

## CLUB MEETINGS

Around 60 turned up for the July club meeting which was nice, and it included a lot of new faces – good to see you. There is no club meeting in August as the summer ball is on, so the next one will be on 4 September. Please let us know if you are coming.

**Still Busy on the courses front. Many congratulations to everyone who successfully qualified on the following.**

### Junior Scuba Diver

Connie Davies

### Scuba Diver

Molly Malone

### Junior Open Water

Harry Jackson

### Open Water

Oliver Kehoe, Debbie Bowey, Nat Andrade, Stuart Whitton, John Hayward, Paul Goddard, Marie Jackson, Michael Jackson, Tom Prout, David Wratten, Louise Mann, Deborah Harris, Charlotte Hughes

### Advanced Open Water

James Dalton, Graham Cole, Steve Rattray, Anthony Boothroyd, Kathryn Boothroyd, Paul Boothroyd

### Deep Speciality

Ben Leibbrandt, Steven Pearce, Roy Goring, Mark Dobbyn

### Nitrox

Dean Els, William Reedman-White

### Open Water Scuba Instructors

Iain Andrews, Phil Knowles

### Nitrox Speciality Instructor

Spike (from Stuart Coves)

## INSTRUCTOR EXAM PASSES



Well done to "Andy" Andrews and Phil Knowles who successfully completed their Instructors Exam at Rugby in June. They both had a little hiccup first time around but sailed through this time around. We look forward to seeing them teaching in the near future.

### IDC GETS UNDERWAY

Our August IDC got underway on 1 August. We will let you know how the 8 candidates get on in next months newsletter.

## FILMING WITH THE BBC IN THE BAHAMAS

I was back out to the Bahamas in July for another batch of filming with the BBC. The plan was to finish off the shoot for "Inside Life" with James Murray, and also finish off the last shoot on the wreck, the aim being to capture some footage of the micro and macro creatures that were beginning to colonize the wreck. We all met at the airport the night before and an early start saw us checking in our 66 bags (£2000 of excess baggage) and the 11 man crew.



Once we arrived we hired 4 cars and went to our accommodation. We were staying at the same house complex outside Nassau, now familiar territory. After a bit of a rest day, the first task was to get James into the water for a bit of a refresher. He passed the referral section with us earlier in the year and had managed a DSD while on holiday in St Kitts, but we jumped in the pool anyway. We then went in off the beach in a couple of metres just to get used to the salt water. Meanwhile, I was also helping to prepare the diving for the life team. We had brought along Sinclair Stammers, who was an expert on filming small stuff – and I mean small.



He uses a microscope attached to a camera – so we set up one of Stuart Coves' classrooms into a laboratory come equipment preparation room.

In the morning I was filming with the Inside Life team and then moving on to the Life team in the afternoon – so pretty hectic, not finishing till 10.00 in the evening most nights. This wasn't too bad except that the only food available at that time was Domino's pizza and local chinese takeaway. Day 3 saw me taking James for his first real open water dive – onto one of the film sets – a Cessna aircraft wreck that was sunk for Jaws 3. Plenty of life and James did really well. Mike Pitts was on hand with the big HD camera to get some

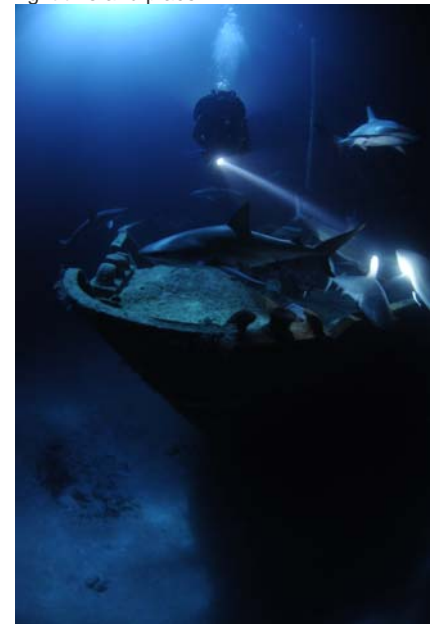
excellent footage. The next day I took James onto the wreck of the Tug (now been christened "Blue Plunder" for some bizarre reason).



It was a slow descent with a few ear clearance issues, but once there it was fine. James managed to get a good look at the wreck, saw how it had changed in 12 months and got his picture taken by Mike. As far as the producer, Doug Hope was concerned it was mission accomplished. That evening James got involved in the first night shoot we did on the wreck.

