

Air Bubbles

The Newsletter of the North Shore Frogmen's Club

Volume 44 Number 6

May - September 2002

President's Message

My Dear Frogs:

It has been a while now since we took flipper to paper and recorded our recent adventures.

Black Bearded Frogs: This was a super side presentation of the exploits of our members on the Black Beards trip.

Many members attended as we were shown some great photo of turtles, fish, sharks, and one old shipwreck. Some of these pictures were comical, as would be expected from our group on a live aboard sailing vessel. Though our members talked of brief sightings of the elusive nipplefish, no underwater pictures were shown to prove its existence. I thank Bill Gannett for arranging such a fun trip for our members (arranged more than a year in advance, I believe).

DUI Demo Days: Though not an official North Shore Frogmen event, we had several of our members attending to see and try the latest in Dry fashion. As many of you know DUI (Diving Unlimited International) is one of our members' favorite Dry Suit manufacturers. Actually several of our members past and present have and do now work for DUI or with the company. It was great to see Faith Ortins (or is it Hannigan now?) and Jeff Hannigan again since they moved to San Diego, California (boat and all).

At this event I tried on a new dry suit that I just could not part with (It took several people to pry the suit out of my fingers); I liked that suit so much (sob). There were a few really new concept ideas

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Trip Report: Eastport, Maine

By Roslyn Smith

Eastern-most city in the United States; population 2000; greatest tides in the United States, second largest whirlpool in the world; center for Atlantic Salmon aquaculture; former sardine fishing capital of the US; whales; seals; great natural beauty – one of the PREMIER DIVE DESTINATIONS IN THE NORTH-EAST UNITED STATES.

Sound like some place you would like to go? It's only a few hours drive north from Boston. Several froggies made the trip to Eastport this spring, and from all accounts (and speaking from personal experience), it was well worth the drive. May 30 – June 2, three

Members of the Month

May	Roslyn Smith for her work coordinating our Club Night In Party.
June	Bill Gannett for arranging a fun filled day floating down the Ipswich river.
July	Paul Sauvageau for coordinating our beach meetings.
August	Mike Donovan for stepping in when his club needed a Vice President.

froggies (Dave Lund, Paul Sauvageau and Bill Werner) joined by 2 members of the NE Aquarium Dive Club; and June 6 to June 10 six of us (Amy, our fearless leader, Maurer; Al, how does this camera work, Morris; John Ferrier and his 20 tank and all your gear van; Michael Donovan, our token wet-suit diver; Mary Howard; and yours truly) drove up to Eastport where we were hosted by photographer and honorary froggie Jonathan Bird and his slave, oops, I mean friend, Gator, at Jonathan's home away from home. I can't speak for the earlier weekend, but here is a rather long (sorry) accounting of the weekend I experienced.



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The North Shore Frogmen's Club 2002

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Sunday Dives

Don't forget, we are meeting every Sunday morning at the Burger King/Dunkin Donuts/Subway Rest Area on Route 128 in Beverly. We start showing up around 8, decide where we are going, and leave the parking lot promptly at 8:30. We have had some awesome dives lately, with lots of lobsters and flounder being collected, as well as sightings of huge striped bass, a torpedo ray, black sea bass, tautog and a sea raven. Water temperatures are in the mid to high 50's most of the time and visibility has been pretty good too. If you are planning to make the dive, but can't make it by 8:30, we will try to remember to leave a dated note telling where we are headed on the guard rail nearest the exit of the rest area. Hope to see more froggies there.

Automatic External Defibrillator &

Oxygen Provider Classes Special Price for Freddie's Friends

The North Shore Frogmen's Club resident PADI Course Director, Maria Maggio, is offering two classes this month at special prices for members of NSF.

Monday, October 16 at Northeast Scuba in Chelmsford, learn how to operate the latest and greatest in lifesaving equipment: the Automated External Defibrillator. The class runs from 7 - 11 PM, and \$75 covers the tuition, books, materials and certification card. This reflects a special NSF only discount.

On Monday October 23rd, learn how to properly handle and administer every carbon life form's favorite gas in the DAN Oxygen Provider Course. Class runs from 7 - 11PM at Northeast Scuba in Chelmsford, and the fee is \$75 for Froggies, \$100 for interested others, and covers the books, supplies, certification and all the oxygen you can metabolize during the session!

For more information, or to sign up, contact Maria at mdm-diver@attbi.com



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Equipment Review - The Aqualung Legend Regulator

By Paul Sauvageau

Back into Diving

Last year Peter Cassidy wrote a President's Message for this newsletter regarding his reentry back into diving after a long hiatus to raise his children. Similarly, I had been out of diving for a better part of the 1990s to attend graduate school and pursue various interests. Though I attended infrequent meetings and actually got a few dives in during those years, the start of the new millennium seemed like a good time to get back into the sport I so enjoyed in prior decades. Living near the ocean and still dreaming of diving led me to understand that I could not put it away indefinitely.

Bobby Boyle's April 2001 start of season sale seemed like the perfect impetus to evaluate my old dive gear, shop the new equipment and see what these intervening years have evolved in terms of new technologies that enhanced and improved the enjoyment and safety of SCUBA diving. I had used old analog depth gauges and tank pressure gauges for years. Winning a Suunto Vyper dive computer at the December, 2000 NSF Annual Banquet not only gave me an indication of how technology had moved forward, but also put me ahead in upgrading dive gear.

