



2004 HOLDERS



WINTER 2004

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## ALL SMILES & SUCCESS !

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### IMPORTANT:

WOULD ALL MEMBERS PLEASE ATTEND NEXT WEEKS AGM ON THURSDAY 25th NOVEMBER

ON 4th DECEMBER, AT THE DIVING OFFICER'S CONFERENCE IN LONDON THE HEINKE TROPHY TEAM OF: JOHN RAPLEY, HOWARD HOPE, JO EATON, JONATHAN MARKWELL AND GREN HAMLYN, WILL BE OFFICIALLY PRESENTED WITH THE HEINKE TROPHY !

Check out our website on [www.kingstonbsac.co.uk](http://www.kingstonbsac.co.uk) you will find a mine of information there, including the dive & social itinerary, the lecture schedule/training programme and all the latest news, together with 532 diving related links - you will also be able to send e-mails to other members.

As we approach our 50th anniversary, it is fitting and appropriate that we do so as the most successful branch of the BSAC in the world.

We are winners of the Heinke Trophy, the biggest achievement in our history **and I have some more exciting news to announce at next week's AGM, together with a fantastic surprise for the clubhouse!**

We have just held a most successful and enjoyable Dinner dance. We are planning next year's 50th Dinner dance to be extra special, so watch this space.

The AGM approaches - please try your best to attend next Thursday on 25th November. Two years ago I said I had a clear three year strategy to move the club forward, there is one year left and I am standing at the AGM for my planned last year at the helm if you'll have me. I have delivered what I promised, the Heinke Trophy being one of them.

Membership stands at 146 members and the accounts are very healthy.

I have replaced all the old furniture and the clubhouse looks really nice now, we are going to re-stain the wooden flooring. I appointed a sub-committee on which I sit, to investigate lottery funding. I have also just completed 10 years as the Editor of this Newsletter!!!

I have continued the Chairman's Supper club evenings this year and they have continued to be very enjoyable and successful. Most of the membership have attended at least one of these evenings, however for those of you who haven't I have arranged the buffet evening mainly for you, so enjoy!

I have also entered us for next year's Heinke Trophy - it will be a tall order, but would be another fantastic achievement to win 2 years on the trot.

Also, of course, we are hosting next years BSAC AGM on 21st May, which in our 50th anniversary year is absolutely fantastic! (see page 13 for details)

I have afforded every opportunity for the membership to offer ideas and suggestions, the suggestions book is always available and my door is always open.

I have been Chairman for the two most successful years in our history - so I must be doing something right! Thank you for your overwhelming support.

*Somebody is standing against me for position of Chairman next week (if they get seconded), to which they have every right as we are a democracy. I doubt if you will know them because they haven't attended the clubhouse in nearly a year.*

However, I know you will use your vote wisely and vote for the good of the club - **please don't ruin two years of very hard work and success.**

Don't forget the club xmas party on Thursday 23rd December!

*John*

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***Gerry is offering current club members a generous 12.5% discount on production of their branch membership card.***

## CLUBHOUSE HIRE

Club members are entitled to hire the clubhouse free of charge for their own private events. Club members are actively encouraged to offer hire to friends / non-immediate family / ex-members etc but these hirers must pay the full hire fee which is currently £70.00. Bar staff are additional at £25.00 per person per night. All bookings must be made through the Bar Manager - a hire form MUST be completed at the time of booking, or the booking is not confirmed. It is a condition of hire that no blue tac or pins may be used on the clubhouse walls. The hirer is also responsible for clearing away food and ensuring that all rubbish is cleared and taken away from the clubhouse immediately after the event. Any drink consumed on the premises MUST be purchased from the Clubhouse bar and not be supplied from any other means.



## TRAINING UPDATE

Joanne Eaton



Some of you may be aware that the past year Dave Beadling has been helping with arranging the pool training. Dave has now stepped down from this role and has handed the gauntlet to Chris Hunka. Should you want any assistance with pool training, please see either Chris or myself...

Welcome back to the mad house, Chris!



### Congratulations to ....



Pauline King	Dive Leader
Rob Lea	Dive Leader
Michelle Welland	Ocean
Alexandra Shanelova	Ocean
Ladislav Shanel	Ocean
Dave Tresidder	Advance Instructor
Joanne Eaton	Nitrox instructor
Suzanne Reynolds	Nitrox diver
Carmello Gallo	Nitrox diver
Sarah Jenner	Nitrox diver
Bret Champion	Advance Nitrox diver
Rachel Sharp	Instructor trainer
Chris Hunka	Boat handler

### Skill development courses booking for 2005..

If you are interested in furthering your diving career next year, please have a look at the regional skill development courses (SDC).

