

FATHOMS

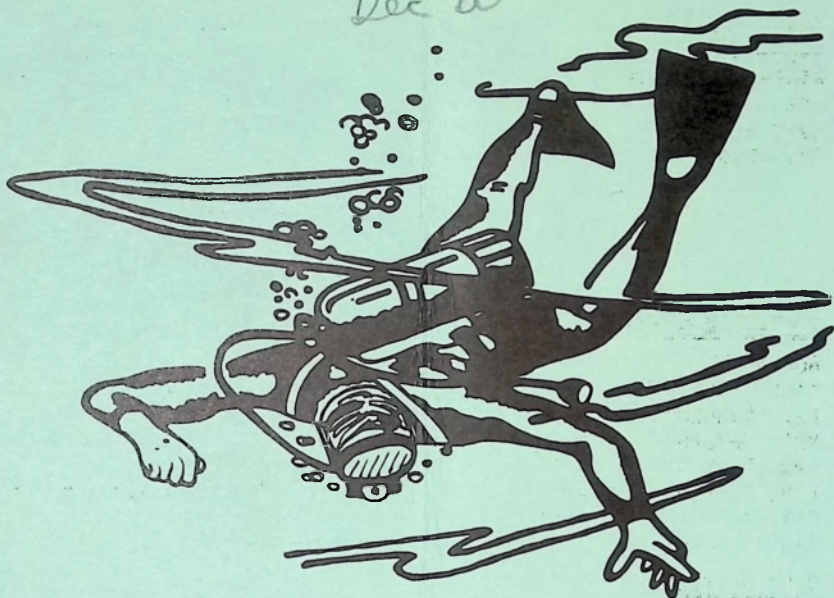
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SAFETY IN DIVING

50c

Dec 80



VSAAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FATHOMS

(Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)
Box 2526W, G.P.O., Melbourne, 3001.

PresidentAssistant Editor

TONY TIPPING

21 Abercrombie Street, Deepdene, 80-4956

Vice PresidentSecretaryS.D.F. Delegate

JOHN GOULDING,
5/22 Hill Street, Hawthorn,
819-1739

Newsletter Editor

DES WILLIAMS,
29 Valerie Street,
Boronia,
762-1623

Treasurer

DAVE CARROLL,
5/29 Dover Road,
Williamstown,
391-2211 (Bus.)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS+

BOB SCOTT - Social Secretary - 367-2261
BARRY TRUSCOTT - Safety/Medical Officer - 783-9095
PAT REYNOLDS - Property Officer - 789-1092
NEIL GARLAND - Points Scorer - 529-5484
FRED FERRANTE - Librarian - 578-4406
PAUL TIPPING - Public Relations Officer & SDF Delegate -387-2027
MAX SYNON - Committee Member - 465-2812
CARL JIRONC - Committee Member - 347-4110

CLUB MEETING:

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Wednesday 17th December, 1980 at 8pm at 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 W A R D:

Father Christmas will soon be squeezing down our chimneys once again, as yet another twelve months have drifted past, a good year for VSAG on reflection.

Our Club Christmas trip to ULLADULLA should also launch 1981 on a good diving note, as the chances for exciting dives are many on the central south coast of New South Wales, hope to see you there.

In my opinion the most important part of the Christmas holiday period is to stay alive on the roads. So if you are driving and diving this Christmas, be extra alert and keep it a happy holiday for your family.

For those of you who are new members of VSAG please note that we do not have a Club Meeting in January. After the coming December meeting on the 17th our next Club Meeting will be Wednesday February 18th, 1981 at Collingwood Football Club.

Response to my request for articles of interest for "Fathoms" has once again been met with poor response apart from the usual donations by our regular scribes. Don't be afraid to scribble out a newsy item, imagine if two or three new donations were made to each issue, we would all have some more variety to read about. So have a go, many hands should make light work of this publication.

Many shiny new 92 cu.ft. cylinders will be seen amongst Club members from now on, due to a bulk buy arranged by Geoff ("want to buy a cheap watch") Birtles. I think this is a classic example of a good price discount for members banding together and bulk buying, one which we should encourage in the future as diving gear certainly isn't getting any cheaper. After all, this is why we are all members of a Club, to help us to help one another to enjoy the sport even more. And Geoff hasn't finished there, at our last General meeting it was his suggestion that those of us wishing to achieve the Cat. 2 Cave Diving Certificate should band together and arrange a whole class of VSAG members to be examined. A great idea! And about 12 other members present thought so, too. Geoff is finding out a few more details and the test will probably take place early 1981. For those who haven't seen it before, this is Club "SPIRIT" and I feel it has returned to the mighty VSAG to stay, now that we have finished with school-girl type arguments from non-divers.

