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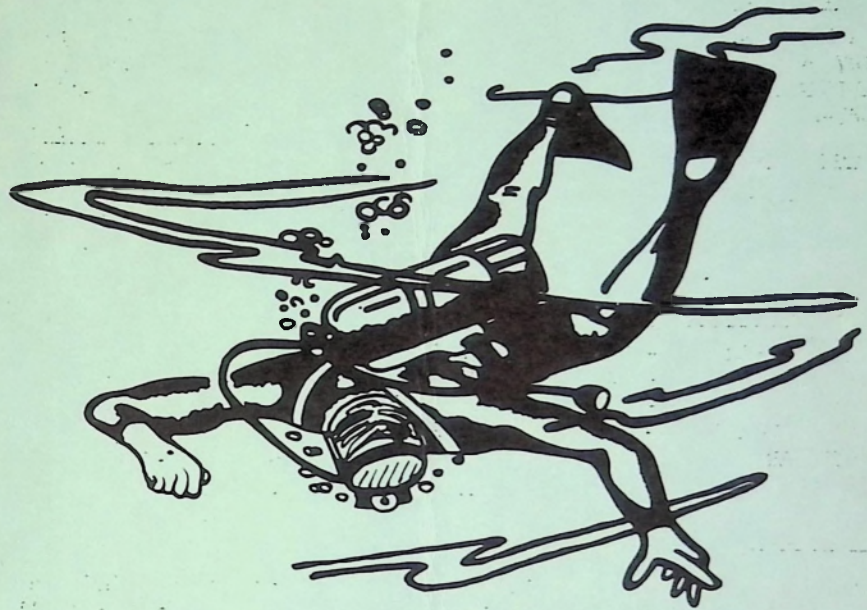
FATHOMS

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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

PresidentS.D.F. Delegate

JOHN GOULDING

Flat 6, 40 Osborne Avenue, Glen Iris, 25-2883

Vice PresidentProperty OfficerDAVE MOORE,
127 Hansworth Street,
MULGRAVE
547-2791TreasurerD. J. McBEAN
25 Driftwood Drive
GLEN WAVERLEY
232-4894Secretary

DAVE CARROLL

391-2211 Ext. 247

Newsletter EditorBRIAN LYNCH
8 Madison Avenue
NORTH DANDENONG
795-2834Committee Members

PETER OAKLEY	- 509-4655	Social Secretary
MAX SYNON	- 465-2812	Points Scorer/S.D.F. Delegate
BARRY TRUSCOTT	- 783-9095	Librarian
PAT REYNOLDS	- 232-5358	Medical Officer
NEL GARLAND	- 56-4992	Assistant Training Officer

CLUB MEETING -

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Wednesday 20TH SEPTEMBER, 1978 at 8pm at the Collingwood Football Club, Lulie 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!

F O R E W O R D

Once again we are at the end of another year, with our Annual General Meeting coming up on the 20th of this month. This year will be a milestone for the club, 25 years is a long time, in my case nearly half my life time, which brings me to another subject. How many of you watched the Cousteau special last month, on the Britannic, apart from it being a very interesting and informative hour, it did my heart good to see good old Jacques donning his wet suit, and dropping down 300 odd feet into the entrails of the Britannic. For him the only problem seemed to be, that around 300 feet it got a "leetle" cold. He should try 15 feet at Mornington in August.

Congratulations to Mick Jacquieu for winning the mystery dive competition held at the aforementioned Mornington Pier, and whilst on the subject of competitions, I feel that the title of Club Iron Man should go to Carl who, despite the chilly conditions dived without a hood, the mystery to us was, why didn't his ears fall off.

With the warmer weather hopefully about to descend upon us, some of our more fragile members will probably be joining us on club outings. Now is the time to check your equipment, get your tanks in test and make sure that your medicals are OK. Its no good finding out problems at 100 ft down, by then it might just be too late.

Nominations are now in for the vacant positions on the committee. Remember that votes must be in by 8.30pm on the 20th to count, so don't be late!

Because we have to put this particular issue of Fathoms to bed early, we are unable to bring you the results of the SDF Raffle, or any articles on the good time that was had by all, however our social commentator Peter Oakley has promised an "in depth" report on the festivities for our October issue.

