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VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FATHOMS

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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, 15th APRIL, 1975, 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.

EDITORIAL

The first thing I must do in this issue is to apologize for two failures in the past two months. The first failure was the very late issue of the February issue of "Fathoms", and the second failure the total absence of the March issue. I won't try to offer any excuses for our falling down on the job but we will try to make up for it in the future.

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MEDICALS

There is no record of these people holding current medical certificates. If they cannot produce such certificates (or proof of their having been recently medically examined as the club constitution requires) by the end of May, then they will not be allowed to dive with the club from that date until a new medical certificate is forthcoming.

H. ALLEN	N. KNIGHT	P. REYNOLDS
R. ADAMSON	J. LIDDY	M. RICHARDSON
P. ATTWOOD	F. LOTNER	G. RYAN
P. BEECHER	J. MARSHALL	P. SMITH
R. COADE	D. MOORE	K. STEWART
I. COCKERELL	P. MATTHEWS	M. SYNON
F. COUSTLEY	A. NEUMANN	R. SCOTT
A. CUTTS	J. NOONAN	P. SIER
B. DEGENHARDT	R. PARKER	J. TAUBE
J. GOULDING	P. PARTRIDGE	T. TIPPING
W. JANSEN	P. RAINBOW	B. TRUSCOTT

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

- 13th APRIL - Flinders Pier, 9.30 a.m.  
Dive Captain - Brian Lynch
- 27th APRIL - Tube Trip  
Organiser - Justin Liddy
- 4th MAY - Hollyhead Dive. Meet Sorrento Jetty.  
Dive Captain - Barry Truscott
- 11th MAY - Sierra Vedada. 9 a.m. meet London Bridge.  
Dive Captain - Brian Lynch.
- 17/18th MAY - Category 3 C.D.A.A. Testing at Mt. Gambier
- 20th MAY - 8 p.m. General Meeting. V.A.Y.C. Hall
- FRIDAY, - Fancy Dress Party at  
23rd MAY 8 Penang Street. J. Liddy
- 25th MAY - Pinnacles Dive, San Remo.  
Dive Captain - Harvey Allen.
- LONG WEEKEND - Water Ski Weekend - Dave Moore  
14-15-16th and Eden - Dave Carroll
- JUNE
- FRIDAY, - Annual Dinner. "Naughty Nineties"  
20th JUNE Organiser - Dave Moore

5th February, 1975

9 Elouera Street,  
RIVERSIDE, TAS. 7250

Dear V.S.A.G.,

I have promised it in the past but I did not come to it: I would report on my diving experiences in Tasmania. Since the beginning of the year, I have been diving quite a few times.

The first of the two dives was at Hebe Reef. This reef is located at the mouth of the Tamar River and has claimed several ships. One of them is of course the Hebe, after which the reef is called (1808). Others are the Phillip Oakden (1851) and the Asterope (1883). The most recent one apparent is the ferry the Dalrymple, but about that later.

We were to dive with the five of us: Ken, Tom, Colin, David and myself. Ken, David and I were to go in Ken's 16-footer off-shore aluminium dinghy, Tom and Colin went in Tom's Hamilton Jet and Holden V-8 powered 18 foot half cabin cruiser.

We left extremely early and it was going to be a fine day. The river was smooth and so was the sea. After arriving at the ramp of Low Head, we donned our wet suits and put the tanks on board. Ken, David and I were ready first and headed straight for the reef. Tom had mounted a new depth recorder and wanted to try that out and would join us later. The diving depth at the reef would be between 12 and 20 ft. David is not a Scuba diver, he was to go spear fishing. Ken had 3 tanks, I had 2 tanks.

Ken has dived the reef on many occasions and has a tremendous experience in finding bits and pieces. The following is probably horrifying to safety conscious people: Ken went overboard and disappeared! I knew that the concept of diving with a buddy is known here but not always accepted as necessary, but this still shocked me a bit. However, I came to dive and did (although it frightens me) the same.

The water was clear, visibility at least 30ft. may be 40 ft. For my untrained eyes it was difficult to see that we were on the site of a wreck, but I found some items, like a wheel of a caster. Part of Ken's harvest was an undamaged bottle. He also found a milk jug, which he broke when he tried to pry it out of the bottom.

