

Edinburgh University Sub-Aqua Club

Heinke Trophy Application
March 2009



EUSAC

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Introduction

"From acorns mighty oak trees grow"

– Charles Fay, Edinburgh Sub-Aqua Club founding member, speaking at the 40th anniversary Burn's Supper.

Edinburgh University Sub-Aqua Club (EUSAC) has always prided itself on being an exemplary branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club, but 2008 was an exceptional year.

The club started from very small beginnings in 1968 but it has grown and matured into one of the most active BSAC branches in Scotland, introducing around 1,000 people to the sport of SCUBA diving since its inception.

A large part of EUSAC's success can be attributed to the excellent training we provide when introducing new divers, usually university students, to the sub-aquatic world.

Our members quickly learn to become competent divers and continually seek to improve their skills, but the club is much more than training and provides the perfect setting to make life-long friends.



Sarah Butler,
Chairman 2008–2009

In 2008 we celebrated our 40th anniversary with a special diving trip in July to St. Abbs. We contacted former members and invited them to join us on the trip, triggering the idea of holding a large social evening for alumni and current members. And so we began planning to make our annual Burn's supper the biggest and best to date.

The task of contacting our alumni proved to be the largest of all, since the filing system detailing previous memberships consisted of three very large, dusty boxes. After a few nights of papercuts and square eyes, we transformed these boxes into one simple database, and started to contact names from the past. The response was overwhelming.

As 2008 progressed, it became clear that this was a special year for EUSAC, for reasons other than it being our 40th. In the face of difficulties overrunning from 2007, including boat failures and a large setback in our training programme after the sudden closure of our pool, we managed to organise an extra training trip without running out of steam, and were able to develop the club in other areas.

EUSAC

In 2008, more in-branch SDC's were run, more expeditions were organised, and Advanced Diver training was done as part of our standard training programme for the first time in several years. This was largely because we now have a higher number of instructors than in previous years, after two years of encouraging and helping to fund our student members so they can participate in BSAC instructor courses.

We also had many achievements that would not usually be associated with a student club. We used a Small Projects Grant to buy a GPS/echo-sounder, with which we surveyed unknown dive sites in locations across Scotland. And we developed a ten-year equipment development plan to negotiate funding from the University Sports Union, which is now used as a template for other university sports clubs to follow.

Without a doubt, a successful club is the result of driven individuals working as a cohesive whole. EUSAC has been blessed with some inspirational members over the years, and this year was no exception. It is a huge understatement to say that I am proud of their achievements, which include winning the BEGS money to fund an exploratory expedition to Cape Wrath, completing the development of BSAC's Ice Diving SDC and writing the BSAC manuals for Advanced and First Class Diver. Most unexpected of all, we managed to prove diving can win out against other sports, despite its 'non-competitive' nature, by winning the Edinburgh University Sports Union Livingstone Trophy for outstanding expeditionary achievement.

To win the Heinke Trophy Award in 2009 would not only be a tremendously proud moment for EUSAC, it would be the perfect way to show our appreciation to those club members who worked particularly hard, despite setbacks or bad weather, to make 2008 such an outstanding year. These enthusiastic and exceptionally talented people are who our new student members look up to each year. And it is them who we hope to follow in maintaining EUSAC's values and developing the club, to ensure our successes continue for the next 40 years... and more!

Sarah Butler

Chairman 2008-2009

History

EUSAC: A timeline

1966 – EUSAC loosely formed by keen recreational divers Charlie Fay, Ian Bruce, Ian Milligan, and David Green.

1968 – EUSAC recognised as a sports club by Edinburgh University Sports Union.

1969 – Club gets its first inflatable boat, mounts its first expedition to Scapa Flow and joins the BSAC as branch 407.

1970 – 3 month scientific diving expedition to Jamaica performed with the help of BSAC branch 51.

1972 – EUSAC is a founding branch of the Scottish Federation of Sub-Aqua Clubs. Half of the first class divers in BSAC are members.

1973 – Postgraduate members mount an expedition to Barbados to study reef forming corals.

1974 – EUSAC divers spend two months underwater for the second season of archaeological work on HMS Dartmouth.

1975 – EUSAC divers survey crannog remains in Loch Tay. EUSAC finds the wreck of Chadwick.

1978 – The club gets involved in "The Gitana Project" filmed for the BBC's Horizon programme but never aired.

1979 – EUSAC asked to organise initial survey of HMS Royal Oak as part of a joint EUSAC/Royal Navy Film Expedition.



EUSAC

1980 – An underwater shot from the “The Gitana Project” project makes the cover of the Scotsman’s colour section.

1980 – EUSAC divers aided excavations of the Spanish Armada wreck, *Trinidad Valencera*, off of the West Coast of Ireland.

1983— After many efforts, EUSAC discovers the wreck of Helena Faulbaums.

1984 – EUSAC has trained 500 divers over its 18 years.

1986 – EUSAC wins its first Heinke award

1991 – EUSAC wins the Heinke award for the second time becoming the only university branch to do so.

1997 – Club invited to clean the penguin pool for Edinburgh Zoo

1998 – EUSAC members join Coral Quay expedition to study coral reefs off the Philippine Islands.

1999 – Club loses significant portion of experienced members because of internal politics.

2002 – Branch secures a university grant for £1650 for equipment to introduce nitrox diving to promote safer diving within the club.

2003 – EUSAC members join EUCARE expedition to chart corals off Madagascar.

2004 – Max Ruffert of EUSAC successfully applies for BEGS money for a cross branch exploratory diving expedition to the Garvellachs

2004 – EUSAC members join Seasearch expedition to Brora in the north east of Scotland.

2005 – Max Ruffert of EUSAC again successful in securing BEGS funding for another exploratory trip.

2006— Nemo Expedition organised to Oman to study the Clown Fish.



The Speech at EUSAC 40th Burns Night

By: Charlie Fay

Good Evening.

It's good to be back in Edinburgh - particularly for this Celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the EUS-AC.

My name is Charlie Fay, and I hope you don't mind an Englishman, reared in Ireland but educated here in Scotland standing here before you on this most Scottish of nights - the 250th Anniversary Burns Night.

I looked hard for any connection between diving and Robbie Burns. In the end all I could come up with was his poem "Ae Fond Kiss" - which reminds me of all that training in artificial Mouth-to-Mouth Resuscitation.

I have been asked, in this short time, to tell you a little bit about how the Club started off.

-O-

In 1966, 43 years ago, I joined the staff of the Physics Dept of this University - to study for my PhD, and to teach students. I was 24.

It was the era of the Beatles; The Rolling Stones; The Cuban Missile Crisis; The Cold War; America hadn't yet landed people on the Moon. And Edinburgh University was a marvelous place to come to - as I did from Trinity College Dublin.

-O-

In one of my classes I had 2 mature students, about my own age. They were - Ian Bruce and Ian Milligan. They were both studying to be vets, and were doing their pre-registration year of physics, biology and chemistry.

In talking to them, I discovered that they were keen divers - one Ian was an ex Royal Navy Clearance Diver and the other Ian was a BSAC trained diver. One Saturday they asked me if I would like to try out a dive - they had their own suits and air sets. And so, I found myself underwater breathing air through these funny tubes with a tank on my back. The sum total of my training was the firm instruction to "for goodness sake, remember to breath out on the way up!" .

There was a Senior Lecturer in our department, one David Green, whom I discovered was also a keen diver. So I introduced the 2 Ians to David and, as we got talking, the idea arose of the possibility of starting a diving club in the University.

Just at that time, Edinburgh University was expanding its Sports Centre for students and it was keen to provide grants to set up new activities within the University.

Dave Green was very good at writing research grant proposals, so he prepared a bid to apply for funding to set up a club.

-O-

Within a year, a grant had been provided. This was very generous and was sufficient to buy a portable air compressor, 6 complete breathing sets (single hose demand valves had just come in) and 6 rubber dry suits (of ex-navy design) with fins, masks, snorkels and weight-belts. We also had access to the Sports Centre's vehicles to transport it all, so we were all set. All we had to do now was to find members!

To attract members, I remember we put on a diving show in a swimming pool during Freshers Week - we were inundated with new members. And so the "Edinburgh University Free Diving Club" was formed in September 1968 - that was the original name of the club.



- Charlie at the EUSAC Burns Night

The following year the Centre also provided us with a 21' inflatable boat and a 25 horse-power Volvo outboard engine. All the equipment was kept in a lock-up at the Centre.

Ian Bruce became the first Diving Officer - and I took over from Ian the following year.

Our big problem was training, with so many new members. So a few of us joined the Edinburgh Town Club at Portobello, who very kindly trained us up to BSAC 3rd and 2nd Class level, and a few of us to BSAC Club Instructor level. Then we could establish our own training programme within the University Club.

-0-

The Club then really took off - we had regular weekly dives down the coast at Dunbar, North Berwick, Tantallon Bay, St Abbs Head and also over to Oban - where we stayed in Dave Tye's newly established diving Centre.

In 1969 we mounted our first summer expedition to Scapa Flow. In 1970 we mounted a 3-month scientific diving expedition to Jamaica, for which we attracted a number of sponsors. Out of that trip, we had 3 scientific papers published in scientific journals. On that trip we had a young lad called Derek Borthwick with us - whom you all probably know.

The proverb "From acorns mighty oak trees grow." is so appropriate for this Club. It started from a small beginning but has grown and matured into a major BSAC Club in Scotland. Many former members have gone on to become senior figures in the world of shipping, science and particularly the environment.

-0-

Diving in those days was so much simpler - but possibly a bit colder!

Our children and their husbands are now qualified BSAC and PADI divers. They show me a bewildering array of fancy equipment.

A diving computer now tells you what decompression stops to make. In our day it was a trusty waterproof watch and remembering the non-decompression dive times - 60 minutes at 60 feet and 20 minutes at 100 feet (we didn't understand metric then).

The modern BCD seems an incredibly over-complex and heavy piece of kit. Together with your air set, you now have 3 different tubes to breathe from. I have only one mouth, so who needs all the additional breathing systems. It may allow you to adjust your buoyancy at any depth - but we found out you could do just the same with an upturned polythene bag filled air from your regulator - particularly when lifting heavy booty from the sea floor. In a serious emergency you just dropped your weight belt.

We didn't like to use life-jackets as we found they were dangerous. One keen member wore one once with an inflation toggle. The toggle got snagged in a fishing net and it inflated - leaving him up-side-down and out of control.

However, most important of all was and is good thorough training. No amount of fancy new gear can take the place of good training and a careful eye to safety when diving, particularly in UK waters. That's how to stay alive and unbent.

-0-

Diving has given me and my family an enormous amount of pleasure over the years - and it all started here in Edinburgh some 40 years ago with the formation of the Edinburgh University Free Diving Club. Indeed, next week, we are off to the Gulf of Eilat for a diving holiday.

So, Thank you for allowing me this time to recount some of my early memories of your Club. It has developed through the years and become a tremendous success.

I wish you all well for the future - and the next 40 years. But I won't be back then!!

My time in EUSAC

By: Geoff Hide

I joined Edinburgh University Sub Aqua Club (EUSAC) in 1978 by accident. I was looking to join a caving/potholing club as I had done some of that before. I discovered that the University didn't have a caving club by asking a member of EUSAC at the freshers fair stall. Within minutes I was signed up to learn to dive instead! Diving with EUSAC over the past 30 years has had a significant effect on my life. As well as having the privilege to dive some of the most inaccessible, challenging, stunning and exciting places in Scotland, I have gained some lifelong friends. I have also developed skills that I would never have thought I would.

As a very shy young person in 1978 I developed confidence first in diving skills and then, through the BSAC Instructor Training Scheme and practical experience in EUSAC, confidence in teaching and instructing. In 1978 I would have never considered talking in front of even a few people at a time! But through the experience of teaching diving, my professional job now involves lecturing to some 100+ people at a time and I am also an active member of the BSAC Instructor Training Scheme. Diving with members of EUSAC has always been inspiring – in my early days EUSAC had one of the very few First Class Divers and Advanced Instructors in Scotland – he and others were aspiration to my diving and experience with EUSAC led to me not only gaining those qualifications but also to go on and become a National Instructor.



– Geoff at Burns Night with EUSAC

Since then I have been privileged to be appointed as BSAC Coach for South Scotland and then latterly on the National Diving Committee as First Class Diver Chief Examiner and then as Diving Group Leader. Diving with EUSAC members on their many and varied expeditions has fuelled a passion for wrecks and exploratory expedition diving. This has led to me publishing articles on wreck diving and currently co-authoring the new BSAC Manual on Expedition Diving. Although, I have had to move away from Edinburgh, due to work, I continue to dive with EUSAC and I haven't missed their legendary annual Burns Supper since the first one in 1980!

This year has been a very special year for me – the 40th anniversary of EUSAC, the 30th anniversary of my membership with EUSAC (and BSAC) and my first dive. To cap it all, I was very proud to be awarded, at DOC 2008, the BSAC Scubapro Award "Presented to the BSAC member who has excelled in promoting BSAC's aims & objectives".

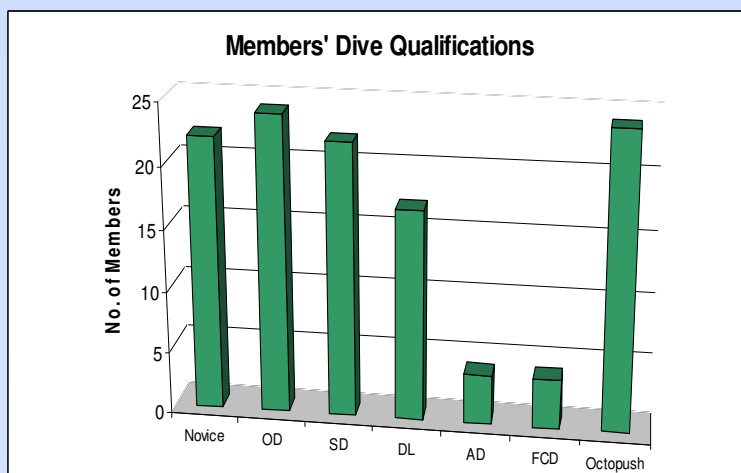
Membership

EUSAC

1. Numbers

EUSAC is a university sports society and a special branch of the BSAC. In December 2008 the club had 93 diving members, (of which 2 are honorary lifetime members) 24 octopush members and several social members. This is compared January 2008, when we had 87 members.

Because of the nature of student membership, 46 members were new divers or Ocean Divers. However, the club is lucky enough to have members at all levels of experience, boasting 22 Sports Divers, 17 Dive Leaders, four Advanced Divers and four First Class Divers.



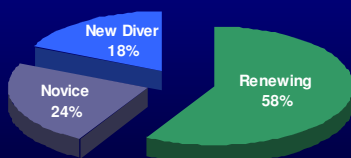
Turnover

The majority of EUSAC's members must be current students, so most members are here for only four years while they complete their studies. In 2008, 54 people renewed their membership, 21 were taken on as novice divers, and 18 joined as existing divers who trained with other organisations.

Most of our intake occurs in September at the beginning of the academic year, but we are able to accommodate existing divers at any time of the year.

EUSAC is committed to introducing new divers to the sport, and offering training at a level suitable for divers over the course of their university careers. There is a high demand for training, and the majority of new members join as novices or relatively inexperienced warm-water divers.

Proportions of New and Renewing Members 2008



Proportions of New and Renewing Members 2007



EUSAC

The problem of member retention

The club's goal is to provide high-quality training to as many people as possible, but in the past this was often restricted by the number of members who were instructors. This was because of the level of experience required to become a competent BSAC instructor generally takes longer to acquire than the club's standard four year membership tenure.

EUSAC often has members who graduate, but stay in the area. So there is no shortage of interest in the welfare of the club, or offers of support from ex-members who have gained their qualifications as student members. But because graduates previously had to join other BSAC branches, their involvement with EUSAC tended to wane in the years after graduation.

Several steps have been taken to resolve this issue over the last few years and in 2008 EUSAC reaped the benefits, offering an extended programme of training as a direct result.

The first step was to take advantage of Edinburgh University regulations which allow up to 25% of our membership to be graduates. The Sports Union recognises that allowing graduates to remain part of the club significantly strengthens our potential, and improves the safety of our training. Non-student members benefit from ongoing instructor training, and their kit costs are part-subsidised by the Sports Union.

Club members also set up 'e-divers' in 2003, a new BSAC branch for Edinburgh University graduates. This allowed graduated members – particularly those who may not have instructor qualifications but wish to carry on diving with EUSAC – to gain BSAC membership through a different channel. E-divers are given full access to EUSAC facilities, training and places on expeditions.

The new club has proved hugely successful. It now has 19 members and regularly provides additional experience on dive trips, as well as acting as a resource of experience.

The third part of the club's retention plan was consolidated in 2008, with increased use of the regional training offered in South Scotland. EUSAC member Nicola McDonnell volunteered to become Skills Development Co-ordinator for the

South Scotland region and took responsibility for advertising regional training to EUSAC members. We advertised regional courses on our e-mail lists, facebook page and website. EUSAC also organised training groups – which included both trainees and instructors – to attend several regional training days.

Each year we offer training for the full syllabus for Ocean Diver, Sports Diver and Dive Leader, as well as a number of Skills Development Courses and other training as requested. The combined impact of the club's retention strategy has improved the club's access to experienced divers. This has means the club was able to offer an additional Ocean Diver and Sports Diver training trip to Oban in 2008, as well as an Advanced Diver training programme.

2. Snorkelling

It is important that divers are competent and comfortable in the water, and good snorkelling technique can make a big difference to trainees when it comes to donning SCUBA gear for the first time.

EUSAC trains all its novice divers in basic snorkel techniques during their Ocean Diver training. This training includes:

- Correct fitting of mask, fins and snorkel
- Finning technique
- Swimming with and clearing a snorkel
- Duck diving technique

Although all EUSAC instructors teach snorkelling as part of the Ocean Diver course, the club also has one BSAC Advanced Snorkel Instructor.

Underwater Hockey

To supplement basic snorkel training and improve divers' confidence in the water, EUSAC created its own underwater hockey (octopush) team in 2003.

Affectionately known as the Edinburgh Hippos, the team has 24 members and is registered with the Edinburgh University Sports Union as an affiliated EUSAC team.



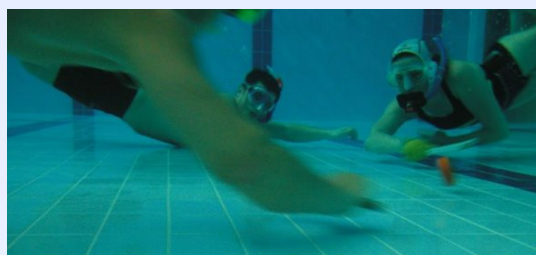
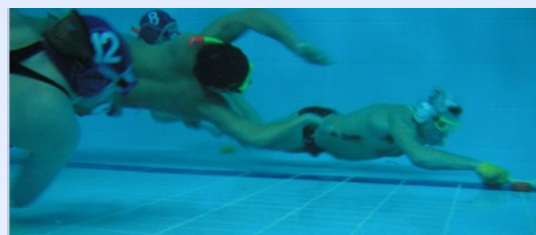
Biffa – the Edinburgh Hippo's mascot

Organisation

The Octopush team has now grown so large that it is necessary for it to have its own committee, which includes a Team Captain, Membership Secretary and Treasurer.

The team captain is also a member of the EUSAC committee, and attends committee meetings.

Because we consider octopush and diving to be complementary sports, Hippos events are advertised to EUSAC members. This helps to continue the close links between the two parts of the club.



Training

Training sessions take place each Monday from 8:30pm to 9:30pm in the Edinburgh University swimming pool. Usually, half of the area is dedicated to teaching newcomers how to snorkel and play safely and effectively, while the other half is used for a friendly game between more experienced players.

Equipment

The Hippos club has ten full sets of kit that can be used by players wishing to try the sport. A full set of kit consist of a mask, fins, snorkel, hat and a pusher. The club also owns six pucks and a number of extra fins.

In 2008 the octopush team bought competition hats, which include ear protectors to improve safety during matches. Team members are now required to wear hats at all times during matches.



- A player puts on his hat.

Competitions

EUSAC's Hippos attended two Octopush tournaments in 2008:

The British Octopush Association (BOA) Student Nationals And the Scottish National Octopush Tournament.

Enough members are now experienced enough that the Edinburgh Hippos have been able to compete in a greater number of tournaments in 2009.

By the end of March this year, the Hippos had already competed in three tournaments, and come second in the BOA's Student Nationals.



- Watching the competition

Inter-branch liaisons

EUSAC's Edinburgh Hippos have formed strong relationships with other octopush clubs around Scotland.

In addition to those members who play for national teams, ten members attend training sessions with the Edinburgh City octopush team, where they play with some of the country's best players.



- The octopush team pull their best poses, but the other clubs seem immune to their charms...

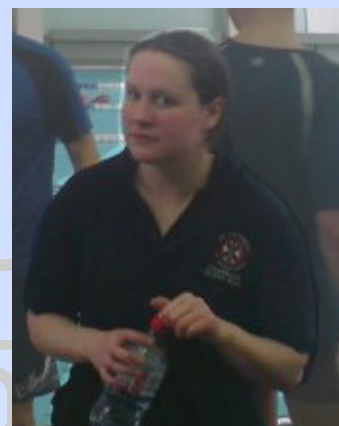
The Hippos go national!

By Sarah Caughey

In March 2008 the Hippos team – armed with members old and new – set off for the far and distant city of Coventry for the tournament of the year: the Student Nationals!

After a long, exhausting and... er... interesting journey, we finally bedded down for the night to rest ahead of the excitement of the tomorrow.

The tournament was going to be tough and fierce, competing against university teams from all over the UK; namely Glasgow, Cardiff, Portsmouth, Stirling, Hills Road Cambridge, Plymouth, Aberdeen, Bangor, York, Durham & Newcastle, Oxford and Warwick.



Sarah, on the pool side

The Hippos played an excellent set of games against hard and challenging opposition. We refuelled often on bananas and jelly babies and held regular pep-talks with our mascot Biffa to keep us fired up for the competition!

Our main rivals, Stirling, were there and it was a tricky and very close game against them. Unfortunately we lost by just one lucky goal!

With this disappointment behind us we rallied round and surpassed ourselves, managing fifth place overall in the tournament. A great feat for a team for our newly-compiled team!



Action shots from the student national tournament.

Rottnest Snorkel trail

By Sarah Boys

One of our members Sarah Boys (a chemistry postgraduate student) went on holiday in 2008 to Australia and took her passion for science and the underwater world with her. She introduced her boyfriend to the underwater realm by visiting the Rottnest snorkel trail. Below is her personal account of it.

" Whilst visiting Rottnest Island off Fremantle, near Perth on the West Coast of Australia, we followed some snorkel trails in some of the idyllic bays on the island. On the sea floor were several large blocks with plaques attached.



- Australian Coast



Source: <http://chaitt.blogspot.com/2009/02/rotnest-island-little-salmon-bay.html?showComment=1235224860000>

They were linking points of interest, such as rock formations, wrecks or bits of wreckage, and marine environment information. It was very interesting to be guided round and informed where to look to find fish that might be less easy to spot yourself, hiding in particular types of coral.



There are various environments, such as coral reef systems and sea grass meadows in the Rottnest Island Marine Reserve, and it has one of the greatest species diversities in WA. We saw many kinds of crustaceans, fish, shells and corals, and these were identified for us during the snorkel trail, which made it very enjoyable. There was so much to be seen, and it was great to learn more about the surroundings to fully appreciate the fantastic range of things present here. "

3. Administration

The committee

EUSAC's committee has ten members. In line with Edinburgh University Sports Union rules, committee positions must be held by current students and only full student members are eligible to vote.

The exception is the role of Diving Officer. Due to the safety considerations associated with this position, any club member may nominate, vote and stand for the post. The Diving Officer must meet the minimum BSAC Diving Officer requirements, unless their appointment is approved by the Area Coach (who is also a EUSAC member and acts as a mentor during the Diving Officer's tenure). This concession is made because of the difficulty of attaining Advanced Diver level within the four year average tenure of a club member.

New committee role for 2008

In 2008 EUSAC introduced the new role of Child Protection Officer, which has become a part of the Chairman's duties. Because the education system in Scotland differs from the rest of Britain, it is relatively common for the students we take on to be under the age of 18, so this role is a compulsory requirement of the University's sports union.

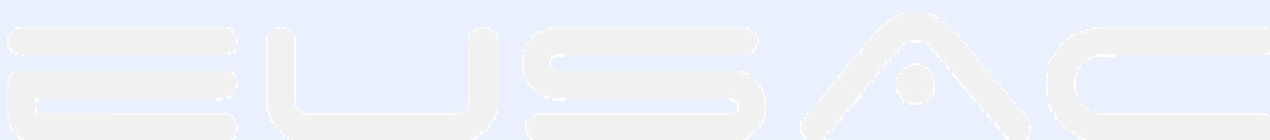
The child protection officer undergoes a police check, attends a training workshop at the beginning of the academic year, and is the point of contact for "child" club members should they require it.

Elections

Elections for new committee positions are held each year at the club's AGM in March, and are voted for by all student members. Holding committee elections at this point in the year allows a long handover period for each position. An information pack is also given to each new committee member, detailing the information required for their specific role. We have included a copy of this handbook on the attached CD.

After the elections a cross-over meal is held to celebrate the work of the outgoing committee and welcome the new one.

Please see the following page for a description of each committee position and a list of our committee members.



Chairman

The Chairman is responsible for setting the agenda for the year, liaising with the sports union and keeping order at committee meetings. The Chairman also acts as welfare and child protection officer.