New Equipment

Assessing my old gear left little doubt that I needed to upgrade just about everything. The old Parkway wet suit purchased in the early 1980s was of the type of neoprene rubber that failed to rebound or uncompress upon returning to the surface after being at depth. This reduced its insulation ability even for summer diving. To extend the diving season, I elected to "go dry" and after seeking recommendations from club members and the sales people at Undersea Divers, I chose the DUI CLx450 dry suit with the self-donning zipper and Trilaminate and Cordura polyester blends. Together with the DUI Buoyancy Compensator and Weight and Trim System, I became a real D.O.G. the designation for the DUI Owners Group. On a club

dive at Lane's Cove in Rockport one Sunday morning last Fall, I was fortunate enough to run into Al Morris who sized me up and suggested I might be more comfortable in a large suit rather than the medium I purchased from Bobby. I am sort of between the two sizes. Al offered to swap this medium for a large that he had in his possession. I was fortunate and have been happy with the dry suit since. A recent dive with John Ferrier's DUI integrated weight system demonstrated the validity of that design over the weight and trim system. The integrated weights helps to stabilize the BC on your back while doing away with redundant belts and straps.

Regulators

My focus in this article primarily concerns the Aqua-Lung Corporations brand new line of regulators. They introduced the new "Legend" series in January 2002. I believe that I may be the first member of the club to own one.

When I decided to trade in my old Dacor regulator that Bobby Boyle informed me might be difficult to obtain parts for overhauls in the future, I chose the Titan LX, which was a perfectly serviceable, medium-priced regulator from Aqua-Lung. Other than the occasional problem of free-flow at the surface (which can be adjusted with the vane adjustment switch), the regulator performed fine. Problems arose only when I had unwisely packed it in my car overnight prior to the club's New Year's Day Dive. It froze open and free flowed at Old Garden Beach. I thought that I could easily remedy the problem by taking it into the water. Since the salt water was not frozen, I mistakenly assumed that whatever moisture condensation may have built up would dissolve on contact with seawater. Not so.

Bob Boyle showed up at the dive site to cheer on the divers New Year's morning. There, he explained to me that Aqua-Lung had just introduced the new Legend line of regulators including a cold-water model that would likely alleviate this problem in the future



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– all the while admonishing me not to leave my gear in my vehicle overnight in that freezing weather.

Aqua-Lung's glossy brochure, states: "The world regards Jacques Cousteau as a legend, as do we, therefore we aptly named our latest line of regulators with his spirit in mind - the Legend series."

Trying to determine the technical differences and engineering design changes that cause the manufacture to claim this as the "highest performing regulator in the Aqua Lung line" was not as straight forward as I had first assumed. Like the Titan line of regulators, both have balanced diaphragm first stages and both have pneumatically balanced second stages to provide consistent inhalation effort regardless of depth or conditions. Similarly, these two regulator series share the Vane Adjustment Switch (VAS) with the Calypso series. This feature controls venturi assist to reduce sensitivity to free flowing at the surface while providing for increased airflow at depth. With this information, I contacted Aqua-Lung's Product Manger for regulators, Tom Phillip in Vista, California to learn what set the Legend apart from previous regulator incarnations. Since Aqua-Lung acquired Apeks Corporation, I wanted to get an understanding of the rationale for introducing not merely a new regulator but a completely new line of regulators.

First Stage:

The function of a first stage is to take incoming, high-pressure air, e.g. 3000 psi, and reduce it to a medium pressure that can be sent on down the hose to the second stage. A typical medium pressure would be 135 psi plus ambient pressure. That's right. It is depth compensating. The deeper you go, the greater the medium pressure. On a typical balanced first stage design, the medium pressure remains at a constant 135 pounds plus ambient. On an over-balanced model like the Legend, medium pressure increases at a rate faster than ambient so that by the time you get to 165 fsw, (feet of sea water), you have actually picked up an additional two atmospheres compared to the bal-

anced design. This additional medium pressure helps compensate for the fact that the air becomes dense with depth so a higher medium pressure value moves it through the second stage faster.

The black polyurethane sheath was designed to protect the exterior metal surfaces from damage - obvious enough. An interesting marketing point is that if



Whoever says God has no sense of humor has never seen a lumpfish! Such interesting creatures just a stone's throw from Rockport Center! © 2002 Daryl Findlay

the diver so chooses, this sheath whether scratched, worn or degraded with use, may be replaced as part of a routine overhaul to maintain that 'like new' appearance.

The Legend models all come standard with an environmental dry chamber that resists freezing by keeping the main spring chamber sealed against moisture and water. The chamber is insulated with air and therefore the main spring remains dry and cannot ice up. A load transmitter running through the center of the spring, transfers ambient water pressure to the main diaphragm. These modern regulators are all diaphragm designs unlike the piston models such as the Calypso regulators also made by Aqua-Lung.

Second Stage:

I happen to own the Legend LX Supreme, the cold-water version of the Legend LX. It surprised me to



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learn from Tom that there were virtually no physical or mechanical differences between these two regulators at all! Cosmetically, they differed where the Supreme has a laser-etched snowflake above the second stage housing to designate its cold-water worthiness. To distinguish the two further, the Supreme has a silver titanium locking ring where the Legend LX has a gold titanium ring to enhance its appearance.

The real difference between these models is in their adjustment. Research on the subject of regulators freezing up in cold water suggests that a slight increase in the opening effort to breathe makes the regulators more resistant to freezing. The adjustment need not be significant and cannot even be perceived by most. The overall “work of breathing” of the regulator remains excellent. I asked him about this since most second stages may be adjusted for breathing effort with the adjustment knob or venturi lever. He explained that both could be adjusted in this way but that the Supreme differed from the Legend LX by the range within which each can be adjusted. The Supreme also comes with a lip shield that Aqua-Lung maintains will keep diver’s lips warm in cold water.

The Legend line of regulators has light, near neutrally buoyant second stages for ease on the diver’s mouth. They are pneumatically balanced to provide consistent breathing effort regardless of depth. Keep in mind however that swimming into strong currents can cause any regulator to free-flow. Both the adjustment knob that regulates the opening effort and the venturi lever that controls the direction of air flow inside of the case should be used for adjustment under specific environmental conditions. The opening effort knob may be incrementally adjusted while the venturi lever is either off when set to the minus sign (-), or on when set to the positive sign (+). There are no in between settings for the venturi.



