

CRUD - September 1999

SASAC Web Site Relaunched

After just over three years the Web site has been thoroughly re-designed. The new layout went live Bank Holiday Monday morning.

The aim of the new design is to make it easier for anyone to find any information within a just a couple of clicks. Please spend a few minutes browsing around <http://www.sasac.co.uk/> and let me have any *constructive* criticism. A lot of the content is the same as the old site. The aim has been to try to make it easier to find information, both for existing and prospective members, rather than writing a lot of new material. The old design had hundreds of pages (which demonstrates the huge amount of work Steve Archer put into it - thank you!) but many of them were buried behind too many links.



Our web site demonstrates what a fun and active club we are, but to do that we need a constant flow of reports of recent events. There's no point in just having reports of the 1936 Its a Knockout competition, or the 1066 Dive Trip to Hastings. People, particularly new members, will want to know what we did *this* year and what we plan *next* year. It isn't fair to expect one person to single-handedly write every article in CRUD and every page on the web site. There are nearly 200 people in this club; surely someone can jot down a few paragraphs and give them to one of the committee?

The next step is to write some new content and for that we need everyone's help. I will be hassling individuals and scouring the notice boards for information I can publish. Some of the forthcoming features could include

- The new RIB, how we got the grant, how we are paying for the balance, specification, delivery dates, maiden voyage and sea trials(?)
- A gossip section; similar to that in CRUD but updated more frequently... within days of the "incident"!
- A page for each Club Dive, to be replaced with a trip report once the dive has happened.
- A page for each social event, to be replaced with an article after the event
- Expanded club history section

With my membership secretary's hat on I would like to make more membership information available, such as contact lists, information about new members, people achieving qualifications, but the difficulty is that Freeserve * (addendum Dec 99 - Site now has its own registered domain) don't provide any facilities to secure individual web pages so that only members can read them. So I don't want to put confidential information there. Tell me if you disagree, but I think names (and photos!) are fair game while addresses, phone numbers, dates of birth etc are confidential and won't be published without permission.

I hope you enjoy reading the site, and let me know if there is anything else you would like to see included ... I will probably ask you to write it! Come on, start pounding those keyboards!

Steve Greenham

Forthcoming Events

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Club Diver Course starts | 13 th Oct | • Rescue First Aid Course £35 | 7 th Nov |
| • Training Dive Stoney Cove | 17 th Oct | • Diving Officers Conference | 11 th Dec |
| • Paignton Training Dive | 23/24 th Oct | • Christmas Party | 18 th Dec |
| • Sports Diver course starts | 10 th Nov | • Millennium Party | 31 st Dec |

Diver Magazine Offer.

Now that 'Diver' magazine has been replaced by BSAC for 'Dive' magazine they have obviously noticed a bit of reduction in sales! Cheaper offers are now being. If the branch has 10 or more members that wish to receive 'Diver' we can obtain a year's subscription on your behalf for just £17.50.

Better still Diver will only take £14 of this and the club get to keep £3.50.

If you are interested in receiving Diver please contact Stephen Archer, either by email stephen.archer@gbx.xerox.com or by phone on 01707 352317. If you already subscribe to Diver please let Stephen know as well, Thanks.

Congratulations

To Stephen & Sandy Archer on their marriage on August 14th.

and Welcome

.....this month to new members Jeremy Hill and Matthew Biggs.

Salcombe Trip - 21/22 May 1999.

Ten members of SASAC headed down to Salcombe on the night of Friday 21st May. In true SASAC style most of us made it to the pub before last orders. Two (nameless) members travelling together both managed to leave the directions behind, this made finding the boat rather difficult as it wasn't moored in an obvious place. At least they got to know Salcombe a bit better as they drove round it a few times.

Eventually all made it to the boat - the 'Dunedin'. This is a lovely-looking boat, originally built as a sea-going cruising vessel. It was the first time the club has used this boat but the consensus was that we should definitely use her again.

