



Mid-winter Greetings

What an unusual year. We started it with the endless summer, if you can recall that now. The middle of the year came with not only a swarm of earthquakes but also a 50 year storm - buckets of rain, 200km/hr winds and 15m waves. During the storm many of our members were without power at some stage, but the record goes to Klare and Phil who lost power at home for the nine days leading up to the NZ Underwater Association AGM weekend on 28-30 June. Despite this misfortune, Klare and Phil battled on as the key organizers for the weekend – the result was a well organised and highly successful AGM weekend. So - well done Klare and Phil, and many thanks.

The NZUA weekend was really good to be involved in. Visitors came from as far away as Invercargill and Northland and a very interesting programme was organised (read about it on p4). The AGM dinner had speakers from MAANZ, Forest & Bird, Shark Alliance and NZ Dive Magazine. NZUA's 60th anniversary was also celebrated. The photo here is Klare cutting the Anniversary cake – a map of NZ.



On the Sunday, a group went out to the Bait House aquarium which was fortunately up and operating. The storm damage along the South Coast, and particularly at Island Bay, was very evident. The next Club dives in Taputeranga Reserve will be interesting, to see the effects of that rather extreme event.

It was great to show dive visitors what we have close at hand here – a marine reserve, muck dives where you can see seahorses, ship wrecks plus the options to dive either coast or in the harbour.

Next Club Meetings:
6:00 pm Thistle Inn
(note the new time)

.....

Last Tuesday of the month
30th July & 27th August

.....

WUC AGM
& Photo Competition

Saturday 31st August
Upstairs, Thistle Inn
starting 3:00pm

.....

**The deadline for the photo
competition is:**
Wednesday 21st August 2013

See p3 for details

Upcoming Activities

Keep up-to-date at the WUC Events Calendar:

www.wuc.wellington.net.nz/wuccalendar.html

Club meetings

- **30th July (Tue)** – Thistle Inn **6:00pm**
- **27th August (Tue)** – Thistle Inn **6:00 pm**

Club Dives and Activities

July

- They'll be announced via email notice.

August

- **3rd - 4th (Sat/Sun):** Weekend trip to Rotorua for the **Tough Guy and Gal Challenge** - Get Fit and Meet the GUE Crew from Auckland.
- **17th (Sat) at 4:00pm: Pool training**
- **31st (Sat) at 3:00pm: WUC AGM** and photograph competition (see p3).

September

- **7th (Sat) at 4:00pm: Pool training** - Point of Contact is Sophie
- **15th (Sun) - All day GUE skills training** – Keep your eye out for details on Club emails. Point of Contact is Rob.
- **20th or 21st (Sat or Sun, tbc)** – Helen Kettles has advised to pencil in either the Sat or Sun for this year's **Wellington South Coast spring clean-up**. Check what Helen's doing at:
www.facebook.com/pages/Wellington-South-Coast-Clean-up/189965687735595
- **24th – 27th (Tue - Fri): Cavern and Caves Trip, Poor Knights, 4 day liveaboard** with an option to sign up for a TDI cavern and/or cave course with Jamie Obern or to just come along diving.
Waitomo Caves: Register your interest now - details tbc - Lost World tours optional: <http://waitomo.co.nz>

- **28th (Sat): Educate to Eliminate** - annual cleanup organised by the Dive Guys, 10am-1pm

Diving again to pick up rubbish under the wharf stay tuned for more updates ... to be a part of it as a diver, a rock walker (no diving) or as a general helper please contact Steve at:

info@thediveguys.co.nz

Also see **Educate to Eliminate** at:

www.eventfinder.co.nz/2013/educate-to-eliminate-harbour-clean-up-2013/wellington

October

- **30th (Wed); 5:30pm: Tour of Te Papa off-site fish storage.** The facility is at the south end of Tory St. Meeting point is opposite the entrance to Mt Cook School.

Committee member Mike Penfold has organised this rare opportunity to view the facility.

