

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FATHOMS

(Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)
Box 2526W, G.P.O., Melbourne, 3001

President

JUSTIN LIDDY,

547-2791

14 Tower Street, Hawthorn. - 82-2112

Vice President

PAT REYNOLDS, 36 Mandowie Street, GLEN WAVERLEY. 232-5358

Secretary

DAVE MOORE

JOHN GOULDING, Flat 6, 30 Osborne Avenue, GLEN IRIS, 3146 Tel. 252-883

Committee Members

ADRIAN NEWMANN - 877-3287

ALAN CUTTS - 877-3287

MARGARET PHILLIPS - 232-9633

BILL GRAY - 232-7220

Treasurer

D. J. McBEAN 25 Driftwood Drive GLEN WAVERLEY 232-4894

Newsletter Editor & Co.N. Ed.

BRIAN LYNCH Flat 16, 77 Queen's Road MELBOURNE, 3004 Tel. (Work) 662-0201

> DAVID CARROLL 15 Bolton Street BOX HILL

CLUB MEETING -

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Tuesday, 15th October, 1974, 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. Please note that it will not always be possible to use the toilets in the hall, so come prepared.

EDITORIAL

Here starts another year, and if it turns out as good as last year I, for one, won't complain. To try and do even better (who's greedy?) at the coming club meeting people will be asked to submit any likes or dislikes they can list, any suggestions for improvement of dives, functions, newsletter, meetings or anything. As a word of warning: there are a lot of people in the club, meaning all bar about three, who might find themselves going for a little in-service training and testing this year. We've not got three members who've just done an extensive course in diving techniques and instruction, and now we might get a bit of it into use. There's an old saying: "I've forgotten more than you'll ever learn". If we analyse this statement it could be interpreted as meaning the speaker knows nothing, he's forgotten too much.

FUTURE OUTINGS -

SUNDAY, 20th OCTOBER - Yarra River Trip - John Goulding

WEEKEND 26/27 OCTOBER - Water Ski Trip - John Goulding

Saturday, 9th November - Justin's Tennis party CANCELLED.

SATURDAY. 7th DECEMBER - Pool party - Bill Gray's.

WEEKEND, 14/15 DECEMBER - Kevington, instead of Mt. Buller
- John Goulding

DECEMBER 26 onwards - Portland, 6 powered camping sites
- David Moore

EQUIPMENT NEWS

The following article is an experimental one, aimed at giving people an idea of the relative value of some of the wide range of new equipment now becoming available. It is extremely hard to form an opinion of something just from looking at it and even just from trying it. It must be tried on a comparison basis with some recognisable standard.

The first items tested were two different brands of flippers, one a French design, size 9-11, Navy Champion Cavalero, made in Italy by Grandes, and the other, an extra large foot size "Aqua Master", made by the U.S. Divers Company. As a comparison basis the Giant Continental flipper of about the same foot size was also tried.

Generally speaking it would appear that both flippers had good and bad points.

Navy Champion: Very hard to walk in due to "curve-down" of fin; easy to fit on; good speed output in water without undue effort; seems to thoroughly stir water up however, making it possibly an unsuitable design for use in areas which could silt up, e.g. Mt. Gambier sink holes and caves; slightly lighter than the Aquamaster and Giant type; black rubber and about as flexible as a Giant type.

Aquamaster: Very rigid blue rubber fin with strong longitudinal ribbing; harder to get on, good speed output in normal usage and very good speed output when pedalling hard, however under the latter conditions the user tired very quickly and tended to cramp up; has much less effect on water (i.e. the ribs tend to direct most of the water down to the tip of the fin whilst the Navy Champion having smaller ribs would allow much water flow over the sides of the fin also. This would mean that the Aquamaster would cause the main water movement in a relatively narrow ray behind the diver, whilst the Navy Champion affected a much thicker ray tending to cause silting closer than the Aquamaster would.)

Overall it would seem that the Navy Champion type had more to offer the diver than the Aquamaster. As noted above, the Aquamaster had the least silting effect, but only of the three tried. It is probably unnecessary to have large flippers in areas like the Mt. Gambier Sink Holes and it would be within the capabilities of most divers to have a standard small pair for use in this type of environment. In open water diving, the

Navy Champion would stand out as the flipper one could pedal all day, whilst with the Aquamaster it could be definitely said that pitstops would be a necessity.

