

The Hyperbaric Times

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A Message From The Editor

Welcome to this month's issue of the Hyperbaric Times. So how many of you managed to get away for some winter sun and some warm water diving? I've just returned from my first trip to Egypt. Perfect weather—26 degrees—and a lovely 22 degrees in the water. I must admit though, being fairly new to diving, I'm still struggling to identify most of the marine life that I encounter. For this reason I have decided to enrol on a Seasearch Observer Course so I can at least begin to appreciate what I'm seeing when I go on the orientation dives that I've signed up for. For those of you who were unable to attend the Seasearch presentation take a look at the article on page 7 if you would like to know more about the project and the various courses that they run.

On page 8 you will find a list on the various social events that have so far been arranged for this year. If there is anything that you would like to see happen that doesn't appear on the list then let Irina know and she'll see what she can do about arranging it.

Back in January the Club held a Photo Competition. Unfortunately I was unable to attend this but I believe it was a really successful evening with some amazing photographs on display. Congratulations to the winners of each of the three categories: Diver—Matt Cook, Sealife—Jane Wilkinson and Wreck—Andy Neatham. See page 2 for the winning photographs and page 3 for an article on Sea Dragons written by Jane as a follow up to the interest created by her winning photograph.

The Club's diving season kicked off last month with the 4th Annual Cold Water Weekend and you can find an article on this on page 6. Sadly(!) I was unable to attend as I was travelling back from Egypt that weekend but I gather it was a huge success. To all of you who were there, you're mad!

If you're more into warm water diving and in need of inspiration for your next holiday then take a look at page 5 where you will find an article written by Jez Blake about his and Miranda's new life on Havelock Island in the Andaman Sea.

As there have been a number of changes to the website over the last year I thought it might be useful to get Roger to do a tour of the website, particularly for those of you who are new to the Club. This you will find on page 12. Feel free to contact Roger if you have any problems using the site.

Finally, the Diving Schedule has recently been updated so take a look at it to see what's on offer. You'll find it on page 9. I have added a column showing the number of places still available for each dive. If you're interested in joining one of the dives then contact either Andrew Askwith (Orientation Dives) or Morag Ward (Club Dives). Even if the dive is full it's still worth contacting them as spaces often become available nearer the time and a reserve list is always held.

Happy diving.

Berni



Copy deadline

Copy to be received by
**31 March for inclusion
in the April 2006 issue**

The views expressed in the articles in this newsletter are personal and should not be taken as representative of The Diving Club or its Committee, unless specifically stipulated to do so.

NEW INSTRUCTORS

Congratulations to Andy Barnes and John Campbell on passing their Instructor Exam in Egypt a couple of weeks ago. Look out for them on any courses you might be attending and show them no mercy.....

Photo Competition Wednesday 18th January 2006

DIVER CATEGORY

Winner: Matt Cook



SEALIFE CATEGORY

Winner: Jane Wilkinson



WRECK CATEGORY

Winner: Andy Neatham



Where there be Dragons! Jane Wilkinson



Since the photo competition several people have asked me about sea dragons and how I came to photograph them on my trip last year so I have written this article hoping it will answer some questions.

Sea dragons, which are unique to Australia, were near the top of my list of 'things I wanted to see' whilst diving out there. Although I was on a six month trip, my plan was to drive all the way round the outside of Australia, (with a quick detour to the centre), therefore my time was precious and I had to choose sites where I was pretty sure that I would come across some dragons (weedy and leafy). I had done plenty of homework in preparation, trawling through reviews and trip reports on a variety of web sites and forums in order to draw up a list of dive operators I would use and things I wanted to see whilst travelling round Australia.

My first sight of weedy sea dragons was at Jervis Bay NSW. I dived Bowen Island in the bay with Deep 6 Diving who are based in Huskisson. It was early in the season so there was plenty of room on the boat and I was buddied up with another Brit called Peter who was a very experienced BSAC diver. As we lost the DM/guide on the first dive (probably because I was taking photos and Peter was poking around), he let the two of us go off exploring on our own on the second dive. It was on this dive we found the weedy sea dragons.



Weedy sea dragons are much more common than 'leafys' and they are often referred to as common sea dragons. As you can see from the pictures of the weedy dragons (which were taken at two different places Jervis Bay in NSW and Flinders Pier in Victoria) they often differ in colour depending on the environment in which they are living.

