

# FATHOMS

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## SAFETY IN DIVING

50c

JUNE 190



# V S A G

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 JUNE, 1980 at 8pm at the Collingwood Football Club, Lurie 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

I am pleased to report that club members seem to have responded positively to last month's foreword; our meeting in May was attended by more than 30 people, there were 18 divers on the George Kermode and 19 people dived the Portsea Hole which were the 2 dives immediately prior to my writing this. A most pleasing aspect of the dive attendances was the number of visitors diving and expressing interest in joining the club, as I believe the infusion of new blood can only have good effects on the club.

At the last committee meeting there was a discussion on T-shirts with club emblems, and I was asked to remind you that we have a screen for printing our own T-shirts or windcheaters. If you are interested, see Fred Ferrante at the next general meeting. V.S.A.G. car stickers at 50c each, and cloth badges at \$2.50 each will also be available at the next meeting.

Another topic of discussion was our Christmas trip. There was a general consensus that since we have gone to N.S.W. for the last 5 years, it was time we looked to the west, and Victor Harbour in South Australia was suggested. Nothing has been decided yet however, so if you know of somewhere else, could you bring your suggestion along to the June general meeting. The criteria we try to satisfy are good dives, reasonable camp sites, availability of other entertainment; since not all the people who go away at Christmas wish to dive each day.

ED.

DIVE CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
June 14-16	YARRAWONGA		B.Soulsby, 62 Telford St. Yarrowonga	
June 18	COLLINGWOOD Football Club	8 PM		General Meeting
June 22	WRECK DIVE Outside Heads	9.30AM	J.Goulding S19-1739	Sorrento B/R
July 6	INVERLOCHY	10 AM	P.Reynolds 789-1092	Anglesea B/R



DIVE CALENDAR (Cont'd.)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
JULY 16	COLLINGWOOD Football Club	8 PM		General Meeting
JULY 26	SKI DAY			
AUG 3	REEF DIVE	TBA	B.Scott 328-3036	Inverloch
SEPT. 7	PINNACLES	9.30AM	B.Lynch 795-2834	San Remo jetty
SEPT.	GOLF DAY		N.Garland	Mornington Golf Club

SCUBA DIVERS DINNER DANCE

The Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria Annual Dinner Dance will be held at Chaucers - Canterbury Road, Canterbury on Friday 26th September.

7PM 'til Midnight

\$18 per head - all inclusive

4 course dinner & refreshments

Tickets available at June General Meeting

NOTE - There are a limited number of tickets available and most have already been sold. So ----

If you want to get in the swing at the diver's ding  
 Pay up soon or at the meeting in June  
 And we'll have a party so real and hearty  
 That we're sure to say --- that wasn't much to pay.

"SHINKOKU MARU"

As a tropical thunderstorm approached, our Trukese guide (Eben) chained our dive boat to the 10,000 ton oil tanker "Shinkoku Maru" 80 feet below us. Even today, oil still leaks from this sunken giant and was visible on the surface close by our boat in rainbow coloured circles.

The "Shinkoku" is upright on the sea bed, completely intact and is considered the most colourful wreck in Truk Lagoon. My dive partner for the day, was Tony Tipping, and we filed down to the Shinkoku's main deck "pied-piper style" behind Eben and several other divers. At the entrance to the cabin area, we all removed our flippers prior to entering to minimize siltation once inside the ship. When the Shinkoku went to the bottom in 1944 she took some 25 Japanese seamen with her and their remains are still there today.

The scene on the main deck was very appropriately like one at the entrance to a Japanese shrine, with neat little stacks of flippers around the doorway, and divers filing through the entrance. Once inside the corridors, we soon located several skulls and large bones lying on the silted floor of tiny cabins. A grisly reminder of the horror of war.

On our return to the main deck to retrieve our flippers, Tony remembered that his were of the floating variety and as a result were nowhere to be found. After a lengthy search for them we surfaced together. One flipper was then picked up by boat some 500 yards from the wreck site on the surface. Then after a 2 hour surface interval and with borrowed flippers, Tony and I returned to the Shinkoku and located the second fin up inside one of the cabins. Only Tony would have this sort of good fortune!

