

FATHOMS

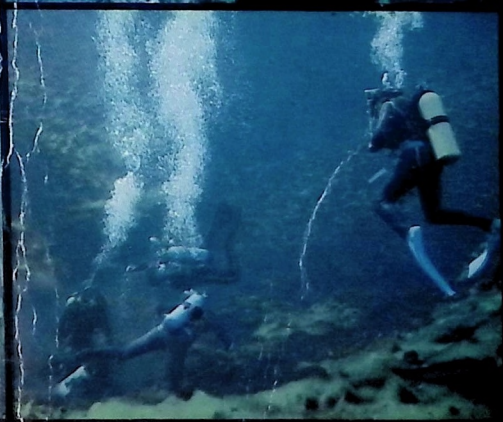
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SAFETY IN DIVING

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VSAG

Top left: VSAG President Max Synon, diving Solomon Islands. (Photo by Keith Jensen). *Top right:* VSAG diver Paul Tipping on the bow area and gun of the "Dai Na Hino Maru" in Truk Lagoon. (Photo by Tony Tipping). *Bottom left:* VSAG diver Justin Liddy at Ewens Ponds, Mt. Gambier. (Photo by David Carroll). *Bottom right:* VSAG divers Barry Truscott, Tony Tipping, Paul Sier and Justin Liddy at Ewens Ponds, Mt. Gambier. (Photo by David Carroll).

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

VSAG

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HUSKINSON

~~044 -~~
415046.

* 415142.

Heath Jensen
460 3672.

The Victorian Sub-Aqua Group was founded in 1954 and has continued as a strong and active diving club since that time. It is incorporated as a non profit company and has no commercial affiliation with any organisation.

VSAG is committed to the preservation of independant diving freedom. It believes that divers must take a responsible attitude toward the protection and preservation of the marine environment but as a general rule is opposed to legislative measures that place prohibitive limitations and restrictions on diving activities.

Local diving is organised on a bi-monthly basis, generally out of participating member's boats. This is supported by weekend camps, charters to more remote locations and annual overseas trips. The club has a considerable investment in diving equipment.

Regular functions provide an opportunity for members, friends and families to socialise. Each month VSAG meets at the Collingwood Football Club where bar facilities are available prior to and after the General Meeting. Visitors are very welcome - smart casual wear essential.

FATHOMS

Official journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group

583.3154.

25 HARRISWAY
DRIE

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DECEMBER 1983

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Next general meeting:

** TUESDAY Dec. 20 8.00 p.m.
Collingwood Football Club
Lulie Street, Abbotsford

Next committee meeting:

January 24 8.00 p.m.
Barrie & Maree Truscott's
8 Netherbrae Rd, E.Frankston

Editorial submissions to: "The Editor" Fathoms C/- 8 Newlyn Close, Templestowe. 3106

Healthworks (the premier Victorian Health club) located at Waverley has donated 3 ladies prizes of "15 Visit Aerobic Passes" and yet another "Year's Free Air" won off Southern Cross Divers at the unsuccessful SDF night. (Good on ya Russell!) To cap all of this, the VSAG committee have purchased a giant Christmas Hamper so some lucky family is going to be very happy.

My apologies to those contributors whose articles did not appear in this issue through lack of space. They will appear next month.

Des Williams (our President) has asked that I wish our members and the many Fathoms readers a very Merry Christmas and a Safe new Diving Year. Your Editor seconds it!

Geoff Birtles

P.S.: Our next General Meeting, the Yarra One (!) .. is on a TUESDAY Tuesday December 20.

**VSAG ANNUAL AUSTRALIA DAY WEEKEND
DIVE SAFARI**

JANUARY 28 - 30, 1984

Final preparations are underway for what promises to be the best VSAG Australia Day Weekend Diving Safari.

Reg Truscott's luxury vessel the good ship "Mirrabooka" has again been booked and Reg has some great new dive sites he wants to take us to, including the famous Crocodile Rock.

All you need to bring is SELF, DIVING GEAR, SLEEPING BAG, MATTRESS, LIQUID REFRESHMENT. VSAG provides everything else, including tents, food and great company - so get together \$70.00.

See John Goulding at December General Meeting with deposit of \$20.00 - balance to be paid on the trip.

Normal cancellation conditions apply and members are warned of possible cancellation costs & deposit forfeits for late cancellation.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Meeting held at Geoff and Isabel Birtles home Tuesday, November 22, 1983.
Entire committee present.

Business arising:

- (i) Paul Sier paid outstanding club debt.
- (ii) Birtles, Goulding and Jeacle confirmed arrangements for Christmas Function donations from Melbourne Dive, Southern cross, Warrick's Dive Shop and Healthworks.

Treasurer's Report:

Cash at Bank	\$792.29
Cash on Hand	\$731.00
Investments	<u>\$779.64</u>
	<u>\$2,302.93</u>

Dive Calendar:

Planned through till Easter, including trips to Refuge Cove, Port Campbell and Tidal River.

Business:

- (i) 30th Year committee to meet new year.
- (ii) Incorporation. P. Tipping confirmed he would review this matter early next year.
- (iii) Membership list. Terry Brooks will get this onto a word processor ASAP.
- (iv) Discussion and negative decision on Keith Jensen's suggestion of a club "photo log".
- (v) Goulding reported on growing groundswell of community hostility to proposed Wilsons Prom Marine Reserve.
- (vi) Williams circulated "marks" for Point Lonsdale "swim through" and "Wyrallah" kindly supplied by Geoff Naylor. Birtles circulated marks for Broken Sub.

(viii) Birtles suggested a drive to increase club membership to 100, on the basis that the club needed more (experienced) regular divers and possibly one or two more boat owners. Motion carried.

Des Williams to spearhead the drive.

(viii) Birtles presented a written submission on long and short term safety objectives.

a) Short term. Review, upgrade and formalise VSAG membership requirements. Revise membership application.

A detailed presentation was tabled on this which included Diver Certification, Experience, Equipment, Medical Clearance and a "grandfather clause". Much heated debate with Goulding/Truscott speaking strongly against proposed easing of current VSAG CZ18 requirement. Nothing resolved - postponed to next meeting.

b) Long Term. A conspectus of deep diving procedure (GRB) was tabled as a basis for preparation of a "VSAG Diving Procedures Manual". This was adopted in principle and will be prepared by Birtles over the next 9 months.