This month we are very pleased to welcome three new members, they are: - Peter Harkin, Jeromy Herrod and Thor Rumold. Great to have you with us fellas, hope to see you on plenty of dives.

EDITOR

DIVE CALENDAR:

<u>DATE:</u>	<u>LOCATION:</u>	<u>TIME:</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>NOTES:</u>
DEC. 14	FLINDERS AREA	10 AM	C. JIRONC 347-4110	FLINDERS
DEC. 17	GEN. MEETING	8 PM	- C'WOOD FOOTBALL CLUB	
DEC. 26-JAN. 9	ULLADULLA N.S.W.		SHOALHAVEN C/PARK	
JAN 18	"SURPRISE DIVE" - CONTACT F. FERRANTE SATURDAY NIGHT 17TH FOR DETAILS - 578-4406			
JAN. 24-26	WILSON'S PROM - PORT FRANKLIN - CONTACT P. TIPPING - GOOD SHIP "MOORABOOKA"			
FEB. 8	SORRENTO	8.30AM	T. TIPPING	
FEB. 15	FLINDERS	9.30AM	N. GARLAND	
MARCH 1	SAN REMO	10 AM	M. SYNON	(* NOTE)

*NOTE

THIS WILL BE AN OPEN WATER DIVE WEATHER PERMITTING,
OTHERWISE A CHANNEL RUN.

COMMITTEE NEWS:

1. New members accepted into VSAG - Jeromy Herrod, Thor Rumold and Peter Harkin.
2. The "Moorabooka" trip to Wilson's Prom is overlooked so first 16 people to pay on or before December General Meeting will have first preference. Cost \$55 HEAD.

3. G. Birtles has donated a Gestetner printing machine to the Club which we have very gratefully accepted. More on that next month.
4. F. Ferrante will promote our Club Library facilities in next newsletter, to rekindle interest.
5. Both Club steel tanks have been sold.
6. At recent SDF Safety Officers Conference Dr. J. Knight made it clear that CZ18 diver medicals were not necessary more frequently than every 3-4 years, unless the person has suffered some illness, operation, recurring diver pains or any other medical condition indicating the need for more frequent medical examination. It was in line with this latest thinking that the committee decided to extend the current medical period in VSAG from 2-3 years. Hear more at December General Meeting:
7. Next Committee Meeting to be held at Barry Truscotts home at:-
3 NETHERDALE RD, EAST BRISBANE, on Wednesday 28th January, 1981.

ULLADULLA:

The VSAG Xmas/New Year Trip is to Ulladulla on the South Coast of New South Wales.

Eight now powered camp sites have been booked from 26th December until 10th January at the Shoalhaven City Council Caravan Camping Reserve, South Street, Ulladulla, Tel: (044) 552457, Managers name - Mr. Hallwood. Official Receipt number for bookings B 5445. A deposit of \$192.00 has been paid by VSAG.

There is a local dive shop at Ulladulla - The Blue Marlin Marine, 126 Princes' Highway, Tel: (044) 55-3383. Proprietor - Peter Smith.

There are many excellent diving spots around Ulladulla as well as the exciting dive spots of Jervis Bay a little to the North. Fine beaches, a golf course, tennis and fishing are just some of the other pastimes to be enjoyed.

Tony Tipping will be our co-ordinator at Ulladulla. Upon arrival you should check at the office (during office hours) and ask for the VSAG sites. It is expected that all members will abide by the rules and regulations of the Camping Ground.

DIVING OFFICERS CONFERENCE:

On Saturday 1st November the Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria held a Diving Officers Conference aimed at providing helpful information to clubs in organizing their dives.

Two delegates from each club were invited, and Des Williams and John Goulding attended for the VSAG.

Whilst it is not practical to cover the whole content of the conference in a single issue of Fathoms, Des and I will endeavour to provide the major topics over the next few issues:-

There is one which I will include in this issue:-

1. Diver Lifesaving - Lecture by Paul Butler.

It is worth noting that all speakers at the conference were very well qualified in their particular subject.

