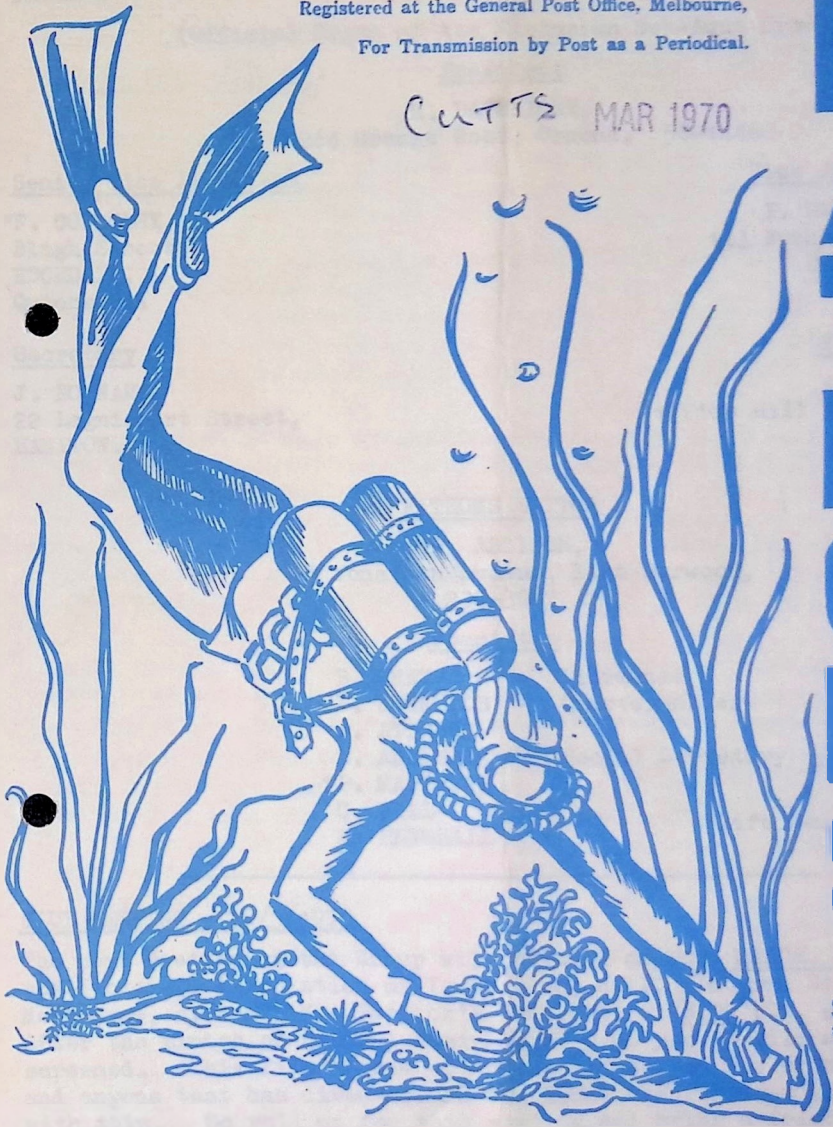


3c.

Registered at the General Post Office, Melbourne,
For Transmission by Post as a Periodical.

CUTTS MAR 1970



FATHOMS



VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

(Official Organ of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)

President

M. DAVENPORT,
264 Grange Road, Ormond, 58-1446

Senior Vice President

*F. COUSTLEY
Bligh Street,
ROCHDALE,
Queensland

Vice President

P. ROBERTSON,
143 Fordham Road,
CAMBERWELL
29-2647

Secretary

J. NOONAN,
22 Lagnicourt Street,
HAMPTON.

Treasurer

A. CUTTS,
21 View Hill Crescent,
ELTHAM
439-9122

FATHOMS EDITOR

R. ADDISON,
24 Jonathan Avenue, East Burwood,
232-3087

Committee

B. GRAY - Librarian
P. REYNOLDS - Quartermaster
P. ATTWOOD
L. ADDISON - Social Secretary
*P. MATTHEWS
C. BULL
M. HENSHALL *Life Member

CLUB MEETING - 20/3/1970

The next Meeting of the Group will be held on 20th MARCH, 1970 at the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs Hall, Gisborne Street, East Melbourne, opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral at 8.00 p.m. sharp. After the finish of general business at 9.00 p.m. a film will be screened. This film is one of the best that Rod Taylor has done and anyone that has dived around the Mount Gambier area will agree with this. So roll up for this meeting and bring a friend. Supper will be served at the finish of the film for a donation of 25 cents.

