

RATAE SAC



Newsletter May 2003

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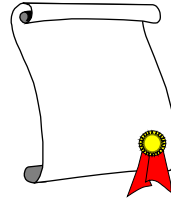
The last month has been active. The club has had its first trip, new trainees have experienced Stoney for the first time, and many of us have been getting wet! We have also broken new ground; with invited talkers and a bit of infamous publicity.

Publicity

So dive arrives, you open it up, and you start to read, only to be greeted by the site of Ratae bums on the first page of the letters! I've already had the comment "are you in *that* club?" from people at work, so Ratae has become famous for baring thongs on holiday! Welcome publicity for our little club.

RNLI Talk & Dem o

We had two visitors to the club on the 24th April. They gave us an excellent introduction to the different types of flares and how to safely use them. This talk was followed by an excellent demonstration outside. For all of those present, including those who burnt their retinas out, can definitely say they are bright! Most of us had the chance to set one off. The club helped out the RNLI by paying travelling expenses for our talker with the excess going to the RNLI funds. An excellent evening, hopefully to be followed by other invited speakers.



QUALIFICATIONS

Several people have been taking the new syllabus BSAC exams at Ocean Diver, Sport Diver and Dive Leader level. Congratulations to all of those that have passed.

Lynn Wright took her first dive in open water at Stoney in April. In a chilling 5 degrees, Lynn did very well. She has since gone on to do two more dives.

TRIPS UPDATE



FARNES

Unfortunately, the Farnes trip will not be going ahead. Due to bereavement we can not get a booking with our usual charter. There are places still left on other trips.

SCAPA FLOW 2004

Deposits (£75) are due for the Scapa trip. Please get cheques to Mark Willoughby by the 27th May, please inform Mark of your interest. We have 12 spaces, with a minimum of 6. Mark has about 4 deposits and interest from 4 others. We will be diving with the Dive Cellar on Orkney.

Scapa is a unique location, where over 70 German warships were sunk on purpose at the end of the First World War. Of these, about 8 remain either upside down or on their sides in varying depths (10-50m). The Scapa trip requires well practiced divers who are experienced Sports Divers or above. A week of diving 35m + in the morning and 20m + in the afternoon is what is expected. As expedition leader, Mark will let people know if he feels sufficient experience will not be gained by this time.

To get to Orkney, we will be sailing from Scrabster (a few miles from John O'Groats). This means either a 500 mile drive, train journey (~£100) or a flight (quotes from £200-£450). So this trip will be expensive on travel costs.

Let Mark or me know if you are interested. If we do not fill the boat, the skipper may fill with divers from other clubs, so it might not be possible to wait and see and add yourself onto the trip later.

STONEV COVE DIVING



Diving activity at Stoney is becoming regular now. Ask around as many people are going down there

Weymouth Trip

On the May Day bank holiday, Ratae had its first trip of the year. Below is a write-up by Ian Ellison:

Cherie and myself drove down on the Friday morning and we encountered rain (horizontal & vertical), sunshine, mist and fog - all your usual mix of typical bank holiday weather !! The rest of the party arrived at various times after a similar arduous drive down.

Although the weather then took a turn for the better, the forecast predicting force 3/4 - but improving, diving on Saturday involved us all diving the wreck of the Enecuri (The Spaniard) inside the harbour. Vis was on-a-par with Stoney but still turned out to be an enjoyable dive, plenty of crabs and even some recognisable parts of the ship (mainly the big pointy bit at the front!). After an evening stroll for some refreshment, most of us then descended onto the local Indian restaurant for a very enjoyable evening feast.

On Sunday Cherie and I had booked an early dive called 'The Bottle Bank'. John the boat skipper, which we had for both dives, was very good. Neither of us had done a drift dive before, but he put us on the right spot for a 30 minute dive drifting towards 'The Hood'. On a personal note, although only two dives were undertaken during the trip, we did accomplish two successful mid-water accents (in low vis) from 17m to 6m with a one minute safety stop before proceeding to the surface. The one minute stop seemed to take forever with a multitude of crap whizzing past you that sometimes is very disorientating. Putting trust in your depth gauge and more importantly the 6m mark that you have coloured in on your reel is a very reassuring thing when every thing else around you seems to be stuck in the spin cycle of a washing machine !

We had a superb Bar-B-Q at Chesil Cove on Sunday lunchtime.

On Monday Cherie and I investigated a few sites listed in the 'Dive Dorset' book that may be worth a dive on future trips to this beautiful part of the country.

Quarterly Meeting

The second quarterly meeting will take place at the **Lifeguardman** pub (note venue change) at 8pm on the 27th May. Please send me any matters for discussion.

ID Cards

Diving is not 100% safe and at times things can go wrong. Most of us have a Stoney Cove Diverlog card, but how many of us dive with no form of identification on us? (I confess to this one). Diverlog is pretty useless away from Stoney and the BSAC card is only a plastic proof of dive qualification. So I've looked into the possibility of producing Ratae Diver ID cards. Many printers offer the ability to produce cards and I have been quoted around £5 per card (half price of BSAC card), but that is for a minimum of 40 cards. I personally intend to have one for my kit and one for round my neck under my drysuit. As we can make our own design, it can have any information on it that we want. Let me know if anyone is interested.

Diving Internet

This month I have mostly been surfing Scapa Flow. If these don't inspire you to want to go, then I don't know what will! Good write-ups can also be found in Dive July 2002 and December 2001. I

also have the Dive Scapa Flow book if interested:

<http://www.divescapaf low.co.uk/> - Our charter company
<http://www.visitorkney.com/home.html> - Orkney tourist board
<http://www.janelaine.co.uk/>
<http://www.scapaf low.co.uk/>
<http://www.diver net .com/ travel/ scapa0600.htm>
<http://www.submerged.co.uk/scapaf low.htm>
<http://www.scapaf low.co.uk/war time.htm> - the full history
<http://www.diver net .com/wrecks/wt our 140400.htm> - The Koln dive guide
<http://www.diver net .com/wrecks/wt our 331101.htm> - The Kronprince Wilhelm dive guide
<http://www.diver net .com/wrecks/wt our 461202.htm> - The Brummer dive guide
<http://www.diver net .com/wrecks/best 10100.htm> &
<http://www.diver net .com/wrecks/best 111299.htm> - proof these are amongst the best wrecks in the country. This is Diver magazines top 100 wreck dives of the UK, so worth a visit even if not interested in Scapa.

Rob Cuss

EVENTS CALENDAR

TRIPS CALENDAR 2003			
21 st May 2003	Stoney Cove		Mark Hessey
27 th May 2003	Lifeguardsman		Quarterly meeting
4 th June 2003	Stoney Cove		Mark Hessey
18 th June 2003	Stoney Cove		Mark Hessey
2 nd July 2003	Stoney Cove		Mark Hessey
5 th /6 th July 2003	Plymouth trip	£89	Mark Hessey- FULL
16 th July 2003	Stoney Cove		Mark Hessey
6 th August 2003	Stoney Cove		Mark Hessey
16 th /17 th Aug 2003	Anglesey trip	tbc	Ian Petchey
September 2004	Scapa Flow	??	Mark Willoughby / Rob Cuss