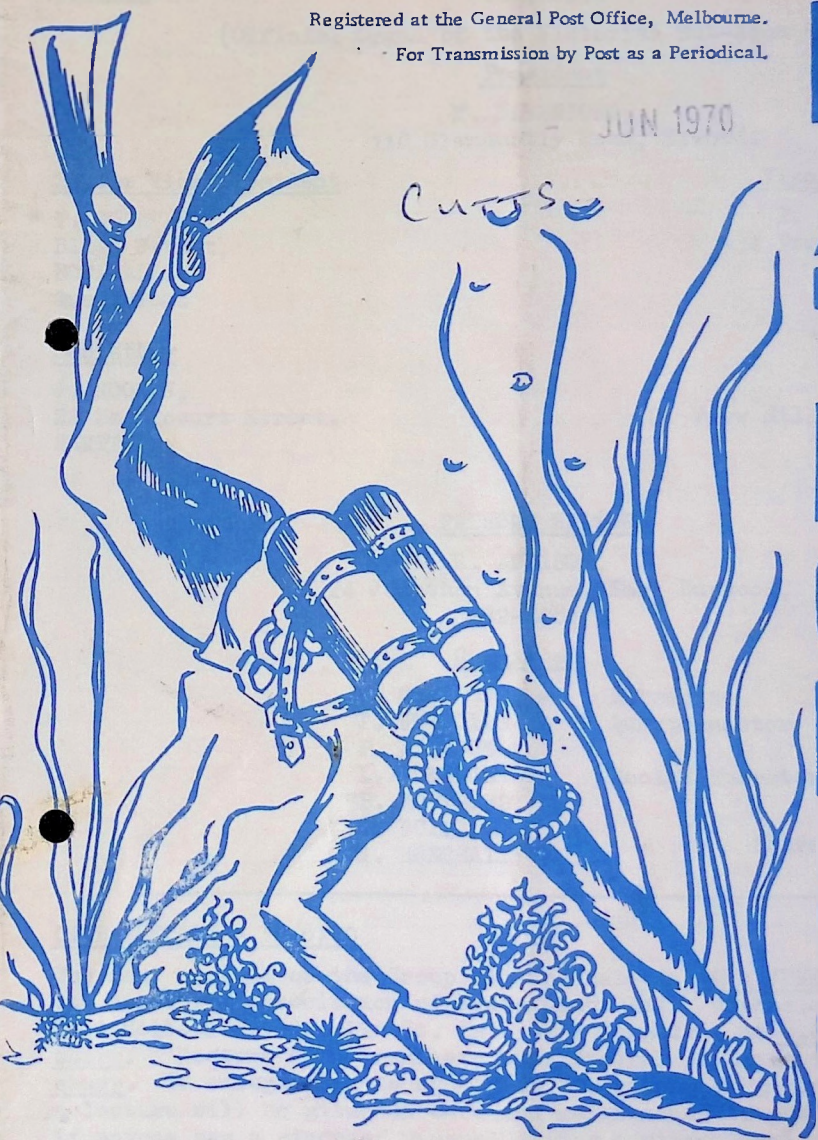


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*Cuts*



# FATHOMS



## VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

(Official Organ of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)

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CLUB MEETING - 19/6/70

The next meeting of the Group will be held on 19th JUNE, 1970 at the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs Hall, Gisborne Street, East Melbourne, opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral at 8.00 p.m. sharp. Meeting will terminate with General Business at 9.00 p.m. sharp. If enough time is available at the end of general business a lecture will be given on care and maintenance of equipment. If anyone has a piece of unusual diving equipment and would like instruction on it, bring it along.

S. D. F. REPORT.

The meeting held at the Federal Hotel on 7/5/70 was given in the main to discussion between S.D.F. delegates and delegates from Sydney from the newly-formed Scuba Association of Australia, in regard to the request from the latter to S.D.F. to become Victorian representatives on a national Scuba Association, so that Scuba Divers throughout Australia would have a unified voice in submitting their representations to Governments.

Reiteration was made of points mentioned in Newsletter of May, 1970.