Sea dragons are close relatives of seahorses and pipefish but are larger, growing up to 45 centimetres and have leaf like appendages that float round them as they move. This also helps with camouflage amongst weed and



kelp. In fact, so good is their camouflage that they can be quite difficult to see the first time, however once you have seen one you tend to get better at spotting them.

Whilst on the boat at Jervis Bay I got chatting to a diving couple who lived in Melbourne. They offered to show me the 'weedy's' that lived under Flinders Pier on the Mornington Peninsular in Victoria. I had a few miles to do and places to see before getting down there so arranged to email them when I knew I was in the area.

A few weeks later I drove down to the Mornington Peninsular and having found a nice campsite the day before, arranged to meet them one morning down by the Pier. I had forgotten to check out the times of the tides but it didn't really matter as it doesn't get much deeper than 9 metres. In fact our air probably lasted longer as it was only about 4-5 metres and we had a dive time of 91 minutes! It was an absolutely ideal site with even a cold shower in the car parks toilet block and a short walk down the sandy beach to enter the water.

We saw some superb things including a huge bull ray go gliding along the pier but of course most of the time I just sat watching the weedy sea dragons. Travis and Sally were quite happy to leave me to it and swam back and forth around me looking at things. Then we would move a little further down and on to the next one or two sea dragons.



Sea dragons tend to be solitary animals, although I observed about five males in an area of less than a square metre at the end of Flinders Pier. All five were carrying eggs and it seemed like a nursery! As you can see from the pictures both types of sea dragons carry the eggs on their tails. The breeding season is August through to March and during this time they will brood two batches of eggs. During mating the females deposit up to 250 eggs onto the brood patch on the male's tail. After about 8 weeks these hatch spending a couple more days in the yolk sac of the egg where they continue to be nourished. However, only about 5% actually survive to maturity. Both types of dragon grow to about 45 centimetres.



I then drove on along the Great Ocean Road pausing briefly in Mount Gambier (wishing I was cave qualified because of the fabulous freshwater cave sites they have), and on to Normanville on the Fleurieu Peninsular. Now lots of coverage is given to leafy sea dragons being on sites round Kangaroo Island and the outfit running the dive operation there will guarantee sightings. However it's horrendously expensive, ferry over to the island, boat dives etc etc and there really is no point as you can find some under Rapid Bay Jetty! I went and had a chat with the guy who runs Dolphin Diving in Normanville which is just up the road. He was very helpful to the point where he drew a sketch to show me exactly where the sea dragons were likely to be under the jetty. So it was here that I did my first ever solo dives. Now whether you agree with solo diving or not is beside the point. The thing was I was on my own; I could have paid for a guide? To dive a jetty? Now my navigation is pretty awful but even I can manage a jetty! So after hiring a tank I set off down to Rapid Bay, forgetting of course that I was diving in a dry suit (water temp 17) and had no one to zip me up. Naturally it's a very popular dive site and the guy in the dive shop had said some other divers were going to be down later. However, in the end with no one in sight, I decided to ask the old guy who was fishing on the jetty to zip me up. He turned out to be one of the gang who had helped to build that particular jetty and the next two along the bays. When he knew I was diving he then proceeded to regale me with tales of how they used to watch the white pointers (great whites) in the bays whilst they were building the jetties and on one particular occasion how they watched whilst one of these sharks was caught that had been attacking swimmers in the bay there. This is not really what one wants to hear just before a dive (and I did wonder how much was actually true and how much he was winding me up) however I tried to reassure myself that this had happened many, many years before and I was going to be staying well under the jetty not a place where a great white would likely to be prowling around (I hoped!).



Entry was down the beach that was rather steep and rocky. I had already taken my fins, mask and camera down and put them ready and did a very 'uncool' entry into the water. The rocks were slippery and I was terrified I was going to fall and smash my camera so I gave up and finally shuffled forwards on my backside over the rocks, (incredibly difficult when your tank keeps catching on stuff), holding my camera for protection in my lap until I was able to roll over and float, exiting was even less elegant and probably very comical to anyone watching. How do people manage to look so cool when they shore dive? I really would love to be able to do it! Even in ideal conditions I usually manage to fall over putting on my fins. All people must see is a frantic thrashing around of fins and limbs until I manage to right myself and find my feet again. Quite uncool and not the image I really would like to portray, however given the choice of a few minutes total embarrassment or not diving then I have to go with the former, and learn to live with it (lucky I don't shore dive too much!).

