



### GERSTLE COVE REVISITED

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Siva School Of Diving  
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After a gap of at least 5 years, I recently had the opportunity to revisit one of my old diving haunts, Gerstle Cove at Salt Point State Park, and at the same time introduce the subsurface of the Northeast Pacific to a visiting diver who found our club and came to our last general club meeting.

Now many of you can recount tales of visiting divers, initially boasting of their cold water diving experience and ability, who after making their first dive in our waters later boast of just surviving the experience and vow to never repeat it, while arranging their next vacation to the Turks and Caicos. Or maybe you had to rescue them from the clutches of giant waves at Monastery, or maybe their will crumbled as soon as they got ankle deep in the surf. I have had two bad experiences with such visiting "divers" that I still remember, and count myself lucky to have kept my name out of the newspapers and police incident reports (they both survived without official intervention, one made a "Polaris missile" like ascent, and the second had an asthma attack on surfacing.) But heck, do I learn? and besides our visitor was a THREE STAR CMAS diver. From Dijon.

Carole Girard had brought with her to the USA only a mask, snorkel, fins/booties, gloves and computer so I supplied the weights and a regulator and she rented a wetsuit and BCD. Monday seemed the best day for both of us and the seas were calm, but she couldn't make it to our rendezvous point in Santa Rosa until 9:30 and HAD to be back at Mill Valley by 4PM.

We got to Salt Point at 11pm, having dawdled a bit over a breakfast in Santa Rosa, and immediately

geared up in the parking lot, which was empty except for a large family with two seemingly even larger growling pit bulls.

The seas were quite calm and it was cool and overcast. I was testing out a new zipper for my old drysuit, and new (for me) retro XXL SP Jet fins to be better balanced underwater (and to look cool like my buddies). I also had a canister light, its third visit to the hospital was over (can I get canister light health insurance Mr. Obama?) but it had previously functioned well to 300Ft (thank you Mr. Gwin!) and I had few doubts it would survive an immersion to a just more than 1/10 of that.



Those of you who have beach dived there remember how its a struggle to get the dive gear down the cliff to

the beach via a steep, steep road, gear up and walk over the boulders, then clamber over the slippery algae covered rocks, finally to put on your fins, followed typically by a faceplant into some minestrone soup and off into the quiet cold wet murk.

Well that is just how it happened. No problems! Carole, although somewhat over weighted by me since underweighting is a bigger problem in shallow water and we didn't know what she would require, made the dive through the jungly low vis shallows, followed by the kick through the marionette factory of bull kelp stipes (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nereocystis>) until we made it to our maximum depth where the kelp thinned out and there were lots of boulders and free swimming was possible.

No, I did not abandon Carole underwater nor she me. We stayed buddies though out the dive, where I

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Reefer's Rap 2010		
<p><b>JANUARY</b></p> <p>01 - New Year's Day - Breakwater Dive 02 - Club Dive: Beachhopper II 06 - Officer's Meeting 22 - General Meeting - Sinbad's 23-31 - 41<sup>st</sup> International Boat Show - Dusseldorf - <a href="http://www.boot.de">www.boot.de</a></p>	<p><b>FEBRUARY</b></p> <p>03 - Officers Meeting 03 - 07 - SF Ocean Film Festival <b>13</b> - Club Dive: Beachhopper II 17 - Meeting - Sinbad's 19-21 - Our World Underwater - <a href="http://www.ourworldunderwater.com">www.ourworldunderwater.com</a></p>	<p><b>MARCH</b></p> <p>03 - Officers Meeting 05-07 - The Boston Sea Rovers - <a href="http://www.bostonsearovers.com">www.bostonsearovers.com</a> 24 - <b>Club Dive: Sanctuary</b> 17 - Meeting - Sinbad's 26-28 - Beneath the Sea - New Jersey - <a href="http://www.beneaththe.sea.org">www.beneaththe.sea.org</a></p>
<p><b>APRIL</b></p> <p>03 - Abalone Opener - Fort Ross - CenCal 07 - Officers Meeting 16-18 - Ocean Fest - Fort Lauderdale - <a href="http://www.oceanfest.com">www.oceanfest.com</a> <b>21 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b></p>	<p><b>MAY</b></p> <p>01 - Bay Area Dive Show - San Jose - <a href="http://www.divechronicles.com">www.divechronicles.com</a> 05 - Officers Meeting 15 - 16 - Scuba Show - Long Beach - <a href="http://www.scubashow.com">www.scubashow.com</a> <b>19 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b> 21-23 - Dive &amp; Travel Expo - Tacoma - <a href="http://www.diveandtravelexpo.com">www.diveandtravelexpo.com</a></p>	<p><b>JUNE</b></p> <p>02 - Officers Meeting 13 - <b>Club Dive: Sanctuary</b> <b>16 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b> TBD - Abalone Closer</p>
<p><b>JULY</b></p> <p>07 - Officers Meeting 17 - <b>Club Dive: Sanctuary</b> <b>21 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b></p>	<p><b>AUGUST</b></p> <p>TBD - Abalone Opener 04 - Officers Meeting 08-11 - Channel Islands - Jim Vallario - 415.566.0784 11 - Channel Island Extension TBD <b>18 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b></p>	<p><b>SEPTEMBER</b></p> <p>01 - Officers Meeting 10 - 12 Lake Tahoe - Norm Knutson 15 - Meeting - Sinbad's</p>
<p><b>OCTOBER</b></p> <p>06 - Officers Meeting <b>20 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Officer Nominations !!!</b></p>	<p><b>NOVEMBER</b></p> <p>03 - Officers Meeting <b>17 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Officer Elections !!!</b> 17 - 21 - The Dema Show - Las Vegas - <a href="http://www.demashow.com">www.demashow.com</a> TBD - Abalone Closer</p>	<p><b>DECEMBER</b></p> <p>01 - Officers Meeting <b>15 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Christmas Party !!!</b></p>