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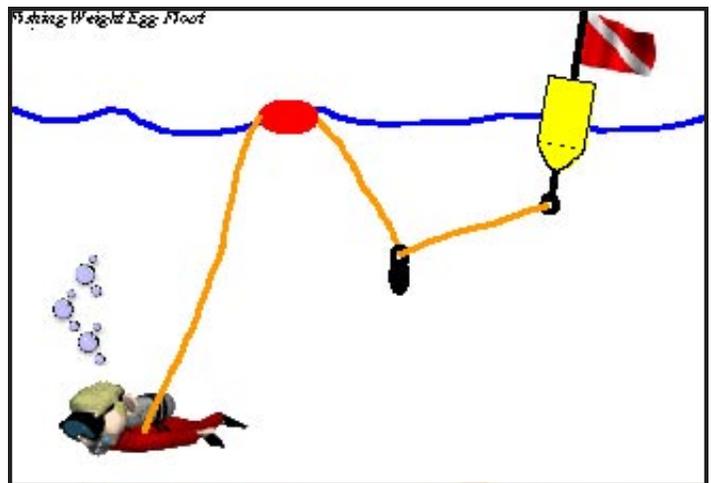
A Slack Taker - Upper for Your Dive Flag!

By Dave Smith

One subtle problem that seems to occur on many of my dives involves the dive flag pull line. I am always getting caught up in the slack as I go from a deeper to a shallower depth. With the help of a couple of readily available items, this seems to be happening less often.

Here’s a nifty setup I tried on a couple of dives at Lane’s Cove. Get an “egg” float from a marine or fishing supply house, a 3 ounce fishing weight, and a plastic cable tie. First, thread and attach the cable tie to the fishing weight. The cable tie seems to slide along the line better than the metal weight. There are edges on the weight left over from when the weight was molded which may prevent it from sliding along the line. Thread the line from the spool, through the egg float, through the cable tie, and then onto the dive flag float.

As you ascend, there is more line than you need. The



weight starts to sink, taking up the slack and keeping your line pulled up and away from you. Eventually, you will want to stop and reel some in. This arrangement will allow that to happen less frequently.

Here’s a sketch of the basic idea. Give it a try on your next dive!



VIDEOLIGHTS

©1999 Roger Roth

Solo Diving Revisited

Last month, I was aboard the Excel, a liveaboard dive boat in the Red Sea. (See last month's article, "Narced at 35',") There were a number of accomplished underwater photographers on this trip with me, many of whom do a lot of solo diving, like I do. One photographer, however, was given a wake-up call that I feel needs to be shared, in the interest of wake-up calls.

The Sara H. is a shallow (35-40') dive site in the Northern Red Sea. She was a freighter (probably about 300' long) that was running at full speed when she ran aground, burying the front half of her hull into the sand. My guess is that

this occurred in the early part of this century or late last century. Most of the superstructure of the ship (that was left unburied) has deteriorated, leaving only a number of I-beams over the exposed hull.

The hull and surrounding debris is well overgrown with corals and sponges, and the fish life is extremely prolific and accommodating. They seem to want their pictures taken, as most don't shy away when approached. While some just stayed put for cameras, others seemed to keep coming back for more exposure(s).



This friendly fellow was visited by Froggies who participated in Bill Gannett's Blackbeard's Live-Aboard Cruise in March 2002.

Our dive was a late afternoon dive from zodiacs, a couple of hundred yards from the Excel. There was no steady current, but the surge grew stronger as the dive progressed. Little did I know that this surge would have a permanent affect on my, and others', solo diving rules.

After I grew tired of the colorful surgeonfishes and other elegant critters that were swimming over the wreck, I settled in to shoot a couple of clownfishes protecting their egg nest. As a matter of fact, when I used my finger to point out the egg nest for the camera, one of the anemonefishes nipped my finger as a

reminder to keep my distance. (Many of you will see this footage in upcoming productions.)

While playing with this pair, I noticed a very brightly colored Pajama slug, 3-4" long, nearby. The size of it,

and its location atop a highly visible, colorful coral near the anemone and its clownfish, made it a great photo opportunity! After I got a few shots with my video camera, I heard the underwater noisemaker that Captain Ramy used to get our attention when he found something interesting. Since this usually meant something good, I hightailed it over fifty yards to see what he had found this time.

Unfortunately for me, it was just another scorpionfish, of which I had already gotten a number of shots. I decided to return to the Pajama slug that

was crawling all over the place. I got the attention of Scott, another still photographer, and took him back to where I was, inside the hull (convertible hull would be more appropriate, as it was not closed over anymore, at all).

We took turns shooting the slug and clownfishes from all different angles for at least ten minutes. They were located about two feet underneath a fifteen foot I-beam, and near a few other beams. The setting sun was at a perfect angle for ambient light video, and the critters weren't going too far.

With enough shots of my own, I gave the thumbs up and turned away from Scott giving him more room to stretch out and continue to shoot his stills. (I wanted to see if I could locate any other slugs or nudibranchs the size of this last one.) All of a sudden, I heard three loud CLUNGS echo in the water! I immediately started a quick 360 to ascertain what and where the noise came from. Looking back at Scott, I noticed he was still lying flat, but the 15' long, 10" I-beam was resting on top of his first stage, and he wasn't moving. Not good! I dropped my camera away from the area, and returned to assess Scott's predicament. There were bubbles coming from his regulator in regular breaths, so I knew he was breathing. While swimming closer, I noticed the beam was not on any other part of his body. When I put an OK hand in front of his mask, he didn't move much, but answered an OK back to me.

