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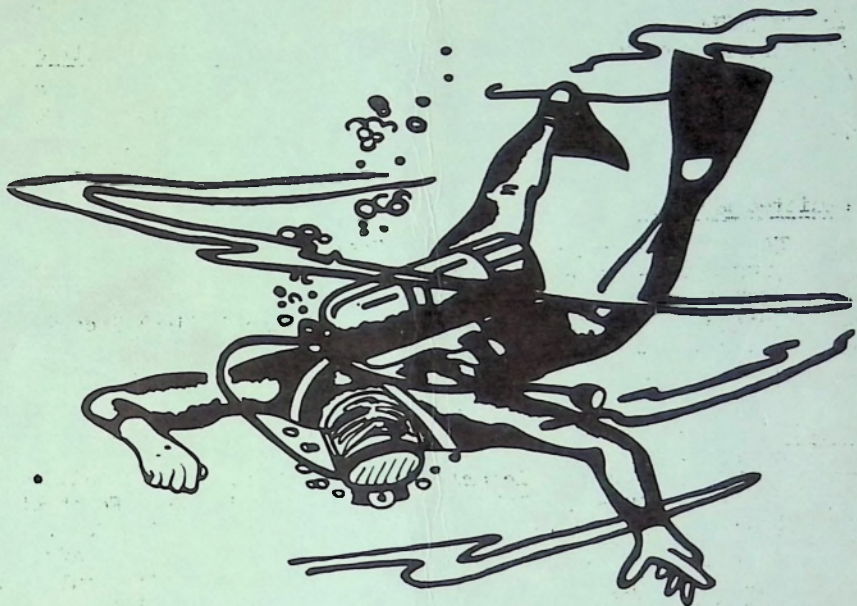
FATHOMS

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SAFETY IN DIVING

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V S A G

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FATHOMS

(Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)

Box 2526W, G.P.O., Melbourne, 3001

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CLUB MEETING -

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Wednesday 15TH NOVEMBER, 1978 at 8pm at the Collingwood Football Club, Lullie Street, Abbotsford in the 2nd floor Function Room. Bar facilities are available to VSAG members prior to, and after the General Meeting and meals are served from 6pm until about 9pm. A list of VSAG members will be provided to the Football Club thereby eliminating the requirement to sign the visitors book at the entrance. Visitors welcome!

FOREWORD

The warmer weather is with us, and with it some of our older members have at last come out of hibernation. On our recent dive on the George Kermode we had 17 divers, what a glorious sight, multi-hued wet suits all over the place, we don't have a yellow one yet though. This brings us to a point to remember, in order not to miss out on dives, it is necessary during the warmer months to ring the dive captain early. I rang this week a little later than usual to be told "well you are number 18" quite a blow to the ego, and a bit of a change from a couple of months ago when ringing one dive captain I was told, "well, there's you and me so far". So be warned!

Last month we had another resignation from the committee, this time it was Pete Oakley. We are sorry to see him go, up until recently Pete was very active particularly on the social side but business pressures or if you like tyre pressure has meant that instead of being in Melbourne with Clara and Christine you could bump into him in Brisbane, Adelaide, Hobart, Sydney, Moonee Ponds, and that was just last Wednesday. We would like to say thank you to Pete for all his work on our behalf, and hope he will soon be back to do the odd dive.

Our Christmas treat this year will be our Annual Dinner on Friday December 8th. This will be at the Chateau Commodore in Lonsdale Street. It is a poolside party, so dress wetsuits could be the dress for the occasion. It is \$15 a head and we need your money at the November Meeting so come prepared.

You will also see from the dive calendar that we have another dive scheduled with the Torquay Club. This time we are the hosts, and we will be visiting the Pinnacles. The charge this time will be \$5 a head, since in addition to our own boats we will be hiring Stan Watts fishing boat in order to cope with the number of divers from both clubs. There will be a bar-b-que afterwards so bring refreshments and food along with you.

Finally I do believe that there is another marriage just around the corner for two of our club members, our congratulations to Justin and Cindy who will be joining our growing list of just marrieds later this year. I also have to report too that a couple of our upstanding, outstanding batchelors are beginning to get that cosy domestic look, so possibly this part of our editorial

may become a monthly feature.

ED.

