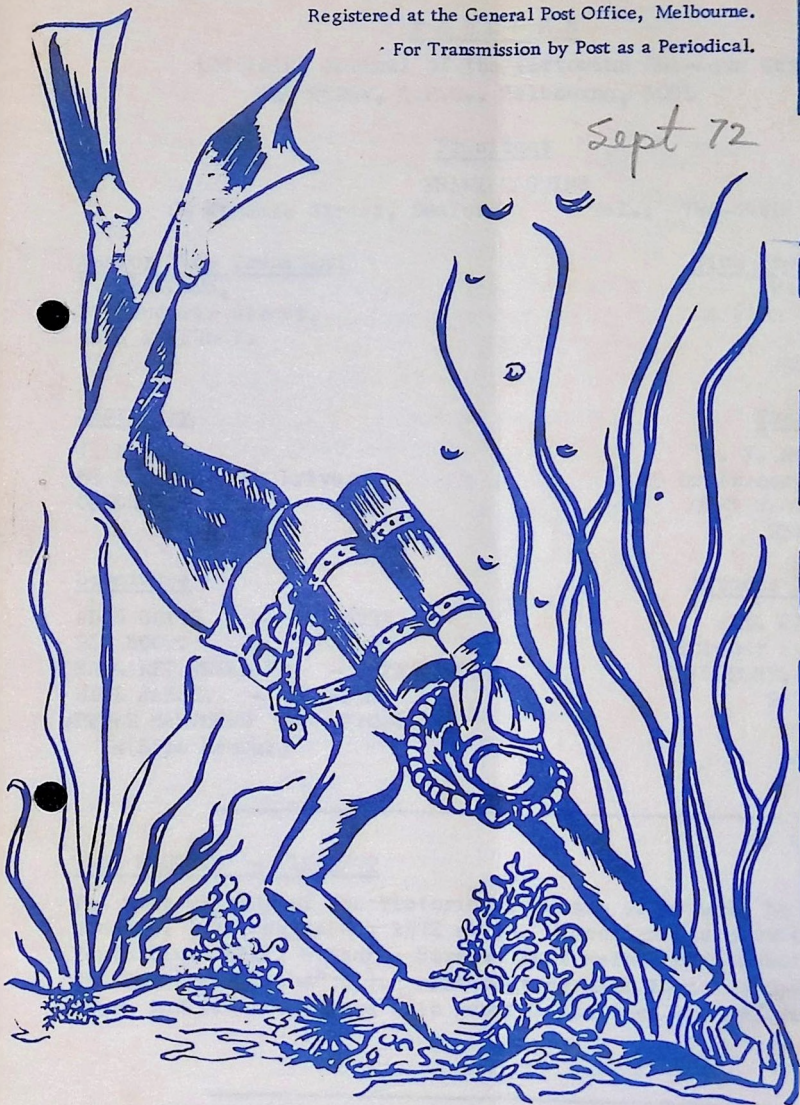


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FATHOMS



VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FAY HORN

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FATHOMS

(Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)
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CLUB MEETING - 19/9/72

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Tuesday, 19th September, 1972 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.

FUTURE OUTINGS

- SEPTEMBER 17th - Sorrento Pier, Meet at Pier at 10 a.m.
Dive Captain, Pat Reynolds, 232-5358
- SEPTEMBER 24th - Williamstown. Meet behind Football ground at
10 a.m. Dive Captain - Bob Scott, 25-6215
- OCTOBER 8th - Wreck Dive in Port Phillip Bay - Holyoake or
Hurricane, depending on sea conditions.
Dive Captain - Don McBean, 232-4894
- OCTOBER 14th - Pub night at the Mountain View Hotel, Cnr.
Springvale Road & High Street Road, Glen Waverley.
From 6 p.m. onwards.
- OCTOBER 22nd - Point Cook. Dive Captain - Mick Ryan. 544 0450
- NOVEMBER 4th - Tennis Afternoon at Justin Liddy's, 14 Tower St.,
Hawthorn. Bring your own sandshoes, racquet, etc.
- NOVEMBER 19th - House Diving at Lake Eppalock.
- NOVEMBER 25th - Barbecue at Bill Gray's, 4 Pimm Court, Syndal.
- DECEMBER 3rd - Lake Purrumbeet .
- DECEMBER 17th - The Speake, wreck dive on Phillip Island.
- DECEMBER 26th - "Boxing Day). Mount Gambier. Arrangements have
been made and space booked at the Willowvale
Caravan Park for this date until accommodation
runs out. Anyone wishing to join in during this
holiday period, please contact Frank Maguire,
786-4940

