



ESTEC SWIMMING & SUB-AQUA CLUB

www.geocities.com/estecessac

March 2007 Newsletter

First Edition



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I did it by writing about my own folk music interests a-while back. This time I offer a little about something that Chris Connor and I are involved in - aerial (real time) video from a radio controlled model aircraft. Yes, we actually succeeded in getting good results so, if you are interested enough, see 'Are We Spying?'.

Finally, this extremely inquisitive and friendly Grey Seal youngster was featured in a previous edition of the newsletter.



Editorial

Word has reached my ear that some pretty serious issues regarding the Essac finances are on the agenda of this years AGM.

Each year we hear of the on-going battle with the SSCC that, even with a friendly face in the hierarchy and a great deal of effort on our part, never seems to eliminate the difficulties. Yet again our Sunday pool is under threat because of the seemingly unfair way that the funding is calculated. All will be made clear at the AGM of course so, I suggest, it is one not to miss.

This edition of the newsletter seems that it may be a thin one - mid March and very little input! So . . . in an effort to pad things out a bit I will resurrect a suggestion that I made last year which, sadly then, got no response, and that is to suggest that club members let us know about their hobbies and interests other than swimming and diving.

To recap, he (or she) wanted a closer look at what John Ives and I were up to, whilst diving in their territory, in the Isles of Scilly in May 2004. Sitting quietly, in about 9m, John took a whole series of photos of the seal over my shoulder. This one has been my, John's and others favoured computer desktop ever since. If you fancy it also, click on the picture for copy from the Essac website.

Phil

From the Chair

As this note is being written the first real 'spring day' of the year is drawing towards late evening. I have just completed my 'Chair's report' for ESSAC to the SSCC; tomorrow I will print it, sign it, scan it back in, and finally email it to the SSCC ensuring the Club has fulfilled all its commitments. Together with a report from the Treasurer (Wim has already done his bit) it constitutes the ESSAC input to the **SSCC AGM** which will take place on 30 March 2007.

The nice weather also brings back memories of sunny days down in Zeeland. Last year unfortunately we 'failed' to bring back to life the old tradition of the 'Aqua-Delta weekend', but this year a new attempt is being made. You have all received invitations from the Expeditions Officer, be sure to answer yes! I have to say though, that the 'substitute' event we did organise last year, the 'Kabbelaar weekend' was a great success. That something will be organised this year too is already perfectly clear! You will also get an invitation from the Swimming Officer for the Gala to be held on Saturday 9 June 2007.

I need to bring up the subject of the **ESSAC AGM**, it will be held on **Saturday 16 June 2007** in 'De Sterrenbad'. You will get a separate notification about this closer to the time, but please, book this morning in your agenda - now! As I announced already in last year's AGM when I was reelected, I am stepping down as Chair of the Club this time. The mission - the Herschel Space Observatory - I have been working on since 1991 (it was known as FIRST then) is scheduled for launch next year, and my professional commitments not only abound but may well also involve me relocating away from ESTEC. Please don't be shy, step forward and talk to me or anybody else on the Committee if you are interested - also for other Committee positions. To be the Chair you do not need to be a diver, but you do need to be an ESTEC staff member.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Göran

Congratulations

Congratulations must go to Chantal Macleod-Nolan on becoming Assistant Diving Instructor! Now, if it wasn't for the horses she would be instructing too!!

The horses reference appears to be a private joke, which the editor does not understand, and can therefore hold no responsibility for.

Our 2007 AGM

The ESSAC AGM for 2007 will be held on Saturday 16 June 2007 in De Sterrenbad, Wassenaar.

It is hugely important that the meeting be well attended as matters that really affect us all are on the agenda this year.

Please be seated (coffee in hand) at the start time to be announced later.

Social Matters

An Italian cooking lesson, followed by the eating of course, will be held at the Me Gusta restaurant in Wassenaar in April. At the time of writing, the event is understood to be fully subscribed with eleven participants.

Another planned activity is a combined cycling, canoeing and picnicking trip, either on Sunday 6th or Sunday 13th May 2007, in the Haastrecht\Schoonhoven (river Vlist) region. We make our own way there by car for a 9.00 am start.

If you are interested in taking part please contact either Rita or Wil as soon as possible. A group must be assembled before a booking can be made and the deadline has to be Sunday 22 April 2007. More detailed information can be found on our Essac webpage:

www.geocities.com/estecessac/social

Wil

The Camino Seguro Project

By the time this newsletter goes out Con and Maria will be back, suitably refreshed we hope, to their activities with the Camino Seguro project in Guatemala.

On home-leave since November, they have enjoyed Christmas with the grandchildren, dealt with a significant birthday and found time to deliver us a well attended, presentation of the project in the Estec Escape. Enjoyable it certainly was - but for the underlining seriousness of what needs to be achieved.

As before, this column will keep up-to-date regarding Camino Seguro, as and when details arrive. We wish Con and Maria continuing success. Meanwhile, a reminder of the bank account details in which Con and Maria manage donations to the project. It is :

C.F. McCarthy Camino Seguro
46.96.44.966
Wassenaar

We understand that even small donations are significant. Ed.