Finally, since this may be the last editorial I have to pen and the last magazine I help to produce for some time anyway, I would like to thank you all for your assistance. Over the year we have had many contributors writing on many varied subjects, and it certainly does help us when this happens. One of my predecessors Bill Jansen, not only edited and produced the magazine but also had to write most of the stories himself. We certainly wouldn't have as good a magazine if it weren't for Glenys Cutts who does such a

good job as our printer, and is able not only to decipher my writing, but also copes remarkably well with the Tipping hieroglyphics. So thank you one and all until the next time.

ED.

DIVE CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
SEPT. 17	SORRENTO OR TORQUAY	To be advised	M.Synon 465-2812	
SEPT. 20	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	8 PM PROMPT	Collingwood Football Club	
SEPT. 24	SORRENTO	To be advised	N.Garland 56-4992	
SEPT. 29 (Friday)	BLACK ROCK YACHT CLUB	7 PM	C.Jirone 347-4110	Night Dive Cerberus
OCT. 8	SORRENTO	8 AM	B.Truscott 783-9095	Sierra Nevada
OCT. 18	GENERAL MEETING			
OCT. 22	FLINDERS PIER	10 AM	F.Ferrante 211-0708	Pyramid Rock
OCT. 29	INVERLOCH	10 AM	B.Scott Contact June Furneaux bus.hrs before 3.30pm on Friday 27th ph.68-3245	

Please note that the Annual General Meeting starts promptly at 8pm, so be early. Remember that if an election is necessary votes must be in before 8.30pm.

Members are requested not to bring drinks to the meeting room, but reminded that the facilities of the club are available afterwards for a sociable conclusion to the evening.

STILL LOST!

One Anchor wet suit top medium size 3/16th. Black outer with purple lining. This top was lent to a club member who hopefully should still have it in his possession. Anyone knowing the whereabouts of this jacket, please contact the editor.

COMMITTEE NEWS

The Annual General Meeting in September will commence the 25th year of the Victorian Sub Aqua Group. Over this time our club has grown from a few enthusiasts, considered foolhardy at the time to the present group of 60 people who come together because of their common interest in diving and through this, find friendship and new experiences.

Our Club depends on mutual co-operation and participation with each member and every activity adding to its character.

The role of each of us is to ensure the proper development of V.S.A.G. so that it continues to provide the fulfilment in diving which we seek in a manner of safety and with concern for ourselves, our diving (and non diving) partners and environment. It is with these aims that the V.S.A.G. Committee has worked during the past 12 months, and it is with much pleasure that I thank all members who have served with the Committee over this period. In addition I express the Club's appreciation to Alan and Glenys Cutts for their continued fine publication of 'Fathoms' and to John Marshall for his services as Auditor.

Now as we enter our Silver Anniversary Year we can be thankful that we have had members; both past and present; Committee and non Committee, who have contributed in many different ways to maintain a successful and on-going Club. For the future let us look forward to continued progress for the V.S.A.G. and enjoyment for its members.

JOHN GOULDING

WEDDING BELLS!

Congratulations to Tony and Esther who recently tied the martial knot. Club weddings are very popular, who will be next, I ask myself?

Continuing our extracts from the North Sea Oil and Gas Industry Diving Accidents 1971-75

In January 1974 two divers operating from the drill master rig in the Norwegian sector at a depth of 250 ft lost their lives when the bell accidentally surfaced. Subsequent investigation showed a breakdown in company communications correcting the drill after a modification to the weight slipping devices.

In April 1974 diver No.9 was drowned whilst diving from a drill ship Habdrill at a depth of 300 ft. This was an unfortunate case of panic by the attendant in the bell. The diver was carrying out the first operational dive from Habdrill on that particular site. The diving team had carried out several practice dives and they were very enthusiastic to get down to work. This may have had some bearing on the accident which really started when the diver overworked. He carried out his task in almost record time and in spite of the fact that he was advised several times to slow down. Having overworked on the task the diver was in some distress and swam rapidly back to the bell, but unfortunately he took a turn around one of the bell's weight wires with his umbilical. The bell assistant tried to assist him into the bell by pulling on his umbilical which in turn pulled him under water. A series of panic actions by the attendant lead to him cutting the divers umbilical and shutting the bottom door and screaming to the surface to be brought up.