David went spear fishing and was quite successful. Later on Ken also went for a feed of fish. Later in the morning I took Ken on tow. Moving the boat at a speed of a boat 3 or 4 knots, Ken was towed with ski rope to examine the bottom. We finally finished up at the light of Hebe Reef. Close to this light we found a load of bricks, some burnt planking and the steel keel. I was told that this was the wreck of the ferry the Dalrymple. Apparently the last owner could not sell the boat and loaded it with bricks, brought it to Hebe Reef, burnt it and there it sank.

When we decided to return, the wind came up and visibility reduced slightly.

There is a tail to this tale: The following day I was to go to Melbourne for business. My plane left at 7.00 a.m. However, the Sunday before was that exhaustive that I only woke up at 8.30 a.m.!

My last dive was last Sunday. This time at Rocky Cape, about 20 miles west of Wynyard. The wreck to dive for was the steamer Southern Cross, which sank there in 1889. Depth was about 25 to 40ft. I was told. Ken was the organizer. We would pick Neil up in Deloraine and Frank would get us a boat from Burnie. Frank knew the exact location of the wreck.

The boat was a Savage Pacific with an 85hp Evinrude outboard motor. The ramp at Rocky Cape is a piece of sand between the rocks and is excellent for the purpose.

We left Launceston at about 5.30a.m. and after a stop in Deloraine to meet Neil and Jill (his wife) we pushed on. Neil had to do some business in Devonport and followed us in his own car. He and Jill would meet us again at Rocky Cape, where we were also to meet Frank. The wind was South-West and the sea was choppy at 8 a.m. At 8.30a.m. Frank and the boat owner, John, arrived. We loaded the tanks in the boat (3 for Ken, 2 for Neil and 2 for me, Frank did not dive this day) and donned our diving gear. The wind slowed down, the white horses disappeared and Ken and Neil went over the side one after the other in a different direction. We could almost see the bottom, so viz. was about 50 ft.

Before I could jump in (yes, again virtually diving on my own), Frank told me that we were on the wrong spot. John started the motor, which caused Ken to surface. We pulled him on board and then started to look for Neil. It took some time before he surfaced and pulled him on board.

The next location was wrong, too. This time I also went overboard to look around and there was definitely no wreck. So Ken decided that we would tow him around and after about 15 minutes he had located the wreck, exactly in the middle between the two spots we had dived before.

There was a rip of about 1 knot and although the steel plates were covered with growth, even I would recognise this wreck. There was not much to find, some steel cable, badly corroded, the bow stem, all large things. Of course Ken found something worthwhile, a port hole. It took him almost a full tank to pry it off the steel plate. After that, Ken and I (together this time) went for crayfish. There should be some, but it was not ideal cray country. We found a 5 and a 4 pounder, which were given to John and Max, who refused money to cover the cost of fuel.

As you can see, it is good diving along the north coast of Tasmania. But I cannot understand that, although safety in diving

is taught by the club, it is not pursued in diving. Knowing that if I want to dive I must count on virtually diving alone, I choose my dives (shallow water, which gives a false sense of security) and I do not dive often.

There is not much point now to try to find a permanent buddy for two reasons: the regular divers do not care about diving with buddies and I will probably move to Hobart in about 4 or 5 months time.

On the 16th February, 1975, the Launceston Sub Aqua Club organised a Club Dive. We went to Beechford, a township of holiday shacks, 9 kilometres north of Lefroy. (Do you know where that is?).

There were seven boats, six four wheel drives (to bring the boats onto the beach and into the water) and the incredible number of 21 divers. The weather was superb, the sea had some swell, but no chop. We were to go to a small island named Barren Joey. I cannot find this island in the Australia Pilot Volume II, but the description and location of the Tenth Islet on page 201 fits. The Pilot only does not mention this school of seals that lives on the island. There were several hundreds of them.

We arrived early and anchored at about 9 a.m. The un was not yet high enough to provide sufficient light to take photographs. However, most of the divers donned immediately their tanks and went overboard. It was quite incredible. As soon as we arrived the seals came into the water and as long as we swam around they stayed at a safe distance. Some of them approached us very near, but always from the back.