Diving Officer

The Diving Officer authorises all EUSAC dives and is called after each day's diving to confirm that everyone has returned safely. He / She certifies all new qualifications earned in the branch, makes sure there is an adherence to safe diving and encourages diving activity.

Treasurer

The Treasurer makes sure that EUSAC has enough money available to run the club and cover unforeseen expenses. A major part of their role involves liaising with the university's Sports Union to make sure EUSAC fulfils their funding criteria and does not incur any financial penalties. The Treasurer also updates the club on new funding opportunities, and co-ordinates funding applications.

Secretary

The Secretary arranges EUSAC and BSAC membership for new and existing members. They are responsible for maintaining branch membership records and keeping BSAC up to date about who is a part of the branch. The Secretary also takes minutes during committee meetings.

Training Officer

This is a large and complex role, given the extent of club training. EUSAC therefore has two Training Officers, who organise all theory lessons, sheltered water training, cross-over trips and Ocean Diver training. They have overall responsibility for booking the Ocean Diver training weekends, inform the club of any regional training opportunities and liaise with the university's sports union.

Social and Fundraising Secretary

The Social and Fundraising Secretary plans EUSAC's main social events and makes sure all new members feel welcome. Notable among their tasks are the organisation of the Burn's night ball, the annual negotiation of a deal with our club pub, and organising branded club clothing.

Expeditions Officer

The Expeditions Officer is in charge of EUSAC's expeditions season. They advertise the expeditions, book accommodation, arrange dive managers, and secure Diving Officer approval for each trip. They also manage EUSAC's expedition bank account.

Equipment Officer

The Equipment Officer sources and maintains all of the equipment that is used to support club diving. This can include arranging the repair of SCUBA gear, smelting lead for belts, servicing boats and overhauling compressors. The Equipment Officer leads maintenance teams and organises equipment maintenance training.

Octopush Captain

The Octopush Captain organises underwater hockey training and tournaments, and promotes the sport to non-players.

EUSAC committee

May 2007-08

Chairman



Sarah Boys
Dive Leader
Theory Instructor
Assistant OWI
PADI Cross-over

Diving Officer



Neil Nutt
Dive Leader
OWI
EUSAC Trained

Treasurer



Kate Fearnhead
Sports Diver
ADI
EUSAC Trained

Secretary



Liz Leuchte
Ocean Diver
NAUI Cross-Over

Training Officer 1



Sarah Butler
Sports Diver
ADI
EUSAC Trained

May 2008-09

Sarah Butler
Sports Diver
ADI
EUSAC Trained



Steve Czuprynski
Dive Leader
OWI
BSAC Trained



Alexander Zacheshigriva
Dive Leader
Theory Instructor
Assistant OWI
EUSAC Trained



Michael Holliday
Ocean Diver
EUSAC Trained



Pete Wasson
Dive Leader
Theory Instructor
Assistant OWI
PADI Cross-over



EUSAC committee

May 2007-08

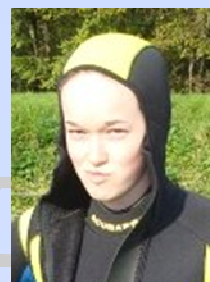
May 2008-09

Training Officer 2



Peter Swann
Sports Diver
ADI
EUSAC Trained

Kirsty Hitchen
Ocean Diver
EUSAC Trained



Expeditions Officer



Anna Goodall
Sports Diver
ADI
PADI Cross-over

Anna Goodall
Sports Diver
ADI
PADI Cross-over



Equipment Officer



Alexander
Zacheshigriva
Dive Leader
Theory Instructor
Assistant OWI
EUSAC Trained

Matt Lennox
Ocean Diver
PADI Cross-over

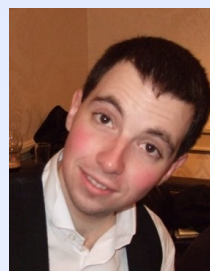


Social Secretary



Sarah Caughey
Ocean Diver
PADI Cross-over

Mike Sim
Sports Diver
ADI
PADI Cross-over

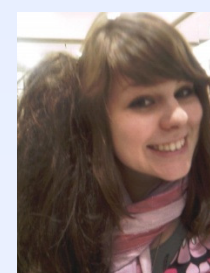


Octopush Captain



Mike McCallum
Hippos Member

Rosie Cook
Hippos Member



Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are held every three weeks throughout the year, with dates and venues published at the beginning of each university semester, and a reminder sent to the club e-mail list a week in advance.

The minutes of each committee meeting are sent to the club's e-mail list.

All EUSAC members are invited to the committee meetings, and to contribute to the meeting's agenda. During the meetings all club members can volunteer for particular jobs, or to take part in working groups. These sorts of roles are often allocated to people who want to learn more about the club or have known skills that will help them deal with specific tasks. All members can also be included on the committee e-mail list if they wish.

Annual General Meeting

EUSAC's AGM is held before the university's Easter vacation. It includes: elections for the new committee positions; a presentation on the club's diving and training statistics for the year; a vote on any changes to the constitution; and a sign-up session for the annual RNLI collection day.

To encourage high attendance, the AGM also includes the awards ceremony for EUSAC's annual competitions (see section 14).

Rules and Governance

Because EUSAC is a BSAC special branch, BSAC's guidelines and policies are applicable. A copy these can be found at:

<http://www.bsac.com/page.asp?section=1302§ionTitle=BSAC+Policies>

The club also operates under the jurisdiction of the Edinburgh University Sports Union, and has to abide by their rules. These can be found at:

<http://www.eusu.ed.ac.uk/158/su-constitution>

Finally EUSAC has its own constitution, which can be found on the attached CD, or on our website:

<http://eusac.eusu.ed.ac.uk/>

Subscriptions

EUSAC keeps subscription fees as low as possible. In 2008 EUSAC charged £20 for students and £35 for non-students. Those who joined part way through the year were charged on a pro-rata basis. E-divers has no subscription fee, but e-divers are not eligible for EUSAC's discounted equipment hire rates.

EUSAC's 2008 membership fees included:

- Access to club diving and expeditions
- Access to dive training
- Access to the club's weekly pool sessions
- Discounted equipment hire, and free hire for training
- Limited storage for personal equipment
- Discounted van hire rate for dive trips
- 10% discount at Edinburgh Diving Centre
- Food and drink discounts at the club's weekly social

Octopush membership costs £5 for members of the Edinburgh University Sports Union, and £25 for non-members.

4. Information

Good communication is vital to the efficient running of the club. In 2008 we made new efforts to use modern technology to ensure that everyone was up-to-date with all the club's events.

The following sources of information were available for all club members, alumni members and friends of the club:

- EUSAC e-mail list
- EUSAC website
- EUSAC facebook page
- Octopush facebook page
- South Scotland e-mail list

We were keen to make sure any information we shared was relevant to those who received it. For example, instructors required information about how the training timetable would work during the academic year, who they would be teaching, and which venues would be used; while new trainees needed more general club information such as where to meet each week and who they can contact for help.

With this in mind, we created a number of channels that cater for specific groups, reducing the number of irrelevant communications. In addition to the e-mail list that reaches all members of the club, the following specific channels are available:

New members	Instructors	Alumni members
Sports Fairs	Instructor feedback	EUSAC website alumni page
Introductory Meeting	Instructor e-mail list	Sports Union website alumni page
New member e-mail list		

The screenshot shows a Facebook discussion board for the EUSAC group. The topic is "What mammals cant swim???". It displays three posts: a question by Michael Sim, a reply by Sarah Butler, and a reply by Peter Swann. The interface includes navigation tabs like "Home", "Profile", "Friends", and "Inbox", and a sidebar with options like "Discussion Board", "Topic View", and "Start New Topic".

– Discussion on our Facebook group

The screenshot shows the "Training" page of the EUSAC website. It features a sidebar with navigation links such as "Home", "Training", "Calendar", "Material", "OD Pool Training", "Loch Fyne Trips", "Social", "Committee", "Hippies", "Kit", "About", "Message Board", "Links", "Statistics", "Feedback", "Expeditions", "Web Cams", "BEGS", and "Membership". The main content area describes the club's training philosophy, equipment, and upcoming events, including a "Sports Diver" course and "OD and boat handling courses".

– The website's page on club training

EUSAC

Website

EUSAC has an up-to-date website at

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

To keep the contents dynamic, the website is designed so that any committee member can update it using a simple interface, without the need for editing HTML code.

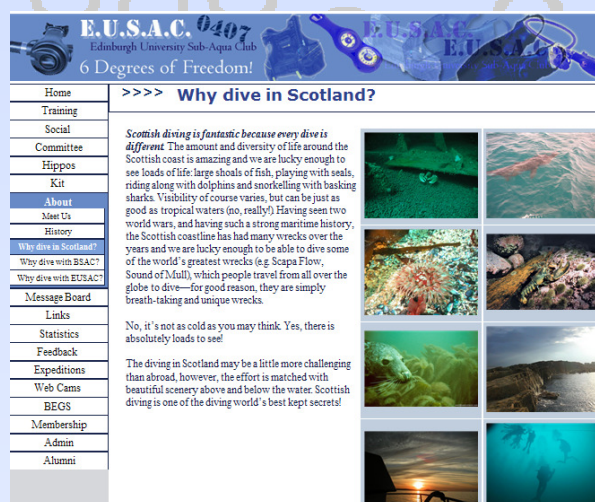
In 2008 there were a total of 110 event and news items posted onto the website. We also added additional pages, including an equipment section and articles on diving with EUSAC and in Scotland.

The three aims of the website are:

- To tell potential new members how to contact us and how to become involved.
- To provide information to current members about club events. This includes details and prices of expeditions, equipment hire procedures, and an up to date training calendar.
- To provide information to the interested general public. This includes trip reports, soundings of dive-sites and links to web cameras monitoring the East Coast of Scotland (broadcasted with permission from their owners).



– Introducing the committee



– An article on Scottish diving

E-mail

EUSAC's mailing list has been used as the basic means of communication for a long while – partly because all Edinburgh University students automatically get a student e-mail address and have access to computers.

Initially, all information was posted on one main mailing list that all members were on. After successful trials of separate committee and octopush lists, we introduced separate training lists in 2008.

We now have additional e-mail lists for instructors, and for new members. These lists were successful throughout the year, reducing the number of e-mails sent to the main list that were only relevant to a particular group.

A further development for 2008 was the creation of specific e-mail addresses for committee members. This meant that we could post e-mail details for the committee on our website, without members having to give out their personal e-mail address.

Regional mailing lists

Many of our club members are also part of the BSAC South Scotland mailing list, and responsibility is delegated to one club member in each academic year to forward information about regional BSAC events to the EUSAC mailing lists.

Instructor feedback

In 2008, the training officers asked all the instructors to submit brief unofficial feedback about their trainees during the sheltered and open water training. This provided extra information on top of the formal report detailing the lessons covered.

The information aimed to pick up on any strong or weak points the trainees demonstrated. Before training events, the information was forwarded to instructors confidentially through the instructor e-mail list, so that they were better able to anticipate any difficulties their trainees might have. The information also helped dive managers pair up trainees and instructors.

Facebook Pages

EUSAC has two group pages on the social networking website facebook; one for the whole of EUSAC, and one for the octopush team.

These are used to share pictures and videos from diving and social events, and as a forum for discussions. In 2008 our EUSAC facebook group had around 80 members, with over 800 photos and 4 videos uploaded.

The Edinburgh Hippos underwater hockey facebook group is also used to organise inter-university tournaments.

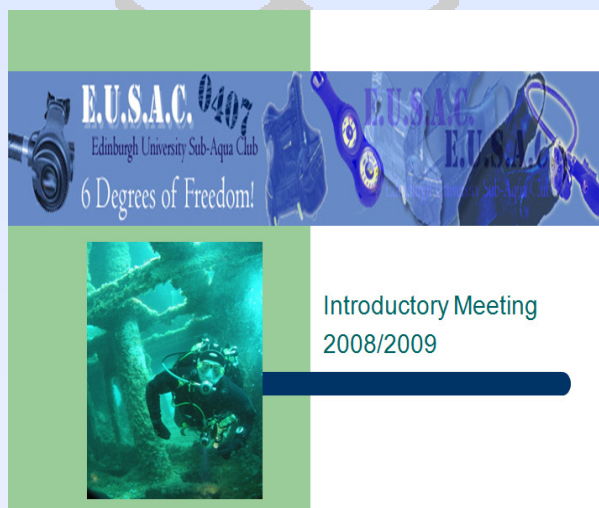


– EUSAC's facebook page

Introductory Meeting

Each year the committee hosts an introductory meeting for all the people who are considering joining. Since our highest intake throughout the year is in September, at the beginning of the academic year, this is when our introductory meeting takes place.

In 2008, the turn-out to this meeting was amazing, the venue was full to capacity, there were 25 people interested in learning to dive, and 35 cross-over divers.



– A slide from the introductory meeting

The meeting consisted of three presentations: the first one explained how the club works, and advertised its advantages and the fantastic diving that is on offer in Scotland. The audience then split into two groups; those that had never dived and were thinking of doing the Ocean Diver course, and the cross-over divers. Each group was informed about the possibilities that awaited them within the club, the joining procedure and the expenses involved.

The meeting was followed by a large social event at the club's pub, where newly signed-up members met existing members and were able to ask questions.

Alumni information

As 2008 was EUSAC's 40th birthday, we decided that it was time to make contact with members who had been in the club in previous years.

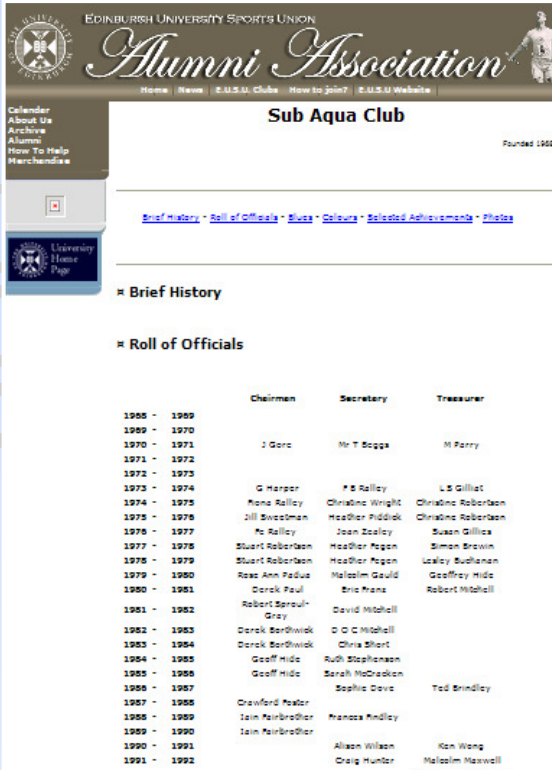
Luckily, there were a number of non-student members who were still in contact with ex-members. However, we didn't want to leave anyone out of our 40th anniversary celebrations, and so further efforts were made to find those members who had fallen out of reach.

One way we did this was by updating the details on the Sports Union Alumni Association's website to enable us to keep in contact in the future.

These details can be found at:

<http://alumni.eusu.ed.ac.uk/index.php?s=content&p=SubAqua>

In addition, we created a webpage on our EUSAC website, inviting ex-members to get back in touch with us.



Edinburgh University Sports Union Alumni Association
Home | News | EUSU Clubs | How to Join? | EUSU Website

Sub Aqua Club
Founded 1968

[Brief History](#) | [Roll of Officials](#) | [Rules](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Related Activities](#) | [Photos](#)

Brief History

Roll of Officials

	Chairman	Secretary	Treasurer
1968 - 1969			
1969 - 1970			
1970 - 1971	J Goss	Mr T. Scogg	Mr Perry
1971 - 1972			
1972 - 1973			
1973 - 1974	G Harpur	P S. Riley	L S. Gilliat
1974 - 1975	Kona Riley	Christine Wright	Christine Robertson
1975 - 1976	Bill Swalesman	Headier Piddick	Christine Robertson
1976 - 1977	He Riley	Joan Riley	Susan Gillies
1977 - 1978	Stuart Robertson	Headier Pagan	Simon Brown
1978 - 1979	Stuart Robertson	Headier Pagan	Lesley Buchanan
1979 - 1980	Ross Ann Padua	Malcolm Gauld	Geoffrey Hild
1980 - 1981	Derek Paul	Brian Frens	Robert Mitchell
1981 - 1982	Robert Spraul	David Mitchell	
1982 - 1983	Gray	G G C. Mitchell	
1983 - 1984	Derek Barthwick	China Short	
1984 - 1985	Geoff Hild	Ruth Stephenson	
1985 - 1986	Geoff Hild	Sarah Macdonald	
1986 - 1987		Sophie Davis	Ted Brindley
1987 - 1988	Crawford Pealer		
1988 - 1989	Iain Fairbrother	Frances Andley	
1989 - 1990	Iain Fairbrother		
1990 - 1991		Alison Wilson	Ken Wong
1991 - 1992		Craig Hunter	Malcolm Maxwell

[Edinburgh University Alumni Page](#)



- Auld lang syne at Burns Night brings current members and the alumni together

5. Promotion

Freshers' Sports Fair

At the beginning of each academic year we advertise EUSAC, BSAC and the world of diving, to the University of Edinburgh's 24,000 students by setting up a stall at the university's Sports Fair.

The Sports Fair gathers all the university sports clubs under one roof so that the new intake of Freshers – and other students – can choose which clubs they would like to join.

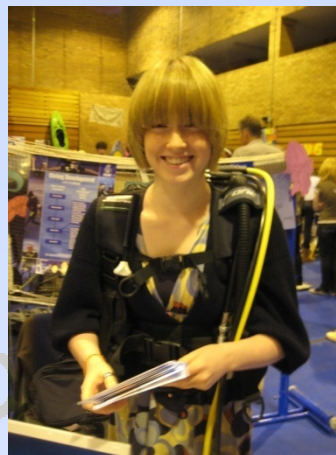
Eight club members volunteered to help prepare the stall the night before the students arrived. The first challenge was to navigate the 5.25 metre inflated boat through the other half-prepared sports club stalls – the Tae-Kwondo club didn't know what hit them!

We set up the backboard with BSAC posters, inflated a few drysuits and placed balloons with smiley faces on top. The final addition was a portable projector and screen showing a slide show of EUSAC photos and a BSAC promotional DVD. The scene was set.

During the following two days, hundreds of students squeezed through the sports hall doors and stopped to talk to the club members on the stall. The display was a fantastic way to make the club stand out and be noticed. The boats were by far the biggest objects in the room! We managed to keep at least four people on the stall at all times, and even so were kept very busy.

Some stall helpers walked around the hall wearing their BCD's and regs, showing the set up of kit and how easy it is to breathe from a regulator. Others walked around in their swimming gear to advertise the university octopus team, the Hippos.

Over the two days, 146 people who had never dived before, and 120 qualified divers, signed up for further information. Every person who signed up was given a bag full of information, including the latest DIVE magazine, a flyer directing them to our website and giving details of our introductory meeting, and a Sports Union handbook containing information about EUSAC. The flyer is included on the attached CD.



- manning the stall



- Trying on the heavy dive helmet

EUSAC

Student Sports Fair

The Freshers' Sports Fair was very successful at encouraging a large number of young people to consider diving for the first time. However, its focus is predominantly on first-years, and we wanted to increase our advertising to include existing students, exchange students and postgraduate students.

In January 2008 we set up the stall again for the university's second Sports Fair, which is aimed at these groups. This was the first time EUSAC had attended the second Sports Fair, and the event was a huge success. Many cross-over divers and previously qualified BSAC divers signed up, including the current Training Officer and new BSAC Universities Co-ordinator for Scotland.

University Promotion

EUSAC is over-subscribed every year, with twice as many trainees signing up to join than we can realistically train up to a good standard, given the funding and equipment we have available. For this reason we have to limit the number of trainees we take on each year.

However, we have put plans into practice for fundraising events, so that we can buy more kit in the future, and become able to accommodate larger numbers of club members.

These fundraising events started in 2008 with a series of seminars. Topics included, 'Underwater Photography', 'Ice Diving', 'Wreck sonar—imaging' and 'The Project Nemo Expedition'. The talks were advertised to all the University's sports clubs and societies, and many students who weren't part of EUSAC attended.

Not only did the talks raise funds for our club, but they promoted EUSAC to the university as a hub of expertise. We hope that increasing the club's profile in this way will help bolster future funding applications.

Club Clothing

In January 2008 we produced specially designed club clothing to promote the club's 40th birthday. We designed hooded sweatshirts and t-shirts with the university crest and the club's name on the front, and a large eye-catching logo on the reverse. These were worn by most of the current club members, and acted as a great advertisement around the university.

For more details about our promotional activities, see section 16.



Diver Training

EUSAC

Introduction

So that novice members can concentrate on diving skills and finding their feet within a new club, our Ocean Diver training takes our novice divers right up to the completion of their Ocean Diver syllabus and Sports Diver theory training, we have included a timeline explaining our novice training programme in the following pages.

By this stage, members are considered to have a thorough enough understanding of how the club works, and enough diving knowledge, to start arranging their own training – in fact the process is often used as a means of encouraging the development of dive management skills. Some training trips are organised for Sports Diver training, but most takes place during expeditions or day trips that the trainees may have helped to organise.



– Everyone knows the boats go faster if you sing to them...

The nature of a student club means that most members will be Sports Diver level or less, so most Dive Leader and Advanced Diver training is arranged on an ad hoc basis as required. That said, the club does run a Dive Leader theory course on an annual basis.

Instructor training is encouraged once divers have reached experienced sports diver standard. Instructing ensures that members' skills are continually practiced and kept up to date, and improves the skills base of the club as a whole.



– Some divers are so keen that they forget to check that the wreck has actually... sunk

Complementing EUSAC's formal training programme, a large amount of instruction takes place on an individual basis. Trainees are encouraged to organise days out diving with instructors if they wish to complete an assessment or are struggling with particular skills.

In 2008, EUSAC also took advantage of regional training programmes, providing both instructors and trainees, as a means of gaining additional access to training and improving relations with other clubs.

Finally, EUSAC has a long tradition of 'informal' training. Members are expected to lead by example, take opportunities for training, observe the training of others, ask questions, put forward suggestions, and challenge existing dive practices.

In the following pages we explain our training programme in more detail. We have included a selection of personal accounts from members, so you can see how the process works in practice, and how EUSAC's trainees found it.

To see a list of the qualifications achieved in 2008, please see section nine.



– Our fully trained DO, complete with twinset, stage bottle and

Novice Training Timeline

- this is an example timeline only, progression depends on individual **choice and ability**.

Novice Year 1

Sports fair and sign up

Introductory meeting

Ocean Diver lectures and exam

Ocean Diver Sheltered water training

Ocean Diver open water training trip

University break

Sports Diver theory lessons and exams

Oxygen Administration course

Fancy dress training trip

Sports Diver sheltered water training

Oban expedition

Club AGM

Novice Year 2

Dive Leader lectures

Diving

Attend IFC

'Useful diver' on Ocean Diver training trip

University break

Oxygen Administration course

Dive leader theory exam

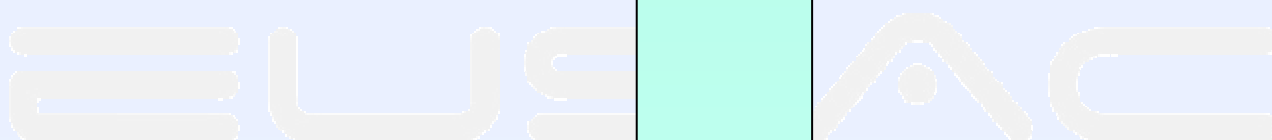
Fancy dress training trip

Oban expedition

Club AGM

Mull expedition

(if Sports Diver qualification achieved)



6. Water-Work

Setting the scene...

Because EUSAC is a student club, the majority of our new members – and all of our Ocean Diver trainees – arrive in September at the start of the academic year. EUSAC organises its training schedule to match this.

We do not schedule heavy training periods at times when the students are likely to have exams or leave the city, but take advantage of quieter academic periods to run training expeditions.

This means that by 1st January 2008 – when the Heinke Award year starts – our training cycle was already well underway.



– the goal: beautiful, wonderful, safe dives!

All the club's Ocean Diver trainees had completed and passed their theory and sheltered water assessments, and had taken part in a training expedition to complete dives 1-4 of ocean diver (where ability allowed).

All new club members with existing diving experience had also completed a 'cross-over' dive with an experienced club member.

