

Spring 2003

# CRUD



## A word from the Chair.

Simon Thurlby

So, a new year for the dive club, and this, the long overdue release of our newsletter – CRUD - Possibly the finest publication in the world. Many thanks must go to all of the contributors to this edition, and special thanks to Robin for all of the hard work he has put into editing and compiling this work.

As I write this, we have just had our AGM, more on that later, but firstly this year is a special year for BSAC and our club. BSAC, as you all know is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday this year and SASAC are celebrating their 21<sup>st</sup> year at Cottonmill Pool. It doesn't take much of an excuse for us to host a party, but this is a pretty good one. Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July is the exact anniversary of our time at Cottonmill, so there will a drink or two to be had that night for a very special 21st Birthday. It's A Knockout closely follows on the Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July, hosted by yours truly – Start getting your teams together now – it will be a day to remember! Of course, the previous weekend is Nige and Fran's wedding reception. (That's our ex-DO and ex-chair for those who don't know them) – And this will be another evening of great fun. All in all, during that month, lace up your drinking boots nice and tight, and don't take them off!

The club has had a brilliant year last year, and this year it looks as though we will be building on that success. Plenty of diving has already been logged, and there is plenty more planned, so get on the trips and help contribute to the success. At the AGM Richard told us all that we managed to dive to a combined depth of 37KM in 2002, this year we're trying to up this for BSAC's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, and obviously, we're going to try for 50KM of combined depth. Keep on diving – we can easily make this target.

On a serious note, please keep logging your dives, I know it is paperwork, and no-one likes that (Especially me) – but to log dives, and then return the logs to Richard Ellis is a very important aspect of diving, as it is the only way that we can track what is being done in the club, and it helps us all learn from each others experiences.

Finally in my first ever piece of writing for the clubs fine newsletter, I would like to make a plea to everyone in the club. We are an extremely successful club, but this is only possible with your continued support. We cannot, and do not operate in the same way as a dive school – we are a dive club, and it is this 'Club' aspect that my plea involves. Clubs by their very nature involve give and take, contribution and help from their membership, so if there is anything you can offer to the club please step forward and volunteer. The committee has noticed a significant drop in the number of volunteers over the years, and it is getting to the point where there is too much work and too few people to do it. We see the same faces at every event and it is becoming more and more of a struggle for the committee to fully serve the interests of the club. We want to use your membership subs to improve our club, not to keep the club running, so we want to do as much as we can in-house. We should not have to start paying for cleaners, bar-staff, painters etc. etc. but if we do not get the volunteers from the club, we will have to go down that road, and at the end of the day, the only people who will lose are us, the members. Your club needs you!

Well, that's enough from me, so please sit back and enjoy the rest of Crud.

## FARNES TRIP - JUNE 2002

This was my first visit to the Farnes - on Tony Fooks annual trip to Stan Halls set up in Beadnell.

The trip is logistically very straightforward - five hours up the A1 and you are there. It's hardboat diving and this year we used Farne Diver which has plenty of room for kitting up for a good number of people. She was skippered by Lee Hall, Stan's son who has a huge amount of knowledge of the dive sites around the Islands. Accommodation was at Stan Halls in Beadnell - a mixture of self-catering cottage and B & B.

So what about the diving? According to the old timers (sorry Tony!) we were very lucky with the weather and got 12 dives over 6 days including the Somali and Whirl Rocks (twice)

The dives were a mix of wreck and scenic dives with all of the wrecks being very well broken up. Seals are the big attraction of the Farnes and were present on most dives although with differing degrees of tameness.



Most of the dive sites have been described before but for me the highlights were:

### The Britannia

We dived this twice. The wreck lies on a slope from 25 metres leading up to a plateau at about 9 metres. The Bow section is almost intact at the bottom of the slope and as you work up there are various things to see. Particularly obvious are: a winch, covered in growth with a smug looking Lobster hiding in the central core. There are a couple of huge millstones a bit further up and then at the top of the slope there is a prop shaft with a well polished brass section at one end. Two gullies follow on from here. The first one contains a huge

boiler and engine block both covered with life - squatties, hermit crabs etc. The gully then narrows down and its possible to swim through the rocks which almost form a tunnel, and out the other side. The other gully contain the propeller (allegedly! !)



### The Hopper, Longstone

We almost missed this dive as it was a bit rough when we reached the site. However dive we did and it was one of the most relaxed dives of the trip with a maximum depth of 17m. This was a scenic dive along a wall with plenty of life to see - loads of anemones and urchins, hermit crabs, wrasse and seals. A large rock filled gully towards the end of the dive was obviously a seal resting area and as we stopped on the large rocks several seals came along to suss us out - including tasting Paul Comptons fins

The non diving activities are mainly centered on the excellent walking and countryside - this is a truly beautiful part of the country. A little further a field there are several historic castles and Edinburgh is an easy day trip.

