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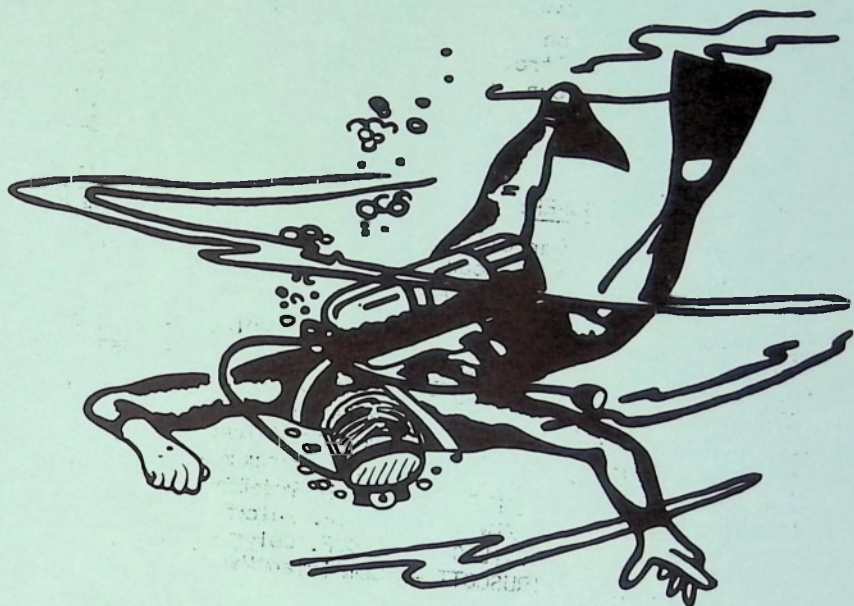
FATHOMS

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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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GEOFF BIRTLES	- S.D.F. Delegate	- 846 1983
BARRY TRUSCOTT	- Committee Member	- 783 9095

CLUB MEETING

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Wednesday 21st October, at 8 p.m. at the Collingwood Football Club, Lulle Street, Abbotsford. Bar facilities are available to VSAG members prior to and after the General Meeting and meals are served from 6 p.m. until about 9 p.m. 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!

EDITORIAL

Yet another diving tragedy has occurred in Victorian waters and whilst I am not aware of the full details of the recent fatality, it did have a very sobering effect on your Fathoms editor. The missing diver was Ross DENZIL-Williams of Boronia, and those listening to radio news at the time in half concentration could easily be forgiven for confusing myself with Ross, as I too live in Boronia. As a result, my telephone ran hot for two days with friends and relatives checking on my safety. But the real pain behind this tragedy is for Ross' wife and family. Perhaps we should all take a long, hard look at our diving techniques as we are soon to make three deep dives in the coming weeks to the "Rotomahana", the Submarines (scene of the September 20th fatality) and the "Wall" at Port Phillip Heads. My advice is, if you are not prepared to stay close by your buddy and be in constant contact with him and follow the golden rule of "plan your dive and dive your plan", then perhaps the next three Club dives are not for you.

The 11th September presented a very enjoyable evening at Moonee Valley Race Club, venue of this years S.D.F.V. Dinner Dance. Good food and a chance to mix with other diving clubs was the order of the evening. Fortunately, I wasn't counting on meeting representatives of all clubs affiliated with S.D.F.V., because only six clubs bothered to support the gathering organised so professionally by the Valley Divers. Lucky card holders received some outstanding prizes including an underwater camera, rechargeable lights and regulators, along with a host of other goodies presented by Reg Lipson the M.C..

Another Annual General Meeting is behind us once again and whilst attendance was not a record, many postal votes were received from members. A quick glance at page one of this issue of Fathoms will show two new V.S.A.G. Committee members in Terry Brooks and Mick Jackiw. Congratulations fellas! And leaving the Committee are Fred Ferrante and Neil Garland who have always had the club's best interest in mind and contributed to the success of V.S.A.G. as a club.

My personal gratitude is extended to all the members of the Committee for 1980-81 for their assistance and regular attendance

at Committee meetings held as far afield as Frankston, Kellor, Boronia and Williamstown and for the hospitality in providing supper afterwards. The V.S.A.G. Committee is renowned for its members with gannet appetites around midnight and Maree, Jenny, Marie, Junc, Wendy, Pam and Lesley presented some memorable meals. Which just goes to prove that the success of V.S.A.G. as a Club has been very much due to the efforts of families as well.