As for Maria . . .

. . . a certain young lady has turned 60!

Some of you will know Maria as the one who livens up the snorkelling, or Maria the diver (lucky lady getting to dive in all those exotic places), or Maria as a previous social secretary, which she carried out very well.



The least forgettable was the car skidding and rallying she had us all doing. Or Maria, through her charitable work, as someone who was always trying to help others and latterly through the work that she and Con have done in Guatemala.

Her surprise birthday party was organised and run by Con and was held in Dublin in January this year. John and I were delighted to be among the happy crowd there and a great evening was had by all. Maria and Con are now back in Guatemala working long hours to help the children out there, and if you have any spare cash, don't feel shy about donating it. I hope that they will send us an update on how it is going and we wish them all success with the project.

Myra

A Very Wet Car

The following article was first published in our July 1999 Newsletter. Dealing with a 'food-for-thought' subject, to repeat its interesting message eight years later, does seem reasonable.

The original text has been edited, with Bryan's approval, to reduce its length but the story is the same. Ed.

June 1999

For anyone who has been to the Wassenaar pool in the last few months, you must have noticed an old silver car sitting on a trailer next to the outside pool. After making enquiries, we found this car has a deadly serious purpose. The property of the Wassenaar Reddingsbrigade, it is used for demonstrating and teaching escape procedures from a vehicle that has, for example, driven into a canal. The good news is that it isn't actually that hard to escape from a car in water.

To this end our club managed to arrange a morning with the Wassenaar Reddingsbrigade where they would teach us how to safely exit a car in the water.

A brief registration procedure and coffee was followed by a short theory lesson, presented in a nice interactive manner and culminating in a question and answer session.

Following the theory we were shown a short video showing the effect of cars going into the water in different ways and also the difference between wearing and not wearing seat belts when a car hits water. And now what we had all been waiting for, some with excitement and others (like myself) with quite a high degree of anxiety and trepidation - our introduction to the car!

Organisation in and around the pool was very thorough. The basic idea was that two students occupied the driver and passenger seats with a safety diver sitting in the back with a spare pair of DVs (the part of an aqualung that divers put in their mouths to breath with). In the pool, we had a safety team of divers, one in front of the car plus at least one by each door of the car. We each took turns at the following recommended ways of exiting the car :

- Remove your seat belt and climb out of the windows, gently synchronising with any other person in the car so that it doesn't rock around too much.
- With the car mostly submerged remove your seat belt and slowly open the door and climb out.
- With the car mostly submerged remove your seat belt and slowly open the door and climb out but, this time, blindfolded!



The first was easy. Apparently most modern cars will stay afloat for several minutes. The second scenario was more challenging. You actually have to wait until a lot of water is in the car otherwise the doors won't open. Using the correct technique this is very do-able but I now understand why panic levels might rise on trying to open doors too early and finding that they wouldn't due to the outside water pressure.

The third scenario I was dreading. Fortunately, the build-up to the exercise had been such that when combined with knowing that the safety divers were around, I was able to keep calm and go through the motions to release the seat belt, assess the level of the water in the car and then open the door and get out. To add to the reality of this exercise, we had donned extra clothes i.e. jeans, T-shirt,

jumper and shoes.

For the fourth exercise we arranged ourselves in groups of four and decided, within each group, what we were going to do. Before doing the exercise, each group and the safety divers together ran through a scenario with the course organiser. For example, in ours, I was in the passenger seat in the front of the car but my window was stuck as were all of the doors so we had to wait until the car was completely under water. The driver then opened his window and climbed out and I had to go across the car and exit via his window. It worked and we all emerged safely. In fact, no assistance was required from any of the safety divers at any time during the day.

Finally, following a debrief and certificate presentation, course attendees were given a seat belt, cutting knife. The importance of such a tool was emphasised during the course.

So what were the conclusions of the course:

- It was well organised and run and all credit to the Wassenaar Reddingsbrigade for this.
- Getting out of a car in the water is not actually very difficult providing you are able to remain calm.
- In all of our scenarios, we were adults getting ourselves out of the car but, this would definitely be more difficult if children had to be unstrapped from seat belts and helped out.
- Practising and preparing for such a 'just in case' situation is worth it but of course, one hopes that it will never be needed.

Bryan Tatman

Swimming Matters

It is great to see that most of our members have been beating the winter blues by heading to the pool for a good swim and of course a coffee afterwards. I see on a Saturday an amazing amount of swimming talent out there.

Wim and I went to De Schelft swimming pool one Sunday afternoon to check numbers and paid up members. We were surprised at how low the numbers actually were, although we do know that other Sundays have had more people. De Schelft as a pool costs us a lot more than the Sterrenbad our

Saturday pool and is an expensive luxury, if underused. I for one do not use it but would personally like to keep that facility in the club. Could I ask for a pole of opinions, what do people think. Do you want to keep it and pay for it? Do you use it? Send me your opinion on an e-mail to: myra@albaspace.nl please.

