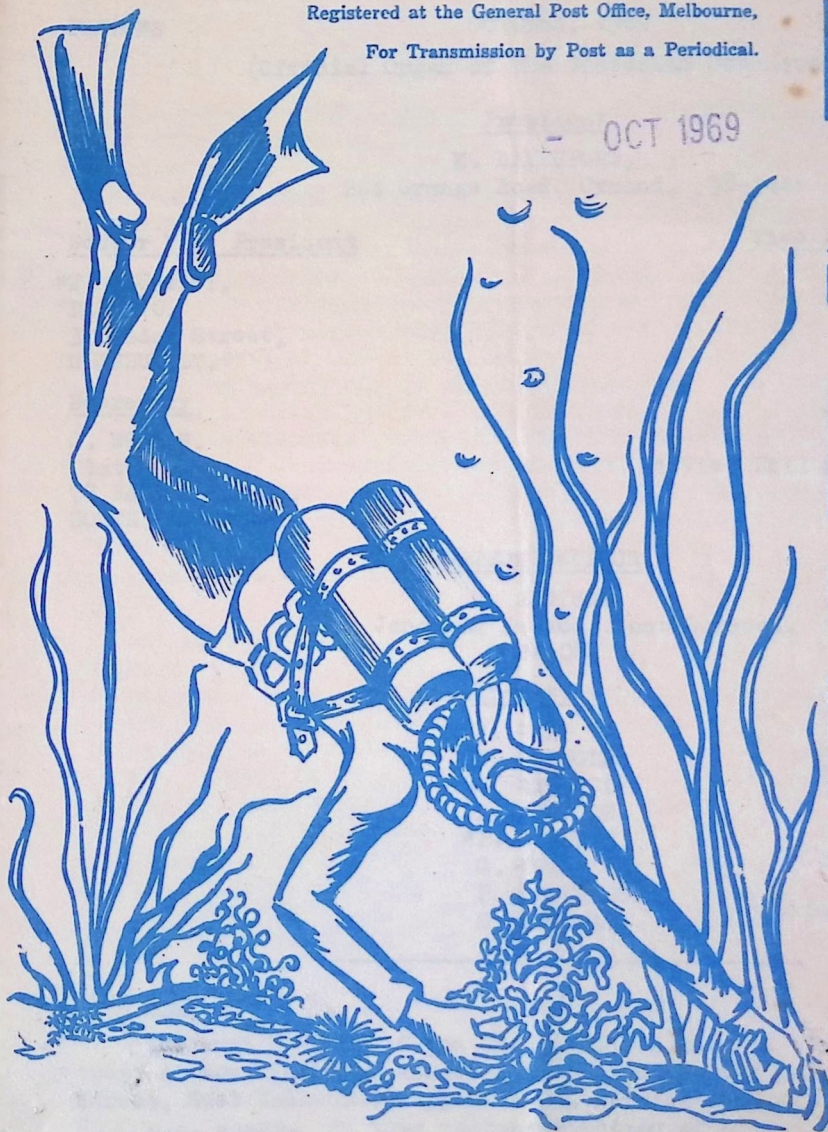


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FATHOMS



VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

(Official Organ of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)

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CLUB MEETING -

The next Meeting of the Group will be held on 17th OCTOBER, 1969, at the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs Hall, Gisborne Street, East Melbourne, opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral at 8.00 p.m. sharp. At this meeting election of office bearers for the coming year will take place. Also members are invited to submit places to dive at, for inclusion in next year's outings list.

AIR CAVITIES IN THE HEAD

The sinuses of the skull and the inner ear -- these spaces, the inner ear and the air sinuses of the skull, communicate with the respiratory tract. Man's ear is a finely adapted organ to pick up vibrations of air. The vibrations pass through a collecting mechanism - the outward and visible ear as we know it - through a passage protected by hairs and waxy secretion, to vibrate a membranous water-tight drum at the end. To this drum is attached a bony mechanism serving to produce nervous impulses which the brain interprets as sounds. The human ear only responds to certain frequencies of vibration, so that we are unable to perceive higher pitched noises, such as the dog-whistle or the screaming of a harpooned fish. Nor can we hear the love and mating calls of fish, their alarm calls and general chatter, although electronic detection has shown that they most certainly exist. Fish may be unable to comprehend human chatter, but shouts, vibrations and footfalls on the bank are certainly perceived by fish, as any keen angler will tell you, and Dr. Lilly, writing in "Man and Dolphin" believes that dolphins cannot only hear human voices, but can "talk" to each other.

