

KINGSTON & ELMBRIDGE SUB-AQUA CLUB NEWSLETTER



50th anniversary
1955-2005



BSAC Heinke
Trophy holders

MAY
2005

- Trip reports
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- Club news
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- Alan's recipe
- Clean air for all

K&E Online:

Newsletter web-site: www.scubakingston.co.uk
Branch web-site: www.kingstonbsac.co.uk

At long last! The diving season is here

It's ski's into moth-balls and time to dust off the spiders from the diving kit...



John Rapley trying out a rebreather at the recent London International Dive Show

Article: John Rapley (Chairman)



Fancy a dip into Littleton Pit?

Of course, some of you bravehardy souls have already ventured into open water during the winter and spring, but for the majority of us the season is just opening.

At the time of writing the annual Gildenburgh weekend is nearly upon us, this is the 5th year in succession that I've run the Gildenburgh weekend – Its a great chance to get some training done, to try out new kit and to make sure all your kit functions well with no leaks etc. Its also a good social weekend with a group meal on the Saturday evening (*Though less and less people are braving the caravans - I wonder why?!*) I'm sure it goes well, and everyone enjoys themselves.

As usual, there's a lot to look forward to in the coming year – Loads of diving is planned, hard-boat weekends, dive holidays, and regular use of the r.i.b's (weather permitting!).

Once again, with the lighter evenings, I am available on most Monday or Tuesday afternoons from 4pm to accompany any of you into Littleton Pit (*and into the local pub afterwards!*).

Hosting the BSAC AGM.

Please make every effort to attend the BSAC AGM on Saturday 21st May. It's going to be both an historic and proud day for our branch – It's the first time we have hosted this event, and in our 50th anniversary year – very fitting!

The day promises to be very interesting and enjoyable, but for those of you who have booked onto the evening Riverboat Cruise it's also going to be a very memorable and fun evening. The trip is now full with 80 party goers, including all the BSAC HQ staff & council.

Club night events.

We recently enjoyed a very interesting wreck film show featuring fantastic footage of some excellent wrecks. We will shortly be welcoming the Receiver of Wreck who is coming to meet us and make a presentation (*on 12th May*) and more presentations are planned to make Thursday evenings more interesting for those not involved in Lectures etc.

Heinke Trophy 2005?

Our Heinke Trophy entry for the year end Dec 31st 2004 is now with BSAC – The book (*albeit a lot thinner this year*), is fantastic, and a lot of effort has gone into it, especially from Gren and Howard - big thanks to them. Whatever the outcome of the competition, it's a fine record for the club.

Dinner Dance.

Looking further ahead, Our 50th anniversary dinner dance, to be held at the Oatlands Park Hotel in Weybridge, will be on Saturday 19th November (*full details elsewhere in this issue*).

A change of Buildings Officer.

Please welcome our new Buildings Officer, Chris Chappell. He has replaced Steven Hall (*who had to resign due to work commitments*). Chris is very enthusiastic and really wants to get things done - with your help! Please support him by attending workdays.

A big welcome to the new members.

Its nice to see we are getting an influx of new members joining the branch, welcome to all of you – I trust that the committee will get to know you and help you integrate into the club real soon.

A gift from the gods (*well the president*).

What a fantastic and generous gesture by our President Gerry, in donating the brass porthole clock (*from the the S.S Laertes – a wreck that Gerry owns*) to the club to commemorate our 50th anniversary year. Cheers Gerry, this is a brilliant gesture!

Thank-you to the do-ers.

Lastly, a BIG thank you to all committee members, all Instructors and all the members who put in time and effort to help run the branch.

Now, lets enjoy the diving!

BS-AC Incident Report for 2004

Article: **Brian DeLuca** (*Diving Officer*)

With the diving season diving season well and truly running now it's seems a good time to remind everyone of some the the statistics outlined in the BS-AC 2004 Incident Report. More importantly however, I would like to stress some of the recommendations that were drawn from these findings.



The report contains the synopses of 445 incidents, together with some statistical and comparative data. These incidents include 25 UK fatalities – this is a high number compared with the average of 16.5 over the previous 10 years. Of this 25, six were BS-AC members and 19 were not. Although this number is higher than expected, no new causal factors were identified.

Divers are encouraged to browse through the incident report and to use this information to understand the problems that others have experienced – Hopefully, by doing so, they will avoid similar problems themselves.

The 'Safe Diving' booklet, available free of charge from BSAC, lists key information that divers should adhere to to avoid problems, indeed it is estimated that more than 90% of all incidents would not have taken place if divers had conformed to the recommendations in this booklet. Critical points that divers should consider are:

- a) Dive within your limits. Build your experience gradually.
- b) Develop your diving skills in the company of other more experienced divers.
- c) Practice the basic skills until you are faultless, and then keep in practice.
- d) Plan and equip yourself correctly for the dive.
- e) Maintain constant vigilance whilst involved in diving activities and be ready to act quickly as soon as things start to go astray.
- f) Ensure that equipment is fully and correctly serviced (both diving and boating).

If you are unfortunate enough to be involved in an incident then please pass your experience on to others by completing and returning a BS-AC Incident Report form. This form is available from Brian DeLuca (*Diving Officer*). Your confidentiality is assured; *we are very careful to withhold information that would identify individuals.*

I hope that this season is a good one for everyone - be safe and have fun.

Further information

The 2004 incident report has just been published and is available to all from the BSAC web site via the following address: www.bsac.org/techserv/

DUNSTER'S HOW TO COOK

PAN FRIED SCALLOPS WITH WARM TOMATO & CHORIZO SALSA

As a starter, this fantastic bivalve delight serves four people – It takes just five mins to prepare, and just over ten mins to cook.



Ingredients

- 110g Pack of Revilla Chorizo de Pueblo Purhero – skinned and thinly sliced
- 1 x medium red onion - cut into wedges
- 250g pack of Santa Baby Plum Tomatoes (quartered)
- 1 x fennel bulb – thinly sliced
- 4 x tablespoon of white wine
- 12 x large scallops without roe (preferably caught from Lullworth Banks)

Preparation and cooking

- 1) First, make the salsa: Warm a large non-stick frying pan over a high heat and add the chorizo slices. Fry for 2 mins, or until the oil is released.
- 2) Add the onion and cook for a further 2-3 mins. Stir in the tomatoes, fennel and wine.
- 3) Cook for a further 4-5 mins or until the wine has evaporated – Season with freshly ground black pepper.
- 4) Spoon the salsa into a serving dish and keep warm. Wipe the frying pan clean with some kitchen paper.
- 5) Dry the scallops by patting with kitchen paper.
- 6) Return the pan to the heat. When hot, add the scallops and cook for about 1 min on each side, or until golden.
- 7) Serve immediately, with the hot salsa and wedges of spanish style Pan Gellego bread.

Member Advert for: Alan Dunster

GENUINE “PORT-HOLE” CLOCKS

IDEAL FOR CLUBS, PUBS, RETIREMENTS ETC.



Contact: Alan Dunster for more information

Muckin' about in Boats

The BS-AC Boat Handling SDC

Article: **Chris Hunka** (Training Officer)

We all sometimes take for granted be taken to and from a dive site, "leave it all to the skipper!" Have you ever thought about having a go your-self? After all, it's got to be easy, it's a bit like driving innit? You may also have heard, as I did, that the 'Boat handling' course is one of the most enjoyable Skill Development Courses (SDC) you can do. I have completed several SDCs and have enjoyed all of them so the claim that this one "was the best" left me in no doubt – I should do it.

The two-day course is split between a 'dry' day and a 'wet' day. – The parallels with driving soon become pretty clear.

Day one was at Surrey University and covered things like: How to pick a dive site, working out the tides, chart work, marker buoys and signals (a sort of Highway code for the sea) getting to the site, safety aspects, comfort of your 'passengers' and the responsibilities of the skipper. It's a bit like planning a road journey really.

We then went through all the parts of a boat so at least you know your bow (*pointy end*) from your stern (the back end to land lubbers) and learn new words like 'transom'.

If you break down on the road it might be a bit inconvenient – however breaking down five miles out at sea is a bit more serious. With this in mind we learned about boat maintenance and the need for having the correct tools and signalling flares onboard etc. We also learned what needs to be checked before you set out – Prevention is definitely better than cure!

The theory day was enjoyable but we were all looking forward to the next day when we would be let loose on the boat...

I had another new experience – towing the boat. In fact, I had never towed anything before so I was a little nervous, even though I had been practiced reversing in the club car park and how to brake properly. I got to the club at around 7am to prepare the boat for the short run to Shoreham.

The weather was kind and we ran through the pre-launch checks and worked out when we could actually launch (*dependent on the tide, you see, 'day one' skills being put to use straight away*)

Like the bunch of beginners we were, we started with the 'slow' skills, which were trickier than it looked; the instructor easily demonstrating the boating equivalent of thing like a '3 point turn' and reversing into a parking spot. Not so difficult in a car but then the road isn't moving is it?

Once we mastered these skills, we progressed to picking up divers without running over them and running 'figure of eight's'. Great fun so far but then we left the harbour, in to open water and got on to the fast stuff – well we had to get it out of our system. RIBs have the capability of going really fast, but you have to make the ride comfortable and safe for the divers. It would be easy for one to fall off in rough conditions so we practiced emergency stops, 'Man overboard' scenarios and more picking up of divers (*using a buoy as the diver*). On more than one occasion various individuals shouting 'yeeehaah!' when they got behind the controls.

Our instructors were brilliant; really patient, giving clear instruction



and although they stressed the safety aspects constantly, they also made it hugely enjoyable. At the start everyone was a bit nervous about having a go, but by the end of the day there was a bit of a scrum to get into the seat next. **I thoroughly recommend this course to anyone, it really is as good as everyone says it is!**

Upcoming Boat handling SDCs

14/05	Diver Coxswain Award	£30
01/10	Diver Coxswain Award	£30
22/10	Boat Handling	£60

Correct at time of writing check www.BS-AC-se.org.uk for any updates.

More GMDSS passes

Article: **Chris Hunka** (Training Officer)

On Sunday 3rd April the following attended the second GMDSS course this year and I'm pleased to announce that all passed with flying colours.

Congrats to: **Sandra Argent, Chris Carter, Brian and Shirley Deluce, Olga Gillane, Steve Maliszewski, Rosie McKimmie, John Oldham and Lynne Ruddick.** Well Done!

This year 22 members have qualified to use the latest generation of VHF radio. Now... who wants to go on a boat handling course ?

Membership benefits Spotlight

FREE Clubhouse Hire



One of the hidden membership benefits offered by Kingston & Elmbridge Sub-Aqua Club is the facility to hire the Clubhouse Free of charge for your party or events.

Last year several great evenings were organised ranging from 60's, 70's and Blues themed band nights.

If you are interested in taking advantage of this facility, why not talk to John Rapley – he can explain the conditions of hire.

- **Parties**
- **Bands & themed nights**
- **Bar-Be-Ques**
- **Birthdays**
- **Stag / Hen nights**

Kit for sale

Article: Grant Seidner

I have the following items for sale...

- 1 x Wenoka dive knife
- 1 x Diverite Transpac II
- 1 x OMS black twin bladder 94lb wing
- 1 x Posiedon crushed neoprene dry suit (needs a new zip) size 9.5 boots
- 1 x Mares 5mm semidry also needs a new zip!
- 1 x Seaquest "Raider" wing bcd will take either single or twins

All items are in very good condition and I'm open to offers. Catch me in the clubhouse or e-mail me at geaseidner@aol.com

Training Reminders

Article: Chris Hunka (Training Officer)

Please note that reminders for training sessions and lectures are sent out by email usually two to three days before the event. It is not practical to call everyone to remind them. Similarly, if you cannot attend, as a courtesy, please try to contact your instructor directly, particularly for pool session.

