

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FATHOMS

(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, 18th SEPTEMBER, 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.



DIVE CALENDAR

- SEFTEMBER 23 V.S.A.G. Car Rally. Location, duration and such incidentals are unknown at this stage but all information necessary will be given out by the joint organizers, Margaret Phillips and Dave Moore, at the Annual General Meeting on the 18th.
- SEPTEMBER 30th Mystery Dive off Portsea. Adrian Newman (telephone 52-6568) will lead us all from the boat ramp to what he has stated, "Will be a dive to be remembered".

 10 a.m.
- OCTOBER 14 Around the Rip with Don McBean. Fopefully, a lot of bounce dives at about 30 ft. until we find something new. Leave from the Rye camp, opposite the Pizza Parlour, 10 a.m., or contact D.J. on telephone number 232-4894.
- OCTOBER 21 Barwon Heads, boat dive on the "Orungal" or off the Bluff. Meet at or around the Barwon Heads boat ramp at 11 a.m. Dive captain Terry C. Smith, 17 11 842-2927 WARNET. PAR. MEY A.W. NEED IT OR I A L. CRAWFISH ROLL. 18 PEAR OF ROLL.

I've been doing a little bit of thinking lately (don't laugh), a bit less talking and a lot more listening. One thing in particular has struck me and it came as a bitter pill. A lot of divers fall into the category of film audiences. They love diving but want it all served on a plate, and guaranteed to be good. If it doesn't turn out

to be first rate then they become very critical.

The best diving spots haven't been found. When they are found and become famous, they also very quickly become hammered. One case of this which comes very quickly to mind is the wreck of the Eliza Ramsden. I have dived it only once, and that was on January 20th, '7 At that stage there were portholes on it, fittings of bronze and brass could be easily sifted out of the upperworks and some of the decks and timbers were still in place.

When the club dived on it recently, most of these were gone. Since then the cable winch, probably of several tons, has also gone. To the best of my knowledge, the shoals of huge fish would still be there, but it would take only a few greedy ideas and that wonderful

Editorial (Cont'd.)

September, 1973

property would soon be gone.

The most startling point, however, is that all of this has happened in only about two years and that in this time only h handful of divers have dived it or probably even heard about it.

Come back to the present then and start thinking of the future. The most successful clubs work for their good dives, they often spend a lot of time finding things, but it is almost always worth In your own private dives when they come about, don't head for the same old spots all the time, where you know you will have a reasonable time. Try a new spot no matter how poor it might appear on the surface. If it looks particularly uninviting, the chances are that nobody else has looked there either.

A case in point here is that of the wreck of the "Lightning" in Geelong Harbor. It is a famous ship, the fastest sailing vessel ever built and belonging to a famous shipping line. A local club worked for months to find it, in uninviting conditions, through most of the winter. Now they've found the remains and have themselves a beauty. They're not telling where, however, and I'm not blaming them. Good luck to them, they worked for it.

Never mean about a dive. If you saw nothing, enjoyed none of it and felt lousy after it, look at it this way, its experience. You can't have too much experience, and you might need that particular one to drawn on next year.

If you do see something, no matter how poor it may seem, a reef, a mud-bank, a couple of bits of timber, some rusty iron or just a hole in the ground, take a good look at it and note in your mind what it is like. It's all information which could be very useful or which could produce the missing clue to an underwater jigsaw that turns out to be something really worth while, but don't just keep it to yourself, discuss it with others and try and get more information about the place. If it turns out that there could possibly be something of worth there, don't just say "that's nice". Go back again soon before you forget the place and look again. Who knows, you might turn up Benito Bonito's treasure.

DAVE CARROLL

GIVERS OR TIKERS

I am probably flogging a dead horse, but once again on our Flinders dive it was the same old faces. At the risk of pinching material from the editorial, it does seem that there is some criticism about our dive venues from members who rarely turn up anyway. I have often heard people say how terrible a particular dive, social or newsletter article was, without offering any constructive criticism on how we can improve things. This club cannot function properly under these conditions. Most of us surely are in the club for the fun and pleasure derived from diving and from the social occasions attendant to these events. Time and time again, at meetings and functions I hear people theorising on how things should be done, but I never seem to hear these same people volunteering to assist in the planning of the clubs events.

