

# FATHOMS

MARCH 82



## SAFETY IN DIVING

50c

*Registered for posting as a publication category B Reg. No. VBH 2101  
If undeliverable, return to Victorian Sub Aqua Group, Box 2526W, GPO Melbourne 3001*



# VSAG

*VSAG divers at Truk Lagoon. Geoff Birtles, John Goulding, Andy Redwood, Yves Corbett, Cynthia. Photo by Des Williams*

# VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FATHOMS

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

PRESIDENT:

Max Synon  
8 Pine Street  
Thomastown, 3074  
465 2812

SECRETARY & SAFETY/  
MEDICAL OFFICER:

John Goulding  
13 Birdwood Street  
Box Hill Sth. 3128  
89 6634

TREASURER:

David Carroll  
5/29 Dover Road  
Williamstown, 3016  
397 2317

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Des Williams  
29 Valerie Street  
Boronia, 3155  
762 1623

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

TONY TIPPING	- Vice Pres. & S.D.F Delig.	- 80 4956
BOB SCOTT	- Social Secretary	-- 367 2261
PAT REYNOLDS	- Property Officer	- 789 1092
TERRY BROOKS	- Points Scorer & Assist. Ed.	- 439 3749
PAUL TIPPING	- Public Relations Officer	.. 387 2027
MICK JACKIW	- S.D.F Delegate	-- 736 1730
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 the Wednesday 17th of March, at 8pm, at the Collingwood Football Club, Lulie Street, Abbotsford. Bar facilities are available to VSAG Members prior to and after the General Meeting and meals are served from 6 pm until about 9 pm. 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 ARE VERY WELCOME!

Yes, this is your "Fathoms" magazine, but with a face-lift! And it is through the generosity of Club member Alex Talay that we can all be proud of the appearance of our monthly communication. Alex offered to update the cover if I could quickly supply a few photographs (being out of the old covers, a quick print job was required) and the result of his excellent work is now in your hands. Alex's idea is to print about 6 months supply of this cover and change the photograph after that time. So, if you would like to submit a favourite shot for our magazine, go on it! Here is what you do. The photograph must be taken on a Club dive and preferably have Club members in it, after all, it is a V.S.A.G. magazine. Submit the print/slide to the magazine editor and when a few have been collected these will be passed on to Alex who will choose the most suitable one for his print process. Please name any divers in the photo, which is meant to generate interest.

Having been in the printing industry myself, I can fully appreciate the cost involved in changing our front photograph twice a year, and we should all be most grateful to Alex for his excellent work, and time made available to produce such a generous donation to the Club. So how about some more articles of interest from members or visitors other than our regular scribes to compliment the new look magazine. The Club is only as good as the members, and that goes for the magazine too!!

The next two general meetings (March and April) should be most interesting, with lectures by Owen Wright on resuscitation and Dr. Geoff Broomhall on Deep Diving and the associated effects on the diver. The March meeting with Owen Wright, will feature a computerized mannequin to demonstrate a real life situation and response of a drowned person. So come and try your resuscitation prowess at March meeting.

I would like to remind you also that Club car stickers are available at 50¢ each and can be obtained by contacting



V.S.A.G. Treasurer David Carroll or Newsletter Editor Des Williams.

The February General Meeting was well attended and there was plenty of "new blood" interested in our Club. The meeting included slides taken on the Christmas trip to Ulladulla, presented by John Goulding, Tony Tipping and Des Williams.

February Committee meeting saw the acceptance of membership applications from Kerry Joyce, Kay Poyner, Alistair Stewart & Jeff Drucker. A very warm welcome to you all, we have some excellent dives planned for 1982 and hope to see you all in the water.

