



ESTEC SWIMMING & SUB-AQUA CLUB

www.geocities.com/estecessac

Christmas 2005 Newsletter

* First Edition



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We try to produce a newsletter each March, June, September and December. Contributions should reach the editor by the end of each preceding month.

**Updated versions of the newsletter, though automatically posted on our website, will not necessarily be distributed by email.*

Such updates, following on from the first edition contain corrections and/or information previously unavailable or overlooked.



Editorial

A mystery involving the six week disappearance and reappearance of the club notice board has not been answered. The board resides at the Sterrenbad of course, and has done for more than 25 years. In midsummer it went 'walk-a-bout'. Neither the pool staff or us had any idea where it was.

Its prime function originally was to carry info such as dive marshal listings, BSAC notes, things for sale, social updates etc. Today's e-mail technology seems to have put a stop to that! A resulting strong argument has been triggered as to whether the notice board is any longer necessary? Somewhere to park our newsletters seems to be its only function these days. Any comments?

A pair of happy pictures taken just a few days ago at our Christmas 2005 dinner and dance. As you can see we separated the girls from the boys, briefly, for these shots. A bit more about what we got up to can be found in Social Matters.



Hello ladies!



Hello gentlemen!

I am delighted that Loretta has chosen to remember us at this season with an ode 'especially written for this Christmas' - as brilliantly perceptive as ever!

There have been rumblings regarding my editorship of this newsletter and, from what I think I hear, perhaps with some justification. The content it seems is not to everybody's taste.

As much as I enjoy my involvement in the production of this rag, my biggest headache has always been the acquisition of sufficient material to fill (my) target minimum of six pages each issue. I therefore resort, more often than I would wish, to padding things out with anecdotes and yarns. When this happens my rule normally is that somewhere water is involved. I have never, I hasten to add, rejected contributions that compliment what we hope is the genial nature of the letter. Badgering on the lead up to publication rarely brings much in the way of page-filling text and/or photos therefore, what you always see is the best any editor can do with the material offered. Anyway, it is gratifying when we receive, as we sometimes do, comments of approval.

As for the 'Is This Funny?' feature in this issue . . . I have to say that there has been a great response to my request for jokes. So-much-so that I've had to leave out several, usually on the grounds that they are even longer (or dirtier) than the ones that do appear. Never fear though. The best have been filed away for future use - maybe!

I've said it before and I will say it again - I love Christmas! The little boy in me lives on. The whole tree, presents, over-eating, decorations, Bing Crosby singing White Christmas (yet again) are things I will never grow weary of. Whether you think like me or not please, please have a great Christmas and cracking new year.

Phil Baker



From the Chair

Quite astonishingly well in excess of half a year has already passed since Con McCarthy cunningly twisted my arm to make me accept standing for ESSAC Chair position. The rest is history. The competition was so meagre that the Annual General Meeting saw no other option but electing me.

So what is the news? As I started to ponder what to write in my promised contribution for the Christmas Newsletter edition the news about the terrible tragedy of Penny and Jacques reached me. I have decided, however, to deal with that separately. As profound a personal shock as it was and is for many of us, it still does not concern every member of the Club.

Those of you who were present at the AGM will remember that an extremely worrying issue was economy. Here I have good news. The Club has been very well treated by the SSCC in

the re-allocation activities this year. There was a worry that rules would be applied that would severely limit the amount we could hope to get (in simple terms, you get a fraction of your membership income, rather than a fraction of your costs), this has not been the case, at least not for this year. If eventually the rules are changed, this will most likely have very important consequences for our Club, but at least for another year we are OK.

Another cloud in the sky is the willingness to help on the Committee. This year we have no Expeditions Officer at all, and the Equipment Officer has been on long term sick leave - although I am glad to be able to say that Martin is now back working - putting additional load on other people, and recently the Treasurer had to quit her position. When I asked the membership for help there were no offers. Gratefully Wim van Leeuwen will take on being Treasurer, however, the SSCC rules say you must be a staff member and Wim is retiring.

