

NEWSLETTER ISSUE 19



GLoucestershire
CAVE RESCUE
GROUP

Cave rescue since 1965, covering the Forest of Dean, Lower Wye Valley, Cotswolds and Thames Valley.

GCRG Depot, Littledean Hill, Cinderford, Glos, GL14 2TT, Phone: 01594 827999

Registered Charity No.
900316

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April 2023

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Editorial

22 April 2023

A quick thankyou to everyone who's supplied either words or photos to go in here and apologies to any photographers who may have supplied the photos shown here and not had the respective credit. If this is the case then please let me know & I'll include the corrections in the next newsletter.

Please also let me know if there's any suggestions of how to make this publication better. Does it work as a way of conveying to the members what GCRG has been up to?

Thanks

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GCRG COMMITTEE

| | | |
|---|--|---|
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GCRG WARDENS AND OTHER CONTACTS

| GCRG Depot | 01594 827999 | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Wardens | Mobile | Home | Other Contacts | Mobile | Home |
| David Appleing | 07804 300598 | 01242 581385 | Dave Tuffley [Forest Mines] | 07799 617934 | 01594 824343 |
| John Berry | 07979 791083 | 01594 822823 | Jon Maisey [Cotswold Stone Mines] | 07922 267052 | 01666 504647 |
| Kevin Brockway | 07970 033345 | 01453 511100 | | | |
| Andrew Clark | 07707 992510 07411 207149 | 01600 716970 | | | |
| Ladi Broadman | 01594 832023 | | | | |
| David Hardwick | 07780 676341 | 01454 299035 | | | |
| Colin Vickery | 07548 240124 | 01684 293202 | | | |
| Martin Holloway | | | | | |
| Greg Jones | 07974 008519 | 01989 218763 | | | |
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SARCALL & HOW TO USE IT

SARCALL is the primary tool used by GCRG when initiating a call out. Not only is it the way we notify members of the details of the call out, it is also how you, the members, let the Wardens know if you are available. It is **EXPECTED THAT ALL MEMBERS WILL RESPOND TO ALL SARCALL ALERTS** - the team need to know both who is and is not available.

SARCALL alert messages are sent by SMS to mobile phones, automatic voice message to land lines and email.

Mobiles

The callout SMS text alert will give brief details of the incident and contact details for the originating Warden.

When replying to these texts YOU MUST use the phone on which the callout text was received. This phone number is recorded on the SARCALL system as belonging to a particular individual, sending texts from other phones will result in them being ignored.

SARCALL Information for Team Members

When you receive a SARCALL SMS alert sent by a GCRG warden reply to it to indicate your availability.

If you are unable to reply by SMS text message try using the GCRG specific SARCALL response web page.

Alternatively call the originating warden or the depot where a message may be left on the answerphone.

The SMS text message **MUST** take one of the 3 formats below:

SAR ▲ Axx ▲ message if you are available

SAR ▲ Lxx ▲ message if you have limited availability

SAR ▲ N ▲ message if you are unavailable

Where

▲ = a space

xxx = time in minutes until you will arrive at RV point

message = relevant additional information, free text.

Changes to your details? Email info@gcrg.org.uk

TRAINING/EXERCISE EVENTS since May 2022

Since the last newsletter, GCRG personnel have been involved in the following events.

Reports for some/all of these can be found further on within this newsletter.

12th June 2022 Wetsink/Slaughter Stream Cave

11th September 2022 Piccadilly Pot

29th January 2023.... Dean Field Study Centre

12th March 2023 Bixhead Stone Mine

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

11th May 2023 GCRG AGM

11th June 2023 Training @ Wetsink

- This will concentrate on the pitches to test out the rescue rigging plans as new anchor points have been installed.

15th July 2023 GCRG Auction @ the depot

16th September 2023 [a Saturday]

- Joint training exercise at Noxon Park Iron mine with MCR, MCRO & SECRO; details to follow

30th/31st September SWERA training event in Wiltshire

- Details to follow

November Coal mines training exercise

- Details to follow

CAVE RESCUE CALLOUTS since May 2022

None, other than the Deer recovery from Green Moss Pot (see writeup under "Other GCRG Activity")

REPORTS OF LANDSEARCH CALLOUTS since May 2022

17th July 2022

Churchdown (Gloucester)

03:27 — request to assist SARA. Stand down at 04:37 when misper located. Personnel 1 GCRG, 2 joint GCRG/SARA.

7th August 2022

Highnam

12:18 — request to assist SARA. Stand down at 12:48 when misper located. Personnel 2 joint GCRG/SARA.

13th August 2022

Littledean

08:49 — request to assist SARA. Standby only GCRG.

18th August 2022

Coalway

07:09 — request to assist SARA. Request for availability only, stand down at 10:37.

