

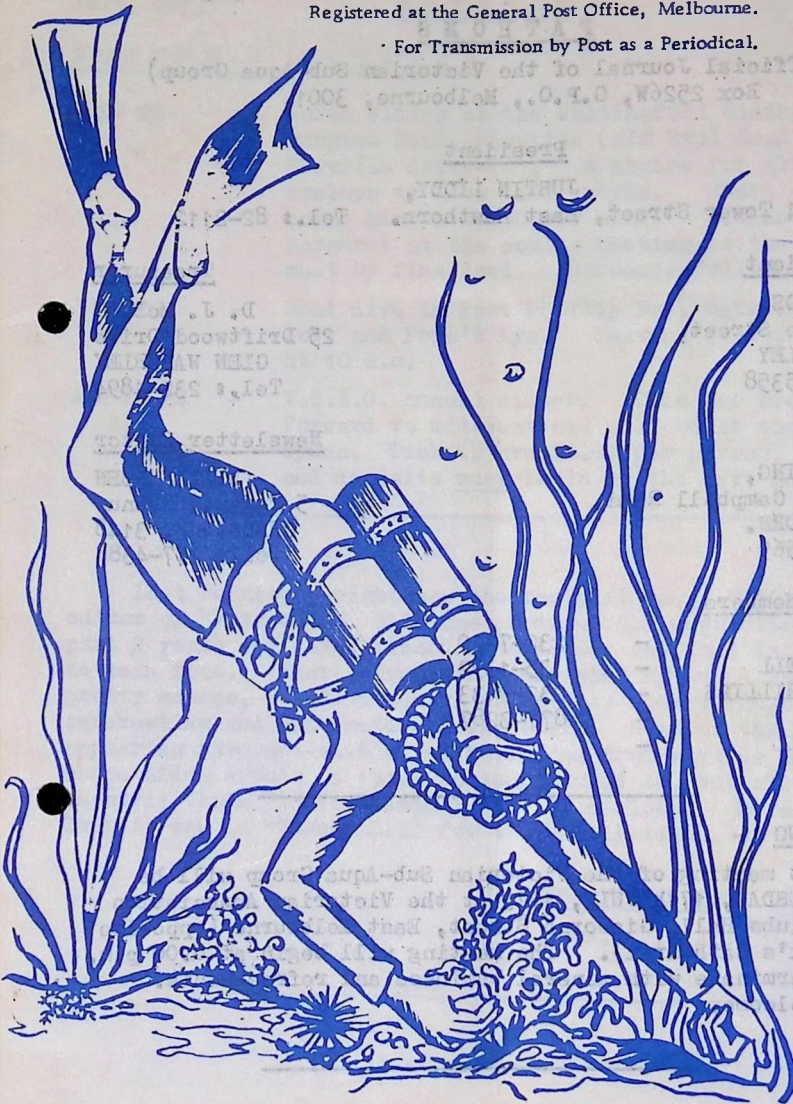
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FATHOMS



VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

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(Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)
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CLUB MEETING -

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on TUESDAY, 17th JULY, 1973 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. and will terminate with general business and refreshments. Visitors welcome.

FUTURE OUTINGS

- JULY 22 - Horse riding at the Wallingford Riding School, Bergins Road, Rowville (off Stud Road, near Rowville drive-in). A chance for all frustrated cowboys to show their style. Start - 9 a.m., horse hire - \$1.50 per hour. Please inform Margaret at the coming meeting as the booking must be finalized. Barbecue following.
- JULY 29 - Boat dive in Port Phillip Bay, between channel fort and Pope's Eye. Leaving from Sorrento ramp at 10 a.m.
- AUGUST 24 - V.S.A.G. annual dinner. This has been moved forward to mid-year and will be at the Chateau Wyuna. Tickets are \$5.00 per person. Confirmation and deposits must be in by the next meeting.
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Last Wednesday night saw the resignation of Bill Jansen as editor of "Fathoms". Bill has produced the newsletter for the past 2 years and never missed a deadline, and that in itself is no mean feat. There have been times when material has been pretty scarce, but Bill always managed to come through with an interesting and informative newsletter. Some of the articles appearing have met with mixed reactions from various members whose hides aren't as thick as they should be, but all in all, we still think Bill's a decent sort of a bloke. So all that's left to say is "Thanks Bill for a job well done".