To go on and thank individual members for their support over the past twelve months would only steal thunder from Tony's President's Report, which follows. So, thanks for a good year, Tony, as El Presidente!

The coveted V.S.A.G. Clubman of the Year Award was this year wrested from the clutches of Tony Tipping by John Goulding who scored top points after another outstanding year. Congratulations John, and I am sure a thank you from every Club member accompanies the Trophy after your hard working year as Club Secretary.

Geoff Birtles was runner-up to John, not bad after only a short time with V.S.A.G., so better luck next year Geoff.

Almost as if some compensation to Geoff, the 1980-81 Literary Award went his way for his "Periscope" article in the August 1981 issue. Good one Geoff, and I trust you will be inspired to continue with further "Periscopd' articles over the next twelve months.

We are soon to hear the patter of tiny flippers once again in V.S.A.G. but the parents to be are keeping a very low profile at present (no! - not Geoff & Isobel!).

Max Synon has just returned from a diving trip to the Solomon Islands and has very kindly volunteered to write a short resumé of his travels for next month's Fathoms - haven't you Max? There will be many members looking forward to your newsy article including the editor.

EDITOR

COMMITTEE NEWS

Meeting held at Tony Tipping's home on September 28th, 1981. Election of Office Bearers was carried out for the coming twelve months. Nominations were:

<u>President:</u>	Tony Tipping, Max Synon and Des Williams
<u>Vice President:</u>	Tony Tipping (as per Constitution)
<u>Secretary:</u>	John Goulding - unopposed
<u>Treasurer:</u>	David Carroll - unopposed
<u>Newsletter Editor:</u>	Des Williams - unopposed
<u>Social Secretary:</u>	Bob Scott and Geoff Birtles
<u>Safety Officer:</u>	Terry Brooks, Geoff Birtles, John Goulding
<u>Property Officer:</u>	Mick Jackiw and Pat Reynolds
<u>Points Scorer:</u>	Terry Brooks - unopposed
<u>Assistant Editor:</u>	Mick Jackiw and Terry Brooks
<u>P.R. Officer:</u>	Paul Tipping and Barry Truscott
<u>S.D.F. Delegates:</u>	Mick Jackiw, Geoff Birtles and Tony Tipping

For results consult Page 1 of this edition of "Fathoms".

- (i) Paul Tipping suggested a sub-committee should be appointed to investigate all safety aspects of V.S.A.G. dive gear and dive regulations on dive and report.
- (ii) Geoff Birtles will have purchased a sextant for the club use by next meeting.
- (iii) Welcomes were extended to new Committee members in Mick Jackiw and Terry Brooks.
- (iv) Dive calendar discussion.

** NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING to be held at Geoff Birtle's home at 8 Newlyn Close, Templestowe on 28th October, 1981.

REPORT D'EL PRESENDETE 1981

As usual, I'll start by giving a brief summary of the club's activities over the past twelve months. You're all probably well aware that the year commences in September after last year's Annual General Meeting.

The year consisted of a total of 29 planned activities in all (apart from General and Committee meetings) and took in a total of 74 days. Of this total, only two days dives were cancelled. Here now is a breakdown of the year's activities:

- 25 day dives (of which two were cancelled);
- 18 days Ulladulla Christmas Trip - of which only two days diving was not permitted due to the weather;
- 3 days - Refuge Cove trip Australia Day Weekend;
- 3 days - Port Campbell Labour Day Weekend;
- 4 days - Easter at Wilsons Promontory - bad weather ruled out all diving;
- 3 days - Queens Birthday Weekend at Somers;
- 9 days - Bass Strait trip on board the "Poipero" September, 1981;

and on the social calendar:

- 2 S.D.F. Dinner Dances;
- Tennis Day at Somers In November;
- Annual Dinner at the "Greek Inn" In December;
- Mornington Gold Day In December;
- DOXA Fun Run in April;
- 2 days Golfing at Yarrawonga In July;
- Ski trip to Mt. Buller In August;

(There were also many private dives arranged between club members as well as the above club activities).