Meeting closed at 11.55 p.m. (!!) Committee members retired to lick their wounds over chicken legs and French Strawberry Flan served by a very tired Isabel.

WANTED - 35 EXPERIENCED DIVERS!

VSAG HAS A CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF 65 INDIVIDUALS. MANY OF THESE ARE NO LONGER ACTIVE DIVERS. OTHERS ARE "2 OR 3 OCCASION" DIVERS. LESS THAN A DOZEN ARE COMMITTED 50 WEEK A YEAR DIVERS.

WE NEED MORE HEADS TO: INCREASE OUR NUCLEUS OF REGULAR DIVERS, INCREASE OUR POOL OF BOATS; SWELL CLUB FUNDS; MAKE OUR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES MORE ENJOYABLE & OF COURSE ADD TO OUR STATUS AS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL INDEPENDENT DIVING CLUB IN VICTORIA.

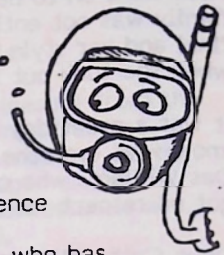
IF YOU HAVE A PROSPECT GIVE HIM/HER OUR APPLICATION FORM AND YOUR ISSUE OF FATHOMS (A REPLACEMENT IS AVAILABLE FROM THE EDITOR). INVITE THEM TO OUR MEETING AND CLOSE! (CLOSE MEANS - GET A CHEQUE).

WARNING: VSAG IS NOT A CLUB FOR NOVICE DIVERS OR "SHOP CLUB CLONES". INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM TO DIVE WHERE WE WANT, FOR WHAT WE WANT, HOW WE WANT IS NOT EVERYONE'S CUP OF TEA! YOUR COMMITTEE SUGGESTS 6 MONTHS ACTIVE DIVING AS A PREREQUISITE.

ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER OR ANY MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE. (A SPECIAL NOTE TO "VALLEY DIVERS": WE'VE GOT ROOM FOR YOU FELLAS - IF YOU'RE UP TO IT!!!) Ed.

HELP

FLOTŞAM & JETSAM



This may sound like sour grapes, but call it what you like. The new editor Geoff Birtles never wrote a more true sentence than when he stated in the last edition: "SAVE US FROM EDUCATED FIREMEN" - I refer of course to Keith Jensen, who has set himself up as a self styled expert on the English Language! Fancy the gaul of the man. Firstly even daring to expose the secret goings on at V.S.A.G. committee meetings - but then to write them in such a SCRIBELOUS fashion that even the learned editor was forced to reach for the pocket Oxford! Not only has Keith Jensen blown the image of the V.S.A.G. committee man as a person to whom even the sea currents obey, but he dared to place himself above the scribes, and wise men of this club, who for years have been claiming (and winning) great respect for their ability to plan dives and predict when the water will be slack!

For those of you who have not the faintest idea what I am talking about, I refer you to last month's Fathoms and Keith's memorable use of the word "CABALISTIC", to describe the business style of the V.S.A.G. Committee.

For years a certain V.S.A.G. Committee man held almost divine right in the Club because he alone could forecast the times that the water would be slack. In actual fact, as Keith so eagerly exposed in his article, this skill was attributable to no other reason than the fact that other Committee members were themselves too slack to buy the tide tables!

One of V.S.A.G.'s social highlights of the year was held on 20th November. The Somers Tennis Party/Mile was once again another success thanks to the Tipping brothers for their organisation and use of their house, and of course thanks to the CABALISTIC committee for planning this event on such a perfect day.

Big Mick Jeacle proved that he was not just a flash in the pan, when he for the second year in a row, took off the major tennis prize. He and Isabel Birtles won the mixed doubles in a superb display of teamanship. Barry and Marie Truscott whilst putting up a good challenge, were no match for Mick's superfast serve and Isabel's see through mesh tennis dress!

Mick went on to beat Tony T. at the mens singles final, but the Truscott family was not entirely disgraced. Samantha took out the ladies singles final and her style was very reminiscent of mum's super squash playing when she took out the Frankston ladies champion a few decades ago!

It was a great day for the youngsters. Young Peter Jensen - son of you know who, won the Somers Mill race. He even dared to beat the President Des Williams who came in second. I tell you, these bloody Jensens ain't got no respect for nobody!!

Doug Catherall's daughter Liz was the first lady across the line - and she and Doug made up one of the many father and child combinations which included:

Brian Lynch with Belinda and Christopher
Dave Moore with Darren,
Geoff Birtles with Reece
Paul Sier with Nicholas,
Virginia and Millie (dog).

Absent from the party was the latest addition to the Tipping family - young Marcus. Apparently young Ben (the Captain) Jarmin Goulding was disappointed that Marcus did not show. He was heard complaining to his father, that at the tender age of 13 months there were not many kids he could bash up - but Marcus (4 weeks) was one of them. Nevertheless Marcus' father acquired a new sense of dignity by making one of the longest unrehearsed speeches of his career. The only thing he forgot to do was award himself Mick Jeacles' second prize - as according to the rules of the Tipping Family: "No member (other than a Tipping) can be awarded more than one prize on the day. In the event that a member (other than a Tipping) is awarded first place in more than one event, his prize shall be offered to the second placegetter who in all likelihood through fair means or foul shall be a Tipping." Rule 396-B

The various authors of this article wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Signed FAY SLIFTER
(The Plastic Surgeon)

STRESS LOADED!!

Cave Diving in Mt. Gambier - by Geoff Birtles

It's cruel but true! VSAG divers extract a great deal of pleasure from the antics of their guest divers and new members. We nicknamed this one "Wank", an MAAV mate of Little Mick's (complete with mandatory beard) who inveigled his way into the trip (with macho tales of super diving exploits), to rack up hours for his Cat 2. (This City of Launceston is a real shot in the arm for dive shops running caving courses).