One point upon which S.D.F. delegates were adamant was, should it join A.S.A. it would hold autonomy over its own affairs. The A.S.A. delegates concurred wholeheartedly with this view.

The A.S.A. Delegates wanted a national Executive of a Scuba Association for Australia drawn from delegates of A.S.A. in each State.

A point to be kept clearly in mind was that membership would not be of a N.S.W. organization, the attending delegates were from A.S.A. N.S.W. but their purpose was to endeavour to see set up the national A.S.A. not oriented to any State but working on behalf of all Scuba devotees in Australia.

The present body claiming to be representative of underwater enthusiasts has slipped badly over recent years particularly in regard to the interest of scuba divers as instanced in N.S.W. of the past 12 months and from the few members of that organization that have been contacted, disenchantment seems pretty wide spread.

It will be argued by many that the U.F.A. is recognized in most States and that perhaps this body should be rejuvenated and made more effective scuba-wise rather than fragment our voice by setting up yet another organization - this could be quite valid but the constitution of U.F.A. as at present does not allow divers to autonomy they want.

Generally A.S.A., N.S.W., appears to have set up an organization in the past few months along lines S.D.F. has developed quietly over the past 9 years.

The visiting delegates were advised that the member clubs would have to consider the matter and no firm decisions were reached. Each S.D.F. Club will have to discuss the matter and advise S.D.F. of their wishes.

It was agreed to set up a Safety Report Committee to investigate

S.D.F. Report (Cont'd.)

diving safety procedures and to make recommendations to S.D.F. for consideration and submission to each member Club for adoption. This Committee will hold its first meeting on Monday, 1/6/70, and is required to submit its findings to the next quarterly meeting of S.D.F. Sub-Aqua is represented on this Committee by Joan Noonan and any suggestions for diving safety from members would be appreciated by him for submission to Committee.

\* \* \* \* \*

PAST  
EVENTS - THE WRECK OF THE LOCH ARD, PORT CAMPBELL - 10/5/70

At 9.30 a.m. John Noonan, Glenys and I decided we would go to the Loch Ard Gorge. We travelled the 4 miles in 10-15 knot winds and light rain. Upon arrival we inspected the diving area thoroughly and decided it was safe to dive on the wreck.

As we entered the township of Port Campbell, we saw Zoltan Okalyi, Robert Crouch and their families on the side of the road. They informed us that several other members of the club and three divers from the Box Hill Club has arrived. We inspected the pier and also looked around for a suitable place to launch Joan's 13-ft. aluminium boat.

At approximately 11.00am two fishing boats pulled up to the pier after unloading their early morning catch, and after talking to them for a few minutes, the fishermen told us it was safe enough to go out after they had eaten BRUNCH.

All divers changed into suits and then helped Joan and I launch the boat. At 12.10pm all boats were loaded and ready to go. Considering weather conditions the boats' occupants hardly got wet on the journey to Mutton Bird Island, except of course, John and I who were fairly damp after about five minutes.

We arrived at the scene of the wreck at 12.30, to see another boat leaving the scene a little heavier than when it arrived. The two fishing boats anchored about 300 yds. off Mutton Bird Island. John then started the ferry service. Frank MacGuire and I were John's first passengers. Our job was to drop the marker buoy on, or as near as possible to the wreck, with the fishermen's aid. Before entering the water, the Dive Captain cum Ferry-master told all divers that the duration of the dive should be no more than 45 minutes as decompression time would have been entered at that depth.

Frank and I entered the water together and swam down the shot line in typical buddy style. On reaching the bottom, some 65 feet down, we discovered the shot line to be only 12 feet from the twisted plates of the wreck. Frank moved the shot to a sandy patch to

avoid fouling of the 56 pound weight when it was to be raised.

Frank and I then surfaced to see John arriving with the second boat load of divers. I told him we were on target, collected a pinch bar and disappeared with Frank into the depths. Whilst Frank and I were fossicking around other pairs of divers descended at about 5 minute intervals until eight of us were in the water. John remained on the surface as dive captain and captain of the ferry service, which we could not have done without. Zoltan Okalyi and Robert Crouch, brandishing underwater cameras, went in search of wreckage worth photographing, but we were told later that the water was too dirty for photography, although the visibility was up to 30 ft. in most places. Some photos were taken but it is doubtful if they will come out. Most of us managed to find some artifacts, most of which were broken plates and tiles or bits of broken glass. One of the divers thought he found the brass top off a small oil lantern.

