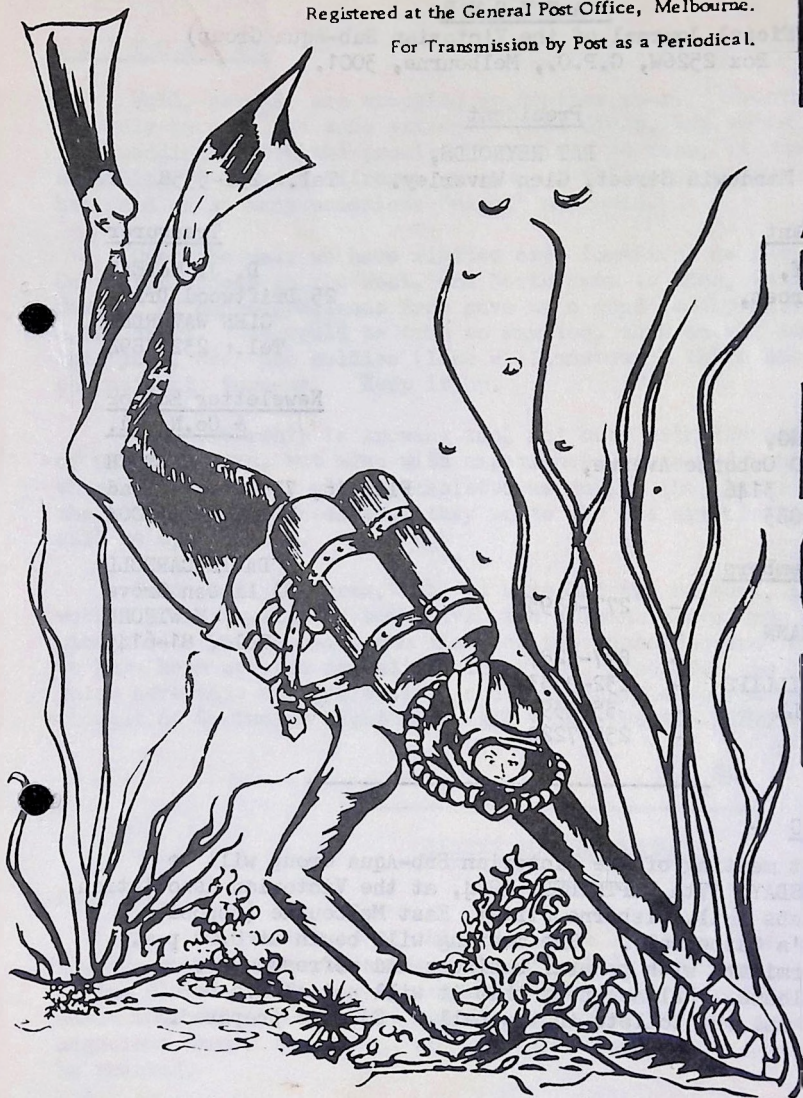


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FATHOMS



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, 17th SEPTEMBER, 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 -

Well, here we are wrapping up another year. Eventful because not only have we had some extremely good dives, but we've also had four weddings, with the promise of a fifth to come, it must be something to do with nitrogen narcosis I think, or as our friend Argus has said on so many occasions "niges" narcosis.

Over the year we have visited dive locations as far apart as Carpenters Rocks in the West, and North East to Eden, whilst at Easter, of course, Wilsons Prom gave us a good family holiday, plus a few crays. It would be true to say too, that on all our dives this year, even the coldies (like Williamstown), there has been an enthusiastic turn-up. Keep it up.

Our membership is growing too, not only with the addition of novice divers, but also with experienced, seasoned campaigners, whose knowledge has greatly assisted us during the latter part of the year. I also hear that they write the odd article too, which will be appreciated.

Throughout the year, too, we have had two editors, which has worked pretty well, and both David and I thank all of you for the nice things you've said, and also for the "constructive" criticism we have been offered as well. Thank you, also, for the articles which have made our job easier, and I'll just leave you with this thought as Confucius might have said - TWO EDS ARE BETTER THAN ONE.

Ed.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

As secretary of this fine club I get to read all the inwards correspondence, amongst which include the newsletters of other diving clubs. Without any intention of being patronizing, I must admit that FATHOMS has more reading matter in it than other club magazines that I have seen, and you and your contributions are to be thanked.

.../3

Letter to the Editor (Cont'd.)

