

# Air Bubbles

The Newsletter of the North Shore Frogmen's Club

Volume 44, Issue 3&4

March/April 2002

## President's Message

Once again we have had some great dives and events this month. This truly should be an awesome dive season for our club if we keep our momentum.

On April 14th, we were treated to a Easter Egg Dive at Back Beach in Rockport and then a super Party at the Carvalho's house.

We had four hens (not the actual original egg layers, but layers the same), our feathered and flippered hens this year where Mary Howard, Paul Sauvageau, Roslyn Smith, and Amy Maurer. Our Egg chef this year was Paul Dumas who bought the eggs, cooked them and also "laid" a few. The eggs were dropped around the sandy area of the beach just at the start of high tide with some mild surge, so once we all entered the water to search for the "hard boiled booty" the scenery had changed and the visibility had worsened. Even our egg layers had a lot of trouble finding eggs. Roslyn Smith did end up collecting the most eggs, but I think her win could be a result of very good navigational skills and search techniques, or more likely just dumb luck. I say this with the greatest respect for the ones that found eggs, for I did not. Yes, I spent more than an hour underwater and did not find a single one. To make my story worse, when I finally crawled out of the deep, Dave Smith nicely informed me that I was disqualified for going over the hour time limit. This disqualification did not bother me since I had found no eggs to speak of anyway. It was still a great dive, I spent most of my time actually shooting video of any interesting sea creature that had the misfortune to cross my path, I feel like "an underwater paparazzo" at times.

You have to feel some pity for the poor fish and divers I daze with the video lights, as they blindly swim into a rock or another diver. Oh well, no eggs this year, but maybe next time. Who knows next time

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## Bobby Boyle Honored in Style

by Paul Sauvageau

The Boston SCUBA Show sponsored by the Professional Diving Instructor Corporation (PDIC) took place at the Holiday Inn and Resort in Marlboro on Saturday, February 16, 2002. This year's event was billed as "A Tribute to Bobby Boyle". Alan Budreau, a Boston area diving advocate for years and known by many of us, directed the occasion and provided the introductions to the speakers and special guests.

### Introductions

First among the speakers was Fred Calhoun who skips the "Easy Diver" for his company, Cape Ann SCUBA Charters in Gloucester. He warmed up the audience with his familiar anecdotal stories of high adventure and near misses many of us divers have heard over the years from his myriad appearances and presentations throughout the greater Boston area.

## Member of the Month

April 2002

Paul Dumas

Among these stories, Fred recounted diving in the 1950s with a pre-neoprene rubber suit called a "Bell Aqua Suit". Cashmere Bouquet powder was the preferred dry lubricant for donning such rubberized exposure suits in those days. Long before the science of dry suit diving, he described how poor buoyancy control could lead to uncontrolled ascents resulting in divers breaching the water's surface feet first. Fred's stories frequently employ edgy humor to illustrate the precarious nature of diving before the regulated days

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**Air Bubbles**

The Newsletter of the North Shore Frogmen's Club

Editor: Rob Falk, Guest Editor: Meg Doyon  
 Contributors: Roslyn Smith, Paul Sauvageau, Daryl Findlay,  
 Mary Howard, Dave Smith

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Articles, Photographs, and letters to the editor may be mailed to:

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**REEF Fish ID Course at FAC**

The North Shore Frogmen's Dive Club will be hosting a fish identification course presented by the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF).

REEF is a grass-roots, non-profit organization of recreational divers who regularly conduct fish biodiversity and abundance surveys during their dives. These surveys are conducted as part of REEF's Fish Survey Project, and become part of a database that is publicly-accessible.

This presentation is free of charge. Anyone interested in a better understanding of marine life that inhabits our waters is most welcome to attend.

WHEN: Thursday evening, May 16th at 8PM.

**CLUB NITE IN: Saturday, May 18**

Come enjoy an evening of good food, dancing and socializing with the Froggies in a tropical paradise. The tropical paradise will be set up at the club, so come dressed for the beach. (Grass skirts and coconuts are acceptable if you are really daring.)

Dinner is pot luck and there is a \$5 charge to cover expenses.

We are also supplying our own music, so bring your favorite island tunes, dance tunes, or whatever else you like.

In addition to the tropical theme, we are also going to have a bit of a gear history night, so we would like you to bring your oldest dive equipment – like that old double-hose regulator or home-made wetsuit if you have been diving since the Stone Age. Or if you just learned to dive last year, bring the latest in modern gear. We have members who started diving in the 50's and members who started in the 21st century, so if everybody brings something, we should have a pretty good showing of the history of dive gear.

