

Y BONT FACH

THE DIGITAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SCHOOL OF OCEAN SCIENCES ASSOCIATION

Blwyddyn Newydd Dda

Dear Fellow Alumni,

Happy New Year to you all. Welcome to our new initiative – Y Bont Fach – or ‘The Little Bridge’. You will be aware that for many years we have issued a full annual newsletter, ‘The Bridge’. Over the past few months your association committee has been discussing various means of communicating with Alumni a bit more frequently and Y Bont Fach is a part of the result. Presuming this is well received by Alumni, it is our intention to issue this around each New Year to supplement The Bridge which we will continue to publish annually each June/July. Due to printing and postage costs, Y Bont Fach will only be circulated electronically. However, we will continue to produce The Bridge in both paper and electronic forms, assuming we can continue to raise sponsorship, as in the past.

You will see from the article opposite, we are organising a grand re-union. I am currently arranging to get my old MSc cohort together for the first time since we left Menai Bridge in 1979 and would encourage you to do something similar by booking a table(s) at the event. We are anticipating a good number to attend and would appreciate early responses from Alumni to our announcements over the next few weeks.

I have been watching, with great interest, the rapid reduction in the price of oil that has fallen to a new five year low. Whilst this is great news for the consumer in the form of lower living costs, many SOS Alumni work in oil and gas and associated industries and will be looking nervously at the impact on current and future employment prospects. Let’s hope prices stabilise soon.

Mick Cook, Chairman of SOSA

Happy New Year

A Phoenix Arises - Marine Centre Wales

A re-union to celebrate the completion of Marine Centre Wales is scheduled for Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th June 2015.

Many of you will be aware that the old Westbury Mount house -- and associated “sixties” buildings that formed the original Marine Science Laboratories -- have been recycled and have disappeared. As a result of very generous EU funding, a 21st century Phoenix, ‘Marine Centre Wales’ is arising to replace the dated buildings.

To celebrate this fabulous new addition to the School of Ocean Sciences building portfolio, we are holding a grand re-union of the School of Ocean Sciences Alumni Association (SOSA) on the weekend of the 27th /28th June 2015. Please put the date in your diaries now!

We are aiming to get together 100+ alumni, partners and staff with a celebratory evening at the excellent events venue of Reichel Hall in Bangor to include drinks/canapés, three course meal and a ceilidh afterwards.

We are also planning other fringe events for the Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning -- including rib-rides through the “Swellies” in the Menai Strait, a tour of the Prince Madog (availability permitting) and a tour of the Marine Centre Wales, including entertaining talks by visiting alumni and staff.

We have secured very cost-effective accommodation at the university halls of residence for those that are interested. We will also circulate a full list of alternative accommodation in the area. Full details of the event will be circulated to alumni early in 2015.

In the meantime please do not hesitate to contact Mick Cook, Chairman SOSA, e-mail mick@mickcook.com, mobile telephone: +44 7593 233633, for further information.

An artist's impression of the new centre



The Sun Shines on David Maguire

David Maguire, Marine Environmental Protection, Class of 1994

With over 20 years in the environmental and renewable energy sectors, he is consulted frequently on complex environmental and energy issues. David is Chairman of the Irish Solar Energy Association 'ISEA' and a founder member of the Alliance for Affordable Solar Energy 'AFASE', the industry group, which represents over 850 European companies with a combined annual turnover of over €26bn and employing over 86,000 people.

In 2007, David founded BNRG Renewables, a renewable energy development company, specialising in utility scale solar projects. To date, the Company has developed and constructed over 85MW of projects with a significant pipeline for 2015 and 2016. BNRG is active in seven countries across three continents with offices in the UK, Northern Ireland, The Republic of Ireland, USA, Nigeria and Kenya.

He is now living in Dublin and has two children.