What's your name?

Article: John Rapley (Chairman)

Please ensure you put your correct name (as it appears in your passport), when you book onto any club diving holiday - as your flight ticket will be booked in that name, so even if your initials are wrong and if it is a non-changeable ticket then it will be your responsibility to purchase another ticket.

BSAC AGM

An important event for BSAC
An historic day for our club!



Article: John Rapley (Chairman)

As you know, we have the honour of hosting the BSAC AGM – This is going to be a full day, with divers from all over the world attending.

I set out the Itinery below:

- 0900 - 1000 Registration
- 1000 - 1300 BSAC AGM Business
- 1300 - 1400 Fish & Chip Lunch (£4)

RAFFLE HELD DURING LUNCH BREAK WITH SOME FANTASTIC PRIZES INCLUDING A NITROX ANALYZER!

- 1400 - 1445 RNLi Presentation
- 1445 - 1530 MCS "Seasearch" Presentation
- 1530 - 1545 Tea & Biscuits
- 1545 - 1630 Historical Diving Society presentation
- 1630 - 1730 BSAC Golden Oldie films by Tony Marshal
- 17:30 Close

All branch members welcome to attend. The day event is free apart from lunch which is £4 – We are now looking for volunteers to help on the day - please liaise with myself or Brian.

20:00 Midnight - Riverboat Disco cruise with buffet - Full

THERE WILL ALSO BE A RAFFLE HELD DURING THE EVENING EVENT!

Club Clobber
Everything is better with the club logo on - sportswear, mugs, mouse mats, beach bags and teddy bears.



Heinke Trophy Winners Special Edition Sportswear

Embroidered Items

Above the club logo will be embroidered the words: "HEINKE TROPHY WINNERS 2004" and below the logo will be embroidered "1955 - 2005"

Rugby Shirts - Long or short sleeved	£25.00
Quartered Rugby Shirts - Long sleeved only	£29.00
Soft finished Rugby Shirts - Long sleeved only	£29.00
Fleece with full length front zip	£25.00
Sweatshirts	£20.00
Polo Shirts	£18.00
Jackets (water & windproof, fleece lined)	£38.00
Caps	£10.50

Screenprinted Items

This is a new line, premium quality Haines T-Shirts, with a large club logo on the front with "1955 - 2005" printed under that, and on the back of the shirt it says "HEINKE TROPHY WINNERS 2004"

White T-shirts - Men's	£16.00
White T-shirts - Ladies, fitted V-neck	£16.00

Items available in various sizes and colours

NEW RANGE! Screen printed products

Ceramic mug	£9.00
Bone china mug	£13.00
Mouse mat	£9.00
Canvas beach bag	£17.00
Teddy bear wearing a club T-shirt!	£16.00



Beach Bag



Ceramic Mug



Mans T-Shirt



Teddy Bear, wearing a club T-Shirt!



Ladies T-Shirt

See John Rapley to place your order.

All prices include postage & packing delivery either your home/work or to the club.

Hi Di Hi ! – Butlins Weekend

John in “extreme party mode”

Article: John Rapley (Chairman)

On Friday 25th March, 20 of us went down to Butlins in Bognor Regis for an over 18's Party weekend, this was organised by Len's son Matthew.

I drove down after work after picking up Julie on the way and we arrived down in Bognor at about 5.45pm. Len, Mary, Cynthia, Graham, Kevin, Eraina and Co. were already in party mood by the time we arrived!

We were staying in the Silver, half-board accommodation and Graham was the lucky one, sharing with me!

After filling ourselves with the plentiful buffet we headed off to the Sports bar for “pre entertainment drinks”. The rest of the crowd including Alex and Louise arrived and we went on to Reds, which is where all the bands were playing. That night we saw 2 Unlimited (sort of soul band), and Bananarama, who were excellent – the girls are in their 40's now but still well fit!



Kid Creole and the Coconuts and Bananarama were the weekends highlights.

Now I wonder why there is no picture of Timmy Mallet? – Ed.



That Night, I was in extreme party mode, and whilst everybody else went back to the chalets, I headed off to Jac's nightclub till 4am.

I had a great nights sleep – slept like a log! – Graham said he had a great nights sleep, until I came home at 4.30. He asked me whether it would be possible if I could stay out later on Saturday night until 6am so he could get another couple of hours!

After a late breakfast, most of us went to the swimming pool, which has a great selection of flumes and tunnel rides, it was great fun. I didn't really enjoy the sink hole ride though most of them loved it...at the bottom of the chute you came out into a big sort of toilet bowl, went round and round and plopped down the hole into the pool in the bottom.

Saturday night was fun, most of us got very “socially confused” and had a great time on the dancefloor. Though some of the entertainment was a bit dodgy, especially Timmy Mallet! (yes, him of the “yellow polka dot bikini” fame).

Without a doubt, the Sunday was the best day – unfortunately a lot of the crew had left by then, including Graham. I don't know if he got much sleep but he was spotted grumbling at breakfast and seen no more!

Some of them, including Len and Bret went off to play ten pin bowling, and Bret won easily I'm told – Bret said that Len would be better of playing Lawn bowling – tee hee.

I had a lay-in (had a bit of a sore head), and went for a fantastic Sunday Roast dinner in the Sun and Moon on-site pub. Superb Prawn cocktail followed by Roast Beef with all the trimmings.

Myself, Len, Paul (the three Chelsea supporters), then went off with Bret (the sad Arsenal fan), to watch the Carling Cup Final between Chelsea and Liverpool, which was being shown on the big screen in the Sports bar. It was a great game albeit a bit nailbiting for a long time, and Chelsea ran out 3-1 winners. When we scored our second goal I got a bit carried away and jumped up, did a cartwheel, smashed into the wall and slid across the floor banging into the table, knocking over the pint that Len had just bought me all over my Jeans, I was soaked, and had a really sore ankle.

But, I was over the moon!

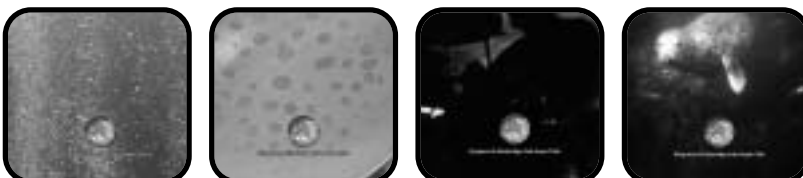
Sunday nights entertainment was five star, first on were Kid Creole and the Coconuts, they were fantastic – A real colourful visual feast. Remember all those songs from the 80's like “Stool Pigeon”, “Annie I'm not your daddy” and “Don't take my coconuts”? – it was brilliant, everyone was up dancing right up the front of the stage. I got a signed photo of the band and even shook Kid Creoles hand – though I couldn't get the Coconuts phone numbers much as I tried.

Jimmy James and the Vagabonds were next up – a soul band from the 70's – very good too, the dancefloor was now really rockin.

The clock was ticking though, it was now 12.45, and I had to be up at 6am in order to drive straight in to work. It was a freezing morning, 10 minutes to thaw the car out, 50 minutes to drive from Bognor to Oxshott and a further 45 minutes to drive the 2 miles from Oxshott to Esher.

- A great weekend!

K&E Computer desktop “wallpapers”



For no good reason Gren has produced several computer desktop “wallpapers” to brighten up the working day - All photos are by club members, and I have sized them for the most popular computer screen resolutions - Download and install them to your desktop from www.scubakingston.co.uk/wallpaper

Tsunami fund

Article: **John Rapley** (Chairman)

I can confirm that, including a donation from club funds, we have submitted a cheque for £636 to the Disaster Emergency committee fund. We have since received a further £25 making a total donation to date of **£661!**

We have requested a receipt from the DEC, and when this has been received we will post onto the notice-board.

The DEC reports that the response from the British public has been tremendous and has now exceeded £250 million. They also assure us that donations are being put to good use and are making real differences to those at the centre of this disaster.

"Rest assured that our member agencies are already operating in the region with the knowledge that we have a fund that is allowing them to meet people's immediate needs of food, shelter, clothing and water and also longer-term needs. We have already allocated £100 million for their essential work over the next 12 months."

Nitrox Club Want to be a member?

Article: **Alex Morris & Jo-Anne Eaton**

Are you qualified to use Nitrox?

If you are, you may be interested in joining the Nitrox Club run by members of Kingston & Elmbridge.

The club has been running for a couple of years, giving access to extremely cheap fills of nitrox that often cuts the cost of a fill in half.

There is an initial joining fee along with a small annual fee. After that the only thing you are paying for is the amount of oxygen you use to fill your cylinders.

With the dive season just starting we are now accepting new members to this growing club. If you are new to Nitrox or if you are a hardened mixed gas diver this could be of benefit to you.

If you are interested in joining and want to know more, please drop Alex a line. You know it's the safe option, so why not find out more.

Are you qualified to use Nitrox?

Should you wish to become qualified to dive using nitrox, there is a course taking place on the 18th June.

This is a two day course and will qualify you to use up to 50% nitrox as a diving and decompression gas. Minimum grade is a sports diver.



Further information

To email Alex: morris.alex@ntlworld.com

To book a course, please use link:

<http://www.bsac-se.org.uk/Bookingform.asp?EventId=221>

And to read more about the two day course, see link:

<http://www.bsac.org/techserv/syllabus/cntrxsyl.htm>

What are you planning?

Please email details to ok@grenvillehamlyn.com for inclusion in a future edition of OK.

New advice regarding rate of administration of Artificial Ventilation

Article: **Dave Tresidder** (South-East Regional Coach)

Please find advice below from the NDC regarding new rates for AV. This should be incorporated into all training from now onwards, you may wish to amend your notes and manuals accordingly.

Advice regarding rate of administration of Artificial Ventilation (AV)

Land based rescue – The BSAC does not recommend a rate for AV which is applicable with all casualties in all rescue scenarios. The essential feature of AV, like all other rescue techniques, is its effectiveness. The effectiveness of AV is assessed and monitored by observing the casualty's chest rise and fall, the sound of the exhalations, and the ease of inflation of the chest. This allows the rescuer to monitor the degree of inflation provided with each breath ensuring that there is neither under- nor over- inflation. The rescuer will also be able to recognise when the casualty's exhalation has ceased (when the chest has ceased

falling and the sound of the exhalations has ceased). When this occurs it is time to provide another breath to re-inflate the chest. This method automatically sets both the rate of AV and the volume by which the chest is inflated, appropriately for the particular casualty's build. A slightly built, slim person will therefore be ventilated more shallowly, but at a slightly higher rate, than someone with a larger chest capacity. It is for this reason no rate is specified.

This guidance is in line with that for 'Rescue Breathing' in Basic Life Support (Resuscitation Guidelines 2000; Resuscitation Council (UK)). In summary these are that only a small amount of resistance to breathing should be felt during rescue breathing and each rescue breath should take 2 seconds, achieving a tidal volume of an amount to produce visible lifting of the chest. The rescuer should then wait for the chest to fall fully during expiration before giving another breath. This should normally take about 2 - 4 seconds; each sequence of 10 breaths will therefore take about 40 to 60 seconds to complete. The exact timing of expiration is not critical; the chest should be allowed to fall before another breath is given.

In water rescue – In the water, monitoring effectiveness as described above is almost impossible and other guidance has to be given by the BSAC. This has to be a compromise because, as noted above, no advice will be ideal for all casualties and situations. In the water there is also the possibility that effectiveness may be further compromised by the need to tow the casualty.

The advice of the BSAC is that, in water, ventilations should be given at a rate of two breaths every 15 seconds. This figure is considered to provide adequate inflation of the casualty's lungs and adequate deflation between the breaths. The inflation phase will take 1.5 to 2 seconds, followed by a deflation (exhalation by the casualty) for about 4 seconds. The total time for the inflation/deflation for each breath of AV will therefore need to take about 5 - 6 seconds, although again this is an approximation for an 'average' adult. Once an in-water rescue has progressed to the stage where monitoring effectiveness can be performed as for the on land situation described above, that method of monitoring the effectiveness should take precedence.