If you can't make it to a meeting, let us know if you are coming and what food you are bringing. (You can contact Roslyn (Roz) at: Phone: (781)648-3488; e-mail: [dixmith-dottar@attbi.com](mailto:dixmith-dottar@attbi.com).)

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of certifications and the passing of municipal laws.

Another story involved the days he co-owned and operated a dive shop with his father. Not a move he advocates. Here we learned of the hazards associated with filling tanks in tubs of water. Apparently, this is a bad idea due to the possibility of introducing moisture into the tank and degrading its serviceability from



rust. Benefits derived from keeping the tanks cooled in the water in no way compensated for the hazards of introducing moisture into the tank fill system according to Fred. Worst still he explained, was a practice in those days of vinyl-dipping steel tanks in an effort to beautify them for the sake of dive system styling and color coordination. This attempt at chic panache for the trendy fringe of the hip diving community nearly cost him his life. Embedded moisture between the wall of a steel tank and the exterior vinyl skin can cause unseen rust to rapidly deteriorate a tank as Fred found out first hand when a tank ruptured during a fill at his dive shop.

Attendees were then treated to a classic old film Fred produced starring his wife on diving in Key Largo, Florida. The atmosphere for this early film was enhanced with a musical sound track taken from the Largo Movement that is the second movement to the Ninth Symphony of Antonin Dvorak. This work is known to many as "The New World Symphony". The film won an award at the Malta Film Festival back in the days when, to paraphrase Fred's words, "... get-

ting underwater film footage without flooding a camera was a worthy enough feat for an award!"

Ever an advocate for divers and the sport of diving, Fred Calhoun summed up with a comparison of the Key Largo reef system then and now. Hazards to the coral reef communities in the tropics are many. They can include natural predation from reef fish such as parrotfish and their cousins, forces of nature like hurricanes and tropical storms as well as man in the form of both terrestrial and marine construction activities. But not, insists Fred, from the activities of sport divers.

### Cape Ann Shipwrecks

The next presentation featured shipwrecks of Cape Ann. This presentation focused on specific wrecks off Cape Ann and included many photographs of the wrecks themselves along with interesting archival photographs from out of date books, historical archives and newspaper articles from the time of the events surrounding those ships' sinking.

Among those discussed were the Racketeer, a stern trawler that ran aground off Cape Ann when its captain allegedly fell asleep. Most divers too, are familiar with the Global Hope a tanker, lost in Salem Sound near Coney Ledge along with the Can Do off Marblehead during the (February 6th) Blizzard of '78.

Other highlighted wrecks included the Albert Gallatin that sunk off Boo Hoo Ledge in 1892, and the Alice M. Colburn, a schooner that went down off Kettle Island in 1923. Any discussion on historical wrecks of the North Shore would be incomplete without reference to the Alabama later named the USS New Hampshire. She went down off Graves Island in Manchester after catching fire when being towed to a Maine scrap yard back in 1922 and has been a source of souvenirs for recreational treasure hunters since.

On the North Shore, one of the most frequented wrecks by sport divers is the former Plattsburgh Socony later named the Chester A. Poling. Personally, I can still remember former Froggie, David Millhowser's haunting tape recording of the ship-to-

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I dive at Old Garden Beach; I may find some remnants of the elusive eggs in some lobsters hiding hole.

As in past years, the Carvalho's graciously allowed us to have the Easter party at their house. The Carvalho's house is a lot of fun to see, they have been diving long enough to amass quite a collection of maritime and diving artifacts. They have two of the largest lobsters I have seen, mounted on their walls and numerous North Shore Frogmen awards. Every object has a story; every object shows a devotion to our diving pastime.

The Carvalho's large deck was loaded with our Froggie members, so many names I just can't list them all. We sat in the warm sun, sipping drinks, munching on all the tasty food, and swapping our dive stories. I particularly like the diving stories from many years ago, when one could almost always see large schools of cod and when sea life was in abundance.



The scary part about these dive stories is how much has changed in the short 20 to 30 years since, I only hope we as a society can wise up and repair some of the damage we have done to our oceans. Groups like the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, Bay State Council of Divers, and the New England Artificial Reef Society can only help our oceans problems if we ALL show our support. As an additional

item about how you may be able to help, the New England Artificial Reef Society and several dive clubs (including the Froggies) will be having a gathering at Pebble Beach in Rock Port on May 5th to build underwater transect lines and train divers on the use of the lines to survey bottom compositions at potential Artificial Reef locations currently under investigation. If you are interested in helping us try to better the marine environment, please contact Dale Findlay at [president@nears.org](mailto:president@nears.org) or your local dive club for details.

