



Worcester Divers News

October 2014

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New Members

I would like to welcome:

- Andy Perkins and Kevin Kirton who have recently joined and embarking on their Ocean Diver training

Chairman's Chat

Well this is the last newsletter in the current club year. When I became Chairman last year I decided to re-introduce the newsletter as a way of sharing news with members and giving an overview of what's been happening. I felt this was particularly important for the many new members who joined, so they would hopefully feel more part of the club and have a better understanding of everything that goes on and what members get up to. I've appreciated the 'thanks' I've had from members, for the newsletter, and it is something I plan to continue if I'm Chairman next year.

As the main diving season draws to a close it is a good time to reflect of how things have gone and keeping the club active over the winter months. It was definitely a busy season to start with but things seemed to drift with dives being cancelled for the weather or because of insufficient numbers/organisers. This seems a recurring issue and one which will be a topic for discussion at the AGM.

The club's AGM takes place on Tuesday 21st October and I do hope plenty of members will come along. We try and make this a social occasion with a photography show and meal.

Happy diving!

Janet Yates, Club Chairman

Club News

Here is a round- up of what has been happening in the club:

Qualifications

Congratulations to the following members who have been progressing with their qualifications:
Rob Martin and Martin Large - passing their Ocean Diver theory exam.

Andrezj Oleksiewicz - Sports Diver theory exam and gaining a gold star at the BSAC Buoyancy and Trim workshops

Josh Yates, Hannah Snead, Stuart Brown, Ollie Walker - passing Dive Leader theory exam

AGM & Committee

You will be aware that the club's AGM takes place on Tuesday 21st October 7.30pm at Severn Motor Yacht Club. The evening will take the format of presentations, club awards and open floor discussion followed by a photography show and meal. If you have any photos please send to Mark Sherwood

We could really do with more volunteers for next year's committee. The committee 'regulars' have agreed to stay on for another year but we would welcome some new faces. It would be especially good if some of our newer members could volunteer to bring some fresh ideas. Please contact me if you would like to know about what is involved.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Dawn and Les who got married on Saturday 11th October. Dawn looked stunning in her wedding dress and their happy occasion was shared by a few members of the diving club, who enjoyed fireworks, pig roast and dancing at the evening reception. The new Mr & Morris have jetted off to Mauritius for their honeymoon - but am sure they will be looking forward to diving in UK waters again!

Another club member who has opted for warm water diving, is Hannah Snead who has recently started working for a marine project in the Bahamas as part of her gap year. Good luck Hannah!



Diving

There have been a few trips since the last newsletter including Newquay and Weymouth. The trip to Weymouth was particularly successful with 10 members diving off Tango. The weather was fantastic and dive sites included Lulworth Banks, Elena R and the Aeolian Sky. For several of us it was the first time we had done this trip. It was obviously popular as we have booked the boat again for last weekend in August next year.



Diving

Unfortunately the diving slackened off in September. Although 3 members tried to organise trips, these were cancelled due to lack of interest. However a few members did manage to book onto shuttle boats. If you are interested in diving over winter, here is what's on offer:

1st & 2nd November TBA

15th & 16th November TBA

13th - 14th December TBA

Please contact Mark Sherwood if you are thinking or organising a trip.

Diving with Sharks

At the end of September I had the chance to dive with sharks. I have often been nervous about diving with sharks and, as I'm going to the Red Sea very soon, thought it best to face my fears. I decided to book on the Shark Awareness course at the Blue Aquarium near Ellesmere Port. The day started with a quick tour of the aquarium followed by several hours of lectures about sharks. Topics included physiology, behavior, senses, reproduction, conservation and diving with sharks. We also had chance to examine different shark jaws and teeth. I found out some really interesting facts such as the great white and basking sharks are members of the same family, the shark's brain is the size of a walnut and sight is one of their most important senses.

Following the dive brief, we made our way to shark tank to get ready for the dive. I was in the second group of 3 to dive and after a nervous wait got into the water. I wasn't allowed to fin so was heavily weighted to enable me to walk underwater. From the moment I got underwater and saw my first shark I was absolutely hooked. We settled in one particular area and allowed the sharks to swim to us. There were lemon, sand tiger, zebra, guitar, nurse and bamboo sharks. Most the encounters were with sand tiger sharks, which tended to swim over our heads, giving a close up view of their teeth.

Sadly the 30 minutes was over all too quickly. I found the experience amazing and now feel more confident about diving with sharks. Although the course was quite expensive, I can definitely recommend it.



Training

Ocean Diver

If you have been to the pool recently you will notice we have 2 new Ocean Divers in training. We are still getting plenty of enquiries so might see some new members in a few months time.

Sports Diver

John Carmichael is still working with his sports diver group and many of them have nearly completed their training

Training Fees

The committee has recently reviewed the training fees for Sports Diver and Dive Leader qualifications. Whilst we charge a fee for Ocean Diver, the only charge we apply for subsequent levels is for the training pack. However the club does incur quite a few additional costs in terms of room hire and reimbursing the expenses of the instructors.

Therefore the committee has decided to introduce a charge of £50 for Sports Diver and £60 for Dive Leader. This will include the training pack, contribution to the additional costs and use of club kit (if members haven't been able to buy all their own by this stage). You will still need to pay your pool fee, boat fees and entrance fees to the inland dive sites.

The committee feels this represents good value and is comparable to what other clubs charge. It is a lot cheaper than what commercial operators charge, which is typically £250-300 per grade (or in the case of Stoney Cove £900 for dive leader!)

Social News

The main social event will be the Christmas bowling and meal night at Bowl Extreme on Thursday 11th December. This is always great fun so do hope as many members and their families can attend. Details have already been circulated by e mail and would appreciate it if you could book and pay for your place very soon so I can confirm the booking.

It would be great if a couple of members could organise a social event over winter so do please let me know if you have any ideas.