JUSTIN LIDDY,

Pres., V.S.A.G.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE -

With the publication of this issue I will no longer continue as editor of "Fathoms". The position will pass to the capable hands of Dave Carroll, who has been a regular contributor to recent issues.

In looking back through old issues, many references appear concerning poor attendance at dives and meetings. During the past two years I have seen great changes take place. Old members dropped out and a surge of new ones took their place. New faces appeared on the committee. The points system, plus youthful enthusiasm have brought consistent large attendances. These are year round divers who enjoy the sport for it's own sake.

With this resurgence of enthusiasm in the club I wish to sound a word of caution. We must maintain our safety record. Organization is the keyword. Equipment check-outs, diver check-lists and adherence to rules are a must. With enough thought given to these essentials, we can indeed be a group to be proud of.....the best club in Victoria.

BILL JANSEN.

IT'S (NOT YET) TIME

On Sunday, May 17th, we gathered at Rye and then at Sorrento for, as the title suggests yet another boat dive on the Time wreck just outside the Bay. Unfortunately, although the Bay was calm enough, the water outside proved too rough to tempt even Barry through the Rip. We therefore decided as the tide was almost right to search for the elusive 'Eliza Ramsden'.

Despite the fact that wrecker Carroll was not amongst us, we lined up the Marks from the centre of the Bay, virtually in the wake of a large passing tanker. Letting the anchor down, we blindly tried to locate the wreck by dragging for it. After two fruiterers, or should it be wreckers' attempts we tried it the hard way. Barry and I swam down the anchor rope, and surveyed the bottom, sixty feet down, whilst being towed by the current at a pretty nippy rate through the Bay. The

floor at this spot somewhat resembles the Sahara Desert although whatever snags there were the anchor seemed to catch on.

After about fifteen minutes of our underwater skiing and anchor rescuing, we came up the line, at right angles, now I know what a flag feels like. We then abandoned the search as the Eliza being a woman of course refused to co-operate and stayed out of sight. So, feeling hungry by this time, we headed further into the bay on our way to the Hurricane wreck, with its accompanying scallop beds. Of course, this is easier to find as it is marked by a wreck buoy. On the way there we called in on a Bull seal sunning himself on a deserted lighthouse. The smell was quite strong, the seal didn't seem to mind this, but when Justin announced his intention of joining him, the seal hit the sea. Funny that.

When our fleet, of two boats, arrived at the Hurricane, we found that we had been beaten to the scene. Two somewhat familiar figures were about to enter the water. However, it seemed we were mistaken, because when one of them accidentally hit the water minus his weight belt, he called to his rapidly descending buddy in some sort of strong foreign language I think. After assisting them to the bottom with the missing weight belt, and then with our anchor, we followed them down. As usual the Hurricane self service store obliged, and about a hundredweight of scallops plus shells, were loaded aboard the boats.

We then loaded ourselves aboard too, upped our wandering anchor, and followed our foreign divers into the sunset. On the way back to Rye we ran into a school of dolphins, some of whom insisted upon escorting Dave's boat in - I suppose they felt safer where they could see him. We landed at Rye, where the fitter members of the club participated in a quick trot up the beach and back. Who said our divers aren't fit.

Those present were in order of appearance, Justin and Denise, Barry and Craig, Tom and family, D.T., myself, Jay Cody, Dave and Pat, Adrian and Judy and Ian Richardson deputising, we are told, for Murray. The boats were supplied by D.J. and Dave, and surprised guest appearances were made by Chubby and Frank.

We all then headed home, after an excellent day's outing, the weather had been very kind to us and our winter day's outing surpassed many of our summer misadventures. Many divers it seems put their wet suits into mothballs at this time of year, but if

the water is right once you are under it, the month doesn't seem to matter and although Barry doesn't agree with me, the temperature doesn't vary much fifty feet down. The season only becomes apparent once you leave the water, and anyway even at this time of year it's still warmer than the English channel.

BRIAN LYNCH

NEWS NOTES

The club will now follow the practice of appointing a dive organizer for each month. He will act as contact and liaison for all outings in co-operation with the dive captain. Name and number will appear in each newsletter. July organizer is Justin Liddy - 82-2112.

