



Buddy Line

November - December 2011 - January 2012



Celebrating 50 years of Fostering the Sport of Recreational Scuba Diving in Scarborough

By Jack Purchase

SUCI is off to a good start in what looks like a fine year of friendship and diving.

Mike McCabe has stepped down as Training Director. In my opinion this is the most important job in our club and his successor will have a tough act to follow. Under Mike's leadership, our club has many Rescue divers and Divemasters in its ranks. Thank you Mike, for all your years of hard work and dedicated service to the club. We will continue to welcome and value your advice.

As many know, Dieter Aupperle has stepped down as 2nd VP. An active Divemaster at various club events, Dieter is now an EFR and O2 Provider Instructor. Since 2008, he has co-ordinated SUCI's participation in the OUC Ice Floe Race, including the design of great t-shirts each year. A member of our 50th Anniversary Committee, Dieter created a historical DVD for everyone. Thanks, Dieter, for your enthusiasm, loyalty and diligence!

We welcome Barb Rotschild, who stepped up to the plate, to become our new 2nd VP. Many thanks, Barb - you are a great addition to our team.

Also of note, Rick Le Blanc, as well as being our 1st VP, has taken on roles at OUC. This maintains SUCI's high profile at OUC and he will need all our support moving forward. Well done, Rick, for representing us all.

Your executive team is busy addressing the most important issues in our club. At the top of our agenda is new member retention, followed closely by new instructor acquisition. But before discussing this further I would like to talk a little about the structure of our Dive Club.

There are three integral components to our club:

- . **Membership** "owned" and operated by the 2nd VP.
- . **Dive Season** "owned" and operated by the 1st VP.
- . **Training Program** "owned" and operated by the Training Director.

Each part has its own budget and we plan on the total of all three adding up to be slightly positive at the end of the year. We are a not-for-profit organization and anything positive of breakeven goes into our "Contingency Fund". The past 4 years we have ended the year slightly negative and have used our contingency to cover the difference. This is why it is there. Nothing serious yet, but we must reverse this trend. Over the years, the **Dive Season** consistently breaks even to plan. During the same period, we have used the surplus generated by the **Training Program** to subsidize the **Membership**. In effect, we are using the generosity of Instructors, Divemasters and all of the other volunteers, to pay for a subsidized membership cost.

With that thought in mind, we are usually slightly ahead with our Open Water course and make a good surplus with all other courses. But, and here is the catch: we only end up teaching Advanced and other courses to Open Water students who we retain as active members. Of our 20 to 25 Open Water students each year, we are lucky to retain only a few in the following year. So this is why WE must be so focused on the issue of retaining new members. I emphasize "WE" because I mean it must be the whole club: we must all work on this challenge. Your executive will lead the charge, but we cannot do this without your help. As in previous years, we ask members to aid in showcasing our club at events such as *Toronto's Ultimate Travel Show*, the *Outdoor Adventure Show*, and SUCI's *Discover Scuba Diving* as well as helping guide our Open Water students into SUCI club diving. These events are crucial to the continued success of our club.

The next priority is **instructor acquisition**. Over the last 4 years we have gone from **Training Director** and **4** instructors, to our current **Training Committee** (in lieu of a **Training Director**) and **2** instructors.

Given everything I have said above, your executive is urgently addressing these concerns and as an executive, we rely on and appreciate your continued support.

SUCI AWARDS DINNER DANCE

article & pictures by
Heather Courney & Janet Hulbert

Our SUCI Awards Dinner Dance was held on Saturday November 5th at the Bluffer Restaurant. This was a nice closing to our 50th year. The evening was well attended with 65 guests. Our prizes this year were really outstanding. Everyone that attended went home with a gift! We had prizes donated by Aquarius Scuba Diving Centre, Dive Source Scuba Supply, Scuba 2000, AquaSub Scuba Diving Centre, Innerspace Dive and Marine, Finger Lakes Charter, Dive Brockville Adventure Centre & Abucs Scuba Charters, Thousand Island Dive Excursions, Proteus Diving, Ideavation, Wildly Delicious Fine Foods, Manulife Financial and our many members that contributed to the wonderful prizes.

