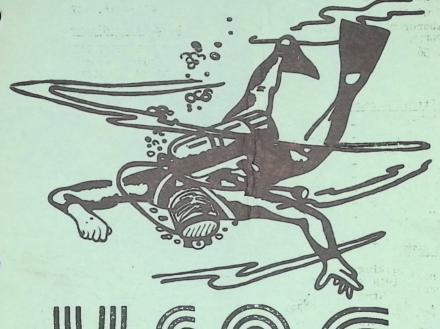
# PATHOMS

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SAFETY IN DIVING

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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 19TH SEPTEMBER, 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 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

It is with much regret that I commence this my last editorial, with the sad news of the death of Bill Gray on Monday 13th August. Bill died as the result of an accident whilst at work. Our sympathies are extended to Patsy and her family at this sad time. We haven't seen much of Bill for a while, and many new members will not know him, but the older ones will remember his little boat, and the Christmas pool parties held at Bill's place, are certainly well remembered by us all. Go in peace Bill Gray.

mis magazine being the last edition of the current year also has the minations for the new committee in it. I often hear people complain about our poor committee, but remember you voted them there, so please remember to vote on September 19. In order to make things easier a voting slip is inside this magazine, cross out those people you do not wish to vote for but please leave 5 names on the slip, as there are 5 positions to fill.

Included in this months articles is the report on the "Wall" fatality in April. We have included this really as a warning since the preaccident part of the dive sounds very familiar, and in fact many of us have dived in the vicinity of this tragic accident. However we are doing deeper dives at the moment, so please all of you who are contemplating future Graveyard or Wall dives make sure that you have the proper equipment, and are fit enough not only to look after someone else, but to look after yourself first. Make sure that the Ships Graveyard remains just that.

On a lighter note now, Tony is still looking for a couple of starters for his trek to Truk next year, anyone interested see Tony (you can rdly miss him these days) at the next meeting.

As I said before this will be my last attempt at an editorial, for a while at least. I have had this particular job for a while now, starting as a cub reporter under Bill Jansen, then as a co-editor with Dave Carroll then out on my own at last. Although we don't have a wide circle of writers, those who do write, do it regularly. I would like to thank all those who have contributed particularly good old Flotsam & Jetsam the faceless wonder, Tony for his Tit-Bits and of late the enigmatic "Ferrit's Friend" winner of Jay's "NO BALL" prize. Flushed with success you will find two articles by this illustrious authoress in this months magazine. Thanks also to Glenys Cutts who has translated not only mine but Tony's scribble

over the years, and has always got the thing back to me in time to get it out to you mob.

So unlike Nellie Melba I will say "au revoir" just once.

## BRIAN LYNCH - EDITOR

## DIVE CALENDAR

DATE	LOCATION	TIME	DIVE CAPT.	NOTES
SEPT. 19	COLLING/JOOD Football Club	8 PM		Annual General Meeting
SEPT. 23	UP THE YARRA Trip	olevalatore manaeminist	F.Ferrante 211-0708	BBQ & Fun
OCT. 7	INVERLOCK	TBA	B.Scott	
OCT. 17	COLLINGWOOD Football Club	8 FM		General Meeting

The results of the ten pin bowling competition were as follows:-

Winners Highest Game	Mens	F.Ferrante 167	Womens	Val Kimm (visitor) 128
Highest No. of Strikes	Mens	J.McKenzie 8	Womens	Chris (with Pete Smith)
*** * * * **				

Highest No.

of Spares Mens T. (Chubby) Tipping Womens D. Lynch

Lowest Game Mens B. Lynch Womens June Furneaux

Superb prizes were awarded for the bowling. An event well run, stagemanaged, and eventually won by our own Fearless Fred. Well done that man, and as Jay would say "three rousing British cheers" etc.

