



**"Jubilee" Trearddur Bay  
Anglesey  
31st May - 4th June 2002**

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**Organised by Tom Riley and Ed Pain**

**Starring:**

- James "Slasher" Donnelly
- Colin "Lobster" McNab
- Ed "I'm a bit tied up at the moment" Pain
- Zine "Strong Arm" Parker
- Tom "Micro Sausage" Riley
- Richard "Nut" Van der Hoff
  
- Aubrey Diggle, *Cobra* and *Arctic Wolf*
- Secret Saboteurs "The weightbelts!"

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**Friday 31st May**

I left work at 4 o'clock and drove, seriously overloaded with camping and diving gear, to Anglesey. Following my own directions I didn't expect to get lost, until I discovered that they'd changed the island and there was lovely new dual carriageway all the way to Holyhead - which unfortunately wasn't where I wanted to go! However I backtracked to the campsite, had dinner and put the tent up, or at least we put the tent up, after the people in the next tent had taken pity and decided to help. Rich and James turned up late in the night, got lost, and eventually found the tent, Colin and Zine turned up a little later having reluctantly decided that they wouldn't be able to stay in the tent next door!

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**Saturday 1st June (HW Holyhead 14:30, LW Holyhead 8:51)**

A quick run for cornflakes, bread and Milk was followed by a classic CUUEG phaff with weightbelts in St. Ives and cylinders that didn't fit. Colin elected not to do the first dive so the four of us headed out on *Cobra*, Aubrey's RIB to dive.

**Rhoscolyn Beacon (14.2m, 41mins, Time in 11:55)**

This is a medium sized rock topped off with a shelter for ship wrecked mariners, unless you're a bored Spitfire pilot in which case it's topped off with a target. There's quite a tide around this rock and although it was neaps we still had to hide from the tide. After discovering that there was no space in the Marshall file Richard and I decided to go diving and rolled into the water.

We dropped the short way to the bottom and were rewarded with a plethora of life. Four velvet crabs looked back at us from pretty much where we landed and we found lots more of them during the dive. The shallower part of the rock was covered with kelp, dahlia, snake-lock and # anemones and we spotted a dogfish making its escape through the kelp. As we felt that 6m was a bit of puny max. depth for a first dive we dropped down a bit deeper to 14m and met Zine and James, who'd found a lobster earlier on. There wasn't as much life down here and the sandy bottom didn't seem to offer much more so we began to make our way back up, finding a couple of sleepy dogfish on the way. I launched my DSMB up to the surface (suspiciously slowly) from about 10m or so before moving up to do a safety stop, Rich and I then made our way up to the surface - only to meet the DSMB on it's way down at about 3m....oops!

After a somewhat frantic shifting of cylinders round to Anglesey Diving Services to get them filled for the afternoon's dive we had lunch in the Sea shanty cafe, which usually comprised of an extremely tasty sandwich and conversations about the colours of Chinese and the rather appropriate coronation chicken.

**Missouri - Trearddur Bay (14.0m, 38mins, Time in 15:57)**

We had originally intended to dive the *Hermine*, but due to a problem with the boats we ended up diving the *Missouri*, this was fine by me as I'd once tried to shore dive it with Daryl but ended up seeing a lot of sand instead!

This steamship was, unusually facing away from the cliff, presumably she had been carried onto the shore whilst attempting to turn away and luckily for us she was buoyed too. Just in case you were loosing faith in CUUEG's ability to phaff, Rich's fin-strap snapped whilst we were kiting up and so he missed the dive. Colin and I dropped down onto the wreck in about 12 metres and found a spider crab waiting to greet us.

Colin picked the crab up and put it on his head, slightly surprised it ran off down his back. This was quite a broken wreck but there were still recognisable bits lying around, with a fair bit of life growing on it. We saw lots of Ballan and Corkwing Wrasse and a fairly large Pollack or Saithe. Going against the tide we followed the funnel up to its end and then drifted back along it. We found a decent sized Sunstar and what appeared to be a decent sized Lobster. Now normally I'm content just to look at these however Colin stuck his hand in and after a brief flurry the lobster came out, only against his hand it was only about nine inches long! Other notable things were the bollards and what appeared to be some still attached wooden decking. After this we came up on a DSMB, did our safety stops and surfaced, I then sacrificed a weight to the great god of dive kit by passing my weight-belt up the wrong way, and probably shell shocked (sorry!) a poor lobster in the process. Luckily the local dive shop was able to sell me some when we went to get the tanks filled.