Our dive then continued into the bridge area where we saw crockery, tiled Japanese soaking tubs, the ship's binnacle and telegraph all surrounded by a variety of magnificent corals and tropical fish life. We then swam on towards the bow and entered the fo'castle to photograph a huge brass lantern situated in a locker. Oh, what a souvenir it would have made as it is in perfect condition!

It was extremely difficult during all our dives in Truk to keep one's hands off souvenirs for the mantlepiece at home, but resist the temptation we did, as preservation of this war museum is absolutely vital if other divers are to enjoy it as much as we all did.

DES WILLIAMS

TIP'S TIT-BITS

The month of May proved to provide a glut of reasonably good dives - two on the George Kermodé out off Pyramid Rock Phillip Island, one for the depth freaks down the Wall off Lonsdale, and the Portsea Hole followed by a cray hunt off Cheviot Beach. Not bad, four weeks in a row with visibility varying from 20-80 feet - the Wall had 80 depending on how marked you were at 160 feet!

There were also good attendances at these four dives - 13, 15, 16 and 18 in fact - with all these new members and interest surrounding boat dives it may pay you to sling a boat owner an extra couple of bucks to make sure you get a seat; but then again you'd hate to have to pay Dave or Johnny a bribe and finish up in a standing room only boat!

Most of you have heard of the M.A.A.V. - they are now recognised by the National Trust as Victoria's official wreck diving group. In other words, if an historical wreck of note is of special interest to the state it will be members of the M.A.A.V. who will have the first chance to rip off as much loot and bash the wreck to death before the rest of you even get a sniff of it!

20th May was a great night's entertainment for the Truk clique - we all took our slides (and movies in Dave Carroll's case) along for a geek - bloody good night too (thanks to Isabel and Geoff for the hospitality) - can't say whose slides were the best, I'm far too modest. By the way is the club still strictly enforcing the CZ 18 medical rule, because it should be adamant that those who went to Truk should have had another medical by now, preferably at a particular clinic in Gertrude Street, Fitzroy!

Has anyone seen an old English terrier running around the Dandenong area who looks lost. If so please return him to the V.S.A.G. - we miss him very much!

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BOUQUETS & BRICKBATS

Dear Sir,

I am writing in reference to your recent request in "Fathoms" asking 'What is wrong with the V.S.A.G.'

The V.S.A.G. is a club, and like all clubs is made up of people, people with varying lifestyles and interests who wish to share a common interest, which in this case is Scuba Diving.

The main reason for joining a club, is not it's great diving record, it's equipment, funds or other assets, although these are attractive to prospective members, but it is the club atmosphere, combining both diving, socialising and the chance to meet people with similar interests. There can be no dispute that a club "is" people.

Each member of a club is an individual and so, will offer or expect something different from the club. This means that the Committee of the V.S.A.G. should endeavour to fulfil each and every need, if possible, of the individual members.

The V.S.A.G. has rules, many rules in fact, which in themselves could be deterring members from becoming involved again in the club.

Let us look briefly at the compulsory medicals needed by members to dive with the club. It appears from perusing "Fathoms" that the list of members without medicals is growing at a rapid rate, black banning members without medicals from diving, on any dive, with the club with which they are financial members. Would perhaps the Committee consider changing this hard and fast rule so that:

1. Medicals given by General Practitioners are once again recognised by the V.S.A.G., and
2. that the Committee shall decide which dives members without medicals are permitted to participate in, and that the more hazardous dives require the recognised diving medical,

because it is obvious that the list of members without medicals is going to become longer and longer in time.

The monthly General Meeting is where members have a chance to express their views, however, it has become apparent, that members are reluctant to speak at these meetings, in fact, they are now even reluctant to attend.

Could this be because members find expressing their views at these meetings is pointless, leading only to arguments and unsatisfactory explanations. The view of every member in the club is important and must be treated fairly, more effort should be made, not to defend the Committees' actions, but to find out why a criticism was made or a particular question asked.

The V.S.A.G. has always at General Meetings introduced visitors, or at least announced them in the minutes of that meeting, but how many times does a member who attends meetings infrequently, or even a life member, get introduced to newer members of the club who have previously not been introduced.