His thoughts, that he later revealed to me, were actually hopes that I had not gone too far away...solo... leaving him to figure out what was going on by himself. His elbow had dislodged the beam while trying to stay still in the surge for his photography. He could not see above him, and therefore did not know what was on top of him, nor what it was going to take for him to get it off his back.

Once I knew he was OK, I wedged my feet as safely as I could, lifted the beam with a sturdy grunt, and pushed his first stage out from under it, freeing him. As soon as he was out, I dropped the beam (good thing steel doesn't weigh as much underwater as it

does out of water, though!). Scott was fine, other than being shaken up, and we continued our hour-plus dive.

Afterwards, we both discussed our solo-diving habits,



Mike Donovan is overcome by emotion as he claims the mystery prize at a regular club meeting. Such finery is often bestowed upon lucky members for a mere 50¢ lottery ticket! © 2002 Daryl Findlay

and decided to add some different safety parameters, which included staying away from solo situations like this. Even though it was not an overhead environment by regular definition, the instability of beams that old, need to have the same consideration...in other words...have a buddy nearby! Sea Ya!

Critter Corner: The Red Sea's Pajama Slug feeds in groups, and can be regularly encountered in reefs there, many times on the magnificent red fire sponge.





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Early Thursday morning, I dropped my parents off at the airport (they were going to the Galapagos and wouldn't take me, so I went to Eastport instead) and my kids (four-legged ones) off at the kennel. I then proceeded north to pick up Mary and further north to pick up Amy. We arrived Thursday evening after a 4 to 5 hour drive through the wilds of Maine. Jonathan gave us a quick orientation and tour of Woody Beach, just across the street from his home, followed by a slide show featuring many of the creatures we would be seeing on our dives. We particularly noticed during the orientation the emphasis on being in the water at the specific time we were told to be there, or we would miss out on the dive. The reason for this: as noted above, Eastport has the greatest tides in the United States. Because of this, when the tide is running, the currents are too strong to dive, unless you want to go out to sea or up the river with the tide. Therefore, in Eastport, diving is limited to slack tide only. Slack tide lasts no more than an hour so if you are not in the water at the beginning of slack, you will miss out on much of the dive.

So, after a quick breakfast Friday morning, we suited up at the house, walked across the street and down the path to the beach and all managed to be standing waist-deep in the water at Woody Beach at the appointed time. We were given a quick description of the layout of the bottom, told where the critters were, and followed our leaders out into the deep. Following the sloping bottom a short distance out, our first hint of what was to come was a wall starting at about 20 feet and going down to about 70 covered with northern red anemones (the kind you see only rarely on Cape Ann) of all sizes and colors.

Snap a bunch of photos and follow the leaders away from the wall and arrive at the home of Jack, one of two resident Wolf-fish that have become used to divers and probably stick around for the free food. Jack is big. I mean, really big. About 5 feet long. But on the shy side. You can swim up to "his" hole, and

"he" will look at you with a confused, suspicious look on his face. Feed "him" a couple of the abundant horse whelks in the area and "he" may come out of "his" hole a bit to take the snack. After 8 divers have harassed "him" for a while, we all head over to visit Jean. Jean is smaller, only about 3 feet long, but still formidable looking. Jean is not shy. Jean likes to eat horse whelks very much. Even with a crowd of divers around, "she" will come completely out of "her" hole to take the bait. The best time to visit Jean is when only one or two divers are around. Then "she" really comes out of "her" shell. "She" will come out of "her" hole completely looking for food. If you aren't holding food, "she" will try to nibble on any attachment that might be food, like clips that are hanging from your gear. Even though "she" should know you don't have food, "she" still seems to like the company and will swim within touching distance, although it may not be such a good idea to touch "her", considering "her" prominent incisors. These fish have no problem eating sea urchins and whelks with their shells still on. You can imagine what they can do to your hand.

A couple of quick notes here about Jack and Jean. First, nobody knows what gender they are. Jack is Jack because "he" is the larger of the two. Jean is Jean, because, obviously, "she" is the smaller one. These fish do not co-habitate, although they live relatively close to each other, so it is possible that they are both the same gender. In case you are wondering, they are named after a couple of Jonathan's in-laws, who I am told are quite flattered by this. Also, when feeding these fish, only "bait" that is found in the area is fed to them – that is, only their natural food.

There are three limiting factors regarding how long you are in the water in Eastport: the tide; air supply; and water temperature. I know for several of us, water temperature was more limiting than the other two, the water temperature being a balmy thirty-something. So, after some 50 minutes in the water, we all exited as the tide was changing. Half an hour later,



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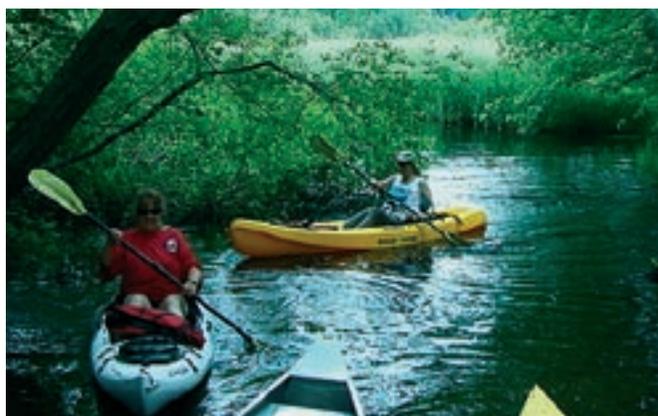
Aqua-Lung's Other Brands