On a comparison basis with the Continental Giant it would appear that both flippers tested gave a higher speed output for the same effort. The speed difference between the Aquamaster and the Navy Champion types was only marginally noticeable but both were a fair cut above the "Giant".

EQUIPMENT TESTED WAS MOST KINDLY PROVIDED BY
"THE DIVER'S DEN"
HIGH STREET. PRAHRAN

COMMITTEE AND OFFICE	HOLDERS	1974/75 -
President		JUSTIN LIDDY
Vice-President	ol colle	PAT REYNOLDS
-Quarter Master	reibels	PAT REYNOLDS
Treasurer	danios H	DON McBEAN
- Social Secretary	ol alige	DAVE MOORE
Secretary	own of	JOHN GOULDING
Diving Officer) Safety Officer)	- {	HARVEY ALLEN BRIAN LYNCH
Training Officers	Tol-Teed	PAT REYNOLDS, ALLAN CUTTS
Librarian	1141	DAVE MOORE
Medical Officer	THE THE	ADRIAN NEWMANN
Newsletter Editors	to record	DAVE CARROLL, BRIAN LYNCH
S.D.F. Delegates Deputy	Cond.	JUSTIN LIDDY, HARVEY ALLEN BRIAN LYNCH
Points Scorer	Super Di	ALLAN CUTTS
Committee Members	e in olse	BILL GRAY MARGE PHILLIPS

FROM THE PRESIDENT TO YOU . . . WITH LOVE !!

Writing the annual report is an odious task at best and somehow seems the same old thing year in, year out, so this year I've decided to flash back through the newsletters and see what comes out.

The diving year, as applicable in the V.S.A.G., runs from October to October in line with the committee's year of office.

This year the club went through 22 official dives, 9 social turns and incredibly 9 long weekends, not to mention innumerable private dives, get togethers and all manner of shennanigans.

The bank account continues to show a healthy balance even though we spent money like water on all sorts of beaut things like D.C.M's, Navy training courses and the manufacture of the compressor trailer.

New members totalled 17 which shows we must be doing something right. Thanks must go to the Committee for the work they have done, especially John Goulding for Secretary, and Dave Carroll and Brian Lynch for the Newsletter, and the instructors for training and Don NcBean for keeping us solvent and to all who gave so unselfishly of their time and effort in the running of the Club. Also the boat owners once again for letting us use their boats more than they do and the S.D.F. Delegates for their efforts. I think as a closing note I would like to thank especially the various wives, girlfriends and assorted pets of us mad divers who put up with us and our antics all year.

Thank you, one and all, and all the best for the coming year.

PAT REYNOLDS

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

All types of Diving Gear at Trade Prices.

All types of Camera and Film Gear at Super Discount Prices.

Overnite film processing and printing in black and white.

Special rates to Club Members.

Also, Passport Photos for C.D.A.A. Membership taken at Club meeting - \$2.00 for 4.

Contact ADRIAN NEUMANN, Flat 6, 195 Brighton Road, Elwood, or phone 38-9280 Bus. Hrs.

UP & DOWN and IN & OUT (of the water)

Round about this time of the year one notices a change in the weather and a change in the attitude of divers. It seems to happen every year with the arrival of summer, one would assume there is some connection between the advent of summer, good diving conditions and the enthusiasm of divers.

You would think people would get sick of the same old summer routine, you know, up out of bed early every weekend.

charge off to the beach,
jump in a boat or off a pier,
put on all that clumsy, uncomfortable gear,
get wet,
get out,
get in again,
peel off that wet suit,
wash all that gear (??),
put it away,
head off home,
fight with the wife or girlfriend (or both),
wait for next week, and
DO IT ALL AGAIN.....

What I mean is, if that's all there is to this silly sport, why do it, I ask you, why do it? Now, before you answer that, let me say that all answers in the affirmative are right and all answers in the negative are wrong. One of the main reasons is that it keeps you off the streets and another is that its good, clean, healthy sport. So, who am I to argue. Might I just bring to mind an article that appeared in this magazine some 12 months ago and which I feel is worthy of reprinting. Especially as now is the time that dive attendances start to go up and some people might be disappointed if they missed out due to any misunderstanding.

