

# MOUTHPIECE

“THE LAST BASTION OF TRUTH”

THURSDAY 11TH APRIL 2002

## DO'S COLUMN



The most important diving news in this issue is about Diving Medicals. Please read the article about this on page 10/11 of Mouthpiece if you wish to dive with the BSAC this year.

The diving season has started, with a dive out of Lymington on 'New Dawn Diver'.

Unfortunately, the sea state meant a change of plan, and the resulting drift dive was very disappointing with extremely low viz. The only view to take is that it can only get better!

On the training front, most of the new intake are about to complete their pool training and embark on some open water diving. A nitrox course organised by Steve Pascall was planned for last weekend, April 13 and 14, was fully subscribed and a great success. The offer of places on a First Aid Course and an Oxygen Administration Course in March were less popular, with no takers. Let me

know if you are interested in these courses as places on other courses are available. We also intend to run a Dive Leader Course at some stage this year, so let me know if you are interested.

There are still places available on some of the Branch dives, so get in touch with Steve Pascall, our Expeditions Officer, if you have not got your name down already.

Finally, please remember that it is very early in the diving season, and most of the incidents happen at this time. There is no hurry – **take it slowly and carefully, and enjoy all of the season.**

Grahame Walker  
Diving Officer

## FAREWELL TO NICK GALT



Above pic what he looked like when he became chairman

It is with much regret that this magazine has to say a fond farewell to our former Chairman, Nick Galt. He has served as Chairman for the last eighteen months and has done a wonderful job. Due to personal pressures, however, he felt that he would be unable to do the job with any degree of thoroughness, so I thought it best to stand down.

I am sure that we would all like to thank him for his past efforts and to wish him well in the future as just an ordinary, rediculously, thick haired diver. Many, many thanks Nick for your time and effort. He passes on his best wishes to "the poor, unfortunate bastard who succeeds him". **And who did you vote in....**

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW CHAIRMAN

In a hotley contested election fight, Steve Willett battled through to win the fight to lead this Club, our Club, your Club, into 2002 and beyond. What finer, safer hands can this club be in ?

Now, without wishing to steal any of his thunder, I did tip this little 'Star in the Ascendancy', to one day become the leader of this great club of ours.

Back in 1993, I was his campaign manager, and if it was not for the fact that there were a host of better qualified people to do the job, he would have become D.O and Chairman then.

I would just like to quote from his campaign poster at the time, because it is still so relavent today. SPOOKY ! (Continued over page)...



## CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN



*A new diving season is once again upon us, the weather seems to be improving and many a diver is squinting up at the sun and considering brushing the grime off of their kit and throwing themselves in the water again.*

In fact some of us already have. Peter Grey took a number of us to Sunny Sharm with him for what seems to be becoming the annual pilgrimage to the Red Sea. This always seems to give the season a little kick start, providing warm clear waters & an abundance of brilliantly coloured marine life. However who wants to do all that when the glorious delights of Swanage pier beckon. This is the ideal place to start your diving season where you get to see the heartwarming sight of British divers as they emerge from their

winter hibernation. Their coats still covered in that light film of cobweb & dust. The layers of fat they had put down to see them through the harsh winter months is still evident due to an overzealous feeding frenzy at christmas. The glorious red colouration of their faces as they squeeze into dry suits that have "shrunk" a little during the winter lay off. I would ask all of us (myself in particular) to make sure that we are all dive fit this year as this is the time traditionally when incidents hit their peak.

Continued from front

### COPY OF ELECTION POSTER 1994

With ~~morale~~ morale in the Club at an all time low ebb, a new leader has emerged out of the flotsam of lesser mortals that is our Club. Just as Maggie Thatcher came to this countrys rescue in it's darkest hour, another man of similar stature is already here, amongst us. We are indeed blessed to have that being with us, to lead us out of the doldrums and on, forever onward to new heights of diving perfection and underwater ecstasy. That man is Steve Willett. When he joined the club in 1991, we were all slow to realise the hidden depths of this giant amongst women. With none taking his pathetic attempts seriously, he battled on against the odds. By 1992 he had become a Novice. But things did not stop there. Oh no. Within only two short years, he shot through to become a Sports Diver. But it was this month (that month 1994) that saw him reach his zenith and I want you all to know, that it is with great pride that I announce to you and the wider world of Scuba Diving that this hero, our hero, your hero, this Churchillian figure has now been given the recognition that he so richly deserves and has been rewarded for his dedication.

### MR. STEVE WILLETT IS A DIVE LEADER

This majestic figure of humanity has introduced a breath of fresh air into the Club. His cultured use of the English language, has, I am sure, often left us speechless. He has shown us such wonders that none has been left untouched by this ~~pervert~~ person. Who, in all honesty, is better suited to lead us, our Club, your Club, through this ~~transsexual~~ transitional period. I give you

**WILLETT FOR CHAIRMAN**  
**WILLETT - A VOTE WELL PLACED**

## NEWS ACROSS

### NIGEL BLAKE RECOVERING

**You may have already heard on the grapevine that Nigel Blake has been very ill of late. By all accounts, he is extremely lucky to be alive.**

In early March he had to fly to New York, as usual. Nigel takes great care when flying these days and drank plenty of water, little alcohol and exercised his legs regularly. His seating was not cramped. When he got to New York, he felt some discomfort in his legs but thought nothing of it. Upon returning to the UK, he still felt uncomfortable with cramps in his legs. He consulted his G.P. who eventually sent him to St, Peters Hospital A & E department, where he was examined and given some pills and sent home.



His legs were now giving him increasing pain and discomfort. One day at work, he decided to run up some stairs and collapsed with breathing problems. Upon additional examination at the hospital, nothing was found again and he was sent home. More constant pain followed with sleepless nights, with an ambulance being called and being rushed back to St. Peters Hospital A & E department. The attitude of the staff at the hospital was not good and he was dismissed feeling that he was wasting their time and 'what did he expect them to do'. Back home again and in excruciating pain, the ambulance was called out to returned him to St, Peters Hospital A & E department. He was examined and a doctor prescribed some other medication which rang alarm bells with Nigel, so he asked the question, "should I be taking these new pills with my present medication". The doctor went away and returned to say that he was right and the combination was "not appropriate". He was again made to feel like a time waster with only leg cramps and sent home in the back of a taxi whilst laying flat out on the back seat with his legs out of the window for some comfort.