#### COMMITTEE NEWS

1. Christmas Trip.

- 2. Thanks from President and Committee to B. Lynch for his services as Editor/Committee person
- 3. Nomination for vacant positions for committee

4. Appointment of Electoral Officers

5. Query in regard to Constitution. (re update)

6. Christmas break-up party for VSAG Cost \$6.00 per head (Adults) \$4.00 per head (Under 15)

Date - 1st December

## ELECTIONS

At the Annual General Meeting, the annual elections will take place. Five vacancies exist and there have been nine nominations. Below are these nominations in alphabetical order. In the centre of the magazine you will find a voting slip with all 9 names upon it. Please cross out the candidates you do not wish to vote for. Remember that the ballot paper will be invalid unless only 5 names remain. Remember too, that in order to vote you must be a financial member.

#### Nominations

1. Dave Carroll

2. Wayne Hatch

3. Carl Jironc

4. Cindy Liddy

5. Justin Liddy

6. Jon McKenzie

7. Bob Scott

3. Max Synon

9. Tony Tipping

\* denotes committee members standing down and seeking re-election. Brian Lynch also stood down and does not seek re-election this year.

Scrutineers will be -

Leslie Gillies
Pete Smith

Returning Officer

Jay Cody

## A QUEER DAY - AUGUST 4TH

Well here I am again. Before I start my story, I want to thank all the people who voted for me. This is a story about Red Riding Hood and Little Boy Blue. Well off we went to Rye pulling our little Rubber Duck behind, quite proud Ferrit was, but before we even started down went one lamp post, you see Ferrit hasn't towed a boat before.

We got there all right and were getting ready for a dive, when to my amusement out came Red Riding Hood and Little Boy Blue, two pretty divers you ever did see. Well off they went, you didn't need glasses to follow them out, all you could hear was putt, putt, that was the little Rubber Duck one mile out to sea. Red Riding Hood and Little Boy Blue stood out like two candles. I think this year we will have to give an award to the best dressed diver, never mind Tony warmer weather is on the way. I think Ferrit looks better in black.

### FERRIT'S FRIEND OR LITTLE BOY BLUE'S FRIEND

## THE PINNACLES - SUNDAY 26TH AUGUST

Our dive destination this Sunday was one of our favourite dive spots, the Pirmacles. Although we have dived here with our own boats, we have found the best and most comfortable way is to go out with Stan Matts from San Remo on his fishing boat. This vessel takes 16 divers and Stan in a matter of about 35 minutes drops you right on top of the tallest rock pinnacle which comes up to 35 feet below the surface, and our first divers drop over some 45 minutes after leaving San Remo.

This Sunday was no exception, although the conditions which had been good on Saturday, looked as if they were deteriorating fast with low cloud advancing steadily from the west, the sea was calm. This time I had the dubious pleasure of being first in, along with Milton Robinson, we swam down the buoy line, to locate the small grapnel at 75 feet. This we removed to about the 40' mark, just above the small caves. We then set out to circumnavigate the rock, we descended to the 100' mark and maintaining this depth we eased our way around. The visibility was reasonable varying between 30 to 40'. There was a lot of fish life, with what seemed to be rivers of fish wheeling above us and disappearing into the haze away in front of us. There were a lot of fish around as always, even small crayfish! The sponge life was varied and the many eccentric shapes

constantly surprise you.

At 100' the water was beginning to feel cold. At 20 minutes we began our slow ascent bumping into two other pairs of divers en route. The only trouble with following other divers is that they silt everything up on you, Dave Moore take note. Pausing only to get my photograph taken by Fearless Fred, and to watch Tony shivering underwater, we lay on top of the rock immersed in the flowing kelp, for a further couple of minutes before rising slowly to the surface to find the boat about 30 metres away. Up onto the boat and a cup of Milton's soup made me feel a bit warmer.

must say that it was a little cold, so cold in fact that for once we aborted our second dive and opted to head back to San Remo straight away. I think that this would be a good time to remind all divers that the Pinnacles are regarded as a nature reserve, and no flora or fauna should be removed. This originally was one of the fishermen's pre-requisites for taking us out there in the first place. So please remember this when next we visit this very pleasant dive spot.