In June 1974 diver No.10 got into difficulties whilst diving to a depth of 200 ft from a pipe-laying barge. He was surfaced and carried out a surface decompression routine albiet one that was well outside the normally accepted 5 mins technique and died from decompression sickness. The eventual postmortem showed that the deceased was suffering from heart and respiratory diseases. He was also obese.

In July 1974 diver No.11 died from a pneumothorax after a dive of 492 ft. This particular fatality was well publicised in Britain at the time because the doctor concerned failed to diagnose a

pneumothorax.

In August 1974 diver No.12 was lost while diving in a bell from an installation in the Norwegian sector. He collapsed and died from anoxia. Failure in communications when ordering the gas, and an error by the supervisor in failing to test the gas, lead to the diver being fed pure helium.

In October 1974 diver No.13 died whilst carrying out a surface swim from the installation Waage 1. At no time did he dive below the surface. The subsequent postmortem showed that he died from drowning aggravated by vomit and that he also sustained broken ribs. It is difficult to categorise this as a diving accident and even more difficult to state how the diver sustained his broken ribs and, in fact if they were the cause of his drowning. However it is possible that he may have struck the sponson or the "cow catcher" in the swell.

In October 1974 diver No.14 was lost while operating from a bell in the Norwegian sector. The fatality occurred due to a breakdown in communication between the divers in the bell and the control on the surface. This lead to a temporary switching off of the divers' gas supply and when realising that he had lost his main gas supply, the diver rushed back to the bell but became fouled on the way.

In December 1974 diver No.15 operating from an installation in the Irish sector of the Celtic Sea was lost through asphyxia. He was carrying out a dive from a bell in bad weather and it would appear that the movement of the bell sheared his umbilical on some obstruction. For some unknown reason the diver did not use his emergency gas supply. The weather was cold and the diver had no artificial heating and once again one cannot help thinking, in hindsight, did cold play an important part in this accident.

In December 1974 diver No.16 operating in the sheltered waters of Scapa Flow to a depth of 100 ft was trapped in a pipe by suction. It would appear that a pipe on the pig tray of the pipe was damaged probably by the jet sledge or the anchors of the barge, and the diver displaced the valve causing a massive suction which partially sucked his shoulder and arm into the pipe.

MYSTERY DIVE 1978

On Sunday 6th August we finally got back under the water with Dave

Moore's Mystery Dive. Well of course it wasn't much of a mystery, Mornington Pier on a damp August Sunday isn't really a mystery, more of a misery I suppose. Our hard core of winter diving enthusiasts were as usual Tony, Carl, Mick Jacquieu, John McKenzie and myself. Dave and family preferring as usual to officiate from the pier-head. One regular face missing was that of Johnny G., he was as Tony put it either interstate or "in his usual state" take your pick.

The water was being warmed up by Ern Irelands scholars ably assisted by our own Trevor Cowley who was his usual "cool" self, again both he and Ern officiating from the comparative warmth of the pier.

In order to put on our usual show for the tourists, Dave led us to the end of the pier where we were to free-fall into the water. One by one we dropped over the edge all except Tony who did his usual twenty metre leap over our heads. Once in we headed down under the pier to search for the elusive lead sinker, a specie which seems to flourish and multiply especially around Mornington Pier. The water had not seemed cold upon entry thanks mainly to my good wet suit, however once my head went below the surface the exposed part of my face felt as if all the skin had been torn off and every nerve end ached. This feeling must have lasted for about two or three minutes before my face became adjusted to the water temperature (Bazza would have loved every minute of it) and I began to look around for the prize sinkers.

There is so much fishing line tangled up all over the place down there it must be a tackle shop owner's dream. I headed out to the left of the pier and still 20 to 30 metres away the fishing line, old rod tops and sinkers dominate the sea bottom, plus the odd beer bottle of course. I was having a good look for the older variety of bottle but unfortunately 1978 Fosters empties do not qualify. We scrounged around for about 45 minutes before emerging into the light of day once more. Although the water had been cold, it had been reasonably clear about 15 to 20 feet, not much fish life though they must be frightened off by all the fishing tackle strewn around the sea bed there.

Despite Tony's pre-dive assertion that he was the greatest, the competition was won by Mick, with John just one sinker away in second place, and for once with Tony bringing up the rear of the field, we had a quiet prize giving. Congratulations to all those who turned out in the damp, and for those of you who didn't, better luck next time. The dive was followed by a barbecue just around

the corner at John McKenzie's, so thanks John for providing a warm end to a cool dive.