Below is an example of the training schedule we use. You can find a full-sized copy this schedule on the CD we have included at with this report.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
64	Thu	03-Jan							
65	Sat	05-Jan			Mus's Lockline Trip				
66	Sun	06-Jan			Mus's Lockline Trip				
67	14 Thu	10-Jan				ST1	Sport Diving	Different diving conditions, self-assessment	
68						OD POOL SESSION			
69	Sat	12-Jan			Regional Training?				
70	Sun	13-Jan			Regional Training?				
71	15 Tue	15-Jan				Wreck Imaging Talk	Appleton Tower Lecture Theatre 4		
72	Thu	17-Jan				ST2	Diver Rescue	Rescues, practical AV + CC	
73						OD POOL SESSION			
74	Sat	19-Jan				ERD			
75	Sun	20-Jan							
76	16 Tue	22-Jan				Underwater Photography	Appleton Tower Lecture Theatre 1		
77	Thu	24-Jan				ST3	Equipment + Techniques	SMB, DSMB, distance lines, use of shot lines, compass	
78						OD POOL SESSION			
79	Sat	26-Jan	Bern's night supper			ITDC	Instructor Trainer Development Courses		
80	Sun	27-Jan				ITDC			
81	17 Tue	31-Jan	Sports Union Ball			ST4	Deep diving	Decompression, Tables/computers planning + diving, altitude tables, travelling	
82						OD POOL SESSION			
83	Sat	02-Feb				IFC + TIE			
84	Sun	03-Feb				IFC			
85	10 Tue	07-Feb				ST5	Breathing gas planning + systems	Equipment configurations	
86						OD POOL SESSION			
87	Fri	08-Feb			Regional Training Day	Leaving in the evening			
88	Sat	09-Feb			Regional Training Day	OD Open Water Training			
89	Sun	10-Feb			Regional Training Day	OD Open Water Training			
90	19 Tue	14-Feb				ST6	Going Diving	Dive leading, intro to nitrox/trimix	
91	Sat	16-Feb				DT2-T	Drygas Administration Courses	OD's, SD's and DL's can all come to this	Mus
92	Sun	17-Feb							
93	20 Tue	21-Feb				ST Exam	Sports Diver Exam	Supervise exam and go over answers	
94						DL Exam	Dive Leader Exam	Supervise exam and go over answers	
95	Fri	22-Feb	Rabbit/Karsaka @ Pleasance?		Oban Trip				
96	Sat	23-Feb			Oban Trip				
97	Sun	24-Feb			Oban Trip				
98	21 Tue	28-Feb				ST Exam result	Sports Diver Exam Result	Supervise exam and go over answers	
99						DL Exam result	Dive Leader Exam Result	Supervise exam and go over answers	
100	Sat	01-Mar							
101	Sun	02-Mar							
102	22 Tue	06-Mar							
103	Sat	08-Mar			Pool	SD Pool Training Group A	S31 Rescue Skills	Loth Academy Pool Booked	
104	Sun	09-Mar							
105	23 Tue	12-Mar							
106	Sat	15-Mar			Pool	SD Pool Training Group A	S31 Rescue Skills	Loth Academy Pool Booked	
107	Sun	16-Mar							
108	24 Tue	20-Mar							
109	Fri	21-Mar			Mill Trip		SD+		
110	Sat	22-Mar			Mill Trip		6 charter boat dives	EUSAC expedition, please email Anna Goodall if you want to go.	
111	Sun	23-Mar			Mill Trip				
112	25 Mon	24-Mar			Mill Trip				

Sheltered Water Training

Weekly pool sessions

In 2008, EUSAC hired a modern research pool from The University of Edinburgh at a discounted rate for a weekly training session.

We divided the pool to allow Octopush practice in one half (see section two), while the other half was used for dive training. This training included the practise of basic skills, drysuit training and rebreather try-dives. Where appropriate, the pool was also used for catch-up training for trainees who were unable to attend the scheduled Ocean Diver and Sports Diver sheltered-water training sessions.

Ocean Diver and Sports Diver training

Because the university pool is not deep enough for parts of the sheltered water training at Ocean Diver and Sports Diver levels, EUSAC hired a separate pool for these sessions.



– Pool training

Ocean Diver and Sports Diver training

Because the university pool is not deep enough for parts of the sheltered water training at Ocean Diver and Sports Diver levels, EUSAC hired a separate pool for these sessions.

Quick Facts...			
Type of sheltered water training	Dates	Trainees attending	Qualifying lessons signed-off
Ocean Diver	15 Jan -12 Feb	8	40
Sports Diver	08-Mar	8	8
Sports Diver	15-Mar	8	8
Ocean Diver	11 and 18 October	11	46
Ocean Diver	25 October and 1 November	8	40

The Diving Officer made clear that no trainee would be allowed to attend open water training for their respective grades until the required sheltered water training had been completed to an acceptable standard. Where trainees needed additional support, they attended extra pool sessions.

EUSAC had a large number of new Assistant Dive Instructors in 2008, so sheltered water training presented a good opportunity for them to practice their skills in a safer environment under the supervision of qualified instructors.



– A trainee practices mask clearing.

Pool contamination

In late October 2007, a chemical spill in the pool hired by EUSAC for training meant scheduled Ocean Diver training sessions were cancelled with only a week's notice. This impacted half our trainees because it was not possible to rearrange the sessions ahead of November's planned open water weekend.

Lothian Divers kindly agreed to let us join their weekly pool session until the problem with our pool was resolved, and the trainees attended a series of sessions in January and February 2008.

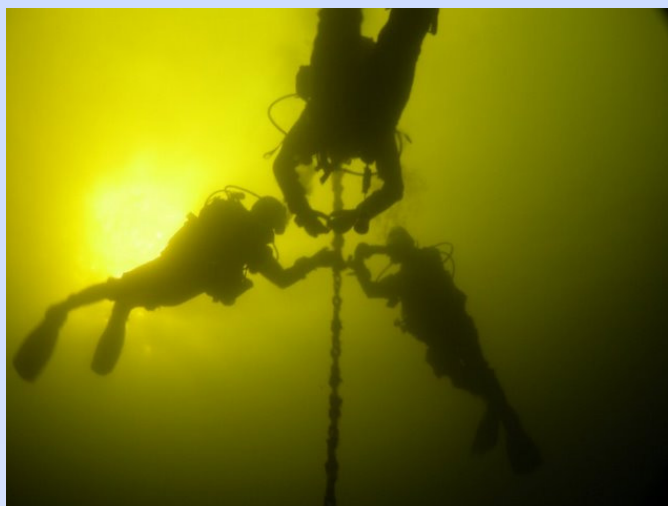
Because these trainees were unable to attend the open water weekend, it was used for Sports Diver and Diver Leader training instead. An extra open water training trip was scheduled for February – using compensation money we received because of the problems with the original pool – so the trainees could complete their Ocean Diver training in time for the spring expeditions season.

EUSAC is extremely grateful to Lothian Divers for their help while our pool access was limited, and for their enthusiastic offers of additional training support.

Open water training

We have listed the main in-water training organised by EUSAC in 2008 in the following pages. Diver training was the focus of all of the trips listed, and additional skills development and expedition training were included where appropriate.

The training provided by EUSAC emphasises quality over quantity. No dive is signed-off unless the trainee is ready to progress to the next stage, and the importance of gaining diving experience and practicing skills regularly is emphasised to trainees of every level.



– divers on a shot line

Each training expedition had an overall manager who organised the logistics of the trip as a whole. They delegated the role of dive manager to a different pair each day, approved by the Diving Officer. These pairs consisted of an experienced manager, and someone who was looking to develop their skills in this area. The less experienced manager gained practical experience of managing a day's diving, while the more experienced manager ensured the plan was safe and sensible.

This philosophy of ongoing training and practical involvement flowed across a number of tasks, so that everyone in the trip took on a role that was suitable to their level of experience. Where tasks required specialist knowledge, less experienced members were paired with a more experienced 'task buddy'.

These roles ranged from boat management to making sure we took a packed lunch with us for the day. Roles were rotated daily to ensure divers gained a broad knowledge base.

During all training trips, new Assistant Dive Instructors were encouraged to shadow Open Water Instructors. When confidence and ability allowed, the ADI progressed to leading all or part of a lesson, while the OWI shadowed, intervening only when necessary.

Catch-up Oban training trip

This trip allowed the Ocean Diver trainees affected by our pool problems to get their first taste of diving in open water at last. EUSAC organised the expedition as a regional training weekend, and we were delighted to receive assistance from five instructors who were not EUSAC members. By the end of the weekend, all eight novices had completed dives one to four of their Ocean Diver syllabus.

Quick Facts...	
Location	Oban
Dates	9 – 10 Feb
Number of spaces	20
Qualifying dives signed-off	65

Fancy dress winter training bonanza

The aim of this trip was to get divers back in the water after the Christmas break, provide training for those who had missed out on the November trip due to a chemical spill in our swimming pool in 2007, and provide training at all levels within a safe and fun environment.

The trip helped trainees avoid long gaps between dive weekends – particularly relevant for new divers who may not yet be confident enough to arrange their own dive trips.

It also provided new members with another opportunity to get to know club members, incorporating a fancy dress party on the Saturday night.

The trip was attended by: four Ocean Diver trainees; four Sports Diver trainees; two Dive Leader trainees; and seven instructors. We carried out a large number of qualifying lessons and rescue scenarios for the first three BSAC qualifications, with 36 qualifying dives completed by the end of the weekend.

Quick Facts...	
Location	Oban
Dates	22 – 24 Feb
Number of spaces	17
Qualifying dives signed-off	36

Spring Expeditions

Having trained intensively over the autumn and winter, in spring EUSAC's training schedule focuses on gaining dive experience in a fun and informal setting.

We offer four expeditions between March and July (see section 12 for more details). The expeditions are designed to suit all levels of experience, and all new members are encouraged to go on at least one expedition.

Quick Facts...	
Location	Oban, Mull, Skye I, Skye II.
Dates	9-10 Feb, 3-5 May, 24-28 May, 28-31 May.
Number of spaces	12 on each trip
Qualifying dives	Around 36 over four trips

Most divers came away from the trips able to sign off at least a couple of the 'diving conditions' elements of the Ocean Diver and Sports Diver and Dive Leader syllabus.

Those who would like rescue skills training are paired with an instructor, and training is accommodated where time and conditions allow.

EUSAC members also organised several additional training days in the spring, and we offered a number of skills development courses.



Summer season

As the majority of students left for the summer, EUSAC's trainee membership was vastly reduced. Most non-students (all of whom have achieved Assistant Diving Instructor level or above) remained in the city, which meant that summer 2008 was the ideal time to focus on skills development, advanced diver training and instructor training.

Some examples include a Combined Nitrox course organised in-house in May, a Search and Recovery course organised by EUSAC as part of the South Scotland regional offering, training in advanced boat handling techniques, and EUSAC's first in-house Compressor Operator course. See section eight for more details.

EUSAC members also gained a number of instructor qualifications over the summer. Between May and September, six members attended an Open Water Instructor Course, and EUSAC gained four new Theory Instructors and two new Open Water Instructors. See section nine for more details.



Autumn season

September is the start of the university year, and the period during which the majority of our new members arrive. It therefore marks the start of our training cycle.

From September to December, the club runs Ocean Diver, Sports Diver and Dive Leader courses. It also undertakes a number of cross-over days to welcome new members that already have diving experience.

Autumn cross-over dives

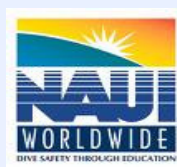
Every year several new members join the club after gaining diving experience elsewhere. These divers arrive with mixed levels of experience, and most will have predominantly dived outside of the UK.

To familiarise these divers with BSAC diving, we organised three cross-over dive trips in 2008 to sites that were well known to EUSAC members and considered relatively safe.

This ensured that each new diver was assessed in-water by an experienced club member, and was trained in BSAC rescue procedures.

The trips were also an opportunity for divers who had been away for the summer to refamiliarise themselves with Scottish diving, and for the club's new Assistant Dive Instructors to gain their first training experience under the supervision of Open Water Instructors.

Quick Facts...	
Location	A-Frames / Conger Alley
Dates	21 Sept, 28 Sept, 5 Oct
Number of spaces	12 per trip 36 in total
Training dives	18 in total



Ocean Diver Training

Quick Facts...	
Location	Loch Fyne
Dates	7th – 9 Nov and 14 – 16 Nov
Members attending	22 per trip
Qualifying dives	80 in total

In November, EUSAC ran two massive training trips to Loch Fyne to introduce our 16 new trainees to open water diving for the first time. Twenty-two divers went on each trip, and ability levels ranged from complete novice to First Class Diver.

These trips were part of the initial package the new novices signed up for, so and every single trainee went on one of these trips.

Where students progressed easily through the BSAC syllabus, they completed open water dives one to four of their Ocean Diver qualification. As always, the rate of progress was dependent on ability, and the focus was on becoming comfortable underwater, and not on signing-off lessons.

Training for more experienced divers, was also incorporated into the dive manager's plan where possible. For example, a member who had experience managing smaller trips, but who had not run something of this size or complexity before, managed each trip under the supervision of a more experienced manager.

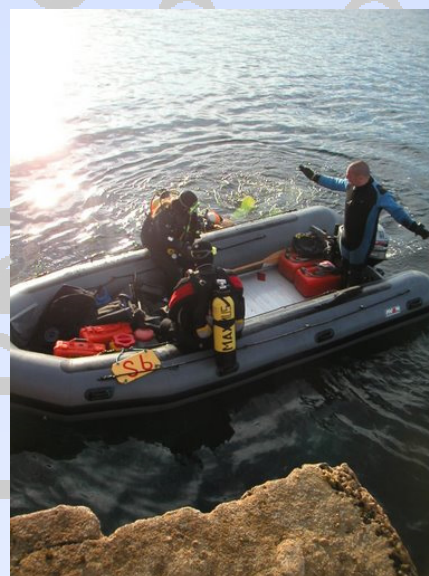
Because access to one of EUSAC's usual training sites at Loch Fyne had been closed, it was necessary to find a new site for dive three of the Ocean Diver syllabus. This became an opportunity to train a group of Sports Divers in exploratory dive techniques.

Under supervision, the team identified possible locations on charts on the Friday evening of the first trip. They found and dived the chosen sites on the following day, and gave a site brief of the most suitable location in advance of Ocean Diver training on the Sunday. This activity was interspersed with a series of sports diver rescue scenarios.

The trip's Sports Divers were presented with a further opportunity for training on day two of the trip. A line was needed between three small wrecks that were used for dive four of the Ocean Diver syllabus. Reinforcing the compass work and search techniques, the group were tasked with finding the two wrecks that did not have a shot line attached, running a line between the wrecks, and returning with an accurate compass bearing for use on future trips.

Advanced diver training was also incorporated on both trips, but was kept separate to other training due to its specialised nature and the depth of the lifts that were undertaken.

A huge amount of formal and informal training took place at all levels over the two weekends – with an incredible 80 qualifying dives signed-off by the end of the two trips.



– Neutral, Go!



Instructor-trainee pyramids

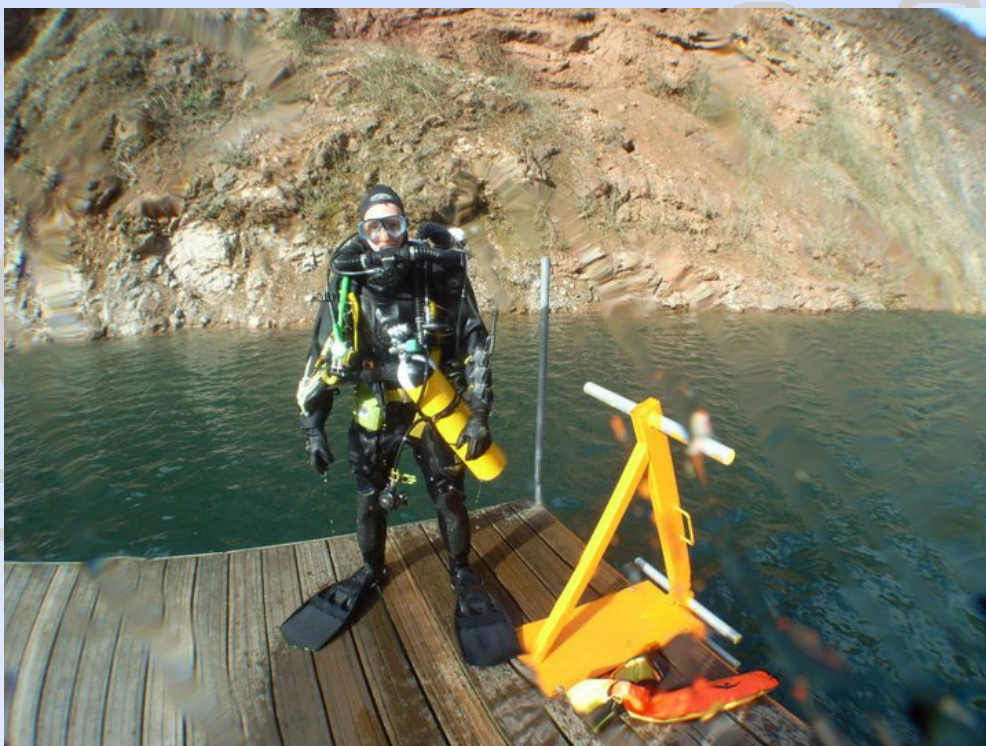
Testament to the success of these trips is the high demand the club has had for trips in 2009. All of our 16 trainees have signed up to at least one spring expedition, and several day trips with took place in December.

Advanced Training Trip

After a hectic but rewarding training season in 2008, this was a chance for the instructors to carry out more challenging diving and develop their own skills.

A hardboat expedition to Eyemouth was organised. While formal training was not the focus of this trip, informal training took place on subjects like decompression diving, and the use of twinsets, stage bottles and rebreathers.

Quick facts...	
Location	Eyemouth
Dates	19 – 21 Dec
Members attending	8



Regional training

Encouraged by kind response we had from Lothian Divers to our pool problems in 2007, EUSAC decided the club would benefit from forming stronger relations with other dive clubs in the region (see section 18).

Part of this was the use of the South Scotland regional training programme. EUSAC advertised regional training days via e-mail, and a number of enthusiastic trainees (and instructors) took advantage of this to supplement club training.

This facility proved particularly popular among the club's Sports Divers during October and November, when the focus in EUSAC was necessarily on Ocean Diver training for our new members.

My year as an Ocean Diver trainee

By Kirsty Hitchen

My first taste of diving was on holiday in Thailand when I spent 30 minutes floating around in a swimming pool – not much of a first go, but it gave me a taste of what diving was like.

So when I came to university in 2007 it seemed like the perfect opportunity to give SCUBA-diving a proper try, join a club and meet some new people in the process.

Within a surprisingly short time I was hooked – and now a year and a half on I am a Training Officer on the committee, attempting not to empty my bank account buying new kit, and looking forward to the years of diving to come!



– Kirsty before her first ever dive, doing her very best to look attractive in a semi-dry

My Ocean Diver training was enjoyable, and made all the more so by the sense of camaraderie and unity within the club – and the laughter and mocking that always followed shortly after someone ended up making a hash of things despite their best intentions (and I don't just mean us novices!).

I survived the training – including a cold February weekend in Oban spent shivering in a semi-dry suit. I spent much of my first dive trying to concentrate on what I was doing and ignore the brain-freeze brought on by the sheer cold of the water, and was therefore completely ignorant to the flat fish that appeared as soon as stuck my head under the water!



– Kirsty and Robert doing the buddy checks before her first dive

Later in the year we started Sports Diver training. This involved some very tactful explanation in pool training sessions as I exclaimed: "You want me to do what to her nose?!" Oddly enough, half an hour later – after some gentle persuasion from my instructor and a bit of practice – putting my mouth around someone else's nose for rescue breaths just seemed totally normal.



– Heading out to dive in Majorca

The training that I completed within the first year of joining the club also meant that a holiday in Majorca could be interspersed with some fun diving. This was made all the more relaxing and enjoyable due to the excellent instructing I had had during my training. I had never felt worried about diving, but the confidence that I had built over the year allowed me to further appreciate my surroundings and as I floated among the multi-coloured fish all around us.

Returning to the club in September 2008 for the start of the new university year saw me take on the role of Training Officer, and suddenly I saw all these new members who were in the position I had been in the year before. Some were confident, some were worried, but most of all they were keen.

Remembering the help and support I received when I joined the club means I realise how important it is to offer a friendly face to all this year's newbie's, and the number of new people who join the club every year is testament to all in the club that work so hard.

For me, it was clear from the first weeks of joining that EUSAC has created a dive club that supports its members through the highs and lows, promotes diving as a fantastic sport and encourages every member to help make the club something we can all be proud of.



– Kirsty (now one of the club's Training Officers) at the post-trip curry to celebrate the first dives done by the 08/09 intake of novices.

My year as a Sports Diver trainee

By Kate Fearnhead

Having joined the club the previous year, I was now part way through my Sports Diver training and keen to gain more open water experience.

I was in the right place – in EUSAC you're never short of people willing to take you out or help you get involved.

I'd also volunteered to be EUSAC's Treasurer – quite a daunting task after only a year as a member. But, with little help from the previous treasurer, I soon got to grips with the job, learnt a lot about how the club works and began to really enjoy it.



– Snorkelling in Sardinia

One of my most exciting – and terrifying – memories of 2008 was offering to assistant marshal a trip to Eyemouth. The trip would use the two club boats, and we planned to head to Loch Long if the weather turned nasty.

I learnt a lot about charts, pairing buddies and making sure we ran to schedule so we would hit slack water. It was a really big challenge, but Nix – the dive manager – was always on hand to answer my many questions, or just reassure me that it was all going ok.

At the end of the trip, I was amazed to realise that our work had resulted in 36 successful dives - and another dive was signed off for my Sports Diver qualification - not bad for a first attempt!

By early 2008 I had done a lot more diving, and finally finished off my Sports Diver. After all that training, it was time go out and get some proper diving experience.



– Coming out of the water after a dive

One of my favourite trips was to Oban. I remember going down the shoreline of the Breda into what seemed like an abyss until suddenly the wreck appeared out of nowhere and we could start exploring. The fancy dress night out was great fun as well. The theme was 'the ocean', and I was amazed at the effort people had gone to turn themselves into jellyfish and such like, and walking around the town in my killer whale outfit was something I'll never forget!

Another great experience was taking part in the regional Instructor Foundation Course, which was a lot of fun and a great opportunity to meet people from other clubs. My new skills didn't go unused either, and I soon found myself helping to give lectures in my flat for Sports Diver trainees.

My new skills were also put to good use snorkelling in Sardinia in September. It was an amazing to see hundreds of fish in a nature reserve, which would not have been possible without the skills I learned during Ocean Diver training.

Being in the club has given me so many opportunities I would never have had elsewhere. The training program has been fantastic – it fits in with the academic year and around exams, and it's so much more affordable than learning with other clubs.

I've also learned skills that apply to all walks of life – like getting over the fear of standing up to give a presentation, or being a part of the amazing teamwork required for every dive trip.

Roll on 2009!



– Back roll from a hard boat

My Year as a Dive Leader Trainee

By Alexander Zacheshigriva



– Practicing diving skills

I have been in the club for over three years, and by 2008 I was an experienced Sports Diver with most of my Dive Leader training done. I had recently done my IFC and was eager to get instructing experience.

Luckily, in EUSAC the training calendar is always busy. In January and February I shadowed some experienced instructors at three pool sessions, and got a chance to practice teaching. I also gave two Sports Diver lectures under supervision.

In February we went to Oban to get some of the club's Ocean Diver trainees into the water for the first time. Our Training Officer asked me to manage the trip – the first time I'd run something so large. Twenty people went, including eight trainees and five instructors from other clubs – which made the logistics of organising it an even bigger challenge. I had lots of backup though. Max (who is an Advanced Instructor) helped check my plan was workable, and the instructors and ADI's were always on hand to help out. I was particularly impressed with the bravery of our trainees – who stayed smiling and enthusiastic despite the cold!

The trip ended up being lots of fun. It taught me a lot, and my last Dive Leader lesson was signed-off as a result. Now I just needed to do few more deep dives to complete the syllabus.



– Boat handling in Cape Wrath



– Helping a trainee on with her kit

A three day trip to Lochaline was set to provide just that. Getting excited about the amazing wrecks we were going to see in the Sound of Mull I decided to try using a twin-set in advance of the trip. The great thing about EUSAC is that people are always happy to lend their kit, so I had a chance to try three different setups, before I spent money on my own equipment. This meant I knew I was buying the equipment that would suit me best, and by the time the trip came around, I was comfortable enough with my new kit to use it for the dives.

After all this build-up, I was not disappointed. The diving in Mull was amazing! In particular I loved diving the Thesis and seeing the turquoise water through the ribs of the wreck. To top it all off, by the end of the trip I was finally a Dive Leader!

But in EUSAC you never stop learning; I attended a Boat Handling course in April. The same month I managed another trip to Oban. This time we brought our club boats, which gave an opportunity for me to practice, boat handling. I love diving with club boats - it adds a flexibility and a spirit of adventure to our trips.

I'd had such a great time on the first Mull trip that when I realized that I had a free weekend in the beginning of May, I organized a second trip there. Even though we had our boats to take care of, everything was incredibly slick because all the divers were very experienced. I found myself managing a trip where I was the least experienced person, which was a bit odd, but made the organisation much easier!

I kept diving throughout the summer, taking advantage of the great shore diving that east coast of Scotland provides in Eyemouth, St. Abbs and Dunbar. I was also looking forward to even more great wreck diving - particularly a week at Scapa Flow, in July! In preparation for Scapa I helped Paul organize a Combined Nitrox course, which was really useful and great fun. The open water training came to less than £30 including the petrol and a barbeque - I don't think those sorts of prices can be beaten!



- Entering the water in Scapa Flow

Scapa was incredible. It was fascinating diving the old battleships, and the blockships were amazing. This trip was shortly followed by the BEGS-sponsored expedition to Cape Wrath. The scenery there was breath-taking; I finally saw a seal underwater, and there were more dogfish than I could count!

The Cape Wrath trip also helped me build up even more boat handling experience, dealing with the rough seas we had to face. This came in really handy when it came to doing my Diver Coxswain assessment in October.

Over the year I also got more involved in training, I did my Open Water Instructor Course in May and Theory Instructor Exam in September, in time for the new lot of Ocean Diver trainees arriving.

2008 was a busy year, but I've loved every minute and done some unforgettable diving. Next year I hope to pass my Practical Instructor Exam, but most of all I'm looking forward to going on even more fantastic dive trips!



My Year as an Advanced Diver Trainee

By Sarah Boys

I completed my Dive Leader training in October 2007, through EUSAC, having gained quite a bit of experience on the way. Having just begun a new degree, I was in no particular rush to complete my Advanced Diver training, but felt I could start to make a leisurely approach towards it.