This brings me to the AGM in the spring. I believe that normal procedure in our Club is that the sitting Committee finds replacements for those who do not intend to stay for re-election. A better 'more democratic' procedure is that an independent person or small group does this, then presents the results to the Membership at the AGM where the new committee is elected.

Concerning the Club activities, swimming, snorkelling, and diver training and diving, it seems to me that we are doing fine. The new intake of diver trainees have just started their training, sharing the pool with the snorkellers, which is full of swimmers afterwards.

I would like to raise an idea, an old one as it were. During my first years as a member of the Club in the first half of the 1990-ies, the highlight of the year in the Club was the 'Aqua-Delta Weekend'. The ADW? I hear new members asking. The ADW was a long (4-day) spring weekend where the diver trainees (the 'novices' as they were called in those days) got the opportunity to get a headstart in their open water diving with up to 7-8 dives in a single event. But it was much more than that. It was a big social event with perhaps 30 plus people spending a long weekend in sunny Zeeland (often in a bungalowpark called 'Aqua-Delta' therefore the name) enjoying themselves in general using the diving event as an excuse - probably the divers were only a minority in numbers. One evening there was always a mega-BRBBQ event with the queue for Jeff's trifle as the last point of firm reference. If there are others

like me who would like to explore the possibility of organising an ADW in the spring of 2006 - please let me know.*

And now, the most important reason for writing this contribution in the first place which is to wish all ESSAC members, your families, and your friends : A Very Merry Christmas and A Very Happy, Successful, and Prosperous New Year and safe swimming and Diving,

Göran

** Count the families Baker and Tatman in. Ed.*



Is This Funny? (or Have You Heard This One?)

A bit topical this one:

A recent survey of the three most terrifying sounds from the animal kingdom, in reverse order, are :

- A lion roaring
- A snake hissing
- A duck sneezing.

Bryan

Two tomatoes are walking along a road. Suddenly a car runs over one them. Says the other : 'Come on ketchup, let's go.'

Göran

A man walking on a beach found a bottle that had been washed up. On removing the stopper a genie came out and said ' I can grant you one wish'. After thinking for a moment the man wished for a road-bridge that could take him all the way to Australia so that he could visit his family as often as he liked. The genie immediately refused saying that such a wish was impossible and the man must make another choice. Thinking again the man asked for the ability to understand the mind of a woman. The genie replied, "How many lanes do you want on the bridge"?

Sharon

Many years ago when such things were new, a young vacuum cleaner salesman was finding the door-to-door market around town a bit crowded. He decided to head for the hills.

The sales technique was simple. After talking his way into a potential clients living room he would begin by throwing a large handful of dirt (ashes, sawdust, soot that sort of thing) into the middle of the housewife's prized deep-pile carpet. Satisfied that she was suitably shocked, he would then proceed to vacuum away the mess to the lady's huge relief and, hopefully close the deal.

Driving up into the hills for several miles our intrepid entrepreneur spotted a neat little cottage. The middle aged farm laborers wife answered the door, still drying her hands on a tea towel (bread baking day) and, being a bit taken a-back by the sales pitch on an otherwise dull day, allowed the salesman into her living room. Anxious for a sale he threw an extra large handful of the dirt onto the lady's pristine carpet. Looking the lady in the eye he noted that there was no sign of shock - just a calm, gentle, sympathetic look. Pressing on with his pitch, looking around, vacuum cleaner plug in hand, when the lady spoke up.

"We're not on the electricity up here!"

Phil

President Bush was visiting a primary school and he visited one of the classes. They were in the middle of a discussion related to words and their meanings. The teacher asked the President if he would like to lead the discussion on the word 'tragedy'. So the illustrious leader asked the class for an example of a 'tragedy'. One little boy stood up and offered:

"If my best friend, who lives on a farm, is playing in the field and a tractor runs over him and kills him, that would be a tragedy."

"No", said Bush, "that would be an accident."

A little girl raised her hand: "If a school bus carrying 50 children drove over a cliff, killing everyone inside, that would be a tragedy." "I'm afraid not", explained the president. "That's what we would call a great loss." With that the room went silent. No other children volunteered. Bush searched the room.