You are able to register on line for the SDC's now, please see the website

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

Alternatively, please see the training officer!

### Want to do some winter pool training?

During the winter, it is possible that your practical skills will deteriorate. Why not ensure that all your skills remain tip-top!

If you are already qualified, then you are able to attend the pool sessions and practice some skills.

If you would like to have some instructor assistance, please speak to either Chris Hunka or myself and we can arrange for an Instructor to come with you.

### Open water-training.

Last training day for 2004!!

The list is now up on the board for Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November, if you wish to attend, or just get wet, then please pop your name on the list.

### Come & Dive with Kingston & Elmbridge BSAC

Just wanted to say a big thanks to all those who helped with the come and dive night on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September.

Thank you all!!

### Oxygen administration lectures

We are running the dive leader Oxygen administration lectures on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2005. This is a full day of learning, it includes practical and theory elements of administration oxygen for diving related incidents. You are able to attend as an Ocean diver upwards... Add your name to the list, you never know when you may need these skills!

Finally, I would like to thank those instructors who have willingly given up their time this season for theory, pool and open water training; it has been quite a successful season.... Same time next year?!

### Kingston & Elmbridge BSAC Try-Dive 2004

30 September saw a mass of tanks, instructors, chirpy helpers and a frankly frightening pile of assorted fins converge at New Maldon pool for this year's Try-Dive session. 21 people had expressed an interest in the event and 12 turned up on the night (plus one who turned up at 9 pm having misheard the time!)

Roles were quickly established, and some kind of chaotic order set in. Sandra A & Sarah J met the Try-Divers and ticked them off our list (we do like a bit of admin!), Stella (with her medical training) & Bo took them through the self-declaration form before Rachel gave them a briefing on what to expect. Cue lots of practice at clearing 26 ears – for some reason accompanied by Stella as well!

At the same time Dave T briefed the instructors who comprised of Dave B, Bret, Shirley, John R, Jonathon, Rob, Julia and most of the Chris's (Drabble, Knight and Hunka).

The dry helpers, Trish, Gren, Pauline, Simon and Michelle – who started off dry but ended up wet - helped people into their kit. Then it was a bit like choosing the school netball team as Try-Divers and instructors were matched up. Andy Ethell & Jim Harrison snapped the results in true Hello! style.

One and half hours later, there were lots of happy smiling faces (luckily the Try-Divers!), five of whom came back at the club-house for a restorative drink.

It's too early to say if anyone will join but if they don't it certainly won't be for lack of effort by all those who took part and helped out on the night.

A photo of the "office-staff" and a try dive session overleaf:



## Swinging 60's and 70's ...

By Sandra Argent

With their flares and large collars flying and flapping in the wind it was a night for some of Kingston & Elmbridge's swingers to actually be back at the height of fashion (albeit only for a few hours) at the club's 60's and 70's night on Saturday 2 October.

Although not compulsory fancy dress was encouraged and there were several fantastic skin tight white flared trouser suits, hairy chests and "BIG" hairdos on display, the women did almost as well in knee high white vinyl boots and lots of cheap plastic accessories.

The club was soon filled with the deep sounds of the saxophone as the night's live musician belted out those well known 60's and 70's songs that we all secretly sing along to in the bath and pretty soon the dance floor had jumped back in time and was writhing with bodies, hips gyrating and medallions swinging.

Sadly this wasn't to last when Gren took the floor and for his own safety and those around him the dance floor was cleared, this man needs space! I can only describe him as a cross between Michael Jackson and John Travolta. He has the moonwalking ability of the master (if you close your eyes) and the raw aggression and passion of John Travolta. Sarah kept well behind the bar for fear of being mistaken for Olivia Newton John and slung around the floor or over Gren's shoulders in one of his smooth and complicated dance moves, who cares what year it is supposed to be the man is timeless!



***Some of the Swingers!***



***Those who can't Swing!***

It was a hard act to follow but we all did our best until the pace slowed down at around midnight and the majority of us retired to the bar chatting and supping the occasional brandy until the early hours.

All in all it was a pretty good night, with a great party atmosphere and our thanks go out to Colin "Bovver Boots" Williams for taking the time and trouble to arrange another successful social night at the club and I for one am looking forward to his up-coming Blues Night on Saturday 27 November.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS ALSO AVAILABLE TO READ OR PRINT OFF ON THE CLUB WEBSITE IN COLOUR!

## Ever thought what it would be like 200 years ago, if political correctness and bodies such as the HSE were around then?.....



It's 199 years since Lord Nelson's famous naval victory over the French and Spanish in the Battle of Trafalgar. To kick-start the anniversary celebrations, an actor dressed as Nelson posed for pictures on the River Thames at Greenwich. But before he was allowed on board an RNLI Lifeboat, safety officials made him wear a lifejacket over his 19th century admiral's uniform.....