1st October 2022

Lydney

13:12 — request to assist SARA. Standby only for GCRG.

3rd October 2022

Lydney

10:50 — request to assist SARA. Request for availability only - Personnel available 1 GCRG, 2 joint GCRG/SARA.

16th Nov 2022

Standish Woods (Stroud)

08:06 — request to assist SARA in Standish Woods. Personnel available 1 GCRG but not needed, stand down at 08:43.

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TRAINING/EXERCISE EVENTS since May 2022

DEAN FIELD STUDY CENTRE:

29th January 2023

Another worthwhile day's training at the DFSC with 48+ members in attendance, an excellent turnout.

Once again a big thankyou to Ian Healey for allowing us to use such an excellent resource.

Sessions were held in laddering, hauling using new shiny kit, France phones, Cave Link and a discussion on what sort of kit every caver ought to take underground on every trip and also on a rescue. A rescue cannot be effective if the rescuers themselves become casualties due to being ill-prepared.



Another of the sessions was to view the work that had been undertaken on the landrover and trailer lighting and auxiliary power supply from the trailer to the landrover. This is used to power the lights etc by using the generator when parked up.

As well as Ian, many thanks goes once again to everyone who helped run the various sessions, Trev in the kitchen for the soup and also everyone who came back to the depot afterwards to help put kit away.



Photo Credits: Unknown photographer, taken from the GCRG FB page.

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BIXHEAD STONE MINE

12th March 2023

44 members attended a successful day's training, both underground and on the surface.



Although the mine does not provide any particularly hard challenges for cave rescue, it does provide an excellent location to practice a number of drills.



Specifically, the roles of Surface and Underground Controllers were spread amongst a number of volunteers in order for them to get the feel of how these specific roles need to be managed and understood.

In addition to the swapping of the roles of Underground Controller, two volunteers were persuaded to act as the casualty for the stretcher-hauling practice.



Having a couple of 'real' bodies to carry also helped to make the stretcher-handling more realistic and gave members the chance to re-acquaint themselves with the correct drills etc when moving with & around the stretcher.

The highlight of the day was the visit by the High Sheriff of Gloucester, Air Vice-Marshal 'Dusty' Miller who was to have presented the jubilee medals to the group last September but at the very last



minute was unable to attend. Earlier in the day Dusty had been shown round the depot by Jo Clarke and then kitted out to join everyone underground. While underground, Dusty—wearing his Sheriff's badge of office—was able to present Jon Holden with his jubilee medal as he'd not been able to attend the Clearwell event last year.

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Photos: Paul Taylor

Back on September 8th 2022, 50 plus members of GCRG gathered at Clearwell Caves with family and friends for the presentation of their Queen's Platinum jubilee medals. For those already on site the events unfolding in Scotland were not known. It was Sir Dusty Miller, the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire, who was down to present some of the medals that made contact with the GCRG Chairman to inform him that Queen Elizabeth II had died. It was decided to go ahead with the event but unfortunately Dusty was not able to attend. Moving forward 6 months to the GCRG training event on March 11th 2023 and we were very proud to welcome Dusty to the GCRG depot for a tour of the premises but also with the assistance of Jo Clarke, take him underground to see the group members in action, undertaking a series of stretcher handing manoeuvres.

Bixhead mine gave the ideal location due to its ease of access and Dusty was able to see the training in operation and able to chat with the members. There was also the opportunity for Dusty to present group member Jon Holden with his Platinum jubilee medal after he was on the night unable to attend the Clearwell presentation in 2022. With Dusty present and wearing his Sheriff's badge, the presentation was made.

GCRG are very grateful to Dusty for taking the time out to come and visit the group. Especially when we were aware that he was only in post for another two weeks and very busy.

A short video of the exercise is available via '<https://youtu.be/HSmlgZesBFU>' from the GCRG YouTube channel

Thanks to everyone who attend the event and made it extremely successful.

Paul Taylor

(GCRG Chairman)



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MY FIRST RESCUE or “Curry for breakfast!”

I'd been thinking about joining the SWCC for a little while. Having been with GSS for nearly six years and Gloucestershire Cave Rescue for about 4 years I felt it would be nice to broaden my horizons as they say.

So, back in August (2021), I paid the provisional sub and waited for the next provisional weekend that I know crop up, November the 5th - 7th, bonfire weekend.

The routine I was expecting was, arrive Friday, meet some new faces over some beers and food, arrange a trip for the Saturday, watch fireworks and bonfire whilst enjoying a nice curry provided by the “soup dragons” followed possibly by another trip on the Sunday, then a steady ride home. Well, nearly!