#### B. LYNCH

## PUSS-IN-BOOTS - 19TH AUGUST

Well you have all heard the story about the little white ball and I, well this is about the big red ball and I, no you are all wrong, it wasn't black it was red with 2 big black eyes. I grew fond of that red ball. Well this game was called Ten-Pin-Bowling, I call it Puss-In-Boots. We started off with boots 2 sizes too big and I couldn't feel my toes, well Ferrit said stick your thumb in that hole dyour two fingers in there, he is always talking about holes! He said you take a little run and throw your back leg in the air and bowl, that's what I did (and I thought down the gully was in cricket) because down went my ball down in the gully, but I did improve a bit in the last game. Ferrit got 4 strikes - I hate show off's. Well there I was again fronting up for the booby prize again - I love matches. Now I'm the Proud owner of 10 white balls and a big box of Redheads.

P.S. To the winners - Congratulations.

#### UPDATE MEDICALS

The following club members do not have current medicals. These names will be continuously published until medicals are obtained. Anyone who has a current medical and whose name appears here should present a photocopy to the Medical Officer, Neil Garland or the editor.

Andrew Benson Brian Baldock Jav Cody Max Dawson Carol Croxford Frank Coustley Phil Jefferson Leslev Gillies Bill Jansen B. Kelly F. Lottner Mick Jackieu N. Knight Carey Marshall P. Matthews John Noonan Jenny Reynolds R. Koper Peter Smith John Smibert Max Synon Gordon Ryan Barry Truscott Peter Smith (Ace) M. Richardson Jim Turner Roma Waldron Amanda Wookey Paul King

Rob Adamson Tan Cockerell Leo Canteri Dave Henty-Wilson Alan Cutts Ken Callec Frank Herbert Carl Jirone Dave Moore Dave Hurle Neil Garland John Marshall M. Matthews D.J. McBean Pat Revnolds Jon McKenzie Milton Robinson Peter Saunders Paul Sier Peter Oakley Clara Oakley Bob Scott Bruce Soulsby Paul Tipping Trevor West Graeme Hamilton Alan Whiteley Lindsay Cole Rob Woolley

If any name appears for more than 3 months it could jeopardise the diver's position on a dive, subject to the dive captain.

## TIP'S TIT-BITS

Once again I can report that there has been very little diving over the past month - the only location being the Fort or South Channel Island on 5th August where 7 spartans braved the frigid waters. For those who have not been there its probably worth an occasional look especially the deeper part near the old jetty. Visibility was a rather surprising 30 feet and an abundance of bay trout seemed to follow us wherever we swam. If a comparison is made between the Fort and Pope's Eye a diver would have to prefer the latter as the sheer number of species of fish seen grossly outway the other; but a distorian would have quite a bit of exploring to do with tunnels and old guns etc. on the Fort - it was apparently built pre World War I after an unknown Russian ship was reportedly lurking outside the heads. Poor old Pat and Scotty in the inflatable weren't too impressed with the slow wet trip back to Rye - especially after being taken about 5 miles out of their way:

It was probably the VSAG wedding of the decade - yes, Johnny and Maree finally tied the knot on 8th August at the Immaculate Conception Church in Hawthorn. We wish them all the best for the future. A delightful reception followed where Dave Carroll and Marg rivalled the newly weds for the cuddly couple award that night. Now as we all know speeches are common place at weddings whether we like them or not; one bloke obviously couldn't stand them, because he preferred to play table tennis with the kids next door for an hour!

The August meeting gave us all an idea of what diving Truk is all about. As you know we need a group of 10 for next Easter. At this tage we have six definite and a couple undecided so it looks like a joint venture with another club. The club was very grateful for Tony Newly and Jan Brevington from Always Travel for putting on the show. Let's make sure now we get the numbers and have that once in a lifetime dive trip next Easter.

