



November 2012

Contact Us: Wellington.Underwater@gmail.com

Global Underwater Explorers (GUE) Extravaganza

With Jamie Obern in town, mid November saw a week of GUE events. Global Underwater Explorers is a not-for profit organisation promoting excellence in diver training, underwater exploration and research. Jamie is New Zealand's only GUE instructor, based in Auckland. So when he comes down to Wellington we try to make the most of his time :-). A number of us in the club are GUE trained already and love it.



Monday evening was supposed to be a fun dive to show Jamie some of the great Wellington diving. True to form, it was a howling southerly and the dive got canned. Tuesday evening, a couple of our divers got the pleasure of a Fundies refresher, an opportunity not to be missed. They did the most of it, and Jamie threw drills at them all evening. Challenges were had, but we all ended up having a lovely dinner and

laughing over the tantrums GUE training brings. Somehow as many ground-crew joined dinner as people dived, maybe some of us were avoiding being in the water with Jamie?? Although I hear hair grew on Jamie's chest from cold murky Kau Bay following from weeks of cave diving in Mexico by 24 degrees and 100m visibility.

Thursday, the club had organised an all-day training course for doubles diving, which was fully subscribed by club members. There, they learned the tricks of the trade to reach their valves, and got lots of theory and practice on twin sets.

Next Club Meeting this coming Tuesday

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Christmas get-together

Sun 9th December

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This year's Christmas get-together is weather proof – at least the first part of it! Sunday 9 December, meet at 11am at Kilbirnie pool for some dive training or fun (you need to pay for your pool entry, the club pays for the pool booking). Join us about 1.30 pm at the pool or shortly after at one of the cafes close by (venue tbc). Feel free to bring family, friends and something Christmassy. **The club will contribute \$15 towards meal and drinks** of every paid club member.

Membership Renewal

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The cost of membership renewals will go up to full price at the end of this month, so be quick and renew your membership before then!! The new membership form with a disclaimer to be filled in, is attached with this newsletter.

Global Underwater Explorer – GUE Extravaganza by Sophie cont'd



Thursday night was the start of the Fundies course organized by Dive and Ski, so poor Jamie spent the day

on the refresher and the night training the fundies students. More about the fundies class below...



Jamie even managed to squeeze in yet another event for us: an amazing presentation on some cave exploring he has been involved in:

Blue Creek Resurgence in the south island, and the shaft in Australia. Think about diving to 125m depth in a cave, with only access there through a hole in the ground and a hoist (the shaft)... Or walking 1.7 km to get the the cave entrance and then diving to 90 meters depth in small corridors (blue creek)!

The tales and the photos were amazing and if you ever considered cave diving, Jamie's your man! The club has a **cavern and cave trip** organised with **Jamie 7-10 January** at the Poor Knights with spots left so let us know if you're interested, it will be much easier than that! You too could get initial training for cave diving and get a feel for it.

Thanks for Coming to Wellington Jamie!

For more information on Jamie's dive trips, and training visit: www.techdivenz.com

TECH DIVE
New Zealand 

GUE Fundies (aka an eye-opening experience) by Nicole

This is the course to take if you want to learn how far your dive awareness and your dive skills could develop and what the key skills are to work on to get you started on this journey. The GUE philosophy differs from other training agencies and very quickly we've got a feeling for the priorities – the team, our buoyancy, our trim (which doesn't mean exclusively horizontal) and the

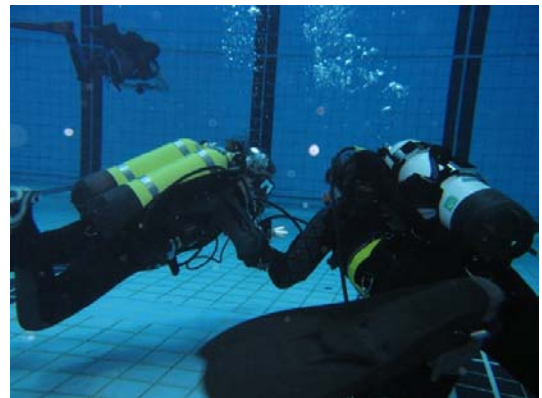
skill the team / one of the divers is about to perform with all the finesse (s)he is able to ...



By pushing each individual diver and the dive team towards their limit in a safe and supervised environment everyone takes the most from the class. Failing an exercise becomes an experience and a lesson to take away with you. We all had our moments and the last 5 min of one of our dives rank



currently somewhere in the top 3 of Jamie's epic muck-ups. It's not a pleasant feeling, but we now know exactly why and how to avoid getting in the same situation. And beside these moments we had a lot of fun - in the class room, the pool and in the sea.