Several new dive sites were visited during this past year, for example, the wreck of the "Light of the Age", a new scallop bed out from a certain lighthouse in P.P. Bay, the Nepean outside wall and the deep channel run between the "Eliza Ramsden" and the Heads. Last, but not least, who could forget those 18 fabulous days

at Ulladulla where the conditions were by far the most favourable I can recall at that time of the year. Their reefs covered in sponges and corals, an abundance of fish life, caves and even a wreck off Brush Island. The dive sites too, were all within a few moments by boat from a very efficient 4 lane boat ramp. Capped off with a variety of night life at the clubs, other sporting activities, and dry flat grassy camp sites with adequate amenities, V.S.A.G. needless to say is returning to Ulladulla for Christmas '81.

The older dive sites also proved to be as popular as ever - sometimes I doubt if we would have a club without our good old favourite locations like the Kelp Farm, Flinders, wrecks of the "Eliza Ramsden", "George Kermodé", "Holyhead" and the Subs off Pt. Lonsdale. Also the long weekend trips to Refuge Cove, Port Campbell and Tidal River seem to be deeply entrenched in the dive calendar and no-one seems to object.

The eleven General Meetings at the Collingwood Football Social Club have been consistently well attended and I'd like to thank all those who arranged the showing of films or slides, those who lectured or arranged speakers, or members for their entertaining but not always articulate dive reports, and you the members for your attendance throughout the year.

I hope we continue to hold the meetings there (at the C.F.S.C.) because it's fairly central and the meal and bar facilities are certainly adequate.

As we are all aware, diving depends on the availability of boats so I would like to thank: Barry Truscott, Geoff Birtles, John Goulding/Jack Liddy, Pat Reynolds, Russ Olorenshaw, Max Synon, Mick Jeackle and just recently, Rod Hicks, for making their boats available on club dives. (Apologies to anyone who I may have omitted including myself!)

Thanks must also be expressed to the eleven other committee members because without their planning and efforts we would not be able to exist. I can't name all of them here individually, but it's great to have people like John Goulding and Dave Caroli

as Secretary and Treasurer. Each of them has held a senior portfolio on the V.S.A.G. Committee for almost a decade and one wonders where the hell the club would be without them. This year the club actually came out ahead financially, but before we all jump up and down wanting a reduction in subscriptions, let me point out that the compressor is due for a thorough overhaul and club tanks and regulators need regular servicing and testing.

Bob Scott as Social Secretary with his raffles at functions and the tireless Des Williams with his work on "Fathoms" were largely responsible for our positive bank balance. In fact, "Fathoms" during this 1st 12 months, has had its best year yet and Des not only writes the editorial, but prints, addresses and posts it as well! Maybe we should make him Editor-in-Chief for life! I'd also like to thank Sally Roberts and Marg Ziccone who have typed the newsletter free of charge during this past year.

Before I finish, I would have liked to have commented on a year completely free of diving accidents. Sure, we all get the odd bruise or cut fingers handling crayfish, but I didn't mean those sorts of trivialities. Probably the most unfortunate diving casualty this year was myself - back on 25th January I managed to rupture the oval window lining of my inner ear which supposedly means "no more diving - over!" It did render me deaf in one ear but I've since been told that diving will be possible (at my own risk of course) providing I follow a new very strict set of limitations. I certainly look forward to enjoying the pastime I love most with you in the coming months. Remember, the club motto is "Safety in Diving" and make sure your medicals are up to date.

I'd now like to wish the new President and Committee all the best for 1981/82 and thank you all for your help and participation during 1980/1981.

TONY TIPPING

DIVE CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT</u>	<u>MEET AT</u>
Oct. 4	Submarines	9.30am	J. Goulding 89 6634	Sorrento Boat Ramp
Oct. 11	Wall Dive	9.30am	T. Tipping 80 4956	Sorrento Boat Ramp
Oct. 18	"Rotomahana"	9.30am	J. Goulding 89 6634	Barwon Heads Pier
Oct. 21	General Meeting	8.00pm	Collingwood	F/Ball Club
Oct. 28	Committee Meeting		Geoff Birtles	Home
Nov. 1	Flinders	10.00am	M. Jackiw 736 1730	Flinders Pier
Nov. 8	Mushroom Rock	9.00am	D. Carroll 397 2317	Sorrento Boat Ramp
Nov. 18	General Meeting	8.00pm	Collingwood	F/Ball Club
Nov. 22	Wall Dive	9.30am	Mick Jackiw 736 1730	Sorrento Boat Ramp
Nov. 28	Tennis Party/Barbeque/VSAG mile at Somers T. Tipping is co-ordinator.			
Dec. 6	Heads Area	8.00am	Pat Reynolds 789 1092	Sorrento Boat Ramp

