

The Muddy Puddle

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3

JUNE 2000

Right Narced Off!!

It's been a quiet month in the water, with the weather disturbing most of the planned dives. However out of the water the club has been buzzing to a different tune. It seems this magazine has stirred up something of a hornet's nest amongst the club. Several members have become incensed with one of the articles in the last issue.

It seems that the article came too close to the edge for some members, and their activities whilst in the seaside resort of Plymouth. At the time of publishing the article, I felt it was right to withhold the name of the writer, due to a possible backlash. In retrospect this was a critical decision following the reaction from certain club members. I have been quizzed on several occasions as to the identity of the writer known as Narced.... Who is this masked writer, how can someone who knows so many

of the clubs secrets remain so calm amongst those who have threatened his or her life.

Yes I have received threats against Narced's life... This is to stop as of now. Everything in the article was true, give or take a little lie.

For those of you who enjoyed Narced's article I am glad to announce that in future issues we shall be hearing more of the seedier side of the club, and tales of woe and wrong doing, which more politically correct magazines would not publish. I shall of course be keeping Narced's true identity a secret, to help him or her in their journeys through the underworld of BSAC 0023, and to mingle with it's dark denizens, machiavelian miscontents, roguish Romeo's and various Victors Mel-drews.

Narced's comments struck home with many of the more salubrious members this month, as most were nowhere to be seen.

Probably preferring to keep a low profile and hide in their lairs and hollows. Whilst others braved the hazardous world of the club, but refrained from coming forward too far into the light. As a result these of these actions coupled with the lack of diving, no one received the Diver of the Month Award.

Please do not let Narced's article affect the way you act. For those members who, in the past, have acted childish, please continue. Those who felt liberated from their leashes, elated with the pleasure of being surrounded by other village idiots, do not sink back into your glum shell. After all, remember, Diving is only a good excuse for going away for the weekend, drinking the bar dry and showing your bare bottom to the world.

Finally remember, there is a place for silliness and stupidity, and that is the Diver of the Month column.

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DIVES COMING SOON

1st—7th July

Scilly Isles
MV Maureen (SD+)

Saturday 22nd July

Brighton
7:45am
Channel Diver (CD+)

Sunday 30th July

Eastbourne
10:30am
Channel Diver
Arganolt 45m (DL+)

Saturday 12th August

Littlehampton
8:30am
Paul Brown (SD+)

CL = Club Diver

SD = Sports Diver

DL = Dive Leader

DIVING OFFICER'S RAMBLINGS

Me again.

Well, the weather has not been that kind to us recently. The Easter Plymouth weekend could have been better and Weymouth over the May Bank Holiday left a lot to be desired. Still, it's early in the season so I'm hoping for an improvement.

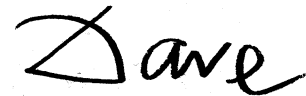
One thing these weekends away demonstrate is the need for teamwork. We are a diving club and the club atmosphere goes farther than the pool or pub. On every open water dive all divers should try to help the day run smoothly whether it be RIB or hardboat. Tom Maguire (after a lot of coaxing) has written an article on RIB "etiquette" shortly to be followed by a similar one concerning hardboats. **Read and learn!!** Too many times I've seen divers fall into two categories, "those who do" and "those who watch" "those who do". Get involved; ask questions; be part of the team.

I know it *seems* a long way off but it's time to start thinking about the A.G.M. This meeting is held October-ish and it's where decisions are made for the next diving season. All committee posts are open to any member (subject, of course, to any required grade/qualifications) so if you're interested, have a chat with the Chairman (Tom) or Dry Officer (Dave Elphick).

Shortly, we're going to apply for some lottery money to upgrade the club's equipment. Being a "training" branch of BSAC means that we have to keep a number of aqualung sets (cylinder, reg, stab etc.) available for new trainees. Also, another piece of training equipment is the RIB. This equipment re-

quires constant maintenance and renewal which, of course, costs £££s. The amount available by way of a grant is virtually unlimited provided a good enough case is put forward. We may, therefore, decide to form a sub-committee to formulate our application.

