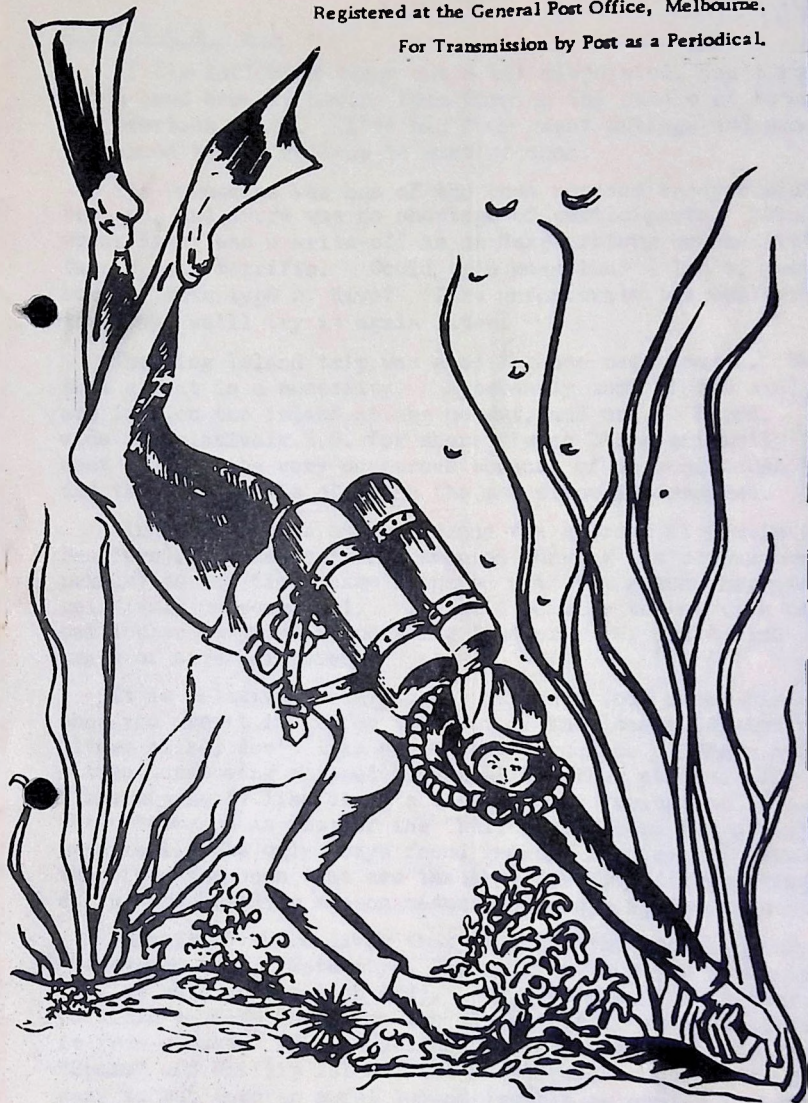


JUNE 74

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FATHOMS



VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

EDITORIAL -

If the following turns out a bit disjointed, don't worry; I've got a good excuse, having been burning the candle at both ends over the previous month. I've had four great outings and was even more impressed by the roll-up to most of them.

The Pinnacles was one of the best run and enjoyable dives I've been on, and there was no shortage of participants. The "exploratory wreck dive" was a write-off as an "exploratory wreck-dive", but the turn up was terrific. Could this mean that a lot of people want more of this type of dive? It's unfortunate the weather beat us that day, we'll try it again later.

The King Island trip was good for one main reason. We realised that a boat is a necessity. Apparently most of the abalone boats are idle on the island at the moment, and can be hired. The east side is relatively R.S. for shore diving being primarily sand. The west side can be very dangerous because of unpredictable freak waves and the heavy reefs of which the shoreline is composed.

Air is available on the island via a local at Currie (Bill Saunders), but he isn't overkeen on running the compressor (a small primus) as the time taken compared with the return he gets makes it relatively uneconomical. It would be wise to not bank on this particular compressor operating forever. We could find no other trace of air-facilities.