However, I would like to offer some suggestions. For some time now there has been a lack of any well informed material concerning the art of diving, the use of equipment, the discussion of safety procedures, etc. The club magazine is a ready tool to communicate useful information and we do not appear to be making best use of it.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN GOULDING

FUTURE OUTINGS

SUNDAY, - Manta Board Trip. Flinders Pier, 10 a.m.
15th SEPTEMBER Dive Capt. - Dave Moore.

TUESDAY,
17th SEPTEMBER - A.G.M. Youth Clubs Hall.

THURSDAY, - Ice Skating, St. Moritz - 8 p.m.
19th SEPTEMBER Skate Captain - Marg Phillips

SUNDAY, - Snow Trip, Mt. Buller. 1 Day only.
22nd SEPTEMBER Ski captain - Terry Smith.

WEDNESDAY, - Loch Ard Briefing - Brian Lynch's place,
25th SEPTEMBER 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, - Loch Ard Dive.
27th SEPTEMBER Dive captain - Brian Lynch.

SUNDAY, - Crawfish Rock, Hastings, 10 a.m.
13th OCTOBER Dive captain - Terry Smith.

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

WEEKEND, 26/27 OCTOBER. Ski-Trip (Water) John Goulding.

SATURDAY, - Annual Tennis Party - Justin's.
9th NOVEMBER

SATURDAY, - Pool Party. Bill Gray's
7th DECEMBER

WEEKEND, 14/15 DECEMBER. Mt. Buller. Terry Smith.

COMMITTEE NEWS

1. It was decided at the last meeting that possibly we, as a club, were not catering for everyone with our dive venues and with our social outings. Since we also have noticed that at meetings people are perhaps too shy to voice opinions, we have decided to produce a questionnaire to discover how all of us can get the best out of our club. This will be produced and circulated with our next issue of FATHOMS, so sharpen up your minds and your pencils.
2. We also would like to apologise to Ron Coomber for the apparent lack of support for his first aid course. Unfortunately there was a misunderstanding about dates, and poor old Ron had to drink all the beer himself too; but seriously we are sorry, and as this is an important aspect of our sport whereas you will see from the following article, danger is ever present, Ron will be beginning his lectures after club meetings at the Youth Clubs Hall.
3. The following article is taken from a provisional report on diving deaths in Australian waters in 1973 by Douglas G. Walker, M.B., Ch.B, in this report he stresses the importance of good training and good planning, and the unfortunate aspect of the DAIS/NAID Syndrome so dangerously common in "experienced" divers. Cases from this report will be reproduced in our magazine throughout the following year. By the way, the DAIS/NAID bit stands for: "DO AS I SAY, NOT AS I DO". Read on:-

Case SC1 Newly trained and certificated and with his recently bought-at-auction tanks and demand valve, this 31 year old diver was undertaking his first sea dive in company of two more experienced divers. They regarded him as competent, an opinion not endorsed by the dive shop owner who watched how he handled his equipment while getting his tanks refilled after a successful morning dive. One of the companions claimed, at the subsequent inquest, to have been an instructor at a large European club, to have dived frequently to 300 feet and to have attended the same diving school as the victim. Despite this wealth of claimed experience, he accepted as a diving buddy someone with tied on weight belt and tank harness without quick-release fastenings. He also was diving without a lifejacket, a common European requirement. These were significant facts.

The chosen entry-exit point for the afternoon dive was from smooth, slightly sloping, algae-covered rocks free from barnacles. They were said not to be particularly slippery. Adjacent water was 12 feet deep, the sea calm and a surge of 2 or 3 feet was present over the rocks. The three divers started together but separation

Committee News (Cont'd.)

occurred early, though the victim's absence was not initially noticed. He swam back to the entry area, there attracting the attention of his wife to have his photo taking standing on a rock, in chest high water. While she adjusted the camera after this, he submerged. About this time his companions noticed his absence and started to seek him, during which search they asked his wife for information. He was found in the area where he had been photographed, near to shore. His mask was off and his regulator was hanging free. Rescue proved difficult as the body was heavy and clumsy in full equipment, which they were unable to remove and dare not attempt to cut lest they injure him. With help from shore he was landed on the rocks, the weight belt and backpack were cut off and E.A.R. and E.C.C. commenced. Underwater time was possibly 10 minutes and it was a further appreciable time before respiration was re-established: consciousness was not regained then or later in the further 14 days he spent under intensive care before expiring from the Cerebral anoxic damage and pneumonic changed. Subsequent check showed no fault in the air supply equipment.