I think that's all. I'm off to have a cup of tea and an eccles cake.



Seriously though....

This years REAL Diver of the Year Award is going to be run slightly different to that of previous years.

The D.O has request that club members nominate divers for the award. Then at the end of the year he will assess each nomination and award as appropriate.

Nominees do not need to be the great and the good, but a diver who has impressed others with their actions, temperament and attitude throughout the year. This could be a novice diver who has excelled during their training, or had to overcome great difficulties and finally won through.

Alternatively this could be a diver who has grown in stature over the season, or someone you respect and admire (as a diver).

You will be asked to validate your reasons for nominating the individual. All nominators will be forwarded into a raffle.

Use the form on page 10 and hand it to the Dry-Member or D.O before the end of the season.

Diver(s) of the Month

After last month's mammoth month with two winners of this award we have another first for this award, as I am sad to say there is no clear winner, in fact there is no winner at all this month. Some might suggest that the British weather is the winner, or even the engine of the RiB. After recent performances both are worthy winners but in view of the past performances required to win I cannot give either of these two this month's award.

Please could every one try better.. I believe the coming month will provide you all with plenty of opportunities. Especially from the Scilly Six.

Past Dives

Over the past month club diving has been comprised by the weather.

On the second May Bank Holiday the club planned a weekend trip to Weymouth for the more experienced members of club. Most of the diving was planned to be in the 30 to 40 metre depth range.

However this was not to be, and the diving that was done was in depths of half this range. In the weeks before the weather had been glorious, light winds, wonderful sunshine calm seas. But yet again just as Croydon BSAC arrived so did the Gale force winds. However the scale of drinking was reduced for this weekend although I have it on good authority that "Victor's" voice was heard wailing above the storm.

Several Rib dives took place with great success although not so well in the RiB camp.

Once again our faith in our technological marvel was once again shaken, as the Japanese made 150 horsepower V6 outboard engine which powers the RiB once again had delusions of being an espresso maker. Apparently only one side of the V was working correctly in the engine. Each side is controlled by a different engine management and timing systems... Don't ask. However after nursing the Rib back to shore and a good kicking, the lads in the marina said they could fix it. The Rib should be back in action very, very soon.

Finally on a personal note... Could everyone please stop losing their PPDs "Personal Propulsion Devices" (Fins) when diving with me as on 4 occasions this year have my buddies lost their fins underwater. It's nothing to do with me but I will start selling odd sets of fins from the start of August.

Planned Night Dives

Night dives differ greatly from day dives in many ways. Most forms of animal life which are rarely seen during the day venture out and explore at night. Lobsters and Congers come out to hunt, fish are less cautious in the dark. Wrecks take on a different perspective, when only seen with only a torch light. The sensation is radically different to those you will feel diving during the day.

So if you have never tried night diving now the time. The club has organised three night dives this year, they will be diving off of Channel Diver out of Brighton or Eastbourne

Planned Night Dives cont.

Thursday 13th July 6.00 pm - reef.

Monday 7th August 6.00 pm - reef.

Divers are £16 each and are open to all grades.

For more information contact

Paul Brown on 0208 640 6761,

0956 555 728,

Paul@dive50.freemove.co.uk

Pool Times

During the Summer and at all times unless otherwise notified St. Joseph's Pool will be open for training as per normal on Wednesday evenings. Tuesday evenings are yet to be confirmed during school holidays.

If this situation changes details will be posted in the next issue.

RIB Etiquette

Having been pestered by our Editor for many months now, I have finally managed to get my act together and dribble on about the dos of RIB diving, which I have broken down into 4 stages.

1) Getting on the dive.

Having sweated over the tide table for many hours, our esteemed Expeditions Officer will have produced a Diving Schedule for the year, which he will hand out to all and sundry. Once you have filled in your requested dates and handed it back to him, he will sort out the list for each boat and hand it back to you with the dives you have got on and the dives you are a reserve on marked.

