

# Historical Diving

# TIMES

from  
*The Historical Diving Society*

## HDS Activities and Adventures



**WELLS & GORMAN'S**  
IMPROVED  
**DIVING APPARATUS,**  
FOR TWO DIVERS.

CONTENTS OF CHEST.

One Helmet Diving complete.  
One Helmet Cushion.  
One Shackle for deep water.  
One Spanner for wing nuts of helmet.  
One 45 ft. Vulcanized I.R. Air Pipe,  
with joints.  
One 30 ft. do. do. do.  
One Dress Diving, Waterproof I.R.  
Two Cuff expanders.  
Six Rings, vulcanized India Rubber.  
One Dress Overall, canvas.  
Three Frocks, woollen  
Three pairs Drawers, woollen.  
Three pairs Stockings, do. (inside)  
One pair do. large, do. (overall)  
One 90 ft. Line Signal, reversed laid.  
One pair Shoes with lead soles.  
Two Weights, lead with mountings.  
One Belt, weighted.  
One Knife, in watertight brass case.  
One Belt Leather for knife.  
One Holder Metal for air pipe.  
One 1 lb. Tin Solution, India Rubber.  
One yard Twill prepared.  
One Frame screw, brass with glass and  
bars for helmet.  
One Glass for Helmet convex.  
One do. do. oval.  
One Urinal patent for Diver.  
One pair Gloves, gauntlet, I.R.  
One yard India Rubber sheet.  
One Book of Instruction.

*one cap one neckerchief*



- ★ Cormac Lowth on the wrecks in Lake Nemi ★ Bob Campbell on the Heinke Merlin
- ★ Lord Elgin and the Sponge Divers
- ★ How not to make a suit ★ All you favourite departments and much more



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## Scarborough Seafest 2009 25th and 26th July 2009

The invitation to attend Scarborough Seafest was a first for us this year, as we have never been invited before. For the HDS it really started back in 2008 at the Birmingham Dive Show, where we were approached by two members of Scarborough SAC, Rob Broadhead and Andy Jackson, who questioned whether it would be possible to dive a helmet that had been salvaged from a wreck off Scarborough called the *Disperser*. The helmet was later dated as 1882 and the *Disperser* sank in 1934 on route to a salvage operation in bad weather. So, 1934 was the last time that this helmet could have been used, some 75 years ago. Also raised from the wreck so far are the remains of a triple cylinder pump, a pair of divers boot soles, and a front weight. The team are still searching, so standby for more revelations.

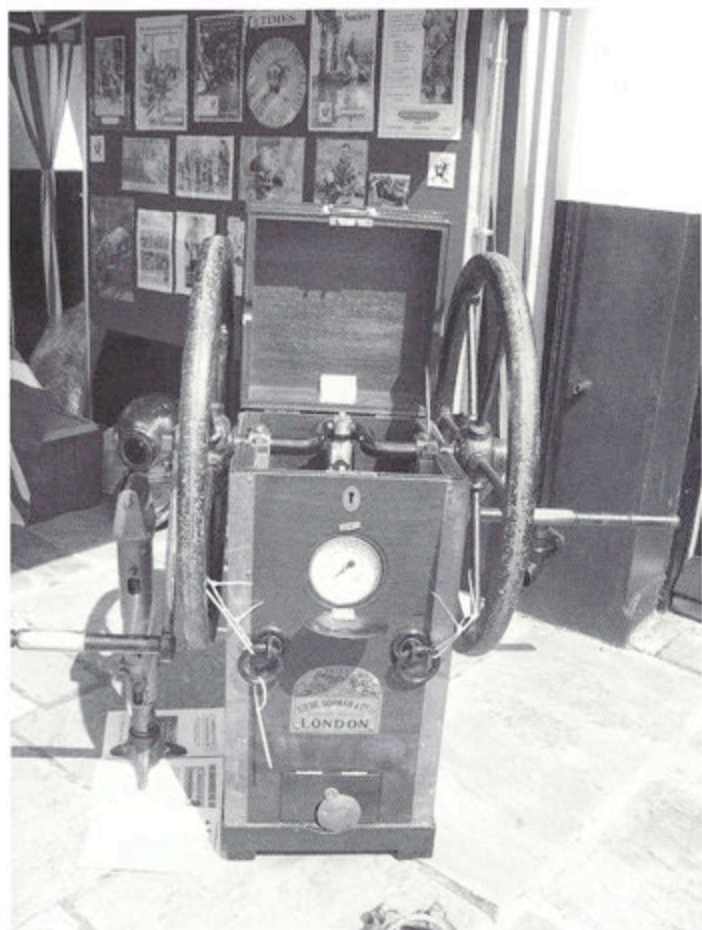
In February 2009 I went to Scarborough SAC to check out