The success of club functions and dives depends on the active participation of all members. Far too often it is the same people who seem to do all the work and often only criticism greets their efforts which can be very discouraging.

So how about it all you armchair divers? The V.S.A.G. is going ahead in all directions, with new members, more dives, more socials and a lot more enthusiasm. Our monthly meetings go for about two hours, once a month at a central location (which you should all know). So how about sparing 2 hours out of the month and showing yourselves to the new members, who now number some 15-20 who have joined over the past year and don't know who some of our older members are. When you find difficulty in understanding what the newsletter articles are about, it only means that you haven't been there, and that's a hell of a way to be a member of a diving club as active as ours.

JUSTIN LIDDY.

President, V.S.A.G.

BLACK ROCK TRAINING DIVE

On Sunday 19 August a sea training dive took place at the Cerberus. The water was very choppy although not cold, and despite the shelter of the old battle ship really simulated open water conditions. Unfortunately due to the swell, visibility was poor, however despite the adverse conditions the two trainees present put in good performances. This dive also gave several other somewhat elderly members of the club the chance to re-acquaint themselves not only with the water but with the intricacies of mask clearing, tank jettisoning and buddy breathing.

Although the courses and training dives run by the club are obviously designed for beginners it is very encouraging to see so many members turning up, not only to assist, but to participate, and as I said before re-familiarise themselves with basic techniques.

To the on-looker the sea and the ocean bed is an alien environment glimpsed only through the television screens. To the diver it becomes a second home welcoming, and with each dive more familiar. However, familiarity can breen contempt and the phrase "it couldn't happen to me" serves as many people's epitaph. Beneath the sea mistakes and accidents do happen, and by training we lengthen the odds in our favour. So the next time the programme states training dive come along because not only will you be helping newconers to the sport, but you will be helping yourself too.

Those present - Justin, Pat, Dave, John, Keith, Peter and Max.

BRIAN LYNCH

HYPERVENTILATION

One of the first things a diver should realize about the human body is that it is an exceedingly complex, though logical mechanism. As a result of this complexity, we as common down-to-earth people must realize that we don't have much knowledge of its workings. If we did have this knowledge, then we would be doctors.

The next step is to try and gain some understanding about the important body functions with respect to diving.

Hyperventilation (Cont'd.)

The air we breathe contains several gases, two of which are oxygen and carbon dioxide. We breathe in oxygen and carbon dioxide, it is absorbed through the lungs, is transferred to the bloodstream and is used in the body primarily as one component in the body energy source.

In the same way that wood burns by uniting with oxygen in the air, and gives off mainly carbon dioxide and heat, in the body, food (mainly carbon in its makeup) "burns" with the oxygen we have breathed in to give us energy and carbon dioxide is produced as a waste gas. The carbon dioxide is pumped in the blood back to the lungs and then expelled by breathing out.

 $O_{\mathrm{n}}\mathrm{e}$ main point however must be considered here. Not all of the oxygen breathed is used straight away, and not all the carbon dioxide is expelled. A certain quantity of the mixture of gases remains in the lungs.

If the percentage of oxygen in this mixture is not high enough, its lack will cause the person to black out. We find that the concentration of oxygen in the lung is not really responsible for our "wishing to breathe" however, rather the quantity of carbon dioxide.

The body tends to breathe every time the carbon dioxide level has built up above a particular level (measured as 40 m.m. Hg.) but not before this.

When a snorkel diver hyperventilates, he essentially breathes deeply in and out several times rapidly, thus cleansing the lungs of much of the build-up of carbon dioxide present. The quantity of carbon dioxide can fall as low as 15 mm Hg. In the meantime the oxygen level has been built up, from about 100 mm Hg. to 140 mm Hg.

As a result of this higher oxygen quantity, the diver can dive longer, and thus deeper, etc. This is fine, as far as it goes! Unfortunately, as the oxygen is used up, and the quantity present drops well below 100 mm Hg, the carbon dioxide level has to rise a long way before the body will be urged to "breathe" again. If the oxygen level has fallen below that required to sustain consciousness, but the carbon dioxide level has not risen to about 40 mm Hg, the swimmer has no warning that he or she has over-done it. They just black out.

