

**Attendees** (10): John Ratcliffe (Chair), Dennis Cartwright (Treasurer), Brennan Massey (Secretary), Beverly Sawchuck, Barry Edgington, Nancy Binnie, Andy Fytche, Jim Dunfield, Chris Harnett, Chris Holloway.

### 1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 19:10. This was an in-person meeting at a new location, the Clocktower Brew Pub, Westboro (418 Richmond Rd), as our former meeting venue, the Clocktower Brew, Glebe, closed permanently at the end of 2023. The chapter is open to suggestions for new meeting venues.

### 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 15 August 2023

A motion to approve the minutes of 15 August 2023 was raised by Barry and seconded by Jim - motion carried.

### 3. News and Recap of Recent Events

- A clean up dive was held at the Madawaska River on September 19; no one from Scuba Finatics present at meeting to provide details.
- The SOS AGM was held in Kingston on October 15; John was out of town and unable to attend but sent a Powerpoint and text which was presented to attendees.
- John recently completed our annual chapter workbooks for 2022 and 2023 and submitted them to SOS Corporate.
- John reported that SOS has been developing a new website (<https://saveontarioshipwrecks.ca/>) which should be available soon. The old website had many issues, and the company which created it (Bolt Media) is no longer offering support. John recently met with SOS Webmaster John Raso to go over the features of the new website. Chris Holloway asked if the URL for the new website is different from the old one; we will need to update the QR codes on the Prescott Scuba Park maps if this is the case.

### 4. Treasurer's Report

Dennis provided an update on our chapter's finances. We recently issued a cheque for \$70.00 to Luc Martin to cover his expenses for fuel when removing the Rothesay buoy in the fall, and a cheque for \$2,500.00 to cover half of the cost of a new diver bench at the Prescott Scuba Park. The expenditure of \$2,500.00 was approved by members at our previous meeting on August 15, 2023.

With these expenditures, our current bank balance is \$4,715.14.

### 5. Donation Boxes

Barry says he will check each box prior to the start of the dive season. It was reported that Diver's Wearhouse is no longer in business, freeing up a donation box for another location.



Nancy suggests that we create a flyer or pamphlet highlighting our chapter's activities to show donors how their contributions help improve local dive sites, to include with the donation boxes. Brennan volunteered to create the pamphlet prior to the start of the dive season.

## 6. Mooring Buoys

John provided an update on the buoys that were deployed last year and the preparations required for the upcoming season.



SOS Ottawa – sites moored in 2023. Not shown – Belly Dumper.

In 2023 our partners deployed SOS mooring buoys on five sites:

- Rothesay
- Eastcliffe Hall
- Milles Roches Power House
- Belly Dumper
- Fred Mercur

All buoys were removed in the fall and are in storage. Tim Vezina has the Rothesay buoy and our spares; Ron MacDonald has the Eastcliffe buoy; Seaway Valley Divers have the buoys from the Power House and Fred Mercur; and Sylvain Marcotte has the buoy from the Belly Dumper.

John drove down to Cardinal on the weekend and picked up two lines from Luc Lafontaine, our former buoy coordinator: a length of about 100' of 1" polysteel and a length of thinner ½" line, about 50' long.

Plans for 2024:

- Seaway Valley reports that the Eastcliffe needs a new line; depth to deck is about 50' so line would need to be about 75' long to provide adequate scope.
- Seaway Valley also want a new line for the Fred Mercur, which would be about 20' long.
- John to talk to Seaway Valley to confirm what they need; will also talk to provincial buoy coordinator Raimund Krob to see if they have any smaller buoys in stock, as our conical buoys are getting old.

Members present suggested the idea of an air tag or a method of digital tracking might allow the chapter to better monitor buoy status and location.

## 7. Prescott Scuba Park

On January 8 John attended a meeting of the Prescott Town Council to present a cheque for \$2,500.00 from SOS Ottawa, to help finance the cost of a new diver bench at the Prescott Scuba Park.

Jim has been hard at work designing the new bench for the park and getting quotes for fabrication. The town of Prescott requires that the bench be constructed with plastic lumber. Jim has been attempting to find a supplier for this material while

keeping the project within budget; he has been speaking to several suppliers. Jim reported that the fabrication company he's been dealing with (Mulder's) has indicated that galvanizing the steel frame of the bench will be more expensive than originally planned, so they will powder coat it or use black epoxy paint instead, to keep the project within budget.

Chris Holloway reported that he and Harold Walker had moved two anchors into the park using lift bags and scooters, which they had found further upstream.

## 8. "Beyond the Edge" with Barry Edgington



Barry delighted members by bringing in a variety of old tank harnesses. He pointed out some of the early developments on older harness that became standard on today's equipment. He also discussed common modifications to scuba equipment that made it more comfortable in and out of the water.



## **9. New Business and Next Meeting Date**

No new business was raised at the end of the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 20:10

## **Book Table**

The following books were given away:

- *Underwater Wonders of the National Parks* (1998), by Daniel J. Lenihan and John D. Brooks
- *Neutral Buoyancy: Adventures in a Liquid World* (2001), by Tim Ecott
- *Sport Diving: The British Sub-Aqua Club Diving Manual* (1985)
- *Diver Below! The Complete Guide to Skin and Scuba Diving* (1969), by Hank and Shaney Frey
- *Weather Bomb 1913: Life and Death on the Great Lakes*, by Bruce Kemp