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[www.swale-divers.org.uk](http://www.swale-divers.org.uk)

Hope everyone has had a good season diving. This will probably be the last magazine issued this year so a Merry Christmas to everyone! Welcome to Matthew S, Jonny C, Justin H, Paul U and Scott C who have recently joined the Club. Could all Club members please let me (Jayne) have any changes to your address details or dive grades ASAP as I hope to send out an up to date Address List before Christmas.

### **Club visit to Tesco and Asda - What a success!**

In order to promote the Club as part of BSAC's "Come and try" event, Kim obtained permission for the RIB to be taken to Tesco car park at Sheerness on Saturday, 30 August and to Asda car park at Sittingbourne on Saturday, 6 September. Trevor co-ordinated volunteers to hand out leaflets and talk to members of the public throughout the day at both events. Trevor and I spent Friday evening preparing the material for the display boards to stand in the shops' entrances. Luckily the

weather was dry and a great deal of interest was shown by members of the public. Colin J was able to arrange for the "Sheerness Times Guardian" to publish an article on the Tesco event with a photo of Trevor and Colin in diving gear. This was in the 4 September edition and later the same article with photo appeared in the free paper, "Sittingbourne Extra" on 26 September. Many thanks to all those who gave time and effort with these events. As a result, to date we have had over 50 try dives and have had to hire Sheerness Pool for an extra hour on 4 occasions to cope with demand. We currently have 5 new members and have considerably raised the public's awareness of the Club.

### **Committee meeting - Tuesday, 9 September**

An emergency Committee meeting was held at The Woolpack Inn to discuss the recent success in promoting the Club come and try event and how to cope with demand. Roy, George, Gaynor, Colin N, Colin J and Sean were unable to attend the meeting.

Various other issues were also discussed and are detailed below.

1. **Come and trys** - It was agreed that the Club should try to organise all come and trys sooner rather than later. Nigel H would speak to the Council about hiring Sheerness Pool for an extra hour for a further £25 on 11 October. If further sessions were needed we would arrange them as and when necessary. Assistant Instructors could take people in but pool marshals (Sports Divers and above) were needed and volunteers were also needed to help with kitting up so that the maximum amount of time could be spent in the pool per person. A maximum of 6 try dives would be held per 1 hour session.
2. **Club kit** - To enable us to keep up with demand for try dives, it is important that Club kit is kept together as a whole set and in working order. We need to chase up any missing kit. Tim may be

able to obtain kit for hire if necessary.

3. **Training** - The Club should aim to complete all known come and trys by 1 November so that pool training can begin for the first 4 new members on 22 November. Theory lectures should start at the Woolpack Inn, Iwade on Tuesday, 18 November. Any further new members would have to begin their pool training in the New Year.
4. **Sittingbourne Air Station** - Whilst promoting the Club outside Asda, we were approached by Brian M. He has a compressor on the Trinity Trading Estate opposite Asda in Sittingbourne and is offering air fills for £2.50 per cylinder by prior arrangement (quality and quantity to be reported).

## **Dive Report - Cornwall, May 2003**

### **Report by Jane P:**

As this year's dive season draws closer towards its end, some of us newer Club members await with anticipation/trepidation the forthcoming Cornwall weekend! (Unfortunately, the October weekend was cancelled due to poor weather but there is always next year!)

So you've done Cornwall before, reef diving, wreck diving, diving in cold water but how about Cornwall 26m down almost tankless? Yes!! Mine decided to part company on what I can only describe as the best dive I think I've done to date, Vase Rock.

Earlier this year the Club enjoyed a weekend's diving at Porth Kerris in Cornwall. The weather was fine and the underwater visibility between 8m and 10m along with relatively warm water, which makes Cornwall diving so special as opposed to other dive sites on the South Coast. Diving with Nigel W, we set off on the Celtic Cat towards Vase Rock. Having exhausted myself kitting up, we entered the water backwards off the Cat. With no time to get my breath back we headed straight down as the tide had started to flood. It was at 26m I thought something was wrong - my cylinder had slipped out of my jacket!! Good job I didn't realize what was happening at the time! Nigel just slipped my cylinder back in before we reached 30m and we continued our dive gradually coming back up the reef.