It has not been long since Aqua-Lung acquired Apeks Corporation, makers of top-shelf regulators that are highly regarded among the wreck diving community in particular. The Titan line of Aqua-Lung regulators has itself only been around for the last couple of years. With this in mind, I asked the Product Manager for Regulators what Aqua-Lung's rationale was for a new line of regulators. Tom told me that other companies were not standing still in incorporating new technologies and features into their leading edge regulators. He explained that a few years ago, Aqua Lung saw the bar being raised on performance amongst some competitors and felt the need to participate in the "high end" when it comes to performance. In 1997, Aqua Lung purchased Apeks Marine, located in England. Apeks was no stranger to high end, high performance regulators. Then as now, Apeks is the #1 best selling regulator in Germany, the UK and other countries around Europe. Since then, Aqua Lung engineers have been working with Apeks engineers to develop a new line of top-end Aqua Lung regulators. The Legend series is the result of their collaboration. Some of the best features of Apeks were incorporated along with many new innovations. The top-of-the-line Aqua-Lung Legend Supreme LX actually has a slightly higher retail price than the top-of-the-line Apex ATX 200. That surprised me.

Conclusion

Like any new piece of equipment, the Legend regulator required the user to become familiar with its features. It breathes comfortably at depth even with its cold water biased calibration. I discovered this during the Bimini trip with the dive club in March where we had made several dives at depths exceeding one hundred feet. Diving locally, problems were minor ranging from free flowing upon returning from a beach dive (simply caused from sand) to a slightly bigger problem on a dive at Old Garden Beach when my tank emptied prematurely owing to air loss from the

first stage. This turned out to be a minor fix as it was only a distorted internal o-ring from the DIN adapter. This could have occurred as an after-market event when the original yoke adapter was replaced with the DIN. Replacement of that o-ring solved the only glitch I have encountered with the regulator. I have been diving with this regulator for over six months as of this writing and have been delighted with its performance and reliability since.



Kayaks - better for diving - accompany canoes - better for partying - on the annual Ipswich River run. © 2002 Daryl Findlay



Paul Dumas guards the grill at the annual canoe trip on the Ipswich River. Bill Gannett prepares to steal a weiner. Great weather and great company was enjoyed by Froggies during this late June Event © 2002 Daryl Findlay



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we tried at the event: A new ringed dry glove system DUI might import and a Full face mask from Ocean Reef scuba. The gloves were nice and warm (of course the pond water at the event was not as cold as the ocean). They also had removable liners (nice if you get them wet or need to bulk up the thermal material). The full-face mask is another story, it took some time to adjust the straps to a point that the mask didn't feel like it was floating off my face (two times the air volume of a normal mask I think). With time and a few more dives I feel the Full-Face mask would become very easy to use and wear. I tried the mask (with an underwater communication system) in the pond with Paul Sauvageau (also sporting the mask). We spend most of our time in the pond just trying to find each other as the silt brought visibility down to a brown impenetrable haze. It was a odd form of the old "Marco" "Polo" game I played in the pool as a kid, we could talk to each other but had no clue if we were coming or going. For Lunch Faith's Step Father brought a roast pig, potato salad, and other goodies for hungry divers.

Paul and I stayed late to help them pack up and get stuff ready for the next days events, I also got a last chance to say good bye to my favorite dry suit. Boy I miss that Suit (Sob).

Fishy Froggie (REEF) ID Class: This was a great presentation by Bob Michelson, members learned a lot about how to identify the sea critters we see during our dives. Though the material can get dry after awhile, we all enjoyed the experience and the opportunity to help monitor what is happening to our oceans resources and inhabitants. Yet another great presentation arranged by Amy Maurer.

A Frogs Night In: What happens when you gather a bunch of Frogs in one room for a party, well only pictures can truly describe the ensuing fun. Roslyn Smith organized an awesome tropical beach theme party, complete with reggae music, grass skirts, leis, Mardi Gras beads, palm trees, hula girls (several

counting the paper cutout one), beach balls, and appropriately dresses Frogs in Hawaiian print clothing. The food was also top rate, as a potluck affair, members brought their favorite dishes and deserts to share. It was a great time all around, just as good or better then our Holiday Banquette and cheaper.

Frogs on the River: Many moons ago Captain Ray Porter and his trusty first mate (Me) set off on an excellent adventure, canoeing the Ipswich River. We encountered many hazards along the way, including bunches of rowdy Frogs in and on kayaks and canoes. These encounters sometimes required a more than liberal dose of water from our trusty super soakers to affect an escape, all ended peacefully (after we dried off that is). For lunch we pulled into a small island and members setup a charcoal barbecue, so we had hamburgers, hotdogs, and all the fixings. After lunch we refilled our soakers and hit the river again, but this time in pursuit of another well armed canoe. A brief sneak attack and our target was completely soaked and we moved on to once again enjoy the rivers scenery. It took some time too navigate the river, as it snakes through the wildlife preserve. Along the way we saw many different types of birds (all I can't really identify, but all neat in their own way). I thank Bill Gannett for arranging such a fun and wet time on the river.

Frogs Hit the Beach: A horde of Frogs descended on Whites Beach in Manchester for a cookout party. When I say a horde of Frogs, I mean more members that I have ever seen at a normal meeting; it was a truly great turn out for our club. The event was organized by Paul Sauvageau and the permits for the event were acquired by Dave Metrano (now of the Manchester Police Department). We had several tables of food and two gas grills running to fill our members with all types of burgers, sausages, chicken, and fish dishes. To my recollection, no lobsters were cooked at the event, but we did have two of our members dive from the beach (I think they bagged a few of the Crustaceans before dusk). After night fell, we did have a problem with the mosquitoes (skeeters), so we didn't stay too long after dark. It was a great

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time, maybe beach meetings should become more common during summer months, and a diving club should spend time closer to the water when we can. I would like to thank all the members that brought tables, grills, food, deserts, supplies, and their families to this event, you all made this one of our best beach meetings yet.

