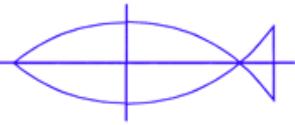


# The British Society of Underwater Photographers



## Chairman's Address – AGM December 2015

### Meetings

Twelve monthly meetings were held during the course of the year in Imperial College Union Building, on the third Tuesday of each month.

Speakers this year were **Rob White, Matt Doggett, Simon Rogerson, Nick Blake, Alex Mustard & Martin Edge, Nigel Wade, Steve Jones, Peter Tatton, Super Jolly, Ally McDowell** and **Paul Colley, Rob Bailey, Anthony Holley, Malcolm Nobbs & Jamie Watts, Alex Tattersall, Paul Colley, Terry Steeley, Ellen Cuylaerts, Joe Daniels** and **Charles Hood**

### Competitions

This year we changed the way in which our monthly competitions were judged. Instead of audience voting, we introduced judging by a nominated underwater photographer, usually one of the speakers at the monthly meetings. All entries were projected, as in previous years, and then the nominated judge, where possible, presented their top six with comments on each. These comments were made available on the website. Many thanks go to **Paul Colley** who took on the task of initiating the changes and managed the monthly competitions.

### Focus On Competitions

Winners this year were **Bob Anthony** (January), **Trevor Rees** (February), **Justin Beevor** (April), **Warren Williams** (May), **Trevor Rees** (June), **Alex Mustard** (July) and **Laura Storm** (August).

### Portfolio Competitions

The Portfolio Competitions were won by **Mark Drayton** (Open Portfolio - 2013), **Pash Baker** (Theme Portfolio – Photo Story), **Trevor Rees** (Best of British), **Martyn Guess** (Underwater Excellence Portfolio) and **John Parker** (Beginners Portfolio).

### British & Irish Underwater Photography Championship

Due to the falling participation in the annual Splash-In in recent years, the competition was changed this year to an online, one day event. Credit must go to **Paul Colley** who master-minded the changes and organised and promoted the event. The BIUPC attracted 55 entrants in Britain and Ireland. The overall winner and BIUPC Champion was **Charles Erb**. The competition was judged by underwater photographers **Peter Rowlands, Martin Edge** and **Steve Jones**, to whom BSoUP is extremely grateful.

### Peter Scoones Award

Colin Doeg, Georgette Douwma and Fiona Scoones each contributed towards a special new Peter Scoones Award which will be presented on an annual basis to the winner of the BIUPC.

## **Print Competition**

The organisation of this year's annual BSoUP/DIVER Print Competition was imposed upon **Mark Feldman** and **Dave Smith** who did a fantastic job from start to finish, including sourcing the prizes. Of the 126 entries, the best 80 were displayed at DIVE 2015 at the NEC in Birmingham, where the visiting public were encouraged to vote for their favourites in four categories. Over the weekend nearly a thousand people voted. A panel of judges comprising **Martin Edge, Alex Mustard** and **Nigel Eaton** chose the overall winner of the Grand Prize of 'A two-week trip in the Philippines', courtesy of Hidden Depths, which was won by **Terry Steeley**.

## **Dive Shows**

BSoUP exhibited at both the London International Dive Show at ExCel, London Docklands in February and DIVE 2015 at the NEC, Birmingham in October. Many members volunteered to man the stand at these events and are duly acknowledged on the BSoUP website. In particular **Joss Woolf** organised the schedules for both shows, and she and **Peter Ladell** managed the transport, set-up and break down of the BSoUP Stand for each of the shows. **Pete Ladell** also organised replacement prints for the BSoUP stand.

## **Magazine**

BSoUP produced two issues of its magazine, "in focus" this year. I don't think anyone who has not been involved has any idea of the enormous amount of work that goes into the advertising, layout, and indeed the mailing to the membership. Huge praise indeed is due to **Chris McTernan, Mike Russell** and **Paul Morgan** with a little help from me, **Joss Woolf**.