Once you are booked on a dive it is your responsibility to ensure you remember. The Expedition Officer will check to make sure you can still make it closer to the time, but if you fail to remember and do not turn up, or do not give him enough notice if you cannot make it, your deposit will be pulled. If you are down as a reserve on a dive, still keep that day free, as more often than not, someone has to pull out and you can take his or her place.

2) Before the Dive.

On the Wednesday before the dive, the Expeditions Officer will hand out a list to each diver detailing the Cox'n for the day (who is normally the Dive Marshall as well), the divers on the boat, location, time of departure and the contact name and number of the Marshall.

On the night before the dive, the Marshall will check the weather forecast again and decide whether the dive is on or off. ALL divers MUST phone the Marshall to check in, as he will tell them his decision and any final alterations to time of departure.

If you do not check in, the Marshall will either try to find a replacement, (in which case you will be bumped off the dive if you do arrive on site), or blow you out and pull your deposit.

As a matter of courtesy, try and phone between 7:00pm to 8:00pm as the Dive Marshall does have a life! (debatable in some instances).

If the line is busy, keep trying, do not give up, as you should be having an early night anyway and won't be going out to party all night long.

3) The Dive.

Ensure you arrive on site well in advance because as we want to arrive on site to hit slack water, the boat will not wait for you (and the Cox'n will probably appreciate some help with the boat). The Cox'n will prep the boat for launching in the compound, ideally you will put your kit on board as soon as he is done, this way the boat can be launched straight into the water and drive off, or you will load at the top of the slipway.

You will need your full diving kit, but as space is at a premium, you need to pack it to take up as little room as possible. This is done, by breaking it down into 4 bundles;

1) Your set: Comprises of Tank, jacket, regulator and anything you will normally carry on a dive. Note: Twin sets are not allowed on the RIB because of their bulk, and pony cylinders should not normally be required and they take up room in the bottle rack.

2) Your weight belt (on its own with nothing attached to it).

3) Your Goody Bag: Into which you put your fins, mask, SMB Reel, SMB, Torch and any other items you require.

4) You

Fully suited with ankle weights, knife, computer and any other bits attached.

If you forget anything, you won't get a chance to come back for it, so make sure all your kit is in the boat before departure!

When packing the RIB, the Cox'n will put all the weightbelts and Goody Bags in the bow for ballast, all sets will be stacked upright in the bottle rack and held in by bungies. This means you can just jump in the boat and be ready to go. It is also advisable to bring a wind and waterproof jacket as the RIB travels at speed and you may get cold and wet. Wet Suited divers must bring this as otherwise they will suffer after the dive. A Bobble hat is also advisable.

After leaving the harbour, the Cox'n will bring the boat up on the plane, to do this he needs to distribute the weight in the boat to balance it out. Normally this means 3 divers either

side of the console and he may bring everybody forward until the boat planes. During the trip to the dive site, keep a look out for anything floating in the water which may damage the boat should we hit it, as well as other boat users and lobster pots.

On arrival at the site, the Cox'n will troll around until he picks up the wreck or reef on the echo sounder. He will then drop in a shot line, which is kept up in the bow (to do this some kit will have to be passed back to allow access). Once the shot is in the wreck, the kit is passed back and the Cox'n will instruct the first pair of divers to kit up. Ideally the boat will be packed so that their sets will be first in line, their goody bags will then be passed to them and the second pair of divers will then help them to kit up.

When the first pair are ready, the boat will be driven towards the buoy and they Cox'n will tell them to stand by, once he has reached to point to drop them in, he will put the engine into neutral and shout go. At this point, the first pair will roll in and make their way directly to the shot line, once safe they will signal to the boat if they are O.K. and proceed with their dive. The last pair will then help the second pair to kit up, and once in, the Cox'n will help the last pair to kit up.