I had a fabulous dive of 76 minutes and then did the same again the following day but with a longer time of 92 minutes. I spent most of the dives between 6-9 metres, which is where the sea dragons were. It was a fabulous experience watching these creatures. As you can see they do not have the gripping prehensile tail for hanging onto weed etc like a sea horse, rather it is thought they may possibly use their tails

for steering. However, most of this is done by the rapidly oscillating translucent fins, which you have to look very hard to see along the spine and just below the head. These fins propel them through the water and it is surprising how speedily they can move, particularly when you are trying to photograph them. Almost as soon as you bring the camera up they will turn away. The males with the eggs were particularly very quick to do this. The dermal plates surrounding their bodies inhibit their mobility and their bodies seem to hardly move at all. I was lucky enough to watch one for some time feeding making jerky little movements with its head as it floated around directing its long mouth at practically invisible 'little bits'! Sea dragons have no teeth but intricate system of bones and muscles in their pipe like mouth which they use to suck in food that consists of mysid shrimp, sea lice and larval fish.

Sea dragons are unique to the southern waters of Australia, their homes being in-shore areas of weed and sea grass. Unfortunately these are under increasing threat from pollution and excessive fertiliser run-off. Demand for aquarium specimens also threatened the species with extinction. There was so much concern about the rapidly decreasing number of leafy sea dragons that early in the 90s it was declared a totally protected species. There are only a handful of aquaria round the world that are legally allowed to keep sea dragons and do so successfully. Many amateurs have tried unsuccessfully to keep sea dragons, which usually die quickly due to the captor's inability to provide them with the correct diet. The leafy sea dragon has become a treasured marine animal in Australia. Because of this it is used as a marine emblem and you will see it frequently when travelling round South Australia. I feel that I have been very privileged to have had the chance to see and photograph these creatures and the memory of sitting and watching them will stay with me for a very long time.



Jez and Miranda On Their Travels.....

Hi everyone

Well as you all know we left early November for Thailand; didn't hang around Bangkok for too long before heading south to Ko Phi Phi where we have been many times before. This time we were very shocked how it's changed since 26 December 2004, the day of the big wave. Over three thousand people died there but fortunately for us all our friends survived but the dive shop they all worked in didn't (Island Divers). Ten months on and it's back and very busy, however, half the island's accommodation and shops have gone but in one way it's better. As for the diving it's just the same. We both did not see much damage at all. For three weeks we dived almost every other day and we spent most of them with mantas and sharks which was fantastic, especially for Miranda as she had never dived with them before. As usual it's very sad to leave because we both always enjoy diving there .



Ko Phi Phi

On the 27th November we left Thailand for India to start our new career as working instructors. We were picked up from the airport in Chennai (Madras) and taken to our hotel next to the company, Barefoot Scuba's office where we were given money to go and enjoy ourselves for a couple of days before being flown to the Andaman Islands and then on to Havelock Island, which was very strange for us as we've only travelled in India as backpackers before and have had to pay for everything ourselves. Six weeks on and we haven't spent a penny of our own money .



Havelock Island

The diving at the beginning on Havelock wasn't great because of the rain. It did not stop for about ten days so there was a lot of water run off from the land affecting visibility which was on average six to ten metres. However, the weather has vastly improved to very hot and average visibility of twenty to twenty five meters. Diving is starting to get as good if not better than when we were here before two years ago. We are seeing massive napoleon wrasse, giant groupers and the usual abundance of beautiful reef fish. Also many dugongs from the surface as well as the odd sighting of sharks!! Some of the dive sites have been damaged by the tsunami. It seems to me that they have lost some soft corals plus we are seeing a lot of the table corals knocked over which is a big shame. A lot of the hard corals are spawning at the moment which is a novel sight for us; a good sign of recovery.

The island of Havelock is an amazing place to be. One of the beaches has just been voted the best beach in the world by the Independent. The resort here has a massive male elephant called Raj. He's about fifty years old and every day they let him in to the sea to swim. We have been diving with him; the biggest thing I've ever seen diving.