DIVE CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
NOV. 12	SORRENTO BOAT Ramp	9.30am	D.Moore 547-2791	Outside Wall
NOV. 15	COLLINGWOOD Football Club	8 pm		General Meeting
NOV. 19	BALNARRING TENNIS Party. Somers afterwards	am	P.Tipping 387-2027	Sandshoes must be worn
NOV. 26	SORRENTO	9.30am	B.Truscott 783-9095	
DEC. 2	PINNACLES Meet San Remo	9.30am	B.Lynch 795-2834	
This dive is in conjunction with Torquay Scuba Club. We have hired Stan Watts fishing boat, and our own boats will be going too. Please note that this is a Saturday dive. Any enquiries to Brian Lynch on the above number.				
DEC. 8	CHATEAU COMMODORE	7pm		Annual Dinner
DEC. 10	SORRENTO BOAT Ramp		M.Synon 465-2812	Sierra Nevada

S.D.F. LOG BOOKS

The following people still have to collect and pay for Log Books ordered on their behalf -

Paul King
John McKenzie

Phil Jeffersm
Dave Henty-Wilson

Just \$2.00 each chaps and the book is yours. November Meeting

please. See John Goulding.

GEORGE KERMODE

For a change the good weather lasted through until Sunday, and when we arrived at Flinders the sun was shining and the sea calm. After watching and even attempting to assist a boat launcher who somehow had managed to bury his back axle in the sand, we launched our own boats. There were four. Tony, Max, Pete and Bill boat, they were to carry 17 divers, yes 17 obviously the winter must be over and it will now pay to ring the dive captain early otherwise you could miss out. We set out in formation, passing through Seal Straits en route for Pyramid Rock.

As we neared the rock, we could see that the area had large swells pounding the rocks, and so our dive captain Fred, directed us on to the site of the George Kermode. This wreck, which was sunk by the Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife as an artificial reef, lies just around the corner from Pyramid Rock. It was found once again by the nose of Paul Tipping and by his brother Tony swimming down the anchor line and bumping into the side of the thing. This siting finally verified by Johnny G. with the depth sounder which made the whole thing official.

After kitting up we dropped over the side and swam down the anchor line. Arriving at the bottom we found that we were alongside the wreck, at which had been the bow. The visibility here was poor only about 6 to 10 feet. We made our way around the bow and along the exposed side of the ship. Here with the deck planking above our heads, we were able to swim inside and around the crushed superstructure. When we first dived here there had been no weed growth and no fish life. Now there was weed growth all over and around, the fish life was plentiful and the wreck itself seemed to be opening up. Indeed there were muffled knocks from within the wreck, and although I never felt it some divers reported that the hulk itself was moving with the current. I must say though, that at times when moving through the holds, there were strange up-thrusts of water, and trying to move over the keel of the vessel was very hard indeed, almost as if the wreck was close in against the cliffs and the ground swell was being forced back from the wall.

Swimming through the ship, and emerging near the large dredging

buckets, we saw some beautiful trumpeter fish. There were leather-jackets and schools of small fry glittering in the murky visibility lucky for us the sun was shining. After embracing Bob Scott on the bottom, it was time to come up into the sun light. Resting in the boat whilst the others finished their dive we were in time to see Leo doing his speciality, and on such a calm day too. It seems that Leo takes over where Rob leaves off, as one soul was overheard to say, "its all a spit too much!"

We pulled up the anchors and motored over to the calm water behind Pyramid Rock. There we dived in murky water, for elusive abalone. They were hard to find but we did get a few, some of us even saw the odd crayfish, but of course this is the closed season, and the hapless creatures are quite safe from the Bazza's and Tony's of this world, although Tony did admit to a little practising. Then it was time to head for Flinders and home, a little bumpy to Seal Rocks and then a very smooth trip across the Westernport approach. Arriving at Flinders we put on a bit of a show for the tourists and then whipped the boats out quite smartly, helped by the fact that it was almost high tide.

Then it was off home, some led by Fearless Fred intended to lunch at the Pie Shop, most of us went straight home.

Those present were Max Synon, Pete Smith, the brothers Tipping, Johnny G, Fred Ferrante, Wendy Mason, Neil Garland, Leo Canteri, Bob Scott, Justin Liddy & Cindy Tilbrook (minus windscreen) Andrew Benson, "Bazza", plus two visitors and myself.

BRIAN LYNCH

This concludes our Diving Accidents from the North Sea Oil and Gas Industry period 1971-75. Once again I think that it was emphasised just how easy it is to kill yourself under water. This article finished with the small cartoon we have reproduced in the centre of the magazine.

In January 1976 a diver was drowned when operating a depth of 480ft and it is possible that he accidentally switched off his own gas supply by knocking the ball valve control.

Again in January a diver was lost through pulmonary barotrauma when a diving bell accidentally surfaced. His bell companion in

in this particular accident was also seriously injured.