Further information

<http://www.bsac-se.org.uk/>

Alternatively Dave can be e-mailed at: southeastern.coach@bsac.com

O² be more careful...

When life-saving equipment goes bad

Article provided by: **Grant Seidner**

This may be a good safety reminder for all at the club, I used to dive / mix / blend with these guys every week – Accidents do happen, mainly through complacency!

"Most people who subscribe to NWRB list already know this story, but I thought that I might as well post it to remind everyone not to be complacent with O₂.

We were diving on Friday (as usual) in anticipating for diving the U-533 again in 2 weeks. The first team (all on OC) has just come back from the dive, and was being helped back on the boat. While the last diver of the team was about to get on board, the second team (all on CC) was getting ready to gear up for the dive.

I was putting on my unit when I heard a strong gas swooshing sound like a BIG blow torch going (no explosion though). Looking up I saw huge yellow flames came from the bottom of one of the 2 ECCR units, and people were flying over the rail in the water and I was the last man on-board since they were all closer to the unit and knew what was happening before me.

Not being a hero, I dove over the rail without thinking while mentally kicking myself for being so slow.

By the time my head popped out of the water, it was only about five seconds from the moment I saw the flames. And 1/3 of the 27-ft diving boat was already in flame.

Everyone knew that there were O₂ and Nitrox stages remained on-board so we swam as hard as we could away from the boat (*all without fins*) since we had no idea what will happen next.

I guess about 3 minutes later, the tank o-rings on the stages were melted one by one and each acted like a giant torch shooting flames up over the rail clearly visible from the water. Just a few seconds after flaring out, each stages "exploded" shooting debris at least 50m/150ft in the air and landed over us.

Eventually all of the stages were destroyed and we were expecting the boat diesel to explode next, but it never happen. By this time, the boat was fully inflamed.

We were picked up by a recreational fishing boat and brought back to port.

The Coast Guard came out to put out the fire and towed the remain of the boat back to port. It was burnt to the water line and everything on board was destroyed (except for my keys which were melted into the fiberglass floor, and still useable now).

I got off light losing only my 2 stages, fins, mask, hood, dive bag, sunglasses, wallet and phone (US\$3,000). The guy who owned the unit that went up in flame lost ~US\$15,000 since his digital video system, GPS, Helium analyzer, etc were gone.

I have started an analytical discussion about the accident since the O₂ tank was turned on at least a few minutes before the flames appear. And if it came just 1 minute later after the diver had don the unit, it could have been much worse.

Here was the timeline event:

- **Diver turned on O₂ tank**
- **Turned on RB electronic**
- **Solenoid activated and got unit to surface set-point (0.7)**
- **Diver was picking unit up to don when fire started (~3 mins after turned on tank)**

The fact that there was a delayed time frame is the part that scares me the most since no one would have any chance of turning the tank valve off as it wouldn't be a human instinct to drop the unit, reach down into the flame and turn the valve off. If the flame started while the tank

was being turned on, then it would have been easier.

Tank was O₂-cleaned ~1 month before. Reg was 3-dive old. Unit was 4-year-old.

We all know about adiabatic compression as a possible source of problem, but no one was able to pin down on any strong cause in this incident. The suggestions were:

- **debris in the valve**
- **old hose**

But at the end, no one will know for sure what happened."

SDC/ITC diary

The following Skill Development courses are currently available!

Article: **Chris Hunka** (Training Officer)

2005 Skill development Courses*

14/05	Diver Coxswain Award	£30
04/06	Chartwork and Position Fixing	£70
11/06	PIE Preparation	£40
18/06	Combined Nitrox	£80
02/07	Search and Recovery	£60
03/09	Dive Planning and Marshalling	£70
18/09	Advanced Lifesaver Award	£45
24/09	Combined Nitrox	£80
01/10	Diver Coxswain Award	£30
02/10	Rescue First Aid	£37
22/10	Boat Handling	£60
26/11	Oxygen Administration	£40
27/11	First Aid for Divers	£35

*Correct at time of writing check www.BS-AC-se.org.uk for any updates.

2005 Instructor Training Events*

07/05	Open Water Instructor Course
08/05	Practical Instructor Exam
21/05	Theory Instructor Exam
25/06	Open Water Instructor Course
26/06	Practical Instructor Exam
10/09	Open Water Instructor Course
11/09	Practical Instructor Exam
08/10	Open Water Instructor Course
09/10	Practical Instructor Exam
05/11	Instructor Foundation Course

*Correct at time of writing check www.BS-AC-se.org.uk for any updates.



It is always more fun to do these courses as part of a group, so if you are considering entering a for a SDC or ITS contact **Chris Hunka** (Training Officer) either at the clubhouse or email chris.hunka@btinternet.com and he will co-ordinate a Kingston & Elmbridge contingent.

Portland: Storm-force 10!

The first of two trip reports from what must be the first club dive of the season

Article: Jo-Anne Eaton

It was in October that someone asked, "Are we going to do the trip to Portland in January again?" In all our excitement, we decided on going for two days rather than the usual one-day event.

January arrives, B&B's booked, ribs all in "alleged" working order, 12 excited divers ready to go – and then there was the weather forecast – "Gales blowing with force 8 winds, moving to storm force 10". Its Portland harbour, of course we can still dive it! We battled down to Portland on the Friday night, had a drink in the bar and retired to bed. I think I can safely say that most people were kept awake with the howling wind and the horizontal rain. Still looking on the bright side, of course we were still going diving, weren't we?

In blew Saturday morning and after a hearty breakfast, we headed out to sort the ribs out. Those with little faith had already programmed in the telephone number of Weymouth cinema into their mobile phone, just in case. Rib's started, ready to go and Britvic decided she would have a spark plug problem, so after a little time taken to sort that out, we were off. Across the harbour, out through the other side, along the breakwater to give us some shelter and off to dive the barge. Ok, so the viz wasn't "gin clear" but we went diving! A while later, all had dived and we were ready to head back for some lunch and a hot drink. As the day was starting to get a little dark, we decided to call it a day. Roll on Sunday...



All were up early with a growing anticipation, we were all ready to go. Rib in the water for 9am, all working, no prop or spark plug chaos to dampen our spirits. Off we went, ready to do what we thought was the Countess, but ended up being the Countessa (wrong buoy!). Never the less, a nice little dive and Sandra nearly had the lobster but it was not to be. Back in for Lunch and a mug of hot chocolate, ready for dive number two, We ventured outside the breakwater again, dive along the break water wall. Unfortunately, the viz was resembling pea soup, so after the first wave, the others dived the Countess. It was definitely the countess this time and slightly better viz, and I do stress slightly! The second wave surfaced from their dive and we all headed back to recover the boats. With boats recovered and all divers in warm clothes, the rain started. We all jumped back in our cars and headed back home. What we thought was going to be a weekend blown out by the weather, we ended up enjoying 3 dives, some rib maintenance, practice with handling the ribs in difficult conditions and to finally say "We dived Portland in a Storm Force 10!"

Same time next year?

Visit by the Receiver of Wreck

Article: Katy Randles (Social Secretary)



The Receiver of Wreck, Sophia Excelby, will visit the branch on Thursday 12th May to meet and get to know us. The presentation will start at 9.45pm (bar opens at 9pm) and last for about an hour, with plenty of opportunity to ask questions.

Introducing...

The dive marshal bag

Article: Jo-Anne Eaton

Did you know that K&E have a dive marshal bag? It has been put together to help all those dive marshals and potential dive marshal plan a successful and safe dive weekend.

The big blue BSAC bag contains the following items to help you plan your dive trip:

- A full collection of reference books, Dive Dorset, Dive Cornwall, Dive Sussex etc.
- A full set of charts for the south coast of England.
- Set of BSAC 88 tables, diving emergency hand book and RYA navigation.
- In the folder, you have a set of tide tables, chart 5011, voyage planning sheets, RIB check list, 5 minute neurological exam and a risk assessment form.

You can obtain the bag through the Diving Officer. Please return the bag in the same condition. Remember to photocopy items, not take the last handout in the files and do not remove anything from the bag.

The bag is not meant to be taken on the RIBs as it is not waterproof, if you take it on a hard boat, please ensure that it's kept in a dry place. If the zips get salty, please wipe them down.

Should you wish to add anything to the bag (with the exception of rubbish!) that may be useful to other dive marshals, please feel free to do so. Please ensure that the Diving officer is aware of the additions.

Once you have finished using the bag for planning, or returned from your diving weekend, please return the bag in the same condition to the Diving Officer.

50th anniversary party Get your diary out now...

Article: Katy Randles (Social Secretary)



I am currently planning our club's 50th anniversary party. There will be games, dancing, bbq and anything else I can come up with!

Friends and family will of course be welcome and tickets are probably going to be a around a fiver

– So keep the evening of the 6th of May free...

- 7pm 'till late!
- Fun and games
- Dancing
- Bar-b-que
- Prize draw raffle
- Invite your friends



Katy (here photographed with Sarah Jenner) will probably kill me for this photo – but, hey she's a "party animal" – this should be a good do!

Trip Report: Borneo Adventure



Article: Adele Smith

Since moving to Thailand, Wally and I had been very keen to experience diving in the Far East. We had dived off Koh Samui, but the sites are somewhat limited, and we had visited them all. Last November, we visited Khao Lak for a week, and did a day's diving on the Similan Islands. That was an excellent day out, but since the tsunami, clearly that was not an option at the moment.

Gordon Brookes suggested a trip to Borneo, as he had dived at Sipadan some time before. Sipadan is now closed as a resort, as its reefs and ecology were being stressed by the number of visitors. However, day trips are permitted. Alan Keal was keen to join us, and we put our collective ideas together, and decided on a two centre holiday to Kota Kinabalu in Sabah, Borneo, and a week on Matakating Island, off the east coast of Sabah. Matakating is set up as a Diving Resort, but has facilities and activities for non-divers.

On 1st march, Wally and I with Gordon and his Thai partner, Usa, flew from Bangkok to Kota Kinabalu (KK). We met up with Alan and his wife, Mo and stayed overnight in KK. Alan and Mo had travelled via Kuala Lumpur, as Alan wanted to visit camera outlets to add to his very smart new digital set up. The next morning we flew from KK to Tawau on the south east corner of Sabah. (An alternative travel route could have been to travel directly from Kuala Lumpur to Tawau). At Tawau, we were met with a minibus (courtesy of Matakating) to take us to Semporna on the coast. The journey took about one and a half hours, passing through plantations of oil palms and cocoa trees. At Semporna, we boarded a speed boat to Matakating, again the journey taking over an hour. As we neared Matakating, we could see that it was a beautiful coral island, fringed by sparkling white sands. Later we discovered that hawksbill turtle come ashore to lay their eggs, though we were not lucky enough to witness this.

We were warmly greeted, and with the paper formalities quickly over, we were invited to have lunch and then have an orientation dive that very afternoon. We accordingly dropped into the house reef just 2 hours later. The diving is organised around 3 boat dives a day, at 0830, 1100 and 3pm. 3 more dives can be taken on the house reef for the real enthusiasts – at sunrise, sunset and at night. The dive masters simply require divers to write their preferences on a board the night before so that they can plan the day.

We enjoyed some excellent diving on the whole. The islands and reefs around Matakating abound with unusual sea life, including sea horses, pigmy sea horses, mantis shrimp, frog fish, leaf scorpion fish and many others that I had not seen before. It was ideal territory for the 'macro cameraman', but interesting for the non-camera guys as well. Some areas showed signs of blast fishing damage to the coral, but that did not detract on the whole. On most dives, we encountered turtle.