We're both working hard. We have just become the managers of the dive centre, which is very hard work but also very rewarding. The financiers of Barefoot Scuba are very happy with us and are currently in the process of getting us a five year permit for the Andamans, so things seem to be looking up for us both. We have had about seventy divers since we opened on 12th December 2005 with twenty of them doing courses from OWD to Advanced and one Divemaster, which we are both fighting over the cert. However, being the only instructors at the moment, we're both realising we're missing out on the some of the fun diving.

Well that's all for now. We both would love to see you guys some time out here. Check out the website sometime -www.barefootindia.com.

Happy diving

Jez and Miranda xxx



Resident swimming elephant!

4th Annual Cold Water Weekend 25-26 February 2006

The first Club and Orientation dive of 2006 was the Annual Cold Water Special. As in previous years, Peter had kindly offered to hold an evening of theory to give the brave souls some idea as to what to expect for what would probably be the coldest water they had dived in. DiveStyle also had a group of students doing their Deep Specialty the same weekend, so it would be a fairly big group of us.

With a few of us trying out new kit it was going to be an interesting weekend. Three new dry suits and five fairly new twinsets were all put through their paces. We had expected Stoney to be quite busy that weekend, but those turning up at 8am still managed to get into the bottom car park. We buddied up and hit the water.... Some earlier than others!

We knew the water would be cold and as we got ready to get in, we made a plan of diving from the 6m shelf to the Nautilus, over the ledge to the helicopter then turn right and back up the road. Probably not more than 30 minutes. We weren't wrong about the water temperature.... a very chilly 5 degrees at the 20m mark. The tour we had planned took the half hour we had planned and what a welcome we got on our return... TEA!!!! Three cups later and we had just about thawed out and were ready for the next dive. A couple of the group had never had the pleasure of the Stanegarth so with excellent viz we navigated our way out there rather than doing a long surface swim. Navigating to it was quite easy.... Three fin kicks from the helicopter and there she was looming out right in front of us. We gave the Stanegarth a quick tour, then to the bus and back to the shelf.



Nautilus



Pike

Two dives were enough to know that the weekend wasn't called the cold water special for nothing. Warm up in the pub afterwards then back to various B&B's before dinner. As is usual on a club weekend, we had planned the social side almost as well as the diving. Unfortunately, the Mill wasn't as good as us at planning and organisation and we turned up at the appointed time to discover that they hadn't reserved the table in time and another group had taken the space.

Not a problem... we helped them rearrange the furniture and then began the important task of deciding what to eat. The Mill got themselves back into our good books after careful negotiations got us all complimentary desserts. I think they must have got through far more Treacle Sponge than normal that night!

Sunday was just as cold as Saturday, and a few chose not to do any further diving due to a bit of a cold and a dodgy back amongst other things. However many people did go back for a second day and had some good dives.

I have had a request to run the Special again next year and if I am still Club Dive Organiser, I see no reason why not. The date I have in mind is in April... will that encourage a few more of you to come???



Clare & Roger with their 'little and large' desserts!!

Club Divers:

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Morag Ward | Tim Burge |
| Carl Yates | Roger Selwyn |
| Geraldine Felix | Clare Selwyn |
| Simon Berry | Dan Cocks |
| Andrew Askwith | Frankie Farren |
| Will Tabner | Adam Davies |

Seasearch Project



What is Seasearch?

Seasearch is a national project for recreational divers who have an interest in what they're seeing under water, want to learn more and want to help the environment.

The main aim is to map out the various types of sea bed found around the British Isles. In addition to this the project aims to record what lives in each area, establishing the richest sites for marine life, the sites where there are problems and the sites which need protection.

Who is involved?

The project is supported by a number of organisations including PADI, BSAC, the Marine Conservation Society, English Nature and the Environment Agency. Funding is also provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Any dive can be a Seasearch dive!

The project needs the support of divers all around the UK to ensure its success. You can carry out Seasearch dives with your buddy, your club or on organised Seasearch dive weekends and longer expeditions. The information collected by Seasearch divers helps everybody responsible for marine conservation to identify what's special about different areas, what's going on that may be affecting them and come up with informed strategies for their protection.

Seasearch Training

There are three types of Seasearch Training Courses currently available.

