

Attendees (13): John Ratcliffe (Chair), Andy Fytche, Beverly Sawchuck, Barry Edgington, Tim Vezina, Melissa Perks, Rick Menard, Gerry Carter, Shawn Girard, Nancy Binnie, Lorne Cooper, Paul Whynacht, Jeanette Ryken.

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 19:03. The meeting was held in our normal spot in the basement of the Clocktower Brew Pub (Glebe location).

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 11 January 2023

A motion to approve the minutes of 11 January 2023 was raised by Barry and seconded by Lorne – motion carried.

3. News and Recap of Recent Events

- CIMS Lecture – John reported that the local chapter of the Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies (CIMS) hosted a lecture by Dr. Ibrahim Nourredine on January 22 at the Dominion-Chalmers United Church, where Dr. Nourredine spoke about his ongoing underwater work at the Phoenician city of Tyre.
- NDA Shipwrecks Symposium – the Niagara Divers' Association (NDA) held the 29th annual Shipwrecks Symposium in Welland on April 1, which featured a number of excellent speakers, including Jill Heinerth and Ken Merryman. John gave a talk on HMS *Erebus*.
- Can Geo Lecture – on April 26 Dr. Mensun Bound will be giving a talk on the discovery of Sir Ernest Shackleton's vessel *Endurance*, which was located at a depth of 3,000 m in 2022. This event is free and will be held at the Canadian Geographic headquarters at 50 Sussex.
- Centeen Park Construction – some work has been carried out along the seawall at Centeen Park, to replace a steel barrier with stonework.
- Removal of the *Jean Richard/Ville de Vanier* from Lac Leamy – the Coast Guard has announced that it plans to remove the wreck of the *Jean Richard/Ville de Vanier* from the Ottawa River near Lac Leamy, as a hazard to navigation. This wreck is well-known locally and was featured in a NFB documentary as the last wooden vessel built in Quebec, in 1959.
- Nancy says that Jill Heinerth will be giving a talk locally on April 20; she will forward details.
- Tim says that Scuba Finatics will be holding their annual Canada Day dive at Lock 21 again this year. Their shop has moved to the new location in Greely.



4. Treasurer's Report

Dennis was not present but provided John with an update on our finances. At our last meeting Barry delivered \$82.50 from our donation boxes (\$13.00 from Sharky's and \$69.50 from KDS), which has been deposited into our account. We also received \$56.00 in Chapter Dividends from SOS Corporate, and returned \$40.00 to our account, as John Mondoux never cashed the cheque we sent him last year to cover his expenses for deploying mooring buoys. We are

waiting on a \$100 donation from Chris Welch, which will be forwarded by SOS Corporate. Our current bank balance is \$6,623.14.



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 13	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
2023 01 20		Donation Box - Sharkey's		\$ 13.00	Z	\$ 6,457.64	Collected from Sharkey's - 2023 01 10 - \$13.00
2023 01 20		Donation Box - KDS		\$ 69.50	A	\$ 6,527.14	Collected from KDS - 2023 01 10 - \$69.05
2023 03 02		SOS Chapter Dividend Payment for 2022		\$ 56.00	B	\$ 6,583.14	BMO deposit Ogilvy & Mtl Rd.
2023 03 02	CK #57	Returned to acct - cheque not actioned		\$ 40.00	N	\$ 6,623.14	Cheque issued to John Mondoux - never cashed or shown against acct

5. Donation Boxes

Barry delivered \$49.00 from our donation boxes for deposit into our account (\$25.00 from Scuba Finatics; \$15.00 from Deco Stop, and \$9.00 from O2 to Go). Thank you to all local divers and dive shops for your continued support.

Barry suggests that we give the keys for the boxes at Deco Stop and O2 to Go to someone like Luc who lives in that area. We also need someone to collect the money from the box at Proper Diving, as Almonte is a bit far for Barry.

Translation of Diver's Guides – SOS Corporate had discussed and approved the idea of translating our Diver's Guides and other material into French. John to follow up with Corporate to see if there has been any progress.

QR Codes – at previous meetings members had suggested adding QR codes to our donation boxes so that people could donate electronically. Tim had forwarded one example of a system used by the Salvation Army. Chris H. had agreed to look into various options, but wasn't present this evening.

6. Buoy Update

John provided a summary of our chapter's buoy inventory. With the upcoming dive season it will be time to start getting our moorings out. John has reached out to chapter Buoy Coordinator Luc Lafontaine to see how things are going and is waiting to hear back. Luc had also suggested organizing a day for buoy maintenance, which would be something chapter members could help with. Barry says he has a pressure washer and would be interested in helping.

John shared a checklist for inspecting moorings which Stéphan Senécal from the 1000 Islands Chapter has created. Members would like a copy they can use on dives.

Number	Type	Site	Stored By	Location
1	Spar	Rothesay	D. Gingras	Prescott
1	Spar	Eastcliffe Hall	Seaway Valley	Cornwall
1	Conical	Milles Roches	Seaway Valley	Cornwall
1	Conical	Fred Mercur	Seaway Valley	Cornwall
3	Spar	TBD	L. Lafontaine	Cardinal
2	Conical	TBD	L. Lafontaine	Cardinal

SOS Ottawa Chapter Buoy Inventory, April 2023.

