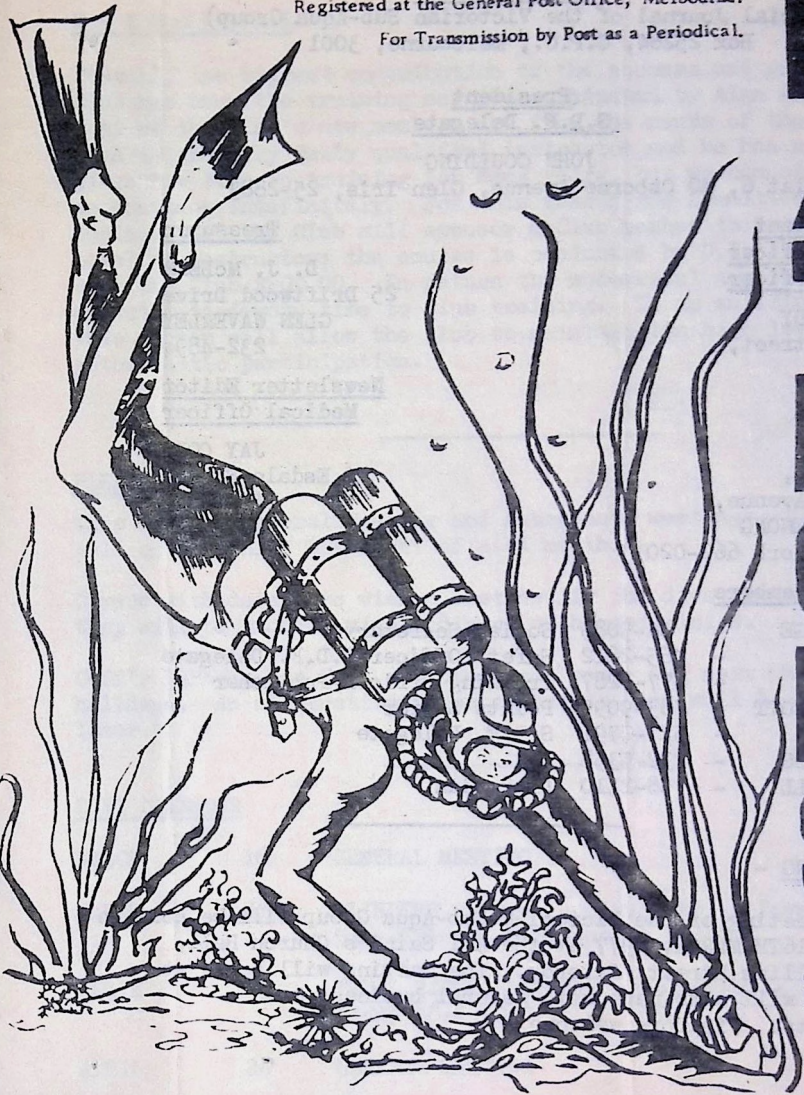


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FATHOMS



VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

F A T H O M S
 (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 WEDNESDAY 16TH MARCH, 1977 at the All Saint's Church Hall, 97 King William Street, Fitzroy. The meeting will begin at 8.00pm and will terminate with general business and refreshments. Visitors welcome.

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EDITORIAL

Possibly the biggest contribution to the success and growth of the Club has been the training sessions conducted by Alan and Justin. Most of the Club's new members are from the ranks of the trainees. Alan is the only fully qualified instructor and he has unselfishly given his time to training for many years, but we cannot expect him to continue indefinitely. For this reason the Committee has decided that the Club will sponsor a Club member to be trained to the level of instructor; the course is conducted by U.I.A.V. and will cost the Club \$200.00. In return the successful applicant is expected to devote time to Club training. It is anticipated that this system will allow the Club to maintain its high level of enthusiastic participation.

ED.

PLEASE NOTE !

This month's General Meeting and subsequent meetings will be held on the third WEDNESDAY of each month.

Divers with defective vision must notify the dive captain so that they will be buddied with a diver with good vision.

