



THE BRITISH SUB~AQUA CLUB

Teesside 43 Branch

MINUTES OF THE 51st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SUNDAY, 9th MARCH 2008

The Chairperson, Paul Nesbitt opened the meeting by welcoming all members to the 51st Annual General Meeting. There were 17 members, including committee, present.

2. APOLOGIES

Billy Cass, Brian Malthouse, John Findlay and Mick Harrison.

3. MINUTES OF THE 2007 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Proposed as a true record by Nigel Watson and seconded by Jeff Pape.

4. MATTERS ARISING

None

5. CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION – Paul Nesbitt

2007 saw the club celebrate its 50th anniversary, a sell out at Highfield Hotel the evening went extremely well due to the organisation skills & efforts of Val Hudson & Cybil Taylor. Thanks go to all those who contributed to the night, including raffle donations, loan of kit, the presentation of the last 50 years from Jeff, Don & Kev. Also for all those who worked on the DVD & any others involved in the organisation of a very successful evening with the only problem being that it was over too soon.

The start of the year saw a lot of changes within the committee & new appointments within club officers posts, due to resignations & retirements at the end of 2006. Glad to say that after the press-ganging was completed everyone has settled into their roles & all have been doing an excellent job whilst still learning the ropes with thanks to the help from ex-club officials.

On the diving front last year was mixed with a good start to the year with the weather soon to be ruined for the remainder of the year. Claims for refund of excise duty for boat fuel have originally been knocked back, but compromise should allow us to allow claim up to 50% of previous claims. This was due to tightening up of regulations & a visit from HMRC to check records.

As promised at last years AGM the club has completed the move to be approved as a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) This followed an EGM in August to approve changes to club constitution to allow this. This charitable status enables refund of rates up to 80% some of which we have already received, other potential benefits may be available which we still need to explore.

Also as was mentioned at last years AGM the move to a common renewal date has now been set allowing easier monitoring & collection of fees due also lightening the load on Membership Secretary enabling the club to combine posts of Membership Secretary & Treasure in one.

As is the case every year thanks must go to all the committee members whose time & effort & hard work enables the club to function, namely:

Diving Officer - Kevin Wilde

In his second year as D.O, Kevin & his no nonsense approach has been feature of his tenure. This year his efforts in training & organising training have seen the club once again take on new members from scratch. Training provides a vital source of new membership to keep the club afloat & hopefully we are now seeing improvements in membership. Thanks to Kev for his efforts over the year

Secretary- Mike Gardner

Press-ganged into position thanks go to Mike for stepping into a new role, has done a sterling job in his first year in the post with help from Cynthia who has taught him a trick or two. Thanks for keeping myself, the committee & club membership of goings on throughout the year.

Equipment officer - Gary McSorley

Another press-gang member, lot of effort from Gary again in a new post keeping equipment up to date & providing inventories & keeping them up to date with equipment tests being completed. Thanks again for efforts over the year

Treasurer/ Membership Secretary – Mick Harrison

Thanks to Mick once again someone taking on new roles & putting a lot of effort into 2 posts this year, keeping finances up to date organising insurance changes & working with Hedley on Charitable status are just a few of the jobs he has done. Also has changed club renewal to common renewal date for all making control of membership details easier & allowing the combination of the roles of Treasure & membership secretary.

Bar Manager- Jeff Pape

Thanks go to Jeff for his efforts in keeping us well lubricated without which we wouldn't have the chance to get together on a Thursday night & put valuable coffers into the funds. Also manages to keep the maintenance up to date on club-house not bad for a sprightly 80 year old assisted by Cynthia to keep him right

Thanks again to Jeff & Cynthia

Committee Members

Other committee members deserving recognition for their efforts over the year:

- Nigel Watson as well as assisting Kevin in the role of A.D.O also keeps the website up to date with new look for 2007 & extra features include such as links to weather, tides etc
- Don Foster generally helping where he can around the club & providing knowledge & experience to all
- Richard Waller again helping out when & where required from boat maintenance to club minutes when required
- John Findlay helping out where required
- Last but not least a special thanks to Hedley Brammer who has put a lot of time & effort into securing the CASC status for the club helping towards club finances

Lastly thanks to all those not on the committee whose efforts do not go unnoticed from helping committee members in new roles & maintenance of club, boats & equipment plus help running the bar thanks to all involved

6 OFFICERS REPORTS

(e) Treasurer/Membership Secretary – Mick Harrison

During 2007/2008 I have been working on implementing the Common Renewal Date. This has been a success and on the 1 May 2008 all club members except new members will be renewing their membership on the same date.

