The WAY OUT

Summer 2001 Volume 1 Issue 9

The Newsletter of the
West Brecon Cave Rescue Team
Registered Charity No 1016463

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The Way Out is distributed freely but a donation to the team would be very welcome.
Send donations to: WBCRT c/o Gary Evans. Poplar Court, Cae Hopkin, Abercrave, Swansea, SA9 1TP
Articles from ALL those interested in cave rescue are welcome for consideration.
Send articles to: Editor. Brian Jopling, Owl Barn Cottage, Duntisbourne Rouse, Cirencester, GLOS. GL7 7LG.
email Jopo@freenetname.co.uk. Text files, JPEG photo's, GIF sketches please.

Vale Bob (Sos) Saunders
1950-2001

I am saddened to report the death, from a heart attack, of stalwart team member Bob Saunders whilst working abroad.

'Sos' was a longstanding member of the team who had served as Hon. Secretary, was instrumental in helping the team to begin modernisation and in particular giving the impetus to the creation of our Advanced First Aid for Cave Rescue course. A glance through the records shows how active a role he played within the team.

Over the last couple of years Sos went back to work at sea and although his active role in the team was reduced his support was still strong.

I remember Sos most as someone who you could always rely upon - be it a callout or for a cryptic comment and someone who, whilst holding strong opinions, was never pedantic.

Sos was a real backbone member of the team and will be missed.

Many members of the team and SWCC attended his funeral at Morriston Crematorium and a tree will be planted at Penwyllt in memory of Sos.

We offer our condolences to Denise, James and Christopher.

Jopo

A big thank you to:
Hilton Studios and Treasured Memories
for their donations to the team.

Bon Voyage (At 7 mpg!)

Hazel Field, nee Forbes, has resigned as Mid Wales Warden and from the team, as she and husband Steve are undergoing a small change of lifestyle.
They are buying one of those bloody big Winnebago motor homes and plan to tour the UK, before departing for an extended trip around Europe - and knowing Hazel - heading for warmer parts.
We wish them well and thank Hazel for her major role in establishing the Mid Wales section of the WBCRT.
Hazel worked very hard to make sure that Mid Wales became and remained viable as the crucial first response to MW incidents. Hazel was also very much involved in the setting up of the Advanced Cave Rescue First Aid Course and perhaps this is where her role as instructor will be missed most.

Best of luck Hazel and Steve and thanks for the caving gear, books and videos, "Which won't fit in the Winnebago without throwing out some make-up", donated for the Nov. auction.

Thanks for your dedication Haze. Pop in now and then.

KEEPING IT UNDER CONTROL.

The 'T' Card System

Knowing who, what, where and when is vital in controlling a cave rescue.
Over the last couple of years we have been using the 'T' card system coupled with a written log to keep ourselves informed of what is going on and it is time that we actually defined how the 'T' card system works.
A written log MUST be kept but the 'T' card gives a dynamic recording system which is very fast, flexible and simple.
It is very difficult - if not impossible - to use a log book to record dynamic changes. Within a short time it becomes very messy and enormously complicated. Flow charts can be useful to identify aims but again become messy, as the

rescue progresses and changes occur, unless they are restricted to main points or aims.

There are two elements to the system -the 'T' card and the 'T' card racks. We 6 racks and an ample supply of 'T' cards.

To explain the system perhaps it is easiest to run through a simple task.

A control point has been set-up and recording started.

Each rescuers name is recorded on a separate 'T' card upon signing in. Personal skills, such as Diver or First Aider, are recorded on individual rescuers card.

These NAME cards are slotted into a section of rack designated as AVAILABLE.

The controller decides to deploy a First Aid team followed by a Communication team.
The FA team is selected and the NAME card of each member moved to a section of rack directly under a 'T' card indicating TEAM 1 and it's task.

Coloured cards may be used to identify sections., so, for example, all Functions may be red, names on green cards and equipment on buff cards.