WRECK DIVING - PORT PHILLIP BAY

Ron Addison V.S.A.G.

This might sound funny to those people who live in close proximity to the bay, but this area abounds in wrecks which are easily accessible without a boat and afford the diver many hours of enjoyable sightseeing.

One of the best wrecks to start off with is the "Cerberus". Launched in 1861 in England, this dreadnaught was the pride of the Victorian Navy before being scuttled as a breakwater at Half Moon Bay, Brighton. It takes a three hundred yard swim to reach it but, as the way is paved with many moored boats of various sizes, resting spaces are abundant.

Entry into the wreck is gained through rust holes in the sides. Once inside and with eyes accustomed to the darkness, it is possible to swim the entire length of the ship on the lower deck with only a slight degree of danger. A waterproof torch is an asset in this wreck. The amount of damage done by the elements is evident and unless the National Trust comes up with something soon, all that will be left will be a pile of rusty cast-iron on the bottom.

Underneath the gun turrets (each gun weighing eighteen tons, two guns to the turret) the bent steel posts show signs that soon the entire upper structure will crash into itself.

At Sandringham, two miles up the coast towards the city, lying in the middle of a well protected boat harbour, is the J.7. A World War 1 submarine launched in 1917, she was stripped of her innards and sunk as a breakwater in 1932. Most of the outer casing has rusted away by now, the conning tower nearly gone, in fact nothing like the pride of the fleet that she used to be. Entry into this wreck is gained through a large hole in the pressure hull from where the motors were removed.

The water inside the wreck is pretty dirty and nothing remains of any of the instruments that she used to have. It is interesting to do a circuit of the outside of the wreck under water because down at the stern she still has her three massive props. The author has tried many times to legally gain permission to remove these props but the stumbling block seems to be the State Government which says if I remove part of it I must remove all of it. What am I going to do with 1200 tons of rusty scrap

steel? It is possible to get to the sub without getting wet as the boat harbour authorities have built a small pier right across the top of it.

Two hundred yards from the sub, at the end of a massive rock filled breakwater, lies the sunken remains of a three hundred foot dredge. The water at this point is about twenty feet deep so the wreck is always completely submerged except for a bit of upper structure at the fore part.

Visibility at this point is usually pretty good with a range of a fine day of about thirty feet. Entry into this wreck is through hatch-ways in the deck, about ten feet below the surface of the water. Inside the wreck it is possible to see most of the old equipment, boilers, winching gear, drums and so forth. Before being sunk this wreck was stripped of all items of value such as valves, piping, etc. (much to the authors disgust) but, because of its size and the clarity of the water, the author has returned again and again to this spot.

The only danger associated with diving around this wreck, is not to try and get out of the wreck by many of the smaller holes in the deck caused by rust. It is possible to give yourself a nasty cut and spoil what should be an enjoyable days diving.

Directly across the bay at Williamstown in fairly shallow water lies the remains of the "Kacka Ricki", a large steamship that caught fire and sank nearby. This wreck was blown to bits by "Johnno" Johnson of "Niagara" fame and the pieces of it were winched into shallow water right near the main Williamstown swimming beach. A couple of lucky divers swimming over the remains have been known to pick up some very interesting pieces of metal.

Down past Geelong on the Bellarine Peninsula, at a little spot called Indented Heads, laying about two hundred yards off-shore, is the remains of an old paddle wheeler. This is the "Ozone" which used to ply up and down Port Phillip Bay during its hey day, carting hundreds of Sunday merry-makers from Port Melbourne to Queenscliff and return.

This wreck is nothing but a rusted heap of metal on the seabed now. Easily found by the massive paddle-wheels which stand upright, she is a playground for hundreds of school children who holiday in this area during the school break.

Her six massive boilers, three forward and three aft, are still in place minus valves and piping which were removed by

un-named person or persons. An interesting tale about this wreck was told to me by a local inhabitant. It so happens that when this wreck was scuttled as a breakwater, a local lad purchased the rights to salvage any non-ferrous metal on it. As the ship was entirely above water, salvage was carried out using axes, hacksaws and sledge hammers and the resultant booty was put into a raft tied alongside. The raft was left during the night much to the salvor's disgust because during the night a wild storm blew up and broke the moorings. This raft, or remains of it have not been seen since. This would be a terrific find for a diver and would repay a long search one hundred fold.

