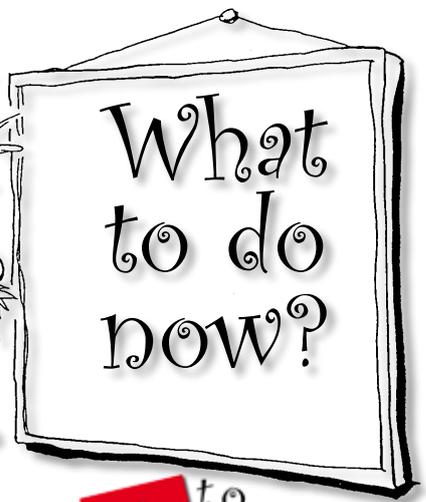




by Keith Cardwell



I remember returning to school at 29 and it made me shiver. I didn't like it the first time around and going through school gates again made me recall all of the days I'd had to endure there. I find it quite ironic that I'd eventually be doing PhD studies in the very subject that should have hung it all together then but never did - education.

I was re-entering those doubtful halls of learning with the intention of offering diver training as something new and diverting. I'd found considerable pleasure in diving and it's an occupation that appeared to have no real boundaries. This was such a great way to extend a young person's knowledge that I couldn't understand anyone not seeing in it what I did.

I tried selling the idea to school principals but my pitch wasn't good enough and I left schools after the 'I'm sorry Mr Cardwell but scuba diving doesn't seem appropriate for our young ladies and we think it best to continue our non-academic efforts in pursuit of more traditional sporting activities'.

My sales pitch about buddy diving and dive planning wasn't equal to their idea of 'team pursuits' nor becoming familiar with a not well known part of our world -the sea. So what was really so special

about diving? As many of us now know, quite a lot.

I realised my implicit understanding of what diving is for young and old alike had to be made more explicit. It was about offering a greater range of future directions/educational opportunities where folk could maximise their potentials. Surely one of the best things a high school could do is create greater awareness of what their students can do in the future to make it easier for them to see what and/or where their education could lead?

Future approaches to school principals went differently - bit like the following after a bit of pre-amble ...

Me: 'Thank you for listening to me. I understand traditional team sports offer many learning experiences in teamwork and interpersonal communication skills. However, would you agree that one of the greatest concerns young people have when considering leaving school is what occupation/s they may choose for the future?'

Principal: 'Yes'

Me: 'Then it would be a good thing to introduce students to a wider range of possible educational opportunities and occupations they may not be aware of?'





Principal: 'Yes'

Me: It may then be surprising to know that with recreational diving a student can be introduced, even in the most basic of courses, to a whole range of subjects that may not necessarily be touched on in many, if any, other sporting activities.

For instance: there's the effects of **A**ltitude and the physiological concerns of hypoxia and hypothermia and why Olympians train there; **B**oatmanship and the legal requirements of using a boat; how to navigate and follow appropriate safety procedures, **B**otany and its unique place in aquaculture, **C**hemistry and its effect on ecosystems (for instance the very well publicised common concern about the effects of commercial products on not just our drinking water but the animals and plants that live in it); **C**ooking – seafood platters! (what we can legally and safely take to eat) Yum!; **D**epth and the dimensions and other mysteries of our oceans (eg the average depth of the world's oceans is nearly 3½ kilometres with an average temperature of about 3½ degrees C), **E**ngineering and the genius behind the simplicity of most diving equipment used, **F**irst aid and what to do with a jellyfish sting; **F**reshwater science/Limnology and the importance of it to human survival, **G**eography – some countries are dependent on tourist economies and scuba diving is often a substantial part of this (Republic of Maldives), and this can lead on to **H**ospitality studies; then there's **H**istory – Pompeii was drowned in lava and ash from Mt Vesuvius but what about the statues and artefacts recovered from their drowning off Alexandria and other coastlines? Not to mention the many wreck sites at places like Scapa Flow (German First World War fleet) and Truk lagoon (Japanese wrecks from the Second World War); **I**chthyology – the study of fish, **I**nstruction – what I do for a job; **J**ournalism – check out this magazine and read the articles on marine life and places in the world to visit; **F**isheries, regulations and penalties; **L**aw – observation of the Historic Places Act and Antiquities Act (permits needed for diving some sites), **M**arine Biology, **M**edicine and the physiological effects of breathing gas under pressure; **N**avigation and finding your way back using a compass and natural navigational aids (not bad skills for tramping too!), **C**ceanography – a multi-faceted marine science; **O**ptometry; the visual changes underwater and optical properties of the sea, **P**hysics and the mechanics of pressure including the effects of Amonton's, Boyle's, Charles, Dalton's, Henry and Pascal's laws (to mention a few), **P**hotography; check this magazine again!, **Q**uantity surveying and strategic planning (this comes a bit later when we start organising more complex