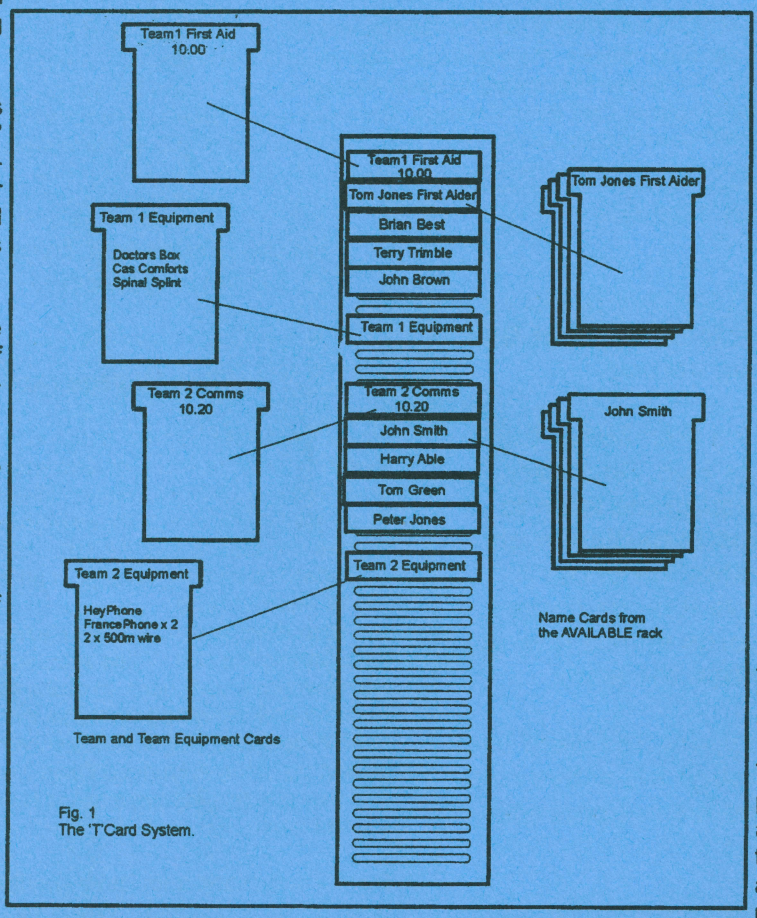

Fig. 1
The 'T'Card System.

Immediately below the TEAM 1 NAME cards is slotted a TEAM 1 EQUIPMENT card with any equipment that team has been issued written on it. The EQUIPMENT cards may be used individually for each item or as a list.

Deployed items of equipment are duplicated individually on a second 'T' card and slotted into a DEPLOYED EQUIPMENT section of rack, so you know what resources have been used.

The above is repeated for the comms team but the TEAM card will read TEAM 2 –COMMS with the NAME cards and TEAM 2 equipment cards slotted below .

What you now have is a visual record of the teams that have been deployed, their function, time in and the equipment deployed.

Cave rescues are fluid and it often happens that team members move to other teams, individuals get knackered and come out or for some other reason the composition of a team changes.
The controller can respond to changes (provided of course they are informed) by simply moving the relevant card(s) to another section, for example if a Pitch Rigging team merged with a Stretcher Carry team once their rigging task had been completed.

The controller has a instant view of who and what is available, the composition of teams and actions. Trying to do this by paper logging is no option and it is much easier to brief the police or an incoming controller as to the current situation.

The system can be used for any function the controller feels will be of assistance. For instance it may be used to record rescuers or other teams on off-site standby.
If an item of equipment is required but has not yet arrived on site a REQUESTED EQUIPMENT section could be created as a visible reminder.

On the recent Daren rescue the we had a section listing those on standby at the community centre.

Another section indicated those on off-site standby.

The 'T' card system is portable and has been adapted to be used in the LandRover or tent if a remote control point is used.

But you MUST not forget to keep a written log, best done by delegating a Recorder. The 'T' card is dynamic and is of no use for recording communications and actions which require a written and timed log entry. In the event of an inquest or at the de-brief you will require written records. And make sure your recorder can write legibly.