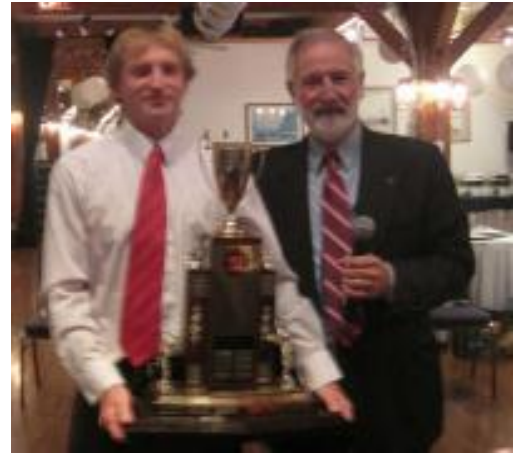


Dieter put a very nice slide show together of the past 50 years complete with music. A copy of the slide show was given out at our December general meeting.

Also, in honour of our 50th year we had some past members attend our banquet. Ted Kortun who was our 1st VP for many years in the 1990's and Diver of the Year in 1990 and 1994 attended and brought along a friend. Ted's friend brought some old diving paraphernalia that we all had the opportunity to enjoy.

Don McBride who joined the club in 1967 and who received the Outstanding Achievement Award in 1978 and became a Life Member in 1980 also attended. Pat MacNab joined the club in 1984. She was Secretary for many years as well as President. She received the Outstanding Achievement Award in 1994. Pat was Diver of the Year in 1989. Bill Durdy joined the club in 1982, and was Treasurer for many years He received the Outstanding Achievement Award in 1994. There were several other past members that attended.

Dinner as usual was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. After a word from our president, Jack Purchase, Mike McCabe, our training director presented the Trainee of the Year award to Ron Bogart. Jack Purchase then presented our Diver of the Year award to Rick LeBlanc.



Rick LeBlanc receives "Diver of the Year Award" from Club President Jack Purchase



Ron Bogart receives "Trainee of the Year" award from Training Director Mike McCabe



LeeAnn Smith & Marlyn Ricci with a cat toy, one of the household items used to determine order of tables.

We proceeded with the process of determining which table went up first to collect their prize. We had a panel of men assemble. They were to determine what these useful household items were used for in order to determine which table went up to obtain the prizes first. They had a little trouble. It got a little hazy and I will need to work on a better way to get everyone up to the table in a more orderly manner. I think all would be in agreement that Dieter was the big winner as he drew the ticket for the BCD donated by Scuba 2000. He was smiling from ear to ear.



1st VP, Rick LeBlanc, Secretary Nora Mark,
and Pres. Jack Purchase

The big club donated prizes made three of our active dive members very happy. Manny won the travel dive suitcase, Mike Lavine won one of the tanks and Sital Patel won the other tank. Everyone who attended went home with a gift.

We had a few spot dances and then danced the night away. I have heard great feedback from the event.

A note of thanks from SUCI's Social Director, Heather Courneyea.

A special thank you and acknowledgement to the generous people and companies who donated prizes to our Annual Awards Dinner and Dance held on Nov. 5, 2011 at Bluffer's Park Restaurant.

Tour of St. Lucia - Nov. 2011

*article and pictures by
By Pat Carnwith & Gillian Harding*

As we are all familiar, when the weather starts to cool down here in Ontario, our diving thoughts start to turn to warmer waters. Well this year eight of us from the club:

Faith Sahadath, Helen Gyselinck, Janet Hubert, Manny Kallon, Gillian Harding, Norm Erikson, Sital Patel and I, Pat Carnwith, took off for the clear blue waters and sunny skies of St. Lucia in the Caribbean. We stayed at the beautiful Almond Morgan Bay Resort which is just north of Castries (the capital) and we dove with Dive Fair Helen which was out of Marigot Bay to our south. We didn't realize at the time that this was quite a ways away from the resort but we made the best of it and got wonderful tours of the island every day.



