

# FATHOMS

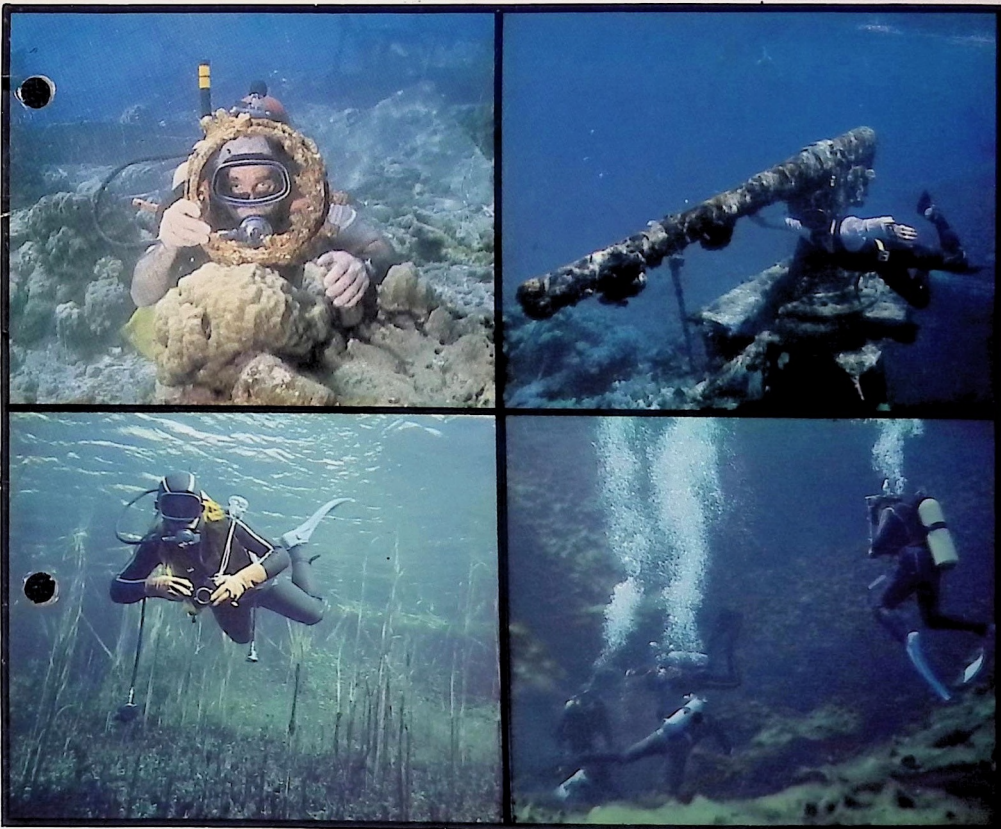
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## SAFETY IN DIVING

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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

FATHOMS

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

PRESIDENT:

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Geoff Birtles	- Vice President, Assist. Secretary & S.D.F. Delegate	- 846 1983
Bob Scott	- Social Secretary	- 367 2261
Pat Reynolds	- Property Officer	- 789 1092
Paul Tipping	- Public Relations Officer	- 387 2027
Mick Jackiw	- Points Scorer (Res.S.D.F. Deleg.)	- 736 1730
Barry Truscott	- Safety Officer	- 789 6395
David Carroll	- S.D.F. Delegate	- 397 2317
Terry Brooks	- Assistant Editor	- 439 3749

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CLUB MEETING:

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Wednesday 16th February at 8.00 p.m. at the Collingwood Football Club, Lurie Street, Abbotsford. Our facilities are available to VSAG Members prior to and after the General Meeting and meals are served from 6.00 p.m. until about 9.00 p.m. A list of VSAG members will be provided at the Football club thereby eliminating the requirement to sign the visitors' book at the entrance.

VISITORS ARE VERY WELCOME!