In reality, just by taking part in events and the plentiful opportunities for new diving experiences, I managed to complete several aspects of my Advanced Diver training simply by having a fantastic time going diving!



– Sarah not quite getting the hang of advanced diving techniques!

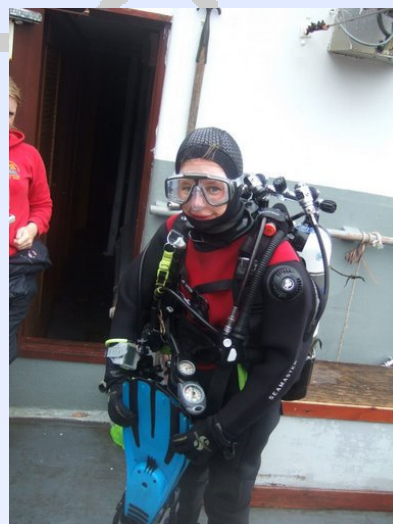
Most of the training under the experience section for Advanced Diver was completed on club trips to places such as Scapa Flow, Moray Firth and Cape Wrath. These trips allowed more experienced club members like me to do things like decompression diving, diving in tidal waters and dives greater than 30 metres.

The bit of formal planning that was required was organising the lectures. Five of us arranged with a few instructors to do these. The group was just the right size, allowing a relaxed and interactive approach. I particularly enjoyed the use of a chocolate orange to demonstrate the how charts of the world are constructed!

The discussions about kit configurations were also useful since a few of us had recently begun to use twin-sets with a pony bottle containing Nitrox, so it was helpful to discuss all the possibilities for arranging these sorts of set-ups, and the pros and cons of manifolding.



– Sarah diving the Doyle, Scapa Flow



– Kitting up for the Tabarca, Scapa Flow

These ideas were soon put into practice and I found myself sewing straps onto my pony bottle so I could hook it onto my BC, and try out different configurations over the summer. My enthusiasm must have been obvious, because we all came back from the Scapa Flow trip wearing hoodies emblazoned with the motto 'Tech as Sez'!

In addition to the dive training, I had been spending more time giving presentations to the club, both as 2007/08 Chairman, and by giving Ocean Diver lectures under the supervision of OWI's.

I felt it was time to take my TIE, which I did in February. It was quite nerve wracking, but I came out having passed, feeling more confident, and able to improve with the feedback given.

The skills I have learned through the BSAC instructor training programme – particularly on the IFC – have already proved invaluable, and not just for diving. I am required as part of my PhD to give regular talks to the whole department, and these have become a much less painful experience since starting down the instructor route.

In September I attended the South Scotland Regional OWIC. I had already shadowed a lot of open water lessons, and had even given a few under supervision. But it was interesting to hear how other clubs do things, and get confirmation that my instructing is effective.



– Preparing a pony bottle



– enjoying the sunshine

The timing was good too, as I had lots of opportunities to practice over the following few months with the arrival of all the new novices and cross-overs. I got very excited when I was able to sign-off a lesson for the first time with my brand new Theory Instructor number!

So what next? I hope to take my Practical Instructor Exam at some point this year, and my plan is still to go out and take advantage of as much of the fantastic diving on offer as possible. If that means learning a few more skills to do so, then all for the better – I may become an Advanced Diver yet!

My year as a Cross-Over Diver

By Anthony Clifford

I joined the EUSAC as a PADI Divemaster crossover, looking mainly to expand my diving network and social group.

My plan was to lurk initially while I found my feet. This didn't quite happen. The club promotes development very well, so I soon found myself on an IFC course, and then in the system working towards full instructor certification.

Being involved in the instructor programme really helped me integrate into the club, but this was cemented when I went on one of the expeditions.

I can't say that I ever expected things to turn out quite as well as they have. In previous dive clubs, you go for a dive and then head home at the end of the day, and you make a lot of acquaintances, and the occasional friend. In EUSAC, however, there really is a good sense of community with an excellent balance between the social side of things and the diving itself.

I think when you are good friends with the people you dive with, then the club really benefits. It stops just being about your own personal development as a diver and becomes more about making the club as a whole more experienced.

Since joining EUSAC I've achieved Open Water Instructor status, and been able to make an active contribution to the club. It's interesting to see how trainees react to the obvious 'above and beyond' interest that the instructors and training team put into their development.

The more dive-orientated members enjoy the amazing social aspect of the club, the more social members enjoy the fact that the EUSAC makes diving as easy as it can, and we all sort of meet in the middle (or wherever the bar is)!

Being a member of EUSAC has expanded the breadth and depth of my diving knowledge, and on the odd time it hasn't been fun, it's been rewarding!

The structure works, that's shown by how tight we are socially, and it's has to be said that EUSAC truly is... a magnificent branch.



- Ant at the IFC



-Enjoying the social side



-Ant on the Oban Expedition

7. Theory Lessons

Theory Lessons

EUSAC delivered a full programme of theory lessons in 2008, achieving a 100% pass rate for all courses by the end of the year.

Quick Facts...					
Level	Number of lectures	Start date	End date	Number of attendees	Number of passes
Sports Diver	6	10 Jan	14 Feb	17	14
Ocean Diver	7	25 Sept	30 Oct	16	16
Cross Over	1	25 Sept and 6 Nov	25 Sept and 6 Nov	17	N/A
Dive Leader	7	2 Oct	30 Oct	11	6
Advanced	4	30 Oct	24 Feb	5	5

As with other years, EUSAC ran the Ocean Diver, Sports Diver, and Dive Leader theory courses in the university's autumn term.

The level of experience required for the Advanced Diver syllabus, and the short length of time a typical student spends in Edinburgh, means that this course is not offered as standard by EUSAC. However, high retention rates and the availability of capable instructors, meant we decided to run the course in 2008.

Lectures took place in facilities provided by The University of Edinburgh (see section 15).

Where possible, Assistant Diving Instructors looking to gain teaching experience were accommodated under the supervision of a Theory Instructor or Open Water Instructor to allow them to develop their theory instructing technique and obtain constructive feedback.

Practical work was incorporated into lessons where this was advantageous. For example, during the Diving Equipment and Signals lecture for Ocean Diver, students were shown examples of the kit described. After the lesson, instructors took groups of trainees to EUSAC's equipment lockup to allow them to examine the kit more thoroughly and see how we store and maintain the club's kit.

A further example was the club's use of Resusci-Annie dolls to teach first aid techniques during theory lessons.



Mayday Jamboree

EUSAC also hosted its annual Mayday Jamboree on Thursday 13 March, to give an all-round refresher of basic rescue techniques to its members.

All members were encouraged to attend the event – regardless of diving grade.

Over the course of the evening, attendees were broken into teams, which rotated around workshops on the following subjects:

- RB and CPR
- Oxygen Administration
- VHF use
- Personal Safety Equipment

The event included all the elements of the Oxygen Administration course.

However, the main purpose of the event was to remind people of their basic rescue training – particularly for those who had not done any theory training since the autumn.

The course was also used as an intensive day of teaching for Assistant Dive Instructors – who met with the instructors before the event to go over their own skills.

The jamboree has become a very popular social and training event, with a relaxed, festival feel about it.

Pre-trip Theory Training

EUSAC firmly believes that theory training should not be confined to individual courses, so a high level of opportunity training takes place at every level before and during each EUSAC trip

For example, before the Easter expeditions in 2008, those people attending were given a refresher lesson in how to use the club's O2 kit and how we load the club's boats.

During the BEGS-funded Cape Wrath Expedition, this sort of preparation proved invaluable. Before the trip, attendees were given theory training on dealing with surf, large waves and capsize procedures by the expedition leader. The training raised awareness of the challenging conditions expected and prompted a discussion of alternative solutions from the expedition team. Rough weather during the expedition meant the taught 'bow forward' boat launch method was used successfully through heavy surf, avoiding transom breach.

8. Courses

Skills Development Courses

EUSAC participates in numerous Skill Development Courses each year. 2008 was no exception, and club members attended ten regional and 'in-house' courses.

Below is a list of the SDC's we participated in, and the members who gained a qualification as a result. EUSAC members are listed in *italics* throughout.

Regional Courses

Extended Range Diver
February and July 2008
Instructor – Gary Liddell

EUSAC Participants:
Amal Al Sayegh
Steven Czuprynski
David Gibson
Graeme Kirk
Benjamin Panter

Oxygen Administration
EUSAC-led course
October 2008

Instructors – *Charlie Westerling*
Trainee Instructor – *Nicola McDonnell*

EUSAC Participants:
George Ftyd
Adel Heenan

Search and Recovery
EUSAC-led course
February and July 2008
Instructor – *Maximilian Ruffert*

EUSAC Participants:
Sarah Butler
Sian Griffiths
Nicola McDonnell

Practical Rescue Management
October 2008

Instructors – *Charlie Westerling*, Wayne Murray

EUSAC Participants:
George Ftyd
Adel Heenan

As part of EUSAC's drive to become more involved in regional activities in 2008, the club offered places on a number of EUSAC-run Skills Development Courses to members in the South Scotland region.

In addition, EUSAC ran an advertising campaign to keep its members more informed of SDC's and other training offered by the region. This included e-mails to the club's mailing list, and advertising on our website.

This improvement was largely facilitated by one of EUSAC's trainee instructors, Nicola McDonnell, who in mid-2008 became Skills Development Co-ordinator for the South Scotland region.

This effort led to a significant increase in the number of members obtaining SDC's in 2008.



– Busy training day at Loch Long

EUSAC

EUSAC courses

Oxygen Administration February 2008

Instructors – *Amal Al Sayegh, Steven Czuprynski and Maximilian Ruffert*

Trainee Instructor – *Sarah Boys*

Participants:

*Kate Fearnhead
Sherief Abu-Senna
Adam Apostoli
Padraig Looney
Peter Swann
Vladimir Krivtsov
Robert Gormley
Nina Svensen
Adel Seaton*

Boat Handling April 2008

Instructor – *Paul Bullen*

Trainee instructors – *Graeme Kirk, David Gibson, Maximilian Ruffert*

Participants:

*Sarah Butler
Robert Gormley
Michael Holliday
Claire Nisbet
Michael Sim
Anna Swift*

Alexander Zacheshigriva

Boat Handling course with instructor approval March 2008

Instructor – *Paul Bullen*

Participants:

*Graeme Kirk
David Gibson
Maximilian Ruffert*

Combined Nitrox June 2008

Instructors – *Amal Al Sayegh and Paul Bullen*

Trainee instructors – *Graeme Kirk, Steven Czuprynski*

Participants:

*Anthony Clifford
Sian Griffiths
Nicola McDonnell
Charlie Westerling
Alexander Zacheshigriva*

Compressor Operation September 2008

Instructors – *Graeme Kirk and Steven Czuprynski*

Participants:

*Amal Al Sayegh
Sarah Boys
Sarah Butler
Anthony Clifford
Sian Griffiths
Nicola McDonnell
David Gibson
Maximilian Ruffert
Alexander Zacheshigriva*

Diver Cox'n October 2008

Instructors – *Paul Bullen and Maximilian Ruffert*

Participants:

*Charlie Westerling
Alexander Zacheshigriva*

Compressor Operation Course

This course was a notable addition to EUSAC's usual SDC offering, and took place shortly after the course was launched by BSAC.

It allowed a number of divers who had little or no experience operating a compressor to learn how they operate. It was run at the start of the Cape Wrath expedition, so the team's new skills were put into practice to fill bottles over the rest of the week.



– Having a go at the compressor

Developing new SDC's

EUSAC has taken a role in developing new Skills Development Courses – thanks to the work of Benjamin Panter, who was inspired to write BSAC's new ice-diving course after learning the skill in Germany.

Benjamin's achievement is outlined in detail in the Special Achievements section.

EUSAC members Paul Bullen and Graeme Kirk also wrote an Outboard Motor Maintenance course in 2008, which is due for presentation to the BSAC in 2009.

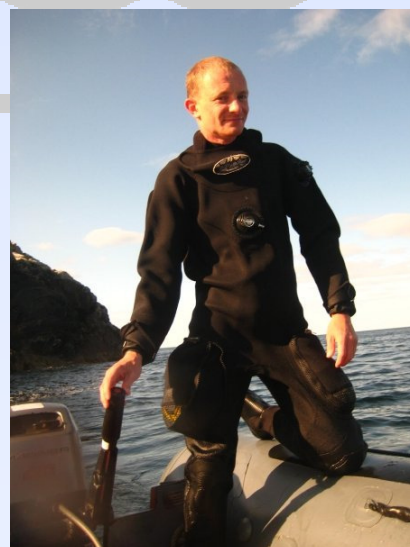
Training at all levels

A key aspect of the EUSAC SDC's is the inclusion of instructor training where possible. Instructors who are familiar with an SDC will supervise those who have not taught the course before, widening the club's instructor resource.

For example, at the start of 2008 EUSAC had only three approved Boat Handling Instructors. Through this system of mentoring, the club doubled this number over the course of the year.



– Instructor and trainees going for a dive



– Demonstrating the 3 point turn

Instructor Training Courses

In 2008 EUSAC gained three new Open Water Instructors, seven new Theory Instructors and five new Assistant Dive Instructors.

EUSAC uses BSAC's South Scotland regional training system for formal instructor training. We advertise regional instructor training widely throughout the club via our website, Facebook page and website.

Three of EUSAC's members are also on BSAC's Instructor Training Scheme, and teach regularly on regional instructor training courses.

Below we have detailed the training sessions attended and qualifications gained by EUSAC instructors in 2008.

Practical Instructor Exam

February 2008

Participants:

Charlie Westerling

September 2008

EUSAC instructors in attendance:

Maximilian Ruffert

Participants:

Anthony Clifford

Sian Griffiths (merit)

Theory Instructor Exam

February 2008

EUSAC instructors in attendance:

Amal Al Sayegh

Maximilian Ruffert

Participants:

Sarah Boys

Charlie Westerling

May 2008

Participants:

Peter Wasson

September 2008

EUSAC instructors in attendance:

Maximilian Ruffert

Participants:

Anthony Clifford

Nicola McDonnell (merit)

Alexander Zacheshigriva

Open Water Instructor Course

May 2008

EUSAC instructors in attendance:
Maximilian Ruffert

Participants:

Anthony Clifford

Peter Wasson

Alexander Zacheshigriva

Sarah Boys

Andrew Goddard

Nicola McDonnell

Instructor Foundation Course

February 2008

EUSAC instructors in attendance:

Amal Al Sayegh

Maximilian Ruffert

Participants:

Sarah Butler

Michelle Clements

Anthony Clifford

Kate Fearnhead

Peter Swann

Messing around in boats

By Michael Holliday

In April I took part in the BSAC Boat Handling SDC, to learn more about how to drive the club's boats so I could help out when expedition season kicked off.

The theory training covered everything we would need to know before they let us loose in open water. We worked in groups looking at charts and learning how to understand them, and talked about how to go about planning boat trips, including calculating the distance travelled and the time needed.



– Man overboard!

Once all the lectures were complete – it was time to get out on the water! The practical training took place on the Firth of Forth at Granton, which has a nice sheltered harbour that was ideal for practicing skills.

We started early, meeting at the lockup to prepare the boat for being on the water. We got lucky with the weather - the sun was shining for the whole day and the sea was calm.



The Cramond Island

When we got onto the water we covered turning, reversing and three point turns. We had our lunch on Cramond Island, before practicing knots and how to use anchors.

The best bit was the 'man overboard' scenarios. Using our affectionately named buoy, Bob, as our 'diver in the water', we practised dropping-off and picking-up divers and rescuing Bob when he fell overboard – which he seemed to do a lot!



–One of our boats—the Falisker

It was a fun day out, and we all learned a lot. To celebrate our new-found driving prowess, we ended the day with a barbeque on the beach while we soaked up the last of the sun.

Since completing the course I've had lots more chance to practice at the skills I learned that weekend. In EUSAC there are lots of opportunities to drive the boats on expeditions, and there's always someone on hand to offer advice and a spot more 'informal training' when the seas get rough.

Diaries of an Instructor Trainer

Amal Al Sayegh

I first joined EUSAC in 1998 and by the time I graduated in 2002 I was an Advanced Diver and Open Water Instructor. I managed to progress through my Advanced Instructor exam and Instructor Trainer Development Course, and was "turned on" as an Instructor Trainer by the Autumn of 2003.

I would never have achieved all this without the support and encouragement of my dive club. There was no end of volunteers willing to sit through practice lectures, give valuable feedback or give up a day to act as mock students for open water lessons.

The Instructor Foundation Course continues to be the most challenging event to instruct on. For me, guiding students through their first steps as instructors will always remain an interesting and rewarding experience. Teaching EUSAC students, both in the water and out, offers me many opportunities to try different teaching styles and get feedback, so my instructor trainer skills are always developing.

The Open Water Instructor Course is a time to focus on developing more advanced teaching skills. This is the time to help candidates make the leap from listening as students to listening as instructors. Watching them have the chance to plan, prepare and present open water lessons is fun and exciting, but seeing their confidence and enthusiasm soar is the best part. EUSAC divers remain among the most enthusiastic and committed students I have met, and their ongoing drive to complete training and progress through the diving ranks has allowed me to teach at many levels and transfer these skills to my role as an instructor trainer.

It is no surprise to me that many EUSAC divers begin their instructor training at the earliest opportunity as, like myself, they are keen to give back to the club the time and effort invested in them. Many approach me for help with preparation for the Theory Instructor and Practical Instructor Exams. It is a delight to see the lectures and lessons prepared and presented to such a high standard, and the students so receptive to constructive criticism and willing to learn. This goes a long way to explaining EUSAC's excellent track record in passing these examinations, even when they are unlucky enough to have me examining them!

I also have spent time supervising new Assistant Dive Instructors and Open Water Instructors in EUSAC and am always impressed by their enthusiasm. Most importantly, they are confident of their limits and know when to seek assistance or advice. This secures our club's safety record by fostering an attitude of diving and teaching (and supervising) within one's level of competence.

Being a EUSAC member offers me the opportunity to instruct at all levels. With such a busy diving calendar, teaching opportunities always present themselves. EUSAC divers are always receptive to new skills and knowledge and have helped me develop as an Instructor Trainer. I learn as much from them as they do from me!



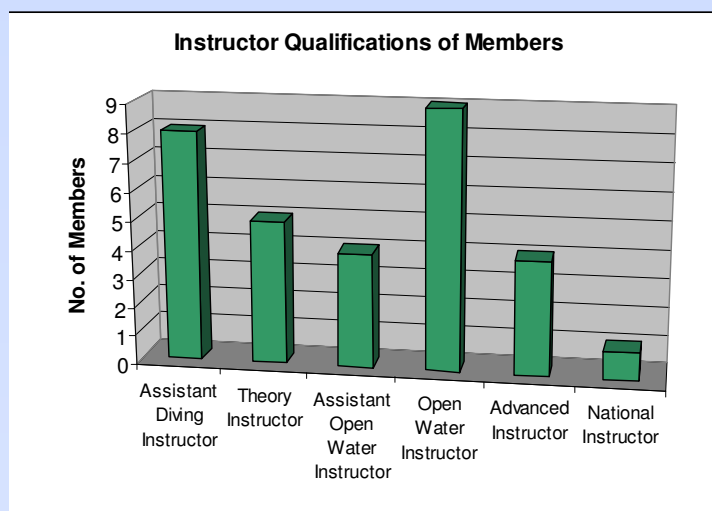
Amal entering the water at Scapa



– Amal giving the brief for tomorrow at Cape Wrath

9. Qualifications

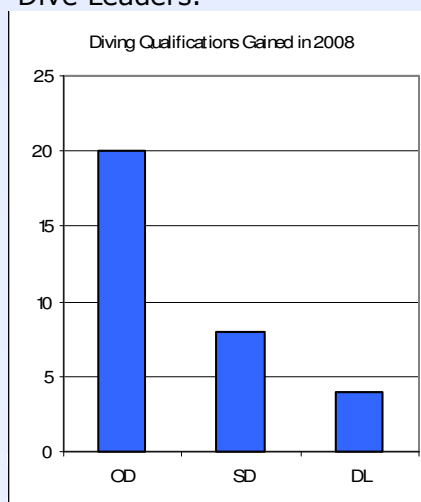
Over the course of 2008, many club members have successfully completed new qualifications, including many new instructor qualifications as well as many new general diving ones. As shown in figure below, we are very fortunate in EUSAC to have many keen instructors of all levels, as this enables us to offer a strong and varied training to all our trainees at whatever level. 26 members have completed at least one instructor qualification, of which 14 are fully qualified instructors, and 3 are part of the Instructor Trainer Scheme.



- Note: Members that are TI and AOWI are listed twice

It is also important to develop new instructors as well so that the high turnover potential for members of a student club, does not lead to all instructors graduating and leaving an inexperienced club behind with little in-house opportunity to develop further. The qualifications completed by EUSAC members in 2008, are detailed in the tables below, classified by diving and instructor qualifications.

Over the course of 2008 numerous members gained new diving qualifications. There were twenty newly qualified Ocean Divers, eight members completed their Sports Diver qualification and four became Dive Leaders.



Exam Title	Date	Site	Instructors
Theory Instructor Exam	02/02/2008	South Scot-	Sean Gribben
Sarah Boys			Amal Al
Charlie Westerling			Max Ruffert
Theory Instructor Exam	11/05/2008	South Scot-	Sue Mitchell
Peter Wasson			
Theory Instructor Exam	28/09/2008	South Scot-	Sue Mitchell
Ant Clifford			Max Ruffert
Nicola McDonnell			
Alexander Zacheshigriva			
Practical Instructor Exam	06/02/2008	North West England	Dennis Wigg
Charlie Westerling			
Practical Instructor Exam	01/05/2008	South Scot-	Sue Mitchell
			Max Ruffert
Practical Instructor Exam	14/09/2008	North Wales	
Ant Clifford			
Practical Instructor Exam	28/09/2008	South Scot-	Sue Mitchell
Sian Griffiths			Max Ruffert

10. Equipment

Dive equipment owned by EUSAC...

One of EUSAC's main objectives is to introduce novices to the sport of diving, so the equipment we own is aimed at facilitating this. The club has basic dive equipment available for hire, including: stab jackets, regulators, tanks and lead weights.

We own enough equipment to take on 16 novices a year. This figure allows room for existing members who do not yet have their own equipment to continue hiring it from the club.

To make the sport accessible to as many students as possible we keep the cost of hiring equipment low, and do not charge equipment hire fees for training dives.

The table below summarises the equipment available to our club members, and the improvements we made to it in 2008.

BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 sets • ScubaPro™ and Northern diver™ • 9 bought new in 2008
Regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 sets • ScubaPro™ Mk11 and Mk2 • Include depth/time gauges and compass • 5 bought new in 2008
Dive Cylinders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 tanks: 10, 12 and 15 litre • Steel. Faber™ • 4 bought new in 2008
Weights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 300lb, in a variety of sizes • 40lb moulded in 2008

Equipment Development Grant

In 2008 some of our equipment was reaching the end of its service life. To remedy the problem, we applied for and won a £1,000 grant from the university's Sports Union for the replacement of five full sets of kit.

We were able to negotiate a discount with our local dive shop for the stab jackets, regulators, depth gauges and tanks, allowing the grant money to stretch further.

Lead moulding

A club member donated a lot of scrap lead in 2008 – which came from his water tank! We used this to make more weights for the club's training trips in the autumn.

Other dive equipment...

Mask, fins, snorkel and gloves

Although the basic dive equipment for novices is provided by the club, trainees are asked to purchase a mask, fins, snorkel and gloves. It is important that these items are a good fit, and they are relatively inexpensive, so we believe it is better that trainees provide their own.

To help trainees find the right items for them, at the beginning of the Ocean Diver training programme we organise a 'kit-night' at Edinburgh Diving Centre (EDC), the only dive shop in the city.

The owner of the EDC, Douglas McEwan (a former EUSAC member himself), kindly opens the shop for one evening at the start of the Autumn term so that we can take all our trainees there to buy their basic equipment.

The kit-night ensures that our novices are well advised about their purchases, know where the shop is for future reference, and are introduced to the staff.

EUSAC is lucky enough to have had a longstanding relationship with the EDC, spanning over 20 years. EUSAC members are entitled to a 10% discount in the shop, and a reduced rate for air fills. The shop has also been a source of Saturday work for numerous club members over the years.

Semi-dry suits

EUSAC does not provide drysuits to our members because we believe that a good fit is essential, both for diver safety and for comfort. For new divers, it is also more appropriate that they learn to control a single source of buoyancy – their stab jacket – than try to balance the pressure changes between two sources.

People without their own suits hire semi-dries from the wide selection of sizes available at the EDC. Because a proper fit is also important in these suits, it is better for members to hire them than for the club to hold a more limited selection. Again, EUSAC has negotiated a discounted rate to minimise the cost for new divers.