This incident shows the dangers of the 3-buddy group, which de facto becomes a no-buddy dive for someone unless the divers are unusually well motivated towards safety. It shows the necessity of a pre-dive check of your own and your buddy's full equipment for full tank which is turned on, lifejacket, snorkel, quick releases on all the equipment (and note the type of fastenings), agreement over dive leader, etc. never dive twice with someone who fails to surface and wait there after separation occurs. Although the suggestion was made that the drowning followed immersion/aspiration of vomit or immersion/hit head on rock, sudden immersion in a relatively calm, shallow portion of the ocean should not be fatal, especially if buddies are near and the kit is easily removable. Surface water deaths are typical of the inexperienced diver.

There we are, are you a DAIS/NAID diver, and are you safe to dive with. Although the buddy system means that you look after your mate, your first responsibility to that buddy, is to make sure of yourself and your own equipment. You cannot look after anyone else if you cannot look after yourself first, and remember too that merely being in the same part of the ocean does not constitute being buddied up. Water is an alien environment, and if you do not obey the rules, you stand a good chance of being the late Mr. Diver.

ED.

DIVER'S DISTRESS SIGNAL

By Ralph M. Singer

A simple plastic whistle - the kind that both policemen and children use - might be the answer for divers in distress. A group of Los Angeles, Calif., divers (L.A. Co. instructors, NAUI instructors and L.A. City Lifeguard Diving Teams) tested the whistle against all other popular forms of distress signal and found the whistle to be the most practical, adequate and unmistakable signal there is.

The human voice, they found, is not economical from the standpoint of distance-to-energy output. Flares, rockets and other forms of pyrotechnics could be effective but they are not practical. "The classical arm extended over the head routine is laughable at best," the group found. It takes a tremendous amount of energy to maintain the position, and the current trend toward buoyancy compensators with large oral inflators makes this signal confusing. Prior to descent, the diver normally extends the oral inflator over his head in order to drain the air from it. This move could be mistaken for the distress signal.

A plastic whistle, on the other hand, is universally understood and yet not dependent on language, is sufficiently powerful so it travels a good distance, and can be assimilated into the diver's equipment without any major changes. The group tested the whistles under a number of conditions - big surf, small surf, offshore winds, on-shore winds, foggy days as well as clear days - and is certain of its ease of operation and effectiveness.

Since those tests were completed, the Council for National Aquatic Co-operation and the National Surf Life Saving Association have both endorsed the idea and have agreed to discourage the use of whistles around the water for any other purpose. It is hoped that the plastic whistle will gain universal use and acceptance as a simple, effective lifesaving tool.

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WILLIAMSTOWN - 18/8/74. WRECK OF THE CAPE VERDE

We awoke to a cold bleak day and might add we felt about the same, anyway we set off for Willy, and arrived at the Bell tower at 9.50 a.m. We were surprised to find that we were the only ones there. (We being June and myself).

We sat in the car, with the windows wound right up, tight, and watched the sea-gulls trying to stand up in the wind for about 15 minutes. Then another brave soul arrived, Peter Smith 1, and about 10.30, John G., Marie and Dave Carroll with Brian (Chicken) Lynch bringing up the rear.

So after much humming and aahing, we did a quick 1.2.3 into our gear, and before we could change our minds, we hit the water. After the initial shock, it wasn't all that c-c-cold, and surprisingly enough with all the wind it was not that choppy, and visibility was reasonably good.

We spent about 30 to 45 mins. doing some deep 5 ft. snorkelling with D.C. finding a china spoon, and a clay pipe bowl. John G. finding a rusty old gear box bit, and me, myself, found a broken old bottle, a handle of a china teapot, and finally the neck of an earthenware jar.

Then it was home James, and hot drinks all around.

BOB (WHO'S HE) SCOTT.

.. .. .

F E N Z Y F R E N Z Y

When Rob Adamson told me he was going overseas I made him an offer which he could not refuse. In return for the loan of his Fenzy, I would supply him the names of all the Counts, Countesses and Counterfeits in Lapland.

So the deal being consumated I grabbed Lynchy and headed down to the Cerberus one Sunday morning to try it out.

The Cerberus dive can either be a good one or can be "just another walk in the fog". This particular day it was

very mediocre. Visibility was about 6 feet but it gave us an opportunity to swim out, and poke around the old ship.

The FENZY is a wonderful object d'art, but its so bulky compared with my little C.O.2 SCUBAPRO. Having weighted myself so I'd sink in concrete I played with the buoyancy compensating valve and after a few ups and downs achieved the desired balance.

The Fenzy is not a difficult vest to operate, but one should really understand its features before going on deep dives. I would even suggest that the first lesson with a fenzy should be with snorkel only, because when you get lift from a fenzy, you sure go up in the world.

