



February 2018

### **Note from the Chair**

Welcome to 2018!

As announced at the snow bound Christmas Meal, we are planning a busy and exciting year. Thank you, Jackie and Jen, for organising the event.

On March 6th we have the London Diving Chamber Lectures in aid of the Trust. We are ever grateful to the Chamber who continue to support us in what is our major fundraiser of the year. Our new Trustee, Amanda Ford, has been busy organising the show.

Then at the end of April, we have a stand at the Naidex exhibition in Birmingham where we are promoting the Trust to a large audience with an interest in disability from all aspects. This is a new venture for us which we hope will raise awareness and gain us some more trainee divers. Liam, our other new trustee, has been instrumental in getting that organised.

In May, there is the Hurghada holiday for the lucky people who have booked some sunshine and excellent diving, led by Frank.

The monthly try dives continue to be busy and Howard is taking a role juggling the trainees with Instructors. Howard is also coordinating some BSAC training and liaison which will benefit the Trust.

As you can see, we continue to be supported by many people, not just the Trustees, who all make the Trust work.

Thank you,

Eric

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## Courses and Certifications

Well done to all those on courses,; keep up the good work!

4 Seal team students

1 Junior Open Water student

3 PADI and 2 BSAC Open Water students

3 Rescue students

4 Dive Masters-in-training

We are looking at running an EFR course and the likely date will be in June.

Keep an eye on the website for further news: [www.scubatrust.org.uk](http://www.scubatrust.org.uk)

Many thanks to all the Instructors and helpers for the time they all put in for the Scuba Trust.

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## London Diving Chamber - Scuba Trust Annual Dive Lectures

Tuesday 6th March 2018, 7pm (doors and bar at 6), Royal Geographic Society

Would you be interested in volunteering for our biggest fundraiser of the year? Seats are reserved for ST volunteers who are coming to shake buckets (please let me know if you are coming), otherwise, please click the link below to reserve your free ticket; they go very, very quickly!

<http://www.londondivingchamber.co.uk/>



Not to be missed - Didier Noirot (Emmy Award winning underwater videographer and Jacques Cousteau's right hand) and Ahmed Gabr (Ahmed is an Egyptian scuba diver who holds the Guinness world records for both the deepest scuba dive and the deepest scuba dive in sea water).

And, of course, special guest speakers from the Scuba Trust.

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### Adventures on the High Seas! The Inaugural Scuba Trust Live-Aboard

This was a first for the Scuba Trust - Blue 02 Red Sea live-aboard and Adam Quartermaster's first Red Sea trip; hopefully not his last. Liam and Dee had previously been on this boat, Horizon Blue, 02's flag ship and Pride of the Fleet, and were very impressed by the service they received, along with a great week's diving, visiting some of the more remote sites day boats do not get to. On Liam & Dee's recommendation, the group was booked onto what promised to be an exceptional adventure on Blue 02's Horizon, Northern Wrecks and Reefs itinerary.

We gathered at Gatwick airport check-in at 10 a.m. with all the excitement and expectation of the unknown. Our first casualty was Eric as Annie was unwell and so he had to pull out at the last minute, Annie is fine now and hopefully both will join us on another dive holiday to make up for the disappointment. This trip was a first for most of the group and I, for one, was uncertain what to expect. Thankfully, the flight was uneventful. Allan Sears, true to form, made up for it by giving a running commentary on the landing as we arrived at Hurghada International, much to the amusement of most of the other passengers. Blue02 staff were there to greet us and efficiently ushered the group through the airport, out on to the waiting buses and cars, and whisked us off to meet Blue Horizon, our waterborne accommodation for the week. The shoes came off and that was the last time any of the divers wore shoes for the week. All the en-suite cabins were very comfortable and after settling in, we set our kit up for the first and last time of our holiday.

After the initial set up on Day One, the only thing a diver had to do after each dive was to check that the crew member, who had eagerly removed your kit from you, had replaced it in the correct kit station; then you removed your reg set from the tank and placed the tag

for which fill you required - air or nitrox. Unfortunately there were problems with the nitrox blending computer and despite Blue 02's crew's best efforts, we only had compressed air for the week. After setting up we were treated to a feast of a dinner; all tastes were catered for - even Liam had his fill (a supply of crisps from the chef - yes we saw you mate!).

At the start of the first day, breakfast was an excellent spread - a choice of eggs in any way you could conceivably think of: poached, fried, scrambled, and even extremely spiced-up omelette, which Dee ordered but I somehow ended up with and WOW it was eye-watering hot!!! . We started to get to know the other two groups of divers who were also on the boat, many who had never dived with a disabled diver, let alone a large group from the Scuba Trust! By the end of the week, both groups were very inquisitive about the Trust and what the Scuba Trust did. We made some very good friends as always happens on our trips.



After the extensive briefings, we were off for our first dive of the day. The usual fantastic Red Sea sea life and turtles. Back to the boat and testing out the various adaptations made to the boat by Blue 02 to get the chair users out of the water. So far so good. During the week most people completed between three and five dives per day including day and night dives on the world famous Thistlegorm. This is probably my favourite wreck I have ever dived on; if you ever get the chance to dive the Thistlegorm, take it. This wreck

never ceases to amaze divers of all abilities and ages. The vast history behind the Thistlegorm is amazing.