## THE CLUB AS IT HAPPENED

By now, he was beside himself with pain and worry and unable to walk at all. He finally, wisely decided to consult a private vein specialist at the Nuffield.

Nigel briefly outlined his problems and the medical history and the consultant immediately sent him for a scan and admitted him to hospital with the comment "you are very lucky to be alive" Nigel was suffering from multiple blood clots in his legs and lungs. Needless to say, he was instantly placed on blood thinning drugs to disperse the clots and monitored 24 hours a day to ensure that the small clots did not break away and kill him.

He remained in the Guildford Nuffield for about 5-6 days, where he made sufficient recovery to be allowed home to rest, remain monitored, take very mild exercise whilst the clots continued to disperse. He can now walk again for short distances without the aid of a frame.

This picture was taken over Easter when I called in to see him. He wishes to pass on his greetings to all members.

I apologise for any inaccuracies in the story as I remember it relayed to me by Nigel. The lesson for us all to learn from his terrible experience must be that anybody at any age can get the DVTs, regardless of age or fitness. Be aware and do not ignore early symptoms. AND if you think that the medical attention is not sufficient or appropriate, then persist, persist, persist.

Nigel, we all wish you a speedy recovery and a return to full health. Finally, I liked Nigel's question to the specialist upon his emergency admittance to hospital:

"Doctor, does this mean that diving at Scapa next month is out of the question?"

It was then that the doctor committed Nigel to the 'nut house'.

**IF ANY SPORTS DIVER IS INTERESTED ABOUT A POSSIBLE DIVE LEADER COURSE PLEASE CONTACT ME GRAHAME WALKER ASAP AND I WILL RUN A SERIES OF LECTURES PLUS PRACTICAL FOR THIS, DURING THE YEAR**

### DIANA AND JOHN ARNOLD HAVE A BABY GIRL

Diana, wife of John, gave birth to a beautiful baby girl on the 2nd of January 2002. Both Baby and mother are doing well. Baby 'Caris' was delivered by caesarean section. John was off work for two weeks to help with mother and baby and both are believed to be getting little sleep. We all wish them well and hope to see both John and baby diving soon.

### REPLACEMENT EXPEDITIONS OFFICER REQUIRED~HELP

Steve Pascall, our present Expeditions Officer, will not be around from autumn of this year. He and Kate are going walkabout and I am envious.

They plan to take at least a year out travelling to Africa first then onto Thailand, New Zealand to stay with friends before ending up in Australia. They plan to be away for a year before reviewing their options to stay on longer or return home to the UK.

Jealous or what. On behalf of the Club, I would like to thank him for doing a splendid job this past year and a bit. He will be missed

Any road up, the Club, our Club, your Club, needs to find a replacement for him, so:

### ADVERTISEMENT

Do you fancy a demanding but challenging job within Surrey Aquanauts. Ever thought of Expeditions Officer ???

Steve Pascall's replacement will find it much easier to liaise with him throughout this season, and assimilate all that he does, in preparation for starting again in the Autumn.

Any body interested, please contact Steve Pascall directly and he will receive our undying gratitude.

### BONZ STILL IN INDONESIA

For all those new members who have heard of the legend that is Bonz, I thought it time to show them and remind ourselves just what he looks like. He does exist and is still in Indonesia.

He did have a big setback with a local 'doggy geazer' over a restaurant and lost money on the deal but is now more settled. With the collapse of the tourest industry due to the much publicised troubles out there, the new restaurant has been 'slow' to get off the ground.

At the moment he's not doing much in the restaurant but he has a couple of sidelines on the go. However, Mr Bonz is now the proud owner of a motorbike and a small holding (just like me).

On that land he has about a dozen cockerells, about 50 ducks and 100kgs of peanuts.

His Indonesian friend and he are planning to rent out the motorbike, sell the land in the future, sell the cockerells and ducks and make tempe out of the peanuts.

Best of luck Bonz, but if we know you, you will eat the bloody lot !!!



# WEDDING BLISS



by Jo Grainger

**Sarah Simpson and Hajo Rozzendall, proud holders of the 'World's Most Nauseating Couple Award', finally tied the knot at All Saints Church, Woodham on 1st December 2001.**

The church was packed with friends and relatives from the UK and Holland and the service included readings in English and Dutch. The bride looked lovely in cream and aquamarine, and the groom equally lovely (not to leave you out Hajo)

Award for the best entrance of the day goes to late arrivals Matthew Collins and family thinking they could sneak in behind the bridal

party without being noticed and ending up looking like part of the procession down the aisle.

After the service, the congregation trooped down to The Cricketers in Horsell, that is all apart from a handful of the Dutch contingent who ended up at the Cricketers in Rowtown and had to be retrieved by our beloved Chairman (luckily before he'd had too many Guinnesses). The Cricketers was superbly decked out with an underwater theme with fish hanging from the ceiling (not real ones!). Even the cake had a couple of kissing angelfish on the top. A fantastic buffet was



Abbb I wish

followed by lots of dancing (and arm flailing from the groom, if you can imagine dancing underneath a helicopter about to take off you are almost there) as the drink continued to flow. Everyone had a fantastic time and was happy to be able to share in Sarah and Hajo's special day.

A two week holiday in Kenya followed with safares and diving, and the happy couple are now settling down to married life and planning their world trip for later in the year.

## CAUTION WITH MAXIMUM MARGIN FOR ERROR

### MY KIND OF GUY

In the photo, you see young Damian with Totlans Pier in the background, preparing himself for a dive. It is good to see young new, experienced members of the club take preparations seriously, He planned to take his twin 10's on his back and a 7ltr deco cylinder 'cos he can carry it.

"Is it enough air" I hear you ask yourselves. "Yes, I think so", and you would be right, especially when you consider that this dive was a massive 3.7 metres deep!!

Now that is careful diving and we want to see more members come up with 290 bar in each cylinder in future. Well done.



## THE VISIT TO THAMES VALLEY POLICE UNDERWATER SEARCH UNIT

TUESDAY 15TH JANUARY

The first thing that I would like to say with regards this visit, is that I arrived on time, infact, five minutes early so there (even though I managed to get lost).