Just to the left of this wreck and a little further out to sea lies a massive vessel. It must be close to two hundred feet long and forty feet wide at its widest point. It has no decking, just looks like an overgrown life boat. This vessel was tied up to the "Ozone" one night and during the night it caught fire and burnt to the water line and sunk. She is a marvellous spot to dive on being rich in underwater growth and fish-life. The water down in this part of the bay is usually clear with a visibility of 20'-30', so the diver is always rewarded for his time and effort.

There are lots more wrecks in Port Phillip Bay, not as easy to get to as the ones I have listed, but these prove that the diver doesn't need a boat to enjoy a good day's wreck diving.

Wrecks waiting to be found are the above mentioned raft full to the brim with negotiable metal; City of Launceston, steamer which sunk after a collision somewhere near Geelong; Navy frigate which sunk about 1943 after a collision about the same spot as the City. The author would welcome any information on any of these wrecks.

S P E C I A L .. F I L M BY ROD TAYLOR

The under-water fab. world of the crystal clear lakes of Mount Gambier.

A L L I N V I T E D

W H E N ? Friday, 20th March, 1970 at 9.00 p.m.

W H E R E ? Victorian Association of Youth Clubs Hall, Gisborne Street, East Melbourne. Supper supplied for a small donation of 25c.

P A S T O U T I N G SPortsea 8.2.70

On a fine, hot day that was just made for diving, seventeen members with wives and children arrived at the Portsea pier at 10 am. Everyone hit the water by 10.30 am and the hunt was on for old bottles. The water was inviting and after being roasted by the sun, divers scattered to all points of the area.

The first dive lasted about an hour and the haul of goodies was not too bad. Two members of the party had cameras with them and it is hoped that these films turn out alright. After the first dive eight members of the group headed for the back beach at Sorrento where the off-shore breeze had flattened out the water and it was an ideal day for ocean diving. A large ray was sighted measuring about seven foot across and it was intensely studied by most of the newer members of the group with varying degrees of emotions. Other fish life in the area is not as abundant as in previous years, and the abalone population has thinned considerably.

The party that remained behind at Portsea pier hunted for abalone after lunch and managed to get a feed, and then recovered a set of car keys for a very grateful boat-owner. Ron Addison was rewarded for his trouble by being taken for a ski behind a very nice fibreglass boat. It's three and a half years since he was on skis and the next day his back, arm and leg muscles were complaining bitterly.

This was a fab day for diving, well attended by members and it is hoped that this attendance will be kept up for the full year.

Mornington night dive 21.2.70

Four divers met at Mornington Pier at 8.00 p.m. and with the water smooth as a billiard table, it was decided to dive at this spot with its deep water rather than drive around to Canadian Bay where there was a bit of chop on the water.

The divers entered the water at 8.15 p.m. and with torches blazing made for the depths. There is an abundance of colour at this spot that is not noticed when diving during the daylight. There are greens, reds and blues in every nook and cranny and fish hidden away for the night get a rude shock when a torch is thrust into his hidey-hole. He stays suspended and hypnotised until the light is moved slightly then he moves sluggishly, deeper into the cranny. The divers moved around in pairs and the torches could be easily seen by observers on the rocks as a greenish glow.

The torches of the divers under-water approaching each other, were seen as green haloes with a beam of green light emanating from the centre. With the torches off, visibility underwater was about 8 feet. If one waved one's hand wildly, little green spots of phosphorescence appeared at the outline of one hand. Kicking the flippers hard while hanging onto a rock caused lots more phosphorescence to appear. An unusual phenomenon that was enjoyed by all.

One is made more aware of underwater happenings at night because the attention is focused more on the close things than on things at the limit of vision.

The underwater festivities lasted about one hour. Then hot coffee, chips, chops, steaks and hamburgers were enjoyed by all, with the gastric juices being serenaded by the mystic strains from Paul's squeeze box. An enjoyable dive that would have been appreciated by all divers.