The picture changed, however, if you let yourself settle on the bottom which was richly overgrown with kelp. Within seconds the seals approached. They came easily within touching distance but they never allowed you to touch them. They are very curious and several seals have a different way of approach. Some of them did a head stand with their heads level with ours, others crept up over the bottom, one big bull charged us on top speed but veered away when he was within a foot distance. This was a bit nerve-wracking! From the rear they approached us within inches and there were that many that wherever we looked, we saw seals. Visibility was about 50ft. We used one tank fill and two rolls of films.

After this dive we returned to Beechford. We had a barbecue lunch while the tanks were being refilled on the club's compressors. Some of the members left after the barbecue, but most of us went out for another dive. That day I had buddied up with Ken, who owns a 16ft. aluminium off shore runabout. We went to Five Mile Bluff to dive

for cray. There was a tidal current, but vizability was even better than in the morning. The dive was short. This because of air consumption. You see, it takes quite some effort to catch 6 and 8 pounders and to swim with two bags of cray against the current. Altogether we caught 10 fine species and as we started this dive going up stream, we had a reasonably easy swim back to the boat.

It is now about one week later and the crays are still not polished off. It will take a while before I like eating cray again!

The L.S.A.C. will now also start to publish a monthly magazine. Yesterday a name was chosen. If it meets general approval, it will be called "Mouth Piece".

Talking about magazines, when will the next "Fathoms" appear? (Sorry Adri, read editorial!)

I expect that the VSAG will have had some more terrific dives (how was the dive to the Loch Ard? Any good?). I am looking forward to the next copy of Fathoms. Please give my regards to everybody and I wish all of you good diving!

ADRI.

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WILSON'S PROM 1975

Typical Easter for V.S.A.G. It rained a lot and diving was only fair to R.S.

There's no truth in the rumour that Frank Derkson rolled his car so that V.S.A.G. could have a wreck to dive on.

Speaking of wrecks, who invited Smith and Liddy.

Who's this Normie character anyway?

You've all heard of obscene phone calls but what about an obscene tent flap.

How about Bazza's boat going cray hunting..... on it's own.

Even Liddy and Lynch joined Rob in the Big Spit.

Harvey Allen hates Advocaat.

Harvey Allen's wife hates Advocaat, especially in a land rover.

How come Bazza can't catch as many fish as his kids.



Wilson's From 1975 (Cont'd.)

When Bazza holds his own, who's Ruth.

Tony Snushall loves water beds, a whole tent full of water.

Di, Clara and Shirley are sane hikers, they don't run down the b... mountains.

Pete Smith only went hiking among the trees so he could either find a wild bush root or make a trunk call.

Superman Lynch loves his dentist, even though the Aussies lose at soccer, they don't lose their teeth.

How much skin did the amateurs lose on Mt. Bishop.

Trevor didn't get near the Southern Comfort, and the girls were very thankful.

Who said you could fit 2 tons of gear, 4 kids, 1 wife, not to mention little Harve, into a land rover.

Is Dave Moore sick, he got up early at least once.

Max cooks terrific crays but forgets to tell people about it.

How ostentatious can you get?? Not all of us go camping with tables, table cloths, candles, crystal wine goblets and lobster a La Lynch for dinner.....even the surfies were impressed.

Pete and Clara stayed behind for abother hike, or so they said.

Everybody left on the Monday and the Meeniyen Pub will never be the same.

Anybody who is offended by either getting or not getting their name in here should not be too upset.....it's probably due to a mental block on the part of

KING NEPTUNE

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PORTSEA HOLE DIVE

8 a.m. start at Sorrento boat ramp. Weather conditions against boat launching with 15 to 20 knot northerly winds. A new dive location was appointed at Diamond Bay, Sorrento Back Ocean Beach. Leaving Brian to catch stragglers, I escorted remaining divers to dive location. Water conditions were calm with  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour to low tide. First divers entered the water at 9 a.m. With six divers in, Brian turned up with three more. These 3 still looking for a boat dive, asked permission to dive Flinders. With J. Goulding appointed associate D. Captain, they were sent on their way. With three divers left, D.C. and Brian with Trevor snorkelling, we spent over an hour inspecting sea formation, fish life and seeking out crayfish. Maximum depth acquired was 25ft. with visability 30ft plus. Dive completed all divers returned safely and left site by 11.30.

DON J. McBEAN.

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FLOTSAM and JETSAM

Well folks, here we are again. After somewhat of a shaky start to the year, we start again. However, it would be a bit easier if we had a few more contributors to the newsletter. Just write something topical and submit it to Brian Lynch or Dave Carroll. Believe me, you haven't lived till you see your own name in print.

