



What's Bubbling

Club Newsletter

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Editorial

Rib off the Manacles 2000

The season approaches an end, with only Swanage and Lundy to look forward to in the British Isles.

I'm told that Florida was a great success, and I am still hopeful that a participant may produce a report.

I was hopeful that some half-promises from Porthkerris would be kept, but in default I have written what little my fallible memory can recall.

Judy's jaunt was cancelled from lack of experienced divers and force 5 winds

I have just heard that Adrian's trip to Brixham was good. Good weather, flat calm seas, cafe, air and launching all on the beach, lots of marine life. I have only heard of one problem, British visibility of only 2 metres at most.

Elizabeth and I had a great time off Ecuador. If any of the photos come out I will try to bore as many of you as possible with the details later.

I have had a E-mail from Rik promising lots of articles from him and Greg, but they both keep avoiding me. Rik also asked (several times) that I repeat his/Greg's request for next of kin details. Response has been absent for the first publication.

Thanks to Rob K for the article on the Stanegarth, and to Jackie for her Training Officer notes.

Some of you may have seen a letter purporting to be from me in "Dive". Do not believe it. Like BSAC, to quote someone who might be DO material, "DIVE speaks with forked tongue on rebreathers". They only printed selected extracts from my letter.

PORTHKERRIS 2000

About 15 divers variously assembled at Porthkerris on Saturday 8th. July. Those early enough were marshalled into formation by Greg and directed into the sea for the traditional first shore dive. Not a good dive this time, only 4 metres visibility and much kelp. The water was warm at 14 degrees C. Richard paid the price for neglecting to replace a dubious wrist seal before the holiday. He did not find the water warm!

We retired to the delights of the rooms at Porthoustock via the Porthkerris dining room. Lisa showed off her baby whilst trying to deal with the varied queries from ESAC members.

At Porthoustock we grabbed rooms, and perhaps roommates. Richard commenced seal replacement. We then went to St. Keverne for a meal. There Jackie subsided to the floor after only one sip of her drink (usually this takes several bottles). This type of event is so common at St. Keverne that the locals did not even look up from their pool game.

Sunday dawned with a foretaste of the weather to come: a force 5 westerly, gusting and increasing. Greg persuaded Jackie not to dive until she was fully recovered from whatever caused her incapacity the previous night. This also, purely fortuitously, left just enough divers to put the rest of us in two boats. The SS Volnay, a freighter sunk in W.W.I provided a sheltered site. It seemed that half of the dive boats from Cornwall were assembling over her. Visibility was a bit better than at Porthkerris, but with sand gradually getting stirred up by all the divers.

In the afternoon the wind had increased, if anything. We were dropped off a little further out from the Porthkerris shore dive. It was a last resort dive. More silt and kelp than on the shore dive the previous day.

On Monday the weather was not much better, force 6-7 from NNW. The marshall took us to an even later resort dive in the sheltered spot from the wind behind Manacle Point. Rob and I dropped onto a 2 metre high cliff, but covered with thick kelp. We went away to find more interesting life and less kelp, then returned to the start area for pick-up. Someone else on the first wave dropped a watch overboard, and I think that Christine lost a weight belt during this day. Richard A. was on the second wave and said that he would look for the watch. I told him that there was no chance in thick kelp and so he surfaced half an hour later with the missing watch! In view of the weather afternoon diving was abandoned. I went in search of sheltered water for some gentle canoeing, but ended up racing the failing tide to avoid having to wade through mud on the return!

Tuesday featured a reduction to force 5 from the North. Greg provided a spare weight belt and others spare weights to equip Christine. This was the last day for some who had elected not to stay for the full time. The marshall] decided to go for the nearest of the good sites, the SS Mohegan, a large passenger ship on a pretty reef. I went round the boilers with my threesome and then moved along the reef to see the first jewel anemones of the holiday. In the afternoon we were dropped over a wide area around Dean Point at positions decided by boathandlers and divers. Some dropped onto flat sand. My group found rock gullies and good clear water British life: urchins, big sponges, sea fans, rose coral, a mixture of crabs, starfish, cucumbers, pollack and varied wrasse. I made careful note of the location for future use.