Having acquired a little skill in its use, Brian and I put Maree in the water and took her on a snorkel swim around the area. Its amazing what these girls will do to attract attention. The masses of kids on the pier were staggered to see doivers but their cries of "Hey Mum, look at the lady doiver" had us all laughing.

JOHN GOULDING

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THE CUCKOO

Once again we descended upon the Cuckoo for our annual club dinner, or should it be ascended upon, since round about the car park the oxygen grows a little thin. Anyhow on Friday, 23rd August, we occupied quite a great deal of the ground floor area, and that was only Ian and Harvey. Seriously, though, there was an excellent turn-out from members and friends, and the evening was enjoyed by all.

Dave Carroll entertained us all with some fine Gaelic dancing but for once he was nicely kept in check by Betty, in fact some of us thought that Dave was the Cabaret, but later on the Tyrolleans capped Dave's show with some fine singing and yodelling, and some unusual instruments.

The food was good and plentiful, and everyone seemed to pay a lot of visits to the buffets, and although they did the

The Cuckoo (Cont'd.)

amounts of food on display never seemed to diminish. The dance floor stretched around a huge fireplace, and from some of the dancing I saw there was certainly a lot of smoke to be taken up the chimney. After the cabaret, poor old Chubby was heard to complain that there had been no beer drinking contest, and he had been saving himself, too.

The evening finished all too soon however, and we all wended our separate ways home. Some of us stopping "en route" at Harvey's Ringwood home for a night cap, or Scout hat, whichever way you looked at it. Those present are far too numerous to name, so I'll just say that we were all there, with a few exceptions.

BRIAN LYNCH

.. .. .

Occasion: Pat and Dave's wedding.
 Venue: St. Paul's Church of England.
 Time: 4.30pm
 When: August 17, 1974.

On the above date, at the above place and at the above time Johnny, Maree, Justin and Shirley, Bazza and Marie, Pat and Annette, Dave Carroll, Terry and Judy, Adrian and Judy, Keith and Di, Brian and Di, Harvey and Jenny, all gathered at the Church and I must say all looked very resplendent in dinner suits, long dresses and hair do's, all for the occasion of seeing Pat and Dave declared Man and Wife. After the ceremony we gathered outside for the usual photo taking, but it being so cold and all, we all dived for our respective cars and drove like man to the Sundowner Motel for the reception, and of course the usual one or two drinks. We had all we wished for eats, drinks, etc. and I hear of a rumour that Harve thought the prawns were rather good!! Having imbibed in one or two drinks, the formal part of the occasion arrived, with the usual speech or two, then the music started so we all hopped up and danced a jig or two. It was nigh on 10.30 p.m. when the time arrived

to see the Bride and Groom off for their honeymoon, so after much advice to both concerned and our best wishes, off they drove into the night, probably glad to see the last of us - for a while at any rate. A certain chick, or diver's moll, whichever you prefer, caught the bride's posey, so watch out to a certain diver, you may be the next, eh! We then went our respective ways to both 'kick on' and flake until some ungodly hour, for some of us at any rate.

It was a lovely day, so to Pat and Dave, from us all, our very best wishes for now and the future.

Justin's financier,
SEIRL.

.. .. .

THE PINNACLES REVISITED 1/9/74

Who in their right minds would get up out of a nice warm bed at some ungodly hour of the morning and travel about 100 miles to some Godforesaken little fishing village and there to team up with other equally silly b.....s and jump into a fishing boat and chug slowly out into the deep blue yonder and there to don a wet suit and tumble happily over the side onto what must be one of the most fan-bloody-tastic dives around?

Well, we would, and we did, last Sunday, the 1st (Fathers' Day), and as usual the same old ratbags turned up, bright, sober (?) and raring to go at 9 a.m. That's when the Dive captain, one Harvey J. Allen, affectionately known as "Harve, you B.....", told us the boat wasn't leaving till 10 a.m. so we could all go back to sleep.

Finally, over a dead flat sea we headed out up the channel and out into deep water. After some expert seamanship by Stan Watts, ably assisted by his depth sounder, the pick went over the side right on top of the Pinnacles. Then came the usual mad scramble to kit up the first group of divers. Then all was ready and the first group was over and under. After about five minutes, two divers came up, one with reg. failure and the other to report on low visibility. Funny though, no one was put off by this report and the despatch of divers continued without any further hitch apart from one unfortunate incident when two divers got a bit eager and went over the side together or should I say one on top of the other.

The Pinnacles Revisited (Cont'd.)

