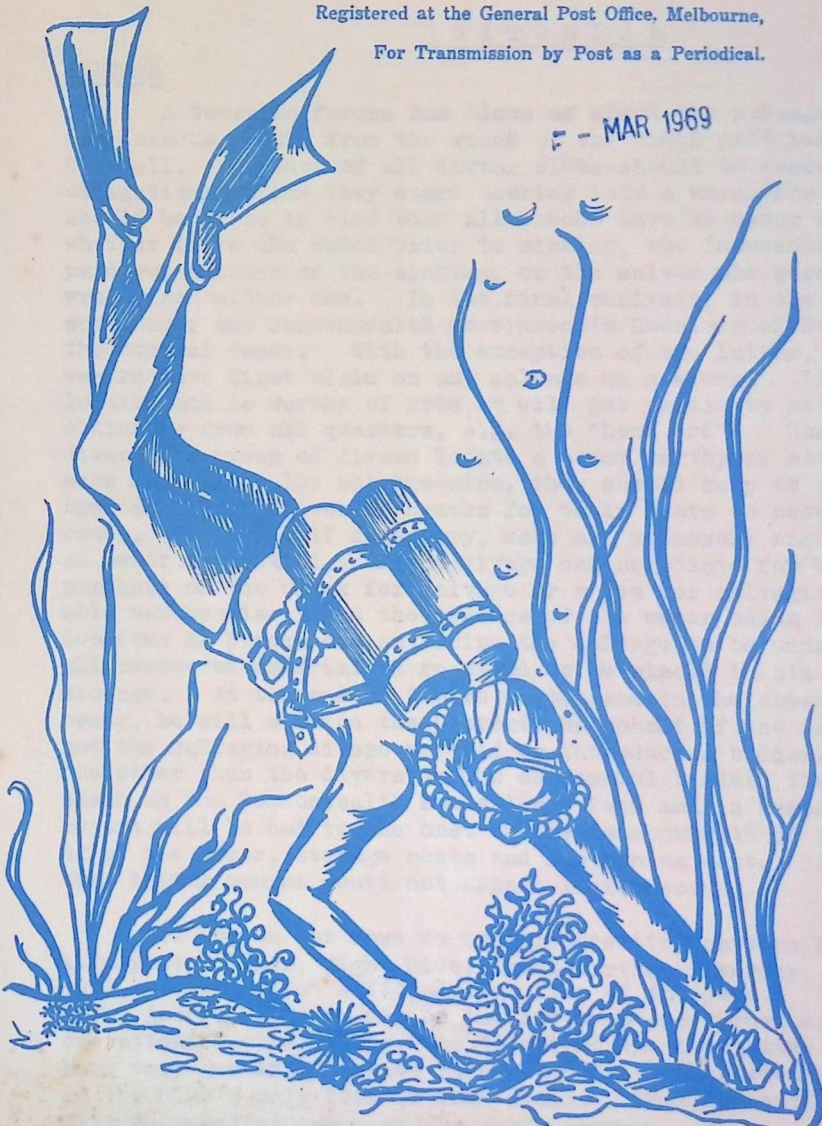


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FATHOMS



VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

EDITORIALSALVAGE

A terrific furore has blown up about the salvaging of various non-ferrous metals from the wreck of the "Loch Ard" near Port Campbell. Members of all diving clubs should be aware of their legal obligations before they start tearing into a wreck for profit. It should be borne in mind that all wrecks have an owner somewhere, whether it be the owner prior to sinking, the Insurance Company that paid out because of the sinking, or the salvor who purchased the wreck from either one. In the final analysis, in the absence of such owner the Commonwealth Government's Receiver of Wrecks becomes the nominal owner. With the exception of the latter, the other owners have first claim on any salvage on a wreck. If a wreck is located and is worthy of note it will get publicity attracting claimants from all quarters, e.g. the "Loch Ard". However, if a diver or a group of divers locate a wreck worthy of attention and of some monetary value salvage-wise, they should keep it quiet, and approach the Receiver of Wrecks for their State to ascertain the owner. He will, if necessary, make all necessary enquiries. If an owner is located then the divers can negotiate for either the purchase of the wreck for salvage or a fee for salvaging recoverable merchandise. In the absence of the owner being located the Receiver of Wrecks can authorize the salvage to be undertaken, but all recovered material is required to be placed in his custody for storage. At the end of twelve months and in the absence of an owner, he will auction the property on behalf of the Commonwealth and the salvaging divers may bid or introduce a bidder. If someone other than the divers is the successful bidder, the divers then claim on the Commonwealth for salvage fees and in assessing these regard will be had to the cost to the Commonwealth of its enquiries after the owner, storage costs and auctioning cost. Naturally, this latter course would not appear lucrative.