There's a lot to catch up with in this issue. For instance did you know that a well known member from another Melbourne diving club, observed our efforts when trying to find the wreck of the Gooranji. Said well known member was taking bearing readings photographs etc. but all's well, our wreck is safe from foreign hands because not even us with our fancy somar and underwater mobile craft could find it.

The month of January gave excellent visibility in Port Phillip Bay and about 3 good bay dives were held during this period.

The January long weekend saw us once again at Port Campbell; but unlike last year the weather was against us and so the treasures of the "Loch Ard" remained unseen. Being real wreck

fanatics we decided to stage our own mini disaster. This was achieved with the help of Noel Lees' boat and a cast of 3. Once they had achieved a suitable distance from the nearest land fall our three disabled bodied seamen abandoned ship, rather reluctantly after their TURDY craft was capsized by a freak wave.

But all's nearly well that ends well. After much searching most of the gear was found and the boat was then pushed back to shore. I bet Dazza was cursing plastic boats that day!

Also in January we found a new dive spot near the Portsea Quarantine Station. We call it Dave's Hollow - after its founder Dave Moore.

On February 23 we had a dive at Flinders and met a few new chums who came along for the first time. Although we had two boats there was not room for everyone on board, so it was necessary for Dave to make a return trip. By this time however, the weather turned the sea into a raging havoc, but good old Dave and Plastic Boat No. 1 came through on top, much to the relief of all those on board.

On the long weekend in March we returned again to Port Campbell and this time we had some decent diving. On the Sunday some of our more hardy members descended into the very bowels of the earth down a slim line to a tunnel 40 feet below the cliff surface. This tunnel was washed with gentle heaving waves which rolled in to the cliff face and broke up through the scores of little crevices in the land. So there we were, sitting up on the cliff, 60 feet above the sea, talking to our comrades below in the cave, when suddenly, over the top of the cliff came the unmistakable roar of a surging sea. Then there was no time to warn the others below because at that moment the sea let loose with full fury and spilt over the top of the cliff upon the Surface Support Crew. With screams of "Yippee a free shower" and "OOOO, its cccold" we braced ourselves against the rocks and waited for the waters to subside and calmness to return. So all was well again. Oh, yes, I nearly forgot all those who were down the hole were completely flooded and nearly swept out to sea..... On the Monday we dived in Thunder Cave which was a great dive and very ably directed by Alan Cutts.

And in brief we'll give you a run down on Easter.

One of the first to ROLL-IN was Frank Derkson with Pete Oakley and

Clara trailing him and picking up the pieces. Max Synon and family added the touch of affluence by bringing along their caravan. The Liddy Lodge was there with all its colour, due to a slight decoration efforts by members along one wall. Bazza's Cara-boat is just a memory these days for the old chippy's got himself a little continental job. The Allen family Circus arrived on the Friday and so with a few others scattered in the bush it resembled the V.S.A.G. in all its glory.

There's a lot that can be said about Easter but I'm sure others will report on the activities. We'll concentrate on the Easter Awards.

The Cuddly Couple Award goes to Pete Smith and John Goulding who, given a chance, would have loved a couple of cuddles.

The Slowest Moving Creature in Camp Award goes to Frank Derkson who was a good 20 minutes behind the other guys in the descent of Mount Oberson. As a matter of fact Frank turned up only one minute in front of the girls.....

The Champion of Champions Award is shared between Trevor Cowley, Brian Lynch and Pete Smith for rescuing Bazza's Boat when it drifted off during a dive.

The Most Worthwhile Act Award goes to Harvey Allen for using his land rover to pull Bazza's boat out of the water.

The English Literature Award for the best catch-phrase goes to Justin with his prize winning quote "OOOOUGH said NORMIE".

And the Charm Award is shared between Diane, Clara, Shirley, Pam, Pat, Jenny and Marie for their patience in putting up with all us ratbags.

