

JUNE 79

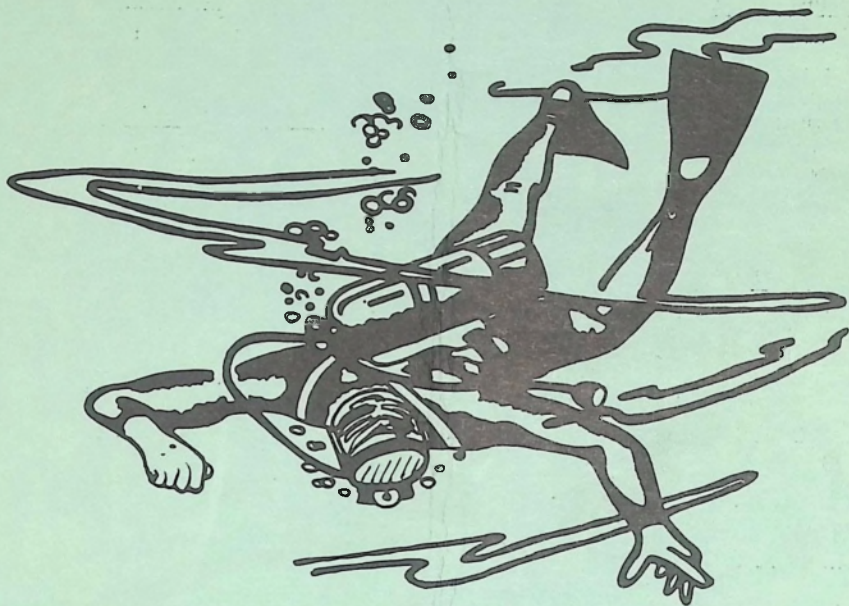
# FATHOMS



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## SAFETY IN DIVING

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# V S A G

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

JUNE, 1979

F A T H O M S  
 (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 20TH JUNE, 1979 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 6 pm until about 9 pm. 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

Well winter is upon us again, but for all the hardy VSAG divers there are still plenty of dives planned; lets hope that we have better weather than last month, when I think we were not able to dive at any of the scheduled dive sites, and had to make alternative arrangements.

At the last committee meeting there was a discussion as to where the club should go for the next Christmas trip, and after throwing around a few possibilities Narooma was agreed upon, as besides having good dive locations (e.g. Montague Island) available, there is a good golf course and fishing and water skiing in case the weather is poor. Paul Tipping will be our organiser for this so if you have any queries they should be directed at him.

We also decided on our annual Christmas function: this year we intend to have a "Hungli" (I hope the spelling is correct). For the uninitiated, of which I am one, this is a barbeque of sorts, you dig a pit, fill it with coals and then put the food on and cover until cooked. Hopefully we will have an authentic Maori to cook for us, and at the moment the location will be Bazza's block at Langwarrin, the date will be the first weekend in December, and it will be BYO grog and tent if you wish to stay the night.

There was also more discussion of the Graveyard dives, particularly in regard to the legality of diving on the wrecks (as per the new Ports and Harbours regulations), and also whether everyone will be able to obtain a CZ18 in time (3 week waiting list at Hampton Clinic). More information will follow on this as soon as Brian Lynch speaks to Geoff Naylor.

The 22nd June Nostalgia Night at Tony's will cost \$5 per double or \$3 per single which will cover the cost of supper, but not alcohol, you must supply your own. Tony and John are still looking for slides, particularly of people within the club rather than normal underwater shots. If anyone has any old slides which they would like to have shown, could they bring them along to the next meeting at Collingwood Football Club. Your hostess for this night will be the lovely Marg Ziccone so the food is sure to be excellent.

So little has happened this month that I have run out of things to say, so until I see you all again, safe diving.

ED.



DIVE CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
JUNE 16 17,18	PORT CAMPBELL		F.Ferrante 211-0708	
JUNE 20	COLLINGWOOD Football Club	8 PM		General Meeting
JUNE 22	21 ABERCROMBIE St. Deepdene	8 PM	T.Tipping 80-4956	VSAG Ncstalgia Night
JUNE 24	SUBMARINE Dive (1)	9 AM	B.Lynch 795-2834 Ring 23/6	Barwon Heads Jetty
JUNE 27	5/135 ESSEX ST. West Footscray	8 PM	B.Scott	Committee Meeting'
JULY 1	SUBMARINE Dive (2)	9 AM	B.Lynch 795-2834 Ring 30/6	Barwon Heads Jetty
JULY 1	CERBERUS	10AM	B.Scott 328-3036 Fri.Bus.Hrs.	Half Moon Bay Yacht Club
JULY 15	GRAVEYARD	9 AM	B.Lynch 795-2834 Ring 14/7	Barwon Heads Jetty
JULY 18	COLLINGWOOD Football Club	8 PM		General Meeting
JULY 22	WALL & KELP Farm	11AM	P.Reynolds 232-5358	Sorrento
JULY/ AUGUST	SKI WEEKEND			To be arranged

