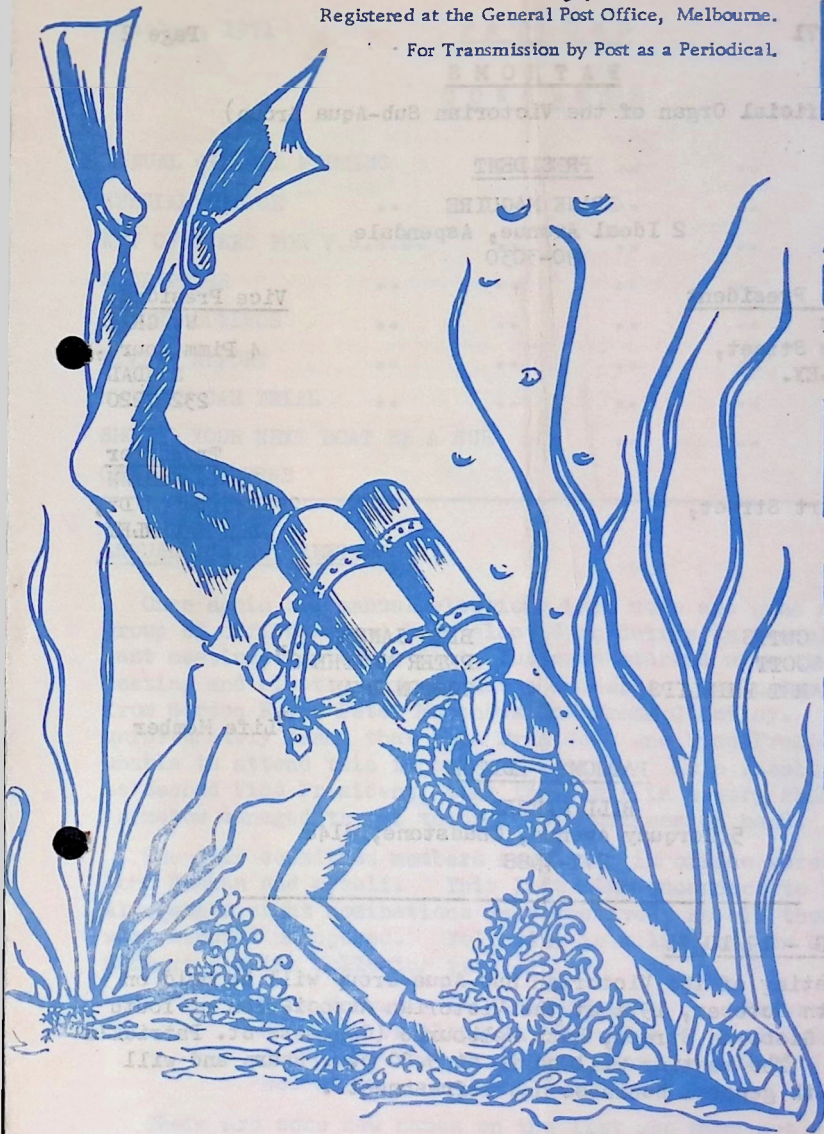


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FATHOMS



VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FATHOMS

(Official Organ of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)

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CLUB MEETING - 19/10/71

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Tuesday, 19th October, 1971 at the Victorian Association of Youth Clubs Hall, Gisborne Street, East Melbourne (Opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral). The meeting will begin at 8.00 p.m. sharp and will terminate with general business and refreshments.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING -

Once again our annual elections have come and gone and a new group of officers have been elected to duties in the club. At the last meeting, September 21st, business started with the annual meeting and election of committee members. Apologies were received from Gordon Ryan, Peter Matthews and Frank Coastley. This unfortunately meant that both President and Vice-President were unable to attend this important meeting. As a result yours truly as second Vice President, took the chair in a very shaky manner and somehow managed to get through the business on hand.