Semidry feels warm in a hot shower



Skipping between dives—keeps divers fit and warm

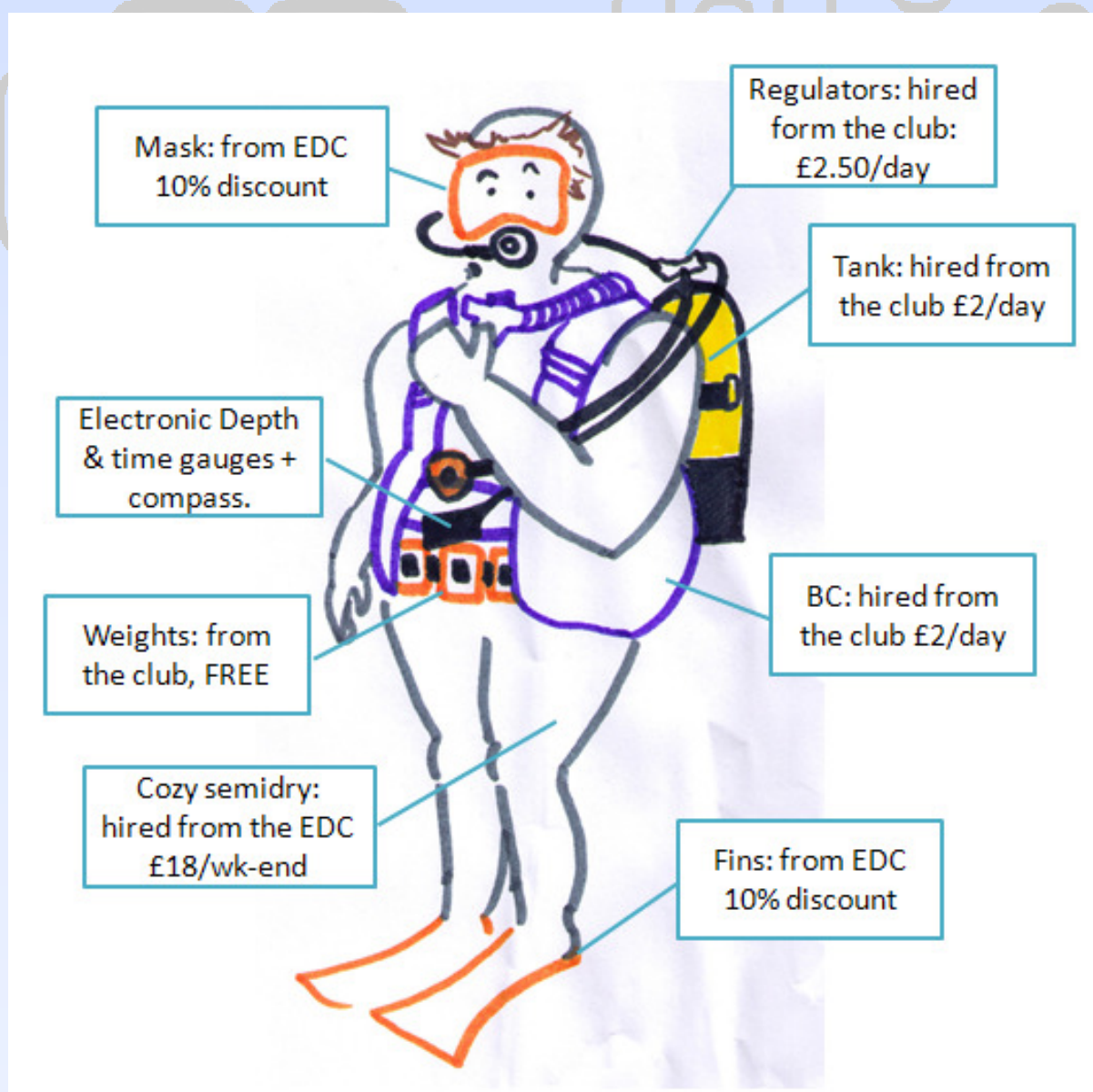
Equipment maintenance

We ensure that all club members know how to look after dive equipment, so that it stays in good condition. It is everyone's job to wash the boats and equipment after a day's diving and to help store it appropriately.

After the Ocean Diver lecture on equipment, trainees are taken to the club's equipment lockup by a few instructors. They are taught where and how the equipment is stored, and how to adjust, set it up and take care of it. This means that all the trainees understand how to use and maintain the club's equipment before their sheltered and open water lessons.

Note: All club kit hire and air fills are free for training!

The Equipment Officer is responsible for making sure that the club's regulators, cylinders and engines are serviced by professionals on a regular basis, and that any faulty equipment is fixed or replaced.



– A typical EUSAC novice diver

Boats

We strive to use our boats to access the best diving available in the UK, and to explore locations that other divers may miss when diving from larger boats.

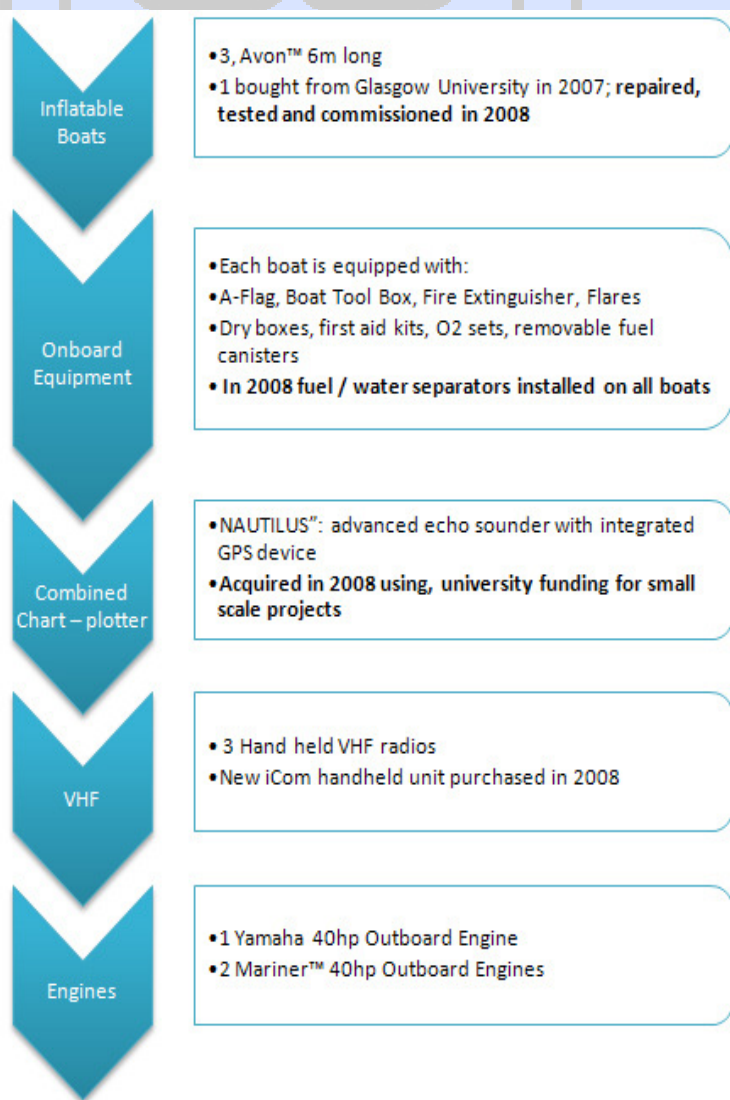
We continue to use Avon Heavy Duty inflatable workboats, which have the advantage of flexibility and lower maintenance costs. Our 'fleet' of three boats – named Talisker, MaCallan and Ardbeg – enable us to take up to 18 divers out at once.

All EUSAC's boats are of the same class, and use the same size of engine. This means we can take advantage of a level of 'standardisation', so it is easier for new boat handlers to switch between them.

Only two of the boats were in full working order in 2008. The previous year, EUSAC bought Ardbeg from Glasgow University Sub-Aqua Club. She was in dire need of repair, and much of the year was spent fixing, testing and commissioning her. We expect Ardbeg to be in full use by mid-2009.



– Talisker ready to be loaded



All of the work described below was done in-house, by our club members.

In April, fuel/water separators were installed on the boats after a number of engine troubles were attributed to water ingress. We have had no recurrence since the installation.

In May we inspected Talisker and McCallan for leaks, and patched the boats where necessary.

In the Autumn, a new propeller was fitted for the Yamaha engine. A testing process found the optimal prop size and pitch for fuel efficiency and speed.

The starter casing on Mariner was repaired twice due to design faults. An electric starter was installed and also tested on the engine.

Safety Equipment

We know that safety is not by accident, so we make sure that we have the necessary equipment in place, that it is serviced regularly, is taken on every dive and that all divers know how to use it. Safety equipment is free for all club members!

The table below details the safety equipment that we have.

O2 Emergency kit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 complete sets comprising of • O2 bottles, O2 1st stages, constant flow ports, face mask. • New pressure gauges installed in 2008
First Aid Kits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Sets, including: • Made from a tough, waterproof material, this kit contains first aid equipment for injuries typically sustained from diving
Resusci Anne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Manikin Sisters • Used for Rescue Training

The equipment officer is responsible for maintaining safety equipment, and makes sure oxygen and first aid items are replaced if used or out of date.

In addition to diver training and Oxygen Administration courses, we host an annual 'Mayday Jamboree' This informal course covers all the basic rescue techniques. It includes:

- O2 kit review
- VHF radio basics
- Personal safety equipment
- First aid

For more details, see section seven.



Checking Mccallan for leaks in the hull



Annual service and some TLC

Equipment-hire payment system

In 2008 a new payment system for the club's equipment was introduced.

Previously we had used an 'honesty' based system where boxes were ticked on a pre-purchased kit card, or cash was deposited in a secure box. Unfortunately this system was not working ideally. People often ran out of credit or had no cash at the end of a trip, and so relied on 'IOUs'. This made it hard to track kit usage and ensure that people were accurately paying the hire fees.

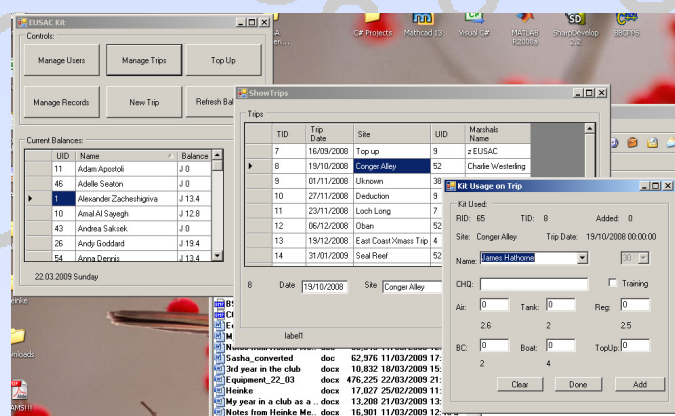
Under the new system, which was designed by the Treasurer, each member of EUSAC now has an online equipment account. At the end of each trip, the dive manager e-mails the Treasurer to report on the kit they used, and the appropriate amount is deducted from the relevant accounts.

After an amount is deducted from a person's account, the database automatically e-mails that person to let them know what has been deducted, and let them check their balance.

Accounts can be topped-up by payment to the club in cash or by cheque.

The new system provides following advantages:

- Equipment payments are easier
- The system is more reliable
- We have accurate statistics showing club equipment use – which helps us determine appropriate service intervals
- Equipment hire fees can be changed easily
- Members can pre-pay or hire on credit
- Members can monitor their equipment hire via monthly reports



– Screenshot of the equipment hire database

Equipment maintenance and development plan

In 2008 EUSAC took steps to secure the long-term funding of the club's equipment, negotiating a ten-year maintenance and development plan with Edinburgh University Sports Union.

The formalisation of this plan has ensured the financial security of the club for the years to come, and is explained in more detail in the Special Achievements section of this report.

Diving Activities

EUSAAC

11. Branch Dives

As shown in the table below, EUSAC has carried out a wide range of diving throughout 2008, covering all levels of divers, many ranges of conditions and types of diving. Several club members have also enjoyed diving at locations abroad, some warm water, some temperate water. A map of the world is included showing the various sites across the world where EUSAC divers have dived (page 67).

Frequency and organisation of dives and sites used

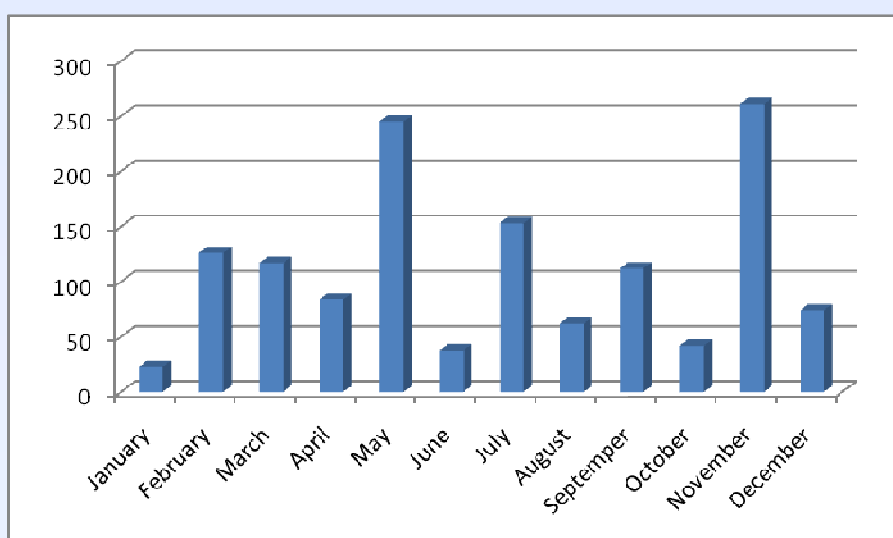
Dates	Venue	Dives Done	Divers				Type of Dive
			OD	SD	DL	AD+	
13/01/08	Loch Long, A-Frames	13	5	1	0	1	Training, Tidal, Shore
19/01/08	Loch Long, A-Frames	4	0	0	1	3	ERD training, Tidal, Shore
20/01/08	Loch Long, A-Frames	6	0	1	3	0	Cross-over induction/Scenic, Tidal, Shore
09/02/08	Loch Long, A-Frames	2	0	0	0	2	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
09/02/08 - 10/02/08	Oban	56	9	3	1	1	Training, Scenic & Wreck, Tidal, Shore & Boat
23/02/08 - 24/02/08	Oban	68	7	5	3	3	Training, Scenic & Wreck, Tidal, Shore & Boat
02/03/08	Loch Long, Conger Alley	18	2	2	2	2	Training, Scenic, Tidal, Shore
09/03/08	Loch Long, Conger Alley	2	0	1	1	0	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
16/03/08	Loch Long, Conger Alley	16	2	4	2	0	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
21/03/08 - 24/03/08	Sound of Mull	79	0	2	3	7	Wreck & Scenic, Tidal, Hard boat & Shore
28/03/08	Ardmore, Donegal	2	0	1	1	0	Scenic
05/04/08	Loch Long, A-Frames	12	3	2	3	0	Cross-over and drysuit inductions, Shore
12/04/08	Loch Long, A-Frames	16	2	2	4	0	Cross-over and drysuit inductions, Shore
12/04/08 - 13/04/08	Wales	4	0	0	2	0	Scenic
13/04/08	Eyemouth	15	1	3	3	2	Cross-over induction, Tidal, Shore
19/04/08 - 20/04/08	Oban	22	3	2	5	2	Scenic & Wreck, Tidal, Shore & Boat
21/04/08	Loch Fyne/	6	0	1	1	1	Scenic, Tidal, Shore

26/04/08 -	Plymouth	4	0	0	1	0	Scenic (with other club)
29/04/08	Eyemouth	1	0	0	1	0	Scenic (with other club)
29/04/08	St Abbs	4	0	0	2	2	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
03/05/08	Sound of Mull	30	0	1	5	2	Wrecks & Drift (some Deco), Tidal, Boat
06/05/08	Eyemouth	8	2	1	4	1	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
07/05/08	St Abbs	2	0	0	1	1	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
10/05/08 -							
11/05/08	Crohaven	20	0	0	1	4	Offshore exploratory drifts, Hard boat
17/05/08	Loch Long, Conger Alley	10	0	2	3	0	Scenic and cross-over induction, Shore
18/05/08	Loch Fyne	22	3	5	3	0	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
20/05/08	Eyemouth	6	0	2	1	0	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
20/05/08	Petticowick	5	2	1	0	1	Training & new dry suit, Tidal, Shore
24/05/08 -							
31/05/08	Skye	138	4	5	2	1	Scenic/Drift/Wreck/Exploratory/Night, Tidal, Shore, Hard boat, Club boat
25/05/08	Clyde	4	0	0	2	0	Wrecks, Tidal, Boat
01/06/08	Dunbar	2	0	0	1	1	Scenic, Tidal
07/06/08	St Abbs	7	1	1	2	0	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
08/06/08	Dunbar	2	0	0	1	0	Scenic (with another club), Tidal, Shore
15/06/08	Loch Long, A -Frames	14	0	0	4	3	Nitrox Course Training, Tidal, Shore
28/06/08	Loch Long, Conger Alley	4	0	1	1	0	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
29/06/08	Green Ends Gulley	9	0	2	3	0	Scenic, Tidal, Shore
05/07/08	Clyde	10	0	0	3	3	ERD/Deco/Wreck/Scenic, Tidal, Hard Boat
12/07/08	St Abbs	20	2	2	2	2	40th Anniversary scenic (charter boat)
12/07/08	St Abbs	10	1	1	3	1	40th Anniversary scenic (club boats)
19/07/08 -							
25/07/08	Scapa	109	0	1	6	4	Wreck/Deco/Drift, Tidal, Liveaboard
19/07/08 -							
20/07/08	Loch Fyne	4	1	0	0	0	Regional Training day, Tidal, Shore
02/08/08 -							
07/08/08	Malta	14	1	0	1	0	Scenic/Wreck, Tidal, Shore
01/08/08 -							
03/08/08	Moray Firth	36	0	2	2	6	Exploratory/Wrecks/Scenic/Deco, Tidal, Boat
25/08/08	Dunbar	10	2	2	2	1	Scenic, Tidal
27/08/08	Spain	2	0	0	1	0	Scenic with dive school
01/09/08	Loch Long, A -Frames	4	1	1	0	1	Regional Training Day, Tidal, Shore
01/09/08 -							
02/09/08	East Coast	16	0	1	2	1	Search & Recovery SDC, Tidal, Shore
03/09/08 -	Cape Wrath (BEGS)	72	0	1	6	5	Remote/Scenic/Exploratory BEGS Expedition, Tidal, Boat

11/09/08	Loch Long, A -Frames	20	2	2	3	1	DL rescue skills practice, Scenic, Tidal, Shore
19/09/08	Green Ends Gulley	14	3	1	3	0	Cross-overs, Rescue skills, Scenic, Tidal, Shore
26/09/08	Loch Fyne	6	0	2	3	3	Exploratory diving and boat test
05/10/08	Dunbar	2	0	0	1	0	Charter boat with another club
11/10/08	Dunbar	4	0	0	1	1	Diving with another club off a RIB
12/10/08	Loch Long, A -Frames	6	3	0	0	0	Regional Training day, Tidal, Shore
18/10/08	Eyemouth	8	3	0	1	0	Charter Boat fun diving
18/10/08							
19/10/08	Plymouth	4	0	0	1	0	Charter boat diving with another club
19/10/08	Loch Long, Conger Alley	11	3	0	2	0	Cross-overs, Scenic, Tidal, Shore
26/10/08	Loch Fyne	7	3	0	3	0	Cross-overs, Scenic, Tidal, Shore
31/10/08							
02/11/08	Mull	8	0	0	1	1	Joint ladies trip with BSAC 21
07/11/08							
09/11/08	Loch Fyne	121	11	3	4	5	Training weekend and exploratory diving
14/11/08							
16/11/08	Loch Fyne	132	11	2	3	6	Training weekend and exploratory diving
07/12/08	Loch Fyne	8	4	0	0	0	Regional training day
05/12/08							
-07/1208	Oban	18	0	2	3	0	Joint trip with MUSAC
19/12/08							
/21/12/08							
8	Eyemouth	48	0	2	6	8	Christmas trip for fun and deco dives
23/12/08	Julian Rocks, NSW, Aus.	2	0	0	1	0	Boat dive, Scenic, Tidal

Below is a graph showing the frequency of diving throughout the year showing that we are active all year round.

Number of dives per month



Quick Fact

On average the club does approximately 7 dives everyday of the year.

Where we Dive?

The Map below shows the locations around the world where EUSAC members have dived in 2008.



Arrangements for both novice and experienced divers

We have trips throughout the year which are dedicated to different levels of divers. Trips such as the Christmas trip are designed for the more highly qualified members and instructors as a reward for all their hard work throughout the year. The trips to Loch Fyne and Oban on the other hand are designed to take trainees on with instruction being given or to just build up confidence and experience for newer divers. We also encourage people of all abilities to arrange their own trips with help and advice from older members to make sure that they are doing the diving that they want to.

The table above gives information on the qualification level of each diver on a trip, and from this together with the description of the type of diving, it can be seen that trips are run to cater for all levels of divers, whether a trip designed for novices, or for experienced divers, or a mixture of all abilities.

Safety and emergency procedures

We clear all dive plans with our Diving Officer who carries out a risk assessment prior to diving and report back in to let them know that the day went well when the last of the group is out of the water and safe. We always take our O₂ kits with us when we go diving and make sure that there is an O₂ Administration qualified diver on site. We strongly encourage people to dive with shore cover at all times and buddy pairs are carefully chosen to make sure that pairs are not only diving to the BSAC recommended limits but also within their own personal ones in terms of experience and skill as well. Annually, we hold the Mayday Jamboree which gives all our members to refresh their emergency skills as mentioned in section 7. We actively encourage our members to practice their rescue skills whenever possible, a good way to do this is by encouraging people to become ADIs or



– Our O₂, flares and boats spare's equipment



– Going to attach Pooh to the Rondo at Mull

12. Expeditions

EUSAC had a full expedition calendar in 2008, which ensured that a large number of members were able to participate in trips that matched their diving abilities.

We organised the transport for all these trips, as otherwise members tended to get a bit too inventive!

A summary of the main expeditions led by EUSAC is listed below – though we also attended several trips run by other organisations.



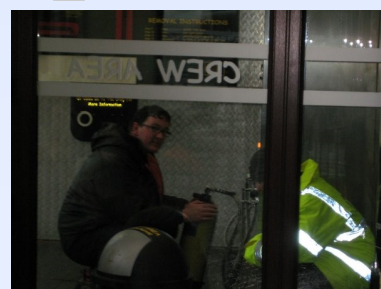
Oban I
9–10 February
Shore diving
Divers: 20 (5 non-EUSAC)
Dives done: 65



This trip was funded by compensation we received via the Sports Union's Reserve Fund after half our Ocean Diver trainees were unable to make the Loch Fyne training trips due to pool contamination issues. EUSAC organised the trip as a regional training weekend. We completed 15 lessons with 8 trainees over the two days, for more details, see section six.



Oban II
22–24 February
Charter boat
Divers: 17
Dives done: 72



This expedition acted as a gentle introduction back into diving for those who had not been in the water since the Christmas break. It also allowed our novices to complete their Ocean Diver qualification by leading a dive with an instructor. We dived classic sites like the Maiden Islands, Heather Island and the Breda. This was a fun trip, complete with fancy dress, in a legendary diving location!

EUSAC



Mull I
21–24 March
Charter boat
Divers: 12
Dives done: 72



This trip ran during the Easter break and was devised to allow members to develop their more technical diving skills from the comfort of a charter boat. We dived the Thesis, Shuna and Lochailine Pier. The trip was aimed at experienced Sports Diver level and above. One member also finished their Dive Leader qualification.



Oban III
18–20 April
Club Boats
Divers: 12
Dives done: 48



This expedition allowed members to dive from club boats in a safe and known location. Both the club's boats were taken, and the trip was attended by a number of Ocean Divers and Sports Divers. Sport Divers who were ready, were able to lead the less experienced divers and all divers were given the opportunity to help run aspects of the expedition.



Lochailine
2–4 May
Club boats
Divers: 8
Dives done: 30



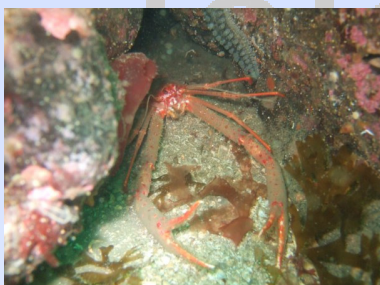
This allowed members who could not make the first Mull expedition to explore some of the fantastic wrecks and scenic diving available in the Sound of Mull. We took the club's boats, and used the trip to develop confidence and seamanship skills, and to allow the club's Sports Divers and Dive Leaders to do some more advanced diving. Many of the old favourites were dived, along with some sites that we had not dived before.



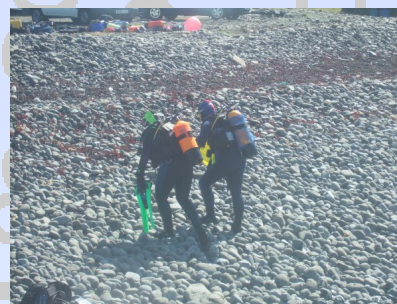
Skye I
24-27 May
Club boats
Divers: 12
Dives done: 70



This was the 20th anniversary of the annual EUSAC Skye trip, and it did not disappoint. Despite some problems with the engines of our boats, 12 EUSAC divers had an unforgettable trip to our friends at Dive and Sea the Hebrides. We dived some spectacular scenic sites, including Lampay Reef, Loch Bay pinnacle Osgil Reef and Meanish slipway.



Skye II
27-31 May
Club boats
Divers: 12
Dives done: 68



As the divers from Skye I headed home, a new set of divers came up from Edinburgh to take over the accommodation and enjoy the diving on offer. Both trips met at Kyleakin to dive the Port Napier and hand over the club's equipment.



Crob Haven (REDS)
10-11 May
Charter Boat
Divers: 12 (6 non-EUSAC)
Dives done: 20



The BSAC South Scotland Regional Expeditionary Diving Scheme trip for 2008 was run by a EUSAC member, Maximillian Ruffert. Six EUSACers were joined by six people from other South Scotland clubs. This expedition explored the Sound of Luing and was organised to develop Advanced Diver trainees. The weather was stunning, so we were able to travel as far offshore as Torran Rocks.



