



POINT LOBOS



November 3, 2007

Aquatic Image Makers Dive at Whaler's Cove



Chuck Bormann

The Aquatic Image Makers (AIM) trip to Point Lobos, California on November 3, 2007 might best be described as outstanding, and the weather was the best we have experienced in the Monterey area in years. It is the first trip Sharon and I have made with the club in some time and upon reviewing my log books, I found it is the first trip to Point Lobos since July 27, 1997. Yes folks, that was over ten years ago. Even I was a bit stunned to realize how long an interval it had been.

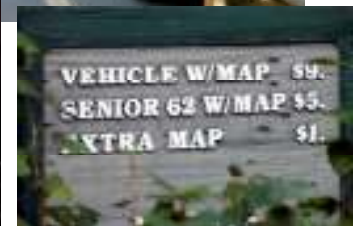
Sharon and I began our journey on Friday afternoon, It took us all of one hour and fifteen minutes to slip the surly bonds of air space from Placerville to Monterey and the weather was beautiful, nary a bump in the sky. After a nice meal and checking the area over, we turned in early to rest up for the events of the following day.

Departing early Saturday morning, we picked up tanks at Breakwater and viewed the sun rising over Monterey Bay. There is always a special atmosphere generated as one listens to the sounds of sailing vessels, surf, and the sea animals rustling in the water as the sun begins its sojourn into the beginning of another day. Perhaps, this was an omen to the pleasant day before us.



Prior to proceeding to Point Lobos, most of our group gathered for breakfast at the Black Bear Diner in Carmel. Following a fine meal, we joined the line up to await entry into the park. It was rather like AIM was there to take over the place, which in fact, appeared to be the case. Fortunately, Holly was well in charge and kept the rangers from becoming unruly.

Every one setup their dive stations in a very neat and orderly fashion. You'd think some of them may have done this before. Of course, my bride has certified herself as a designated "warm water woose," electing to forego getting her toes wet in such frigid waters. She now prefers to enjoy everyone's company, rather than get wet in water below 80 degrees F.



Sharon Passes
the Time at
Point Lobos

Dive buddies for my first dive included the Moose family, Tom, Kathy, and Rachael. They all proved to be very patient waiting for this old man to finally figure out how to enter the water in his dry suit and eventually make his way through the water from a shore entry.

Naturally, my primary camera's strobe light would not function, so out came old faithful, the Nikon Coolpix 5000. It may be dated, and the time delay just short of forever, but it does normally work like a charm. I hate to think of the number of dive trips that this spare camera has saved.



The Moose Family

One draw back with using an older camera is it takes some getting used to, remembering how it is supposed to work. That took about half the dive. The other obstacle was getting caught up in all the kelp. The strobe arm was like a magnet, attracting every strand of kelp in the area. The kelp even liked my fins, perhaps even better than the camera.

Thrashing my way through the kelp, and grossly over-weighted, I found the surge action within Whalers Cove was not helping my transition through that kelp. It soon appeared to me that my right foot was ever so much freer than my left. Yep, the fin was no longer attached. Woops! Thank goodness Tom was there to the rescue, assisting me to re-attach the wayward fin.



Kelp was everywhere.



The second dive was almost as much fun as the first, especially after attempting to rid myself of some of the excess weight I was carrying earlier. This time Kathy and Rachael stayed on land and Tom picked up two old farts to look after – Paul Bisbee and myself. Figuring I must be the slow one, Tom had me take the lead to begin working our way through the kelp again and out to deeper water. Apparently without the extra weight, I was able to buggify a little faster than on the first dive. Stopping after a few minutes of dodging the kelp, a turn was made to check on my “dive buddies.” Alas, they were nowhere to be found. After hanging out for a few minutes, a surface search was made and there they were checking the scenery above sea level. Re-grouping, Tom put me in lead again. Back down we went through the kelp, on to view the wonders of the world below. Did I stop to see my buddies in close trail behind me? Certainly. Turning 180 degrees, I found the kelp bed still in existence behind me, lots of starfish and other little creatures. Guess who was not there? Yea, I’m sure Tom and Paul had pre-arranged a solo dive would be in my best interest. Anyway, from that point forward it was a Bill Levine dive, made without the encumbrance of dealing with other divers. Just me and my camera. Heck, when you come to think of it, t’was like diving with my usual dive buddy. Sharon starts off with me, and then finds a more accommodating group to finish the dive. I’m kind of used to it, but is there a uniform message not being interpreted by me?



Bat Starfish



Kelp Air Sac



Anemone

Completion of any dive must end with exiting the water. Oh my, that last exit taught me what a beached whale must feel like. First, the camera attachment would not unclip from my BCD. Then, the fins held on to my dry suit boots with the force of a strong suction device. Tom was not there this time. Thank goodness Joe Herrlie was.



Cayle

Tom & Craig



Thanks Joe, Tom – and everyone that made this a great trip. Special thanks to Holly for putting it all together.