the helmet and also look at possible dive sites. The owner of the helmet, Andy Jackson, did not want it changed in any way and so it was decided the only way was to seal the exhaust valve on the inside, make sure the inlet valve was clear and get a couple of good strong pump hands. One other thing, because the inlet elbow had been knocked, was that the screw thread was too close to the helmet to get a hose attached, so Rob manufactured a temporary angled adaptor, which worked well. The invitation to attend the Scarborough Seafest had arrived and on the day the helmet would be dived as a free-flow open helmet.

Saturday 25th saw a fine day, sunny and very little wind. We arrived on site at about 9am and set up our HDS stand and diving gear. Including the *Disperser* helmet there were ten helmets on display, plus the ancillary equipment, a small amount of Scuba equipment and of course our usual collection of pictures and photographs.

In all we dived eight divers during the day, including the Mayor of Scarborough (Bill Chatt) and the Leader of the Council (Tom Fox), who both enjoyed their experience in standard dress very much, as did five members of SSAC who also joined the Society.

The day was finished off with a member of SSAC, Tom Clark,



The HDS stand is a fixture and centre point for all the activities.

(One of the new members of the Society, and also the Coxswain of the Scarborough Life Boat) doing a sponsored walk from the dive site to SSAC fully dressed in Standard equipment, a distance of approx 1 mile, the last 200yds being up a very steep cobbled hill. Tom was accompanied on the walk by Howard Dykes who assisted by screwing in the faceplate

occasionally when the public threw buckets of water over the diver for £1.00 a time.

Howard finished up wetter than the diver and a total of approx. £300 was collected for the local Alzheimers Society.

Weatherwise the Sunday was not quite as good, but good enough and we duly re-erected the equipment and stand etc. Andy Jackson was first down



Prior to a game of musical helmets, the HDS team at last reveal themselves. From the left. Di Dykes, Roy Argyll, Ty Hardin, Howard Dykes, Pop Yarrow, John Smillie and Una Smillie. We assume that John Buxton was off cave diving again.



*'Well, I suppose it depends on which way you look at it'. Pope Yarrow and John Buxton appear to be taking John Smillie to task.*

with his helmet recovered from the wreck of the *Disperser*. The dive went like clockwork, no problems at all. Andy really enjoyed it and we had a job persuading him to come out of the water (all that worrying for nothing). During the day we dived another seven SSAC members, and new members of the Society, plus Ty Burton, who travelled a long way to be with us that weekend.

The Stand on both days was very ably manned by Una, Diana and Audrey. I would also like to thank all those who assisted at Scarborough with the equipment; a lot of effort was put in by Howard and Diana Dykes, Ty Burton, John and Audrey Buxton, 'Pop' Yarrow, Roy Argyle, Rob and Debbie and all members of Scarborough SAC, especially Rob Broadhead, Ann Polkey, and Andy Jackson. Oh and of course my wife Una. Things were so busy, I think she was there!

*John Smillie (WEG North)*

*Ed Note:* The HDS teams on these weekends put in a lot of very hard work and perform a wonderful job publicising the HDS to a broader public, in this case aided by support from the town to Scarborough (yes,

it really is as pretty as it looks) and the Scarborough Sub-Aqua Club.



*A Siebe about to be dived in open-helmet mode.*



*Any number of devotees paid homage to the helmets..... or were they only taking pictures?*

## HDS MEMBERSHIP

Please remember, all matters concerning membership are now dealt with by

Una Smillie who can be contacted at: [unaemsmillie@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:unaemsmillie@blueyonder.co.uk)

