

BRANDON SCUBA CLUB

Volume 13, Number 1

April, 2009

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2009. Since our last newsletter many things have happened in the Scuba Club.

We held our annual Christmas party around the pool at C+L Scuba. Everyone had a great time.

We held our AGM and members elected a new executive.

The new members are:

President – Mark Tokle

Vice President – Mark Chapman

Treasurer – Ed Burridge

Secretary – Elaine Riesmeyer

Events – Mark Addison

– Kellie Burnett

Membership – Linda Burridge

Our mid winter bowling pizza and beer night was also a great success.

Be sure to come out to our club meeting on April 28th. We would like to plan some more events and would like your input. It will be great to catch up with everyone and find out how their winter dive trips went.

We now have a website with all the latest information on the scuba club and diving in Manitoba. The address is

www.brandonsclub.com.

If we don't have your email address we can't let you know about events that happen between editions of the newsletter, so send your email address to myself or David Ford at superdave@wcgwave.ca

Dive safe,
Ed Burridge
burridge@mts.net



Brandon Scuba Meeting

7 PM April 28th, 2009

20 Wankling Blvd

Brandon Manitoba



April, 2009

Brandon Scuba Club President's Message

Hello fellow divers! I hope this message finds everyone in good health and good spirits. It's likely been a long winter for all of us, including those that may have been able to escape to warmer climates for a week or two. Although it still may not feel like it most days, SPRING is finally here! With that comes the possibility of a great summer as well as a fun and adventurous dive season for the Brandon Scuba Club. There are a few events planned for 2009. I encourage you all to check out our new website, <http://www.brandonsclub.com>. It is a wonderful link to keep you informed and up to date on all things related to our club and its' events. Further I would encourage anyone with an interest to participate in our meetings. They generally last no more than an hour. The more thoughts and ideas, and votes, we can get from our membership, will allow our direction to be stronger, and more representative of our entire membership.

I look forward to seeing some of you at meetings and or events this year. I hope everyone is able to find some underwater time this summer!

Sincerely,
Mark Tokle
President Brandon Scuba Club

Safety - Maintaining your Equipment

Raking up the yard? Washing the windows?
Cleaning the garage?
Welcome to the annual spring cleanup.
When was the last time you had your equipment checked out? Last spring? 2 years ago? Never?

Well now is the time to ensure you are ready for another year of diving. We do a lot of things because it is that time of year but equipment maintenance is sometimes forgotten. It is important to remember that we do not breathe naturally underwater and that we are solely dependant on our equipment to allow us to enjoy this underwater realm.

Things to do:

- Regulators - in to your Local Dive Shop for a tune-up / check mouthpieces as well
- Tanks - in for annual visual inspection (check Hydro dates too)
- BCD - check inflator / deflator for leaks,

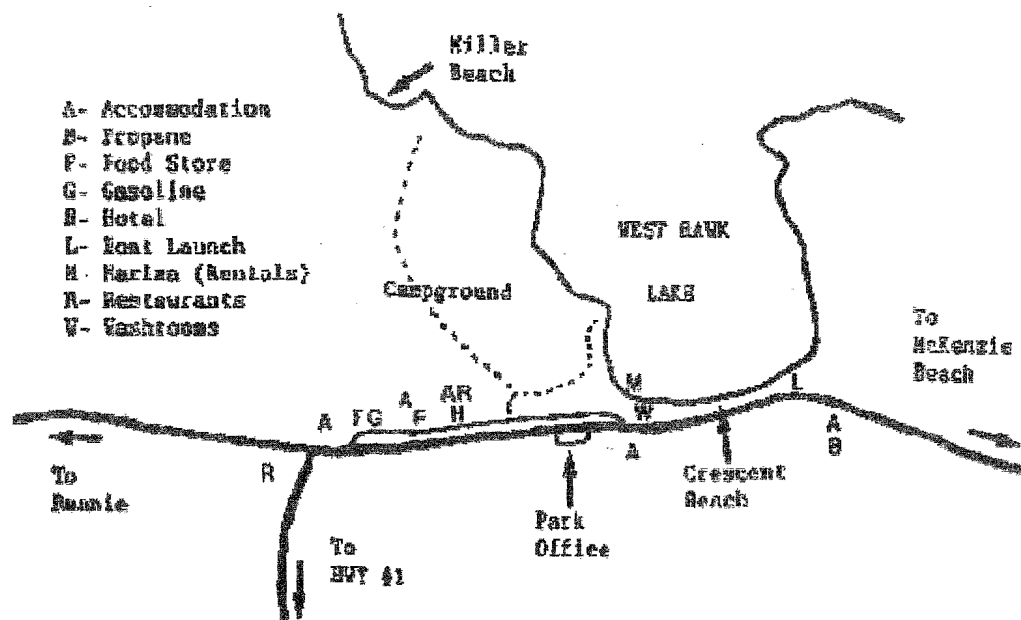
ensure hoses, clamps are secure, ensure dump valves are tight, working properly (not sticking open/closed) , ensure dump pull strings are not frayed, cummerbund and retaining clips are not broken / working properly, Tank strap not frayed / buckle working

