



Welome!

Here we are then – the end of 2005. The weather has been kind to us and the club has had a bumper year in diving terms, with only 4 of our scheduled days being blown out (one of those due to the skipper's bad back). The 2006 dive list is ready and will be available after the New Year, lets hope its as good as this year. A review of next years diving appears on page 10.



2005 has seen several new members join including Rick, Ian, Marie and more recently Victor, David, Neil and Nicola. I hope you have all been made to feel welcome, we are pleased to have you in the club. It is good to know that we are bucking the trend of recent years and increasing our numbers – in the past 3 or 4 years we have come perilously close to dropping below what we realistically need to keep the club going, lets hope we can continue to grow. We are always on the lookout for new members, so if you know anyone who may be interested in learning to dive (or is already qualified) try to convince them to come down and meet us. We welcome anyone, with qualifications from any organization, so bring them along. BSAC's SALT chart allows them to easily cross over to the BSAC training syllabus. We've managed to get back up to 30 members in 2005, how about getting to 40 in 2006??

November 8th saw the club's AGM, once again held at the Burn Bullock. Thanks to all those who came and especially those who have taken on committee positions. This is, generally, a thankless task but without you the club couldn't carry on. There is a list of new committee members and review of the AGM starting on page 4.

Finally I'd just like to thank everyone who has contributed to the newsletter in 2005. I think the issues have been pretty good, and hope that we can have more of the same in 2006. The next issue will probably be out around March time, if you would like to contribute something please feel free – perhaps holiday, kit, or diving book review or maybe come Carvall-esque nonsense/filth...whatever it is I'm more than happy to put it in

Have a top xmas and New Year, see you all in Stoney Cove soon!!!!

Enjoy!!
Paul

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DO's Bit

"Greece is the word, is the word..." Apparently Greece will be the new Red Sea for the diving fraternity in the coming years. With the current plans for deregulation, many, many miles of new coastline will be accessible along with wrecks that have been virtually un-dived. This will be a potential diving Mecca, or so they say...

Now correct me if I'm wrong, but there appears to be a drawback here. As I remember it, I saw very little diving in Greece, if at all. What I did see was a lot of pansy choreographed dancing, jiving around cars and generally annoying routines. I heard songs cheesier than a bag full of Edams, along with dialogue that had a syrup content that would make Tate & Lyle choke. However, I do recall Danny and Sandy were both in technical black ("I've got chills, there multiplying" – probably a bend). I also remember that Ms Newton John's strides were tighter than a fat blokes neckseal – Now you're talking!! I understand

that there are plans to include marine parks in the equation, well, if Ms NJ was made into a marine park I might consider diving the reefs. Greece – It'll never catch on.

The whole thing might be a job for the "Awesome Foursome". Who?? You will be pleased (and probably astounded) to know that the Club has divers described as the above. The phrase was coined by the dive guide on our last trip to the Red Sea in October. When faced with the predominate of Selsey Bill BSAC on the board, our cuddly quartet added a few discreet noughts to the list of number of dives done, thus transferring them into the "Awesome Foursome".

Things were not always awesome. In fact, never have so many mistakes been so successfully hushed up by so few. These include (in no particular order): being underweighted, being overweighted, not being weighted at all, air off, air empty, cameras flooding and "current" & "directional" issues. Despite our efforts, the crew tried to go one better, notably trying to sink us all in the dark whilst on the Zodiac, , trying to dismantle Doug and my cabin from the inside out and not being content with that trying to drown Scott bit by bit in his bunk.

However, dive by dive we gelled as a unit. As we have a film theme for the column this time, it may help to think of the flourishing comradeship of "The Dirty Dozen" or "The Magnificent Seven" (or maybe "Carry on Sergeant" if you prefer). It became a pleasure to dive, so just for a little while I believed in the "Awesome Foursome"...

Slightly less temperate has been the atmosphere at Chez Carvall every time we have a Diving Christmas Do! You try and explain that losing my wallet meant me losing a "Fistful of Dollars" too!

Best Regards
Paul C.



