

**BRITISH SUB-AQUA CLUB TEESSIDE 43 BRANCH
MINUTES OF THE 48th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY, 30 JANUARY 2005**

The Chairperson, Don Foster opened the meeting by welcoming all members to the 48th Annual General Meeting. There were 22 members present.

2. **APOLOGIES** – Richie Sykes, Kevin Jackson, Ken Pape, Kevin Wilde, Keith Finnegan, Alan Hunter
3. **MINUTES OF THE 2004 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** were proposed as a true record by Paul Nesbitt and seconded by Jeff Pape
4. **MATTERS ARISING** – none.
5. **CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION – Don Foster**

2004 has been a mixed sort of year for the branch, as always diving, being why we are here, could have been better as in most years the weather seems to work against our best efforts.

From the management side of the club the committee has had spending restraints in place, due to a huge capital spend in order to purchase the two new boat engines, which saw funds greatly reduced. To keep this clubhouse going is not easy in as much rents, insurance for the building and the boats with our equipment are big items which have to be found before we are able to buy all the new things to make our diving better.

At this point I want to remind members of the work done by your committee last year...

The Diving Officer Heather McNeill, aided by, Richard Waller ADO, Kevin Wilde Training Officer. Have put training projects together and have worked hard both to help new members gain qualifications and more experience members to further advance their experience in diving.

Billy Cass, Equipment Officer. Bill has spent many hours working on the boats. Often replacing shot lines and generally checking the condition of all diving equipment. Keith Finnegan gave Bill a hand as required with the boats. Also Keith has advised on safety requirements and has sorted First Aid boxes. Colin Crookston took over the Pool Equipment that has been a great help to Bill.

Tim Feldon. Tim always amazes me how he never fails to produce those envelopes we all look forward to each year. Also he is on hand when we have new people showing interest in joining our club, the Membership Sec's roll is more than just collecting fees, he gives the committee guidance on the level of memberships needed to maintain a viable club.

Paul Nesbitt. Well Paul has collected the information and made the claims on the Inland Revenue which brings a welcome boost to club funds thanks very much Paul.

Cynthia Church. Who is it that saves all that money by switching off the heaters? Well Cynthia has been a wonderful Sec. So good with the paper work which is needed to keep a committee informed and always reminds people that they have outstanding things to do. Now she also has another job. How else would Jeff Pape manage to work our bar without her? I can't thank Cynthia enough for all the help she has extended to me as Chairman these last two years.

Bar Manager. Jeff Pape.... I cannot imagine Teesside 43 Branch without Jeff, super Bar Manager and I have known a few in my time as a member. If things want doing well Jeff is there how many times have I heard oh ask Jeff Pape be it compressor building works boats engines, Jeff's your man. Also a dam good buddy too. Last but not least by any means

Treasurer Sybil Taylor. Sybil committed herself to serve just two years as Treasurer and has seen us through a difficult period over seeing the purchase of the engines and bringing our revising our accounts. I am sorry to see Sybil leave the post she has put a great effort into keeping our heads above water. Thank you Sybil a job well done.
I have to also thank people not committee members who gave of their time, Roly Church how many times do I hear, Roly fill my bottle also he's not afraid to muck in working with the compressor. Bill Hudson always doing something.

It only remains for me to say I have enjoyed my two years in the Chair, it is time for the club to move on, new committee, new ideas.

My best wishes to you all please dive safe have a great diving year.

6. **OFFICER'S REPORTS**

(a) **Treasurer's Report – Sybil Taylor**

Sybil said there was little to report and gave a detailed Income and Expenditure Account for 2003 and 2004. (see attached sheet) Sybil said that income has been steady with the majority coming from the following:-

Membership Fees
Bar Account (which was consolidated with the General Account) and
Excise Duty recovered from the Customs and Excise for Boat fuel
Plus other miscellaneous receipts

With regard to expenditure – there has been no major expense pool fees, clubhouse rent, rates and all insurances rose slightly.

As usual thanks go to Alan Hunter for auditing he accounts and Paul Nesbitt for seeing to the recovery of the excise duty, and this year we have to thank Jeff and Cynthia for their efforts behind the bar and managing to make a profit.

(b) **Diving Officer – Heather McNeill**

What disappointing dive conditions we had in 2004! Very little inshore diving took place locally, but more experienced divers were able to go offshore for slightly better viz. However, we have had a good year in terms of people's skills development.

I'm very grateful to Kevin Wilde who took on the mantle of Training Officer and has had a very busy year with lots of cross-over new members and many more new starters undertaking their pool training. I think you'll all agree that the quality of Kevin's training and leadership is excellent.