Again I would like to thank all the members that contributed their time or materials to the events above, with your help we can continue to keep our club at its best.

Dive News

New parking restrictions at Loblolly Cove and Pebble Beach: Half of Pebble Beach's parking is now designated as Resident Only (The remaining half that is still open for non-residents is the far right pebble section, with no sand until you get in the water). In a related change, the three parking places along the road to Loblolly Cove are now Resident Only. This means if you want to dive either dive site, you will need to park on the far side of Pebble Beach.

From what I have seen this change will eventually happen to Old Garden Beach soon also, based on the number of divers and student divers I see there on the weekends. Many residents in the Rockport area are already pushing for the change.

Club News

Our Vice-President Dave Metrano has recently accepted a position on the Manchester Police Department. He has been hoping to get back into public service for sometime, so he is really happy about the position. Unfortunately he will not be able to attend our meetings since the position is during the evenings, so I have appointed Michael Donovan to acting Vice-President for the remainder of the term. Dave will hopefully still be helping us with permits for our events and the Club picnic. He might also stop by some of our weekend events when he is not running his helix mooring business. Best of luck to both of

them.

2002 Beach Clean-Up: Coast Sweep of Niles Beach will start at 10:00 AM on September 21st

(The event rain date is 9/28). If you have questions about the event Please Contact Dave Smith for details. During the day some club members will be breaking off to clean Lane's Cove and maybe Magnolia Rocks. Just remember that the club has agreed to clean Niles Beach, so lets make sure that beach has enough people left to finish.

The 2002 Club Picnic: I would like to hear some suggestions on how we can improve the event. Also what has worked in the past as far as food that is will we have a lobster hunting party needing a boiling pot for their catch? Who can donate a grill for the day (we need at least two)?

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

- * Nitrox for You: The benefits and misconceptions of using enriched Air in diving.
- * Beyond PADI : A presentation on extended training. What is technical Diving? A look at some of the equipment used for diving some of the most impressive wrecks and underwater structures.
- * New marine life and diving video presentations. Experience places most of us can only dream about diving.
- * 2002 Cape Hatteras, North Carolina: Wreck Diving video (New video currently in the works by your Pres.). Features guest cameraman Paul Blanchette on his amphibious hydro-motorcycle (DPV, Scooter).
- * 2001 San Diego Diving video (New video currently in the works by your Pres.).
- * The latest Eastport Dive Trip report and presentation with brand new slides, pictures and video.
- * More great original Sea Hunt episodes. See Mike Nelson catch sharks with his teeth while bringing



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down a smuggling ring. If you have other suggestions for club movie night, please contact me.

* Club boat dives to sites many sites up and down the New England coast. It is still my hope that members take advantage of the many diving charters we have available to us.

I would like once again to call on all our Froggie members to lend a hand this year, so we can all enjoy in the fun. Even the smallest donation of time or thought goes a long way to improving the club, here are a few ways in which you can help:

* Submit a paragraph, article, picture or suggestion for the club newsletter or web page, this could simply be something small written on paper or a picture and brought to a meeting.

* Participate in club dives this year, most require no more than 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.

* When a new member or guest comes to the club, try to 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.

Thank You. See you on the wet side soon.

Daryl 'FIN' Findlay



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and the current made the water undiveable.

After a few hours of lazing around, eating lunch, changing film and swapping tanks, we were ready for our next dive – same location, low tide instead of high. Since the tide was low, we had about a hundred extra yards to walk across seaweed covered rocks to get to the water. At high tide, Jack and Jean were in about 60 feet of water; at low tide, about 35 feet. Everybody visited Jack and Jean again, but we all started exploring a bit more. Again we were impressed by the number and colors of northern red anemones, as well as orange-footed sea cucumbers, stalked tunicates, sea peaches and hydroids.

After the dive, we rinsed our gear and took a leisurely walk around the area, taking in the great views of Campobello (Canada) across the bay, and Lubec, Maine (1 mile by sea, 1 hour by car). After our walk, we had a pleasant dinner at the local Mexican restaurant followed by exciting (moan, yawn) viewing of Monty Python's Search for the Holy Grail. Although the movie was not nearly as good as we all remembered when we were viewing it for the first time when we were much younger and under the influence of something other than Diet Coke and grape soda, there were some pretty sad renditions of certain scenes going around the next day. Then it was early to bed to be ready for the dive the next morning.

Next day, we dove the Eastport Town Pier. If you have ever dove the Town Pier or the Salt Pier in Bonaire, you would notice many similarities. At the bottom (50 feet or so) there was debris from a couple of hundred years of "civilization" – bicycles, tires, broken bottles, and other debris. On the pilings, however, lived myriad, colorful creatures that many of us have never seen before. Various nudibranchs, tunicates, winged stars, anemones and sea cucumbers. A macro-photographers paradise. After snapping of a quick couple of rolls of film, it was a wonderful sight to see Gator, who hadn't made the dive, standing on the dock ready to help with the gear. After the

dive, all of the tanks (about 20 of them) were loaded into John's van and he and Jonathan went to Calais (1 hour drive) to fill them all. They said the folks at the shop said they rarely get that many tanks to fill in a week. For the rest, laziness, lunch and another dive at Woody Beach (except Al who took a 40 mile bike ride and missed the next dive). After a wonderful supper of Gator's Beef Stroganoff, we all watched Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (much more enjoyable than Monty Python) and off to bed.

