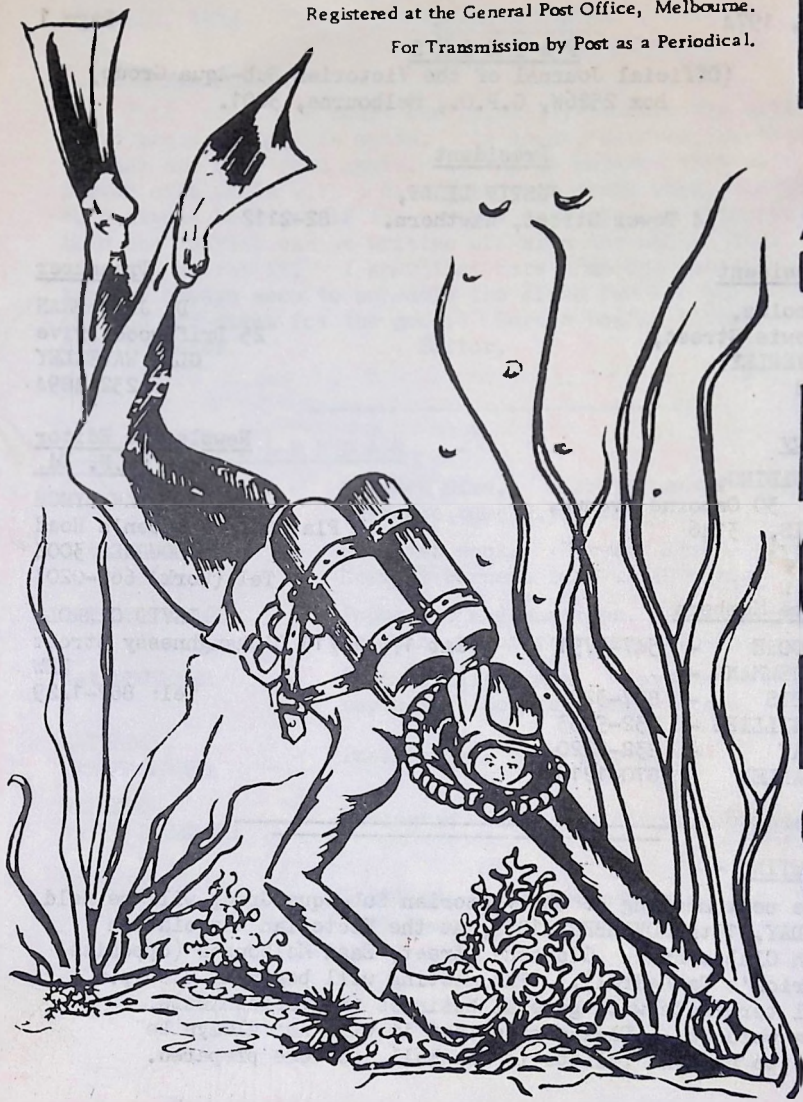


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FATHOMS



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, 19th NOVEMBER, 1974, at the Victorian Association of Youth Club's 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. Please note that it will not always be possible to use the toilets in the hall, so come prepared.

E D I T O R I A L -

This issue is a short one primarily because the articles must go to press early this month. It looks, however, as though the weather has come good again. It may be notices that we've a period of a month with a dive scheduled every week, and this is so designed because if the weather does chop up intermittently then one weekend can be written off with the chance that the next can make up for it. I know that more than one members has noted that we always seem to schedule the dives for the bad weekends and the off-dives for the good. Here's hoping this covers all contingencies.

Editor.

D I V E C A L E N D A R -

-
- 10th NOVEMBER - Ramsden Dive. Barry Truscott - dive captain.
Sorrento ramp 9.30 a.m.
- 17th NOVEMBER - Crawfish Rock. Harvey Allen - dive captain.
Meet at Warneet ramp at 10 a.m.
- 24th NOVEMBER - Popes Eye and environs. Dave Carroll - dive
captain. Sorrento ramp 9.30 a.m.
- 1st DECEMBER - Port Phillip Heads. Dave Moore - dive
captain. Sorrento ramp 10 a.m.
- SATURDAY,
7th DECEMBER - Pool Party - Bill Gray's.
- WEEKEND
14/15 DECEMBER - Kevington - John Goulding - organizer.
- DECEMBER 26th
ONWARDS - Portland, 6 powered camping sites.
Dave Moore.
-

SUBMARINE DIVE : SANDRINGHAM YACHT CLUB 22/9/1974

Being the tail end of winter, with genuine winter weather prevailing, very little was available that weekend if any divers wanted a bit of underwater fun. Noel Lees, however, is a very eager beaver when it comes to getting into it, so after a bit of name dropping about propellers, brass, bronze valves and submarines, the 4-wheel drive was stoked up and with Dawn Lees, her dog and myself as co-drivers, we set off. Visibility ranged from six inches to zero and the bay was a beautiful seething mass as we plunged in, but one consolation, the water actually seemed warm.