Club Rules for Official Club Dives

- 1. All divers must possess current medical certificates.
- Life vests or bouyancy compensators are compulsory and must be worn.
- Visiting divers must satisfy the dive captain/safety officer of their proficiency. Proof will be required.

- 4. All divers must contact Dive Captain prior to dive.
- 5. Dive partner to be assigned by Dive Captain.
- 6. No one to enter the water until authorised by Dive captain.
- 7. Any misconduct will be reported to the Committee (Article 94 of Constitution)

This is not meant to be restrictive but is designed to ensure safe diving.

Also one or two other points -

The Dive Captain is not just a figurehead but is there to see that the Dive runs smoothly and <u>SAFELY</u>. So make sure you report to him on arrival and departure and take notice of what he says.

Anyway, enough of this dull, uninteresting and completely worthless article, it's only in here to fill out the magazine or maybe to get someone through summer without a gutfull of water.

KING NEPTUNE

SATURDAY. 22nd SEPTEMBER. 1974

Well, it looked like a good day for a dive so bright and early I rang Johnny G. about 11 a.m. and asked him firstly to wake up, and secondly if he thought it was a good day for it. To which Johnny cheerfully replied: "Bonzer day for it. Justy." And so it was decided. I hurriedly finished work about an hour later and very hurriedly went home (from my place of employment) and got changed and went and picked up me moll and round to Johnny's moll's place, just in time for lunch! After that Johnny still reckoned it was a good day for it so we got our gear together and jumped in the old T.C. and hurried off to the dive site we had so carefully chosen. The spot we had picked out reminds me of the shaft at Mt. Gambier insofar as it is about the same size and the only difference being that it's called the M.C.G. and there were about 100,000 other people there. Yes, you've guessed it, it was our annual pilgrimage to the mecca of Australian Rules football, the members' bar at the M.C.G. Luckily we arrived before the game got under water and found ourselves a good vantage spot in the 2nd booth from the end nearest the door. This way

we could see all the other devotees of the game coming and going and getting wetter and wetter.

It was good to see the color and pagaentry of this great game as all and sundry got steadily wetter and colder as Melbourne turned on another beautiful day. The M.C.G. during Finals Fever must be the only place they measure the rainfall in feet and not in inches. Our two molls were a bit disgusted with our earlier tactics in finding a sheltered spot but as the rain continued, quickly saw the wisdom of it and entered into the "spirits" of the day. After what seemed a hell of a long time we staggered (sorry), i meant, strolled up to the stands to see what was apparently a very close finish to a very closely 'fought' match with the umpire winning by about 20 yards from the goalkeeper and two policemen.

Having had our fill of "footy fever" for another year we all headed back to Maree's on the old T.C. (another story - see page 34 for this saga) to watch the replay and the replay of the replay. There we were joined by one or two other fans, and finished off the day the way any self respecting diver would, but here, alas, my memory grows a bit dim on the succeeding momentous events and all I can tell you is that Sunday came around the next day very late.

PS. Johnny insisted on the "buddy" system on the Saturday..... "Hey, buddy, it's your shout".

P.P.S. There are seven more cranes than last year visible from the bar window.

P.P.P.S. Shirley and Maree now know that the cranes haven't got lights on them for Xmas. They were looking at the M.L.C. weather beacon.

P.P.P.P.S. They say Harve's beard tickles when he says goodnight.

P.P.P.P.S. Dave Carroll has a unique way of finding an address. He walks around the streets until he sees a car that looks familiar.

Anyway, see you same place,
same time,
same spot,
next year !

MOUNT CAMBIER, SEPTEMBER 27-29

Friday, late in the afternoon, with Justin at the wheel, his "Doiver's Moll" beside him, yours truly filling the rest of the front seat and "Cat" Carroll in the rear overcoming much emotion as we sped by Williamstown without even a second glance. A short stop was made for petrol and a change of pilots; then once again we were on our way at the fantastic speed of 10 miles per tinnie as "Cat" kept us fascinated with his theory as to how he should maybe take the plunge and get in touch with the fabulous Betty once again.

