

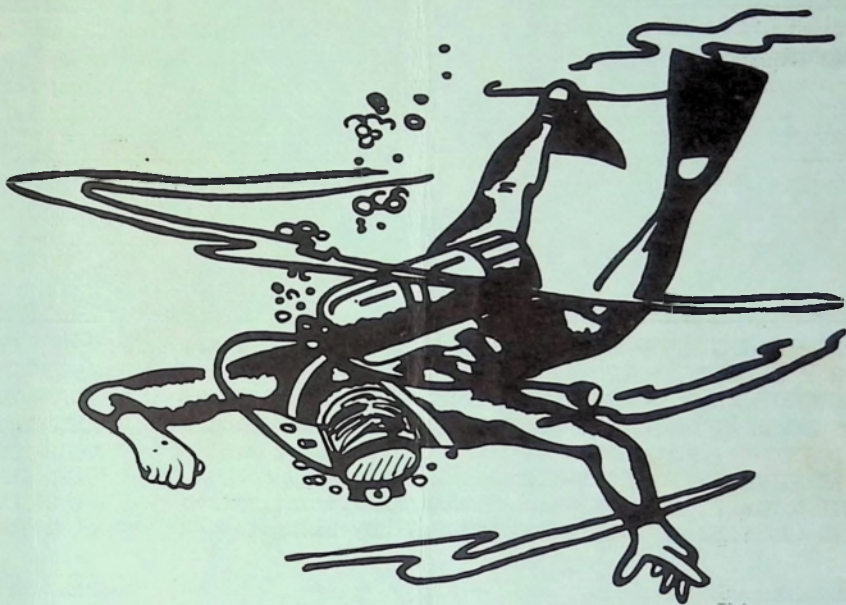
FATHOMS

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SAFETY IN DIVING

FEB '80 50¢



V S A G

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FATHOMS

(Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group)

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CLUB MEETING -

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Wednesday 20TH FEBRUARY, 1980 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

Well here we are 1980, a new decade upon us, and first of all I want to wish you all a Happy New Year and I hope you all enjoyed your holidays. Most of us have now returned to the joyous routine of everyday work and to the ecstatic Victorian diving scene.

On behalf of the Club I'd like to thank Brian Lynch for the delicious sandwiches which he graciously supplied for the Christmas party on the Yarra.

During the Dec.-Jan. break the Club had several successful dives with near perfect conditions but the clincher was the Refuge Cove trip with Reg on the "Mirrabooka". The weather was perfect, read about it in Wendy's article "How to have a good time or Fourteen sex starved men and me".

As you can see from the dive calendar we are in for some good diving. So remember the Club policy "SAFETY IN DIVING".

ED.

P.S. Many thanks to Bass Strait Diving Club for their generous loan of their camping equipment for the Refuge Cove trip.

DIVE CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
FEB. 10	WRECK DIVE	8 AM	B.Truscott 783-9095	Sorrento B/R
FEB. 17	FLINDERS Cray Hunt	10 AM	P.Reynolds 787-5972	Flinders B/R
FEB. 20	GENERAL MEETING	8 PM		
FEB. 23	1960 ERA FANCY Dress Party 21 Abercrombie St. Deepdene (BYO Meat, grog and everything)	6 PM onwards	T.Tipping 80-4956	Cost \$1 per head

DIVE CALENDAR (Cont'd.)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
MAR. 2	GOLF DAY	TBA	N.Garland 529-5484	
MAR.8-10	LOCH ARD	-	D.Moore 547-2791	Pt.Campbell
MAR. 16	FUN RUN for the energetic for others BBQ on the Yarra (near Anderson St. Bridge) Start 10am onwards		F.Ferrante 211-0708	
MAR. 19	GENERAL MEETING	8 PM		
MAR. 23	WRECK DIVE	9 AM	J.Goulding 819-1739	Sorrento 3/R
APR. 4-7	INVERLOCK	TBA	B.Scott 319-3036 (B.H.)	

COMMITTEE NEWS IN BRIEF

1. Old medical records to be checked by Secretary and appropriate action taken
2. Photocopy of medicals to be handed to medical officer
3. J.Liddy to be refunded monies re Graveyard Proper dive
4. Revision of mailing list re unfinancial persons
5. Over 40's yearly medical not required according to several medical (C.Z.18) doctors. (See post script)
6. Purchase of plastic tool box for new first aid box.