7. Conestoga – Issues with Divers

Stéphan Senécal from the 1000 Islands Chapter forwarded a letter they had received from a resident of Cardinal, who is upset by the behaviour of divers at the Conestoga site. The resident is concerned about divers speeding on Legion Way, which is a danger to children who play there and other local people who use the area. The writer says that divers also leave trash and human waste, bring no tourism dollars to the community, and are generally rude and evince a lack of respect for locals. The resident blames divers from Quebec for these problems, and indicates that they will try and have access to Legion Way barred if the situation doesn't improve.

The letter was presented to the town council at their meeting on April 3. John wasn't able to attend, but Stéphan Senécal, Helen Cooper, Dominique Gingras and Neil O'Hare attended on behalf of SOS and the larger dive community. John met with Stéphan on April 8 and received an update on the meeting, which Stéphan reported as being very positive, with SOS there to listen respectfully to local concerns and work together to find solutions so that everyone can continue to enjoy the site. Helen and Stéphan gave a presentation on the contribution diver tourism has made to Brockville; they have survey data to show the positive economic impact divers have on the local economy.

The town has not yet made any decision to bar access to the site. Stéphan has posted on various Facebook groups for local divers (in English and French) highlighting the concerns of residents and reminding divers to be respectful.

The road already has speed bumps and the site features numerous signs which indicate the posted speed limit, that there are children playing nearby, and that overnight camping is prohibited. Stéphan suggested that additional signage directed specifically at divers (in English and French) would help alleviate these issues, and had prepared a draft sign, which members liked. Lorne says we should take down the Covid protocol signs and replace them with new signs reminding divers to be respectful. Nancy suggests the first line of the new signs should state that “Diving here is a privilege,” and we should include “SOS Ottawa” and our contact information at the bottom. John to work on sign text, and Tim to help with fabrication.

Tim asks who maintains the outhouses, as they are generally filthy (especially compared to those at the Rothesay), which may be one reason people haven’t been using them.

Lorne says we need to publicize our good deeds, share our message, and build allies among local people whenever we’re diving in the area, and should also call out bad behaviour. Melissa says that people tend to remember bad behaviour, which cancels out good deeds. Barry says we should try and attend the next council meeting to demonstrate that we’re engaged, and have contributed to the site over the years.

8. Prescott Scuba Park

Dana Valentyne, the Economic Development Officer for Prescott, recently responded to the email John had sent in February to introduce our new Prescott Sub-Committee, composed of Rick Menard, Melissa Perks, and Jim Dunfield. Rick has agreed to serve as the primary point of contact between Dana and the Sub-Committee, and will respond to her last email. Dana has suggested they meet in April.

Scuba Park Sign - Dana appreciated our feedback and proposed putting the larger map of the Scuba Park just beside the entrance ramp, which members agreed might work, and will explore our suggestion of putting a sign further to the east, along the rock wall. Rick says putting the sign beside the ramp might cause congestion when doing dive briefings.

Washrooms – Dana says they are in the process of getting quotes to install facilities similar to those at the Rothesay (bathrooms and change rooms). They’re on track to get those installed this year.

Entrance Ramp – Dana says they will engage with our Prescott Sub-Committee and Operations team in Prescott as required. Tim suggests adding an angle bracket to support the ladder at the end of the ramp.

Nancy says we should offer to contribute some money to help with these upgrades, if needed, since we’re not doing much with our current bank balance.

Tim and Melissa say the training platforms at the Scuba Park have been getting lots of use.

9. Ottawa River Sidescan Survey

Prior to our last meeting in January John had been contacted by Jean-Marc Perreault, a high school teacher from the Montreal area who was planning to do some sidescan sonar survey work in the Ottawa River and in the St. Lawrence near Cornwall this summer, which members might be able to help with.

John had emailed Jean-Marc to see if he had any updates to provide, but didn't receive anything.

10. "Beyond the Edge" with Barry Edgington

Barry continued his popular "Beyond the Edge" segment of our meetings by presenting another carefully curated selection of diving nostalgia from his incredible collection. Tonight's selection focused on vintage collectibles, action figures and models, with Barry presenting a detailed model of Jacques Cousteau's famed *Calypso*. Thanks Barry!



Barry Edgington and his model of Jacques Cousteau's famous *Calypso*.

11. New Business and Next Meeting Date

Meeting adjourned at 20:10.

Book Table

The following books were given away:

- *Into the Planet: My Life as a Cave Diver* (2019), by Jill Heinerth (two copies – signed)
- *The Last Dive: A Father and Son's Fatal Descent into the Ocean's Depth* (2000), by Bernie Chowdhury
- *Mighty Fitz: The Sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald* (2005), by Michael Schumacher
- *Reef Fish Identification* (1997), by Paul Human
- *Reef Creature Identification* (1996), by Paul Human
- *Sails Through the Centuries* (1965), by Sam Svensson

Thank you to Jeanette Ryken, who generously donated a number of books.