This leaves one of two possible paths to follow if this situation arises. Either the body still continues to "not breathe" and sufficentes

If it recommences breathing, it breathes water and drowns.

One last thing about practising hyperventilation.....

DON'T !!!

DAVE CARROLL

FRESERVING ARTIFACTS

Something on ceramics and glassware, well yes, it requires some thought, because usually, very little preservation is required.

The main thing that is normally required to improve the appearance of pottery and such, and to bring out the colour of the pattern and the shape itself, is to remove any scum and algae (that greeny-brown muck) or coral like growths that adhere to the surface of the objects.

An acid dip (e.g. battery acid) is the best method of removing coral or shell type of growths, as the carbonate in the growth is broken down by the acid, and much of the waste produced is given off as carbon dioxide gas.

Once the object is removed, if it is vigorously rubbed with a cloth or some other soft cleaner, most of the rest of the stuff cleans off also. If stains still remain, they can be soaked out by leaving the object in strong hydrogen peroxide (in a dark cupboard) overnight or longer.

Glassware and pottery with paintings or artwork sometimes require more special treatment, especially if the pattern is of a lower quality, the pottery of a porous nature or if it is very old.

These types of objects usually form thousands of extremely small cracks all over their surfaces, and after standing in seawater over a long period of time, salt leaches into the cracks. After they are removed from the sea, the water evaporates but the salt is left behind. This salt crystallizes, and exerts a "wedging" force on the sides of the crack, splitting the surface further and often "peeling" the pattern off.

To remove this salt, the object must be soaked in a solvent

such as water for a period of time, the longer the better to ensure the removal of as much salt as possible before leaving the relic to dry.

D. CARROLL

A PCSSIBLE FUTURE TRIP -

One of the future meccas of diving in Australia will be Flinders Island and its associated group, collectively known as the Furneaux Group.

The group is named after Captain Tobias Furneaux, who sighted them in 1773 when he had lost contact with Captain Cook, with whom he should have been sailing. (He didn't meet with him again on the voyage.)

The islands were found again, the hard way, in 1797, on the morning of the eighth of February, when eighty years old Captain Guy Hamilton, master of the East India Company ship "Sydney Cove" beached his near sinking ship on what was subsequently named Preservation Island.

The ship, old and unseaworthy, had been attempting to open trade with the new colony in New South Wales, and carried what had been speculated to be a suitable cargo, mainly run and whisky.

Despite atrocious weather all the way from India, the ship had beat her way from Hooghly in India to the south of Tasmania, but at this stage had been strained beyond redemption.

At the beginning of the voyage, three months earlier the ship was unseaworthy. As it struggled northwards across the face of hurricane force gales from the east, Hamilton had to contend with keeping his ship from being blown onto the treacherous eastern shores of Tasmania, keeping afloat despite the fact that his ship was making eight inches of water an hour and practically working the ship alone as his despairing crew of Lascars and Bengalis had refused to do any more.

Somehow he guided the ship through the uncharted waters of what is now known as Banks Strait and eventually came up inside the southern islands of the Furneaux group to run his ship ashore between two small islands about an eighth of a mile apart.

His first thought was to the safety of the more valuable cargo and this was unloaded onto what is now called Rum Island.

Mext, the long boat was repaired and eighteen men set off to seek help from Botany Bay. The boat was driven ashore and wrecked off the Finety Mile Beach. Struggling around the coast, fiften men died, some of starvation, some being speared by the blacks and three months after the wreck. Clarke, the ship's purser and two Lascars staggered into Sydney to spread the news.

Two ships were sent south to rescue what they could. The "Eliza" was one, but on the return trip was lost, never to be seen again, thus becoming the second known wreck off Victorian waters. The second ship was the "Francis" and on its second and last trip it carried as an observer, one Matthew Flinders who was on the verge of exploring Bass Strait and environs. Some years later, while charting much of Bass Strait in the thirty ton schooner "Norfolk", Flinders returned to the site of the Sydney Cove wreck, but remarked that the wreck had slipped back into the water.

h map of the Furneaux Group now shows much of this history in its chart names. Hamilton Roads, Armstrong Passage (named after the lost captain of the Eliza), Clarke Island and Preservation and Rum Islands tell a much clearer story than just names on a piece of paper.