This year membership of the Club has grown with four new Novice divers joining. The existing members who have completed the Assistant Instructors course have enabled the Club to accept new divers for training and interest in joining the Club is being facilitated by the Club Website as a number of enquiries have been received as a result.

It has certainly been an eye-opening experience taking on the role of Treasurer. Having hold of the “purse” strings has involved a considerable amount of responsibility as well as providing an insight into the costs of running the club. (I've gone through at least four cheque books!!!)

Whilst the club has the benefit of being in a sound financial position we will need to continue to look at ways to reduce outgoing costs. The CASC status gained as a result of the work Hedley has put in has helped to reduce the Business Rate liability-a big thank you to him for all his efforts. We will also need to take a serious look at the cost of insuring the Club House as this has now become excessive.

We celebrated our 50th Anniversary this year and an additional bonus to what was an excellent evening was that it was also a financial success with Club funds being boosted. A big thank you to Val Hudson and Sybil Taylor for their hard work and Graham Clarke for the DVD.

Mick Harrison was unfortunately unable to present the accounts at the meeting due to his wife, Sally, being admitted to hospital following a horse riding accident. Thankfully, Sally has been released from hospital and is on the mend. Consequently, the accounts will be reviewed at the next committee meeting, scheduled for Thursday 10th April, and subsequently displayed on the club notice board.

Our best wishes to Sally Harrison, and we all hope she is feeling much better soon.

(b) Diving Officer – Kev Wilde

After a poor start to 2007, when little or no diving was taking place due to the terrible weather, (An example of this was my own dive itinerary, which if I had completed all my planned dives, by June I would have 60 logged, in fact I had only managed 14 and put a lot of mileage on the car).and as for our club diving, Our boats went out a total of 15 times in 2007, so you don't need me to tell you this has been a terrible year. Things picked up towards the end of the year, admittedly this was mainly due to more of us heading for warmer waters.

Our club has had members travelling to Wales, Ireland, Red Sea, Galapagos Islands and Thailand. Club trips included Red Sea, Anglesey and Oban. Hopefully 2008 will see more club outings. I know the Farne islands, Weymouth, St Abbs and a Red sea holiday are either booked or at the planning stage. A trip to Truk (Chuuk) Lagoon could also be on the cards for early 2009.watch this space.

Some of you may remember a few years ago when I became Training officer I was keen to give the assistant instructors an active role in training as I felt these experienced divers could play an important role in club training and their potential in my opinion had been overlooked.

I'm pleased to report our club can once again boast a good instructor team, Due to, (and not without a little pushing from me,) four of our more experienced members taking the first steps on the instructor ladder and completing the instructor foundation course, for those unaware of this can I introduce my team,

Paul Nesbitt, Nigel Watson, Mike Gardner, Stuart Wintringham. All of them are now involved with lectures and three have their own students. This is a big boost for the club (and will take some of the load off myself). Hopefully when they feel they are ready they will take the next step and become full instructors who can then teach unsupervised.

On the subject of training, at the beginning of 2007 I completed the RYA day skipper course as I thought it was inappropriate to teach basic chart work having had no formal training myself. (Having the course paid for by the EU had no influence on my decision at all)

Then we gained four new members;

Daniel Harrison...who has started open water training, Tony Harker & Paul Kiss, who have completed pool work and are about to start Open Water training. Alan Granger joined a few weeks later and is well into pool training. I ran the new Ocean and Sport diver Nitrox workshops for several of our members (all passing with ease) and the instructor team have now completed Ocean diver lectures.

The BSAC have just introduced tighter guidelines on buoyancy since it emerged that a significant number of incidents have arisen through bad technique, inadequate training or dare I say complacency, are we relying too much on shot lines? Details are on the notice board of the expected level of ability for the various grades, and as always the only way to improve is to practice.