Almost an hour was spent going around the old hulk, Noel picking up a nearly new four foot crowbar on the trip, and most of this time was spent in feverishly digging around the propellor (I don't know why because it is buried to about three feet and very, very solidly attached to the propellor shaft.).

On the way back a bit of compass work was necessary as there was quite a chop on the top and we tried swimming about two hundred yards back to the jetty, finger walking on the bottom. One thing for sure, I need more practice. Eventually the two hundred yard trip developed into about six hundred and the trip was finished on the top.

REPORT ON "FARALITE" STROBE FLASH

If you forget the price of the thing (about \$35) it could be regarded as being a great bit of underwater equipment. Essentially it is a strobe flash with a cycle time of five seconds and a reported battery lifetime of about fifteen hours.

An intense blue flash is given off which penetrates practically any water.

Upon testing it in a night dive in Piccaninnie Ponds (28/9/74) it could be seen by all and sundry in the main chasm and the reflected flash could be seen by all viewers on the jetty at the first pond until we entered the Cathedral. It was found that it "switched on" automatically at 50ft. because of water pressure, (press button switch), and could

Report on "Farralite" Strobe Flash (Cont'd.)

not be switched off again until that level was reached again on the way up. It was found that a few drops of water had entered the battery chamber on surfacing but no other part was affected. The maximum depth reached was 100 ft. and it was found, surprisingly enough, that the divers' night vision was not affected at all by the repeated light flashes. This is probably because blue-light, the color of the flash, is one of the colors which least affects night-vision retention. (Red light is better for working with but does not carry as far underwater). With a magnetic reed switch instead of a mechanical one the depth would have no effect upon switching.

The main use of the flash would be as a means of drawing attention to a diver, either surfaced or submerged, when lost or even as an aid of keeping tabs on various groups of divers.

As mentioned earlier, the price is the main control on its possible use, and for a four or five ounce piece of electronic equipment about 4" x 2" x 1" this might seem a lot, but if one can afford it, it certainly would increase diver safety.

Object in question loaned by Terry C. Smith.

HIGH DIVING AT BLAIRGOWRIE PIER

On Sunday, 13th October, we drove down to St. Johns Wood Road ready for a good back beach dive. Unfortunately the sea hadn't heard about it, so we were forced back across the peninsula into the Bay. So our intrepid divers plunged into the formidable waters under Portsea Pier to probe once more the secrets of the deep. Those of us without tanks, spent the time unravelling a mooring chain, chatting up a moonface fish and trying to keep up with Pat's long visits to the bottom.

John and Bob scuba-diving beneath the pier met with sea-horses and sea-snakes, shades of Ben Cropp, but spent most of their time dodging other divers. Once out of the water we adjourned to the Koanya Pub, where we all dived once more, but this time into the food and drink. After a very pleasant lunch, Johnny suggested we dive down to Blairgowrie, to see the sights of his childhood

holidays.

Arriving at the end of a very wind-swept Blairgowrie pier, we listened spellbound as Johnny's past life flashed before us. Then overcome by remorse he threw himself into the sea, but first putting his Fosters in a safe place, before he sailed gracefully into the water, shoes, sun-glasses and all. Really very well done, however, just in case, I hastily donned my suit ready for a classic rescue, not really necessary but I went in anyway. At this point all the other male members of the party headed for the beach, can't think why. Anyway we dried Johnny out and sent him on his way, we are all waiting now to see what his friend Argus will say about it.

After the excitement had died down, and Dave woke up, we all headed home. Di and I drove up Canterbury Jetty Road to pick wild flowers, yes, really; the sea was still pounding in, not a diving day, but we had had some reasonable vision and a lot of fun.

Those present: Pat, Annette and family, Justin and Shirley, Bob and June, Dave Carroll, Johnny, Diane and me.

BRIAN LYNCH.

CRUISIN' (UP AND) DOWN THE RIVER

On Sunday the 27th we had chosen to point the boats in the opposite direction to that which we normally take, and explore the lower reaches of the Yarra. The day dawned bright and sunny, and we were all geared up ready to go at the appointed time, however, we did delay it just a little for the benefit of the Moores. So just before eleven we set off across Hobson's Bay, heading for the mouth of the river.