*How would Nelson have fared if he had been subject to modern health and safety regulations?*

"Order the signal to be sent, Hardy."

"Aye, aye sir."

"Hold on, that's not what I dictated to the signal officer. What's the meaning of this?"

"Sorry sir?"

"England expects every person to do his duty, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious persuasion or disability. What gobbledegook is this?"

"Admiralty policy, I'm afraid, sir. We're an equal opportunities employer now. We had the devil's own job getting 'England' past the censors, lest it be considered racist."

"Gadzooks, Hardy. Hand me my pipe and tobacco."

"Sorry sir. All naval vessels have been designated smoke-free working environments."

"In that case, break open the rum ration. Let us splice the main brace to steel the men before battle."

"The rum ration has been abolished, Admiral. It's part of the Government's policy on binge drinking."

"Good heavens, Hardy. I suppose we'd better get on with it. Full speed ahead."

"I think you'll find that there's a 4 knot speed limit in this stretch of water."

"D\*\*n it man! We are on the eve of the greatest sea battle in history. We must advance with all dispatch. Report from the masthead, please."

"That won't be possible, sir."

"What?"

"Health and safety have closed the masthead, sir. No harness. And they said that the futtock shrouds don't meet regulations. They won't let anyone up there until a proper scaffolding can be erected."

"Then get me the ship's carpenter without delay, Hardy."

"He's busy knocking up a wheelchair access to the fo'c'sle Admiral."

"Wheelchair access? I've never heard anything so absurd."

"Health and safety again, sir. We have to provide a barrier-free environment for the differently abled."

"Differently abled? I've only one arm and one eye and I refuse even to hear mention of the word. I didn't rise to the rank of admiral by playing the disability card."

"Actually, sir, you did. The Royal Navy is under-represented in the areas of visual impairment and limb deficiency."

"Whatever next? Give me full sail. The salt spray beckons."

"A couple of problems there too, sir. Health and safety won't let the crew up the rigging without crash helmets. And they don't want anyone breathing in too much salt - haven't you seen the adverts?"

"I've never heard such infamy. Break out the cannon and tell the men to stand by to engage the enemy."

"The men are a bit worried about shooting at anyone, Admiral."

"What? This is mutiny."

"It's not that, sir. It's just that they're afraid of being charged with murder if they actually kill anyone. There's a couple of legal aid lawyers on board, watching everyone like hawks."

"Then how are we to sink the Frenchies and the Spanish?"

"Actually, sir, we're not."

"We're not?"

"No, sir. The Frenchies and the Spanish are our European partners now. According to the Common Fisheries Policy, we shouldn't even be in this stretch of water. We could get hit with a claim for compensation."

"But you must hate a Frenchman as you hate the devil."

"I wouldn't let the ship's diversity co-ordinator hear you saying that sir. You'll be up on disciplinary."

"You must consider every man an enemy who speaks ill of your King."

"Not any more, sir. We must be inclusive in this multicultural age. Now put on your Kevlar vest; it's the rules."

"Don't tell me - health and safety. Whatever happened to rum, bum, bac c y and the lash?"

"As I explained, sir, rum and bac c y are off the menu. And now there's a ban on corporal punishment."

"What about bum?"

"I believe it's to be encouraged, sir."

"In that case ... kiss me, Hardy."

## CLUB COMPRESSOR COURSE

*Dave Tresidder has kindly offered to run a compressor course for those interested, probably late November - if you are interested please see Dave.*

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**Speak to Dave Tresidder if you are interested**

**Photos of the apartment are available.**

### Seasickness - what is it?

Seasickness happens when the body, inner ear, and eyes all send different signals to the brain, resulting in confusion and queasiness. It is a problem generally attributed to disturbance in the balance system of the inner ear (vestibular) system. Your sensory perception gets out of synch as these nerve fibers attempt to compensate for the unfamiliar motion of the ship moving through water.

The movement of a boat on a fluid sea creates stress in the portions of the brain responsible for balance. Perhaps that stress causes the brain to start malfunctioning as the land based environment it understands is suddenly not behaving as it should.

The visual stimulus is misleading as it reports things like cabin walls, and furniture, in such a way that the brain interprets these things as stable when they're not. Your brain is being told by the vision system that the world is stable, while the inner ear is screaming that it's not.

The good news for sufferers is that the condition often disappears without medical treatment within a few days. As your brain learns to compensate for the swaying and pitching of the boat you will get your "sea legs". One unfortunate aspect is that after a prolonged period at sea it may take a while for you to adjust to being on terra firma again.