BRIAN LYNCH

MARINE PARKS

The progress of having certain areas of the Victorian Coastal regions declared as marine parks is at a standstill. The Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria has corresponded with the Victorian Government but to no avail. It appears that the Government, while accepting the reason for Marine Parks will not decide on what areas should be declared as sanctuaries for marine flora and fauna.

What is needed now is more pressure from interested groups such as ourselves to make the Government realise the unquestionable need for Marine Parks set aside for the purpose of protection and re-population of fish species.

An extract from a letter from the Geelong Sub Aqua Club to the S.D.F.-V sets out 4 good reasons for having Marine Parks :-

1. To have sanctuaries where aquatic fauna and flora may flourish with minimal human interference and predation.
2. To provide recreational areas where natural marine communities can be readily examined appreciated and photographed.
3. To maintain marine communities in an untouched state so that they can be scientifically examined and studied over extended periods.
4. To establish breeding reservoirs for certain species of reef fish for re-populating areas outside the reserves where spear-fishing and other fishing takes place.

Obviously Scuba divers will benefit from having marine parks, but by allowing these places to provide safe breeding ground (i.e. safe from all fishing) there will be a rub off benefit to fishermen as well. Not only this but it will mean a step in the right direction for the protection and conservation of fish in certain areas.

Your help is needed to ensure that some positive action is taken.

At the September General Meeting ideas will be called for ways to

to promote the concept of Marine Parks.

JOHN GOULDING

FLOTSAM & JETSAM

Well, this should be rather a short column this month. An early deadline and a rather non happening month during August, certainly puts the dampers on a chap's enthusiasm. In fact we're writing this, the night before Budget night which may zap away any remaining zest. Can you imagine the headlines in the "Divers Weekly" -
"Taxes cause Fenzies to inflate" or
"The Treasurer Spiro Howaryou budgets for a de-fish-it"

Diving has been getting its fair share of publicity lately. There have been some interesting documentaries on T.V., one in which featured the old master himself Jacques Cousteau diving with his woollen cap still firmly affixed to his head. However the publicity has not always been of the educational and factual variety.

Did you catch the recent full page colour advertisement in the Melbourne Sun featuring George Lazenby and glamorous blonde, both in diving gear. The blurb alongside the photograph states that the central action of the film was to be underwater --- and the product being advertised --- why cigarettes of course. What, between an ex James Bond flogging Benson and Hedges and Graham Kennedy in full diving rig doing a Wills Super Mild advert, the time is maybe coming when the cigarette companies will give our sport some worthwhile promotion. - Like maybe a fag that we can smoke underwater - aptly named of course - the "Super Kool".

Congratulations to Mick Jacquieu on winning the annual underwater treasure hunt. Mystery dive master Dave Moore directed proceedings from the warmth of the windswept pier, keeping a watchful eye also on young Darren, who at only 3 months of age was attending his first dive.

Those who braved the cold Mornington waters on the 6th August were treated to an uninspiring cooks tour of an underwater garbage dump of car bits, cans, bottles, clothing, you name it - it was there, and everywhere there were starfish. One wonders about those eager anglers who wait hours for the tug on their lines --

if only they knew just how luckless most of their hours will be.

LUKE B. HIND
(The Scottish Clairvoyant)

TIP'S TIT-BITS

This month one really has to stir up the old coals to put a column together especially when "Flotsam & Jetsam" scooped the rest of us last month with regard to the ski trip.

There was one small item of interest that remains to be exposed from that fateful Saturday night at Swindlers Valley - just who "did" Johnny spend the night with after Mini went to bed early? Let's not be fooled by the deep masculine voice and the firm handshake!

Congratulations to Mick on winning the Mornington Pier competition dive - this year Dave Moore organised a sinker search but unfortunately only five competitors turned up (plus Dave who had to stay dry to make the presentation.) The barbeque that followed at John McKenzie's Mt. Martha hideaway was well worthwhile - I'd like to know what happened to the families who'd been looking forward to later starts (12 noon), shore dives (pier) and barbeques on this fine winters day!