## EDITORIAL

*It is time to wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year and hope that 1983 presents you with every opportunity to enjoy safe and interesting diving with V.S.A.G.*

*Once again, the new year got off to an excellent start with a great diving holiday at Port Lincoln in South Australia. Barry Truscott organised the details and it was a resounding success. Be at our February 16th meeting for full details and a slide show of the trip.*

*Too late for the last "Fathoms" of 1982, but the marriage of the year is now announced to all!! On December 13th last, Margaret Ziccone finally roped Tony Tipping, and they were married at a very private ceremony in Deepdene. This is terrific news and involves two of the best people I know. Our sincere congratulations go to you both Tony and Marg and thank you for the surprise news so close to Christmas. May all your problems be little ones!! And every good wish for a happy and healthy life together comes to you from your friends at V.S.A.G.*

*1983 is showing every sign of being the year of more restrictions on the individual diver in Victoria and so it will become increasingly more important for divers and diving clubs to stick together. V.S.A.G. will (through "Fathoms") endeavour to remain in contact with divers and diving clubs and invites other organizations receiving our magazine to participate with us in 1983. Maybe we could have combined dives or provide lectures to various Clubs, or even get involved in social functions en masse. Think about it, what other sports provide the variety in the field and socially that diving does? It is worth sharing with other divers. 1982 was a great year for V.S.A.G. and 1983 will be better.*

*A new list of members' addresses and names will be provided to the doorman at the Collingwood Football Club to eliminate*

*the necessity to sign in on entry. But, as a result of new management, you will probably note the doorman has been told to be more responsible and thus you may be requested to give your name for checking with the list. We therefore ask that you extend courtesy to the doorman and comply with his request, he is only doing his job. Visitors are asked to advise the doorman that you are a visitor to V.S.A.G. meeting and you will be admitted probably after signing the visitors book.*

*Remember monthly payments to the Club Overseas Trip Fund will be due at the next meeting for both January and February, so bring your cheque book or mail to V.S.A.G. with a covering note if you can't be at the meeting.*

*All Members will find enclosed a full list of names, addresses and phone numbers of V.S.A.G. members for future reference. Please keep it in a safe place, as it will not be re-issued until probably October 1983. We hope the list will be useful and enable V.S.A.G.ers to keep in touch.*

*Our centre spread should be a pleasant surprise and was prepared by our Printer member Alex Talay. Thanks, Alex, for a good Christmas dive report and for the trouble you went to producing a pictorial record.*

EDITOR

### COMMITTEE NEWS:

Meeting held at Barry and Marie Truscott's home on Tuesday 25th January. Visitors Keith Jensen and Mick Jeacle.

- (i) G. Birtles suggested Club building society money may return more if invested with Statewide Permanent who are at present paying 13.3/4%. Alex Talay agreed to follow up this suggestion.
- (ii) B. Truscott suggested Club return to the traditional system of Dive Captain having the "last word" as to where we dive on a particular day. A. Talay suggested closer liaison between boat owners and D.C. before we get on the water may solve the fragmentation problems.

- (iii) B. Truscott suggested Club purchase bouys and rope be purchased to assist drift dives etc. G. Birtles offered to supply rope if Club purchased 4 bouys.
- (iv) D.W. suggested Committee members be given instructions on proper operation of Club depth sounder at next Committee meeting. This would avoid any faults during Club dives.
- (v) G. Birtles advised some delay (due to Xmas rush) has been experienced with production of Club Savings Account booklets.
- (vi) Keith Jensen outlined planned Mt. Gambier trip details. A tentative booking has been made for accommodation.
- (vii) D. W. produced a list of members containing full addresses and phone numbers; all members will receive same.
- (viii) D.W. requested permission to purchase adhesive labels for members' addresses for newsletters. This agreed to.
- (ix) M. Jackiw suggested a full list of Club property should be produced for all members' information.

\* Next Committee Meeting to be held at Pat & Jenny Reynold's home at 14 Nurla Court, Frankston on Tuesday 22nd February, 1983 at 8.00 p.m.