It is relatively easy to get put onto food wreck-fives, if you show you aren't in it for the loot. The locals (divers and non-divers alike) don't like seeing what are some of their main attractions being shipped piecemeal to other states. The cray fishermen don't like diver's taking crays during the "non-female taking" season as most of the "bull"-crays head far off shore and practically the only crays found inshore are females. These are therefore the ones that are taken by divers and every female taken during the breeding season means less crays in the long run.

"Possible" shore dives that we found the locations of, are the "Carnarvon Bay", "Netherby", "Blencathra" and the "Loch Leven" (sister ship to the Loch Ard). By possible, I mean that it is possible to dive them from the shore, but it would be better to do it from a boat. The locations are very similar to that of the "Speke" off Phillip Island, but more treacherous. It would be very easy to get into an awful lot of trouble in coming inshore again from any of them. In all, a diving trip to King Island would need the aid of a local diver and a boat and plenty of get up and go.

C A L E N D A R -

- FRIDAY, - V.S.A.G. Annual Dinner at the 'Cuckoo'
AUGUST 25 \$7 Single, \$13 Double.
Floor show - Dancing - Smorgasbord (all kinds known). Further details at the next General meeting.
- JUNE 15-17 - Long Weekend - Sorrento. J. Goulding Dive captain.
- JUNE 30 - Williamstown Dive. Dive captain - D. Carroll.
More snorkling than aqualunging. Maximum depth about 30 feet about 300 yds. off shore. If the preceding days are of onshore winds followed by calm for a few days, dive will be O.K. Otherwise R.S. To be held between the Williamstown Football Ground and the Time Ball Tower (near the Naval section) at the back beach. Guaranteed cold water.

ALTERNATIVELY :

Ringwood Underwater Group has extended a cordial invitation to several other clubs, including VSAG, to attend a combined Car Rally to be held on June 30 in the vicinity of Westernport Bay and to end with a barbecue and a dive at a good spot (which cannot be named until the panic envelopes are opened on the day). (Since several members have shown interest in attending, this outing has been entered as an alternative. If anyone would prefer to dive at Williamstown, contact D. Carroll accordingly, otherwise if you wish to go Car Rallying, ring Harvey J. Allen, 870-9907.

- JULY 14 - Indented Head "Secret" Wrecks dive (Ozone and Dominion) and/or Bottle Dive in Geelong Harbor.
Dive Captain - Pat Reynolds.
- JULY 18 - Bay Dive : Portsca - Pope's Eye - Point Lonsdale area.
Dive captain - Dave Moore
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THE PINNACLES

On Sunday, 12th May, we all arrived at San Remo ready for our dive on the Pinnacles. We were all there before time, which certainly is a step in the right direction for us. On our drive down we had witnessed a glorious sunrise, and standing by the water's edge it was warm, with no wind and so we knew that for once it was all systems go. We were intending to treat this dive as a dress rehearsal for our next planned deep dive down to the ships grave yard off Barwon Heads. Because of this we had decided to follow stricter diving procedures than usual in order to familiarise ourselves with the very tight schedules needed to ensure safety on a very deep, open sea dive.

Anyhow back to the story, we boarded Stan Watt's fishing boat dead on 9am, which had been our stipulated time of departure, and drew away over a flat calm sea. There were fifteen divers and Pat Creffield who was going to log us in and out of the water. We arrived at the spot marked on the echo sounder and dropped anchor into the top of the Pinnacles.

Pat and Bob were the first two into the water followed by Justin and Peter Smith, then Harvey and Barry and Adrian & Judy brought up the rear of the first bunch. They returned in order, all of them excited about the visibility and the marine life around the rock outcrop. Then it was our turn, Bazza, Dave and I were diving as a trio and all of us determined to get o the bottom of the sea bed. Over we went, then back to the boat for a new mask for Dave, whilst waiting, we lay on the surface on the anchor line, watching Johnny and the Cat some thirty feet below us, preparing to drop off down the side of the underwater mount. Then we were ready to go and down we went, just hesitating really over the drop, and then there we were standing on the bottom at one hundred feet. We swam out and down again, over an underwater ravine and down once more, at this stage our depth gauges seemed to register around 135 feet, due to the sunlight above we could still see very well, but decided to return to the rock for a slow tourist-type return to the surface.