COMMITTEE NEWS

Subjects discussed at the last committee meeting were :-

1. Graveyard dive - medicals and legality
  2. Christmas trip to Narooma
  3. Windcheater & T-shirt with club emblems to cover cost of screen
  4. Christmas function at Langwarrin
  5. Club fees to rise in order to cover costs
  6. Pat Reynolds to bring library to General Meetings and to have more publicity about it.
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NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Included with this month's copy of Fathoms is your subscription reminder notice.

The Annual Subscriptions for the 1979/80 Year are due for payment by the end of June, 1979.

It is 3 years since the Annual Subscription was raised to \$15.00 and over that period and in particular the last 12 months our ordinary operating costs of the Club have risen considerably.

We are now faced with the situation that our anticipated income from current Members' Subscriptions at \$15 per head will fall short of our anticipated operating expenses for the next 12 months by: \$198 at worse or \$123 at best.

The Committee has considered this problem over two Committee meetings and is of the opinion that it would be most unwise to enter into a new financial year with the prospect that anticipated income will not meet expected costs.

It is true that we do have some cash reserves, but to draw on this money for our ordinary operating costs would place the Club at risk in meeting unforeseen expenses and would severely limit our ability to provide replacement for existing equipment and the purchase of new equipment.

It has therefore been decided to increase the Annual Subscription to \$20.00.

We are sure that in these times of rising costs you will understand the regrettable necessity for increasing the subscription, and it

is our wish that all members will continue to support the club and take maximum benefit from their membership by active participation.

DAVID MOORE  
PRESIDENT

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### TIP'S BREAST-BITS

Sunday 29th April is hardly worth a comment - although winds were light, the sun was shining and all 14 divers and 4 boats had arrived by 10am, we may as well have gone on the piker's picnic instead of to Picnic Point. Yes, only three of our more rugged specimens ventured down into the murky depths below those fifteen foot swells. Never mind though, chasps, it was worth paying your four bucks to see Bazza put the good ship Marie II into orbit!

It's probably a good move that someone or something has caused several members to rush out and get current CZ18 medicals (in actual fact its a standard pre-requisite for the Graveyard dive coming up). Surprisingly enough, at least three divers have been told they have a condition called exostosis (a benign cartilage-capped protuberance from the surface of bones due to chronic irritation possibly caused by cold water.) Divers get it in the ear and despite the fact that its not worth getting the excess bone drilled out immediately one must be careful not to get too much wax inside their ears otherwise a blocked ball of wax could cause a reverse ear squeeze and a possible rupture during ascent, so if you heard all that, good luck for your medicals!

If you're over thirty, and let's face it most of us are these days, you'll remember the "Axes and Orchids" column in the old "Listener-In" - good and bad awards or letters given to media personalities during the fifties and sixties. Well, for his effort in cancelling the dive on May 6th Dave Moore deserves a semi trailer load of axes and for the same day we'd like to award as many orchids to the green keeper of the Olinda Golf Club for presenting perfect conditions whereupon Johnny Goulding blazed his way to victory with a sizzling ten over double bogey, then celebrated afterwards with a Devonshire tea with scones and tea and jam and cream!



Well it finally has happened; Lynchy - the poor old bugger had to pull out of this years River Run, one of Melbourne's popular jogathons. As soon as he heard that his not so old arch rival who wishes to remain anonymous at this stage, was running he came out with a list of excuses ranging from an aching back to an abuse of libido (same thing?) and scratched from the race that very morning. Incidentally his rival who squared the series 2 each ambled along the 10,138 metre course in 43 minutes as a warm up to his 18 holes of golf at Olinda. In fact Lynchy intends to go overseas later in the year just to avoid being thrashed in the Big M Marathon!

This Nostalgia Night coming up at Deepdene sounds as if it could be a night to remember - it's not just the usual boring old under-water slide night we've seen so many times before, but a look at members of VSAG past and present; for example, shots of Bazza before his hair went grey, the well endowed Paul Sier before he began to wear underpants, Dave Carroll without his pizza gut, and there's even one of Jenni Reynolds in diving gear!