Besides teaching huge amount of theoretical knowledge and the practical skills the training was inspiring, taught with passion and it motivated each of us to work harder on us and on our awareness for the others.



Training Success – New Open Water Divers by Nicole

Congratulations to our new Open Water Divers: Debbie, Jr and Stefan. Rajiv the 4th student in the team will catch up on his open water dives soon.

The course was organized through the club with training provided by Pete and Nicole through Dive and Ski HQ. Thanks to Rob for assisting. We had a great time on the course and we are looking forward to go out diving with all of you!



Celebrating Capt Cook's Birthday – 27 Oct by Mike J. and Mike P.

Some WUC members took advantage of a tour of the barge *Hikitia* which is moored at Taranaki Wharf. The tour was organised by WUC committee member Mike Penfold. The tour coincided with the celebration of Capt Cook's birthday, an annual event arranged by the Marine Archeology Association of New Zealand (MAANZ), of which WUC is a member.

Capt Cook was not only an outstanding explorer but was also known for discovering how to keep his crew free of scurvy, a terrible disease caused by lack of fresh vegetables and fruit that afflicted



crews of yesteryear on their long voyages. In solving this problem, Cook was well ahead of his time, as scurvy continued to be a problem late into the 19th Century and even the early 20th Century. Cook's solution was to make his crew consume sauerkraut and lime during the voyages. So that's what was served up at the birthday celebration, together with asparagus sandwiches and chocolate cake.

Another part of the celebration was the firing a small cannon, shown here being primed by MAANZ President Ken Scadden - small cannon, but big BOOM.

The tour covered the upper and lower decks of the *Hikitia* which was built in 1925 and is being preserved by Maritime Heritage Trust of

Wellington. The *Hikitia* was built during the steam days, although now converted she is something of a machinery museum. For those who like old machinery and gauges, *Hikitia* is a fascination.

The *Hikitia* has the MAANZ conservation laboratory, where artifacts brought up from years under the ocean are preserved. Objects that are exposed to air after years underwater will crumble away very quickly. To ensure they do not deteriorate is quite a technical matter. It usually means many months soaking in solutions and attachment to electrical currents.



On display in the conservation lab were artifacts from the *Rifleman*, which left Hobart in 1833, never to be seen again. The wreck was found at the base of the treacherous cliffs in the Auckland Islands.

Initially thought to be the *General Grant*, establishing the wreck's true identity is a great story recorded in a book, *The Riddle of the Rifleman*. This book was launched at a MAANZ meeting earlier this year. The story is also written up in the November issue (#118) of the *New Zealand Geographic Magazine*. The artifacts from the *Rifleman* that had been pictured in the book and the magazine (shown here) were on display in the laboratory.

Tasmania diving is a bit like Wellington diving: cold and it's good to have the essentials: drysuit, undersuit and camera gear :-)



Prior to getting to Hobart, I contacted Tasmanian sub-aqua club, and Dave Robson, the president, was incredibly helpful. I joined the club for their monthly meeting. There were some great

discussions on how to progress things both sides of the Tasman, and hopefully make a link between the two clubs.

Dave had generously organised one day diving with Eaglehawk dive, and one day boat diving on a private boat owned by a club member. That included organising my gear rental and picking me up, what service! Seems like Tasmanian divers are tougher than us! Water was 10-11 degrees and only one diver from Sydney was in a drysuit.

The first day with Eaglehawk was fantastic. It started with a flock of short-tailed shearwaters so dense it made the water black and we had to slow the boat to almost stand-still to be able to get through. During the course of the day we saw six couples of humpback whales, who hang around there at that time



of the year before migrating back to Antarctica. We didn't see them underwater, although we were told they were very close while we were underwater.



Dive one was a giant kelp forest dive towards Cape Roul. There's not much of it left due to oceans warming, but it was pretty spectacular, particularly in 10m visibility. Fauna was rather

similar to Wellington, with lots of different types of wrasses, red moki, trumpeter, and my favourite of the trip: cowfish. These look like pufferfish of some sort.

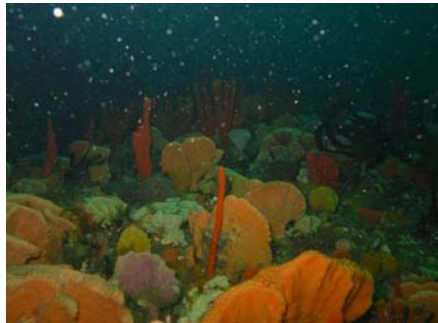
I also got dive-bombed at and grunted at by an Australian fur seal, and they are much bigger and more impressive than their NZ counterparts!