As always, I ask you to please support you dive club with this endeavor and to continue to make our club better with these simple ideas:

- \* Submit a paragraph, article, picture or suggestion for the club newsletter or web page, this could simply be something small written on paper (napkin) or a picture and brought to a meeting.
- \* Participate in club dives this year, most require no more that you and your dive gear.
- \* Come to some of our Non-Dive events, many would be a lot of fun for family members.
- \* Volunteer some of your time to a club committee, such as the Activities, Membership, Calendar, Picnic, Banquet, or Photo Contest Committee.
- \* Share your experiences and knowledge with our less traveled members.
- \* Bring in a new piece of dive gear you have, and tell us what you think of it.
- \* When a new member or guest comes to the club, make them feel at home.
- \* Join or participate with one or more of the environmental organizations that we are affiliated with, such as The New England Artificial Reef Program, Bay State Council of Divers and the Coast Sweep Beach Clean-Up Program.
- \* Take an active interest in Your Club, for it is a great club.

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In the past months I have had the opportunity to participate in many club activities, from Sunday dives on Cape Ann to Ski trips in Maine. They all have been enjoyable and worth every second. I can only hope for more members to join us for these events, as we move forward with a very full active calendar this year.

Once again I would like to give a special Thank You to the Carvalho's for allowing us to invade their home, their refrigerator, supplying Easter hunt prizes for the kids, and for hosting a great party.

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shore communications between the captain and crew of the Poling and Coast Guard and shore-side rescue officials in January 1977 when the ship went down off Eastern Point, Gloucester. Dave played this tape for those of us who joined him aboard his boat the "Trust Me" for a dive off the Poling. This was years ago when he still lived in Salem.

Again, among the many interesting archival photographs were those of newspapers and old photographs themselves. The Charles S. Haight was a World War II Liberty Ship commissioned to supply Great Britain in their war efforts against the Nazis. It went down in 1946 off Rockport. For members interested in a detailed source for shipwrecks in New England, see Dave Clancy's web site to be discussed in a later section.

#### PDIC Award Presentation

Along about noontime the main event of the day took place. This was the tribute to Bobby Boyle with Alan Budreau presenting the "Paul Revere Spike Award" to Bobby on behalf of the PDIC and the Boston SCUBA Show. The award was a plaque with a mounted spike salvaged from the USS New Hampshire that conveyed the organization's appreciation for Bobby's promotion of the sport of scuba diving and his generous support to individuals and organizations over many years.

#### Dave Norman - Diving New England Waters

Following the award presentation, Dave Norman gave a slide show of northern Maine including Eastport, Lubec



and the Passamaquoddy Reservation area, and Deer Island Lighthouse off New Brunswick, Canada. He had some remarkable slides of northern red anemones, basket stars, as well as purple and orange smooth and spiny sun star species. Fish life included sculpins, sea ravens, rye mouths, pouts, and wolf eels.

Next, David Norman's program changed scenes radically as we headed for New England's southern climes. His slides of Point Judith off Block Island, Rhode Island were more about cage diving among blue sharks. Unlike the shore dives in northern Maine, these dives took place some 30 miles off the coast in 150 to 200 feet of water. I did not catch his guide's last name. I can only remember him as Charlie whose business motto was: "The Cage is here for those who dare!" Chumming the waters with blue fish and whiting, Charlie has managed to attract makos, dusksies, great whites as well as the familiar blue sharks. The oily meat of the blue fish seems to be particularly alluring for these sharks. Dave showed many fine close-ups of blue sharks and was happy to share memorable stories of how particular shots were taken.

Dave's slide show ended with a visit to a dive site very familiar to most Froggies: Folly Cove in Rockport. In keeping with tribute theme of this year's conference, Dave narrated and showed slides of the "Bobby Boyle Annual Fourth of July Folly Cove Dive" with memorable shots of these divers from years past. There were many photos as well of frilled anemones, shrimp, striped bass, puffer fish and flying gunners.

