

Attendees (7): John Ratcliffe (Chair), Dennis Cartwright (Treasurer), Brennan Massey (Secretary), Beverly Sawchuck, Barry Edgington, Luc Lafontaine, Chris Harnett.

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 19:01. This was an in-person meeting held in our normal spot in the basement of the Clocktower Brew Pub (Glebe location).

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 8 June 2022

A motion to approve the minutes of 8 June 2022 was raised by Luc and seconded by Barry – motion carried.

3. News and Recent Events

- Neptune and Salacia Diving held a “Dive Against Debris” cleanup dive on the weekend of June 18-19, in the drydock next to the Marine Museum in Kingston. Dennis suggests that SOS chapters should consider arranging similar events.
- Scuba Finatics held a Canada Day Dive and BBQ at Lock 21 on July 1, where they raised \$160 for SOS – thank you Scuba Finatics!
- Seaway Valley Divers held their annual Pig Roast fundraiser at the Milles Roches Power House on July 16. The Seaway Valley club has been deploying most of our moorings for the last few years, so it’s good to get out and support them.
- SOS AGM – at our last meeting Luc had asked if there was any news about the SOS provincial AGM. John followed up with SOS President Durrell Martin, who indicated that the AGM has been pushed back to September, given the uncertainty with Covid in the spring.
- Luc asked if there was anything coming out of the Ontario Archaeological Society (OAS); John indicated that the Ottawa chapters of both the OAS and the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) continue to organize lectures. He has not forwarded anything to members recently, but will do so if there are any lectures or events related to maritime archaeology. Luc asked if the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI) had participated in Doors Open Ottawa this spring; John thought Doors Open has yet to resume. Luc and Dennis say that CCI and Parks Canada have interesting artifacts and collections from underwater sites, and are worth visiting if possible.



4. Treasurer’s Report

Dennis gave a brief update on our finances:

- Since our last meeting, we spent \$268.04 to reimburse Chris Holloway for printing costs for his map of the Prescott Scuba Park. Our current bank balance is \$6,119.00.

- Dennis asks John to follow up with John Mondoux, as he hasn't cashed the \$40.00 cheque we sent him to cover his fuel and boat launch costs when deploying some of our moorings this spring.
- At our last meeting Luc had asked about saving receipts for food and drink to submit to the Clocktower manager. In past years we used to do this, and received a small donation from them in exchange. John has followed up with manager Bill Lewin, who says he doesn't recall any arrangement like this.

Date	Code	Description	Debit	Credit	Balance	Notes
2021 01 01		Balance from previous year			\$ 6,743.14	
2021 04 15	CK #56	Prescott Platforms	\$ 987.41		\$ 5,755.73	
2021 06 21	IB	United Way Donation		\$ 100.00	\$ 5,855.73	BMO ATM 1450 Merivale
2021 06 21	IB	SOS Membership Dividend 2018 - 2020		\$ 267.00	\$ 6,142.73	BMO ATM 1450 Merivale
2021 09 13	MB BR. 0081	Donation Boxes - Various - B.Edingctn		\$ 113.91	\$ 6,256.34	Sharkey's, Diver's Warehouse, KDS, Deco Stoop
2022 05 02		SOS Chapter Dividend Payment for 2021		\$ 115.00	\$ 6,371.34	BMO deposit Ogilvy & Mtl Rd.
2022 06 08	CK #57	John Mondoux - mooring support	\$ 40.00		\$ 6,331.34	Mooring support - gas and launch fees
2022 06 08		Donation Box - Scuba Fanatics		\$ 55.40	\$ 6,387.04	Collected from Scuba Fanatics - 2022 06 07 - B. Edingctn
2022 06 23	CK #58	Christopher Holloway	\$ 268.04		\$ 6,119.00	Printing Brochures - Minute Press Ottawa

5. Donation Boxes

Barry provided an update on the donation boxes we maintain in local dive shops:

- Proper Diving in Almonte has received a donation box.
- Barry highlighted the commitment of Scuba Finatics to SOS, and noted how the support of a dive store owner can really influence the level of donations and interest in SOS. Scuba Finatics held the previous one-time donation record of \$55.40, which they have since surpassed by raising an impressive \$160 at their Canada Day Dive and BBQ Event on July 1, which Barry delivered to Dennis at the meeting. John noted that owner Tim Vezina had also put together an inexpensive Save-a-Dive kit, which divers can receive in exchange for a \$2 donation to the SOS box. SOS Ottawa would like to extend our sincere thanks to Tim and the entire Scuba Finatics crew for their continued support.
- The EPSO shop in Gatineau had requested a donation box. Chris Holloway picked up a box from Barry – need to confirm if this has been delivered. The owner, Dominique, is aware that our material is English-only at this point.
- At our previous meeting we had discussed the possibility of translating our Diver's Guides and other material into French, as many (if not the majority) of divers in eastern Ontario are francophone. Providing bilingual material will allow us to better serve the local dive community and get our message across. John mentioned that translation can be a challenge given the specific terms used in diving – the French text for the Beavers plaque on the Conestoga site required quite a bit of revision before it was ready. John has advised SOS President Durrell Martin that we would like to have our material translated; Durrell says he'll raise the issue at a future board meeting. Luc says we should submit a formal proposal or motion to SOS Corporate if we don't see any movement from them; Corporate should be responsible for translation. Given the amount of information on the pamphlets Barry suggests a complete separate French pamphlet