On another dive, our group had the pleasure of coming across a Nurse shark at a cleaning station, and those in our dive group that day have some fantastic footage .



On another dive, whilst in the aptly named Dolphin Alley we were just about to return to the boat disappointed that no dolphin had been seen. In the meantime, Lindsay and Suzanne were taking a photo opportunity (see photos), when down the channel came a pod of dolphins – perfect! Quite a few of the dive sites were reached by RIB (Rigid Inflatable Boats) and we had one or two antics going off over the side, but I'll let Mr. Coffey remain anonymous. It goes “One, two – whoops! He's gone again - three!!”



After most night dives and some superb dinners, which were served up by our two chefs, the crew assisted the wheelchair users up to the top deck to mingle with the other divers



and to get near enough to the Wi-Fi router to get on social media; this was very hit-and-miss most days but that's nothing unusual for Egypt. For most of us, this was the only time we exchanged our swimwear and bathrobes for casual wear.



We did have some entertainment out at sea when one of the day boats with Chinese divers on-board decided to have a BBQ on the dive platform; smoke quickly engulfed the whole boat and ended up being dowsed by the a crew member.

# SCUBA TRUST NEWSLETTER

Diving with Disabilities



All too quickly the week was coming to an end but the chefs and crew had one last meal surprise for our last supper. How they managed to produce what they did (see photos) was just unbelievable in such a small galley kitchen and for so many people. The pastry chef was first class; you would expect to see his creations in top class hotels. Thursday evening and we docked for the first time in a week and our last sleep on board. Friday morning breakfast and last minute packing, then it was off to Hurghada airport.

Check-in staff then informed us that no spare batteries were allowed on board the aircraft and there were threats of iPads being confiscated. Those who were randomly searched had all 'spare' batteries taken from torches and cameras. Finally, after a lot of discussion the cabin crew took charge of the various iPads that had been taken from passengers. As long as you told the security staff that your batteries were not spares they allowed them through!

Apart from the departure escapades we had a great time, made some good new friends who have met us at our stand at the last dive show in Birmingham and made several donations, for which we thank them.

Now looking forward to the next dive trip, planned for next May. Join us.

Frank

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## **Christmas Dinner**

This year's Christmas Dinner was once again held at the McDonald Berystede Hotel in Ascot after the pool session. As you may all remember Mother Nature decided to throw all the winter weather it could overnight. Some managed to make the pool session but most of us just about managed to make the Christmas meal. The Berystede did us proud once again, although we had to delay the meal for an hour to allow the last stragglers from afar to arrive.

Our thanks to Jessica Bellworthy who gave the group a brief outline of her work out in Israel. The subject being 'the regeneration of coral reefs' and her research into them. With some of Jessica's great photos, footage and an explanation of the research results she had achieved, all present were very engaged which led nicely into a delicious three-course meal, beautifully presented with everyone having their fill - including Suzanne and Lindsay who managed to arrive just after most had finished their main course.

The annual awards were given out by Chair of Trustees, Eric Bellworthy, after we all had finished our coffees. The worthy recipients were:

Brenda Carey Award - Dee Coffey

Leon Golding Award - Dale Robson and Michael Apps

Lew Cullwick Award - Ian Tucker

Paul Cluney Award - Laura Greene

The Scuba Trust Holiday Award - Adam Quarterman

The awards presentation was followed by a raffle and so many prizes that most people won something. Our thanks to Jen Cluney and Jackie Buchanan for their joint effort in organising the whole event. As Laura was unable to get to the event Amanda Ford kindly presented the award to Laura on behalf of the Trust at a later date.







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## **Facebook & Twitter**

A big thank you to everyone who posts on our Twitter and Facebook pages, to Pippa Ashley who monitors Facebook for us and to Suzanne Harper who looks after our Twitter account.

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### Regalia Sale

We have a few hoodies left and looking to clear the stock at a reduced price of £12 each. Sizes we have are:- 1 x XS, 1 x S, 1 x M, 3 x L, 2 x XL, 1 x XXL.

**Hoodies**



**Polo shirts**





### Try-Dive pool sessions

A few polite reminders -

Please remember that pool sessions start at 10.30 a.m. and finish at 12.30pm prompt (unless otherwise stated), and we have to be out of the pool by 12.30pm as there is often a group following on. Please plan to arrive for 10 a.m.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school grounds. This is not our policy but the schools and must be adhered to. If you wish to smoke you must leave the school grounds. Also it would be appreciated if kit you are using was broken down and returned to the van. If you are teaching it is good practice for students to carry this out as part of their course and everyone's help is appreciated in clearing up.

If during a pool session you notice a problem with any piece of Scuba Trust kit, please attach a completed **RED** tag and place the faulty item on the seat in the front of the van. This will greatly assist us in keeping all kit in a serviceable condition.

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### Spreading the message

Many of the instructors are now able to teach a full range of PADI, BSAC, DE and DDI courses so we are able to spread the enjoyment of diving further.

Do you know of any organisations that would benefit from hearing about Scuba Trust, and how regardless of the disability, diving is an accessible activity?

Please contact any of the Trustees who will be happy to help.

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