SEASEARCH OBSERVER COURSE

This is a one-day course aimed at giving divers new to the project and new to marine recording a basic grounding. At the end of the course you should be able to complete the Seasearch Observation Form and take part in Seasearch Dives either with your buddy, with your club or on dives organised by Seasearch partners.

During the course you will learn about Seasearch, its aims, history and achievements. You will receive a basic introduction on the variety of marine life in UK waters, how to recognise and classify marine habitats, position fixing and how to complete the Observation Form. The day concludes with a 'video dive' and an opportunity to fill in a form without even getting wet!

SEASEARCH SURVEYOR COURSE

The Surveyor course is aimed at experienced Seasearch Observers and others with a good background knowledge of marine life and marine recording. The aim is to enable you to complete the Seasearch Survey Form which is used on most of the expeditionary Seasearch Dives and which gives much more detailed information for future conservation purposes. The course lasts two days and includes a dive on the second day.

SPECIALIST COURSES

Seasearch also run a number of specialist courses to assist in the identification of marine life ie Fish ID, Nudibranch ID, Seaweed ID, Sponge ID etc.

For more information on any of the above course or any other aspect of the Seasearch take a look at the project website—
www.seasearch.org.uk

As a number of people showed an interest in attending a Seasearch Observer Course after the presentation on Wednesday 1 March we are currently looking into the possibility of running a course locally in the not too distant future. Let me know if you would be interested in attending.
 Berni
publicity@thedivingclub.co.uk

Social Events Calendar

Dear members,

I hope you've enjoyed the events that we started 2006 with, the trip to Jongleurs, the Introduction to Rebreathers talk and the Seasearch Dive Project presentation. I thought I'd give you a glimpse of what has so far been organised for the rest of the year. If there is anything that you are interested in doing that does not appear on the list then let me know and I will see what I can do to make it happen this year. I'm always open to suggestions and, as I'm running a bit low on ideas, I will be more than happy to make some of your thoughts reality.

Enough said. Here is the list of events:

| | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|---|
| April | | |
| | . 14 th | Jongleurs |
| May | | |
| | . 3 rd | Shark Trust are paying us a visit |
| | . 21 st | Helicopter Underwater Escape Training (HUET) |
| June | | |
| | . 24 th /25 th | Mencap challenge event together with Club BBQ |
| July | | |
| | . 5 th | Quiz night |
| September | | |
| | . 6 th | Coast Guard presentation |
| October | | |
| | . 4 th | AGM |
| | . 11 th | LDC Dry Dive |
| | . 14 th | Blue Planet Aquarium – visit/dive with the sharks |
| November | | |
| | . 1 st | Wreck presentation |
| December | | |
| | . 16 th | Christmas Party |

Irina
social@thedivingclub.co.uk

Diving Schedule 2006

| Date | Location | Details | Max Depth | Cost | Level | Spaces Remaining |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 15 March | London Diving Chamber | Dry Dive | 50m | £25.00 | All | 1 |
| 18/19 March | Poole | Big Dinghy* | 18m | £37.00 per day | O | Sat Full Sun 4 |
| 25/26 March | Poole | Big Dinghy* | 30m | £35.00 per day | C | Sat 6 Sun 6 |
| 8/9 April | Swanage | Swanage Diver | 35m | Approx £36.00 per day | C | Full |
| 17 April | Portland | Fathom and Blues | 15-16m | £40.00 | O | 8 |
| 22/23 April | Torquay | Babbacombe Bay | 8m | £5.00 per day | O | Full |
| 4-8 May | Tenerife | Aqua Tenerife | 30m | £160.00 Bed & Diving | C | Full |
| 7 May | East Wittering | Wittering Divers | 18m | £39.00 | O | 4 |
| 17/18 June | Pembroke | Pembroke Dive Charters* | 18m | £45.00 per day | O | Full |
| 17/18 June | Pembroke | Pembroke Dive Charters* | 38m | £45.00 per day | C | 1 |
| 1/2/3 July | Farnes | Sovereign II | 30m | £155.00 (inc 3 nights B&B) | C | Full |
| 8/9 July | Portland | Dive Eclipse | 18m | £32.00 per day | O | Sat 7 Sun 8 |
| 16 July | Poole | Big Dinghy | 40m | £35.00 | C | 6 |
| 5 August | Swanage | Pier Dive | 7m | £5.00 + Entry | O | 7 |
| 5 August | Swanage | Swanage Diver | 35m | Approx £36.00 per day | C | 10 |
| 6 August | Swanage | Swanage Diver | 18m | £35.00 | O | 8 |
| 12/13 August | Plymouth | Ceeking | 40m | £108.00 (inc 2 nights B&B) | C | 1 |
| 9/10 September | Swanage | Swanage Diver | 18m | £35.00 + Entry per day | O | Sat 2 Sun 7 |
| 23/24 September | Swanage | Swanage Diver | 20-40m | Approx £36.00 per day | C | 4 |
| 7/8 October | Poole | Big Dinghy | 18m | £35.00 per day | O | Sat Full Sun 7 |