Security at the Police Underwater Search and Recovery Unit was tight, bloody tight, as tight as my (no, better not go there). When I arrived at the unit's reception area, I was met by twelve dodgy looking divers crowding the corridor and control room, eyeing up several 'trophys' and thousands of pounds worth of diving gear littering the offices. I was impressed with you lot. Even Mr. Knights managed to keep his hammer and crowbar under wraps and not make any attempt at 'retrieving lost items'.

After enough time to have striped the joint clean, our lecturer and guide for the evening arrived in the form of PC Nick Peck, looking every bit the part in his sexy black shiny "letherett" trousers, tucked into his black boots in a 'well hard' manner.

He warmly welcomed all 18 of us to the Police Underwater Search and Recovery Unit. We patiently waited another minute for the arrival of our then chairman, Mr Nick Galt and his two daughters - gave up - and made our way to the lecture room.

There, he gave us an outline history of the unit. It had drastically changed since the last time we visited the unit. With government cutbacks, their numbers had been reduced and their role expanded from that of being just an underwater search and recovery unit. This obviously means that the officers are involved in underwater operations of every description and because of their experience and expertise, they now assist police units all over the country in that task. One day, they may be called upon to dive the River Thames at Reading to search for dumped weapons and stolen goods. The next day, they could be called up to the Lake District to recover dead bodies.

Now, because of the fact that their diving suits are environmentally sealed to protect them from toxic poisons and harmful pollutants in the inland waterways and bacterial infection in the sewer networks, they were thought to be ideally placed to recover dead bodies from land locations, especially where that involves badly decaying bodies.

...and this is where it got really interesting, if not a tad revolting. PC Nick kindly reinforced this point with a video. Now we all know what happens to meat when left out to rot in the summer sun. Imagine what happens to a human body. It only takes a matter of days for flies to do their work. Grossly extended bodies seeping bodily fluids, softly falling apart when touched made recovering these poor people's remains a nightmare for them. But they did with care and respect. With their own air supply, they were spared the obvious assault on their sense of smell. Their job must take some getting used to.

Their leader, with whom I had been arranging this visit, was Sergeant Gill Williams. Unfortunately, she was called away to the north of England, to help another force with an underwater search problem.

The was an obvious comradery within this group and a great sense of humour that I am sure they need when doing their job.

As we had all behaved ourselves so well and not been sick in the lecture room, we were invited to join "the Lads" in their bar, where we downed a few subsidised bevies with Nick, once given a reassurance that we would not be breath tested once outside the grounds on our way home. Trouble is that they only had "bloody French wine".

We thanked him and all left with the conviction that we had all had an extremely enjoyable and interesting time

These guys do a fantastic but often extremely unpleasant job that I know, I would not be able to do.

This visit was very well attended so thanks for your support. Any ideas for future visits would be gratefully received.

## FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD

RED SEA 10TH MARCH 2002

By Peter Grey

At the southern tip of the tooth of Africa lies a phallic headland with two ergs called Ras Mohammed. The straits of Tiran and Gubal meet at this desert headland and create what is considered the best dive site in the world.

The hungover divers wearily make their way to the boat, a rush for the best crash spot ensues as the engines throbs into action, everyone returns to the land of nod for the next two hours. As the desert mountains drift past dive marshal 'Martin' calls for a brief. Ten minutes to go! There is always one P\_att who is not ready as we assemble at the stern ready to jump.

The plan is to enter the water in buddy pairs, drop into anemone city where many species of clown fish live, let the current take us past 'Shark reef' & 'Yolander Reef', ending on the wreck of the 'Yolander', surfacing on the reef & swimming out to the boat.

The boat backs in towards the reef, precision timing is required jumping in fours, first four do a perfect stride entry, second four someone stands on P\_att's fin, he tries the stride, the foot stays put. A cry 'BAS.....' as he hits the water in a perfect belly flop, free-flowing kit everywhere. The culprit jumps in after with no air in jacket and sinks before P\_att recovers, a good plan as the next person who surfaces is blamed.

Anemone city is missed, the clowns are saved their ritual poke, attention is drawn to an eerie dark wall to the right and a deep dark blue to the left, the whole is a living aquarium. The sun slips as the depth increases, the buzz starts, increasing attention is drawn to the blue, 'shark reef' the subconscious mind says, the music starts the eyes widen breathing deepens or is it the thumping heart, we head towards the blue nothing below us for 1000m we are told, the surface unseen at 30m, a tentative look around to check you are not alone, P\_att is seen at 42m.oblivious of depth.

'Shark reef' disappears into the gloom a feeling of awe descends, leading the crowd the fish are the only reference point, they watch you from all directions. A dark shadow appears ahead, you try the brakes but the current draws you on into a shoal. Big eyed fish, phew! A turtle swims towards you, takes a look and swims away, encouraged you try and follow suddenly you become aware that you are alone in the blue, breathing quickens, music loudens, a barracuda appears, five no ten, no more fingers 30+, in amongst them they stay on station and part as you drift through, eye contact is made, you wonder what they're thinking, you know what you're thinking, a quick fin, a wall appears and bubbles, thank goodness for your compass, you are back amongst the crowd.

'Yolander reef' is festooned with fan and table corals the size of which are rarely seen, groupers and potato cod can be found in large hollows. You see all shapes & types of corals, all colours and sizes with the fish to go with them, you turn the corner a loo sits there on the sand all by itself, a great reminder that you need another pee, also a good spot to see if you can still fart with confidence. Who put it there was a young unnamed member of Surrey Aquanauts some eight years ago for a photo shoot. The loo has become the most photo'd loo in the world, you have reached the wreck.

The Yolander wreck no longer sits on the reef, but it did leave it's cargo of Ideal Standard baths basins and toilets there for you all to see, most of the crowd have finished their air by this stage and left their buddies to continue diving. Free from the crowd you remember how nice it is to dive alone, I decided to see my favourite spots. The 'Little Yolander' reef, perhaps the most beautiful of all the reefs with it's small dive through cave full of glass & lionfish. The blue spotted ray's cave behind 'Little Yolander'. The much larger dive-through cave on 'Yolander reef' at 4m. The potato cod cave on 'Yolander reef' 6m. Fred was still resident, a five-foot super cod with big teeth warning you away.

