



Sounding

*Newsletter of the
South Shore Neptunes*

ANNOUNCEMENTS, ACTIVITIES, & REMINDERS

Calendar, 2020

- 6/2 Zoom General Meeting
TBA
- 6/9 Zoom Board Meeting TBA
- 6/14 Club Dive from
clubhouse, TBA
- 6/21 Zoom Pub social time,
Newsletter/
- 6/28 Club Dive from
clubhouse, TBA
- 7/2 Zoom General
Meeting TBA
- 7/5 Women's Dive Day TBA
- 7/9 Zoom Board meeting TBA
- 7/14 Club Dive from
clubhouse, TBA
- 7/16 Zoom Pub social time,
Newsletter TBA
- 7/20 Club Dive from
clubhouse, TBA

Club General and Board Meetings are now being held **on Zoom** until further notice. See **Club Facebook page** for pics and brief writeup.

Zoom Pub Social Hour is being held at **7 PM** on the **third Tuesday of the month** to replace Club programming until further notice.

Sounding will be emailed to you until further notice.

To be sure you receive your issue of Sounding and are included in the Zoom meeting notifications and newsletter, we are calling every member to verify your email address as well as your directory information. Please return calls when we leave a message. Thanks.

All Club activities and programs listed on the Calendar or not that are in conflict with the stay-in-place quarantine **are also CANCELED until further notice.**

Future Activities and Programs: The Club Board of Directors is meeting via Zoom to revise our activities schedule and come up with solutions to keep us all together as much as possible. Stay tuned. We will be in touch in the very near future.

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APRIL/MAY CLUB ACTIVITIES & DIVES

Hathaway's Pond, Wednesday Morning, May 6. *Story & photos by Rob Robison*

Yesterday morning (5/6/2020), Brian Smith and I met up at Hathaway's Pond down in Barnstable at 9AM. No one was fishing or diving, just a few dog walkers out on the trail. The park was virtually empty. So we suited up, Brian in his wetsuit and I in my dry suit, and planned on an easy dive. I was especially glad to have Brian as a dive buddy because he knows the pond better than I, and more importantly, because we hadn't dived together since before his 3-month trip to ski country in Aspen, CO. He's one of my few steady winter dive companions when in town.

Despite the protestations of the now ritual mad, barking, unleashed, attack-dog-wannabe, we submerged unscathed following the rock pile pointer that took us down past the West end dive platform to the wrecked car at about 33 feet, which I haven't seen in over a year. From the looks of it, the car is an old subcompact car, but difficult to determine the make for sure, given its current condition. Also, we found a circular weight made of concrete, which served as a junction for a number of guidelines. Brian looked confused, as was I, so I indicated we should



head east, which we did. I knew

this would take us toward the objects we were looking for, and sure enough the line angled us up and toward 20-24' and the objects we were searching.

Eventually, we arrived at a new American flag planted in the pond over the weekend, and the first of two diamond-shaped buoyancy-control swim throughs. A fingerling Bass hovered in the crook of one of the points—just beautiful—



but swam away, startled by our movement and bubbles, before I could approach close enough for a photo. We continued on and began to approach the second one near the underwater clearing and East side swim platform. Brian motioned and I looked up and saw a lunker Largemouth Bass, somewhere between at least 4 - 6lbs. I tried to hold my breath and approach ever so cautiously for a photo, but evidently not stealthily enough. The Bass sensed us and took off like a shot.



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Happy Diving

From

JOHN & KATHY BLACKADAR



It was such a beautiful fish! We found all the icons including the miniature snowman, the Madonna, and the little boy garden statue reading a book. Someone had covered his head with an Alien mask in the interim since my recent visit to see him with Bonnie 4 days ago.



Our return took us back down to the submerged auto wreck and the West-side dive platforms before guiding us up to the beach, a lost dog-toy ball, which we retrieved, and out of the 47°-48° degree

water, 39 minutes after we had begun the dive. Vis was a bit murkier than the 25' plus we had enjoyed over the weekend, due to the recent gale force winds, but was still plenty good.

As we stowed away our gear, Bill Jeter, the one responsible for most the underwater “toys” and guidelines, and his wife drove up. Bill evidently makes stopping at the pond to check on who’s diving part of his daily ritual. We informed him of the three underwater scooter riders of a few days ago. He identified them as Capt. Heather Knowles (Sp?), husband, and a friend from Salem. Similarly, he filled us in on the new American flag that had replaced an old tattered one. He’s totally plugged in to everything about Hathaway’s. Bill is quite a guy and diver.



On the way home, Brian and I stopped at Jesse’s Marine, the Plymouth boat yard where I park Commando, my 15.5’ Zodiac, as boating season approaches, to check on the status of its nose.