The 10-Pin Championships at the Golden Bowl on 19th August was something different in the way of family outings. As usual Jon McKenzie our VSAG man for all seasons did it again - yet this month's latest, Val managed to take off first prize in the Ladies singles or whatever, but Freddie managed to pip Jon for the Men's. Not a bad effort though for Macka, considering that in the last few months he's brought along Ladies who have dominated the water ski trip to

Eildon and the Golf Day at Glen Eagles, and above all he's still the current holder of the Superman Award - but who knows how much longer he can keep it up!

The following is the report on the dive fatality on April 29th of this year. A few points to remember are -

1. This is an area in which we dive

2. The dead diver was receiving medication

3. He was a capable diver apparently used to depth

4. There are still a lot of names on our list of club divers without medicals. Think much much nearer home it would be if one of our names headed this report.

# REPORT ON DIVING FATALITY - MICHAEL JOHN WILLIAMS, 29 APRIL, 1979 OPEN STATEMENT TO ALL SDFV DELEGATES

At a Committee meeting held on 26.7.1978 a dive was planned for the Australian Post-Tel Institute Underwater Club on the Nepean Shelf, known to Victorian divers as "The Wall". The dive was scheduled for 3.12.78, but due to inclement weather, was cancelled and rescheduled for 29.4.79. This date was selected because the tides at the heads were favourable i.e. 7.33am low tide, 10.33am slack water.

Thirteen (13) divers placed their bookings for this dive and assembled at the carpark opposite Portsea Pier prior to 9.30am.

The charter boat "Elandra" departed from the pier at 9.40am, on board were:-

The boat owner - Mr. D. Stanton, 13 divers and 3 non diving passengers.

E. Yaksender was the acting Safety Officer and during the trip he matched divers in buddy groups on paper and on the boat's blackboard.

As the boat was nearing the dive site, E. Yaksender advised all divers to commence dressing into their diving equipment, the boat arrived at the site approximately 10.35am. A number of smaller boats with divers were already anchored in the area in a group, the "Elandra" slowed down and circled with depth sounder switched on. The boat completed 3 circles taking approximately 5 minutes and anchored in 40' of water on the edge of the Wall where the maximum depth was 200'. To avoid the possibility of a collision with the smaller boats when the tide flow changed direction the "Elandra"

anchored south of the small boats at a distance of approximately 200 yards. This position placed us in line with the Lonsdale Lighthouse approximately 1 kilometer inside the Port Phillip Bay heads.

A buoy attached to ski-rope was thrown over the back of the boat, the divers' ladder was placed in position and two (small & large) divers flags were flown. Divers then assembled into their buddy groups with the rest of their equipment and proceeded to finish dressing. During this time E. Yaksender went around all groups giving the following instructions:-

Advised all groups that with the exception of M. Williams and P. Richardson their maximum depth was 130'.

E. Yaksender made a visual check of diving equipment to ensure

that items conformed with club rules.

P. Trewin (Assistant Safety Officer) checked M. Williams' and P. Richardson's equipment for correct dressing and to ensure that all was in order.

I spoke to M. Williams re his Dive Plan. M. Williams stated 4. that 5 minutes bottom time without decompression was the same for a dive from 150' to 200'. I checked this against US divers tables and confirmed that the information was correct. M. Williams then advised that they intended to swim out from boat dive to 150', if all OK, proceed down at 10' intervals, but would abort the dive irregardless of depth, as soon as the 5 minute bottom time was reached.

This action took approximately 7 minutes by which time the current appeared to be easing off. The first group entered the water to check the current's strength. As it was still too strong they swam to the rear of the boat and waited 8 minutes. This group then swam bow. waited 2 minutes and commenced their dive down the anchor rope at 10.57am.

Group 2 - entered the water at 10.57am Group 3 - " " " " 10.57am

Group 4 - M. Williams & P. Richardson entered the water at 10.58am

Group 5 - entered the water at 10.59am

Group 6 - " " 11.00am

M. Williams and P. Richardson entered the water after receiving an "all clear" from E. Yaksender, Mick passed one end of his buddy line to Paul and attached the other end to his left arm. Paul slid the buddy line rubber hoop over his right arm and then both swam approx. 15 metres towards Corsia Rock and started to descend.