Time to say goodbye and return to the boat for the 'never dive alone lecture'. What a great dive and worth ever second of the hour. Someone had to take the pressure off P\_att.

# SHOWBIZ SPECTACULAR

FANCY DRESS THEME WAS A GREAT SUCCESS

**Well I think you all deserve a Pat on the back. (Just give me a ring.) What a really good effort was made by you guys. The costumes were varied and I think 'bloody good fun'. Thank you all for making such a good effort.**

What I forgot to say when I was blabbering on at some point in the evenings proceedings, slightly the worse for wear BUT nothing to do with the alcohol - was, "THANKS". Thanks to all those who helped to make the evening go so well.

As always, thanks to Chris Knights for raising a staggering £350 in raffle ticket sales for the club. Every year he has got that figure to grow but after a long spell at it, he has asked if somebody else will sell the tickets and organise it next year so I will be looking for volunteers next year.

Thanks to Sarah and Hajo, James Brown and Sally and Grahame for coming down early to get the hall ready and preparing the place so that all you guys could be assured of a good time. Sincere thanks. AND not forgetting the small army of people who stayed behind to clear up the hall at the end. It is a rotten job at the end when we are all tired, but it is much appreciated, so many thanks.

Thanks go to Ed Bolton again who, as the official intrusive club photographer, is always there recording these events for our general amusement. It is time consuming and expensive, so a special thanks to him.

My profuse apologies to Mick Iles and John Hayman who were left a tad hungry because the caterers ran out of food. So sorry but what else can I say. In previous years, the food has been excellent and plentiful but, personally I was slightly disappointed with the food this year. As some of you know, I hardly notice the food in front of me on these occasions, often having to be force fed by Sally to hurry me along. On this occasion, however, I made a wrong choice of food with our caterers. I will resolve that problem next year.

If anybody knows of a better Disco/DJ who is highly regarded, just for a change, I would be more than interested to have their details. I would like to get a live act for a change but this would push the price of the tickets up from £20 to £26/£28 per head. Comments on this would be appreciated ASAP.

## NOW, AS FOR THE ACTUAL EVENING.

Upon entering, (the hall that is) I was immediately struck by the ghostly apparition, a green gnome with a white flowing beard down to his wotsit (Tony Sheargold) wielding his huge tool. I have always been a sucker for Snow White (Jill Sheargold) and fortunately she was there to keep him under control.

The sight of a lovely Chinese Princess (Chrissy Knights) standing next to some scruffy, scraggy git (Chris Knights), dressed in a multi torn grey suit lacking any elegance and decorated with dead grass. More straw sticking out of a small stetson above a grubby face, fronted with a huge stick-on carrot. In striking contrast, he stood talking to a wonderful, dusky tartlet with long blonde curls cascading down her semi-clad torso, with the most amazing backside that it has ever been my wish to fondle, all went to reassure me that I had come to the right place after all, and that this was indeed the 2001 Annual Divers Dinner Dance. The blonde tartlet was in fact Daria Howard who came (pardon the expression) as the prostitute 'Divine'. When not burying her head in shame (whoever Shame is), was accompanied by her very convincing punter 'wiggle'



Hugh Grant (Chris Howard).

Gladiator star Russel Crowe (Steve Willett) was trying his best to de-wing that loving, cute fairy 'Tinkerbell' (Jo Grainger) as she flew around the building casting her charming spell wherever she settled.

The grey helmeted crusader (Chairman Nick Galt) laid siege to the burkah covered Arabic fair maiden (Sally Walker) who sought and found no protection from her uncouth Arab husband, Alli Jobsindeclub (Grahame Walker), who seemed only too willing to trade her in for a camel or, at a push, a rather stunning Cher (Carol Hipwell). Cheer's dulcet tones were being kept firmly under her bright purple wig.

Messrs Adolf Hitler (Matthew Collins) and 'Bob' The Builder (Christopher Knights), seemed happy to engage each other in a lengthy conversation with regards invading Woking and taking over Surrey Aquanauts by force and re-building The Third Reich.

We were blessed again with God (Peter Grey), who came incognito, thinly disguised as Mustapha Problem. He was kind enough to grace us with his presence. But miracles were in short supply that night. Poor unfortunate upper class passengers from the Titanic (Lady Mary and Dr. Mankyegg Adrian Foulkes, were all washed up on the dance floor with the other jetsam and flotsam. At one stage, I became very concerned about the health of Madge Simpson (Sarah Simpson) who was looking extremely jaundice. However, I was reassured by her handsome partner, Captain Kirk (Hajo Roozendaal) that she always looked that 'shitty' (I would never speak about you like that Sarah). Incidentally, Hajo remained in a more sober state this year, making slightly less of a 'tit' of himself than last year, bless.

Pistol Packing Lara Croft (Anne Collins ?) did it for me. She was the overall Fancy Dress winner on the night and what a splendid choice too.

Feather boas aflutter, the lovely French Tartlets (Angela Harker and her sister Michelle) looking every bit like rejects from the 'Moulon Rouge' on the grounds of not being sluttish enough - danced their way around the dance floor accompanied by their pimp Clint Eastwood (Dan the Man).

Appearing in mono-vision, the elegance of the 1940s returned in the guise of black and white movie stars (Clare Garrett and friend). But as I looked upon her again and again, I could not help but be reminded of 'The Munsters', tasty never-the-less.

Those khaki clad, rebellious South African Boer fighters (John and Angela Pos) regarded with suspicion, the masculine, rough but handsome manly form of Indiana Jones (James Browne) as they both compared the size of their hats.

Scalf clad and wearing dark shades, Thelma and Louise (Sue Parfett and Jane Weisz) loved and stole the hearts of many a young man before jumping into their open topped motor and were last seen speeding away into the night searching for a yawning canyon into which to launch themselves - but Steve's mouth was closed at the time.

Speeches, presentations and awards were followed by the raffle draw. Then came the dancing until the early hours of Sunday morning and a return to normality as we said our goodbyes and returned to the bosom of our own families.