On return to the surface, the divers must signal the boat they are up, and get clear of the shot should they have come up it. Once alongside, the Cox'n will help them dekit and enter into the boat. As soon as they are back in the boat, the divers must repack their kit, stow it immediately to keep the decks clear and then give their dive details to the Cox'n. Once the next pair surfaces, the first pair will help them into the boat, etc, etc. Then it's time for Tea & Cakes.

4) After the Dive:

Once all the divers are back and ready the Cox'n will head for home. Back at the harbour, the boat will be refueled and then retrieved onto the trailer. The boat will then be parked at the top of the slipway and the diving kit handed off, everyone helps with this, so you will sort your kit out once it is off the boat. The boat is then washed down, the engine flushed and the running gear stripped off, the Cox'n may want to do most of this himself, but it is always advisable to give him a hand. The boat is then moved back to the compound where the cover is put back on, this is not a one-man job, so all divers will need to help.

The Cox'n will then grab your dive money off you and then retire to the Cafe to pounce a mug of tea, chat about the day and pass on his/her inexhaustible knowledge of the sea.

Tom Maguire

In a Rich Man's World

The committee has taken the decision to apply for a grant (or two) for funding for projects within the club. This is a complicated procedure and is required to be well thought out. To receive any funds we require a reason for the funding. Two suggestions which have been given and both will probably be used are:

- 1) A new engine or engines for the RiB.
- 2) 10 Complete sets of training kit, possibly including wetsuits for open water diving.

The Chairman and D.O are preparing the plan of attack at present and will report back at the next committee meeting in the second week of July. If you have any suggestions for raising money, or requirements for the club then please contact a committee member by the 9th July.

Committee 2001

We may be in the middle of the so-called British summer, and in the heart of the British Diving Season, but we, the committee, would like you to start thinking about next year.

After the end of the season the club AGM will be held. At which point the present committee will resign and a new committee will be voted in.

Any club member may apply for a post (especially editor), although some posts such as Diving Officer have qualification requirements.

Some of the present Committee will be reapplying for their posts whilst others will not.

If you wish to apply for a for a post please contact Dave Elphick for an application form, even if you wish to apply for Dave's post. He won't bite and likes a good bit of healthy competition.

Croydon BSAC
are proud announce the
Christmas Party 2000
9th December 2000
Pitchers Sports Bar
Sutton

*This is open to members and non-members
alike.*

Tickets will be on sale from the 1st August

For more details see
Dave Elphick

To Bubble or Not to Bubble??

The Close Circuit Rebreather seems to be transforming diving, and to have gripped the diving press in a state of frenzied excitement.

But what is the truth and what is it really like? Now you can have a chance to find out

Mark Emuss is putting together a session on the Buddy Inspiration Close Circuit Rebreather. This will involve a talk by a Rebreather user and then a try dive with the unit.

Details are still to be arrange but if you would like to attend please contact Mark Emuss. Place are limited.

BSAC 0023 proudly present A Summer Evening River Cruise.

Join us onboard the **M.V Suerita** on **Friday 4th of August** for an enchanting evening cruise on the river Thames. Guests will have the unique opportunity to view the sites of London's famous river banks from "Old Father Thames" himself.

Our vessel is M.V Suerita, a large double-decked catamaran hulled vessel giving it excellent stability (there'll be no need for the "Sea Legs"). Facilities include a large dance floor on the upper deck with all-round visibility and pay-bar, food is served on the lower deck. If you find the dancing or eating to much, you can always take some air on the observation deck at the bow.

We embark M.V Suerita from 19:15. Departure is from Embankment pier (opposite the Embankment underground station) at 19:30 sharp returning back to Embankment pier to disembark at approximately 23:30.

The ticket price of **£20** will include Buffet, Disco and free entry to the raffle (approximately ten quality prizes). A pay-bar is available on the upper deck.

For directions, tickets and all other information, please contact me (**Dave Elphick**) on **020 8688 5161** or e-mail me at david.elphick@ntl.com

Club Fees :

Membership fees rose from the 1st June 2000, by £10. The cost of a renewal will be £145. This increase covers the £2 BSAC membership increase.