- Mask - Straps not torn, nicked or broken, adjusters working, Skirt not leaking, no pinholes, purge works
- Fins - Straps not torn, nicked or broken, adjusters working, no cracks, splits, etc
- Drysuit - Inflator working, Deflator(s) working, and tight, Does it still fit (remember the holidays!!), Leaks?
- Wetsuit / hood / gloves / booties - Does it still fit (remember the holidays!!), Tears / leaks / etc
- Weight belt - still fits?, Correct weight?, Strap not frayed?, Buckle not broken (remember when you drove the snow blower over it?)

Always ensure your equipment is properly maintained.



DIVE SITE MAP WEST HAWK LAKE MANITOBA



The Manitoba Underwater Council suggests that on the day of the planned dive, both the site and diving conditions be adequately assessed and diving should take place only if these conditions are acceptable. Remember, West Hawk Lake is often dark and ALWAYS cold; weather conditions can change water conditions dramatically.

To ensure a safe and enjoyable dive, the council also suggests that the diver observe the following precautions:

1. Always mark your dive site with a diver down flag.
2. Be alert for boat traffic when surfacing and snorkelling.
3. Never dive alone and always do a buddy check before descending.
4. After a long snorkel, rest at the surface prior to descent.
5. Do not dive beyond your comfort zone.
6. Watch depth and bottom time carefully.

7. Finally, practice good buoyancy control. Much of the bottom the lake is silty. Bottom floundering can drastically reduce visibility creating a hazard for you and for those following.

The information provided in this brochure is intended as a guide. Although we have attempted to advise the diver of any hazards, some hazards may exist of which we are unaware. It is the diver's responsibility to obtain further information where available.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Call Operator - ask for ZENITH 50,000 Contact O.P.P. (in Ontario) or the R.C.M.P. (in Manitoba) and state the following:

"This is a diving emergency."

History of West Hawk Lake

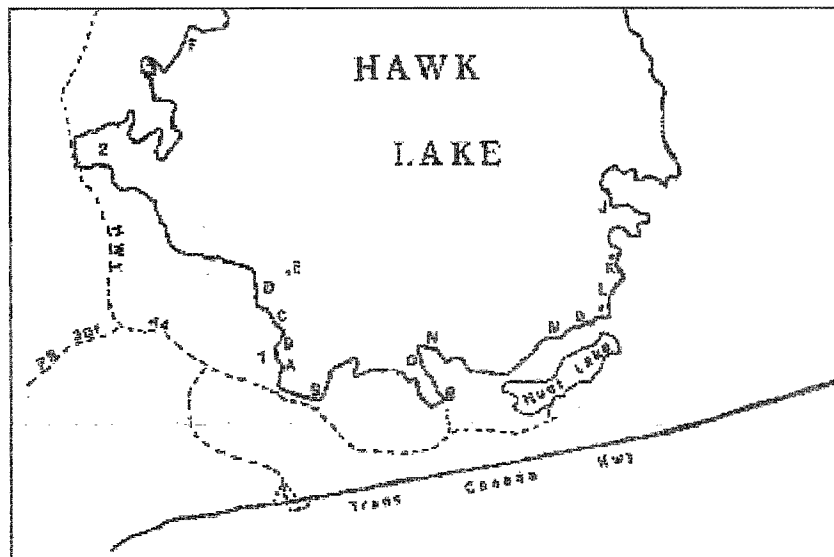
West Hawk Lake is one of the most popular sport diving sites in Manitoba, in fact anyone reading this article will probably admit to having "sat in the tub" off of Cat's Ass at least once in their diving lives. All divers have come to know West Hawk Lake for its tremendous maximum depth. Some of you may know that the West Hawk Lake basin is in fact a meteorite impact structure. For those of you who are not aware of this fact, and even those who are, here is a brief geological history regarding the formation of West Hawk Lake.