NOTICE - FLINDERS ISLAND -

The long weekend trip to Flinders Island has been cancelled. In the last issue those who intended going were asked to confirm their arrangements. As there did not seem to be sufficient enthusiasm at this stage, the club could not make a firm commitment with Ansetts, involving possible loss. Better luck next time.

DANGER - HIGH EXPLOSIVES !

One of the old friends of VASG is Mr. W.P. Evans, librarian and historian of the City of Williamstown. Mr. Evans is a trained diver himself so our forthcoming dive at Williamstown was noted with interest.

In a letter to the VSAG, Mr. Evans warns that a considerable number of live mortar shells and other explosives are scattered on the seabed off Williamstown. Navy divers searched the area after a bomb scare in 1959, but with recent sightings, the authorities are considering calling in bomb disposal experts. To quote Mr. Evans:

"Some of the mortar bombs recovered in the last six weeks could prove to be highly lethal and capable of easy detonation. One of the last recovered had the live fuse still extending into the bare booster and secondary charge. I would suggest that if you do dive in the area that you leave any metal objects lying on the bottom strictly to themselves - among famous last words are, 'they don't know what they're talking about, it's safe.' "

Our sincere thanks for your timely warning. Rest assured our members will proceed with caution. This warning could well be taken, by other clubs and divers, at Williamstown or anywhere else.

- Ed.

WHAT'S THE SCORE ?

With our annual general meeting coming up this month, the points scoring for club participation in 1971-72 is drawing to a close. Interest has been keen and the competition has had the desired effect. Attendances at dives and meetings have been and newsletter contributions have been increased.

We hope that, with some modifications to further increase outings attendances, the scheme will be renewed in the coming year.

The points standing of members to this date are as follows:-

.../4

<u>Placing</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Placing</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Score</u>
1	FRANK MAGUIRE	160	16	PETER MATTHEWS	25
2	DON McBEAN	134	17	TONY TIPPING	19
3	BILL GRAY	130	18	PAUL BEECHER	14
4	BILL JANSEN	121	19	FRITZ LOTNER	13
5	ALAN CUTTS	112	19	LORRAINE ADDISON	13
6	LES WALKLING	100	20	PETER LUSTIG	10
7	MARG. PHILLIPS	95	21	DAVE SWALLOW	9
8	BOB SCOTT	91	21	BRUCE HERCUS	9
9	PAT REYNOLDS	89	22	DAVID CARROL	6
10	IAN COCKRELL	83	22	PETER ATWOOD	6
11	JUSTIN LIDDY	54	22	PAUL DAVIE	6
12	BARRY TRUSCOTT	48	23	NEIL KNIGHT	3
13	RON ADDISON	37	24	GORDON RYAN	2
14	JOHN NOOMAN	31	24	MARTIN RICHMOND	2
15	MICK RYAN	30	24	GARY MUDDYMAN	2

"BIOLOGICAL MONITORS" COMBAT POLLUTION -

Scientists working at Cockburn Sound, near Perth, have developed a unique series of "biological monitors" for detecting and predicting water pollution.

The research program at Cockburn Sound (which is part of the outer harbour of the Port of Fremantle) is likely to become a model of its kind for ecologists.

The work is being undertaken to ensure that the Sound is not harmed by the industrial development being carried on along its shores, and by the construction of a causeway to nearby Garden Island.

The building of the cause-way was opposed by some environmental groups, on the grounds that the ecology of the Sound had already been endangered by the big industrial complex that has sprung up at Kwinana, and further pressures could cause irreparable damage.

After trying many conventional techniques for monitoring water contamination, the research team discovered three groups of plants and animals which were ideally suited to checking the accumulation and effects of chemicals in the water.

The most valuable results were obtained from epiphytes, tiny algal plants which live on the leaves of seagrass that

proliferates in the Sound.