Saturday was nice and sunny, however the wind was a bit strong (force 3-4). We first dived the 'Persier', lots of fish but the vis' was only about 3M. The wind made the boat roll horribly as it was picking up divers. Yours truly had a nasty moment getting back on board, teaching me a valuable lesson in the use of spine ladders (i.e. don't hang around). Rather expensive actually, as I lost a watch in the process.

The afternoon's dive was supposed to be the 'Elk'. What we actually dived was a reef. I can't be too harsh on the skipper as the weather made searching difficult and the Elk was roughly the same size as the boat we were using. This then turned into a rummage dive as there was lots of junk lying around. The best find was a fully intact mug, despite extensive marine growth we were able to make out a date on the bottom - 1997. Raibeart must have been a bit disappointed with this as he promptly threw it overboard.

As I said before, the weather was a bit choppy. One of the best quotes came just before this dive. One person suffering from the motion was asked if they felt OK to dive, the person responded - "You think I'm going to stay on board? I'll feel much better once I'm in the water". They then had a quick heave, donned mask and followed their buddy overboard.

Saturday night saw our hosts demonstrate their culinary expertise - rump steak and veggies for everyone with plenty to spare - all cooked beautifully. We then spent the evening moored in a small Cornish village well served by pubs, it would have been rude to not go ashore to try them....

Sunday morning's dive was, for me, the best UK dive I have ever done. The skipper dropped us in off 'Hand Deeps' - I felt that it was reminiscent of some of the reefs in the Red Sea. Visibility must have been at least 8M, both the plant and sea life were fantastic. This included crabs and lobsters as well as dogfish cruising the reef walls as if copying their larger cousins from abroad. This is one site that I have to visit again.

Sunday afternoon was dominated by the weather. The wind picked up making a dive on the 'Maine' a bit too risky. Instead we opted for a dive on the 'Herzogin Cecilie' which lies in the shelter of Starehole Bay. Although the dive was a bit of a disappointment for some, all was not lost - thanks to the senior members of the group (Nigel, Raibeart and Mark) several bits of training were signed off.

All-in-all a good weekend aboard a lovely boat with a good crowd from SASAC. When can we do it again?

Adam Collis

Are you a Scrubber?!

No, nothing to do with Nige and Pierre in drag, this is a job that needs *real* women with masks, fins ... and scrubbing brushes.

We have an agreement with Westminster Lodge that we will clean the pool each week in exchange for a discount on our hire fees. The reason this task is restricted to women has nothing to do with a lack of "new men" prepared to do housework. The cleaning is at the same time as the ladies aqua-aerobics session and they don't seem very keen on having a load of hairy male divers there watching them!

The Dive Management Committee discussed the arrangements as we weren't sure whether the Health and Safety Executive would consider our scrubbing to be "paid work" but BSAC HQ say we are alright providing the money goes to club funds.

Together with the improvement to safety by having a lifeguards present at all pool sessions it seemed sensible to review the current cleaning system. The consensus was that if the "cleaner" is underwater it is difficult for a pool lifeguard to even see them, never mind rescue in an emergency. BSAC recommend either a fully kitted standby diver or, preferably, a buddy pair. As we require buddy pairs for all other diving situations Pierre has recommended, and the committee has endorsed, that there should always be two cleaners working together. That provides buddy cover and also gets the job done twice as fast, but it does require more volunteers as if only one shows up then cleaning shouldn't be started.

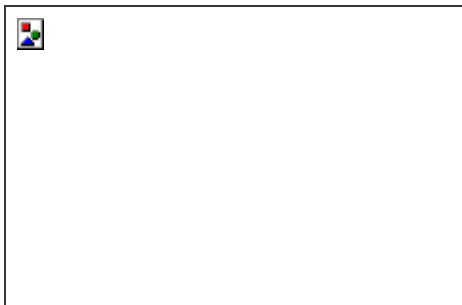
So if you've got what it takes to be a 'scrubber', please add your name to the rota. It really should only take 20 mins every month or so. Min Qual - Club Diver.