Brian owns a sailboat and works part time at the Tern Harbor Marina in Weymouth. I wanted his input on how much I really needed to do to make the stick downs around the bow cleat and anchor roller on the bow ship shape. I also wanted to show him the newly installed dive ladder, which he approved of.

Diving into it provides a much-needed escape from the tedium. All of us wear masks and gloves and maintain social distance. Cautious sanity preservation is the only relief from this once in a lifetime (hopefully) tedium.

For more photos , go to the club FB page.

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Quarantine Break Hathaway's Pond. Saturday, May 2, 2020. *Story and photos by Rob Robison*

After striking out on successive weekends attempting to dive at Gull Cove (Portsmouth, RI) and Little (Morton) Pond (Plymouth), dive buddy Bonnie Zeller and I found nirvana in Hathaway's Pond (Barnstable). It seems like we weren't the only ones with diving on the brain. By the time I arrived at 10 minutes of 9 AM, Bonnie was already on site, one diver, a fellow customer of Wayne Gomer's Divers Market (Plymouth), was exiting the pond, and another had just finished suiting up and was entering the water.



The beautiful sunny, warm weather was catching! Maintaining our social distance, Bonnie and I suited up at a relaxed pace and entered the pond from the beach. Because she was wearing her wetsuit and I my dry suit, I told her if she felt cold and needed to head back to shore at any time during the dive, not to worry and let me know. Then, we dropped down and finned leisurely out of the mouth of the cove and began a gentle descent to the guideline.

The last time I dove this pond the guideline was at 19'. Today, after a couple of weeks of heavy rains and stormy weather, we didn't reach the line until descending to around 23-24'. The pond had gained nearly 5' of depth from all of the rainwater and runoff in our absence! Another change was the significant increase in underwater plant life. The drive shaft I featured the last time I wrote about the pond experience was nearly covered with green growth. More minnows and fish fry abounded. We saw over a dozen fingerlings and small fry, where two weeks ago or so only two were sighted the entire dive! The algae balloons proliferated as well in virtual garden-like formation.



Bonnie and I meandered along the guideline and eventually came upon the buoyancy skills test diamond swim thru and the Madonna who had acquired a brush, ostensibly to clean up the premises after the Easter egg hunt. Bonnie posed for photos with both, when suddenly a trio of divers, dragged by underwater propulsion vehicles (AKA dive scooters), flashed by, startling the two of us. That's an easy way to see the entire pond, I guess.

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After the motorized divers passed us by, we found the pigmy snowman, the dive training platform, and the little boy reading a book. Somewhere along the dive, Bonnie found an empty airline-sized booze bottle and tried to force feed a few of the unsuspecting underwater statues. As we headed back, we ran into another buoyancy skills test diamond and finally a small garden of tools to remind us of all the hard work it had taken to populate the pond with these underwater treasures.

After taking my last photo of the tools, I turned to Bonnie, who indicated she was getting chilled. We were close to our entry point, so we headed back up to shallower depths after 34 minutes of diving, reaching a max depth of 27,' in 48°-49° water, enjoying at least 20-25' of vis, and the exit where warmer water and sunshine awaited.

While the pond is clearly not the ocean, it offers a way to get wet, maintain skills, and enjoy a different view of what the underwater world has to offer There's nothing quite like diving into it! The fact that we had company is proof positive.

Until next time, safe living and safe diving, everyone.

Rob

LOOKING BACK

Night Dive at Gun Rock May 4, 2018. Neptunes Eric Cantor, Jon Willis, and I joined Peter Ninh and Rob



Rock gunnel

Christian for a delightful night dive at Gun Rock on Friday evening. We met at 7, donned our gear, and splashed in to 20+ feet of clear vis. The gently sloping sandy bottom was coated with moon snails, baby hermit crabs, a couple of very brief flashes of schooling bait fish, skates, a flounder or two including a window pane, some sea/sand lances, juvenile red hake fish, a boat mooring chain and blocks of concrete, as well as a couple of *Homarus americanus*, one of which was undoubtedly a keeper. Eric and Jon videoed, while I took stills and a brief 5-second clip of one of the innumerable schools of Mysid shrimp (AKA brine shrimp) See a 5 second clip of the shrimp in action here: <http://ocean-stuff.daisyhillsoftware.com/posts/2018-05-04/>. It's the clip without a cover photo. Peter and

Rob C scoured the area as if on the hunt for serious game. Our various temperature readings of the water were 42°, 43°, and 45.° We reached a depth of 22' when we exited the cove to the right and followed the rock/sand line. Our bottom time was 41-42 minutes. The moon was full and shiny on a crystal clear night. Everyone enjoyed a great dive. For Jon Willis' video clip of the dive, go to: <http://ocean-stuff.daisyhillsoftware.com/posts/2018-05-06/>.



Flabellina verrucosa



Onchidoris muricata

For additional photos, go to the club Facebook page.