TO's Bit

Quite a lot of training has occurred recently. Ian Mulcahy is the only one not to get around to do the SD Theory. Rick Whitby, Chris Carter, Steve Speer have all passed and been signed off. Marie Lambeth has concluded the Ocean diver and is now at the "adding to experience stage" and almost ready for the sea. A few more trips to Stoney will suffice. Roy Parris is still in training and is getting used to his dry suit. Neil and Nicola his daughter have joined the club and have just started the Ocean Diver training in the pool. Victor and Dave are both PADI divers who need to do some Sports Diver cross over lectures to get up to BSAC Sports Diver level.

Forthcoming lecture needs:

Victor and Dave need lectures and also the SD theory test and some qualifying dives. Neil and Nicola need the Ocean Diver lectures and the OD theory test. Ian (after SD theory pass), Chris, Rick and Steve all need the DL lectures and the DL theory test.

So, activities on all fronts!

In addition. Chris C, Chris G, Rick and Alan Lawrence have put themselves down for the Instructor Foundation Course in Feb 2006. Alan will also be attending the Practical Rescue Management Course run by the BSAC regional Coaching scheme, as indeed shall I as an instructor. I am involved now with the regional Coaching scheme and assisted at a boathandling course on the Thames yesterday (6/11/05).

As you can see folks, many people are learning and excited/enthusiastic about the club and their own personal skill development.

Let me know what you would like to do as far as skill enhancement is concerned. I would be happy for some of the people who are going for the IFC in Feb to deliver elements of the OD theory to Neil and Nicola under my supervision. Talk to me about having a bash.

There is a definite need for people to commit to pool sessions as assistants. I am having my hand repaired next Monday 14 and will be out of the pool until the stitches are out. I also need commitment from instructors to help out.

Please advise.

Regards

Alan

The Club's Committee for 2005/06

Well, here they are – your leaders for the coming year...good grief.

Anyway, thanks to them for volunteering their time to run the club, please help them out if need be or at least by them a pint every now and again.

	Chairman	Diving Officer	Training Officer	Treasurer
Picture				
Name	Paul Brown	Paul Carvall	Alan Glen	Chris Griffiths
Age	25	48	Dunno, was Ships Diver on the Ark though.	39, although he has the mental age of 7 and the body of a 75 year old.
Qualification's	Advanced Diver, Trimix Diver	Dive Leader, Nitrox Diver (PADI hahaha)	Advanced Instructor, Extended Range Diver	Sports Diver, Nitrox Diver
Distinguishing Features	Waif-like. Always has a smile on his face and a crowbar in his hand. Has been described as "a personal hero" by the Diving Officer.	Big red face and a big pointy nose. Often seen drinking more than his fare share of wine and annoying the Chairman. Has had his work published in VIZ.	He'll be the Irish one doing all the teaching. Is now helping on the regional coaching scheme – don't hold it against him though.	Sweats, eats and speaks posh. Is a second cousin to Prince Charles.
	Membership Sec.	Expeditions Officer	Equipments Officer	Dry Officer
Picture				
Name	Andy Hart	Rick Whitby	Alan Lawrence	Clare Walton
Age	42, but wears it well	46	68, but doesn't look a day over 70	32
Qualification's	Sports Diver, Nitrox Diver	Sports Diver	Sports Diver	Sports Diver, Nitrox Diver
Distinguishing Features	Bald as a coot, blind as a bat and randy as a rutting rhino. Do not approach when on heat.	Loud Shirts and Kronenberg - Can't buy class like that. Never seems to know whether he's in Weymouth or Streatham.	Ever-smiling, laugh-a-minute joker. The life and soul of the party.	Drinks like a fish, dives like a dolphin and eats like a horse. Usually found giving up the will to live on Hand Deeps or nicking my tea.

AGM Review

Tuesday the 8th November and a gaggle of Croydon BSAC's finest met up at the Burn Bullock in Mitcham for the club's Annual General Meeting. Now the announcement of this event is usually met with the sort of reception usually reserved for positive results from the local STD clinic, but it is something we have to do and thankfully many of the members made the effort to attend. After agreeing at last years meeting to sell the RIB, I didn't expect the 2005 meet being particularly contentious - this was pretty much how it panned out. Reports were given from all officers summaries of which are as follows:

Chairman: Had been a good year for the club with several new members and plenty of training happening. Diving was incident free and we have had some fantastic visibility. Thanked the committee for all their hard work and especially those outgoing officers.

