



Founded 1974

# Naas Sub-Aqua Club News

December 2009

Issue 4

## Welcome to another year of diving

2010 will be NSAC's 36th year of diving. The club has seen a drop in the number of members over the past couple of years but I am glad to say that there remains a strong core of committed divers. A huge amount of what the club does annually is invest time into training members. During 2009, we concentrated our efforts on training a group of existing members up to Club Diver level and consequently did not take on any new trainees. It is very important that members put a lot of effort into attaining this Club diver status in their first or second year of diving in order that the Club's instructors, who are limited in number, can spend time with new members. Without this constant flow of new blood into the Club, it can not survive and grow. Rosemary Finn gave us a brilliant year of diving in 2009 and I'm sure all members will agree with that. Seldom was an opportunity for diving missed. Liam Whelan, our new Diving Officer for 2010 will continue this trend and if the weather holds out we are guaranteed great diving- just look at the dive schedule planned. Mouth watering!!

## Welcome New Members

On behalf of all existing NSAC members, I would like to welcome all of the new members who have started training with us on Thursday from 8.45 - 9 at the Curragh Camp pool. Take a look around at the motley crew who are training you – in a couple of years, that will be you! New members are the life-blood of the club. As you will learn, diving is a time-intensive sport, and sometimes established members get to go diving less often than they would wish. Work, marriage, children, commitments, even boyfriends / girlfriends / fiancées .... the list of reasons goes on. Therefore, the club needs new people to keep coming through. So if it seems that all of the Club's efforts are focussed on you guys, particularly in the early part of the season, this is definitely the case, so lap it up and make the most of it!!! You are the first new trainees since 2008, so we need you to shine! All of the established club members are there to help you become a qualified 'Club Diver', and go further, so enjoy the training, ask questions, seek advice, ask more questions and enjoy the diving.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2009 -2010

TONY LEESON



Chairman

LIAM WHELAN



Diving Officer

BARRY LAWLER



Training Officer

TOM CRUISE



Secretary

UNA CORRIGAN



Treasurer

PASCAL MICHEL



Equipment Officer

ANDREW MURRAY



P.R.O.

ROSEMARY FINN



Child Liason Off.

BERNARD KRUGER



Ass. Equip. Officer

PHIL BRADY



Ordinary Member

[www.kildare.ie/nsac](http://www.kildare.ie/nsac)

Google Group - <http://groups.google.com/group/naassac>

Check them Often!!!

## Trainees - Where to From Here?

Over the next few weeks, you should attend the pool every Thursday night, where you will be trained in snorkelling techniques, fitness and stamina, and basic SCUBA training. It is very important that you attend, as the aim is to get you into the sea as soon as possible. However, this will not happen until you have passed a **pool snorkel test** and **pool fitness test** to the satisfaction of the Training Officer, Barry Lawler. Barry has been TO a few times before, so he is actually quite good at it! The pool sessions will continue to the **17<sup>th</sup> December** (TBC). There will be a break for Christmas, and training will resume on **7th January**.

Diving is a great sport, but it can be dangerous if people don't understand the risks, and then don't know how to deal with a problem should one arise. Therefore, an essential part of your training will be the **diving theory lectures**. These will be held on four Sundays after Christmas. (See page 4). On a very serious note, it is **VITAL** that you attend all the lectures, as not only will they ensure your safety and understanding of diving, they may also ensure the safety of your diving 'buddies'. The people who give the lectures are instructors of the club, give up their Sunday afternoons for the purpose so please make a special effort to attend.

Once you have done the pool tests its time to get you into the sea for some real snorkelling. Depending on numbers, weather etc. we hope to have open water snorkels each Sunday from the beginning of January 2010. Preceding these of course will be the annual New Years Day snorkel at the Grand Canal at Digby Bridge, near Salans. This actually is fair craic. (One year we had to bring a pick and a dog to break the ice!-see below). Of course, for these snorkels you will need some basic equipment, and you can find some advice on the following page.



A dog realises his mistake during New Years Day snorkel a number of years ago.



With global warming, will we see pictures like this in 2010?