If a group of divers could locate any of the remains of this ship, it would be a definite first. The only known earlier wrecks off Australia are the various Dutch wrecks and the English "Tryal" off Western Australia, Cook's wreck off Cooktown, H.M.S. Sirius Australia's first flagship off Norfolk Island and H.M.S. Pandora carrying the captured Bounty Mutineers at Torres Strait in 1791.

One particular club member is interested in getting two or three people to accompany him on such an expedition to Flinders Island in January. He has collected all the information existing on the wreck, has all the existing charts and aerial photographs of the site and lastly, permission from the Tasmanian Government to search and camp on the islands (which are reserves).

A two week stay is envisaged, with no uarantee of finding anything.

One thing is certain however, the diving would be in virgin waters and if the wreck was located, it would be one of the most exciting underwater finds possible in Southern Australia.

DAVE CARROLL.

THE CONTINUING SAGA OF THE V.S.A.G. RIDING CLUB

There I am sitting in the car, freezing, wet through, with the windows all misted up and my kids crawling all over me doing their normal thing, while my mad husband and some more hardy types trundle web-footed horses through the windswept countryside.

It's a far cry from last week - then the sun was shining, birds singing, children laughing, blue skies (you know, just like the cigarette adverts), and the club representatives spent half the afternoon trying to look like horsemen and horsewomen.

Keith, Diane, Justin, Denise and Pat, took to the road and galloped off into the hills, Diane being our first graduate from the school. For myself, I have progressed from the stepladder method of mounting to swinging up athletically on the stirrup. Mind you now and again I do end up on the ground on the other side. However, joking apart, Brian, Patsy, Scott, David and myself are gradually mastering the art of; knees in, heels down, straight back, hands down, and the, show the beast who's boss. Well, I know that and probably you do too, but I wish the horse did.

We have advanced from the ring into the large paddock with not too many misadventures. Except that Scotty rode his horse upside down halfway across the field. He had pulled up the horse from a full gallop, but in doing so over-balanced and was left hanging by a stirrup while the horse took off. He dropped off eventually, we looked for him in vain and then a muddy puddle stood up. Thank goodness for lemon charged Fab. Boom-Boom.

Watching others ride has always looked easy, but there is so much to renember. Eventually I guess it will all come naturally and so we keep pegging away, or should that be bouncing away.

Last week I was eating my tea off the mantlepiece and I'm not joking. We are learning to trot, one, two, one, two, unfortunately our horses can't count, they seem to rise up just when we are descending, defintely a case of, I saw the saddle now I'm saddle sore. Hopefully rather than painfully soon we will be able to ride in harmony.

Anyhow - after having five lessons our indefatigable young teacher kinds no longer screams in horror at the sight of us marching through the gate, and rumours that she is leaving town are simply not true.

AIMETTE REYNOLDS.

HOW I SPENT MY HOLIDAY (NOT OVER YET)

It has been suggested that I report on any dives I may have been involved in and I don't know quite how to begin. First of all I suppose I had better introduce myself to the members who may not know me yet. My name is Peter Zonnenbergs and together with Jim Taube - both of us new members of the V.S.A.G. we recently went on a holiday to Queensland intent on getting into the water up there to see what it had to offer us.

Before leaving Melbourne I went around to see our President Justin to see if he could put us onto anyone along the way or up there so that we would not have to spend too much time running around finding out where the action is so to speak. Anyway Justin gave me an introduction to a friend of his in Sydney by the name of Kevin Deacon.

On August 10th at about 5 in the afternoon we set off an arrived in Sydney without mishap about 4 the next morning and promptly fell asleep parked outside the swimming pool at Parramatta.

When we woke up shortly after we went to Maroubra and had a bit of a talk with Rick Poole of Pro-diving and he gave us some introductions to Max Marsh in Lismore and Doug Smith in Kingscliffe (if no-one knows where those places are, look up a map of N.S.W.). We never got to see Max Marsh but we did finish up diving with Doug Smith.