For those of you who are not boat owners, but still enjoy the freedom in diving that boats give our club, I am sure you will be unhappy to learn that day-boat diving fees have now been increased to \$8 per member. But, let me remind you also that petrol prices decreases haven't been too frequent lately and our boat owners have in fact been subsidising divers! I can say this, because I am not a boat owner and believe me it is the truth, and in my opinion an intollerable situation. Next time you are out with V.S.A.G. and you dive all day at places like the Wall, Submarines, Phillip Is., George Kermode all for \$1, spare a thought for the divers who pay \$10 each to leave Portsea Pier in the "Ellandra" and have one dive in the "Portsea Hole" a round trip of no more than one kilometre!!! More on this subject at March meeting.

Des Williams

### COMMITTEE NEWS

Held at Pat & Jenny Reynold's home at Frankston on 24th February, 1982. Visitors: Mick Jeacle & Alex Talay.

- (1) Dive calendar discussion. Barry Truscott in charge of Christmas Trip to be at Robe South Australia.

- (2) New membership for Kay Poyner, Kerry Joyce, Alistair Stewart & Geoff Drucker ratified by Committee.
- (3) Motion by T. Tipping banning all spearfishing on wreck George Kermode by V.S.A.G. members was carried.
- (4) Alex Talay donated six months supply of Fathoms covers to Editor. A vote of thanks to Alex was made by all present.
- (5) Several Committee members requested a copy of V.S.A.G. Constitution.
- (6) D. Williams requested Terry Brooks take newsletter notes at next General and Committee meetings in his absence.
- (7) Deep Diving Sub Committee recommends a special diving manual be made available to all members, with the emphasis to be made on diver self-reliance to alleviate pressure put on Dive Captains.
- (8) Attempts will be made to obtain a booking in Winter at Wilson's Prom. in Lodge accommodation, Pat Reynolds organising.
- (9) Members to pay full Casico Insurance fee themselves if they require the cover.
- (10) Bob Scott is working on production of more Club sew on badges. More news next meeting.
- (11) Club boat fees for dives have to take a rise due to increasing cost of fuel. The new fees will operate from March 17th and will be: Members - \$8 per day locally and \$9 per day on country and interstate trips. Visitors on dives (non-members) will pay \$2 extra on the above fees. After each outing it will be the responsibility of the Dive Captain to collect money from divers.

\* NEXT MEETING OF V.S.A.G. COMMITTEE will be on Wednesday 24th March at Paul & Leslie Tipping's home at 521 Lygon Street, Carlton at 8 p.m.

DIVE CALENDAR

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Dive Capt.</u>	<u>Meet At</u>
Mar 6, 7 & 8	Port Campbell - long weekend		Max Synon 465 2812	
Mar 17	General Meeting - Lecture by Owen Wright on Resuscitation			
Mar 21	Pinnacles Dive	2.30am	Bob Scott 367 2261	San Remo Jetty
Mar 28	Port Phillip Heads	9.00am	G. Birtles 846 1983	Sorrento Boat Ramp
Apr 2-17	Vanuatu Tour		Andy Redwood	699 3906
Apr 4	Slack Water Dive	3.30am	Max Synon 465 2812	Sorrento Boat Ramp
Apr 9-12	WIlsons Prom. 8 sites for camping will be looked at Tidal River		Tony Tipping	80 4956
Apr 21	General Meeting Lecture by Dr. Broomhall on Deep Diving.			
Apr 25	Sorrento/Heads	9.00am	Terry Brooks 439 3749	Sorrento Boat Ramp
	*This will be a deep dive outside the Heads*			
May 2	Flinders	10.00am	Geoff Birtles 846 1983	Flinders Pier

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

\* \* \* \* \*



FOR SALE

- SEIKO DIVERS WATCH SPORTS 100 -

Black face, luminous markings, elapsed time bezel, metal band, day and date. Tested to 100 metres by Seiko and 55M Geoff at Nauru. Buzzes when in close proximity to crays.

Excellent condition 18 months old. Replacement value \$195.00, sell \$90.00 or any reasonable cash offer.