3 Mile rock this way!!

## TRAINEES— EQUIPMENT YOU NEED

For the pool training you will need a mask, snorkel, fins and booties. At this stage, most of you will have these, but if you don't - here are a few tips when going to spend your cash.

Go to a dive shop and ask them for a 'package deal', i.e. a discount if you buy all 4 items together, and preferably meet up with a few other trainees and gang up on the assistant to get a better deal. The same goes for when you go to buy SCUBA gear in the new year. Be aware however, that there is a lot of good second hand gear out there.

- Get a good fitting mask - try it on, and ask the assistant for help. A good fit is vital to keep water out when diving. If you suck in through your nose and it doesn't stick to your face - do not buy it as it will let water in.
- I would recommend not using pool fins. Rather, buy a pair of sea fins and booties at this stage. You are going to need them for your open water snorkels anyway, and very importantly, sea fins are hard to get used to. You are better off getting used to them and building up your stamina in the pool rather than getting cramp in the Irish sea!!! You can spend from €50 to €200+ on fins. Don't be afraid to ask other club members to try their fins in the pool. Different people like different types – try different pairs until you find ones which you like.
- For your open water snorkels (**starting Jan. 1st in the Canal at Digby Bridge, near Sallins**) you will need a diving wetsuit (Typically 7-8mm long john & jacket). Don't get a thin surfing-type wetsuit. The photos on the previous page should be evidence enough against that! Again, try the dive shops, or ask other members – there are always some second hand ones floating about at good prices, and not all of them 'christened' ("). Dive schools often have last year's suits for sale. Try 'Buy and Sell' or tinternet. You will also need a weight belt and a small amount of lead weight on it. A flask of soup and some apple Bakewell tarts for Barry Lawler would also be useful.  
(Tip: This is a small investment - will pay off later on in the season!)

I hope the above information is helpful to get you started. Do not be afraid to ask for help. You will find some contact names and numbers on the last page. Finally, you **MUST** have a medical check-up and a chest X-ray. See section on this below.

### Diving Medicals

NB Every Member must fill in Medical Assessment form CFT 409/a annually.

Every member must have an up to date medical:-

- Upon joining CFT
- When you reach 35
- Every 3 years till you reach 55
- Annually after age 55.

# UP-TO-THE-MINUTE INFORMATION!!

## SMS :

As you will already be aware, the Club sends out a couple of sms messages per week to remind members of diving, club activities, social events, and dates for your diary etc. This is mostly done by web text from the Club's mobile phone or direct from Liam's phone. This is your lifeline in terms of information, so it is important that you ensure that Liam has your correct mobile number.

## WEB :

The website ([www.kildare.ie/nsac](http://www.kildare.ie/nsac)) is updated very regularly. See the "[Dive Plan](#)" page which will keep all members informed of what Liam expects will be happening at the weekends. When possible it will be updated regularly during the week to keep up with changes in weather etc. The dive schedule is up there in great detail, as is information on accommodation at the various locations.

and **NEW!** – [Google Group: 'Naas Sub Aqua Club Ltd'](#)

**Sign up, sign up!!** Liam will also be regularly updating the "2010 Dive Schedule" on [Google Groups](#) with all snorkelling, diving, training, club events, regional courses & test dates etc., so keep an eye on it also. Please feel free to use the [Google Groups](#) to write comments or ideas as Liam would like to get some feedback.

Finally, you are also welcome to e-mail Liam with any questions you may have at: [nsac@eircom.net](mailto:nsac@eircom.net)

As you can see, all available technology is being used to keep us informed, but there is no substitute for plain old diving regularly - that's a sure fire way to keep up with what's happening next!