Jopo

THE NEW CALL-OUT LISTS ARE ALMOST READY. PLEASE LET GARY EVANS KNOW ASAP OF ANY CHANGES TO YOUR DETAILS.

and

SUPPORT THE NOVEMBER AUCTION AND CEILIDH

(F & M allowing)

FLOATING STRETCHER.

Some time ago a portly gentleman by the name of David Jenkins, a schoolmaster by profession, wandered wondrously in the Waterfall Series. His mind on higher things he tripped, tumbled and trod air before breaking a leg. With him was one William Birchenough, a colour blind electronics engineer by profession, who was on his first trip into the cave. He rushed for help and soon the cave was the scene of a classical cave rescue operation. Hordes swarmed and jostled for position as the water rose in the rain and the stream was several inches above the Step. Undeterred the rescuers clutched the mainstay of cave rescue, the Neil Robinson stretcher, and struggled down the streaming stream, a task taking several hours. By the luck of the Gods and a good covering of fat the schoolmaster was returned to his gaping pupils.

The then committee decided that there was room for improvement. In their infinite wisdom they set up a subcommittee of experts to devise a better stretcher.

May God forgive them, three elementary mistakes.

1. A sub committee.
2. Experts, people who know what cannot be done.
3. A stretcher—they confided their thinking by defining the end result thus excluding such reasonable options such as tele transporting.

Others nameless, shameless and blameless congregating in the local hostelry (pub) were initiated into the technique of trigger words by one William Clark, a timber merchant by profession. In trigger words you express the problem to be solved as a single simple sentence containing an active verb. The active verb becomes the focus of creative attention

With the assistance of one Evans Bevan, a local brewer from the Vale of Neath, the team defined the problem as, " How do we move an injured person from top of Streamway to cave entrance". With ample quantities of Bevan's amber brew and an impressive list of verbs the terms associated with 'move' where generated. These included; fly, swing, float, cartwheel, shoot. These five trigger words were taken to a test stage. The others were used as a reason for flights of fancy in congenial surroundings.

Fly. The concept here was an aerial ropeway. Two scaffolding pole bipods were used to stretch a wire over a distance of some 20 metres The stretcher was hooked on and slid over the wire. We abandoned this one too soon. It was similar to how gun carriages are moved in military tattoos.

Swing. Our inspiration here was Tarzan. He swung to move. A quick fix stemple was designed and a dozen produced. These were fixed high in the stream passage and ropes suspended from them. The stretcher was moved from rope to rope in a swinging action. Apart from puking and bruising the technique was reasonable successful.

Float. We tried moving the stretcher on a rubber dingy down the stream. This was not easy and expensive on puncture kits.

Cartwheel. We acquired a 1 metre diameter wheel from a local farm, late at night. To this we bolted two scaffolding poles to make a wheelbarrow, to which we fixed the stretcher. When dragged across country it worked well. It was of little use in the stream as the wheel diameter was less than diameter of the pots. Later we learned that mountain rescue had developed a similar contraption with a softer wheel for cross-country transportation.

By this time amidst great acclaim the subcommittee had reported on what could not be done with the Neil Robinson. There were rumours of honorary memberships and even a vice presidency.

Shoot. This seemed to everyone where the answer lay. At first we contemplated a large plastic tube laid down the stream with a capsule fired by compressed air similar to that for moving money at the co-op. (no super markets in those days.) This we discarded for reasons of expense.

We tried to imagine a situation similar to stream passage with someone shooting down it at speed. The Cresta Run--bobsleighs. Eureka.

A little time for design considerations and then a messenger was sent post haste to Cardiff to commission a sail maker for the production of a canvass cover. Let me explain, even though these events took place some time ago merchant sailing ships had long since stopped trading from Cardiff. The sail maker, being a man of some initiative, had found new gainful markets.

Two airbeds were purchased along with other items needed for the trial.
The trial started by us laying out the canvass near the confluence at the top of stream passage. The air beds were laid on top and one Martin Gough, a student from Cardiff volunteered to take the first run. He lay on the air beds and the lot was wrapped around him to form a tube of air. He was provided with a crash helmet and lowered into the stream. Whilst we adjusted the control ropes the tube assumed control and set off down stream with Martin face down in the water.