I booked my bunk, paid for my curry and arranged to share a lift with Jill Brunsdon (an already established SWCC member and member of GCRG). We duly set off hoping to beat the Friday teatime traffic.

The journey was uneventful and we found our bunks and settled in with a bite to eat and a beer. Other provisional members turned up and we chatted to a few people. Jill introduced me to John and Si who had done an OFD trip that day and wanted to return to the same places the next day, Tomasz was to join us too. A trip was hatched. We turned in for the night, after a bad night's sleep due to being freezing cold (heating came on in the morning!) I wandered down for breakfast and met the others. The weather was grey with light misty rain. We all got kitted up and wandered up to the top entrance, the time was around 10.30.

Our starting point was the Prokofiev series, then taking in the Poached Egg, Bagpipe Chamber, Wedding Cake, speedy caver back through Gnome passage and back towards the entrance. Upon reaching the entrance metal-work there was an A4 sheet and a handheld radio propped up against it. The sheet read “Serious incident, please contact headquarters ASAP” John got on the radio and informed them we were on our way out. The time was around 1600 hrs and the rain was now heavy and sideways.

Upon arrival at HQ it became clear that this was serious. Knowing the SARCALL would have alerted my landline back at home, I rang my wife who was panicking and trying to get information from other cavers wives. I reassured her it wasn't me but also said “I could be some time”. It then started to sink in that this was real and not a drill. At this point in time, I believe Jill and I were the only GCRG members on site.

Over the next 2-3 hours we sat, and tried to get our heads around the information that slowly came through, George's injuries, where he was, and what we might need to do. All the time SMWCRT members were running into the room and looking intently at the big OFD survey on the wall then dashing out again, obviously looking for options. The operation to get medics in and get George moving was already underway but now needed more people.

I think it was about 18.30 when a request came through for a party to take in supplies so we volunteered and joined with 5 others to become a party of 7. By this time, other GCRG members were starting to show up and it was good to talk to familiar faces.

We were briefed at control and asked to take 3 bottles of O2, a bag of IV fluids, and a cordless drill for bolting purposes. The time was now 22.30 Saturday evening.



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The Cwm Dwr entrance was not something I had done before and is awkward to say the least especially when laden with bags and bottles.

The crawl is low in a couple of places but not too long. Glow sticks gave a rough idea of direction. It took just over an hour to get to the area of operation, people were already there, chatting and trying to stay warm. I think it was about another 45 mins before I climbed onto the electron ladder to go down to the drop off point.

Curry for breakfast, you can't beat it!

Eventually, some of us were called through to assist with moving bags and pulling the stretcher. This was my first contact with George, hearing him crying out every time he was moved cut through me and I actually felt a little queasy.

The stretcher was moving very slowly because it was all rifts and hauls up and down, I ended up on the head rope at one point helping to pull him up a slope toward a balcony until he was in front of me. The doctor chose that moment to give him more morphine, I'm not good with needles!

There was much waiting around for decisions to be made and other things to happen, this is when you realise that you haven't worn enough clothes. You also lose track of time. I started to get cold and no amount of moving around was helping, I had to concede and decided it was time to come out.

Lots of people were making their way in and out by now, by the time we reached the Cwm Dwr entrance I was going out with 3 others. Climbing out of that concrete tube is interesting and a rope would have helped!

I was very pleased to get back to the HQ. It was 0600 hours Sunday and curry for breakfast! You can't beat it!

I did a lot of eating that day and just resting, drying my kit, charging batteries etc and had a bit of a walk in the brief time the sun shone.

New faces had been turning up all day, some people I knew personally from GCRG and some I had met before from trips and other areas of the country. I think around 40 GCRG members were present.

Later in the day I told control I would go back in on Monday if required and I was allocated a slot for 10.00am.

Monday morning came and it was the strangest feeling to open the bunkroom door and see fully kitted cavers wandering around having breakfast!

The team on the catering side of things were working flat out with a constant stream of hot food and drinks for which we were all eternally grateful for an amazing effort.

I got kitted up and joined a team of 7 to go and do general stretcher hauling, by now the extent of George's injuries were fully apparent. The way in was now through the top entrance which was predominantly a walking passage and much easier going.

By now, George and the teams had made their way along the streamway to just above the Great Oxbow. Many people were now on site and the number of teams entering the cave had increased which meant the switchover times had quickened to around five or six hours. The feeling of comradery between the rescuers was overwhelming with people raising spirits by chatting and cracking jokes but all with a common goal.

The press had turned up in mass and were congregated in one corner of the car park where Paul Taylor had the task of feeding them information at the right times.

At the point where we reached the stretcher it had to navigate a tight bend whilst also being elevated at head height. I found myself in that corner with the stretcher being dragged over my shoulders to get the height! Many passages were negotiated by cavers being used in this way, like a human conveyor belt.