"Isn't there someone here who can give me an example of a tragedy?" Finally at the back of the room a small boy raised his hand . . . In a quiet voice he said: "If Air Force One carrying you and Mrs. Bush was struck by a "friendly fire" missile and blown to smithereens, that would be a tragedy." "Fantastic!" exclaimed Bush. "That's right. And can you tell me why that would be tragedy?"

"Well", says the boy, "It has to be a tragedy, because it certainly wouldn't be a great loss and it probably wouldn't be a f*cking accident either".

John

A Swede, a Dane, and a Norwegian are captured during the French revolution, and are about to be executed in the guillotine.

The Swede volunteers to be the first, 'For the King of Sweden' he shouts as he is tied onto the guillotine. The blade is released, but as by a wonder, it gets stuck just above the neck

of the Swede. The French revolutionary authorities regards this as the will of God, and the Swede is released.

The Dane is second, 'For the King of Denmark' he shouts as he is tied onto the guillotine. The guillotine is checked, but no problem is found. The blade is released, but again as by a wonder, it gets stuck just above the neck of the Dane. The French revolutionary authorities regards this as another wish from God, and also the Dane is reluctantly released.

The Norwegian is last. He asks for the courtesy of a last wish, he wants to be tied on his back on the guillotine so that he faces upwards. His wish is granted, and he is placed on his back, and tied, while the guillotine is thoroughly checked. Suddenly everyone hears the Norwegian screaming: 'I can see the problem, I can see the problem....!'

Göran

A little boy goes to his dad and asks, "What are Politics?" Dad says, "Well son, let me try to explain it this way:

1. I'm the head of the family, so call me The President.
 2. Your mother is the administrator of the money, so we call her the Government.
 3. We're here to take care of your needs, so we'll call you the People.
 4. The nanny, we'll consider her the Working Class.
 5. Your baby brother, we'll call him the Future.
- ... now think about that and see if it makes sense." So the little boy goes off to bed thinking about what his Dad had said.

Later that night, he hears his baby brother crying, so he gets up to check on him.

He finds that the baby has severely soiled his diaper. So the little boy goes to his parent's room and finds his mother sound asleep. Not wanting to wake her, he goes to the nanny's room. Finding the door locked, he peeks in the keyhole and sees his father in bed with the nanny. He gives up and goes back to bed. The next morning, the little boy says to his father, "Dad, I think I understand the concept of politics now." The father says, "Good, son, tell me in your own words what you think politics is all about." The little boy replies:

"The President is screwing the Working Class, While the Government is sound asleep. The People are being ignored and the Future is in deep shit!"

Tiree



A CHRISTMAS FANTASY 2005

It was Christmas Day in Scotland
And the haggis were roaming free.
They had, they knew, till Burns Night
To enjoy their liberty.

The snow was lying ten feet deep
And the keening wind blew sere,
When struggling through the blizzard
Did a figure gaunt appear.

"No, I'm not The Ghost of Christmas Past",
It feebly tried to say.
"Nor yet of Winter Festivity Future -
I'm The Ghost of Christmas Cliché.

It's me, yes me, responsible
For all this ruddy snow,
For tinsel and those ghastly songs
You wish you didn't know.

But I've had enough - with "Christmas Shops"
Selling year-round Season's Tat -
Of Dickens junk and sentiment.
THAT, as they say, is THAT.

So, there's arsenic in the fat man's tea
And loosened bolts on the sleigh.
I've put ketamine in Rudolph's feed -
No, really - he's had his day.

There'll be no more ersatz TV cheer.
I've pulled the plug on commercial wishes.
I've burnt all twee teddy-Santa cards
And there'll be strictly HEALTHY dishes.

And me? I'm off to warmer climes.
The Amazon could be good.
I'll swing in a hammock by the mighty flow,
Whittling bits of wood."

The spectre trudged off down the hill.
I was turning back to my gift-wrapping
business,
When stopping and loudly blowing its nose,
It shouted, "A merry Christmas!"