Stunning kelp-topped walls were decorated in a blazing colourful spread of jewel anemones everywhere. The size of a finger's end, these truly beautiful and aptly

named anemones occurred in great numbers and those of a particular colour were grouped together in bright shades of purple, red, green, orange and blue. Almost translucent, their tentacles feeding in the running current. The rocky reef was host to virtually every kind of anemone and coral that I could find in any book along with several species of crabs. Hiding amongst the kelp and rocks were found very large Bullern Wrasse and Pollack, not forgetting the most inquisitive and colourful of the fish, the Cuckoo Wrasse. Having taken up diving in our seas, its difficult for non-divers to appreciate the extraordinary and rewarding experience of the undersea world. Cornwall is a superb place to start but you're now talking to a convert!

## **Club Polo Shirts -**

If any Club members are still without a Club polo shirt, Kim A is still taking orders. The polo shirts are light grey with a black logo (see logo on front page of magazine) and cost £15. Please let Kim have your money and size required.

## **Committee meeting - Wednesday, 1 October**

The meeting was held at George and Gaynor's house. Roy, Colin N and Sean were unable to attend the meeting. The main purpose of this

meeting was to organise the burger stall at the Upchurch Fireworks. Various other issues were also discussed and are detailed below.

### 1. **Upchurch Fireworks**

**Night** - Nigel H is co-ordinating this event which will take place on Saturday, 1 November at 5.30pm. Jerry will try to get the big BBQ we used last year. Darren said he may be able to obtain a generator at very little cost to the Club. Mark S is having problems obtaining the market stall we used last year. It was agreed that an email should be sent out immediately asking for help in supplying some form of shelter e.g. gazebos or tarpaulin and to appeal for volunteers for cooking, preparing and selling burgers and cans of drink. Jayne agreed to send the email out. Nigel H confirmed he would buy 400 burgers and 20 cases of drink and 8 kilos of onions. Trevor and Jayne offered to keep the burgers in their freezer and Kim would prepare the onions.

### 2. **Confirmation of diary**

**dates** - Jerry announced the next Club Quiz night is on Sunday, 26 October. The Xmas Dance will be on Saturday, 6 December. Nigel W set a provisional

AGM date for Tuesday, 20 January 2004.

3. **Raffle prizes** - Jerry still needs more raffle prizes from Club members.

4. **Pool closure** - Nigel W spoke to the staff at Sheerness Pool who confirmed that 6 months notice is required before the pool can close. No news is good news!!

5. **Club equipment** - After taking in several come and trys, Graham P confirmed that some of the Club equipment is of a very poor standard. Nigel W, Graham P and George agreed to meet at Nigel's house on Saturday, 4 October to assess all the Club equipment. Trevor will supply numbers that can be attached to each piece of kit so that sets are kept together and not mixed and matched. A proper inventory will be done and a maintenance record is to be produced.

6. **Club funds** - Nigel H confirmed the Club has money in the bank.

7. **Boat trailer** - Trevor reported that the brakes on the boat trailer have locked on when the trailer is stationary on several occasions, most recently at Weymouth. Trevor will speak to Paul S and arrange for them both to strip down and grease the brakes.

8. **Medical forms** - An email should be sent to all Club members to remind them that self-certification medical forms should be signed and a copy sent to Gaynor each year at renewal date.

## Quiz Night - Sunday, 26 October

Can you answer any of these questions?

1. Which famous Jeremy is one of Ms Potter's characters?
2. What animal lives in a Drey?
3. Where would you find the Prime Minister's country residence, Chequers?
4. Which actor played Judge John Deed?
5. Would you recognize the theme tune to Dukes of Hazzard?

If you are able to answer any of these questions, then you should have been at the Swale Divers Quiz Night held at the Sheerness Conservative Club (answers at the end of article). Although there were 17 teams, only 4 teams (of 6 people) were from Swale Divers. The winning team scored 109 and received a prize each. Once again Jerry and his team did an excellent job of providing refreshments and interesting rounds of questions with a music round and a picture round. Money was raised for Swale Divers through ticket sales and a

raffle. Many thanks to Jerry, Carol, Colin and the markers and to Colin's daughters for collecting the answers. We hope you all enjoyed the evening and we look forward to the next Quiz Night in 2004. A great deal of time and effort makes this a fun and social evening that could be better supported by Club members.