St Abbs
12–13 July
Club and Charter boats
Divers: 24
Dives done: 30



This weekend away was organised to celebrate the club's 40th birthday. Alumni members were invited to come along, and we ran a combination of hard boat, club boat and shore diving. Twenty-four members of all abilities and ages dived some of the classic sites in the area, and we held a barbeque on the Saturday evening before camping on Coldingham beach. The wet weather did its best but we had a great turnout – and some very strange looks from onlookers as we stood in the rain celebrating 40 years of EUSAC, dressed according to the theme "life begins at 40"!



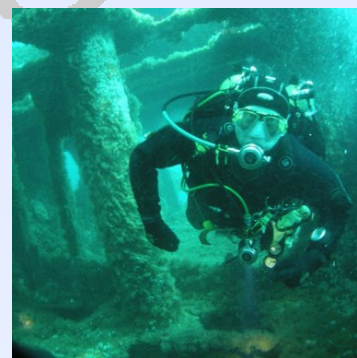
Moray Firth
1–3 Aug
Charter boat
Divers: 12 (3 non
EUSACers)
Dives done: 36



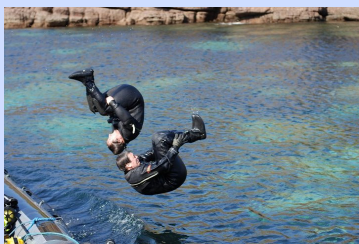
This was an unknown location for the club in 2008, and the fabulous wreck-diving on offer was very much enjoyed by everyone on the trip. This was a EUSAC-hosted multi-branch trip and was attended by members of three other clubs. Despite the inevitable sea-sickness and the persistent swell above and below the water, everyone had a great weekend away.



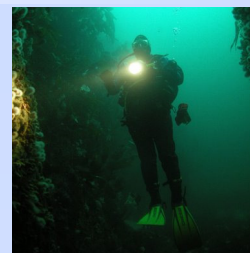
Scapa Flow
19–26 July
Charter boat
Divers: 11
Dives done: 109



Living on and diving from the Jean Elaine, 11 EUSACers spent a week diving the classic wrecks of Scapa Flow, including the Coln, the F2, and the Tabarka. Scapa is an old favourite for EUSAC and this year's expedition was timed to coincide with the local 'Shopping Week' celebrations.



Cape Wrath
3-7 Sep
Club boat
Divers: 12
Dives done: 84



This exploratory expedition was partially funded by the BSAC Expedition Grant Scheme. The trip documented the sites around Cape Wrath and developed the confidence and experience of Diver Leaders and above. For more detail see the Special Achievements section, and the trip report included on the attached CD.



Loch Fyne I
7-9 Nov
Club boat
Divers: 23
Dives done: 121



The main aim of this trip was to introduce the club's novice divers to diving in open water, but a great deal of Sports Diver and Advanced Diver training also took place. A massive 22 divers took part, diving around Inverary Caravan Site and at St Catherine's. For more details see section six.



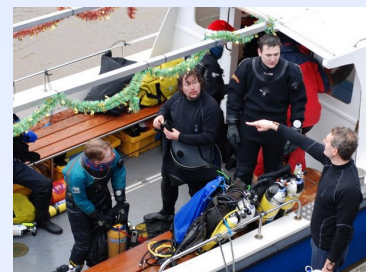
Loch Fyne II
14-16 Nov
Club boats
Divers: 22
Dives done: 132



This second Loch Fyne trip allowed the last of the 2008 intake of novices to get their first taste of salt water. We also ran rescue scenarios for Sports Diver level and did Advanced Diver training. Unfortunately, we were not blessed with the beautiful weather of the first trip, so surface intervals were used for a spot of skipping to keep warm!



Eyemouth
19-21 Dec
Charter boat
Divers: 8
Dives done: 50



The Christmas trip was designed as a 'reward' for the instructors who had worked tirelessly over the autumn term. This was an advanced trip which allowed instructors to develop their own skills (such as using twinsets and rebreathers). It included a Christmas dinner on the last night, and santa hats were compulsory. The skipper begrudgingly accepted our Christmas cheer, and even allowed us to cover his boat with tinsel.

Moray Firth (8–10 August 2008)

By Amal Al Sayegh

The drive up was so long that I thought the diving must be worth it. Fortunately, it was a lovely sunny day so spirits were high.

I had last dived in the Moray Firth ten years earlier and my memory was of two fantastic dives on the wreck of the San Tiburcio and abandoning the second day of diving because I couldn't bear the sea-sickness! I wasn't the only one on that trip to go home early.

I had high hopes for this weekend's trip and was determined not to be defeated by my stomach.



Amal at Moray Firth

Unfortunately, my enthusiasm and positive outlook were no cure for motion sickness. Although our dives on the SS Moray and MV Unity were fabulous, the time on the surface was marred by wretched nausea.

Thankfully, our skipper managed to find a sheltered spot to spend our surface interval, allowing some relief so we could enjoy our lunch of curried spuds! The journey back to the harbour was not too bad and I decided that overall, the great dives are worth the discomfort – especially the huge, fabulous nudibranch that I spotted on the MV Unity.

I wasn't the only person who took up the welcome offer of anti-motion sickness tablets on the second day, and they worked a treat! Sea-sickness sorted, I was set for the day.

Our first dive was on the SS Verona and for some reason, everybody got a little competitive about finding the toilet with the blue scroll-work on it. Nobody can quite explain divers' fascination with seeing toilets underwater!!

Our second dive was on the bow section of the magnificent wreck of the San Tiburcio and it was even better than I had remembered.

The trip also a lovely opportunity to dive with friends from other clubs, including e-Divers and Dive-Tech. EUSAC has always been a welcoming, social club and much thought went into where and how we would have our group Saturday night meal. In the end we blessed Lossimouth's Chinese restaurant with our company, and enjoyed their all-you-can-eat buffet. Surprisingly enough, they appeared unphased at the prospect of feeding 12 hungry divers!



Hungry divers at the buffet

Lochaline 3–5 May 2008

By Steven Czuprynski

In May 2008 EUSAC ran an expedition to Lochaline using the club's two inflatable boats. The trip comprised of EUSAC members of ability levels ranging from First Class to Dive Leader. Some had been to the Sound of Mull many times before, while others were heading there for the first time.

Build-up dives beforehand allowed us get some practice in and become familiar with the equipment and techniques we would use on the trip. This included the use of pony cylinders, twinsets and stage bottles. Some divers used the expedition to prepare for their Extended Range Diver assessment, while others became more familiar in the operation of club boats and managing more advanced diving. For most, the trip was about having a fantastic time exploring the incredible wrecks of the Sound.



Steve descending to the Shuna

The group was based at the Old Post Office at Lochaline and used the ferry slip to launch the boats. From this starting point we could dive either end of the Sound.

The first dive of the trip was on the well-known Rondo, which sits near-vertically on a cliff-face, with the bow at 50 metres and the stern at around six metres. One Dive Leader successfully signed-off their 50 metre depth progression at the bows. Divers were sent into the water in two waves to ensure constant boat cover was provided on the surface.

The group had brought spare cylinders along for the second dive, and we changed the tanks over during lunch. Due to the poor weather conditions we decided to launch from a small beach near the Shuna rather than motor all the way back to Lochaline. This saved considerable time and fuel and allowed some of the divers to practise beaching the boats onto the shore.

The Shuna was not as silted up as usual, despite the poor surface conditions, so most pairs took the opportunity to explore inside the engine room and around the stern.

The group motored back to Lochaline pier, unloaded equipment and got airfills from the nearby Lochaline dive centre. Three divers moored the boats nearby for the night using a three point anchor system.

After an exciting day's diving we were rewarded with a feast of Max's famous roast salmon and German roast potatoes. We did make an attempt to head to the pub after, but we were all too full and tired to really appreciate our beers!



Kitting up for the drift dive

The following day, the increasing wind and rough sea-state meant the planned dive on the Hispania had to be scrapped. Instead we did a drift dive along a wall south of Lochaline that we had been told about by divers who had been to the area earlier in the year. The drift was lovely, with lots to see, and it was good for us all to dive a site we'd never seen before.

The second dive of the day was another drift – this time in Lochaline itself. The group waited until the spring tide was running quickly and dropped a wave of divers in after the ferry had left. The dive was exhilarating, though pretty short, and it was easy to forget that we were only a few metres under the water.

After the dive we packed up for the long drive home, pleased with our weekend's achievement. Despite our inevitable exhaustion on arrival in Edinburgh, we all made it out for the traditional post-dive curry – and with the added boost of new tales to tell, this time the beer flowed more freely.

40th Anniversary Trip

By Neil Nutt

On 12th July 2008, just a couple of days after the club officially turned 40, a trip was organised to one of the sites most frequently dived by EUSAC over the decades; St Abbs.

We planned a laid back, relaxed weekend and made a real effort to ensure that the diving would be accessible to all, regardless of whether they had done five or 5,000 dives. As an added bonus, the day would be a great opportunity for us to catch up with old friends.

Due to the large number of past and present members who wanted to take part, the trip was split into three groups, with diving taking place



– The club boat divers

from charter boats and club boats, as well as from the shore.



– The hard-boat group

Following some enjoyable diving around St Abbs Head and Cathedral Rock, we held a beach barbeque at Coldingham Bay. Despite an impressively intense downpour that did its utmost to put a dampener to the grand finale, everyone had great fun taking part beach games such as frisbee, kite flying and rounders until well beyond dusk.

To round off the first day a handful of EUSACers from several generations sat around a campfire on the beach sharing tales

from the past 40 years before camping out beneath the stars.



– Near the dusk by the camp fire



– Diver recovered into the boat with the kit on

13. Scientific

'Here comes the science bit...'

One of the benefits of being a university club is that we have easy access to sources of expertise, both from our members themselves, and from the wider university community. Most importantly, our membership is keen to learn.

Even so, 2008 was a special year. EUSAC members in the Project Nemo team were invited to Buckingham Palace to receive an award for marine research (this project is explained in more detail in the Special Achievements section).

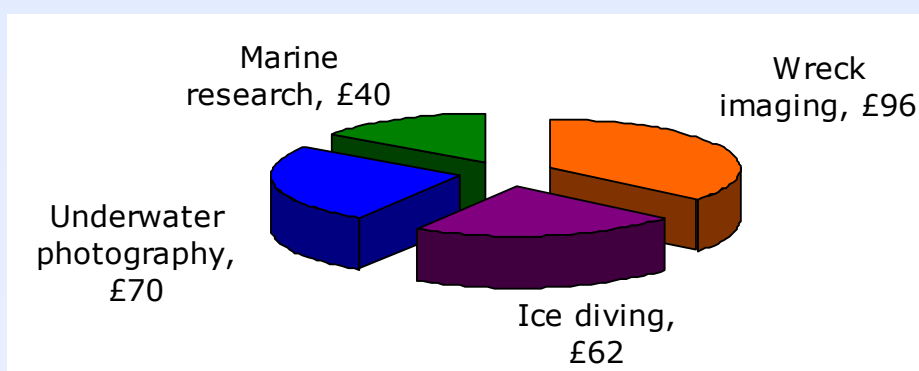
In addition, EUSAC held a series of educational seminars on scientific topics, which were open to all dive clubs in the region. We also took full advantage of our new combined GPS/echo-sounder unit, which was used throughout the year to survey a range of dive sites in Scotland.

Seminar series

One of our goals for 2008 was to use the sources of expertise that we have links with to offer a programme of educational seminars for the wider diving community. These seminars helped increase the profile of the club, improved our links with other organisations, and raised funds to expand our training programme.

We invited presenters, in fields ranging from wreck imaging to marine research, to hold seminars in the university's lecture theatres. We charged £2 for entry, and invited other dive clubs in the area (regardless of which organisation they were affiliated to), and university societies with an interest in the subject matter.

Amount raised by each seminar:



EUSAC raised £268 over the four events. We received very positive feedback and plan to host a second series of seminars in 2009. Details about each seminar are listed overleaf.

EUSAC

Marine Research: Project NEMO

Speaker: Dr Stephen Simpson, University of Bristol (expedition leader for project NEMO)

Project NEMO was an expedition to study the biology of the Omani anemone fish. It aimed to establish how juvenile fish choose where to settle and determine how fish stocks can best be protected.

In the 2006/2007 academic year, EUSAC supported this expedition by training a group of scientists so that they were able to conduct the required survey work in Oman. The resultant expedition won second place in the 2007 Duke of Edinburgh's Prize competition.

Stephen Simpson has remained a long-term friend of the club, and returned to tell us why Omani clownfish is so special, and how his research is helping to save reef fish throughout the world.



– The Clown Fish



– The expedition in Oman

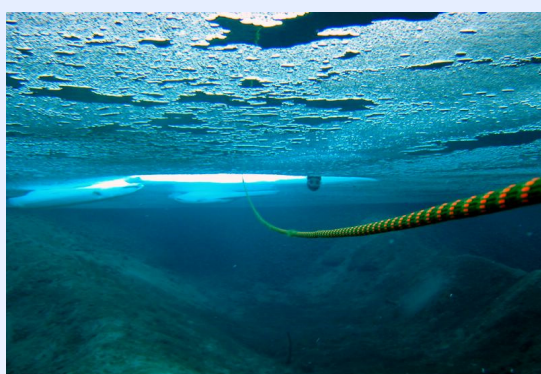
Ice Diving

Speaker: Dr Ben Panter, University of Edinburgh (developer of BSAC's Ice Diving SDC)

Ben Panter is a First Class Diver with a wealth of teaching experience. In 2008 his SDC, entitled BSAC Ice Diving, was accepted by the National Diving Committee.

This seminar introduced the audience to the world of ice diving, looking at the equipment and rope handling techniques required to deal with the extreme cold and ice.

Ben was a valued member of EUSAC in 2008, and his accomplishment is described in more detail in our Special Achievements section.



– The view from under the ice



– Ben about to go under the ice

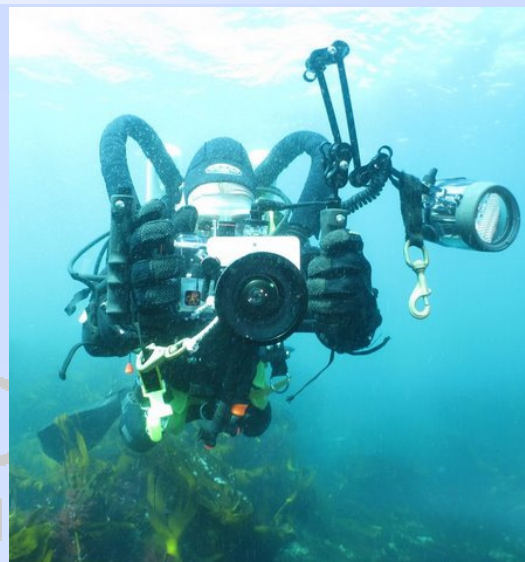
Underwater Photography

Speaker: Paul Duxfield, Cameras Underwater

EUSAC was delighted when one of Scotland's leading experts on underwater photography agreed to host a seminar with us on the subject.

The lecture was aimed at beginners and improvers. It explained the basic principles of underwater photography, concentrating on the 'point and shoot' cameras that hobby divers are more likely to own.

In addition to divers from a range of Edinburgh clubs, this talk was attended by several members of the Edinburgh University Photography Society.

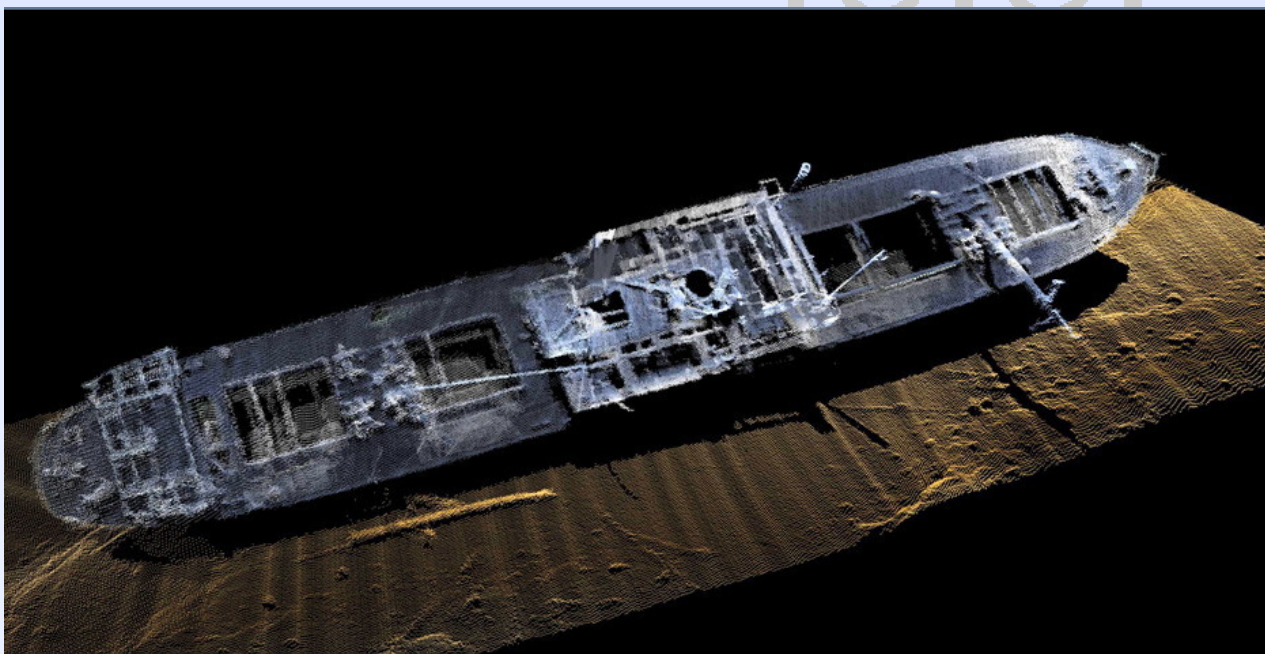


High-Resolution Imaging of British Wrecks

Speaker: Dr Martin Dean, University of St Andrews

Martin Dean is a maritime archaeologist who specialises in wreck-imaging techniques. He is involved in the Rapid Archaeological Site Survey and Evaluation (RASSE) project with the University of St Andrews, and his work has been published by the Nautical Archaeology Society.

His seminar showed how 3D datasets can be resolved to one centimeter precision – far higher than in the picture shown – to create accurate images and allow interactive 'fly-throughs' of the UK's most popular wrecks. He also explained how this data could be used as an educational tool to improve diver safety.



– Hispania (Source: <http://www.adus-uk.com/HispaniaImage1.html>)

Survey work

EUSAC operates from inflatable boats, rather than RIBs. Inflatables have several advantages for a university branch: they are more forgiving when mooring and bumping into rocks, they are easier to patch up, easier to tow and ideal for training purposes. But in the past, the use of inflatables made site-survey work more difficult.

Our boats do not have built-in electrical power, nor a console, so all electronics need to be portable, removable, and self-contained. The lack of a fixed GPS/sounder meant that sounding a site to produce a map was a fairly laborious process.



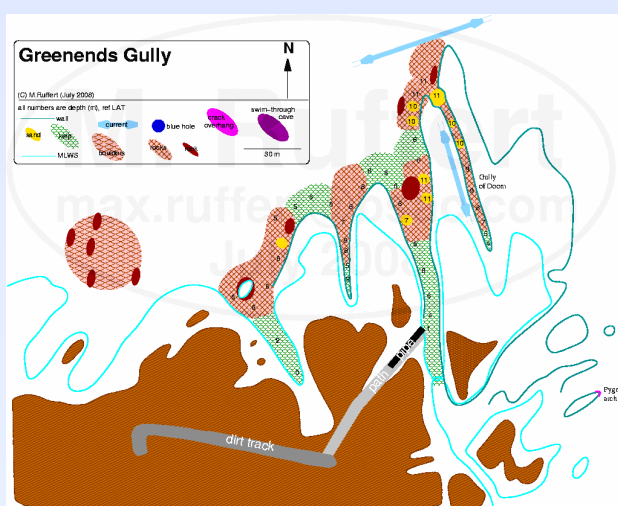
– Max sounding at Cape Wrath

Until a couple of years ago, the only way EUSAC could survey a site was by using a hand-held GPS unit to produce a track with time stamps, and manually write down the depths read off a portable sounder. Back at home, the times of the depth soundings had to be matched up with the timings on the GPS track to produce a coarse, hand-drawn chart.

This procedure changed in 2007 when we applied for and won a Small-Projects Grant' from The University of Edinburgh to purchase a combined GPS/sounder unit, together with all necessary equipment to make it self-contained (such as a robust waterproof box and a substantial lead-acid battery and charger).

The new equipment arrived in 2008, and now sounding a site is as semi-automatic as it is on RIBs. The transducer is fixed to the transom and the GPS tracks and saves the times, depths and positions to memory. Much more data can be collected, downloaded and plotted as a result.

The last step is to produce charts with depth contours on, or even a three-dimensional rendering of the seabed. This should simply be a case of using the appropriate software but, in reality, hand-drawn versions of the electronically generated sounding charts are the ones that look best. An example is shown below:



More examples of these sorts of surveys can be seen on EUSAC's soundings website at:

<http://www.maths.ed.ac.uk/~mruffert/Soundings/>

Led by EUSAC members Maximillian Ruffet and Neil Nutt, the club compiled a large number of site maps in 2008.

Below is a list of the areas that were sounded over the year:

Isle of Skye

Loch Bay pinnacle

SW Isay Island, Loch Dunvegan

SW Wiay Island, Loch Bracadale

Oban

Wreck of the Breda

Sound of Mull

Wreck of the Shuna

Loch Fyne

St.Cathrines

Seal Reef

Eyemouth

Various sites

Cape Wrath

North Faraid Head

North West Faraid

Rubha na Leacaig

Creag Mhor

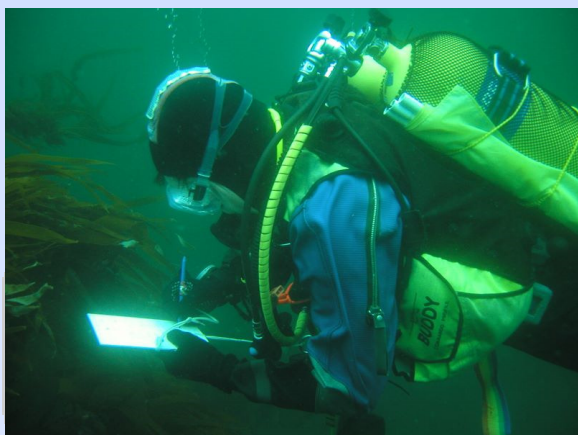
Dubh Sgeir

South West Roin Beag

Seasearch

Several EUSAC members have taken Seasearch courses on marine-life identification. Attendance is encouraged as part of diver training, so that divers are better informed about their surroundings.

Ben Panter took part in an exploratory Seasearch expedition to Loch Nevis in 2008. The divers were based on the remote Knoydart Penisular and carried out marine life surveys of sites in the surrounding area.



– Seasearch divers surveying the marine life

Edinburgh University Expedition Society

EUSAC member Maximillian Ruffert is also in the Edinburgh University Expedition Society, where he is charged with approving the dive safety procedures of planned trips.

EUSAC members have been involved in several Expedition Society projects, including the Project NEMO research trip to Oman, and a survey expedition to Madagascar in 2003.

Everyday Science

Site briefs are a standard part of the dive manager's remit in EUSAC. Before a day's diving, the manager will explain what underwater features can be expected. This may include examples of the marine life common in that area, the expected depth, a description of the geological features found, and a short history of any wrecks that will be dived.

This makes sure that trainees know what to expect, and acts as a reminder for those who have dived the site before.

14. Competitions

BSAC Competitions

BSAC Scubapro Award

Geoff Hide was awarded the BSAC Scubapro Award at the Diving Officers' Conference in 2008. This award is given to the BSAC member who has excelled in promoting BSAC's aims and objectives.

BSAC Expedition Grant Scheme (BEGS) Awards

In 2008, EUSAC was honoured to receive a BEGS grant of £1,000 for an exploratory diving expedition in Scotland. You can find more details about the Cape Wrath expedition and how the grant was used in the Special Achievements section of this report.

Edinburgh University Competitions

Edinburgh University Half Blues Award

In 2008 **Steven Czuprynski** received a Half Blues Award for outstanding sporting achievement from The University of Edinburgh. The award recognised Steven's rapid progression to Dive Leader, Open Water Instructor, and club Diving Officer over the course of his university career.

Edinburgh University Colours Award

Anna Goodall received a Colours Award for outstanding commitment to a university sport club from The University of Edinburgh in 2008. This award recognises the impressive contribution she made to club diving over two years as Expeditions Officer, organising a total of 12 expeditions on the club's behalf.

Edinburgh University Sports Union Livingstone Trophy

In 2008 EUSAC won the coveted Livingstone Trophy; a university-wide award that is given to the club that makes the most outstanding expeditionary achievement over the year. EUSAC won this award for the BEGS sponsored expedition to Cape Wrath (see special achievements section).

EUSAC Competitions

EUSAC's internal awards are voted for by members, and are presented to recipients at the club's Annual General Meeting.

Heinke Knife Award

The Heinke Knife was presented to EUSAC by BSAC for winning the Heinke Award twice. In recognition of the club's continuing commitment to excellence, the Heinke Knife is now given annually to the EUSAC member considered to have made the most outstanding contribution to the club over the preceding academic year.