Luckily, the inner ear has another opening apart from the drum, otherwise diving would automatically lead to ear drum rupture. There is a tube which is normally closed that connects the ear to the back of the throat, called the Eustachian tube. Like any flattened tube, it does not open easily if there is any gummy material inside, such as may occur with catarrh or colds. At such times a plug of mucus may obstruct the tube whose size has already been cut down by inflammation. Old infections of the middle ear may also have "gummed up the works". Swallowing or yawning will stretch the tube and usually open it up, and then a small increase of pressure at the back of the throat will force air up the Eustachian tube to the middle ear. This is known by divers as "Ear clearing".

Many divers find this equalisation of pressure difficult at first, but will be relieved to know that it becomes easier to inflate the tube after the first few times. A cold or catarrh can, however, set things back again. Pinching the nose or pressing the nostrils against the mask wall and blowing gently, may help.

If diving is continued with a blocked Eustachian tube, the ear drum will rupture and the influx of cold water in the balance

mechanism of the middle ear may cause serious loss of sense of direction, giddiness and sickness. Swift descents with the head down do not appear to cause trouble of this sort, but do sometimes lead to nose-bleeds.

The sinuses are air spaces in the skull which serve to lighten it. They are connected to the nose and throat by narrow tubes that can easily get blocked. If matter from a nose or throat infection is forced up a blocked sinus, a serious disease may set in which will prevent diving for a long, long time. Pressure changes in a blocked sinus can also be very painful. Where sinus trouble has occurred in the past, medical advice is essential.

PAST OUTINGS - NORWINGTON PIER, 21/9/69

This outing was not attended by your editor, and various members that were contacted also did not go. As the weather was not conducive for diving, being very cold, wet and windy, I take it that most members decided to remain in the warm precincts of their homes.

CHANNEL FORT ISLAND, 5/10/69

This outing was attended by seven diving members of the Group with ancillary wives and children along for the ride. It was a beautiful day with a flat, calm sea, and with all members aboard, including three members from Black Rock Underwater Diving Group and one from Beaumaris Club, we set out from Rosebud pier and headed out to the Island.

We arrived at the Island at 11.45 a.m. and five minutes later the first divers hit the water. Water visibility in spots was up to 15-20 ft; on the average about 12 ft.. Everyone poked around the island in their little parties and were recalled back to the boat at 2.30 p.m. We then headed to the Hurricane Wreck for scallops. Everyone who went for scallops managed to get a feed, but the feeling was that they are getting scarce in the area.

We received a nasty surprise when we returned back to the pier when we were informed that the price for the boat wasn't the expected \$24.00 which was the tariff last time, but \$48.00. This was split up twelve ways with the four visitors paying \$4.00 a head and club members paying \$2.00 a head, being subsidised by the Club for the balance.

FUTURE OUTINGS TO END OF YEAR

October 19	-	Phillip Island
November 2	-	Apollo Bay
16	-	Anglesea
30	-	Walhalla (Gold Dive)
December 6	-	Club Dinner.

TREASURER'S REPORT -

Accounts will be forwarded to all non-paid-up members in the near future. At the present time there are 15 financial members of the Group with another possible 20 to pay up.

A. CUTTS - Treasurer

SOCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT -

Deposits on tickets for the club dinner have now all been paid. The balance of \$4.00 is due on 31st October, 1969 and it would be appreciated if these could be given to me before that date, preferably at the next club meeting.

L.J. ADDISON - Social Secretary

CONGRATULATIONS -

To Joy and Max on their recent engagement. Best wishes from all the club.