Coff's Harbour has been selected as a venue for next Christmas holidays. An alternative venue closer to home will be decided later.

DIVE CALENDAR

MARCH	16	GENERAL MEETING
MARCH	27	FLINDERS - 10 am - Dive Capt. - Dave Moore 547-2791 and Barbeque at Somers
APRIL	7	TIDAL RIVER (EASTER) - Organiser - Justin Liddy 58-2310
APRIL	20	GENERAL MEETING

DIVE CALENDAR (Cont'd.)

APRIL	23/24	WATER SKIING, JERUSALEM CREEK - Organiser - Pat Reynolds 232-5358
APRIL	25	TUBE TRIP - ORGANISER - Justin Liddy 58-2310
MAY	1	GEORGE KERMODE - Dive Capt. - Tony Tipping 24-7133 (Tentative)
MAY	8	PINNACLES (Tentative)
MAY	18	GENERAL MEETING
MAY	22	HORSE RIDING - Organiser - Carey Ramage 56-5085
MAY	29	THE WALL OR ELIZA RAMSDEN - Dive Capt. - Don McBean 232-4894

HUSKISSON

Let me tell you a short story about Captain Johnny Slack Jack. He was very fussy about the toilet seat, so he draped paper all over it so the creepy crawleys wouldn't attack his you know what, but to his surprise when running through the camping ground, a great trail of toilet paper trailed out of the leg of his underjohns. Looking around and very red in the face, he tucked it all up and went merrily on his way. Footnote. By the way there is a new diving group called Twelve Little Underjohns, their names :- Smiley, Ratso, Slack Jack, Lumpy, The Strangler, The Snapper, The Stretcher, Moleface, The Choker, The Smudger and Cheeky. They are full of energy. (Sorry one month late.)

FERRETS FRIEND

REFUGE COVE

Max and I arrived at Port Franklin at 10.30 pm on Friday 28th January. After driving around in a square we finally joined Captain Cody at the head of a line of cars, who then led us down to the "Docks" area where the good ship "Mirrabooka" lay quietly at anchor. This was to be our home for the next three days as we ventured out into the watery wastes of Bass Strait. Throughout the next two hours people kept turning up, and some just kept turning! We tried to sleep but the sweet music of the mosquitos kept most of us awake, while those who tried sleeping beneath the stars complained that the nocturnal antics of the animals in the area kept them awake too. Morning arrived with Captain Reg Truscott, we stirred and began unloading the cars and loading the boat, this we accomplished reasonably quickly due mainly to the "Herculean feats" performed by "Snush", and the very smart manner in which Bazza and Max winched Max's boat gently down onto the river's surface.

Then it was time to go, we managed to persuade Reg to set sail before 'Tip' could get us all going on the dreaded exercises and away from the dock we glided with Max's boat bobbing along 25 metres away in our wake. The sun was rising ahead of us, as we made our way down river against the rising tide, between dense clumps of mangroves before emerging into Corner Inlet where we could see the granite out-crops of the 'Prom' ahead of us. We settled ourselves into comfortable positions all over the boat decks and cabin roof, for we had a five hour journey ahead of us before landfall at Refuge. Well most of us relaxed, down below in the galley, Chef's Cody and Oakley began cooking breakfast, and as we sailed across a flat sea we enjoyed a hearty meal and a dip into Reg's well upholstered library.

We kept close to the land and were able to observe the backside of the Prom in much the same way as Bass and Flinders had done some two hundred years ago. The sea was calm, the sun came out, and off came our early morning sweaters. We passed one long sandy beach and then rounded a headland and sailed into Refuge Cove, well named to our way of thinking. We nosed our way towards the bright sandy beach, disturbing the "natives" who were sunbathing on the foreshore.

The water was gin-clear, and after the initial shock too cold. The human bomb Tipping once again demonstrated his uncanny talent

for soaking his colleagues, a feat he repeated at length over the entire weekend.