We had a day trip to Sipadan half way through our stay, which was magical. This is usually at extra cost, but for a group of divers staying for a minimum of 5 days, was free. The trip took 2 hours by speed boat, as the sea was quite choppy that day, but a crossing of 1 hour was feasible. We had three dives, all wonderful. Reef sharks abounded, so used to divers that they were reluctant to move unless we got too close. There were turtles everywhere, also clearly very used to visitors. On the second dive, we were dropped into a shoal of jacks so numerous that we were surrounded by them for a long time. The highlight of the dive was an attack by an extremely aggressive titan trigger fish during our safety stop. It first seized Wally's fin, and when he kicked it away, had a go at the dive guide, who fended him off with a spike. I tried to 'keep a low profile' which seemed to work as it then turned on Gordon and finally Alan. It looked highly amusing to me, but the others were not so amused!



The resort itself was a delight. We occupied 3 self contained 'lodges' with their own facilities, all overlooking the beach. There were chalets with their own balconies, but with shared facilities at lower cost. The food and general service was excellent and the staff very warm and friendly. All meals, tea and coffee and fruit juices were included in the price, and drinks and snacks were available all day. Other drinks could be purchased at the bar, signed for during your stay and settled at the end. This type of resort would not suit those who like an active night life, but we found it delightful and very restful.

At the end of our stay we were taken back to the mainland to meet a flight back to KK. We were waved off by our dive guide and other staff, a novel experience for us, and epitomised the care they gave. We spent the last few days of our holiday exploring the flora and fauna around KK. One trip took us into swamp land where proboscis monkeys abound. We had several sightings of family groups. Another interesting type of fauna we were not expecting was a Rolls Royce/Bentley Rally that was currently touring Borneo. We were able to watch the cars in procession and exhibited by their proud owners, ranging in age from 1924 to 2004!

Wally and I would like to return to the area, probably staying in Tawau for a few days and visiting the Orang Utangs. Another visit to Matakating would be very nice, or to an alternative resort closer to Sipadan such as Mabul. Travel to the area from UK is not difficult, as Alan Keal will vouch for. He is also highly delighted with the excellent pictures he was able to take of the very smallest of the sea life in the area.

All in all, a wonderful 'Borneo Adventure'.

Trip Report: Micronesia



Article: Simon Neuhoff

This is a report on Claire and my recent trip to Micronesia. We went with a group of friends making a party of seven in all. All were experienced wreck divers and this was for us the trip of a lifetime.

The hassle (part one)

We left from Heathrow Sunday 6th March. Our first inkling of the trouble that lay ahead was an "additional, random check" that we were told was required by US regulations after we had already been through the normal Heathrow security. Strangely the "random" check involved only those on South African passports and the only Black man on the flight. We had to empty our hand luggage, were physically searched and even had to remove our shoes. Eventually we were allowed to board the plane.

The first leg of the journey was a whopper – London to Singapore (13 hours), a 2 hour layover in Singapore and then off to Hong Kong, 3 hours there and then off to Guam. It was on this final flight when the next rude shock lay in wait – we made an unexpected (to us at least) stop in Saipan, a US controlled island. There all passengers had to "deplane" together with all hand luggage and go through their security checks. This involved screening the bags as well as the passengers with most being physically searched as well. On screening my bags they found the 2 Halcyon HID torches I had packed and opened the bag (I was not allowed to touch it) and asked me what they were. I explained they were diving torches and was told these could not be taken in hand luggage and would have to be placed in the hold. I explained they were both expensive and fragile but despite a protracted argument they would not return the bag to me. We got back on the plane stressed and frustrated and then the security man came up to us again on the plane and asked what "fuel" the torches used. Confused I replied that they were battery operated and he then told me that they could not be taken on the plane at all and would be confiscated. Bearing in mind this was after 26 hours of travel I was understandably seriously put out by this time. An American listening to the argument from the seat ahead suddenly piped up "Hang on, aren't you talking about FLASHLIGHTS?" We confirmed that this was indeed what they were and the security chap left without a word, leaving us no wiser as to the eventual outcome. Thankfully the bag actually did arrive in Guam, torches intact.

LESSON ONE – to a Yank a torch involves flames of some kind – think oxyacetylene! Do NOT call them torches – they are flashlights or diving lamps.

The hassle (part two)

After an uneventful day exploring Guam which seemed to consist almost entirely of karaoke bars, strip clubs and sex shops scattered between the hotels we headed back to the airport. Here we were in for another surprise. Instead of checking in as usual, once you have got your boarding passes you have to take your checked in bags in person to the security screen and wait whilst they are xrayed. The security personnel then decided that every bag we had had to be searched and we had to id our bags and then stand and wait whilst they unpacked literally every single item, hauling out knickers and regulators with equal impunity. We were again not allowed to interfere or assist in any way and when one of our party tried to stop an official cross threading the head of his torch he was told harshly and aggressively to back off. The buddy "suicide bottle" on one BCD was almost confiscated as it would not be internally inspected but we managed to get it opened using our own tools and it was finally passed.

From there it was off to the next set of checks where our hand luggage was searched with equal intensity and all but one of us subjected to physical searches and scans with orders such as "Keep your arms up"

"Legs apart" "Don't step back" "Don't turn around" being barked at us. It took over two hours to get through the whole process and by the time we were done we had to all but run for the plane. We boarded the plane feeling grubby and violated and with the grim knowledge that we would be passing through Guam twice more on this holiday. Finally though we left for Chuuk.

Chuuk

Chuuk is the more correct name for Truk and was officially changed in the 1980s with the formation of the Federated States of Micronesia which is formed of four states, Chuuk, Yap, Kosrae and Pohnpei, each state consisting of a number of islands. Of them Chuuk is the poor cousin and we found it to be both more populous and more third world than we'd expected. The buildings are largely very dilapidated with broken down vehicles all over and more potholes than road. The people though were without exception healthy looking and very friendly and happy.

Chuuk itself is a huge coral atoll which is in fact the third largest barrier reef in the world. Almost no-one dives it though – they come for the wrecks! Within this atoll are a number of islands, several of which are inhabited. Moen is the island that is most developed with the airport as well as the two dive resorts, Blue Lagoon and the Truk Stop. During World War II it was a strategically important base for the Japanese and was used as a base for aircraft as well as shipping. It was attacked by US carrier based planes in February 1944 in Operation Hailstorm during which over 40 wrecks were sunk. Today there are between 50 and 60 ship wrecks in the lagoon with numerous fighter plane and bomber wrecks besides. The wrecks vary in depth from a few metres below sea level to over 80m deep. The visibility between the centrally situated islands where the water is shallower is between 10 and 20m whilst outside this area up to 40m vis is found with deeper water. There is more life though in the shallower areas.

We stayed and dived with Blue Lagoon dive resort which is on the island of Moen (as is the airport) and a little out of town. The resort itself is very nice, lots of palm trees and grass and the accommodation clean and comfortable. There were also lots of cats! The resort has a reasonable restaurant with a fair selection of food. We did go to the Truk Stop twice during our stay to get some more variety though. The diving is all guided and the guide was excellent, not being intrusive or restrictive but showing us the best routes to make the most effective use of our bottom time. We dived independent twins, giving us lots of gas for long deco hangs. All of the sites were within 45 minutes by boat.

The diving was simply unbelievable. We did nine days diving with two dives per day. Blue Lagoon has both nitrox and trimix facilities and even a trimix analyser but apparently helium is only sporadically available and whilst we were there there was none to be had. The cost of trimix is very steep too – I was told up to \$250 per dive. We chose to do the morning dive on air and use nitrox for a shallower afternoon dive. We also used 50% for accelerated deco on 3 of the deeper dives, hanging the tank below the boat.

In all we dived 15 of the wrecks, every one of them world class. The wrecks are all fantastically intact and heavily decorated with coral and lots of fish and macro life. In fact each wreck is worth diving simply as an artificial reef. All the fixtures are in place with portholes, telegraphs, propellers all in place. The cargo was incredible too – we saw bullets, gas masks, aeroplanes, trucks, cars, artillery pieces, tanks, a periscope for a submarine, sake bottles and landmines. One of the highlights was seeing the massive shells for the battleship "Yamato" which had the biggest naval guns in existence at the time. Each engine room could have been a purpose built playground for divers with intact gauges that you can still

Trip Report - Continued:

Micronesia



read (strangely most are in English). Most of the wrecks were armed and these guns are now covered in very colourful coral.

We also came across human remains in two of the wrecks, driving home the point that these are war graves and need to be dived with appropriate respect. The freighter Aikoku Maru had been converted into a troop transport and was sunk with the loss of over 500 men. Almost all of the remains have been removed by the Japanese Navy for proper Shinto funeral rites but some remain.

Our favourite wrecks included the San Francisco Maru and Fujikawa Maru but for me the best dive of the trip was our second dive on the Nippo Maru (the suffix Maru denotes that they were merchant Navy). Jenny our guide led us through the superstructure and into the top of the engine room. We descended into the pitch black engine room in perfect visibility and explored the machinery, dials, saw the telegraph repeater – all at about 42m. We then dropped below the cat walk to exit through a hole in the side at 47m. As we left the wreck we were treated to the sight of a grey reef shark patrolling the wreck. From there we headed towards the stern to see anti aircraft guns and some weird machinery before making our way back to the anchor line to start a long deco. Even the deco was fun as the whole wreck could be seen below us and a large group of barracuda kept cruising by.

Palau

Sadly eventually we had to leave and pay another visit to our old friends in Guam. To be fair the shift on duty that day were far less unpleasant than the first time and we had checked our baggage through to Palau so we were spared the sight of them being searched. Despite the fact that we were in transit and did not leave the airport all our checked baggage WAS searched in our absence and any that were locked had the locks broken off. Irritatingly they opened all the sunscreen and other bottles that we'd wrapped in plastic bags and failed to always close them securely with the result that we had sunscreen smeared all over our dive gear. Disturbingly one of the party had her bikini bottom stolen. She laughed it off though, saying that they would have been less keen if they'd known it belonged to a 43 year old woman!

We then had a stopoff in Yap where we were introduced to a new game. One half of the plane had to "deplane" with all hand luggage, the remaining passengers had to sit with their hand luggage in their laps whilst the empty half was thoroughly searched. We then moved across so the other half could be searched in turn. Meanwhile the deplaned passengers were subjected to random searches and the external parts of the plane checked by ground crew.

We were in Palau for 5 days and dived with Fish and Fins, a professional if slightly mercenary centre. Palau seems to be the home of outsize outboard engines and some of the boats had twin 250 hp engines! This did allow us to get to distant sites in double quick time. The dive sites were excellent, mostly vertical walls with stunning visibility, strong currents and loads of grey reef and white tip reef sharks. We also saw a few bump headed parrot fish, a couple of huge napoleon wrasse and several turtles and two small manta rays! One of the highlights was a dive into the "Temple of Doom", an 80m deep sea cave with a narrow entrance at the bottom of the "Blue Hole". It was very roomy with extremely clear water and a permanent line running to the back of the cave. Inside are the skeletons of three turtles which had lost sight of the exit and drowned. Palau also has a number of wrecks and we dived two Japanese wrecks which were well worth the effort although the visibility was poor.

The Return

The return journey was a mirror image of the outward journey with the by now familiar routine of deplaning in Yap and Saipan and the bullsh*t in Guam. By now we were old hands at it and managed to take it in our stride. We spent 2 nights and a day in Hong Kong, doing a whistlestop tour of the highlights. Somehow we managed to end up in a karaoke bar at 2am full of very drunk and very gay locals singing exceptionally badly in Cantonese – but that's another story! In all we made 14 flights in three weeks.

So was it all worth the hassle and the travelling? The answer is an emphatic YES. The diving in Chuuk is all its cracked up to be and more. We are already planning on going back. Now I just need to win the lottery!