#### DUI Award

After Dave Norman's presentation, our own Al Morris made a cameo appearance just long enough to present Bobby Boyle with yet another award. Detailing Bobby's long involvement with the sport, Al recounted his early years with Jim Cahill and Frank Sanger at New England Divers, then coming over with Roger Garrett to found Northeast Scuba. He also mentioned Bobby's association with Paul Lydon's Aquatic Center in Danvers. Later, Roger's passing and subsequent events at NES prompted Bobby to go it alone and found Undersea Divers in Beverly. Al recalled Bob's

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[Editor's Note: Due to lack of content, the March Issue of Air Bubble's was not published. Here is Daryl Findlay's President's Message for March 2002]

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Well here we are, three months into the year and we've already had many great events, with more just around the corner. This month we livened up the Sea Rovers dive show in Boston and had a fun time during our St. Patrick's Day party.

The Sea Rovers dive show was a blast this year, many of our favorite patrons and speakers attended again and the lectures/seminars/videos were top rate. Our North Shore Froggy booth was setup and organized better and brighter than I think it has even been before, thanks to the exceptional work of Roslyn Smith. The booth this year had many of the winning pictures from our photographic contest, plus video and multimedia presentations. We lit the booth this year, just as the photo contest was, but blue and white rope lights were added at the foot of the tables to make our club's contributions stand out among the other clubs' booths. As we did last year, candy and treats were given out free to all that stopped by. Swedish fish seemed to be the biggest draw, as I saw many younger divers drag their parents up to our booth for a quick treat of the sweet fish. Of course we only occasionally mentioned to people in conversation that some of the candy was being served in an artifact that our deep diving member 'Paul Blanchette' rescued from a local shipwreck, actually it was a chamber pot (a precursor to the toilet). I would like to thank all the members that contributed time and materials to make our presence at the Sea Rovers show the best yet, a special thanks to Peter Cassidy, Dale Findlay, Mary Howard, Amy Maurer, Dave Metrano, Ray Porter, Paul Sauvageau, Dave Smith, and once again Roslyn Smith.

The St. Patrick's Day party was quite an occasion, as members participated in the Froggy tradition of toasting their dead relatives (I mean they drank to their dearly departed relatives) and talked of the fun times to come as we start a new dive season. We also had a birthday to celebrate that night; Roslyn Smith had made a very special birthday cake for Paul

Sauvageau. The cake included a diver, with the likeness of Paul, chasing a rather large lobster. Paul's actual birthday age had somehow already been eaten off the cake by the time I took a picture of the occasion, but I believe it said he was 30 something (plus or minus a few years).

We can look forward to many new events in the upcoming months; here are a few things we are working on:

- \* An equipment checkout at one of our meetings, so we can show and discuss our equipment and what we have done to improve it for our diving environment and us.
- \* New marine life and diving video presentations. Experience places most of us can only dream about diving.
- \* More great original Sea Hunt episodes. See Mike Nelson catch sharks with his teeth or bring down a smuggling ring. If you have other suggestions for club movie night, please just ask.
- \* A Fish identification class for all members that wish to sign-up now.
- \* Club boat dives to sites many sites up and down the New England coast.

### Boat For Sale

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first small shop on Rantoul Street before moving to Water Street, thereby returning full circle from where it all began with the original New England Divers store. Pointing out that the Water Street store is only some 900 square feet, Al congratulated Bobby on making Undersea Divers the fourth ranking dive shop nationwide in sales of DUI diving equipment. He then presented Bobby with a plaque commending him for this accomplishment.

The attendees were then treated to some rare footage of Bobby's early cinematography. This was a 16 mm film entitled: "Santa Barbara Island, Over and Under" which narrated the terrestrial ecology of the island before going under water with a 16 mm camera in a Bolex aluminum housing. It was great fun to watch.

## **New England Shipwrecks - The Net Way**

The afternoon program had Dave Clancy providing the audience with a guided tour of his web site: [www.wreckhunter.net](http://www.wreckhunter.net) for those interested in hunting New England shipwrecks. A visit to his web site will reveal many valuable resources available to divers interested in wreck diving. Among the many pages and links to be found are: a photo gallery page, lists of shipwrecks, artifact handling, a web page on government regulations concerning wreck diving, a nautical archaeology page, maritime history and a host of other links and pages. This site is definitely worth checking out for those divers interested in the subject who may have computers with Internet access. Devoting an average of 10 hours per week, Dave developed this web site over the course of the last year using Microsoft's FrontPage web application development tool. Bill Carter, a shipwreck researcher was a source of some of his material.

## **U/W Photography Workshop**

The afternoon concluded with an underwater photography workshop. Many archival slides illustrated divers modeling their old Fenzy horse collar BCs while others revealed the marine life and environs most of us are familiar with in and around Cape Ann.