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Corporate Fizz

Steve Logan

Physical Oceanography, Class of 1983

After several seasons as a ski guide, Steve returned to marine science joining Geoservices, followed by Schlumberger. On losing his job during the oil price dip of 1989, he moved on to Coca Cola, eventually ending up as European Central Services Director. He then moved on to work with (Sir) Stuart Rose on Company turnarounds. He now manages various concerns but finds time to sail.

steve@finchonline.co.uk

SOS Revisited

Brian Scannell, Ocean Electronics, Class of 1982

Initially, Brian worked for the Seafish Industry Authority and then Welsh Water on coastal surveys and modelling studies aimed at achieving EU bathing water quality standards.

Post-privatisation he was part of a team that grew a successful environmental consultancy business, eventually moving to Hong Kong in 1994. He returned to the UK in 1997, joining National Energy Services as Managing Director. The company provides software, training and quality assurance services related to the energy efficient design and assessment of buildings and he has been heavily involved in various Government initiatives to promote energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty.

Having sold the business in 2011, he decided to pursue a long-held desire to further his academic studies, returning to Menai Bridge to do the MSc in Physical Oceanography. He subsequently managed to secure a NERC studentship for a PhD supervised by Prof Tom Rippeth and is looking forward to the new challenges of a research project.

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South-West Top Cop

Jim Gale, Geological Oceanography, Class of 1992

Jim settled in Devon in 1992, and joined Devon and Cornwall Police. Now he is an Operational Chief Inspector with firearms command responsibilities, alongside running a major IT project.

Along the way, Jim married a Devon girl; they have two children at local schools. He also completed a Masters Degree and PhD in policing-related matters at Exeter University.

Not leaving all things salty out of his blood, he had 'Silver' command responsibilities relating to the MSC Napoli, the listing container ship, which was run aground off Branscombe in Devon in January 2007 (see photos) and also various coastal flooding events, which have occurred around the enormous coastline!

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Lifeboat going out to the Napoli



Where there's Muck, there's Brass

Dario Savini Marine Environmental Protection, Class of 1999



After the SOS, Dario spent a long period as a PhD student, where he became a contracted Researcher and Professor in the field of Aquatic Ecology at the University of Pavia, Italy.

Since 2013, he has been the Chief Executive Officer of a spin-off company (ECO-SISTEMI SRL: www.eco-sistemi.org) of the university. He has invented a new type of wastewater treatment system for the remediation of biodegradable wastewaters (RCBR: www.rcbr-water.com) and they are now selling it internationally. He is 43 years old, married and father of two girls Caterina, 7 and Matilde 3.

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On the Midnight Special

Gareth Wood, Marine Geotechnics, Class of 1992

Gareth has recently moved to Houston for BP, with his family, to head up a team of Geohazard Specialists, working on Western Hemisphere New Well Delivery and Sub-sea Installation projects.

The Geohazard team is responsible for the safe delivery of offshore oil & gas drilling operations in the top 1000m sub-seabed, and providing technical expertise for Production Development engineering projects. Specialisms include; 3D/2DHR seismic and seafloor survey data acquisition, seismic interpretation and mapping, attribute analysis, and Geohazard assessment.

Gareth has been with BP for 8 years, and will remain in Houston for a 3 year period.



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Good on Yer, Cobber

Alex Gaut, Marine Biology, Class of 1997

Alex now lives and works in Australia (working on marine conservation) and recently returned to SOS to give a presentation about temperate Australian marine life to members of the SOS.

Alex also brought her aunt, Vicki Billings (1960s alumna), who wrote an article in the last edition of 'The Bridge' on diving around the world. They both met with Prof Chris Richardson and looked around the School. An excellent lunch afterwards helped to cement UK—Australian relations!

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Alex Gaut, Prof Chris Richardson and Vicki Billings

Bridge that Gap

Natalie Macauley, Geological Oceanography, Class of 1993.

After leaving Bangor, Natalie joined the Royal Navy. Ten years later she moved to Calgary, Alberta, Canada. She now works with Russell Reynolds Associates, an international 'Headhunting Company' based in Calgary.