P.S. Report submitted by Secretary (extract from Minutes of Committee Meeting, January 1980.)

The club Safety Officer reported that he had been advised by an experienced diving medical practitioner that, as a rule of thumb, divers over 40 would not normally require annual medical review. However, the individuals concerned should monitor any changes in their health and consider whether medical examination more often than 2 yearly was indicated. Accordingly, the committee agreed that the previously advised requirement for annual medicals for the over 40's would not now be enforced.

P.Tipping.

The following people owe money for Narooma camp sites -

P. Sier	\$5.00	
J. Goulding	\$5.00	
T. Tipping	\$5.00	
R. Adamson	\$5.00	
D. Moore	\$20.00	
P. Moore	\$20.00	(Peter Moore)

Please pay at February General Meeting.

GRAVEYARD PROPER 9/12/79

In the usual tradition of the V.S.A.G., five daring aquanauts descended upon little Paully's premises in the wee small hours of Sunday morning (10am to be exact) for the purpose of assembling and proceeding to the site of another harrowing dive experience.

Since the advent of the aqualung, divers have wanted to go deeper and deeper, the V.S.A.G. being a traditional organisation, believes in following tradition. "We can do it deeper". So with this thought in mind we, the gallant few committed ourselves to our destiny.

After finishing breakfast, which chef Paully cooked, we all converged upon our motorized chariots and commenced the long the arduous drive to the Barwon Heads jetty. Upon arriving at our destination, we all donned our ceremonial attire and stowed our gear on our trusty vessel. At 1315 hours we cast off and set sail for "The Graveyard Proper". Upon reaching it we assembled ourselves in the traditional buddy pairs under the watchful eye of our D.C. Tony.

The procedure was one group down at a time with a bottom time of 10 minutes and 5 minutes precautionary time at 10 feet. The conditions for this dive were typical for Melbourne diving - very slight winds, slight surface swell and an overcast skyline, now I come to think about it, these were good Melbourne diving conditions.

With all safety checks completed down went the first group of divers, Des Williams and myself, straight down the shotline till we reached 100 ft where we paused for a moment for orientation purposes as Paully calls it, with the orientation completed we continued our descent, at 150 ft. we were on the deck of the wreck.

I must say Geoff Naylor knows how to drop his shot line right on the spot. In this instance it was amazing because he hasn't dived on this wreck himself.

The wreck itself was well preserved, probably because we were only the second group to dive on it, the first was in the morning by the A.P.I. (Aust. Postal Institute Diving Group). Visibility was an amazing 15 to 20 ft., but the basic problem was insufficient time to see enough. It seemed that by the time Des and I had swam about 40 ft. stopping here and there for a general peek-a-boo it was time to turn around and find the shot line, this was easy thanks to our trusty compass.

We both decided it was time to start our ascent, at about 90 ft., I noticed a grey shadow streak past us at a distance of 20-25 ft., I tried to explain to Des what I saw but to no avail so we continued our ascent to the 10 ft. mark where we commenced our deco stop.

Upon reaching the surface, we were picked up by the boat which at the same time dropped Johnny and Dave Henty-Wilson in, to do their dive. We both performed the traditional disrobing ritual and dried off. Within 15 mins Johnny and Dave surfaced and so in went Tony and Paul, before they even put their heads underwater Paul started to have problems, (I hear there's a secondhand Poseidon regulator for sale, see Mr. P. Tipping). This time with a change of tank and reg, Tony and Paul started their dive.

When the Tippings finally surfaced it was found that Tony had managed to do the deepest dive, but according to Paul he had to dig down three feet into the sand (which of the two was narked the most no-one will ever know). With both of them back on board the shot line was raised and we all settled down for a nice comfortable trip back to shore, with the usual, "I saw this, did you see that fish".

In all it was a good dive but too short in duration.

FRED FERRANTE

BOTTLES! Yes, bottles! What do I know about bottles? I only make them! Well, having been asked about a thousand times by both the young and old Tipping brothers, the Pom and various other executive

types, finger has been extracted and some homework done. Below is a short "stolen" account on bottle making in Australia up to about 1910. The techniques used were primarily the same as used elsewhere in the world.

