

FISH-TAILS

Haslemere Sub Aqua Club

Sept 2014



Summer and Autumn Programme 2014

Due to the major refurbishment works at the Herons, the usual summer break had to be extended this year.

With the Herons car park and reception area turning increasingly into a building site during Spring, our final Thursday session was on 26th June when we moved all the training kit out to the boatshed and into the hands of the various trainees and instructors.

We were at the **Spectrum** for all five **Thursdays in July**, enjoying the benefits of an hour and a half session in the 4m deep pool for buoyancy practice, rescue lifts and deployment of delayed Surface Marker Buoys (and all for less money than an hour at the Herons!). A quick drive back round to the main car park and the bar overlooking the ice rink provided welcome refreshment to round off the evening.



On **Thursday 7 August** Mike Trussler gave members an introduction to the operation of the new Garmin GPS **chartplotter** now installed on Cobra. The chart plotter is a key bit of boat kit for finding dive sites etc and well worth knowing how to handle.

On **Thursday 14th August** many members were enjoying the delights of the Club trip to **St Abbs and the Farne Islands**.



Thursday August 28th saw the now traditional boatshed barbecue and second hand kit sale, with a bit of air-compressing (when smoke from the odd burning sausage hadn't wafted in the wrong direction).

Autumn training and events

For the first three weeks in September, Liz has managed to book us in at the Spectrum again, from 8.30 – 10pm.



On **4th then 11th September**, Mike T & Yvette, and then Bryony & Nick put Liz & David, then Rob & Francis, respectively, through their paces in the practical pool part of the dry suit course. Through buoyant breaststroke while dry-suited and finless, weight checks, buoyancy drills, inflating, venting, air sharing and, all importantly, rectifying inverted over-inflation, all candidates showed themselves to be in command of their dry suits. (Liz and David just need to sort out leaks so they don't always have to pour water from their boots after the event!)



THURSDAY DIARY for the Autumn

Thurs **18th Sept** – Spectrum 8.30 – 10pm

Thurs **25th Sept** - Curry (for members and friends) at the Shahanaz in Haslemere. Book with Tony.

Thurs **2nd Oct** to Thurs **30th Oct**

Dates and venues are being finalised for :

- Seasearch marine life intro
- Diving film evening
- Accident management with Sandy Busek, Community First Responder.
- Rescue scenarios
- Seamanship for divers

Thurs **6th Nov** – Back to the Herons

(Refurbishment is reportedly on track)

Thurs 27th Nov - AGM - everyone welcome!

Diving

Early in the season, **Chepstow** is particularly good for checking out the dive gear that's been sitting idle over the winter. Yvette organised a visit for Sunday May 11.

Mulberries Sun 22nd June - Yvette reports

Gorgeous sunshine, calm seas and a great boat load of eager divers. Water temp a balmy 17°C what more could we possibly want?....well, vis of more than 2-3m would have made this a perfect day. Apart from that the first dive on old favourite the Mulberries went really well. Charlotte and I went down in the first wave and after diving in half a metre vis there a couple of weeks ago and struggling to find it I was a little apprehensive about getting lost. Luckily Charlotte had taken a reference on her compass and the chain could be clearly seen so we found ourselves there in no time.



Buddy check for Charlotte and Yvette

A nice slow pootle as I like to have a good look at the small stuff and see little point in rushing, wastes air apart from missing the small stuff. Plenty of European oysters, some really big ones, crabs, four lobsters in a pot and some tompot blennies, one was really keen to come out and play almost as though it wanted to pose for photos. Sadly I had left my camera on the boat but one day I will get to test drive it. Loads of dead mans fingers, sponges, snakelocks anemones, white striped anemones, bryozoans, corkwing wrasse and a big school of pollack/bib and a candystripe flatworm.

Before returning to the shot Charlotte did a very credible job of putting up her DSMB. It is always a good idea to practice this often so that it becomes second nature and easily recalled under stressful conditions if need be.



Paul S dived with Mike T and by all accounts had an excellent inaugural sea dive with the club and we look forward to many more.



Mike and Paul preparing to dive on the Outer Mulberry

Sitting topside the sun was pretty strong so plenty of sunscreen applied, although once home I realised I had missed a few spots, so note to self to pack a hat next time, mind you then it will probably rain knowing my luck.