Richard Waller has been a particularly active and skilled Assistant Instructor and Assistant DO, and Colin Crookston and Alex Robertson have also been assisting with instruction in the pool and in open water. Thanks to Billy Cass for his work, and that of others, on maintaining the boats on behalf of all of us.

A group of experienced Dive Leaders are working towards their Advanced Diver (Stan Layton, Nigel Watson, Tim Feldon, Mick Harrison, Paul Nesbitt and Nick Reeves) some of them completing rescue assessments at Wastwater.

Well done to Colin Crookston, Richie Waller and Nigel Watson for successfully completing their training in the use of the Buddy Inspiration. The quality of the training received is evident in their approach to their diving.

The Wastwater Weekend was a particular success this year, in glorious autumn weather – everyone enjoyed themselves. 29 people took part in this year's event. Thanks to the

instructors (Kev, Richie, Colin & Alex) and Roly, Cynthia and Don who also played a big part in making the weekend work so well.

We've had a good number of people diving in open water for the first time this season and probably the most memorable experience goes to Daniel McSorley whose first dive was the one wherein we searched for and recovered the bronze propeller from the Pilot boat. The group was split into a search team and a recovery team, Daniel being in the recovery team and given that the prop was well bedded in soft silt, handled the zero-viz experience very well. Mike Willans was the person who alerted us to this opportunity to find the prop. Mike has also donated an ex-special forces scuba kit to the Club and we need this to go on display.

Complements to Brian Malthouse and Bob Micklewright who, at a stage in life when most people would have been settling down to more genteel interests, have decided to take up diving and who are now progressing through their Ocean diver open water training.

Hedley Brammer did 6 dives within a couple of months of joining the Club, having done only 8 in the 2 previous years in another club. Thanks to Pat for taking loads of great photos at Wast and generally being a great team player.

Michael Gardiner and Paul Handley have been busily working their way through Ocean diver and Cath Legg completed her Ocean diver late summer.

Ken, Sarah and Helen Lock are taking things step by step but building up their experience and skills.

Dennis Smith, Martin Sowerby and Mark Walton crossed over to Ocean diver and are building up to completing their Sports diver. Irene Smith declines to participate in such cool waters!

Richie Sykes has worked hard towards his sports diver and has already assisted in marshalling dives as well as doing the Boat Handling Course in the autumn.

We've joined with Hartlepool Club for Skill Development Courses in Boat Handling and Advanced Nitrox, though it's fair to say that Hartlepool's organisation is not what we're used to. Paul N, Mick & Tim completed their Advanced Nitrox practical, just before Christmas, in Crummock in water temps of 7° C and air temps of minus 3° C, breaking the ice on their DSMBs!

Probably the most frustrating experience of the year goes to Stuart Wintringham who, having dragged himself along the stream, through the tunnel, down the ladder and then the slope to Hodge Close, carrying twin 12s, rolled in the water only to realize that his dry suit zip was wide open!

Keith Finnegan has organised many trips to the Farnes and many people have enjoyed the opportunities for better viz diving. Dive record sheets haven't quite matched up to the number of dives! I'm expecting a closer match next season!

There's been reliance on a few for planning and marshalling dives. It's important that people feel confident about planning and marshalling dives so there will be refresher events in the lead up to the 2005 season.

Safe diving practices

I'm pleased to say that there has been little cause for concern this year amongst the recreational divers. A couple of minor things have been dealt with there and then. We've got a good safety record in the branch and there's no good reason to change that.

And as for 2005? well, there's a few things planned:

- CPR & O2 for DL
- Chart work and dive planning refresher
- Expedition Planning for Advanced Diver
- Instructor Development
- Dive marshalling & voyage planning refresher

I have certainly enjoyed being DO this year building on the previous year's experience and would like to continue the work in 2005. I believe I've carried out the duties of DO in a way reflects the responsibilities of the post and which moves the Club forward.

(c) Training Officer – Kevin Wilde

Having accepted the job of training officer from Heather I think we have worked well together and had a very rewarding year from the club training, we have achieved quite a lot considering the limited number of active instructors our branch has.

With this in mind one of my aims over the year was to involve Assistant Instructors whenever and wherever possible, In the past I have often thought these experienced divers have been looked upon as more than "just divers" but not yet instructors and as such they have not been utilised to their full potential where training's concerned. This I was able to do under the guidelines set by BSAC and my thanks go to Richie, Colin and Alex for their help in the pool and especially at Wastwater where without them we would not have managed the amount of training we did. That was a very busy but fun weekend; the next step is to get them fully qualified so I can dump even more of my workload onto them.