After another stop for food and one or two beverages at Geelong, the "Cat" took the wheel and off we headed once more in the direction of S.A. Things were quite uneventful, in fact you might say quite dull until we decided that we really ought to test the latest piece of equipment which Terry had discovered, namely one flashing blue light for the express purpose of locating lost divers.

Well Terry, I'm happy to report that it works well, so well in fact that a gent with his own bloody flashing blue light found us before we'd even realized that we were bloomin' well lost. However, with our combined bulldusting ability we were able to convince him that we had a perfectly valid reason for showing said light on a public highway as we were "doivers".

Just and I seeing how this adventure had completely unnerved the "Cat", by being interrogated so close to Colac, we did the only decent thing and forced him to stop at yet another refreshment house for some more "Courage"!! whereupon "Cat" got talking to some drunken farmer while Justin and I stocked up on Courage.

After stopping to purchase petrol at the "Dartmoor Dance" we finally made it to Gambier about 2.30am and were just falling out of the "Liddy mobile" to the clatter of a rather long tinnie top chain when Roger Townley plus Marion arrived to help us wake up the rest of the sleeping guests as we clattered down the hall of the guesthouse and had an impromptu party in Shirley's bedroom.

Early Saturday morning yours truly is off to Ewens Ponds and Allendale East to participate in the testing of committee members of the C.D.A.A. Meanwhile Justin and Cat are resting and saving themselves for a night dive in Piccaninee Ponds which was a rather cold affair owing to the rather R.S. weather. On this dive the flashing blue light was taken in to the water where it reportedly automatically turns on at the 50 ft. mark. It's no wonder that the cop managed to locate us last night as it was visible from the landing at Piccs during the whole dive except when they entered

"The Cathedral". Later that night we all ended up back at Jen's Hotel with two more "Desperado Doivers", namely Lou De Bono and Norm Wentworth from Mako. We did our best to make "Cat" keep up with the shouts even if he did have to buy 2 rounds at once.

Sunday we descended on the YMCA for the main purpose of the trip; the Cave Divers Association of Australia Annual General Meeting. The meeting was a great success and well supported by divers from Victoria and S.A., however, there were quite a lot of people rather conspicuous by their absence, let's hope they can make it to the next C.D.A.A. meeting. Yours truly was elected to the Committee as Treasurer so it seems that I will have to attend Mt. Gambier more often - it's a good excuse anyway.

The trip home after a late lunch of Pizza and tinnies was very early interrupted by lack of air in one of the tyres which took approximately 5 tinnies to repair. After passing through Hamilton we saw a sign to Mortlake and decided to give Murray and June a surprise. June put on a much appreciated meal after which we had an enjoyable beer or two just for a change. Around 10pm we finally hit the road again and had an uneventful trip back home (the pubs were all closed).

HARVEY J. ALLEN

SORRENTO SUNDAY

Sunday, 29th September whilst Harvey, Justin and the Cat were at Mt. Gambier, some of the rest of us decided to dive the Portsea hole to see what we could find. If you remember this weekend was to have been a Loch Ard pilgrimage once more but weather signs were against us, and unfortunately the only one to arrive at Port Campbell was Murray, yet again, but don't despair Murray, the ships been down there for nearly 100 years so you've still got time.

Back at Sorrento ramp we slid Bazza's and Dave's boats into a choppy sea and headed off across the Bay to visit Swan Point and the old submarine there which serves as a breakwater. We inspected the old vessel from stem to stern and all I can say is that they must have been small sailors to get through the little hatches.

It was time then to head back to the hole, the wind appeared to be dropping and the water was visibly less choppy, we arrived at Portsea right at slack water time. We lined up to the marks and dropped anchor, deep water. So a couple of us went down and found

we were in eighty feet of water, sandy bottom sloping away towards the wall, hidden somewhere off to our right. Returning to the surface we buddied up and began our descent, unfortunately we had some problems with equalizing, and we returned Carey to the tender, and regrouped together on the bottom. Setting off toward the wall, we swam along underwater dunes and glided down them, until the rocks at the foot of the wall began looming up. Up to this point we had seen very little fish, or plant life, and were hoping that once the wall was reached we would be luckier. We found an anchor buried in the sand, not as old as our previous find, but a find none-the-less.