PAST MEETING, 19/9/69

At the last meeting of the group, election of committee members took place. In accordance with the group's constitution, four members, the longest serving members on the committee, stood down - these being W. Drett, B. Heather, B. Jonson and J. Evans. As there were only four nominations to cover the four vacancies, no election was necessary and the four nominees were accepted for committee. They were P. Attwood, C. Bull, M. Henshall and last year's co-opted member, P. Robertson. This magazine takes the opportunity to congratulate the new committee men and hopes that they have a rewarding time.

Also at the last meeting two members were rewarded for the amount of hard work they have put into the club; Peter Mathews, a founder of the Group, first diving committee member, past secretary, past newsletter editor and writer, delegate to S.D.F. and a working Committee member appointed to investigate the new look U.S.F.A. re S.D.F.'s amalgamation with that body and Frank Coustley, past president senior diving instructor and current senior vice president and Group's Public Officer. These two members were created Life Members and a presentation of their scrolls and badges will take place at the Group's Annual Dinner ad "The Barrel". It was unanimous amongst all present and all members congratulated Peter Mathews, who was present and, in absentia, Frank Coustley who is getting tooy at the imminent arrival of his first progeny.

SPECIAL NOTE -

The member clubs of S.D.F. agreed that rather than have combined money making events, that each club run its own function and receive the support of the other clubs. The organising club to retain all proceeds.

BASS STRAIT DIVERS CLUB is first off the mark and has arranged a DINNER DANCE for Friday, 31st October, 1969 at Carinya Reception, 550 High Street, Preston. Price, all inclusive, food, drinks, everything - \$14.00 per double.

If Sub Aqua expects support in its functions, members must support the other member clubs, so see if we can get a group to go to this function.

Tickets available from the Secretary at the next meeting, or ring 36-3587 - Trevor Johnson.

S.D.F. DELEGATE REPORT -

At the last meeting it was decided to admit Black Rock Under Water Diving Group to the Federation. A query has also been received from another diving club re the possibility of joining S.D.F. The working committee re the possible amalgamation with U.S.F.A. has had one meeting and are in the process of formulating a set up which will be acceptable to all clubs in S.D.F. and U.S.F.A.

F. MATHEWS - Delegate

DOWN UNDER DATA

Sealab 111 - A new delay in the deep sea dwelling project occurred when aquanaut Berry Cannon died at 610 feet due to CO₂ poisoning. It was found that the CO₂ absorbent cannister in his S.C.U.B.A. was empty.

In the U.S.A. at Duke Medical Centre, Dr. Kyletra flooded the lungs of pro-diver Francis Falejczyk so that for a short time the diver took his oxygen from an incompreecible liquid.

French divers of Comex have made 20 minute working dives at 812 deet and are capable of jobs at 1000 feet.

A DIVE IN THE MOUNT GAMBIER LAKES

Alan Cutts and Glynness, and Ron and Lorraine Addison recently spent ten days diving around the lakes in the Mt. Gambior region. The lake that really took the fancy of Ron and Alan was Killsby's Hole, a lake of considerable depth, more or less on the back door step of the farmer who owns it.

All in all we made four visits to Killsby's but the first visit turned out to be inconvenient to the owner, and we called back two days later. This time all was okay and we drove over the paddocks to a small fenced enclosure with a tin shed inside it. This tin shed contained pumping gear as the farmer used the water from the hole for irrigation purposes.

The hole itself was about 50' in diameter with extremely straight sides that disappeared into the water 32' below. There was a smaller hole beside the main one about 8' in diameter with part of an unidentifiable piece of farm equipment laid out across it. It was decided to belay the ladder to this piece of steel and we then played out our 50' x 6" caving ladder with rungs 1' apart. The ladder hung free straight into the water and as I had had more experience on ladders than Alan, it was decided that I go first to break the ice, so to speak.