*Two cylinders needed

Please read 'Guidelines for club dives' on the website or contact the Dive Organiser for a copy

Attendance on club dives is dependent on individual's qualifications and experience

A supplement (approx £2.00 per dive) is added to provide a subsidised place for the Dive Marshall on Orientation Dives

Non Club members will be asked to pay a £5.00 supplement per day

For latest information on spaces please check the website

For further information please contact the Dive Organisers:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Club Dives: Morag Ward | 07904 207306 | diveclub@thedivingclub.co.uk |
| Orientation Dives: Andrew Askwith | 07789 900423 | diveorientation@thedivingclub.co.uk |

Guidelines for club dives

1. Responsibilities of the Diver

- **Divers are responsible for ensuring that they have the appropriate qualification and experience to undertake a particular dive and that their diving experience is current, i.e. that the period since their last dive is no greater than that recommended by their qualifying agency. Evidence of qualification may be asked for.**
- It is the diver's responsibility to check with the Dive Marshal the day before to ensure that there are no adverse weather conditions which may prevent the dive from going ahead. The Dive Organiser will not contact divers unless there has been a change to previously given advice.
- The supply of equipment appropriate for the planned dive is the responsibility of the diver. Standard kit includes (but is not limited to): regulators, (including primary second and alternate second stage), Submersible Pressure Gauge, depth gauge, timing device, buoyancy compensator, cylinder(s), 'personal' kit (e.g. mask, fins etc), emergency signal device (e.g. whistle), cutting tool, Delayed Surface Marker Buoy (mandatory on Club Dives), appropriate exposure protection and weight system. Any diver who does not have the appropriate kit may, in the interests of safety of the whole group, be refused entry into the water.
- Divers are responsible for planning their individual dives within the limits of their qualifications and those set by the appointed Dive Marshal.
- Divers are required to complete the Marshalling Sheet before entry into the water.
- Divers must surface no later than 3 minutes after their declared run time (run time being defined as the total time from when the diver leaves the surface to when they are back on the surface) stated on the Marshalling sheet. NB There is a coastguard requirement to notify them if a diver is more than 3 minutes overdue.
- The diver shall respond to their name being called at any roll call. They should not respond on behalf of another diver.
- The decision of the Dive Marshal/skipper is final.

2. Booking and Payment

- Dives booked by the club will be published on a schedule which will be available on the club website, the notice boards, and from Committee members on request. It may also be possible to obtain a copy from DiveStyle.
- Bookings for dives will be on a 'first come, first served' basis.
- When you register your interest in attending a dive with the appropriate DIVE ORGANISER whether by phone, e-mail or face-to-face, a deposit must be paid within 2 weeks, either by post, online via the club website, or to a Committee member on a club night.
- Any diver who does not pay a deposit within two weeks of booking will forfeit their place unless they have notified the dive organiser of the reason for the delay.
- Once a deposit is paid, the diver is obliged to pay the remaining balance by the due date. If the diver is subsequently unable to dive for any reason, they will only be released from their obligation if another diver fills the place.
- The balance of the dive and any accommodation cost is payable one month before the date of the dive. Any balance not paid by that date will result in the diver forfeiting their place on the dive unless agreement has been reached with the Dive Organiser
- When all the spaces available on a dive are full, a reserve list of those interested will be kept. Those on the reserve list will be approached should a space arise. If they still wish to go on the dive, they will be expected to pay a deposit or full balance according to the guidelines.
- Accommodation is the responsibility of the diver unless indicated otherwise on the dive schedule.
- On Orientation Dives, an additional payment will be incorporated into the published price to provide 3 supplemented spaces for a Dive Marshal and two Assistants. Any diver accepting one of these reduced cost spaces on an orientation dive will be expected to participate in all planned dives unless there are exceptional circumstances (eg injury).
- The Dive Marshal and Assistants will be Instructors, Divemasters or Rescue Divers (or equivalent from other agencies) with a minimum of 30 dives, including UK sea experience.

