

CamBSAC

CAMBSAC 240 NEWSLETTER



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DECEMBER 2003

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SANTA BARBARA	2
SANTA BARBARA CONTD...	3
IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO THE DO !	4
NORMANDY AND THE RED SEA	5
ESTARTIT AND NEUHAVEN	6
COMPRESSOR ROTA	7
COMPRESSOR ROTA (CONTD.)	8
CAMBSAC DIARY 2003-2004	9

CHRISTMAS CURRY

The 2003 dive season has been and gone unless you're a hardened diver or one of those fortunate to have dived abroad recently or about to dive abroad

However the social side of the club continues with gatherings every Thursday at The Boathouse on Chesterton Road. Meet upstairs from 9.30 pm onwards.

The pinnacle of the camBSAC 2003 social calendar takes place on 18 December at The Boathouse.

It is of course The Curry Night.

The night kicks off at 7.30 pm

As well as a curry the evening will include:- The underwater photograph competition; The Dive related photograph competition; Christmas raffle; presentation for winning photographs;

presentation of The award for most logged dives in 2003 and trainee of the year award.

Underwater photographs must have been taken in 2003 and they don't have to have been taken on a club trip. The dive related photographs must be from a club trip. Entries to Pete Flaxman either before or on the night.

Donations for the Christmas raffle will be greatly appreciated.

Tickets are only £8 available from Pete Flaxman, buy early to avoid disappointment as numbers are limited.

Scott Lough

Editor

INTEREST:

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-
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Website:

www.cambsac.com

SANTA BARBARA

Liam on Location

days diving on the Sunday after my arrival in Santa Barbara. Five minutes out

SANTA BARBARA CONTINUED...

huge sheephead, Garibaldi, cuttlefish, surfperch and lots of fish I have yet to identify. After the first two dives, the captain cooked chicken and steak on a bbq at the front of the boat and I had the best dive-lunch I've ever had.

The second two dives were better as we moved to a site next to a seal colony and had several encounters with them on each dive. It is amazing just how fast and agile they are, and a lot bigger than I had remembered from my Farnes experience last year. At one point one of them circled us a number of times and then darted past my dive buddy almost hitting him in the head. After the last dive of the day I changed into my swimming trunks and settled back in the hot tub with a cold beer in my hand, and the Californian sun toasting my head. Talking to the captain I managed to secure a place on the boat the following morning, again diving sites around Anacapa Island.

Conditions the following morning were even better than the previous day and en route to the first dive site a school of dolphins swam along at the bow of the boat.... which was nice! After a chat with the dive master, I managed to buddy up with Terry, a guy who was a diving instructor of 10 years. He was very thorough and knew his stuff so I was more relaxed from the start than the previous day. Just as we are finishing our buddy check a woman who had no dive buddy asked if she can dive with us. We say yeah and go through the buddy check with her all over again. It

rapidly becomes clear as Jennifer goes through her kit that she doesn't have a computer. Oh and she doesn't have a bottom timer or a watch either. Oh and I almost forgot, no depth gauge. Terry is turning a whiter shade of pale at this point. Apparently she'd been diving for the last ten years like this. Usually dives on her own and just follows the nearest person to her when she gets in the water. Interesting way to do your diving!

Our first dive was Arch Rock, a passage way through a rock about 25m wide by 50m long located in about 20m of water. There was lots of marine life on the walls as you went through and the sun was shining through it, lighting everything spectacularly. A very enjoyable dive. Outside of the archway there were kelp fields with lots of smaller fish. Most of the dive sites around Anacapa are located in areas designated as marine reserves so you can't take anything out of the water. A real shame given the amount of scallops, crabs and lobsters to be found. I did two further dives that day close to a seal colony in a place called Landing Cove. These were probably the best dives of the weekend. The sea bed lies at about 18m with lots of kelp fields on rocks at about 12m. The seals would hide in the kelp and dart down around you as swim along the side of the rocks. At one point myself and my buddy were swimming along over the top of one of the rocks through a shoal of fish who suddenly darted away to our right. This we came to know was the sign you were about to see a seal. We swam to the sea bed and lay down and a seal began circling us getting closer and closer. Eventually it lay down in front of me no more than a

couple of feet or so away, staring straight at me. Fantastic! Things like that are what diving's all about.