Well folks, that's all,

Yours truly,

I. KRAPALOT

SORRENTO BAY/BACK BEACH DIVE

On Sunday 23 March we all got up early and headed down the Peninsula. When we got to Don McBean's Rye resort we found a message telling us what we already knew, that the bay was too rough and that Don was checking the back beaches. We went on to Sorrento to wait Don's arrival there. Those that arrived were Trevor Cowley, John Marshall and Carey, Johnny G, Pete Oakley, Dave Moore and Pat, Bob Scott and June and D.J. and myself. After waiting some time we realized no one else was coming to Sorrento and so we headed over to Diamond Bay. There it was flat calm.

We dived in pairs, except Dave and Johnny who decided to try Flinders where I am told after engine failure they had a super pier crawl. Meanwhile, back at Diamond Bay, we swam out amongst kelp reaching from the surface down to the rocky bottom. We hadn't swum in this area for a while and it was a very interesting dive, a lot of fish life, a crayfish behind every other rock and plenty of deep dark caves to venture into and the depth never below 30 feet. We remained in for about an hour and then swam in.

We climbed back up the cliff and down the dune the other side. Then we headed off, most for home, Pete Oakley, Diane and myself for Oakleigh (no relation) swimming pool and the cave diving tests.

We arrived there just as the drizzly rain started. We sat down and tried to concentrate on the questions which I finally managed to do. By this time we had been joined by Dave Carroll, Justin and Pete Smith who were also by now wearing earnest expressions and trying to look as if they knew all the answers too.

After handing in my paper to Prof. Harvey J. Allen, I went off to the showers to wash off the sand and then put my very wet, wet suit back on - try that on a chilly day. Then to the pool along with another 20 of some of Melbourne's finest divers. Pete and I were buddied up, the first test was buddy breathing, across the pool with one maskless and then change around and back the other way. Apart from my detaching Pete's tank from his harness we managed this part well.

Then we waited for a while and the next test was a simulation of diving in silted up conditions whilst following a life line. This was done with a blacked out mask. Once that was completed there was only the buoyancy compensator test to go through, not as easy as it seems, especially with no flippers to help you. Then I ran out of

air and that was that. I had enjoyed and afternoon and I hope that both us, the participants and Harvey and Roger Townley, the organisers, got as much out of it as Pete, Dave and I most certainly did, and I hope that the response that they got rewarded them for the hard work they are putting into this project.

BRIAN LYNCH.

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### FLINDERS

Many Sundays ago, the date escapes me for the moment, we arrived at Flinders pier ready to go at around 8.15 a.m. We got out of our car, turned around, saw Trevor and then lo and behold, Dave Moore's trusty vessel came gliding around the corner. So at 9.10 a.m. we were ready to go, hastily suiting up Rob Adamson we set off in two boats much to Bazza's disgust, he arrived just as we headed out.

We motored out and around towards Cape Schank until we stopped inside a small reef which protected us from the ocean swells. Over and down we went, visibility was good. I think that the ocean scenery along these dark cliffs is tremendous. Weed covered hills, with soft green valleys and caves and rock ledges all waiting to be explored. As you get deeper down to 60 or 70 feet and moving away from the cliffs, there are pebble paved roadways deep down weed covered valley.

Rob and I after having had a good look around surfaced with 3 crayfish. We got back into the boat and waited an age for Dave Moore to surface. He finally arrived, holding a large crayfish which was wearing his mask. Because of his new found friend's liking for his mask, Dave had dropped his bag. So it was over the side again for Dave and I. We searched around, no luck, as we moved inshore about midwater suddenly below us just off the bottom we saw a fin, then a grey body, was it a shark, no too big, a whale, no, not at all, it turned out to be 4 porpoises, a pair in front then a mother with a baby behind, beautiful. However, they didn't come up to play, just kept on moving over the undulating weed whilst we kept on a-looking for the elusive bag. We finally had to give it away and get back on board and head back to Flinders.

Once there Dave turned around and headed back out with a fresh load, two Johns, Carey and Brian II, but this time into a freshening wind and a rising sea. Some 60 minutes later he returned, wetter

than before, but no dives unfortunately; too rough. Bazza had enjoyed a good counter lunch, so that was that. A good dive for those of us early enough and lucky enough to get in.

BRIAN LYNCH

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### EASTER AT THE PROM

On Thursday evening we packed up our cars in Melbourne in typical Easter weather. Once on our way the rain continued to fall, until magically just as we entered the Prom it stopped, for a while anyway. We found our site and also Bazza, Max, Johnny, Justin and Pete and Clara, who had preceded us. We had noticed glass on the roadway some eight miles out and discovered that Frank Derksen's Renault rolls sideways almost as well as it goes forward. Incidentally, we had noticed a few smashed windscreens en route. Frank's windscreen was o.k. just the car smashed up around it. Frank didn't have a scratch on him, just a few white hairs. Luckily he was wearing his safety belt properly.