3. Refunds, Cancellations and Changes

- Diving is weather and tide dependant. The club or boat skipper may change boats, dive sites or departure times according to weather and operational requirements.
- If a dive is cancelled due to adverse weather or for other safety requirements, refunds will be made in accordance with the contract the club has made with the boat skipper. Normally, this will either be a refund, or the option of attending a rescheduled dive.
- Dive bookings are accepted on the understanding that if you have booked for a specific site and the weather does not permit diving that location, where possible, an alternative site will be sought taking into account the previously published dive type, qualifications and prepared gas mixes.

4. Responsibilities of the Dive Organiser

- The Dive Organiser will attempt to plan the dive sites in advance of bookings being taken
- Dive details will be published with the approximate depth of the deepest planned dive and a maximum planned depth.
- Orientation Dives will be published with a maximum depth of 18m. Club Dives up to a maximum of 40m.
- The Dive Organiser will appoint a Dive Marshal for each dive. The Dive Marshal will agree to carry out the role and may refer anything to either the appropriate Dive Organiser or Chairman or any other Committee member.
- The Dive Marshal will be provided with:
 - o The list of divers expected and their relevant qualification
 - o Dive information, time, location, planned dives
 - o Appropriate paperwork, including Dive Roster, Emergency Contact List and Marshalling Sheet.

5. Responsibilities of the Dive Marshal

- The Dive Marshal will be appointed by the Dive Organiser.
- The Dive Marshal may seek advice from the Dive Organiser, Chairman or President.
- All diving activities will be agreed with the Dive Organiser prior to a trip.
- In cases where weather or other circumstances prevent the planned dive going ahead, any changes must not require a qualification increase without reference to the Dive Organiser and/or Chairman
- Ensure the appropriate club kit is complete and taken: O2 and First Aid, Dive Marshal File
- A risk evaluation of the site will be carried out, to minimise the risk to all divers, including:
 - o Weather Conditions
 - o Water State
 - o Tidal Conditions
 - o Diving Conditions
- Advice should be sought from an appropriate local source (e.g. the skipper) in the event of a change in dive sites
- The Dive Marshal will ensure all divers complete the Dive Marshal Sheet before they enter the water.
- If the Dive Marshal is unsure as to the qualification level of any diver they may request sight of proof of qualification level.
- Any diver who cannot provide such proof will not be allowed entry into the water.
- The Dive Marshal may, in the interests of safety, refuse a diver entry into the water
- On Orientation Dives, the Dive Marshal will assist in organising buddy teams appropriate to training and experience. Individual requests will of course be taken into account. For Club diving, the Dive Marshal will, where appropriate, assist in organising buddy pairs.
- The Dive Marshal will ensure that all divers are accounted for before leaving a dive site and/or quayside by a roll call
- The Dive Marshal will advise the Dive Organiser and Chairman of any problems, or incidents as soon as possible but no later than 6 hours after the incident
- The Dive Marshal will manage and co-ordinate activities in the event of a diving incident. This will be done in full co-operation with the boat skipper and Emergency Services

TOUR OF THE CLUB WEBSITE

This time last year I wrote an article introducing the updated website to the club. A year on and Berni thought it worthwhile that I write a quick tour to highlight changes since last time, and for new members who weren't around last year.

A first thing to note is that all members of the club should have access to the Members area through logging in to the site. If you don't have a userid/password (or have lost it) please mail me at webmaster@thedivingclub.co.uk.