His dive plan was to descend the 30 ft. deco line and "hang there" for freshwater experience. (True!) A combination of inexperience, lack of a buddy, unsuitable equipment (f enzy with oral inflator) and overweight resulted in the shot line sinking to the limit of its tether (about 50 ft. in all). I now quote Wank, who wandered around confiding to anyone who would listen, "I was definitely what you call Stress Loaded! And he was serious. Truly! (Task loaded is a trendy caving word - I think Wank got it crossed up.)

Actually Mick's mate and Tony should make a good pair on the C of L. Both new Cat 2 graduates, both wear fenzies and each pretty good with the mouth! (It was at this stage your Safety Officer started keeping a pretty close eye on the guests.)

It all started back in February '81 when your correspondent organised formal training and certification (at \$15 per head!!) for the many old VSAG lags (16) who'd done it all but couldn't go back for lack of an appropriate qualification. Terry Brooks followed it up with another bulk training deal in September '81 but for some inexplicable reason an organised VSAG caving weekend never seemed to eventuate.

Finally, a fireman came to the rescue. (You know those chaps who climb ladders, jump out of windows, walk on water . . . !) Cup weekend finally saw 7 VSAG divers, 2 wives, 4 children and 4 guests head off to the Mount under Keith Jensen's enthusiastic and capable leadership. Thirteen dives later, at 7 different locations over 4 days we unanimously voted this a VSAG Cup weekend "fixture". Everyone was stoked!

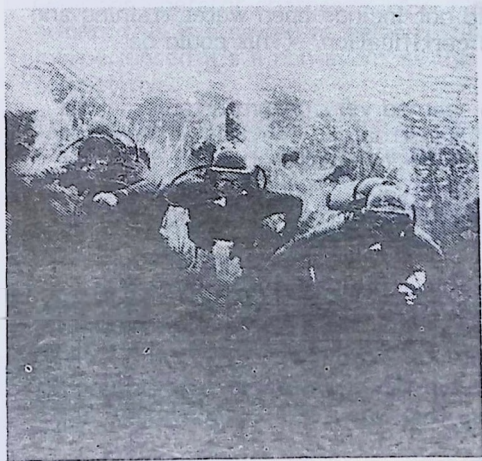
Space and caving politics do not permit a detailed resume on people and places - a few highlights follows.

1. Shocked disbelief to find the Big M drinking squash in the Nelson pub!
2. Again the M at Pics - this time displaying lack of recent freshwater experience, "Annie get me another weight; Annie I need another weight; Annie get me my snorkel - and so on." (This was his first dive - I'd like to have seen him try this on Annie at the end of the trip!!!)
3. New members Doug & Gary doing a nervous 35 minutes decompressing amongst the yabbies at 10 ft. after surreptitiously clipping onto my cave line and following a deep multi-level planned dive. (A complimentary copy of Multi-level Decompression Procedure has been posted to each). They provided a beaut target for much rock throwing!!)
4. The Safety Officer not feeling so safe when Paul, Pat & Igor threw him off a 30 ft. rock face overlooking One Tree. (Big wet suit rinse!)
5. The beautific and thoroughly narced face of a certain fireman contemplating a hens egg during a rather deep, deepie.
6. Spinning eyeballs on Alex when he hit the one-tree thermocline.
7. A very "chuffed" correspondent when "cray eye" Pat pointed out your editor's name next to dive buddy, Henry Bource and the date 1964 inside The Pines. (Unfortunately our dive captain became very petulant when confronted with proof positive that I had in fact been cave diving longer than he!)
8. The thoroughly delighted and very proud faces of young Peter Jensen and Reece Birtles after diving Ewens.
9. Meeting Reg Watson, station manager of "Barnoolut'. A nice old chap who likes a yarn. We learnt that sheep dogs get "footsore" at shearing time, sheep grow 2 teeth each year for 4 years, (thats how you tell their age), ear clips can only be placed in 12 month old lambs or the clips fall out, young shearers favour wide tooth combs, the oldies hate them for cabalistic(!!) reasons and the property owner (a lady) recently knocked back an offer of millions from oil rich Arabs.
10. Quoteable quote of the weekend: If the Pines is a Cat 3 hole, "The Heads" are a Cat 20! (Alex)

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PHOTOGRAPHS OPPOSITE

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|--|
| TOP | <u>"ONE TREE"</u> | L to R: Geoff Birtles, Mick Jeacle, Pat Reynolds, Keith Jensen, Alex Talay, Igor Chernichov. Gary & Doug in the background. Photo by Reece Birtles (Igor's camera) |
| BOTTOM LEFT | <u>"PICS"</u> | L to R: Paul Crellin, Geoff Birtles & Mick Jeacle above chasm. Photo by Keith Jensen |
| BOTTOM RIGHT | <u>"MORGANS CAVE"</u> | Keith Jensen holding ladder for Reece Birtles. Photo by Geoff Birtles |



WHERE/HOW MUCH?

A review of Air, Tuition, Charter & Service facilities available to the Melbourne diver.

by Geoff Birtles

As experienced divers we are often asked by friends which SCUBA teaching body we can recommend. If recent NSW State legislation requiring proof of PADI, FAUI or NAUI certification for gear hire or airfills is adopted Federally (and this is a big chance) many of our more senior VSAG divers may be posing the question on their own behalf.

With this in mind and the onset of summer, the time seemed opportune to do a "Ralph Nader" on our Melbourne dive shops. The following table of dive shops is a comprehensive summary of all "Full Service" operators that provide a nationally/internationally recognised accreditation.

"Full Service" means a retail operation offering accredited dive tuition and air fills. The more progressive and/or committed dive stores also offer "club" facilities, gear hire, charter facilities and equipment service. Those who do not train to international standards and provide an appropriate qualification have been excluded. (There is little point in owning a "shop card" which precludes you from diving at Heron or Fiji).

I was amazed to locate two retail operations offering diver tuition without recognised certification. One reasonably large inner suburban operation was particularly evasive about supplying "hard" information on their domestic product which as far as I could tell did not include open water training and certainly did not provide a recognised certification. (This could be "arranged" at extra cost!)

Interestingly the young salesman, who seemed very uncomfortable on the phone, claimed to be an Assistant NAUI instructor. NAUI is an American organisation trying very hard to establish themselves in this country as a reputable international training body. One cannot help but speculate on how they would react to the news of a new "disciple in training" selling "get wet quick and cheaply" courses!