The S.D.F. has been negotiating with boating authorities for the posting of signs at all launching ramps in the bay. These will advise boaters of their responsibilities concerning divers. A suitable sign is now being planned, and any designs or suggestions will be appreciated. Contact Frank Maguire, tel.: 786-4940.

Considerable discussion took place at the last committee meeting on the most appropriate diving flag. The S.D.F. policy is to promote the St. Andrews Cross flag. Various interstate and spear-fishing authorities use the code A flag (blue and white panels) while the international flag is the "H over D", which requires two different flags. For clear recognition the first would be preferable, whereas the other flags bring conformity with other bodies. What do you think?

The Underwater Instructor's Association will be sponsoring an advanced course for instructors. Several clubs are sponsoring selected members to attend.

Can you think of something that needs inventing? One of our brainy members will be undertaking this as an engineering school project. How about artificial gills?

Research has been carried out by Les, Dave and Bill lately on a suitable buddy line, with convenient quick release. "Buddy diving doesn't just mean being in the same ocean together".

The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs has requested copies of "Fathoms", to help in formulating youth programs. Possibly an idea for a future joint outing?

The points score to this date are as follows:

J. LIDDY	-	218	D. McBEAN	-	38
T. TIPPING	-	186	D. CARROLL	-	30
B. TRUSCOTT	-	144	D. MOORE	-	27
P. REYNOLDS	-	115	K. STEWART	-	22
B. GRAY	-	112	I. CARSON	-	20
PHILLIPS	-	105	M. RICHARDSON	-	17
A. CUTTS	-	85	T. ARMSTRONG	-	12
I. COCKERELL	-	83	M. RYAN	-	11
R. ADAMSON	-	82	G. RYAN	-	6
J. GOULDING	-	81	R. ADDISON	-	5
L. WALKLING	-	75	J. NOONAN	-	5
B. JANSEN	-	71	P. BEECHER	-	5
F. MAGUIRE	-	64	C. CROFT	-	3
B. LYNCH	-	49	F. COUSTLEY	-	2
A. NEUMANN	-	44	P. ATWOOD	-	2
B. SCOTT	-	41	V. JONES	-	2

PUB NITE - WALTZING MATILDA - 23/6/73

First arrivals on the scene, looking forward to a few lemonades were Brian Lynch, Justin and Denise, Ian Richardson and Carolyn. After some initial confusion in finding our table, a young lady in waitress uniform insisted on providing us with some liquid refreshment. While this was going on more and more people began to arrive. There must be some attraction in the brand of lemonade they serve there. By 7.30 or so there was a fair crowd of V.S.A.G. sitting around sharing a lemonade or two!, including Murray and June Richardson, Adrian and Judy, Keith and Di, Dave and Fat, D.J. and Irene, Carl and Barbara, Paul Rainbow (just back from overseas and dropping names everywhere, Andray Kamelkov and, of course, Bazza and Marie, who never leaves before the food runs out.

The evening went very well, with plenty to eat and the occasional lemonade. Of course there were some idiots who had to get up and dance, but we won't go into too much detail. The

floorshow was well received with special emphasis on a tribute to Bazza.

Around 11.30 p.m. we were forced to leave as they shit the place down about that time. All in all a good night was had by all.

JUSTIN LIDDY

AUSTRALIAN UNDERWATER FILM EXPOSITION -- DENRY THEATRE, 24/6/73

This is the first time such an exposition has been staged in Victoria and even though there were some technical problems the majority opinion was an outstanding success. There were 5 or 6 short films covering a fairly broad spectrum of diving activities. Notable was John Harding's "Aquariers" which has not been finally edited yet and commentary supplied by John Harding on stage. Also of interest was an old "Movietone News" excerpt on a spearfishing championships in N.S.W. and an ill fated underwater commercial for face cream which apparently didn't live up to expectations (the face cream that is). There was also an American film on underwater habitats and submersibles. Then came interval and a chance to get out of a rather stuffy theatre and say hello to a hell of a lot of familiar diving acquaintances. Also in the foyer was a display of diving gear put on by Dale Chapman. Then it was back to the underwater realm with films by Ron Taylor and Walter Staack which provided varied comment from the still attentive audience. The evening finished with a few more comments by John Harding and the drawing of a couple of lucky seat numbers. One prize was an after dive jacket from Dale Chapman and was followed by a pair of Rocket pins and a diving course from Southern Aquanauts. The pins were won by Les Walkling, but unfortunately due to his not getting down to the stage quick enough, he missed out. After that little setback and a round of farewells, we all shot thru.