We got the tents up just before the skies opened up again and went to bed. Throughout the night we could hear comings and comings as other people arrived around us. The morning dawned and brought with it Trevor and boat, Dave & Pat, Harvey and family, Tony and Rob. It wasn't a bad day so we hiked up to the top of Mt. Oberon then ran down, quite easy really. The hardest part was forcing our way through the dense bush, leeches and all, but good training for one of our subsequent dives as it happened. Back to camp, lunch and then a game of soccer. Best to draw a veil over the result except to say I can't smile quite as prettily as I used to.

Early to bed and then up for an early start. Out with the boats and round to Oberon Bay. Choppy but reasonable, and so we all dived in. The scenery is good there plus a few crayfish and our diving enlivened by a seal who came to join in the fun. Both Pete and I felt sick, and then I was, so we made it to the rocks. Whilst sitting there recuperating, we noticed Trevor signalling to us. We waved back and then noticed that Bazza's good ship "Marie" was dragging her anchor at a fast rate of knots through the water and heading for trouble. So we took off, Pete for Trevor, me for the boat. We both had a rough swim and when we got to her we were both shattered. However, we drove back to the others and taking everyone on board in a rising sea we headed back to the calm shelter of Tidal River where I, for one, was pleased to have a firm footing underneath me again.

Saturday afternoon was good. Warm and sunny with the smaller children bathing in the river and the bigger ones catching "lots" of fish. In the evening a bit of rain and most of the crew off to see "Bazza Holding His Own" at the Tidal River cinema. Sunday dawned fine but with a hint of more rain, certainly a lot of wind. So it was a walk up to the top of Mount Bishop with Pete Smith organising a roped descent down the granite out-crops which overlook the road. So we walked up, small children too, little Paul certainly has strong legs. Arriving at the top, those of us late on the trail found Pete and Justin preparing to absail down the rocks. So we joined in swinging off with Pete into space normally reserved for seagulls and mountain goats. Bazza didn't mind the rope work but didn't much go for forcing his way through the bush. In passing, some of Tony's and my skin is still up there somewhere hanging off the rocks. We finished up by racing down an old walking track to the road meeting up with our rugged walkers back at the car park.

Then a good Sunday lunch and just as I was settling back for a rest, Justin and Pete were round again, dive at Squeaky Bay. Dragging myself up I dressed and drove with Di, Pete and Clara to Squeaky Beach car park. No one there except Bazza who was also donning his wet suit, then Rob and Max arrived, no Pete, no Justin. We then assumed that they had found a quicker route and were already in the water. We pulled on our tanks and set off. Down to the beach. Up onto the cliff tops via a steep sandy slope. Along the top, through dense scrub, then down a steep sandy slope. Up the other side, all done encased in suits, carrying tanks, although I must say at this stage that Diane, Marie and Clara were also giving a hand. Bazza and I were laying bets at this stage on the casualty rate amongst our diving team. We then spotted miles away the distinctive "Fenzies" of Justin and Tony. They were further away than us and in thicker scrub which heartened us considerably and so we pressed on finally reaching our goal where we slid down the cliff and I for one straight into the water.

I must again say that Bazza was dead right and we had a 50% pikers' brigade. Six of us made it into the water, six didn't, special mentions here to Pete Oakley who did the whole bit and could still open a tinner at the end. I must say that the dive was fantastic, we all saw a fish, the same one, and a lot of shifting sand. Then we trekked back again but luckily by a shorter route into the cars and home to an early, for some of us, bed. Then the night descended and so did the rain all night. Most of us had tents complete with running water. Pete Smith's bed looked like London Bridge at one stage. It was comparatively calm Monday morning so we dried out a little, packed up a lot and began to leave at around



11.45 a.m., leaving Pete and Clara to their Lilly-Pilly walk. Despite the in and out weather we had accomplished more than usual, just getting Justin out on nature walks is a start in the right direction, good on yer Shirley. We got in one and a half dives anyway, a couple of walks, runs, one combat endurance task, a soccer match, a cliff hanging rope descent and we saw a bit of the sun, and this time Johnny had done us proud, not just near one toilet block but right in the middle of three of them. Thank you Mr. Secretary.