The message is very clear. Diver beware! Train only with those who operate to strict international standards.

AIR

Survey covered pressure capabilities, cubic storage capacity and pricing. Everyone claimed 5000 psi capability so this was a non event.

Big cubes mean fast fills, so any store with capacity above 3000 cu.ft. is going to provide super prompt service. With one exception the going rate is \$4.00 for a single fill. All but one offered some kind of discount for multiple (10 to 20) prepaid fills.

GEAR SALES

Nothing to table here - the price you pay will depend on your negotiating skills and how often you frequent the dive store. "Scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" seemed to be the universal answer to questions on pricing policy.

TUITION

Quoted prices ranged from \$190 thru \$285 - with the median at \$235. But beware the hidden extras!

All but two organisations included suit hire in tuition fees. These charged \$40 or \$50 to supply a new suit on a Hire/Buy (HB) basis. Keep the suit and the fee is deducted from a pre-determined sale price. This has plusses and minuses. On the plus side you probably won't get Tinea, Herpes or other social diseases. On the other hand, if you decide you do not like diving you are down the tube for \$50. (Who gets the "new/used" suit?)

Is a mask, snorkel or fins included? For many it is not. Typically these items run out at \$70+. Once again, if you decide SCUBA diving is not for you, you have shredded 7 tens!

Only one operator charges SCUBA hire as an extra item. For equipment owners this is a saving as basic tuition is listed at \$190. For the inexperienced it's a non-event as the total charge of \$220 is still competitive.

The big "can of worms" is the medical. FAUI require a modified AS2299. AS2299 is a very stringent Australian standard for professional divers. Typically this runs out at \$70+ and is not refundable against medical benefits. PADI require students to obtain a clearance from their local GP (subject to a simple questionnaire). Total cost is only a few dollars after medical benefits.

All tuition fees included text book, affiliation fees and log book. Some courses require one or more nights accommodation. The most expensive course included 3 nights bed and breakfast at a diving lodge which makes it good value on a comparative basis. (If you wish to stay away 3 nights). Many others require one night away as an extra charge in the order of \$15.

BUSINESS	PHONE NO.	LOCATION	AFFILIATION	A I R				BASIC QUALIFICATION	INCLU
				BANKS CU./FT.	\$ ONE FILL		NO./\$ CARD		
					PUBLIC	CLUB			
AB OCEAN DIVERS (MARTY OWEN)	PHONE: 579 2851	BENTLEIGH	FAUI	3000+	4	-	10/20	250	\$50 HB
ASSOCIATED DIVERS (DAVE PERRY)	PHONE: 544 9002	CLAYTON	FAUI	7000	4	3	10/30	225	Y
BOB CUMBERLAND & D.I.S. PHONE: 589 2084		BEAUMARIS	FAUI	1800	4	3	10/30	285	Y
IN DEPTH (STEVE SINCLAIR)	PHONE: 328 3218	NTH MELB.	FAUI	800	4	3	10/30	245	Y
MELBOURNE DIVE (DICK WHITTAKER, BRIAN WILLIAMS)	PHONE: 459 4432	HEIDELBERG	PADI	7000	4	12/ 30	12/40	190	\$40 HB
MELBOURNE MARINE (CLIVE BUDD)	PHONE: 347 3199	CITY	PADI	500N	4	-	20/40	230	Y
MOD DIVE & SKI (RAY WELSH)	PHONE: 783 1638	FRANKSTON	PADI	ND	4	-	20/20	215	Y
MORNINGTON DIVE (JAN ADKINS)	PHONE: 74 2086	MORNINGTON	PADI	3300	4	3	-	215	Y
WARRICK'S DIVE SHOP (WARRICK McDONALD)	PHONE: 555 9128	MOORABBIN	PADI	1000	3	2	20/20	230	Y

* After Medical Benefits.

HB = Hire/Buy

Y = Yes

D = Depends on instructor

N = No

NC = No charge

NA = Not applicable

TUITION										CHARTER					SERVICE	
IONS	S.C.U.B.A.	ACCOMMODATION		EFFECTIVE ALL UP COST (NOVICE ONLY) \$	SESSIONS			INSTRUCTOR PUPIL RATIO (SEA ONLY)		OWN BOATS	PUBLIC		OWN CLUB		OWN SERVICE FACILITIES	
		N/\$	\$		POOL	SEA	THEORY	PERMITTED	CLAIM		1 TANK	2 TANKS	JOINING FEE \$	1 TANK		2 TANKS
N	Y	N/A	70	440	4	5	5	1:4	1:4	NO	N/A	N/A	-	-	-	EXTENSIVE
Y	Y	1/15	70	310	4	5	5	1:4	1:4	23 /FT	15	28	30	12	25	EXTENSIVE HYDRO
Y	Y	3/NC	70	355	4	8	5	1:4	1:4	27 /FT 23 /FT	14	18	30	10	14	REGULATOR
N	Y	1/NC	70	385	6	6	6	1:4	1:4	22 /FT	15	25			22	REGULATOR
N	\$30	1/17	*3	350	4	5	4	1:10	1:5 MAX	33 /FT	15	26		12	20	EXTENSIVE
Y	Y	N/A	*3	233	3	5	3	1:10	1:4	NO	-	-	30	HIRE		NO
Y	Y	N/A	*3	218	3	3	4	1:10	1:4	NO	-	-	N/A	-	-	REGULATOR
Y	Y	N/A	*3	218	D	D	D	1:10	D	NO	-	-	-	-	-	NO
Y	Y	N/A	*3	233	3	5	6	1:10	1:6	NO	-	-	20	HIRE		REGULATOR

To calculate the "effective all up cost" of tuition, I have taken the simplistic view of a novice contemplating the sport but not committed to it. Such a person owns no equipment and may never dive again on completion of the course. This could mean suit hire, SCUBA hire, purchase of fins, mask and snorkel (at \$70), accommodation and certainly a medical. Obviously this is not a realistic basis of comparison for an experienced diver with own equipment or even for those who intend to continue or make use of their purchases.