Looking forward to 2005 Awards

From “photography” to the “wooden spoon”.

Well, do you fancy your chances this year?

Article: Rachel Sharp (Pool Marshal)

As the diving season and new club year gets underway I would like everyone to bear in mind that they, or their buddies are possible candidates for some of the various awards that the club bestows.

The time honoured tradition of awarding all the trophies at the Dinner Dance as been revived. So if you think you have won something or one of your friends might of, please join us for the night. As a novice, I used to go to see if I had won anything, and to find out who had won the Wooden Spoon. Much to my shock one year it was me! Mind you there are some very prestigious names on it.

The trophies are open to all, so let's have some competition this year. Most are decided by the committee, so you need to let them know or nominate your friends. I think it will be clear what to do once you have read the details.



If you like shellfish and do occasionally battle with crab, lobster, or crayfish, and occasionally win don't forget to get it weighed and witnessed. It can then be entered for the **CRAWLEY CUP**. The winner is the person whose find weighs the most – Don't forget people bring things up, but forget to weigh them, so you never know...

If you like taking pictures, then we have three trophies to enter for. Please bring some photos to be judged at the Club. The way this is done, is that we show them on projector and those viewing vote for the best photo which receives the **UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR**, the best group of photos which receives the **UNDERWATER PORTFOLIO**, and the best photo taken in UK waters the **UK WATERS TROPHY**. This is usually done the Thursday before the Dinner Dance.

We need more people to enter these competitions with colour or black and white, preferably in slide format, although we will probably need to find a way to show the digital photos as well (*just let the person organising the viewing know the format and we will see what can be done*). Please consider your photos even if you do not think they are brilliant. Apart from

anything else it gives us a chance to see some of the work you have done.

We have two trophies presented by Bill Woodhams. These are the **RIVER RACE TROPHIES**, presented to the male and female winner of the River Race. This race was swam in snorkel gear from Hampton Court Bridge to Kingston Bridge, it was stopped when too many people started getting ill afterwards. The Committee tried to start this again, but in Littleton Pit. Unfortunately there was little interest.

To win the next trophy someone needs to be rescued, so please try not to help someone else win it. **THE LIFESAVING TROPHY**. However someone saves a life, please nominate them.

There is a trophy for the new trainees each year called funnily enough **THE TRAINEE OF THE YEAR TROPHY**. Basically if you progress in your skills well, overcome something such as real fears, adverse situations, learn to swim (it happened once), or are committed to the Club by helping at work days, events, throwing yourself into the committee or anything else that makes you stand out then you might be nominated.

We have a trophy for the best underwater find (*mermaid's or bikini clad young ladies excluded*). It is the **JEFF BETTS TROPHY**. This was donated in memory of Jeff Betts a former member who was very active and loved finding brass down there. Obviously the climate has changed, and we do need to declare any finds to the receiver of wrecks. So please enter anything you have brought up, but declare it first. If you are not sure how to do this then please ask a committee member or myself – By the way one year it was won for a full tool kit that was found, so do try.

THE JOHN PARKER TROPHY is also for an underwater find; this was donated by John Parker, who was the Chairman at the time. He noticed that some divers were bring up small finds which could not compete for the Jeff Betts Trophy, also some were making clocks with shells (brass) brought up etc. He wanted to address the balance, so this trophy is for the best presented find. So it can be for anything that you then present well. In recent years since there has been no real competition, anything that did not win the Jeff Bett's Trophy is entered, but that was not the original idea. So let's give them a run for their money let's be imaginative.....

Each year we have the plunge competitions and anyone can enter. This is a very old sport, and involves a shallow dive from the deep end and remaining totally still until you sink, stop or run out of breath. The length of your dive is then measured. It is great fun even if you do not win. This is run a few weeks before the Dinner Dance and is usually at New Malden, although if we have enough interest, then it can also be run at Walton. Who ever wins receives **THE MALE AND FEMALE PLUNGE TROPHIES**

THE LADY DIVER OF THE YEAR was donated by Ivy Woodhams as she felt that the men were dominating the trophies (*in those days there were a lot fewer lady divers*). It is given to the lady who has shone the most during the year. This could be in achievements in diving or giving to the Club, or anything else, again judged by the Committee.

A new trophy last year is **THE LOGBOOK TROPHY**; this is given to the person who has logged the most hours underwater in the year. So the Dive Marshals need to fill in their log sheets, and give them to the Diving Officer.

THE MARION TROPHY is our best trophy and is for the person who has done the most for the Club, usually over a period of time, but sometimes the work put in is outstanding even just over one year. So the more we give to the Club, the more possible it is to win this trophy.

THE WOODEN SPOON is our last trophy and is given for the best cock up or series of cock ups for the year. So on this occasion please do rat on you fellow divers, and nominate people to a Committee Member in writing, so it is not forgotten for later in the year.

Positive press for Sharks of the World

Article: Kevin Morgan

One of the ultimate diving thrills has to be an encounter with a shark. But with over 400 species and subtle differences in body patterns and shapes between many sharks, how can you tell them apart?

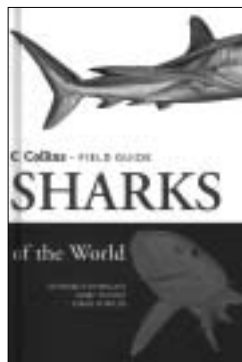
Well, help is at hand with a new Collins field guide published this year called **Sharks of the World**. The illustrator is Marc Dando, along with Leonard Compagno of South Africa, one of the World's leading shark experts, and Sarah Fowler, president of the European Elasmobranch Society (EEA) who was recently awarded an OBE for her work on Shark conservation.



Dogfish are sharks and are common in UK waters.



Another UK sighting, the basking shark



Sharks of the World – "A classic for shark identification".

Many illustrations convey the subtle differences in the overall 'presence' of different groups of sharks and apart from the typical 'side profiles' there are illustrations of the 'head from above' for similar species, profile we often see when diving with sharks below us. In addition there are over 1,000 line drawings and distribution maps. As Jeremy Stafford Deitsch of the Shark Trust says in the forward, this is a classic for shark identification.

In UK waters that most likely species you'll see is the Dogfish with the outside chance of seeing the Greater Dogfish or Nursehound. 'Dogfish' has always been misleading. When club members say they have never seen a shark in UK waters and I mention the dogfish, I am often told it doesn't count – wrong!

Our 'dogfish' belong to the family of catsharks and in *Sharks of the World* are known as the Nursehound and the Smallspotted Catshark (the Lesser Dogfish – the main 'dogfish' we encounter). So think of 'catshark' when you next encounter one and give it a friendly stroke!

Press hysteria

Most of you would have read about the Great White Shark attack on a diver (Mark Currie) in cage in South Africa in the papers. Well, the whole article is misleading. You are told on the excursion that the shark will often bite onto the cage (and this is what is shown in the pictures) and this is a response to the electrical impulses given off by the cage and not because the shark is trying to get at the diver. If it has been me in the cage, I'm sure the adrenaline would have been pumping, but I would have felt really privileged to have had such a close encounter with a big great White Shark.

Well, White Shark Ecoventures in South Africa is considering suing Mark Currie for loss of earnings, claiming he had exaggerated the attack that occurred last December. Mr Currie was in a specially built, half-submerged steel cage lashed to the side of a diving boat and he claimed the shark began to ram the cage he was in with open jaws and that the captain of the boat was bashing the shark on the head with a metal pole. The others onboard have stated the incident did not happen as portrayed in the media. The captain didn't hit the shark over the head with a metal bar, no one had to fight for their life, or had a shark chewing through the metal bars of the cage to get at them.

As the Shark Trust have said, the great white shark was probably "mouthing" the cage out of curiosity or in response to aggression rather than a genuine attempt to attack and eat the person who was in it. So it is rather depressing that the press portrayed the story in such a way when a good journalist could have had a front page article that was rather more accurate whilst still sensational. Something like 'Close Encounters with Jaws' and that you can have a close encounter right out of the film *Jaws*, but are quite safe – and even highlight some of the threats to sharks.

A threat to paradise

Many of you will know I have been to Bimini in the Bahamas to swim with wild dolphins. Bimini is also famous for big game fishing, diving, and the Lemon Sharks that breed in the mangroves. Mangroves are vital as a fish nursery and as coastal protection, so it is alarming that there are plans under way to build a hotel complex on the Bimini mangroves. Lots of people are in opposition to this development, from fisherman to divers and dolphin experts to tourists.

It is also very frustrating that such plans may go ahead with the recent tsunami disaster. What is coming out of this terrible tragedy is that many coastal communities with healthy coral reefs and mangroves were spared the full power of the incoming waves. Yes, there will be some locations that will always be in the wrong place and the tsunami still did huge amounts of damage to the better protected areas. However, in many cases, the damage done and the lives lost were considerably less than in similar nearby areas that has less natural protection.

Major tsunamis are rare events but hurricanes and typhoons occur every year. These hit the Bahamas every year and quite often Bimini is affected. On such occasions the locals take their boats right into the heart of the mangroves to protect them for the full force of the winds and waves. So why are they planning such a hotel complex in this day and age? For more details also refer to the Shark Trust – www.sharktrust.co.uk – who have written to the government of the Bahamas about this.

And talking of web-sites, I now have web-site you can access via NaturalExplorer.co.uk or WildlifeSurveys.co.uk. It includes some reports on swimming with dolphins and with sharks, as well as encounters with whales. You can also learn how to make a garden pond and have links through to the club web-site... *and where to go to salsa!*

Chill Out (*water*)Baby!

Relaxation and a complete mind and spirit workout

Article: **Chris Hunka** (Training Officer)

I was intrigued when I spoke to Marcus Greatwood about the **Underwater Relaxation course** he runs every few weeks or so, so I did what everyone should do when they are curious about something they haven't done before, I signed up. The course is run over two consecutive weeks at New Malden Pool. It starts a little earlier than the Scuba sessions, about 7pm. Marcus starts with a safety briefing – you are, after all, underwater and the need, just like Scuba, for a buddy to watch out for you. We discussed breathing techniques and the reasons why humans, like all mammals, are a little uncomfortable underwater and how to overcome our anxiety – all good stuff.



Not Chris Hunka! – This is Marcus Greatwood - Britain's number eight freediver.

Next up was the pool session. Marcus made us swim underwater with just a mask to see how far we could (safely) get. My first attempt was pretty pathetic – about a third of the pool, but this was just to set a baseline. He then gave us a couple of drills to relax (*go on the course to find out how*) and set us off again, I was astonished to go from the shallow end to the dip where it goes deeper. After a few more drills, I was getting into it and within half an hour I could swim a whole length underwater – Amazing. We then put on some fins and a length seemed hardly any effort at all. We were swimming lengths and then hanging on to a weight-belt on the bottom to prove to ourselves we had plenty in reserve. At the end of the first session I felt both elated at the improvement but incredibly relaxed, - chill baby!

The second week Marcus taught some techniques for breath holding and further relaxation techniques (*safety was strongly emphasised*), again with astonishing results. We even breathed out to empty our lungs so we would sink and then spent at least 30 seconds crawling on the bottom before our buddy pulled us up, we could have all spent much longer on the bottom but safety first. The drill I liked most was to swim to one end of the pool, turn around and swim back on a single breath - Fantastic!

Moreover, I have learned how to breath properly in normal everyday activities (*yeah, I was sceptical too*) and it is amazing how breathing properly helps you relax, I now use the technique when I go to bed and I drop off to sleep very quickly.

I'm converted, but don't take my word for it, sign up, listen, believe and you too will discover how to relax underwater. Thanks Marcus!

Sub-aquatic relaxation

Article: **Marcus Greatwood**

Would you like to:

- Reduce stress during the dive?
- Decrease air consumption?
- Reduce the risk of DCI and Narks?
- Increase enjoyment during diving?