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## Stammtisch

Pierre Hurter



Jacques-Yves Cousteau was born on June 11, 1910, in Saint André de Cubzac, Gironde in France. With the exception of Mike Nelson and Sea Hunt, Cousteau arguably brought more people to diving than anyone else I can think of. And unlike Mike Nelson, he helped develop the basic diving equipment that with remarkably few changes is with us today, the Aqualung or self contained underwater breathing apparatus.

Here's an excerpt from *The Silent World*; published in 1953 where he describes using the first Aqualung.

*ONE MORNING IN JUNE, 1943, I went to the railway station at Bandol on the French Riviera and received a wooden case expressed from Paris. In it was a new and promising device, the result of years of struggle and dreams, an automatic compressed-air diving lung conceived by Emile Gagnan and myself. I rushed it to Villa Barry where my diving comrades, Philippe Tailliez and Frederic Dumas waited. No children ever opened a Christmas present with more excitement than ours when we unpacked the first "aqualung." If it worked, diving could be revolutionized.*

*We found an assembly of three moderate-sized cylinders of compressed air, linked to an air regulator the size of an alarm clock. From the regulator there extended two tubes, joining on a mouthpiece. With this equipment harnessed to the back, a watertight glass mask over the eyes and nose, and rubber foot fins, we intended to make unencumbered flights in the depths of the sea.*

*My friends harnessed the three-cylinder block on my back with the regulator riding at the nape of my neck and the hoses looped over my head. I spat on the inside of my shatterproof glass mask and rinsed it in the surf, so that mist would not form inside. I molded the soft rubber flanges of the mask tightly over forehead and cheekbones. I fitted the mouthpiece under my lips and gripped the nodules between my teeth. A vent the size of a paper clip was to pass my inhalations and exhalations beneath the sea. Staggering under the fifty-pound apparatus, I walked with a Charlie Chaplin waddle into the sea.*

*I looked into the sea with the same sense of trespass that I have felt on every dive. A modest canyon opened below, full of dark green weeds, black sea*

*urchins and small flowerlike white algae. Fingerlings browsed in the scene. The sand sloped down into a clear blue infinity. The sun struck so brightly I had to squint. My arms hanging at my sides, I kicked the fins languidly and traveled down, gaining speed, watching the beach reeling past. I stopped kicking and the momentum carried me on a fabulous glide. When I stopped, I slowly emptied my lungs and held my breath. The diminished volume of my body decreased the lifting force of water, and I sank dreamily down. I inhaled a great chestful and retained it. I rose toward the surface.*



*I experimented with all possible maneuvers of the aqualung -loops, somersaults and barrel rolls. I stood upside down on one finger and burst out laughing, a shrill distorted laugh. Nothing I did altered the automatic rhythm of air. Delivered from gravity and buoyancy I flew around in space.*

Cousteau goes on to describe how he handed lobsters to his wife who was snorkeling overhead following his bubbles. Topside, she asked a local fisherman to watch her lobsters as she went back for more. All the fisherman saw was a blonde girl walking out of the surf

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pointed out some of our more unusual species of animals and wrote their names on a slate I had brought along. All the gear worked impressively and I have to honestly say I really like the jet fins, even if they are trendy.