- Geoff Birtles 846 1983

"FLOTSAM AND JETSAM"

*"There was movement at the meeting,  
for the secret was let slip.  
That Johnny had found some birds  
for the 'Mirrabooka' trip,  
And all the macho divers who  
rashamedly showed their best,  
Were no match for old Reg Truscott  
when it came to the final test."*

Just when the final preparations were being made for what was looking like an all-male trip to the "Prom." on the Australia Day weekend up popped Kerry and Kay who sight unseen were prepared to come away with the blokes for the annual trip aboard the good ship "Mirrabooka".

And what a trip it was.

- The usual "get together" at the Foster Pub followed by the assault on the sleepy little town of Port Franklin.

On the Friday night the sky emptied itself out drenching anybody who had not found a bunk space on the boat or at least a cramped sit-up position in a car.

My morning was heralded by the sound of Reg's leather soled shoes thumping around on the deck. I thought sea-faring men were

supposed to wear non slip rubber shoes, but not so this captain who neither conforms to daylight saving time.

A story is told by another Port Franklinite, that at the New Years' Eve party, everybody kisses each other at midnight and then one hour later all the girls line up to kiss Reg. They say that it was almost daylight the last time he had had enough.

So around 7.30 our time we pulled out of Port Franklin for the trip to Refuge Cove.

Upon arrival Barry, Geoff, Dave and Mick were already set up and were playing cricket on the sand. Well at least Geoff can claim he bowled a maiden over, even if it was in the cricket sense.

Our first dive was at Little Waterloo Bay. Not a brilliant dive, but it did yield a few crays.

On Saturday night the sweet scent of perfume lingered in the air and blended delicately with the flavours of boiling crayfish, fried onions and beery breaths. The only thing missing was the garlic!

On Sunday we dived Lighthouse Bay, the visibility was better than on the previous day and both the first and second dives yielded a good feed of crays. Just as well too, for that evening Russell Kitt's Southern Cross Divers came ashore from their charter boat to join us.

Later in the evening it was joke time, Mick with his "Archie", Alex with his "prawn trawler", some crude character who gets off on Dave and Mabel stories, Charlie and his pink house, and Tip, who took so long to tell his international one upmanship, that he lost a lot of ground on the local scene.

Monday's clean up was done in almost record time and was followed by a couple of dives near Hobb's Head and Sealers Cove; where Kingy found and lost a ledge full of "10 pounders".

And so back to Port Franklin, but not before Reg had received some careful nursing for a splinter in the foot, and the rest of us had on-the-spot ear examinations from Alan Wood.



This trip was one of the best yet organised by V.S.A.G. -

- two compressors
- a doctor
- a nurse
- a travel consultant
- and a ship load of animals who were refused admission on Noah's Ark.

Two weeks later we dived the wreck of the "George Kerridge". In the 40 degree heat of summer it was a perfect day to enjoy diving.

Most of us had 3 dives and rounded off the day with a romp with the seals at Seal Rocks. An absolutely fantastic experience which seemed to be enjoyed as much by the seals as by ourselves.

On the 21st February we dived the Lonsdale drop off and were joined by Alistair Stewart, Jeff Francis, Geoff Drucker and Neil Louis. Alistair and Jeff came from Wangaratta for the day and are now two new country members of the Club. Also showing up was Peter Harkin complete with chauffeur, Ken Virtue. Of the 16 divers, 5 were having their first dives with our club. We finished off the day with a channel run off the Quarantine Station.

To date its certainly been a hectic and busy start to the 1982 diving year.

Plans are already being made for a summer trip to South Australia (home of the great white!) and of course there is Vanuatu and the Easter "Prom" trip.

To date 5 new members have joined the club and another 5 have shown considerable interest in joining.

And how about our new newsletter cover - first class Alex! How would you like a photo of that well known home-made boat towing Barry's Haines Hunter through the Rip. Should be worth a few points!