The lake today covers a total area of 3,685 acres, with a maximum length and width of 7.2 kilometers and 4.8 kilometers respectively. The maximum depth of the lake is approximately 110 meters in the sediment-water interface. The lake basin was formed approximately 150 million years ago, during a period of geological time known as the Jurassic Period, by the impact of a meteorite. The meteorite itself was approximately 150 meters in diameter and was probably composed of iron. The tremendous explosion force of the impact has been estimated as being equivalent to that of 25 Megaton blast.

The resulting crater was subsequently eroded and modified by the scouring action of glacial ice, which retreated from South-Eastern Manitoba approximately 11,000 years ago. Meltwater from the retreating ice filled the crater forming what we now know as West Hawk Lake.

South End

The South end of West Hawk is the most often dived part of the lake.



Site A Cat's Ass

Shore Access - This is the most heavily dived area in West Hawk Lake. Located off Section A of the campground, the site has become most commonly known as Cat's Ass. Entering the water directly off the point, takes the diver to the edge of a wall. This wall and ledge system extends North and North-Easterly for a considerable distance. Depths at the base of the wall vary from 25 to in excess of 60 feet. The site along the base of the wall is characterized by odds and ends of paraphernalia from a signpost to a bathtub as well as a small boat. To the East of the dock, the rock face drops to approximately 25 feet where two wooden platforms can be seen that are used for training exercises.

Site B

Short Access - From the shoreline to the North and West the site is characterized by a relatively shallow (20-25 feet) sandy bottom with occasional rocks and boulders. Even further North-West will take the diver to an underwater forest of sorts as many downed trees strew the bottom at a depth of 30-40 feet. A large vein of quartz can be seen at approximately 30 feet.

Site C

Shore Access - The shoreline South-East of the Miller Beach dock offers a gently sloping silty and rocky bottom with boulders increasing in number as the dive proceeds away from the dock area. This site may be best as a night dive but can offer encounters with fish life during daylight diving.

Site D

Shore Access - A medium length snorkel is required from the Miller Beach dock to reach the red marker bouys anchored over the reef. The top of the reef comes to within 4-5 feet of the surface while a descent down the walls will take the diver to a silty bottom at 45-50 feet. Short walls typify the site. In season, bass can be found above the thermocline found at 35 feet in mid-July. The site offers an interesting alternative to Cat's Ass (see Site A) for those limited to shore diving. Frequent boat travel over the site requires a dive flag be used and care be taken upon ascent.

Site E

Boat Access - This Peanut Island offers a variety of good diving. The area to the West of the island offers a relatively gentle slope with numerous rocks and boulders at which bass can often be observed sunning themselves during the day or resting near the bottom during the night. The majority of the rest of the perimeter of the island is typified by drop off and short walls cascading to depths well in excess of 60 feet. The bass generally reside above the thermocline once it establishes itself around a 35 foot depth.

Site F

Boat Access - This site is marked by sheer walls, recesses, undercut wall faces, and small cave like openings at greater depths. The sheer cliffs are regarded as lingering evidence of the meteor that created the depression that is now West Hawk Lake. This site is not recommended for the novice and extreme care must prevail when diving such a site.

Site J

Boat Access - This Site is similar in many ways to Site L.

Site K - The Flower Garden

This sites maximum depth is approximately 80 feet. Above this depth, ranging between a depth of 40 to 60 feet, will treat the diver to an underwater grotto. This undercut recedes some 20 feet and is encrusted, particularly in the more shallow depths with fresh water sponges. There is also a sheer wall which adds a delightful touch.

Site L

Boat Access - The orange cliffs are visible across the lake from the campground to identify this area. Sheer cliffs rise above the water but a number of trees grow along the shore to provide assistance for docking. Underwater, the site is marked by stretches of sheer wall face and areas providing ledge and boulder topography. Depths exceed 60 feet.

Site M

Boat Access - This site is similar in many ways to Site L.