P. Trewin and E. Yaksender entered the water at 11.00am and completed their dive at 11.14am. On swimming back to the boat G. Box told E. Yaksender that Mick was 160' down in trouble. E. Yaksender confirmed this with P. Richardson who stated that Mick was on the bottom, that he had tried to inflate his vest by pulling the cord. After E. Yaksender had satisfied himself that Paul was OK with the exception that he appeared to be in a state of shock, he went back to G. Box and both climbed into the second small boat. They moved into the vicinity of where Mick dived and descended on a 120' life line.

This rescue bid was unsuccessful and upon surfacing the water police had arrived on the scene. E. Yaksender made a statement to them and finally left the area at 3.30pm.

E. Yaksender then spoke to G. Box and asked him what he knew about Mick's disappearance. G. Box stated that on surfacing with S. Trewin he noticed the boat owner D. Stanton waving and pointing to P. Richardson. G. Box told Steve to swim to the boat and then swam over to Paul. After taking hold of Paul's arm, Paul said in a shocked condition that Mick was dead and tried to explain what happened. Graham could not see any bubbles and was almost out of air, he asked Paul if he had any air left and was told "No". Back at the boat Graham asked if anybody had air or if there were spare tanks on the boat, he was told "No". Paul by this time seemed groggy and was suffering from shock, Graham then checked Paul's tanks and realised that Paul had a total of 2300 psi between both tanks.

Between Graham and Dave Stanton the alarm was passed on to the other small boats by sounding "SOS" on the boats horn. One of B. Gay's friends jumped on the first small boat and moved to where Paul surfaced and commenced to dive with the boat owner, this took 3 to 4 minutes from when G. Box first got Paul to the "Elandra".

- D. Stanton radioed the Lonsdale Lighthouse to request assistance, some doubt exists as to who actually raised the alarm i.e. D. Stanton or Barry Heard. The helicopter was first on the scene followed by a rubber inflatable (Probe Diving Services) and then the water police. The bay was closed to shipping but other than the sport divers who were on the site since slack water nobody else attempted to recover Mick's body. Two divers using hooker equipment reached 100' and one diver from this pair using a scuba tank got down to 160' but found nothing.
- E. Yaksender then spoke to P. Richardson (who by this time had

apparently recovered from his state of shock) and he asked him to tell me everything that happened from the time they started to descend. Paul stated that M. Williams was the leader and he stopped at 30' to equalise, at 40' they reached the lip of "The Wall". Checking each other and their gauges continuously they continued the descent going over and down three ledges (steps) the last one being very steep. At this point their depth was 170'. M. Williams looked at his watch, pointed to the watch and displayed the thumb up sign to P. Richardson indicating that it was time to ascend. P. Richardson stated that he felt happy and intoxicated but was still capably checking his gauges. M. Williams was wearing a US divers BC vest all did not know (remember) if it was inflated. Paul was wearing a Nemrod BC vest which was fully inflated. Both started to ascend straight up (not following the wall) at 100' M. Williams levelled out indicating to slow down as they were surfacing too quickly.

At 100' the problems started, Mick was sinking, Paul only noticed when the buddy line became tight and was himself being pulled down. Paul swam to Mick and could still see bubbles, Mick had his regulator out of his mouth. Paul offered Mick his spare regulator but Mick would not accept it. Paul could not see Mick's face but tried to force Mick to take the regulator, at this point Paul felt that Mick did not even know that he was in the water with him. Mick was not calm and made a very short sharp dash for the surface and then blacked out, Paul then tried to inflate Mick's BC vest by pushing the button, nothing happened although he is not sure if he succeeded in actually operating the button. Both were sinking and finally struck the bottom at the 160' mark (Paul was not sure of this depth). Paul again tried to inflate Mick's vest without success while both were lying on the bottom. Paul said that at this time he couldn't el anything and started to black-out, panicked a bit and made a dash for the surface but was stopped by the buddy line. He untied the line, dropped his own weightbelt and quickly surfaced. On the surface Paul waved both hands and shouted for help. Paul had the idea that the boat was coming over. (Actually the boat was still