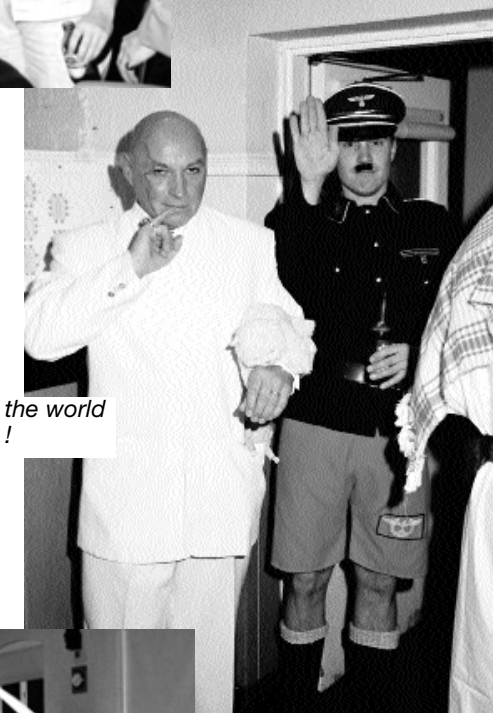
Thanks again for coming and keep Saturday 16th November 2002 for our next Dinner Dance.



Those babes Thelma and Louise getting larged up



Left - Oh What a Knight, negotiating a price for Sally, The Pleasure Queen (in black I think, could be Steve though) whilst that whily old silver fox Alli Jobsindeclub pushes down the price



DICKtators of the world unite !



Well I'm convinced. Guilty as sin and ain't sin grand !!!



Anthony is very impressed with the size of his tool



Who left the asylum doors open ?



Above: Tinkerbell tries to get the Small Town Trash to mend their evil ways whilst Clint argues 'the importance of his women's' careers



Picking up their 'The Nauseous Buddy' Trophy



Glamour on the dance floor or death warmed up

# SHARM EL SHEIK~RED SEA

By Pat Gibbon

## SUNDAY 10TH MARCH TO 17TH MARCH 2002

**This was the first time that I had visited Na'ama Bay, Sharm el Sheik and the Sinai Peninsula, having been to the mainland of Egypt and El Gouna on previous trips with Peter. This was also the first time that I had taken Angelika with me. And may I say what an absolute delight it was. Actually, what's the point in lying, she will never read this magazine anyway.**

The actual resort was only built out of the barren desert some 15 years ago but is a lot more interesting than El Gouna because it has a busy local Egyptian atmosphere about it combined with an international holiday resort.

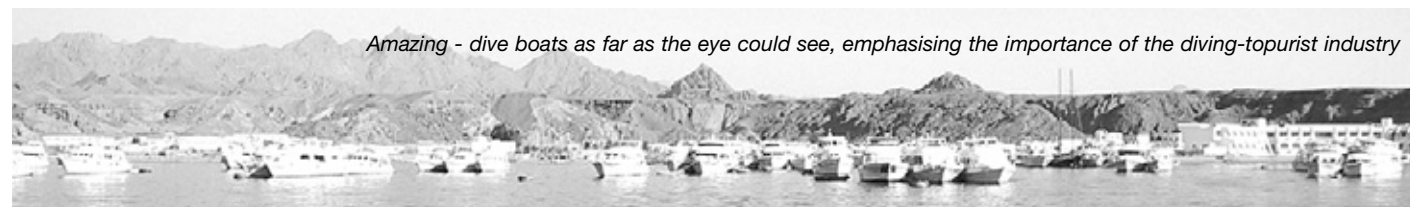
Several of our group were seasoned travellers to this diving destination, so already knew the ropes. I felt that the breakfast in our hotel The 'Kahramana' was not nearly as good or varied as in El Gouna but that was easily offset by the fact that the choice of eating places in the town was excellent and plentiful, offering a selection of international menus.

We were spoilt on the first days diving by being offered an extremely large and spacious boat for our two warm up/test dives. We motored west round to the nearest bay and dived on a coral outcrop called 'The Temple' and later 'The Tower'. Both boring but necessary. However, this boat was deemed too big and therefore wasteful for us. So the next day, Tuesday, we were given a boat called 'The Admiral' which was adequate and good (pic right)

What was very apparent from day one was the excellent dive guide that we were blessed with. His name was Martin, originally from the UK, but had spent many years away, travelling and working as a dive guide throughout the Mediterranean, Australia and the Red Sea. He had acquired a first hand knowledge of all of our local dive sites and his enthusiasm was boundless. His dive briefs were of the best and we all respected him so much that nobody in the whole party ever, ever did anything that they were not meant to do, certainly not breaking any rules about diving alone (unless your name is god), diving too deep, coming up with +50bar and not bringing up anything that they found (can't believe that I am typing this crap). His new assistant, again from the UK, was Ian, another helpful dive guide.

BUT, first things first. I needed to make it clear and advertise the fact that I was in the market for an Arabic numberplate. I asked Martin to put the word about.

Our first dive on the second day was Jackson Reef, up to the east



Amazing - dive boats as far as the eye could see, emphasising the importance of the diving-topurist industry

of Sharm, in the Straits of Tiran. I had the distinct pleasure of diving with Mandy, which was good because she always had plenty of spare air (bitch). This is one of a series of brilliant reefs named after the cartographers who charted these reefs way back in time. Covered with beautiful coral and fish, it was beautiful. The clarity of the water was superb. Glass fish in dramatic shoals are always a favourite of mine along with pairs of clown fish guarding their territory. Speaking of clown fish, we were all disappointed on this holiday not to be constantly presented with the spectacle of the Rozzendaal fish coupling and copulating whenever they had the opportunity, as they have done in previous years. Still, they are married now and Hajo had something else to play with underwater - his tiny new Sony underwater camera which could take excellent still and video pics. Bad luck Mrs Rozzendaal. Just remember, I do not have an alternative play thing - just my old faithful toy!

Second dive was the adjacent Thomas Reef. We dived on the south side, heading north. Saw a huge Napoleon and spotted rays and saw my first turtle of the week at a distance in a gully in the reef wall. I was getting excited. Air consumption climbing, but I did have Mandy Small-Breaths with me.

Two days into the dive holiday, and Chris Knights' nose was in trouble. Twitching non stop, like a junkie needing a fix, he had not had a sniff of brass for an age. It got so sad that I had to drag him out of the toilet next day as his nose had led him to the small brass porthole in the head. Sad or what.