December

- **7th - 8th December (Sat/Sun) - 24 hour Dive II:** The fundraiser of the year for the Wellington Coast Guard. Dive or just come along to be part of it. You can even camp out at Scorching Bay. Divers will try to do more dives and collect more sponsored minutes underwater. More details closer to the event or from Dive and Ski HQ Petone 04-568 5028 or on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/events/547847005254306/

More Upcoming Trips Courses

- Our **PADI Open Water Dive Course** is now on. Register your interests for the next one.
- **6th – 12th April 2014: Fiordland 7 day liveaboard.** Email us for details.

WUC AGM & Photo Competition

Saturday, 31st August 2013; Upstairs Thistle Inn, 3:00pm

It's AGM time again

Come along and have your say, see the results of the photo competition and the Club award and swap a few stories in a relaxed atmosphere.

The AGM is also the time to appoint the Committee, so if you are interested, send us an email. Also, Notices of Motion need to be received two weeks before the meeting, if you want to raise one.

REMINDER- to last year's award winners: If you were the lucky recipient of an award last year, please bring it along or arrange for someone to collect it.

Entertainment

For those who attend, there will be money on the bar at Thistle Inn for a drink or two. Also, some nibbles.

The meeting starts at 3:00pm and goes for about an hour or so.

After the AGM and formalities are complete, the night will be young. So there will be time to carry on and have dinner in town for those who want to socialise a bit longer. We'll make arrangements on the night.

Award

- There will be an award to the most improved diver.



Photography competition

Categories:

1. Best underwater photography this year within Wellington area
2. Best underwater photography this year outside of Wellington area
3. Best topside photography

Photo Competition Rules:

- Up to three photos per person are allowed per category.
- Photos since 18th August 2012.
- Name each photo with:
 - Your name (e.g. Ima Diver)
 - Category i.e. 1 Within Wgtn; 2 Outside Wgtn; 3 Topside.
- Email your photos to the club by 6:30pm Wednesday 21st August, to:

Wellington.Underwater@gmail.com



These are last year's photo competition winners.

NZUA AGM 28th- 30th June – by Klare

The New Zealand Underwater Association (NZUA) Annual General Meeting (AGM) run in conjunction with the NZUA Photographic competition was organised by Wellington Underwater Club on the weekend of 28th to 30th June.

A great weekend was organised, during which Wellington displayed some of its best winter weather to our national visitors and delegates. They represented a range of underwater facets/organisations (including scuba diving, underwater hockey, spear fishing, environment, conservation, photography, Airpurity) coming together for a weekend of catch ups, discussion and cake!



NIWA tour: Club member Leane (centre) and Dave Moran, Editor of NZ Dive Magazine, with our NIWA guide Karen

WUC arranged a number of events showcasing what Wellington has to offer including a fascinating insight into NIWA's invertebrate collection, an appreciation of MAANZ restoration work on the Hikitia and an opportunity to show support for the Marine Education Centre's on-going endeavours (despite their thrashing by the storm the week prior).

We even had a contingent of divers, who although couldn't get out onto the F69, were treated to viewing of the 'wreck of the Nissan' and seahorse sightings. The weekend also included a NZ Shark Alliance/finning campaign presentation; an update from the recreational marine fisheries sustainability initiatives, photography competition and NZUA trophy awards, an evening meal - involving a level of hilarity - and cake!...

The AGM official business was dealt with swiftly allowing for discussion and dialogue over the more pressing topics such as reduction in legal Paua size, auditing adventure tourism, Blue Nose Cod regulations, underwater hockey update, future Oceanz, dive accident report and lots more. Minutes from this meeting can be sourced from the WUC committee.

A big thanks to those involved from Wellington Underwater Club in the running of this event. You did us proud.



Club members at the pre-dinner mix and mingle prior to the NZUA Annual Dinner on

Diving Alderman Islands – by Nicole

In April, Nicole did some diving up north. Here's her story and photos:

The east coast of Coromandel offers plenty of nice dive sites and warm water temperatures way into the Wellington winter. We had planned to visit a few dive sites accessible by boat out of Opito Bay. Unfortunately we were limited to use the boat as a cloth dryer instead of a means of transport for most of the days, but we found a few nice spots for shore diving and went out with the crew from Tairua Dive Zone for a day trip to the Aldermen Islands. Great viz, two fabulous dives and lots of rays - what else can you ask for...



