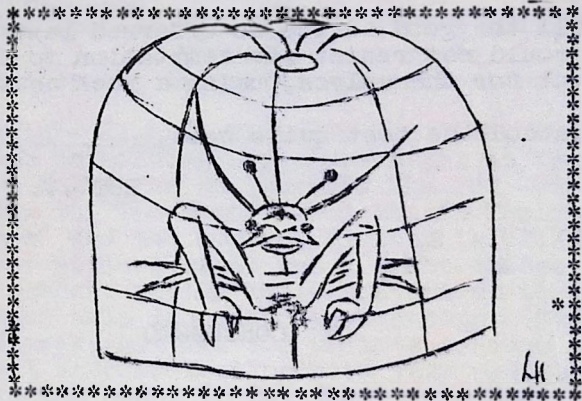


F A T H O M S

Month of MAY, 1966.



This is the ring of confidence??

Registered at the G.P.O. Melbourne for transmission per post as a periodical.

EDITORIAL

POWERHEADS, Part 2,

or,

HOW TO GET RID OF YOUR DIVING
BUDDIES IN ONE EASY LESSON !!

Contrary to all the good advice we offered last issue,
your Editors could not resist the temptation to try
that gadget out for themselves, using a rock as target.

The rock withstood the test quite well,

BUT ...

THERE WAS A SLIGHTLY CONCUSSED

GROUP WHICH WANDERED BACK TO THE

BOAT!

Committee Meeting Report.

1. Handbook. Believe it or not, this has at last gone to print, so this should be the last episode in what has come to be a serial story. Members should get their new pages in the near future.

2. New Members. We welcome Joost Jacob (don't ask me how you pronounce his name, ask him!) and Tony Sierak to the club, hoping they may have many happy dives with us in the future.

3. Discount House. A letter in correspondence from Mick Simmons Wholesale Pty. Ltd.,
307 City Road,
SOUTH MELBOURNE.

Toys and sporting goods at a direct selling price, open till 9 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays. Present club membership badge for identification.

4. Picture Night. Thursday 2nd June, 1966.
The club is holding a picture night at the Esquire Theatre Melbourne on Thursday the 2nd June, 1966. The film is "The Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines" and the cost of tickets is \$1.75 each. The last picture night was a great success due to a few members really selling a lot of tickets. So please help the club by attending. Contact Tony Sierak, 43 3224 for tickets or come to the next Members Meeting with your orders for tickets and money to pay for them. This is the only meeting before the night, so PLEASE help Tony and approach him.

5. Outings. It is some years since the charges for boat outings were set; since then prices have risen steeply, particularly since the scallop boom. The committee therefore feels that it is more realistic to increase the fares to no more than \$2.00 per head per diver in future.

6. Training. The committee is beginning to consider the requirements for A Grade certificates. This

seems to bring down a lot of acrimonious and partisan discussion, so it was hastily shelved! In any case, it was agreed, this certificate should, when planned, require a very high standard in diving practice, theory, and experience.

7. Life Jackets. The S.A.A. Code for Lifejackets and Aids to Bouyancy is now in print, and the Club will obtain a copy.
8. Boat Available. A boat to carry six divers is now available to the club on hire basis in Westernport.
9. Footscray Y.M.C.A. The usual diving display will be held in conjunction with the hobbies exhibition in July. Frank Coustley will be running the display, and members will be notified further.
10. Films. The Secretary has sent an S.O.S. to the U.S.A. per medium of the Skindiver Magazine for films on diving. There is such a paucity of interesting material in Australia, it was felt that we may do better in the States.

WORKING BEE There have been two successful weekends on the painting bee so far, but there is still more to do to finish. There will be a new time arranged in the near future, so if you can possibly spare a Saturday or Sunday, let Frank Coustley know 28.3910. (We hear our colourists slipped up on the bedroom and are now painting it again - Ed).

OUTINGS PAST. Easter. By all accounts Port MacDonnell was a roaring success, that is, after they all found one another, and finally got the tents to stay up. Dives were made in the freshwater lakes; apparently the local club has built a jetty to help access to the water over one marshy spot, and at Picanniny Blue, the local farmer has

eased the burden of the diver by building the road right to the waters edge, so that you can dive, car and all, if you wish. We also hear that there is worthwhile salvage at the bottom in the form of impeded torches and weight belts.