#### Prevention?

Stay above deck, keep busy, focus on the horizon, drink plenty of fluids, avoid spicy/fatty foods, wrap up warm, try to stay relaxed and comfortable. If you must take a seasick pill then be very careful as a lot of them make you drowsy, "Sturgeron" is okay though and is easily available. Some people say eat ginger, you can get stick on patches that go behind the ear, or special wrist bands that can help.

The main thing is to get enough sleep and to avoid excess alcohol the night before and drink plenty of water. - Ed

## Conservation corner

by Kevin Morgan

Winning the best celebration of 50 years of BSAC in 2003 and the Heinke trophy in 2004 and deciding what to do next has got me thinking – what can the club do for marine conservation? What about Kingston and Elmbridge leading the way ahead for BSAC clubs with '10 ways for the club to help our marine environment'.

Here are some suggestions for this list. What is important is taking action. With the ongoing publicity with the club we could be a lead for others. Perhaps we could even put up a list agreed by the committee for the BSAC AGM?

- **Promote good buoyancy and protect marine life.**

We should all be good at buoyancy control but it isn't always so. With novices who are still sorting out their buoyancy avoid sensitive sites where damage may be done to marine life. As you become more experienced and keep off the bottom double check that your fin wake is not stirring up the sediment behind you. This happens all too often. Learn to avoid this and help protect marine life. You also become a better diver and any divers further behind won't realise you are there!

- **No take areas.**

Many divers like scallops and taking a crab or lobster for the pot and there is no problem on drift dives or on less dived reefs and wrecks. But what about the most popular reefs and wrecks? If everyone takes a lobster there is less to enjoy. I realise this may be more controversial but we wouldn't like it if the sharks on our favourite reef on a dive holiday were taken by fishermen. On Lundy they have had a voluntary no take zone for lobsters and now there are two to three times as many!

- **Respect marine life.**

Most of us respect marine life but have you ever thought how your approach affects the behaviour of marine life around you? From years of whale watching and swimming with the likes of sharks and turtles I've learnt that your approach is vital. The temptation on seeing something of interest is to head directly towards it. The chance is that it will disappear into the void and even your buddy will miss it. Swim parallel to the animal instead and gradually come closer. In this way you are no threat and you will be amazed how many times you get their curiosity, whether it is a shark, a turtle, a seal, or a wrasse, and they swim to you! This also applies on boats. If you are lucky enough to spot a Basking Shark don't chase it but get in a position where it may come towards you (and send in the record to the Marine Conservation Society!).

- **Join a conservation group.**

There is plenty of choice. All UK divers should be a member of the Marine Conservation Society – and how about the Shark Trust – to name but two.

- **Record marine life**

With a group like the Marine Conservation Society you can go on courses to learn to identify marine life and you can put something back – by taking part in Seasearch. A way for *you* to help map the seas around our coast. You can also send in those records of Basking Sharks, jellyfish you see – and even send records on the state of coral reefs from holidays abroad, or go on one of the coral cay expeditions.

- **Adopt a site.**

Adopt a site and dive the site at different times of the year and see how the marine life changes over the seasons. Not only do you learn more and observe more – it will make you a better diver.



- **Promote conservation with others.**

Get novices interested in marine conservation .... and even die hard 'wreckies' who look at a crab and think 'food'! Also help dive guides on dive holidays. In Tobago one of the guides was impressed by my dolphin guide. He didn't have much access (or money) for such a guide, so I gave it too him. Have you thought about sending fish guides or whatever to the enthusiastic local guides that have looked after you?

- **Prevent litter.**

Divers these days are much more aware about not throwing any litter overboard. But you can go further. On a dive individuals can pick up any discarded fishing line and other litter they come across. And if there is too much to pick up – how about recording the fact and sending it too the MCS? As a club we could even take part in one of the beach cleans ups that are organised from time to time. Some clubs have even cleaned up dive sites.