This year EUSAC was proud to present the Heinke Knife to **Nicola McDonnell** in thanks for her hard work for the club, and her impressive commitment to organising club training over the year. Nicola took the club's trainees under her wing during her time training to be a Dive Leader and instructor. She was always keen to get all members involved in any diving related activity. She regularly gave up her time to train members of the club. Her dedication and enthusiasm of training was recognised by the region when she became the South Scotland Region's Skills Development Co-ordinator.

New Diver Quaich

This award is presented annually to the novice trainee who has made the biggest contribution to the club in the preceding academic year. The award is not for the trainee who has progressed fastest through the BSAC syllabus, and instead focuses on team spirit, enthusiasm and commitment.

This year EUSAC presented the trainee award to **Alexi Millman**. Alexi showed enthusiasm throughout her training, and was instrumental in helping others progress. During very cold winter training trips, she was always ready help out and encouraged others to join in and enjoy themselves despite the weather. Alexi showed impressive determination in overcoming her own fears of diving, and had become competent and comfortable in the water by the time she passed her Ocean Diver qualification.

New Member Tankard

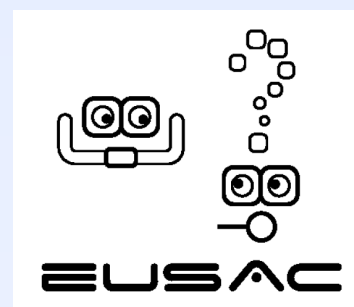
This award was introduced in 2008, to commemorate EUSAC's 40th birthday and recognise the contribution made by members from other organisations. It is presented to a new member who trained outside of EUSAC, and rewards commitment to organising and participating in diving activities and training.

Charlie Westerling was the club's first winner of the New Member Tankard. Charlie joined EUSAC from Manchester University Sub-Aqua Club. He was a keen and helpful addition to diving and social occasions, and instrumental in organising a huge number of diving and training day trips. His efforts helped expand the club's offering of accessible diving and training days for new members in-between the club's larger expeditions. He also instigated the, now annual, EUSAC/MUSAC summer dive and beach barbeque, strengthening our relations with the Manchester University club. Since winning this award, Charlie has become the region's University Liaison Officer.

Club logo competition

EUSAC held a competition asking members to design a new club logo to mark our 40th anniversary. The entries were shown at the 2008 AGM, and members voted for their favourite.

Maximilliam Ruffert's design was the clear winner, and his logo was printed on our club clothing for the year.



– The winning design

Two of EUSAC award winners on their time in the club...

Nicola McDonnell

Heinke Knife winner 2008

EUSAC is a large club, and fairly active. I found early on that there was lots of support available to me while I worked towards being an Open Water Instructor. The club is very fortunate to have instructor trainers as members, and they very kindly helped me prepare for my Theory Instructor Exams, which I passed with a merit in September.

But most importantly, there was a wealth of great diving on offer. The spring expeditions that are organised each year were a great opportunity to dive some more remote areas that clubs based further south would not have a chance to visit. In addition, Edinburgh's close proximity to St. Abbs, Dunbar and Eyemouth means I can finish work, pick up a buddy, and be in the water within an hour and a half!



– Charlie and Nicola at Burns Night

Charlie Westerling

Not Novice Newcomer Award winner 2008

I joined EUSAC in November 2007. I was at that time a Dive Leader and assistant open water instructor, working towards being a full open water instructor. Although not a student, I had recently graduated from university, and felt I wanted to remain within a university branch.

During my first year in the club, I managed to dive some fantastic sites. The expeditions that are organised each year are a great opportunity to dive some remote areas, which clubs based further south would not have a chance to visit.

In the past year I have managed nearly one hundred dives, visited some amazing locations and met some fantastic people, many of whom, I regard as my closest friends. Joining EUSAC has provided me with an active social scene coupled with great diving and support in progressing my diving.

General Activities

EUSAC

15. Branch Meetings

Weekly meetings

Branch meetings are held every Thursday night, even during university holidays, in Greyfriars Bobby's Bar from 8:30pm onwards. We have our own section of the pub reserved, free food and drinks deals. These meetings are generally for catching up with friends in the club and organising small day trips for the weekend. For larger weekend dive trips or expeditions, we organise meetings in the pub on a Thursday night at the earlier time of 7pm. This allows the people on the trips to have a proper meeting, before the pub becomes busy.



Other meetings

Committee meetings are held every third Tuesday at 7:30pm in a room we book from the university. The branch also uses rooms for theory lessons, dry practical lessons, in-branch Skill Development Courses and talks. The rooms are arranged through the university, and must be booked at the beginning of the academic year to ensure the correct size of room and facilities are available. In 2008 we booked rooms for every Tuesday and Thursday night throughout the academic year, which means all our members always have access to a room for a lecture or meeting if required.



Pool meetings

On Monday evenings from 8:30pm until 9:30pm, the underwater Hockey team meet at St. Leonards pool for training and friendly games. This pool time is also used by small groups of divers to practice diving skills such as drysuit training, rescue skills and rescue scenarios. For the Ocean Diver and Sports Diver sheltered water lessons, we hire out a local pool for a few hours over two weekends.

Equipment lockup

The club has two lockups which we use for storing our boats and other equipment. They are located close to our meeting rooms and club pub, and have a power supply and running water to allow the kit to be washed on site. We have seven sets of keys for the lockups, which are distributed to committee members. The committee is responsible for ensuring that the equipment is available to all club members 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

In April 2008, we started the process of organising to move all our kit to a suitable temporary location whilst our lockup gets a new roof. The equipment was finally moved in March 2009.



ELUSAC

16. Social

EUSAC has a busy social calendar, and we host both regular and one-off events throughout the year.

Our main socials occur in the first six months of the academic year, when the club welcomes so many new members. That said; the level of enthusiasm and demand for social get-togethers is usually so high by Easter that the calendar quickly fills for the remainder of the year.

Pub nights

Every Thursday we meet at our local pub – Greyfriars Bobby’s bar – to chat about past dives, organise new ones, have fun and make new friends. The pub forms the centre of our diving community, and more than 30 members turn up every week.

Despite being a university club, we have a presence at Greyfriars all year round.

Post dive curries

After every club expedition (and often after day trips) everyone on the trip goes for a curry at the Bombay Bicycle Club. These curries are a great way to round off a good few days diving, and very often members are joined by other members, eager to hear stories from the trip.

Over the years, the staff at the Bombay Bicycle Club have come to know us well. They offer us a discount on our bill, and when the curry house was refurbished in early 2008 we were invited to attend their reopening.



– Curry at Bombay Bicycle Club



– On a pub night

Other events

Below is a list of all the additional events we held in 2008. We have described some of these in more detail in the following pages.

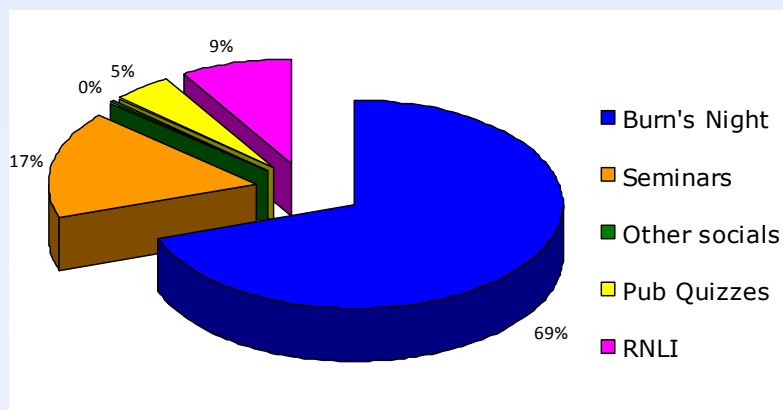
Month	Social Activities
January	Burns night ball Sports Union ball Underwater photography seminar Wreck imaging seminar Student Union club night
February	Pub quiz Ice diving seminar
March	Pub quiz
April	Committee changeover meal
May	RNLI collection day
June	Skittles night
July	40 th Celebration BBQ
September	Introductory pub meet
October	Bring-a-buddy night Rubiks night
November	10km RNLI Reindeer Run
December	Pub quiz

Fundraising

Over the year we raised £696.29 from social events. This included £139 for the RNLI, which was tripled by RBS as part of a community funding deal we have with them (for more details see section 14).

Monies raised on RNLI day and on the RNLI fun run were additional to this total and have not been included in our figures because the money was paid directly to the RNLI, rather than going through the club's accounts.

The pie chart shows how these funds were raised.



Burns' night ball

Our biggest annual social occasion is our Burns' night ball at the end of January. The event was held in the Bruntsfield Hotel, and included a three course meal, the traditional toast to the haggis (done partly in Russian by our Moscow-born Treasurer!), speeches to the lassies and laddies, and a ceilidh after. The event was attended by 80 people, and we were pleased to welcome ten visitors from a local Instructor Trainer Development Course as honorary EUSACers for the evening! The following day, we all headed to the pub for the usual post-Burns breakfast gathering.

Ticket sales raised money for the club, but raffle ticket and whiskey pound toss revenues were split between EUSAC and the RNLI.



– From right to left: the whiskey toss; enjoying the ball; toasting the haggis

In 2008 we also organised our 2009 Burns night ball – the culmination of our 40th anniversary celebrations. We raised over £5,000 for the event, booked the Balmoral Hotel as our venue, and spent the year finding and inviting alumni members. We sold 115 tickets to members old and new, were delighted to hear speeches to the laddies and the lassies from both current and alumni members.

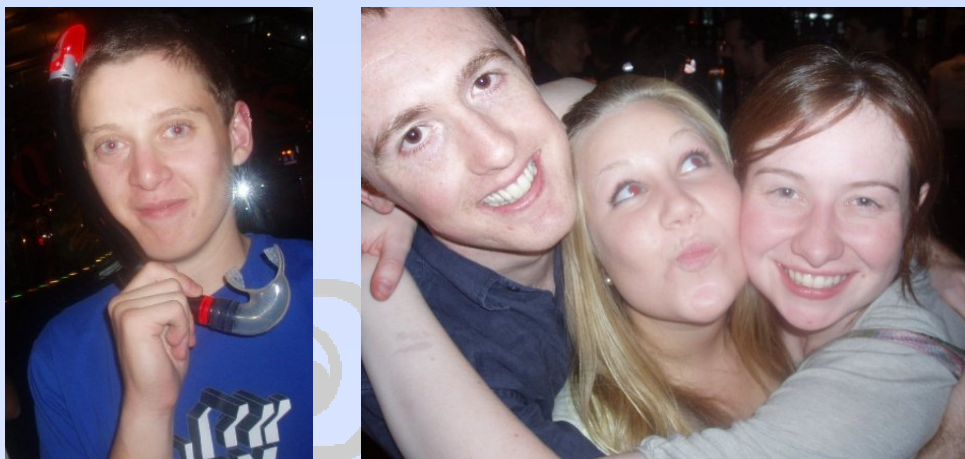


– Group photo from the 40th anniversary Burns' supper

Three-legged pub crawl

EUSAC's social calendar starts with our three-legged pub crawl, which is held in the first week of the university's autumn term. Each new member is attached to someone already in the club for the night, and they have to work together to negotiate their way from pub to pub.

The pub crawl allows new members to get to know us, and find their bearings in the city. 2008's pub crawl was a great success, and a lot of new friendships were started.



- on the pub crawl; armed with compulsory snorkels!

Bring-a-buddy night

Bring-a-buddy night is held in the autumn term each year to allow our new members to join us in a social event, without the fear of turning up on their own.

Each member brings along a non diving friend for a night of games and drinking, and we charge an entry fee on the door to raise funds for the club. The evening raises the profile of the club, and is a lot of fun in the process!

Rubiks night

Rubiks night is another fun fundraising event held in the autumn term. The idea is to come dressed in all the colours of a rubiks cube. A series of games result in members swapping garments, and the object of the game is to end up dressed all in one colour.

2008's Rubik's night was a lot of fun, and some very inventive costumes were worn, as shown below.



Pool tournament

We held a pool tournament in November to celebrate the end of 'pool' training for the Ocean Diver trainees. We charged a small entry fee and the winner got a cash prize at the end. The result of the tournament was a universal decision that people's sheltered water skills were far superior to their pool playing skills!

Pub quizzes

We held three pub quizzes throughout the year, which were organised by our social secretaries. Entry fees were charged per team, and the winners won prizes. The rounds varied in subject – but there was always a diving round!

10km RNLI Reindeer Run

In November, three members took part in the RNLI's Reindeer Run in Stirling. All three completed the 10km race, despite the -5°C temperatures – and raised money for the RNLI. All three members are now preparing to run the Edinburgh Marathon in May 2009.



RNLI collection day

Every year we get in touch with our local RNLI representatives and go out onto the streets of Edinburgh to raise money on RNLI day. We have found that the public is more generous if we make the effort to dress up in our drysuits and fins – which can make for a very warm day of collections!



Committee changeover meal

In the spring term we hold our committee changeover meal, to congratulate the outgoing committee on their hard work over the preceding year, and to welcome the incoming committee members.

To add some fun to the night, the old committee are allowed to dress up the new committee in whatever fancy-dress outfits they choose!

In 2008 the changeover meal was held in an all-you-can-eat Mongolian barbecue restaurant – which resulted in a lot of competitive eating!



17. Publicity

Target audiences

EUSAC's publicity is aimed at three main groups – prospective student members, university funding bodies and the club's alumni.

The success of our efforts with students means that every year for the last decade, more novice divers have wanted to sign up that we can realistically take on, given the equipment we have available and the standard of training we wish to provide.

For this reason we allocate only a minimal budget to the production of student marketing materials, and our publicity focuses on the start of the academic year, when most students arrive at university and start to consider which sports clubs they would like to join.

We use online media to keep in touch with our alumni, as many of this group no longer live in the area. In 2008 the committee decided to increase the focus on our alumni, and created a new committee position of Alumni Publicity Officer. Our first officer in this post will be elected at the 2009 AGM on March 26.

Flyers

In preparation for the first week of term, we designed and printed two different types of flyer. One-hundred flyers were aimed at novice divers, and another hundred were aimed at qualified divers.

These are given out at the start of term, with the majority distributed at the Sports Fair (explained in more detail in the Promotion section).

EUSAC

Cost:
EUSAC and BSAC membership and third party insurance: £39


Essential kit: Mask, fins, snorkel and gloves.
10% discount available at local dive shop.

To get involved:

1. Come to find out more and sign up at the pub, Greyfriars Bobby 9pm on Thursday.
2. Fill in membership forms.
3. Attend a short cross over lecture introducing you to BSAC systems and tables.
4. Have an introductory fun dive with an experienced club member to get familiarised with the club and Scottish waters.

Dived before? Whether you are a BSAC diver or qualified with any other organisation join us to...

- Discover enjoy some of world's best diving.
- Take part in expeditions around UK and abroad
- Have fun! Lots of social activities through out the year, enjoy diverse and active club.
- Further your training with internationally recognised British Sub-Aqua Club (BSAC) at cost price. We offer: complete diver training, instructor training, skill development courses including: boat handling, practical rescue management, wreck diving, UW photography, Advanced Nitrox and further technical diving, and many more.



We are very diverse club in terms of both people and activities:

- Good mix of students from different disciplines plus PhD students, members of staff and graduates!
- We dive all year around!
- We dive around all of Scotland: East Coast, West Coast, Skye, Sound of Mull, Scapa Flow, Cape Wrath, Summer Isles!
- Dives include: Boat, shore, drift, night, scenic, wreck, walls, reefs, gullies.
- Trips: From an evening dive at St. Abbs to a week at Skye or Scapa Flow.
- Accommodation: From tents to liveaboards!

More info available at www.eusac.eusued.ac.uk, specific training questions emailed to: training@eusac.co.uk

EUSAC

Press articles

A few weeks into the autumn term, we publicised our club's 40th anniversary with an article on the University's Sports Union website. This article was timed to target the new student population.

The screenshot shows the Edinburgh University Sports Union website. The header includes the logo and navigation links: Home, Previous 2008/2009 News, Newsweek 3, Print, Bookmark, and Contact. A banner image features a person diving with the text: "With 6,500 members, we are the biggest Sports Union in Scotland." Below the banner is a "Club Search" section with dropdown menus for "Type of Club Member" (Full Member Clubs) and "Sporting Club" (Archery Club), with a "GO" button.

The main content area is titled "Newsweek 3" and features an article titled "Life Begins at 40 for Sub Aqua Club". The article includes a photo of a diver underwater and text celebrating the club's 40th birthday. The text mentions that the club has 6,500 members and is the biggest Sports Union in Scotland. It also mentions that the club has been celebrating its 40th birthday in style, with a successful day of beach barbecues and diving for new and alumni members in June. The article continues with details about the club's traditions, including a pub crawl and a series of expedition weekends. It also mentions that the club will take on an impressive 16 trainees this year, as well as existing divers from other dive schools. The article concludes with a quote from a club member: "That's why EUSAC members tend to become such firm friends so quickly, and it's that network of enthusiastic people which means that there's always someone on hand to train a new diver, join you for a day trip in Scotland, or help organise a week out in the Red Sea."

On the right side of the page, there is a "Latest News & Events" section with several articles: "Record Turnout for the Edinburgh University 'KB' 5 Mile Road Race", "Orienteering Dominance", "Quarter Finals Bogey Beckons after Smashing Result", "1-2-3 Result for Squash Men", and "2009 Coaching Week". Each article has a "Read Full Article" link.

At the bottom of the page, there are sections for "Bursaries" and "Prospective Students".

Throughout the year, several members wrote articles for the Sports Union website about the diving events they were involved in, covering topics such as expeditions, octopush tournaments and social activities.

Articles were submitted to the Chairman, who acted as a link to the University's Publicity Officer and passed on the articles to for publication on the university's website or in its newsletter.

18. Inter Branch Liaisons

Improving inter-branch relationships

BSAC is founded upon the belief that one good turn deserves another, and with instructors teaching for free it is very important to return the favours you once had. It means that more experienced members help out the less experienced ones as a matter of course – but it also applies both regionally and nationwide.

This was brought home to the club early in the year, when Lothian Divers stepped in to help us when our pool was suddenly closed after it became contaminated (see section six for more details). EUSAC has always had strong relationships with other clubs, but this event illustrated the mutual benefit of building on these ties.

This development has taken many forms, and is largely due to the efforts of enthusiastic individuals within the club. Members who already had ties with other clubs organised joint trips; we participated at instructor and trainee level in regional training days; and we got more involved in regional and national BSAC groups.

The result is that we are better informed, have greater access to excellent dive trips and can do more training. Importantly, we are also aware of the wider organisation we are part of, and more involved in making it the best it can be.

Clubs we have dived with in 2008:
BSAC 21
Lothian Divers
Glasgow Underwater Group (GLUG)
Manchester University Sub-Aqua Club (MUSAC)
Salford University Diving Society (SUDS)
Liverpool University Sub-Aqua Club (LUSAC)
Cupar Sub-Aqua Club
Dive- Tech
E-Divers
Melbourne Sub-Aqua Club (MSAC)
Fyne Divers
Aquanauts
South Queensferry SAC (SQSAC)
Deep Blue Scuba

EUSAC

Regional Training

We attended many regional training days in 2008, and even organised a few ourselves. South Scotland regional training was advertised to members via e-mail, and people organised car-sharing to make attendance cheaper and more sociable.

A particular success was the regional training weekend in Oban, which we organised to let our novices to catch-up after their training was delayed because of the pool problems. EUSAC ran the trip and advertised it regionally. We were very pleased to welcome five non-EUSAC instructors who really helped our trainees have a great first taste of Scottish diving (see section six).

EUSAC also ran a number of regional Skills Development Courses (listed in section eight), providing instructors, trainees and instructor trainees. As a result, EUSAC members partici-



Paul Bullen teaching on the Coxswain SDC

Non-Diving Events

EUSAC was pleased to welcome regional members to non-diving events as well. Our series of seminars (detailed in section 13) was open to all clubs in the region, and was attended by people who dived with SAA, PADI and ScotSac, as well as BSAC. In addition, ten divers from the ITDS joined us for our 2008 Burns night ball.

Regional Trips

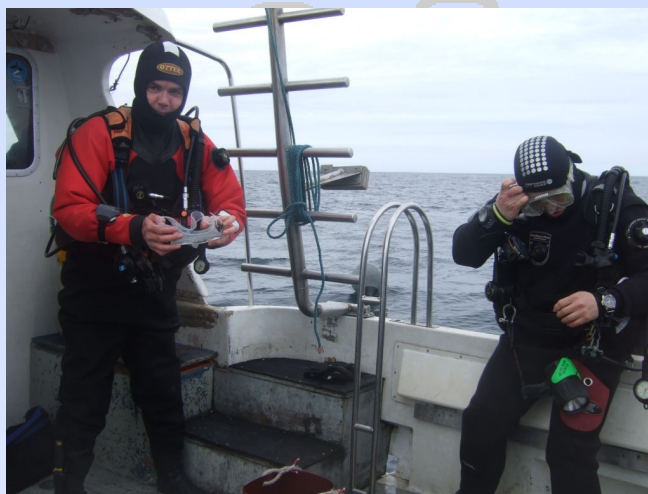
EUSAC organised several trips over the year that were open to, or run jointly with, other clubs. Our e-mail list was also used regularly by branches in the area to offer spare spaces on their expeditions.

We have listed some of the main cross-branch trips EUSAC was involved in below.

Crohaven Regional Expeditionary Diving Scheme (REDS)

EUSAC – BSAC 21 – Cupar SAC – MSAC – Lothian Divers – GLUG
May 2008

This trip was organised by EUSAC member Maximillian Ruffert on behalf of the South Scotland regional coaching team. The goal of the trip was to carry out adventurous exploratory diving, and introduce members from different clubs in the area. Six EUSAC members went, and were amazed by the 30 metre visibility and fantastic cliff diving they experienced. Max has organised the region's annual REDS trip for several years.



– Kitting up before a dive.

University clubs St Abbs

MUSAC–EUSAC–SUDS–LUSAC
June 2008

In June, nine EUSAC members attended a MUSAC organised inter-university trip to St Abbs. The event was attended Manchester, Liverpool, Salford and Edinburgh university sub-aqua clubs. Thirty divers arrived for the day's diving, and the group was joined by even more people for the evening's beach party.

The trip was such a success that a similar trip is being organised for 2009 by EUSAC member (and former MUSACer) Charlie Westerling.



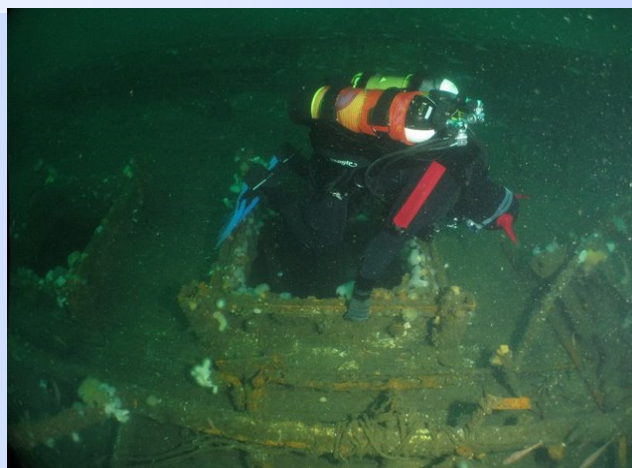
– Charlie demonstrating his faith in other

Moray Firth

SQSAC – BSAC 21 – EUSAC

August 2008

This expedition was populated by nine EUSACers, and three members from BSAC 21 and SQSAC. Although the weather was good, sea-sickness prevailed. But the beautiful clear waters and incredible dives on the Unity and the Verona were well worth it. A longer report on this expedition can be found at the end of section 12.



– Max wondering how small he could go!

Ladies Mull

BSAC 21 – EUSAC

November 2008

Following a ladies shortage, two of our members were invited to join BSAC 21 on an all-female trip to Mull in November. They had a great time getting to know the BSAC 21 girls and diving the Sound's classic wrecks from the relative comfort of a charter boat.



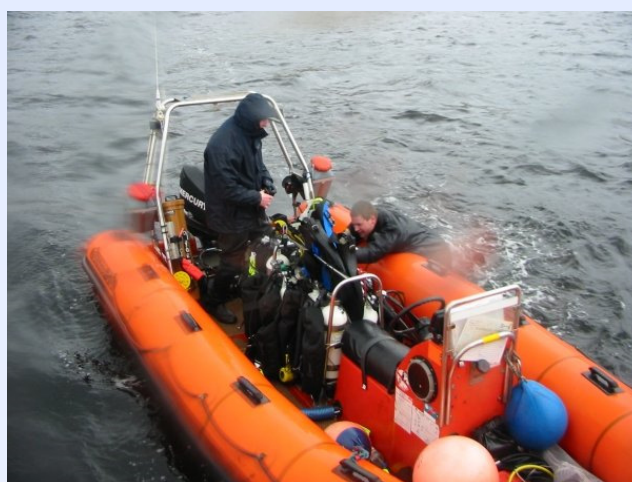
–The girls checking their kit to hope they don't need the men to fix it!

Oban

MUSAC-EUSAC

December 2008

Another MUSAC-EUSAC venture took the form of a trip to Oban in December. EUSAC took one of its club boats and met up with MUSAC for a weekend of diving at favourite sites like the Breda and the Maiden Islands. Five EUSAC members and six MUSAC members made up the trip.



– One of MUSAC's members trying to get aboard

BSAC representation

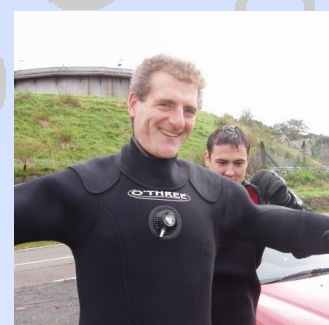
Several EUSAC members who are no longer students (and are therefore ineligible for our committee) have gone on to take up positions within the region, or in BSAC nationally.