Frank and I managed to look over about 50 ft. of the wreck and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. Frank found a new anchor chain, but we were unable to dislodge it from the rocks. I found an old Lee and Perrins worcestershire sauce bottle. We were both having a marvellous time poking around in the wreckage when Frank approached me and gave me the "surface" signal, and I knew that our 45 minutes were up and did not fancy doing decompression stops, so we surfaced. John helped us aboard the boat with our tanks, weight belts and "goodies".

The boat was attached to the marker buoy, and after four of us were aboard, John took us to one of the fishing boats. John and I returned to the buoy in the ferry and recovered another 4 divers with arms full of goodies. After transferring these divers to the other fishing boat, we set sail for Port Campbell. Because of the 10 foot swell, John and I lost visual contact with the other boats quite often.

On returning to Port Campbell boats were unloaded and John's boat put on the trailer. Most people indulged in a boiling hot shower and a copy of coffee (also boiling hot).

In summing up I would like to say that everyone who attended this dive certainly seemed to enjoy themselves, and I am sorry for those who could not come and for those who backed out at the last minute, missed out on a very interesting dive. I would like to thank Frank MacGuire for fastening my weightbelt at 65 feet, which I did not know had come undone. There is nothing like a good buddy on a dive like this. Thank you Frank.

ALAN CUTTS.

MEETING - 15/5/70

There were about twenty members present at this meeting and by the time general business had been discussed, mainly plans for the Bar-B-Que, there was no time left for any other business. It was decided that the President, Max Davenport, with the help of another committeeman give a talk on diving to the Noble Park Rotary Club at their invitation. There was quite a lot of talk about the dive on the wreck of the "Loch Ard", a report appears elsewhere in the magazine.

Some second hand gear - compass, mask and snorkel, knives, etc. which had been purchased by Alan Cutts from an ad. in the Age, was re-sold to members at bargain prices. The meeting terminated with supper at 11.00 p.m.

\* \* \*

BAR-B-QUE AND WHITE ELEPHANT SALE - 16/5/70

Held at the home of Bill Gray, the function was a rousing success. Until all income has been totalled no one is sure just how much profit the club made, but it could be as high as \$60. The white elephant sale was the highlight of the evening, Ron Addison doing the honours as auctioneer. Bidding was spirited for the items that were on sale, and the surprise item of the night, an antique copper kettle donated by Peter Rob, was sold for the fantastic sum of fifty-four cents, after the bidding had been pushed up by the magnificent sums of one cent.

The Octopush push game was cancelled owing to the fact that a team from another club was not forthcoming and besides it was raining like the very devil and the water was as cold as an iceberg. Of course this state of affairs should not stop keen divers going into the water and it didn't. Round about 1.30 a.m. Sunday morning, three spartans hit the water and proceeded to do some brisk laps of the pool.

Other items for sale at auction included three old-time bottles, one a hundred and ten years old, a fishing rod and reel, three and two pound lead weights, welder's helmet, magazines, safety windshield, sun visor, small antique steel-plated coal shovel, pedal bin, etc. etc. Representatives from other clubs included Pail Webster and Phil Hollis from Underwater Explorers Club, Grant Austin from Ringwood, and three or four members from Black Rock Underwater Diving Group. Many members of V.S.A.C. were most likely frightened by the inclement weather, but a phone call to Bill's place would have assured them that there was ample cover for all and no-one

got wet who didn't want to.

Many thanks to those other club members who turned out to do the work; a special thanks to Bill Gray for the loan of his home, and an extra special thanks to Patsy Gray, who went to great lengths to ensure that the function was a success. Without Pat's effort the Bar-B-Que would not have been half the fun that it turned out to be.

