

Scuba diving history

Scuba history from a diving bell developed by Guglielmo de Loreno in 1535 up to John Bennett's dive in the Philippines to amazing 308 meter in 2001 and much more...

Humans have been diving since man was required to collect food from the sea. The need for air and protection under water was obvious. Let us find out how mankind conquered the sea in the quest to discover the beauty of the under water world.

1535 – A diving bell was developed by Guglielmo de Loreno.

1650 – Guericke developed the first air pump.

1667 – Robert Boyle observes the decompression sickness or “the bends”. After decompression of a snake he noticed gas bubbles in the eyes of a snake.

1691 – Another diving bell a weighted barrels, connected with an air pipe to the surface, was patented by Edmund Halley.

1715 – John Lethbridge built an underwater cylinder that was supplied via an air pipe from the surface with compressed air. To prevent the water from entering the cylinder, greased leather connections were integrated at the cylinder for the operators arms.

1776 – The first submarine was used for a military attack.

1826 – Charles Anthony and John Deane patented a helmet for fire fighters. This helmet was used for diving too. This first version was not fitted to the

diving suit. The helmet was attached to the body of the diver with straps and air was supplied from the surface

1837 – Augustus Siebe sealed the diving helmet of the Deane brothers' to a watertight diving suit and became the standard for many dive expeditions.

1843 – The Royal Navy established the first diving school.

1865 – An underwater breathing apparatus was developed and patented by Benoit Rouquayrol and Auguste Denayrouse. A steel tank filled with compressed air was connected to a valve and a mouth-piece. The tank was strapped to the divers back and the diver was tethered

1877 – The first workable, self-contained diving rig that used compressed oxygen was developed by Henry A. Fleuss.

1893 – Louis Boutan invented the first underwater camera.

1908 – Detailed studies on the cause and symptoms on decompression sickness were published by John Scott Haldane, Arthur E. Boycott and Guybon C. Damant.

1911 – Draeger of Germany introduces an oxygen re-breather.

1912 – The U.S. Navy tested decompression tables published by John Scott Haldane, Arthur E. Boycott and Guybon C. Damant.

1917 – The Mark V Diving Helmet was introduced by the U.S. Bureau of Construction & Repair. The Mark V Diving Helmet was used for most salvage work during World War II and became the standard U.S. Navy Diving equipment.

1923 – W. H. Longley became famous for the first underwater color photos.

1924 – The U.S. Navy and Bureau of Mines conduct first helium-oxygen experimental dives.

1925 – A very successful self-contained underwater breathing unit is introduced by Yves Le Prieur.

1930 – Rubber goggles with glass lenses are developed by Guy Gilpatric. Soon face masks and snorkels were in common use.

1930 – A bathysphere attached to a barge by a steel cable to the mother ship has been used for William Beebe descended to 435 meter.

1933 – Swim fins are patented by Louisde Corlieu in France.

1933 – Yves Le Prieur develops a demand valve with a high pressure air tank. In this way the diver became independent from hose connections to the surface.

1934 – Another descent to 924 meter in a bathysphere was undertaken by William Beebe and Otis Barton.

1935 – Louis de Corlieu designed a very popular fin for divers.

1939 – Dr. Lambertsen fully developed the Lambertsen Amphibious Respiratory Unit, or LARU, a closed-circuit, pure-oxygen rebreather in 1939 while a student at Pennsylvanias School of Medicine.

1941 – During World War II, closed circuit scuba equipment are used by Italian divers to place explosives under British naval and merchant marine ships.

1942 – Jacques-Yves Cousteau and Emile Gagnan redesigned a car regulator that would automatically provide compressed air to a diver on his slightest intake of breath.

1943 – The Aqua Lung was born. Jacques-Yves Cousteau and Emile Gagnan designed and tested the first Aqua-Lung. This device is a fundamental improvement on air supply for divers.

1947 – A 94 meter dive record in the Mediterranean Sea was made by Dumas equipped with an Aqua Lung regulator.

1948 – The first Aqua Lung regulators were imported to the USA and the diving community quickly adopted this new, convenient device.

1948 – In California Otis Barton descended to a depth of 1372 meter in a modified bathysphere to.

1950 – A completely self-contained new type of vessel called the bathyscaphe was designed by August Picard and his son Jacques to go deeper than any bathysphere.

1951 – Hans Hass published “Diving as Adventure”

1951 – The Reserve Valve, later commonly known as “J” valve was developed.

1952 – “Silent World” was released by Jacques-Yves Cousteau, Frédéric Dumas, and James Dugan.

1953 – “Underwater Safety” containing important basics on diving safety, was published by E. R. Cross.

1954 – The television program Kingdom of the Sea starring Zale Parry is aired in the US. That same year Parry broke the depth record by diving to 64 meter near Catalina, CA. Her record attracted many female to scuba diving.

1954 – The National Cooperation in Aquatics published the “Science of Skin and Scuba Diving” and it becomes the main textbook for diver education.

1955 – The first formal instructor certification program was created by Al Tillman and Bev Morgan.

1956 – At the University of California the first wetsuit is introduced by scientists and the red and white “Divers Down” flag was introduced by Ted Nixon.

1958 – Sherwood Manufacturing announce the piston regulator.

1959 – YMCA organized the first nationally scuba diver certification program and the Underwater Society of America was formed.

1960 – Al Tillman and Neal Hess create the National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI).

1960 – Jacques Picard and Don Walsh descended to 10921 meter in the bathyscaphe “Trieste”.

1961 – The National Association of Skin Diving Schools (NASDS) was founded by John Gaffney.

1962 – A number of experiments were conducted whereby people lived in underwater habitats.

1963 – In the “Man in the Sea” project Ed Link spends 24 hours at 61 meter.

1966 – The Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) was founded by John Cronin and Ralph Ericson.

1968 – A dive to 133 meter, using compressed air, was carried out by John J. Gruener and R. Neal Watson.

1970 – Bob Clark founded Scuba Schools International (SSI).

1971 – Scubapro introduces the Stabilization Jacket.

1980 – Divers Alert Network (DAN) was founded at Duke University to promote safe diving.

1981 – A dive record to 686 meter was made at the Duke Medical Center decompression chamber.

1983 – The first commercially available dive computer, the Orca Edge, was introduced.

1985 – The wreck of the Titanic was found.

1990 – Further improvements and developments are taking place and find it's way into the scuba diving sport. The use of mixed gases, like Oxygen and Helium, full face masks, underwater voice communication, propulsion systems, computer, etc. became more common in

1994 – Bret Gilliam and Mitch Skaggs formed Technical Diving International (TDI)

1998 – Scuba Diving International (SDI) was created.

1999 – Chuck Driver and John Bennett descend to 200 meter. The deepest oceanic dive ever completed. The same year Barte Vestor set a challenging 225 meter mark.

2001 – John Bennett breaks his own world record in the Philippines, with a dive to amazing 308 meter.