Signed

Anna Conder  
with apologies to Banjo Patterson  
and "The Man from Snowy River"

EDITORS NOTE:

This has to be one of your best F. & J. columns ever Mrs. Conder!  
Thanks.

PERISCOPE

This month we figured that Periscope would give the local news a miss as the "Refuge Rage" will be more than adequately reported elsewhere. Besides, Periscope is receiving handsome "hush" money from certain married chaps who no doubt are very anxious to vet this issue prior to wifey getting her hands on it.

Any diver wishing to indulge masochistic tendencies should immediately contact Steve Sinclair (FAUI Instructor) of IN DEPTH North Melbourne (3283218) and enrol for the Royal Life Saving Society's "Sub Aqua Bronze" course. If you are really switched on by pain, tack on the "Senior Resuscitation" course. Its time consuming, tiring and at times painful (bruised lips with cold sores are the inevitable result of prolonged E.A.R. practise). But, if you successfully complete the course I can guarantee that you will leave with a real sense of achievement and know that you have accomplished something really worthwhile.

Both Gary Copplestone and I (together with everyone else on the course) figured that this was the most useful thing we had ever done to improve our diving knowledge and abilities and are convinced that anyone in charge of a group of divers or boat should have similar training. The ability to apply effective resuscitation to victims of respiratory failure or cardiac arrest also has important application outside diving (particularly if you have kids) and should be considered by anyone who leads an active lifestyle.

SUB AQUA BRONZE MEDALLION

This is award to candidates who can demonstrate their ability to carry out an effective rescue (both with and without the assistance of diving gear) and the treatment of another diver in an emergency situation.

Training and examination is divided into the following sections:

(i) Diver lifesaving techniques using diving gear.

This includes underwater recovery of an unconscious diver with respiratory failure, in water E.A.R. (Expired Air Resuscitation) and surface swim techniques. The procedure is technically demanding and complex in application. It requires a great deal of practise and can be physically tiring because it includes 100 yard swims in full SCUBA gear applying E.A.R. each 10 seconds.

(ii) Life saving techniques without diving gear.

Most divers find it hard to grasp the necessity for this section (including me) as it has little application to diving. On the other hand it sorts out your water ability and confidence and if you're not fit, forget it - you'll drown!

It includes the effective restraint and recovery of a struggling, panicking swimmer (no buoyancy aids) and the recovery with in water E.A.R. of an unconscious swimmer with respiratory failure. If this is not hard enough consider that 100 yards swims are involved and the whole rescue procedure must be accomplished in 4 minutes.

(iii) Resuscitation

Resuscitation training and testing for treatment of Respiratory and Circulatory failure in adults and children. This overlaps with the "Senior Resuscitation" section where the subject is more fully covered.

(iv) An oral and written test on the handling of emergencies, diving physiology (again!), first aid, boat handling and safe diver practises. (Steve handles his theory lectures really well and no one found this section particularly demanding.)

At this stage I should mention that if you haven't already caught on, this is not a "puss" course. Six nights over two weeks.



Each 4 hour session broken down into 1 hour theory, 1 hour resuscitation and 2 hours pool work. Everyone who completed the course passed (and deserved to), but we lost 50% along the way!

All E.A.R. training involved actual mouth to mouth (or nose) contact between patient and rescuer.

#### SENIOR RESUSCITATION CERTIFICATE

"This award is designed to cater for those responsible members of the community whose interests, occupations or needs render it necessary to possess a thorough knowledge of the procedures required in the first aid treatment of cases suffering from respiratory and circulatory failures".

The Sub Aqua Bronze adequately meets most diver resuscitation needs. As Senior Resuscitation is a mandatory requirement both for PADI and FAUI Divemaster Certification I had no choice. In contrast to Sub Aqua Bronze training which one eventually gets to like, Senior Resusc. training is very onerous requiring much practice and study. On the other hand, having completed it you have a real sense of accomplishment and become very confident of your ability to competently handle a diving or other emergency requiring resuscitation procedures.