If the answer to any of the above is "yes" then you should sign up for a course in sub-aquatic relaxation. Marcus Greatwood organises our clubs' twenty-plus free-diver membership and runs this relaxing course that has measurable benefits for scuba divers.

The course is run over two sessions at New Malden pool on Thursday's starting at 7.30pm

Further information

If you are interested in joining one of the sessions, contact:

Marcus Greatwood (e-mail mig@notanx.com) or

Chris Hunka (e-mail: chris.hunka@btinternet.com)



Tuesday night yoga

Article: **Marcus Greatwood**

I am hosting yoga on Tuesday nights - It is £10 per session at the moment, but this cost may be reduced if we get a few people in every week.

The yoga is called "dynamic Ashtanga" – well its fantastic. I have tried different types of yoga and martial arts and I have never done anything like it before – complete mind body and spirit workout – wow!

Information

The Ashtanga method of Yoga involves synchronising the breath with progressive series of postures – a process producing intense internal heat and a profuse, purifying sweat that detoxifies muscles and organs. The result is improved circulation, a light and strong body, and a calm mind.

Club communications

Looking back over the last three months and looking ahead.

Article: Gren Hamlyn (Editor)

Firstly, thank you to all members that offered their kind words of appreciation after the publication of the last newsletter - I enjoyed producing it and hope that you found that it was worth the read. Having said that, thanks should also be extended to those who contributed – without their effort this would be a pretty empty exercise.

In the months after the last newsletter I have been pretty busy one way or another on club related business. I have been co-opted onto committee meetings, spent a day on the Kingston & Elmbridge SAC stand at the London International Dive Show (LIDS), worked with Howard Hope on the design and production of the club's entry into this year's "Heinke trophy" competition, attended the inaugural meeting of the "marketing sub-committee", produced posters and leaflets for BS-AC South-East region and produced this issue of the newsletter.



The standard of club communications in general has been improved. Taking the lead from the Heinke trophy documents, the club leaflet used at the London International Dive Show looks professional and highlights some of the benefits that our club offers.

The newsletter format change

After adding up the cost of the printing and mailing of the last newsletter, and polling the membership (via e-mail) to find out if you would be happy to fund its production. I can report that, wait for it, wait for it: most of you did not respond to the question. *Doh!*

In fact 23% of you did respond, and the result of those opinions was pretty much fifty-fifty.

It was obviously only a straw-poll, but it was enough to convince me that there is no great ground-swell of opinion that think we should have a paper copy – So, internet download it is.

Given this, I have changed the layout of the newsletter a bit so that it should work on most desktop printers.

London International Dive Show

Well, from my perspective I thought it went pretty well. "My perspective" being the furtherment of our club and increasing our potential to attract new members.

On the Sunday that I was there (along with Sarah Jenner, John Rapley and Howard Hope) we seemed to get some positive feedback from

prospective members – Time will tell whether this actually converts into new members. But there were other benefits from attending: John managed to blag some gear for raffle prizes - including an Analox O² analyser! And, our club was also prominently positioned – I noticed a steep rise in downloads for our winning entry for the Heinke Trophy document – *So, overall, some positive recognition.*

During the event, I was also able to attend a "branch marketing workshop" and spoke at length to BSAC's outsourced public relations and marketing professionals – *You never know, it might come in handy!*

In on the committee

I accepted an invitation to "sit-in" on the club committee meetings. You may think me a masochist, but from my point of view, I want the newsletter to be the primary communication channel for committee members to explain decisions and their overall steering and strategy. Obviously being involved gives me a better chance of getting this sorted.

Heinke 2005

To support Howard's fantastic work having gathered together all the ingredients for the club's attempt to hold on to BSAC's most prestigious award we spent a month of Sundays together (*literally*) to make a credible document to do just that.

Whether we win or not, the document is a fantastic record of another year in Kingston & Elmbridge fifty-year history. I know some members have their own printed copy, but everyone is welcome to download both the original winning entry and the new contender from the newsletter web-site: www.scubakingston.co.uk/annuals

Marketing sub-committee

Jo-Anne Eaton volunteered to set up a small group to look at the club communications and put together a plan for the "marketing" of the club.

The participants met for the inaugural meeting on Tuesday the 13th of April – Our first decision was to find out what current members' concerns and requirements are. The team identified this as a priority action that should be undertaken *before* any effort was made to attract new members.

By the following Thursday club night, Andy Ethel had produced questionnaires, and was actively talking to club members to get feedback.

If you haven't participated in this poll yet, you will be shortly – It goes without saying that we all want our club the best that it can be.

Looking ahead

In my editorial last issue I mentioned that the effectiveness of a volunteer organisation like Kingston & Elmbridge Sub-Aqua Club depends on "communications" – By this I mean not only reaching-out to prospective members, but also keeping our current membership informed while making sure that we recognise individual members' achievements and efforts.

I want this newsletter to give a voice and appropriate recognition to the overwhelming and incontrovertible good-will that is volunteered every week by Dive marshal's. Instructors. Len and Irene behind the bar and those members that attend work-days – to name just a few.

So, if over the next three months, you feel that you would like to give any member or group due recognition for their positive input to the club or to yourself personally – jot it down on an e-mail and I will make sure that it appears in the next issue of the newsletter.

The next issue is due out on the 1st August.

Trip Report: Matiking Island

Article: Alan Keal

In early march I met Gordon Brookes and Wally and Adele in Kota Kinabalu which is in Sabba Borneo, from there we had a 40 minute flight to Tawau, a one and a half hour drive to Semporna and an hour and a quarter speedboat trip to reach the Reef Resort Matakig – it was worth it.

Matakig is about as remote as you can get in Borneo not to far from the Philapines. The resort has been in operation for about three years now and has beautiful, white sand beaches lush interior and good food and accommodation.



The diving is well run and plenty of it – 3 boat a day and unlimited shore diving, the whole lot is bought as a package and though the trip can prove a bit expensive for what you get is worth it. The local reefs have been dynamite fished but there is plenty of life all be it small, nudibranc's crabs shrimps frog fish ect. I think the lack of large stuff has allowed the little critters to flourish. Visibility very good, Warm (*I was quite comfortable in a dive skin*) plenty of room on the boats and fast at least twin 100hp outboards. Sipadan island is about an hours boat trip away, although it can take another half hour if it's a bit lumpy (*it was when we went*) The larger fish hang out here, Shark Jacks Turtles and a very grumpy Triton trigger fish which attacked each one of us in turn. The trip to Sipadan is included if you stay for six days or more, other wise there is an extra charge.

If anyone wants to know more see me at the club.



Kit for sale

Article: Alan Keal

I have the following items for sale...

Under water camera Subel Housing 2 Nikon 801 bodies + various lenses and ports Nikon flash Subel housing
any intrest please contact me at club

50th anniversary dinner dance

Article: John Rapley (*Chairman*)



The group organising our special 50th Anniversary Dinner Dance would like to announce the full details of this event: As previously noted, this is a very special occasion and the Oatlands Park Hotel is more expensive that previous venue's. But, it has a fantastic reputation and is well versed in big occasions and parties.

Venue: Oatlands Park Hotel in Weybridge
Capacity: 200
Ticket Price: £45

Entertainment: Band and Disco

Food: *A special menu is being devised, we have asked for the following:*

Starter: Chicken Liver Parfait, toasted brioche and sauternes jelly

Vegetarian Starter: Pan-friend risotto of woodland mushrooms, scented with truffle oil, herb butter sauce and pousse salad.

Main: Medallions of Kent Lamb, dauphinois potatoes and seasonal baby vegetables

Vegetarian Main: Gateau of aubergine, mozzarella and tomato roast patti pan and tomato coulis

Dessert: Raspberry creme brulee & hazelnut biscuit (*we are trying to get an extra Sorbet course thrown in as well*)



With money raised from various raffles, we will be providing some special surprises at the event to celebrate our 50th anniversary.

40 rooms have been reserved at discounted rates as follows on a first come first served basis:

accommodation: Single Room B&B £70
Double Room B&B £80
Double Deluxe £90

Information

The group co-ordinating the event is myself, Gerry, Alex and Rachel who are co-ordinating ticket sales – Friends & family are welcome, first come first served.

A few words from the Diving Officer...

Article: **Brian Deluce** (Diving Officer)

The diving season is fast creeping up on us and it is good to see some people taking their kit to the pool to check all is in good working order. Much better to do this now than to spend a small fortune in petrol driving to the coast, going through all the effort of loading your kit onto the boat only to find a neck seal has perished, a high pressure hose has split or a demand valve is free flowing. Please check out all your kit in plenty of time before you go on a dive, not only to save you any inconvenience and expense but also for your own safety as well as your buddy.



Please check-out your kit in plenty of time *before* you go on a dive.

I know some hardy people have already been away this year, including one group who dived in a storm force 10 wind. This may at first glance appear foolhardy but when all is considered it was done in the shelter of Portland, and in a safe way, by experienced divers. Which just goes to show it is not just the wind strength that governs where and when we can dive – I have abandoned a dive in the same place in a force 4.

All the dreaded forms you are now required to complete are located in one section of the web site under the original title of 'Forms'. Please can I ask that you all complete the Dive Notification Form before you go diving and either give it to me on a Thursday or email it to me. I need these forms completed whether you are diving in the UK or abroad and even if you are going to dive with another branch, club or school. I have simplified the form as much as possible and ask for it to be completed so I know what is going on and not to intrude in your diving. One of the responsibilities the Diving Officer takes on is to ensure as far as is possible is that all dives are carried out in a safe and responsible manner and within the BSAC guidelines. If I do not know a dive is taking place I cannot fulfil that requirement and at the risk of being alarmist, it could cause complications if you were involved in an incident of some sort.

Please also complete the dive logs, at the time of diving and not by guesswork in the bar afterwards. I know this is not easy on a rib and I will produce some laminated copies to be kept with the ribs so that you can write on them when at sea and copy them onto a permanent record when you are back on dry land. There is no excuse for not completing the log on a hard boat. These dive logs are not there just to impose more work on the poor dive organiser but to provide a record for the safety and security of the divers and to provide assistance to the rescue services should an unfortunate incident occur. I would hope most dive organisers would delegate this task anyway as they have enough to do as it is. Last of all on this subject please pass the completed logs to me as soon as possible, the next Thursday will do, midnight on the Sunday on the way home from a dive is not necessary and would probably be met with some unprintable comments.

I hope you all have a safe and enjoyable diving season but should an incident occur let me know as soon as you can. I do not want to know so that I can judge or criticise but to help and give guidance and assistance where requested or required.

I try to be at the club as much as possible and will always help out with advice where I can, but if you cannot chat to me there feel free to call me about anything you think I can help with.

A few words from the Training Officer...

Article: **Brian Deluce** (Diving Officer)

Hi to everyone instructing or training

This is a gentle reminder to everyone about commitment to attendance to lectures, pool and open water training sessions. There have been a few instances where training sessions have been set up only for students (and instructors too) simply not to turn up or cancel at the very last moment.

I'm sure you are all aware a great deal of time is spent preparing lectures and training sessions.

I appreciate that work, family commitments or illness can sometimes alter availability at the last moment but out of courtesy to either the instructor or the students more notice is needed to make alternative arrangements or, at the very least contact all those involved to cancel in good time so their time is not wasted.

Please keep up to date by looking at the notice board and on the web-site. Please also check your contact details are up to date. I try to email instructors and students of upcoming events but it is your responsibility to check.

Thanks and good diving!

Emergency General Meeting (EGM) Update

Article: **Jonathan Markwell** (Secretary)

An EGM was held on 31st March to discuss and vote on two resolutions. The first was to ask members to consider a rise in the annual Branch fee to £100.00 for the year 2005/6, brought by Committee to maintain the current financial viability of the club.

