

Attendees (13): John Ratcliffe (Chair), Dennis Cartwright (Treasurer), Brennan Massey (Secretary), Beverly Sawchuck, Barry Edgington, Luc Lafontaine, Tim Vezina, Melissa Perks-Vezina, Rick Menard, Gerry Carter, Grant Stirton, Nancy Binnie, Jim Dunfield.

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 19:02. This was our chapter's 2023 annual general meeting (AGM), held in our normal spot in the basement of the Clocktower Brew Pub (Glebe location).

2. Guest Speaker

Prior to the business portion of the AGM local underwater photographer Grant Stirton gave a presentation on his work. Grant is a professional photojournalist both above and below the water specializing in marine environments. Grant has received numerous awards and publications for his work in journalism and tv/film. He is a graduate of SPEOS Photographic Institute in Photojournalism, the University of Toronto in Management and is an artist in residence with the School of Photographic Arts Ottawa (SPA0).



Grant shared examples of his photos above and below the water, including a series on the Centeen Park sculptures. He also offered helpful tips and suggestions regarding photographic techniques and equipment. Grant is somewhat unique among modern photographers in that he still prefers to shoot film whenever possible.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 2 November 2022

A motion to approve the minutes of 2 November 2022 was raised by Nancy and seconded by Brennan – motion carried.

4. News and Recap of Recent Events


- Centeen Park Construction – There is construction at Centeen Park. The existing street parking is being replaced by angle parking to accommodate more vehicles. Parking may be reduced while this is going on.
- Online Lectures – John has been forwarding links to virtual lectures organized by the Wisconsin Maritime Museum. One lecture was on the discovery of Sir Ernest Shackleton's ship *Endurance* in Antarctica, while a recent lecture focused on the discovery of an American WWII submarine in the Philippines.
- Upcoming CIMS Lecture – On January 22 the local chapter of the Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies (CIMS) will be hosting underwater archaeologist Dr. Ibrahim

Noureddine as he discusses his ongoing work at the Phoenician city of Tyre. John to forward details. Lecture will be in-person and virtual, with the in-person component at Dominion-Chalmers United Church.

- Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show - Luc asked if the SOS Board is holding their annual business meeting in Toronto this year. In previous years the Board would hold their annual business meeting in Toronto on the same weekend as the Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show, where SOS would have a booth. John to follow up with SOS Corporate.

5. Treasurer’s Report

Dennis reports that our current bank balance is \$6,444.64. No major new financial activity. We have money to spend on projects. Dennis notes that SOS seems to engage in fewer surveys and field projects than it did in previous years, which likely contributes to a reduced membership. If we become more active in that regard we may see an uptick in membership.



Save Ontario Shipwrecks - Ottawa - BMO Account Summary

| Date | Code | Description | Debit | Credit | Cleared | Balance | Notes |
|------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|-------------|---|
| 2021 01 01 | | Balance from previous year | | | | \$ 6,743.14 | |
| 2021 04 15 | CK #56 | Prescott Platforms | \$ 987.41 | | Y | \$ 5,755.73 | |
| 2021 06 21 | IB | United Way Donation | | \$ 100.00 | Y | \$ 5,855.73 | BMO ATM 1450 Merivale |
| 2021 06 21 | IB | SOS Membership Dividend 2018 - 2020 | | \$ 287.00 | Y | \$ 6,142.73 | BMO ATM 1450 Merivale |
| 2021 09 19 | MB BR. 0081 | Donation Boxes - Various - B.Edington | | \$ 113.91 | Y | \$ 6,256.64 | Sharkey's, Diver's Warehouse, KDS, Deco Stop |
| 2022 05 02 | | SOS Chapter Dividend Payment for 2021 | | \$ 115.00 | Y | \$ 6,371.64 | BMO deposit Ogilvy & Mtl Rd. |
| 2022 06 08 | CK #57 | John Mondoux - mooring support | \$ 40.00 | | N | \$ 6,331.64 | Mooring support - gas and launch fees |
| 2022 06 08 | | Donation Box - Scuba Finatics | | \$ 55.40 | Y | \$ 6,387.04 | Collected from Scuba Finatics - 2022 06 07 - B. Edington |
| 2022 06 23 | CK #58 | Christopher Holloway | \$ 268.04 | | Y | \$ 6,119.00 | Printing Brochures - Minute Press Ottawa |
| 2022 08 05 | | Donation Box - Scuba Finatics | | \$ 160.00 | Y | \$ 6,279.00 | Collected from Scuba Finatics - 2022 08 04 - B. Edington |
| 2022 12 06 | | Donation Box - Scuba Finatics | | \$ 6.59 | Y | \$ 6,285.59 | Collected from Scuba Finatics - 2022 11 02 Mtg - \$6.59 US |
| 2022 12 06 | | Donation Box - Scuba Finatics | | \$ 159.05 | Y | \$ 6,444.64 | Collected from Scuba Finatics - 2022 11 02 Mtg - \$159.05 CDN |
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6. Donation Boxes

Barry delivered \$80.00 he collected from our donation boxes in local dive shops. Approximately \$13.00 was donated by Kanata Diving Centre with the remainder from Sharky's. Barry has plans to visit O2 to Go and Deco Stop at some point to check on their boxes.

Translation of Diver's Guides and Other SOS Material – At previous meetings members supported the idea of producing French versions of our Diver's Guides and other SOS pamphlets, given the number of francophone divers in eastern Ontario. John contacted SOS President Durrell Martin, who said that the SOS Board had discussed and approved the idea, and plan to translate all Diver's Guides and similar SOS material and make it available online, also accessible through a QR code. This sounds excellent, but John is concerned that the translation may be a slow process. More to follow.