(Answers: 1-Jeremy Fisher, 2-Squirrel, 3- Buckinghamshire, 4-Martin Shaw.)

## Training

### Report by Graham P, Training Officer:

Thanks to all those who have assisted over the weeks with the 50+ try dives. We have had 4 join and a lot more interested.

We had another successful Sports Diver session on Sunday, 5 October. Congratulations to Stuart R, Matt S and Lyndsay S on completing their Sports Diver. Sean F also attended and is almost there. Thanks to Nigel H, Martin B and Simon P (Lyndsay's other half) for their assistance to make this happen.

An Oxygen Administration event was held on Saturday, 11 October attended by John and Anne M, Jane P and Malcolm C.

So far, 3 new members will begin Club Diver training in

the Pool on Saturday, 22 November.

## Dive Report - Weymouth weekend, 20-21 September 2003

### Report by Trevor P, Dive Marshall:

Well what a weekend!

After arriving at Osmington Mills Caravan Site on Friday evening, we were all pleasantly surprised to find that they have renewed all their caravans making this another decent site to stay at. Darren S, Paul H, Nigel W and myself thought we would check out the Spyglass Inn just down the road in Weymouth to see if the food was still up to scratch, (e.g. in quantity and quality) we weren't disappointed. The evening was rounded off with a pint at the Smugglers Inn before a short walk back to the caravan.

As slack water was at 9.30am, we rose early to good conditions and launched the Club RIB at Castletown slipway in readiness for our 12 mile trip around Portland Bill to the wreck of the M2 submarine. When we arrived there was already 1 hard boat there with divers in the water. This made the deployment of our shot line a bit more awkward as we had to lower it down rather than throw it off the boat as usual. But we still managed to get it

alongside the hull (the coning tower was already taken!).

The first pair in were Paul H and Darren followed shortly by Graham P and Paul S, leaving Kim and Graham A to follow soon after. Nigel W and myself went in once Paul and Darren had returned. This was a good dive with visibility ranging from 3-5m. This was my first attempt at using my new camera. I managed to capture several pictures of a Conger eel and lobster as well as a variety of fish. (I have noticed that Nigel is a little bit camera shy!)

We had a pleasant trip back to Castletown and our surface interval was taken up with refreshments before a 4.30pm dive on the wreck of the Binnendyk. I remember this being a good dive but I was a little bit preoccupied with my new toy! The general consensus was that it was well worth doing. Castletown was almost deserted on our return at 7pm (we must be keen!). After a wash and brush up at the caravans we all went to the Spyglass Inn for a late meal. Fortunately, Sunday's first dive was not until 12.30pm so we all had a bit of a late night and a nice lay in bed in the morning (by diving standards!).

Surprisingly, there were still parking spaces available at Castletown on our arrival at

9.30am even though there were more RIBs in the water and a lot more divers about. Our initial fears that it may be very busy on our chosen dive site turned out to be unfounded as most of the other divers, including Castletown Shuttle RIB, seemed to be diving either in or just outside the Harbour. Approximately half a mile before reaching our dive site on the Alex van Opstal, we found the RIB, Clidive, circling a shot buoy. Being unsure of our marks we enquired whether they were on the wreck. After checking around the buoy ourselves, we decided that they weren't and after a discussion with them we went off to try our marks and we found it! In turn both Clidive and one other hard boat used our shot line to place their divers on the wreck. This wreck is quite big and again voted well worth diving.

After returning to Castletown for refreshments, a drift dive was planned on the Lulworth Banks for later in the afternoon. Not a great deal of current was expected as this was a neap weekend. A shallower part of the Banks was selected as we only had a short dive interval, but unexpectedly this turned out to be our fourth wreck dive of the weekend. When Graham P and Paul S returned from the dive they had left an SMB

attached to the wreckage which Nigel said was the British Inventor. Nigel and I were the last to dive and we used the SMB line as a shot line. We discovered that the line had almost worn through the metal to which it was anchored. After a quick look round the flattened plates of the wreck we continued off on a drift with Nigel collecting a future meal of scallops. Just at the end of the dive Nigel and myself got separated in the poor vis. After the customary look around I started to ascend only to find Nigel on his own delayed SMB a few metres away. This caused some confusion on the boat, with 2 SMBs so close together they couldn't understand how we couldn't see each other! We returned and recovered at Castletown and made ready for the journey home. Nigel and I arrived home at 11.15pm tired but satisfied with an excellent weekend.