We saw among other living creatures, ling cods, black and yellow and gopher rockfish, surf perch, greenlings, nudibranchs, abalone(s!), sea urchins, giant gumboot chitons ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gumboot\\_chiton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gumboot_chiton)), a variety of sea anemones and seastars, masking and cancer crabs, and were finally attacked by a pod of ravenous white sharks which we were able to fight off by poking out their eyes with our dive knives. (put that in to see if anyone is actually reading this...)

After navigating in circles due to a magnetic anomaly we made it back to the beach safely and reversed the steps we had taken to get where we had been before the dive began.

It was after 2PM when we finally get back to my truck in the Salt Point parking lot and Carole had an important appointment at 4 in Mill Valley. Despite the hopelessness of getting her back in time, I drove like a madman over the scary twists of highway one back to Santa Rosa. Luckily for Carole, there was a freeway fire that slowed traffic between Santa Rosa and Mill Valley to a near halt and while she was late, she could blame her tardiness on factors beyond her control rather than me.

So, to all you SF Reefers out there. Carole Girard is a good competent and avid cold water diver and deserves your support

and acceptance as a buddy. She will be here for about a year and while she will be slowly acquiring more gear, it would be helpful for those of you with a garage of extra dive stuff to help fit her out. She is free for an entire day on the weekends so boat trips to Monterey should be possible. She can be reached via our Yahoo Groups site at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sfreefdivers>

Dive Stats(Aladin Uwatec Nitrox)

Gas: 32% Nitrox in 100CF HP cylinders

Dive time: 39 minutes  
max depth 37ft



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wriggling lobsters in her hands. The fisherman promptly dropped his pole in amazement at the sight of seeing what must have appeared to be a real live selkie, a sea creature of legend that's capable of assuming human form by shedding its seal skin.

It's a great book, published first in English, Cousteau along with Lloyd Bridges in *Sea Hunt* is what brought so many to take a closer look at what lie beneath the waves for that "sense of trespass" I still feel every time I take a giant stride, a back roll or walk into the water until it's over my head.

There are those who will argue about who invented the first practical SCUBA equipment. Here's what I've found. With the scuttling of most of the French fleet, Jacques Cousteau found himself a civilian, living in German occupied Paris. Cousteau was married to the daughter of the Chairman of the board of *Aire Liquide*. Working at *Aire Liquide* at the time was Emile Gagnon a young French Canadian engineer working on a demand valve for the automotive industry.

Gasoline was in short supply and many vehicles had been retrofit to use partially combusted wood and other materials. The demand valve was essentially a carburetor for the gases produced. Using patent ideas from the *Aerophore* designed by Benoit Roquayrol and August Denayrouze in the 1860's Cousteau and Gagnon came up with a demand valve that could be attached to tanks carried by the diver rather than surface supplied air.

There was another setup with independently carried tanks develop by French navy captain Yves Le Prieur. It also used a modification of the *Rouquayrol-Denayrouze* device, combining a demand valve with a high pressure air tank. The apparatus had no regulator; the diver received air by opening and closing a tap (In the late 1930s Cousteau used this apparatus but, as he wrote in *The Silent World*, "the continuous discharge of air allowed only short submersions.") In 1935 Le Prieur's SCUBA is adopted by the French navy.

Along with the "swimming propellers," as fins were referred

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to, patented by Louis de Corlieu in 1933, and the rubber goggles with glass lenses developed by Guy Gilpatric, Cousteau and his companions were ready to make the move from free diving to SCUBA diving. In October of 1943, Fredric Dumas, another of Cousteaus' dive buddies, descended to 210 ft in the Mediterranean Sea and experienced *l'ivresse Des grandes profondeurs* - rapture of the deep.

Not long thereafter Aire Liquid started a division called *Spirotechnique* to market the new device, the Aqua-Lung.

After the war Rene Bussoz, another Frenchman formed U.S. Divers and began manufacturing the Aqua Lung in the United States under license to *Aire Liquide*. U.S. Divers Company was later sold to *Aire Liquide* with Jacques Cousteau as Chairman of the Board.

As late as 1950 only 10 of the units had been sold in the United States, according to the distributor, "the market had been saturated". A lot has changed since then, now you have certifying agencies, neat laminated cards that proclaim you to be a "certified" diver of one sort or another, Advanced, Open water, Rescue, the list goes on and on. If you look at one of those first setups, it's clear that times have changed, but when you look closer, not really that much since the first manfish, took that eventful plunge.

Maybe it was Cousteau's stirring account of his first encounters with the world beneath the waves or maybe it's because we were having such gorgeous weather, but we

decided to head for Monterey and a dive aboard the Sanctuary with some fellow Reef Divers.

We headed down on Saturday after a leisurely breakfast and a stop at Any Waters to pick up my doubles which I had dropped off to be hydro'd.