We transferred all our worldly belongings to shore and set up camp in a clearing at the convergence of three nature trails, and amid a profusion of insect life, cicadas, bull ants, cow ants and many other "things" too countless to mention. Johnny loved every minute of his many encounters with many of the flying varieties and the aerogard worked overtime. We lunched well and then were ferried back to the Mirrabooka ready to start our first dive.

Our first dive was near Refuge at Little Waterloo Bay, fifteen of us took to the water with Wendy remaining on board and doing the administrative part of the proceedings. Underwater we found reasonable visibility, around 30 feet, the vegetation and rock formations were covered with sandy sediment as we worked our way along, the fish life became plentiful, and in the course of the afternoon Bazza caught his customary crayfish, two in fact, but no one else sighted a feeler. We eventually reached a depth of 55 feet, but then returned in a leisurely fashion to the boat which we had no trouble in locating underwater since there was no appreciable current to worry about, up the ladder and then home for tea, with Justin taking up his customary position, where, you may ask, at the compressor of course.

Once back at our jungle refuge, Chef Oakley got to work and with a little assistance from wife Clara, and a little hindrance from others produced a gourmet meal much appreciated by all. The evening's entertainment was provided mainly by Max who treated us to a display of low diving, fully clothed from the deck of his boat, followed by his pursuit of Paul around the decks of the good ship Mirrabooka, which only stopped when Max couldn't remember who or why he was chasing..... Back on shore we entertained our trusty skipper Reg, and those of us in the geriatric tent who went to bed early found that our domicile was over the path leading to the rustic toilets (more on those later) and everyone including a local possum claimed right of way. We should also place on record at this point Tony (Tip) also went to bed early, but did take part in a few conversations sort of, down but not out.

Sunday morning dawned, but we wished it hadn't, overcast with drizzle our usual Prom weather. We breakfasted and then got on board, we turned out of Refuge in laymans language to the right, into

rough water, which proceeded to get rougher the further we went. Our thanks here to Pete Oakley who spent so long retrieving his weightbelt in the bow of the boat that he took all the seas coming over the front and kept us dry. When he moved, we made Reg turn the boat around. We found a sheltered Bay north of Refuge and finally entered the water at 11.35. Milky conditions but we were rewarded by the sun occasionally breaking through, the highlight of this dive was the sighting of a large Boarfish which Tony managed to photograph. No crayfish!

Back on board we lunched and then moved on, this time to Bareback Bay where there were caves. The sun was out and the day was getting better. Tony and I dived together and our first notable achievement was Tony cuddling a small shark, which when released took off smartly like some of his girl friends. We then searched for the caves which we found stirred up by the passing of Jay who had preceeded us. Then we were lucky enough to strike one which Jay had missed. Beautiful, stony floor, granite boulders and "windows" high above us, with sunlight streaming through bright red curtains of flowing kelp as I said beautiful. We exited through the top windows and squeezed ourselves around and into other rocky crevices. We found a crayfish and Tony lassoed it but it got away leaving one feeler with us.

Meanwhile back at camp. Once there, Chef Peter again produced a gastronomic marvel, sausages Oakley. After this the evening was dedicated to Bacchus and the entertainment was provided by that famous double act, All and Sundry. The evening was finally brought to a close by Master of Ceremonies Max who neatly tucked everyone into their sleeping bags. Tony who was last in on this occasion, still maintaining a lively conversation to the end.

Came Monday morning and at this point I must explain some of Refuge' peculiarities. The toilet arrangements had probably been left there by the aforementioned Bass and Flinders. There were male and female toilets, well holes in the ground surmounted by a metal box would be more apt. They were both bad, but the better of the two was the ladies loo. So in order to avail myself of this, I arose early and proceeded to the ladies. I was no sooner in position than the wretched box collapsed under me, my past life flashed before me and my elbows were imbedded in the sides of what nearly became a tomb. (Poetic licence). Luckily, however I saved myself from a fate worse than death, but unfortunately wrecked the loo, however it got a

laugh at breakfast time. Next on the agenda were the famous circuit exercises. Paul, Tony, Peter, Carl, Bazza, Jay and I took part. Johnny did a few afterwards but unfortunately tripped over a rope laying on the ground, hasn't been the same since.