## **Conclusion**

Tributes to Bobbie Boyle appear to occur with some frequency these days. I sat with our club vice president, Dave Metrano at the dive show. At a later date while paying a visit to Undersea Divers, I asked Dave to fill me in on some of these contributions that Bob made since my hiatus from diving over the last several years. He reminded me of the fire and rescue training for the Cape Ann dive team with all equipment either donated or furnished at below cost. He had done the same for police and municipal organizations in various communities throughout the North Shore.

Bob had been a perennial contributor for the Seamark Fund Raising initiative for the Coting School in Lexington. Like his contributions over the years to the North Shore Frogmen, Bobbie also provided raffle prizes to the New England Aquarium and their dive club. At Dave's urging, Bob helped train and outfit Manchester's Boy Scout Explorer Post 82 with diving equipment and later did the same for a scout troop in Peabody. Along with his reputation for integrity and for treating his customers well, it comes as no surprise why he remains one of the North Shore's most worthy and respected advocates for the sport of diving everywhere. The many tributes are well deserved.

## **Small Office/Home Computers**

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**07-Mar-02**

Meeting called to order: 8:06 PM

Attendance:

Officers: 3 Members: 22 Total: 25

Guests/Visitors: 0

Announcements None

Correspondence None

Committees:

Membership:

John Ferrier reports no new candidates.

Finance: Rich Kinkade reviewed the numbers. Rich will create a list of members who have yet to renew their memberships.

Old Business: None

New Business

Daryl Findlay: Need somebody who will talk to the FAC about getting the big Acadia room for the REEF seminar on 5/16.

Dive Talk:

Dave Smith: Review of the Sea Rover's Film Festival. Daryl Findlay: General review of the Sea Rover's show. Review of presentations.

General Discussion:

Sunday's dives leave at 9:30AM!

Rich Kinkade: Our own Bill Werner has a letter published in the April edition of Rodale's Scuba Diving !

Raffles:

Dollars Box: Mike Donovan

Mystery Prize: Paul Sauvageau, Endeavor picture  
No bug bag prizes tonight.

Adjourn: 8:58 PM

**28-Mar-02**

Meeting called to order: 8:21 PM

Attendance:

Officers: 3 Members: 8 Total: 8

(Low turnout due to Blackbeard's cruise).

Guests/Visitors: 0

Announcements: None

Correspondence: Invitation from Atlantic

Aquasport to attend the 10 Annual Diver  
Introductions at Yokems Restaurant on April 20th.

Committees:

Membership: John Ferrier reports no new candi-

dates this week.

Finance: No treasurer's report this evening.

Program: Amy Maurer presiding. Paul Dumas will prepare the eggs for the Easter egg dive.

Old Business:

Tonight is Dawn Denneler birthday!

New Business: None.

Dive Talk: Daryl Findlay went diving at Winter Island.

Very windy. Kept bumping into pylons. Dave Metrano installing moorings again in Boston Harbor (Water Temp 36F. No vis.) then went diving in Bonaire (Water Temp 78F; 70ft vis). Recommends Divi-Flamingo. Very nice place with great food. Amy Maurer is working on a Boat Dive w/Captain Rob. Presentation in the works?

General Discussion: Amy Maurer attended Beneath-the-Sea in New Jersey. Went to the film festival there. Poor facilities for seminars and film festival.

Raffles:

Dollars Box: Dave Metrano

Mystery Prize: Dawn Dennler, Sea Scene Mail File

Tee Shirt: Peter Chapman

Mask Connection System: Peter Chapman

Adjourn: 9:20 PM

**4-Apr-02**

Meeting called to order: 8:12 PM

Attendance:

Officers: 4 Members: 22 Total: 27

Guests/Visitors: 1 Rick Holerin

Announcements: None

Correspondence: Another lawyer's bill.

Committees:

Membership: John Ferrier reports no new candidates this week.

Finance: Rich Kinkade read the numbers



Program: Amy Maurer presiding. Paul Dumas will prepare the eggs for the Easter egg dive.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

Dive Talk: The Blackbeard's Trip attended by many club members was a GREAT time! A total of 17 dives for the week. A presentation organized by Bill Werner is expected soon.