Cape Everard. Disappointed divers returned without getting wet - in the sea, that is, but, with hair raising tales about the strength of gale force winds.

San Remo. Small party managed to get in the water on Monday when the weather had calmed down. A good dive was had off Cape Woolamai, in about thirty feet, around and around an isolated rock. There were plenty of fish in a cleft, and a good bat was made by the spearfishermen of the party.

Anzac Weekend. Your Editors have not found a single person (yet) who went on the scheduled outing to Phillip Island. The weather could have been better, so that may have been the reason for the lack of enthusiasm. A party went to Crawfish Rock in Westernport on the Monday, and had an interesting dive. A legal point arose over the ownership of one crayfish, shot by one member, and found some time later, dead, by another. An anchor was salvaged and a good dive was had at depths of 70 feet.

OUTINGS FUTURE. Reminder - Snow Trip. This has been arranged for the weekend 22nd and 24th July. Place Mt. Buller. Fun assured. If you want to be part of this popular yearly outing, book with Frank Coustley NOW, as the first fourteen only will be allocated bunks, and we believe it is cold out in the snow.

Thompson River, Gold Dive. Weekend trip, Bring your gold pans, and as many wet suits as you can put on.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS. Will be available to all new members shortly. Please remember that the number which appears on your card is your club number for as long as you are a member, and should be painted

on all your gear for identification purposes.

MEETINGS PAST. Twenty-four members attended the last meeting, There was a fairly long business session, and afterwards supper and general social gathering. Congratulations were offered to Peter Matthews and Margo Robertson on their forthcoming marriage on 7th May.

NEXT MEETING Will be held on Friday 20th May, at Scots Church Hall, Russell Street, Melbourne at 8. p.m. Supper Volunteers are:- Tony Sierak, Jan Watson, B. Heather, B. Gray.
A slide showing by Frank Coustley on his trip to New Zealand.

NOTE. CHANGE OF VENUE for U.R.G. inaugural meeting. This will now be held at the Small Lecture Theatre, Botany School, University of Melbourne, at 7.30 p.m. sharp.

This change was due to illness of our invited speaker. Mrs. Sophie Ducker, a specialist in marine algae, agreed to speak at short notice, but only in her own department at the Botany School, where she will give a talk illustrated by slides.

SEA SCIENCE SECTION.

The April, 1966 issue of the National Geographic Magazine carries a full account of the several weeks spent at 370 feet by a team of divers, whose photographers produced a superb pictorial record of the experiment. Following are the main points of interest from the story.

The project involved a capital cost of \$700,000 employed 150 technicians and six divers - Oceanauts, who, spent 21 days on the ocean bed at 370 feet. The object of the operation was to either prove, or disprove that men could spend extended periods living and working on the sea floor. There were daily tasks of several hours duration to be performed both in and out of the sphere known as 'Conshelf', involving complex engineering problems such as met with in the course of off-shore drilling operations.

The Oceanauts were completely free from any connections with the surface, except for power cables. Breathing mixtures of helium and oxygen were used, a retreatment compressor and purifying plant were included in the equipment of Conshelf. Divers going out to work on the ocean bed worked on a hookah unit from Conshelf, but also carried helium-oxygen mixtures in an emergency lung in case of trouble.

Cold was a problem, as the body loses heat very rapidly when breathing these mixtures, and the pressure would of course flatten a conventional wetsuit. To solve the problem, a new patent suit consisting of bubbles of gas enclosed in small ebonite spheres pressed into a sheer, was designed. This allowed one diver to work at the depth for seven hours, although eventually suffering severely from cold. Infra red lamps were used to warm up cold divers after completion of daily missions.

In the darkness, torches had to be carried on all outside work. The light attracted myriads of plankton;

an octopus lived on a nearby rock; spiny lobsters milled about the bottom; fish large and small were attracted to the light of the diving hatch.

An experiment on breeding diatoms under artificial lights was also carried out but the results of this were not mentioned.

At the end of the 21 days, the men were almost physically spent, and the surfacing procedures were set in motion. Massive decompression should the sphere loose pressure on the ascent was the main worry, as the hatches were sealed for the ascent, which took only three minutes after ballast was released.

Decompression was carried out within the chamber for 84 hours.