The only committee members remaining in office were Peter Matthews, John Noonan and myself. This left nine vacancies to be filled. Altogether eight nominations were received, so all those nominated were elected unopposed. Following is a list of new committee members for the following year:

John Noonan	Don McBean	Peter Matthews
Margaret Phillips	Pat Reynolds	Alan Cutts
Frank Maguire	Gordon Ryan	Bill Gray
Bob Scott	Bill Jansen	

There are some new names on the list who have not previously been active in club affairs. We hope to see some fresh ideas coming up from them.

Annual General Meeting (Cont'd.)

A vote was also taken on the election to life membership of Ron Addison. As this did not receive the necessary two-thirds majority, the matter will be deferred to a later date.

Following the annual meeting, the regular monthly meeting got under way, with minutes, financial report and general business. Recent outings at Flinders and Mt. Gambier were reported, and future outings discussed.

Instead of the usual coffee and biscuits after the meeting, all members were invited over to Peter Trevor's flat for refreshments. Peter, who hails from New Zealand, has been on a working tour of Australia and is due to leave for Europe in the near future. During his stay in Victoria he has been diving with the V.S.A.G. and has been a most welcome guest at almost all of our recent outings. His invitation was in appreciation of the good times shared with our club members.

Speaking for all the club, we wish you 'Bon Voyage and Good Diving' in the future, Peter.

SPECIAL NOTICE

All members are urged to make a special effort to attend our November meeting (Tuesday, Nov. 16). The very well-known Jan Watson of the U.R.G. will give a slide illustrated talk on Marine Biology, artificial reefs and conservation of marine life. Don't miss this opportunity for a most interesting session with one of the foremost authorities in this field.

The start is 8 p.m. sharp, so be sure to roll in early. All members of other clubs and fellow divers are cordially invited to attend.

NEW OFFICERS FOR V.S.A.G. -

Following the election of committee members at the Annual Meeting, a meeting of committee was called to elect the new club officers. The result of this is as follows:

FRANK MAGUIRE	-	President
PAT REYNOLDS	-	1st Vice President
BILL GRAY	-	2nd Vice President
JOHN NOONAN	-	Secretary
DON McBEAN	-	Treasurer
MARGARET PHILLIPS	-	Social Secretary
BOB SCOTT	-	Medical Officer
BILL JANSEN	-	'Fathoms' Editor

In addition, the convenience of the present meeting place and meeting night (Tuesday) were discussed. The club would like to have the opinions of members as to which night of the week is most convenient for the majority. A space is provided following this article to state your first preference and second preference for meeting nights. It would be appreciated if all members indicate their preferences and if unable to attend the next meeting, post them in to the V.S.A.G.

S T O P P R E S S

At a meeting of the Club committee it was decided to amend club dues and training fees. The new rates are as follows:

Members Joining Fee	..	..	..	\$ 5.00
Members Annual Dues	..	..	..	10.00
Students Joining Fee	..	..	..	4.00
Students Annual Dues	..	..	..	6.00
Country Members Joining	..	..	..	4.00
Country Members Annual Dues	..	..	..	6.00
Associate Members	"	"	..	4.00
Training Course Fee	..	..	..	18.00

I would like meetings to be held on the following day:

1st Preference: _____ 2nd Preference: _____

Signed: _____

FUTURE OUTINGS

- OCTOBER 17 - Wreck dive on 'Victoria Towers', Torquay.
Contact Frank Maguire - Tel.: 90-3030
- OCTOBER 31 - Cape Schank.
- NOVEMBER 12 - Annual dinner at 'Baron of Beef', Sherbrooke Road,
Sherbrooke. Tickets \$5.00 per person, payable
now to Treasurer or Social Secretary.
- NOVEMBER 14 - Port Campbell (Loch Ard wreck).
- NOVEMBER 28 - The Pinnacles, Phillip Island (boat dive)

NOTE: The S.D.F. survey of the Frankston area on October 3
was cancelled due to gale force winds.