rather than a mixture on the same product. Chris Holloway has indicated that a francophone friend has translated the text for his map of the Prescott Scuba Park.

6. Membership

At a previous meeting Dennis had asked how many current members our chapter had; John guessed about 40. Dennis and John have since followed up with SOS Provincial Membership Coordinator Steve Hatch to give Dennis website permissions regarding chapter membership, and Dennis has undertaken the task of reviewing our membership data and sending reminders to those with recently expired memberships.

After reviewing the membership data, Dennis reported that our chapter has significantly fewer “current” members (SOS membership paid and current) than expected. Our chapter currently has 14 active memberships, with 20 having expired in the past two years during the pandemic, and nine expiring in the two years prior to the pandemic. Lapsed memberships are likely the result of several factors, including issues with the new SOS website, and problems with the automatic renewal reminders members are supposed to receive by email.

Dennis has drafted a personalized reminder email to send to those members whose memberships have expired in the last four years or so, outlining the current membership situation, explaining what our chapter has been doing and hopes to do in the future, and providing instructions on how to renew. It was agreed by members present that this was a nice touch, as a personalized email from the chapter rather than an automated message showed that the chapter is active, and also allows us to try and resolve some of the issues members have been having when trying to renew. Dennis reports that he has sent reminder emails to 31 individuals with lapsed memberships, and has already noticed some renewals as a result.

7. Buoy Update

John reports that our chapter has moored four sites this year with the help of our partners at EPSO and Seaway Valley Divers: *Rothesay*, *Eastcliffe Hall*, *Milles Roches Power House*, and the *Fred Mercur*.

John Mondoux has been storing and deploying many of our mooring buoys in the Cornwall area for the past few years, but has recently indicated that he is no longer able to continue, so we may need to look at other options to recover our buoys in the area this fall. John to follow up with Seaway Valley Divers and others as required.

Luc raised concerns that there is no mooring at the Hoople Creek Bridge, as this site falls within our chapter’s area of responsibility. He dove the site recently and said there is a thin line tied to the bridge, but no buoy. He would like to see the line replaced and the site properly buoyed. John said that the chapter does have line and buoys which could be used on the site, but we need boat access to reach the site. John has been acting as the chapter Buoy Coordinator for several years in addition to his duties as Chair, and noted that it has not been as easy to deploy and remove our buoys since Andy Bennis sold his boat and stepped away from the role. Luc reminded members that they can check the condition of the mooring as a quick part of every dive they do.

John reported that he has recently received some new stickers from Provincial Buoy Coordinator Raimund Krob, which we will add to our buoys next year. The new stickers include

a generic email address and phone number, and fulfill a Coast Guard requirement for private aids to navigation.

Brennan says that he and Dustin Proper intend to evaluate the lines and mooring at the Red Pine Bay Wreck in Arnprior. Their plan is to run new lines in the fall to make it accessible from shore again. Brennan noted that there is an SOS land plaque on site, but it is in rough shape and could use replacement.

8. Prescott Scuba Park

Scuba Park Map:

- At our last meeting members had reviewed Chris Holloway's map of the Prescott Scuba Park, agreed that it was ready for distribution (print and digital), and approved printing 500 colour copies. 500 colour hard copies have since been printed (cost of \$268.04), and delivered and mailed to all local dive stores where we have donation boxes, with the possible exception of Proper Diving in Almonte.
- John reports that he has shared PDF copies of the map on the SOS website and our chapter's Facebook page, and has also sent copies to SOS Corporate, the Town of Prescott, and Neil O'Hare from the 1000 Islands Chapter, who built the training platforms installed last year, and has generally taken an active role in improving the site.
- Dana Valentyne, the Economic Development Officer for the Town of Prescott, has expressed interest in improving the diver experience in the area generally, and would also like copies of the map for the Prescott Visitor's Centre. Members present suggest that the town could print their own copies, if they already have a PDF.
- Neil O'Hare has shared a map of the Scuba Park he had worked on last year, before the training platforms were installed. Members present thought Neil's map offered many details and could be a useful navigational aid; John would like to compare Neil's measurements and bearings with our map, for possible improvement.