Incidentally Tip's Escort Service, a subsidiary of Tip's Tit-Bits Inc. is looking for consenting female partners for the Nostalgia Night and other future coming events!

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### SUNDAY 20TH MAY

On Sunday 20th May the scheduled dive on the Victoria Towers was abandoned due to surge and bad visibility over the wreck site. We transferred the dive location to Queenscliff, and decided to make channel runs to look for the elusive S.S. Gambier.

The S.S. Gambier was incoming from Newcastle, it was a fair sized ship of 1030 tons and carried 103 passengers. Early on the morning of August 28th 1891 she was nearing the Popes Eye shoal running at seven knots against a strong ebb tide. Coming the other way steaming at 10 knots and aided by the tide was the 969 ton collier Easby. Due to some degree of misunderstanding between the respective captains, the Gambier turned to starboard and the Easby cut into her amidships, ripping one third of the way across her. When the Easby backed off, the Gambier sank almost immediately. There is some discrepancy on the loss of life involved but at least twenty-one people perished on that cold August morning. After the accident all that remained above the water line were the

funnels and masts of the stricken vessel. The Gambier was then dynamited in order to clear the channel which brings us back to the present some eighty-eight years on.

We commenced our runs to search for the remains at a point north of the wedge light and drifted with the tide down past Popes Eye, hopefully along the route taken by the Easby. When we entered the water there was some wreckage and plenty of coal, we drifted down and in fact on this first run were underwater for 40 minutes which probably meant that after the initial five minutes we were sailing merrily away from the wreck site. We did find however several old bottles, one whole cup, several cup halves, many broken plates and one wooden pulley, and as I said before plenty of coal. Also criss-crossing our drift line were thick strands of cable which must have come from the Gambier.

This area west of Popes Eye was also used as a dumping site by the early settlers, so perhaps some of our finds were from this source. However the crests on the plate remnants found by Dave Carroll indicated the Gambier so we know that these and probably the coal came from the ship.

We made several passes with two boats but could not pin point the ship, which we all surmised must be under a bit of sand by now; however we do believe that we are narrowing our search area, and our relic collector in chief, Dave, reckons that we might be near it now. Anyway the day was pleasant, the sun warm, not much wind and underwater the visibility was about 10 to 15 feet. All in all a good day was had by all those who decided to dive. We did hear that Carl was lost somewhere on the Bellarine Peninsular but he never surfaced near us. Those taking part were:- Dave Carroll, John Goulding, Tony & Paul Tipping, Pete Smith, Mick Jacquieu. Those spectating were Marg and Lesley, Justin and Cindy Liddy and Bob Woolley.

BRIAN LYNCH

### WHISKY ON THE ROCKS

In Queensland recently two prawn fishermen anchored their trawler off Hope Island, donned their scuba gear and went over the side to enjoy their second most favourite pastime in the clear blue waters of the offshore Queensland coast.



To their surprise they found a copper casket on the sea bed which naturally they imagined contained precious coins and jewellery from a bygone era.

On raising the casket to their boat, they found to their even greater amazement that it contained a dozen bottles of Canadian Club Whisky.

Both men were absolutely puzzled - what was a copper casket filled with whisky doing in such a remote area - and on the bottom of the sea?

During a lively discussion about their "treasure" find at the local pub sometime later, someone reminded the 2 fishermen about an advertisement he had seen many years ago for Canadian Club Whisky. So with the help of some mates and a plentiful supply of old Playboy Magazines smuggled across the border from New South Wales, the search began to find the advertisement. They searched right back to 1968 before they found what they were looking for.

You see in 1968 the Canadian Club people hid 17 copper caskets of their famous whisky in 17 very inconspicuous places around the world as part of a promotion to advertise their whisky and the forthcoming Mexico Olympic Games. I do not know but perhaps a prize for finding one of these "lost" caskets was a trip to Mexico to see the Games. Anyhow, most of the caskets have never been found. I believe the first one was found in 1970 behind a waterfall in the Grand Canyon.

Our 2 fishermen contacted Canadian Club's agent in Sydney who knew nothing about the advertisement in the 1968 Playboy or the competition. He referred it to the Canadian Club's Headquarters in the U.S. and they verified the story and advised that they would arrange for someone to verify the find. Meanwhile in North Queensland there are 2 fishermen who reckon that Canadian Club Whisky matured for 11 years in a copper casket 30 feet below the surface is not a bad drop - and they have no idea what they will do with their 1968 Mexico Olympic tickets.