Loretta



Training Matters

A new year of training begun. After a number of weeks of try-dives in the Sterrenbad, there were 13 potential students for novice and cross-over training, (even before advertising the course !), so we had to make a choice of whom to offer a place.

The priorities for selection were agreed between the DO, TO, and the Chair, and basically were to give priority to people we

could hope would become long-lasting members of the Club, and eventually give something back as e.g. instructors or Committee members in the future. (As Göran said, we need to identify the people who eventually will be replacing us!).

Finally, on the 26th of November the Scuba Diving Training started, with the following students:

1. Michel Van Pelt
2. Stefania Monni
3. Verle Sterken
4. Benoit Dutilleul - crossing over from PADI OW
5. Francisco Reina - starting in January 2006
6. Nuria Blanco Delgado
7. David Exposito Cossio
8. David Fernandez Prim

They are all very motivated students, with good feeling of the water. We have already held three pool sessions and two theory classes.



Pool training - Stefania and Manuela

I would like to thank all the instructors who are supporting the course: Göran, Peter, John, Mario, Luis and Anthony, and wish them a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2006, full of diving in wonderful coral reefs all around the world!

For Penny :

It was September 2003, we gathered from Holland and North Germany in Brunssum, to participate in the Instructors Foundation Course.

It was the first time I'd met Penny Glover, she was the hectic organiser of the two days course. Through theory lessons and practical sessions in the pool I learnt a lot and, for me, she still lives in the words I always remember when teaching the students. Thanks a lot, Penny.

Manuela



Interested in a Vaarbewijs course in ESTEC?

The ESTEC Sailing Club (ESC) is considering organising a Vaarbewijs course. The Vaarbewijs is the Dutch 'driving' licence for a boat, and is a legal requirement for certain types of boats on all inland waters. In the ESC a Vaarbewijs is needed to drive their safety boat. In ESSAC it is needed to drive our Club boat, the 'Space Diver'. It is possible depending on the interest in the ESC - that interested ESSAC members could be able to join the ESC course. Therefore, any ESSAC member interested please send me an email or call me right away. Below is the message circulated within the ESC:

'The ESC proposes to organize another Vaarbewijs course (theory only) in ESTEC during the winter. The Vaarbewijs covers inland waterway topics and is legally required for driving the club safety boat. It is also the easiest way to obtain the "International Certificate of Competence", which is increasingly needed to charter yachts outside of the Netherlands. The course would follow the pattern of the course organized in Spring 2005. That means there would be approximately nine lessons held in the training centre and starting at 18:00. Most likely I'll hold it on Wednesday evening starting end of January until end of March, due to availability of the teacher. The course is open to all ESC members (currently non-members can join the club as cruising members to be eligible to participate in the course). Price will depend on the number of students, but will be around €150 plus some cost for material used. The exam can be taken in Dutch (written) or English (oral). The course will be in English.

One peculiarity used to be that only people that have been resident for five years in NL can get the "International Certificate of Competence".

The minimum number of participants is 10-15 (TBC). I will ask someone from the participants to look after the course organisation once it has "kicked off". Let me know by email if you are interested. Once I know the numbers, I'll get in contact with the teacher and pass on further details. Payment will not be required before that time'.

End of ESC message.

Göran



Penny and Jacques

As I write these words it is three weeks to the day since the horrible events that took the lives of Penny Glover and Jacques Filippi. Like most of you I first learned about the tragic accident from Jeff's email, and then from the emails from various people that followed, and personal discussions.

Even today, I cannot tell you what happened. Regarding the factual circumstances, this is my understanding of the actual events, it may not be entirely accurate. There were three buddy pairs diving, the divesite was a seamount 55-80m, they were diving from a boat. I do not know the diveplans or equipment of the other two buddy pairs. My understanding is that Penny and Jacques were doing an 80m dive on trimix using closed circuit rebreathers. The other two pairs surfaced normally, the delayed surface marker buoy (DSMB) of Penny and Jacques was deployed, but no divers appeared after the expected surface time. Eventually the DSMB was recovered - without a trace of any divers. At this point alarm was raised, but they were not to be found at the surface despite calm conditions. Surface search by boat and helicopters was carried for the next day and half despite poor weather. Afterwards, weather permitting, searches by divers have been conducted, but due to the depth they were limited in duration, and nothing has been found. A search using an underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) finally started last Friday after the weather improved, but nothing was found. Further searches are expected to take place in the coming days. On what happened and the reasons for it one can only speculate, and this I do not want, nor do I intend, to do.