Let's get some of the terms right first -

#### E.A.R. Expired Air Resuscitation.

This is the oxygenation of a non breathing patient's blood through artificial inflation of their lungs with expired air. It works (extraordinarily well) because we breathe out the greater part of inhaled oxygen.

#### E.C.C. External Cardiac Compression.

This is artificial circulation of a patient's blood through regular compressive movements to the lower half of a patient's sternum. It is only used in the absence of a carotid pulse and always combined with E.A.R.

## H.L.R. Heart Lung Resuscitation

This is a combination of E.A.R. and E.C.C. (2 breaths/ 15 compressions; 4-6 times per minute). It produces an artificial circulation of oxygenated blood to the tissues of the body which prevents and delays the onset of brain damage.

### Practical Training and Testing

This is conducted on a Swedish invention called a "Resusci Annie" - a sexy life size doll with "tricks". Its good and bad! The only good thing is that you no longer have to have actual mouth to mouth contact with another guy! (Some of us "turned" - didn't we Gary darling?)

The bad things start with the difficulty of achieving an effective seal on her plastic face: also, if you don't break her damn neck the airway remains closed; she has a nasty little tape spitting out her side which indicates tidal volume and frequency of E.A.R., compression depth, position and frequency of E.C.C., and of course the H.L.R. sequence of E.A.R. and E.C.C.!!! (Confusing, isn't it?) Bomb out on any little aspect and you fail - and you don't know your progress until it's too late. So you practice - believe me! (If you can't get it right in practice you'll break ribs and puncture lungs in a real life situation, so the standards are reasonable.)

If this is not bad enough you must also be able to demonstrate correct technical procedure whilst briefing a bystander on how to obtain help and how to assist you by taking over one of the functions (E.C.C.). Try counting compressions, whilst talking!

### Oral Test

This follows the practical examination and covers the theoretical aspects and procedures for E.A.R. and H.L.R.; post recover procedures; modification of procedures for babies and children; signs, symptoms, causes and first aid treatment of asphyxia, shock, haemorrhage and fainting; complications of E.A.R. and H.L.R. Summoning medical help.

Having got this far you know your subject. In fact you are better trained to deal with an emergency requiring resuscitation than most doctors, who, unless they have the interest to do post graduate work such as this, have had no training on the subject at all!

Any volunteers for the Sub Aqua Bronze? Before you shake your head with "no way" let's close with some of the diving emergencies that could require F.A.R. or H.L.R.

- Decompression sickness (Chokes)
- Pulmonary barotrauma
- Blue ringed octopus bite (paralyses the chest muscles)
- Bites, stings and punctures from fish, venomous shells, rays, snakes and jelly fish.
- Asphyxia arising from poorly filtered air.
- Drowning
- Internal poisoning (crook fish)

On that cheerful note - C. U. or the Loch Ard! (There's still time before its gazettee).

by G.R.B.

### "THE GEORGE KERMODE"

All along, Kaye has been saying, "You have to come diving, the ratio is great." So last Sunday (after a heavy Saturday night), she drags me out of bed at six a.m. for what I believe to be a casual day sunbaking on the beach. Little did I realize what was in store.

The ladies met and tore down to Flinders and there we were four 'fragile' females in the clutches, (not crutches!) of sixteen attentive gentlemen.

Before I knew it I was accompanying four strangers (not strange), out to sea. Kaye had said how organized the club was and I was



Impressed at how each lady was assigned to a separate boat!!! It was then that I was introduced to Mick, Alex, Alan and Rob.

So, being the quiet lass I am, I became the 'silent observer' having never been diving before. My eyes were glued ahead, but not my feet, as Mick decided that he would rather have been at Sandown as he broke the sound barrier.

Later, I peeled my fingers off the railing that I had held for grim death as they began to look for the "George Kermode." With complete attention, we looked for "the second telegraphic pole to the right of the window on the house on the hill." .....beats me, we were all going in different directions!! Then I heard that ever reliable sound - Kaye's whistle - they had found it.

