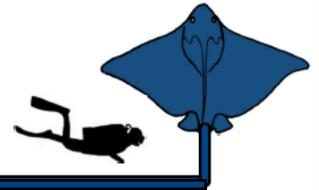


FISH-TAILS

August 2015

Haslemere Sub Aqua Club



SOCIAL

Indian Summer

After one or two date changes to keep us on our toes, we were off to the Shahanaz on Tuesday 28th July for a social curry as part of the annual summer programme. Nick's toes let him down, but lucky for him his wife happened to be enjoying a curry on another table that evening, saw us and rang home, or he would have arrived two days late and wondered why he was on his own! Drinks flowed freely and swiftly, food less swiftly but was very good when it finally arrived! Thanks to Mandy for organising a very enjoyable evening, and for staying the course despite her horribly early start the next morning.

Independence BBQ 4th July

Nestled between days and seemingly weeks of summer rain and wind disrupting the season's diving, was a hot, hot Saturday, and it was the annual HSAC barbecue. Members assembled in shorts, t-shirts and other light and airy summer attire, helped themselves to chilled wine, beer and Pimms from the garden fridge and watched as the more energetic took up water pistol arms in the open aired swimming pool.



All well mellowed and dried off when the barbecue fired up, delivering copious supplies of perfectly cooked savouries, followed by chocolate fountains, fruit, cake and pavlova. Thanks to Yvette for providing the wonderful venue, and to Mandy for making sure everything was so well organised it could happen unsupervised.



Slot Car Racing

Mandy is also busy sorting out the next social – racing round the four track Scalextric course at Home Farm in Milland with vehicle types ranging from trucks through formula one to Italian Job minis. Current suggestion is for Friday 18th September, and to order in Indian or Thai. Let Mandy know if you're interested.

Christmas bash Saturday 5th December

Somewhat out of the blue it was agreed that rather than have the Christmas get together at an hotel or some such other, the preference would be to have an informal dinner in Yvette's newly extended kitchen/dining area, with caterers and music that's background enough not to prevent convivial festive conversation. The Club's various non-groove bots who would rather chat and drink than dance, all loved the idea, and it was a firm date. Book your place with Mandy as soon as possible.

EQUIPMENT

Gear Servicing

Thanks to Phil who has organised more cylinder testing and gear servicing with Angus Diving – who collect and deliver all the kit back, almost, but not quite, to the door. Lots of gear was safely returned at the end of June, though Phil was left trying to find the owner of a stray pony which trotted back a bit late in July.



Boats

David has been continuing to do an amazing job keeping both boats fit for use. All that's needed is for the weather to allow us out a bit more so we could make use of them - but at least Cobra had a successful trip to the outer Mulberry. The fault with the wiring between the GPS and the radio on Eagle turned out to be due not so much to a fault as to a lack of wire altogether. So wire and new connectors were rapidly put in hand. Both boat batteries have passed David's test, but they aren't as sprightly as they were in their earlier youth, so remember to put them on charge before going out, while you add two-stroke oil to the reservoir to make sure it's at least half full.

DIVING

Yvette reports on a dive on the lovely Mulberry harbour: Saturday dawned fair and sunny. Loading Cobra with Darrin, David and Steve's help made for a quick getaway from the boat shed, until we discovered my number plate was missing. A quick detour to mine to retrieve another plate, not helped by my very rusty towing skills and a hill start in third – not recommended! Hubby soon discovered my missing plate concealed underneath the current one and we were back on our way to Eastney, only to be delayed by slow traffic.

Everyone's kit loaded and it was off to the Mulberries, albeit slowly as Cobra was not happy going over 20 knots delaying us further. Steve tucked into his snacks, just in case we had to turn around and go back.



Off to the Mulberry Harbour

Photo: Rob Elliott

Luckily the slack window was quite long and we were able to go off in a fairly big first wave. I was diving with Rob on his first sea dive. Our descent was very slow as I had a few hassles clearing my ears. Viz was about 3m once down and luckily we found our way to the Mulberry quite easily, following the chain. It was quite mucky with a lot of algae drifting but as we were on the leeward side it was fairly sheltered at first. Sadly not much to see in terms of fish life but plenty of the tiny, white anemones scattered over everything from the walls of the Mulberry to the empty slipper limpet shells.

