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FATHOMS

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SAFETY IN DIVING

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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 21ST MAY, 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 the little expedition to Truk has returned, all safe and sound (?) Although nine members of the club went to Truk, why was the attendance at the April General Meeting so low. Out of about fifty financial members only six attended, and there were five visitors. What impression would they have of our club.

Here we are trying to gain new members, and at our monthly meetings we can't even get the support of our current members. Are our meetings so bad or boring that they don't even rate attendance by members (diving and non-diving). This general apathy is reflected practically through every activity organised.

i.e. The Tube Trip in March - a good family event and only seven people turned up, six adults and 1 child (4 members and three visitors).

"WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?"

"WHAT'S WRONG WITH US?"

"TELL US PLEASE"

R.I.P.
V.S.A.G.

ED.

DIVE CALENDAR

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>LOCATION</u> | <u>TIME</u> | <u>DIVE CAPT.</u> | <u>NOTES</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---|--------------------|
| MAY 18 | GEORGE KERMODE | 9.30AM | N.Garland 529-5484 | Flinders B/R |
| 21 | COLLINGWOOD F'Ball Club | 8.00PM | | General Meeting |
| 25 | PORTSEA HOLE | 9.30AM | P.Reynolds 787-5972 | Sorrento B/R |
| JUNE 1 | CHANNEL RUN | 9.00AM | D.Moore 547-2791 | Sorrento B/R |
| JUNE 14-16 LONG W'END | YARRAWONGA | | B.Soulsby 62 Telford St. Yarrawonga. 3730 | |
| 18 | COLLINGWOOD F'Ball Club | 8.00PM | | General Meeting |

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. All equipment which is borrowed from the club must be returned before the next club dive.
2. CASICO Insurance - 29 people out of the club have nominated to join the scheme as opposed to 21 last year.
3. A question was asked "Why was there a poor response at the General Meeting and several dives during April?"
4. Films will be shown on Kangaroo Island at next General Meeting
5. Christmas Trip ideas to be submitted at next General Meeting.

BOUQUETS & BRICKBATS

The Bouquet Divers Federation of Victoria Annual Dinner will be held at the Grand Ballroom - Grandview Hotel, Camberley on Friday 25th September.

There will be a 3 course dinner and entertainment. Tickets are available at \$18.00 per head - all inclusive. Call in early for your tickets.

STRENGTH AND FITNESS - 1980

Over 200 members of the Bouquet Divers Federation will be present at the annual dinner and entertainment. The dinner will be held at the Grand Ballroom - Grandview Hotel, Camberley on Friday 25th September. The dinner will be a 3 course dinner and entertainment. Tickets are available at \$18.00 per head - all inclusive. Call in early for your tickets.

Following the meeting the members of the Bouquet Divers Federation will be invited to a social gathering at the Grandview Hotel, Camberley on Friday 25th September.

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 till Midnight

\$18.00 per head - all inclusive

4 course dinner and refreshments

Tickets available at May General Meeting

Get in early for your tickets

26/9/80

26/9/80

26/9/80

26/9/80

SYDNEY COVE AGAIN - SYDNEY COVE PROJECT - FEB/MARCH 1980

From 23rd February to 9th March this year, National Parks and Wildlife Service of Tasmania conducted the latest archaeological survey on the wrecksite of the Sydney Cove at Preservation Island. Present on the exercise were over 18 people including Don Ransom, archaeologist for N.P.W.S.; David Wood, conservator for the Queen Victoria Museum of Launceston; Graeme Henderson of the W.A. Museum; Bob Tyson, Operations Officer of N.P.W.S. and divers from Flinder's Island, Tasmania and Victoria. The group lived on Preservation Island and dived on the site from the landing craft M.V. Elanor which had been sailed across Banks Strait from Launceston with most of the supplies and equipment used.

After the April 1978 feasibility survey, the main aims were:-

1. Excavation, survey and raising of remaining anchor, stocks, cannon and guncarriage and associated items
2. Carry out further exploratory excavation and survey to determine the extent of the hull, particularly the stern

Following the marking out of grids, systematic excavation of the overburden (which had been deposited on the site after the previous excavation) was commenced using two four-inch airlifts run from a

64 S.C.F.M. compressor.

Next, while the anchor and cannon material near the bow were raised, exploratory trenches were cut in an effort to find the stern. These exploratory trenches opened up what turned out to be an absolute jumble of artifacts. Amidst a matrix of ships timbers and cargo the work slowed to a crawl as the divers found that almost every item was interconnected with other material. Once the surface layer of sand had been removed, every item found had to be uncovered by gentle fanning of sand sometimes because of their fragile nature and always because of the risk that adjacent to the item there may have been other fragile items. This was borne out time and time again when a relatively solid object, such as a bottle, was found to be partially covered by a fragile item, such as a hessian sack full of equally fragile shoes and subsequently the sack might have been then found to be interconnected with a ships timber several metres long and twenty centimetres thick.