### POPE'S EYE ROCK. 24/5/70

John and Bill turned up with their small boats at 10.30 a.m. on Sunday to be welcomed by two other members eagerly awaiting. The weather did not look the best, there being an overcast sky, but there was no wind and conditions on the bay were perfect for small boats.

We got the boats in the water and away by 11.00 a.m. and each boat could have taken one more diver. Of the people who had booked for this trip, two had been in contact and begged off as they were sick, and one failed to show up and had not been in contact with anyone.

We zipped out to Pope's Eye first over glassy calm water that was crystal clear, and then anchored inside the rocks and hit the water. It was fairly cold at first but it didn't take long to warm up and get cracking. A story was told of how one of the members on a recent trip to Queensland was diving around the coral and came across a bottle encrusted with coral growth. Tenderly picking this bottle up and cradling it in her arms, she gingerly landed it and surveyed it. With visions of a fortune being made from this antique from the sea, she proceeded to de-coral it and as its pristine cleanliness became apparent, it became more and more obvious that this relic from a by-gone age, this dead marine from the sub-aqua world, was none other than a Carlton and United stubby.

We dived at Pope's Eye for about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours, 3 members used Scuba and made a complete circuit of the island, and two members snorkeled with their rarely used spear guns. They landed three nice fish which should keep the wolf from the doors for a couple of days.

After finishing with Pope's Eye, we then made a run down to Channel Fort but didn't land. We circled the island and then made our way to the wreck of Sorrento but as the tide was coming in full belt at about 9 knots, it was considered prudent to not enter the water. Definitely must have a dive on this wreck soon. To sum up, a terrific day on a glassy smooth bay.

\* \* \* \*

FUTURE OUTINGSLong Weekend 13-14-15 June, 1970

It was decided at the meeting held on 15/5/70 to change the venue of this dive to Cape Otway, as this position is in close striking distance to a lot of interesting dive spots. Most members will be camping near the wreck and shack near the lighthouse as drinking water will be available at this spot. This is a terrific spot to dive at with crays abounding in all the rock pools. Make sure you measure your container first before you catch one, as you may not fit it all in.

June 21st - Cape Schank

There will be a meeting on 19th June, 1970 just prior to this dive and it would be a good idea if all members attended to signify their intentions of going.

July 5th - Victoria Towers

This will be a boat trip and the same conditions apply as on all boat trips. First in best dressed. Come to the meeting on 19th June and it will be decided if we hire a fishing boat or if the two boats owned by club members will suffice. Don't be disappointed. Roll up and book your place.

FUTURE OUTINGS TO END OF YEAR.

JULY 19th	-	FRANKSTON WRECK - Boat
AUGUST 2nd	-	SNOW TRIP
" 16th	-	PORTSEA
" 30th	-	TO BE DECIDED
SEPTEMBER 6th	-	DIAMOND BAY
" 20th	-	GEE LONG PIER
OCTOBER 4th	-	CHANNEL FORT - Boat
" 18th	-	BLACKWOOD - Gold Dive - WEEKEND TRIP
NOVEMBER 1st	-	PHILLIP ISLAND
" 15th	-	KELP FARM - Boat
" 29th	-	RYE
DECEMBER 12th	-	DINNER



CLUB DINNER. 12th DECEMBER, 1970

We have three tentative bookings for fifty people for this function and they are -

1. CHATEAU WYUNA, Swansea Road, Montrose.  
Tariff \$6.50 per head, three course meal, purchase drinks.
2. TATRA HUT, Main Road, Mount Dandenong.  
Tariff \$5.50 per head, three course meal, purchase drinks.
3. SALZBURG LODGE, 191 Burgundy Street, Heidelberg.  
Tariff \$6.50 per head, three course meal, purchase drinks.

All these places have entertainment and dancing and it is requested all members get in touch with the social secretary, Lorraine Addison, phone: 232-3087, or come to the next meeting, because a decision will definitely be made on the location of this function.

If necessary a vote will be taken and the majority rules, so if you want to have a say in where we will be going, come to the meeting on 19/6/70 and let your wishes be known.