I have enjoyed the position of Dive Officer for the last two years I still get a great deal of pleasure from the training side of things and as always I am grateful to the people who have helped me, firstly a big thank you to my Assistant DO Nigel for covering me on the very rare occasion I manage to get a trip away, Though to be honest I've started dragging him with me most of the time. Thanks also to Jeff and Don for helping out with Dry suit familiarisation in the pool. With your permission I would be happy to carry on for a third term in this position.

Brian Malthouse was awarded Diver of the Year 2007 for his continued enthusiasm following a particularly nasty accident, and lengthy recovery, after slipping in St Abbs harbour over 14 months ago. Congratulations to Brian on this award, and let's hope 2008 sees him back into the water with us all.

(c) Equipment Officer – Gary McSorley

Starting the year as a committee member I was aware that I would be expected to help out wherever I could and assist in the decision making process within the club. When I was press ganged into the post of equipment officer I was unsure of exactly what I was letting myself in for.

At the end of the diving season I started looking around the club to see what maintenance needed to be done so that when the new season starts the club is ready to dive. The list included

- 1) Service compressor
- 2) Service boat engines
- 3) Make the boat ready including repair / renew valves

To date we have obtained 2 quotes to service the compressor and club members have committed to service the engines and make the boat good. We should therefore be in good shape to start the new season

It has been a good year for the club in that we have been actively training new divers that will inject much-needed new blood and it was a pleasure to see the training equipment being repaired and serviced and then being used

It is my belief that being a member of this dive club any equipment we have and use should be correctly serviced and therefore safe to use we should work towards meeting this goal

Gary has resigned from the post of Equipment Officer, and the committee, this year, and will be replaced by Billy Cass. Many thanks to Gary for his help over the last year.

(d) Bar Manager – Jeff Pape

The awful weather of 2007 was responsible for the cancellation of most mid-week, and weekend diving plans. Even away from the north east, it was no better (apart from the Red Sea and Canaries) enthusiasm flags and the bar taking suffer as a result. However, as you will be able to see from the balance sheet (available to view on the notice board), we still managed to contribute a significant amount to the main account, and cover the cost of maintenance costs of the clubhouse, and the renewal of the bar license. With our reduced membership, and increased running costs, your presence and goodwill the other side of the counter is appreciated.

Cynthia and I look forward to seeing your smiling faces in 2008 and hope we enjoy a far better year.

(e) Other Committee Reports – Hedley Brammer

Following the AGM last year I was asked by the chairman if I would undertake this task. The task started with the gathering of all the necessary documentation ready for the rewriting of our constitution. This included all relevant documentation from BSAC and model clauses and constitution from CASC unit of HM Revenue & Customs.

The rewrite of our constitution included the need to up-date it to bring it in line with the latest terminology and new legislation. The draft rewrite was completed; including asking various members to proof read it and comment and include the necessary legal variations; was submitted for principle approval by early May. Thanks to all those who assisted me in this part of the task.

I received the response back from the CASC unit in early June and following telephone conversations with them, subject to two minor modifications in the wording which didn't affect the constitution, we went to an EGM on the 2nd August 2007 to ratify the document. This completed, all required documentation was submitted for final approval. This approval was received about 10 days later.

We are registered as a CASC from 2nd August 2007. This is a life-time registration provided there are no changes to the Constitution and Codes of Practice of the club. We have already received the Council tax rebate and have to organise the gift aid payments and commence claims for that.

7. NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS ANNOUNCED

Chairman	Paul Nesbitt
Diving Officer	Kevin Wilde
Treasurer/Membership Sec	Mick Harrison
Secretary	Mike Gardner
Equipment Officer	Billy Cass
Bar Manager	Jeff Pape
Committee Members	R Waller, J Findlay, D Foster, N Watson, H Brammer

8. CHAIRPERSON'S CLOSING REMARKS

Paul closed the meeting by again thanking the committee, and members for their continued support. He also encouraged everyone to actively seek out new members to allow our club to continue to grow as it had over the last 12 months. Let us all hope 2008 is a better year for local diving !

The meeting was closed at 11.25 am. The Chairman thanked all those that had attended.