This we did, swimming upwards, we could see the green and brown of the kelp clothing the steep sides. There were schools of fish swimming in their parallel fashions, all round us. The bottom here was studded with sponges, one particular one we noticed shaped like a huge 2-ft. wine glass, a man-sized drink if ever it saw one. The sides of the rock were pitted with weed festooned caves. I pushed my head into one and looking upwards could see my air bubbles boiling along the cave roof, some six feet above me.

The Finnacle (Cont'd.)

At this point we engaged in some intricate underwater ballet sequences, for the benefit of the Cat, who as usual was taking pictures of anything that moved. We then rose to the top of the rock where we could clearly see the boat some sixty feet away, and we were still about thirty feet down. So you can see just how clear the water was. Then it was up to the surface and into the boat via the nice handy boat ladder. Terry and Keith were still down being the last pair in, in fact they had been descending as we came up.

Finally up they came, so we upped anchor and moved a little closer inshore. Here the eager hunters could satisfy their lust for crayfish, and nearly everyone again fell over the side. Alas to no avail, no crayfish, but they did manage to overcome a few abalone, before it was time to head back to San Remo again.

We arrived back at the pier, and unloaded our gear. We had been very lucky, the weather had been perfect, sunny with no wind, the sea calm and the water warm, and consequently the visibility had been excellent. We had had an enjoyable dive, most certainly aided by the helpfulness of Stan Watts, and we all agreed that it had been a good day. We all then adjourned to the hotel for a counter lunch ably arranged by Terry Smith. After lunch we sat on the beach in the sun, some of us then went back into the sea, which will show you just how warm it must have been. For myself, Terry and I drove slowly back to Melbourne, reliving the dive as we did so.

Finally, I would say that this was a dive that all of us had great pleasure participating in. I was made more enjoyable I think by the excellent co-operation of all those who took part. and also by some members who did not actually go on the dive itself.

BRIAN LYNCH

POMPSEA WRECK DIVE 26/5/74

It wasn't a bad sort of a day and Sorrento Ramp again looked like Bourke Street in the middle of a diver's convention. Dave Carroll had done it again and called forth all sorts of people for what promised to be a great day's diving and something a bit different. The whole idea was to go looking for something new and we were due to head out at 10am as soon as Dave Moore turned up with his boat. About 10.30 dive captain Dave Carroll got a bit up tight and commandeered my car (and John Goulding) and headed off for the nearest phone to learn that Dave Moore would be a bit late as he was still in bed !!

So after due deliberation and the arrival of Pat R. and Alan Cutts, complete with respective families, it was decided to head off and check out the back beaches. Alas and Alack, they was all R.S., so it was back to Portsea for a spot of lunch and a summoning up of enough courage to get in the water. There were various arguments for and against, mostly against, but a few of the more hardy, amongst them in order of appearance: The one and only Johnny G., Pat and Alan, Dave Carroll, Brian Lynch and trainee Kerry Ramage, Peter Smith (not Terry's Peter, the other one), John Marshall (who got stuck with Alan), Peter Marshall and Dave (who's last name we can't think of), and visitor Trevor Cowley.

Harvey and I decided that as the car fridge was looking a bit lonely, we'd stay on the pier and keep an eye out for the Lock Ness Monster. We must have been successful as it wasn't sighted! After an hour or so various bedraggled divers began to appear over the edge of the jetty. Even though all were pretty cold, all had enjoyed a dive which had very nearly been a wipe out and so after the usual post mortem everybody began to head home. Harvey Allen, Dave Carroll and myself stopped off at Bazza's to tell him all about the ripper dive and Marie ended up by inviting us to share Bazza's tea, much to Bazza's disgust. But we enjoyed it and then went home.

Hoo-Roo,

JUSTIN LIDDY

KING ISLAND - FRIDAY - MONDAY, 31/5/74 to 3/6/74

On Friday morning at 9.15am six rugged divers, namely Barry Truscott, Dave Moore, Dave Carroll, Rob Adamson, Harvey Allen and Max Symon met at Tullamarine to wing down to that God-forsaken speck in Bass Strait called King Island, for a "Diving and Pheasant shooting" four days. After all our gear was loaded aboard the plane and more air put in the tyres we took off - just! Whilst flying over the southern end of the bay a couple of good diving spots were noted around Mud Island, which must be checked out in the near future.