It was a bit bumpy across the open Bay, but once in the shelter of Dave's beloved Williamstown it calmed down. Passing by Naval boats, old dredgers and the Royal Victorian Yacht Club we had to make our first decision, the river deemed to divide. Luckily we had on board that old sea dog, Dave Carroll, without hesitation he sent Pat's ailing boat into a dead end, whilst we endeavoured to catch up Bazza to misdirect him too. Barry was a bit too quick for us though and chose the right route. On this section we passed the old Williamstown Ferry and the pylons

and debris of the Westgate bridge, with the two completed halves swinging away into the distance with mathematical precision. At this stage Dave M. was towing Pat, whose engine was over heating, and so Bob and Barry shot off up the Maribyrnong to collect some tools.

Whilst idling our way up river waiting for them to return we saw Terry haring back to us, followed a little more slowly by two tugs assisting the ill-fated "Straitsman" on its way to Launceston for a refit. The ship certainly looked the worse for wear, buckled sheets and a smokestack askew, but with the rear doors firmly closed the little procession moved down river like a funeral cortege.

We moved on up river between lines of live ships from Panama, Russia, Finland, Germany and wait for it, England, some being unloaded, and others just waiting. We were passed by the old pilot boat, the AKUNA, taking a pleasure cruise down stream, and we then passed the current pilot vessel "RIP". We were now approaching the city, it was high tide and there didn't appear too much headroom for Bazza's boat beneath the oncoming bridges, and so with heads bowed we kept going, and going and going, until we passed under Princes Bridge, with headroom to spare. Now with green lawns on either side, we were encountering a few rowing boats, but the natives looked friendly and so we pulled into the gas barbecues for lunch, just in time because Bazza was close to collapsing from hunger.

We spent a little time foraging for toilets and cooking our lunches and then had a siesta, the highlight of the afternoon was Craig's impromptu swimming act, and Dave's bottle of Port. After lunch we continued up river, stopping off at Snake Island and then passing beside and beneath the roadway, and along the steep banked Toorak slopes with the tiny native shacks perched on high, until we reached the tea gardens in the wilderness, just past the old Hawthorn Train depot. At this point we turned around, ready now for our dash to the sea.

Going downstream was easier than going against the current as the many canoeists we passed testified to. In no time at all we reached the bridges, the water level was lower now and we had no qualms at all as we passed beneath the arches. We stopped at the Westgate Bridge to allow Dave Moore to catch up and then headed off again passing the old Akuna on the way in. We could now feel the fresh movement of the Bay water under us and we took off into

salt spray and the setting sun. As we coursed back to North Road, the high rise buildings of Melbourne stood out starkly against the darkening sky, and as we neared the shore the sea began to level out. However, it was now seven o'clock, hardly noticed by us due to our gaining an hour that very morning, and so we decided no skiing and pulled the boats out, aided by Mr. T.C. Smith, who had left his family en route at Middle Park, well at least that was his story. So our day with a difference ended, it had been a good experience, the weather had been kind, red faces all round, and we had all enjoyed it. Our thanks to the boat owners. Bazza, Dave, Pat and Terry, thanks, too, to our hard working wives and moll, Annette, Judy, Marie, Di, June, Pat, Maree and Jenny, the kids, Bob and me, and not forgetting our indefatigable pilot Dave Carroll. We leave you till next time.

BRIAN LYNCH

THE WEAK END OF SKIING

Saturday morning at the ungodly hour of 6.30 a.m. I rolled up to the Moore's new abode in the wilds of mulgrave to find to my great surprise that the Moore was up, out of bed and only about 2 hours away from being ready. Anyway, finally, after much pushing and pulling, we had him ready to roll, all apart from a flat tyre on the trailer. Fixed that and then in convoy with Pat and Annette Reynolds, John G. and Maree, Mrs. "P" Moore and assorted kids, we headed out towards Eildon. All went well until just before Yea when Pat Reynolds noticed a wheel go rolling past him into a paddock. He then stopped as he thought it looked like one of his trailer wheels.....it was. After a lengthy delay he succeeded in getting it fixed and off again. By this stage Dave and I had been to Eildon and set up camp, got the boat ready for the water but as Johnny had the car fridge we decided to go looking for them.

So after a rather confusing morning and early afternoon we eventually launched two boats and started skiing. Even though it was late afternoon the water was a bit rough and hard to find the flat bits. When everyone started shivering it was decided

to head back for camp and a hot or cold drink. Upon our return we were greeted by the Smith mobile and the news that we'd set up camp on someone else's permanent site and they'd arrived and heaved all our stuff into the middle distance. So for the second time that day we set up camp, lit a fire and finally relaxed with a couple of cold ones. About 9 p.m. the quiet of the night was shattered by some middle-aged lair in a red G.T. It could only be Bazza and Co. Bazza, of course, insisted on a couple of quiet ones so naturally the night got a bit late and sore heads abounded in the morning.