\* \* \* \* \*

TIDES FOR WEEKENDS IN JUNE, 1970

Date	High Water at Heads		Low Water at Heads	
	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.
5	-	1.16	5.59	6.54
6	12.47	2.00	6.45	7.43
12	4.58	5.27	10.52	11.38
13	5.47	6.01	11.28	-
19	11.44	10.47	4.17	5.06
20	12.39(p.m.)	11.52	5.10	6.01
26	4.56	5.26	10.34	11.14
27	5.57	6.11	11.21	11.57

Cont'd page 11.

At other places High or Low Water can be ascertained approximately by subtracting from or adding to the time of high or low water at Port Philip Heads as follows:-

SUBTRACT FOR:

APOLLO BAY	-	38 min.
LORNE	-	35 min.
CAPE SCHANCK	-	1 hr. 33 min.
FLINDERS JETTY	-	1 min.
LAKES ENTRANCE	-	3 hr. 25 min.
MARIO	-	3 hr. 22 min.
MALLACOOTA INLET	-	3 hr. 13 min.

ADD FOR:

BARWON HEADS	-	16 min.
POINT NEPEAN JETTY	-	9 min.
QUEENSLIFF JETTY	-	3 min.
SWAN ISLAND DOCK	-	1 hr. 59 min.
PORTSEA JETTY	-	29 min.
SORRENTO JETTY	-	2 hr. 11 min.
DROMANA JETTY	-	2 hr. 33 min.
MORNINGTON JETTY (Schnapper Point)	-	2 hr. 42 min.
FRANKSTON JETTY	-	3 hr. 7 min.
BLACK ROCK BREAKWATER	-	3 hr. 2 min.
ST. LEONARDS JETTY	-	2 hr. 44 min.
INDENTED HEAD	-	2 hr. 47 min.
PORTARLINGTON JETTY	-	2 hr. 50 min.
GEE LONG WHARVES	-	3 hr. 32 min.
COWES JETTY	-	28 min.
STONY POINT JETTY	-	39 min.
HASTINGS JETTY	-	1 hr. 6 min.
TOORADIN	-	1 hr. 23 min.
INVERLOCH	-	20 min.
CORNER INLET ENTRANCE	-	25 min.
WELSHPOOL JETTY	-	1 hr. 28 min.
TOORA JETTY	-	1 hr. 5 min.
PORT ALBERT WHARF	-	1 hr.

In accordance with members' wishes, times and tides will be included in future issues of "Fathoms." The first is included above.

ESCAPE FROM DANGER

G. BOAG,  
B.R.U.D.G.

The morning was cold but the sky was clear and the early sun half hidden by the horizon promised a warm day. There was a quietness in the air that to me was noticeable, for this time in the day I was used to chatter and songs of the birds as they proclaimed their territories.

The quiet was broken by the harsh roar of the car which pulsed on the boat ramp. The tyres squealed to get a better grip on the concrete as it went forward towing the trailer with it. The boat swayed and bucked. I had to hold the bow hard, this seemed to break my dreaming for I wasn't used to working and rising this early.

I looked at the boat, it seemed to be a thoroughbred and was waiting to go. The other divers joined me, with one in the boat, they loaded the diving gear in the boat, the helmsman took the wheel, pressed the choke then turned the starter key and with a cough the powerful motor caught and roared to life. I swung the bow out to the open sea and with a swift clamber I joined the others aboard.

I went to the stern with a check to see all was ready, the helmsman thrust the go-lever forward, the motor roared, the boat shuddered and began to make way. The bow started to raise then the whole boat, the sea around the prop turned yellow with the sand then white with froth. The boat even now riding her prop as we swiftly sped to our destination.

The sea had a slight chop on it with the slap of the sea on our hull and the water and motor volume made conversation impossible. The sun was rising sending its long fingers of warmth down to us. I seemed to be in a state of euphoria and yet a state of uneasiness took hold of me.

We headed for the mouth of the bay. The long arm of the peninsula slid past us. It would be the first time I had dived this area. We would dive on the slack tide as the tide turned, we would have to get out quick as the still water would turn into a boiling cauldron as millions of tons of water tried to get to sea through a hundred yard gap.