The main constituent of glass is sand. This sand needs to be fine and free from impurities. The Melbourne glass industries (primarily Melbourne Glass Bottle Works Co.; Moonee Valley Glass Bottle Works Co., Victorian Flint Glass Works, Flemington Flint Glass Works, Floyd Green & Co., John Thomas & Co. and the American Glass Bottle Works) used sand from the beach in Port Melbourne for normal production. This sand has a high iron content which subsequently caused a slight green tinge.

Another main component was sea shells from Corio Bay on the Ballarine Peninsula. Both of these materials were transported by lighter or other small vessels and subsequently many of the small ships lost in the Bay were never salvaged, so their cargoes of shell-grit and sand are still intact (for interested divers).

The moulding of bottles was carried out much in the same way as in previous centuries. A bottle shop comprised a Gatherer, a Blower, a Wetter-off and a Maker. The Gatherer would, by dipping and twisting the end of a blowpipe in molten glass, gather sufficient glass to make the desired bottle. He then took the pipe to a water tub, turning it all the while to keep the glass under control and then cooled the blowpipe so it could be handled by the Blower.

The Blower rolled the suspended glass on a flat sandstone or iron marver, making the glass smooth and compact. He blew air into it and made it larger and elongated it so that it approximated in shape and size the inside of the wetted wood mould which was of the exact size and shape of the desired bottle. This operation was called making the "parison" which much of a Blower's art lies. He would run it along the edge of the marver to reduce its diameter where the neck of the container would be so that it would fit into the mould.

The parison had to be a certain length so that it would sag down in the mould in order to get a fairly uniform bottom. If a square bottle was being blown, the Blower, when marvering would work some glass into that part where the shoulder would be, otherwise it would tend to be thin at that point. Another man would take the pipe and blow down it while the glass was settling.

After blowing was completed, the blowpipe with the attached bottle was handed to the Wetter-off, who removed the bottle from the mould and cracked off the bottle from the blowpipe by allowing water to fall on it from a knife-shaped piece of iron. This caused many small cracks near the point of application of the water, the part that would eventually be the mouth of the bottle. A sharp tap and the bottle would be removed, put in a shovel shaped tool called the punty and handed to the Maker.

The Maker would heat the top of the bottle in a furnace and with the aid of a ring iron would get a thread of molten glass and put it around the top of the bottle. Sitting in his chair near the furnace he formed the ring by rotating the bottle with rotary movements of his hand tools and finished the container. The bottle was then handed to a boy with a heated one-prong fork who transferred the bottle to an annealing oven or lehr for reheat and slow cool down.

An alternative to the "punty" was a very old system where the bottle was transferred to another rod on the bottom of the container before "wetting off". This left a mark called a "pontle" mark which is often seen on old bottles with a pushed up bottom. This "push up" provided an even, circular base to give the container more stability. Usually moulds were not used with this system, marvering only formed the shape.

Well, that's generally how they used to make them.

D. CARROLL

THE SHIPS GRAVEYARD

As far back as 1973, I can remember members of V.S.A.G. talking about a dive on the Ships Graveyard. In those days very few people had dived this place as its whereabouts and wreck locations were known only to a few fishermen who quite understandably were very choosy about whom they took there.

All we knew, was that it was bloody deep and was the resting place of a number of ships that had finished their active life.

My own reaction was to be awed by the very name of the place which left me with a rather cold feeling everytime there was discussion of the "Graveyard".

As the years went past and we dived all over the place the awesomeness of the Graveyard turned more to intrigue and it seemed that if we ever attempted this dive it would provide a new exhilaration. Perhaps to be equated with the challenge of a mountaineer to reach new heights.

In early 1979 we learned that Geoff Naylor who was one of the first to dive the Graveyard in 1972 was conducting dive groups to scuttled ships off the Barwon Heads area and if certain preliminary dives were undertaken to his satisfaction he would consider a dive in the Ships Graveyard.

The matter was raised at our General Meeting and 10 members were selected to start the Graveyard dives.

June 24th 1979 was scheduled for the first dive on one of 'J' class submarines located south west of Point Lonsdale.

Two more preliminary dives were conducted on the remains of the steamer 'Rotomahana'.

These wrecks are outside the "Graveyard" area and lie in 120 to 130 feet of water, somewhat shallower than the Graveyard but nevertheless requiring a serious and competent approach to the dive.

The first scheduled Graveyard dive was cancelled due to bad weather and rescheduled for December 9th - a period of 3 months since the previous Rotomahana dive.

As luck would have it we managed another 130 foot dive on one of the Submarines on the 18th November and this again provided the opportunity for a self disciplined dive into deep water.