Items recovered during this time included cannonballs, sheathing tacks, bones, earthenware plates and a jug, bottles, one full with a sealing wax and crest, a ship's hourglass, an ebony handled knife, a leather hide, rope, barrel stoves and tops, bones, the carved back of a chair, concretions containing casts of nails and ships tools and dozens of brightly coloured pointy toed shoes. The last day of excavation also found the stern of the ship being located when the rudder pintle was uncovered. Before any item uncovered was raised it was photographed in situ, trigometrically located for a master plan and a photomosaic of the site taken.

Other items mapped included the stern mast step, another anchor, the ship's pump and all items of the ship's structure uncovered. Every item raised was further photographed in plan and side elevation, dimensioned and catalogued before being wrapped and re-immersed in water for transport to the Queen Victoria Museum for conservation. Samples of various ship's timbers were cut out for wood analysis in an effort to identify the ship's origins and then the slaves of the trip spent the last four days filling the lot in again, until next time.

DAVID CARROLL

TIP'S TIT-BITS

For most club members I guess not too much has happened this last

month or so - I almost forgot, congratulations Bob and June. However, a few of us were lucky to crack it for 18 scuba and 7 snorkel dives around Truk Lagoon, Guam and Nauru between 4th and 17th April. I'm not going to go into lengthy descriptions of every dive, you'll cop enough of that elsewhere - this column is not chasing the Walkby Award for journalism either (unfortunately they don't necessarily run in the family).

Air Nauru took us to Nauru then on to Guam via New Caledonia - not much of an airline, they kept running out of grog and the hosties although rather jovial, all have big bums and talk with Peter Sellers accents. They did however have plenty of seats, not like Continental, Guam to Truk - three of our guys had to spend the flight in the little room at the rear, with Jill Williams!

If you're scared of sharks you'd better give Nauru a big miss - we must have seen at least 100 white tipped reef sharks on those three dives but that wasn't all, on the second and third dives visibility was in excess of 100 feet. This enables you to keep in sight of your buddy at all times - ask Little Paully whose J-valve cut out at 60', he swam straight down to his buddy for a breath of air at 95 feet! Good decision: free ascents are a last resort only!

Other Truk notes: no booze on Moen Island that is until the second day when it was discovered the house next door to the hotel was a sly grog shop; red track suits look black at 140 feet on the Amagisan Maru; the bed in Room 107 at the Continental needs new springs; Des Williams has nerves of steel - he didn't bat an eye-lid when an eight foot whaler shark cruised within 6 feet of him; you don't wear giant flippers that float on the Shinkoku Maru if you go inside to photograph the skulls; Bruce and Terry ---- both with heavy bags ---- get the blame for our return excess baggage - all those T-shirts, toys and watches not to mention the Chivas Regal; and it was one hell of a great idea when the tour leader made us all agree not to spill the beans about each other to anyone on our return!

For sale: Seiko Divers watch, good condition, keeps excellent time, auto, with date and guaranteed to 70 metres \$45. A bargain! Nikonos II with flash & PFI adaptor, sekonic light meter in housing, sports view-finder all in excellent condition \$375 OMO and wait for it, this price includes 3 x 36 Kodak films tel. 80-4956 (both items).

While I think of it, if you missed the Truk trip this year, and you'd like some underwater action overseas there'll be another VSAG

trip in 2 years time to Palau and Ponape, Micronesia. Always travel, who don't do too bad a job, will be organising this trip also (cost: about the same plus inflation) just start putting \$15 per week aside now and it'll cost you nothing!

That's it, must go practise the golf swing, you know what you can do with your Victorian diving!

PRESSURE RELATED AILMENTS

Descent The tissues of the body can withstand tremendous pressure: men have made actual ocean dives to 350 metres and, in experimental situations, have been exposed to pressure equivalent to a dive of 500 metres. Small animals, such as mice, goats and monkeys, have withstood pressures equivalent to dives as great as 1700 metres.

The majority of the body is composed of virtually incompressible liquids, permitting external pressures to be evenly transmitted through all of the tissues. If air is supplied at approximately the same pressure as that surrounding the diver, the natural air spaces in the body, the lungs, the middle ear and the sinuses, will be in pressure balance with the body tissues and external pressure.