Now let us get down to more interesting matters for discussion like past outings, Night Dive, Mount Martha, Saturday, 8th February, 1969. The first official club dive of the year. And how did it go? According to my man on the spot, no one turned up. If anyone attended this outing, the Editor of the newsletter would have been very grateful to have received some notification for inclusion in the Club's only form of mass media. Weather conditions, it will be recalled, were unfavourable anyway.

Portsea, Sunday, 23rd February, 1969

Due to the inclement weather, this dive was not attended by your editor and telephone calls through the week to various members solicited no further information.

Warrnambool, Long Weekend, 8th to 10th March, 1969

As no one got in touch with the editor with information on this dive, no news can be included in the newsletter.

FUTURE TRIPS -Cape Woolamai, Sunday 23rd March

This should be a boat trip so bring along your life jackets, depth gauge and diving watch.

TRAINING -

Training started in the city baths on March 1st, 1969, so if you have anyone wanting to learn, get in touch with Pat Reynolds, Phone: 232-5358, or Bill Gray, phone: 232-7220, and book in. Remember, these lessons are the cheapest of any diving lessons offered in the city. Bring your pals and get them under water.

S.D.F. -

S.D.F. officials met with officials of the National Trust to see what could be done about protecting historical wrecks around the Victorian coastline.

S.F.D. is also trying to get Channel Fort Island and the waters surrounding it, declared a National Park, but because of difficulties establishing ownership of the island, this project could take some time.

A new artificial reef is on the books and when permission for this new venture is given, work will proceed. A site has been picked out by officials of S.D.F. and all being well, this site could open up the southern part of the bay for good catches.

A plea to all members If you go on a dive anywhere, please ring the editor of the newsletter (Ron Addison - work 63-0311, ext. 2728, or home 232-3087) and give him the details. The place where you have dived could be of interest to other members. Of course it is appreciated that the spot dived upon may want to be kept secret for some reason or other, but when the need for secrecy has terminated please let me know.

Good Diving spots handy to Melbourne -

There comes a time when members find it impossible to get away all day Sunday for a dive and for those who are in this category, a spot to dive close to home is a god-send.

One of the nicest places for a quick trip is Quiet Corner, just past Balcombe Road, on Beach Road, Sandringham. Here, if one is lucky, can be found three of four different species of fish, abalone, and mussels. With luck an oyster or two can be found.

Another good spot is at Williamstown, just near the bus terminal. A fairly large artificial reef, which forms the footpath, provides ample hiding places for an abundance of marine life. This is a wonderful place to go for a couple of hours of quiet exploration.

WANTED TO BUY --

Diving Suit, any condition, medium size. Ring Ron Addison, 232-3087.

NEXT CLUB MEETING -

The next Club meeting will be held at Youth Hostels Hall, Gisborne Street, East Melbourne, at 8.00 p.m. All members and their friends are invited to attend.

The agenda for this evening provides for a lecture on First Aid, so turn up and learn how to treat those cuts and abrasions and bruises which are an ever present possibility on a dive. The Group has an excellent First Aid Kit but without the knowledge of how to use it, it could be a waste of money.

So, play your part, and be present at this lecture.

SACRIFICES MADE TO SAVE HIS SHELL

By Darcy Pitcher.

Has any reader had an experience similar to this?

Whilst diving at Lottin Point up near the East Cape, last October, Archie Miller and Bruce Moonie decided to look for crays before moving out to deeper water, and on Archie's first dive he spotted a good-sized cray in about 15 feet of water. On surfacing he told Bruce that they were there so Bruce dived, but was unable to reach the bottom as he had hurt his ear the day before.

Cont'd.

On Archie's second dive the crays disappeared up a chimney in the rocks, the entrance of which was blocked by a bull cray weighing at least 10 lbs. Grasping the feeler at its base he was unable to move the cray so he surfaced and dived three more times, always with the same result. Archie seemed to be going up and down like a yo-yo but this is the way it happened.

On the fourth dive he thought the position of the cray had changed but on getting closer he saw that the bull was holding another cray across the back by its two powerful front claws. On extending his arm to grab the smaller cray the bigger one pushed it towards him and he gratefully accepted.

Archie was getting excited now, seeing himself getting a sackful with the help of his own mate, the bull cray, but he still had to work hard to get three more crays handed to him by the old chap; by this time he had grown fond of him.

Looking at the crays later, it was found that they were all female, but not in egg, and averaged between three to four pound.

The point is, are bull crays prepared to sacrifice their partners to save their own shells??? Archie thinks so.

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