Please note this is the first increase in 5 years so don't whinge too much or too loudly.

Dry Activities

Calling all potential **Schumachers** and **Rambos**, the dry officer is looking into an evenings Go-Karting and possibly a days Paintballing. These events will go ahead if there is enough interest.

If you are interested in these or have suggestions for Dry Activities then contact :

Dave Elphick. on 020 8 688 5161

Seafood Paella

This is for a large gathering, so you may want to cut back by 1/3 or even 1/2. Or perhaps you'll just cook it up for your fellow divers, just right for after a summer dive.

Ingredients:

4 lbs seafood ex: **1 lb firm, mild fish cut into 1"-2" pieces**
 1 lb medium size shrimp, peeled
 1/2 lb scallops
 1 lb squid, cleaned and cut into 1" rings, tentacles whole
 1/2 lb crabmeat, roughly 1"-2" chunks

Roughly 24 mussels or small clams (combination of the two is best), de-bearded and scrubbed clean.

* All of the above species and quantities are just a suggestion; use whatever is to your liking and is available; the more different kinds, the more fun. However, do **NOT** use oysters. Their unique taste clashes with the others.

1/2 lb chorizo or Italian sausage, crumbled (optional)
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 medium onions, chopped
2 medium red bell peppers, cut into 1" slices
2-3 cloves garlic, minced or pressed
1/2 tsp paprika
1/2-1 tsp saffron, dissolved in 1/4 cup hot water
salt & pepper to taste
1 large tomato, finely chopped
3 cups short-grain rice
1 can artichoke hearts, drained
1 package (10 oz?) frozen peas, thawed
1 bottle (8-12 oz) clam juice

In a LARGE, oven proof skillet to be used for the saute'ing, baking, and serving:

1. Saute the sausage until cooked, if not already cooked. Remove the sausage, set aside, wipe skillet clean.
2. Saute the onions, red pepper, and garlic in the olive oil, until soft. Stir in the paprika, saffron liquid, salt and pepper.
* If preparing a day in advance, stop here and refrigerate the chorizo and pepper mixture in 2 separate bowls. If not, do not remove the peppers.
3. Preheat oven to 375F. In 1" of water, steam open clams and mussels until just opened. Remove them immediately. Combine the water from the steaming, the clam juice, and enough water to make 5&1/2 cups of liquid, and bring to a boil.
4. Add the tomato to the peppers, and saute until hot. Stir in the uncooked rice and saute 3-5 min. Add the hot clam juice and mix well. Cook over moderate heat, uncovered, for 5 min without stirring.
5. Stir in the chorizo, squid, crabmeat and fish. Pat the entire top into a flat, even, but still loose surface. Arrange the shrimp, scallops, and artichokes, and press into the rice. Bake uncovered for 15 min, or until shrimp/scallops are just cooked.
6. Arrange and press the clams/mussels, open side up, into the rice. Sprinkle the peas over the top. Bake for 5 more min.

The Scilly Season

Bishop Rock, off the Scilly Isles, is Britain's most south-westerly Atlantic outpost, with a long history of wrecked shipping and ravaged lighthouses. When conditions are good, the rocks below the current lighthouse (opposite) make one of the best pinnacle dives in the country, says Clem Maginnis.

IN the 13th Century, people convicted of a serious crime were taken out to Bishop Rock and left there with bread and water to be ravaged by the sea. Or so history suggests. Today the rock is better known as the point where record-breaking attempts to cross the Atlantic are started and finished.

Bishop Rock lies at the most south-westerly part of the United Kingdom, at position 49° 52.33'N 06° 26.68'W. One story suggests that it was named after its shape, similar to a bishop's mitre.

The Bishop has to be one of the best pinnacle dives in the United Kingdom. If conditions are right, it is an absolutely stunning experience, with viz sometimes in excess of 30m - this is not a dive you will ever forget. In its exposed location, Bishop Rock is open to Atlantic swells. Anything more than a Force 3 south-westerly will put you off, and even with this light wind you may decide that the famous "Atlantic hump" precludes diving.