There were Johnny, Bazza and myself clustering around the old relic, we indicated to Johnny to inflate his fenzey, we will say no more except that Johnny's gestures under water are most emphatic and easily understood. So we swam it up to the surface, watched by a curious old wife (fish) from the edge of our visibility. At the surface we signalled the boats and Dave hauled our prize aboard in fine style. We discovered that Dave in his own inimitable fashion had managed to drop Carey's weight belt overboard. So down again, but alas to no avail and another piece of VSAG equipment bites the sand.

The weather was becoming calmer so after lunching at Sorrento we headed out for a ski, once again we found that Dave was reluctant to get wet. The same hardy few entered the water, plus Chris Truscott who gets better every time he gets up, and to do it without a wet suit, tough, just like his dad. The day ended with the sea getting smoother and smoother and as the sun set in the west we headed home.

BRIAN LYNCH

SKATER'S WALTZ

Thursday, the 19th was our night for taking to the ice at St. Moritz rink at St. Kilda. It turned out that there were 13 of us including Samantha $T_{\rm r}$ uscott, and considering how cold the ice was it was a warm old evening.

The early stars were Justin and Johnny but we were all over-shadowed by Fritz when he arrived, wheeling and tearing about all over the rink. Bazza managed very well with Chris and Craig alternately holding him up and then pulling him down, and in fact the award for the best newcomer must go to Chris who gamely managed circuit after circuit on the ice, and runner-up Craig who managed to get round hanging on grimly to the side. He was nearly outdone by a tiny six year old who couldn't even stand up on the skates off the ice, and was slipping and sliding all round the edge of the ice. When taken

in hand by our old friend Argus who had turned up by then, this little fellow asked as to whether or not he'd make it in ten year's time - I believe the reply as "if you live that long", which to judge by his antics was doubtful.

However, on with the plot, Don & Irene McBean ambled around together and Maree toured the ice in company with Justin, Johnny and myself and then we all did wheelies in the centre, before I headed off home with Bazza. My last recollection of the night is seeing D.J. sliding into the fence on his rear after dicing with death and me near the end. It just remains for me to mention our cheer squad of Shirley. Maree and Samantha before ice skate off.

BRIAN LYNCH

About the earliest wreck known off Australia, apart from the Western Australian Dutch wrecks and the British "Tryal", and "H.M.S. Pandora" (1791) is that of the "Sydney Cove", a ship dispatched from Bengal with speculation cargo to the newly founded settlement at Botany Bay by the merchant house of Campbell, Clarke & Co. on the 10/11/1796.

The captain, an 80 year old Scotsman named Guy Hamilton noted in his report that only a month after leavong Bengal, in latitude 15° 30' south, a heavy gale was encountered and from then on it increased until towards the middle of January, when a timber or plank became sprung in an inaccessible part under the bow and the hull commenced leaking at the rate of 6 to 8 inches of water per hour. A few days later a thrummed sail was made and manoeuvred over the leak. (A thrummed sail was a large piece of sail cloth with rope, twine, wool and/or other material sewn into the cloth in order to make the equivalent of an area of carpet, but with a deep pile of several inches. If such a sail is drawn over a leak or small hole, water pressure tends to jam the material against and into the hull, thus blocking any leaks.)

Usually such a device worked quite well. In this case however the gales worsened, the sails blew out, the second mate was blown overboard and lost, the thrummed sail partially unseated and the ship labored so much that the leak worsened. Round the clock pumping only managed to steady the water inflow till a constant 4 feet of water stayed in the well. This small gain however was at the cost of three of the Lascar crew dropping dead at the pumps and a nearly exhausted crew. Obviously they could not continue so some of the ship's hands were taken from the pumps and set to making

another thrummed sail.

By the time this sail was finished the leakage rate was 12 inches per hour. The new fothering reduced it to eight and the ship continued. In the next few days as the ship rounded the southern tip of Tasmania, the gale developed into a hurrican, seas so swept the deck that no-one could work the pumps, a new leak developed and control of the boat was almost lost. decided to try and shelter in the Furneaux Group about 90 miles N.W., which had been discovered by Tobias Furneaux about 20 years before. The ship headed for this place and by throwing much of the cargo overboard and making every exertion to keep the leak under, a sheltered island was finally reached and on the 8/2/1797 the ship was run ashore in 19 ft. of water on a sandy bottom between Preservation and Rum Islands. On 27/2/1797 the longboat was dispatched to Port Jackson with seventeen men, that is, the chief mate, the supercargo and the best of the crew. The boat was wrecked near Lakes Entrance on 11/3/1797 and by the 15/5/1797 contact with the N.S.W. settlement had been made. Only 3 of the seventeen survived this trip.