December 9th was overcast with a slight southerly wind. The sea was a little lumpy and an uninviting grey colour. The site chosen for the dive was a steel hulled ship lying in 160 feet of water, and was already buoyed for a group of divers that had been on it earlier in the day.

Bottom time was established at 10 minutes, with a 5 minute decompression stop at 10 feet.

There were only 6 divers on this trip and it was decided that divers would go in pairs, with the second and third pair waiting on the boat until the earlier pair had ascended to the staging position on the shotline.

Fred Ferrante and Des Williams were to be first, then Dave Henty-Wilson and I followed by Tony and Paul Tipping.

The shotline went straight down to the deck at the bow of the ship 150 feet from the surface. The ship was quite small, maybe 150 foot long, with 3 open cargo hatchways along its deck and a smaller hatchway with ladder leading down inside the hull.

Visibility was 15 to 20 feet and in the time available we were able to swim completely around the ship and peer into the various holes and hatchways.

All too soon the bottom time ran out and after waiting 6 years for this dive to the Ships Graveyard it was back up the vertical shotline to decompression and then on board for lunch.

No doubt that those who missed the dive will be disappointed but for those who made it, it was a good experience at deep diving and a chance to dive an area visited still by very few.

JOHN GOULDING

TIP'S TIT-BITS

By now, hopefully, we've all recovered from the pre Christmas booze-ups, New Years Eve and with a bit of luck the Australia Day long weekend i.e. unless you went to Refuge Cove on the Mirrabooka. From a diving point of view we've had quite a smorgasboard since the last issue of Fathoms with dives out in the Graveyard off Barwon Heads, Montague Island, Gabo Island and Wilsons Promontary.

The Narooma diving was made interesting by the weather, you could either pick up 8 dozen golf balls by doing a shore dive off the third fairway or pick up a breath-taking 150 foot visibility out at Montague Island with wall to wall kingies included; (slides to be shown at February General Meeting). In the 13 days at Narooma we managed 7 days out at the island, 2 shore dives off the golf course 7 rounds of golf and 6 dozen cans of Abbots!

It was pretty difficult to decide who'd pick up the quote of the month on the Christmas trip this year: runner up was an anonymous one - "Just give me one long hard night!" and the winner was that of young Chris Synon when he sprinted up to the shower block to announce to the packed queues: "Guess what, my Dad's doing women's work!"

WANTED: The ashes of one particular clip-board. Clues - dark in colour, but decorated by several diving stickers e.g. Danger Diver Below and Federation of Australian Underwater Instructors; usually seen on club dives. Reward: shorter VSAG meetings so come on help end this clip-board madness!

Briefly: Congratulations to Clara and Peter Oakley who've just become proud parents once again - this time a boy! Also to Maree Goulding (doesn't look right does it - James was far easier) who chalked up the best score at golf over the holidays. Lil Ab's price is now down to a bargain basement price at \$2595! In the Lost and Found area will anyone who found a restored green EH Holden in Whitehorse Road Balwyn please return it to Kobbie at 21 Abercrombie St, Deepdene soon - he needs it for the Rockers Vs Jazzers party later this month! Forget about Truk, Bazza, there have been enough divorces in this club already!

In closing, just to sum his holiday at Narooma and Mallacoota one sub literate VSAG member submitted the following excuse for a poem:

Eight divers brave and so depraved,
They came from near and far,
But eight men died and none survived,
The dreaded Narooma Bar.

Then V-sag took the challenge,
On a bummer of a day,
There was Johnny Goulding narco,
And Bazza with a cray.

Narooma seemed too easy,
So down Highway No. 1,
For a crack at Mallacoota,
Where they copped it in the bum.

He's not much of a poet,
But, hell, he's got a nerve;
So read this bloody garbage,
Or he'll finish up a!

AUSTRALIA DAY WEEKEND 1980 (ANIMAL WEEKEND)

There were 15 starters (14 men and me) what odds but Reg Truscott (Capt. of the good ship "Mirrabooka") brought along his niece

Bev, just to even things up.

Saturday: After a cold and wet night spent in cars and one tent we arose early to find Des and Paul K. had arrived, so we began to load the mountain of gear on board and were away by 8. It was alternatively warm and cold-rain with a shower or two of hail. We actually made it down to Refuge Cove again this year and then we moved all the gear onto the beach to set up camp. Off for a dive we went and ended up near the lighthouse. Most of the boys went in and of course the cray king caught a cray. After all the excitement, we went back to camp for dinner.