She has come up with a great idea. In her own words: *"I thought I would send you an image for inclusion in Y Bont Fach. It is of a rather beautiful bridge, recently built here in Calgary, called the Peace Bridge. I thought it might be a cool idea to feature Alumni, who are in far flung places of the world, via a bridge that is significant to their locale. Bridges are such a great metaphor for connecting us -- as the newsletters, The Little Bridge and The Bridge, do with news of the School and other Alumni."*

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Editor: Why not send us a picture of a bridge near you and tell us a little about yourself?

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Calgary Peace Bridge



Drs David Todd and Kerry Marten are ex-Bangor students now working in the Coasts & Estuaries team at HR Wallingford. The team also contains Dr Tom Benson and David Finch, both of whom were undergraduates at Menai Bridge. All work closely together in the field of Oceanography, undertaking numerical modelling tasks. David and Kerry also undertake physical modelling in the HR Wallingford Fast Flow Facility (<http://www.hrwallingford.com/facilities/fast-flow-facility> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-29830348>).

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Bob Hickman Marine Biology Class of 1968

The new Marine Centre looked impressive in the photos in the July 2014 edition of "The Bridge" and was equally impressive when seen on site in August, but what surprised me most on my recent brief visit to SOS was the numbers of students now completing their MSc studies at Menai Bridge. During a couple of hours spent with Prof Chris Richardson discussing old times and new developments, he informed me that SOS now hosts between 60-70 MSc students each year – a far cry indeed from the group of twenty or so on my M Sc in Marine Biology back in 1967-68.

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Sarah Orton Class of 2010

Since leaving the School of Ocean Sciences, she has worked in Human Resources and is now starting a new course in adult nursing. She thinks that she is the embodiment of a perpetual student. Her advice to new students is: "Remember your class mates are your greatest source of support and empathy and good luck to you all"

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PRIFYSGOL BANGOR UNIVERSITY

Our annual newsletter, The Bridge, is scheduled to be sent out in early July this year. Why not send us an article about yourself or something relevant to the School of Ocean Sciences? Anything up 1000 words. Good photographs would also be appreciated.

**anna.macdonald@bangor.ac.uk
or kevin@kevjen.com**

If your organisation/company would like to advertise in the main newsletter, please contact Mick Cook, mick@mickcook.com, for further information.



Happy Days

Bangor Alumni catch up at the recent Conference of the Challenger Society for Marine Science. Dr Pat Hyder of the Met Office, Dr Tony Walne, Prof Ed Hill OBE of the National Oceanography Centre, Prof Jonathan Sharples of Liverpool University, along with Prof Tom Rippeth of the SOS. All except Tony Walne had Prof John Simpson as a PhD supervisor.

The Challenger Society Conference is the UK's main academic Marine Science conference. This year's conference saw presentations from many current Bangor PhD students and Post-Doctoral Researchers. The outgoing Challenger Society President is Prof Hilary Kennedy with SOS's Dr Jaco Bas the outgoing secretary. Meanwhile SOS's Dr Mattias Green has been elected to sit on the Challenger Council.

Play Up and Play the Game Marine Biology v The Rest of the World



© Mick Cook

Congratulations to the Marine Biology team for a comprehensive win over the Rest Of the World team during the annual SOS cricket match on the 4th of September. The Marine Biologists won by 6 wickets with about 10 overs to go, and have now “earned” the Ashes four years in a row. Well done biologists, well done...



Tense Anticipation

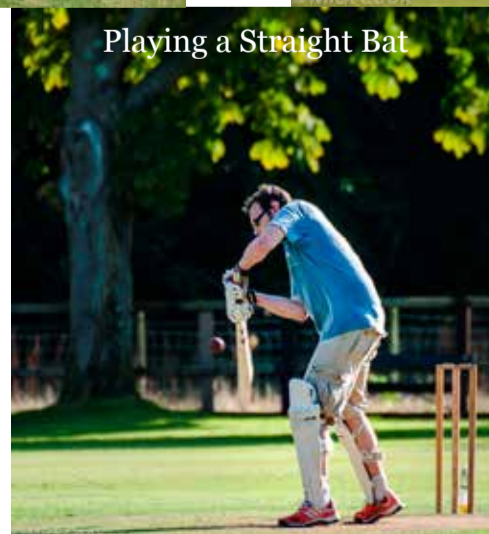


Perfect Bowling Action



Mick Cook

Umpire Dave Bowers giving a Marine Biologist Out!