So anchors away (excuse the pun, but I had to use it somewhere), the guys started to dress. Scuba gear of course! Knowing nothing, I began my silent observation... firstly you have to clear a space and drag all your gear out ... pour yourself into your wetsuit, attach weights, vest, tank, gloves, booties, flippers, masks, snorkel, knife, torch -and they talk about women! Having thoroughly tested all gear, they decide their course of action.. Mick goes over and we all nearly went with him, I found myself alone, as I watched their beady eyes submerge.

So, over I go into the depths of the ocean for one of my many cooling swims, awaiting the return of my "buddies." One by one they emerge and hurl flippers, masks and snorkels at me.

All aboard, they talk about this and that and I try to visualize the "George Kermode" and again I think to myself, "I hope I pass my medical on Thursday, so that I can try to be a part of this sport."

Amidst the bright sun the laughs and conversation revolves around all boats and we head off for our second adventure - the cray dive.

The light hearted competitiveness becomes apparent as the crabs were hard to find, however, each boat came away with a bag full.

So, we headed towards home, and detoured to Seal's Rock. They were there in hundreds and merged beautifully with the colour of the land. The closer we moved the more excited we became and it wasn't until we were around the other side that we saw a group of seals swimming close to shore.

One game diver decided to snorkel with them and it only took seconds before we were all in. What an experience! Having only snorkeled once before, my excitement overcame my concentration and many months later I had it under control with the memories that will last a lifetime. My eagerness to dive heightened.

With the helpful hands of one kind gentleman, my towel was 'placed' around my shoulders and we headed inland.

During my state of collapse on the hot trail back to Melbourne, I couldn't help but feel grateful firstly, to Kaye for having dragged me out of bed and secondly, to all you guys who made my "casual day at the beach" an exhilarating experience and finally, for demonstrating to me that the sport of diving can be the enrichment of the individual for the belonging to and trusting of friendships in a thrill seeking environment and of course I appreciated the ratio of 1:4. What female wouldn't!

by Chris (Kaye's flat-mate)

## FLINDERS APEA

After a speedy trip with Kerry, we arrived at Flinders at 9.00 a.m. In the company of two other lovely ladies (trying to increase the ratio, not that we mind at all.) Anyway, we checked with the dive Captain, who quite cunningly, separated the girls one per boat, O!! Two on his boat, of course, nothing like sharing the talent.

We headed off to the "George Komode", at top speed, sensational, the weather was perfect, bright blue sky, sun, sea, what a day we couldn't have asked for better!

We arrived at a place where the house on the hill, lined up with the telephone poles and the red face of the cliff. All the young guys with their zippy boats and top equipment, had to be shown by the OLDER BOYS just how it is done, without the depth SOUNDER! EXPERIENCE is the name of the game. The George Komode was located.

Great dive. In 70 feet of water, visibility only 15 feet so they told me, plenty of fish life, Mr. Goulding with torch in hand, started to escort me around the dredge, although not very colourful, it was a fascinating experience for me.

Then, after relaxing for a few hours; swimming, eating, sunbaking, the girls being well and truly entertained for the day (in more ways than one). Well fella's, those of you that didn't come along really missed out.

We raised anchor and headed off faster than the speed of sound in "BILL" to East of Pyramald Rock to dive for crays. There were a few cray pots around but unfortunately I was informed that isn't the way you catch them. PITY. Everybody IN. Even though Mr. Tips and John had the best bag girl, they only managed to bag one cray. That was hardly eating material BUT the Grey CRAY KING and Pat managed to bag a few.

Then off to West of the Nobbies, a quick dive to top off the "CRAY BASH". Kerry not able to dive due to water in her middle ear, was left on board with myself and Mr. Tips, enjoying the sunshine, we were well informed on the drug report...TRYPHASIL, SUDAFED, SOMETHING FOR THE P.M.T. suffere and about LIBIDO increasements! Say no more.