In general the best diving conditions in California are to be found in the months of October and November. There are plenty of wrecks to be found in the southern California area, it's not all just scenic stuff. Indeed several decommissioned Oil Rigs lie just off the coast of Santa Barbara and are open for exploration. All in all I thoroughly enjoyed the diving in California and would recommend it to any keen diver.

IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO THE DO !

By Sandra Castro

My friend, George, had organised some Friday evening dives with Gary Lawson in North Berwick and so I booked myself on the boat on Friday 2nd May. There was a club trip over on the west coast that weekend that Bruce Barr had organised. I thought I'd put my name down for the trip but I hadn't and so Jon was heading across to Oban as I was getting my kit sorted at North Berwick Harbour.

There was an easterly wind and a fairly big swell so we decided to dive the west side of the Bass Rock, which was lovely and calm. The journey out there was quite bouncy and so my first comment as we got to the Bass was 'I hope this dive is worth it after that!!'.....little did I know what was to come!

There were 6 of us diving that evening. Brian and George were taking in 2 less experienced divers so Rhona and I kitted up first, did our buddy check and in we went. We descended to about 6m and the viz was really good! We followed the seabed and a ridge of rocks down to 15m and then felt the pull of the current. Rhona indicated we should try to swim back but it was too strong so I suggested we ascend. I sent up my dSMB and we made our way to the surface.

At the surface, we found ourselves facing the foghorn on the northeast side of the Bass! We had been caught in the ebbing current that had taken us almost half way round the Bass! The boat was on the west side and so had no way of seeing us. We immediately realised we were in potential trouble so we made sure we got together and Rhona held on to my pillar valve behind me. I have a whistle attached to my stab jacket and so I blew on that for a few minutes but it was not much use as we were too far away to be heard. At this point, I asked Rhona to get my flag from the back of my cylinder and I put that up while Rhona made sure the dSMB was fully inflated. My flagpole unfolds to 6 feet long and the flag itself is about 2 feet

square and bright yellow. I had never had to use it but have carried it with me on almost every dive for the last few years since I bought it. I also put my strobe on and if needed, we had 3 torches between us.

The conditions weren't too bad. The surface visibility was good and though there was a 2m swell, it was quite smooth. We both had plenty of air in our main cylinders and we both had pony cylinders too. We had started our dive at about ¼ to 7. Gary always allows 45 minutes maximum dive time and says he will call the coastguard after 55 minutes if divers have not surfaced. We surfaced after 23 minutes so we knew that Gary would start to look for us in earnest in about 20 minutes and would call the coastguard after about ½ an hour.

We floated past the Bass and were heading directly east. The wind seemed to calm down a bit after a while and we were able to take our regs out. Every now and again, we could hear a big wave approaching and we put our regs in as it broke over us. And there we waited....and waited....and waited!!! I felt quite calm for most of the time but as I started to get chilled, I fretted a bit. But we both knew that the coastguard would send out the lifeboats to look for us and the helicopter from RAF Boulmer would be launched, assuming it was available!! We also knew we had all the right kit with us. We had a yellow flag, a red SMB, a strobe and 3 torches, which we decided to save in case it got dark before they found us! We talked to each other a lot and kept each other calm and I was very glad that I wasn't alone! Of course, we also realised that as we were both members of the North Berwick Lifeboat Crew, we were sure to get a bit of a ribbing for this!!

Eventually, after about an hour and a ¼, I saw the big blue hull of Gary's boat steaming towards us and boy, was I glad to see it!! We assured Gary and the others that we were OK and the Dunbar D-Class lifeboat came over to check we were OK. And so we headed back to North Berwick and to

the pub!!

There are a few lessons we can all learn from this experience. Gary told us that they had started looking for us northeast of the Bass, based on a previous lost diver incident we had had 2 years ago in the same area. Of course, they didn't see us as we were heading east. The coastguard have a computer programme that they can use to predict the currents and tidal flow in the Forth and they advised Gary and the lifeboats to look for us east of the Bass. As soon as they headed in that direction, Gary said they saw the flag we had long before they saw us and the strobe was very prominent too. Of course, the other factor that helped the situation greatly was Gary calling the coastguard as soon as he did. Many divers leave it too long before they call the coastguard but it is always better to call them and then cancel if the incident passes than leaving it too late.

We discussed the use of EPIRB's and flares with the others in the Lifeboat Crew. EPIRB's are very effective but quite expensive and rely on the helicopter being available for a search, which is not always the case. Flares are also very effective.....if they are seen! A flare can only be used once and so you need to be sure you use it when you think lifeboats are looking for you and not 5 minutes after you surface!