Playing a Straight Bat



Bangor University's School of Ocean Sciences recently hosted a Fisheries Congress conference which coincided with the landmark birthday of two eminent academics in the fisheries science field. Professor Tony Pitcher and Professor Paul Hart will both celebrate their 70th birthday later this year and both presented to a global audience at the Bangor conference.

Both academics have had a long association with Bangor, Professor Pitcher was a senior lecturer at the School of Biological Sciences in the late 80s/ early 90s before leaving to lead the Fisheries Centre at the University of British Columbia in Canada. He also introduced the MSc Fisheries course to Bangor which saw many of its students become influential in the field and now hold senior positions in the fish and fisheries industry.

Professor Hart has had many collaborations with Bangor staff over the years and was also an External Examiner for both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

They both co-authored the acclaimed Fish & Fisheries 'Pitcher and Hart 1982' text book which is still regarded as a seminal work. They are also the lead editors — together with Professor Gary Carvalho of the School of Biological Sciences — of the Fish and Fisheries journal, which is the leading journal in fisheries and fish research.

A warm (brief) welcome back to Professor Tony Pitcher and Professor Paul Hart — two Eminent Academics return to Bangor.

(From left to right: Prof Gary Carvalho (alumnus and SOS staff), Prof Tony Pitcher, Prof Paul Hart, and Prof Michel Kaiser (SOS Staff))



Au Revoir

Sandie Hague, our Postgraduate Administrator, is retiring on the 5th February 2015. Sandie has been instrumental in developing and delivering a fantastic service to our MSc classes for many years. Many cohorts of students and our SOS staff have benefited enormously from Sandie's guidance, assistance and advice. Sandie will be missed and we wish her well in retirement. In the New Year, SOS are organising a small "gathering" to mark Sandie's retirement.

Congratulations to...

Prof Ed Hill OBE on being awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Bangor University. He is Executive Director of the National Oceanographic Centre, Southampton University, and a former postgraduate student and member of staff at the SOS. Professor Ed Hill said:

"I'm delighted and very honoured to receive an Honorary Fellowship from Bangor University, a university with which I've had a long association, first as a post graduate student then as member of staff. Bangor has a very strong reputation in marine science and is noted worldwide for the excellence of research and quality of its graduates."

See more at: <http://www.bangor.ac.uk/news/university/bangor-university-honorary-fellowships-2014-19553#sthash.iRY31zE2.dpuf>

Dr Graham Allen (Physical Oceanography) on being appointed as the head of the British Oceanographic Data Centre in Liverpool. Graham took up the post in August having moved back to the UK from an IT position in New Zealand. Also, to **John Siddorn** (Physical Oceanography) on being promoted to Head of Ocean Modelling at the Met Office.

Holly Pelling, who has recently graduated with a PhD in Physical Oceanography from the SOS, has been reviewed by NERC's Planet Earth magazine: "Coastal defences could contribute to flooding with sea-level rise". See: <http://planetearth.nerc.ac.uk/news/story.aspx?id=1734>

As a result of this work Holly has been a guest of the British Council on a trip to Columbia to discuss the potential impacts of climate change with other young scientists from across the globe.

Coleen Suckling presented her research 'Antarctic sea urchins acclimate towards future climate change' in the House of Commons at the SET for Britain event in March 2014. SET for BRITAIN is an annual event which encourages, supports & promotes Britain's early-stage and early-career research scientists (engineers, technologists & mathematicians) who are in the forefront of continued development of UK research. The event's webpage states: "Many of whom will become Britain's future scientific & technological leaders & therefore are a vital asset and investment for the UK."

<http://www.setforbritain.org.uk/index.asp>