Afterwards, Jon Willis and I headed over to Nantasket Beach to down some fish tacos and Cokes and decided we would make a followup pilgrimage shore diving at Plymouth Long Beach, Sunday morning, May 6. We found flat water, visibility ranging from 25-30' or more, and 45° H2O awaiting us on an ebbing tide. Even though our depth never exceeded 9-10', we found plenty to write home about: nudibranchs of at least two or three varieties, big hermit crabs, a big rock crab, interesting foliage such as coral weed, some sponges, moon snails, mussels, whelks, and more.

As you can tell from the amount of diving that is being done, the pace is quickening with the improving weather, and we are having a blast. Come on out and dive into it with us when you can. The water is fine, if still a bit chilly.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

From the Archives delves deep into club historical files to find jewels from the past. Special thanks to Theresa Czerepica for this gem

Jimmy Fund Dive Competition at Pemberton Point, Sept. 16, 1968

Skin Divers Pay to Compete—for Jimmy Fund

By JACK CRAIG

A group of South Shore skindivers—no strangers to good deeds—really outdid themselves this time.

They actually paid a dollar each for the right to duck into the frigid sea last Sunday off Hull, which looked more like the North Atlantic in March than Pemberton Point in May.

But the cause justified the effort, for their contributions went to the Jimmy Fund to help cure cancer in children.

Some 50 rubber-suited men, plus a half dozen girls braved the elements.

Never had they encountered conditions so unbearable, confessed dive-master Steve Burg of Weston. The temperature at this finger of land was 38 and the East wind swooshed past at 25 miles per hour. The turbulent tide reflected conditions.

But in the skindivers went, and most stayed for the allotted one-hour sea hunt.

One of the first to depart from the water was Ed Ross, who lives less than two miles from the Point. He had plucked the top prize, a silver mug that had been placed some 50 feet from the shore in the ocean floor.

Ross' reward was an evening for two at the Playboy Club in Boston, the contribution from that beauty-bound night spot to the Jimmy Fund.

★

"I guess we'll go, Ross said speaking for his wife, Jean, and himself.

Assuring him that he should, were three choice items from the Playboy Club, namely Bunnies Linda, Ilse and Penny.

This trio battled nature for much of the afternoon, from the time they sound-of whistles to send the divers into the water until awarding prizes some three hours later.

While attired only in miniskirts and light sweaters, they repeatedly tumbled out of their heated Cadillac to answer requests to pose for pictures with the tripping skindivers.

"We really like this, its fun," the

shivering Linda unconvincedly, looking as nice in windblown daylight as any of her 40 Bunny-mates do in the subdued twilight of the club.

Appearing most uncomfortable of the 300 persons gathered at the Point were those families of the skindivers who found it impossible to wait in warm autos for their breadwinners to bob out of the water. Instead, they walked along the beach, trying to make themselves enjoy the whole thing.

Soon after Ross brought his winning mug to shore, it was passed about the crowd for more donations to the Jimmy Fund.

★

Bill Kester, administrative vice president for the Jimmy Fund, who shivered along for his cause with everyone else, called the program a classic example of the effort put forth by many small groups to raise money to aid the cancer-stricken children.

Dive-master Burg countered that his group could hardly wait until next year. "When you are having as much fun as we are today, you have to expect to pay something for it," he insisted.

The skindivers' romantic name is South Shore Neptunes, but their practical label is Quincy Underwater Recovery Unit, telltale of most of their public service activities.

The organization has grown to 42 members in its 13 years of existence. They are part of an estimated 4500 skindivers in Massachusetts. Approximately 25 divers from elsewhere in the state joined in Sunday's effort for the Jimmy Fund.

Burg estimated that he dives 140 times a year. The severest test comes annually when ice is found to cut through for a quick dip.

What does it take to become a skindiver? About \$200 in equipment and six or seven training lessons.

Is it dangerous?

"I always answer that it is as about as dangerous as golf. And we never get rained out," Burg replied.



ICE WATER PLAY, BOY—Ed Ross, of Hull, emerges from the sea, winner of Playboy Cup. Frank O'Brien photo)

PARTING THOUGHTS ...

As this edition of Sounding comes to a close on the eve of Memorial Day, we can hold close neither the loved ones who have gone before us, those who have given their lives for this country, nor the tens of thousands, past, present, and future numbers of fellow citizens, including first and everyday who are, have, do battle or the deadly COVID-19. poignant New front page sums succinctly the this disease by filling the entire a list of the around one the 100,000 plus whose deaths attributed to the coronavirus by this week. It is as the Vietnam Memorial.



responders people, or may yet suffer from effects of Today's York Times u p horror of graphically space with names of percent of people can be novel sometime as moving W a r

... AND SHOT



Happy Memorial Day everyone!

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