Farewell to the Heinke Trophy

This month we say a big congratulations to Clidive on winning the 1999 Heinke Trophy. The shield will be with us for another month or so but then it will be handed over at the DOC in December. The big question is "Do we want to win it back in 2000?" What do you all think? Are we as a club up to it? Comments to the Committee please

SASAC to Subsidise Diver Cox'n Exam

At the last committee meeting we discussed the level of competency we required so that everyone could use the club boats safely. Getting the new RIB is a good reason to review the requirements and ensure that everyone is aware of them. The committee felt that anyone in charge of a club boat should be a qualified Diver Cox'n, having passed the BSAC/RYA exam. At the same time, we are well aware that there are a lot of people in the club who own their own boats and have extensive boathandling experience even if they've not got formal qualifications.



Consequently we agreed that we would allow a 12-month moratorium for experienced boathandlers approved by the Dive Management Committee, allowing them time to take their exam. There is also a cost involved in taking the exam so we decided the club would subsidise any members taking and passing their diver cox'n exam to the extent of 50% of the fee. Again, this offer will run for the next 12 months and then be reviewed. Hopefully this policy will result in a lot of people being qualified and competent to take out the RIB and that it will get extensive use. Of course it helps to have taken a boathandling course before attempting the exam so we will also be arranging courses. This new offer extends the club's policy of subsidising courses and qualifications which are considered to be of particular value to the club, as well as the individual student.

Remember that we also fully reimburse instructor exam fees - all you have to do is pass them - and operate 50% subsidies for Oxygen Administration and First Aid course fees.

If you are interested in any of these courses, particularly Boathandling and Diver Cox'n, please see Nige Dobinson.

CLUB GOSSIP

(It's here, it's hard, it's cruel ... but oh boy, it is fun! - Keep it Coming!!)

- SASAC have acquired a new member, Wedge. Wedge has the unusual habit of finding a hole in a wreck big enough to get into, but not out of - well not once inverted and with a loose BC. Thankfully Wedge was saved to dive another day by a friendly Brummie visitor who now think St. Albans divers have some funny habits but then he could be right!
- Tech diving buddy check requires amendment! On a certain small boat in Newquay some divers have taken to tying their cylinders to the gun'ales once prepared for the dive. However sometimes when it comes to dive time they complete their buddy check only to find they can't stand up!! Is this form of public Bondage going to become common place??
- Who put their name down for an October Dive trip as a reserve, hassled for a place, got one eventually, paid their deposit, and THEN realised that it clashed with the Red Sea trip that THEY WERE THEMSELVES ORGANISING!!
- May Bank Holiday diving ... the fog causes the choice of site to move. Someone in a smart self donning suit unzips themselves to allow some cool air in. Ah! but who forgets and is only reminded by the quick in rush of the somewhat cold English Channel!

- Should we take the p*** out of visitors on the clubs trips?? Absolutely! Poole's the place, instructions were given to that large marina car park. But when the visitor returns to the caravan minus his car questions were asked. "The gates were locked and the fence is 16 feet tall I didn't fancy climbing it so I cant get my sleeping bag or cloths". Puzzled looks all; around a) the car park had no gates, b) the fence must be all of 18". It turns out our friendly visitor had parked in the Sunseekers Sales Car Park, in amongst those rather expensive luxury boats! This was Saturday night - the question was "Would they be open on Sunday??". He was a lucky chap and the staff just laughed when he went to pick his car up!
- How do you do a perfect buddy check? Perfection comes by donning masks upside down for a more experienced member on a recent trip to Paignton. It was claimed that ".... personally I think someone turned my mask strap upside down when my attention was elsewhere.....", although the blame has also been laid at the feet of feeling seasick whilst desperately trying to maintain an "old salty sea dog" visage!

Money, Money, Money.....

We've also heard via the regional coaches that the FSA are making 100% awards of between £500 and £5000 to celebrate the millennium. The Committee is considering using this opportunity to apply for funding for sets of Scuba gear for trainees. What's your opinion? Feedback to the committee please

St Albans Sub Aqua Holiday 2000

After last year's successful club holiday to Menorca it was suggested we arrange another for Whitsun week in May 2000. Lots of interest was shown to go back to Menorca but to go to the other side of the island and try our luck in S'Algar. After much searching it has not been possible to find enough flights or accommodation for Whitsun week. I will endeavour to find something in Menorca and will continue looking.