Second dive we decided to try our luck on HMS Pine, a little wreck that we have often spoken about doing.



Mike T and Paul S went down first after we thought we had found it and evidently we had as they spent a good time down there having a rummage. Once back on board, they reported that it was pretty silty, viz not great and current starting to run. Paul, Liz, Michael and I dropped in but the viz had deteriorated to about 1m. Liz put up her DSMB in pretty dire conditions, and with the buddy line between us we tried in vain to find the wreck. The drift was fairly gentle but with bad viz and an empty sandy bottom with only featherstars and the odd hermit crab, after 25 mins we decided to call it a day.

A quick drive back to East Beach to powder our noses while the strong bladdered folk waited for the tide to rise so we could recover Cobra onto the trailer, and return home after a lovely, relaxing day. I always feel so much better after a day's diving, almost like I've had a mini holiday. Looking forward to our next dive which is the Bottle Wreck.

More diving

Littlehampton 29th June Steve Bond reports:

Fox, Liz, Sandy C and I dived the wreck of the Jaffa on what turned out to be a very sunny day with a calm sea. A thorough safety / boat briefing given by Ray Lee on dive boat Huntress IV was a good example of how a brief should be carried out.

Surface visibility proved better than the 2m visibility underwater, however a good descent on the shotline brought us within 10m of the boilers and the depth of the wreck at 24-29m was ideally suited to nitrox with all three of us diving on 32% oxygen. Some large crabs were seen as well as shoals of wrasse on the lee side of the wreck. Some good diving without diver separation and some very polite help with the DSMB was given and accepted.



Tompot blenny

A relaxed mid water ascent whilst just keeping out of mandatory decompression, and the underwater politeness continued with a safety stop drysuit rub down session prior to our arrival at the surface where Ray and Bernie were waiting.

Sandy C and Rosie dived together on the Jaffa with Sandy test driving her "new ears" after some previous eardrum damage a few weeks before, They collected a paella dish quantity of scallops in the sands near the wreck and once back on the boat discussed recipe choices during a scallop preparation demonstration.

The second dive was a drift in 12m with Sandy, Liz and myself diving as a trio as Fox sat out the dive due to an issue with his regulators. Some dogfish and plaice were seen, despite the fast drift and limited visibility of 2-3m.

Bernie crashed the boat twice, causing a small amount of damage and a large amount of hurt pride / boating language whilst mooring up, (mental note to myself to be more careful when approaching moorings when coxing).

Thanks to Sandy C and Steve T for bringing the dive to our attention, so we didn't need to do the long drive to NDAC Chepstow.



Pollack

The planned trip out to the **Brigitta (aka T-Pot)** on 21 July was called off with the threat of wild weather and thunderstorms, which frustratingly didn't seem to materialise on the day – the unpredictability of our summer weather!

A dive to the **bottle wreck** on 5th July was also hit, this time by glitches with the boat, but David soon fixed this - replaced the winch pawl, fitted a new jockey wheel and sorted the engine electrics. A specific fault with the engine instruments wasn't apparent, but all seemed to be solved after David took the connectors in the wiring loom apart, electrolubed them and put everything back together. For reference for the more technical among you, in case you should need to, the easiest way to get to the electrics behind the instrument panel is to remove the seat in front of the console, and there is a hatch behind it which gives direct access. After all this, Cobra was again ready for action.

Not to be defeated by electrics, of either the storm or instrument variety, and now getting desperate to get into the water, Yvette planned a dive from **Eastbourne** on 9th August, diving on the Duchess followed by some photography practice in the shallows of the north marina.

St Abbs and Farne Islands in August



For the Club's main late summer trip this year, several members made the long but highly worthwhile journey up to the far north east coast to enjoy the famous wolf fish and dead men's fingers of the amazing St Abbs reefs, followed by more amazing encounters with seals in the Farne Islands. More to come on this trip, and take a look at Paul's amazing video!

Swanage

Several members took off to the lovely Swanage for the weekend of 30th-31st August – diving with Swanage Boat Charters shuttles out to the Rosalie, and on the pier among the bright green coloured juveniles of the big blotchy pink ballan wrasse.