The best winds are from the north-east, and a gentle Force 2-3 will help to calm the large swell that comes in from the south-west. Because of its position, the tides are always on the run, and slack water is rare on hard springs. The best time to dive is three hours before High Water St Mary's on neaps.

Below 20m there is rarely much movement, but you need to be careful on your ascent because there can be downfalls over the ledges. The depth down to 48m, combined with the location and tide, make this a challenging and exciting dive - not one for the inexperienced or fainthearted!

Marker buoys are essential. Some divers use SMBs, but these run the risk of getting caught in the kelp, being snagged on a rock, or snatching one of the many pieces of wreckage, so delayed SMBs are preferable. This is a superb site for photography, regardless of the conditions. If the viz is poor, you can opt for a macro lens to do some close-up work, and there is plenty to see.

Before you descend, you need to position yourself close into the rock face to avoid being swept off by the

tide and losing your reference point. Beware, for if there is any slop, you could get pushed into the rocks.

So what is there for divers to see around the Bishop? Provided the tidal stream permits, it is possible to swim around the rock in one dive, but if you want to avoid mandatory decompression stops, you will need to complete your trip in an ascending spiral. This is a great shame because, with good visibility - 10m is usually the minimum - the bottom of the Bishop is quite a dive.

The scenery around the base is mightily impressive. The bottom consists of rock and fine white sand, and the colour contrast can be very dramatic. Some rocks are as big as houses, standing over 10m proud in places, while other pinnacles rise 30m from the sea floor.

Nearly all the walls are covered with life. For those who love colour there is everything you could want on this site, but to appreciate the full splendour you need a powerful lamp.

An interesting occupant of the rock's ledges is the crawfish (*Palinurus elephas*). You can recognise it by its long antennae, which make a squeaking noise when rubbed - hence the local name "creaker".

As you come up to around 10m, the kelp starts to thicken, and you may see the friendly ballan wrasse that frequent the site. At this depth you will start to feel the tide picking up, and this should remind you to stay close into the rock face.

There is every possibility that you will see a shoal of mackerel. If the sun is shining, you will have a terrific experience as they dart to and fro with perfect synchronicity.

If you dive with a computer, it is worth waiting here a while, but as you reach 3-4m you must swim away from the face, regardless of the tide, to ensure that you and the boat do not get washed into the rocks.

At 45m there is what looks like the remains of a bell, with the top part broken away. On 30 January, 1860, a huge storm swept the fog bell from the lighthouse tower and it fell into the sea. Could this be it?

As you ascend, there is a nice sloping ledge at about 27m, and lying on it is part of an iron pillar that was used to support the central column of the original lighthouse.

You can find other wreckage that seems to be from the same period, so diving this site is like stepping back in time. Other bits and pieces lying all over the rock at various depths include copper tubing, brass work, plastic-coated wiring and galvanised plates.

As you survey the scattered pieces, you might well be looking at wreckage from long-forgotten

ships, but such is the plethora of iron around the rocks that you will not know for sure.

Ships were wrecked off Bishop Rock until 1847, when Trinity House decided to erect a lighthouse. It consisted of a large central iron column topped by a light platform and the keeper's quarters, approximately 37m above mean sea level. The column itself was not expected to survive the fury of winter Atlantic gales, so lattice-work was built around it to support the underside of the platform, leaving the base open to allow the sea to pass through.

Unfortunately, the poor tensile strength of the materials did not prove equal to the job, and the structure was swept away in a storm on the night of 5 February, 1850. Luckily, the lighthouse had not been completed and there were no fatalities, but the pillars and central column had been lost, leaving only about 1-2m of iron projecting from the rock.

A new plan was devised, and this involved building a granite tower. By 1851, the construction of a foundation was underway, and it took a whole year to complete. Huge iron pegs were driven into the rock before the base blocks were put in place, and the first 14m of the tower was solid.