Here are some alternatives, which may appeal to some or all of you. Before I can put together a definite plan I need to know your interest and availability for the destinations and dates. *Jacci Ramage*

Hurgada, Eygpt

A well known mecca for divers. Excellent diving from the front of the hotel. Trips to Luxor can be arranged for non-divers or those who want to explore.



Hotel Princess Hotels

These 3 hotels are all part of one group and you can use all facilities. Accommodation would either be in the hotel on a 2 per room basis or 4 sharing a two roomed villa with ensuite shower room, fridge and air conditioning.

Facilities

Diving with Emperor Divers, 2 swimming pools, shops, bank, laundry service, bar, restaurant and

Dates

Friday 26th May - Friday 2nd June

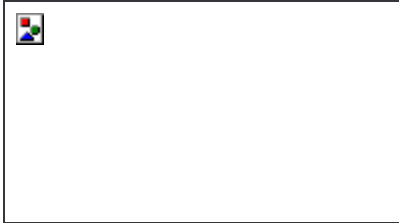
Flying from Gatwick approx. 0900 departure and return at 2200.

coffee shop.

Price

£409 Hotel *half board*

£399 Villa *half board* (for 4 persons)



Price per person including breakfast and evening meal. Diving 6 x 2 dives per day = £120.

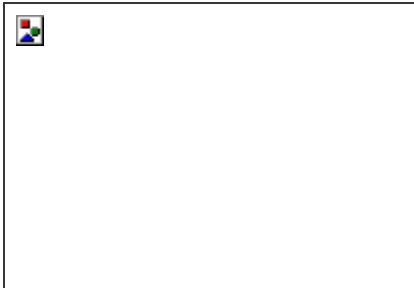
Sardinia

This stunning Italian island offers superb diving with as many as 32 dive sites ranging from wrecks, drop off's, reefs and the nature reserve of Lavezzi, where you can hand feed world famous groupers.

The village of Cannigione is situated in the north of Sardinia. Once a small fishing village it now has a carefully developed picturesque marina, and a reasonably priced selection of restaurants and pizzerias.

Cala di Falco resort

The accommodation is just 50m from the beach and 200m from the dive centre and boat. Luxurious apartments have well equipped kitchen, bathroom, sat TV, telephone, air conditioning, balcony/veranda and 1 or 2 bedrooms.



Price

These prices are based on

1 Bed Apt. 2 sharing = £410 each

2 Bed Apt. 4 sharing = £364 each

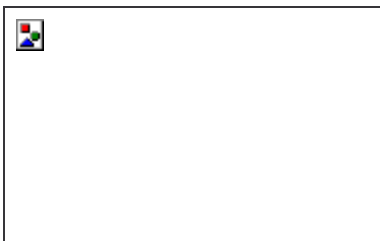
2 bed apt. 6 sharing = £338 each

Diving = £75 for 5 dive pack.

Dates

Saturday 27th May - Saturday 3rd June flying from Gatwick departing at 0625 arrive 1005, and return on 3rd June depart at 1115 arrive Gatwick 1235 on a Monarch Airlines Charter flight.

Menorca



As for Menorca, all apartment accommodation in S'Algar is contracted to various tour operators such as Unijet, Cosmos, Virgin etc. I have contacted all companies and none of them seem to be able to offer anything over the Whistun week as already fully booked on flights and accommodation. I can't seem to find any other apartments to suit our group in S'Algar but could look into sharing some villas in the resort or a short distance away. Of

course we could always try Crystal seas again !!!

Meeting

A meeting will be held on **Friday 1st October at 9 pm** to discuss the three options as shown on this leaflet. Please come and let me know what you prefer and if you want to join us. Thanks

Feeding Groupers in Sardinia

Jacci Ramage Tel: 01582 760223

Email: jacci@jramage.freeseve.co.uk