Instead I am writing these words because I want to look forward. As I indicated in the email I circulated, everyone I have talked to who knew Penny feels that "we need to do something"; "we" here includes both current and former members of the Club. In the Committee we have had some interaction on the subject, two rather different ideas have been proposed so far.

The first is to produce a special edition of the Newsletter entirely devoted to the memory of Penny, the second one is to instigate an annual prize/award/grant to the memory of Penny. But the committee is only a small fraction of the Club, and we would like to hear from you whether you have any comments to these ideas or additional ideas. Please let us know!

It may not be known to everyone in our Club, but Penny also helped in starting the 'Randstad Harings' BSAC branch in Den Haag. Due to the ESTEC branch having special rules about who can join (due to SSCC regulations) another branch was created. Some of us were members of both Clubs for years, and some of us also knew Jacques who was from the 'Randstad Harings'. I have put myself in contact with the 'Randstad Harings', they are in the same situation as we are, they are also discussing "what to do". It may or may not be appropriate that we do something together, depending on how the discussions go in both Clubs. Personally I think the objective of whatever we do should be paying a tribute to the memory of Penny in our Club, and/or - to the extent that is at all possible - providing some consolation to Penny's family. In fact her sister Fiona has actually posted a contribution in a discussion forum saying that she is touched by what several people have posted there.

As I said in my email a couple of days after the accident, it is very difficult to cope with this kind of news. You are taken off guard as it were. I promised to write something in the Newsletter, but what do you say? Most events in life have two sides, if you think hard enough even for very bad ones you eventually find something good, but this one beats me. I knew Penny much better than Jacques, I know she loved diving, perhaps above everything else, so yes, she died doing what she loved. But it still feels feeble and unfair.

Göran



Social Matters

For the benefit of those that weren't there, we held our Christmas dinner and dance on Friday 9 December 2005 at the Auberge de Kieviet, Wassenaar.

The venue was slightly more up-market for us than usual, reflected by a higher ticket price, but the general consensus was that we had value for money.

The menu, though not really Christmassy, was excellent. The final sweet dish caused some concern when reading its description on the menu card. It appeared to consist of three parts, all involving prunes, which proved to be absolutely delicious!

Music was provided by a 'mature' gentleman (sorry, don't have his name) accompanying his own, at times rather spectacular, vocals with one of those modern electric keyboards that can be made to sound

like a full rock band or orchestra. His delivery was mostly 'easy' though some would have preferred a bit more heavy rhythm occasionally. No serious complaints however. All-in-all a good start to our festive season.

By the way, several of the jokes featured in this issues 'Is This Funny?' section were obtained during the evening. One of those hand-held Dictaphone recorders was being passed round for the purpose and some (only some) of the material has been used. The rest are in the newsletter editors archive!



Our committee

Our 2005/2006 elected committee is:

Chairman	Göran Pilbratt
Club Treasurer	Audrey Paterson
BSAC Secretary	Chantal Nolan
Diving Officer	Peter de Maagt
Equipment Officer	Martin de Boer
Expeditions Officer	-
Snorkelling	Wim van Leeuwen
Social Secretary	Katherine Baker
Swimming Officer	Myra Macleod-Nolan
Training Officer	Manuela Baroni

The committee minutes and reports can be viewed on our website under the 'Our Committee' icon.



For Sale

STAB jacket with CO2 bottle in good nick. The regulator is a Poseidon which also looks OK.

Actually there are two small bags of dive equipment. The basics are the vest, a regulator, knife and 9mm gloves plus sets, o-rings, connectors etc. I am happy to give the stuff to the club or a beginner for a small token.

Thorsten Siwitza