We wouldn't do this trip justice if we didn't talk about the roads and driving. Well for those of you that know me, I am a "Gravol Girl" so it was a good thing I had plenty with me given the van rides!! St. Lucia is very mountainous and to avoid the traffic in Castries, Sital convinced them to take "the back roads". This literally meant traversing the very top of the mountain ridges, looking down... way down, on either side as our driver put the pedal to the metal and flew over the roads. The roads are barely wide enough to get 2 cars to pass and then as a sick joke, remember I said mountainous....there are concrete ditches on each side for rain water to drain so if you go over too far, you would end up in one! I don't even want to think of what that would have been like but thank goodness our driver Mark was excellent. Manny thought he would take the front seat, on our first "back road" adventure (normally that was my place to sit - remember Gravol Girl!). Well let's just say, he was in no hurry to ever take that seat again and I believe there were indents in the dashboard that just might have matched his finger prints....I'm just saying!

Even with the roads as they are, St. Lucia is a stunningly beautiful country. It is very tropical and mostly rainforest so we did get quite a few showers as we were just getting out of their rainy season but it added to making everything so lush and green. We also got to see rainbows everywhere which again is always nice to see. Their main crop is bananas so we drove past many

orchards filled with banana trees and the bananas covered in blue plastic to keep the birds claws from damaging the skins.

Dive Fair Helen is an excellent dive shop and they took care of us very well. It is the only shop I have seen where for their 2 tank dives per day charters they provide a full lunch! Now this is also because the diving starts late in the morning given the distance we had to go to get there but all the same it was unexpected and greatly appreciated. Our main contact for our trip was Andre and he was wonderful. Very proud and knowledgeable about the country so he always had stories and history to tell us about which we enjoyed. And his wife cooked the meals everyday for the boat. We are not talking sandwiches, oh no, we are talking pork chops and chicken, pasta, salads and local specialties to give us a taste of the island. It was a big meal and the surface interval was definitely needed to be able to digest the meal before the second dive.



As I mentioned before, we did our diving out of Marigot Bay but the actual dive sites were closer to Soufriere in view of the famous Piton mountains. In case you want to see what Marigot Bay looks like, all you have to do is rent the original "Doctor Doolittle" movie starring Rex Harrington as it was filmed in Marigot Bay! Remember the Giant Sea Snail that had the cold....well that was St. Lucia! The bay on one side hasn't changed too much since then as it is a nature preserve. The water was very warm averaging around 83 F on most of our dives. St. Lucia is not the place to go if you are looking for big things (sharks, rays, etc.) but if you like the smaller things, it is definitely a beautiful place to dive. We saw lots of Turtles, schools of various fish, Spotted Eels, fireworms, banded shrimp, Christmas tree worms, Feather Dusters and my favourite the Arrow Crabs with their little blue front claws. We even saw a nice large octopus thanks to Manny and a molting King Crab sitting inside a large barrel sponge for protection beside the shell he just came out of.

The Almond Morgan Bay Resort was great and we had a wonderful time. They had many restaurants to choose

from and the food was very tasty. One word of warning



however...they don't label their hot sauce very well and it is yellow so it kind of looks like mustard when in a squeeze bottle or salad dressing when in a bowl. So the first couple of days were a bit interesting as a few people mistook the hot sauce for something else and found out the hard way! Manny also learned the hard way that just because the squeeze bottle has the top on, if you do squeeze it too hard, Hercules, you will be wearing its contents all over your shirt, shoes, Janet's shorts, the counter, floor and chairs nearby!! Good thing his shirt was a yellow tie dye so it wasn't even noticeable!! And when I say hot sauce, I mean H-O-T sauce!! Faith and Sital were in their glory and spent the entire week figuring out how they were going to get jars of the stuff home with them. Sital was even using it on his food at breakfast!!!



Another thing that was happening when we were on St. Lucia is they were in the last weeks leading up to their Federal Elections. It is a big excuse for a huge street party. There are two main parties on the island, which we knew by their colours. The RED party and the YELLOW party and everyone was wearing one of these colours to show who they supported. On the weekends there were big parades and singing and dancing in the streets like a Jump Up as they celebrated prior to the elections.....very different from what we see here in Canada. We found out it was the RED party that won which was something as they were not the ones currently in power and everyone we talked to seemed to think the YELLOW party would win. It was definitely a lively time to be in St. Lucia.