In May a diver was drowned whilst operating in 120ft due to the fouling of his umbilical.

Another diver died from pulmonary barotrauma after a dive to 120ft in Lock Fyne. Diver No. 30 was lost through downing whilst diving on air at a depth of 120ft off Anglesey.

Diver No. 31 was lost whilst operating from a barge in the North Sea almost certainly due to his main gas supply becoming disconnected at his mask.

Time does not permit me detailing all the other accidents and near misses but from the information that we have an initial analysis of figures suggest a broad breakdown of the reasons something like.....

Human error	16	Lack of equipment	3
Poor physical condition	3	Inadequate medical supervision	2
Inadequate training	6	Poor diving supervision	6
Equipment failure	9	Poor equipment maintenance	4

In addition cold has certainly been a contributing factor in at least three and probably more cases.

Reports have been received as a result of accidents and also through the grape vine of divers becoming unconscious under water for no apparent reason. The Dept. of Energy has instituted a research to investigate this particular problem.

In addition to the introduction of legislation the Dept. of Energy now issues diving safety memos on points of diving safety as soon as they arise. One in particular applies to the topic for this paper and this is diving safety memo No. 14 which draws attention to the need to provide a hoisting harness for the diver which lifts him from the pelvis as opposed to the chest or shoulders.

THE END.

TIPS TIT-BITS

By the time this issue hits the streets the Big M Marathon will be well and truly over. However whilst congratulating Lynchy for his devotion to fitness and valiant finish in this gruelling event

spare a thought for TTB's reporter who's probably still running and just about at the final refreshment stand in Fitzroy St. St.Kilda!

It's good to see the attendances pick up on club dives lately - recently there were about seventeen divers under the astute leadership of Fearless Fred out on the George Kermodé. As usual there were seventeen different sets of markings and once again it was up to Little Pully to tell Bazza when to drop the pick - sure enough: spot on!

As we write this edition, the final round of the Westlakes Classic Golf Tournament is about to start! As they tee off in Adelaide we find that Johnny Goulding, Olympics official representative and sponsor, is three strokes clear of the international field. For those who have even had the pleasure of playing golf with Johnny it would obviously not be golf strokes we're referring to!

One of our roving reporters was recently working up around Wangaratta and managed to get out to Yarrowonga for half a day or so. He then met up with Bruce Soulsby for lunch who offered to show him around the town and over the border to Mulwala. Now Mulwala, being in N.S.W. has several flash clubs thanks to the one armed bandits, and after being shown each of them our reporter asked Bruce which one he belonged to. Bruce's reply "All of them!"

Don't forget the Tennis Party at the Balnarring Foreshore Courts on November 19th - watch out Jay, Alan and Pully because a couple of VSAG members were down there practising their power serves the other day - in fact they were serving so well you couldn't see the ball; nor could they when they went to find them outside the courts! It promises to be quite a day with a 6am dive (weather permitting) and the Somers Handicap Mile; stick to marathons Lynchy!

DIVE LEADERS A DYING RACE

I have noticed that over the last twelve months, Dive leadership has been conducted by the same handful of regular people in the club. The task of the dive captain is not an arduous task but quite an easy one if undertaken with a bit of commonsense and enthusiasm, so why not give the old die-hards a rest and prove your ability as a dive leader.

In being dive leader, there are several points you must take into consideration such as type of dive, selection of dive site; any special features of the site and alternative dive location, the ratio of divers to boats and matching novice with experienced divers and any special equipment that might be required.

A summary of factors to take into consideration can be divided into four main categories :-

1. Pre-dive/Advance planning
2. Actual dive
3. Post dive
4. Specialty diving (we'll look into this point at a later date)

Let's have a closer look at these points. Pre-dive consists mainly of organisation, site, boats, divers (limit on numbers) check-in by divers and final weather and sea conditions.

N.B. If conditions are not favourable you have the right to cancel the dive because you're the boss.

Well everything has so far gone well, people start to arrive at the site, when all are present and accounted for allocate them to their respective boats and brief them on the dive. Before leaving for the dive site make sure they all have the appropriate equipment, because there is nothing worse than at the dive site you find you're missing say one fin or a mask.

Now you commence the journey to the site make sure all boats remain together and make sure this is observed (THIS IS A CLUB RULE!) At the dive site, anchor boats within a safe distance of each other, give divers, after they have geared up, a repeat of the dive plan and briefing, and any emergency procedures that might have to be put into action. You then make sure that the divers' flag is raised and go enjoy the dive.