Further, there has been concern shown by many members regarding club funds. Members who have pursued this question with members of the committee have been given unsatisfactory answers. If the V.S.A.G. has reason to keep building on these funds, (by way of raising money at Social functions etc.) shouldn't club members be entitled to know what target the committee has in mind for the clubs savings and also what the available funds will be used for. The V.S.A.G. is a non-profit organisation, and so, it would only appear reasonable that funds should not escalate continuously.

If the Committee cannot agree on a suitable way of utilising the funds invested, (rather than accumulating interest annually) perhaps it should look at ways at using this money to induce more members to attend Social Functions etc. by subsidizing the cost per head to the members of the Annual Dinner, or other such functions which are usually held to break even or make a profit.

It is quite clear that if the V.S.A.G. raises its annual subscription, without giving good reason for the need of more money, membership numbers will continue to decrease.

It is obvious that something is wrong with the V.S.A.G. but only the Committee can rectify the unrest in the club, and maybe a good start is by listening to the members, the people who attend General Meetings, even if they are not actively involved in club activities, they are still members, members the V.S.A.G. needs, and perhaps their viewpoints will remedy the situation within the club.

There is no reason for a name to be placed at the end of this letter, for it serves no purpose, however, the V.S.A.G. has given many divers the opportunity to make lasting friendships and at the same time to enjoy with others the sport of diving. It would be very sad to see it come to an end.



FLOTSAM & JETSAM

Whoever is credited with the quotation "The pen is mightier than the sword" must have foreseen the incredible literary talent of our Fathoms editor and his criptic style in writing last month about the pathetic attendance at the V.S.A.G. April Meeting.

Needless to say the attendance at the May meeting was one of the largest we've seen since free coffee and biscuits were distanded. Furthermore the Portsea Hole dive on 25th May was also well attended by members, with 6 visitors coming along too.

For many members the dive on the Portsea Hole was their first at that location and I'm sure that the drop off proved to be a most interesting spot for new and old divers alike. Even for Phil Jefferson, who seemed to like the place so much he refused to come back to the boat.

Talking about old divers, Bazza now joins the esteemed ranks of Pat Reynolds in having second generation members of the family diving with the club.

During May we have had 3 good dives; the George Kermode, the Wall and the Portsea Hole. Each dive offers quite different diving conditions and although many of us have dived them before they nevertheless provide new experiences each time.

Four years ago we first dived the George Kermode when it was a rather barren hulk of old ship quite barren of fish and growth. Now the objectives of making an artificial reef are being achieved with schools of pike, trumpeter, sweep and leatherjackets taking up residence. Strange though, I've not seen line fishermen on the site of the wreck and fortunately we've not spotted any spearfishermen there either. A concentrated spearing attack at this site could spoil the development of the fish colonies that has taken place over the last 4 years since the ship was scuttled.

In Victoria there are very few complete ships beneath the water and in years to come the George Kermode will be one of the finest wreck sites if a sensible approach to the conservation of the area is taken by divers.

Departing from our shores in June will be Alan Currie (brother-in-law of Pat Reynolds). Alan is heading off to Europe for about 10 months and is aiming to get a job in the Austrian Ski Slopes during their winter.

It seems that plenty of interest was shown for a V.S.A.G. snow trip to Mt. Buller, so if you're into skiing start preparing for the V.S.A.G. downhill race.

No doubt about our Dave Carroll. Not enough for him to be on a Government sponsored archaeology mission to the wreck of the "Sydney Cove" in Bass Strait, and then head off to Truk Lagoon, but he also gets his ugly face (and body) on the front cover of "Skin Diving in Australia and New Zealand".

Rumour has it that Dave has been visiting dive shops and boat stores, autographing copies of the magazine.

The Club post office box at the G.P.O. has recently received a number of complaints from distressed readers of this very fine magazine, who demanded to know what happened to the annual Easter awards, awarded by Flotsam & Jetsam.

Well this year we were in a terrible bind over this matter. F & J went to Truk for Easter so therefore the only nominations we could give for the Cuddly Couple Award, Superman Award, Supergirl Award, were naturally Des and Jill Williams, (Jill won the Supergirl Award). Best and Fairest Diver Award went to Des Williams for bringing Jill along, and the Bravest Diver Award also goes to Des, and for the same reason!! - which proves one thing: Behind every good man there's a good woman. Hell Murgatroyd where are you?

A. HERNIA  
(The big pain)