Then breakfast, break camp and break out of refuge and our last dive of the trip. This was at Horn Point, dived at 11.20 am and although the sea was calm, it was milky down below, fish life plentiful, but again a lot of sandy sediment covering the kelp. The water was warm but at 50 feet it got very, very cold. All our intrepid divers entered the water even Peter Smith who was feeling a little groggy. The little groggy dived too. Back on board for the last time we finally began to pack our diving gear away for the first time in three days and Tony and Johnny surprised us all by preparing lunch, as we motored back along the coast. Snush prepared himself for the hard work of unloading by resting on the deck and we refreshed him with the odd bucket of sea water from time to time. We made one stop for a swim and a run along the beach and then back on board for our journey up to Port Franklin on the rising tide.

We docked about six and very smartly unloaded the big boat and equally smartly loaded the little boat. We took our leave of our trusty skipper Reg Truscott, who made us promise to come back again next year. Then it was off to Foster, where we stopped at the Pub for a beer and a sight of running water from a tap. After a short stay Max and I took off arriving back in Melbourne about 10.30 pm.

In conclusion, we had had a very good weekend, all of those present participated in one way or another to ensure that we all enjoyed ourselves. We had four dives in three days and logged over three hours of diving each in that time. We would also like, at this point, to thank Bass Strait for the loan of their equipment which was much appreciated by us all. Our thanks also to skipper Reg for putting up with us.

Those taking part in our green-water adventure are listed below in alphabetical order :-

Jay Cody - Organiser, Chef and All Round Good Fella

John Goulding - President, Compressor Operator

Carl Jironc - Roustabout

Justin Liddy - Compressor Operator

Wendy Mason - Washer-Up

Peter Oakley - Chef Extrordinare
 Clara Oakley - Assistant Chef
 Julie Okle - Washer-Up
 Peter Smith - Roustabout
 Tony Snushall - Layabout
 Max Synon - Boatman, M.C., Wine Waiter
 Barry Truscott - Boatman, Compressor Operator, Cray Catcher
 Tony Tipping - Physical Education Instructor, P/T Chef
 Paul Tipping - Bird Fancier, General Duties, P/T Chef
 Cindy Tilbrook - Compressor Operator

and me.

THE BEACHMASTER

YO, HO, HO, AND A BOTTLE OF VIC.

(A story based on fact, but with names changed to protect the guilty.)

Pause a while friends and I'll tell you a tale of two of the most feared and notorious pirates to sail the water of our fair Prom.

"Wrecks Hynon" a once talented ships carpenter who was marooned at Refuge Cove by shipmates for putting foreign material in the Brandy.

"Wrecks" had joined forces with "Lion Pinch" who was once reputed to be the finest Beachmaster in South Gippsland and a former chef to the Courts of Europe, but who, like "Wrecks", had decided on a life of crime on the Seven Seas.

Our story starts on a fair and still January evening when from their pirate lair in Refuge Cove they sighted a becalmed Merchantman hove-to in the Bay. This fair ship was under the command of Captain Reg. They were two days out of Port Franklin and badly in need of fresh copies of Ribald, Stag and Penthouse; so as you see their plight was serious.

"Ah-haa!" growled "Wrecks", "she's ours for the taking. You see, she's low in the water which means a good cargo of Coldies ripe for plunder."

Casting off they slowly approached the hapless ship and prepared the graples.

It was then, a strange and unexplicable thing happened. As "Wrecks"

flung himself at the ship cutless in hand, he was suddenly seen to cry out in despair and hurl himself off the forecastle. Some said it was the looks of horror on the faces of the becalmed sailors that had suddenly torn at the heartstrings of "Wrecks' Hynon" and he had flung himself over the side as a last act of repentance, but, alas no one will ever know. His pirate accomplice "Lion Pinch" was sentenced to 10 years of living on his own cooking.