Donation Boxes - A discussion was had as to the design of the current display and donation box. Some believed that simply placing French copies behind the English versions might be problematic, or that there might not be enough space in the existing design to accommodate both English and French pamphlets. Luc suggested that we place the French copies directly beside in another pamphlet box. Barry pointed out that many dive shops have small counters and that increasing the size may dissuade shops from prominently displaying our boxes. It was recommended that the current display design is revisited.

At our last meeting some members had suggested we add a QR code to the display boxes so that people could donate digitally, as many people no longer carry cash. Chris Holloway had agreed to look into options, and Tim Vezina had forwarded one example used by Salvation Army. To discuss further when Chris is present.

7. Buoy Update

Buoy Coordinator– Luc has accepted the role of chapter Buoy Coordinator. On December 4 John and Murray Hollis delivered the chapter's extra buoys (two large spar, one medium spar, and one conical) to Luc in Cardinal, along with spare mooring lines, new decals and extra solar powered lights. Murray had been kindly storing the chapter's spare buoys at his property in Stittsville for the last few years. Buoys in use this past season are now in winter storage with our partners who deployed and removed them (Seaway Valley Divers; Dominique Gingras).

Buoy Maintenance – Luc will be taking care of upkeep and repairs to the buoys and lines this spring. Luc will notify the membership ahead of time so that members can help out. Luc would also like to form a working party to inspect, repair and possibly replace shackles, chains and lines on sites in our chapter's territory, as required. John mentioned that provincial Buoy Manager Raimund Krob is available to hold mooring workshops, if there is sufficient interest.

Luc and John noted that many of the mooring lines are tied directly onto the wrecks, which is not a recommended practice. SOS is working on a MOU with the Coast Guard for deployment of mooring blocks, which might be helpful down the road, although the high current in our area makes deploying large blocks a challenge.

9. Prescott Scuba Park

Site Infrastructure – John said that he hadn't heard anything recently from Dana Valentyne from the town of Prescott regarding the placement of the proposed large dive park map or other improvements to the site, such as washrooms.

Prescott Scuba Park Sub-Committee – Luc had proposed that we create a sub-committee to work directly with Dana and the town of Prescott, to provide input and advice on improvements to the area around the Prescott Scuba Park. John thought this was an excellent idea. Rick Menard, Melissa Perks-Vezina, and Jim Dunfield volunteered to serve on this sub-committee. John will put them in touch with Dana and will forward the suggestions our members provided at our last meeting. He will also include Neil O'Hare, given his substantial efforts to improve the diver experience in the area, and Chris Holloway, who created our map of the Park.

10. Chapter Elections

Chapter elections were held, as this was our AGM for 2023. As no new nominations were forthcoming, the existing executive offered to remain in their current roles for another year, and were confirmed by acclamation.

11. “Beyond the Edge” with Barry Edgington

Barry delighted the chapter again with well preserved mementos from diving history. This evening Barry demonstrated a simple yet extremely comfortable vintage tank pack with double hose regulator, as well as a pair of classic horse collar BCDs. Lastly, Barry showed off a spear gun kindly donated by Tim Vezina at the meeting. Barry also brought along his personal catalogue of Rideau River dive sites, which Brennan plans to review and digitize. Thanks Barry!



12. New Business and Next Meeting Date

Side Scan Survey – John reported that Jean-Marc Perreault, a diver and high school teacher from the Montreal area, recently joined the chapter and had been in touch regarding some side scan sonar work he is planning this summer. Jean-Marc has an 18-ft boat and plans to conduct a side scan sonar survey of sites in the Ottawa River this June with some of his students, and possibly some sites in the Cornwall area. He has been in touch with SOS President Durrell Martin who provided guidance on how to apply for a marine archaeological license. Jean-Marc is interested in having a member of SOS join him. Grant Stirton said that he would be interested, and Tim and Melissa said they would ask Chanelle who works at their dive shop, as she has a background in archaeology.

Nancy recommended scanning to the south of Pinhey's Point. A tornado had gone through the area in 2018 and much of the debris likely ended up in this section of the Ottawa River, including valuables such as Olympic medals which could be recovered and returned.

SOS Ottawa Chapter Boat – Luc stated the largest constraint for the chapter with regards to moorings is the lack of a boat. Since Andy Bennis stepped away from his role as chapter Buoy Coordinator five or six years ago our chapter has been dependant on various external partners to deploy and remove our mooring buoys. Other SOS Chapters such as 1000 Islands or Picton are either headed by or have charter operators on their executives, which simplifies the annual deployment and recovery of their mooring buoys.

Luc proposes that our chapter considers the possibility of purchasing a zodiac so that we can take a more active role in deploying and maintaining our moorings. Concerns were raised as to the logistics of the chapter owning a boat, in terms of maintenance costs, storage and liability. Nancy and Andy own a zodiac similar to that proposed by Luc; she will provide him with a detailed breakdown of annual costs. Luc will reach out to SOS Corporate to explore the possibility of funding once he has a better idea of costs.

No date for the next meeting was selected at this time. Once a date is selected the membership will be notified via email.

Meeting ends at 20:55

Book Table

The following books were given away:

- *Shipwrecks of British Columbia* (1980), by Fred Rogers
- *The Story of the Mary Rose* (1982), by Alexander McKee