After being flabbergasted at how much cheaper diving gear is in Sydney compared to Melbourne (a U.S. divers depth gauge that the divers den want \$42.00 for was \$25.00 at Pro-diving), we went to Mona Vale to look up Justin's mate Kevin Deacon of Hydronaut Pty. Ltd. Jim bought a compressed air spear gun from Kevin as we thought we may need something for protection - fortunately we lidn't need it but it's best to be sure than sorry.

Kevin Deacon is associated with a team of wreck divets who are collecting different relics from the wrecks around Sydney for a "Wreck Museum" that they are building up at his shop. For a small contribution Kevin invited us to have a look at it. Well, they have quite a display was particularly interested in the coins of the realm that they had salvaged of various sites and for the first time in my life I saw some "pieces of eight". I had always wondered what they looked like (ever since reading Treasure Island at age 11) and Kevin gave me a brief rundown on their history and what they are, how they were made, etc.

Anyone going to Sydney should drop in to see Kevin Deacon of Hydronaut Pty. Ltd. and have a look at his museum - it is well worth it.

All in all we finished up spending nearly a day in and around Sydney but after Kevin had expressed regret that we couldn't stay around and go for a dive with him and some of his mates except for a short stop in Raymond Terrace to see Jin's sister, we arrived at Surfer's Paradise (after another short sleep) at about 9.10 on Sunday, 12 August. We got ourselves a flat at Broad Beach, Queensland and were settled in the same day.

On the Monday we drove over to Kingscliff and saw Doug Smith and arranged to go out on the Wednesday norning, spent the rest of the day sunbaking. Tuesday norning it rained and we were a bit worried it would turn nasty but Wednesday arrived with good weather, so off we went for our appointment with Doug.

Doug closed his shop for the half-day - charged us \$4.00 a head; picked up his father-in-law's boat and father-in-law to act as shipper and we set off for a wreck about a mile off shore. Doug lined up his landmarks - threw the anchor overboard. We went overboard shortly after and lo and behold, smack over the top of the wreck - beautiful bit of navigating on Dou's part. I've forgotten he name of this wreck but it was scattered all over the place (as most) and we had quite a good dive trying to salvage bits and pieces. We tried to bang off what Doug afterwards said was a starter-motor, but it was solidly encrusted to the rest of the debris. However, we did not come up empty handed. We retrieved a lump of lead weighing in at 20 lbs. and half a porthole. Jim had noticed a speared reef whaler shark but hadn't bothered bringing it up to the surface. Visibility was to 40' and the wreck was in 50' of water, it was a very interesting dive. We had more tanks full of air in the boat and the day wasn't yet over so we upped anchor and moved off to another site about 2 miles away which Doug called Shark Alley. It was about 400 yds. off an island called Cook Island which is about 12 miles off the shore of the mainland. Jim announced he was having trouble with his ears so Doug Smith and myself went over this time without him, all intent on getting something for the table, so we were armed with Jim's newly acquired spear-gun and a long pole to keep off sharks. Unfortunately we couldn't fit a powerhead to any of our spears as we had overlooked bringing along an adaptor to do that. It was a slightly deeper dive this time to about 60' but visibility was the same. We saw a lot of wobbegong sharks here and believe me, what canouflage experts they are. You have to see them to believe it. That is if you can see them.

One of them about 7' was directly in our path. I was quite content to go around him, I wasn't too worried, however Doug had other ideas for I noticed he swam up to it and promptly began to give it a few sharp prods in the gills. The shark was very reluctant to move. Doug persisted and it swam off in disgust. They appear to get quite usset and I'm not too sure whether Doug got more fun out of upsetting the webby or noticing a very worried buddy (me) hovering around all set to bolt. However, we set off again and he pointed out a plant to me that was moving in the current that I just had to feel. before I did I was pulled up smartly by a sharp whack over the knuckles. In hurt surprise I looked up to see Doug vigourously shaking his head at me (he afterwards explained it was "stinging nettles") very pretty though. There was also a lot of fish there so since half our air was already gone I set off in earnest after this thing that was about 3' or 4' long but I wasn't quick enough. because I couldn't catch him. Just as well as Doug said afterwards that it was a Queensland blue groper (protected) so I gave up in disgust and gave Doug the spear-gun while I took over the pole. I didn't know until then that Doug had been keeping off a 6' reef-He was now joined by another one a little smaller and even though they didn't bother us really, just the knowledge that they are circling and the necessity to poke the little one in the stomach a couple of times to discourage him.coming any closer made us decide to give it away. No fish dinner for us but the memory of a very enjoyable live had made my holiday. We got back to shore at midday and after thanking Doug for the day and refilling our bottles we went back to Broadbeach and promptly fell asleep.