NOTE: *Those wishing to dive on above dates must confirm with the Dive Captain the evening before the dive to arrange boat accomodation.*

FOR SALE

DIVER'S HOOKAH

Featuring 5 HP Honda Motor 2 x See Bee Regulators
 V2 Clisby Compressor 2 Divers to 80 ft. with ease
 2 x 320 ft. hoses

EXCELLENT CONDITION
 ONLY SLIGHTLY USED - (ABOUT 100 CRAYS WORTH)

Contact: Mick Jeacle (USAG) Phone: (Home) 772 6820

P.A.D.I. CROSSOVER & ADVANCED DIVER CERTIFICATION

October 12	Mon.	7.00 p.m. - Theory
13	Tues.	7.00 p.m. - Theory & Pool Swim
17	Sat.	Two Tank Dives (All Day)
19	Mon.	7.00 p.m. - Theory
20	Tues.	7.00 p.m. - Night Dive
25	Sun.	Two Tank Dives (All Day)

This course will be run by Warwick McDonald of Melbourne Marine, 10 Hosken Street, Springvale and co-ordinated by Geoff Birtles, Tel: 846 1983. Intending participants must confirm with Geoff Birtles and pay a fee of \$70 prior to commencement date. Limited to 12 members per class.

Confirmed Participants are: G. Birtles, B. Scott, M. Jeacle, D. Moore, M. Jackiw, B. Truscott, D. Williams and G. Copplestone.

Tentative Bookings are: J. Goulding, D. Carroll and K. Jensen.

CAVE DIVING SEMINAR - 7TH NOVEMBER

North Melbourne Football Club

Cost: \$15.00 per head - with dinner
 \$10.00 per head - without dinner

Speakers include: Ian Lewis, Russell Kitt, Reg Lipson, Peter Stace and Barry Herd.

(PLUS EXCELLENT FILMS)

* SEE JOHN GOULDING FOR TICKETS

V.S.A.G. NIGHT ON THE TOWN

Organised by Geoff Birtles and Bob Scott at Abbeyes Inn, St. Kilda Road, was a lot of fun and well supported by club members.

The food was great, a good jazz band with tiny dancy floor conducive to a fair amount of bum-pinching between members and ladies. Our El Presentente arrived quite late, direct from Newcastle after a five day business conference and immediately mingled with his loyal subjects, spare a few moments cut to chase the waitresses.

An excellent raffle was once again organised by Bob Scott our Minister for Social Activities, with three excellent prizes. Pay Reynolds won the U.S. Divers T-shirt, Cindy Liddy ripped off the bottle of "plonk" second prize. And a guy, unknown to the author, who was with Gordon Ryan's party won the divers package.

DES WILLIAMS

PERISCOPE

Mick Jeacle started it all with a bilge pump and depth sounder. Bazza Truscott kept the ball rolling by not only fitting a bilge pump but radio and cabin light as well. Geoff Birtles immediately countered with a stainless steel grab rail, tank racks and boarding platform. Bazza then fitted a remote speaker to his radio and skin fitting to his bilge pump putlet. Mich followed this up with new tank racks and Geoff retaliated with a monogrammed Velcro anchor strap and mesh retainer for his anchor rope. Barry fitted a new, longer anchor rope. Mich rising to the bait like a hungry trout threw down his Bankcard and was last seen sporting a new grab rail, customised stainless steel boarding ladder and velcro anchor strap! Where will it all end? We

hear that Bazza is constructing tank racks and has pressure on Marrie for a depth sounder, Geoff is saving for satellite navigation and Mick is going to paint his name on the back of his boat. Rumour has it that John Goulding has a radio on order and that Pat Reynolds is heading for an overkill by trading up to a Jenkscraft!