\* \* \*

## DIVE CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>MEET AT</u>
Feb.13	Pinnacles	9.45am	Geoff Birtles 846 1983	San Remo Pier
Feb.16	General Meeting - Collingwood Football Club - 8.00 pm			
Feb.27	Flinders	9.00am	Mick Jeacle 772 6820	Flinders Pier



<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT.</u>	<u>MEET AT</u>
Mar. 12, 13, & 14	Port Campbell Long Weekend Camp at Port Campbell - give your names at Feb. meeting.			
Mar. 16	General Meeting - Collingwood Football Club	8.00 p.m.		
MAR. 18, 19, & 20	Mt. Gambler Weekend - see enclosed leaflet for details - our co-ordinator will be Keith Jensen Tel: 460 3672 - Book Now!			
MAR. 27	Charter boat wreck dive from Barwon Heads - our co-ordinator is Geoff Birtles Tel: 846 1983			
APR. 1, 2 3 & 4	Easter - Wilsons Prom. Camping Weekend			
APR. 20	General Meeting - Collingwood Football Club	8.00 p.m.		

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

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### FOR SALE:

Steel Tank 72 cu.ft. just been tested in December 1982. Good  
spare bottle! Price: \$70.00 - Ring Max Synon Ph: 465 2812.

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### PORT LINCOLN - SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Our recent trip to Port Lincoln was made all the more enjoyable  
by the friendship of Rosemary & Kim Stewart, proprietors of the  
Port Lincoln Skin Diving and Surfing Centre. Kim and Rosemary  
made every possible effort to see that we dived the best spots in the  
area most of which are still relatively virgin diving territory. The  
use of their 4-wheel drive vehicle made such memorable dives as  
Smith Island and fantastic Cape Wiles possible.

V.S.A.G. is indeed very grateful to both Kim and Rosemary and we now include a summary of various dive sites available via Port Lincoln Skindiving and Surfing Centre as summarised from their advertising literature:

- Port Lincoln, discovered in 1802 by Captain Matthew Flinders, is a prime fishing port in Australia, mooring over \$20 million worth of craft in its harbour. With an average temperature of 24°C, it offers the perfect climate for the diver or the holiday maker. Above or below the water, this is truly a divers mecca. From the awesome cliffs of Cape Wiles to the timid, but playful seals found on many of the surrounding islands. The marine life found along this coastline varies from tiny nudibranches to enormous 50 kg. goppers, which can be hand fed.

In all, there are over 55 species of fish found around the Eyre Peninsula and associated islands. Gorgonian coral in red, orange and yellow can be found in the maze of limestone reef caves and the breathtaking sight of 30 dolphins leaping from the waters around the boat can be assured at Wedge Island or Flinders Island.

### FLINDERS ISLAND (Not the Bass Strait One!)

Tours are also available to the spectacular Flinders and Pearson Islands. Deep dives on 80M drop-offs, crystal clear water and a myriad of ocean life, you may even sight a pelagic tuna on the outer reefs around these islands. These islands are situated 35Km off the coast of Elliston, a small fishing village north-west of Port Lincoln. The waters here are possibly the best diving in South Australia, its virgin waters have untold amounts of unexplored reefs.

Accommodation is situated in Shearers Quarters with transport around the islands supplied.

### WEDGE ISLAND

Another unique location where trips are available, is Wedge Island.

Wedge is situated 60KMs S.E. of Port Lincoln in the Gambler group islands. The island is 6KM x 3KMs with 200M cliffs and golden beaches. The diving, a Flinders and Pearson Islands, is totally untouched, and breath-taking. On this trip the island is exclusively yours, fishing, relaxing, exploring, photographing and diving. A scenic island to get away from everything and everybody.

Accommodation is in a comfortable homestead which has every possible amenity; 5 bedrooms, 2 lounges, 2 toilets and 3 showers; all fully furnished with modern facilities.

\* For more details of diving in the area contact Kim or Rosemary Stewart at Port Lincoln Skindiving and Surfing Centre, 73 Mortlock Tce., Port Lincoln, Sth. Australia 5606, Ph: (086) 82 4428.

Any diving clubs in Melbourne are free to ask V.S.A.G. for more information on the dive scene in the immediate vicinity of Port Lincoln.

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### TRIVIA COLUMN:

After exploring the hull of an ancient galleon without finding any treasure, the diver walked through the surf towards the beach. Suddenly, in water reaching only halfway to his knees, he spied a corner of a chest buried in the sand. He dragged it to shore and discovered it was full of gold coins. "How true it is," he murmured, "that booty is sometimes only shin deep."