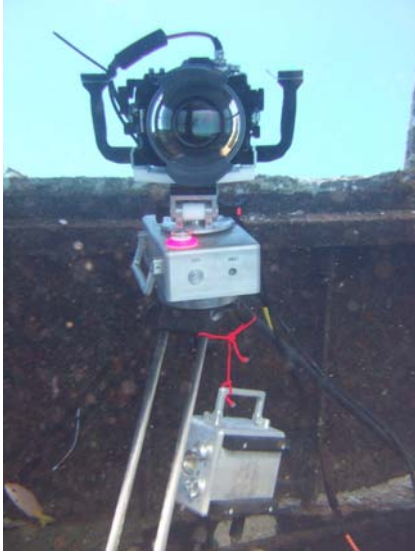
With "Inside Life" in the bag, I was straight on to the Life project – we were doing about 4 – 5 hours in the water every day – Mike and John Chapman, (the other support diver) being on rebreathers.

We did one night dive on the wreck of the "Ray of Hope". This is much bigger and always has resident sharks in the area. The aim was to get a shot of a diver coming over the bow of the wreck, at night with a shark in the picture. It took some planning, with lights simulating the moon on the surface, a diver behind the main diver, holding some light to make him stand out, and it required sharks to be there at the right time and place.



The latter was accomplished with a liberal dose of dead fish and guts – and some chain mail as they tended to get a bit frisky when they were feeding.

We also used a time lapse device (see below).



This was designed by Neil Lucas the producer and was an underwater version of a system he used during the Life of Plants series amongst others. All pretty high tech, it produced some amazing results. The trip was excellent – I was extended by 3 days to get more footage and they were actually talking about extending to the following Tuesday, but with a big IDC already underway, and a summer ball to go to, I had to decline.



My experiences with the BBC have been great fun and have opened up new avenues within Media diving – hopefully there will be more work of this kind in the future, and if there is I will let you know. The results of the last 18 months with the BBC will be filmed in September next year, so a bit of a wait – I will let you know when its on.

### DO YOU REMEMBER “TROLLS”?



Do you remember the “Trolls”. Funny little toys with odd hair that used to point straight upwards? I had one many many years ago – and you could stick it on a pencil. We

always thought they were fictional characters. That was until we went to Malta! On one of the dives we spotted a Becky Troll actually scuba diving – see below.



### GINGER BARNES-WALLIS



4 of our staff including Ginger Phil, decided to pop down to Portland for a bit of diving fun and relaxation last month. We “teamed up” with Dale at Fathom and Blues for a couple of dives. Unfortunately, Ginger Phil seems to have been a bit out of practice on travelling on RIBS and managed to fall out at 35 knots. The resultant mayhem saw Phil skip along the surface – a bit like a ginger bouncing bomb. Hence, he is now known as Ginger Barnes-Wallis

### GUNWHARF QUAYS WEEKEND



The weather was a bit against us but it could have been worse. We had been asked to put up our try dive pool and marquee at the return of a round the world yacht event at Gunwharf. The forecast during the week was looking pretty grim, but on the Saturday the rain stayed away and we got quite a few try dives in, in spite of the very strong wind. Sunday saw a bit of dampness but even so, quite a few of the general public jumped in. Many many thanks to everyone who helped us out at the event.

### SUMMER BALL - 2008

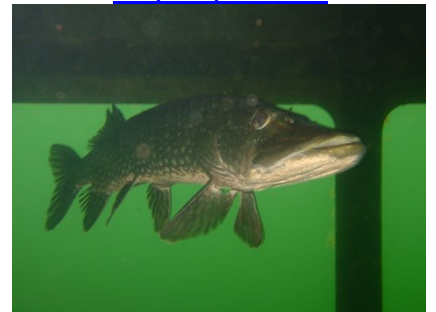


We had the summer ball on 2 August and it was another cracking night. The dance floor was full and Paul the chef at the Royal Beach did us proud with the meal which was excellent. The raffle raised just under £500 and many many thanks to all of our sponsors who donated prizes. Well done to Rebecca Ogilvie who won the star prize of a nitrox computer. The party went on until 4.30 in the morning (apparently) and Zara had real fun teaching EFR the following day ....“hello, I am an emergency first responder, can I have some aspirin”. Photos will be in the Gallery in the next few days.

### LIFE AFTER HORSEA?

Many thanks to everyone who took the time to write to Mike Hancock with regards to the closure of Horsea Island as a diving facility open to the public. Mike Hancock has passed on the letters to the Secretary of State and you never know – it might just turn things around. Anyway, all is not lost and so here is a quick review of the alternatives now that it is closed: (click on the title or picture for information websites)

### [Wraysbury Reservoir](#)



Located near Heathrow, this lake has always suffered due to a lack of good facilities however they have now built a loo and changing rooms. Mid-week the lake is not too bad and as long as you stay off the bottom there is plenty to see, including a huge pike that lives in a bus! (see above). However, with Horsea now closed all the London clubs and schools are going there – and it is packed out at weekends. Entrance is £8.

### [Vobster Quay](#)



A bit further away, reckon on about 1 hour

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45 for the journey. The lake has just changed hands and the new owners have lots of plans. Facilities are reasonable – the biggest pain is queueing to get in. That said, visibility is very good – in excess of 10m and there is plenty to see. There are numerous wrecks to have a look at and some pretty big trout as well. Entrance is £15 but you can become a member and it then works out cheaper.