1. DIVER LIFESAVING:

(a) The speaker emphasised the merits of the Sub Aqua Bronze Medallion course as a pre-requisite for proper training in diver res

(b) The most common single causes of diving fatalities are:-

1. Divers Error
2. Buddies Error
3. Instructors Error

(c) Diving deaths usually were brought on by a chain of events:-

1. Outset of cold and fatigue
2. Increased stress levels
3. Mistakes are made - examples:- failure to drop weight belt or goody bag, removing regulator or snorkel
4. Panic and death follows

(d) Given that, there is a certain danger and risk in diving the proper approach to the activity is to plan around accident avoidance:-

1. Priority importance of using the buddy dive system -
***** certain VSAG members - Take note!!
2. Selection of the dive site and conditions compatible with the abilities of the divers
3. Monitoring of your own and buddy's air pressure or content
4. Correct use of weight belt and ensure proper working of quick release of buckle.

(e) ON SURFACE RESCUE:

1. Ditch weight belt - don't wait until your gasping after swallowing mouthfuls of water.
2. Inflate bouyancy compensator.
3. Jettison tank if you are faced with a long swim.
4. Keep mask snorkel flippers and knife.
5. If tiring, roll on your back or use the crouch position. The crouch position will help prevent heat loss.

(f) UNDERWATER SELF RESCUE:

1. If out of air and unable to reach buddy for buddy breathing then go for free ascent.
2. Try and ascend at normal ascent rate or at 60 ft./minute
3. Extend neck upwards and hum to expel air.
4. Retain regulator in mouth as air may start to flow as you ascend closer to the surface.
5. The weight belt can be used to control ascent however, if very deep and unable to gain sufficient ascent you might have to drop belt.
6. If using a bouyancy compensator you can re-breathe from the unit, or if fitted with its own air supply (Fenzy Type) breathe from the unit as with a regulator.

(g) ENTANGLEMENT:

Remain calm, Practice ditch and recovery, use knife, have buddy handy.

(h) SURFACE RESCUE:

If rescuing another diver or swimmer do not endanger yourself by allowing victim to crawl over you.

1. Try and control verbally:- "Ditch weight belt!"
 - "Put snorkel in mouth"
 - "Inflate vest!"
 - "Follow me"

If necessary to physically assist diver or swimmer, approach from behind victim so that he cannot grab you and drown our too.

- Release his weight belt and inflate his buoyancy compensator
- Retreat if he is endangering you.

(i) UNDERWATER RESCUE:

Give air quickly but don't lose control of the regulator

- An octopus regulator system is far safer and practical in a rescue.
- Buddy breathe to surface.

(j) UNDERWATER UNCONSCIOUSNESS:

Make and maintain contact. Ditch victim's weight belt. Maintain victim's neck extension and retain regulator in victim's mouth. Ascend at safe rate. Inflate his buoyancy compensator on surface.

RESUSCITATION:

As soon as possible to victim being on the surface, commence resuscitation through mouth to mouth or mouth to snorkel.

PROBLEMS:

One of the biggest problems in diver rescues occurs on the surface. - How to get the victim into the boat or ashore:- It is therefore crucial to have a topside man on shore, man who can assist.

The biggest weapons in accident prevention are the buddy system and air supply control.

In February Fathoms we will outline the lecture on:
Emergency Management

JOHN GOULDING

TIP'S TIT-BITS:

Welcome back readers, I promise there will be no more censorship or distortions and there will be plenty of the latest gossip, rumours, who's doing what and to whom, politics (what a disaster it was) and any other smut worth printing. So let's hear from you, the spicier it is the more we'll exaggerate!

There have been some worthwhile dives over the last few weeks - a couple of good crays have been plucked out Flinders way and Bob Scott sure knew where the scallops have been hiding since the old "Hurricane" was flattened. By the way, I'd hate anyone to think we're just a pack of scavengers - it's not often we chase a feed; most of our dives cater for the photographer or in the case of the Wall or the subs just the sheer exhilaration of diving.

As usual, the dive calendar is crammed at this time of the year; we've had a Golf Day, Tennis Party, Annual Dinner and the annual VSAG Mile - Can't tell you who was the most monstrous animal at the Greek Inn or who won the golf at this stage but the rest of the action went to Paul King - I wonder if we'll even hear the end of it! Ther'es still plenty more to come - Ulladulla over Christmas New Year still plenty of room and of course after that we can look forward to Reg Truscott's hospitality on the Moorabooka over the Australia Day Weekend (bring your own binoculars)!