The stretcher progressed quicker now and now many people were involved in its transportation. It would move so far, then George would be checked and re-assessed before progressing again.

It was now around 1700hrs and I was told that my shift was up and replacements had arrived, so I joined a couple of others and we made our way out into the murky horrible weather that had descended.

I got changed, sorted my kit out and had something to eat. By this time, the last party came out of the cave and shortly after we watched George come down in the land rover.

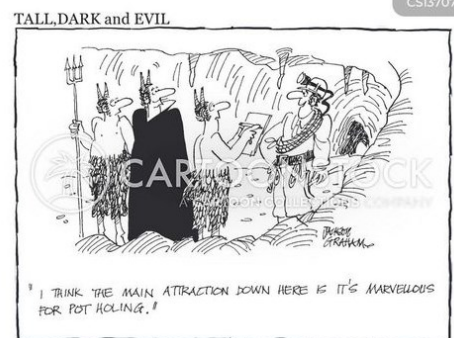
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I hadn't been prepared for the emotional bit that followed, after running on adrenaline for so long and then for it all to suddenly stop was obviously a bit too much and I wasn't the only one.

I have to take my hat off to a lot of people on that weekend, especially the ladies and gents who endlessly washed up, cooked meals and kept the fire going for the people who dragged themselves in and out of that cave, this type of support must never be underestimated.

I stayed Monday night to have a few beers and talk to others about their experiences of the weekend, and went home on Tuesday, broke out in bruises and started with a bad cold!

Jerry Breen



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RESCUE BENEVOLENT FUND

The first thing that must be said about this fund is that it is completely independent of either MREW or the BCRC so neither of these bodies has influence or control over what it does and it is a completely independent charity. Registered charity number 1152798.

Having said that, the primary and probably one could say its only role is to support members of cave and mountain rescue teams when they need help. So, when would you think that a team member or their family need help?

From the website

Why?

..... but, if a team member sustains an injury during a call-out, quite apart from any physical rehabilitation required, that the injury might impact on his or her ability to earn. Their family might struggle financially and emotionally. And that's where we come in.

What?

..... Our aim is to help alleviate hardship and suffered by team members- and, consequently, their families- which has arisen as a direct result of a mountain or cave rescue operation. And we also aim to get those team members back into action as soon as possible

How?

.... We can provide a range of services, including immediate and longer term financial support, physical rehabilitation (either residential or arranged locally with a recommended health practitioner), and emotional support through access to counselling services (online or locally)

So how do we support this charity?

GCRG has made donations in the past to the charity and this is something that I would like to see us do on an annual basis. But you can also donate yourself by visiting the charity website.

www.rescuebenevolent.fund

Locate the section "About us"

Click on the Donate Button

None of us know when we might want the services of the fund so please take the time to have a look and donate.

Paul Taylor

(GCRG Chairman)

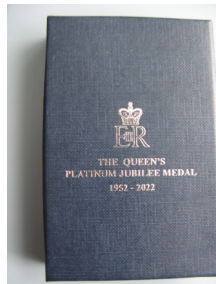


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QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE MEDAL PRESENTATION

8th September 2022

As part of the celebrations to mark the 70th anniversary of the coronation of HRH Queen Elizabeth II, a commemorative medal was minted and issued to a members of the Armed Forces, Police, Fire Brigade and other groups, including the volunteer emergency services, of which GCRG is a part.



Just as the previous Diamond (60 years) anniversary medal had been presented to GCRG members in 2012 at Clearwell Caves this was also the same venue for 10 years later in 2022 for the Platinum (70 years) medal presentation.

The original intention had been to have the High Sheriff of Gloucester, Air Vice-Marshal Sir 'Dusty' Miller in attendance to present the awards but events of the day were to prevent this.

Late in the afternoon it was learnt that Her Majesty the Queen had sadly passed away and consequently the High Sheriff would be unable to attend, due to being called away for a more important meeting due to the death of QE II. However, at short notice it was possible to have Kevin Adcock from the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (who was also a former GSS member) and John Dutton from SARA.

Around 50 GCRG members were able to take part in the evening's events and a big thanks to Jonathan Wright and Clearwell Caves for giving their time and facilities to make the event more special to cavers, rather than just having the presentation on the surface somewhere!



Photos: Raif Evans

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OTHER GCRG ACTIVITY

In January 2023, 7 members of GCRG recently took the group's Larkin Frame to a cave site called Green Moss Pot in the Forest of Dean to recover two Deer that had unfortunately jumped over the fence and fallen into the pot.



They had subsequently fallen down a second scaffolding shaft and died from their injuries.