Sunday dawned bright and clear and very b..... early, thanks to Dave Moore who was out to prove something by being first up at 6 a.m. !! After that auspicious start it was a normal V.S.A.G. early getaway about 10 a.m. The water was flat, both boats were raring to go, so we went. The Moomba Masters quickly set the style of the day with Johnny showing us all how to do it until Pat and Annette put on their little show. It must have been good because Dave's boat then packed it in with a broken mounting. So it was left to Pat's wooden boat to tow the rest of us around. The highlight of the afternoon was to be Bazza and Dave on slalom and yours truly in the middle (still on two), but that came to a sorry end when the rope broke leaving me behind. But Bazza and Dave got up and disappeared into the middle distance. Then it was my turn with Marge to follow but half way across the boat decided to take up the noble art of smoking and after initial panic by the girls on board, limped back to base. After a critical operation by "Drs." Smith, Moore and Reynolds, the craft was mobile again so we decided to head back to camp while we still had transport.

Upon arrival we were met by Paul Rainbow who informed us that petrol and shorting wires do not mix in his mate's brand new boat and showed us the burn marks to prove it. Luckily there was no serious damage and they hope to have her mobile in the near future. So, all in all, a good day's skiing, marred only by the three boats packing up in one way or another.

Time then to pack up, get rid of the remaining perishables and head off, stopping en route for a hamburger at Alexandria. And that was it, our weak end of water skiing. More comments on this trip on page 137 of this newsletter by

JUSTIN LIDDY

HOW TO COOK A "BAZZA" CRAY -

Because Lobster or crayfish is so expensive in restaurants, a lot of people think they are the best seafood.... So do I, but being a bit short of the necessary folding, an alternative can be found in fresh prawns (about the size of a Bazza cray). The other reason they're cheaper is that there are more of them.

There are three ways to get hold of enough for the following experiment.

- 1st - catch some
- 2nd - pinch some, or
- 3rd - buy some, and then try this:-

Take one (1) lb. of fresh shelled prawns,
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brandy
 1 cup cream
 4 tablespoons of chopped parsley
 4 tablespoons of tomato sauce
 1 tablespoon of worcestershire sauce
 and juice of a small lemon,

and then - - -

saute the prawns in butter, then add the brandy and stock a match (lit) in it. When the fire brigade leaves, add the lemon juice and then the cream and stir gently. Now, quickly, the tomato sauce, salt, fresh ground pepper and the chopped parsley. Finally, add the worcestershire sauce and stick it on the gas for a couple of minutes.

Now the boiled rice (which you should have ready). Chuck the whole lot on a plate and pour out a couple of beers. One for you and one for

KING NEPTURE

FLOTSAM and JETSAM

O.K. everybody, you can now breathe easy again. Good old F. & J. is back again and all the writers report that they have renewed vigour to take up the fight against literary pollution.

Firstly we must apologise for missing the October issue. We know how disappointed you must have been. However, your flowers, well wishes, telegrams and cookies have put us back on the road to first-class mumbo-jumbo narcosis inspired tell-tale tips about our crew.

It was to be expected that he who can excell at the skilfull art of diving would be quite at home precariously balanced above two fine slithers of steel skimming over the ice at St. Moritz.

Captain coach for the evening was the ancient mariner Lynch, who because of his wealth of years had managed to cram in about 36 years in the U.K. during the ice age.

Young Bazza was dutifully helped around by his delightfully angelic children.

Liquid legs Liddy was of course quite familiar with the feeling of treading on thin ice.

The McBeans were the only married pair to dice the ice but Johnny and Maree helped one another to fumble and stumble - and then along came Fritz, soccer boots and all, to show us how it was really done.

On Sunday, 29th September we indeed had a most enjoyable day. Having left the Sorrento Boat ramp quite early we set across to visit a wrecked sumarine somewhere on the other side of the bay. This sub was dumped to act as a breakwater and it would appear the hull is in quite reasonable condition. As the sub is part out of the water we scrambled all over it, but much as we searched failed to find the dining room. So having missed lunch we headed back to Portsea and dived on the portsea hole, where a major salvage operation was carried out to raise a sunken anchor, believed to have come from an ancient 15 foot fishing boat called the "Polly Woodheap".

