



Christmas is at hand

That means the Club Christmas function is this coming weekend – **Saturday 30th Nov**, meeting at **Chocolate Fish, Scorching Bay at 2:00pm**. There is a \$15.00 voucher for WUC members to help with the cost of your meal.

If you'd like a dive beforehand – we plan to meet at the beach at 11:00am. Let us know if you want to be part of this dive – use the club email address – we will decide the dive location near the time, depending on conditions.

Apart from that, the other exciting activity is the **24hr dive on the weekend 7th-8th December** (see page 2 for details). The purpose of the dive is to raise funds for the Wellington Coast Guard, a worthy cause, particularly for we divers. I encourage you to take part – it's a fun activity. You can even camp out at Scorching Bay if you'd like. And it's a good way to boost your dive tally.

The water temperature around Wellington is warming up. The weather seems to be a bit fickle, which some would say is a consequence of Global Warming – whatever, we have the advantage of two coasts and a harbour, so you are bound to find a good spot most weekends.

We are just a month away from the longest day and a welcome break over Christmas and New Year which I hope everyone has the opportunity to enjoy. It is the time to get out there and enjoy your diving. But take care and stay safe.

Merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Next Club Meetings:
6:30 pm Thistle Inn
Last Tuesday of the month



26th November
None in December
28th January 2014



Membership Renewal



Thanks to those of you who have renewed membership. Your membership cards will be sent shortly. For those who have yet to renew - an email was sent in September with details about sign up and renewal of membership - fill out membership renewal or new member form and pay your subscription (cash on a club activity, cheque or bank transfer to WUC - details on the form). See p8 for fees.



Want more information?

If you want to know more about any of the articles in the newsletter, or just want to contact us, then email:

wellington.underwater@gmail.com

Upcoming Activities

Club meetings

- **26th November (Tue)** – Thistle Inn **6:30pm**
- **December** – no meeting
- **28th January (Tue)** – Thistle Inn **6:30pm**

Club Dives and Activities

November

- **30th (Sat):**
 - **Club Christmas function.** Meet at Chocolate Fish, Scorching Bay at 2:00pm. There will be a \$15:00 voucher for members towards their meals.
 - **Club dive at 11:00am.** If you'd like a dip before the above Christmas function, we are planning a dive at 11:00am. Please let us know ahead of time, as the location is weather dependant and we'll confirm plans nearer the time.

December

- **2nd – 5th December (Mon/Fri):** This is a chance to join WUC members on a 3 day dive trip to the Lermontov. The trip will be run with Brent from Go Dive Marlborough. Divers will be based at the Lermontov Lodge (arriving Mon 2nd Dec). Diving is scheduled for Tue 3rd, Wed 4th and Thur 5th Dec. Beside dives on the Lermontov there might be a possibility to dive the Lavington and Rangitoto.
- **7th-8th (Sat/Sun) 24 hour Dive II:** Fundraiser for the Wellington Coast Guard held at Scorching Bay. Organised by Dive and Ski HQ Petone. We already have a strong WUC representation.

Each diver signs up for one or more 45 minute dives and the aim is to tally up sponsored minutes underwater. Relays of divers will be underwater for the full 24 Hours.

Contact Dive & Ski at: 04 568 5028

- <https://www.facebook.com/events/447327638713927/>
- or
- diveskihq@xtra.co.nz

- **16-19 December (Mon-Thu), Poor Knights Cavern and Caves,** 4 day liveaboard with an option to sign up for a TDI cavern and/or cave course with Jamie Obern.

Celebrate a real Kiwi summer and join WUC for Xmas/New Year at Northland Dive. Bring your family and friends and explore the Bay of Islands above and below water.

More Upcoming Trips & Courses

- **30 Nov/1 Dec (Sat/Sun):** Scooter Safari, Poor Knights
- **4th Dec (Wed): Taputeranga Marine Reserve Public Meeting.** 5:30 to 7:15pm, Island Bay Surf Club. The Friends and staff from DOC would like to join with the South Coast community to discuss how the community can help raise awareness about Taputeranga Marine Reserve and assist with compliance.
- **7th Dec (Sat): Taranaki Wharf Clean Up Organized by Sustainable Coastlines** Love adventure? Love your coast? Join us for some fun above and below the water and help keep Wellington's waterfront clean. Wanted: experienced scuba divers and volunteer in kayaks, to remove rubbish.
Come along to the steps next to the diving platform on Taranaki Wharf between 1pm and 5pm on the 7th December. Bring your dive gear and kayaks. To find out more email: jo@sustainablecoastlines.org

Dive Trips 2014

- **6th – 12th April 2014: Fiordland 7 day liveaboard.** Email us for details.

Keen to learn diving or know someone who wants to start scuba diving? Let us know, we are looking at our next **PADI Open Water Dive Course** in the New Year

GUE Fundies course – by Nicole & Rob

We had club members participating and assisting in the latest GUE Fundamental course with instructors James Croker and Jamie Obern (jamie@techdivenz.com).

