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19 February 2025

Dear Ori,

**Hore, Russ, "SARLOC," Mountain Rescue 36, 2011, pp. 20  
Shelfmark: ZK.9.b.27193**

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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amy Miller".

**Amy Miller**

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# mountain rescue

ISSN 1756-8749

APRIL 2011

£3.50

ZK.9.b.27193



ISSUE 36

## WELCOME TO ISSUE 36

Mountain Rescue is the membership magazine for mountain and cave rescue in England and Wales.

Contributions should be sent to the editor at the address below.

Every care will be taken of materials sent for publication however these are submitted at the sender's risk.

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### NEXT ISSUE ISSUE 37

Copy Deadline:  
5 JUNE 2011

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Advertising artwork must be supplied, ready prepared on CD or via email as font embedded PDF/EPS/TIFF (300 dpi) or Quark document with all relevant fonts and images.

### FRONT PAGE

Swaledale MRT and friends in action at their 'Exercise Swale Rescue' Challenge day in March  
Photo: Swaledale MRT

EDITOR'S NOTE: Articles carried in Mountain Rescue do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Mountain Rescue England and Wales. We do not accept responsibility for information supplied in adverts/advertorial.

# mountain rescue



APRIL 2011



## David Allan Chairman

There do appear to be an increasing number of occasions when individuals or parties contact

mountain rescue to let us know that darkness has fallen on the hills. Closely related are the times when we are informed that visibility has been seriously impaired due to mist or other weather variants.

This issue has been discussed quite widely and, as reported elsewhere, was a focus of attention at the recent Mountain Safety Forum. There has been an assumption that the principal reason for the calls has been the absence of torch, map and compass; or at the very least a lack of knowledge about their deployment. Undoubtedly in many instances this is the case but perhaps another factor should be brought into the equation.

Over the past two centuries the human race has endeavoured to deplete darkness, developing elaborate means to illuminate the environment throughout the 24 hour span. This is but one aspect of a turning away from the natural world. The avoidance of inclement weather during most of societies' day to day existence runs in parallel to the issue of darkness. A minority of people will instinctively recognise the difference of a hot dry wind and one bearing imminent rain.

Society has been involved in a headlong rush into a Brave New World of a completely man controlled environment where the 'real world' becomes the one that is manmade. This has been occurring in an insidious way

for many years and, in 1956, Gaston Rebuffat observed:

*'In this modern age very little remains that is real'.*

This state of affairs means that most people have never experienced darkness away from street lighting, car headlights and the reflected glow of urban sprawl. The first encounter of true darkness on a hill side perhaps induces a state of irrational immobility of thought and deed that cannot be alleviated simply by the possession of torch and map. In a similar vein, the loss of visual markers in mist may induce a paralysis of reasoned action. Man is inherently a visual animal but can acclimatise to the loss of this facility with adequate exposure.

Perhaps many people are taking to the hills with no perception of the ability to continue in these adverse circumstances and find the contrast with their day to day experience too great to accommodate. If this supposition is valid there will be an ever increasing number of people who find themselves quite overwhelmed by the environment into which they have ventured. This does not bode well for a reduction in the numbers of incidents mountain rescue will be asked to resolve.

In the wake of the last piece I wrote I was delighted to be invited to attend a PDMRO meeting and to have what proved to be a very rewarding open discussion with many team members about the direction in which Mountain Rescue should travel. The offer remains open.

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# SARLOC

## Russ Hore Ogwen Valley MRO

**W**e've probably all been there. You get a phone call from somebody out on the hill: 'I am lost.' With the ever-increasing use of smartphones I felt there must be a way for the user's phone to tell us where they are. The following gives an overview of the system currently under test.

I assume we are all aware of Steve Fletcher's work on feeding the location data from MR personnel phones in to MRMap. This undeniably works perfectly where we have access to the phone to install Steve's application. I was looking for a way we would not need to install anything on the 'phone.

Most modern web browsers are now able to query the device they are running on, be it a phone or a computer, and obtain its location as Latitude/Longitude. Normally the user of the device will have to give their permission for any applications to read its location. For example, on an iPhone a small dialogue pops up allowing the user to deny or permit access to its location.