That evening Rob Willin and I started our work as joint marshalls for Wednesday. The forecast was for strong winds from the East, which left nowhere nearby to dive. Next morning we got up and found a force 3 westerly. We happily threw away our two different plans and went out to good scenic Manacles sites, Penwin followed by Raglan. Our only reward was an accusation from the expedition leader that our dive planning consisted of "making it up as we went along". Very true, but we had the knowledge and information to do so, and it was the best thing to do in the changed circumstances.

Jackie had discovered a small slit in a wrist seal before the Raglan dive. I taped it up with insulating tape as first aid, but without any guarantee. Jackie eventually surfaced extremely damp. The split had grown by a factor of three or four during the dive. That night while Porthkerris Divers spin-dried Jackie's undersuit Richard was back to replacing seals, but this time for Jackie.

Thursday was Richard's for marshalling. With only a force 4 from the North he took us to the Mohegan for a slack water dive. For the first time we had some sunshine to brighten up the

underwater scenery. The afternoon dive was more of a problem as slack water was too late. Richard decided on the better area around Dean Point. We had a slow drift past gullies, large numbers of fans and dogfish. I think that it was on this dive that Adrian and Pradeep disqualified themselves for ever joining the Marine Conservation Society. Apparently Adrian threatened Pradeep (probably for very justified reasons) with a large crab's waving claws. Pradeep retaliated by picking up a dozing dogfish and aiming it at Adrian. On release it scored a direct hit amidships, before wobbling away apparently half dazed.

I think that it was on this dive that Christine and her buddy surfaced while their boat was far off. They waited hanging on to the other boat. In view of the waves we took their weight belts into the boat. Shortly after this Christine's stabjacket collapsed as a valve disintegrated. I still think that these unsafe new-fangled stab jackets should be banned by BSAC and we should stick to good old ABLJs.

Friday was a half-day, Greg organising one dive before washing out the boats. The wind was force 5 from the North. He took us to Vase Rock and we waited for slack water. I don't think that Greg was too amused when I quoted some of the comments made about me waiting for slack last year. We had the prettiest dive of the week. Clumps of sun brightened jewel anemone colour clones covered the rocks and boulders. There were also other anemones, including plumose and sagartia elegans.

Not a good weather holiday, but some good diving.

David Dooley

BOAT HANDLING COURSE

Anyone interested in a BOAT HANDLING COURSE please see the notice board and indicate whether you would be able to do the course in Southampton in November.

BLUE LOG BOOKS

There is a list on the board of those whose books I would like to see to update the training record cards. Please could I have your logbook ASAP if your name is on the list. If your name isn't on my list but you have any training added to your book in the last two years then I need yours too!

TRAINING MATERIALS

Please could anyone with lecture notes, pool training notes or anything else with "return to T.O." written on the top, return it/them to me if you have finished with it/them. Anything you still need please let me know you have it as I've lost touch with the whereabouts of various items of training material!

THANK YOU
Jackie

STONEY COVE

Stanegarth

Scuttled on June 2000, the final resting-place for Stanegarth, a former British Waterways tugboat, is the centre of the 22- meter area. She is buoyed.

Stanegarth is the biggest inland shipwreck specially provided for divers. Build in 1910 at Lytham originally steam powered, Stanegarth was converted to diesel in 1957 and spent much of the working life on the Gloucester canal.

Stanegarth has been prepared with care to provide a spectacular feature. However divers must remember it is an authentic shipwreck so there are cleats, bollards and other fittings, which may snag a divers equipment.

With her wheelhouse roof at 13 meters Stanegarth gives an excellent introduction to wreck diving. One of her winches is preserved on her forward deck and divers visiting the aft deck can look into the engine room through the now welded open hatch covers. The engine has been removed. Moving round the outside of the hull, divers will quickly recognise the potential of her rudder and propeller to create some interesting shots but, care will be needed to avoid stirring up the surrounding silt.

Stanegarth is the property of Stoney Cove and has been preserved and prepared for the present and future generations of divers to visit and enjoy.

See Stanegarth below.

Rob Kaminski