On the night of the EGM our Treasurer, Graham Evans, gave a presentation on what we get for our membership fee and then went into details of what the Branch spends this money on. The large expenditure items in 2004 were our RIBS, pool hire, the compressor and maintenance of training equipment. Depreciation is also a significant cost. We have limited ways to reduce this expenditure, as it's all linked to our activities as a diving club,

New members and use of our facilities are key to our future success

although we have recently taken the decision to cease use of Walton pool.

Key sources of income are obviously branch membership fees, but bar takings and functions also contribute in a major way and these latter two are down on past levels. As

we heard at the last AGM, it was only with the Heinke Trophy cheque and Elmbridge Council grant that we managed a small profit for the last financial year.

There were plenty of questions from the floor; would a rise deter new members? Could we obtain a higher interest rate on our reserves? Questions about depreciation policy, how our fee compared with other branches and many more were fielded by Graham.

The vote by those present was a close call, but the result was 20 in favour of the proposed rise and 17 against, so the Branch fee for 2005/6 is now £100.00.

The second resolution was unfinished business from the last AGM, a vote to confirm Adele and Wally Smith as Honoured Social Members. This was carried unopposed.

New members and use of our facilities are key to our future success. A Marketing sub-committee led by Jo Eaton has been set up to look into this, so please give this initiative your support and any ideas you may have.

Force 10 from Portland!

The second of two trip reports from this weekend – Obviously a weekend to remember...

Article: Alex Morris

The sun was beating down and the late summer sounds filled the air. Birds on the wing, the gentle rustle of the leaves in the trees. It was in this very warm mellow moment on reading an email from Jo Eaton that doing a New Year dive at Portland seemed like a good idea.

Ten others had similar thoughts and suddenly a dive trip the weekend after New Year was on. Not only that but we would take the club RIB's down and stay at the luxurious Breakwater Hotel.



Day 1 – Looking good to go...

The weather forecast was looking good, south/south westerly 6-7 turning gale force 8-9 with plenty of potential for rain. I didn't say the weather was good for diving! The weekend started early for Steve and Chris who agreed to tow the boats down on Friday. Chris ended up having to do a road side repair to a shredded tyre on the trailer.....was this a sign of things to come?

I took the hardy option of leaving at 6.30am on a Saturday morning (*I don't get up that early for work... this weekend better be good*). The drive down took me past a lorry on the M3 that had lost its load of logs due to strong gusts. The gale continued and added horizontal rain into the bargain just as I arrived in Portland. However all was not lost as a shout from the Hotel restaurant led me up to a good English breakfast. From the warmth of the hotel we started to wonder why we were alone in Portland. The weather was not doing us any favours and the news was reporting trees blown down and stories similar to the Great Storm of 87. So let's go diving then.

We decided to go for the outer wall of the harbour near to the Hood as our first dive. A site dived on several occasions by most of us. Britvic however had other ideas. The engine was running but didn't want to give us much power. We poked, prodded and cajoled for about half an hour and then suddenly it was happy to go. Maybe the weather was making it reluctant to get going, after all no one else was bothering to venture out for non-essential journeys. So off we go again.....CLANK.... "Oops I think that was the prop that we just dinged" exclaimed a red faced Dave T (*mind you most of us already had red and blue faces from the wind*). So again off we go bouncing over the white horses (and that was just near the beach!). Eventually we arrive and decide to dive the barge below the crane. One by one we begrudgingly kit up as the wind howls around us. I join Dave T at the bottom of the shot after realising that not taking a 2kg

torch will mean I will definitely need some extra weight to get me down. Steve came to the rescue in that instance. The shot had hit the wreck perfectly which allowed me and Dave to feel our way around the wreck. Twelve inches of visibility meant that the odd shadow in the murk or a glimmer of torch was all we saw of each other, but we did see a small edible grab or 2 and some fish. Don't ask me what they were as it was too murky to tell. It was fun though looking at the minute detail of the wreck nut by nut and spending several minutes admiring a winch assembly. Sometimes when you have good vis you miss the details and the small wildlife. After about 25 minutes of rummaging we decide that we have seen enough of the detail and head for the surface. By now most of us had been in and the remaining divers were identified by SMB's heading in some interesting directions? When they returned, their descriptions of the sea bed failed to tempt any of us to regret staying on the wreck.

At last then a cold bunch of by now blue faced divers could head back for a warm drink and bite to eat. We decided that we would leave it at 1 dive today as the weather, boats and warmth of a drink were tempting us to stay on shore.

The evening festivities led us to the Pub/Restaurant a couple of doors down from the hotel. It is a very cosy and quaint location considering they cater for a lot of hairy arsed divers. We sat down to enjoy an entertaining evening's food and drink to help detract from the weather still raging outside. Steve seemed to get a good banter going with our waitress and she took a shine to him. After ordering some water I felt it was necessary to comment on the "nice pair of jugs" that she had.....delivered to the table. The stage was set and by the time coffee was served she commented that an Italian had said she made the best espresso outside of Italy. Things going well, so I felt that the comment that she made a "good head on mine" was all above board. The roars of laughter suggested that some other members of our group had far too much to drink and rather smutty minds also.

Day 2 – The wind has virtually gone

Sorry, I was just dreaming.... It is still blustery by any standard, but calm compared to yesterday.

We all drag our kit and boats back out to try a dive on the well known Countess of Ern. We all drop into the murk again, but are greeted with some great vis... compared to yesterday! When Dave T and I eventually get in we quickly realise that it definitely isn't the Countess, but one of the many barges that litter the harbour. A rummage around prod and a poke at various bits and pieces and before we know it we have done about two laps of the barge. On surfacing we point out that it wasn't the Countess, to be met with "Oh I thought I didn't recognise it". The weekend continued....

Final dive then and we attempt the outer wall as this is now about the only semi sheltered place we can find. Jo surfaces making hand signals that we soon realise means they cannot see a thing down there. So the battle of who is going to chicken out first between me and Dave starts. Do we really want to try a final dive in this mess, mind you we have driven a long way to get here so why not....And with that we try the Countess of Ern again. Only this time we find it and for Portland Harbour it isn't bad vis... well maybe it was.

Diving done we were all desperate to de-kit and get the boats out of the water to begin the long journey home. Not before some entertaining stories were told and one that is worth finding more about from Grant. Something to do with a new torch, batteries and water? I will let you work it out.

Ten Pin Bowling

Some unflattering photos from the Charington Bowl!

Article: Dave Tressider

An opportunity to wear stupid shoes, make a fool of myself and socialise with fellow club members, how could I refuse? Don't know – so I didn't. Thanks to Katy (our new social sec.) for an excellent evening – what's next? Suffice to say, all had a good time and there was a good bit of friendly mockery. Distraction tactics ensured an unfair competition which clearly made a huge difference to my performance!



Ian – look at the face he has painted on his ball.



If it's not looking good – run away fast!



You can shorten my legs and give me a bald patch but that's looking like a strike to me!



Using your teeth Gren, was always going to hurt!



Shirt £15, Jeans £30, smug grin – priceless!

GMDSS Skill Development

Learning to use the latest generation of VHF radio

Article: Sarah Jenner (Membership Secretary)

Mayday, Mayday, Mayday. This is Kingston Diver, Kingston Diver, Kingston Diver...

Thankfully not a real emergency but on Sunday 6th February the Club-House echoed with emergency calls as a group of us qualified for the GMDSS certificate. This one-day course, run under the auspices of the RYA, incorporates training in using a VHF radio with an introduction to the Global Maritime Distress System: useful for anyone planning on going out in the ribs or working towards their Boat Handling or Diver Cox'n SDC.

The day was roughly split in half. Before lunch the focus was on how VHF radio works and learning the correct way to communicate.

Most small leisure craft and small workboats use simplex working, where transmission is possible in one direction only at a time so you can transmit or receive but not both simultaneously. Hence the need to communicate clearly and slowly, following an agreed vocabulary, i.e. 'I say again', 'received', 'over and out' etc. and repeating certain phrases where necessary.

For historical reasons some distress and warning phrases are French. Cue much torturing of the French language as we all learned to distinguish between *Seelonce* (*literally radio silence*) and *Sécurité* (*important navigational or meteorological warning*) and to distinguish a major problem (Pan Pan) from Mayday (Fire, sinking, impending death etc.). For instance a ship taking on water but not sinking would issue a Pan Pan message rather than a Mayday.

In the run-up to the course we had been following Chris Hunka's advice to practice the phonetic alphabet by reading out car number plates. This gets compulsive after a while and you can't look at any letters without trying to convert them – Sierra Alpha Delta!

For the same reasons of clarity 50°12'4N becomes five zero degrees one two decimal four minutes north. There is a lot to remember but we were each given a sticker which outlines the distress procedure and can be stuck on the boat by the radio as a prompt.

After lunch we concentrated on the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) which came into force on 1st February 2005.

VHF frequencies between 156.000MHz and 174.000MHz are allocated to the Maritime Mobile Service (MMS); that is, for use by ships fitted with VHF radio. The band is divided in 59 channels and Channel 16 has always been the VHF Distress Safety and Calling frequency. GMDSS was



A typical VHF/DSC radio suitable for leisure craft.

introduced because there were still examples of loss or damage to life and shipping because there was inadequate time to issue a Mayday.

The system requires ships to be fitted with equipment, a VHF DSC (*Digital Selective Calling*) marine radio, which ensures that a casualty can alert search and rescue organisations with the minimum of delay. Pressing a single red button can send a digital distress alert, which gives both the identity and the position of the casualty even if there is no time to transmit any other information.

There is also the option to send a pre-set message, such as 'we have been attacked by pirates' (*I kid you not*) and the more useful – at least in the UK – 'we are sinking' or 'we are on fire'. Voice messages can also be sent but again the value is in the Coastguard knowing exactly who they are talking to and where they are located, which may not be easy to communicate if there is limited time or licking flames.

Although HM Coastguard will continue to listen to Ch. 16 at its stations, from 2005 it ceased to have an operator whose sole job it is to monitor the channel. The only way to guarantee communications with all authorities within VHF range is by fitting VHF/DSC equipment. Pleasure craft are counted as 'voluntary fit' and may fit any component of the GMDSS although both club ribs are fitted with VHF DSC radios.

The day itself was fun, noisy and provided plenty of opportunity to sound like a 1950s BBC News Broadcaster. Roll on some rib diving and a chance to put some theory into practice – although hopefully not Mayday!

With regard to BSAC Direct members who wish to dive with Kingston & Elmbridge Sub Aqua Club.

Article: Brian Deluce (Diving Officer)

The following is an important clarification of club policy regarding BSAC Direct members who are not Kingston & Elmbridge SAC members who wish to dive with our club.:

Members of BSAC Direct, who have not also paid the branch membership fee, can only dive with the branch by invitation and with the approval of the Diving Officer, when a dive organiser is unable to fill the available places of dives advertised within the branch.

Sports Diver long weekend: Seven spaces left!

Article: Rachel Sharp (Pool Marshal)



I am running three days diving from Weymouth (*Dorset*) and currently there are not many takers.

This is most likely because the dates clash with the club holiday to the Medas Islands, but for those stuck in the UK - This would be a great weekend diving. Nice and comfortable too - from a hard boat.

Max depth will be 30M.

If you are interested, please don't hesitate to put your name on the list (*On the notice-board*). I would hate to have to call of this weekend

Training Report: Freezing cold in Wraysbury

Article: Andrew Ethell

Packing the car on Saturday morning revealed a sunny but chilly day – 1.5 degrees. Blimey, don't forget the Thermos or the woolly hat. A few days before I was wondering if my new under-under fleece suit was going to be a waste of time, it seems not – I shall be smug and toasty while the others are shivering.