On our last day in St. Lucia, the group split up with four of us (Manny, Janet, Faith & I) taking it easy at the resort and the other four (Sital, Gillian, Norm and Helen) going off for an island tour. I am going to turn this article over now to Gillian who sent me the following on their day exploring St. Lucia with Andre.

Take it away Gillian.....

Our last day in St. Lucia and what a day it was ! Four of us opted to take a grand tour of this lovely island.

Andre, one of the gracious dive masters offered to be a guide and the driver of the minivan.

The tour began with a half hour drop off at the bustling Castries market; the traffic too horrendous for Andre to park. Castries is the capital and has a population of approximately 65,000 people. Many cruise ships spend a day in Castries's harbour (one of the Caribbean's busiest ports). This lush island grows all types of vegetables, spices and fruit – mangoes, plantain, papaya, citrus fruits and coconuts. Its main crop, being bananas, is largely exported to the U.K. and Europe. Some purchases were made. The tour took us to Government House, a beautiful Victorian era building. It was surrounded by lush gardens and an imposing gate on which hung the Coat of Arms emblazoned with two parrots –the national bird. Incidentally, the current Governor General is a woman! Another stop was Fort Charlotte, located on a height of land called Morne Fortune, the backdrop to Castries. The Fort was completed in 1790 after twenty years of battling between France and Britain. The fort is presently being used for local education purposes. St. Lucia has produced two Nobel Prize winners (one for economics and the other for literature).

The tour took us along the west coast trail. This road to Soufriere and onwards was incredibly tortuous with hairpin turns, steep drop offs and road washouts – anyone for a roller coaster ride ? No vehicle seemed to slow down, including ours. We drove through many small fishing villages, and at one location we noted the 'snake



man' standing with a boa constrictor wrapped around his neck. Needless to say, we didn't stop to see this island attraction. We travelled through Soufriere, the oldest town in St Lucia (1746) on our way to see the Pitons, two unusual mountains, a symbol of St. Lucia. A guide at an elevated Conservation Park led us up a steep narrow pathway to a lofty viewing point of these two mountains called "The Gateway to Heaven". It was during this hike that we learned that one of our group, undaunted by deep diving below the ocean surface, was somewhat concerned when facing terra firma elevations. To their credit with a little coaxing, cajoling, and a helping arm completed the hike.



On we drove –more treacherous roads through lush rain forests to the hot springs waterfall and pools for a luxurious soak ; Helen's highlight of the tour. These pools were not far from St Lucia's "drive -in " volcano, our next stop. A guide took us around the volcano caldera which is constantly steaming from fissures and bubbling hot water pools. All of this set in a valley- like cone of lava surrounded by lush vegetation. The earth's seething magna is only two miles below the surface at this point, normally it is several miles underground – a sobering thought ! It is here we saw people wallowing in hot, black mud pools which did not appeal to any of us ! The smell of sulphur permeated the air here.

On the way back ,the roads are no better as we stop at the very edge of one of them . The precipitous landscape combined with heavy rainfalls and unstable soil in this area causes landslides from time to time. Andre pointed out that we are at the exact spot where a landslide occurred a year ago burying a house along with several family members into a deep gorge. We were glad to get on our way.

Our last stop was Marigot Bay where all our boat dives originated and where the Fair Helen Dive Shop is located. The Bay is very pretty and calm. Andre took us on a tour of two hotels near the dive shop. We were impressed with some of the features shown us for future trips.

We head back to our hotel with a greater appreciation of St. Lucia . Thanks Andre, for sharing with us your love of this island , its people and your keen knowledge of its history .

DISCOVER SCUBA - OCTOBER 8, 2011

*article by Rick Le Blanc
pictures by Paul Francis*

\$20.00 fee for Discover Scuba on October 8th, 2011

As a vibrant club, our lifeline to survival is attracting and retaining new members. “Discover Scuba” is one of the longest traditions SUCI has to attract new members. At the October 8th event, we instituted a \$20.00 fee for participants to participate our Discover Scuba. There was much debate. It was felt that in previous DS’s there was an abundance of participants who were rushed through and thereby not getting the full experience of scuba diving. Much trepidation was felt throughout the club. We were all worried has how this would affect the number of participants. We wanted to attract participants who were serious about scuba diving. To alleviate this feeling and to present SUCI in a good light, it was decided that the \$20.00 fee would go to the Toronto Food Bank. If they did join, the fee would go toward the cost of the course.