Email us if you are interested in finding out more about GUE in general or the fundies course in particular. WUC and GUE Wellington members regularly organize informal training sessions in the pool and go for out for sea dives.

All Photos by Rob, Frontline Photography



Working on kick technique in the pool



Equipment and theory session



Dry run before the pool session



Team photo: Paul, VUCEL member, Franz, Rob, Jamie, Simon, Brendon, James



Divers finishing one of the sea dives

Some activities

Cave diving talk – by Nicole & Rob

While based in Wellington for the GUE Fundies course, Jamie Obern gave an inspiring presentation about his latest cave diving trips in Australia and New Zealand (Blue Creek). The talk was hosted by the Wellington Caving Group.

The expedition to the Nullarbor Plain in Australia required a special permit for the collection of cave slime samples as the cave is closed to the public after 13 cavers and cave divers got trapped in a rock slide (the movie Sanctum is based on this event).



Educate to Eliminate – by Mike J

On 28th September, the annual clean up around Wellington wharves occurred. WUC had good representation and plenty of trash was recovered from the bottom – ranging from bicycles and shopping trolleys to bags of potting mix and road cones (at least eight).



Entry point

bicycles and shopping trolleys to bags of potting mix and road cones (at least eight).



Stephen Journee (Dive Guys) doing a safety brief. Mayor Celia, a great supporter of the activity, looks on.



The Heavy Lift Team – Colin, Pete and Rob

Visit to Te Papa Offsite fish storage facility – by Mike J



WUC & MAANZ tour party assembles

A number of WUC members joined a group from Maritime Archaeology Association of New Zealand (MAANZ) in a visit to Te Papa's offsite fish storage facility. The visit was organised by Mike Penfold, WUC and MAANZ Committee member.

Tour guide and host was Dr Andrew Stewart, Collection Manager Fisheries. Andrew is a member of Te Papa's Fish Team which is responsible for collection, identification, registration, management, curation and researching the National Fish Collection for the nation. The collection is not only a national asset it is also used extensively by international researchers.

There has been an active programme of collecting by museum scientists in association with exploratory fishing and biodiversity surveys, as well as collecting by MFish scientists and recreational anglers and divers. WUC members have been involved in contributing to this collection over the years.



Above: Dr Andrew Stewart briefing. Phil's Dad, Phil & Mike P listening in.



Top: A brief in the Large Tank Storage room.

Above: A brief in the Formalin Room. Listening is Michael Ryland.

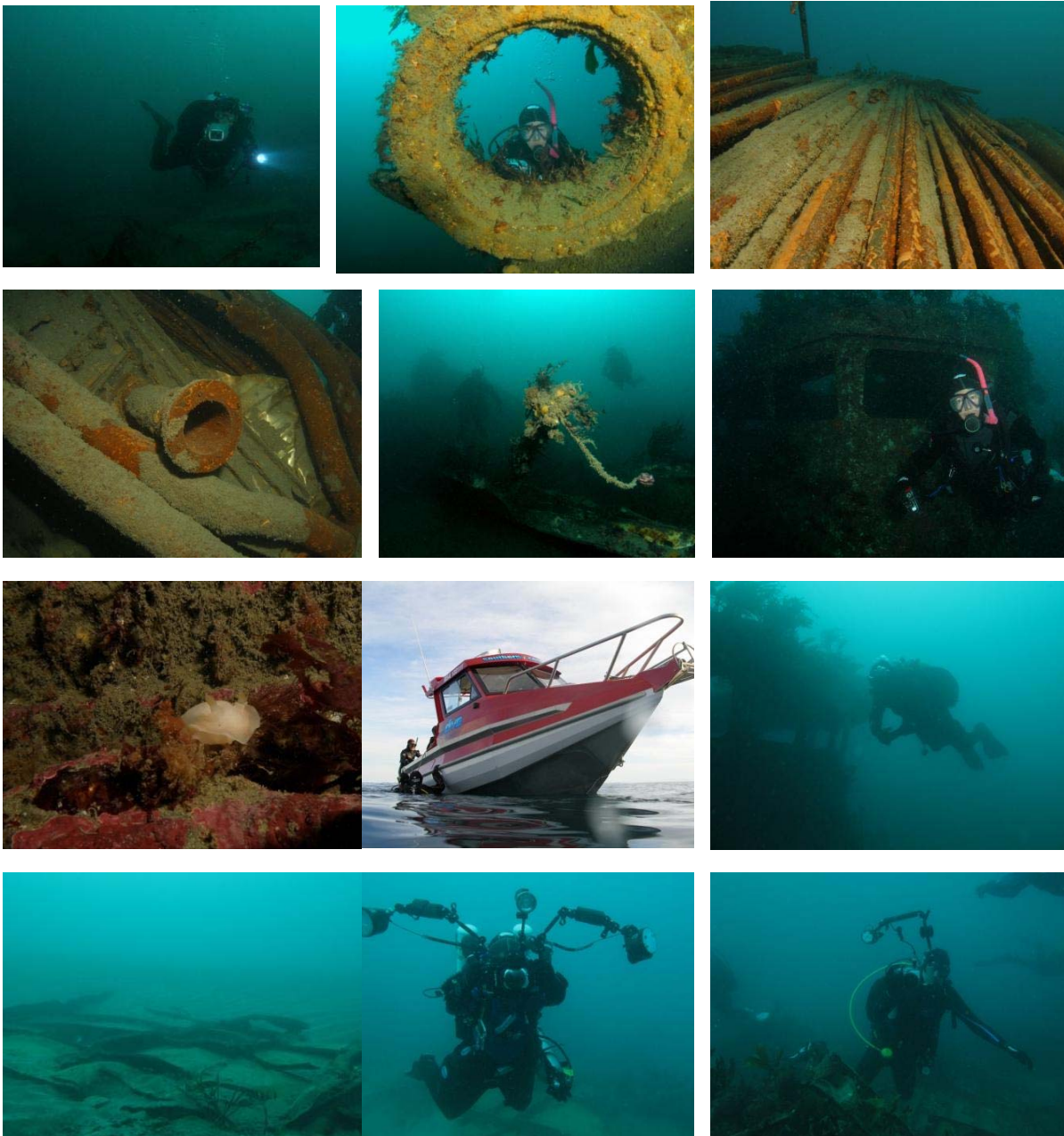
Left: Various fish storage containers.