Sunday: Up early and off for another dive or 2. The D.C. Dave H-W decided we should try to get around to the Ansell Group (where we dived last year). We went for a look-see but the swells were too large so we came back again. While starting up the compressor Carl lost his watch over the side and not only that he managed to:-

Break his backpack strap

" " flipper "

lose " snorkel mouthpiece - so for Carl it was an

expensive weekend.

We had a couple of dives on Sunday with the weather improving and were looking forward to more diving on Monday.

After a filling, if not so tasty meal, the boys settled down to demolishing a few tinnies, so they wouldn't have too many to carry back onto the boat. We were joined by another group of 4 divers who told a few good jokes and the noise got louder. The Ranger paid us a visit and asked us to make a little less noise and after about 2 hours the boys finally obliged, but not until Tony was ejected from the H-W tent and had to spend a solitary night in the mess tent.

Monday: Monday morning and we were up, some a little slower than others and after a hearty breakfast we moved all the gear back on board the boat.

Motoring along a bit, we stopped for a dive. This was to be the usual cray/abalone/crab hunt and when Bazz heard there were crays to be found, he forgot about his hangover and was into it.

On the long trip home, the boys tried to drink the ship dry and the beer was not the only thing which flowed freely. Tony and Dave H-W managed to fall overboard and a lot of water washed the

decks and various bodies. Poor Carl copped more than a bucket of water when he miscalculated - sorry Carl I didn't mean all that abuse - I guess it rubs off after 3 days.

We actually got back to Port Franklin at a reasonable hour and after a brief interlude at the Foster pub it was off home.

In the usual fashion we all enjoyed ourselves and thanks to Reg and the organisers, it went off very well.

To the members - old Tony, Bazza, Carl, Dave M, Dave C, Dave H-W,
Mick J, Paul K, Fred, Bruce S, me
- new Des, Gary
- non Bruce and John

see you all next year.

WENDY MASON

MEDICALS

As from December 1st, any person who's names appears on the list below will not be permitted to participate on any scheduled club dive. So get your medicals up to date or else you'll be the ones who'll miss out on the pleasure of club diving.

If you have a medical and your name still appears on the list below please notify the medical officer and/or the editor and also supply a photocopy of the medical for the club files.

NB. Numerous members have medicals but there is no record on file, so could all medical holders please supply a photocopy of their certificate to the medical officer/editor.

Neil Garland	Ian Cockerell	Gordon Ryan
Andrew Benson	Leo Canteri	Peter Smith (Ace)
Brian Baldock	Alan Cutts	M. Richardson
Jay Cody	Ken Callec	John Marshall
Max Dawson	Frank Herbert	M. Matthews
Frank Coustley	Dave Hurle	Milton Robinson
Phil Jefferson	B. Kelly	Peter Saunders
Lesley Gillies	N. Knight	Peter Oakley
Bill Jansen	P. Matthews	Alan Whiteley
Trevor West	John Noonan	Jon McKenzie
R. Koper	John Smibert	Graeme Hamilton

WANT AN OVERSEAS DIVE TRIP AT EASTER?

Black Rock Underwater Diving Group are wanting extra divers to go down to the Kent Island Group in Bass Strait at Easter.

Reg Truscott's boat has been booked to take divers to the island, where accommodation will be arranged on shore at Erith Island or Deal Island.

Diving at Deal is quite fabulous with sheltered water to be found in any weather conditions. There's plenty of choice from wrecks, reefs, fish, crays and above all clear water.

Contact Bob Hurst 93 4924 or Dave Hawkes 277 9439
for further details.

SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF VICTORIA NEWS ITEMS

Plans are being formulized for a Safety Officer Seminar in mid 1980 - members of V.S.A.G. who wish their delegates to raise any particular matters should bring these to attention of the Clubs SDF delegates.

Printed SDF-V Tee Shirts are available for cost \$4.50. The T-shirts are light blue with the Scuba Divers Federation of Australia emblem and readily available sizes are 16, 18 and 20.