## DATES FOR THE CALENDER.... (All PROVISIONAL)

- St. Patrick's Day 17th March: **HOOK HEAD, WEXFORD (Shore diving - weather permitting).**
- Easter B/H Weekend 2nd - 5th April: **ANAVAN, CO. GALWAY (Trainee weekend).**
- May B/H W/end 30th April – 3rd May: **MULLAGHMORE, CO. SLIGO.**
- June B / H Weekend 4th-7th June: **INIS MEAIN, (ARAN ISLANDS), CO. GALWAY**
- 3rd - 10th July: **CLUB SUMMER HOLIDAY - VALENTIA ISLAND, CO. KERRY**
- August B/H W/end 30th Jul.-2nd Aug: **INIS BOFIN, CO. GALWAY**
- 20th - 22nd August: **Wreck Weekend- U260 & Kowloon Bridge, Castletownshend, Co. Cork**
- 4th - 14th September: **Club Foreign Holiday, Marsalforn, Malta**
- October B/H W/end 22nd - 24th Oct.: **TBC**

### Trainees- Dates Not to be Missed!

**DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE SO KEEP IN CONTACT WITH LIAM & BARRY AND CHECK THE WEBSITE REGULARLY**

10th December	19:45 - 21:00	Pool Fitness Test 1, Curragh Pool
18th December	19.30 - Late	Christmas party, Toughers, Naas.
1 <sup>st</sup> January	11.00	Snorkel in Digby Bridge, Sallins
3 <sup>rd</sup> January	11.00	Snorkel in Sandycove, Dublin (Weather Permitting)
17 <sup>th</sup> January	14:00 sharp	<u>Theory Lectures</u> , Lawlers Hotel, Naas
28 <sup>th</sup> January	19:45 - 21:00	Pool Fitness Test 2, Curragh Pool
31st January	14:00 sharp	<u>Theory Lectures</u> , Lawlers Hotel, Naas
14th February	14:00 sharp	<u>Theory Lectures</u> , Lawlers Hotel, Naas
25th February	19:45 - 21:00	Pool Fitness Test 3, Curragh Pool
28th February	14:00 sharp	<u>Theory Lectures</u> , Lawlers Hotel, Naas

## A Short Message from the Diving Officer.....

Dear Member,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for appointing me as Diving Officer of Naas Sub-Aqua Club for the coming dive season. I hope you are happy with my choice of 2009/10 dive destinations as I have given a lot of thought into those locations. Obviously weather will play a big part in what kind of diving we get on the various weekends. I have tried to choose suitable locations for early season that will give some shelter. The more adventurous locations are later in the season when there is a better chance of getting fair weather.

Diving islands comes with the usual logistics problems that we will have to overcome and it will take "Teamwork". Getting all the equipment to and from, setting it up and looking after it will be every ones responsibility. Inis Meain, The Skelligs and Inis Bofin can also provide some of the best diving available off the Irish coast with world class dive sites so the rewards are great.

I can assure you that I will endeavour to get diving whenever possible provided safety is not compromised.

Over the past few years we have really improved the club's equipment and we now have excellent equipment to bring with us diving. With so much equipment to maintain it is important that everyone helps out and I expect everyone to be generous with their time and help prepare/repair equipment for diving. Pascal and Bernard, our equipment officers will be working hard to keep everything running smoothly but they can't be expected to do it all themselves. **All** members going away for club weekends are expected over in club house the previous Wednesday evening to help prepare/load equipment. Club house/equipment/cylinder filling night is every Wednesday nights, 8 – 9pm over in Tougher's. When we start diving evening's mid-week in Dublin during the summer months we will fill cylinders two nights per week. I would hope to start midweek diving as early as possible in the season by using dry cox'n/one stick dives.

I will be working very hard to get us the best diving possible throughout the year and will be asking you to do various jobs while on diving trips to assist me. I would expect all club members to do their bit as you will only get out what you put in. If you are not contributing to the work load you are a burden on the club, someone is doing your share. We all benefit from the club system so let us all pull our weight and work together.

We have been successful in our efforts to recruit new members and we will be very busy training them this coming season. We all know the importance of these new members to the future of the club. I hope all instructors will give plenty of their time to training and diving to get the new members up to a good diving standard early in the season. There is no point having that badge in your logbook unless you are going to use it. (,") [Note from the PRO – I had the power to delete this sentence but chose not to!].

Snorkels will commence on January 1<sup>st</sup> with the annual Digby Bridge snorkel in the Grand Canal with lunch/drinks after in the Bridgewater Inn, Sallins. This will be followed by Sunday snorkels in Sandycove, Dublin, weather permitting. New members require 5 x 30min snorkels before diving with all other club members requiring 3 x 30 minute snorkels (**No exceptions or excuses**).