One of the biggest highlights of the day was at Seals Rock. WHAT AN EXPERIENCE. As we rounded the corner, seals in view, everyone was trying to get their gear on as quick as they could (a change to getting it off as quick). Every man and his dog



was in the water. More divers than seals, but fortunately no sharks, well not the fish type anyway. It was just sensational. I had a smile from ear to ear. After a great time in with the seals, we headed back for home.

Boats loaded, gear packed. Day was over.  
THANKS FELLA'S FOR ANOTHER GREAT DAY. SO GLAD WE HAVE BEEN  
ACCEPTED AS MEMBERS.

by Kaye Poyner

NOTE: *It is great to see new members already taking an interest in the newsletter, and I hope this won't be your last report, as it certainly has that new style we have all been waiting for. Many thanks.*

EDITOR

## COLONIAL TORPEDO BOATS

In September 1981 issue of "THE NAVY", a fascinating article was presented by HARRY ADLAM on the Colonial Navies and their frail craft. I have endeavoured to summarise this lengthy article for those of you unfortunate enough to have missed it.

The Royal Australian Navy is primarily a small ship navy, the only large fighting unit being the flagship HMAS Melbourne. Indeed, the circle seems to have been completed when we consider that in the days before Federation, the States that maintained naval forces kept small ship fleets.

The small ship of those now far off days was the torpedo boat, which corresponds with today's frigate or destroyer-escort. The first torpedo boat, rated as such was HMS LIGHTNING built for the Royal Navy in 1876 by the well

known Thornycroft yard. What is usually overlooked is the fact that in 1879, the New South Wales Government built two of these new crafts in Sydney. The Colonials were right there from the start! Both were built to Thornycroft design and named ACHERON & AVERNUS and by all accounts were of a successful type.

The boats were very "narrow gutted" being 80 feet long by 10 feet wide, driven by a single screw they had a speed of 16 knots and developed 300H.P. They were fitted with two sets of dropping gear for 14 inch Whitehead torpedoes, as well as being fitted to carry the spar torpedo.

The spar torpedo had been tested during the American Civil War with good results. It was a very expensive type of weapon, as to secure a hit usually meant the loss of the torpedo boat. The spar torpedo was in fact explosive charge suspended from a long pole, or spar, pushed out over the bow of the torpedo boat. When the charge was pushed against the target ship it could be either fired by percussion or remote operation, usually by a pull on a long lanyard.

In respect of the dropping gear, the torpedo was of the locomotive type. When the boat's skipper decided he was close enough to the target, he merely dropped the "fish torpedo" into the water and then went hard astern. In both cases the boat had to be aimed at the target, although the dropping operation at least gave the boat a sporting chance of survival!

The colony of Victoria received two second class torpedo boats suitable for harbour use being named NEPEAN AND LONSDALE both being spar torpedo boats with dropping gear.

Just how good the second class torpedo boats were is a matter of opinion. As early as 1885 the Naval Commandant admitted that the spar torpedo was of little value and stated that the boats could not live in any seaway and if a torpedo was dropped the boat would capsize. He further added that even in calm weather it would be very risky to drop a torpedo without

having men on deck to change sides to counterbalance the loss of weight!

NEPEAN AND LONSDALE were evidently regarded as of little use and in 1903 were put up for auction, but there were no takers.

First class boats were designed as sea-going, suitable for attacking ships at sea. The Victorian Navy placed an order for one 1st class boat and received the vessel name CHILDERS also built by Thurgcroft. She was much larger than Nepean or Lonsdale at 112ft. x 12ft., and 60 tons with a speed of 20 knots. CHILDERS carried a torpedo tube in the bows and a single revolving deck mounted tube aft, and four sets of dropping gear. She saw considerable service until hulked on Swan Island in 1916.