A mad scramble followed a moment of stunned silence. Mr Gough was eventually recovered taking his last but one breath. By this time we were in rough waters, which were shooting over his head. We decided to proceed with all haste, down stream. But not before adjusting the floatation balance. Someone whispered to Martin that this would assure him of full membership. (I doubt if he heard it.) Twenty minutes later we arrived, more in anger than in hope at Pluto's bath.

A pacified student and a tranquillised team debriefed with Evans Bevan.

There followed several weeks of development in an atmosphere of working together to achieve something worthwhile. We improved the design and in no time were riding the device down stream in high water.
But we were young and apparently irresponsible for turning cave rescue into a sport. An elder of the sub committee wrote to the committee (please raise your hats) and two team members were for the second time in their

membership disapproved of by the powers that be.

Time passed and an elder of the subcommittee had an accident in boulder chamber and was the first to be rescued in the floating stretcher. May God bless him.

The Floating Stretcher in OFDII Streamway circa 1971
Photo by Glyn Genin (SWCC Newsletter 70)

Clive Jones

Thanks to:

Telford Crematorium Ltd for paying the postage for Way-Out 8.

Kirby for re-furbishing the 6 standby cells and charger .

Sue Wilson of Magichem for supplying silica desiccant crystals for the rescue dumps.

Nicky Cogan. OBE

The SWCRO received donations totalling £615 in memory of the late Nicky Cogan OBE who died in June this year. Nicky had asked for donations be made to SWCRO rather than buying flowers for her funeral.
Nicky spent many happy hours caving in South Wales in OFD and Agen Allwedd and was a member of Harwell Exploration Group. The administration of the donations was kindly handled by Jeff Gazey and a plaque in memory of Nicky will be fitted at the WBCRT Rescue Stores on September 22nd.

Gary Evans

Dates for Your Diary.

Sept 28th	Presentation to Aberystwyth CC (even.)
Sept 29th	Gear familiarisation for ACC re Mid Wales cover. Help req. from team members.
Oct.19th-21st	Advanced FA training
Nov 4th	Joint SWSARA practice
Nov 10th	Ceilidh in evening at Colbren Hall (proceeds to WBCRT)
Nov 11th	Auction at SWCC 10.30am
Nov 24th	War Game SWCC

Gary Evans.

National News.

By the time you read this all of the HeyPhones will have been issued to the teams that ordered them and lots of feedback is expected.
Must mention the help of Kirby in the project. He has provided all of the wire for the antenna, some 3.5k, and helped purchase cells and PeliCases at very low cost.
He also provided controlled battery chargers at cost.

The annual NHS grant for Mountain Rescue dried up this year and the MRC are putting in place a professional fund-raiser. There has been no money for equipment grants for any cave or mountain team this year. Public Liability insurance is still in place and it looks as if our FA course will have no problem in becoming approved by the MRC well before 2004 - when only MRC approved courses will be covered.
The BCRC conference will be in Ireland next year. Details when available.

Fund Raising

Proceeds from the SWCC Ceilidh on Saturday 10 Nov. 2001 will be donated to the team.

Following on the Sunday at 10.30am we have an **AUCTION OF CAVING AND RELATED EQUIPMENT** on Sunday 11th November 2001 at Penwyllt.

Please bring lots of money and also donate any items you think may sell.

Editors Note.

The next WAY OUT will be Volume 1 issue 10.
It is time to think of a binder cover design and a kind soul to index issues 1-10. Suggestions please.

We Need Articles and Pictures for Issue 10.

There have been several donations to the WBCRT in the past couple of months. We cannot survive without donations and all donators, past and future, can be re-assured that the money will not languish in a bank but be used for replacing equipment, new equipment and the unavoidable running costs such as insurance and telephone costs.

The WBCRT policy of not paying expenses to members or the executive remains unchanged.
Jopo