Orders are now being taken for:

SDF logbooks	\$3.00
Underwater Photographic Seminar notes	4.50
Wreck Seminar Notes	4.50
Scuba Seminar Notes	3.50
Decompression Table Comparison Chart	3.50

These SDF publications are an excellent asset to the serious divers library. See Dave Moore or John Goulding

FLOTSAM & JETSAM

With Malcolm Fraser on holidays, someone had to stay behind and run the country and so it was not until several days after Christmas that Murgatroyd and I were able to get going for Narooma.

Narooma is a pretty little town on the south coast of NSW and

about a 9 hours drive from Melbourne. These days its main claim to fame is the superb fishing found in the area and particularly at nearby Montague Island, about 10km south east of Narooma.

VSAG members had started arriving at the Van Village camping ground on the 23rd December and were therefore experts on the area when Murg and I arrived on the 29th.

We found out that by applying certain mathematical equations to everything that was said was the only way to obtain an accurate assessment of what had been going on.

Our most often used equations were as follows:-

- (a) Underwater visibility - to obtain accurate diving visibility divide quoted visibility (in feet) by 4.
- (b) Golf Score - to obtain accurate golf score take quoted score and add 1.75 hits for every hole played.
- (c) Sea conditions - to obtain accurate height of waves at dreaded Narooma bar, divide quoted height by 2.
- (d) Size of fish caught - firstly disregard any mention of "catching fish" and rephrase question to determine how much money has been spent at the local fish and chips shop.

The diving at Montague Island gives the southern diver quite a change of scenery in fish and plant life as well as underwater topography. Kelp covered rocks give way to breath taking drop offs which supported many varieties of sponges and corals. On several dives we saw the great schools of kingfish which swam around us in circles and gave the appearance of an overcrowded sardine can on a gigantic scale.

Slow and obliging wobbegong sharks were in complete contract to the evasive blue groper which would take off at first sight of a diver.

The seas remained fairly kind to us and the Narooma Bar which had taken the toll of 29 boats during 1979 did not present too much of a problem to Bazza, Dave, Tony and Max who took their boats.

Murgatroyd had warned me before we set out that she wanted to play a lot of golf, and fortunately for her Narooma has a magnificent golf course perched right on the cliffs overlooking the Pacific. On two of the holes, the sea has forced deep gorges which penetrate the golf course and golfers are required to hit across the sea. It was from one of these inlets that our boys gathered nearly 100 golf balls while snorkel diving.

And it was on the other gorge where Barry, Tony and Dave very capably assisted in the rescue of a youth who had fallen down the cliff while attempting to retrieve golf balls. Well done fellas!

Murgatroyd's dynamic 49 for the 9 hole course was the lowest score recorded by our players, and I hear caused an embarrassing intrusion into the male domain of "winning".

A table of average scores is included in this article. The great Robbie was the most improved golfer by managing to reduce his score by 42% between his first game and last game.

VSAG alley at Van Village was perhaps a little quieter this year than in the past. As Bazza put it, "We are getting old when fellas come round to take out our daughters". Apparently Michelle Synon was quite a hit with one of the local lads while sister Vicki and friend Anne preferred to play the field, when they weren't winning on the pokies.

All too soon January 5th came and it was time to pull out. Of those who had remained to this time, Bazza, Tony, Dave, Murgatroyd and I decided to head down to Mallacoota to try and get a dive at Gabo Island.

After a very interesting night at the Mallacoota pub at which a local fisherman warned us that we would be quite mad to tackle the Mallacoota bar, we decided to "give it a go".

Bars are funny things and I really do prefer the type that they have in hotels rather than those at river and estuary entrances. Nevertheless some good boat handling and with a lot of hope we survived the bar and headed out to Gabo Island.

The wind began to spring up from the south east however we found some sheltered water behind the island and had an interesting dive.

There was not the same prolific fish life at Gabo as we had seen at Montague but the bottom was strewn with sponges of the most diverse colours, and would be good for macro photography buffs.

For Murg and I this was the last day of the hols and early the next morning we headed for home.

For many who went, the golf was as enjoyable as the diving and for those who are interested we publish the average scores.

Tony Tipping	averaged	57	after	7	games
Maree Goulding	"	59	"	5	"
John Goulding	"	60	"	5	"

Fred Ferrante	averaged	63	after	5	games
Bazza	"	66	"	3	"
Marg Ziccone	"	68	"	6	"
Paul Sier	"	69	"	2	"
Dave Moore	"	73	"	2	"
Rob Adamson	"	76	"	3	"

But I won the diving !!!

CLIFF HANGER
(The clumsy mountain climber)