The evenings eating was always going to be a problem, with so many to accommodate so we tended to split up into small groups and make our way into town to whatever restaurants took our fancy. Sally and Grahame had a wedding anniversary so they wanted to be alone - or were they making up an excuse, hmmm, I wonder.

I did love the choice of fish dishes and as the resort was not at peak season, there was less waiting than usual. However, given the abundance of labour in Egypt and, therefore, necessitating the restaurant owners to use them,

order taking, passing on to another waiter, who had to pass it onto the chef before handing the ticket back to the manager to log and keep it until it was time to hand it to the adder-upper who, in turn, handed it to the money taker before he was able to give the drawn up total back to another waiter who would pass it back to us for paying, meant that sometimes things were a tad slow.

With the overall water temperature at a pleasant but not overwarm 20°C to 22°C, diving and sunbathing in the Red Sea was extremely bearable. You forget just how easy diving in hot climates is when



God tries to walk on water again but fails He must have been naughty



Our boat The Admiral

comparing it to England.

The third day was spent at Ras Mohamed, in the National Park. This meant a \$5 fee. The Egyptians are brilliant at their sneaky little hidden 'additional charges'.

This was my and most peoples favourite site. We started off diving down to 20m on the first reef before following Martin out into the deep blue with nothing to act as a reference except each other. Fortunately, he went to the same navigation school as me and was able to fin across this beautiful open expanse of blue to the adjacent reef, Yolanda. It rose out from the depths in dramatic form. Suddenly appearing from nowhere, we saw 'The Wall', reaching down into the abyss. Mandy obviously 'lost it', claiming to have seen a shark. Right! We proceeded to drift along to the wide sandy gully between the next two reefs - 'Toilet Valley', where a few years previously, a ship had carelessly dropped its cargo of toilets. The container was there, providing shelter for rays and crocodile fish. Brilliant dive.

Second dive was at Raz Ghazlani, which was a 5 Splat dive. I had the absolute privileged of 'dancing' on my own with a large Turtle for 2-3 minutes at a depth of 36m. It was not at all stressed by my close proximity and I was able to stroke it (and the Turtle) on its shell and legs quickly before Martin saw me. Excited, air was running low BUT I did have Mandy Small-Breaths with me!

For the next day, his godliness, Mr Peter Greystein, had arranged a compromise dive for us. Because the 'extra' cost of a dive on the 'Thistlegorm' was a staggering \$85, we decided to dive the only other wreck in the area, the 'Dunraven', which was only \$40 extra!!!

This was a really nice little wreck. Sunk in 1870, she had a metal hull with a wooden deck. Lying at 29m depth, hull side up, her large prop was still in place. Martin led the way as usual and although quite crowded, he took us inside on a little tour. She was very open so plenty of light inside. Large groupers had their home here. After completing the tour, we made our way alongside the adjacent reef at a lesser depth. Just below me I saw a large Napoleon, but a pain in my ears prevented me from diving down to get a closer look. Ten minutes later, I saw another OR could have been the same one. This time, I managed to get really close - brilliant.

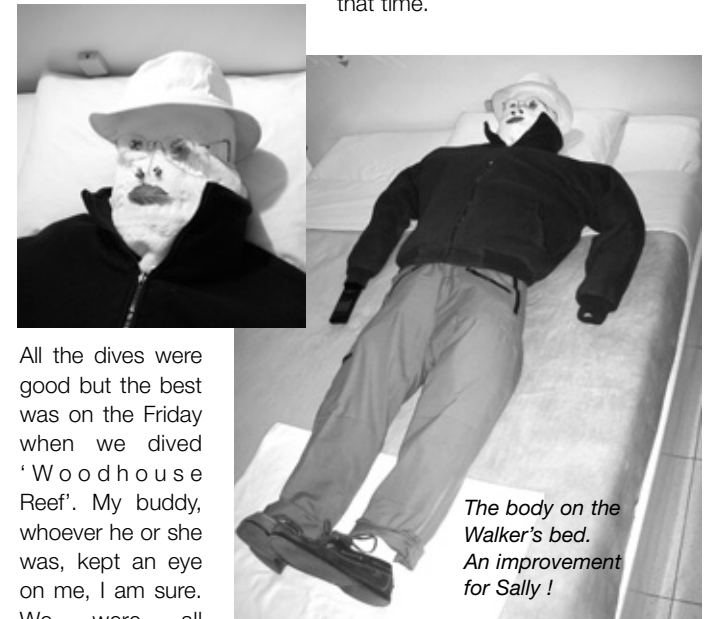
So close yet so far - a wreck, almost too much for Chris to bear



That night, on the advice of Martin, some of us decided on having a Mongolian feast. We were the only guests there on our arrival. The food was wonderful. We had a selection of calamari, lamb and beef slices grilled with a choice of garlic oil, sesame oils, onions etc, which was to die for. After one such wonderful meal, we retired to The Camel Dive Centre Restaurant to relax, whilst Hajo smoked an Egyptian pipething. I lay back on the carpet to reflect on another wonderful days diving, when Angelika decided on a trip to the toilet. She, bless her, decided to take a short cut across my trim little tummy, causing my stomach and bowels to collapse under a force of 20 stone. This left little room for the methane gas that has a habit

of collecting in ones bowels after such a feast. With the obvious outcome, I was left in an embarrassed heap as the assembled throng collapsed with laughter.

We returned back to the Straits of Tiran to dive Jackson and Thomas Reefs. Again, however, Chris Knights nose was a'twitching again and this time he was salivating. A glance over the side told us why. Holed up on one of the reefs was the rusting, broken skeleton of a freighted, it's portholes 'smelling' of brass. Quickly, we jumped onto Chris and held him in the straight jacket that is part of Surrey Aquanauts emergency kit. When we were a five miles away, the smell decreased, enabling us to release the manic Mr Knights. Close call that time.



The body on the Walker's bed. An improvement for Sally!