Snorkel Trail – by Mike J

The plan was to do a Club dive around Greta Point, but that was thwarted by strong northerly winds. So Nicole, Rajiv and I chose the lee coast and met at the Snorkel Trail car park.

Our dive route was out along the snorkel trail, then round a large rock at 12 metres, and back on the reciprocal. Despite the viz being maybe 3 metres and the water temperature at 12°C, it was good fun.

I got some colourful shots of anemone – seeing these is one of the pleasures of diving the snorkel trail. Also saw a healthy crayfish or two.

The best part was meeting an octopus. The others claimed it squirted ink before shooting off to join a crayfish among the rocks. That seemed like a risky thing to do as octopus prey on crayfish, however the crayfish was probably big enough to hold its own.



We also found this broken jar sitting in the open on the bottom. The photo was posted on the Club Facebook, hoping that someone could explain the find.

www.facebook.com/pages/Wellington-Underwater-Club/231703176891615

That was interpreted by some as an invitation to provide a caption. Here's the best offering:

My best guess is that's the remains of a cremated guy called "Wellington, something" who asked to be buried in the ocean!

Yeah, Right.



Diving Scotland – by Phil (with Klare)

The water in Scotland in May is b*#%@y cold! We were in Edinburgh having a look around the old city and visiting Shane Wasik for a bit of diving. We headed to Eyemouth first for a shore dive where we geared up in the biting cold wind, topped off with a wee hail storm, anticipating the water to be even cooler. We weren't disappointed with an instantly painful face on entry. But you get that in 6°C water.



Under the water things looked a little different to other diving I had done. The amount of fish life was noticeable by its absence. We saw a few fish in the weed at the beginning but fewer in the open. Once we got past the weed line the most prolific



plant life was a soft coral called Dead Man's Fingers (*Acyonium Digitatum*). These are a furry white or orangey/pink soft coral the shape of which could be imagined to be the fingers of a body which has been in the water for a while. These covered the rocky walls.

There were other plants growing some of which looked similar to those we are used to around Wellington but others weren't as recognisable. There are large sea



urchins with white spikes and pink in between (that's the technical name for them!!); large and small anemones; a few small fish similar to the Scorpion fish we have and a number of out of proportioned lobsters-big pincers, small body.

The second dive was on a boat out of St Abbs, a small town around a very old lovely boat harbour. The boat - MV Tiger Lilly - like many of the dive boats we saw has a diver lift on the stern. Exiting the water is simply a case of standing on a platform and you are lifted out of the water with all your gear still on. Once up to deck height you just walk off and take your gear off. Brilliant!



The dive from the boat was off a headland, with some incredible swim throughs and walls teeming with those Dead Mans Fingers.

Scotland is a beautiful part of the UK and despite the cold water I would be keen to do some more diving there ... but maybe later in summer when the water apparently might reach a balmy 14°C.

Kapiti Island – by Mike J

On 8th June Geoff, Jane, Nicole and I dived Kapiti Island courtesy of Kapiti Dive Club (KUC). The skipper was Glen, a KUC member. Glen's boat was great for diving. Our hosts were very kind – the day ended in their club rooms with a barbeque, including paua and the catch of the day, plus a welcome beer or wine. Thanks to KUC.

The first dive was on the front (west) side of Kapiti. There was a swell coming from the north. That meant we couldn't get to the Marine Reserve at the northern end which had been the initial plan. We dropped down to hit bottom at 29 metres. Viz was quite limited (say 5 to 7 metres) and there was a decent current which resulted in us drifting with it.

Most of the dive was slowly ascending along a rocky face with some striking zoanthid anemone colonies.

A perch allowed itself to be photographed as we drifted past. I still managed to get my nudibranch photo. The one shown here is a variable nudibranch, but we saw a clown nudibranch as well.

The second dive was at the south end of Kapiti. While our boatie caught a huge crayfish, we had fun finding an octopus among the kelp and sea stars.



Kicks and Bubbles

Giant kelp

Some of our club members are quite particular, in fact quite expert, at identifying marine flora and fauna. In case you were wondering, giant kelp occurs around Wellington. It can be confused with bull kelp. After a recent dive, kelp like that in this photo, generated an email discussion.