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## **Sunday 2nd of June (HW Holyhead 15:24, LW Holyhead 9:40)**

### ***Primrose Hill (14.9m, 47mins, Time in 9:48)***

This ship had been carrying a cargo of bricks when she ran into the cliffs and sank. The lookout on the mast stepping ashore without getting his feet wet! Ed and I dropped down and we saw a medium sized edible Crab, velvet crabs a pollack, some ballan wrasse, smaller sunstars and lots of brittle stars which waved their legs around when they thought we weren't looking. Several sponges (Elephant's ear sponge and the yellow cliona amongst them) also broke up the seabed and yet another Sunstar put in an appearance. The wreck itself was broken up but there were still some recognisable bits of ship lying around. James managed to find the cargo of bricks, which brought back happy(?) memories of Gildenburgh, so any CUUEG diver should be quite at home on this wreck. In terms of scavenging the only thing I found was a diver's karabiner, unfortunately whatever expensive bit of dive kit it had been clipped on to wasn't there. Eventually we ran out of dive time and surfaced after a brief safety stop. The weather was rather more spectacular than your average dive with some flashes of lightening, but we were underwater when it rained!

Lunch involved a quick trip round to the dive shop (who was now holding one of our credit cards hostage:-)) and then another trip to the Sea Shanty for lunch. Aubrey had just acquired another RIB (which was why we'd been able to get boat space at such short notice) and for the afternoon we were out on the ex-military Arctic Wolf, complete with Helicopter lifting points. It's an extremely seaworthy RIB with rather large tubes which are comfortable but give it a lot of windage so swimming back and passing your kit up can be a bit of an effort. Our first dive was to the north of Trearddur Bay.

### ***Norman Court (6.5m, 47mins, Time in 13:47)***

You get lots of famous wrecks, famous for being good dives, and you get lots of famous ships who's wreck you can dive. But every so often you get to dive the wreck of a ship, which in life was something rather special and is also great fun to dive. This is one of them.

This wreck was of one of the famous sailing clipper ships, a rival of the Cutty Sark in London. The clippers raced each other over thousands of miles from India (Tea), the Far East (Spice, Silk etc.) and Australia, to get their cargoes to Europe first and get the best price for them.

Aubrey dropped us into six metres of water directly onto the wreck. Looking around we were treated to about nine metres of viz. and the ribs of the old ship. A lot of the original planking and brass bolts were still visible and the wreck is absolutely crawling with life - literally Ed saw so many Spiny spider crabs that he got bored with them and stopped pointing them out! Velvet and Edible crabs also put in an appearance and large areas of the wreck were carpeted with tiny mussels. Some Ballan wrasse and Pollack put in an appearance plus starfish anemones, deadmens fingers, yellow cliona sponges and elephant's ear sponges. We ended up off the wreck and swam around for a bit before surfacing on a DSMB and swimming back to the boat (which took some effort as it was being pushed away from us by the wind) but overall this was and certainly one of my most memorable dive's of the year.

The wreck is being archeologically surveyed and has a sign on it asking you not to disturb it and to have a look at their [website](#) that really brings the ship to life and is definitely worth a look.

This time it was Colin's weight-belt that decided to make life difficult by making a bid for freedom as we were getting back onto the boat however Zine managed to grab it. I managed to leave my glasses in the boat, causing unbelievable amounts of phaff and ending up with my car spending the night on the seafront. James, who gets full marks for creative use of Tupperware, cooked a nice dinner for us back at the tent.

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## **Monday 3rd June 2002 (HW Holyhead 16:31, LW Holyhead 10:39)**

### ***Mein Piscar, The Habso (15.3m, 31mins, Time in 10:05)***

Some twenty year's ago ("when diving men were men and diving women were men too" - Andy Blackford, Diver) my dad selected this dive for his First Class exam. This meant locating it in advance using transects and dropping a bouy on it in advance that would float below the surface enabling it to be located at high water. In the end they decided it was too rough, proving Mr. Blackford wrong and went to dive somewhere else so all the preparation was wasted. CUUEG, aided by Aubrey's experience, GPS and small clue given by waves breaking over it at low water had a considerably easier time locating the site and weren't to be put off by a few waves, although the skipper did decide to re-start his engines and motor away from the rocks for a bit as Rich (who was doing a DL assessment) went through his briefing!

Rich and I didn't see much of the wreck but apparently it was rather good with a nice conger and boilers. We contented ourselves with a gulley and found a lobster hiding in one of the holes in the plates scattered around on the bottom. To make life a little interesting I chucked my mask on the deck, Rich "rescued" it very quickly and we carried on with the dive. Making our way up the side of the gulley we found a rather strong current and dived back into the gulley to escape it. We surfaced on a DSMB and were picked up it's a nice dive and I'd like to do it again sometime:-).