Adult ballan wrasse

Red Sea 2014

Several members headed off to the warm, clear waters of the Red Sea again this year, encountering some wonderful marine life, as always.

Photos and more information promised for the next FishTales.

Isles of Scilly in 2015

Isles of Scilly for a week from the August bank holiday (Aug 29 – 5 Sept)

The Club's late summer trip for 2015 will be on a lovely dive boat with a lovely skipper for 6 days of diving from 30th Aug to 4th Sept (2 dives per day).

The trip was kindly tested out by Chris and Liz this year, and the area was pronounced "idyllic both above and below the water". So, Liz, Chris, Yvette, Bryony, Darren, Mandy, Fox, Tony, David (and Thomas from Reading SAA) will be heading off next year, with the promise of **incredible reefs, fabulous walls, spectacular wrecks, historic cannon sites, abundant marine life and ever playful seals** (see www.divescilly.com). Liz has already organised B&B with Dave and Sarah (conveniently the skipper's house) which can accommodate 8 divers, with the others staying nearby.



Social events

Goodwood Races—20th June

Friday night at the horse races. Thanks to Clare and Paul for organising this great night out for the third year. First race at 5.40pm, but seven races in all, ending at 9pm, so plenty of scope for placing the odd bet through the evening, before the partying begins – when the Parade Ring is transformed into a unique dance floor! The electric atmosphere reaches fever pitch as lasers ignite the sky and the sound system roars into life with DJ in the person of Radio 1 star, Zane Lowe.

Socials still to come:

Christmas Dinner-Dance - Sat 6th December

This year, our social team has organised for us to join in with a larger party at The Old Thorns, Liphook. A great venue, great food, music provided, and a few drinks included with the meal, and no raffle tickets this year! Please book with Sandy as soon as possible (£40)

Food and Wine evening - Sat 15th November

Delicious entertainment, an event not to be missed!

Clay pigeon shoot

With a hearty pub lunch to follow the shooting.

Speak to Tony or Sandy to book on these events.

What better way to help keep the annual club subscriptions down than enjoying a social event with other members and their partners and families!

Bob no longer legless

Having suffered the indignity of losing a prosthetic leg this year, Bob was out of action at the beginning of the summer. He was spotted at the June Committee meeting, sitting on Nick's downstairs toilet where he apparently remained until David had managed to re-manufacture a cable and Nick and Maddy had wrestled with him for over an hour to pull the cable back through his leg and tension it with the nut that sticks out of the bottom of his foot. All limbs seemed to hold in place while he was repeatedly rescued from the bottom of the spectrum pool in July, and he's now spending the rest of the autumn in the boatshed, and would probably be glad of another trip out to the Spectrum if anyone is keen to do more rescue drills.

Training

Thanks to Liz, Steve Bond and Steve Trussler who delivered open water lectures on 22nd June and 27th July. Thanks to Francis for providing venue and hospitality for the first session.

Rob and Francis both then passed the theory exam held at Sheet Village Hall – many congratulations!



Boats

Boat Officer, David, reports that Cobra had its first outing this year on 13th April following repairs and overhaul during the winter. The weather was excellent, Cobra was launched from Eastney public slipway, initial tests showed everything was working well, so, with a full crew, Cobra was taken over to Ryde on the Isle of Wight for a full shakedown cruise. To add a little excitement to the day man overboard (or more accurately 'buoy overboard') drills were practised, giving a number of club members the opportunity to hone their boat handling skills. Thanks to Fox for towing and Mike for skippering.

During the winter a new combined GPS and chartplotter was added to Cobra's instruments. The plotter has a daylight viewable colour screen and is equipped with electronic charts covering the whole of the UK and Ireland. The charts also include wreck sites which should make popular dive sites easier to find.

SAA Regional Courses

28/09/2014 1 Day Rescue Diver Practise
12/10/2014 1 Day Rescue Diver
18/10/2014 1 Day Open Water Instructor Theory
25/10/2014 1 Day Open Water Instructor Practical
08/11/2014 2 Day Club Instructor
22/11/2014 1 Day O2 and Emergency Diver First Aid

The South East Regional Rep is Stefan Heathfield - serep@saa.org.uk 07709276374

Visit the SAA website: www.saa.org.uk and register as a member to gain access to the members' section.