### PACIFIC ISLAND DIVING FOR \$49.00

Our overseas investment fund, launched at our last December General Meeting is off to a great start. Enthusiastically supported by regular and non-regular divers alike, we already have accrued the grand total of \$1,372. This is safely invested in Mick Jeales National Australia Savings Bank (Investment Account) pending placement in \$2,000 blocks at higher rates of interest with Building Societies and Cash Management Trusts (e.g. Statewide currently 13.75% for \$1,000+).



At our last sub-committee meeting it was unanimously agreed to drop the requirement for "late joiners" to back pay past subscriptions retrospective to December. You can now join at any time (in first 6 months) simply by paying \$49.00. So no excuses "put up" and start planning! (Naturally late joiners will only earn interest applicable to their reduced investment).

Those not familiar with either the objective or mechanics of the fund should re-read their December FATHOMS. The plan is both exciting and realistic. In summary this is how it happens.

Participating unit holders make 18 monthly subscriptions of \$49.00. Additional discretionary subscriptions (of \$49.00) may be made to provide for a travelling companion.

These monies are invested to maximise interest (consistent with prudent investment principles) and are allocated and distributed to unit holders at the close of the fund on the basis of 100% return of all subscriptions plus pro rated share of interest.

Our objective is a warm water venue suitable to both divers and non-diving partners. Venue will be decided by consensus 9 months prior to departure - so everyone will have time to plan well ahead.

The following members are participating in the scheme and I have indicated current balance.

Many, including myself, are contributing for one only but still intend to take the wife. This simply means putting up the extra cash at the time of travel!

NAME	BALANCE	JANUARY SUBSCRIPTION
B. Truscott (2)	\$196	Paid
M. Jeacle	49	Not paid
D. Henty-Wilson	49	Not paid
A. Talay	49	Not paid
M. Jacklew	\$147	Paid
G. Birtles	98	Paid
M. Synon	147	Paid
D. Williams (2)	196	Paid

R. Scott	\$ 98	Paid
N. Stewart (2)	196	Paid
P. Tipping	49	Not paid
B. Sallsbury	98	Paid

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Those who have not made their January payment should do so promptly as tardy payment will make interest allocation difficult and impose an unfair penalty on the prompt payers. February subscriptions are due by February 16. These can be made at the General Meeting or posted to me at 8 Newlyn Close, Templestowe, 3106.

Geoff Birtles

### AIR FILLS COST FOR REFUGEE COVE WEEKEND

The Wilson's Promontory long weekend air fills are now due at a cost of \$2.00 each. The number of fills is shown after your name on the list below and is due at the February General Meeting.

If you cannot be at the meeting, you are requested to mail the amount to our Treasurer, V.S.A.G., P.O. Box 2526W, G.P.O., Melbourne.

Geoff Birtles - 5	Alex Talay - 2	Andy Mastrowicz - 5
Gary Thorn - 2	Mick Jackiw - 3	Hilary Brew - 1
Doug Catherall - 2	Terry Brooks - 2	John Goulding - 2
Warwick McDonald - 2	Bruce Soulsby - 3	David Twine - 2
Barry Truscott - 3	Wayne Hatch - 2	Peter Quail - 2
Dave Henty-Wilson - 4	Paul Ster - 2	Casia Quail - 2
Mick Jeacle - 3	Tony Tipping - 2	Des Williams - 1
Pat Reynolds - 1	Paul Tipping - 2	David Carrol - 2
Jeanette Large - 2	Bill Hayes - 3	Paul King - 2

Please make prompt payment to avoid the V.S.A.G. having to pursue late payments.

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## ===GOING DOWN===

## PORT LINCOLN XMAS TRIP - 1982

Pat, Gay and I arrived in Pt. Lincoln after 2 days and 1500 km of pretty boring travel. The land is mostly flat and extremely dry most of the way. We made Pt. Pirle on the first day out, and arrived ready to destroy the nearest pub to ease our parched throats. It didn't take Pat long to sniff out the fact that the motel we were staying at boasted closed circuit T.V. and he immediately put the hard word on the bird behind the jump as to what type of movies she had available. The answer she gave seemed to please him no end and we set off in high spirits to the pub with Pat imploring us to go home immediately after stumps as the movie started at 10.30 p.m.