All members other than new trainees should have a compass and Red SMB/Reel as they will be leading dives. If you are D\*\*, you are qualified to lead dives to 30mt with another D\*\* or above and trainees to 25mt. There is a full list of dive qualifications and depth limits on the notice board in the

## A Short Message from the Diving Officer (cont.)...

club house. I will appoint the dive leader for each buddy group at the "Dive brief" and under no circumstances should the leader be changed unless changes are agreed by me, directly after the brief.

Last year we decided at the AGM not to take on any new members and concentrate on getting what trainees we had qualified to D\*\* level and lessen the burden on the available instructors we have. We now have to move on and concentrate on the new trainees that have joined the club this year and they must be our priority. The 7 x D\*\*s that have been in the club are now expected to attain enough dives and experience before June/July 2010 to sit and pass their D\*\* test. From July we would hope to get some extended range dives and there may not be enough dive leaders left to go around. New 2009/10 members will get preference when this occurs. All the new members are also encouraged to get as many dives and experience as possible so that they may be tested for their Club Diver by the end of this dive season. This is very achievable and just takes a little dedication, getting all the snorkels done early and diving regularly, building confidence and gaining experience. There will be plenty of opportunity to dive but don't get left behind, take every opportunity available to snorkel and dive early in the season. Don't leave it until next week as the weather can easily scupper those plans!

It was agreed at the Naas SAC committee meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> of November 2009 that all members intending to dive on the summer holiday in Valentia Island from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2010 will need to have completed at least 15 x dives (*Dived up to 25mt*) in the 2010 calendar year prior to 3<sup>rd</sup> of July. It is unfair to limit instructors and dive leaders by having members that are not dived up to 25m+ on this week's holiday. Most of the diving on the Valentia Island holiday will be in the 25 – 40m depth range. With such great dive sites as the Skelligs on the menu, no one going on the dive holiday wants to be restricted to shallow dives.

Depths & times will be strictly adhered to. Under no circumstances do I want to see anyone exceeding their qualification depth unless in an emergency situation. The same applies to the dive time. (*30 minutes is 30 minutes on the surface*) It is unfair on everyone else on the boat, especially the cox'n if you deliberately exceed your dive time. Don't worry, I have a solution for every crime, actions speak louder than words! I am not going to get into arguments; I will just take action to prevent similar incidents happening in the future which could impact on the quality of the diving. Later in the season when the water is warmer I may increase dive times to 35 or 40 minutes.

Drysuits must be closed when on boats or close to the water's edge. We all know the dangers of falling into the water with drysuit zips open and it is a very bad example to trainees. Lifejackets must be worn on boats at all times and is a requirement by law for which the cox'n is responsible. Let's stick to the rules!

Punctuality is very important when organising diving as "*Time and Tide wait for no man!*" I will be organising dives where it is important to dive at an exact time to get slack tides. An unforeseen delay could result in everyone diving in unsuitable conditions. [\[Another note from the PRO- what this really means is that Liam might end up not diving slack- and wo-betide anyone who causes that!\]](#) Waiting for someone that is late will not be tolerated; they can wait for the second dive. Please ensure you are at the dive site in plenty of time to properly prepare and check you equipment prior to diving. Rushing can be the cause of something being overlooked which can result in an accident later.

The first Pool fitness test took place in the Curragh pool on Thursday the 10th of December from 7.45 – 9pm. Next fitness test will be Thursday the 28th of January 2010 and the final pool test will be

## A Short Message from the Diving Officer (cont.)...

on Thursday the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2010. These three dates should provide sufficient opportunities for all members to successfully complete the test. This CFT mandatory fitness test must be passed by all members before they are insured and can participate in any diving activity. It consists of 8 x lengths of the pool wearing fins, one length underwater (*without surfacing*) followed by a two length tow. The full exercise must be performed to the satisfaction of the Diving Officer. This is very achievable if you attend all the pool training sessions – you won't get fit at home watching TV! (,) An unfit diver is a liability to themselves and everyone they dive with. Pool time is very precious so I cannot emphasise enough the importance of getting there on time, getting changed and poolside for 8pm sharp and getting off the premises by 9pm. If you are not poolside for 8pm sharp, you are late and have missed the pool brief and possibly some of the training. We must be off the premises at 9pm sharp so no time for chatting etc.

