

SVENSK DYKERIHISTORISK FÖRENING.

By Hans Örnbaden, president of SDHF

SVENSK DYKERIHISTORISK FÖRENING; that is the official name in Swedish of the Swedish Diving Historical Society. Since June 2002 SDHF is one of the affiliates of the HDS. The society dates back to 1979 and was born as a result of, shall we call it, an “emergency situation”. The Swedish Navy had just moved their experimental diving facility to the new building at Hårsfjärden, and the abandoned building at Djurgården in the centre of Stockholm was scheduled for wrecking. Some attempts had been made to save the main chamber for use elsewhere, i.e. to support the growing sports diving in western Sweden, but nothing substantial had resulted.

A rescue operation was organised based on a call signed by several VIPs in the diving community. Among the names were Anders Franzen, the historian who found Vasa, Per Edvin Fälting, the diving supervisor at the Vasa rescue operation, Carl Magnus Hesser, professor in diving medicine at Karolinska Institutet and many others. The newspapers spread the message and Svensk Dykerihistorisk Förening was born on May 29th 1979. The main purpose of the society was to create an understanding for the value and potential of a building in central Stockholm in which diving history could be displayed. The real advantage was that this was not just any building, but the building in which Zetterstrom, the first man to use hydrogen-oxygen mixes in deep offshore diving and other pioneers in modern diving had worked. It was also a building in which the first electro-welded pressure chamber from 1934 was housed. The society was given two years to show that the idea of a diving historical museum in Stockholm was good enough to get further support.

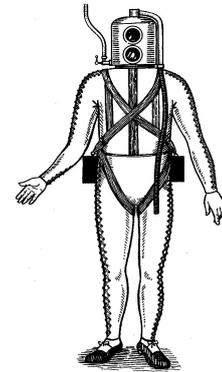
The building was located in the area where it was planned that the new Vasa museum would be built. However, a problem occurred as some influential people considered the same area to be ideal for recreation and games and a huge lawn was planned. After a struggle the Vasa supporters won and this also meant that the old



house with the original navy experimental lab and escape training tank could survive. In 1990 the Vasa museum was opened, but it took another 10 years until the old navy experimental lab and escape training tank could open its doors to the public.

Today the members of the society take turns at running the museum. The aim is to open the museum during weekends in the summer and offer guided tours to groups of interested, mainly sports divers, for the rest of the year.

The 2 ½ storey building is centred around the 6 m escape training tank and the vertical compression chamber used for wet dives to a maximum of 100 meters. In addition to these built in objects, the house is now filled with equipment from professional and recreational diving from over the last 50 years. Unfortunately the museum does not yet contain an example of the Fahnehjelm equipment that has become the society logo. A.L. Fahnehjelm, Swedish naval architect, designed this hardhat equipment and dry suit in 1839. If an HDS member finds Fahnehjelm equipment or something similar somewhere in the world we would be happy to hear about it.



Among the more recent objects that we are proud of is a yellow mini submarine built in the late 60-ties by Håkan Lans the entrepreneur and inventor of the computer mouse, computer colour graphics and a GPS based navigation system. To the left Håkan Lans is standing in front of his minisubmarine "Doppingen".

Another rare object is a water jet propelled ROV from the fifties, built for the Swedish navy. The ROV was designed for a mine clearance project, however it was not too



successful as ultrasound pingers and navigation aids were not common at this time, so there was continuous uncertainty regarding where the ROV was after it was launched. The ROV needs to be restored before it can be displayed, but we hope this will happen in a near future.

To the left is Hans Örnhagen talking to Rolf Jansson, a mine clearance diver in the early fifties and the donor of the 1950 Aga "Iron bed" Scuba hanging on the wall behind.



The entry and some of the valuable items in the museum. The mini-submarine Doppingen, a 2-cylinder and in the lower left corner a 1-cylinder pump.



Whenever you are in Stockholm please contact Lars Gustafsson on telephone 08-971177 or Hans Örnhagen on telephone +46732503935. We will do our best to find someone to show you our “Dykankhus” if we do not have the time to do it ourselves. You can also reach us via www.sdhf.se If you look at a recent tourist map of Stockholm or the maps at the “yellow pages” in the Stockholm telephone directory page 38 you will find the “Dyktankhuset”.