them direct or let me know, I doubt that ten will be ordered, but you never know.

Regards,

Colin

AGM DETAILS

If anybody is interested in standing for election as one of the Officers of DCRO please ensure that you inform the Secretary by the first of May. We are certainly looking for someone to take on the post of Treasurer – any offers.



EDITORIAL.

Please feed any interesting articles direct to the controller if you think they may be of interest to others in the next edition on the "Stretcher"

See you at the next rescue practice on the 18th May 2003 and afterwards at the AGM

Safe Caving, Jon.

DCRO OFFICERS

Chairman: Keith Pearson

Controller: Jon Whiteley

Secretary: Lee Woodward

Treasurer: Keith Pearson

Training: Simon Mullins

Equipment: Geoff Dommett

Post 1: Colin Smith

Post 2: Ali Neill

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to seeing you at the next training night and rescue practice.