FAUI or PADI

As a dual certified Divemaster I have seen and heard both sides of the story. It gets down to this. You can dive anywhere in the world with either - it really doesn't matter. Both organisations have an "ongoing education" system designed to drag bulk dollars out of badge bandits. (More on this next issue).

CLUBS

Almost all dive shops have their own "club". Lip service is paid to club autonomy but in nearly all (but not every) case, the "club" is a commercial operation the same as my Health Club. (Free plug for Healthworks - Waverley).

The positive aspect to this is a continuing controlled diving environment for novice divers. A chance to accumulate experience in safety and comfort before braving the "real" world. Unfortunately, some divers never leave this "mother-hen" situation and even graduate to instructor status without ever really getting to understand that there is room for individuality in diving.

CHARTER

This covers number and size of boats operated by each dive store, one and two tank dive pricing to the public and discounted rate to own club members. Typical pricing for a two tank, half day charter is \$20+ to club members. (VSAG divers do rather well at \$10.00 for a full day with a much broader range of diving options).

EQUIPMENT SERVICE

All operators claim to service equipment. The fundamental difference is in-house facilities and technical expertise. I have used 3 ratings.

"Regulator" - minor in-house repairs to regulators - other work sub-contracted.

OUTSIDE THE HEADS

NOVEMBER 6TH DIVE WITH GEOFF NAYLER

by Des Williams

Very mild weather as Warren Cannen and I motored down to Queenscliff to meet Geoff Nayler by 9.00 a.m. We were first to arrive and were soon joined by Don Abel, Keith Jensen, Peter Jensen and Dave Henty-Wilson.

Geoff's 26 ft. cray boat "AQUARIUS" was soon loaded and happily chugging down the creek to steer for Point Nepean, our meeting place for Geoff Birtles' and Mick Jeacles' boats, which had launched at Sorrento.

Mick and Geoff had with them Alan Currie, Alex Talay, Robert Swoffer and Barry Truscott.

We mooched around Corsair Rock for some time, but no sign of the two Sorrento boats, so we decided to make for the "PETRIANA" wreck site behind Point Nepean, before the tide produced a poor sea. A close look at the wreck site soon had Geoff turning the boat back toward the Heads, as large swells sent up "Rooster Tailed" streams of spray 200 yards from shore. Not a good day for a 200 yard swim to the wreck and back.

As we neared Point Nepean again the Sorrento boats came into view and were soon alongside. Geoff Nayler then gave us some marks for an interesting spot off Point Nepean for future reference. A dive at this spot at the time was out of the question with the stream still running and cray fisherman Harry Muchmore setting his pots on the site. The pot marker bouys were just below the surface as a result of the out-going stream and Geoff was concerned that the Sorrento boats would foul one of the lines. As Geoff works part time with Harry, such confusion was best avoided on the day to save a valuable friendship.

The sun was by now out and shining down on our little group as "Aquarius" chugged towards the wreck site of the deep "broken submarine". Keith and Dave agreed the boat trip was indeed a pleasant change, as we relaxed on deck with plenty of room to spread out.

A dark smudge appeared on the depth sounder indicating the old warrior's presence 120 ft. below our keel and Geoff dropped his marker bouy. The

BOATING & FIRE HAZARDS

Compiled by Keith Jensen

Home is rated the most dangerous place in the world. The chances of being killed or injured in a domestic accident are greater than anywhere else; unless you leave it to spend time on a pleasure boat! Then, compared with home, your chances of being maimed or destroyed in or through a fire are about doubled.

The following article is taken from the Australian Fire Protection Assoc. Ltd. monthly bulletin No.117 published in November 1980. Permission to reprint is kindly granted by Mrs. Daly of the AFPA (telephone call of 21/11/83 to K. Jensen).

"BOATING AND FIRE HAZARDS

Fires and explosions are the most common causes of serious accidents aboard boats.

The boating industry is well aware of the special danger of fire afloat and pays a lot of attention to fire safety in the design of craft and equipment. Despite this, the increasing popularity of boating over recent years has resulted in an increase in the number of serious fires and explosions afloat.

Boat Fires (A.F.P.A. Records)

<u>DATE AND PLACE</u>	<u>DETAILS</u>
28 January, 1979 Perth, W.A.	Jetty and five boats burnt out. Damage \$400,000. Included in loss was W.A. University research vessel valued at \$100,000.
16 September, 1979 Belmont, N.S.W.	Fibreglass speed boat burnt out. Cause - welding of cracked exhaust pipe.
25 December, 1979 Georges River, NSW	Fibreglass cabin cruiser. Explosion followed difficulty in starting the engines. Occupants thrown into water by blast.
10 October, 1979 Highbury, S.A.	Cabin cruiser extensively damaged, man severely burnt when petrol vapours exploded after the ignition switch was turned on.
7 July, 1980 Murray Bridge, S.A.	Houseboat superstructure completely destroyed when heat from welding flame was conducted through the steel bulkhead igniting contents of wardrobe.

The most frequent cause of a fire or an explosion is a liquid fuel or gas leak.

Older inboard-powered boats with petrol engines - particularly those that use converted car engines - are most frequently involved in explosions or fires.

A typical case involves a boat which has a leaky fuel line. The boat is used without incident, returned to its mooring and locked up.

The next time the owner steps aboard and starts the engine, the boat is torn apart by an explosion.

Why do explosions occur in this way? Basically because of the danger of accumulated petrol fumes in a confined space. Petrol is a highly volatile fuel and readily vaporises. While there is a steady air flow, such as when a boat is in motion, petrol fumes are likely to be dispersed before they have reached an explosive density

But when a boat is closed up - particularly in warm weather which speeds up vaporisation - fumes may build up till they reach explosive density. Then one spark from the starter motor may be enough to trigger off an explosion.

If you have an inboard petrol-engined boat - particularly one with deep bilges where heavier-than-air petrol fumes may collect - make sure it is well ventilated. It is always a wise precaution to open up all the hatches and get some air through the engine compartment before you touch the starter button.

Outboard motors have the advantage that they are always well ventilated.

Purpose-built out-board fuel tanks and fuel lines are designed to eliminate any risk of leaks occurring but accidents do occur even with outboards.

The most common danger comes from storing fuel in unsuitable plastic containers. Many plastics deteriorate in contact with petrol and are likely to leak. Never use any plastic container for petrol apart from a purpose built plastic jerry can.