But the best piece of safety equipment I believe you can carry is a flag. They are cheap and very effective. The other divers on the boat all bought flags the week after the incident and friends of mine in a BSAC club in London have told me that they do not allow anyone in their club to dive without a flag!

This story shows that this can happen to anyone, even the Divetech DO!!

Safe diving :-)

NORMANDY AND THE RED SEA

Fellow divers,

For those of you who cannot make it down the club at the moment, this is a

Notice which is on the board about a trip to Normandy I am planning. I think

This will only be possible if we get at least 4 people to sign up. Let me

know if you are keen, or if not, suggest what would make you more keen.

Please Note

The charter boat availability is disappearing by the week, so don't

Hang around if you want to reserve a place. Any offers of help in organising

This will be gratefully received.

Holiday to Cherbourg area - White Horse

Charters-

www.whitehorsecharters.co.uk

Diving would be in the Cherbourg area. There is a large number of well

preserved wrecks in the area. The depth range for most wrecks is 20 to

30m, but deeper ones are available too. Nitrox is available but we would

need to blend our own gases. The evenings can be spent on shore in St.

Vaast Le Hougue, where there are pubs and places to eat.

There are various weeks through the summer still available. I suggest

The 4th to the 9th of July. The simplest way of doing it is to join the

boat in Weymouth, sailing early Sunday morning. One dive would be done that day.

Then on days 2,3,4,5 two dives would be done each day, with a single

dive on the Friday, which is the return to Weymouth day. Cost £70.00 per person per day.

An alternative is to join the boat when it is already in France (a high

season option). This has the advantage of giving 6 full day's diving,

but is logistically more difficult due to the ferry crossing. [Could be possible

to use the club van to transport gear on the ferry, thus keeping the cost to a

rumoured £40 per person for the crossing]. Cost £360.00 per person plus ferry.

We need 12 people to fill the boat, which will give us discount on the

Above prices. Sharing with another group is a possibility. I think we could

Run this with a minimum of four people from our club, but preferably we

Should fill the boat.

The Boat has:

Four cabins: 2 four berth, 2 two berth

Shower, bar, saloon, galley, two toilets, TV, 3 wash basins below , O2

kit, inflatable with outboard. The skipper has been doing the trip for a

Number of years, so should know where the wrecks are by now.

What's included:

Bed

Breakfast

Lunch

Afternoon tea

Drinks during the day

2 dives per day with air

What's not included:

Oxygen for nitrox fills

Another camBSAC trip to look forward to in 2004

Organised by a veteran of the Club and The Red Sea - Ian Thorburn

The Red Sea Trip is 5th Aug 2004, that's a Wednesday flying from Gatwick to Marssa Alam, the cost is now less 10% (985-50 ukp) because we have a party of 6, the booking will soon be opened up to all comers if there is no more interest within the club.

Sign up now at The Boathouse or contact Phil and Ian direct to book your place on either or both of these trips.

ESTARTIT AND NEWHAVEN

I'm organising a dive holiday to Spain for 2 Sept 2004 for a week, renting a

Wood family property in Estartit (10 minutes walk from the seafront, marina

and dive place) and have organised a package with Unisub. I will be flying

to Barcelona-Girona and if we book as soon as Ryan Air have published their

flights it will only cost about £30 return, for flights, and about £21

For transfers.

As this isn't a package, anyone wishing to join us in Estartit or come by

boat, car, bike, foot etc

is welcome. (Could someone forward this to Gary and Anna?)

All I need at the moment are a few more people to raise the 20% accommodation deposit to seal the booking (yes I really do have to pay the family £200); and to let Unisub know that we need about 10 spaces.

Total cost expected to be a maximum of £420 including accommodation (not food), diving and airport transfers, flights.

Villa (for 10 persons - £1245) £124.50 per person.

12 dives package - £172 per person for 6 boat dives on Medas, 6 coast;

weights&cylinders.

Diving.

We can also do night Medas dives, and if you have any questions on the

diving. let me know and I'll contact Antoni Murray at Unisub.

Medas is a marine park, has good swim-throughs and caves. Not sure

about

wrecks! I have a few details on paper if anyone wants to see these.

Unisub are well reputed and

long-standing dive operators.