Have you noticed that if you own enough gear there is always some piece that is in need of maintenance of some sort or another. Still haven't figured out the various hieroglyphics stamped into the neck of the tank purporting to tell those initiated into the guild all sorts of interesting information, thread specification, alloy the tank is made from, working pressure and of course the all important test date.

Anyway, the tanks had a fresh stamp, they were full of Nitrox, 32%, and shortly they were packed in the back of the dive 'Taco' and we were ready to go. Fueled by a pit stop at Jamba Juice, we headed down the road to Monterey and the Lone Oak Lodge.

As has become our custom we met up with our fellow Reefer Divers at Passion Fish for some good food and conversation before the dive. This was our

second time aboard the *Sanctuary*, with Captain Mike at the helm. We had Norm onboard nominally as able bodied crew,

but the less said about that the better. Lets just say, that "able bodied" does not necessarily carry with it the implication you might think it does.

With the seven of us onboard, Norm, Jim, Bhushan, Maria, Steve, Gerda and I, we headed south for East Pinnacles. It

was a beautiful day, flat, clear sky's and not a cloud in the sky. Gerda and I teamed up with Maria and took the plunge. Water temperature was 46 degrees and I had forgotten our HID canister lights, but the visibility was good enough to let us peer into nooks and crannies with the aid of our backup lights. Gerda and I both brought along slates so we could share hints, tips and sightings, but managed to get through the dive without using more than a few well thought out hand signals.

Have you ever noticed that once you are in the water, the signals you think are obvious quickly get lost in the thin green swirl, or maybe it's just an issue with Gerda and me. That's why we got the slates, but I think we enjoy the misunderstanding more than we thought.

For our second dive we pulled



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up anchor and headed for the Outer Pinnacles. This time Gerda and I partnered up for the plunge. We dropped down the anchor line and into deep narrow channel. The water was still and past the 100 foot mark as clear as a glass of water. It was still cold at 46 degrees, but we paddled around for a little over half an

hour. By then the nagging leak in my left arm and the seep down my neck was getting the better of me and we headed for the surface.

A good weekend spent with fun people, capped with a visit to Any Waters for a new neck seal and while your at it how about some pockets and wrist seals? Won't be needing the dry suit in

the Philippines, but that's another story best left for another newsletter. As that other famous diver, Mike Nelson, might have said, "... my lungs were close to bursting, the detonator would not come loose from the WWII mine, my hose was cut, life giving air streaming to the surface ...", see you next month.

# Spindrift

## THE CALYPSO TO BE RE-LAUNCHED TO THE CENTENNIAL OF JACQUES COUSTEAU'S BIRTH

The *Calypso* has been quietly mouldering away for years and was badly damaged in 1996, when a barge rammed into it in the port of Singapore. All that may now change as the Cousteau Society hopes to restore it as a floating educational exhibit.



The ship, originally built for the British Royal Navy as a minesweeper by the Ballard Marine Railway Company of Seattle, and made from Oregon pine. In 1950 she was purchased by Irish millionaire and former MP Thomas Loel Guinness, a descendent of the founder of the Guinness brewery, who had it outfitted to Captain Cousteau's specifications and leased it to him for a symbolic one franc per year.

Captain Cousteau died in 1997. Since then there has been a long acrimonious fight over what should be done with the ship and by whom. As of this report, his eponymous society plans to mark the centennial of his birth with a year-long celebration and the restoration of the *Calypso*. For more information take a look at their website ... <http://www.cousteau.org/>.

## SPERM WHALE POOP HELPS ABSORB CO2

It seems that marine plants, specifically phytoplankton grow better when they are fertilized. They in turn absorb CO2 during the process of photosynthesis. That's where the whale poop comes in.



Sperm whales release an estimated 50 tones of iron into the Southern Ocean annually. The whales eat mostly squid and in the process of elimination release iron as well. The iron is utilized as a nutrient by the phytoplankton.



*We encourage you to also support the other organizations listed below when you pay your annual dues. (Please indicate your membership options with the checkboxes below.)*

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**SINCE JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> 1973**

**ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO REEF DIVERS (SFRD):**

The *Reef Diver Times* is the official newsletter of the San Francisco Reef Divers, a not for profit community organization dedicated to safe sport diving and the preservation of our ocean resources. Membership is \$25 annually, dues payable to "SFRD". The General Meeting is held the 3rd Wednesday of the month at Sinbad's, located at Pier 2, Embarcadero Street, SF, CA 94111. Meet at 7:00pm for socializing, drinks and food and 7:30 pm for club business and entertainment. For more information, visit <http://www.sfreefdivers.org/>.

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