Help in the form of two boats, the 25 ton "Francis" and the "Eliza", a decked longboat, was dispatched to Preservation Island. Upon being rescued, Hamilton reported that a few weeks after the wreck the hull had disappeared and very little had been salvaged. Half a dozen had died on the island and of the survivors who boarded the "Eliza" no more was heard, as that boat disappeared without trace on the return voyage. Altogether of a total complement of about 55 people, over 45 died on the voyage, wreck or in the subsequent rescue or just afterwards.

Little is known of the "Sydney Cove" itself. It had at least 2 decks, carried a crew of 53 and 2 passengers, measured at least 19 feet from the keel to the upper deck, and carried a "speculation" cargo of 4500 gallons of rum, brandy, wine, rice, crockery and porcelain, cloth, silk, tar, a wagon, several horses and a cow, soap and candles and generally whatever the East Indian Company hoped to sell to a new colony with no secondary industry

whatsoever.

The beginning of September saw several Victorian Sub-Aqua Group members winging in over Preservation Island to land on what must be one of the best camouflaged airstrips in the world. Even at ground level it looks like there isn't one there.

After five minutes setting up camp and half an hour's walk to the probably wreck-site a great week's diving commenced.

This was the second such outing to this island in a year and it might as well be said straight off, no wreck was found. is being arranged however, because in not finding the wreck in the area searched, the people concerned have reduced the remaining possible site areas to a relatively small one offshore. As well as this, material, mostly fragmentary, has been found in several areas and all these pieces tend to point one way, out to deeper water.

Preservation island itself is the type of place one could spend weeks on - about 13 miles long, 2 mile wide, extremely rugged being covered with enormous rocks, scrub and sand dunes, full of wild life, such as Cape Barren Geese, Quail, Ducks, Tasmanian Black Tiger snakes, Albatros and other sea birds. Over the summer period thousands of Mutton Birds arrive and breed in their underground burrows and these with scrub Kangaroos and Wombats were the staple diet of the survivors of the shipwreck in the six months period they lived there in 1797.

Over the island are scattered remains of stone buildings, some built by the "Sydney Cove" people, and others by James Munro, the notorious "King of the Straits Man", a reputed pirate and wrecker who lived on the island for about 30 years at the beginning of the 19th Down the south end of the island can be seen a well dug by Munro over a 100 years ago, about an acre of parsley planted at the same time and between two enormous rock groups overlooking the beach between Preservation and Rum Islands, is the site on which the Sydney ·Cove survivors camped. Around this area are hundreds of fragments of hand paste Chinese porcelain bowls, plates and jars, rust-red Indian earthenware, hand forged bronze nails, clay pipe stems, burnt muttonbird bones and shell fish, rotten wood coated with pitch, broken gin and brandy bottles made in Holland and England in the 1700's and similar material.

Nothing could be taken from the island, because of an agreement with the owner, but offshore, when one's attention wasn't distracted by shoals of salmon, enormous flathead, cuttlefish and other totally unafraid species of fish, it was relatively easy to locate fragments of porcelain, earthenware and black bottle glass, a lignum vitae pulley sheave, a bronze fish hook, clay pipe stems and a bowl, a bronze coin made in Ceylon between 1789 and 1790, a couple of pieces of waterworn pitch or tar and an iron spike which was in reality only a cast of the original metal and which fell apart before it could be preserved.

About 40 hours diving were clocked up altogether in the numerous little bays around the island and around the south end and although the best visibility was only about 40 ft. with an average of 20. it was definitely one of the best week's diving ever enjoyed by the members participating.

"FATHOMS"

Registered at the G.P.O.

MELIBOURNE for transmission
by post as a periodical.

Blen WAVERLEY. 315

Postage Paid HAWTHORN, Vio 3122

Cat. B

DON'S CHILL