Training Officer: Several members have joined and either completed, or are near to completing the Ocean Diver course. We have 2 new trainees – Neil and Nicola, who are starting the course. We need more instructors so please try and attend the Instructor Foundation Course. Alan also pointed out that he is now on the London Region coaching staff so if you sign up to do any SDC's you may see a familiar face.

Treasurer: Chris reported that the club is currently looking fairly good money-wise. The sale of the RIB has meant that our overheads are much reduced and so we are pleased to announce a drop in membership to £120. In addition to this there is now the option to pay by Standing Order (£10 per month). The reduced rate will be available as of your next renewal date and is dependant upon all outstanding fees being brought up to date.

Membership Secretary: Andy couldn't make it, but sent a report. We have had a good year, recruiting 10 new members, to bring the numbers back up to 30. Hopefully the new fees will attract even more in 2006.

Equipments Officer: Roy didn't have an awful lot to report. All of the club kit is in good service and there should be some new kit soon.

Expeditions Officer: Only 4 dives blown out this year, and we have had some fantastic visibility. Highlights were the Weymouth weekend and the Sark trip. Boats have been booked for next year for trips out of Brighton, Portsmouth, Weymouth, Plymouth and Oban. Lets hope its as good as 2005 was!

Dry Officer: Andy had sent a short report – understandable really as we hadn't done anything!!

Diving Officer: Paul thanked everyone for their hard work through the year and commented on what an enjoyable season it has been. He was pleased to report an incident free year but reinforced the need for people to following the guidelines and recommendations laid out by BSAC.

There were few questions, which meant that we actually arrived at the curry house on time. Beer was drunk, curry was stuffed and Dave Elphick was given a 50th birthday cake.

Thanks again to all who attended.

Paul
Chairman

Fortuna 18th September 2005

The weather leading up to Sunday had been truly horrible with a gale blowing up the channel all week so the chances were that the viz was going to be horrid but we should be able to get out.

The first piece of good news came when I phoned the skipper on the Saturday evening as it turned out that instead of the frankly masochistic leave time of 8am we would be leaving at around half ten. Then followed the traditional flurry of phone calls (or lack there of, you know who you are) before a quiet night and a far more civilized start.

The second piece of good news was when we got to Brighton to find young ladies with bacon butties for sale, flat calm and sunshine. The perfect start to a day's diving.

This is where I would normally go into a bit of history about the Fortuna and how big it was and what sunk it but being on the lazy side and not remembering my own dive briefing the Fortuna can best be described as a medium-sized lump of iron sitting upright on a fairly silty bottom, sunk during either the first or second world war probably by a U-boat. The Fortuna was transporting beer and cement when it went down so the impoverished alcoholics amongst us were hoping for a free night in courtesy of the Fortuna. Fortunately for the local A&E who would have had to deal with projectile-vomiting, paralytic divers none of the beer was found.

The slack was exceptionally short on this dive due to the spring tides so it was a case of everybody kitting up at once, which can be a problem on some boats, but not on Nauticat due to the generous deck space available. So with everyone kitted up and only one tank dropped on it's pillar valve and only one forgotten weight belt (again you know who you are) we were all ready to go.

Then six pairs and Bob jumped in, in fairly close succession, to make best use of the slack. This was shortly followed by one pair getting out again as a Poseidon regulator did its' usual free-flow trick and emptied a cylinder on the surface. Tank swapped over and Alan G and Ian joined the rest of us on the wreck. They were to become our unlucky couple for the day as Alan also managed to jump in on the second dive to find that he had parted company with his weight belt mid-flight. So if anyone finds a rubber weight belt off the coast near Brighton I know someone who might be prepared to buy it back. At a reduced rate you understand because it has been very well used.

Originally the plan was to take down my camera and get some stunning shots of the wreck and the various flora, fauna and fellow divers to be found around it, but after looking at the colour of the water this seemed like a bit of a silly idea. However leaving the camera on the boat seems to have done the trick as the viz was a very reasonable five metres or so. The wreck itself was also alive with Pout, and also a shoal of very large Pollack were hanging around off the stern. The crab population also appeared to be thriving in the sheltered side of the wreck and there were the odd lobster and Conger to be annoyed for our amusement. Just under twenty minutes later and having toured up and down the wreck and looked into a few nooks and crannies it was time to leave the wreck and head back to the surface.