### **Porth Rhuffydd (10.0m, 39mins, Time in 13:38)**

This was a nice dive along a shallow reef, which had quite a few boats on it and there was a slight current to push us along it. Ed decided to make this dive slightly more interesting by getting caught in fishing line, James quickly drew his knife, meanwhile Ed's feet began to float up and he had to wave his arms around a bit to get them down again. What followed is best left to the imagination, we will draw a veil over the scene with Ed stuck on the bottom, fin tied to his first stage, whilst James approaches waving his knife and with an unholy glint in his eye.

Completely oblivious to this Rich and I spotted a couple of blennies and a small lobster, as well as a some urchins and what might have been a squat lobster but it was even better than they usually are at hiding in its hole so I couldn't be sure. Our bubbles attracted the a few wrasse who came to see what was going on and probably to see if they could get some food out of us! There was quite a lot of life on the bottom with elephants ear sponges, cliona, lots of kelp and membrinipera, eventually we sent up a DSMB and jumped back into the boat.

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### **Tuesday 4th June 2002 (HW Holyhead 17:38, LW Holyhead 11:44)**

The weather was a bit windier today and coming from the SW which meant that Trearddur Bay and the West Coast of Anglesey was blown out. This meant we had to hop across to Holyhead harbour and launch from the slip there. We'd asked for something a little more adventurous and were rewarded with a nice 20m wreck.

#### ***The Lady Meath, Holyhead (20.1m, 46mins, Time in 10:13)***

For me the best dive of the trip, this was another wreck that had a good story behind it. During the second world war U-boats released their mines outside Holyhead and then let the tide drift them into the harbour. The Lady Meath hit one of these, with predictable results and began to sink. A boat was sent out from Holyhead to rescue the crew but was dragged down when the Lady Meath suddenly went down, interestingly one of the crew on the rescue boat was the grandfather of the current Holyhead RNLI's Honorary Secretary.

Diving close to the safe limit for diving this was a slightly bouncy trip out on the Arctic Wolf, which appeared to have had its teeth (or at least an "I") drawn by the elements! Was followed by deploying the shot and rolling into the water. James and I followed the shot into viz that CUUEGs extensive gildenburgh training had well prepared us for! After switching on our torches we fined away from the shot and the Viz improved to about 3m. She is substantially more intact than the other shallower wrecks we'd done and the bridge, with a small bit of net nearby, was easily recognisable. The bow was also very nice with a huge anchor and loads of chain, actually in the low viz we nearly ended up swimming under a part of the wreckage, but James spotted it and we made a detour to avoid it. Although a bit deeper there was still quite a lot of life on the wreck, which had dahlia anemones, pollack, ballan wrasse, a lobster, edible and velvet crabs, plus some lightbulb tunicates. With our bottom time and air turn-points approaching we shot off our DSMB and made a very nice slow ascent up to the surface sorting out a reel phaff on the way. Once on the surface we made an "interesting" re-entry onto Arctic Wolf and helped to manhandle a non-CUUEG diver back into the boat.

#### **North Side of Holy Island, Near a Cave (11.7m, 34mins, Time in 13:56)**

The wind direction limited our options for the second dive so we tucked in close to the cliff on the north side of Holy Island and dropped in for a shallow scenic dive. This was the last dive of the trip and my 200th dive! I celebrated this milestone by forgetting to put my weightbelt on and having to take my BCD off again, doh!

There was a small cave near to where we dropped in, James and I didn't bother to investigate this but apparently the water in it was only about 10cm deep anyway!

Given the spectacular amount of silt that gets stirred up from this coast when the fast ferry to Dublin goes out this dive was really nice with plenty of life, lightbulb tunicates a couple of moderately sized edible crabs, wrasse, assorted spnges, a starfish and no less than three dogfish. One of the dogfish was headfirst into a hole with only its tail sticking out, we were sorely tempted to grab it and see what happened. However it obviously realised we were there and disappeared into the rock, presumably it knew another way out...

After about twenty minutes we turned round and swimming with the current made our way back to the boat passing many things we'd seen but not really expecting to find the anchorline again on the fairly featureless bottom. We shot the DSMB up and did our safety stop, even though it was only a couple of metres off the bottom! Whilst we were hanging around James saw Colin's yellow shoulders moving diagonally upwards at the limit of visibilitiy - obviously up the anchorline! We surfaced all managed to surface within about 20m of the boat, which prompted Aubrey to complement us on our navigation. After jumping into the boat we sped back to Holyhead.

We had a brief negotiation with the sailing club who asked us to donate some money to the RNLI, which we were going to do anyway, to pay for the water we'd used washing our kit down. Then all that remained was to get the tents down and dispatch everyone back to Cambridge (or wherever else they were going!)

Thanks to everyone for making it a nice trip.