In 1981 the Victorian Navy took delivery of another 1st class boat, the largest torpedo boat to be acquired by any of the colonies. Named COUNTESS OF HOPETOUN she was 130ft. x 13 ft., and her single screw drove her at 23 knots with 1186 H.P. She had a bow torpedo, a twin revolving deck tube aft four sets of dropping gear and two 25mm Nordenfelt guns. The COUNTESS was christened in a most unusual way. Instead of having a bottle of champagne smashed against her bows, the bottle was suspended over the stem and shattered by firing the bow torpedo.

The Countess was actively used, but like all the Colonial boats was never called upon to engage in hostile action and she was sold in 1924 for \$600. For many years the Countess's main engine was in use at the Gordon Institute of Technology at Geelong, where engine drivers learned how to adjust lap and learn on this historic relic.

Despite the boat's limitations, great respect must be held for the Colonial Governments of the day to invest in these small warships. The money could have been put to



good use elsewhere, but defence was very important and the Colonies wanted to play their part.

by DES WILLIAMS

## C.A.S.I.C.O. INSURANCE

Members requiring insurance cover for diving are requested to submit their names to Tony Tipping at March meeting. This year, fees are expected to be about \$10 (estimate only) for 15 months cover, and full payment is to be made by members.

\* \* \* \*

### BLACK LIP ABALONE: (Amended regulations & sizes )

Regulation 82 (1) of the Fishing Regulations has been changed through Statutory Rule 32/1981 to effect variations to size limits for Black Lip abalone in Victoria. As shown in the following map size limits for Black Lip abalone were:

- (A) West of Longitude 143/40 East (Cape Otway) 12cm
- (B) Between Longitudes 143/40 & 144/53/30 (Cape Otway to Cape Schank & not including Port Phillip Bay) 11.5cm
- (C) Port Phillip Bay (incl. Corio & Hobsons Bay) 10cm
- (D) Between Longitudes 144/50/30 & 145/50 (Cape Schank and Tarwin Meadows) 11cm
- (E) East of Longitude 145/50 (East of Tarwin Md) 12cm

From February 17, 1981, the following size limits and areas apply (see map)

- (A) West of Longitude 143/50/30 (Erskine River) 12cm

(B) Between Longitudes 143/58/30 & 147/58/30 (Lorne to Lakes Entrance, but not including Port Phillip

- 1cm

(C) Port Phillip Bay (incl. Corio & Hobsons)- 0cm

(D) East of Longitude 147/58/30 (east of Lake Entrance) -12cm

GREENLIP ABALONE:

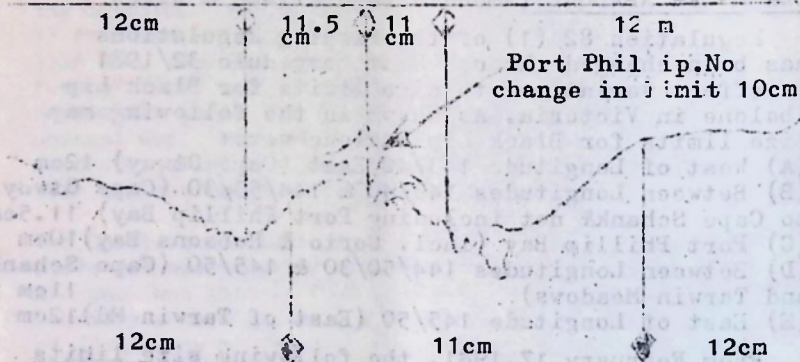
The size limit of 13cm in all Victorian waters is unchanged.

AMATEUR FISHING BAG LIMIT:

The bag limit for amateur fishermen remains at 10 per person per day.

NOTE: The map shows approx. the boundaries between the zones in which different size limits apply for Blacklip Abalone.

Size limits and areas previously applying



SIZE LIMITS & AREAS APPLYING FROM 17 FEB. 1981.