4 of the team went underground and placed the deer into 1 ton builders aggregate sacks and hauled them up the first shaft before bringing the bags to the base of the entrance pot where

the Larkin Frame was used extremely successfully to bring the bags back up to the surface.



For the keen eyed amongst you only one hauling rope was used so as to minimize any potential contamination of the rope and the equipment. GMP had been on the cards for a test out of the Larkin Frame.



Thanks, are extended to Gareth Jones and Chris Crowley who undertook the bagging up underground. Jon Forster and Paul Taylor who assisted with the underground hauling and Maria Lynch, Tom Chatterton and Mat Rees who set up and operated the Larkin Frame. An interesting if somewhat sad exercise.

Paul Taylor (GCRG Chairman)

Photos—Matt Rees

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THIRY YEARS AGO.....

Thirty years ago in 1993 the GCRG was able to finally have its own headquarters.

Prior to the use of the current depot at Cinderford, the equipment (and landrover) used by the group was stored at the Coleford Police Station.

In approx. 1991, due to operational requirements at the police station the group had to move out and a new location for the landrover and equipment was needed.

In 1992/93, the former Highways Depot at Cinderford (the site of the current GCRG depot) was put up for disposal and available to purchase.

Luckily due to the group being able to apply for a £40,000 grant from the 'Foundation For Sport and Art', the depot was able to be purchased for £37,000 in 1993.



Photos show the depot as it was in October 1992



Depot now, April 2023

£40,000 grant boost for cave rescue team

8 THE CITIZEN, FRIDAY, MAY 21, 1993

A RESCUE group in Gloucestershire has been awarded a £40,000 grant to help buy a new headquarters.

Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group was based at the police station at Coleford until 18 months ago.

But because of operational requirements the police needed the space and they had to move out although their equipment is still stored there.

Since then the group has been looking for its own premises and now the Foundation for Sport and Art has given them £40,000 to help out.

Underground

The cave rescue group has already identified a suitable building in the Forest of Dean. It has put in an offer and is awaiting a response.

The building would initially be used to store their equipment, although it is hoped it will be used as a control room to co-ordinate rescues in the future.

The rescue group is a recognised emergency service which provides round the clock underground rescue for the whole of the county. It also helps out with surface rescues.

by Sam Goldsack

The group was formally established in 1965 and over the years has been called out on dozens of rescues.

Spokesman Nick Negus said: "Over the last two to three years there have been major new caves discovered in the Forest of Dean. As a result there a lot more people involved in caving as a sport or on the education side and the potential for incidents is higher."

The foundation has also awarded a £20,000 grant to Wotton-under-Edge Community Recreation Trust to help finish building a community hall.

The Trust built the foundations of a community hall and changing rooms at Dryleaze two years ago but ran out of money to complete the project.

Now the £20,000 grant will be used to complete the shell of the building and put on a roof. The trust will need to raise more cash for the interior.

Other Gloucestershire groups to benefit from a grant were Gotherington Tennis Club at Cheltenham and Cirencester Judo Club.

The tennis club has been awarded £6,000 to resurface a court and the judo club £500 for mats.

Notice below sent out to the members of GCRG at the time.

Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group

NEW CAVE RESCUE HEADQUARTERS

We have been given the opportunity of obtaining our own building for development into a Cave Rescue Headquarters. The building, which is located at the rear of Cinderford Ambulance Station, will be purchased for us by means of a grant. The premises will provide garage facilities for our vehicles along with much needed storage and maintenance space.

The building will be open for members to view on
Wednesday 2 June between 18.30 and 20.00 hours
and
Saturday 5 June between 10.00 and 12.00 hours.

We will also be looking for people to help with the improvement of the building and grounds. Please contact Nick Negus (home - 0452-504515) if you require further details.

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GCRG DEPOT TRAINING AREA EXPANSION [PART ONE]

Back in 2016 when the work was undertaken to construct the kit washing and drying rooms at the depot, part of the criteria was that the roof of the rooms would be load-bearing and could be used as part of the training facility.

From this, a bridge was built out from the original platform to a central pillar that was constructed and a large timber beam was installed right up at roof level from which slings etc could be hung for SRT training and for practicing hauling of stretchers etc.



The remaining two open fronts of the 3 bay garage were also clad and doors fitted to help weatherproof the area and a low-level concrete block wall constructed around internally on the remaining section of the rear and side of Bay 3. The idea was that at some point in the future the wall could be further extended upwards. Subsequently a roller shutter door (donated by SARA) was added to Bay 2 allowing the doors to be removed and a new access door fitted at the end of Bay 3.

Last year, prior the Dachstein expedition training weekend, an additional timber beam was installed between the central and front pillars so that further slings could be added and take away the use of a further section of the internal steel roof trusses.