A few dead man's fingers were growing on the walls with a several colonies of anemones. Liam and Michael saw a cuttlefish and we found quite a large dogfish and lots of common starfish. Lots of Bugula bryozoans, and several tiny white/yellow nudibranchs, I think the fried egg sea slug and a large ribbon of eggs. A few common oysters were lying around and we saw only one fairly large edible crab tucked under a rock. Small growths of hydroids provided a little colour to a very brown scene with a few clumps of hornwrack, a few goldsinny swam around the crevices but sadly no tompots which are normally a very common sight.



Goldsinny wrasse

As we went round the current picked up quite a bit. (A tip in current is to drop as low as you can safely and stay as close to the wreck/reef as possible which provides some shelter, makes finning less onerous and helps conserve air and energy.) As the current became stronger, the visibility also deteriorated considerably which made staying with buddies and controlling buoyancy challenging.

Steve, Liz and Darrin decided to try to find the landing craft and Cuckoo by following the rope and a bearing of 325 and managed to see both wrecks despite viz being affected by the algae and current. They wisely didn't try to swim back against the current but surfaced on a DSMB, a surprising distance away from the Mulberry shot. It's great to know these wrecks can be reached easily from the Mulberry, and it would be good to see them when the visibility is better. We were able to pick up speed on the way back to Eastney as all the cobwebs had been swept out of Cobra's engine after a long period

Bottle Wreck

Nick hatched a plan to dive the 25m deep Bottle Wreck on 27th June, followed by a shallow drift dive (possibly on the Waldrons) afterwards. Slack was due around 1pm, meaning a nice leisurely start to the day, probably 11:30 down at Selsey. Nick circulated some background information about the Bottle wreck, summarising that it's a very interesting dive. The Bottle Wreck is a wooden merchant ship sunk around 1835, carrying pottery, bottles of Porter beer, cutlery and cast iron pipes – home to lobsters, crabs and conger eels. See Wessex Archaeology's site for a wreck map, and video http://www.wessexarch.co.uk/projects/marine/alsf/wrecks_seabed/round2/5013/index.html

All was set for a great day out, but sadly the weather had other ideas, and the Bottle Wreck visit was postponed pending better conditions.

Vobster 14th July

Yvette put on a training and shakedown dive day at this inland site on 14th July. Francis, Darren and Mandy and Mike were instantly on the list, even with a 7am departure. Yvette reported a "great day yesterday at Vobster", keen to do it again.

Britsum 25th July

So, the plan was for a gentle slack tide dive on the shallow Britsum in Bracklesham Bay on 25th July, followed by slow drift over the Hopper Barge and nearby fossil beds or the Bracklesham Balls. Forecast gave a passable Force 4 early in the week, and Liz, Rob, Michael Dave, Sonya and Mike were all signed up for a 7.50am departure from the boatshed, gathering for launch at Eastney an hour later. Unfortunately as the days passed, so the predicted wind speed increased, and by Friday morning there were several orange triangles and strong wind warnings in place. Reluctant to admit defeat too readily, Yvette resolved to "keep an eye and relook later this evening, but it's looking doubtful". Later it was NW Force 5 to 7, occasionally gale 8, and the understated message went out "weather not good so unfortunately dive won't be going ahead". Ah well, it has to improve soon, surely.

TRAINING

Try dives and taster training

HSAC has welcomed several people from Alton College for a number of pre-trip training sessions, in preparation for their survey trip to Greece. We've also had a number of try divers who seem to have thoroughly enjoyed their first experience of SCUBA.

Thanks to Liz and Yvette for organising and delivering rescue training for those interested in doing the SAA Diver Rescue assessment later in the year. Bob has been out of his handcuffs for some practice rescues.



The lecture room and pool were full of underwater cameras of all shapes and sizes on 11th June. Liz orchestrated a photography theory basics session with Paul and Yvette, followed by practical application in the crystal clear water of the swimming pool, where a model reef joined the usual stray earrings, hair clips, nose clips, plasters and general nastiness that only SCUBA clubs can see on the pool bottom. Next week Paul waved his magic Lightbox wand over a selection of underwater photos, and enhanced their depth, contrast and colour.



To follow up, Paul circulated some top tips for underwater photography, and a link to a free underwater photography magazine which is good for info on

techniques and new kit etc: <http://www.uwpmag.com>

Paul's tips in short: get close; flash on; get low and shoot upwards; fill the frame; focus on eyes; sort your buoyancy; practice in the dry; strobe externally; resolution high, ISO low; custom white balance, or auto flash; manual aperture priority; spot focus; speed up for moving subjects; shoot in raw.

Nitrox users - essential to register!