Last year I suggested to the committee and it was agreed that we needed to change the lane markings in the Sterrenbad for a trial period - a trial period that never ended because it worked so well! Strongly expressed e-mails were received but, most agreed we have, for the moment, the best solution to the problem of 'too many people in not enough space'. Consideration is the name of the game!

The swimming and snorkelling FUN gala will be on the 9th of June this year.



It will start at 11am and finish at 12.30. There will be no other swimming, snorkelling or diving that morning, only the gala. The gala did not happen last year as there was not enough interest. It was decided within the committee that it will definitely run irrespective of numbers this year but if there is a low turn out then it will be permanently cancelled.

We already have three team captains, Nicolas, Wim and Tiriee, but we need two more. They will be looking for some team members soon. The gala is traditionally followed by a BBQ in the evening with a disco. This will start at 7pm and go on until midnight at the tennis club in ESTEC. I will send out e-mails closer to the time with update information. See also our Swimming and Pool page on Essac website:

www.geocities.com/estecessac/swimming

I had been asking for ages for a slide/movie show evening. We have some wonderful photographers in our club and they have been fortunate enough to go to super locations over the years on our club trips. So I decided if no one else would organise this social I would just have to do it myself. It was so easy to do. I booked the room with Philip in ESCAPE and sent some e-mails, badgered all the photographers to sort out their DVDs, digital picture and then handed over the responsibility to Wim to coordinate! I would like to say a big thank you to Wim as he had a lot of technical problems to sort out at the beginning. And it worked, there was a very good turn out and lots of stunning photographs as well as Chris's excellent underwater movies. I sincerely hope that it is something that happens again.

Myra

Are We Spying?

Aircraft, be they full-sized or miniature, have been an interest of mine since I was a very small boy. It began (and is now ending I guess) with my building and flying balsa wood models from kits and plans (I have never been interested in the modern, boxed, ready-to-fly efforts). The smell of glue and dope is something that my family have always had to suffer. The transition from free-flight to radio controlled models happened when I was still in the Royal Air Force (my day job - playing with the real thing) and able to buy, what was then very expensive, radio equipment.

About three years ago Chris Connor and I decided to have a go at combining our two specialist interests - me radio controlled (R/C) model flying and Chris diverse aspects of video recording and presentation (club members will be familiar with his stunning underwater camera work over the years) and try to obtain in-flight video pictures. The results, we both agree have been, though not perfect, highly satisfying.

The object of the exercise was to carry a pair of video lenses (cameras), a transmitter and a second battery power supply (entirely independent of the already onboard R\C package) into the air in a model aircraft

large enough to lift it all. It was my job to choose and build the model and this I did by selecting from my archive of 50 year old plans. What we ended up with is a high-wing, slow-flying classic model with a roomy fuselage, and a beefy 9.5cc four-stroke engine in the nose. We have called it 'Redbird' - leaving you to guess what colour it is!



An engine pre-flight check

Two antennae are needed, one to receive the models flying control signals, the other to transmit the moving video picture from the onboard cameras to a receiver on the ground. The cameras are fitted, one (colour) facing forward, slung between the landing wheels, the other (black and white) within the fuselage, under the port wing, providing a left side view. Camera selection in flight is made by utilising a spare R/C channel. The pilot controlling Redbird can be asked by Chris (recording the flight images) to toggle between forward facing or side facing camera sequences whilst in flight.



A still shot from the flying model
(note the ground crew below left)

Issues such, as engine oil splashing on the front camera lens, the model being a bit too 'frisky' on windy days and the addition of an on-

board microphone (great to eventually hear the engine and prop turning) were resolved. I will bore you no more with the technicalities of the project - only to say that it has worked extremely well for three years now and, we have a DVD to prove it! *

Chris and I are both members of the model flying club at the (sadly former) marine base at Valkenburg. As can be seen from the 'still', of the end of runway 34, they provide us with a great flying location and stunning aerial views.

Phil

* If you would like to see the DVD, just ask!

Our Committee

Our 2006/2007 elected committee is:

Chairman	Göran Pilbratt
ESSAC Secretary	Wim van Leeuwen
ESSAC Treasurer	Wim van Leeuwen
BSAC Secretary	Chantal Macleod-Nolan
Diving Officer	Mario Monaldi
Training Officer	Vacant
Snorkelling Officer	Wim van Leeuwen
Equipment Officer	Vacant
Expeditions Officer	Valerie Le Gallou
Swimming Officer	Myra Macleod-Nolan
Social Secretary(s)	Rita Kremer Wil Hedley

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

Editorial Footnote

We try to produce a newsletter each March, June, September and December. Contributions need to 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 e-mail. Such updates, following on from the first edition, may contain for example, corrections and/or information previously unavailable or overlooked.

Contributions to a newsletter should be addressed to the editor, preferably by e-mail, and any attachments in a file format other than PDF.

Non-English text is welcome but must be thoroughly checked by the sender because grammar, punctuation and spelling errors will be published as received' - by this editor!