A fitting end of those who pirate tinnies on the high seas.

So I leave you with this tale, the moral of which was immortalised by the Bard of Refuge Cove:

"If you want to be a miller, grind your corn standing up!!"
(Apologies to P. Tipp)

BEN GUNN

TORQUAY NON-DIVE - SUNDAY 20/2/77

After deciding that it was completely out of the question to expect anyone to drive to Torquay on a Sunday morning, Justin, Clive, Di and I headed off about 7 pm on Saturday night, accompanied by the ever faithful friend Esky. We arrived at Torquay in time to find Pete and Debbie located (strangely enough?) in the Pub, and all six of us set out to find our accommodation. This proved to be so luxurious that Pete and Deb decided not to stay there at all, and headed off into the wilderness, leaving we four to suffer alone - though not necessarily in silence.

Sunday morning dawned clear and sunny, with the sea as flat and shiny as a mirror. After a 5 mile jog along the beach, we met the remaining club members at Torquay ramp and had a magnificent dive at the Victoria Towers, with 200 ft. visibility and myriads of swarming fish. (Oh, excuse me. Thought for a moment there that this was one of the Tippings' articles.)

Suffice it to say that after meeting Bilbote, John, Maree, Karl, Max and family, Mick, and Pete Smith (junior) at the Torquay Pier and surveying the white caps, the dive site was changed to Queenscliff, and the entourage departed, leaving the ranks in the blue Torana behind, trying to rustle Pete and Deb out of the wilderness (from which they eventually appeared).

Queenscliff proved to be no more encouraging than Torquay, and the decision was made to abandon the dive and devote the rest of the day working on the ever increasing VSAG tinnie-chain. So, minus Max and family and dog and boat, we adjourned to the Pub for a counterlunch and a lightning electronic squash tournament, and thereafter Tallied Ho (now minus Bilbote, John and faithful companion) for a guided tour of Fort Queenscliff. Here we effectively lost the entire remainder of the tour at least twice, decided to go for a dive in the well until we saw the condition of the water, and managed to interrupt the guide's touching closing speech by someone (not to mention names, Clive) ringing the brass bell outside the guard's hut.

As we had now run out of ice to cool the tinnies, the ranks headed for home, marred only by Pete's new Mazda refusing to start (compliments of Karl and Justin), and Justin's car requiring a change of tyre along the Geelong freeway.

But we did increase the tinnie chain!

CINDY TILBROOK

THE YARRA TRIP OR "UP THE CREEK WITHOUT A PADDLE"

The day dawned bright and clear with only an occasional hint of heavy rain. The same could be said of the "whether". Whether we would go or not. After much yessing and noing Argus said why not, after all the eskys were packed and it would be a shame to waste them. So without further ado Bill Boat and Pete Smith's green terror slid gracefully bum first into the water, closely followed by some yellow and white thing that closely resembled last night's dinner!! Luckily water conditions were calm, inside the marina. Outside it was a different situation but luckily we made it into the Yarra where it just happened to be time to splice the main brace so we did, we did, we did! After a leisurely trip up the Yarra we nearly ran into a slightly bigger boat. The sights that can be seen in that river are many and varied. We said hello to various ships of the world and of course Polly. We waved to Dave Carroll hard at work polluting the environment. We inspected various wrecks, notably Tony Snush and a few others about to happen. Finally we made it to the gas B.B.Q's at Prince's Bridge where we had a leisurely lunch and were joined by Clive and Di and the

Moore's (older version) and answered such questions as "What the hell sort of boats are they?"

Then it was decided to push on up the Yarra to Dights Falls where Dave wanted to meet "Destiny". So at a very sedate pace away we went. After a very scenic trip and one or two ambushes and false leads we came across the Moore quietly swearing and cursing with a smashed prop in his hands. We never really found out what wreck he got it off. Very nearly Bill Boat as we were to find out.