No in date dive medical (*signed by your GP in your logbook*) = No insurance = **No Diving!**

Club fees are now due as I need to activate your insurance with CFT online before end of December. No fees = No Insurance = **No Club Activities!** (*Pool training, snorkels, diving, courses, tests etc.*) Please do not turn up for any of these club activities after 31<sup>st</sup> of December if you are not paid club fees as you will not be insured.

I will use the "[Dive Plan](#)" page on the club website to keep all members informed of what I expect will be happening at the weekends. When possible this webpage will be updated regularly during the week to keep up with changes in weather etc. I will also be regularly updating the "*2010 Dive Schedule*" on [Google Groups](#) with all snorkelling, diving, training, club events, regional courses & test dates etc. so keep an eye on it also. You are also welcome to e-mail me with any questions you may have at: [nsac@eircom.net](mailto:nsac@eircom.net). Please feel free to use the [Google Groups](#) to write comments or ideas, I would like to get some feedback.

You will also be informed about all diving activities by group phone text from the internet. Please send all replies to my phone 087 2726699 and not the club phone from which the text will come. I probably won't get your text if you send to the club phone. This dive information will be sent out as soon as I can evaluate diving possibilities due to weather etc. It is important that you reply to club text promptly if you are diving so that I can organise the required equipment onsite. There will be times that when the boat is full I will not be taking any further entries. If you have booked in please let me know immediately if you are unable to make the dive or going to be late.

I would like to try integrating all the members, especially the new members on weekends away. I hope to achieve this by staying in the same accommodation, booking houses close together. This will also give us better bargaining power and hopefully get cheaper accommodation for all. I have setup simple online forms on the "[Weekend Accommodation](#)" page on the [Naas Sub-Aqua Club website](#). (*Form link can be found on right hand column*). It is otherwise difficult for new members to book accommodation as they would not know exactly where we dive out off etc. I will soon be putting up cut off dates as I have provisionally booked houses and need to let owners know numbers. If you wish to avail of this accommodation, please fill in form & submit ASAP. I will soon be putting up other weekends + weeks holiday accommodation for Valentia Island and Gozo so check webpage regularly.

Meeting in Lumville House after pool training on Thursday evenings is also a very important part of the social aspect of the club. I would like to see more members dropping in for 30 minutes after the

## A Short Message from the Diving Officer (cont.)...

pool for a chat to welcome the new members. We all know how daunting it can be joining a new club with all the strange faces – some stranger than others! (,")

Apologises for being so long winded but I would like to get everything straight from the start so that there are no misunderstandings later. I don't enjoy typing this much either! (,")

I am responsible for the safety of everyone while out diving and therefore want CFT rules and regulations followed at all times. I would like to be informed of all incidents so they can be reported to CFT as required by our insurance policy.

I am looking forward to working with all club members over the coming year so we can all enjoy great safe diving and plenty of craic. I took this job on with the knowledge that I have some great people behind me and will appreciate all their help to make this a great years diving.

Kind regards,

Liam Whelan, Diving Officer. 087 2726699

PS If you don't know me yet, I'm the sweet cuddly one with the cute laugh and the beard.

## Some photos from 2009



Club sponsored snorkel / BBQ 2009



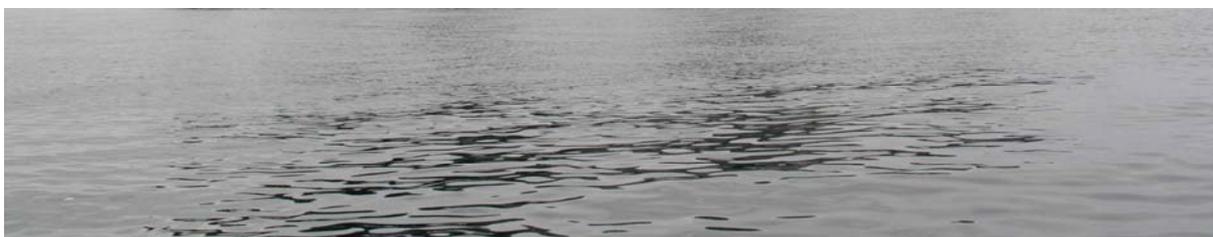
Wonder what the weather will be like tomorrow.....?