DIVING REPORT - MT. GAMBIER, Weekend Sept. 10th to 12th.

Dive Captain - Frank Maguire

Early Friday morning the weather looked fair, but as time passed by, the sky darkened, and sure enough, down came the rain just as Val (my girl friend) and I were leaving home. We went to Peter and Margaret's flat and left with them for Mt. Gambier at about 1.00 o'clock.

After 4 hours of solid driving, we arrived at Nelson around 6.00, had our tea and then drove to the local hotel where we were meant to meet Frank, Lyn and Frank's mate, Peter, at 6.30 p.m. On meeting Frank, and after a short discussion, we made our way to Piccaninny Ponds for a night dive. The track wasn't the best in places, and a lot of the time was spent off it instead of on it. However, we eventually made it to the ponds. After a very quick inspection we kitted up and were soon in the water. By this time it was getting on for 7.30 p.m. and becoming quite dark. We snorkelled over the first pool, then Frank had no trouble in finding the gap between the reeds which led to the second pool. I buddied up with Peter Trevor, and we, that is Peter and myself with Frank and his mate, Peter, began our descent. First of all we did a bounce dive to about 80', then we slowly descended again to about 110'. After 15 minutes total bottom time, we all began our ascent, we could make out the shape of the hole against the dark sky, and as we neared the surface, even a few stars became visible. The whole dive was really fantastic and really worth the effort in getting to the ponds. After a cup of hot coffee we managed to get back to the highway without too much trouble.

First of all we tried unsuccessfully to get air in Mt. Gambier, then we moved on to the Caravan Park. Here the caretaker and his wife informed us that because we were divers, we couldn't use the caravans that we already had a deposit on. It turns out that the vans are privately owned and a while back three divers from a Melbourne club had, in some way, caused \$79 worth of damage to a van. Therefore, they (presumably the private owner/s) had concluded that all divers are wreckers??? Anyway, a bit of an argument resulted after which we left. Finally, we found another Park situated off the highway, approx. 2 miles before Mt. Gambier - Frank, Lyn and Peter took a cabin, Peter and Margaret had their station wagon, Val and I our little tent. All's well by the time Barry and Fritz found us about 10.00 o'clock, so everyone got an early night.

Very early next morning Frank was off to find the other divers who were supposed to be coming, however, after a couple of hours driving around, no sign of them! The rest of the morning was spent shopping for air fills, etc. and food. After the shopping was completed, we moved to One Tree for a dive. Following a quick inspection of the hole, we dressed and were soon in the water, six divers in all. With visibility at around 40' we started our descent, once again I was buddied up with Peter Trevor. We arrived on top of the mound at 80'. After only a few minutes we all surfaced because Frank had wind problems or something. Any way, shortly after this Peter and I again descended, this time reaching about 120'. After a total bottom time of 15 mins. we started our ascent. At about 80' Peter completely ran out of air so we buddy breathed most of the way to the surface. Fritz, Barry and Peter had gone down together and reached about the 150' mark. Apparently Fritz hadn't been able to clear his ears properly, and at 80' he finally cleared them with a bang! On the way up he received a reverse blockage, so that finished any more diving for Fritz on the weekend. Frank had also discovered a very helpful way of getting over barb wire fences when fully dressed in diving gear! After hot coffee and a discussion on the principles behind the U.S. Navy decomp. tables we moved off after a very eventful dive.

Later that afternoon we went to Ewen's Ponds where Frank, Peter and myself snorkelled in unbelievably clear water. After swimming the 3 ponds, we walked back and convinced Barry that it was too good to miss. Val borrowed Peter's suit and came in with us. She was completely rapt and is very interested now on taking up diving. After our second snorkel in the Ponds, we packed up and went back to the Caravan Park for tea and a reasonably early Saturday night. Still no sign of any other V.S.A.G. members.