If you still have'nt been convinced about Ulladulla (the single blokes anyhow) word is ther'es a nude beach very close by - not only that but I believe the clubs are excellent (NSW all over) and El Presidente is in charge of several "Boys Nights Out." In other words if you're heading that way don't forget the cow's hoof repellent and the D.S. tablets.

Guess it's that time of the year again - have a Happy and safe Christmas and leave your car at home for the December VSAG meeting as it'll be off to the Yarra Bank and besides most of the tarts have their own cars these days!

SCUBA DIVERS CONFERENCE QUARTERLY MEETING REPORT - MEETING 28.10=80:

1. The SDF has been promised a grant of \$1,500 from the Victorian Government to cover costs of projects held during 1980 and some planned for 1981.
2. The Marine Aquarium Research Institute was admitted to SDF.

3. New Club membership applications were received from Education Scuba Club, Marine Research Group. A vote will be taken at the next VSAG Meeting for approval to vote on the acceptance of these clubs to SDF.

4. The Annual SDF-A Conference will be held in South Australia.

5. The Technical Review Committee reported that the Standards Association of Australia were surveying tank testing stations as to the necessity of yearly hydrostatic testing of aluminium scuba tanks.

Early indications were that testing stations favoured yearly visual checks only and longer duration for hydrostatic tests.

The Committee is also undertaking a test on Divers Safety vests, and a full report will be made at a latter date.

6. The Conservation Council of Victoria have requested that SDF provide information to be considered for the proposal to declare a marine reserve around Wilsons Promontory.

An audio visual display on the Harold Holt Marine Reserve has been made by SDF-V and is available for loan to affiliated club.

A Brochure on the Harold Holt Marine Reserve has been printed by the Ministry of Conservation but will not be released until a law enforcement officer can be appointed to patrol the Reserve and police the laws and prohibitions of the Reserve.

7. Surplus from the SDF Dinner Dance was \$76.00.

8. A motion was moved and carried to run a raffle in 1981 to finance re-printing of the very popular SDF Log Book. There will be a 10% return on ticket sales to Clubs on their sale of tickets.

9. SDF - badges can be available. - Order through Dave Carroll, John Goulding.

10. The President of SDF-V Toby Stewart will be standing down at the Bi annual Election (Feb. 1981) and will not be seeking re-election. Nominations for President are called for.

11. CASICO INSURANCE:

New applications for inclusion in the CASICO Diver Insurance scheme will now only be accepted one week after the quarterly meeting of the SDF.

The next SDF meeting will be held on the first Tuesday in February, 19 1.

JOHN GOULDING

FLOTSAM & JETSAM:

Over the past few weeks some great or maybe not-so-great leaders have risen to champion status amongst their ranks.

The United States has a new President in Ronald Reagan. The Miss World contest has been won, given away and then awarded to apparently the second most beautiful girl in the world. (Although in my opinion she's not a match on my Murgatroyd, first thing in the morning).

Alan Jones one time old school buddy of our own El-Presidente has long achieved International fame and now at last has been truly acknowledged at home as a great driver. That quietly spoken and introverted younger of the Tipping brothers has again won the Clubman of the Year award. So we have Presidents driving aces and beauty queens but in tennis and running - VSAG style, we have nothing short of KINGS:

Now, I don't mean Kings with crowns and robes, but instead Kings with running shoes, sweaty Tee-Shirts and long socks falling down around their ankles

In a devastating burst of vigor and enthusiasm (for which most of us bronze anzacs are so well known) Paul and Julie King took off the VSAC tennis prize on November, 16th at Balnarring. Narrowly defeated were Justin and Cindy Liddy who although playing well could not match Julie's ball handling and Pauls foreplay.

With completion of the tennis and after a short pause it was time to run the Annual VSAG Somers Mile race.

A sure favourite and joint back marker Brian Lynch was scratched from the race the night before and was ruled unfit for such a long distance endurance event.

Another well backed favourite Geoff Birtles whose fitness test was part of last months issue is believed to have worn himself out doing arm-stretching exercises. Geoff whom we understand likes to eat crayfish has developed a new exercise to increase the length of the lower arm allowing the lucky owner of such an arm to reach into the deepest crevice to seek out the elusive cray.