All the dives were good but the best was on the Friday when we dived 'Woodhouse Reef'. My buddy, whoever he or she was, kept an eye on me, I am sure. We were all poodling along, looking at outcrops of coral gardens dotted along the sandy bottom when we saw a 2m 'white tipped shark' resting on a sandy spot at 30m. Chris and Adrian were the first to go down to it. Sensing their approach, it turned round and swam away towards the deep at the edge of the reef. I was about 10m above and tried to anticipate where it was headed and swam down towards it. Luckily, it did not change course and I intercepted it at 37m. I was privileged enough to swim with it for two minutes. **I kept watch on my depth**



A Happy band of divers



Wreck stripping for my numberplate  
My hero

stripping tools. You could see the strain etched upon his craggy face. As we wandered back to our loved ones at the hotel, we turned a corner into the car park in Na'ama Bay and saw the sad sight of a grown diver, hungry for booty, lusting over the dusty wreck of a gas guzzling American car, relieving it of its Arabic numberplate. Well, after all, it was good therapy for him and it was needed by me, so we, like the policeman standing twenty feet away, turned a blind eye to his naughty but necessary deed.

By the time this week ended, it was so nice to hear Mr. Knights say "I have been converted. I love fish spotting so much now and will be happy never to see another wreck again as long as I live".

When we returned to our rooms on the last evening of our holiday, the ladies got a shock as they discovered that the male 'maids' had created their dream man for them on the beds out of whatever they could find. Sally did comment that there was more life in it than her husband - sorry Grahame.

On behalf of us all, may I thank Peter godness Greystein - thanks again for organising yet another wonderful holiday. We all enjoyed it - thanks.



"Pack a Weisz in your pocket for that little emergency"

But finally, can I recommend that whenever you go away on holiday, you take a mini Jane Weisz in your suitcase. Absolutely essential for fixing any broken bits, medical problems that need curing, dive gear that needs repairing and hearts that need mending. She is a national treasure and they should put a Blue Plaque on her

## WELCOME

We would just like to welcome Chris Williams, Aaron Spreadbury, Colin Sivewright, Matthew Terence, Anthony Clegg and all new members to our club. We hope that they will stay for a long time, become involved AND give a little bit of themselves to our club.

# THE NEW BSAC MEDICAL

Grahame Walker - Diving Officer

**IF YOU WANT TO DIVE WITH THE BRANCH THIS SEASON, PLEASE READ THIS! ( AND I NEED TO SEE A LOT MORE MEDICAL FORMS! )**

**There is obviously some confusion about the new procedure, and I have attempted to explain it below. If you have any queries about it, please ask me.**

- 1 With effect from last year, every diving member of the Branch has to complete the new Self-Declaration Medical Form every year on our common renewal date (CRD), which is 1st November.

This means that every diving member should have completed one last November. You keep the original, and give a copy to the DO, either through the Membership Secretary with your renewal form, or to the DO direct.

- 2 Obviously, if you can answer 'No' to all the medical questions on the form there is no problem.

- 3 If you answer 'Yes' to any of the questions, there are two options:
  - (i) Your existing medical certificate of fitness to dive is still valid and will still be valid to 31st October 2002: In this case simply attach a copy of your Certificate to the Self Declaration Form.

**NB 'Still Valid' implies that you have not consulted a doctor since the date of the original examination for the Certificate, for a medical problem that could affect your fitness to dive. If you have, your Certificate is automatically invalidated. This has always been the case.**

- (ii) Your Diving Medical Certificate will expire before 31st October 2002

**In this case you MUST telephone a BSAC Medical Referee to discuss the 'Yes' answers. (See Note 1 below)**

As before, there are two options:

- (i) As a result of the telephone conversation, the Medical Referee is satisfied that you are fit to dive. You post the form to the Referee, together with a stamped addressed envelope. The Referee endorses the form to say that unless there is a change in your medical condition, you need not submit your self declaration form to a medical referee, EITHER:
  - 1) Indefinitely OR
  - 2) for years
 The form is returned to you and there is no charge for this service.
- (ii) As a result of the telephone conversation the medical referee decides that an examination is necessary. You need to make an appointment, complete the old style two page medical form and PAY for an examination. The result of the examination is that the referee may, or may not, issue you with a Certificate of Fitness to Dive. A copy of this certificate needs to be submitted to the DO.

### NOTES

- 1 Our nearest BSAC Medical Referee is **Dr Sandra Domizio**, 14 Paddocks Road, Burpham, Guildford, Surrey, GU4 7LL. Telephone number 01483 571 437. This is her home number and she requests that you telephone about BSAC matters between 7.30 and 8.00 pm Mondays to Fridays. Her current charge for a full medical is £40.
- 2 None of the forgoing prevents any member of the Branch from having a full medical examination at any time if they have any concerns about their fitness to dive. However, this examination will not be recognised by BSAC unless it is carried out by a



OH YOU SEXY LOT !

*Just a little snippet from Kathy Gilbert wife, mother and all woman*

This is an extract from 'The Extreme sports make you sexy - survey', Reuters, London

Extreme sports can make you more interesting, exciting and attractive in the eyes of potential admirers, according to a recent survey.

(Take a lot more than that, I can tell you, have you seen our present lot)

Research for The Daily Telegraph Adventure Travel and Sports Show also found that Brits were a brave lot, overcoming their fears for an adrenaline rush. Over a quarter of those who had dived with the fish admitted to suffering from claustrophobia while one in 10 who braved a parachute jump had vertigo.

With 49 percent of respondents finding adventurous people exciting, and 17 percent attracted by their wild side, it is unsurprising that, having completed an adventure we want everyone to know about it.

Twelve percent said they boasted about their adventures, but less than one in 20 admitted to inventing their heroics in the survey of 1,267 adults.

Earlier this week, another survey found that 80 percent of job seekers were "creative" with the hobbies section of their CV, although here extreme sports were not always seen as a bonus. Some employers disapproved of excessive risk taking.

The Daily Telegraph Adventure Travel and Sports Show 2002 took place at London's Olympia last January 11th to 13th.

### THE NEW BSAC MEDICAL - CONTINUED

BSAC Medical Referee, and thus only a BSAC Medical Referee can approve a BSAC Certificate of Fitness to Dive. Whilst your GP, or another Doctor, may sign the form, it will not be recognised by BSAC.