The pressure-related problems which may arise as a diver descends in the water result when the pressure, either in these natural air spaces, or in certain items of equipment which put an air space next to the diver's body, cannot be equalized. The natural air spaces have vents which normally allow internal and external pressures to equalize. The lungs are vented by breathing, the middle ear and the sinuses are connected by air passages with the throat and nose. If these passages should become blocked - by the congestion of a head cold, for example - air trapped in the spaces cannot be equalized as the diver descends. This is also true of air trapped between the diver's skin and a piece of equipment. Because the spaces have rigid walls, this air cannot be compressed to equalize the pressure and a situation may arise where body tissues, under higher pressure, will be forced into the space. This situation can be painful, and if the pressure imbalance is great enough, can result in ruptured blood vessels or other tissue damage. In diving, the general term applied to this type of problem is SQUEEZE.

Squeeze affects only spaces which have rigid walls, whether inside the body or in a piece of equipment. Gas pockets in the intestine, for example are not usually a problem on descent because they are

easily compressed.

Face or Body Squeeze Face masks used with scuba, goggles and certain types of exposure suits can lead to problems of squeeze under some conditions. The pressure in a face mask can usually be equalized by exhaling through the nose, but this is not true of goggles which offer no way to equalize pressure. The most seriously affected tissues in an instance of face mask or goggle squeeze will be those of the eye and the eye socket. With wetsuits/drysuits etc., air trapped in a fold may lead to some discomfort and possibly a minor case of subcutaneous hemorrhage from pinching.

Tooth Squeeze This results when a small pocket of trapped gas has been generated by decay or is lodged under a poorly fitted or cracked filling. If this pocket of gas is completely isolated, the pulp of the tooth or the tissue in the tooth socket can be squeezed into the space.

Next month we'll discuss (1) Thoracic (lung) squeeze and (2) Ear and Sinus Squeeze.

DR. R. ESS

(Medical Adviser to the VSAG)

TRUK LAGOON TRIP APRIL 1980

The recent VSAG trip to Truk Lagoon was, I believe, an outstanding success and one which my wife Jill and I thoroughly enjoyed.

My summary of the trip will not be about a particular dive in Truk, but instead about the trip itself.

Firstly, the flight to Nauru via Noumea was an excellent one even if it was 3 hours late leaving Tullamarine. Accommodation at the Menen Hotel at Nauru was acceptable, although the attitude of staff (natives) was very blase and the hotel itself, which must have cost plenty to build 7 years ago, is now rapidly deteriorating.

Our arrival at Nauru was made at about 9pm and after checking in at the Menen Hotel, we were all driven to a private house for a barbeque and booze-up arranged by Nauru divers. We had a mighty time as the beer was really welcome after a long flight, particularly as VSAG members had drunk the plane "dry" before we had passed Sydney!

Next day saw a very enjoyable dive made by most members, with tanks supplied by Nauru divers as well as transport, boats and guidance, although I couldn't get the hang of entering those big waves over a coral reef in full gear. My reward for the excursion was very bad bruising and a badly gashed arm. Thanks for the Ben Casey repairs, Fred.

The following day, another dive was made by VSAG group in calmer water at the port phosphate loading facilities and was enjoyed by all. Again, all diving tanks and transport was supplied by Nauru divers, a very generous bunch indeed. Those who chose not to dive this time, were given a tour of the whole country (8 square miles of it) again by courtesy of Nauru divers.

Our flight to Guam at midnight that night was a restful one and we had a few hours sleep at the Guam Continental Hotel before leaving at 7.30am for Truk. The landing at Truk had all the excitement of a roller-coaster ride, as the coral runway is 800 feet shorter than the recommended safe length for 727 jets.

The aircraft literally flopped onto the coral surface and was immediately reverse thrusting engines and breaking heavily. There was a pile of spectacles, wigs and false teeth near the cockpit after landing! I have certainly never experienced a more exciting landing anywhere.

Our accommodation at Truk Continental Hotel was excellent, only 30 metres from the waters edge. Powerful air conditioning and comfortable beds in a very pleasant room. Food and service at the restaurant was good also, and I thought the prices were very reasonable. The view out of the restaurant over Truk Lagoon and nearby Fefan Is. more than compensated for any slight imperfections in service.

The dive boat, "Chineina" could have had more deck space I guess, but VSAG members soon adapted very well and I certainly had no complaints. Once out of the water there was always a Trukese guide to help remove those 88 cf tanks quickly, and this made everyone more manouverable. In fact if there was one place that was very crowded it was on the anchor line trying to stay for 5 minutes deco. with 10 other divers all crowding for the 10 ft. level.