## **Website & Social Media**

The BSoUP website ([www.bsoup.org](http://www.bsoup.org)) content continues to grow and we now have 2,153 php pages (an increase of 100 pages). The site now includes more than 362 Gallery pages (an increase of 32 galleries) and 107 'Members only' slideshows (an increase of 15 slideshows).

The website had over 11,000 accesses per month (an increase of 5,000).

The BSoUP Facebook Group, which is an extension to the main BSoUP website, currently has 1,385 members. That's 218 more than last year.

A BSoUP Twitter Group started in July 2013, still only has 19 followers.

**Brian Pitkin** continues to manage the website and social media. We thank him for his continued efforts.

## **Other member's achievements**

**Alex Mustard** was one of the judges in the annual 'Wildlife Photographer of the Year' competition.

**Alex Mustard** was also a judge at the CMAS World Championship of Underwater Photography and at his highly successful new competition, Underwater Photographer of the Year, together with **Martin Edge and Peter Rowlands**.

**Alex Mustard** wrote monthly columns on underwater photography: Be The Champ for Diver Mag UK and Images for Sport Diver USA. Last but not least, he was featured as one of the world's most inspiring underwater photographers in Scuba Diver Ocean Planet, along with fellow BSoUP members **Matt Doggett** and **Steve Jones**.

**Trevor Rees and Charles Erb** wrote a monthly articles: Photoquest on underwater photography for SCUBA Magazine.

**Paul Colley** won the British Wildlife Photography Awards (Coast and Marine). His pioneering work in UK rivers featured in national newspapers and on the BBC.

**Linda Pitkin** was one of the judges in the annual 'British Wildlife Photography Awards' and the annual 'Royal Society of Biology' Photography Competition.

**Linda Pitkin, Dougie Souness, Nick Robertson-Brown, Alex Mustard, Joss Woolf, Charles Erb, Paul Colley** and **Alex Tattersall** (and possibly others) had their images used as magazine front covers.

### **Departing Committee Members**

I would like to extend my thanks to **Pash Baker** for all her patience and hard work as Membership Secretary for the last three years and who is now leaving the committee. We would also like to thank **Mike Brodbelt** for his help with all things web-based and, although he is leaving the committee, we are grateful that we can still call upon his expertise in the future.

### **Non departing members**

I would like to extend special thanks to committee members who are *not* leaving, not yet anyway. **Sarah White** has religiously produced detailed accounts for us on a monthly basis and has enabled the Paypal function on our website to make it easier for members to renew their memberships. She also has the unenviable task of chasing sponsors and "in focus" advertisers for money.

I don't think people realise just how much hard work **Martha** does for the Society and we are forever in her debt. Thanks also to **Paul Colley** who has overseen many of the changes and improvements made to BSoUP this year.

### **BSoUP UPY Dinner**

Some people have expressed their disappointment, as a result of the new style BIUPC, that there is no longer a social event in the BSoUP calendar. A dinner has been organised, which is open to all, to be held on Saturday evening 13<sup>th</sup> February at the Isis Styles Hotel in Docklands, straight after the Dive Show. It is intended partly to welcome those who have travelled from far and wide to receive their awards as successful contestants of the UPY competition and also as a socialising opportunity for BSoUP members and underwater photographers in general. Full details can be found on the BSoUP website and we've made it easy for you to pay through Paypal. I hope that many of you will take this opportunity. Do book soon though as places are limited

.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your support over the last four years. But it's time for a change; Suddenly it's over and time for me to step back.

As a committee, we are always looking to see who will be next and, as people leave, who can take over and best fit the committee roles. People rarely volunteer and it is never easy trying to persuade already busy people to do something more.

There can be few people, either through social media or as members of BsoUP, who have failed to notice that Paul Colley is "on the scene". Although always busy, either trying to get the ultimate image of a trout in the River Test or advising the defence and security community from which he came, he has kudos, energy, ideas and above all, enthusiasm. I can't think of anyone better qualified to lead BSoUP through to the next era.

I think that his heart is in the right place. I hope that you will agree with me that he is the right person for the job and ask you to support his election at this AGM or to propose an alternate candidate.

Thank you