Costs for the weekend including accommodation, Harbour fees, boat fuel and oil totaled £55 plus 2 £5 boat vouchers (1 voucher per day) per person. Who needs a hard boat? Thanks for all those who joined me for a superb weekend. I'm sure I will plan some more trips to Weymouth next year.

## **Upchurch Fireworks Night - Saturday, 1 November**

We couldn't have asked for better weather! It was dry and not too cold and the burgers went like hot cakes!! In fact we sold out of 420 burgers before the fireworks had finished and only had 5 cases of drinks left out of a total of 20 (these were sold to Club members). Money was raised for Club funds. Many thanks to all those who helped with this event either in setting up or manning the stall, with a special thanks to the "chefs" (Paul S, Graham A, Tony, Trevor and Glen W) who just about kept up with demand. Well done to everyone and the fireworks were great too!

## **Christmas Dance - Saturday, 6 December at 7.30pm at the Sheerness Conservative Club**

The Swale Divers Christmas Dance will be held upstairs at the Sheerness Conservative Club. Tickets are £8 per head which includes a buffet and disco. Friends and family are welcome but, for this event only, we do ask you not to bring children. Please let Jerry L, Kim or Graham A know how many tickets you would like by **Tuesday, 11 November** so the caterers can get themselves organised.

Please support this event as it is a great way to finish off the year and celebrate Christmas with Club members and to also celebrate George's 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday which is the same day. If you are able to donate any raffle prizes, please let Jerry know.

## Swale Divers AGM - Tuesday, 20 January 2004

The Club Chairman, Nigel W, has set a date for the AGM to be held at the Woolpack Inn, Iwade. The meeting will start at 8pm in the restaurant area. If anyone wishes to stand for

election as officer or has anything they wish to raise, can they please contact Nigel W. For information, the AGM 2003 Minutes are in Issue 26 - February 2003 of the Club Magazine which can be found on the Club website [www.swale-divers.org.uk](http://www.swale-divers.org.uk).

### Swale Divers - Profile

Name:	<i>Nigel H</i>
Age/Family:	<i>?/Married to Tania with 2 sons, Stuart (non diver) and Tim (Club member)</i>
Number of years diving:	<i>Both Tim and I joined the Club in February 1995 to learn to dive - just after his 14<sup>th</sup> Birthday</i>
Diving qualifications/ Club appointments:	<i>Qualified as Dive Leader (December 1998). Some qualifications to Advanced Diver done. Also qualified as Assistant Club Instructor (September 2001). Nitrox Diver (April 2000). Oxygen Administration (March 2000). Qualified to "Part 1" (lowest level) of the Nautical Archaeology Society</i>  <i>Club Treasurer 1999 to date</i>
Best diving experience:	<i>I don't have a best or worst experience. There have been so many dives where something has been best e.g. walls of jewel anemones - Ireland; turtles - Florida and New Zealand; super wrecks - loads of places around the UK. Diving a protected wreck (Sterling Castle) and seeing huge freshly exposed timber, gun carriages and artifacts. Working with the Alderney Maritime Trust on an Elizabethan wreck for 2 weeks. Last but not least weekends away with Club members</i>
Worst diving experience:	<i>I really don't have a worst experience. The time that the Club RIB (with an ex-member at the helm) left 3 others and myself drifting in the Channel was interesting. Even more so was when a big Seacat came over to check that all was OK not long before the Lifeboat arrived!! - Just another interesting dive!</i>
Location would most like to dive:	<i>There are 3 locations I want to dive: 1 - New Zealand (Poor Knights Islands) again; 2 - the Red Sea; and 3 - a Pacific Coral Island.</i>
Occupation/Other interests:	<i>I have now been retired from the Police Force for 2 years and love it. I cannot get enough gardening but have to ration myself so that I can also do other things I enjoy such as all DIY, walking and of course diving.</i>

If you have any comments on any of the articles published in this Magazine, please contact me, Jayne Payne, Magazine Editor.