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dive trips like searching for treasure or gold; **R**ecreation (check the NZRA for future careers); **S**ailing (we often go out on these types of boats), **S**earch & **R**ecovery and police/commercial diving; **T**eaching! (sort of what I do); **U**nderwater **V**ideography – movie making; **W**recks and again, knowledge of appropriate laws regarding these, **Y**achting (see sailing) and **Z**oology.

The list can be extended and (excuse the play on words) just skims the surface of things that recreational diving can lead to. So Mr/Mrs Principal, if you know of any sport that comes close to introducing young people to anywhere near this number of potential future occupations or life challenges, I'd really like to know. Here's my card and I hope to see you soon. And you I'll train for free!

(When I got to the Equipment bit I'd added, 'I think you can see where I'm going with this. I can give you a discipline/subject of interest related to recreational diving as a sport starting with every letter of the alphabet. Surely as an educational institution, you can see some value in looking at this further?')

The sales pitch worked and we had more high school classes to teach scuba to than we could handle.

Recreational scuba diving offers a myriad of lenses for people to look through for future opportunities, pastimes and occupations.

I've seen high school students inspired to become PhDs in zoology, designers of diving equipment and in one special case a Sous-chef who amassed the most amazing bottle collection from diving under old wharves he'd dived after researching in public libraries. And that inspiration came from a course where the stress was just on collecting rubbish off the bottom. The mind boggles...

And these are only a few examples for the reason why there are so many specialty courses designed to increase our knowledge and enrich our lives. And specialty courses may be what I might write about next...



Highlights from the adventures of New Zealander Matthew Carter (awarded the Our World-Underwater Australasian Rolex Scholarship (2009))

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(see page 66 Rolex Award Winner, #111, Apr/May09) below l-r: Petal Moran, Matthew Carter, Dave Moran



• Spent a week with the Maritime Archaeology branch of Heritage New South Wales working alongside a team of professional maritime archaeologists. One of their major projects is the management and protection of the M24 Japanese Midget submarine sunk in Sydney Harbour during the Japanese attack in 1942.

• Murcia (southeastern Spain) with Mark Polzer of Texas A&M University's Institute of Nautical Archaeology (INA). Mark and Spanish Maritime Archaeologist Juan Pinedo surveyed and are excavating two ancient shipwrecks: one Phoenician dated to the end of the 7th century BC, the other Punic from the 2nd century BC just off the coast from La Manga at the site of Bajo de la Campana.

Our first job was to clear the site of the rocks and boulders while being careful not to disturb the ceramics and other artefacts that covered the seafloor beneath. As the excavation progressed, we began to uncover amazing and rare artefacts, including a range of ceramics and metal ingots. However, I will always remember my last day at the site, as I was fortunate to be in the team responsible for removing three elephant tusks from the wreck and

bringing them to the surface. This was an amazing and surreal experience; swimming along at 18 metres while holding this massive elephant tusk that had not seen the light of day for over 2600 years, and all I could think was 'Don't drop it!'

• Lithuania and as the plane descended into Vilnius the capitol I caught my first glimpse of Eastern Europe. I was to take part in the 10th year of excavations at Lake Luokesas, the site of two submerged lake settlements dating to the Bronze Age 6th century BC and Iron Age 4th century BC in the area. The site was originally built around 2600 years ago on a foundation of wooden stilts above the water 30 metres from the lake shore. A typical day involved around two continuous hours of underwater excavation then another two hours on the surface platform monitoring the dredge machinery followed by two hours cataloguing artefacts. This was the first time I had excavated in a lake and it was a great experience to work in such challenging conditions

• Next I will be heading to the UK for a couple of months to spend time with Wessex Archaeology, English Heritage and to dive the wrecks in Scapa Flow.



excavation and collection of artefacts.