F69 Dive – photos by Mike J & Nicole

On 25th August we were lucky to dive the F69 with the crew from Dive Wellington with quite good viz and relatively calm conditions – we even spotted a nudibranch on the hull. As you can see from the number of photos, we had plenty of cameras on the trip.

We did two dives – covering the bow and the bridge section.



Assorted News

A rare find at White Island

Nicole has just come back from a week diving at White Island with a group of other scientists. While there, Nicole captured a rare photograph of a Kermadec Scorpionfish. Its identity has been confirmed and the fish is documented in "Fishes of New Zealand" by Malcolm Francis.

Kermadec Scorpionfish are probably nocturnal and are rarely seen. They are able to burrow into the sea bed by tossing sand up with their fins, suggesting that they lie buried in the sand and gravel during the day and emerge to hunt at night.



Good find Nicole.

Proposal to ban shark finning

Last month we referred to the campaign to stop shark finning, a despicable practice that was bad for New Zealand's reputation as an environmentally savvy nation, and bad for sharks. No doubt you will have seen the mural near Te Papa.



There has been good progress on this campaign.

On 10th November, the Conservation Minister, Dr Nick Smith, announced details of the draft National Plan of Action for Conservation and Management of Sharks. Banning shark finning was part of the proposal. The document is now out for public consultation, until December.

So the good work of groups like Forest and Bird and the NZ Shark Alliance (who incidentally were involved with the NZUA AGM in which WUC had the key organising role) has been recognised.

You can find a newspaper article at:

www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11154753

The tenor of comments in this article was that it's not before time and the sooner the ban actually comes into play the better.

Also of note – the ban on shark finning has general cross-party support. Agreement like that seems hard to come by, but it's nice to know our politicians can find common ground on this environmental issue.

What to do if you see poaching in our Marine Reserve

In their newsletter, the Friends of the Taputeranga Marine Reserve (FOTMR) advise what to do if see poaching in the Reserve.

Basically, the answer is to record details of the activity (i.e. when, where, what, who and how) and phone the DOC hotline.

DOC Hotline: **0800 DOCHOT (0800 362468)**

DOC duty officers have been asked to contact the callers who report poaching and provide an update on the response taken.

Items of interest

Spearfishing NZ news

Spearfishing NZ is affiliated to NZ Underwater Association. Newsletters #102 and #103 were emailed to members on 24 & 25 Nov 13.

Club subscriptions

The AGM confirmed the following subscriptions:

- Membership Renewal (received by 30th Nov 2013) - \$35
- Membership Renewal (received after 1st Dec 2013) - \$45
- Student Membership Renewal - \$30
- New Members pay \$30 for their first year.

Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR)

This is a group of volunteers that introduces kids to the marine environment. The focus of the programmes is to create positive practical outcomes, using the knowledge gained to create a conservation action that benefits our marine systems.

The programmes need helpers, so if you are interested, please contact:

Liz Gibson, Program Facilitator
Island Bay Marine Education Centre, Wellington
lizgib@hotmail.com Ph: 0220378460

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.

A night dive at Island Bay

Nicole, Rob and Mike did a night dive from the Bait House car park. We started on the boat ramp side and went round the point. The viz was great, and some interesting marine life was seen.



Free-swimming eel



Wandering anemone