Once back on the boat it was time to count heads and drink tea. Vicky was performing a very efficient air bitch (sorry dive marshal) job and filling in dive sheets while everyone else drank tea and decimated the local Jaffa cake population.

But where was Bob.

It appears that the hour run-time agreed with the skipper does not apply to crew so he happily floated along beside the boat as we drifted with the current. Eventually even Bob, tiring of decompression stops and the various food-stuffs being thrown at him, decided to join us on the boat. Incidentally apple cores do not make good ammunition for an underwater food fight due to their inability to sink.

The next dive was a drift at a fairly reasonable pace off Brighton. The dive was, as is to be expected, sh*t and the viz was extremely limited so Ian and Alan, Tony and Sandra you didn't miss anything. Oh, and there wasn't any point staying down there for an extra ten minutes after losing your buddy (again you know who you are).

It was then back to Brighton for a few beers at the Pub before the return to London to cook some of our ill gotten gains. The buddy-pairs for the day were Andy and Jaime, Sue and Chris C, Alan G and Ian, Jeremy and Alan, Tony and Sandra Dillon and Vicky and myself. This was a classic days UK diving with the usual mix of good company and good diving with a bit of dodgy viz thrown in on the second dive just to put everything in to perspective. I hope everyone had as good a day as I did.

Chris Griffiths

Winter Diving at its Best

Once upon a time your dopey Chairman had an idea – *lets try booking a weekend's diving in the middle of November out of Weymouth*. After a few emails and a chat with Paul Cooper, skipper of Kyarratoo, 5 hardy Croydon BSAC souls were booked for two days over the weekend of the 12th and 13th to dive something, well, anything out of the cheeky-chirpy-chipper port of Weymouth.

The Crew:

- Paul "mine's a pint" Brown
- Paul "mine's a double" Carvall
- Clare "mine's a thong" Walton
- Rick "mine's a mini" Whitby
- Ian "I don't know what mine is" Mulcahy



Now most of you know that the club doesn't normally book any diving after October, because the vis is poo and the weather is usually poo-er. Unsurprisingly, these were traits that were to be continued on our weekend away...Honestly, 16 years diving and I never learn do I? Anyway, for the 3 weeks leading up to the weekend the winds had been blowing gale force on the south coast, which didn't bode well on the vis front. Heading down on the Friday the forecast was predicting the wind would drop off and come round to blow from the west or north west, if this were to be the case then it would certainly be possible to get out, things were looking up...



By 7pm Paul, Rick, Clare and I had arrived at the digs and had time for a quick shower (not together) before heading down the Red Lion for a very welcome pint or five. Whilst we were here I spoke to Paul Cooper and we decided to meet at 10am on the Saturday and make a decision then. This worked well as we could have a few drinks and not have to get up at the crack of dawn. A few frothy ones later and we were ready for the regular pilgrimage to the Weymouth Tandoori, where Ian arrived making up the full crew. After a (uncharacteristically shit) dinner we headed

off for a last beer in possibly the grottiest boozier in Weymouth – outside toilet anyone? The crowd were less than impressed, so after one pint we headed back to the digs.

Saturday morning and the sun is out, there isn't a breath of wind (other than from the Diving Officer) and the sea is flat. We had plenty of time, so a slow bit of boat loading/tea drinking/piss taking ensued before the 11am leave to dive the Alex van Opstal. This is the wreck of a large Belgian liner that was sunk on the 15 September 1939, some 7 miles from Weymouth in 27m of water. After we were about 2 miles out we could see that the visibility was awful. A few calls round on the VHF radio confirmed that the boats that had already been out on the early tide had been graced with vis like mud. Now many of you might not know, but dives don't generally get called off by the skipper if the vis is bad. Usually, it is only the weather that prevents them making us go diving. In this instance however, Paul Cooper played a blinder and said that if we wanted to turn back then that would be fine. We had a chat and thought that if the vis was as bad as it looked (which had been confirmed by the vis reports from the other boats) it wasn't worth diving – so despite the fairly good conditions, we headed for back in.