Members who dive on Nitrox need to make sure that their nitrox qualification is registered with the SAA in order for the SAA insurance to be valid. So, if you have anything other than an SAA certificate, please send our DO, Nick, a photo of your certificate **before you continue to dive with Nitrox.**

Thanks to TO Liz for orchestrating a full training programme this year:

Nitrox: Thanks to Paul. Well done Phil and Darrin

Dive Leader lectures and written test: Well done Liz, Liam and Phil

Dive Supervisor lectures and written test: Well done Yvette, Mike T, Paul and Nick.

Dry Suit course: Well done Darren, Mandy and Ann

Rescue Diver - in house theory and practical training (thanks Yvette) then regional assessment in Sept
Good luck Paul, Liz, Phil, Liam

Still to come: Oxygen and Emergency Diver First Aid – Saturday course to be arranged

Compressor

A reminder for anyone using the Club compressor that it doesn't have the required level of filtering to be used for oxygen cleaned nitrox cylinders. Operators also please remember to enter the hours you run the compressor into the log, and to tell David when the total hours are approaching the filter-change time that is now written large in the log book.

Suunto

Thanks to new member Darrin for arranging for Suunto rep, Sven, to bring caseloads of every type of Suunto computer, wing and torch for members to test dive in the Herons pool on 4th June, and again at the Spectrum on 23rd July. There's an impressive wish list of kit that Liz is negotiating at a favourable HSAC collective price from an obliging Suunto outlet.

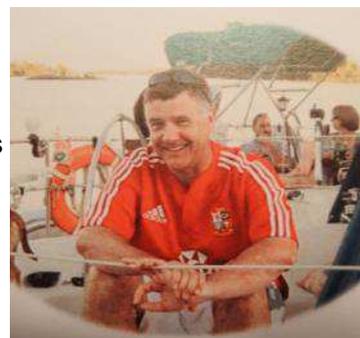


Kit by Suunto, photos by David



Sadness

Longer serving members, from the time when Mark Brodrick was part of HSAC, were very sad to learn of his sudden and untimely death in May, aged just 56. We remember his time with HSAC with fondness, and send our sympathy to the family he leaves behind.



HSAC's Thursday Programme 2015

Annual Boatshed Barbecue and Bring and Buy Evening—Thursday 20th August 2015

A great opportunity for a relaxed social, and to bring along any diving kit you no longer need that might be just what someone else needs, and have a look for a bargain on something you need that is now surplus to someone else's requirements! Please come along to the club boatshed from 7.30pm onwards—let Mandy know if you'd like to have something to eat off the barbecue, so she can order enough food, and ensure there's enough to drink.

Here's a record of what we've been doing on Thursdays this year - thanks to Liz for keeping this programme going throughout the year.

1 st Jan	New Year's Day!
8 th Jan	Dive leader DL1 Stage Stop (NS). Pool rescue
15 th Jan	Dive leader DL2 Dive Leadership (NS) Pool rescue
22 nd Jan	Dive leader DL3 Search Diving (MT) Pool rescue
29 th Jan	FREE 'TRY- DIVE' OPEN EVENING
5 th Feb	Dive leader DL4 Advanced Diving (YK)
12 th Feb	Half Term
19 th Feb	Dive Leader Revision and Test (BC)
26 th Feb	Dive Leader Revision and Test (BC)
5 th Mar	
12 th Mar	Dry Suit Lecture Open Water 9
19 th Mar	Alton College Try Dive
26 th Mar	Final rescue training
2 nd Apr	No session this week – Easter Break
9 th Apr	Dive Planning and Marshalling Recording
16 th Apr	Dive Planning and Marshalling Recording
23 rd Apr	Dive Planning and Marshalling Recording
30 th Apr	Final Documentation Review
7 th May	
10 th May	Sunday Nitrox course (PW)
14 th May	Neptune navigation explained! YK
21 st May	Finning fun – improve your technique! Theory & practice
28 th May	
4 th Jun	Dive Computer comparisons and uses. – All
11 th Jun	Basic Photography theory and practice
18 th Jun	Photo-editing and more photos in the pool
25 th Jun	Summer programme planning
2 nd Jul	Rescue procedure and O2 dry demo. Try divers
9 th Jul	Standardised skills training. Rescue training
16 th Jul	Rescue Theory recap and practical, and form completion.
23 rd Jul	Spectrum with Sven and his Suunto treasure trove
28 th Jul	Tuesday Dinner at Shahanaz
6 th Aug	Spectrum Guildford, dry suit practice
13 th Aug	
20 th Aug	Boat shed BBQ and kit sale
27 th Aug	Isles of Scilly
3 rd Sept	Isles of Scilly
10 th Sept	Back to Herons