"There's gold in them hills" may soon be amended by history to "There's gold beneath them there waves". Or at least it would seem that way to anyone following recent news reports. Divers have recently raised one of two safes from the Italian liner Andrea Dorea (reported to have contained more than A\$1 million in cash and jewellery) and 100 gold bars from the HMS Edinburgh. The Edinburgh was torpedoed in 250 metres of water in 1942 by German submarines whilst carrying A\$70 million in Soviet gold to Britain, as payment for arms.

Whilst on the subject of "wreck bashing" (to call a spade a spade) Periscope was very excited to find its journalise the subject of a very emotional and petulant letter to the editor of "Skin Diving in Australia". (It kind of makes the effort all worthwhile!). It seems that certain self appointed custodians of the "Loch Ard's" remains, objected to our rather graphic dive report in April Fathoms. No doubt the line "... one could be forgiven for thinking this was an underwater quarry with workers on piece rates" really broke them up! It's the same old story of local minority self interest groups emotionallising an issue to cloud common sense and trying to stir up public response with emotive arguments to achieve their own selfish ends (which hardly need stating).

Periscope would like to remind these groups that the Loch Ard has not been declared an historical shipwreck and in fact no such act has been proclaimed

in Victoria at this time. Any historic value they accord the Loch Ard is their personal view and in Periscope's opinion not shared by most divers with a serious interest in Maritime Archaeology. Periscope suggests that there are many other ships of real historic value far more deserving of legislative energy and protective attention than the rubbled remains of this ship - e.g. "The Thistle" (Henty's), "The Children" and "The Isabella".

We should also remind the W.I.A.E. and Flagstaff Hill Sub Aqua Group that V.S.A.G. has a long history of worthwhile maritime archaeology contributions including the raising of the Loch Ard's anchor, now on display at the Port Campbell ranger's office. The initial survey concerned with refloating the Poly Woodside; a Feasibility study on the presentation of the HMS Cerebus and important consultative contributions to Australia's first book on Victorian shipwrecks by Margaret McKenzie.

It is Periscope's personal opinion that the Loch Ard is little better than an interesting pile of rubble which provides a very suitable play-ground for foraging divers - as amply evidenced by the 30 - 40 divers (of which only 6 were from VSAG) who picked it over on this particular weekend and came up with nothing of any historic or monetary value. Why should this harmless and pleasant pursuit be denied to so many just to serve the very selfish motives of minority local self interest groups?

As many of you know it takes quite a bit to get our international swaggy (Andy Redwood) diving in Victoria. In fact Andy feels the cold so much he wears a wet suit in tropical waters! But the lure of our new (censored) dive spot was too much for him. I think we can confidently report that this was his last Victorian dive. After enduring the heavy throttle hand of Hunter-Too (Bazza claims

Hunter-One), 6 ft. visibility at 120 ft. in freezing conditions cured any future local aspirations.

Periscope is delighted to have the opportunity of reporting another "animal act" by Paul (Captain) King on a recent Eliza Ramsden dive. On descending the "shot line" (I'm learning Des) with one of our novice lady divers, he spots some likely cray ledges. Without any regard for how his buddy felt (who had never dived the E.R.) he immediately swooped on the ledges dreaming of glory and killer crays (and of course sticking it up Birtles). He never did get a cray, nor did Julia (not to be confused with his lady) get to see the Eliza Ramsden. Paul claims he couldn't find it; funny about that - the shot line was right beside the hull! (Never mind Paul, we liked your hot soup and chicken sandwiches - other dive captains take note).

We hear that Des Williams is still swatting for his Cave Diving theory paper - he started 6 months ago!

Recently, Periscope accompanied the Big M on one of the most exciting cray hunts either of us can remember. The dive was exciting because it was so damned difficult; 8 - 10 foot visibility with heavy bottom surges. Invariably, the conditions resulted in a spooking of the crays which meant "off with the tank" to penetrate deep into the narrow (and dark) ledges. A dodgy enough procedure at the best of times but with a bottom surge and nearly zero visibility its murder (or suicide). Fortunately brilliant teamwork (did you catch that Des?) resulted in an "8 out of 8" including a couple of five pounders.