With help from Rob Brookes and Dave Binks, I have been testing a system that seems to be providing good results, with certain caveats, which I will mention later.

So how does it work? What I needed to do was get the user to use their phone to browse to a web page which would query the phone for its location. The code then needs to share this location with the MR team and display the phones location on a map.

The URL the 'user' needs to browse to is <http://sarloc.russ-hore.co.uk/sarloc.php?MYID=identifier> where **identifier** is a unique identifier.

The next release of MRMap will display the reported location but to achieve this, the **identifier** needs to be one of the team's spare radio IDs taken from mrmmap.ini. Check with Dave Binks if you are unsure which IDs to use but, at the moment, we advise using the last numbers in your block. So, for example, within Ogwen we would use 19070 or 19071.

Therefore, the URL would be <http://sarloc.russ-hore.co.uk/sarloc.php?MYID=19071>

I suggest that teams store these URLs on a phone and if they receive a call from a lost person they can send an SMS straight back with the pre-prepared URL. The caller can then just click on the URL and this should browse to the web page.

If the user's phone is internet capable they should see a screen like the following whilst the web page attempts to obtain the phone's location:

*Getting location. If location not show in 30 seconds please try again.*

*Tested on:*  
*iPhone 3GS*  
*iPhone 3G*  
*iPhone 4.0*  
*Blackberry Storm*  
*HTC Desire HD (Android 2.2)*  
*Samsung Galaxy S*  
*If it works on another phone please let me know*

*As of 15 February it didn't work on*  
*Nokia N95*  
*Nokia N97*  
*Nokia 3720*  
*Nokia 2037*  
*Some Blackberrys*  
*Sony Ericsson C903*  
*Samsung D900i (Pay as you go, very limited internet)*  
*An unidentified Samsung*

If the web page can obtain a location from the device the page should change to show something like:

*SARLOC© Russ Hore*  
*Timestamp: 1299015959259*  
*OS Grid Ref: TQ005591*  
*Latitude: 51o 19' 0.316"*  
*Longitude: 0o 33' 0.369"*  
*Accuracy (m): 33*  
*Altitude (m): 0*  
*Altitude Accuracy (m): 0*  
*Heading (degrees): 0*  
*Speed (m/s): 0*  
*TAG: 19071*  
*Tested on*  
*iPhone 3GS*  
*iPhone 3G*

If the user sees this screen, then their location has been uploaded to a database on the web, which is used to display the location on a map. This would be protected by a password known only to authorised people but can currently be viewed at [http://sarloc.russ-hore.co.uk/sarloc\\_reports.php](http://sarloc.russ-hore.co.uk/sarloc_reports.php)

This page shows a map on the left and all the reports received so far on the right.

The system is still under development and needs you to test it in your area, with different types of phones, and to provide feedback to me at [russ@russ-hore.co.uk](mailto:russ@russ-hore.co.uk).

*Russ Hore has been a member of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation for almost twenty years, and served as chairman for two years. He is the IT Coordinator for NWMRA and, with much help from Dave Binks and Rob Brookes, he introduced MRMap and GPS enabled radios to NWMRA in 2006. Russ's other projects include MRMap for the web - see [http://www.russ-hore.co.uk/mrmap\\_for\\_web](http://www.russ-hore.co.uk/mrmap_for_web)*

### SARLOC - © 2011 - Russ Hore

Add a MYID parameter at the end of URL or I will regularly delete readings without a TAG whilst testing  
At the end of the locate\_me.php you need to add ?MYID=your name  
Open the tabs on the right and click on the accuracy to centre the map. [Stats](#)



▶ 17850
▶ 18950
▼ 19071
Accuracy: 33m 18:56:26 Sat 26th 11
Accuracy: 33m 18:56:07 Sat 26th 11
Accuracy: 33m 18:55:57 Sat 26th 11
Accuracy: 33m 18:51:05 Sat 26th 11
Accuracy: 33m 18:48:16 Sat 26th 11