There are some 67 varieties of these microscope plants in Cockburn Sound.

Research showed that about a third of these species occur only near the sources of effluents, which flow into the Sound from industries. Another third live happily in either polluted or unpolluted water, and the remainder live only in water free of effluents.

The researchers, using these species, are able to predict the directions in which pollutants will spread. They are clear indicators for three quarters of a mile in advance of where effluents have any noticeable effect on seagrass.

Two other unwitting allies are the solitary sea squirts (ascidians) and razor clams (bi-valves).

Ascidians live on the piles of jetties and have a superb filtering system for collecting food (the system in fact is superior to most equipment that can be used in the standard research laboratory when it comes to filtering fine materials from large volumes of water).

Chemicals filtered by the ascidians stay in the creature. Similar concentrations build up in the razor clams, which live on the sandy bed of the Sound.

By comparing the concentrations of chemicals, in particular organs of ascidians and clams that live close to existing industries on the Sound, with others in distant parts, the scientists have been able to gain an accurate picture of pollution levels.

What is more important, the three groups of animals - the epiphytes, the ascidians and the clams - will provide a permanent monitoring system.

The authority and the department also support research programs to watch for possible beach erosion, or the deterioration of the seagrass meadows in the Sound. It is these meadows that represent the key to the future stability of the Sound's environment. Most of the sandy shores around it are geologically very young - they were formed as recently as 3000 years ago. This makes them vulnerable to change, and the seagrass carpets that lie in shallow water along the shores are the best insurance against a possibility of erosion.

The stabilising influence occurs when sand from the beaches is washed into the Sound in winter. The sand is prevented from drifting

irretrievably into deep water by that seagrass carpet, which also protects the beaches from storm action in winter.

In addition, of course, the seagrass meadows are the home of much of the Sound's sea-life. As long as the seagrass survives, so will the existing shores. If grasses are killed, the Sound could face the fate of places like the Queensland Gold Coast, where 30 or 40 feet of shoreline can be swallowed in a few days of heavy seas.

"Where there is industry, there must be industrial wastes. Our job is to discover how much the Sound can absorb without significant environmental damage, and still remain both a splendid harbour for ships, and most important of all, a priceless recreational resource! For Cockburn Sound is as beautiful as it is attractive to industry.

Some pollution problems have been detected. However, these are not irreversible and solutions are in sight.

Altogether, there has probably never been such an intensive study of 43 square miles of an Australian body of water as there has been at the Sound. Even now, there are no easy answers. The work at Cockburn Sound is exacting - and very costly - to the two organisations which have commissioned the studies. But their care reflects the high degree of responsibility and could pay huge dividends for other coastal areas.

Submitted by DON McBEAN.

MOUNT GAMBIER, 1/9/72

Month after month we receive dive reports on Mt. Gambier. It must be a popular place. Following is a report on the latest adventure, attended by: FRANK, PAT, BOB, DON, MICK, CHUBBY, LES, JACK, PETER and JUSTIN.

Once upon a time there were 10 brave divers, who decided to go for a swim in the far-off waters of Mt. Gambier. So, on a cold windy night six of them met at Justin's and loaded their gear into Justin's and Bob's cars - 10 wet suits and 23 tanks. On the following day which strangely enough happened to be a Friday, they met at a pre-determined spot (where Pat works) and set off about 3.30 p.m. After a brief run in with a semi they carried on bravely to Laverton (the home of the big silver birds in the sky) to pick up Mick Ryan. They journeyed on, these six brave young men and came to Warrnambool where they met up with two or three blokes called 'Chubby' and transferred Les and Mick to Chubby's car.

After a small orgy in the local hamburger joint they continued

on to Nelson and partook of light refreshment and finally reached Port Macdonald about 9.30 p.m. to be greeted by early arrivals Chubby, Mick and Les. It was decided to wait up for Bob, Jack and Pete, but after an hour or so everybody went to their well earned slumbers.

Bob finally arrived at about 2.30 a.m. and very kindly insisted on everybody being awake to say 'hullo'. About 5 a.m. Chubby pulled the same trick and they all get up amid cries of anguish and decided to split into two groups and dive separately, one group comprising Pat, D.J., Bon, Justin, Jack and Pete going to the Pines, and the left-overs to One Tree.