Sunday, 13th October, found us back at Portsea again searching for Chinese junks under the pier. However, we were obviously too late because the ASIAN FLU struck, and me mate Argus was in bed for a week suffering. Maybe that had something to do with the efforts of one Mr. Lynch who started practicising rugby tackles on the Blairgowrie pier.

And then on to 15 miles on the Melbourne side of Yea. Here we find Pat and family and Johnny with Maree, Pat Moore and Shirley looking for the wheel off the boat trailer which Pat has borrowed for the weekends. After spending 2 hours replacing the bearing and attempting to buy assorted bits we limp on to Jerusalem Creek on Lake Eildon for a great weekend skiing and frolicking in the sun.

Bad luck dogged us all weekend but those who were able to get there certainly had a good weekend.

Here is a list of the bad luck happenings:

Saturday

- 8.20 a.m. Dave Moore's trailer tyre is flat. We have no pump.
- 10.15 a.m. Wheel bearing on Pat's trailer disintegrates - wheel heads for the hills - delay 2½ hours.
- 5.30 p.m. We arrive back from 2 hours skiing to find Liddy's Lodge (Tent) has been pulled down by owner of the camp site upon which it had been erected.
- 6.30 p.m. Terry Smith bogs the Kombi van.
- 8.00 p.m. Bazza's kids turn up.

Sunday

- 6.15 a.m. Dave Moore wakes everyone up.
- 6.16 a.m. I realise I have a headache.
- 7.00 a.m. Chris Truscott puts a nail through his foot.
- 10.00 a.m. Paul Rainbow arrives and finds us already departed for a day's skiing.
- 11.00 a.m. Bob Scott arrives and can't find anyone.

- 2.45 p.m. Dave's boat motor has minor breakdown and can't be used for skiing again.
- 2.50 p.m. Pat's boat boils its head off.
- 5.00 p.m. We get back to camping ground to find that Paul Rainbow's boat has caught fire.

From then on nothing much happened.

Completely undaunted by our disasters of the previous weekend, we had a fantastic day cruising up the Yarra on the 27th October. This event proved quite popular with the "regulars" and gave us a very interesting and different attraction. The whole day was made possible by the generosity of the boatowners who once again gave us the opportunity to engage in an activity denied to many people. Although the Yarra is a muddy old river it certainly is a busy one. Scores of ships, hulks, wrecks, etc. line its banks as it twists its way up to the city from Williamstown. As we pass under the numerous city bridges people peer down at our little flotilla. Then on to the gas bar-b-ques. Indeed we are the envy of other people who must fight the traffic and then search for a parking spot, so that they can enjoy the pleasant afternoon sun.

Hoping to see you all at the coming summer attractions.

- FINNEGAN INNAGAIN

HOW'S YOUR GEAR ????

With Christmas holidays coming on, the V.S.A.G. has made plans to go to the Portland area for the period; Boxing Day to the 5th January. Weather permitting this ought to be a damn good break, as this area can offer plenty of diving spots, scenic drives, family entertainment, etc.

It would be a shame to spoil it all by forgetting to bring some essential piece of equipment, e.g. safety vest. It would also be a shame to go away with faulty equipment. Before

Xmas, members who are sincere about diving should make sure their equipment is in good working order. Ask yourself this question.

How long is it since your regulator and tank were tested? If the answer is about one year or more then get your gear checked out. If you can't remember how long it has been, then get your gear tested.

If you have CO₂ safety vests pack at least one spare gas cylinder.

What about O rings? How disappointing it would be to get 200 miles from Melbourne and find you haven't got a replacement O ring when your's gives up the ghost.

For a few dollars expenditure you can ensure yourself of a better chance of trouble-free diving.

Remember, a good diver looks after his gear. Your buddy and your own equipment are your best friends in the water.

Would you want to dive with a bloke who hasn't had his equipment tested in 2 years?

Whilst we're on this subject we could learn a trick or two from Pat Reynolds. Whilst going up to Eildon recently Pat crunched a wheel bearing in the boat trailer he had borrowed. Now this need not have occurred if the bearing had been properly maintained - a bit of grease does wonders. This was not Pat's trailer and of course not his fault, but Pat provided for the unexpected. He had a spare bearing in his car and saved the day.

Cars, boat trailers, caravans, tents should be checked over before we go away.

From Portland we can skip over to Mt. Gambier fairly quickly so don't forget your Picaninnie Ponds Permits. Until advised to the contrary, these permits are still necessary

for diving this hole.

A meeting will probably be held prior to Xmas to sort out matters of equipment, boat charges, etc. so watch the newsletter for details.

JOHN GOULDING

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