After much carrying on with the air hostesses and clicking of cameras through the windows, we managed to reach our destination. Much to our surprise flat seas and calm weather.

First on the agenda was to pick up the hire-car and drop off the "older" members' gear beside their feather beds at "Claire Cottage" in Currie, while the other rugged four looked out over the rolling windswept country and thought of the great times we would have under the bright stars above, etc. etc.

After cruising around the centre of the island and lining up a Sunday dive with a local, Lyle Monk, we returned to Currie to fill the tanks at the residence of a Mr. Bill Saunders. Much to our surprise and pleasure his wife Thelma invited us to stay the week-end in their flat out back, and Bill asked us in to join him in a small turn he was running. It ended up with the four younger stayers having a pleasant evening (to 4 a.m.) with Bill (flaked), Thelma and the mighty Maxine from over the road.

Finally we all withdrew and headed out to the flat, slept "soundly" for an hour or so and then headed off to pick up Barry and Max, before setting out on the hunt. We returned Saturday night after the hunt - with the same number of pheasants in the fields as there were in the morning.

Sunday: After rising just before dawn and picking up the oldies again, we headed off to tour the island for diving. First stop was the north tip of the island where waves travel at 90° to the beach. Upon returning to the car and moving the cows from around it, we discovered the windows licked and the wireless aerial chewed off.

Next stop was the south tip, the most rugged spot for diving, but as we are divers (Bill said ALL VICTORIAN DIVERS ARE R.S.), we donned snorkels and hit the water to find some

crays - Dave Carroll finding the only one which we will not go into great detail about.

Next was a trip from east to west of the Island with some shooting in between. Dave Carroll again getting the only one - that, too, no details entered into.

Finally locating the positions of two wrecks, we crawled out again at the crack of dawn and with Monday's sun struggling to make an appearance, hit the beach. Wouldn't you guess it? Fantastic for shore photography but with 30-foot waves breaking on the beach, we called it off and headed to the only possible site at the mouth of the Etterick River on the west coast to have a really deep dive (up to fifteen foot depths were recorded) before "finally" bleeding off the rest of the air, and after a sordid hour or two at the local club, were poured into the Fokker Friendship and back to Melbourne.

DAVE MOORE
DAVE CARROLL

THE SORRENTO DIVE - MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE
PORTSEA DIVE - 26th May, 1974.

The intended location for this dive was Sorrento, and the proposed meeting time was 10.00am at the Boat Launching Ramp. On arrival we were confronted by divers, left, right and centre, all keen and ready for an early start, all gear on, and preparing the boats for launching. However, after a somewhat closer look we realised that not one of these divers was a member of the V.S.A.G. Where were they! After five minutes of wondering we headed for the coffee shop, and there, to our surprise, we found our lost divers, all seated around tables drinking coffee endeavouring to recover from obviously enjoyed Saturday nights. At about 11.30 the arrival of Pat Reynolds was noticed (only 1½ hours late - you're getting better Pat!). It was then unanimously decided to head for Portsea, where we arrived at approximately 12.00 - just in time for lunch and refreshments. Justin Liddy, who had been patiently waiting for the "sun to come over the yard arm", expressed his regret not wanting to dive, and attempted to supervise from the pier, while the more game members

of the club entered the water. However, as the water was cold, and refreshments awaited on "deck", most left the water soon after, apart from the more prepared such as Brian Lynch who took the liberty of wearing two wetsuits for the occasion.

At about 4.30pm everyone was changed and warm, contemplating the drive back after a very enjoyable social outing-dive.

JOHN MARSHALL and
CAREY RAMAGE

FLOTSAM and JETSOM

Every month when we go to write this article we never really know the correct spelling for the title. In many issues we have tried different versions so I suppose it doesn't matter what we put. One even wonders if anybody bothers to read it anyway. We know that most of the articles written here are simple tales of stretched truth, but occasionally we do have something really worth reporting.