So even though some of the leading lights were missing the VSAG mile got under way with Bazza acting as time keeper whilst mumbling things like "Aah I remember the days when I used to run!" and being somewhat bewildered by someone's digital watch.

To our disbelief and astonishment the rank outsider Paul King lead the field into Sandy Court, Somers and claimed victory in the name of the King.

Bob Scott finished a close second and in fact was awarded the prize as our noble organizer and El-Presidente was concerned that to award 2 prizes to the same person may bring forth cries of foul play. Little was it known that Tony had planned to win both contests himself but was the victim of a nobbling to slow him down, which until he reads this he did not even knowabout.

The usual bar-b-que followed all this activity and rounded off a very full day.

On Sunday 23rd November it was back to diving again off McRae in what turned out to be the great shelling session of the year. Fourteen divers from four boats can cover a lot of territory in searching for scallops, and after about 40 minutes divers began to pop up accompanied by very heavy bags.

Recipes were swapped as we passed the time away shelling our catch and I must admit that Wayne Hatch's speciality sounded rather something!

The ingredients included 3 bottles of white wine and only half a pound of scallops!

So it's almost the end of the year and once again the Club is bound for the friendly waters of NSW.

The authors of F & J wish their readers, a safe and happy Christmas and good fortunes for 1981.

SANTA JAWS
(The Christmas Shark)

CASICO INSURANCE:

Please note:-

Members who were not included in the CASICO diver insurance scheme intake in May, 1980 and who wish to join before the next intake must notify John Goulding before the end of January.

Arrangements will be made for new members:-

Jerry Herrod, Peter Harkin, Thor Runold to be included.

Other members - notify John Goulding.

FEATHERED NAVIGATORS:

The Mutton Bird, as the short-tailed shearwater is usually known, is migratory, leaving its nesting areas in the Bass Strait region in late March or early April, flying first north easterly, to places north of New Zealand, from there north west to the Phillipines, and following the coast of Asia past Japan to the ALEUTIAN Islands in the BEHRING SEA.

Towards the end of the northern summer they begin their flight down the west coast of America; then they cross the Pacific near the Hawaiian Islands, and return to Bass Strait on the same day each year. It is

known that some of these birds have repeated this flight thirty times. The migratory pattern is unique. Times of arrival and departure are strictly adhered to and, in fact in many cases are maintained to the hour.

The parent birds begin their flight north about two weeks before their young, which seem to follow the same "flight path" by relying on instinct.

The Bass Strait area is the only nesting place for mutton birds. Burrows in which they make the nests, are found in sandy soil near the edge of the sea. In very crowded rookeries there may be as many as nine to a square metre. One egg is laid each season and if anything unfortunate should happen to that one egg there is no second egg that year. The birds return to the same burrow every year and after mating the egg is laid and the female sits on it for two weeks without stirring for food.

The egg is the size of a duck egg and like the flesh of the bird, has a strong oily taste. During this period the male is at sea feeding, but returns on the second week to relieve his mate on the nest. Mutton birds feed mostly on the small octopi and squid which abound in the waters of Bass Strait.

The build of the bird does not lend itself to easy travel on land, its short legs makes for a clumsy rolling wing movement and a fluttering gait. Without a "runway" at a reasonable height it is difficult for the birds to become airborne. If conditions at sea are too calm it is impossible for them to leave the water, they just "sit it out" and wait for a breeze!

All flight movements round the rookeries are carried out at night, the great exodus occurring just before dawn, the return at dusk, similar to our peak-period traffic rush.

The pre-dawn departures develop into a wild scramble as hundreds of birds jostle for position on the runway, and there are many collisions and many abortive take off, with dozens of birds fighting for a second try, before all the birds have gone. Whilst the birds navigation accuracy baffled scientists for many years, it is now generally accepted that the bird does have its own built-in compass and clock and is capable of navigating by the stars and sun!

Although the Mutton Birds are protected under Victorian law, there is no evidence of any great increase in the bird population around the coastline. On some of the islands of Bas Strait which are not under the jurisdiction of Victoria, a limited amount of hunting goes on, but this is rigidly controlled and even under these conditions there seems to be very little variation in the population.

DES WILLIAMS