After this kind of battle, it really hurts to find most of your catch are very pregnant females. It hurt even more when on explaining the reason for our poor catch (we returned all but two to the ledges) to a group of novice divers that they responded by saying they did

not really believe anyone would throw back a cray! Periscope suggests that dive instructors should "lift their game" by getting the message through to their pupils that unless divers do observe laws relating to female crays, we won't have any crays to catch at all! And will play right into the hands of commercial fishing lobbyists and underwater tourists.

CU at the Flagstaff!

GEOFF BIRTLES

"BASS STRAIT SAFARI"

To the south of Victoria lies Bass Strait. By comparison with other oceans, Bass Strait is a small stretch of water yet it has a reputation of being able to turn on the fiercest conditions of any of the world's untamed seas.

For over 200 years men have weathered the Strait backing out an existence on the decks of pitching ships and on the isolated islands that dot this unpredictable sea.

My interest in the area stemmed from the days when sharing a flat with Dave Carroll, I would listen for hours to his stories about the wrecks of the Strait and the good diving to be found there.

So it was around these stories, plus the many comments made by others and articles written by divers and historians, that prompted our interest in organizing the V.S.A.G. Bass Strait Safari aboard Alan Cripps' charter boat "Polperro".

The group consisted of Terry Brooks, Dave Carroll, John Goulding, Mick Jackiw, Dave Moore and Barry Truscott from V.S.A.G. and also Larry Rowe and Mike Rice from the Melbourne Fire Brigade Underwater Club.

First, a word about our skipper and our boat. Alan Cripps is a fourth or fifth generation Bass Straitsman with a reputation amongst his fellow seamen as being one of the most knowledgeable skippers on the Strait. His luxury charter boat "Polperro" is designed and built very much in mind for diving charter work and is ideally suited for this type of trip.

Alan's knowledge of wreck locations, tides, fishing and cray spots seems endless and each night he would enrich us with stories of the Strait and its people.

We departed from Port Franklin at about 7.00 a.m. on Saturday 12th September down past our old friend the "Mirrabooka" sitting in the mud and on into Corner Inlet. Our planned destination today was the Kent Group, about 10 hours away.

A little way south of Rabbit Island, Alan suddenly swung "Polperro" into a tight circle around a buoy floating in the water. Efforts to retrieve the buoy failed as it was tethered to something heavy on the sea floor.

"Send down a diver" came the cry as Barry, Larry and I quickly donned our gear, eager to be the first on perhaps some new wreck, or at least some illicit drugs dropped overboard from a passing trader.

At 30 feet we found a huge anchor fluke protruding from the sand. We searched for a while, but found no trace of any other wreckage. I suspect that a

fishing boat had snagged the anchor in a net, and thus by chance had located an anchor from a mystery ship or wreck.

The trip to the Kent Group seemed endless with most of the lads becoming paler as the day wore on. As we approached the Group we ran into the biggest seas that I have ever encountered. The "Polperro" pitched and rolled in the huge swells and for all of us it was a relief to find shelter in the protected waters of Winter Cove on the east side of Deal Island.

On Sunday morning we awoke to find a sunny peaceful morning despite the howling gusts of wind that whipped through the cove the previous night.

Our first dive at the Group was on the wreck of the "S.S. Bulli", a 496 tonne iron steamer built in 1873 and wrecked just four years later.

Lying in about 55 feet, this wreck is remarkably intact apart from the bow section. It is a very colourful dive with beautiful sponges, corals and an abundance of fish. The clear and sheltered waters of the cove make it a great spot for photography.

That afternoon we dived at Deep Bay on Erith Island and managed a selection of local seafood for the evening meal.

The waters around the Kent Group were incredibly inviting; clear turquoise in colour fringed with white clean beaches and thickly vegetated islands. The only things missing were the warm water, palm trees and bikini girls, although there was plenty of educational reading matter about the latter on board, and two of the lads admitted to encountering two living specimens late one night when everyone else was asleep.

On the Monday we up-anchored and headed south for Flinders Island and the Furneaux Group.

I kid you not! The weather was so perfect that we went to sleep lying on the front deck, soaking up the sun.

Over Monday and Tuesday we had two dives on the wreck of the "City of Edinburgh", wrecked in 1840 near Settlement Point on the West Coast of Flinders Island.

This wreck lies in 15 - 20 feet of water and is a fossicker's dream. The bottom is littered with fragments of glass, ship's timbers, broken pieces of crockery, and occasionally a complete bowl, spoon or bottle.