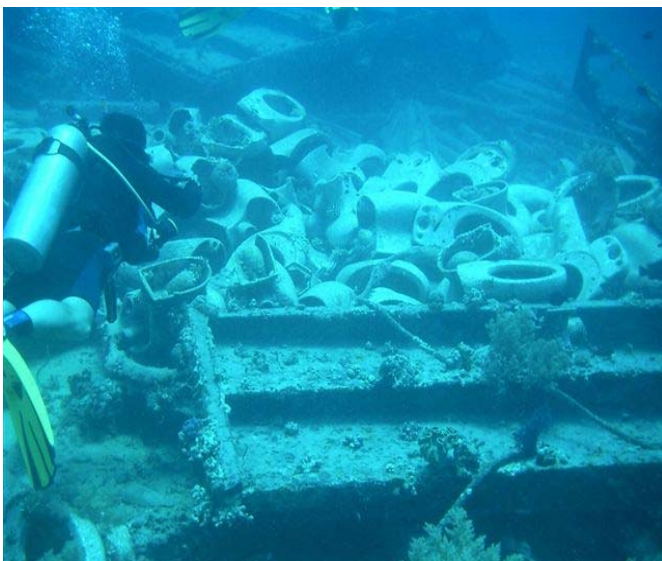
- **Be more sustainable.**

With the costs of travel and fuel most divers share lifts that saves on fuel. But how about arranging vans for more dive trips? Also eat more sustainably. Many fish have been over fished and a number of 'good fish' guides have come out that have a green list of fish that are sustainable (not many at the moment but including Icelandic Cod), an orange list (not 'ideal' but with more options on what the concerned diver should eat) and the red list – those fish you should not eat at this time (it includes a lot of favourites including things like North Sea Cod and Swordfish I'm afraid!).

- **Appreciate our Marine Environment.**

From coral reefs to giant kelp, sharks to seals, and Cuckoo Wrasse to Jewel Anemones, as divers we know the marine environment is so special. But don't take it for granted. Support moves to have more marine reserves at home (especially!) and abroad. Also appreciate our marine heritage in the UK! We may not have the highest mountains or the largest forests. But what makes Britain special is our island heritage and coastline, from the white cliffs of Dover to near 1000ft cliffs off on Cape Wrath, from rugged Western Scotland and the remains of ancient volcanoes to the Thames marshes, and from the 'Jurassic' coast of Dorset to the island of Lundy. Coastal marshes support some of the largest groups of wintering wildfowl and waders from Greenland to Siberia, cliffs and offshore islands support some of the most important seabird colonies in the world, whilst two thirds of the Grey Seals in the world breed around our complex and varied coastline that is calculated to be around 10,000 miles for Britain and Ireland!

A couple of photos from this years Red Sea liveaboard, an article will appear in the next edition



TOILET BOWLS ON YOLANDA REEF!



BSA MOTORBIKE ON THE THISTLEGORM

## Regional Coach

Dave Tresidder

This is just a to let you all know that as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005 I will become the BSAC Regional Coach for the South East of England – map below.

Many of you may not even realise that the BS-AC is split into coaching regions, I suspect even fewer are aware that Kingston and Elmbridge are in the South-East region.

**So what is a Regional Coach and what does one do? A good question that is hard to answer at this time as the role is mine to define in what ever way I want. However there are some key things that the 14 Regional Coaches in the BSAC do.**

- Co-ordinate support and advice for all branches, schools (comercial training centres) and members of the BS-AC in the Region. To help me do this I have about 12 area coaches who tend to be the direct contact with the branches. Some of you I'm sure are aware that Andy and Jo Golby have been K+E's area coaches and they have confirmed to me that they are happy to continue in this role.
- Run the South East coaching region of BS-AC and develop as I see fit. I have many thoughts about how to do this but if you have any then I'd be keen to hear them.
- Assist branches in difficulty / conflict, with dwindling numbers, serious accidents, training issues and so on.
- Advise on BS-AC matters such as assisting with the creation of and approve new branches, advise on the use of the new Branch Marketing packs and so on.
- Ensure branches have the latest up to date information and advice.
- Support and assist individuals working towards Advanced Instructor and First Class Diver.
- Organise and run a programme of Skill Development Courses for the region.
- Provide support to clubs wishing to run in house Skill Development Courses.
- Organise a programme of Instructor Training Events for the region.
- Maintain links with other organisations within the region.
- All the other things that I haven't yet been told about.

So what does this mean for K+E? – actually not a lot – K+E is a well established club that needs little help from the region. Some older members of the club have, what is now, an ill-founded fear of the BS-AC and I sincerely hope that will change. You may also notice a few extra bits of equipment around the club from time to time. You will see a few more regional events organised at our clubhouse as well. Those of you that are OWI's will find me bugging you to help out with regional instruction and the rest of you will probably see less of me – yippee I hear you all shout!

Dave Tresidder

<mailto:david.tresidder@BSAC.com>



## HOT OFF THE PRESS

### BSAC AGM - 21st MAY 2005

As you should know by now, the BSAC AGM is going to be held here at the Clubhouse next year. This will be a historic day for the branch and a day to remember, so please make a note in your diary. We have been working on the afternoon Itinery and evening event and I am pleased to say we have now give you a rough idea of the day's events, exact timings and content of presentations to be confirmed.