Arrival at Wraysbury in bright sunshine, Chris is showing off with woolly gloves too, let's see him fill the dive marshal log sheet with those! The Wraysbury kitchen window is doing brisk business with hot chocolates and teas all round whilst kitting up. Hitch number one – the new under under suit is not compatible with the pee zip which I had fitted to my drysuit over the winter. If you don't understand, I won't bother going into any more detail. Lots of hunchback staggering and grunting ensue.

Into the water for the first dive with Grant and Sasha, 9 degrees blimey it hits you. Sasha is wearing a semi dry suit and her lips are already blue while she is still at waist depth. Hitch number 2 – despite spending some time with the bathroom scales, new pony and different tanks during the week I am well under weight. "Get a couple of rocks off the bottom and put them in your BCD pockets" suggests Grant. Bad news all the rubble tipped in at the shore of Wraysbury is roofing tiles and bricks, so I am still bobbing around like a cork after 5 minutes of looking. In the mean time Sasha has completed her mask clearing in the shallows, and the rest of her face is blue by then as well. Looks like uncontrollable shivering isn't far away, so sensibly she decides to call it a day. By this time I found a couple of extra kg so Grant and I went back into the water and groped around in the silty water for 10 minutes.

More hot drinks and briefing for dive number 2, with the teams retreating to opposite corners of the car park so they can't overhear each other. Unwinding of reels and unfurling of DSMBs, much discussion of inflation strategies. Simon spots a bloke in the most colourful drysuit ever seen and bravely goes over to ask him for a photo whilst trying to keep a straight face. He returns victorious with a photo and even avoids getting thumped. No chance of being mistaken for anyone else wearing a suit like that, at least.

Dive 2 was planned to be a swim around with Katie and Grant and inflated DSMBs. Katie is still adjusting her weight and we lose each other soon after submerging. Second try gives much the same result. Attempt number 3 sees a more serious effort to stay together, and we swim holding hands to avoid losing sight of each other. In my impatience I end up towing Katie along and finally we swim into the bank.

More hot drinks and Bob's Teletubby hat proves to be a big hit. Simon models it to perfection with his bright blue under suit, eye stalks and all. Chris and Jo engage in a top secret discussion using Quality Streets as markers on the table, the rest of us are impressed. We get kitted up for Katie's rescue drill and I discover once again I am under weighted without my pony, Chris comes to the rescue with spare weights.

Commendably Katie managed to lift and tow me to shore without getting too much water into my nose, but I soon discovered there is nothing colder than being an immobile victim. A good rolling in the grit at the top of the slipway to get me into the recovery position, and we were soon finished. Not a bad outing for the first dive of the season, and it can only get warmer!



Bob Holroyde in a funny hat.

Bob seems to have turned into a bit of a model lately - Surely it is his face that has been used to help sell novelty hoods at www.scapascuba.co.uk/hoods.htm



K&E to Clean Up its Act!

A major improvement to the club compressor is in the offing.
So, what does it mean to you?

Article: Bret Champion

For sometime, there has been great enthusiasm amongst club members for the Club to enhance its facilities to provide "Clean Air".

More recently, the support for such a facility has become widespread.

Based on this and budget prices prepared by Dave Tresidder, the Committee have unanimously agreed that the Club should move towards providing such a facility as soon as possible.

The procedure will be that detailed costings will now be sought and presented at the next committee meeting. Provided these costings are within the anticipated budget (*between £1,000 and £1,500*) and no other issues arise, it is anticipated that this project will progress as soon as possible thereafter.

For many years Elbridge Borough Council have provided financial support to the Club in the form of a grant – The maximum grant available is £750.

We have been continually successful in obtaining some of the largest "pay-outs" which have generally been in the region of 50% of the maximum.

The Committee have agreed that this year's grant application should be on the basis that the monies will be utilised to progress the "Clean Air" project.

It must however be emphasised that the Committee are committed to this project and its success is not dependent on whether or not our grant application is successful.

In terms of the benefits of "Clean Air", the following article provided by Dave more than adequately covers this!

If any member wishes to comment on, assist, or have any input into this project please do not hesitate to liaise with any of the committee members.



2005 Nitrox Skill development Courses*

Visit www.bsac-se.org.uk to book

18/06	Combined Nitrox	£80
24/09	Combined Nitrox	£80

*Correct at time of writing check www.BS-AC-se.org.uk for any updates.

Article: David Tresidder

The committee are looking into providing clean air for all and they have asked me if I can try and explain the benefits as I see them.

If you'd like to discuss any of the following then I'd be more than happy to do so, if you want to express your views on the committee decision then - speak to them not me! I should perhaps also point out that as a member of the Nitrox group I already get clean air.

Firstly, perhaps an explanation of what clean air is and what it involves. Clean air relates to air that is of an appropriate purity and produced in such a way that it is considered suitable for use in cylinders that will be exposed to high pressures of oxygen (i.e. Nitrox and Trimix cylinders). To achieve clean air in a way that is pretty much universally accepted as appropriate, the air output from a compressor is double filtered. The double filtration is adopted irrelevant of the purity created by the primary system. Double filtration is as much about being a back up system should the primary filter system fail as it is about purifying the air further, at least that's my understanding. If you have a Nitrox cylinder then you must always fill it with clean air even when you are only getting an air fill. The branch compressor does not currently provide clean air so you have to either join the Nitrox Group or go elsewhere for clean air fills if you have or are thinking of starting to use Nitrox. Accidental filling of a Nitrox cylinder with non clean air should result in you getting the cylinder re-cleaned, you could otherwise be putting yourself and others in danger. The majority of all commercial outlets now provide clean air.

So, to provide clean air to all branch members the branch compressor would need to be fitted with a secondary filtration system for all the hoses. At present the Nitrox group uses just one hose and only that hose is double filtered. Clean air can be used to fill non Nitrox cylinders so if you have no interest in the benefits at this time, the conversion would not affect your cylinder filling in any way.

Negatives

It would seem inappropriate to list all the benefits I can think of without listing the negative aspects so lets get those out of the way first:

- **The cost of converting the compressor to clean air.**
- **The ongoing cost of filter replacements.**
- **Any additional maintenance and servicing costs associated with the additional equipment.**

Benefits for everyone

And the benefits. I think splitting into two is best, non Nitrox related, these are direct benefits to absolutely everyone:

- **Providing doubled filtered air significantly reduces the risk of accidental contamination of air** be it through filter failure, compressor malfunction, contaminated intake or any other means. Clearly contaminated air can in extreme circumstances have fatal consequences. If you remember the contamination incident we had a couple of years ago - members of the Nitrox Group were significantly less effected because of the double filtration we had.
- **The dryer air that can be produced (depending on secondary filtration type) will be less likely to cause rust in your cylinders.** So your cylinders could last longer and the need for expensive shot blasting could be reduced. There are added safety benefits as well to having non rusting cylinders.

K&E to Clean Up its Act!

Continued from page 22

Article: David Tresidder

Benefits for Nitrox users

Firstly I think we should explore the basic benefits of Nitrox for those of you not familiar with them.

- **Nitrox is now accepted to be a safer diving gas than air** if used properly in the same way that air is. As we all get older and less fit etc Nitrox is an excellent way of increasing our safety margins without having to change the diving we are doing. I can go on for hours here but you are less likely to get bent.
- **Alternatively you can choose to extend your bottom time and keep the same or even reduce your decompression times and no stop time.** This doesn't increase your safety but for some maintaining current safety factors but extending dive times without deco penalties is a really attractive prospect.
- **Nitrox divers often claim they feel much better after dives than they do when using air.** Clearly I can't cover a whole Nitrox course here but there are many other benefits as well. All can benefit from Nitrox it is not a deep diving gas.

So given that Nitrox is the preferred diving gas of safety conscious divers we can explore some of the Nitrox related benefits of providing clean air:

- **There are a few who have chosen to use Nitrox but don't wish for the expense of the Nitrox Group as they don't need Nitrox fills from the branch** – These members loose out for being safe as they can't benefit from the branch compressor.
- **Conversely to the above, the provision of clean air for all enables you all to chose to convert your existing cylinders to Nitrox ones (if you wish)** and gain the benefits, having done a course. So the provision of clean air to all can be considered to be actively promoting safety within the branch rather than discouraging it.
- **It is the intention of the BSAC to introduce the use of Nitrox into all stages of our core diver training** (Ocean Diver included) and as such the ability of the branch to provide Nitrox compatible clean air will enable all to gain the full benefits of this change. I'm not sure of the exact details at this time but training dives often involve multiple bounces and are therefore ideal candidates to benefit from the use of Nitrox for both instructor and students alike.
- **I would suggest that all of the above are likely to be considered significant benefits by divers who fully understand the issues** and could therefore well result in attracting new members to the branch as well as providing a potentially safer diving environment for us existing members and therefore maybe this will assist in retaining members as well.

On balance

I guess that's probably enough, you can see I'm clearly in favour but then that's why I've already sorted myself out and set up the Nitrox Group. **This I would suggest is an opportunity for the branch to offer increased safety and choice to its members** that most forward thinking divers were requesting in the early 1990's.

Training Report: Gildenburgh training weekend

Article: Jo-Anne Eaton

Headed off bright and early on Saturday morning for the weekend training trip to Gildenburgh, or Gildenbog as it is affectionately known. Arrived in time for a cup of tea, met up with the students and gave out instructions of who was diving with whom and what they were doing. Some tucked into a hearty breakfast, whilst other kit fiddled and the rest gave the dog some attention!



Andy Ethell with DSMB

For those uninitiated to Gildenburgh, it's a lake near Peterborough, about a 2 hour drive from Kingston. They have a variety of platforms and items sunk for you to dive. Depth range from 3m to 20m, so a wide range of diving for all and an excellent training site.

All ready to go for the first dive of the day, Andy and I were off to complete his nitrox open water drills. After the initial chill, the water was quite pleasant. We headed out to the bus, has a look around at all the small fishes swimming around. Found the line which would take us to the plane and headed off in that direction. 30 minutes later we surfaced, debriefed and tucked into some lunch. All other instructors and students we busy doing their drills. Julie, assistant DM for the weekend was also on tea duties. Fully charged Andy and I were all ready for our second dive, off we splashed to practice more skills.

John has booked a table at a local restaurant, so once the diving was finished we all headed off to get ready for the evening. Sandra, Katy, Andy and I had taken the advice from previous trips and booked ourselves into a local B&B. We avoided the caravans, or should they be called "condemned-vans"! Which was just as well as the men's showers were not working, so the guys gate-crashed the girls... All I can say, is poor Cynthia and Julie coming face to face with John in the shower!!!

Once we were all ready, we headed off to the Lion pub for dinner. With all food eaten and drinks drunk, we headed back to our chosen residencies for the night for a well earned nights sleep.

The next day was bright and sunny, just the right weather for some diving. After a nice bacon sandwich at the B&B, were off to the Bog and more training drills. All students were ready to go, so back in the water for a trip to the bus, then plane and then the lorry. Two dives and more tea as supplied by Julie. Some guys had had enough and headed off for Sunday lunch after one dive, some had been dancing on a wall the night before and had hurt their back, yeah right Bret!... but everybody managed to get what they needed done. We were all packed up and ready to go, just as the first spatters of rain started as we headed off, tired but satisfied for a good weekend's diver training.

All in all, a very nice and successful weekend....Same time next year but not in the caravans?!

In memory of my good friend
Lorraine Sutton



This is how I remember Lorraine best – between dives, soaking up the sun with the obligatory mug of tea in hand. Diving always made up tea-hydrated.

Most dive boats would have tea ready for us as we were climbing the ladder. Lorraine, Ted, Brian and myself enjoyed many club diving weekends and holidays together over the years. We will miss her lively company sorely – She was always cheerful, loved a good laugh and was known as “Minnie the Minx” to some.

We have lost a great and true friend and our hearts go out to Ted and Paul.

“Put the kettle on for when I get there Lorraine!”

Shirley Deluce.