Summing up, a very enjoyable and informative night out for the diving community and let's hope more such functions come up in the future.

From V.S.A.G. -

Justin Liddy and Denise, Bill Gray, Marg Phillips, Brian Lynch, Murray Richardson and family, Ian Richardson and Jeanette, Dave Carroll, Bob Adamson, Dave Moore and Pat, Adrian Neumann and Judy, Les Walkling and Helen, Keith Stewart, Terry Smith, Frank and Lyn Maguire, Ian Cockerell and Gloria, Chris Ward and Dolia, Charles Croft, Max Synon, Peter Sonnenborg, Frank Dombey.

This report is the sequel to our last unsuccessful attempt to find the elusive Eliza Ramsden. However, this time, thanks to the Mako Clubs echo sounder we found it the easy way.

Once again we were blessed with a fine sunny day and also with an excellent turn out of divers, over thirty of us waiting impatiently for the afternoon. We set out from two points, Rye and Sorrento, with the faster bigger boats coming from Rye captained by Norm and D.J. We met the Mako boat at Popes Eye and followed them out towards the Heads and the last resting place of the Eliza.

Diving this particular wreck is hazardous due to the fact that it is only possible to dive at slack water and then only for around half an hour. At all other times the current makes it impossible. Thus once we had located the wreck and had one anchor lodged in it we anchored the other four boats and secured the area between them by roping all the boats together. Then we were ready to dive. There is a terrible fascination about going down onto a wreck. As we grouped on the surface prior to descending we knew that about 45 foot below us lay a dead ship. You grip the anchor line and haul yourself down, the water is green, broken only by the upward ever expanding bubbles of the divers already below you.

At first all you can see is the opaque water, but you continue climbing down until there she is. You wait, holding

onto shell encrusted uprights until you are ready to explore. At this point she doesn't really resemble a ship, more like a reef. As we move along her and then glide down her sides past gaping empty portholes she begins to take on familiar lines until coming to her bow, and gazing upwards to where the prow towers above us, we realise that she is still a ship upright and sailing on a sea of sand. All her sharp once sleek sides are now softened and encased entirely by forests of marine growth, and we feel like apologising for disturbing her grave. But then the mood passes and wreck fascination takes over again, down, in and around the tide-swept skeleton we go. Surrounded by hosts of unafraid inquisitive fish who simply treat us as part of their world. One trumpeter insists upon sharing my mask to such an extent that I have to almost lift him bodily out of the way. The fish use the wreck, as they always do, as an oasis in the watery desert but their size and numbers are surprising especially as our last few bay dives have been virtually fish-less.

We move slowly in a silent world although the number of divers swarming over the wreck reminds us of Bourke Street on a Friday night, no sound but your own air intake can be heard.

Having circumnavigated the vessel we prepared to return to the surface again via the anchor rope. Slowly we ascend, keeping pace with our air bubbles until finally our heads break into the sunshine and here we are back in 1973 and brought back to reality by the bay slapping you in the face.

We climbed back into the boats, all of us trying desperately to find marks on the shore so that we could revisit the site without riding on the anchor. Heading back to Rye and the girls waiting patiently on the beach we all agreed that the dive had been exceptional. We then went our separate ways with eight of us finishing off the day with fried rice somewhere near Rosebud. It only remains for me now to list the cast of thousands in alphabetical order.

Alan Cutts and Glenys, Adrian and Judy, Bob Scott, Barry and Chubby, Chas. Croft, Chris Ward, Dave and Pat, D.J., Frank, Garry, John Noonan, Justin and Denise, Keith and Di, Murray, Paul Beecher, Peter Saunders, Pat, Annette, Scotty and Samantha, Phil, Neville, Rob, Roger Townley, Torry and yours truly, Brian Lynch.

A "LITTLE" BIT OF KNOWLEDGE IS DANGEROUS

"The Buddy system is the biggest single safety factor in scuba diving. It makes two divers responsible for each other's safety, over and above all other safety precautions which the diving supervisors may take."

- U.S. Navy Diving Manual of March, 1970.