Early in the year, with the help of Heather and Carl, I ran the Ocean, Sport & Dive Leader lectures; these went well with a very high percentage of passes. Heather has already given a detailed account of the ongoing Open Water training so I won't bore you by duplicating it but will add:- those who at Wastwater didn't get the grades at first attempt, don't give up because with a little more practice I have no doubt, you are all capable of achieving your targets.

Again the first draft of the schedule for 2005 has already been outlined but I would also add to this the lectures for Ocean, Sport and Dive Leader, all hopefully completed before the end of May, so we can then concentrate on "getting wet" and building up experience.

As most of you know the Training Officer is appointed by the D.O. Should the D.O. stand down then so too does the Training Officer so that the newly appointed D.O. can appoint a Training Officer of their own.

I have both enjoyed and learned from my first year as Training officer, and would be happy to continue for a second term should Heather remain as Diving Officer and offer me the appointment.

(d) Equipment Officer – Billy Cass

BOATS

(JUNO) has had a new GPs, Antenna fitted and the GPS was sent for a service, a new compass was purchased, the radio was working but the volume squelches and the controls have seized and needs repairing, the sounder and the GPS are working well now. The oxygen set was checked and working. The engine needs a Service (this is in hand), First Aid Kit up to date, Flares in date, Tool Kit ok.

GROWLER

This will need a new GPS, Antenna this year, the same fault has occurred as the Juno GPS, the radio and the sounder are working quite well and the oxygen set had been checked and are ok. The engine needs a Service (this is in hand), First Aid Kit up to date, Flares are still in date, Tool Kit ok.

COMPRESSOR

Working well with a new plastic diesel tank fitted and new impeller was fitted to the water pump, plus a new Din fit hose was purchased. The compressor needs a service this year plus an analysis test will be in house.

POOL TRAINING EQUIPMENT

The club has 5 full sets of diving gear for pool training for example:- regulators, stab jackets (BCD's), bottles and an assortment of masks and fins. All pool equipment needs to be returned on the first Thursday after the AGM so that we can check it and have it serviced.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a few people for their help during the year to keep up the maintenance of the boats, compressor etc. Thanks to Colin for taking over Pool Equipment, Jeff, Don, Bill Hudson, Keith, Richie, Roly and Paul for keeping the boats filled. Sorry if I've missed anyone.

(e) Membership Secretary – Tim Feldon

It's been a good year in terms of the development of the Club, with many new members joining. Some of these have crossed over from other dive organisations and many others have taken up diving for the first time.

The voucher system does provide us with a way of enticing people. £7.50 is taken off their first year's membership fee if they join within 3 months of their try-dive. Quite a few vouchers have also been sold in the lead up to Christmas.

We need to make more use of the signing in book for guests as part of keeping a clear message about the benefits of membership.

Members need to be reminded about medical self-certification. If completed falsely, you could be invalidating your personal insurance.

We get a lot of enquiries through people looking at the website and clicking on the links to our email addresses. Feedback on the website is very positive and people indicate they are impressed by the quality of the site.

Membership currently stands at about 72. The Club has a good balance of people and a good proportion of active divers and is in a very healthy state.

(f) Bar Manager – Jeff Pape

A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE BAR CAN BE SEEN ON THE NOTICE BOARD OF THE CLUB HOUSE

7. DIVER OF THE YEAR – Mick Harrison

(D.O) Heather announced the diver of the year by reflecting on his diving career. This year nominations had been invited from the Club membership and there was one clear nomination.

Mick has overcome considerable personal difficulty in this last year or so with medical problems and has fought back with great determination, through considerable uncertainty, to take a full part in training and in diving. Mick is always helping out before, on, and around dives. He is a popular and respected member of the Club.

8. NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS ANNOUNCED

Chairman	Paul Nesbitt
Diving Officer	Heather McNeill
Treasurer	Paul Handley
Secretary	Cynthia Church
Membership Secretary	Tim Feldon
Equipment Officer	Billy Cass
Bar Manager	Jeff Pape
Committee Members	Richard Waller, Colin Crookston, Paul Nesbitt, Don Foster, Nigel Watson

9. CHAIRPERSON'S CLOSING REMARKS – Paul Nesbitt

Paul thanked Keith Finnegan and Sybil Taylor for their good work on the Committee during 2004 and welcomed Mick, Paul & Don onto the Committee.

Paul said that he would be placing a document on the notices board and on the club website and would welcome any ideas that members have to take the club forward. Paul wished everyone a safe diving year.

The chairman asked if there was any other business and then closed the meeting at 11.45 am.