Many additional 12mm anchor points have also been added into various sections of the walls and pillars and more recently three steel anchor plates have been installed into the floor of the training area. These can be fitted with M12 eye bolts to provide ground anchor points but are not left in situ to avoid a trip hazard when not in use.

With the steel plates installed, the two large lumps of limestone that have been used as anchor points were winched outside using the GCRG landrover winch and are ready to be used as a training aid for a session using Plugs and

Feathers. This has opened up the floor area.

The training area is not only used by GCRG but also by the local caving clubs as a good indoor SRT training location.

Moving on to 2023 and it was decided that the time was right

to move forward with the expansion of the training area. Paul and Gareth undertook some measuring up and worked out what would be required materials wise and it was put forward to the GCRG committee as a proposal and was given the green light.

The work is going to entail the construction of concrete block walls up to the eve height along the back wall of Bay 3 to a pillar in the corner. Then, similar walls will be built

along the end wall of Bay 3 where two further pillars are to be constructed. At this point the wall will join an existing pillar that was previously constructed to the right of the access door in Bay 3.

Two further large timber beams are to be

installed running out from the existing central pillar to the two end wall pillars. A third beam running over the top will (when viewed in from above) will produce a letter A shape.

A Platform is to be installed in the right-hand back corner of the two walls as high up as is practical to allow for standing on.

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Once all this work is completed then additional 12mm anchor points are to be installed to suit along with additional ground anchor plates. As with the existing area, this is very much something that develops as the need arises from the type of training that is being undertaken.

Photos: Paul Taylor



See 'PART TWO' for the rest of this article

GCRG CALENDAR 2023

The 2023 GCRG calendar was planned for 2022 as a follow-up to the very successful 2019 one which had sold 250 copies and raised almost £1400 for GCRG. However, we all know what happened in 2020 and so it was not possible to complete the photo work so we decided to push things back and go for 2023. But for this, the finished product needed to be ready by early 2022 to get it off to the printers.

Not knowing what was actually in front of us the first thing that needed to be sorted for the calendar was a theme for the pictures and this needed to be different from the previous one. We came up with the idea of "Iconic TV or Movie" So a picture that was easy recognisable but it would have a GCRG/caving twist along the way. It's ok having the theme but then you need a total of thirteen pictures; twelve monthly ones and the front cover.

A request for suggestions was put out and we received some great ones along with some which were way off the spectrum and although would work for some, they would not for the masses!

A list was prepared to give a variety of different programmes and movies and then the next stage was to start taking the photos.

Two were taken although in the end only one of these was used in the calendar. Although I have to say this, from a personal point of view, I still believe it to be one of the best photos that I have taken. It was a great subject with an absolutely fantastic model who I greatly admire and It was taken in a very difficult location. We all had the most incredible amount of fun doing the shoot and I completely understand and respect the decision regarding the non-use of the picture. But it will remain with me as once of the best fun days of my life. Along came COVID and everything was put on hold but it did give me the opportunity to refine the pictures and plan the locations. Once Covid restrictions were out of the way work got going again in earnest and throughout 2021 many trips were had to the location sites to check them out and then the final pictures taken.

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Not everything went to plan!

A camera failing right at the moment the steam train was coming along the track for the 'Railway Children' shot certainly did not help as it was the last time that year that the train would be going in the right direction on the track. Fortunately, we had another one already taken.

The models for the 'Dirty Dancing' shot were very busy so we had to change the date and the location for that picture and also again we were lucky that Rose took pictures as well as Paul as it was her picture that was used as it was from a slightly different angle and gave just the result that was needed.



Its fair to say that there is a story behind every picture. Even the night the Front Cover picture was taken it seemed that every man and his dog wanted to drive past the Palace Cinema that night when on previous visits nothing had come by!

Finally, everything was completed and it was just a case of fine tuning and then it was off to the printers.