It also stated that "Buddies are a pair of scuba divers working as a unit, each of the pair is responsible for his buddy's safety throughout the dive. It further stresses that the buddies must maintain a continuous contact."

Surgeon Captain Stanley Miles of the R.N., through research has found that heading the list of major predisposing factors for fatal accidents was inadequate safety precautions. In his words: "Inadequate safety precautions. This applies solely in this context to the ability to remove a diver from the water should he become in difficulties and implies primarily adequate supervision and attendants and the use of a lifeline or buddy line".

The B.S.A.C. requires that its members remain within touching distances, i.e. 6 feet, of each other.

The Royal Navy diving Manual states that "when diving..... a diver is always to have a lifeline securely attached to him except.....when operating in pairs, when swimmers are always to be attached to each other by a buddy line".

Our own, Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Carl Edmonds, R.A.N. apart from freely quoting all of the above, also readily acknowledges the "line" taken by people such as Paul Tzimoulis, editor of "skin diver" and Wade Doak, editor in chief and publisher of "Dive South Pacific". I personally feel that if only one tenth of the wisdom that comes from these people was taken to heart, then we would all be far better off, safety wise, than now. Another interesting point from Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Carl Edmonds, R.A.N., in his review of the last 10 diving deaths along the Eastern Australian coast. "In eight of the cases the person in difficulty was unable to be rescued because his "buddies", when he had them, were unable to find him and surface him in time." By the way, the other two were due to decompression sickness. He adds

further -

"Of these diving fatalities that have occurred in the past twelve months, over half were in "very experienced divers" - not sensible or safety conscious divers, just experienced."

In his wisdom, he asserts three factors that are almost always essential for first aid treatment of serious diving accidents, and almost always absent in fatal cases;

1. A buddy line for communication and assistance with rescue.
2. An inflatable life jacket.
3. Training in resuscitation.

"These refer to first aid given by divers, not first aid from ambulance staff and medical officers. The latter groups give secondary aid and definitive treatments."

Remember, (in Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Carl Edmond's words) -

If you don't know where your buddy is, then you haven't got one.

If you have to search for your buddy, then you haven't got one.

If you can see your buddy, but can't reach him, or if you can reach your buddy in time, but can't get to the surface, you may as well not have a buddy.

From Mark Herrell's, "The Principles of Diving": "No diver shall be beyond the reach of immediate effective assistance.....if diving is to be done in dark or tidal water a lifeline should be worn, and the divers should operate independently. But in good visibility the divers can often work more efficiently in pairs, being linked with a buddy line so that they maintain contact."

And, most important of all, this vast span of knowledge was gained simply by reading Dive South Pacific, Vol. 11, No. 6. It's in the Club Library, along with stacks of others, including all the "Skin Divers" and diving manuals you could immediately want.. The whole point of this article is that there's probably more diving knowledge around, than we as humans could ever consume, so let's get amongst

it, and learn a bit more than our basic scuba theory. Let's open our eyes and see that no one is infallible as a diver; for our sake, hopefully to put us on the right path to becoming knowledgeable, sensible, and safety conscious divers. Let's realise the potential that exists in this knowledge and learn from the people in the know. I can't see how anyone could ignore such logical principles, especially when they come from people of the calibre of Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Carl Edmonds, R.A.N. and Co.

Dive Safely,

LES WALKLING

FLOTSAM & JETSAM

Well, this column is going to look pretty thin this month because its been some time since your correspondent had his flippers wet. Instead he's been keeping in and out of mischief in Singapore.

The last V.S.A.G. function I had the pleasure of attending was Tony Tipping's farewell party at Paul Sier's. Boy, what a night. I'm sure that all who attended will agree that this was a great party, and a fine tribute to Tony who certainly worked hard for the club.

Many thanks to Paul Sier for providing the venue, Brian Lynch for organising the food and the many others who bogged in and helped. Pat Reynolds; that wild bearded man proved to be pretty tame when it came to washing dishes.

I didn't get a chance to do any diving in Singapore, but there are fairly active clubs on the Island. Due to the great amount of shipping in and out of Singapore harbour, and around the coast most of the divers go north to the Malayan coast, where the water is much cleaner. Singapore is a fascinating place - the city is one of a 1000 contrasts. The blend of delicate and ancient Oriental ways and customs mixes with the throbbing of Western 20th Century civilization so as to make a changing and very colourful country.