This following helpful reference material came out of the discussion:



*In more sheltered spots, such as between Island Bay and Taputeranga Island, forests of *Macrocystis pyrifera* (giant kelp) up to 20m tall are found with blades floating on the surface.*

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-visit/wellington-kapiti/wellington/taputeranga-marine-reserve/features/>

Also, knowledgeable sources say our giant kelp is the same species as in California and Tasmania. In New Zealand, Wellington is the northern range of the species.



Giant kelp
Macrocystis pyrifera

World Oceans Day: 8th June 2013

World Oceans Day is celebrated round the globe. In Wellington, the day was acknowledged by events such as beach clean ups and free movie screenings:

www.worldoceansday.org/2013events/new-zealand-events

Did you take part in anything? If so, we are interested to hear what you did. Send a note and some photos if you would like to share it in the newsletter.

'You should have been here Thursday!'

In June the Editor was emailed this photo and with the above message and a note to say there were plenty more photos like it. It's a great photo and I suspect some like it may pop up in the Club photo competition!



At the time, it was a grotty day, a night dive didn't look very inviting plus there were all those other demands on life to attend to (like working late), so I missed the dive. It was apparently a fantastic night dive with lots of seahorses on display.

The message: To capture the moment, you have to be there.

More items that may interest you

MAANZ – upcoming meetings A voice for maritime Heritage within NZ

info@maanz.wellington.net.nz

Meetings are at 7.30pm; usually the 3rd Wednesday
Museum of Wellington City and Sea

21st August

'Wairarapa Maritime History and Shipwrecks'
by Ken Scadden

Club Items For Sale

Prices

Woollen Beanie	– \$14.00
Merino Beanie	– \$29.00
Embroidery and T-Shirt	– \$19.00 (m/f)

Also, we have the WUC logo set up for embroidery and can order T-shirts, jackets or other clothing for club members or you can get the logo on your own piece of clothing or accessories.

Previous announcements

Items repeated from earlier Newsletters:

Dive Hobart, Tasmania. Keen to look for weedy **sea dragons** and **sea caves** in Tasmania. We'll have a club member in Hobart on weekends 12th - 13th October, and possibly 19th – 20th October. Let us know if you are keen to join. To get a taster check out some wonderful videos from the local dive centre. Take look at **videos** of some [highlights](#) of **diving Cathedral Cave**, or a [tour](#) through the Cathedral Cave system
<http://www.eaglehawkdive.com.au/>

Xmas/New Years diving at Northland Dive. Celebrate a real Kiwi summer and join Northland Dive. Bring your family and explore the Bay of Island above and below water.

Greater Wellington Regional Council – River and Streams website:

The web pages showing river flows are very useful to understand how much (rain) water goes into/through our rivers.

<http://graphs.gw.govt.nz/rivers-and-streams-2/>

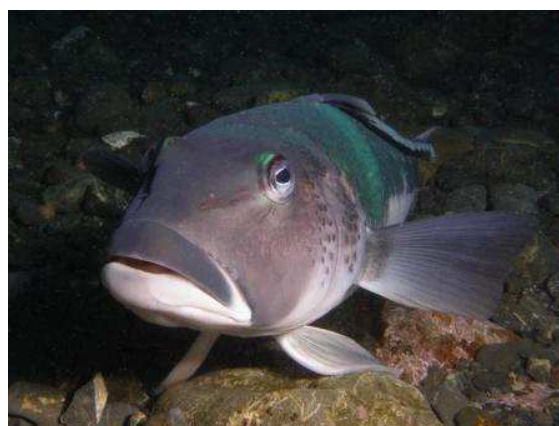
It is possible to drill down into the flow records for each of the tributaries of the Hutt River to find out their flows. Swimming sites are included as well.

Cave diving expedition

Interested in the **cave diving** expedition to the **Pearse Resurgence** then check out <http://www.wetmules.com/home/pearse-resurgence>

Download a 3D model of the Resurgence, watch some videos and read the trip reports from 2010, 2011, 2012.

Another article on the Pearse is available on: <http://www.advanceddivermagazine.com/articles/pearse/pearse.html>



One of the persistent blue cod in the Taputeranga Marine Reserve.