JOHN GOULDING

### FLOTSAM & JETSAM

May might well be called the month that didn't happen as far as most of the VSAG activities were concerned.

To my mind the most memorable part of May was listening to Toby Stewart's excellent presentation on underwater photography at the May General Meeting.

In a very professional yet modest way, Toby, who is in his second term as Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria President conducted a very informative and interest filled presentation on various underwater photographic systems.

Its just as well that C.R.B.'s top photographer Bill Jansen was there to ask a few intelligent questions, and by the same token it may have been ours and Toby's good fortune that Paul Tipping was not there. Paul, who is never short of a word would have loved the opportunity to engage in verbal intercourse with Toby and impress us all with the grand vocabulary of photographic jargon like F stops, ASA, micro, macro, flashes etc.

It would be hard to pass up the opportunity to describe a certain dive captains stubbornness on April 29th in going ahead with a Flinders dive, when his experience and the first hand advice from members present urged that the location be changed to the Sorrento side of the Peninsula.

We are rather fortunate in Melbourne in that certain wind and sea conditions maybe unsuitable for diving on one side of the Mornington Peninsula, but will be OK for the other side. This means that providing you are willing to travel a good dive can be almost virtually guaranteed from either Sorrento or Flinders.

Similarly in Melbourne, we are used to short visibility ranges underwater, but 3-5 feet is pretty foul and in my opinion not worth the effort!!

Lately there has been quite a lot of publicity in various newspapers concerning underwater activities. In case you missed some of these exciting snippets we include a few here.

The Financial Review carried a large advertisement placed by a "Public Company" of Sydney, which called for tenders to salvage one of Australias most valuable sunken cargo ships. The advertisement described the ship as lying within 14 miles of the coast, and contained in its cargo large quantities of non ferrous metals with total weight about 9000 tonnes.

Obviously they were not referring to our favourite wreck the

"Loch Ard". So, with a little digging around, we find that the Melbourne Sun took up the story. They believed the wreck is that of the William Dawes lying in 140 metres of water off Tathra Head on the southern N.S.W. coast.

Estimated value of the cargo -- a cool \$10 million -- P.S. The William Dawes was sunk by Japanese torpedoes in 1942.

At the other end of the spectrum, those members who journeyed to the Barrier Reef aboard Max Allen's 54 foot charter boat the "Murphy Star" will be interested to know that Max has a sister -- Gina! -- who like her older brother has a keenness for the clear waters of the Reef and whose lithe and pretty features are gracing the pages of Australian Playboy Edition 3.

Whilst on the subject of the Allen family, the Australian Sea Spray Magazine carried an article on Max's new \$300,000 65 foot charter cruiser "The Australiana" which will be based at Gladstone for conducting charter trips to the Bunker, Capricorn and Swains Reef.

More closer to home, we find that scientists at Melbourne University have developed a sonar sensing "torpedo" for mapping the sea bed of Port Phillip Bay.

Already they have located an old railway truck at the end of Station Pier, and piles of bluestone blocks on Hobsons Bay near Webb Dock.

Could our dear old Bay have been the site of the lost city of Atlantis? Perhaps the sunken railway truck holds the secret to train development that will give us timetables that the railways can work to!

On a more scientific note, the University has detected the various courses of the Yarra across the Bay floor when the Bay was dry land. We may even hear in time that they have found some new wrecks.

Maybe even the elusive wreck of the Gambier.

Whilst Ports and Harbours Authorities are driving us from areas where we may dive on the Ramsden, Goorangai and so on, a few members of this club have been searching for the Gambier.

Anybody who has recently seen this wreck, should report its exact location to the VSAG lost property officer.



The Great Barrier Reef Oil Drilling controversy is again raising its head amidst a worsening world wide shortage of oil.

It appears that there are 2 very real and strong issues involved in this conflict.

Australia and more precisely the world needs to search for and find new oil reserves.

Today's modern technology cannot provide a full assurance of safety to the reef from oil drilling induced damage.

In this regard the issue has similar criteria to be considered as the uranium mining question. "We need the energy but how do we ensure protection of the environment and its life."

Most people do not understand about a barrier reef, especially one that is over 1200 miles in length, and might mistakenly believe that its a lot of coral to be viewed by divers, or in glass bottomed boats.

In the words of Sir Maurice Yonge, who led the first biological survey of the Barrier Reef "It is the largest and most complicated ecological system in the world". I guess its a shame, that it might also be the richest!

CLAIRE VOYANT