Sunday came with bright sunshine and clear blue sky. We headed off later in the morning for a sea dive at Carpenters Rocks. After much side tracking we finally arrived there to be met with moderate to rough seas, so we tried a few more spots in the hope of being able to get in, with the possibility of crays. On the way back from the second spot visited, Peter Trevor was cutting a corner on the supposedly one-sided dirt track, when we met head on with a Ford coming in the opposite direction, the other Ford collecting the most damage. Anyway we were both soon on our way - an unfortunate accident. The third spot tried produced calm water inside the sand bar. However, the water was very dirty and only several feet deep so the idea of a sea dive was soon abandoned. We made our way to a fantastic hole called 'The Pines'. At first I wasn't too keen due to the trick duck weed covering the surface, and shutting of light available to the hole. However, Frank soon assured me that we could clear the surface and we were soon in the water and making our way down through the entrance. Going down every thing was pitch black, but arriving at the 80' mark and turning around, we were met with a fantastic sight of the entrance which now appeared as an aqua-coloured hole in a black sky. With torchs O.K. we began to explore the hole. The 2 most prominent things being the air pockets in the roof that looked like upside down puddles and the reversed sight of a waterfall, as created by our bubbles during their mad race upwards and along the slanting roof of the hole. We surfaced after 20 minutes bottom time and with a really unbelievable experience.

By now it was nearly 2.00 p.m. so we made our way back to the park for a final clean up before starting our long trip home. After a long and weary trip Peter dropped Val and I back home about 9.30 p.m. after a really good and eventful weekend of excellent diving. It seems a pity that more members were unable to turn up and partake in such a fantastic club outing. It's also strange that only two of the six divers present were club members, the other four being much welcomed visitors. All in all, a very successful and enjoyable weekend for those who went.

LES WALKLING

MYSTERY CAR TRIAL

September 26 dawned, and bods from all over were up early making last minute adjustments, packing, picnic lunches, sporting equipment and families, to be on time for the start of the big car trial at Chadstone (not the BP rally, the VSAG one). By 9 o'clock cars were rolling in from everywhere and a ball game was already in progress, just missing several passing cars.

Entrants were sent off at five minute intervals with a sheet of clues leading them to the destination and a little sealed packet telling how to get there if you really got lost.

The name of the game is observation. Clues had to be filled in on shop signs, etc. along the way and cryptic directions figured out.

After several wrong turns, 10 miles and about an hour more than necessary, we finally came across Frank, the 'anchor man' waiting for us at Frankston with the last clue. We surged off in a cloud of pollution heading for what seemed the obvious course. Next clue - where is it? Couldn't be, keep going! Another 20 miles too many. We finally figured it out and sputtered on to the Mornington beach to find everyone there waiting for us. What humiliation!

But wait, the race is not always to the swift. After counting up points for correct clues, the grand prize winner was announced. Guess who?

The next event on the program was a treasure hunt for the kids. This had kids (of all ages) searching the sand for milk bottle tops. Prizes were duly awarded. Somebody mentioned snorkelling, but somehow this had no takers, so everyone moved on to the picnic area in the park for lunch. Snags, chops, sandwiches and some bottles of Carlton (1st prize) were shared by all.

The sporting session opened with kicking a football around, just for warming up. Then a game was organized (soccer this time) with all types from XSSW to OS making up the teams. Who says it's a sissy game. It soon showed how fit I was (not).

When everybody was thoroughly exhausted we decided to switch to baseball. This was going great guns with home runs flying everywhere, but we had to quit every two minutes when the sheets

of rain hit us.

Finally, we called it a day, a thoroughly enjoyable one. I can strongly recommend all members not to miss the next one. Final advice from a winner, watch out for those clues.

BILL JANSEN

SHOULD YOU NEXT BOAT BE A SUBMARINE?

Whether you want to spear fish, search for treasure or merely explore the undersea world, the mini-sub is a good way to get there. We have always thought of submarines as exclusively naval vessels, but with the recent rise in undersea scientific exploration, more and more types are entering the scene.