We did nothing of any importance for the rest of the week, as for starters the weather changed in the next two days and Jin was still having trouble with his ears.

We saw a dolphin show at the Marineland in Southport on the Friday which was very good. However, what I was most impressed with, was a display of coral from the Great Barrier Reef on show at Marineland and I have promised myself I must go and give that reef in the very near future.

We left that Sunday and were back in Melbourne for lunch on Monday. After the V.S.A.G. annual dinner my wife, Maryatta (another new member) and myself went to Adelaide to celebrate our 12th wedding anniversary. However, it rained all the time we were there so after two days of rain we decided we may have better luck at getting in the water at Mt. Gambier.

We had a very poor day as far as weather was concerned and also very limited time at Mt. Gambier. Neither of us have permits so we were only able to have a quick dip in the first hole at Ewan's Ponds. That was enough. What they would have been like on a fine day absolutely blows my mind. The visibility is unreal and I promptly promised myself another visit to the Mt. Gambier region will be coming up shortly.

PETER SONNEBERG

V.S.A.G. ANNUAL DINNER - AUGUST 24

About 60 V.S.A.G. members and friends headed for the bush on Saturday, August 24th. About a third of that number got lost on the way, but most finally ended up at Chateau Wyuna, an attractive log cabin styled restaurant in a natural bush setting at Mt. Evelyn. Bazza was heard to claim that he took a shot at a deer on the way but it turned out to be a stuffed one. The steaks were large and tender, the band was great, the booze flowed and the evening was a screaming success. Dave Carroll wandered around blinding everyone with flashbulbs, and Murray took the record for occupying more of the dance floor than anyone else. We inspected Dame Nellie Melba's bathtub (doesn't look very comfortable), and also a beaut little chapel. Adrien and Judy had a good look around that, so perhaps there's a wedding in the air P?? Maree got a mention....Barnacles??? A bit after midnight most of the party descended on the Smith residence and the merriment continued. The lads were in fine voice, and John Goulding gave an excellent solo rendition of 'Barnacle Bill the Sailor'. Party eventually folded about 3 a.m. a bloody good night.

TERRY SMITH

FLINDERS SCAVENGER HUNT

On Sunday, September, 2nd, thirteen divers and asserted friends, wives and sweethearts assembled at Flinders Fier for the scavenger hunt of the decade. At 12.45 we were all decked out ready to go. Waiting for us on the jetty was petty officer Goulding who was to conduct air safety tests before the dive proper. As well as giving all divers, safety checks, the trainees underwent a sea test.

After the sea tests it was every man for himself in the hunt for trophies along the storm torn seal debris under the pier. The finds were many and varied, and the winning object was an anchor and chain recovered by Admiral Goulding (strange coincidence) (He donated the prize). However he did then share the first prize with the other divers.

All in all it was a great day and will be remembered by all those who participated, who were -

John Goulding, Justin Liddy,
Pat Reynolds, Dave Carroll,
Brian Lynch, Murray Richardson,
Jim Taube Paul Rainbow,
Peter and Maryatta Sonneberg,
Paul Beecher, and myself, Keith Stewart with
my little woman.

FLOTSAM and JETSAM

Ask Annette Reynolds how she enjoyed THE Social Event of the year, meaning of course the V.S.A.G. Annual Dinner and she replies:"Oh, but darlings, wasn't it a gas! but ooh such a rush.
Normally we have it at Christmas time, but this year it had to be in August and I only had 8 months to run up a new gown". Never mind Annette, next time little Samantha will be a year older and she can help you.

Most of the gang turned up at the Chateau Wyuna escorting wives and girlfriends; in short a fine bevy of bonza birds. Now come on you blokes, must you leave 'en at home on Sundays? Why not bring them along on dives. You know what fresh air does for them, and of course you know what birds do for me. I had quite a