Better late than never, but I suppose it's about time someone said something about that grand old gentleman of the sea, and one of the few good pommies to grace our land: Brian Lynch. Anyone who's seen Lynchy lately would not be ridiculed if they thought that he's been thunderbolted, or as some people might say "DUN 'IS NIGES". The truth remains however, that Brian is getting married. Those of you who have been participating in club activity recently will have had the pleasure of meeting Diane McAlpine, for it is she that lucky Lynchy has managed to whip out from under our noses and say: "Sorry lads, she's mine". When asked how Lynchy proposed, Di replied: "Oh, he just said to me, "how about you become me divers MOLL?" No kidding, kids, we wish you the very best for future happiness.

Lynchy also gets a vote of congratulations for the way he handled the organisation of the Pinnacles Dive. Let there be

a man who will stand up and say that V.S.A.G. members were drinking 12 hours before the dive, and I'll show you a liar. In all my experiences with the V.S.A.G. I have never seen a more orderly group of people assemble at one SPOT and so keen to get on with the dive. We must have known that Justin, Barry, Harvey and others had a few cold ones stored up for later.....

The V.S.A.G. had a recent unusual outing to see "Les Girls" - a show with a difference. What a spectacle and what a good time we had. Pity though about the number of people who turned up. Yet I suppose high culture is only for the minority.

On May 26th we had the exploratory wreck dive. Naturally we found 14 new wrecks, 8 of which yielded port holes, the other 6 offering only ships' bells. You may think I'm joking, but I wonder just how many non-starters will ever really know what happened that day. I know diving is not compulsory, I know there are some genuinely good reasons for not coming, and I know that some of us do sleep in at times, but the poor attendances at some recent dives indicates that too many people get their diving fulfilment from reading this column rather than attending dives.

So I'm not commenting on the May 26th dive, but I can assure you that the next three programmed dives (see May Newsletter) should be even better. See you there!

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S T O P P R E S S

The spies have just returned from the King Island escapade. We hear stories of friend extraordinaire Harvey J. Allen, who lifted half the island and managed to keep the party supplied in medicinal brandy, lollipops and cooking utensils. The question is. Where was Harvey when the Barrabooby bell was found?

Dave Carroll goes for the birds. Having "borrowed" one of Bazza's 500 round of ammo, he nearly plugged a pheasant which was quickly consumed for reasons best known to those of us who

were there. We hear Dave also got the only cray. Can't beat these country boys.

Big tip for all those who are off to King Island, don't drive cars driven by Rob.

See you folks, you're not safe anywhere.

CLAUDE BOTTOM

A NIGHT OUT WITH LES GIRLS

The V.S.A.G. has always had a high regard for cultural finesse and maintaining Christian moral Standards, so when Marg Phillips and Barry Truscott had a free-for-all fight as to whether we should see "Les Girls" or "Deep Throat", I was not a bit surprised.

Marg. of course won the battle and so on 23rd May we got on our gear and headed off to Earl's Court, the House of Clean Amusement. Pat and Annette were the first to arrive and naturally Pat took the closest chair to the stage commencing, "I want to see where they put it". Annette said they probably put it the same place as Pat does, so I'll sit back a bit....

I arrived with me two favourite sheilas. The beautiful Maree made all the actors jealous, and Dave Carroll (OIM A DOIVER) made the actors furious as he carressed his recently trimmed beard.

Next to arrive were Justin and Shirley, later to become immortally known as "knockers".

Keith and Di came with a couple of friends, and were followed by Pete and Marietta.

The evening started in a happy atmosphere which built up to almost climatic anxiety as the hour of the show drew near. And there it was. The stage was filled with six really terrific looking creatures who swayed and wiggled and mimed their way through a couple of hours of provocative and sensuous show mastery.

The star of the show, one Stan Munro, was one of the quickest and brightest comedians I've yet seen. Mind you, a bit on the hawdy scene, but incredibly funny. We saw two shows and the second time round Shirley was asked to come up on stage and help dance that great hit of the '30's -

"Ooby-Dooby Bounce You Booby."

Oh, what a pair of swingers, and I'm only referring to Shirley.

We were then entertained by a small orchestra and danced will the wee hours of the morning.

It is a pity that this occasion was missed by so many, because it was really a great night.

JOHN GOULDING