Perhaps Costean started it all with his diving saucer. Actually saucer shaped, it is propelled by water jets and can withstand depths down to 1000 ft. This has been followed by a host of different types with such names as Benthos V (700 ft.), Deep Jeep (2600 ft.), Alvin (6000 ft.) and Aluminant (15,000 ft.) These have already shown their usefulness in such tasks as deep sea photography, marine life observation, salvage and rescue operations.

While these deep submergence are very sophisticated and costly, several types have also been developed for the average Scuba diver. Two of these are the Markham 2 man sub, which can be built from a kit for \$400 and the Perry "Shark Hunter".

The Perry Oceanographics Company (U.S.A.) felt that some shark-proof vehicle should be developed for SCUBA divers. Though its passengers are totally enclosed when riding through shark infested waters, the mini-sub's plexiglass side panels and canopy provide excellent visibility. This lends itself ideally to photography and exploration. This sub is known as a 'wet' type. That is, the occupants are immersed in water and breathe through aqualung regulators, just as when diving.

Because no swimming is involved, a normal 100 minute supply of air lasts up to 50% longer, depending on water temperature. The colder the water, the higher the rate of air consumption.

Mini subs ride easily on the surface at tow speeds of 6 to 8 knots, or under self propulsion. A hand controlled valve is opened in the bottom to flood the hull and wings in order to submerge. An airplane type joystick determines the descent angle through forward externally mounted bow planes. Airplane type pedals activate the rudder at the stern. Flooding of the hull and wings provides neutral buoyancy from which the sub is planed up or down. To surface, air is blown from the two 72s into wing tanks. Two other scuba bottles with regulators supply air to the crew. In the Perry sub a separate tank called a Q^T tank provides emergency negative buoyancy for quick dives, to avoid collisions when subs are operating near the surface. Also, when this tank is flooded, it helps hold the sub in position, enabling the crew to park on the sea bottom and leave the sub for short excursions.

On most subs, power is provided by several high-ampereage lead acid batteries encased in a watertight box near the stern. A frequently used motor is that developed for electric trolling outboards, as they meet the requirements of watertightness, compactness, high power output and low ampereage consumption. They can be installed to swivel, providing drive in any direction including reverse.

The Perry sub's recommended operational depth is 100 ft. though they have been tested to 200 ft. They have a gross weight of 1580 pounds, are 16 ft. long, 8 ft. wide (including wings) and 5 ft. high. The expected price is between \$4000 and \$5000.

Neil Knight and myself are in the throes of making one. It will be 16 ft. long, 3 ft. 6 ins. wide and 2 ft. 6 ins. high, and powered by a swivel mounted electric motor. We have made the mould but a few changes are necessary. Our window is a Mustang fighter canopy.

Working in fibreglass is a real challenge so instead of mucking up the sub, we tested ourselves on a 12 ft. dinghy. Turned out pretty good. Next step :

Submarine.

P. REYNOLDS.

CROWN OF THORNS -

The following news item was heard on the A.B.C. news session on October 1st:

Members of the SCUBA Divers' Association have met with Senator Georges (Labor) to discuss plans to combat the Crown of Thorns starfish on the Great Barrier Reef. Senator Georges stated that as many as 1000 SCUBA divers could make themselves available to be formed into teams to kill the starfish with spear and formalin guns. He maintained that the situation required urgent action, despite recent pronouncements that the crown of thorns did not constitute a threat to the reef. In reply to doubts expressed on whether the method would be effective in a reef 1000 miles long, he noted that Americans had been successful with this method around the island of Guam. Primary attention would be given to conserving specific areas.

A long term project was envisaged, extending up to 10 years if necessary. Funds were being sought, the primary objective at present being a suitable boat to operate from.

Sen. Georges stated that an organization similar to the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia was envisaged by the SCUBA divers.