Jo Ann Maheu started the ball rolling. She put in motion a schedule for the members to follow, called Innerspace to get the necessary equipment, contacted Adrian to ensure we had the pool was booked. A family emergency forced her to hand over the duties to myself. Adrian arranged to have a portable sign placed on Ellesmere. Adrian was also instrumental in convincing the City of Toronto that we did need lifeguards for this event. We were worried that they were not trained to rescue a scuba diver. This reduced our hourly pool rate from \$94 to about \$75 per hour.

The calls were slow in the beginning but ramped up quickly as October 8th neared. The club had a scheduled an Open Water course for the following weekend. There were 3 of 8 spots vacant. Much to our surprise we had 21 participants, 6 of which wanted to take the Open Water course. Thanks to our wonderful club volunteers who pulled together another successful DS. Janet and



Vivian greeted everyone as they entered. Patricia arranged for the Scarborough Mirror to take pictures and Paul Francis took several underwater pictures. Jack, Nora, Manny, Marion and Raimund gave all of our participants a great tour of the underwater world. Stella, Leslie and Robert made sure all of our participants were properly fitted. Ron, Richard, Sital and Pat dressed them in the pool and reassured them that everything was going to go smoothly. Barbara, Maureen and myself, at the information desk, witnessed ear-to-ear smiles as the participants exited the water. Not one participant balked at the \$20.00 fee.



Deep Reading

Shadow Divers, author, David Kurson
article by Mike McAllister

Many divers who have been certified for awhile are aware of the story of a father and son who died off the coast of New Jersey, while attempting to explore the interior of a WW II U-boat. For some new converts to the sport of Scuba Diving, and other more experienced aquanauts, as well as those who simply enjoy reading an amazing story expertly written, there is the book Shadow Divers.

The demise of Chris Rouse & his son Chris Jr. is what is most often mentioned by divers, when speaking of this story, but this unfortunate episode is not even the central theme of the book, there is much more to this incredible adventure than that.

Author Kurson weaves his tale with a remarkable fluidity, and descriptions that make it easy to visualize the scene being described. This non-fiction book that reads like a novel, is more the story of John Chatterton, Ritchie Kohler and the team of divers, as well as boat crews who worked to identify this wartime submarine, discovered in 1991, which according to official history records, was *not supposed to be there*.

Interviews with surviving U-boat crewmembers as well as historical records unearthed by Chatterton, give the reader some sense of the silent, invisible war under the sea, not to mention the modern-day intrigue and skull duggery that went on between the boat Captains and wreck hunters of the North Atlantic, over the secrecy and locations of the best sites.

So as you settle in for the winter, have this book on hand as you think about the warmer weather to come, or if packing for a warm salt water dive, toss this one in your suitcase, to peruse after a day of diving, and be prepared to realize that the days of adventure on the high seas are not quite over yet, and the best tales are very often the ones that are true.

The following is a link sent to me by Nora Mark for a video that our members might find interesting on diving in Fiji.

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/mcbHKAWik3I>
copy and paste the link into your web browser to open.

SUCI GOES TO THE THEATER



On January a large contingent of SUCI members attended the Scarborough Theater Guild's production of "The Affections Of May". The majority of the members also met for dinner at the Old Cottage Inn. The evening was enjoyed by all. Thanks to Heather Courneyea for organizing this event.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR SUCI MEMBERS

Outdoor Adventure Show Feb. 24th - 26th. We need your help to have **fun** at this show! Last year was invaluable regarding interest in our scuba club. The following are the times for our participation in the Scuba Demo Tank and times to help in the OUC Booth:
Friday, Feb. 24th: 6:30 - 8:30 pm for the tank
Saturday, Feb. 25th: 11:45 - 1:00 pm for the tank and **4:00 - 6:00 pm** for the OUC booth
Sunday, Feb. 26th: 12:30 - 1:45 pm for the tank and **2:00 - 5:00 pm** for the OUC booth

Ice Floe Race March 11, 2012

Skiing and Tubing Saturday, March 3rd after 4:30

Spring Discover Scuba March 17, 2012

Check the website for more information regarding these events.