As I had a fantastic time diving and Jill enjoyed the peace and sunshine of Truk, it would be one place we could easily return to next year.

And thanks to all other members of our group for your company. It

wouldn't have been half as much fun by ourselves.

DES & JILL WILLIAMS

MEDICALS

As from December 1st, any person who's name 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.

N.B. 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.

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Jay Cody | Ian Cockerell | Peter Smith (Ace) |
| Max Dawson | Leo Canteri | M. Richardson |
| Frank Coustley | Alan Cutts | John Marshall |
| Bill Jansen | Frank Herbert | Peter Saunders |
| Trevor West | N. Knight | Peter Oakley |
| R. Koper | P. Matthews | Alan Whiteley |
| J. Noonan | Jon McKenzie | |

FLOTSAM & JETSAM

Air Nauru may have the distinction of being the smallest all jet international air line in the world, but this does not prevent them doing things in a grand scale.

Like that other public commuter system we know so well the Victorian Railways, Air Nauru loses millions of dollars per year, but to the phosphate rich meniscule country of Nauru, these losses are accepted as being necessary if their country is to pretend its a giant.

The Nauru Underwater Club comprising mainly of Aussies and New Zealanders met us at the International Terminal and after checking in at the Island's only hotel entertained us at a fabulous barbeque complete with ice cold cans of Fosters.

The club members were most hospitable and to our delight had organised a dive for us the next day.

Nauru is fringed with a shallow rock ledge from which you step off into the Pacific Ocean, which quickly drops away to over 1600 fathoms in depth.

Our first dive at Nauru was not to be as easy as it sounds, as we had to swim fully kitted through 4 foot breakers. Yet once past these the water was still and the shallow rock ledge gave way to a steep sloping wall that dropped into the blue gloom below.

Visibility was about 80-90 feet and all around us the tropical fish and white tipped sharks busied themselves by inspecting the new arrivals. The warmth and clarity of the water at Nauru was a Melbourne divers dream. Nauru by night was experienced again after the dive when we dined at one of the few excellent Chinese restaurants - 8 courses for \$4.50 per head! Not bad! Followed by a night at the Nauru Easter Ball.

From Nauru to Guam to Truk. Truk - the Lagoon of Lost Ships, the underwater time capsule and living museum of war.

There has been so much written about Truk that I do not intend to dwell on its great attraction.

Suffice to say that the wrecks of Truk Lagoon are undoubtedly the most exciting and fascinating diving that I have experienced.

The Japanese used the sheltered waters and fortress like islands of Truk as a naval supply base and from here provided support for the Imperial Navy during the Second World War. In February 1944 US naval planes bombed Truk and sent over 200,000 tons of shipping to the bottom. It is on these wrecks resting peacefully for 36 years that we invaded. Big ships, small ships, some upright, some on their side complete with cargoes of war materials made every moment a new experience. Penetration dives through the bridges, corridors, cabins, engine rooms revealed the once active world of the Japanese seamen. Now the life of the sea has made its home in these galleons of war, and wherever we swam teems of fish glided through the corals to accompany us.

Our dive plan at Truk involved an early start to the day to enable 2 tank dives with an intervening snorkel dive and lunch.

Strict adherence was paid to the dive tables, and although all dives were to be "no decompression" dives, we did have a decompression stop on most dives as an added precaution.

The Trukese dive guides were most helpful in assisting with equipment

and I'm sure we are all a little spoilt by their actions.

All too soon our 7 days diving at Truk came to a close and after many farewells and the traditional dunking of the head guide, we packed up and headed for Guam.

What a rush. At Guam the Coral Reef Divers guide met us at the airport, took us shopping and then on a beautiful night dive.

The end of the dive was an added bonus when the guide disappeared into a cave 30 feet below the surface and led us through a tunnel and chimney from which we stepped out onto the coral rock shelf into 2 feet of water.

A late night pizza party, a few beers, about 2 hours sleep and it was back to Nauru again for more diving, partying and cold Fosters.

And so to home.....

To a large extent the success of this trip was due to the organisation of Tony Tipping who most seriously did a marvellous job as tour leader, and chief haggler with hotel managers, airline officials, police, dive operators etc.

The smoothness and enjoyment of the trip was due to the good spirit extended by all members who made sure that they were going to have a good time.

The friendliness and hospitality of the people of Nauru, Guam and Truk made the trip all the more enjoyable, and lastly Tony Newley and his staff at Allways Travel Agency who put together a very full and action packed itinerary, deserve our special thanks.

It was a great trip and if you ever get the opportunity to dive Truk, then do it.

MIKE ROMESIA