Accommodation. 5 bedroom villa, established garden, pool being built,

recently (like 2 weeks ago) furnished; only 10 minutes from seafront and restaurants (v important) and the marina and dive shop. I've lots of digital pictures I can email if you would like these (Pete F has printed

copies).

Flights and transfers

For airport transfers (minibus and taxi) allow about £21.

I've allowed £100 for flights. British Airways are currently charging

£86 to Barcelona Reus but if we book early Ryan Air and other carriers do

excellent deals (eg £1!) from Stansted to Barcelona Girona.

If anyone wants more information please email or ring me on

01223-504200 or

07815-975245 (leave a message and I'll ring back).

I have 5 people on list so far.

For those with broadband etc, the following sites give more information

<http://www.ddgi.es/tmd/imesdes/eindex.htm> on estartit and links to where

the

main dive sites are

<http://www.unisub.es/shop/company>

<http://www.estartitowners.co.uk> Granny Wendy's property rental company

which

will lead you to a picture of Villa els Perdals.

Jenny

Newhaven facts:

Where is it?

Newhaven is on the South Coast between Brighton on Eastbourne, almost directly South of London. It takes about 2 ½ hours to get there from Cambridge.

How do you get there?

Take the M11, M25(clockwise), M23/A23 then A27 past Lewes, then follow signs for Newhaven. You will arrive in Newhaven on the A26 and reach a mini-roundabout. Turn right and go past the ferry terminal to join a flyover and bridge over the river Ouse. Join the one way system and take the second turning on the left. This is sign-posted "Newhaven Fort". About half a mile down here you turn left opposite a large yellow pub: The Sheffield Arms. The slip is along here on the right. Park in the free car park just before the slip.

What are the launching facilities?

The concrete slip can be used up to within an hour either side of low water; slightly longer on neaps than springs. There is a short length of pontoon which can be used for overnight mooring. Use the non-slip side for this as the slip side dries. On low water springs the far end of the pontoon sits on the mud in very shallow water so put the engine up if you moor here. Launching is by tractor only and costs £15. Overnight mooring is £10. Pay at Simpson Marine; the chandlers shop just back from the slip (01273 612612). The tractor operates from 9am to 5:30pm. If you need to pull out after this it is possible to lift the centre post from the chain barrier and drive over it but you should ask the tractor driver when you launch if this is ok.

What are the harbour rules?

There is a set of three red lights next to the marina which come on just before there is major traffic in the port so you cannot leave while they are lit. There is also a set of lights at the entrance to the port. These are harder to read but the rule is Green-Green-White : ok to go in and out and Green-White-Green : no movement permitted. If in doubt you can radio the port authorities on channel 12. There is a 5 knot limit in the river and an 8 knot limit until you clear the breakwater. The coastguard is Solent unless you are East of Beachy Head in which case you are in Dover territory. Note that Solent Coastguard will not do radio checks.

Where can you get air?

Air and nitrox is available from the Newhaven Scuba Centre just past the slip (01273 612012). At the time of writing air is £2.50 a fill but nitrox was about £7 a fill (?). It is open from 9:45am to 5pm. They are very helpful and will give you marks for wrecks which is very handy as the ones in "Dive Sussex" are literally miles out!

What other facilities are there?

There is a café which opens stupidly early so is good for breakfast but shuts at about 5pm so is not good for evening food. You

COMPRESSOR ROTA

Thu 18-Dec-2003	Robert Helling
Mon 22-Dec-2003	Richard van der Hoff
Thu 25-Dec-2003	Do you really want gas on Christmas Day?
Mon 29-Dec-2003	Cormac O'Connell
Thu 01-Jan-2004	Do you really want gas on New years Day?
Mon 05-Jan-2004	Ian Thorburn
Thu 08-Jan-2004	Simon Parker
Mon 12-Jan-2004	Gawain Edwards
Thu 15-Jan-2004	Michael McLaren
Mon 19-Jan-2004	Ian Gregory
Thu 22-Jan-2004	Philip Clegg
Mon 26-Jan-2004	Richard Turner
Thu 29-Jan-2004	Stuart Moore
Mon 02-Feb-2004	Jon Schneider
Thu 05-Feb-2004	Scott Lough
Mon 09-Feb-2004	Cormac O'Connell
Thu 12-Feb-2004	Andy Mell
Mon 16-Feb-2004	Simon Parker
Thu 19-Feb-2004	Ben Pemberton
Mon 23-Feb-2004	Gawain Edwards
Thu 26-Feb-2004	Iain Smith
Mon 01-Mar-2004	Ian Gregory
Thu 04-Mar-2004	Ian Thorburn
Mon 08-Mar-2004	Jon Schneider
Thu 11-Mar-2004	Keiron Fraser
Mon 15-Mar-2004	Michael McLaren
Thu 18-Mar-2004	Philip Clegg
Mon 22-Mar-2004	Richard Turner
Thu 25-Mar-2004	Simon Parker
Mon 29-Mar-2004	Robert Helling