09:00 Registration

09:30-10:00 BSAC AGM

11:00 Tea & Biscuits

11:15 AGM Continued

13:00 Lunch (buffet by ticket)

14:00 RNLI Presentation

15:00 MCS Sea search Presentation

15:15 Tea & Biscuits

15:30 NAS Presentation

16:45 ish CLOSE

20:00 - MIDNIGHT - RIVERBOAT DISCO CRUISE WITH BUFFET

We have booked the "Kingston Belle", which takes up to 90 people. We are having a disco and a nice buffet. Ticket price to be confirmed. All HQ Council will be in attendance. Branch members will be cordially invited on a first come first served basis. Pick up and drop off from Kingston.

### EGYPT - NEW TAX

All visitors to Egypt will have to pay a new departure tax when leaving any of the country's airports as from October this year. The tax, which is approximately 5 pounds, must be paid at the airport and cannot be pre-collected or paid on the visitors behalf by the resort representative.

### SCAPA COUPLE FATALITY

A couple from Edinburgh who were due to marry next year, have died on the wreck of the Karlsruhe in Scapa Flow Orkney. Lynda Johnston, 32, and Neil Murphy, 34 were diving from the Charter boat Karin when they were spotted unconscious at the bottom of the shotline. The pair were recovered onto the boat before being transfered to the Longhope lifeboat. Extensive attempts at resuccitation by the Karin crew and a Doctor with the lifeboat were unsuccessful. Described as experienced divers, the cause of the tragic dual fatality remains a mystery.

### VERNA CLAIM's NEW WOMAN's DEPTH RECORD

South African diver Verna van Shaik claims a new women's depth record with a reported 221m dive at Boesmansgat cave, South Africa.

34-year-old Verna van Schaik successfully completed the dive on Monday 25 October, beating the previous women's depth record of 211m, held by Italian Claudia Serpieri. She took just 12 minutes to reach 221m, and completed five and a half hours of decompression. A full expedition diary has been posted on her website, Xtreme Dream, including her account of the dive.

### BRANCH TROPHY WINNERS

A full list of the winners of this years trophies will be printed in the next edition of the newsletter.

## DIVE ETIQUETTE

There is a copy of Dive Etiquette on the noticeboard and it was printed in a previous newsletter two years ago, however it is prudent to repeat it in this edition because we have so many new members, these guidelines are here to help you:

- 1. If a trainee is unable to attend a theory lesson or practical session then they should phone the Instructor concerned at the EARLIEST opportunity! – trainee's should ensure they have their Instructors contact numbers.**
- 2. If anybody cannot make any club dive due to last minute illness or any other reason – they MUST telephone the Dive Marshall immediately. You will still have to pay for your dive and dive associated costs.**
- 3. If anybody pulls out of a club dive for ANY reason, the ultimate responsibility is on you to find a replacement. If no suitable replacement is found then you will have to pay your full costs for the dive, which may include hardboat charter costs and bed & breakfast bookings. If a replacement is found, and you have already paid for your place, then it is your responsibility to reclaim the money from your replacement.**
- 4. BEFORE PUTTING YOUR NAME DOWN FOR A CLUB HOLIDAY YOU MUST BE SURE THAT YOU CAN AFFORD THE TIME AND THE MONEY! If, by dropping out, it makes the holiday more expensive for the group, then you will have to foot the extra bill.**
- 5. ALL CLUB KIT must be properly maintained and washed down in fresh water after each pool session and returned immediately you finish your training. ON NO ACCOUNT MUST CLUB KIT BE USED FOR OPEN WATER DIVING WITHOUT THE AUTHORITY OF THE EQUIPMENT OFFICER!**
- 6. TRAINEES – Show your appreciation to your unpaid Instructor, who gives up his/her time to train you!. A simple 'thank you' will go a long way – and please don't hesitate to buy them a drink at the bar! If your Instructor has driven to a site purely to train you – then you should consider offering a small contribution towards their petrol costs.**
- 7. Before handing in your logbook to the Diving Officer, please ensure that it is filled out and completed/signed properly (ensuring you have written up your dives and dive profiles and got them signed)**

**By order of the Committee**

### **Further Etiquette:**

At the end of a group holiday, where you have spent a weeks dayboat or liveaboard diving – the group leader will usually organise a "whip round" to provide a tip for the crew who have looked after you all week (they are notoriously low paid), an amount will be suggested and it is the usual correct etiquette for each diver to contribute equally (unless you have not enjoyed your diving, in which case say so).

The club does not run itself! - Dive trips, Holidays, Instruction, organisation, social events and club-house maintenance are done by member volunteers. Please remember to put something back into the club by volunteering for workdays and the like!

## NEW MARINE LEGISLATION IS CALLED FOR!

In recent years there have been increasing numbers of dolphins and whales washed up dead on the beaches of southwestern England and Wales. The numbers peak in the winter months and show a direct correlation with the activities of large offshore fishing fleets. In addition post mortems carried out on the dead animals indicate that their injuries and death are almost always consistent with pelagic by-catch. This is a sanitised term meaning that they are incidental and unintentional victims of huge modern trawlers, often operating in pairs, which tow extremely large nets between them scooping up everything in the water column between the surface and the sea bed. The intended catch is the shoals of oily fish such as bass and mackerel which are found in the Channel and Western Approaches at this time of the year.