If you have not been to the Farnes before its well worth the trip - get your name down next year

Finally a CRUD article would not be complete without a little anecdote. One of our more recent but enthusiastic members clearly has the home/diving issue well under control. Not only did he bring his wife along but was heard to say after a hard days diving 'Fetch my slippers and make a cup of tea dear' followed by said lady jumping up to comply.

Well done Penny.!

Robin Smith and photo's courtesy of Richard Ellis

## Survey Dive at Herts Young Mariners' Base Feb 15<sup>th</sup> 2003

It may have been frosty on the ground and there may have been ice on the water but that didn't stop a group of intrepid divers from SASAC braving the Cheshunt Lee Valley lake at the Herts Young Mariners' Base (HYMB) in early February - and it was all in the interest of science.

Close by the lake and to compliment the excellent watersport facilities, a new youth hostel is being constructed. With emphasis on the environment, the intention is to heat the building by exchanging heat from the large volume of water in the lake. To achieve this, some steel pond mats and piping will be placed on the bottom of the lake. The mats must lie evenly and the brief for the divers was to survey the bottom of the lake and to identify any obstructions and steep ridges.

Clive, whose brother, Stuart, is a canoeing instructor at the base and who had been contacted about the project by Geosciences Ltd of Falmouth, led the dive, accompanied by Russell, Paul, Dave P. and of course our fresh water expert Dave R. Alexandra, Nadine and Stuart, provided boat cover in a rowing boat and canoe! The water was shallow at less than 4 metres and in places it was possible to stand up. The divers spread out and joined by lines, conducted a systemic survey of the bottom. Any significant obstacles were identified and buoyed from the boats, using different colour buoys weighted with bricks to denote different types of obstacles, such as shallow and deep spots and the line of a submerged ridge, possibly a former road. The approximate location of the buoys was marked on a contour map of the lake. Another request was to identify whether the bottom was soft or hard - judging by the viz this was pretty soft. Only a few obstacles were identified, no double decker buses, just submerged oil drums but Clive did raise a stone hot water bottle and mug - not totally surprising since the lake was on land reclaimed from a former rubbish tip.



All in all a successful mission was completed and it was time to retire to the pub for debriefing.

In return for SASAC donating its services, the HYMB has expressed its thanks and has promised to donate a selection of fins to the SASAC training equipment. Oh and was it cold - yes!!!

Those taking part in the survey:

Russell Brown, Paul Compton, Nadine Gardner, Clive, Alexandra and Stuart Kerr, Dave Painter and Dave Ramage

To find out more about the HYMB – watersport and caving activities for ages 9-90!

Check out <http://www.bearingnet.co.uk>

Many of you will already know that Howard Clowes is planning a round-the-world trip in September this year for approximately six months. He has set up an e-mailing list for anyone who may be interested in being kept up to date with news of his preparations/progress. If you would like to be included on this list, please send a request to [howardclowes@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:howardclowes@yahoo.co.uk)

## THE AGM

It was my first year as chair, I actually only managed half a year as the original chair, Fran, had to leave the committee half way through the year and I stepped into the breach mid-term. Chairing a few meetings and generally keeping the ramshackle mob that is the committee in order, “what could be easier?” I thought to myself when I agreed to take on the job. Slowly but surely the full extent of what I had let myself in for became apparent. My first hurdle was the dinner dance, where I proved to the club that alcohol and public speaking are not necessarily a good combination, but I continue on and muddle through in my own unique style. The next big hurdle was the AGM, and I had spent weeks trying to think of all the questions that the club could ask, and have really good answers lined up. What can I say, other than thank you – you gave me, and the rest of the committee, a really easy time. (Oh and thanks to Brian, without whom no AGM would be complete!!)

I would like to introduce the new committee now

President	-	Steve Gore	Premises	-	Paul Compton
Chair	-	Simon Thurlby (Also Boat Officer and Webmaster)	Training	-	Jim Burnley
Secretary	-	Stephen Archer	Social	-	Lisa Shafe
Treasurer	-	Robin Smith	Bar Manager	-	Peter Kilcline
Diving Officer	-	Richard Ellis	Committee	-	Nadine Gardner
Membership	-	Richard Goodey		-	Mark Crumplin
Equipment	-	George Lush		-	Howard Clowes
				-	Tony Worsely

Please be gentle with them!

Also, another plea from the chair, don't let the committee operate in the dark. Please let us know if there are things you would like the club to do, or not do, or keep doing. Anything you can do to advise us is very much appreciated; sometimes we just don't know when we are getting things right or wrong.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank lots of people, in no particular order. All of the outgoing committee - thanks for all of your help over the last year. Special thanks for the new committee for stepping forward and helping out your club. Roy Harrison for always making AGM's go with a swing. Steve Greenham and Stephen Archer for all of their work in getting the report produced, printed and sent out with very tight timescales. And final thanks to all of those people who help out behind the scenes, never get mentioned, but do an absolutely sterling job in the smooth running of the club.