Ray Porter: Special thanks to Bill Gannett for organ-

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izing the trip. Mary Howard: Lots of "firsts" for Ray! Paul Sauvageau: Last dive was the wreck of the Secona. (which was a marker for the five P38's that were lost in the Bermuda Triangle). Old WW-I transport ship. Swarms of fish. Bill Gannett: Gave a report of the return of the "Jolly Rogers" flag to it's rightful place... Paul Dumas: and replaced by an inflated cleaning glove! Bill Werner: Witnessed an awesome display of coral spawning. Peter Cassidy: Saw huge hammerhead shark close in to shore. Head estimated to be 24" wide. Daryl Findlay, Roslyn Smith, Amy Maurer, and Dave Smith did some real diving at Old Garden Beach. Water temp 38F, depth 37ft, vis excellent; about 20-30 ft. Saw lumpfish, moonsnail and cod trapped in a lobster trap.

General Discussion: None.

Raffles:

Dollars Box: Peter Cassidy

Mystery Prize: Paul Sauvageau, Lobster dinner napkins, hotmat, & utensils.

Fins: Bill Gannett

Adjourn: 9:40 PM

## 11-Apr-02

Meeting called to order: 8:18 PM

Attendance

Officers: 3 Members: 19 Total: 22

Guests/Visitors: None

Announcements

Come one and all to the Easter Egg Dive this Sunday!

Correspondence Amy Maurer: Email from Faith & Jeff. Getting married 9PM EDT TONIGHT!. CONGRATULATIONS!!!! Mike Dennler: Article in Salem Evening News on Sea Kayaking.

Committees:

Membership: John Ferrier reports no new candidates this week.

Finance: Rich Kinkade read the numbers.

Old Business: None.

New Business None.

Dive Talk: Amy Maurer, Paul Sauvageau, John McColley, & RosLyn Smith dove the "usual place" at Old Garden Beach. Lots of Critters. Water temp 42F. Vis was 20 feet but better close to shore. Daryl Findlay gave a review of the MetroWest Wrecks 2002 symposium. Viewed a presentation of diving in Scappa Flow, Scotland and the sinking of the German fleet in World War I. Daryl & Dale Findlay: Winter Island dive last Saturday. Saw lumpfish protecting eggs. Came up with several brass casings & live ammo. Also found several 18th century bottles and 21st century (Coke) bottles.

General Discussion: Mike Dennler: Submitted for your approval; for "Most Unusual Find"; ? of an 8-track cassette tape case. John Ferrier: Still great skiing up north but this will probably be the last weekend of the season. Went up to Killington Ski resort last Sunday. Maria Maggio: Went diving w/a busted valve. Made for a really wet-dry suit. Took a defibrillator course. Mary Howard & Ray Porter went dancing at the Beacon Estates Resort in Lincoln, NH. Dottie Carvalho: Went snowmobiling at their cottage. THE NEXT DAY; snow is gone so go 4-wheeling! Peter Cassidy: PADI replacement C-Card; \$25 for a "vanilla" replacement. If you want all the original info (cert date, PADI number, etc.) it will cost \$10 more for data research.

Raffles:

Dollars Box: Paul Dumas

Mystery Prize: Paul Dumas, Froggie garden statue & mirror globe.

"Got Air?" Pewter ScubaFrog: Jim Follis

Adjourn: 9:18 PM

## Hey You! Is That A Frog I See, Or A Bump On A Log?



Don't be a bump on a log! Send your pictures, stories, accounts, yarns, anecdotes, fables, myths, musings, fairy-tales, exaggerations and spare change to Air Bubbles. The more you participate, the better it gets for all members! Did you enjoy this issue? Help someone else enjoy next month's. Send in a picture or article TODAY!



## What's in YOUR bag?

by Dave Smith

Standing at the airline ticket counter, you hand your bag to the ticket agent. It gets weighed, tagged, and “carefully” thrown onto a conveyor belt. As you stand there and watch your bag round the corner and disappear behind the wall, do you ever wonder what happens to it? Chances are, nothing. If you just happen to be one of many people bent on beating the system and getting illegal goods into or out of the country, plenty!

When your bag rounds the far turn on its way to your flight, it is subjected to a variety of machine and human inspections. After the PanAm 103 disaster over Lockerbie, Scotland on December 21, 1988, the



David Lund and Bill Gannett toast their dead relatives at the annual St. Patrick's Day party ©2002 Daryl Findlay

British have adopted a standard of inspection which uses increasing levels of detail. This provides the basis for inspections in the USA. The first peek at your bag happens at what is known as a Level 1 inspection. This is a totally automated inspection done by a machine. As the bag enters the machine, it trips a switch which turns on an x-ray generator. The radiation that makes it through the bag is captured by sensors which convert the radiation into electrical signals. This is used to make what a human would see

on a screen; the ghostly image of a hair drier, shaving cream can, or, maybe a gun. This is the information analyzed by the computer.