The fishing fleets that run these huge and indiscriminate trawling operations are French and Scottish and a Newlyn-based boat. The Danish and Dutch are involved in midwater trawling for mackerel. There are a number of reasons why bass pair and midwater trawling is so devastating: Beam trawlers and scallop dredgers report trawling up increasingly large numbers of rotting carcasses and skulls in their usual catches. These are mostly from common dolphins. It is clear that the common dolphin population is suffering the highest losses as they are also the most frequent corpses washed up along the coasts.

It is known that it is common for 20-30 animals to be caught at the same time. It is clear that the fishing industry attempts to distance itself from the deaths by throwing the dolphins overboard in the hope that they will sink. Most do, but the estimated 1% which come ashore as corpses bear the evidence of their fate. Animals have washed up with rope still tied around the tail stock, sometimes in pairs, left after they were winched overboard. Some have been punctured in the region of the heart and lungs to aid sinking, in at least one case post mortem evidence shows this was done while the dolphin was still alive and it subsequently bled to death in the sea. Other attempts to hide the evidence include cutting the heads off, and slicing the bodies into sections. These too washed ashore. The Cases section of this website contains graphic images and accounts of these mortalities.

- The speed at which the trawl is pulled through the water, an average of 6 - 8 knots.
- The trawlers themselves are huge with very powerful engines.
- The mesh size at the mouth of the trawl is 8 metres or larger (and can be up to 16 metres). Dolphins are unable to feel any water pressure or resistance on their bodies until they are much deeper in the net where the mesh size is smaller.
- The headline (the top of the trawl mouth) is on the surface and extends all the way to the sea bed. Nothing escapes.
- The length of time the trawl is towed, 8 hours or more.

Some of the larger and slower moving victims may simply blunder into the nets but it is likely that dolphins and killer whales for instance are actively feeding on the trapped shoals of fish. While the nets are being towed (often for 8 or more hours) the dolphins probably swim in and out without much trouble. It is most likely that they are trapped when the net is hauled in. Their death must be an agonising one, asphyxiating as they are unable to reach the surface to breath. Damage to the head and beaks results from crushing as the net is constricted. Their bodies are lacerated by the spines of the fish they are tumbled with in the trawl and sometimes the spines are found embedded in the skin.

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It is not just active fishing gear that causes injury and death at sea. The most lingering and painful deaths are caused by discarded gear. Drifting lengths of rope, monofilament line and pieces of netting frequently become entangled around all manner of marine creatures from whales and turtles to seabirds and fish.

Such deaths are horribly slow as the tangled lines prevent normal movement and feeding, and relentlessly tighten around the victim. It can take months before the debilitated animal finally dies. A whale calf grows rapidly and entangled rope cuts deeply into blubber and muscle. Towards the end the open wounds attract sharks.

Any piece of discarded fishing gear is potentially lethal. If anything of this nature is noticed along the coast it should be safely disposed of away from the sea. Remember that whatever came in on the tide can wash out again on the next tide. Winter storms are particularly productive of such rubbish. If the mass of netting and rope is too large to remove personally then efforts should be made to secure it so it doesn't wash out on the next tide (don't take personal safety risks), and the local council should be informed to arrange removal.

## TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT UK WHALES AND DOLPHINS

Whales and dolphins are being killed and harmed needlessly every year in UK waters. The UK's laws are not able to properly protect whales and dolphins.

Take action and help us in our campaign for new marine legislation!

Every day whales, dolphins and porpoises face being entangled, poisoned, harassed, starved and evicted from where they feed, breed and take shelter.

WDCS, along with several other leading UK conservation groups, is calling on the Government to take action. We need comprehensive legislation to achieve better protection for marine wildlife and effective management of our seas.

Log on today and make a difference - Add your voice to ours by signing our on-line petition. Take action today and help protect the UK's marine wildlife:

[http://www.wdcs-uk.org/petitions/e\\_campaigns/campaigns.php](http://www.wdcs-uk.org/petitions/e_campaigns/campaigns.php)



# The Magical Muppet tour of Marettimo

17-24 Oct 2004

by Katie Randalls



Why the Muppet theme you ask? This was the rather uncharitable name given to ocean divers on the trip, but then they did call sports divers 'Fraggles' which included me as a PADI Advanced diver unfortunately. We have yet to get our own back on the more advanced divers – so names in a hat please!. But I digress...what I really wanted to focus upon was what great fun our week spent in Marettimo, one of the Egadi isles off Sicily really was. Organized by our one and only chairman John Rapley (Batman);



Batman



The only town on the Island

This was certainly be a dive holiday to remember – and not just for the diving, which was of course excellent. Amongst other amusing mishaps several people, and they shall remain anonymous, nearly departed the boat without the help of their weight belts and one even managed to complete a whole dive without one. Applause must go to Ian Emery for this feat – and also for the resilience of his better half in not giving in and letting him have some of her weights. Quite right too. Jokes about Stones in Your Pockets of course now run riot at the club.