By this time it was getting a bit late so we had to hurry it up a trifle on the way back down. A few people very kindly offered to lighten the load by walking along behind, but then we ran out of gas so with the lightened load we managed to make it out into the peaceful waters of Port Phillip Bay where we stopped for afternoon tea and cake. I did enjoy that cake, all of it!! Wonder what it tasted like?

On arrival at St. Kilda we put the seasick ones ashore and took on Di's nephew and neice for a scenic ride around the marina. Glad we did or we wouldn't have seen the yacht with the all girl crewstarkers. After about fifteen times around we went back in and put the boats on and out and home. A few of the die hards made it back to Penang Street and "helped" clean the boat and put it to bed. Then a bite to eat and a quiet ale just for a change and zap. - End of a great days relaxation.

Participants in any sort of order were -

Johnny and Maree	}	and Bill Boat
Justin and Cindy		
Pete Smith	}	and the Green Terror
Karl Jerong		
Dave and Patty		and the Yellow Thing
Tony Snush and Ess		
Julie and Wendy		
Clive and Di		
Mr. and Mrs. Moore		(think they belong to Dave)

and in a supporting role, the puzzled people of Melbourne and other places.

JUSTIN LIDDY

FLOTSAM & JETSAM

Sometimes when I sit down to write this column it seems that I've only just finished writing the previous month's masterpiece. Yet only now do I realise the reason. You see every night before I lay me down to sleep I pick up the most recent edition of Fathoms and read with wide amazement the thought provoking comments which abound on every line of that previous F & J.

So having opened with the usual amount of modesty I will now try and do justice to the modesty (or immodesty) of our active little group of divers.

Somebody called "The Beachmaster" stole my thunder, (not to mention what he did to the ladies thunder box) and wrote a short report about the long weekend at Refuge Cove. Undoubtedly this was one of the best weekend trips we have tried. The diving was quite good, but the area was superb. Refuge Cove is so well named. It's a sailors paradise, with sheltered clear waters fringed by white sandy clean beaches.

We were most fortunate in being able to borrow the Bass Strait Diving Club's camping equipment. Also we were fortunate in having the services of Raving Reg Truscott; one of the last "Young Men of the Sea".

It was a tired but very contented crew that came ashore on the Monday night and you may be sure that we will be doing this trip again.

With such good diving being enjoyed in the last month the scheduled George Kermodé dive on January 30th was somewhat of a disappointment as we were confined to the closer shores of Westernport because of rough seas outside. Nevertheless it gave Johnny and Justin the chance to do a little wave dancing and once again prove the merits of fibreglass boats which have plenty of wooden bits and aluminium pieces attached too. - You know we try to please everyone in this column!

The scheduled Sierra Nevada dive on February 6th was another one to be re-directed because of bad weather but nevertheless the sheltered waters around Pope's Eye provided a quiet little dive and also a suitable venue for Dave Moore to try out his imitation Bill Boat. One good thing about Dave's tiger coloured ship is that it will carry 10 people (at anchor) and a magnum of champagne.

The second "Up the River" cruise and Barbeque was a big success even though we no longer have the accepted Flagship Marie as the troopship. With Pete Smith's, Dave Moore's and the Liddy/Goulding boat present about 16 of us cruised from St. Kilda, to Williamstown and then up the Yarra, for a happy get together and barbeque. Here we were met by Dave's parents and Clive and Di who just happened to pass by looking for some jet-set action down by the Riverside. They tell me that the Moomba talent scouts took some names of those present and further demonstrations of water prowess will be shown on the Anzac Day long weekend in April.

Then it was off to Torquay for a dive on the "Victoria Towers" - Alas again the weather was not on our side so it was a dive into the Queenscliff Pub for a counter lunch.

Remember to keep a watch on the dive calendar, check with the dive captain, and come on diving it's the total experience.

ANNA CONDA

- THE SNAKE IN THE GRASS

Members are invited to apply for the opportunity to become a qualified instructor. The course will be sponsored by the Club. It is conducted by U.I.A.V. and is valued at \$200. The successful applicant is expected to devote time to Club training.