- 3 These changes result from a comprehensive study carried out by the Scottish Sub Aqua Club, which discovered that many non-diving doctors did not appreciate the significance with respect to diving of medical problems presented by their patients. It is claimed that the new questionnaire, assessed by a medical Referee when necessary, will provide improved levels of safety for divers. At the same time, for the majority of members, it will save the cost of unnecessary diving medical examinations
- 4 The reason for accepting current diving medical certificates, whoever performed them, is in an attempt to spread the load of telephone calls to BSAC medical Referees over a number of years.
- 5 Copies of the Self Declaration Form or Full Medical Form can be obtained from our Membership Secretary Linda Bangle, or our Treasurer Anthony Sheargold. Alternatively, they can be downloaded from the BSAC website at [www.bsac.org/](http://www.bsac.org/)



by

*Captain Anonymous  
the little boggy man who is  
always listening over your shoulder  
~ so be warned !*



"Where does the battery go"  
Jo to Angela  
Cricketers pub 25.10.2001

"I can't get it off"  
Angela - bless her  
Cricketers pub 25.10.2001

"Oh it's really small"  
Jo to Hajo  
Cricketers pub 25.10.2001

"I've used all the KY jelly and it's still tight"  
Clare Garrett to Steve Pascal  
Weymouth 18.11.2001

"Night-night"  
Sarah Roozendaal saying  
goodbye to Chris and  
Christopher Knights as they left  
the Cricketers Pub  
25.10.2001

"How do you want it"  
Jo to Pat  
Cricketers pub 4.4.2002

"Don't spit it out"  
Sally Walker to Pat  
Cricketers pub 4.4.2002

"Are you coming again next week"  
Sarah to Paul  
Cricketers pub 4.4.2002

"He needs a firmer hand than I can give him"  
Steve  
Cricketers pub 4.4.2002

"OK Pat,  
you just pop that in"  
Steve  
to Pat at home, 10.4.2002

## BSAC THIRD PARTY INSURANCE

If you would like a copy of the BSAC Third Party Insurance Certificate, please contact Anthony Sheargold on 01932 866350.

## BRING & BUY SALE

**THURSDAY 2ND MAY**  
Our club will be holding a Bring & Buy Sale in the lecture room at 'The Pool in the Park' at 8.00.  
Turn up before to set up your stall.  
Anybody with anything can come.  
Your chance to pick up a bargain or to sell one on.

*Please join in the following functions.  
Remember, its your club !*

**IMPORTANT DATES  
FOR YOUR DIARY  
DURING 2002**  
Please keep these date free NOW

Diving Programme	Almost full already - new dives being sought
20-21 April	Dive aboard Loyal Helper out of Poole
Friday 10th May SOCIAL	<b>AN EXCUSE FOR A PISS UP</b> A Quiz evening at Woking in private hall. Bring your own drink and take part in a quiz. 'ANN ROBINSON' MAY BE THERE that's all I can say at present.
19th-25 May 2002	Grahame Walker's Scapa Flow Expedition.
Sunday 21st July Summer BBQ SOCIAL	With all the fun of the previous ones. Will notify you of location nearer the time. <b>Please keep date free</b>
Saturday 16th November SOCIAL	Annual Dinner Dance. Please keep this date free so that you can come to our little do.
Wednesday 1st January 2003. New Years Day SOCIAL	<b>Annual New Years Day Dive</b> at Littleton Pit, Chertsey. Get down there for 10:30-ish and by 12.00, all over to the Three Horseshoes in Laleham afterwards for a lunch- time drink to celebrate the New Year.

**CAN YOU RECOMMEND A GOOD LIVE  
ACT/BAND OR DJ AND DISCO FOR DINNER  
DANCE THIS YEAR AT REASONABLE COST ???  
ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DINNER  
DANCE TO MAINTAIN INTEREST  
IF SO, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE CONTACT ME,  
PAT GIBBON TEL: 01483 770819**

**WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING  
FOR NEW MEMBERS SO DO  
YOU KNOW ANY DIVERS WHO  
WOULD LIKE TO JOIN OUR  
CLUB OR ANYBODY WHO  
MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN  
SCUBA DIVING AND WANTS  
TO GIVE IT A TRY ?**

Phone **Freefone 0800 0186431**  
for more details

**GREENPEACE**

Ever thought of joining? We could do with your support  
in trying to keep our seas clean and alive with fish.  
Join now by contacting Greenpeace at  
Canonbury Villas, London N1 2PN or phone for details on  
Telephone: 0171 865 8100 Fax: 0171 865 8200.  
E.Mail: gp-info@uk.greenpeace.org  
Web site: <http://www.greenpeace.org.uk>

*We only have one world, so do help to save it.*

**BRING & BUY  
SALE**

**THURSDAY 2ND MAY**

Our club will be holding a Bring &  
Buy Sale in the lecture room at 'The  
Pool in the Park' at 8.00.

Turn up before to set up your stall.  
Anybody with anything can come.  
Your chance to pick up a bargain or  
to sell one on.

**SUMMER CLUB  
BBQ**

**SUNDAY 21ST JULY  
PLEASE KEEP THIS DATE FREE**

We have yet to decide on the venue,  
so if you have any ideas where to hold this  
event, somewhere with toilet facilities,  
good for children and allows BBQs  
- near water would be good -  
then please contact any committee  
member

**CHARITY BBQ AT  
CHISWICK BRIDGE  
GOLF CLUB**

**WEDNESDAY EVENING 7.30pm  
17TH JULY**

CHRIS KNIGHTS IS ORGANISING A  
CHARITY BBQ TO RAISE MONEY FOR  
PORTERSBURY SCHOOL, CAMBERLEY  
FOR HANDICAPPED AND SPECIAL  
NEEDS CHILDREN.  
THEY ARE ALWAYS IN NEED OF FUNDS  
SO EVEN IF YOU CAN'T GO, A  
DONATION WOULD BE GREAT  
SEE CHRIS KNIGHTS FOR TICKETS  
01932 565313

STEVE WILLET HAS INFORMED ME  
THAT DISCOUNTS ON DIVE GEAR ARE  
AVAILABLE TO SURREY AQUANAUTS  
MEMBERS FROM THE FOLLOWING  
SHOPS:

69 DIVE AT EWELL 10-15%  
NEW DAWN AT SEND - SOMETHING%

**I WANT YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS**

Just send it to me at [gibbonpat@aol.com](mailto:gibbonpat@aol.com)  
so that we can update the e-mail database.  
Also, please reply with your home, work and  
mobile numbers.