The holiday began with weather more akin to Torquay than the semi-tropical paradise we had built up in our minds. Day two sticks in my mind most of all – we set out in the boat, named the Tresette, amid rocky seas and had barely been gone an hour when I nipped into the tiny cupboard that was the toilet. On exit someone helpfully told me they had some bad news for me: all the stuff I'd carefully heaped into the overhead net including my rucksack, had gone overboard! However the good news was it was all recovered – just sopping wet, including my mobile! So being the coldest person on the trip I was less than pleased to be without my fleece in the bracing air.



From day three onwards however we had beautiful sunshine, flat calm seas and fantastic visibility underwater too (up to 40m). We were treated to colourful coral walls, with yellow and red gorgonia, nudibranchs and many sightings of scorpion fish and morays. The water was crystal-clear and a comfortable 23 degrees, making each dive a pleasant experience and a real feast for the eyes. Some among the group were lucky enough to see a Spanish dancer on their dive, but for me the most memorable sight was a brief glimpse of a large moray (around a metre long) snaking through the sea-grass and hurrying into a nearby cave. Despite being told that we should see lots of lobsters on a couple of the dives, they proved illusive, and when we did find one it made for an uncomfortable subject of the spotlight, with so many torches shining on it.

Having never dived in a cave before I think many of us felt like real cave experts after we explored at least one cave every day. Apparently there are over 400 caves both under and above sea level around the island! One of the most memorable dives was the "Cathedral" cave with an entrance at 29m, and a height of around 10m – with its impressive stalactites and mites it was both eerie and inspiring. It could also be particularly pitch black when neither you nor your buddy has a torch to speak of!

One of the best days was the last – when Marcello, who runs the dive shop, took us to the 'tunnel of love' - a cavernous channel just off the island. We dutifully donned our masks and fins and the waves forced us bobbing along, shrieking and echoing through this brilliant natural fairground ride – and spat us out at the other end. Some group members liked it so much that they had to go through twice – and we probably could have left them there all day!

Marettimo was a great place to get away from it all – with hardly any cars or roads, a low season population of under one hundred, and a mountainous backdrop. Approaching the island on the hydrofoil you couldn't help but be impressed by the rugged landscape, with its tallest peak, Monte Falcone (700m) shrouded in mist. Local hospitality didn't disappoint either – with a little help from my rusty Italian and everyone else adding an 'o' to everything they said we soon made firm friends as well as managing to obtain food for the week.

The discovery that Sicilian wine typically contained around 14% alcohol around the middle of the week explained a few sore heads – particularly the last Saturday of the trip. John and Michelle both celebrated their birthdays at the end of the week, which added to the general party atmosphere after we'd been dragged out of the water on our final dive. We had a meal in the restaurant on Michelle's birthday on the Friday night and on the Saturday night for John's birthday we had a great party in the Garden of Chris's apartment which went on until the early hours, Marcello and the dive guide's joined us and there was a great buffet and loads of wine and beer and party tricks, Chris even made a new friend! (see overleaf!)



Chris's pussy

Our Italian dive guides (top left) were also great fun throughout the week and won themselves a few female admirers (in fact all the girls on the trip!) – sorry guys, Gaetano was gorgeous!



Party Tricks



Group meal in Sicily on last day

So thank you John for organising a great holiday, to Marcello and the dive guides for looking after us so well and expertly showing us round the stunning dive sites. And of course to everyone for making it such a good laugh and don't forget that Muppets rule and Fraggles rock!



Marettimo Harbour



Sicily

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**HIGH QUALITY SPECIAL EDITION EMBROIDERED ITEMS**

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- FLEECE WITH FULL LENGTH FRONT ZIP - £25
- SWEATSHIRTS - £20
- POLO SHIRTS - £18
- JACKETS (water & windproof, fleece lined) - £38
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(see photo examples of our new screen printed range of goods - sizes s - xxl)

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This is a new line, premium quality Hanes T-Shirt, 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



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SCREEN-PRINTED TEDDY BEAR wearing a club T-shirt ! - £16



Please see me to place your order, all prices include postage & packing to either your home/work or I can have them delivered to myself and will bring to the club for you - John Rapley