We hastily climbed into our wet suits and, to save a bit of time, I decided to wear my weight belt and mask and snorkel down. I climbed gingerly onto the first rung of the ladder and started the long climb down. It was a fairly easy climb and it wasn't long before I felt the water with my feet, and as the day was hot and the energy expended on the way down great, I dropped off the ladder into the cold, clear water. I called to Alan that I

was okay and he started lowering the bag containing flippers, torches, depth gauges, his mask and snorkel and gloves, etc. When I received the bag I tied it onto the ladder with a piece of nylon rope. Alan then sent down my 72' C.F. tank and I tied that onto the ladder with the same piece of rope. While Alan was fiddling around up top getting his tank and weight belt tied onto the line, I decided to put my tank on and proceeded to do so. I then thought I would put my flippers on and went for the bag tied onto the ladder. No bag. "Hey Al", I called out, "Can you see the bag of gear floating around anywhere".

He scanned the water and then said no soap. I then put my mask on and looked down into the water. I could see the bag on the bottom; it didn't look too deep, but how to get down and back up again without flippers. I got Al to drop the rope down that we were using to lower the gear, and tied it onto the bottom rung of the ladder which was 17' into the water. On the other end of the rope was a block and tackle of reasonable weight which I lowered to the bottom. I then belted down the rope, grabbed the bag and pulled my way to the surface again. Disaster had been averted. In double quick time Al lowered his gear to me, then came down and joined me. We decided first to see how deep it was where the bag had fallen and it proved to be 125' actual proved on the rope.

This was the clearest water I had ever dived in, visibility unlimited. A diver sitting on the bottom in the centre of the hole, depth about 130', could see people leaning over the top of the hole 32' above the surface of the water. We swam a complete circle of the main hole and attained a gauge depth of 140', and at no time was the torch needed and at all times bearings were easily found by looking up and seeing the ladder stretching up to the top.

It wasn't until the second dive into the hole did we realise it was possible to go deeper. This second dive took place two days later and once in the water we headed straight into the darkest patch of the hole with torches blazing. We were going down into a massive cave along a very rocky bottom with the roof about 80' above our heads. Our torch beams stretched on, it appeared, into infinity, as we slowly went deeper in depth and deeper into this massive cave. At 160' I looked back over my shoulder at the entrance. What a fantastic sight. The entrance was about 200-250' away and yet clearly visible. This wasn't clean water; this was transparent with only the cold to remind you that you were under water. Al and I proceeded on downwards until the roof of the cave

appeared to meet the floor, with massive gaps between the rocks. The rocks were as big as houses and the gaps were also in proportion. We stopped on a large boulder at 185' and shone the torch down, I would estimate, another 50'. At this time the entrance was something like 300' away so I decided to call it a day. The stem gauges on the cylinders were pretty low in their holders and I didn't relish a free ascent from 185' with 300' of cavern to traverse before it was possible to go straight up.

Torches were not necessary on the way out as the top of the hole was clearly visible and it was possible to get some idea of just how vast this cavern was. We went into raptures about it and made claims that it looked big enough to hold the Melbourne Town Hall. On reflection this was about how big this cave was. Al and I are looking forward eagerly to our next trip to Mt. Gambier.

R. ADDISON

THEY PRESERVE THE OLD SHIPS

Because of the interest by many Australians (not only Victorians) in the progress of efforts to preserve and reconstruct ~~THE~~ Cerberus information has been gathered on similar projects overseas.

San Francisco has five ships at the Maritime Museum. The citizens restored the Balclutha (steel ship 1836), businessmen gave money and supplies, and the unions gave 13,000 hours of skilled work to put her in shape.

Since 1955 well over a million people have visited the ship, and in six years \$615,000 was paid for admission.

The Cutty Sark is another fine example of ship preservation. She was opened to the public in 1964, has been visited by 250,000 people a year, and is paying her own way.

Our own National Trust has plans for the Folly Woodside in Melbourne, and has shown great interest in the Cerberus project. Likewise Sandringham City Council has it under review.

An interesting parallel is that according to the National Geographic, Sept., 1969, the original Monitor which sank off Cape Datteras in 1862, after her battle with the Merrimac, is being hunted. Once located, a serious effort will be made to salvage her for exhibition. After reading of such successful enterprises by other nations, is there any doubt that we should start work on the Cerberus?