Never store petrol in an enclosed space no matter how safe the container may be.

A small spill may be enough to create an explosive air-fuel mixture.

Cockpit lockers with drain holes at their lowest points are the safest places for storing fuel.

Gas cooking systems have also caused explosions, usually as a result of incorrect installation. Gas bottles should be kept in as well-ventilated a spot as possible. If they are kept in a cockpit locker or similar position a low-level drain hole should be provided to allow the heavier-than-air gas to flow away if a bottle leaks.

There should be no possibility of the gas draining into bilges. Gas systems should always be turned off at the bottle after use.

Powder-type fire extinguishers should be kept in a handy position below decks aboard all cabin craft.* Even a burning pan of sausages and bacon can quickly cause a serious fire in the confined space of a boat.

A sensible attitude to the dangers of fire will keep boating the safe recreation it should always be.

*** A.F.P.A NOTE:**

Vapourising liquid extinguishers are also suitable for use on boats, although the area should be ventilated after use as fumes may be harmful after prolonged exposure.

A good position for the fire extinguisher is near the stairs where it can be reached from the deck should a fire occur when the cabin is unoccupied."

The foregoing covers most important points, but I would like to emphasize the following items to check on your boat for fire safety.

STORAGE OF FUEL

Most of the boats we use carry engine fuel, often large amounts which make them a potential floating bomb. Use only properly designed fuel containers. Check fuel lines for leaks or damage. Stop the engine whilst refuelling, taking care that all possible ignition sources are shut off, as vapours from flammable liquids can travel long distances and are easily ignited.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Running lights, depth sounders, bilge pumps, radios etc. Even though this equipment is simple it carries the risk of fire should some component malfunction or overheat. Even the simple storage battery gives off hydrogen gas when being charged. Refitting of cables can provide the spark which may initiate an explosion or fire.

PYROTECHNICS

Boats operating offshore always carry flares, rockets etc. Store these in a secure dry place to prevent them being accidentally ignited or tampered with.

Should the occasion arise for their use, extreme care must be taken, remove only one unit from the container at any one time. Hand flares to be held at arm's length out over the water to prevent flaming droplets that may fall overboard.

EXTINGUISHERS

Dry powder extinguishers are probably the most versatile extinguishing agent available, although extinguishers using Halogenated Hydrocarbons such as B.C.F. (Bromochlorodifluoromethane*) are becoming more popular.

Extinguishers should be sited in a suitable place for ready use.

MARINE DECISION "NON NEGOTIABLE"

Wilsons Prom

In spite of a vigorous and growing groundswell of opposition from groups, individuals, fishermen (professional and amateur), councils, associations, tourists, divers and just about anybody interested in The Prom, the Vic. Labor government intends to press ahead with establishment of the Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve.

The decision is clearly political and not rationally based on community needs and wishes. It would be amusing, if not so infuriating, that socialist governments invariably see electoral victory as an "electoral mandate" to do whatever they wish. (Electoral "promises" to reduce petrol pricing and taxes are not "mandates"!)

Of real concern to SCUBA divers is the obvious and blatant political manoeuvring to trade yet again with commercial fishing interests. The writing is clearly on the wall. Another Reserve that denies fishing rights to divers and positively discriminates in favour of professional fishermen.

Professional fisherman Daryl Robinson's clearly emotive remarks in regard to divers and crays are obviously unfounded, unrealistic and unfair - but he's getting a lot of press and no doubt will play right into the hands of the environmental trendies.

Why our Labor government feels the need to respond to these minority pressure groups (who are generally committed Labor voters anyway) at the expense of the vast majority is beyond this writer's comprehension. It seems quite incredible that any government can legislate to stop an individual from using our natural resources to obtain a meal. It seems that divers are doomed to underwater tourism or wet-suit criminality.

Please put your protest in writing and direct it to the Secretary, South Gippsland Marine & Wildlife Reserves, 240 Victoria Parade, East Melb. 3002

The following extracts are from the November 23 Weekly Times which reported on a meeting of 300 Gippslanders opposed to the proposal. Our thanks to Mick Jackiw for spotting the article.

G.R.B.

"The Minister of Planning, Environment and Public Works, Mr. Walker, and the Minister of Conservation, Forests and Lands, Mr. Mackenzie, told the meeting at Foster the decision to establish the reserves was "non-negotiable". "We've made

a decision to proceed, but not as to how the reserves will be managed," Mr. Walker said.

He emphasised it was not a question of the Land Conservation Council (LCC) which had recommended the reserves, but was primarily ALP policy, "upon which the Government was elected and had received an electoral mandate".

No decision had been made on the future of fishing in the reserves and it should not be assumed that fishing would be phased out.

Many at the well-attended meeting were critical that the Government had already decided to proceed with the reserves.

Four interested groups presented submissions to the Ministers.

Representing the South Gippsland Conservation Society, Mr. M.J. Sleigh, said there were two reasons why the society was represented at the meeting to be seen as supporting the marine reserves proposal and support for continuation of fishing rights.

Speaking for the Victorian National Parks Association, its president Mr. G. Nodin, said it was not association policy to phase-out fishing in national parks.

South Gippsland Marine Management Council chairman and Woorayl Shire Councillor, Cr. T. Hall, reminded the Ministers of the 7118-name petition opposing establishing the proposed marine reserves.

The council was pro-conservationist and wanted to preserve marine reserves and natural resources, but did not believe in wanton establishment of reserves at enormous cost, both socially and economically.

Cr. Hall claimed the LCC had failed to investigate the effects the creation of reserves would have on tourism in the area, or on property values in surrounding area.

Representing the Pt. Franklin Fishermen's Association, Mr. D. Cripps, said . . . 'To fish successfully, we must be able to fish wherever the fish appear.'

Victorian Fishing Industry Council executive officer, Mr. P. Heighway, presented a submission on behalf of the Victorian Professional Fishermens Association. 'Professional fishermen do not in principle oppose marine parks, but feel they must be justified.'

Forty per cent of prime quality fish passing through the Victorian Fish Market was from the bays and estuaries of the State and consumers were entitled to share these resources.