All pages of the site can be accessed through the menu system just below the club logo. This includes:-

- **Home** – You can see this above
- **Newsletters** – Where this magazine is published to
- **Diving**
 - *Calendar* – Where we tell you what dives are planned for the year
 - *Guidelines* – The rules by which divers must abide
 - *Weather* – Some links to weather sites which might be of use in dive planning
 - *Completed Dives* – A record of dives we have been on in the past
- **Social** – Where we tell you about planned social events
- **The Club** – Some information that tells visitors what the club is about
- **Gallery** – A public gallery of photos representing club activities
- **Information**
 - *Committee* – Details of committee members. Club members have access to committee email addresses
 - *Contacts* – Information on the major contacts/locations for club events – intended for non-members
 - *Links* – General links to useful people
 - *Help* – Some basic help for the site
 - *About the Site* – Information for those who want to know more about how the site works.
- **Members** – The secured members area
 - *Discussion Forum* – Where you can have your say about diving, the club or anything you fancy
 - *Email* – Lost an email the club sent to you, have a look here
 - *File Share* – Where you can share large files with other members
 - *Private Gallery* – A place for you to upload photos for club members to see. Some of these will be copied to the public gallery for all to see
 - *Store* – See last months article for detailed information, but this is where you can pay for dives, social events and membership
 - *Wreck Information* – A link to an excellent external wreck database
- **Contact Us** – A way for people to get in contact with the club. Simple but effective

So what's changed since last year? Well, the promised Tide Tables came and went through lack of use. The same is true of the Site Information page. However a new fixture which will remain permanently is the Store where we are starting to take a substantial proportion of dive payments. Other additions are the Weather, File Share and Email pages as detailed above.

Additionally, I have split the original Gallery into a public Gallery and the Private Gallery. This was because we getting so many photos loaded to the site (over 300 last year alone). So we decided to reduce the number in the Gallery to give a more focused view of the club to the world at large. You are still able to load your photos to the private gallery. If it isn't obvious how to do this, just send me a mail.

Well, I think that's about all for now. If you haven't had a look at the site for a while, why not logon and have a browse around ☺. It can be found at www.thedivingclub.co.uk

Membership Matters!

The season has now started with the Annual Cold water weekend up at Stoney Cove and we have some new members to welcome and get to know.

Members who have joined since the last newsletter are: Ken Lovell, Richard Goodman, Jackie Hitchcock, Elizabeth Speakman, Bill Devitt, Karren and Rory Young, Bryan Johnston, Jonathan Potts and Dave O'Brien.

If you see any of these folks in the pub or on a dive, please make them feel welcome.

With a number of previous members re-joining, this brings us to a current total of 147 members.

If you have not received an email notification of this newsletter, please let either myself or Berni Kehoe (Publicity Officer) know – there may be a mistake with your e-mail address.

If your contact details have changed in anyway, don't forget to let us know. You can also change your email address via the website.

Please make a note – the contact info for the membership secretary is:

Clare Selwyn

Home address: 14, The Mews
Bramley
Tadley
Hampshire
RG26 5QX

Tel: 01256 882119

E-mail: membership@thedivingclub.co.uk

Your Club Website is: <http://www.thedivingclub.co.uk>

THE DIVING CLUB

We're on the web:
www.thedivingclub.co.uk

Divestyle
Mike's Waterfront Warehouse
Maiden Lane Shopping Centre
Lower Earley
Reading
Berks
RG6 3HD

Tel: 0118 926 2288
Fax: 0118 926 9616
Website: www.divestyle.co.uk

The Diving Club is a chapter of the PADI Diving Society and aims to allow newly qualified divers and existing members a forum to meet and dive with other divers. We are a PADI orientated group, which accepts divers from any diver-training agency (eg BSAC, SAA, NAUI, IANTD etc). We have close ties with Divestyle, who conduct all our training and offer us use of their pool sessions for equipment testing and practice sessions when space permits.

The Diving Club Committee Members - Contact Details

President

Peter Wright
T: 0118 926 2288
E: president@thedivingclub.co.uk

Chairman

Roy Stevenson
E: chairman@thedivingclub.co.uk

Treasurer

Matt Cook
E: treasurer@thedivingclub.co.uk

Club Secretary

Michelle Darby
E: secretary@thedivingclub.co.uk

Orientation Dive Organiser

Andrew Askwith
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E: diveorientation@thedivingclub.co.uk

Club Dive Organiser

Morag Ward
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Social Secretary

Irina Wade
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Membership Secretary

Clare Selwyn
E: membership@thedivingclub.co.uk

Publicity Officer

Berni Kehoe
E: publicity@thedivingclub.co.uk

Webmaster

Roger Selwyn
E: webmaster@thedivingclub.co.uk