The first group hit the water at 7 a.m. and were out by 9 a.m. The water was B.....cold as usual and the green slime on the top did not look too inviting at that time of the morning. Anyway they all went in pairs and voted it a good dive. Although visibility was not as good as last time, depth reached was around the 70 ft. mark. Justin left his wet suit pants back in camp and had to share with Bob, which was quite fun!!! They went into Mt. Gambier for breakfast and to fill tanks and had a look at Valley Lake as a possible new dive site. It was decided to dive that spot in the late afternoon. They then headed to Port Macdonald to find the rest of the valiant band, who were looking for new dive locations after a successful dive at One Tree to 70ft.

Unable to locate them the first group decided to dive the Shaft. On the way out they ran into Frank's group who were in their way to the Black Hole. After transferring the shot and rope they moved on to the Shaft where Pat, Bob, D.J. and Justin dived first and Pete and Jack waited on top. While Pat and Co. were in the water Frank's group turned up, having aborted the Black Hole due to overcrowding. Meanwhile, Pat's mob were still 120 ft down the Shaft on the rockpile. Visibility was fantastic. While they were down, the lights went out when Pat's torch imploded. Pat got a bit upset and started to head up with Bob, slowly followed by D.J. and Justin. After they broke surface they were informed they should descend back to 15 ft. just to be on the safe side. All agreed it had been a fantastic dive. As there were more divers on top Bob, Pat, D.J. and Justin decided to do a fast run into Mt. Gambier and dive the Valley Lake. On arrival they found that children had stirred up the huge underwater forest of bell-shaped growth, but further out it was reasonably clear and quite an eerie sensation swimming through them. Fortunately, it was only about 20-30ft deep so they did not have to worry about repeat times and could spend some time wandering around in that damned cold water. All agreed it was a good dive spoilt only by the rapid stirring up of these weird looking plants.

Then it was on into Mt. Gambier to meet the other group and have a well-earned feed of beans. They decided to join forces for a night dive at Ewans Ponds. It was decided to make it a night dive because it was 10 p.m. After arriving at Ewans half of this brave band chickened out and went home to bed. The rest - Frank, Mick, Les, Chubby - had a very enjoyable dive in crystal clear water with plenty of eels for company.

Next morning, which happened to be a Sunday (a day of rest, Chubby), they were all awakened again at 5 a.m. by Chubby and as Pat's mob hadn't dived Ewans, the night before, decided to do so. Everyone, except Jack and Pete, went on to Ewans and all hit the water as the sun came up on another terrific day - words cannot describe the experience of lying on the bottom in all the mud and watching the sun come up. While they were in the last pond watching Pat dived head first into the mud springs and disappeared up to his shoulders. They were startled to see a boat gliding along over head. On investigation it was found to be a local farmer trying to catch eels.

After a very enjoyable hour or so in the water all went back to Pt. Macdonald, and after some discussion decided to finish off a truly marvellous weekend's diving, by doing a pier crawl along Pt. Macdonald pier, but what a let down. After 50 to 100 ft. visibility all weekend, it suddenly dropped to about 2 ft. Nevertheless, Pat, Bob, D.J. and Jack rummaged around in the murk for about an hour or so continually duffed by a fairly big swell. Pat naturally enough just had to find a bottle, which turned out to be a hundred year old stone ink bottle. Then it was back to camp for a shower and pack up and on the road about 1 p.m. All agreed that, as they had finished diving, they had earned a beer or TWO or THREE, so pulled into the Nelson pub for lunch and a few of the old brownies. Then back on the road and after a scenic tour of Geelong, only because the navigator can't tell his left from his right, arrived in Melbourne about 7 p.m. Bob, of course, couldn't resist stopping for a piece of pavlova along the way.

As they say in the subs, "Dive, Dive, Dive" and that's just what we did all weekend and had a colossal time.

The above stirring epic was

Produced by JUST-IN LIDDY.

Directed by PAT REYNOLDS.

Narrated by DON McBEAN.

Inspired by C.U.B.

and very ably typed by our beautiful typiste BOB SCOTT.