Compressor Opening Times

Monday 7:30pm to 8:00pm

Thursday 7:30pm to 8:00pm

Please note operators are normally happy, to fill cylinders after 8pm, if they are delivered

before 8pm. If you need to arrive after 8pm, please telephone the operator on duty to

make arrangements for them to wait for you, if they can.

BANK HOLIDAYS, As there is most likely to be a club trip at bank holidays, an operator

will be allocated nearer the time, if any members require cylinders to be filled.

NO filling after 9:30pm**Only operators on the compressor authorised list may use the compressor**

If any members wish to discuss the operation of the compressor, or go on the rota, or any

any other matters relating to gas filling, then please don't hesitate to contact

Ben Pemberton, BSAC240, Compressor Officer

Mobile:

Email: compressor.officer@cambsac.com

COMPRESSOR ROTA (CONTD.)

Compressor Operators	Email Address	Home Number	Mobile Number
Andy Mell	amell@cambridge.org	N/a	07966 278672
Ben Pemberton	b.pemberton@thermoteknix.com	01223 574977	07966 473429
Cormac O'Connell	cjo24@phy.cam.ac.uk		
David Smith	davesmith200@hotmail.com	01954 260628	07831 145099
Gawain Edwards	elgme@02.co.uk	01954 782892	07931 361041
Iain Smith	iainmsmith@btinternet.com	01223 511989	07790 415344
Ian Gregory	ian.gregory@teraview.com	01223 502356	07814 795563
Ian Thorburn	ijthor@waitrose.com	01638 780729	07769 715482
John Kendal	john@johnkendall.com diving.officer@cuueg.org	01223 704908	07798 523110
Jon Schneider	jon@jschneider.net	01223 423941	07973 796374
Keiron Fraser	kppf@bas.ac.uk	01954 270599	07812 778031
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Pete Flaxman	pjf22@phy.cam.ac.uk pete@flaxmans.co.uk	01223 562112	07753 911620
Philip Clegg	phil@cleggp.g.force9.co.uk	01223 207534	07776 237106
Richard Turner	richard.turner@cambridgeantibody.com	01223 412576	N/a
Richard van der Hoff	richard@rvanderhoff.org.uk	01223 704908	07979 597176
Robert Helling	helling@atdotde.de	01223 529688	07986071885
Scott Lough	scott.lough@hadenyong.co.uk	07787180774	07787180774
Simon Parker	SimonP@ced.co.uk	N/a	07752 279854
Stuart Moore	stjm2@cam.ac.uk	N/a	07764 191908

CAMBSAC DIARY 2003–2004

9 December 2003	Committee Meeting - 8.00 pm The Boathouse
18 December 2003	Curry Night - 8.00 pm The Boathouse
9 February 2004	The AGM - 8.00 pm The Boathouse
19 February 2004	2004 Dive Trip Planning Meeting - 8.00 pm The Boathouse
27 & 28 March 2004	London International Dive Show – Excel London
29 May–5 June	Challaborough 2004 Chris Scott for Details
4 July–9 July	Normandy Phil Clegg for details (See Page 5)
5 August–12 August	Red Sea Ian Thorburn for Details (See Page 5)
2 September–9 September	Estartit Jenny Wood for Details (See Page 6)
9 October–16 October	Scapa Flow Neil Burgess for Details (FULL)

camBSAC 240 Official Club clothing now available.

T-shirts, Fleece, Pullovers, hats, scarves and more are available in all sizes. All items are embroidered with the club logo. Pay a little extra to add your personal touch.

Contact Neil Burgess for details.

Lonely Hearts

Professional male with keen interest in rubber wear seeks britney spears lookalike (o.n.o) for discrete weekends in Littlehampton! :) or is it Detroit ?

He's still waiting !!!

Contact Liam

GOOD LUCK IN THE US LIAM !

Website:
www.cambsac.com