On the first dive here we attempted to use Dave Moore's water suction pump. However, disaster struck and the pump motor finished up on the sea bed and we finished up in a swift current and missed the wreck. After Alan picked us up we tried again. This time with more success and quite a few interesting artifacts were found. Our Tuesday's dive on this site also yielded me a good size rock flathead, which was not quick enough to get out of the way of my diver's knife.

Tuesday afternoon we sailed south along the coast of Flinders Island to the small fishing village of Lady Barron. Here we had a chance to meet the locals (mainly in the pub) and again feel the security of "Terra Firma".

On the Wednesday morning it was off to Goose Island and to the wreck of the "Merilyn". A relatively modern wreck the "Merilyn" was a trading vessel of 239 tonnes on route to Hobart with a cargo of

explosives when it crashed into the island in 1958.

The entire crew escaped without injury but not so the ship. Because of the volatile nature of its cargo, the "Merilyn" was blown up by the Department of Mines. The explosion scattered wreckage over much of the island and created a huge underwater scrap yard on the sea bed. The propeller was about the only recognizable object although Dave Carroll's weight belt should make a good find for some future diver at the wreck.

Nearby Badger Island provided our next dive, which was to search for a mystery wreck. Parts of a ship's winch and chain up on the rocks above the watermark gave clue to some previous misfortune, but the undersea terrain yielded no trace of wreckage.

On Wednesday afternoon "Polperro" anchored off Whitemark, the main town on Flinders Island. The locals eyed us warily as we wandered around the small shopping centre and paid a visit to the "local". However, they had no need for concern as we had come with bulging wallets to boost their rather fragile economy.

That evening a shift of wind forced Alan to shift the "Polperro" to the protection of Prime Seal Island. With the wreck of the "City of Edinburgh" being quite near, we had another dive there. This time Dave's water pump worked and for about two hours we dug and fossicked in the sand and amongst the wreckage. Again - some fine artifacts were found including pewter spoons, medicine phials, brass spikes and clock parts.

Thursday we sailed back to the Kent Group and anchored in the protected waters of West Cove near the wreck of the "Puffin".

Friday morning the wreck of the "Karitane" was on the menu.

On Christmas Day 1921 in a thick fog the "S.S. Karitane" ran straight into the rocky beach of Squally Cove on Deal Island. After reversing off the beach the 1376 ton ship settled in about 35 feet of water. Most of her cargo of copper was salvaged and today the wreckage, although very large offers little to the wreck fossicker. Yet Dave Carroll proved that patience and getting lost in a cloud of silted mess pays dividends and came out with a name plate.

By this time, we were beginning to feel a little "dived out" and appreciated the opportunity to go ashore for a walk to the lighthouse keeper's settlement and museum.

On Saturday morning we headed for Hogan Islands and dived on the east side of Long Island. This very picturesque spot yielded a good feed of tender green lip abalone which went down extra well with squid that Terry had speared from the boat a couple of nights earlier.

At least we were back in Victorian waters at the Hogan Group and able to take crayfish which regrettably were out of season in Tassie waters further south.

We managed a few good male crays and I was particularly pleased with Mick Jackiw and Dave Carroll who helped me with my biggest bug.

Sunday morning we departed early for Cliffy Island. In fact, we had actually finished breakfast and were diving on the wreck of the "Lune" before 9.00 a.m. Not much remains of this wreck, however two large anchors and some brass pins and steel junk was identified.

This was to be the last dive of the trip. From

Saturday 12th to Sunday 20th we had dived five different wrecks as well as other good dive spots. Most of us logged 12 or more dives with a notable exception to Larry who unfortunately hurt his ear on the second or third day and couldn't dive for the remainder of the trip.

The "Polperra" is a great dive charter boat and quite comfortable for 8 - 10 passengers.

The weather with a few exceptions was very kind to us and permitted diving every day. This amount of diving activity plus the hours of relaxation pouring over Alan's well stocked library made it a great nine days break from the rat-race.

Many thanks to skipper Alan Cripps who looked after us extremely well particularly with mashed potatoes and jokes.

by John Goulding

* FLOTSAM & JETSAM - Sorry folks, gone fishin!

Signed Miss Dout