The Ministers were told it was patently obvious the decision to create marine reserves was not based on scientific evidence, but on the policy of the Labor Party.

"We believe this is not sufficient justification to create the havoc and unemployment which will occur if they are introduced."

The Ministers were told it was the view of the municipalities that introduction of marine reserves would have such an enormous socio-economic impact that the decision should be deferred until all the facts were known.

Later at the public meeting, the final paragraph of the joint submission was overwhelmingly carried: "We ask you (the Government) to withdraw your notice of intention to proclaim main reserves, marine and wildlife reserves, and wildlife co-operative management areas, until evidence has been adduced of the necessity for them and, initiate inquiries into all of the various aspects concerning marine reserves, etc., providing the public with an opportunity to make submissions."

During question time, professional fisherman, Daryl Robinson, of Inverloch ... said ... Sixty per cent of the crayfish catch along the coastline from Cape Shank to Welshpool, came from Wilson's Promontory and to prohibit professional fishermen from taking crays from along the promontory would be disastrous to the livelihood of fishermen and the availability of crayfish to the consumer.

Outside the meeting, Mr. Robinson said the greatest problem was caused by poachers hooking out crays from under rock ledges.

Fishery officers could be employed to police fishing grounds to stop poaching including taking catches from professionals' pots, and illegal netting."

The following notice now appears in all FAUI, NAUI & PADI affiliated dive shops in N.S.W. Do not forget your card when interstate.

DIVER SAFETY POLICY

The Federation of Australian Underwater Instructors, Professional Association of Diving Instructors, and National Association of Underwater Instructors are in full agreement that their members in New South Wales will require that certification be produced by divers requiring scuba gear hire or scuba cylinder air fills. The only exception being when the diver is under the direct supervision of a recognised diving instructor in a diving course.

Furthermore, their members will make all reasonable efforts to satisfy themselves that the certification produced belongs to the person to whom they are providing the equipment or air and that only sufficient equipment or air will be supplied for the person showing that certification.

Trade Practices Act 1974

Federation of Australian Underwater Instructors, Professional Association of Diving Instructors, National Association of Underwater Instructors. 6/4/1983

SOMERS '83

A gripping report on the gruelling VSAG Handicap Mile and Tennis Tournament
by Brian Lynch

The club gathered first at the Balnarring tennis courts for our annual Tippingfest. This is the weekend of the year that Tony attempts to win everything in sight. First of all, I must congratulate both Tony & Paul for their organisation, even to their manipulation of the weather which was first class. The tennis was also good with the lead-up games to the finals providing some sparkling entertainment. The Scotts with their matching raquets were unlucky, and Johnny Goulding's elegance was only surpassed by his opponent's shots. President Des was also unlucky but as he pointed out, it was his job to present the prizes, not to win them.

The younger members of the clans played well, in fact well enough for Samantha Truscott to win the ladies final, just pipping Mum (nearly another trophy for the tele, Baz!) Then onto the mixed doubles final, where Isabel Birtles carried the Big M through a nerve-wracking final against Barry & Marie Truscott. It ended with the Birtles-Jeacle combination winning six games to three. Then it was time for the big one, the mens single final. This was between Big Mick Jeacle, and Tony Tipping. Luckily the Big M has this cruise-missile of a first service, luckily for him that is, and although Tony played well, he went down three love.

About this time some actual divers returned from the deep, just in time for our move to Somers and the other athletic event of the day. Our version of the Stawell gift, the Somers Mile. This run started about ten years ago when we used to run around Hawthorn. On moving our tennis venue to Somers, Tony invented this course for us. It is the only road I know which always has a head-wind blowing in your face as you run.

Anyway we all moved to the start. The smart ones like the clean living Abells, preferring to sit quietly in the garden; or even smarter like Pat, Keith and Alex who became instant officials, and official drivers etc., this left all us macho men, and enthusiastic juniors waiting at the start, "straining like greyhounds in the slips". We were all sent off at our allocated time. The only consolation I get from this run is the sight of Tony's rear getting bigger and closer every year.

The run was won by Keith's son, Peter Jenson with Des second and Johnny third. Its quicker with Ansett Johnno! My congratulations to all the young people running. Firstly to Liz Catherall who was the first lady home, then to Reece Birtles who once again showed his old man the way home, and to

Belinda Lynch (who could be a force to reckon with soon Tony my boy), who also finished with a smile on her face.

Then it was off to the barbecue and the prize giving ceremonies. It was obvious that coach Keith would also help move young Peter's prize and my congratulations to social secretary Mick, who moved very smartly to get young Samantha's prize. Almost quick enough to guarantee Mick a place with the starters of next year's mile, Tony.

Thus the afternoon passed very pleasantly until it was time to make tracks.

Everyone had a good time and it was nice to see all the families with the ever-increasing small diver population. When we started our tennis and running day back in the early seventies, most of us were unmarried and fancy free, doesn't time fly when you are having fun!

Our thanks again to the brothers Tipping for an excellent day and a word to Igor who had been in training for the race; back to the drawing board and work on the handicapper, who may be looking for a babysitter soon.

CHRISTMAS TRIP - JERVIS BAY

At time of writing 21/11/1983 the V.S.A.G. expects the following members to attend the summer diving trip at Jervis Bay.

Des Williams - Julie, Barry Truscott, Marie & Family, Paul Tipping, Lesley & Family, Terry Brooks - Sally, Keith Jensen, Peter & Cathy, John Goulding, Maree & Family, Peter Quail - Kasia, Andy Mastrowicz, Gail & Family, Alex Talay + ?

Other possibilities are Igor Chernichov, Bruce Soulsby, Tony Tipping.

Would all members and interested parties who wish to attend this dive trip please confirm to John Goulding no later than 21st December. Late cancellation may result in a cancellation fee and forfeiture of deposit.

FROM PAGE 8 FLOTSAM & JETSAM

EDS. NOTE: At the risk of perniciously attacking John's literary expertise, I feel it incumbent upon the editor to take issue with "gaul" which is either used out of context or spelt incorrectly. (After all John does seem to be using a bit of literary one-up-manship on our self educated fireman). My Webster's defines GAUL ". . . roughly the area of Modern France". Perhaps John meant GALL. My Oxford provides ". . . asperity, rancour - write virulentley".