So what is there to do at 12pm on a Saturday in November in Weymouth? Well, plenty actually, but being the culturally inept alcoholics that we are we chose to ignore it all and go to the Red Lion. And that's where we stayed 'til about 7pm. Now by this time a few of us were a little worse for wear, so a trip back to the digs for a shower and a freshen up was in order before heading to the George Inn. This proved to be a good move as we got to see the highlights of the England v Argentina game and Ian got to annoy the living daylights out of two poor 18 year old kids from Bristol who had come away for a naughty weekend. For most of this time its safe to say that the Diving Officer and Chairman were taken in by the young ladies 'charms' (it was obvious she was from Bristol), although Ms Walton commented that "in 5 years they'll be round her knees". You can take the girl out of Camden...

The nonsense continued in the George for some time (including the worst impression of Jimmy Saville you're everlikely to see), after which we followed the well trodden path to Yates'. By this time we had been in the pub for about 10 hours and were pretty much wasted. Diving on Sunday was looking more unlikely with every pint and it was all going a bit wrong. Rick seemed to have complete forgotten where he was ("Where else is there to drink in Streatham?"... "We're in Weymouth Rick"...."Oh"),

Ian was throwing down moves that made Shakin Steven 80's hip thrusting look refined, Paul Carvall had reverted to a baby-like dribbling mess, Clare could only talk about kebabs (loosley packed) and I had gone into Brown-wants-to-batter-someone mode. We all decided (after a quick dance to Tiger Feet by Mud) that it was time to go. After getting some rat-in-pitta and making too much noise we retired to bed...All except for Rick that is who lost his door key (later found in his pocket) and thought waking up our landladies at 2am was the best idea. This on its own is stupid – but our hero had managed to do this last time he stayed there too! Twat.

Sunday. Sweet Jesus. Only 3 of the awesome-fivesome made it to breakfast and only two on them managed to eat anything. We had arranged to meet Paul Cooper again at 10am for a weather check. Most of us (Ian excluded who was suffering especially badly) made it on time as did Paul. The wind had picked up and he said it wasn't happening. I can't remember the last time I had been so happy that diving had been blown out – the thought of being out on a boat with that stinking hangover had almost had me in tears. Anyway, we set about unloading at which point Ian turned up. Now we are a nice bunch here at CBSAC23, but sometimes we can be cruel. We watched said Northerner park his



car, pay £4 parking, amble down to the boat and start getting his kit ready before making his year by telling him it was off. This made his year. It had already made mine.

With cars packed all headed off for the pleasure of 3 hours on the A31. All in all the weekend had not been the best diving I had ever done, but it was a good laugh and worth the effort. Cheers to the crew for making the effort to go. Roll on the next winter trip!!!



Dry Officer's Drivel...

HELLO

I would like to thank Chris G for the cocktails and hospitality on the evening of the pre-xmas night out to Galicia Tapas Bar back in October. Also a big thank you to everyone who attended.

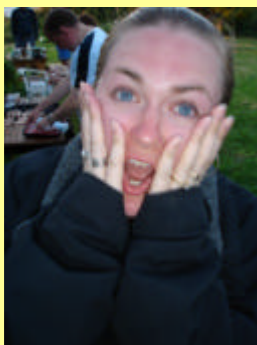
Another thank you goes to Andy B for arranging the Christmas dinner at The Tree House.

Some of you may be aware the BSAC South East Region is holding a conference, DiverSE 2006, on Sunday 12th March 2006 at Guildford University. There will be internationally renowned speakers covering a range of topics include cave diving, deep wreck expeditions, digital underwater photography, discovering new wrecks in the Red Sea, marine life rescue and conservation. Speakers include Martyn Farr and Jack Ingle.

The cost for DiverSE 2006 is £5 and tickets are limited, if you would like to go please let me know ASAP and I will arrange a ticket for you.

If you require further details please go to www.bsac-se.org.uk/diverse

Planning is underway for a number of events which will be revelled soon. If you have a suggestion for a future dry event you would like me to organise please feel free to email me or speak to me on a Wednesday night.