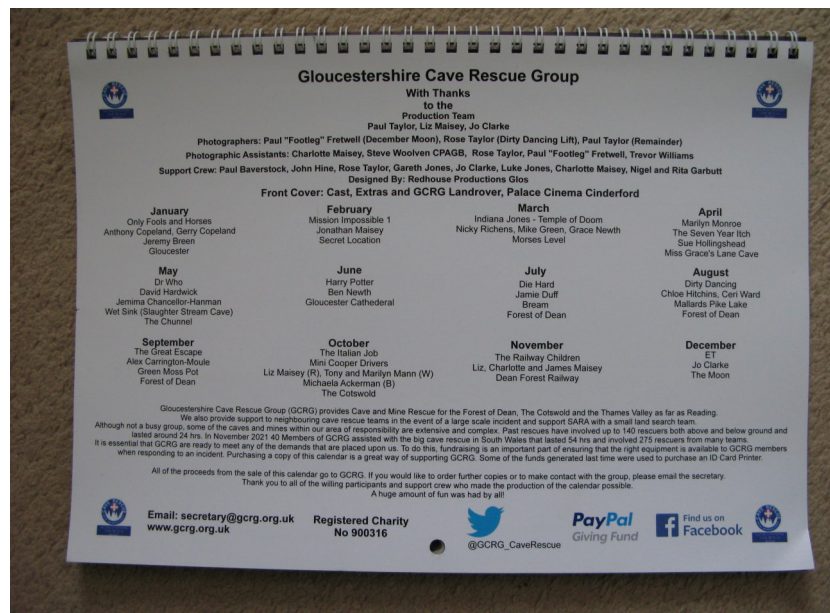
Based on the previous sales we decided to increase the numbers to 300 copies and also as we knew we would be giving some away FOC we added these onto the total and ended up with 325 copies.

Approximately 300 were sold and this has resulted in a profit to the GCRG of £2000 so a big thanks to everyone who purchased copies it is really appreciated.

We are especially grateful to everyone who came along and gave their time free of charge to help with the producing the pictures. This helps considerably and I know from my side of things it was a really great and enjoyable time for me and I think everyone else.

I am also very grateful to the other photographers who helped with the end results. We could have not done it without you.

Special thanks to Andy Lougher at the Palace Cinema Cinderford for allowing us to use the cinema as the backdrop for our cover picture.



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Special thanks go to all the models for the photos. Without you we would not have been able to shoot the pictures. To Liz Maisey and Jo Clarke for all of your support, especially when the chips were down and to Rose who came out with me on many occasions to look at locations. To Charlotte Maisey who had the idea for the 'Italian Job' picture; once we set that one up and I went back to the camera I knew it was the one.

And finally to everyone who purchased a copy.

The income from the calendar sales has allowed the group to purchase a new Slix 50 stretcher so that we now have one for front line use and one for training and also on the GCRG landrover the old bulb blue light bar has been replaced with a nice shiny LED one. There have also been other smaller things that we have been able to do.

Will there be another one?

Currently the feeling is no. The two we have produced have done very well and I think its good to go out on a high.

Paul Taylor

(GCRG Chairman)

PROMOTING GCRG

21 March 2022

On 21st March 2022, I took a trip to Essex to go and talk to the Harlow Air Cadets. As an ex-cadet there myself I spoke briefly about my career since I left before launching into a session about cave rescue and what we do. With the aid of a survey (kindly lent to me by Jerry), clips from the BBC News reports and a bit of talking from me I took them through what happened last November when we rescued George from OFD. At this point I decided to get the cadets involved. We got the training stretcher out and I took them through a stretcher packaging session (not too dissimilar to recent GCRG practises) before getting them to pass their loaded stretcher across the room and over some obstacles so they could get a feel for what would be going on. At the end there were some great questions asked and smiling all round so hopefully they all had fun and learned a thing or two.

Maria Lynch



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GCRG DEPOT TRAINING AREA EXPANSION [PART TWO]

And GCRG Auction, 15th July 2023

Construction of the walls is using hollow concrete blocks with reinforcing rods vertically through the blocks and all the blocks are backfilled with concrete as the construction moves upwards. This is the same method of construction that was used for the whole of the drying room and kit washing area and allows for the installation of anchor points almost anywhere on the walls. Additional lighting is to be installed for the new area and the existing doors are to be removed on Bay 3 and a roller shutter door that is already in place is to be commissioned.

Having witnessed first-hand the use of the whole area for the expedition training weekends, the completion of this work is going to greatly enhance the facility and provide GCRG with a highly useable and extensive indoor training area.

In addition to this work provision is being made within the construction of the walls for two openings to allow for the construction outside of the 3 Bay building of a 'Tunnel System' to provide a confined space training area for stretcher handling etc.

The design of this is not fully confirmed as it is being dictated by the space available and the tubes that we have on site but it will certainly add another significant dimension to the facilities.

Of course, all this work comes at a cost but with the provision of large amounts of free labour which is very much appreciated this is primarily linked to the cost of the materials and even with these some good deals have been struck. However, there are ways in which you as the members of GCRG can help out.

Firstly, make sure you have **Saturday July 15th** in your diary and attend the **GCRG 'Grand Auction and Sale'** that is being held at the depot & is raising funds for both GCRG and the MCRO. There is a massive collection of caving, climbing, walking, camping, kayaking, cycling equipment and much more that is going to be available to bid for and buy. Thanks are extended to everyone who has donated items. Along with a large collection of magazines, books and other items all available for donations.