The computer can be programmed to detect bombs, money, drugs, anything from a long list of contraband. The machine has less than 5 seconds to decide if it has something or not; because there is another bag right behind it. At 1200 to 1500 bags per hour, things have to happen rather quickly. If the computer detects nothing, the bag is allowed to continue down the belt to the plane where it is literally thrown (and, some places, for a considerable distance) onto carts and taken to the plane. If the computer finds something that is suspect, a signal is sent to a huge mechanical arm that sits a small distance down the conveyor belt which physically pushes the bag off the belt and on its way to another machine. Since the machine doesn't like our bag, it goes on to Level 2.

We are now at a Level 2 inspection. Here, the original bag data has been sent to a computer screen by fiber optics. The suspect bag sits on the belt waiting for a decision from the inspector. The inspector studies the “threat” in the x-ray image. The inspector must now decide whether to clear the bag and send it on to the plane or send it to another inspection.

Our bag still has problems, so the next level, Level 3, is usually a machine that does particle analysis or a CT (computer tomography) scan. For particle inspections, an inspector takes a round cloth disk and wipes the outside of the bag. The cloth is analyzed by a machine that detects molecular traces of explosive or drugs if they are present. If none are found, the bag is cleared onto the waiting airplane. For CT, instead of a single one dimensional image, the x-ray source is narrowed (to analyze the bag in “slices”) and rotated (to see all sides of the bag.). The computer then assembles this information to produce a three-dimensional view of the bag. If everything looks good, it goes onto the plane.

If the bag is STILL suspect, the owner of the bag is summoned to open it in the presence of inspectors. If the owner of the bag cannot be found, then the bag is REALLY suspect and gets hauled off to the end of the

✿ continued on page 11 ➤

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🦎 continued from page 10 🐸

tarmac to be blown up from a safe distance.

Think the fun has ended there? Think again! You still have to go through an inspection of your carry-on bag. Up until a few years ago, there were very few changes in the original x-ray baggage scanners. The same reliable black and white images that were first



Steve Galperin, Rob Falk and Roslyn Smith discuss artifact collection at the NSF St. Patty's Day bash, hosted by Mary Howard ©2002 Daryl Findlay

used during the hijackings of the early 1970's provided the majority of inspections. With the advent of faster and cheaper computers, the same technology that is used in the hold baggage scanners is used on your carryon, except the threat determination is immediate. If there is contraband or a bomb in your bag, you aren't going anywhere for awhile. Unfortunately this is not an exact science. There are "false alarms". My son has been busted for carrying sugar honey grahams in his carryon. Sugar has very similar atomic properties to plastic explosives. I have had to show the inspector that the little nickel bag of dope he thought he saw in my dive camera was really a bag of moisture-absorbing silicate.

Allot of travelers are concerned about all this x-ray energy passing through bags. "It can't be a good thing for developed or fresh rolls of film", says you. Don't be too concerned about fogging those once-in-a-lifetime dive pictures from Fiji. For the machines that I have worked on, the dosage for hold baggage (baggage that you've checked in) is less than 0.1 mil-

lirentgen/hour (mR/hr). For carry-ons, it is 0.25 mR/hr.

For comparison, here are some typical values of x-ray exposure we see in our everyday world:

Cosmic Radiation	31mR/year
Transcontinental flight	2.5 mR/Flight
Terrestrial Radiation (USA)	40 mR/year
Chest X-Ray	10-100 mR/Exam
Upper GI series	500 mR/Exam
Lower GI series	900 mR/Exam
Cancer Treatment	
2000mR/Treatment	
Dental Exam	9mR/Exam

I would have to say that your film tends to get more radiation during the trip ON the plane than the trip TO the plane. So sit back, relax, and enjoy the flight.

By the way, if you get to where you're going and your bag isn't there, chances are, it will find it's way to a factory that makes these machines. We use unclaimed lost luggage to test machines all the time and, I have to tell you, I would never be caught dead in some of the outfits that are in THOSE bags! Yuck!!!