C x
Dry Officer
clare@croydonbsac.com



Diving 2006

After a cracking year's diving in 2005 we have another good calendar of dives lined up for 2006. The following is a bit of a review of what's to come, dive sheets will be available after the New Year.

Day Dives

Once again we have **Nauticat** and **Wight Diver** booked to take us diving from Brighton, Eastbourne and Portsmouth. Steve has a new boat on order, which is due some time this year, don't hold your breath though. Sadly Andy Ryan has had to sell Wight Diver as he has an ongoing back problem that needs operating on that will keep him out of action for a year. The boat has been brought by a group associated with the local dive shop who are happy to honour our bookings. I have been assured by Andy that we will receive the same good service from them as we did from him.



Weekends

We have three weekend trips booked this year - Easter and the second May Bank Holiday to Plymouth and a July bash out of Weymouth. As usual we are using Pete's excellent boat **Venture** for the Plymouth trips, I'm sure you'll all look forward to getting your hands round his hot pole and to the upset stomachs that his bowls of chilli will treat you to. Plan is for the Easter trip to be an open to all, shallow, warm-up type weekend, with the May one being a little deeper (max 35m) and only open to Sports Diver+. Both should be excellent trips, as the quality of diving out of Plymouth really is fantastic.



Sadly Paul Cooper (skipper of **Kyarratoo**) has sold up, so for this year's Weymouth trip we will be using a different boat - **Wey Chieftain III**. This is a large yellow catamaran that is probably the fastest boat running out of Weymouth. Skippered by Graham Knott, Wey Chieftan III is the perfect dive platform for offshore diving - I can tell you from personal experience that this is a fantastic bit of kit and that you WILL be impressed. Plan for the weekend is to do stuff in the 35-40m range,

hopefully including the liner Salsette. This porthole-covered wreck lies in 44m on her port side with the top of the wreck in only 32m and is an awesome sight, a real 'must do'. This will be open to experienced Sports Divers and above.

Week Trip

For this year's week away we are travelling up to the west coast of Scotland to dive the wrecks of the Sound of Mull and the Western Isles. Our home for the week is the liveaboard **Gemini Storm** a converted Severn Class lifeboat which should provide an excellent platform for our motley crew. The quality of wrecks in the Sound of Mull is reported to be fantastic and it is an area that I have been wanting to dive for many years. Probable targets include the Rondo, Breda, Shauna and Hispania. There are also many pretty walls and drift dives that will provide a little relief from the wrecks for the camera types (yawn). Once again depths will be Sports Diver range - 35m max. As far as I know this trip is full, but if you are interested in coming, speak to Rick and get on the reserves list.

There will be more short-notice trips added through the year, Rick will keep you informed of these as and when they occur. Of course, if you'd like to organise a trip feel free - there are stacks of venues the club has never visited or that we haven't returned to for a while. Lets all hope that the vis and weather are as kind to us next year as they were this!



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"Its changed my life – now it's any excuse to get out from behind the skirting board and get wet!!!" **Jerry the Mouse, Address withheld to prevent stalking by Tom the Cat.**

"No more eating paper and chewing the cage bars for me – all I want to do is dive!!!" **Phoebe the Hamster, Stevenage, Midlands**

The **HAMSTERLUNG™** is available at special discounted rate for Croydon BSAC 23 members' pets from AMPHIBIAN SPORTS – Just ask to speak or squeak to Nibbles. **Coming Soon – The Rodent Rebreather...**

New Membership Rates

At the AGM the committee announced that there would be a reduction in the membership cost. The new rate is **£120 per year**, which you now have the option to pay in monthly instalments via a standing order. This fee includes the BSAC membership cost as well as the club fee.

The SO option and new rate are valid as of your next renewal date **as long as you have paid up any outstanding fees**. Should you wish to pay the full amount you can still do this, by cheque to **CROYDON BSAC 23**.

Please see **Andy Hart** or **Chris Griffiths** for further information regarding payments and to complete the SO forms.

Medical Cert and Note

This is just a reminder that EVERYONE has to fill out BSAC's Medical certificate to ensure that their membership/insurance etc is up to date. You can get these forms from **Andy Hart** or from the BSAC website at www.bsac.org.

NOTE – YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO DIVE WITHOUT HAVING COMPLETED THE CERTIFICATE.