Site N

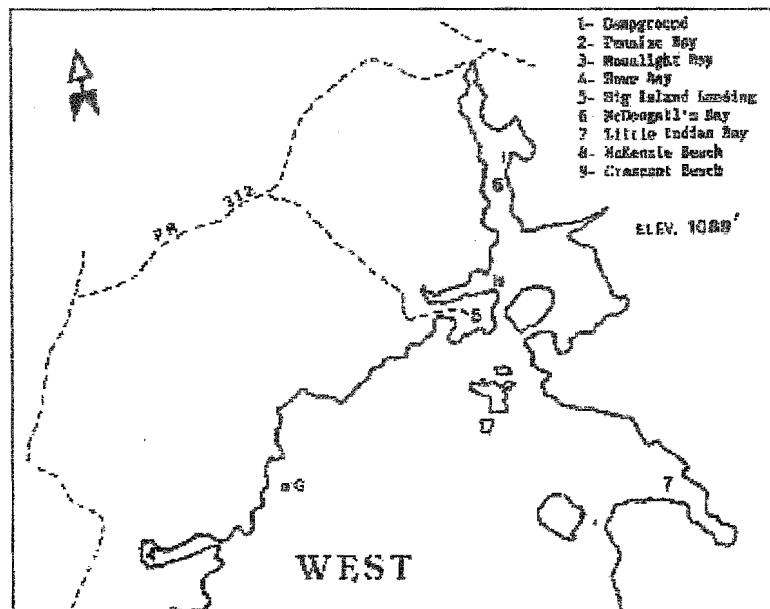
Boat Access - This site is similar to Site F in terms of depth, but is remarkable for the sheer wall starting at 20 feet and extending to well beyond 80 feet. An excellent wall dive.

Site O - McKenzie Beach

Boat/Shore Access - This site can be reached via a long (approx 200 yds) snorkle from McKenzie Beach. Boat access is preferable. This site is adjacent to one of the deepest areas of the lake. The drop off is relatively undulating and marked by the short steep walls seen including a large pinnacle at around 70 feet and several small overhangs. Odd white sponge-like fungi are quite prevalent at 30-40 feet. Depths well in excess of 100 feet are common. A dive light is recommended as light penetration in this area is limited. The West side of the inlet is less interesting with a fairly gentle rocky slope down to the sandy bottom at about 70 feet.

North End

The North end of West Hawk offers some lesser known gems.



Site G

Boat Access - This island site offers an excellent shallow (30 feet) dive although greater depths can be reached if desired. A number of interesting rock formations along with abundant fish-life makes this site worth the plunge.

Site H

Shore Access - A snorkel to the mouth of the bay provides some interesting diving amongst rock and boulders along a sandy bottom. Fish-life is plentiful but boat traffic requires the diver to be aware when shallow.

Site I

Boat Access - The North end of the lake can be reached via PR #312 to McDougall's Landing. A mixed bottom, primarily sandy with weeds and occasional rocky areas at a maximum of 30 feet. This may be a junk collector's dream site as areas of the bottom are strewn with various "artifacts". A large pipe and an abundance of weeds offer cover for small aquatic life. This site is better suited for snorkelling.

UPCOMING BRANDON SCUBA CLUB EVENTS

April 28th, 2009
7 PM

Brandon Scuba Club meeting
20 Wankling Blvd
Brandon, MB
(map on the Brandon Scuba Club
website www.brandonsclub.com)

May 23rd, 2009
1 PM

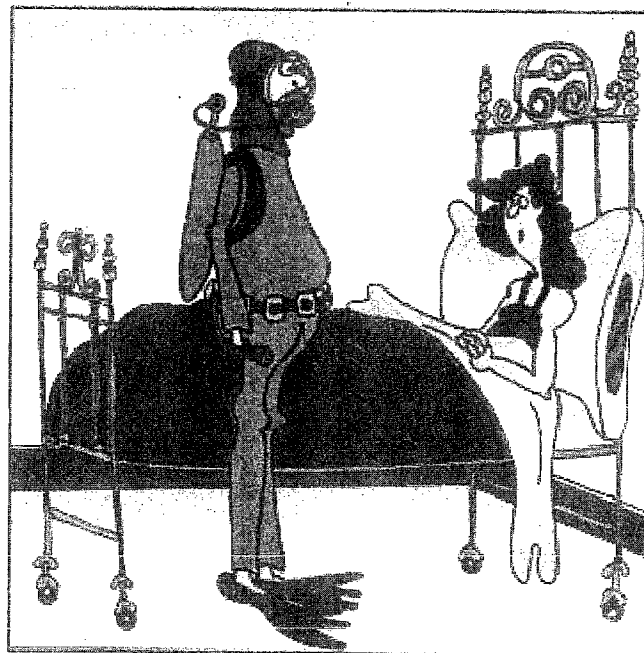
Dive site opening and put the buoys
in at Glen Beag on Clear Lake.
Pot luck BBQ to follow the dive. Divers
and non divers welcome. Phone Ed
Burridge 728.2040 for details.

July 18th, 2009
1 PM

National Parks Day dive. More details
in a later newsletter.

August 8th and 9th, 2009

Diving in the Ducks annual spearfish
contest. Duck Mountain Provincial
Park. More details later.



"Frank, this is carrying safe sex too far."