By early 1852, the main part of the lighthouse was up, but due to the difficulty in executing a major engineering project in such a remote and challenging location, the work took six years to finish. The light, some 44m above mean sea level, was operational on 1 September, 1858. The construction of the Bishop Rock Lighthouse must rate among the greatest of Victorian civil-engineering achievements.

In 1860, the lighthouse suffered considerable storm damage, which included flooding of the tower and the loss of the fog bell. A storm in 1874, even more violent, caused a considerable amount of exterior damage.

In 1882, work began to strengthen the structure, involving placing stone cladding around the original tower. A storm in 1925 damaged the outer glass and extinguished the light - proof that the sea can reach right to the top of the tower - an awesome spectacle!

Incredibly, although a carbon arc lamp had been demonstrated to the Brethren of Trinity House by Frederick Holmes in 1857, and one had been installed in the South Foreland Lighthouse in December 1858, the light in the Bishop was oil until 1973!

It was 1976 before the next addition was made - the helicopter pad. Until then, the keepers were transferred to and from the lighthouse by boat and line, which was at best uncomfortable, but on some days difficult or impossible.

The most recent modification was automation in 1992 - Bishop Rock was the last of the West

Country lighthouses to remain manned.

Today, the light is fitted with an operational helicopter platform, the top of which is nearly 58m high. The light is white, has a nominal range of 24 nautical miles, and flashes every 15 seconds. In fog, a horn issues the morse signal for N every 90 seconds.

The racon on the Bishop Rock Lighthouse is referenced as No 1 in the United Kingdom, works on the 3cm (X-band) and 10cm (S-band) wavelengths, has a range of around 18 nautical miles and the morse coding of T.

The lighthouse has not been enough to prevent countless wrecks over the years, but its keepers have kept accurate records. In September, 1839, for instance, the 140-tonne Theodorick, on passage from Mogadore in Western Morocco to London, struck the Bishop; the crew were rescued.

In the early hours of 12 October, 1842, the Brigand, a 600-tonne packet paddle on passage to St Petersburg via London from Liverpool, struck the rock with such force that it stove in two large bow plates. The rocks then acted as a pivot, and she swung round and heeled into the rock portside, crushing the paddle-wheel and box to such an extent that it penetrated the engine room. She drifted for two hours, covering seven miles before sinking in 90m. Again, all the crew were saved.

On 26 June, 1854, the Belinda, sailing from Cardiff to Cork with limestone, hit the Bishop in thick fog. Again the crew were rescued. The Swedish barque Sultana was abandoned near the Bishop on 17 February, 1895, after leaks became uncontrollable.

More dramatically, on 22 June, 1901, the Falkland, a four-masted barque, struck the lighthouse. She was 135 days out from Tacoma on the west coast of the United States, loaded with grain bound for Falmouth when, in a south-westerly gale, she hit the rock broadside on, her mainyard smashing into the tower. After drifting about half a mile to the north of the Bishop, she fell onto her beam ends and sank.

Twenty-five of the crew, plus the captain's wife and child, escaped in the port boat before she went down. Captain Gracie and the remaining five crew-members were lost attempting to launch the starboard boat.

In the early hours of 11 March, 1945, a German submarine, the U-681, struck either the Bishop or the Crebinicks, while running submerged. Where she sank is not known, but the crew report indicates a position three nautical miles west of the Bishop. Others say she went down four nautical miles north of Min-carlo.

There were 40 survivors and eight of the crew were reported to have been killed. The depth of the wreck, at 80m, precludes a visit by sports divers, but it must be an interesting time capsule.

Jim Heslin (01720 422595) runs the Underwater Centre on St Mary's, and Tim Allsop (01720 422848) operates the BSAC School on St Martin's.

Diver of the Year 2000 Nominee

Nominee's Name :

Reason for Nomination :

Nominated by:

(Required for entry into the prize draw)

Please return to DO or Dry Officer before 11/00.