Luckily, no injuries. At last everyone had dived except for Harve and his mad buddy. So over they went and down to the bottom at 120ft. Alas and alack, visibility was down to about 20ft to 30ft. due no doubt to the poor weather conditions over the preceding week. Not to worry, you can't win them all and it was still a great dive. We cut it a bit short, being sneaky b...., and surfaced after 10 mins. or so. Once back on the boat and after a quick head count to make sure all were aboard we upped anchor and headed inshore a bit to another drop off to try for a few abalone. About half the crew went over again and disappeared into slightly better visibility. Bazza, of course, after that elusive cray. Harve and I chased and managed to subdue about a dozen abalone which took great courage, of course!

Time, that great killer of good diving, finally caught up with us and it was back to San Remo for a late lunch and the usual post mortem, result of which was that everyone reckoned it was a great dive, and thanks to Stan Watts for his boat and Harve for taking on that difficult job of Dive Captain.

Now for a list of those that had a good dive and those that didn't. Those that did:-

Ringwood Underwater Group -

Ron Sweetman, Ken Thurmon, Ian Buck, Graham Smith, Paul Hardie, Jeff Barnes, Alex Van Veen, Ray Mathews, Alan Lloyd.

Bass Strait - Andrew Benson and Jay Cody.

V.S.A.G. - Barry Truscott, Ron Coomba, Brian Lynch, Bob Scott, Terry Smith, Harvey Allen, Noel Lees, Justin Liddy, John Goulding.

Those that didn't.....Justin Liddy.

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F L O T S A M and J E T S O M

It's interesting to note that some of our contributors to this magazine are attaining widespread recognition. In a recent issue of the Mt. Gambier's Skin Diving Club Newsletter, there appeared an article from Fathoms by John Goulding on Bathtub diving. John, who takes a bath once every 3 months, whether he needs it or not, claims that he is delighted that interstate bodies have recognised that he has reached his peak of diving ability. However, he states that it is lonely to tub dive on his own and is eager to interview suitable buddies with a view to stirring up some bubbles.

Young man about town; Rom Adamson, has departed our shores for a quick flip to England and the Continent. Rob's an accountant-auditor by trade and seems to have a well balanced and planned mind. However, he must have been feeling will in the Red when he missed his Qantas Jet at Melbourne and had to leave 2 days later.

Whilst talking about personalities, we regret the passing-on of divers moll Pat Creffield. On 17th August, she and Dave Moore took the big plunge into matrimony. Naturally we wish them all the best and look forward to their return to the diving scene.

The old man of the sea; Lynchy, looking younger than ever, has had another birthday and insists that he'll be around for another few years.

On Sunday, 18th August, Dave Farroll got his big chance to be dive captain again. This time Dave led us to his old stampign ground out at Williamstown. Those suffering from sheer madness were Dave, naturally, Bob Scott, Pete Smith and John Goulding.

Williamstown is an interesting snorkel dive but the water is so cold that one really needs to be soft in the head to enter the water. As for Brian Lynch and me; well we stayed high and dry.

Anybody interested in old warships should drop down to South Wharf near Spencer St. Bridge and visit the Maritime Museum.

Flotsam & Jetsam (Cont'd.)

At present a World War 2 minesweeper is being refitted and is open for inspection, on weekends. Just alongside is the Polly Woodside and further down the wharf is the Straitsman.

The Maritime Museum has plans to restore the Cerberus, however, having dived on this hulk recently, I think its a bit too much to hope for. Still its a great idea and it could be done with adequate finance, and a lot of guys lifting at the stern.

What better way to start off Spring than to go for a dive on the Pinnacles off San Remo.

In conjunction with the Ringwood Underwater Group, we hired Stan Watts and his boat for the morning and went on another fantastic fairyland dive. Stan's a remarkable sort of character and has the ability to drop an anchor down 50 feet of water onto a 3 foot wide ridge in the middle of Bass Strait. Modest Stan admits that its "All done with mirrors". Now we reckon we've got some keen and skilled boatmen in VSAG but you ought to see this guy park his boat SIDEWAYS.

The annual dinner at The Cuckoo was held on 23rd August. The evening was extremely well attended and it was good to see everyone mixing it together. Let's hope that the next two major social outings, i.e. the Tennis party and Pool Party, are equally as popular.

In these days of rising prices, continual strikes, shortages of goods and increasing inflation one would be wise to remember this quote when jumping from great heights.

"Blessed is he who expecteth nothing, for he shall never be disappointed".

CARNA HORKS

"FATHOMS"

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