#### Chichester Lake

We had a look at this some time ago (when we thought Horsea might be closed) and Ian and Stuart went on a recce dive in April and got 4.5m with hands in the silt. The lake is along the A27 and predominantly used for things like wake boarding and windsurfing. The owners are more than happy for anyone to go and have a dive – it costs £5 on their website and you just have to give them a call. However it's not particularly deep so not much use for training. There are no attractions to look at and the thick silt means that vis is rubbish. It is not the best site in the world for diving, however the staff there are lovely and we can recommend the windsurfing tuition and wake boarding.

#### Weymouth / Portland



It takes around 1 hour 45 to get down to Weymouth and Portland. Advantages .... well you are diving in the sea and there is plenty to look at. Disadvantage is that boat costs are around £17 a go, so not quite as cheap as an inland site – but at least it is real diving. There are plenty of operators running boats out of there, but we like Dale and Ron at [Fathom and Blues](#).

#### Diving in the Solent



There is plenty of good diving in the Solent and it is easily accessible by RIBs. Jed and Jim ([JJ Ribs](#)) run 2 RIBs out of Eastney and a full list of available dives is on the website. If you have not dived the Solent area, there is plenty to see, but weather and vis can be hit and miss. Best time of year, between June and October. Open water divers are well catered for with some nice shallow dives like tank landing craft and the Mulberry Harbour. Other dive operators who offer RIB diving in the Solent are [Mulberry Divers](#) and Wittering Divers, who both operate out of Selsey.

#### Lulworth Cove



Lulworth is a bit further down the coast (about a 2 hour drive) but does offer a very good spot for training and an excellent dive for new divers. The cove itself is around 6m deep, visibility is excellent and there is plenty to see in terms of marine life. The disadvantages are a bit of a hike with dive gear from the car park and there are a few boats moving around so make sure you use an SMB. There is no air station or dive shops – you would have to go to Swanage if you need anything. There is no entrance fee but you do have to pay for parking.

#### Swanage Pier



Swanage pier is an old favourite. Around 1 hr 30 mins to get there, it is a great shore dive, around about 6m deep and there is plenty of marine life. There is a charge for diving the pier but it is not much. There is a dive centre "Divers Down" on the pier for air fills etc. The main disadvantages with Swanage are the number of people you can get there – especially in the summer – and the problems with parking. Basically drop the gear off then park somewhere else, unless you are lucky you get in on the pier. The main advantage is that it is a lovely sheltered dive site with loads of marine life.

So, there is still plenty out there even though Horsea has closed – so get out there and try something different. For more info, pop in and see us

#### **SOUTHSEA SHOW CANCELLED**

Unfortunately the Southsea Show was cancelled. No idea what happened, however, many thanks to everyone who volunteered to help out. Maybe next year

#### **INSTRUCTORS AND DM MEETING SATURDAY 16 AUGUST**

We are running an instructors training meeting on 16 August. This will include essential HSE updates, training equipment information and advanced Oxygen training (which we would like all our instructors to

have). This will include using Bag Valve Masks. The meeting and the training will last from 1.00 pm until 5.00 pm. Afterwards the plan is to have a couple of drinks and then move down to the Cockleshell club for their Hog Roast. We would like all instructors and qualified DMs to attend. Can you please make every effort to do so and also, please make sure you let us know if you are coming, either by phone or email.

#### **HALLOWEEN PARTY**



The next big event on the social calendar is going to be the Halloween party on 1 November (just realized that there is another IDC starting that weekend – how do I manage to plan it like that!) Anyway, this promises to be a cracking do. We are going to be having a 2 course meal, disco and late bar, as well as the usual trick or treat type of things going on – so you can bob for apples etc – so there will be a fun section. The party is going to be in the Royal Beach in their new downstairs rooms, which will be an excellent venue. Tickets are going to be £10 per person (either members or guests and this will include the food and a free Halloween cocktail. If you want a ticket please let us know. Numbers are going to be limited to 120.

#### **INVITATION TO A HOG ROAST**

A reminder that Cockleshell Divers have invited our club members to a **free hog roast on 16 August at 7.30 pm at the Cockleshell Club House next to Eastney swimming pool. Let me know if you would like to go.**

#### **HOLIDAYS FOR 2009**

Slight delay in getting this information together – will try for next month. However, I can tell you that the big destination of the year is going to be Borneo.

#### **COMING UP IN NEXT MONTH'S NEWSLETTER:**

**IDC and Instructors Exam** – Another 7 candidates are going for the ultimate diving challenge. We let you know how they get on.

**Dartmouth Weekend** – over subscribed in the end (sorry about that) we will have a full report from our annual trip to Dartmouth.

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