On returning to the Portsea Pier, Paul Richardson and E. Yaksender made a statement to a Police Officer which consisted of names, addresses and a description of M. Williams, they then drove to Mick's home in East Bentleigh. It was here that E. Yaksender first discovered that Mick had been to the Doctor complaining of severe headaches after dives. Mick's cousin told him that he had used a

anchored but G. Box swam over and assisted Paul to the boat.)

nasal spray "Tobispray" for the first time that morning and that the headaches were severe enough to cause nausea and vomiting.

On Monday 30.4.79, Michael's Doctor rang E. Yaksender and after confirming that M. Williams was a patient of his, he stated that Mick had been to see him on 2.4.79. The Doctor originally diagnosed the headaches as being caused by Barometric Hypostatic Pressures, and as he felt there may also have been an embolism he ordered x-rays of the skull. On 6.4.79 the Doctor informed Mick that the x-rays were negative. In view of the tragedy, these x-rays were again checked but the result is still negative.

Club records indicated that Mick was a capable diver whose deepest previous dive was 190' and had considerable experience below 100'. This dive was not beyond his capability, he was wearing all equipment as required by Club Safety Rules and his dive was authorised by the Club Safety Officer,

#### FLOTSAM & JETLAG

Mothers of Melbourne you can now relax, here is the news you have long awaited. We are glad to report that you can now unbar your doors, unlock those chastity belts, yes, and even let your dogs run free, because one of Melbourne's most eligible (he told me) batchelors has finally met his match. Johnny Goulding was married to the lovely Maree James on Wednesday August 8th and this column would like to wish them all the very best and may they both be very happy, preferably with one another. Many of you may remember Johnny as a batchelor gay, a title he acquired as a veritable succession of young men shared his living accommodation; I've even spent the odd night there myself. Very odd! Johnny has now left all that behind him so to speak and seriously folks we hope that he and Maree will be very happy.

The dive scene has been very quiet, due mainly to the inclement weather and the only VSAG turn of note was the Golden Bowling Day to which some of our hardier brethren turned up. The noble Fred had us all organised and we had these damaged cannon balls, they all had holes in, to hurl at these funny looking skittles, or as in my case they had this lovely ditch thing at the side which you could roll the cannon ball along and it never even touched the poor skittles. inyway Freddy put in a matchless performance which John McKerzie

and our beloved president Dave Moore could not match. Neal and Bob also matched shot for shot, and a friendly ferrit also knocked a few over too, in fact the ladies prowess was matched only by their good looks. Afterwards in the cafe Fred presented the prizes which I can only describe as matchless, in fact Fred seems very attached to red heads. Well done Fred certainly a day with a difference enjoyed by us all.

Talking of shirt splitting which we weren't but brings us nicely to our next piece of gossip, guess who's going around these days masquerading as the "Incredible Bulk", just ask Tony and watch him tree green.

I was going to publish a list of those club members with current medicals as I said I was but I couldn't really find anyone who would own up to having one. Our reporter spoke to one member who alledgedly replied "they'll not get their cold hand on me", and then remarked that he could not cough on oue anyway.

Some of our fitter but definitely less same brethren will be running over the Westgate Bridge this month in the Sun Superun. Our sports reporter spoke to one of the clubs remaining athletes, whose only problem appeared to be, where could he put the toll money, so our reporter told him. He has now recovered, but privately told me that our athletes do not have a sense of humour. All I can say is that anyone who wants to run eleven miles over a bloody great bridge must be a bit furny to start with and probably tired out at the end.

That's all for this month and I'll leave you now as we draw to the end of another winter with a quote for our newly weds.

I MARRIED YOU IN WINTER
SO THAT TO ME, YOU WOULD CLING
BUT WHEN THE BED COLLAPSES DARLING
I WILL SEE YOU - IN THE SPRING

IVOR BAKAKE (the slipped disc jockey)