Dive two was at Cathedral Cave, one of the biggest southern ocean seawater caves. We didn't go in, but skirted the outside and arches. The encrusting life was wonderful. We also saw a draughtboard shark, crayfish, paua, more cowfish just for me, and some pretty impressive cave entrances. I'll definitely need to go back with proper training and gear!

Day two saw us go towards Bruny Island. First dive was at Point Queen Elizabeth. Whilst there were not many fish around, this dive is renowned for its sponge gardens at 35m depth. It was

Tasmania Diving by Sophie cont'd

absolutely mind-blowing and I wish we could

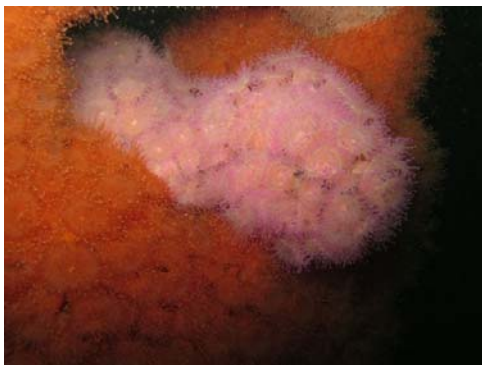


have stayed down there longer. Visibility was still very good, but there was lots of

suspension in the water (see pics). We didn't see any weedy sea dragons even though the topography was suitable.

The weekend finished with a dive of a portion of the sunken floating bridge at Battersa Island. A floating bridge over the Derwent river in Hobart was

removed in the 1970s and bits of it sunk around the harbour. That dive



was much more of a Wellington dive: 3m visibility, currents.

But the bridge was phenomenal: every single side and pillar area was covered with Jewel anemones, my favourite. And the flat platform of the bridge (where cars would drive) was a full sponge garden. It was completely surreal and beautiful. I spent my dive hovering on the side or over the top, not managing to decide what was best. I'll be back, next year and I can only highly recommend Tasmania, not only for diving but also for hiking. There are lots of beautiful places to see. And if you ever go there, get in touch with David and the Tasmanian sub-aqua club, they were ace! We are keen to foster further connection and if there is enough interest, WUC might organise some diving in October next year.



Some links:

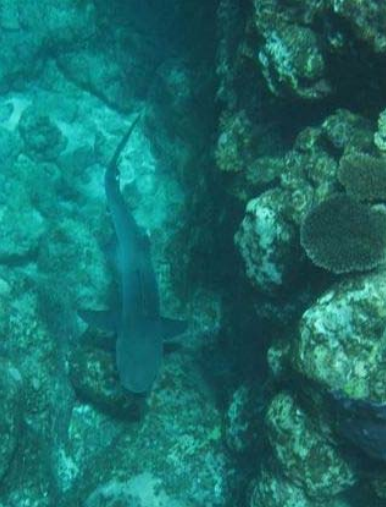
www.meetup.com/Tasmanian-Sub-Aqua-Club/

www.eaglehawkdive.com.au (check their videos)

Niue Trip Report by Sophie



Well my Niue dive trip was a bit of a mix bag. I made it there, but I managed to catch the flu on my way there. So no diving for me, although I snorkeled to my heart's content. The whales weren't playing ball either, and only one whale-watch trip over the entire week got lucky enough to jump in with them. It's all very good excuses to get back there at some point. I hear there are now two flights a week...



Niue Trip Report by Sophie cont'd

Snorkeling was great, my own favourites would be the reef shark on the morning of the flight back home, the haloclines, the fish that change colours, the numerous sea snakes,

and Vaikona chasm. Here's a word of advice though: don't go to Vaikona without a guide and be careful even with a guide. It's extremely slippery and rockfall made the alternative and supposedly easier exit not traversable anymore.



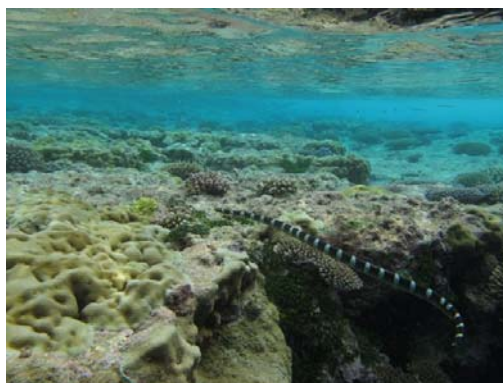
My other favourite: all the small adventures one can have in Niue. Nothing strenuous, but there's

literally dozen of small beaches, caves, water holes that you can check out, all uniquely different from all the other ones, and all really easily and quickly accessible (bar Vaikona, but you get my drift). I'm told diving was nice, but not spectacular.