Moving Forward - Working with the Town of Prescott:

- Neil O'Hare offered several suggestions to the town for improving the diver experience at the Scuba Park, including restrooms and benches similar to those at Centeen Park. Dana Valentyne has indicated they are looking into installing a public restroom on the grassy area near the commercial dock, but there is no precise timeline or details as to size or exact placement yet. Members in attendance agreed that a hard piped permanent facility would be cleaner and safer for use. Luc mentioned that a cruise line docks near the park, and that perhaps we could use that as leverage to encourage the installation of a permanent restroom facility.
- At our previous meeting Nancy had raised the idea of installing a plaque at the Scuba Park, which could include both a map of the park, as well as local historical information. Luc took on the job of investigating what plaques are already in the area, and has provided a written report. He determined that there are already quite a few detailed historical plaques along the waterfront, and proposes that a SOS plaque be limited to a

map of the Scuba Park, which he suggests should be located near the entrance ramp or existing Scuba Park signage.

- Brennan noted that while the new ladder at the end of the entrance ramp is a welcome addition to the park, it is mounted on a hinge without a stop. When a diver attempts to use the ladder, it moves further under the ramp making an acute angle that requires the diver to climb over the edge of the ramp rather than straight up off the ladder. Some divers stated that the ladder should be on a slight outward angle. The Forces Sub Aqua Club (FSAC) has donated some rope and tied the ladder on a slight outward angle, attached to the wall of the dock. Brennan proposes that in the future a pin or chain could be installed to hold the ladder in place when deployed.

9. “Beyond the Edge” with Barry Edgington

Once again Barry delighted the chapter with well preserved mementos from his enormous collection of vintage diving gear. At this meeting Barry presented a few early single hose regulators in great condition, including an early Poseidon regulator. He also brought along an early analog dive computer (seen at the bottom of the photo) capable of calculating tissue saturation, fittingly manufactured by the SOS company of Italy.



10. New Business and Next Meeting Date

Dennis was a founding member of SOS Ottawa who has recently rejoined the chapter. He notes that the chapter is less active in its archaeological and preservation efforts than it had been in past years, and suggests we look at new ways to remain relevant and involve members. Having seen various 3D models of wrecks online he proposes that we get involved somehow, perhaps by paying for charters or accommodation for those with the necessary skills to construct these models, or organizing training sessions. He also suggests that SOS organize more clean up dives.

John says that these photogrammetric models have largely replaced traditional hand-drawn site plans, and that the necessary images to construct the models can often be taken in as little as one or two dives, from what he understands. He noted, however, that this type of modelling typically requires significant knowledge, experience and financial resources (for cameras and computers), and that most individuals who are interested are already doing it on their free time. Examples of these models can be found online on sites such as <https://3dshipwrecks.org/>, which includes a model of one wreck in our chapter's area, the *Rothesay*.

Brennan mentioned that he has recently been involved in 3D modeling of wrecks and agreed that depending on the wreck there can be many different considerations involved. Brennan went on to say that one avenue to support modelling efforts would be to financially support those doing it by paying for the boat if required. Brennan concurred with John that most of the individuals doing the models are doing so on their free time with their own gear and are not exactly for hire, so individuals with the necessary equipment, knowledge and skill may not be available. Luc

mentioned that if SOS were to provide funds then the images would have to be labelled or credited to SOS. It was noted that there is a larger barrier to entry than the older techniques of hand measuring, and that the artistic skills required to produce hand-drawn site plans are becoming a harder to find. Brennan said that he would talk to individuals involved in 3D modelling and come back to the chapter with more information on how we may be able to support this work.

Brennan raised the idea that perhaps we could start to monitor the deterioration of wrecks as part of our archaeological and preservation efforts. Brennan recently dove on a wreck in Kingston and was almost hit in the head by a falling steel beam, and John mentioned that he heard that the Gaskin used to be considered a penetration dive, which is a far cry from its current state. Brennan suggested that the monitoring of wrecks could provide an additional service that keeps divers safer, while adding data that can be used in maritime history preservation.

Next meeting scheduled for September, same location and time. Meeting adjourned at 20:30.

Book Table

The following books were given away (kindly donated by chapter member Sandy Sutherland), as well as some SOS t-shirts:

- *Lost Beneath the Ice: The Story of HMS Investigator* (2013), by Andrew Cohen
- *Shipwrecks of the Baltic* (2007), by Björn Hagberg, Jonas Dahm and Carl Douglas
- *Ghost Ships* (1983), by Emily McCain
- *The Silent World* (1954), by J.Y. Cousteau
- *Deep-Sea Detectives: Maritime Mysteries and Forensic Science* (2004), by Peter R. Limburg
- *Harbors and High Seas: An Atlas and Geographical Guide to the Aubrey-Maturin Novels of Patrick O'Brien* (1996), by Dean King