Our special thanks to Bazza and Trevor for bringing their boats; Harvey for bringing his traction engine type landrover and who figured this time as our star performer, racing the big boat out of the river with "superb" skill and horn blowing. To Johnny for booking the sites, to Pete Smith as senior tour organiser, and to Justin who has now earned the distinctive letters R.S.D.C. after his name. Also many thanks to our gallant wives and sweethearts who feed us, carry our equipment and generally look after us in many trying situations..... and now our cast of thousands reading from left to right -

Max, Pam and family

Dave and Pat

Harvey, Jenny and family

Bazza, Marie and family

Frank, Pete (Smith), Tony Snushall and friends

Justin, Shirley and Katrina

Trevor and Johnny, Brian for a day

Pete and Clara

Diane and myself.

BRIAN LYNCE

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PREDICTING THE WEATHER (i.e. "REMOVING GUESSWORK", we hope)

Equally as important as practical experience in boat handling is the ability of the skipper to interpret weather conditions.

Consulting the daily forecast and the meteorological chart can give the skipper a good indication of the conditions likely to prevail during the next 24 hours.

The reports and charts, however, should only be a guide and the astute skipper will be able to read the visual signs of forthcoming weather.

Cloud forms can be a vital source of information, and are divided into three major groups - cirrus, cumulus and stratus.

Cirrus clouds form the highest layer of cloud, and at times reach right to the stratosphere, 50,000 ft. above the earth. They are the least dense and have a variety of formations. If they gather into sheets and rapidly lose altitude, rainy weather is imminent. The wind will veer to the direction of the cloud streaks, and if the end of the streaks appears brushed backwards at one end then a wind change in this new direction will also develop.

Furthermore, if the fibres point upwards then the cloud is descending and rain is close at hand. The reverse means an ascending cloud and an improvement in the weather.

Cumulus clouds are associated with both fine and showery weather, and are the most common of all cloud formations. There is a difference, however, between the fine-weather cumulus and the shower cumulus clouds.

The fair-weather cumulus appears as a soft white bank of clouds drifting slowly across the summer sky and disappearing at sunset.

The shower cumulus in contrast, rises like great puffs of smoke from a long base line, and often billows 1.5 miles in height.

The third cloud pattern is the stratus, a type of cloud always close to the land surface. At times they are only a few hundred feet from the ground level. Rain is the common result of these clouds which frequently provide a startlingly clear visibility.

Each group has a variety of cloud structures.

In the cirrus group is the cirrostratus, the lowest of the cirrus clouds, although still five to six miles high. It causes the moon and sun to have a hazy appearance, frequently forming a ring

or halo around the moon, which indicates approaching wet weather.

The cirrocumulus appears like faint ripples on wind-blown sand. Small groups of this cloud scattered high over the sky on a fine day usually indicate a change bringing short showers spaced over several hours.

The first of the cumulus group is the cumulonimbus, the familiar rain cloud, which frequently converges towards the earth or sea in a pyramid form. At the point of this formation a storm of minor cyclonic intensity often appears.

The altocumulus cloud can be distinguished from the cumulonimbus because it appears in large globular masses. Often these are closely packed in dense groups and should they stretch in bands over the sun at sunset, a deterioration in the weather can be expected.

Castellatus clouds are castle or turret shaped, usually seen in fine weather, mostly in the summer months.

The mammatocumulus cloud is the last of the cumulus group, these appear as small clouds hanging suspended beneath a typical cumulus layer, and indicate very stormy weather with wind and torrential rain.

The stratus group has three members - stratucomulus, nimbostratus and altostratus.

Stratocumulus appears across the sky in large grey billows with some darker parts. It does not always bring rain, although it causes the sky to be very overcast.

The typical rain cloud is the nimbostratus. This layer of low cloud is evenly dark grey in color and usually brings continuous rain.

The highest of the stratus clouds is the altostratus. This cloud causes the sky to have a very milky appearance and gives the sun and moon a watery appearance.

The speed of the clouds can also indicate the approach of a weather change.

Leisurely moving clouds indicate stable weather. Fast moving clouds usually mean a change with wind and rain.

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