



**Swanage
June 1998**

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Trip Report by Mike McCarthy

Divers:

- Peter Huxley
 - Kathy Gubbins
 - Mike McCarthy
 - Tom Riley
 - Ed Coney
 - Susie Pirie
 - Aaron Mazeika
 - Richard Van der Hoff
 - Shewy
 - Darryl
 - Charlie
 - And quite possible some others...its a long time ago , Sorry!
-

The Diving

By diving you could see that the pier, which looked impressively strong from the surface, was in fact held together about one critical beam which was relying on an ageing hermit crab for its strength.

I therefore decided to concentrate my dives about the nearby old pier. Which had coincidentally fallen down some years back.

Kathy 'Queen of Crabs' Gubbins lived up to her nick-name and seemed to find hundreds of them under the rocks, beer cans, structural beams and unexploded ordnance which littered the sea bed.

Visibility was fairly good and the odd nudibranch slithered past.

The trainees trained and the sports divers, well, dived. Oddly.

We had a brief game of football on the end of the pier, which was scrapped after the first goal because the ten-minute swim to recover the ball wasn't really worth repeating.

The Night Life

After spending 20 quid on batteries to fill the voids inside our torches. we were ready to see the famed nightlife of Swanage.

Which consisted of a lot of crabs.

I'd never before thought that a creature such as a crab could convey so much in its facial expression. Yet, the two that Pete spotted shagging with his 15kW torch somehow managed to look more pissed off than Kathy did after I drunkenly poured a glass of white wine over her head.

Hitting the Town

Sitting in a nice warm pub having drunk too much beer and humiliated the locals at pool (psychologically anyway), I suggested we should go swimming off the nearby beach. Realising noone would be so stupid as to take me up on this, and that for safety reasons I couldn't do it alone, this seemed a fairly easy way of impressing everyone with my love of freezing water and enhancing my macho(?) image.

And so it was that half an hour later I found myself, clad only in my pants, wading into the arctic waters cursing Richard, Ed and Kathy who each seemed intent on catching a dose of hypothermia and were happily swimming around, though equally scantily clad to the amusement of some locals who were watching.

My second Big Mistake that night was to lend Shewy my camera.

Sadly none of the photos can be shown here. And if Kathy, Ed and Richard stump up five hundred quid each I will keep it that way. [Webmaster's note - What Mike fails to realise is that there were other cameras around! Negotiations are in progress!!!]

The Nice Beach

I can't remember what it was called, but it was nice.

The only down side was that it was at the bottom of a 100m cliff, which made for a fun trip back at the end of the day each of us carrying mask, fins, snorkel, weightbelt, bucket and spade and looking very stupid.

Much silliness ensued at the beach. But I can't quite recall what exactly. Except that Kathy accused us (falsely) of hiding her knickers.

Quite how we could do this without her noticing has not yet been explained...

The Trip Home

This was not particularly exciting but I found it amusing to watch Aaron's antique 2CV struggle with the load. He insisted if we put more than one cylinder in it he would break down, though he did find room for Susie...

To this day I wonder when he noticed the six weightbelts I hid under the seat.