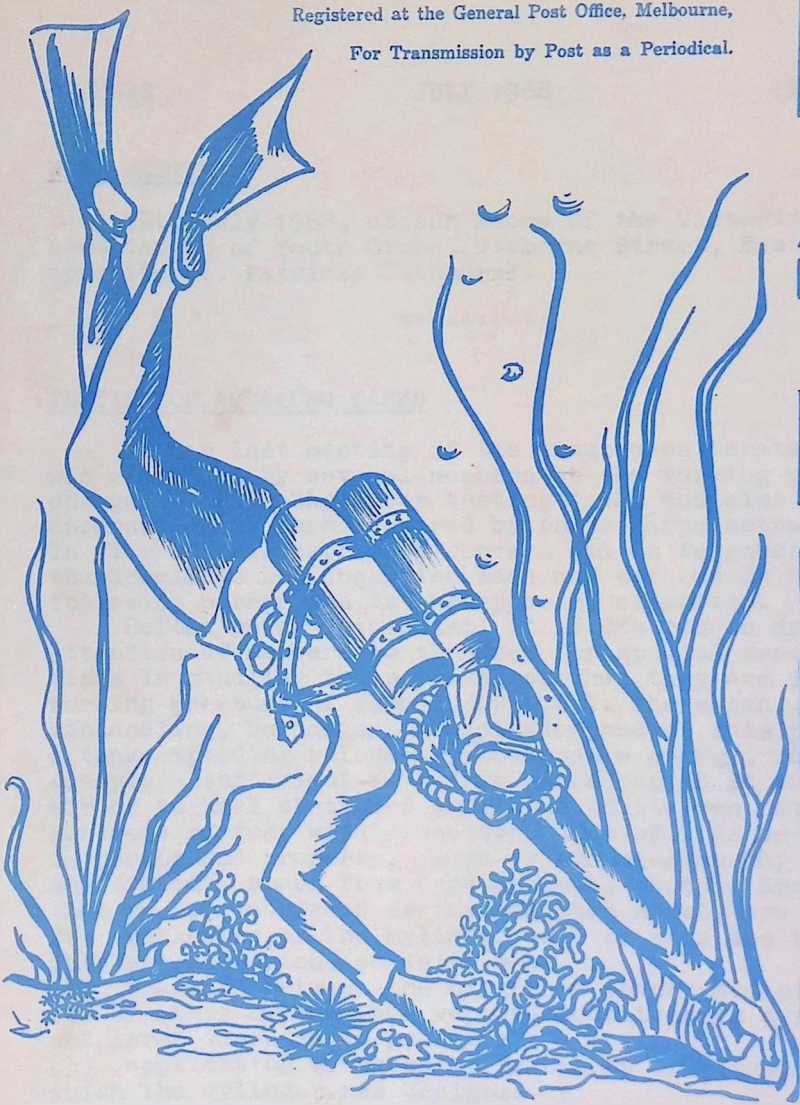


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FATHOMS



VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

(2)

NEXT MEETING

19th July 1968, at the Rooms of the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs, Gisborne Street, East Melb, opposite St. Patricks Cathedral.

TESTING OF AQUALUNG TANKS

At the last meeting of the Group considerable concern was expressed by several members at the varying prices charged by Dive Shops for testing tanks and also the apparant short term required by these shops between tests. In view of this expressed concern and in fairness to all the Committee had enquiries made and set out in the following paragraphs is the apparant situation.

Before going into detail it is desired to draw the attention of members to the need for special care at all times in handling their tanks, as when they are full to working pressure of some 2,300 P.S.I. there can, with mishandling, be danger of explosion and at this pressure a tank exploding releases considerable energy, for example - sufficient to lift a motor car 50 ft into the air or to hurl shattered particles of its own metal hundreds of feet with consequent loss of life or injury to person and property. Some of the reasons why tanks may explode, apart from carelessness, such as dropping them on hard surfaces or tossing them about, are

- (1) weakening of the cylinder wall or ends due to internal corrosion, abrasive wear
- (2) reaction between the oxygen of compressed air and oil or other hydrocarbon vapours resulting in a rapid and large increase in pressure
- (3) application of pressure in excess of pressure for which the cylinder was designed
- (4) excessive heating of charged cylinders, leading to increase in pressure.

A diver may well ask in view of this how he can be aware of these factors so that the risks are reduced to an absolute minimum. The obvious answer is by testing and to this answer there is always the reply that testing is a racket organized by the Dive Shops - Rubbish to such a statement - for our enquiries among the Dive Shops were received with friendly co-operation and the advice tendered was that regular inspection was the only safeguard to life and property as this is the only way to stop trouble before it starts - to the advantage primarily of the diver himself. It was ascertained that all Melbourne Dive Shops are guided by the Recommendations of the Standards Association of Australia - specifically in accordance with Safety Code A.S.C.B. 4 and supplement No 3 (1963) of that Code (Safety of Portable Compressed Air Cylinders used in Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus)

For the benefit of those who are not aware of the Standards Association of Australia (S.A.A.) and its work, it is advised that it was set up in 1922 as the Australian Commonwealth Engineering Standards Association and its function is to prepare and publish Australian Standards and to promote their adoption. Standards are in the form of specifications for materials and products, codes of sound and safe practice methods of testing etc. The Association's work is financed from Government Grants, members' subscriptions and sale of its publications.

The recommendations of the S.A.A. in regard to Aqualung tanks, as extracted from the above Code are set out for the benefit of members and it is considered that this will indicate that in following this code the Dive Shops are in fact the Divers Best Friend.

1. Frequency of Inspection - Cylinders (tanks) should be submitted for inspection by a recognized testing authority at intervals not exceeding 12 months or as otherwise laid down by State Regulations.