Next day, Canada. Well, we didn't quite go to Canada – the ferry wasn't running yet, so we went out on the boat of a local fisherman Deer Island in Canada for what was the most exciting dive of the weekend. The boat skirted "Old Sow", the 2nd largest whirlpool in the world, and anchored off the island. We waited for the appointed time to enter the water, fell in, descended, and waited for the tide to go slack. The abundance of marine life here was spectacular – every rock was covered by anemones and sea cucumbers; lobsters of several pounds were common (no, John, you cannot take them). However, like I said, when we hit bottom, we waited for slack tide. I guess there must have been a slack tide because you suddenly noticed that the tide was moving the opposite way it was going when you entered the water. Somewhere there must have been a slack when the current was switching, but nobody remembers it. On top of this, everything started getting dark, and it took a while to realize that all the flashes of light you were seeing were not camera strobes, but lightning. We hung (literally) onto the bottom for a while waiting for the worst

of the storm to pass and still hoping for something resembling slack tide. Eventually one of us gave up and gave the ascend signal. We hit the surface and let the 2 knot current carry us back to the boat where with some difficulty and a lot of help from others on the boat, we were able to climb the ladder (to those who went on the previous weekend, yes, guys, eat your heart out, there was a brand new, wonderful, ladder – no climbing over the side of the boat or using the winch to get back into the boat) and get out of the water. As exciting as this sounds, and after hanging on for dear life to a drop line and another diver for a several minutes, I am eagerly looking forward to diving this spot again.

The last dive of the trip was Sunday evening back at Woody Beach. After a quick "hello/good-bye" to Jack and Jean, a few of us headed out to deeper water in search of new critters. We were treated to views of soft corals, basket stars, horse stars, rose fish, 4-inch nudibranchs and all the other usual marine life.

Then it was time to pack away the gear and load most of it into John's van. Then supper, lots of talk and late to bed. Next morning we all took off, promising ourselves we would return soon to enjoy more of Eastport's attractions both above and below the surface.



A Note from The Editor

It has been some time since we last saw one another in this forum. I understand that some in the club are a bit upset that there has been no Air Bubbles published since May of 2002. Although I too am disturbed by that fact, it would appear that my perceptions and those of my brothers and sisters in the club, as to the reasons for its absence, are askew. Therefore, unlike 98% of the members, I have set pen to paper (or more precisely digits to keyboard) and actually submitted an article to Air Bubbles.

If there are really and truly any members who think the club is being held hostage, they should relax. There has been nothing to publish since May or it would have been published. If anyone thinks otherwise, they are invited to take over.

For anyone thinking about stepping up and taking over, or for those not familiar with how a newsletter works, let me explain the process. An editor formulates a style for the paper, and sets a general tone. Then, depending upon the institution, he or she assigns articles to individuals, accepts them from the public, or as I do, begs, wheedles and cajoles whoever he can into writing whatever they will. This editor often composes articles himself; either because he has something to say about diving or the club, or, at other times, because it beats cleaning the garage. Once there is sufficient material, the editor then “edits” the material. This involves spelling and grammar correction, and on occasion, removing what we in the business call “naughty parts.”

Then, the newsletter is layed-out. This is the part where, in the old days, we would type it all up, smelt lead and make letters, print it in columns, cut it into strips, gum up the backs, and stick it all on a board. These days, we have computers to do all the smelting, cutting and sticking for us. I just sharpen up the modem and drip a little candle wax inside, and, like Harry Blackstone used to say *voila!*

Then, because Harry Blackstone was a magician, the newsletter copies itself, folds itself, staples itself and

mails itself. All this, while humming *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice!*

But, since Harry died, its been going a little differently. What happens is this: I edit the articles, I adjust and crop photographs to fit, I lay it out so it fits on a page, and I print it out and proof read it.

Then, I make adjustments and print out a final copy. That copy is then reproduced, folded and stapled, labelled, stamped and mailed. Sometimes, by myself, and sometimes with the help of one or two other club members. It is also emailed and posted to the web in PDF format.

The labels come, all printed and accurate, from the label bush in my back yard. I just mulch it with old copies of the phone book, and the new labels all come out with up-to-date addresses for all the active members. Unfortunately the label bush has a season like oysters, and during any month with a vowel in it, we can’t use its fruit. Instead, your president, treasurer, and membership chairman trade various emails, trying to keep one another informed, and I hand edit the mailing list before printing the labels.

The result (after many many hours, which I do not begrudge) is Air Bubbles, the newsletter of the North Shore Frogmen’s club; you are holding an actual size replica in your hand at this very moment. And, as I have written and said before, I am happy to be the Air Bubbles editor, and will be pleased to continue to serve the club in this manner.

But, there are some ground rules, and I think we all need to be clear about this:

1. No Articles, No Air Bubbles. I did not sign up to be a secretary. If the club wants a calendar to go out monthly, the club should arrange for someone to do that. I would have to question the wisdom of such a decision; the calendar has changed nary a whit since it was first published. Updates, like the who’s and what’s of the club presentation nights are handled at the web site, but hardly merit a special mailing.

2. I Will Not Print What I Do Not Have. It would

be kind of cool if I could, but if I don't have a president's message, or meeting minutes, or a reminder about some event, I won't be including them in a newsletter. I don't think that would surprise anyone, and should answer every single question that begins with "Where's the..."

3. Articles Do Not Write Themselves. If I had a newsletter article for every time someone said to me "Hey, there should be an article about ..." I would have more articles than Niles Beach has cigarette butts. But, you know what? They don't, and I don't. In fact, this edition of Air Bubbles contains every article that has been submitted to it since May of this year.

4. I Know That You Know That I Know That You Know. In other words, I have asked repeatedly for articles. I have actually personally requested specific articles from specific people, *some* of which I received. Most of which I haven't. I have asked, in general at every meeting I have attended. I have stated that I will not put out Air Bubbles without articles. I have read the minutes of meetings that I have not attended. Every set of meeting minutes indicates that club members were asked for articles, given the deadline, and told that no issue would be forthcoming if there were no articles. Previous editions of Air Bubbles have contained those minutes. You were all put on notice. So please, don't act surprised, disappointed, or angry. As I said, I know that you know that I know that you know...