Suddenly the motor roar quietened to a whisper, the boat hull slapped against the water and we slowly started to turn in a long circle. The other divers started to search for land marks. "There" someone pointed. The helmsman put the wheel over and we slowly approached to the reef, we were to dive.

The anchor splashed the still water. Suddenly there was stillness in the air as the helmsman cut the motor. Even the water was still. Then there was a melee of bodies getting gear on and I had already got my wet suit on. So I watched them. It was like watching young children sorting out a large pile of clothes and trying them on and rejecting those they didn't want and returning them to the pile for someone else. In a few minutes all were ready, the hookah was started and checked. The first diver went over and checked the anchor and conditions. When everything was in order, I slipped overboard taking a large breath and started down. The feeling of uneasiness started to leave me.

Down, down stop check and down again, the sea bed started to appear out of the murk. I suddenly saw the wreck. Just a pile of iron. I always feel let down in wreck diving for I still think of wrecks as ships slowly sinking down till her keel kisses the sea's sand and then she stays. But of course this is not so, as the sea doesn't let anything weaker than itself survive. I started to search for points, there a boiler, the remains of a motor, the crankshaft, the propeller shaft. I swam to where the stern would have been, but now just a pile of scrap iron strewn with a giant's kick over the sea bed.

I returned to the bow, as I did I felt a tug of the water which I enjoy for I like to gently rock by the sea's current. It always reminds me of a foetus rocking in its mother's womb. Gently, I finned to the front of the wreck. I poked my head under the remaining part of the hull to see if anything was there. The sea had scoured a hole between the hull and the sand and there was a couple of Port Jackson sharks. But further back the soldier fish kept standing sentry duty. Back and forth they swam and memories of past dives came to me. A little wisp of sand kicked up at my elbow and I wondered by it happened. Could it be an underwater spring? What was happening to me was the tide was changing and was tugging me. I began to head back to the boat, as I started to fin up I felt the sea pushing me. Slowly the sea began to sweep me back, back to the open sea. I reached down and grabbed a piece of the wreck.

Till now, It was quite a pleasant experience and I wasn't unduly worried but as I held on to the crow bar I could feel the sea's force pushing against me. Then the panic started to rise in me as I looked down onto the wreck and thought of it. If the sea could do that to you, who is so much bigger than I, what could it do to me. The water started to push against me, my hand started to ache. I realised I couldn't stay there so looking around I began to plan my next move. Reaching to the next hand hold, slowly, hand over hand. Hope slowly seeped into my fear frozen mind, then there were no more hand grips. The sea with its inestimable force pushed against me. I swung like a pendulum against the wreck, my arm started to ache now. "What the hell", I thought, and realized what I had done. I tried to tighten my grip but it was too late, my hand had slipped off the sheet of iron leaving a trail of green blood. I twisted into a ball and the sea swept me along.

I was at peace with the world. No more to fight, no more worrying, just relaxation. From now on I forgave my enemies, my friends. Thought of the hire-purchase companies and the frantic dash of life. The company where I worked, "Who would do my job, damn, I left a book there". Oh well, "What the Hell". I will not need it now, I wish I could see what would happen on the surface now. What would they be saying? doing? My wife will be a thousand dollars better off if they find her still its not everyday a diver gets swept out to sea, so I wonder if I will get in the papers. My mother will miss me, she will be down to one daughter only now.

The sand and rocks flashed past me in a blur. Side to side I swept, the regulator started to sing. I began to fight. The noise from my regulator was getting louder, it reminded me of my alarm clock.

It was my alarm clock. I reached out, stopped the bellow, opened my eyes and as I did, I could see the sand and began to shake my head to clear my mind, and sat up, glanced around my bedroom. Sliding out of bed, I got dressed and went into the kitchen for breakfast.

I slammed the car door, pulled the choke button, turned the key and with a savage push stamped into the clutch pedal and with an urgent hand movement I pushed the gear lever into first gear. The motor roared, I let the clutch go suddenly, the wheels spun and I was on my way to a dive. The morning was cold but the sky was clear and the early sun half hidden by the horizon promised a warm day. There was a quietness in the air that to me was noticeable, for this time in the day I was used to chatter and songs.....

By courtesy of "Down Under".