What's happened to Bazza this winter - only last year he'd be out in Lil Ab diving either the Portsea Hole and then looking forward to Crawfish Rock in July and in those days with a 2/16ths of an inch wet suit - maybe its so cold he's worried about his wrist getting thin and his gauges sliding off - that reminds me some years back Bazza bought a \$300 odd Rolex watch: it had extra dials, was antimagnetic, stainless, rustproof, shockproof, dustproof, waterproof but he still managed to lose it!

Well this years budget was a real shocker: income tax up; booze and petrol up - in fact one poor VSAG member is so desperately affected by it that he's asked me to run a free advertisement for his car: HQ Golden Holden Kingswood, RWC, radial tyres, good condition, new big 6 motor (10,000 miles) a bargain at only \$1995 Tel. 24-7133, but don't delay! First to drive will buy!! Rumour has it that he has to pay for his interview suit!

NITROGEN NARCOSIS

The following is taken from Section 17 on First Aid of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Diving Manual:

Nitrogen Narcosis is the result of the narcotic effect of nitrogen when breathed under pressure. These effects may first be noticeable at depths exceeding 100 ft but become more pronounced at depths greater than 150 feet. The effects produce impaired judgement and a false sense of well-being. Concentration or performance of even simple tasks are difficult. The diver may do things he would normally not attempt (removing his regulator, swimming to unsafe depths without regard to decompression sickness or air supply.) With hard concentration on the task at hand most experienced divers can keep these effects under control.

Symptoms

Loss of judgement or skill. A false feeling of well-being.

Signs

Lack of concern for job or safety. Apparent stupidity. Profuse laughter at normally not humorous subjects.

Treatment

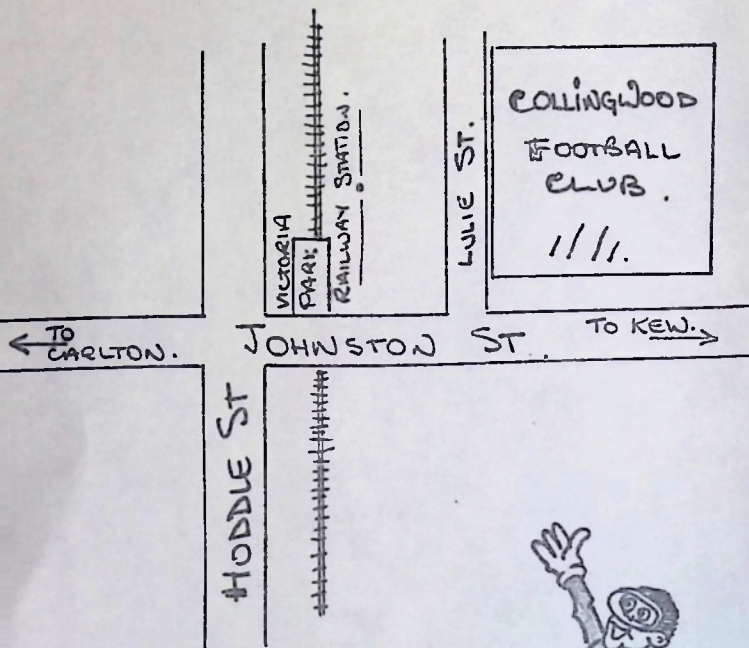
There is no treatment as such. The diver must be brought to a shallow depth where the effects are not felt. The onset of these effects can be quickly detected by the surface crew of a surface-supplied dive.

Submitted by - TONY TIPPING

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP.

CHANGE OF MEETING VENUE.

AS FROM THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. SEPT 20TH. 1978.



BALLOT PAPER

CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION
TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE
OF THE V.S.A.G. FOR 1978-79

SIX VACANCIES EXIST. PLEASE CROSS OUT
THE CANDIDATES YOU DO NOT WISH ELECTED.
THIS BALLOT PAPER WILL BE INVALID UNLESS
SIX NAMES REMAIN.

FRED FERRANTE.

NEIL GARLAND.

JOHN GOULDING.

DAVE MOORE

PAUL TIPPING.

BARRY TRUSCOTT.

SINCE THERE WERE NO OTHER
NOMINATIONS, NO ELECTION IS
NECESSARY. AND THE ABOVE
COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE RE-ELECTED
FOR 1978 /79.

THIS BALLOT PAPER MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE
SECRETARY BEFORE 8.30 pm WEDNESDAY 20 SEPT 78.