We now look at the post-dive section. Everyone has returned to their allocated boats, you as dive leader will do a head count and make sure everyone is alright, any injury should be treated immediately to the best ability by most experienced person present. You can then discuss the dive and any problems encountered and also a self analysis.

It is your duty then to signal all boats to return back to the launching ramp in a similar manner as to the journey out to the dive site. Remember you are still dive leader until the last boat is

out of the water. So in summing up, a dive captain must consider the following:-

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Purpose of dive | 7. Check in |
| 2. Choice of dive site | 8. Control at dive site |
| 3. Alternative location | 9. Group control at all times |
| 4. Advance planning | 10. Sign on and off |
| 5. Divers attending | 11. De-briefing |
| 6. Safety - Boat & gear | 12. Dive leader - "YOU'RE THE BOSS" |

So in conclusion, don't let all this information deter you from giving it a go and if you do decide to try it and you find that you come up with any problems don't hesitate to ask any one in the club who is a regular dive captain, because they'll be only to glad to help.

FEARLESS FRED

FLOTSAM & JETSAM

Some months ago we reported with great excitement how we had found the remains of the wreck of the Navy minesweeper Goorangai. Everybody on the dive took bearing positions as to where it lay, so with a cross check of 30 different markings, it was almost certain that we would have no difficulty locating the wreck again.

Yet there we were on the 8th October searching in vain for the elusive Goorangai. It was a case of lining up 2 marks, but which post on what tree.....and where was that yacht that two months earlier had been directly in line with the Chinamans Hat.

After several drift runs we gave up and settled for a dive on old faithful the Eliza Ramsden. This wreck is taking on new dimensions for those who have observed her over the past 5 or 6 years. The bow section is becoming more exposed, allowing deeper penetration into the wreck. The forces of the sea have cleared away the sand underneath the bow, giving the impression that the ship is more suspended than entombed in her watery grave.

Those of you who have dived the Kelp Farm will know that this area is quite simple to find, being clearly identified by the large kelp trees which rise to the surface as the ebb or flood currents slacken.

Well on the 15th October some hardy V.S.A.G. divers hoping to seek

V.S.A.G. ANNUAL DINNER

FRIDAY DECEMBER 8TH

ON THE ROOF

at the

CHATEAU COMMODORE

131 Lonsdale St

City

7.00PM - MIDNIGHT

Don't miss out on this great V.S.A.G.
Annual Dinner - Bar-B-Que beside the pool
on top of the Chateau Commodore

(if it rains there's a special function
room too)

For a night with a difference

- Come Along -

\$15.00 per head - all inclusive

All money to be paid at November General Meeting

out some new locations around Point Nepean decided on a dive at the Kelp Farm. Not only did they miss the magnificent caves in this area, they also missed the kelp farm itself! This hapless expedition ended back at Point Nepean again where Milton and Johnny obtained a chefs delight in fresh abalone, and a very old bottle as a bonus!

In September our editor Brian Lynch when commenting on the recent

marriage of Tony Snushall and Esther Campbell wrote "Who will be next, I ask myself"..... well maybe he did ask himself and got a knock back, but we know of one member who asked another, and didn't get a knock back!!

Remember the famous weekend back in March when the more famous members of the V.S.A.G. with some help from the Torquay Scuba Club recovered the more famous than famous anchor of the incredibly famous famous "Loch famous Ard" - well if you weren't there you wouldn't believe it anyway! It seems that the Premier has seen fit to honour this achievement by inviting those involved with the project to a State Government Reception.

The dress for the occasion is lounge suit for chaps and day dress for chapeses. One of our more debonaire members asks "I only have one suit; an interview suit, can I wear it?" Yes, Tony you can, but follow in the family footsteps.....get a good interview with someone you can later use as a name drop.

Another member who claims he is dressed by Georges stated that his only suit was a fully lined tailor made, single breasted wet suit. It seems he meant George Simplemous - the manufacturer of Leakyseams Wet Suits.

Last November we had an incredible day on the George Kermodie which looked like being repeated on the 22nd October last. With a smooth sea, blue skies, and great expectations, you can imagine our disappointment when amazingly enough, the first divers reported poor visibility of 10-15 feet.

Yet even in this gloom we could make out a strange phenomenon not previously reported about the George Kermodie.

Lying in its twisted and deformed state the George Kermodie was actually rocking gently in the surge. This of course set up its own wave action which at certain parts of the wreck was strangely fierce and far too strong to make any progress against.

Guess who's not getting thrown into the pool at the V.S.A.G. Annual Dinner on December the 8th - yours truly

LORNE GREENSEED
The Cowboy Gardner