A catalogue of all the items is in the process of being put together and will be circulated. If you happen to be in the market for a 2.5kva petrol generator we have a brand new one available, or you are about to buy a new bike and looking for a carbon fibre road bike with a 20" frame look no further as again we have one! Do you need a 240v 3hp air compressor for your workshop? its yours to bid for. We need lots of people to attend so please let your

friends know and if you cannot make it then then once you have the catalogue send your bids in for any of the items.

On the day there will also be the opportunity to take part in a series of activities, caving, walking, mountain biking & kayaking, between 10.00 hrs and 14.00 hrs with the auction taking place from 14.30 hrs onwards. For anyone who attended the event

we held in 2015 we have the same auctioneer - Joe - coming back again to run the proceedings.

Please spread the word and if you have any items that you would like to donate then please let Paul Taylor know via either email chairman@gcrg.org.uk or phone 07803539945 and arrangements can be made for either delivery to the depot or collection. Please spread the word.

Secondly you can help by taking part in the depot working sessions that are being planned. There is lots to do both in assisting with the construction but also with clearing the space for the tunnel complex and moving the tubes out from their present location and help with the design. These are being run on as many Saturdays as is possible so, please contact Paul who is co-ordinating things if you are available to help. Also working sessions take place on Mondays so if that would suit you better again let Paul know.

This is a big project but one that is going to make a massive difference to what can be achieved in training at the GCRG Depot.

Paul Taylor

(GCRG Chairman)

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CAVE RESCUE LONG SERVICE

In January 2023, at the AGM of the SMWCRT (South and Mid Wales Cave Rescue Team) BCRC long service awards (25 and 50 years) were presented to GCRG members Joel Corrigan, Paul Taylor and Nicky Bayley.

The photos here show Joel, 'only' having been a member of cave rescue for 25 years and Paul Taylor who has been a member of GCRG 'only' since 1970! Congratulations to Joel, Paul and Nicky!



SOCIAL MEDIA

Website

The GCRG website has undergone a revamp, including the ability to donate directly to the group via PayPal and the following tabs/buttons to go to specific areas/subjects:

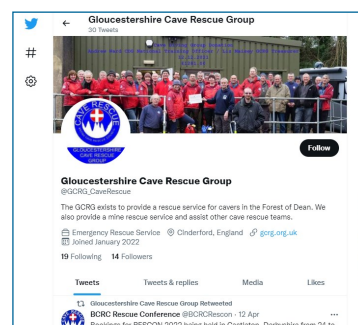
**Home About News Training Membership Fundraising-
Callout/Safety Gallery Publications Contact & Links**



Twitter

GCRG now also has its own account on Twitter, follow the group at

https://twitter.com/GCRG_CaveRescue



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SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK

GCRG has its own presence on FB

<https://www.facebook.com/Gloucestershire-Cave-Rescue-Group-1828966887343731/>



Rigging & Rescue Workshops



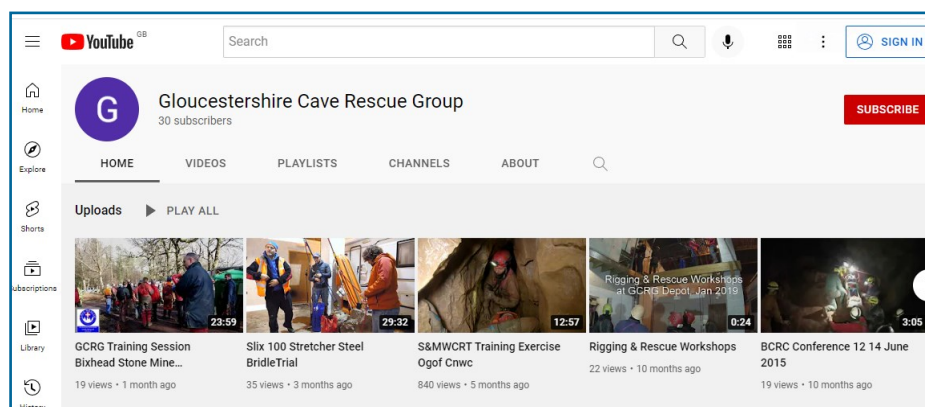
GCRG Training Session
Bixhead Stone Mine...



GCRG Training Exercise
Wetsink (Slaughter Stream...



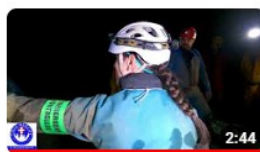
See GCRG's own channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbb3v4lcSbxSLyUF5FqlqWA>



GCRG Z Rig for Cave Rescue



JAG Bridle System For Cave
Rescue Stretcher



GCRG TRAINING AT BIXHEAD
STONE MINE MARCH 2023



Slx 100 Stretcher Steel
Bridle Trial