National representatives

Ben Panter was voted onto the BSAC Council in 2008, and is its Web Forums Administrator. He contributes nationwide to the development of BSAC as a whole, as well as helping out at a branch and regional level. Ben is also a member of the South Scotland Regional Coaching Team.



Maximillian Ruffert is the Expeditions Officer for BSAC as part of the BSAC Diving Group. His role is to encourage branches to plan exciting new expeditions throughout the UK, with an emphasis on inter-branch diving.



Regional Representatives

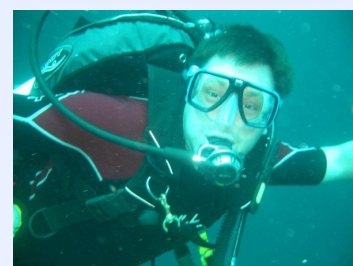


Nicola McDonnell became the South Scotland region's Skills Development Course Co-ordinator in May 2008. She provides SDC support for local branches, assessing their training needs and arranging a programme of events that fulfils their requirements. She enlists both instructors and trainees, and organises course logistics.



Amal Al Sayegh is one of South Scotland's Area Coaches. She identifies training and resource gaps in local clubs, and puts them in touch with branches that may be able to offer support. Amal is part of BSAC's Instructor Trainer Scheme, and regularly instructs at events in South Scotland.

Charlie Westerling became the University Liaison Co-ordinator for Scotland in 2008. The South Scotland region created this new position to promote diving activities between Scotland's university clubs (including the two university clubs in the North Scotland region). Charlie organises inter-branch diving, and offers support to university clubs in dealing with the unique challenges they can face.



Getting Involved at the Regional Level

By Nicola McDonnell

It was, while listening to a friend describe the beauty of swirling phosphorescence on a night dive near Dalkey Island (Dublin), that I realized I wanted to learn to dive.

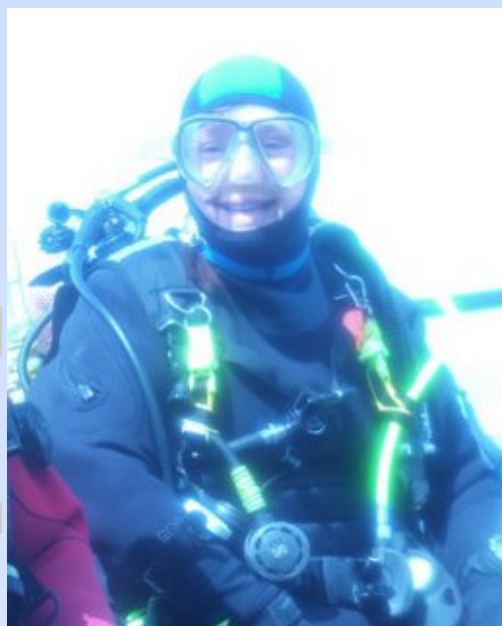
A few years later, in 1998, I finally got around to completing my Open water training with PADI. I dived on holidays for several years, but it wasn't until 2004 when I joined EUSAC that I started to dive in earnest.

I had moved to Scotland a year or so earlier and was working at Edinburgh University. I emailed a few members of the EUSAC committee whose contact details were available on the clubs website. I got kind and friendly replies, inviting me to come and meet them and the rest of the club 'down the pub'. By the end of the evening I had joined and plans were well underway to take me and some other new members out for some dives. My first Scottish dive trip was an experience I won't soon forget - riding the van with the trip manager and my buddy for the day as they regaled me with tales of diving adventures. We dived the A-frames in Loch Long and I was blown away by soft coral which I'd never seen before; though I found their name, 'dead men's fingers', somewhat sinister. This was the first of many trips. EUSAC brought me all over Scotland from Scapa to Skye and on each trip I learnt new things, and I got more involved.

Once I became a Sports Diver, I attended the IFC. My motivation initially was to give something back to the club, but as soon as I started instructing, the words of one of the instructor trainers came to the fore of my mind, 'we teach, because we love it'. There is no shortage of instructing opportunities in a student club. Guided by the more experienced instructors, I develop my skills; I'm hoping to take the PIE in the next month or so.

The capability and dedication of the students, especially the committee members, never ceases to amaze me. Inspired by them, but unable to join them - all committee position, bar the Dive Officer, can only be held up by a student member - I asked the Regional Coach if she needed any help. I was only a Dive Leader and an Assistant Instructor so I didn't think I could do very much. She seized the opportunity and before I'd realise what I'd signed up for, I had become South Scotland SDCO. At first it was a bit daunting, but I kept thinking about how the training officers in EUSAC managed to arrange all the clubs training having only just qualified as an Ocean Diver the previous year.

Armed with conviction that it could be done, and the support of the instructors at EUSAC I started organising the events. By now there are many more non-student members of EUSAC have joined the regional team taking up positions for IFC Organiser to Treasurer.



- Nicola ready for a dive



- EUSACer at the Regional Event

19. Special Achievements

Writing the BSAC Advanced Diver and First Class Diver Manual

Geoff Hide (EUSAC) and Andy Hunt are currently writing a new BSAC Manual on Diving Expeditions. This manual will become the reading material for the BSAC Advanced Diver and First Class Diver qualifications.

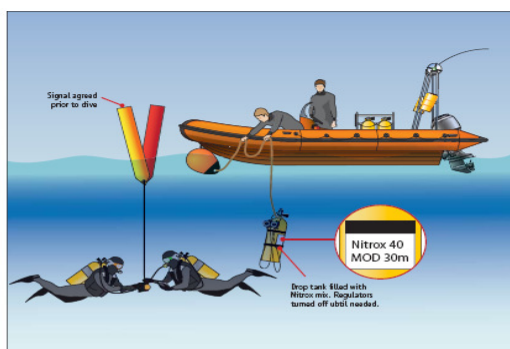
The book contains a forward by HRH Prince Charles, President of the BSAC, and has ten chapters covering all aspects of Diving Expeditions.

The first three chapters introduce expeditions, researching dive sites and cover the planning and organisation of expeditions. The next three chapters deal with risk assessment, management and leadership, and dive site location. The book then covers equipment and diving support,



– Geoff at EUSAC 40th

Drop tanks



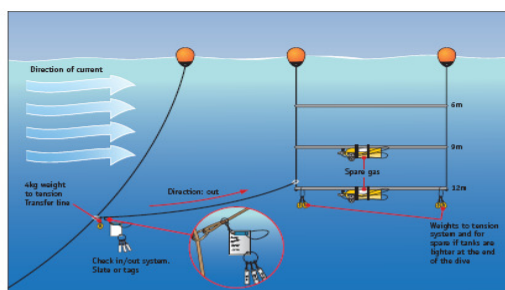
Drop tank procedure

Drop tanks

These are used to provide divers who are running low of gas during the decompression phase of the dive with extra gas. Pre-prepared tanks of gas (usually air or an appropriate mix of nitrox) are fitted with regulators and attached to a buoyed rope ready to drop to any divers signalling the need for more air. The buoy clearly needs to be sufficient to support the weight of the cylinders, and the rope long enough to reach the divers at their deco stop.

Drop tanks may be deployed on a shot line in anticipation of the divers returning up the line. However, if the divers are not returning up a shot line, then the drop tanks could be deployed upon a pre-arranged signal. It is important that any emergency signals are agreed before the dive. It could be a colour-coded delayed surface marker buoy (yellow is usually taken to mean emergency, nature unknown) or two DSMBs deployed together or a DSMB with a message written on a slate. Surface support will respond accordingly.

Decompression stations



Setting up a trapeze decompression station

Decompression stations
Decompression stations keep divers together during prolonged deco stops. Spare gas and lead weights are often deployed on the decompression station for decompressing divers to use if required.

A trapeze is the most common type, consisting of a series of horizontal aluminium or plastic bars supported under two buoys on ropes at decompression stop depths of for example 12m, 9m and 6m. Weights on the ends on the ropes maintain tension and, providing the buoys are not too buoyant, help reduce the amount of wave motion transmitted to the horizontal bars.

The decompression station is connected to the shot line with a transfer line and a quick release clip. Once all divers have returned to the station it can be released from the main shot line and allowed to drift with the current.

A checking in and out system is useful to verify that all divers have returned to the decompression station. A popular checking in and out system consists of a name tag, which each diver clips to a ring on the transfer line on descent. As divers ascend they remove their own tags. Once all the tags have been recovered, all divers will be on the decompression station, which means it can be released from the shot line.

If any divers fail to return to the decompression station the usual procedure is for the decompression station to remain attached to the shot line for a pre-arranged time before releasing. A system needs to be agreed beforehand to handle divers who do not return to the shot line on time. It is usual for them to deploy a DSMB and carry out their decompression below that.

– a sample page from the book. A full sized version of this can be found on the enclosed CD.

Geoff and Andy are both experienced expedition divers who write from their experiences based in their respective clubs.

Geoff was a member of the BSACs National Diving Committee (NDC) 1999-2007 and has held posts including First Class Diver Chief Examiner, NDC Steering group member and leader of the NDC Diving Group. A good deal of Geoff's expedition diving experience was gained through his many years of diving with Edinburgh University Sub-Aqua Club.

Andy Hunt is a current BSAC NDC member, having held the post of Expeditions Officer, and is currently the BSAC First Class Diver Chief Examiner. Maximillian Ruffert of EUSAC has taken over from Andy as the BSAC Expeditions Officer.

The Expedition Diving manual is expected to be available from December 2009 – we have included a sample page from the book overleaf.

EUSAC would like to congratulate Geoff and Andy on this fantastic achievement, and thank Geoff for his many years of support for the club.

EUSAC

Developing BSAC's Ice Diving SDC

This year marked the successful conclusion of the development of the BSAC Ice Diving SDC by one of our members, Ben Panter. A member while a student at Edinburgh, he got involved with the design and writing of the course while living in Germany, and then took over the development for the final stages. After many pilot courses, 2008 saw the acceptance of the course materials by the National Diving Committee and the first official courses. By this time Ben was back in Edinburgh and a member again, and led a group of divers back to Germany from the South Scotland region to teach them how to dive under the ice.



– Plansee



– Lechausee

Ice diving is essentially 'tendered diving' and although most diving skills are exactly the same, handling the rope takes some getting used to! The extreme cold creates difficulties for regulators, but the course teaches practical techniques to reduce these problems. Rope skills are developed, first on land, then in water with no ice, and finally in a frozen lake high in the Austrian Alps. In 2008 the groups were able to dive in Lechausee and Plansee, and enjoyed underwater visibility measured at 100m – better than it was at times on the surface!

The course has since been run twice in Scotland following interest from divers in the region at the ice diving lecture given as part of the EUSAC lecture series. EUSAC divers are keen to take part in the SDC and develop their diving skills in this new and challenging environment as opportunities arise over the coming years!



– BSAC in snow!

EUSAC would like to congratulate Ben on this fantastic achievement.

Project Nemo: Award-winning marine research

In November 2008 Dr Stephen Simpson made the long journey south to London after receiving a very special invite to Buckingham Palace.

Dr Simpson represented a team of 21 divers – including 11 EUSAC members – who took part in the Project Nemo marine research expedition.

The project was named first runner-up in the Duke of Edinburgh's Prize in 2007. This prize, given in agreement with BSAC's Jubilee Trust, recognised the best scientific research project carried out by BSAC divers in the UK that year.

Although Project Nemo was piped to the post, the team was invited to the Palace to meet the Duke and receive a certificate in recognition of the contribution to marine science they had made.

Below is a brief description of the project. You can find a more detailed breakdown of its purpose and results on the attached CD.

The plan

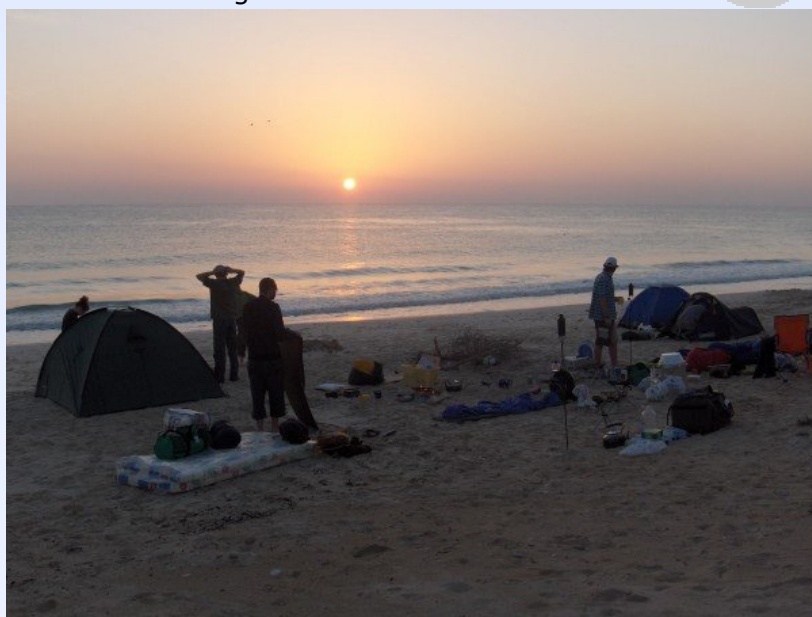
The project aimed to collect DNA samples from the Omani clownfish (*Amphiprion omanensis*) from sites throughout Southern Oman.

The purpose of this collection was to study the genetic structure of the Omani clownfish throughout its entire species range.

Modern molecular techniques enabled the team to fingerprint individuals and statistically predict the relatedness of fish from different sites. This allowed them to determine the spatial scale on which clownfish fish populations interacted, identifying boundaries between populations, and predicting the level of exchange of individuals between populations at different distances.

Understanding the spatial scale of population connectivity is vital for designing effective fisheries and conservation management strategies. The study aimed to use the information gathered about the Omani clownfish as a valuable model for understanding fish populations around the world.

The research was conducted by a team of divers, who found and fingerprinted the Omani clownfish at different sites along the southern Omani coast.



The preparation

In 2006 Dr Simpson approached EUSAC to ask for our help solving two obstacles to his project. Firstly, he was leading a group of scientists that for the most part could not dive, and secondly he needed more researchers.

EUSAC agreed to help, taking on an entire new group of trainees for the year and training them up to Sports Diver level. This was a massive undertaking but, by scheduling most of the training over the quieter summer months, we were able to run the second trainee programme without too great an impact on the training or equipment available for existing members.

Excited by Dr Simpson's proposal, some existing EUSAC members joined the project, solving the researcher shortage issue in the process.

The outcome

The expedition collected over 400 tissue samples during the two months that the team was in Oman. Additional training, an occasional recreational dive (including two unknown shipwrecks identified by local fishermen), and some other surveys, were also included in the team's schedule.

This study was a world-first in measuring the level of exchange of individual fish between two distinct populations spanning a species range separated by a substantial distance.

Since dispersal in coral reef fishes occurs predominantly in the larval stage (clownfish larvae develop at sea for the first week after hatching), this study demonstrated that long-distance dispersal is a regular event, and that it ensures a regular exchange of individuals. This information carries a valuable message for both fisheries and conservation managers:

For fisheries managers the study showed that the recruitment of fish to a population is predominantly a local process. This means that local management efforts (e.g. Marine Protected Areas) will provide substantial local benefits and enhance local fisheries.

For conservation managers the study showed that long-distance dispersal is also a regular event. This means that large-scale networks of Marine Protected Areas (as proposed in the recent UK Marine Bill) will have definite long-term benefits for maintaining and protecting threatened species in the marine environment.

The benefit for EUSAC

For EUSAC, this project was a huge commitment that stretched the club's training capacity to a level not possible within the confines of an academic year.

It was a massively exciting project to be part of, and offered a unique opportunity for some of our members to be involved practically in a leading conservation project.

Finally, the project introduced the club to 21 enthusiastic divers, many of whom remained EUSAC members after the project finished.

We would like to congratulate Dr Simpson, his team and all those who worked tirelessly to make sure the project achieved its well-deserved successes.

Securing EUSAC's financial future

EUSAC's biggest outlay is for the purchase and maintenance of its boats, engines and dive equipment. In 2008, we created a Ten-Year Equipment Maintenance and Development Plan to make sure this equipment remains as safe and up to date as possible.

The initiative started at the end of 2007, after the Treasurer identified a risk that funding for long-term equipment purchases could potentially be overlooked.

Most of the club's equipment has a long lifespan, but the outlay can be large when it does need to be replaced – particularly if the item required is a new boat or engine. Nearly all the proceeds of equipment hire fees go on maintaining our existing equipment, and new purchases are funded through Sports Union grants and fundraising initiatives.

The funds to replace this sort of equipment cannot be raised over the course of one or two years, and so savings must be spread over the lifespan of each item. If the club's university funding was cut in a particular year, this could have a dramatic impact on the equipment available for use.

The need for a long-term financial strategy was even more relevant because our committee must consist of student members, and so it can change entirely from year to year. This left open the risk that an inexperienced committee may not fully understand the long-term saving requirements of the club, without a formalised plan in place.

A maintenance and development plan would enforce strategic planning, give long-term stability, and guarantee the smooth running of the replacement of large items of equipment.

The committee put our proposal to Edinburgh University Sports Union and started negotiations to formalise a ten-year funding programme with them.

This was a big commitment for both sides, and negotiations took place throughout the year between EUSAC committee members and Sports Union officials. Negotiations were further complicated when a committee changeover occurred in March – halfway through the process. Fortunately, the club's outgoing Chairman, Treasurer and Equipment Officer remained in the area and agreed to support the new incumbents throughout the remainder of the process.

By the start of the 2008/9 academic year, a Ten-Year Equipment Maintenance and Development Plan – worth a staggering £57,555 – had been finalised. Over the decade, the branch will contribute 66% of the total through equipment hire fees and fundraising initiatives, and the Sports Union will contribute 33%.

Monies from the fund will pay for regular service and maintenance costs, and the purchase of new equipment. The plan includes the cost of buying two new inflatable boats, two new engines and 13 new sets of kit (consisting of STAB jackets, regulators, weights and dive computers).

The plan will be updated each year, so that it continues to span the following decade and remains relevant as dive equipment develops. In this way, it secures – and will continue to secure – EUSAC's financial future and our training capabilities.

The Ten-Year Equipment Maintenance and Development Plan is now being used as a model for other university sports clubs that have similar long-term financial requirements.

EUSAC would like to thank all those involved in the development of the Ten-Year Equipment Maintenance and Development Plan. This was an enormous achievement for both the club and the Sports Union, and it simply would not have been possible without the ingenuity and commitment of everyone who contributed.

Award-winning expedition

In 2008 EUSAC won a £1,000 award from the BSAC Expedition Grant Scheme to run an exploratory trip to the most north-westerly point in Scotland: Cape Wrath.

The resultant trip won the University of Edinburgh's Livingstone Trophy for outstanding expeditionary achievement.

The expedition is detailed in the following report, which was written by expedition leader Paul Bullen. The full version of this report can be found on the attached CD.

Cape Wrath 2008

We had two main reasons for organising the Cape Wrath trip.

Firstly, we had a collective ambition to dive each extremity of the Scottish mainland. In practical terms, we thought that achieving this dream would give an annual opportunity to develop divers' exposure to unknown sites and the challenges of running expeditions to remote locations. Cape Wrath would be the first in a series of exploratory expeditions.



- Happy divers after a great dive!

Secondly, a previous trip in 2006 run by Graeme Kirk, also of EUSAC, showed the potential quality of dive sites at Cape Wrath. However, the weather is often tricky in these locations and so the team didn't manage to dive around the Cape itself.

The trip aimed to explore and document unknown dive sites around Cape Wrath; to develop dive leader and above level of diving; and to increase the capabilities of the expedition team.

The expedition

Diving at the North West tip of the UK needs self-sufficiency; a healthy respect for the weather; great team work and preparation for whatever is "thrown" at you. The rewards are amazing exploratory diving with stunning scenery above and below water, as well as diverse marine life.

As with all good expeditions, a lot of the excitement comes from dealing with the unexpected. Initial van troubles meant that a quick re-work of transport arrangements was needed before we'd even left at 5am. After a seven-hour drive from Edinburgh, we were keen to get into the water but had to man-handle our boats over Balnakeil Beach and through the surf – already our pre-trip training was coming into play.

With considerable effort the boats were loaded and, of course, to make things interesting, we now had engine troubles. Luckily, the boats had been prepared for self-sufficiency and the staged towing bridle was put to use to get the boat out of the surf so that the engine could be fixed.



– More tricky than we thought

Once repaired, we motored round to Faraid Head, which showed promising steep walls which we scanned using the echo-sounder to locate potential dive sites. The dive turned out to be a combination of a steep wall and gullies. The visibility was stunning. There was a profusion of life including a 'nest' of dogfish, huge shoals of fish and as an added bonus, a sun-fish at the surface!

The boats were unloaded and secured using a three-point anchor a good distance from the surf zone, while a couple of people remained to fix the engines. In the end, local assistance helped us resolve the issue with one engine and we were also offered a spare engine should we continue to have issues!

The following day, once we'd applied the repaired parts to the engine, the boats were again loaded through the increasing surf. We were aiming for Garvie Island, an island regularly used for bombing practice (we had checked there were no raids planned!). As we motored out, the swell increased to a point where "The Perfect Storm" sprung to mind and the crews were grateful for the security of their life jackets.

We stopped, turned East and headed to West Faraid Head which was just about diveable. The site gave impressive results with spectacular underwater landscape, gullies of different sizes, underwater pinnacles, caves and lots of swim-throughs. Again, an impressive abundance of marine life; dogfish, shoals of pollack, gobies and scorpion fish.

With the weather forecast suggesting stronger winds in the 'wrong' direction (F6 NE), it was decided to cut our losses and recover the boats back over the beach. A number of us headed south and after checking charts, launched at Kinlochbervie - which had the luxury of a slipway and a pontoon rather than a beach. In the meantime, one of our instructors ran a number of back-to-back Compressor Operations Skill Development Courses for the remaining divers.

On the third day, we had a short boat journey to the mouth of Loch Inchar. The dive was a steep slope down to 40m. The visibility was incredible, the surface being visible from 30m. Although there wasn't as much life as the northerly sites, there was a stunning crack which ran through the headland. This swimthrough was a spectacular end to the dive with an abundance of life and colour; an undercut cave to 15m and wreckage of a relatively modern vessel. Subsequent research revealed this to be the Bon Ami, sunk in 1985. This was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the trip.

After lunch, we explored some caves near Creag Mor. The caves did not go too far into the headland but they were still interesting and the undulating pristine sands made the water feel tropical. Some divers explored an island a short distance away and had a more interesting dive involving a sheer drop to 20m, with gullies in the shallows. There was the opportunity for plenty of snorkel-exploration of caves whilst waiting for divers.

On return to the harbour we did our bit to help out the locals—two divers carried out a yacht hull inspection whilst another two undertook a search for a concrete block which the harbour master reported as posing a danger to vessels. As with each evening the entertainment included a series of shifts running the compressor.

With the weather continuing to forecast force 5-7 NE, we had to accept we weren't going to be able to head for Cape Wrath itself and so we remained based in Kinlochbervie. On our fourth day we ventured out to Dubh Sgeir for more exploration. The swell and waves were sizable, but some excellent diving rewarded our effort: caves and gullies with life everywhere, and superb visibility. Some divers reported seeing seals.



– Diver in gulley

In the afternoon, we headed to what looked like a promising bay on the charts at Roin Beag. When we arrived there were about 15 seals sat around watching us. I'm not sure I've ever seen divers kit up so quickly! Dropping in at the mouth of the bay we immediately saw a stunning sheer wall to 15m. This was followed by undercutting gullies and, of course, a seal waiting for us. As we headed further into the bay we followed deep gullies into the shallows where we watched seals and they watched us. This was probably one of the best dives of the trip. Other divers reported even more stunning walls beyond 20m and gullies further round the headland.

The final morning of the trip was finished off with a mixture of surfing (in drysuits!) and exploration of Smoo Cave (a huge, natural limestone cave and cavern). Our drysuits proved very useful! The joy of diving in this remote area was that every dive was exploratory and became an adventure. This is coupled with amazing visibility, an abundance of marine life and breath-taking scenery above and below the water. Here, more than most places, the weather and its effect on the swell and waves only adds to the challenge and excitement of diving in such a wild location. Unfortunately, the weather prevented us from reaching Cape Wrath itself, however, we will return to attempt it

The best expeditions are made of great people and great diving; this trip was no exception. Our congratulations go to every team member who contributed to the success of the expedition. Here's to Ardnamurchin 2009!

Authors

Creation of this report required efforts of over 20 current club and alumni members. The report was written and edited by the following eight authors:

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We would like to thank the following people for their contribution to our report:

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Geoff Hide	Peter Swann
Kirsty Hitchen	Charlie Westerling



Heinke Trophy Award 2008

Edinburgh University Sub-Aqua Club

March 2009

CD Contents:

1. 1st Class Manual—Extract from Geoff Hide's Manual
2. Copy of the report—Electronic Version of the application
3. Expeditions—Cape Wrath (BEGS) 2008, full report
4. Information—Slides from 2008 Introduction Lecture
5. Publicity—Hoodies logo designs; Novice and Cross-over Flyers from Sports Fair
6. Scientific— Few Sample sounding charts, old and new; Oman Expedition Report
7. Training—Training officer's handbook (2008) and Proposed training timetable
8. Treasurer—10 year equipment development plan; Sample printouts from the equipment hire database