And now Clare's strange shade of red has faded I think she has forgiven me!

Simon Thurlby





## FIRST AND LAST 'SHORE' DIVE AT DURDLÉ DOOR

Being the outdoor, roughy, toughy, fit and adventurous diver that I 'think' I am, I planned a 'shore diving' trip to Dorset, pitching our tents at Durdle Door Camping and Caravanning Site. Paul Compton and I planned to arrive early on the 08/03/2002 and the rest of the party aimed to get there in the afternoon of the same day.

Now here comes the plan... 'A DIVER GUIDE TO DIVE DORSET' is the book that I took my information out of... Ha Ha Ha... I hear you laugh!! Why??? Well I'll tell you why... The book quotes... "WHILE IT IS POSSIBLE TO CARRY A FULL SET OF EQUIPMENT TO THE SEA, IT IS HARD WORK, ESPECIALLY WHEN STRUGGLING BACK UP AT THE END OF THE DAY". I will comment more on this at the end!!

The story begins....

After Paul and I pitched our tents in glorious sunny weather and sorted out the essentials, I suggested a hike down to 'THE DOOR' to have a quick dive before the rest of the party arrived! We gathered our kit, donned Dry-Suits and off we set. The route down to the Door consists of walking through a camp site, then through a car park and a descent down a cliff side, which although had steps cut into the side of the precipice, winds its way down! On the way down we were very cheerful and chatting to other holiday makers and hill walkers but when we saw the 'Field Gun Crew' that were training there at the time, I started to get a little perturbed! They kept telling us that we were mad! (And this was from a Field Gun Crew who were running around with sandbags and telegraph poles on their shoulders!) (Who was mad?!)

After reaching the shore, whilst we got our breath back we were had a look around at the surroundings, which are stunning. We proceeded with the briefing and preparation for the dive and after taking a bearing for the Door, entered the water and submerged.

The dive through the Door was fantastic, with visibility of about ten metres. There was no Kelp, so the rocks were well within sight. The current never runs strong enough to disallow diving and runs from West to East or East to West. On this dive it was running from West to East. The dive was great, with lots of small marine life in between the rocks. We kept well into the cliff side to keep contact with the shore, had a maximum depth of 12 metres and a duration of 30 minutes. We surfaced at the next cove called Man-o-War.

After reaching the shore we rested, took on water and I took on some needed nicotine!! The sight of the cliff above us filled me and I suspect Paul with dread!! Now, I regard myself as being a fit, late 30s', ex' military person and I regard Paul as being a fit, late ??s(Editors note—he's actually very very late something)' civilian! We set off walking up the shingle beach; this should have been a 'smack in the face' warning of what was to come! Paul's endurance was the only thing that kept me from giving up and staying on the cliff side for the night. He kept saying, "we will only go to that fence post and stop", when we got to the said fence post he was saying, "only to that stone wall"!! BASTARD' (I say that in the best possible way!) Thanks Paul!!! B\*\*\*\*\*D!!!!

On reaching the halfway point the Field Gun Crew were still there taking the mickey! This only gave us the determination to carry on and prove them wrong. We eventually reached the top car park and at this point I made the decision to put us both on OXY-GEN! What a sight we made!!! We were sat on the bench at the top of the cliff side breathing from an Oxygen Administration Kit looking like two old grannies!! We got some strange looks, I can tell you!!



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

12th July—Fran and Niges wedding reception

30th August—Tony Fooks 60th birthday

16th July—Cottonmill 21st Anniversary  
Celebrations

29th November—BSAC 50th Dinner dance

19th July—It's a Knockout/BSAC  
50th anniversary

28th February 2004—Dinner Dance

**Missing those Club Holidays of yesteryear?**

If so watch out for news of its reappearance in 2004.

Any offers of help organising to Stephen Archer please

And so to those amusing footnotes . . . . .

It's always nice to help other divers from other clubs, particularly when trying to get back on land from a particularly hard shore dive, but help takes many forms, and I'm not sure how much help this diver thought he was getting when one of our club members stood on the beach and started insulting his kit.....

It started out as a very sensible idea at one of the club parties, to stop our over enthusiastic smoke alarm waking up all of the neighbours, it would be best to cover up the smoke alarm with some clingfilm and tape. Probably best not however to do it in front of the regional fire officer. Easy mistake to make, he's not all that easy to see, being over 6'6" tall.....

On the recent Lundy trip the words 'that must go in CRUD' were uttered many times. However the editor has taken pity on the perpetrator of most of them and will only reveal what should be here on request. In his absence Carol or Paul may be able to help