SCRIBELOUS proved too much for my Oxford, Comprehensive Webster, or Hamlyn Encyclopedic World Dictionary. A nice word but it may not exist. Perhaps John is building on the name of Frenchman Augustin Eugene Scribe (1791-1861) a French dramatist. But I fear he is reaching!

Readers may now look forward to the next literary battle. Keep your dictionary handy!

FROM PAGE 10 STRESS LOADED

A great weekend and a lot of fun. When next there, look up Tony Stephen, an active member of South East Scuba Divers Inc. and Manager of the Queen Elizabeth Caravan Park. It's a good spot to stay (scenic, clean, good value) and Tony can give you the good oil on local info.

A well done to Keith who did considerable preparation and used his extensive caving experience to ensure a buy, safe, dive filled holiday for experienced and inexperienced alike.

FROM PAGE 16 WHERE/HOW MUCH?

"Extensive" - Regulator, cylinder, compressor service with extensive support facilities and technical expertise.

"Extensive/Hydro" - As above with Hydrostatic testing of cylinder.

SUMMARY

It all boils down to people. If you like the dive shop proprietor, the instructors and you feel good on the premises - and they are listed here. go for it! They all operate to a strict code of ethics.

My only reservation on information supplied by listed organisations is Student/Instructor ratios. I think some organisations have told little white lies. (There is a big difference between 10 students supervised by 3 qualified instructors and 10 students supervised by one qualified instructor & 2 trainee dive masters). Ask to observe an open water dive & pool session before putting up your \$\$\$\$.

FROM PAGE 17 OUTSIDE THE HEADS
Sorrento boats soon joined us.

Our group were soon over the side and swimming along the deck of the old J-Class submarine. Don, Warren and myself stayed together and entered the old engine room which is now half full of sand, we swam through and exited through a stern hatch. Then along the deck past the split in the hull, where Keith Jensen had found an item of interest, and on past the conning-tower which is heavily encrusted with yellow anemone.

Towards the bow Don managed to pull a cray out of a notch in the hull, only to discover it was a female with eggs. We turned to see Warren also clutching a large cray - again with eggs under her tail. Both were sadly returned to their hiding spots.

We looked over the bow torpedo tubes and glanced at our watches to find we only had a few minutes of bottom time left, and so swam on to the stern to locate Geoff's marker. We passed a few of the private boat divers on the way up as they headed for the old hull below.

The visibility wasn't very good, probably only 20 ft. but everyone enjoyed their dive. Geoff picked us up and we motored closer into the shore just west of Point Lonsdale, where Don, Keith, Dave and Warren dived on a large swim-through in the reef.

By this time the weather was becoming overcast and so we entered the Rip and sailed back to Queenscliff at a very relaxing pace. Warren even fell asleep on the deck!!

Thanks go to Geoff Naylor for an excellent day and we will be seeing you again soon!

My personal thanks also go to Geoff Birtles who acted as Dive Capt. on the Sorrento side of the Bay.

FROM PAGE 20 BOATING & FIRE HAZARDS

Knowledge of how to use them effectively is a must. The time of fire is not the time to read the instructions on the side.

In conclusion, remember when at sea, it is not possible to call the Fire Brigade. Should a fire occur, you will be the firefighter. Know how to deal with a fire emergency or better still, know how to prevent it!

Bon Voyage

EDS. NOTE: * He's done it again!! A 26 letter word!
Any prizes for the pronunciation?

DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT/LOCATION</u>	<u>DIVE CAPTAIN</u>	<u>MEET AT</u>
Dec 16	Christmas Function Hunters Lodge	Mick Jeacle 772 6820	7.30 p.m.
Dec 20	General Meeting - <u>TUESDAY</u> , Collingwood F/C Followed by refreshments on the Yarra, B.Y.O.		8.00 p.m.
Dec 26	Dive Huskisson - Jervis Bay	John Goulding 890 6634	Caravan Park
Jan 22	Dive Broken Sub & other wreck	Geoff Birtles 846 1983	Sorrento 9.30 a.m.
Jan 24	Committee Meeting		The Truscotts
Jan 28-30	Dive Trip Refuge Cove, Wilsons Prom	John Goulding 890 6634	Details this issue
Feb 12	Dive George Kermode & Reef Dive	John Goulding 890 6634	Flinders 9.30 a.m.
Feb 15	General Meeting - Collingwood Football Club		8.00 p.m.
Feb 19	Dive Sorrento (to be confirmed)	Pat Reynolds 789 1092	
Feb 21	Committee Meeting		The Reynolds
Feb 26	Dive Flinders Area	Max Synon 465 2812	Flinders Pier 9.30 a.m.
Labour Day W/E March	Dive Trip Port Campbell	Details next issue	--
Easter April	Dive Trip Tidal River	Details next issue	--

NOTE:

It is important that intending divers confirm with the Dive Captain on the evening prior to the dive.

THREE ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO FATHOMS READERS!

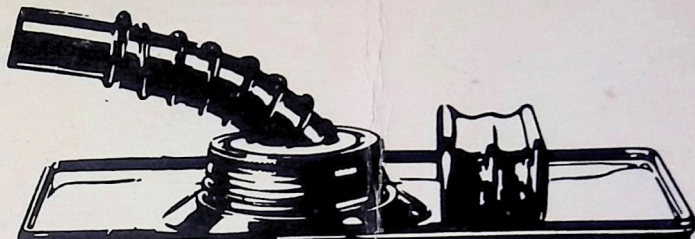
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PHONE DICK OR BRIAN NOW !

PH. 459 4112

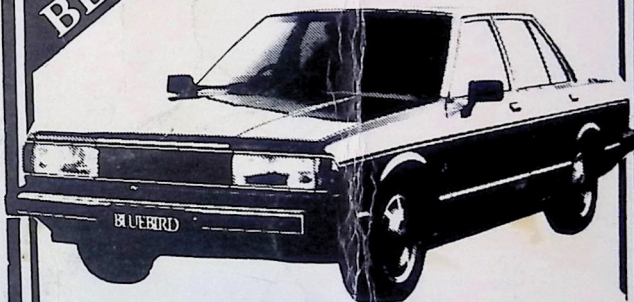


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