.....its good, a perfect day for diving.



New Rescue Divers - August 2009  
Well Done!!



What we're looking for all through 2010.

# Inish Meain - June Bank Holiday Weekend 2009

“Clear blue skies, sunshine, temperatures of 27 °C and a flat calm sea with great visibility”. You could be forgiven for thinking I was talking about some far away foreign shore but not so! It was the June Bank Holiday weekend on Inish Meain, Aran Islands, nine mile south of Rossaveel.



The weekend got off to a shaky start with force 5 winds blowing for the crossing, late on the Friday evening. We arrived safely at the north pier, Inish Meain just before or just after dark.

The winds subsided very quickly overnight and we were able to work out of the east pier which was within a two hundred meters of where we were staying with Martin Faherty, Cois Cuain. The compressor was sited on the pier close to the steps so it made everything very easy. Most of the diving equipment stayed onboard for the entire weekend with cylinders only removed to be filled.

On Saturday the winds had eased but there was still a bit of a swell so not all the sites were available to us but we got good diving off the west side of Inish Meain. After lunch back on Inish Meain we had a second dive close to the three wind turbines on the south of the island.



By Sunday the sea was flat calm & we headed to the north of Inish More to a dive site called the Canyon which as the name suggests is like an underwater canyon that bottoms out at 33 meters.

Everyone was sad to be leaving such a lovely island & beautiful weather behind and all would have loved to stay for a few days longer.

I hope we get the chance to return sometime soon to explore all the remaining dive sites we had not the time to dive as I feel this was only a small sample of the excellent diving the Aran Islands have to offer.

Liam Whelan

**Update!!!- Book your place soon for the return trip, 4th to 7th June 2010!**



## Valentia Island - Club Holiday July 2010

A fantastic week was had in July when a boat load of us went to Valentia, a place where we have previously spent a few weekends. The weather was fantastic, breaking only on the last day...and it has rained continually since then, save for about 10 days in September! Moral of the story- go diving if you can today - tomorrow may be bowing 40 knots! The diving is great all around Valentia, although it can be challenging as we have found out over the years. So for those of you wishing to travel next year, please heed the DO's warning and get dived up for it.



**This must be the cleanest place to have the Club picnic—look at the sign!**



**The mighty Skelligs - a World Heritage site, a world renowned dive site and a hard place to get to given Irish weather. Will Andrew Murray ever get there again..?**



**Satisfied divers. The weather must have been kind.**



**The underwater profile is a mirror image of the cliff face- cracking diving.**

## Naas Sub Aqua Club / Kildare Search and Recovery

More about this in future issues, but it is fair to say that 2009 was a good year for this important aspect of the club's activities. Firstly, we did not have to search for real for bodies. Secondly, we carried out three training sessions in the Canal. Thirdly, we added three more to the ranks. Barry Lawler, Andrew Murray & Pascal Michel completed the course which brings to ten the total number of Naas SAC members now qualified in Search & Recovery. The other seven members of Naas SAC completed the S&R course in April 2007. Finally, we agreed at the AGM to purchase dedicated equipment to enable us to be more effective. More anon.



## Gozo, Malta - The Return! September 2009

There is a full report on this great trip on the website. To summarise, Gozo didn't disappoint! Very good diving, some of it quite deep and challenging so be warned if you're hoping to travel in 2010. You need to be well dived up.



Gozo - September 15th - 22nd 2009

**The small crew - Gozo 2009**



**The Arch at the Blue Hole. The scenery here is as good below water as above**



**Luxury travel in Gozo**



**Yer man's a bit of an arse!**



**Octopus on night dive**



**The General at the rear end of the sunken ship!**

## Future Issues

I hope to prepare a newsletter every two months or so. If you have anything you wish to add, even if its libellous, or especially if its libellous please send to [amurraya@gmail.com](mailto:amurraya@gmail.com)