John Ferrier, Steve Levy, Rob Falk, Amy Maurer, Paul Sauvageau and Roslyn Smith ponder alternatives to a blown-out OGB outing on 4/21© 2002 Daryl Findlay



**North Shore Frogmen's Club**  
**P.O. Box 3604**  
**Peabody, MA 01960**

**LOOK!**

**Project REEF Fish ID**  
 Thursday 5/16 at the Club

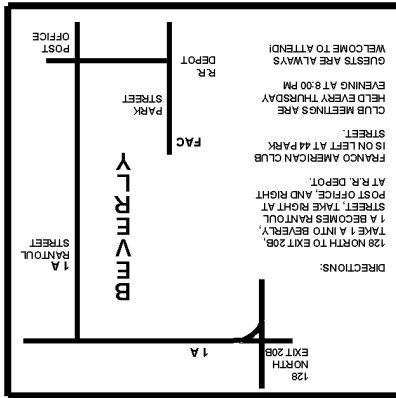
**Club Nite In**  
 Saturday 5/18 at the Club

The printing cost was  
 54¢ The stamp was 34¢  
 Save the club money:  
 subscribe to E-Bubbles  
 see bottom of page 11

Via First Class Mail  
 Address Correction Requested

Sunday dives meet EVERY SUNDAY at Burger King on Route 128N in Beverly.  
 June 9 Through September 30 Meet at 8 AM, Depart at 8:30 AM  
 October 1 – June Meet at 9:30 AM Depart 1 10 AM  
 Night Dives Meet at Back Beach  
 Pre-night dives meet at Old Garden Beach, Rockport planning to enter water 2  
 hours prior to night dive)

Club meetings are held every Thursday evening at 8:00 PM at the Franco American Club in Beverly. Guests are invited to attend the meetings!  
 Directions: 128 North to Exit 20B – take 1A into Beverly, 1A becomes Rantoul Street. Take a right at the Post Office and a Right at the Depot. F.A.C. is on the left at 44 Park Street.



# Air Bubbles

## NSF Activities Calendar 2002

Regular club meetings are at 8:00 every Thursday at the FAC unless otherwise noted. Regular club dives meet every Sunday at Burger King on Route 128N in Beverly; depart promptly at 8:30 from June 9-September 29; at 9:30 from October 6-June 2, watch e-mail list. Night dives meet at Back Beach, Rockport;

\*pre-night dives meet at Old Garden Beach, Rockport planning to enter water 2 hours prior to night dive)

Date	Event
May 15 (Wed)	Bay State Council meeting (see Mary Howard)
May 16 (Thu)	Presentation - Fish ID class sponsored by REEF (see Amy Maurer)
May 18 (Sat)	Club Night In; FAC 6:00 (see Roslyn Smith)
May 22 (Wed)	Night dive; meet at Back Beach; enter water at 8:30 * (see Roslyn Smith)
May 30-Jun 3 (Thu-Mon)	Dive trip to Eastport, Maine (see Amy Maurer)
Jun 2 (Sun)	Summer kick-off dive & cookout; depart BK 9:30am
Jun 6-10 (Thu-Mon)	Dive trip to Eastport, Maine (see Amy Maurer)
Jun 9 (Sun)	Dive time change; meet at 8:00; leave at 8:30
Jun 19 (Wed)	Night dive; meet at Back Beach; enter water at 9:00 * (see Roslyn Smith)
Jun 22 (Sat)	Canoe trip on Ipswich River; meet at Foote Brothers Canoe (see Bill Gannett)
Jul 18 (Thu)	Beach meeting; White's Beach; 6:00 (see Paul Sauvageau)
Jul 24 (Wed)	Night dive; meet at Back Beach; enter water at 8:45 * (see Roslyn Smith)
Aug 7 (Wed)	Night dive (new moon); Back Beach; enter water at 8:30 * (see Roslyn Smith)
Aug 15 (Thu)	Beach meeting; White's Beach; 6:00Paul Sauvageau
Aug 21 (Wed)	Night dive; meet at Back Beach; enter water at 8:00 * (see Roslyn Smith)
Aug 30-Sep 2 (Fri-Mon)	Labor Day camping weekend in Wells, Maine (see Dawn Denneker)
Aug 31 (Sat)	Dive at Nubble Light, Maine
Sep 18 (Wed)	Night dive; meet at Back Beach; enter water at 7:15 * (see Roslyn Smith)
Sep 21 (Sat) (rain date: 9/28)	Coast Sweep; 10:00 at Niles Beach (see Dave Smith)
Sep 22 (Sun)	Annual picnic; Stage Fort Park, Gloucester (see Bill Gannett)
Oct 6 (Sun)	Dive time change; meet 9:00; leave 9:30

### SEWING BY JEANNIE

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42 WATER STREET

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