2. Inspection. Inspection of cylinders should provide for :-

(a) External examination - If there are signs of serious damage, such as denting, abrasion, grooves or corrosion it should be condemned and destroyed.

(b) The cylinder should be examined internally with an electric lamp or intrascope. If it shows any serious defects, such as split necks, severe folds, or severe corrosion, it should be condemned and destroyed.

(c) Inspection of internal lining, if any, for signs of lifting or breaking. If there is any corrosion under the lining it should be removed to allow for proper examination and removal of rust.

(d) Loss of weight. The cylinder less valve or other connections, after cleaning, should be weighed. If the weight is less than 95% of the original bare weight, the ~~examiner~~ cylinder should be condemned. If possible thickness of walls should also be checked - if nowhere less than 95% of original thickness the tank may continue in use.

3. Hydrostatic Test.

Each cylinder which passed the above requirements should be hydrostatically tested at intervals not exceeding 12 months.

NOTE (1) Hydrostatic test alone is not a complete safeguard, as it primarily checks the presence of leaks or any undue expansion of the cylinder.

The Compressed Gas Association, Incorporated, of New York U.S.A. in advising on the care and maintenance of Diving Tanks also recommends hydrostatic testing at 12 monthly intervals.

NOTE (2) S.A.A. states that frequent overstressing may weaken a cylinder and therefore hydrostatic test should not be applied more frequently than as recommended above. This reader will note, is contrary to the statement made in a recent Skin Diver Magazine (U.S.A.)

It is felt that this should lay the allegations that the Dive Shops require inspections and testing too frequently for their own benefit.

Of course the matter of cost of such inspections and tests is another matter and the following details are as obtained from Dive Shops contacted in this regard - its a free country and you can choose your own Dive Shop for these services - no Dive Shop is going to unnecessarily condemn tanks or skimp on the tests - they stand as much to lose as anyone by extremes in these fields.

<u>SHOP</u>	<u>PRICES</u>
AIR DIVE EQUIPMENT	Full Test \$5-60 (every two years) Check Test \$2-60
SCUBA DIVERS	Full Test \$5-00 (every year)
AUSTRALIAN DIVERS	Full Test \$6-50 (every year) Painting tank 75 cents extra
SKI HIRE	Full Test \$5-50 (every two years) Check Test \$2-50

DINNER DANCE

Remember to keep the 14th of December 1968 free to attend the Group's Annual Dinner Dance at Hunters Lodge - book your places now as available accomodation is being booked rapidly.
Contact the Social Secretary - Jeff Evans.

PICTURE NIGHT

Quite a number of members and their friends attended the Picture Night at the "Plaza Theatre" to see "The Year 2001" - described as a Space Odyssey. Comments were varied.

S.D.F. DELEGATES REPORT

Two groups of Abalone divers working the coast around Port Campbell have located the wreck of the Loch Ard and applied to the Receiver of Wrecks for salvage rights - not too successful so far it is understood - the Old Shiplovers Society was approached by S.D.F. for support to block, if possible, the issue of such rights so that the wreck may be undisturbed for future generations of divers. The National Trust is understood to be interested in seeing that the wreck remains undisturbed.

ARTIFICIAL REEF → MORDIALLOC

The Williamstown Fishing Club have reported vast increase in Schnapper in this area over past 2 years and it is considered that the artificial reef could be a contributing factor in this increase. This will add weight to the recommendations for further artificial reefs.

CHANNEL FORT ISLAND

The S.D.F. has approached the National Trust for its support in having Channel Fort Island set apart as a Marine Reserve.

It is proposed to have a weekend trip by members of S.D.F. Clubs in early spring to survey the marine flora and fauna of the Island.

NULLABOR PLAINS

There is a proposed Caving Trip to the Nullabor Plains at Christmas and diving in the undergorung lakes is expected to be undertaken. Experienced divers interested in making such a trip should contact Peter Matthews.

If you do not think there is any worthwhile diving there ask Peter Robertson. On a previous trip he went to stand on a rock apparently a couple of feet under the surface in one of these lakes - he did not make it. A diver later ascertained that the rock was in fact 70 ft down - gives you an idea of the excellent visibility.

BARBEQUE

Members are again reminded of the Group Barbeque organized for 17th August 1968 at the home of Alan Day - 39 Carlton Street, Bentleigh. Keep this evening free to join your friends at what promises to be a terrific night.

OUTINGS FUTURE

July 28th - COWES.

Phillip Island has many excellent diving spots for any wind conditions - although the primary purpose on this day will be around the Cowes Jetty etc. Meeting place and time will be advised at the next meeting.

*5 divers
K.A. DR
G.R. & M.D.*

August 11th - CAPE SCHANK.

This area has excellent diving and snorkelling available. Good barbeque facilities and car park ~~xx~~ available. This dive is known to select the fit from the not-so-fit so come along so we can all know what category you fit into.

August 25th - PORTSEA PIER.

This is a spot where members always have a good time. Fish, pier crawling - barbeque, and if the weather is right a dive at the Back Beach. Portsea is currently popular because of members ~~recently~~ fad to find old time bottles. A couple of members recently turned up what appear to be two hand made dark glass bottles of similar type and vintage as those found on the Victoria Towers.

Also Ron Addison reports that plans for a publicity effort on previously found bottles from this area are well under way with A.C.I.

September 8th - FRANKSTON WRECK.

The last time out there one member left his \$100 watch on the bottom - might still be there for some Hawk-Eye. It has also been suggested that this site could be adopted by the Group for the Establishment of its own Artificial Reef.

A former regular attender at Group Outings But not seen on the diving scene for a couple of years is reported to have returned to active participation of the sport - hope to see you much more frequently Neil - perhaps you could get your wife interested also.