5. I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore. Just like the Young Rascals said it, I'm not going to worry about whether or not you write articles. When there are enough articles to make it worth the time to do all the rest of what it takes to put out an Air Bubbles, I'll do it. When there isn't, I won't. No anger, sadness, recriminations or blame... but also no Air Bubbles. As Donny & Marie said, "I'm Leavin' It All Up To You." (For the copyright paranoids out there, titles can't be protected, so yes legally, I can do this. Morally, I should stop.) That's all I have to say on this topic. I'll just *Let It Be. Oops...I Did It Again...*

In closing, I encourage everyone in the club, and anyone else who reads this newsletter to get off your thumbs and write something! It's not that hard and it will contribute to continuing a rich and varied experience for all the rest of the North Shore Frogmen's Club and diving enthusiasts around the world who receive this by E-mail or via the world wide web.

Here is a method that anyone can use to write an article for Air Bubbles: Write a list of 5 things you would like to tell people (about diving Cape Hatteras, for instance)

1. The ride was long/short
2. The place we stayed was...
3. The water temperature was
4. We saw some fish like...
5. We ate and drank...

Then start to fill it out

1. The ride was not so bad... We left at 4 in the morning ...So and so was in the car We brought... with us
2. The house is nice... I slept on the floor. The cat didn't bite me very much. They have cable TV
3. The water is cold... We had to drill through the ice... My dry suit stayed dry...Even Jeannie was comfortable...
4. We saw some fish: wolf fish, fox fish, chicken fish, rabbit fish...even some of those little things that Daryl always swims by too fast... lobsters as big as Volkswagens...
5. We ate and drank... We ate [this] food... We drank [these] liquids... We sang songs around the campfire

Then, it gets easier. Start turning each little item into a real English paragraph. Let the words flow, like you were telling someone something! Just the outline above could turn out to be a couple page story. Especially if there were pictures.

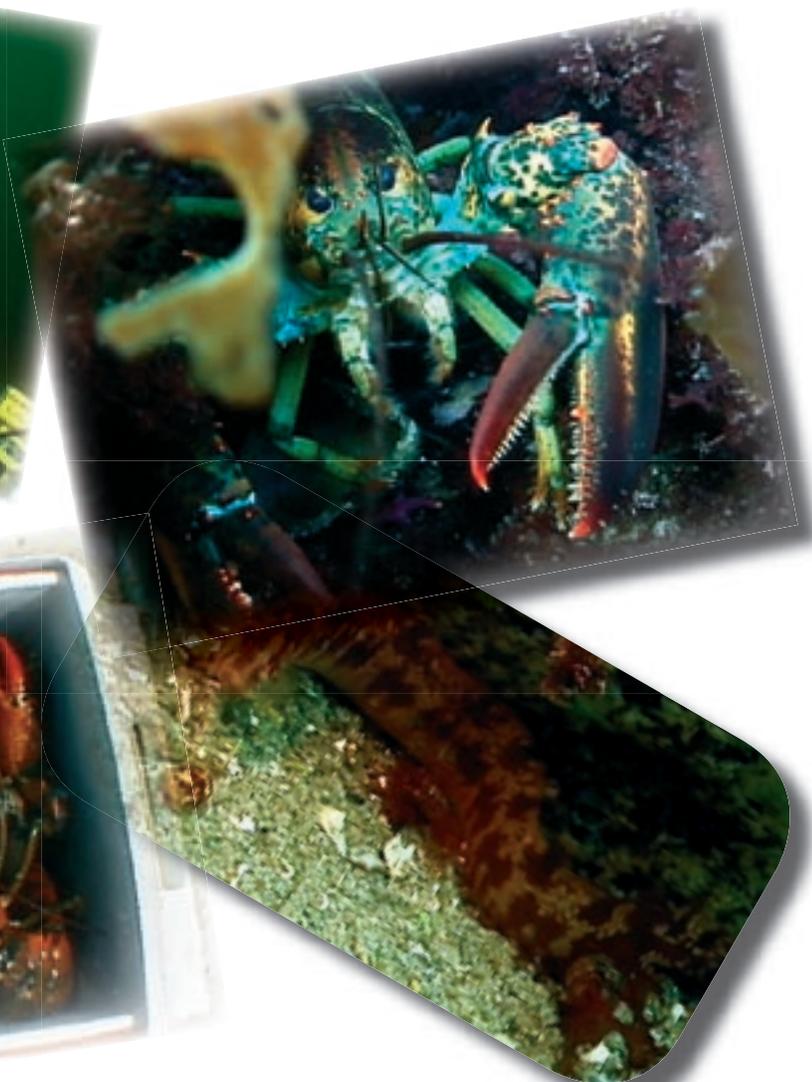
This 5 things/fill it out method will work for anyone, and not just about Cape Hatteras. Give it a try!



Summer Scenes



Cape Ann 2002



Small Office/Home Computers

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Visit our web site at <http://www.northshorefrogmen.com>

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

- Sep 18 (Wed) Night dive; meet at Back Beach; enter water at 7:15 * (see Roslyn Smith)
Sep 19 (Thu) Presentation: Stellwagon National Marine Sanctuary
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
Oct 16 (Wed) Night dive; meet at Back Beach; enter water at 6:30 (see Roslyn Smith)
Oct 26 (Sat) Halloween party
Oct 27 (Sun) Pumpkin carving dive; Stage Fort Park, Gloucester (see Jeannie Rahilly / John M)
Nov 28 (Thu) No meeting; Thanksgiving
Dec 5 (Thu) Elections
Dec 7 (Sat) Banquet; FAC (see Nancy Gannett)
Dec 26 (Thu) Pizza party; no business

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