PAST MEETING 20.2.70

The meeting started at 8.00 p.m. with the president, M. Davenport, in the Chair, and 23 members present. General business was routine and P. Matthews started showing his slides of the early days of club activity (1958-59) at 9.15 p.m. The meeting terminated with supper at 10.30 p.m.

FUTURE OUTINGS

March 22nd, Cape Woolamai Boat Trip

This will be a boat trip from San Remo. Eight divers expressed a desire to attend this trip and it is hoped that more people will turn up at the meeting on the 20.3.70 so the boat booking can be confirmed. If other clubs would like to make this a joint venture, please contact M. Davenport.

Easton 27th/30th Battangabee

Crystal clear water in a sheltered inlet, fish by the yard. 24 hour a day diving in safe water. Good camping area with fresh water. The meeting of 20.3.70 will thrash out final details.

April 12th - Queenscliffe

Meet at the Queenscliffe Jetty at 10.30 a.m. A couple of good spots are close at hand.

FUTURE OUTINGS TO END OF YEAR

	APRIL 26th	- CRAWFISH ROCK - Boat
	MAY 10th	- LOCH ARD - Boat
	" 24th	- POPE'S EYE - Boat
QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY -	JUNE	- CAPE LIPTRAP
	" 21st	- CAPE SCHANK
	JULY 5th	- VICTORIA TOWERS - Boat
	" 19th	- FRANKSTON WRECK - Boat
	AUGUST 2nd	- SNOW TRIP
	" 16th	- PORTSEA
	" 30th	- TO BE DECIDED
	SEPTEMBER 6th	- DIAMOND BAY
	" 20th	- GEELONG PIER
	OCTOBER 4th	- CHANNEL FORT - Boat
W/E TRIP -	" 18th	- BLACKWOOD - Gold Dive
	NOVEMBER 1st	- PHILLIP ISLAND
	" 15th	- KELP FARM - Boat
	" 29th	- RYE
	DECEMBER 12th	- DINNER

LECTURE BY DR. HASS

On Monday, 16/2/70, an invitation was made to the editor of "Fathoms" to attend a lecture given by Dr. Hans Hass. This was to be his only, more or less, public meeting in Victoria and it was regarded as an honour to have a representative of V.S.A.G. in attendance. Because of limited accommodation available, invitations were given only to very few members of affiliated S.D.F. clubs. Dr. Hass is in Australia making a documentary film for European Television on the death of Harold Holt, and is also going to Queensland to do some work around the Barrier Reef.

His lecture started with a talk on the habits of sharks and went on to a film showing how sharks ignore divers and go for previously hidden speared fish. We saw how sharks cruised backwards and forwards across the face of the reef smelling out where bleeding fish were hidden. The camera panned from shark to

at intervals to show the distance between them and this was no more than 8 feet. Proof was there on film, sharks go about their business and ignore divers completely. They grubbed around the reef just ferreting out the bleeding, speared fish. Dr. Hass said that if divers made any sudden moves towards sharks, they would turn tail and get out.

Dr. Hass's second film was about evolution. It had been made in such a way that it was possible to study human behaviour without the subject being aware he was being studied. This involved making a camera with built-in mirrors in the lens, enabling movie films to be taken of subjects when the camera was pointed away from them. In this way it was possible to capture a range of emotions across a subject's face. Another aspect was that other scenes were shot and then the film speeded up so that various animal and human subjects were shown moving at a speed faster than normal. It is very hard to describe this particular portion of the lecture and I think it could be more fully covered by discussion at a club meeting.

Questions were invited from the audience and Dr. Hass has the happy knack of answering a question in a manner that future questions were also answered. Questions fired at Dr. Hass ranged from how to become interested in diving, to all the theories regarding the death of Harold Holt.

The lecture terminated with supper at 12 p.m. and I would like to take the opportunity to thank Mr. & Mrs. P. Webster for making their house available and for the refreshments supplied and especially Phil for the invitation.

WHAT'S UP DOWN UNDER

P. Webster of the Underwater Explorers Club has been doing some filming with Dr. H. Hass at Portsea.

The Maggie constructed by a couple of members of V.S.A.G. is now ready for its maiden voyage, and an opportune moment is now awaited for its salt-water christening.

STORY COMPETITION

Come on you budding authors, how about sending in your stories. Only one to date from R. Addison on Wreck diving. There's a two-year free subscription to Dive South Pacific swinging on this. All eligible, no rules.