I would recommend do less diving and more exploring and snorkeling, and hire a car to go to all these places (there's no public transport). And we had Bob, the local coconut crab making an appearance outside our fale most nights...

I'll be back, probably before I have gone around all the accessible islands.



Upcoming Activities

Upcoming club meetings

Thistle Inn, 6.30 pm

- **27 Nov - this coming Tue**
- 29 Jan (Tue)

December

- 1 Dec (Sat), Kapiti Boat Dive (limited spaces, sign up now)
- 8 Dec (Sun), Local Boat Dive (limited spaces, sign up now)
- 9 Dec (Sun) Pool Training at the Kilbirnie Pool, 11am-1pm
- 9 Dec (Sun) Xmas Lunch 1.30 pm
- 16 Dec (Sun), GUE skills training, tbc



Dive trips 2013

- * 7-10 Jan (Mon-Thu), 4 day liveaboard trip to the **Poor Knights** with an option on **TDI cavern and cave course with Jamie Obern**. Nitrox available. Email us for details.
- * Advanced Kapiti dive, tbc - register your interest
- * 7-12 April, 6 day liveaboard in **Fiordland** – email us for details.

... and any other weekday or weekend club members want to go out, just let us know a few days ahead so we can spread the word and find you some dive buddies. You can also join us on one of our club meetings and if you have friends interested in diving just bring them along.



Many of the photos in this newsletter are courtesy of Rob Wilson, one of our new club members and professional photographer. Check out Rob's facebook page or www.frontlinephotography.co.nz

Kicks and Bubbles

Plan your dive in Wellington - Follow the link below for a quick look at some **South Coast webcams**:
<http://www.wn.co.nz/categories.php?category=8v>

This is the **Auckland University Underwater Club's** mission to promote the anti-shark finning message. AUUC went from the top to the bottom of North Island of NZ, but in a different sense, from the highest point to under the sea. Don't forget to sign the petition at the link at the end of the video.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=0HrOFXK_hgo



NZ Coastal Marine Invertebrates - Volume 2: Image Wish List

Volume One of New Zealand Coastal Marine Invertebrates was published in 2010, and now Steve is looking for a range of images to complete Volume Two, which includes over 650

species. If you think you might have some suitable images, please let Steve know. Follow the link to a working list, which will be updated as required and more details:

<http://www.scorpius.co.nz/NZCMI/>

Aqua Lung - voluntary recall of SureLock™ II weight pocket handles

Aqua Lung is conducting a voluntary recall of SureLock™ II weight pocket handles. SureLock™ II is the mechanical weight release system found on most Aqua Lung buoyancy compensators (BCs) beginning in 2009. Aqua Lung is concerned about the rubber handle pulling off of the plastic SureLock™ II weight pocket assembly. Aqua Lung has made a revision to

the handle assembly that strengthens it. A revised handle is easily recognized by a thickened band of rubber at the base of the handle. Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using their BCs with Sure Lock II weight pockets. Bring the pockets to your nearest authorized Aqua Lung Dive Retailer or Dive Center. They will be able to replace your handles for you while you wait, as changing handles is a quick process. The replacement is made under warranty and you will not incur any charges.
<http://www.aqualung.com/us/content/view/629>

Celebrate Australia's new Marine Reserves

In Australia the largest network of marine parks in the world was officially declared and is now legally in place.

<http://www.projectaware.org/update/celebrate-australias-new-marine-reserves>



Diving Scholarship for 18 years and older

Are you a PADI Advanced Open Water Diver and Looking to Become a PADI Divemaster?

Then why not apply for a Scuba Diving Scholarship in FIJI Worth a combined value of \$FJD 44,800

Dive HQ NZ Trust, PADI and Safari Lodge Fiji are giving 4 lucky applicants the opportunity of a lifetime. Are you;

- 18 years or over
- Holding a current medical stating "Fit to Dive" (or have the ability to get one)
- Have 20 logged dives
- Available/capable to travel to Fiji (passport and in good health) for a period of 3 weeks to complete rescue and PADI Divemaster training in January 2013

Get in quick!

Email secretary@divehq.co.nz right now for application details! Completed applications must be received by 24/12/2012.

Ph 0800 102 102 Nationwide or visit www.divehq.co.nz

In Memorium

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We sympathise with our Club members Graham and Jeannie Redman and their family in the tragic loss of their beloved Amanda.

A wonderful person, taken from us.

Our thoughts are with you now and in the days ahead.