Naturally, as I had Gay with me, I had nothing to do with these negotiations and remonstrated with Pat to that effect, as he yapped at our heels to hurry up as we sauntered out of the pub, closely followed by the butts. We made the motel with a couple of minutes to spare and I assumed a bored expression as I cracked a stubby and stared at the silent screen. Pat was positively champing at the bit, and I have rarely seen a bloke more upset when Gallipoli finally appeared on our screen. Fair dinkum, I reckon Pat would have killed that bird and strung her up on the antennae if she'd had the gull to front up to our door.

Next day we arose bright and early for the final leg and arrived in Pt. Lincoln about 2.30 p.m. Pt. Lincoln is a lovely place surrounded by hills on one side and Spencers Gulf on the other. It is the third largest town in South Australia behind Adelaide and Mt. Gambier, and has a population of around 12,000. The shopping centre is very large and modern and there are some beautiful homes on the hillsides approaching town, mainly owned by Tuna and Prawn fishermen. Fishing, of course, is the main industry, and is extremely lucrative, as a very large fleet operates out of the port. It sure was a slight sore eyes, as the previous 500 km was nothing to write home about, and I was beginning to think our destination wouldn't be much better.



We found the camp without any trouble and the five campsites V.S.A.G. occupied were a sort of terraced arrangement, running downhill. We were last to arrive and were, naturally, assigned the lowest site, closest to the water. The camping ground itself was one of the best I've been in, and is situated right next to the water and boasts it's own boatramp which was an obvious benefit to us.

The first day's diving we decided to familiarise ourselves with local conditions, so we didn't undertake any major trip, but went about 10 miles down the coast and dived a small island just off shore. This wasn't a very good dive, although the water was clear and there were plenty of fish about.

On the way back we dived a wreck just off the lighthouse, about 6 miles from Pt. Lincoln. This was quite a good dive although the viz. wasn't much, but heaps of big fish inside.

By this time of course we had split up into 2 groups of 3 on each boat. On Bazza's we had myself, Pat and the skipper, and on Max's we had Des, Bob and the skipper. On surfacing from the wreck dive, Bazza, Pat and I discovered a couple of members of the other boat, who also happen to belong to a well known diving conservation group, discussing in secretive terms a visit to the local hardware shop. We decided to pretend we hadn't heard, but immediately determined that we'd get to the bottom of their scheme and find out what the hell they were up to.

Next day was a wipeout as the weather wasn't much chop, and we decided that a game of tennis would be a good idea. Most of our group headed for the courts, but the Grey Ghost's crew became suspicious when previously mentioned greenies decided to hang around the camp.

Our suspicions were confirmed when on arrival back at the camp, we discovered that the little tin job had done a bunk. About 2 hours later, we espied the boat ploughing its way back to the ramp and wandered down to greet them and find out what sort of loot they had on board.

# PT. LINCOLN XMAS 82-83



Relaxing at the camp.



VSAG at the camp.



The scene from our campsites



Relaxing in the evening



The Grey Ghost's Catch.





Pat & Alex enjoying  
a Coldie.



Lunch at Fishery Bay.



Discussing dives with Rosemary



Pat hiding from the sun.



Max having trouble.



Pat & Alex resting while others  
sightseeing.





About to depart for Smith Isl.



Rosemary of Pt Lincoln dive centre launching Maxi boat



launching at Fishery Bay



Arrival at Smith Island.



Commencing dive at Smith Island.





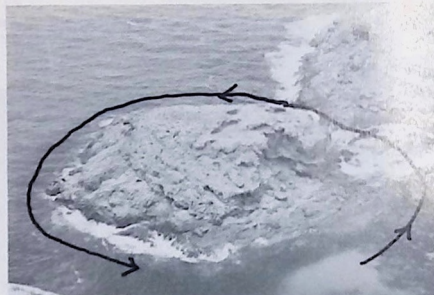
Approaching Cape Wiles.



Inside Cape Wiles Lagoon



Bob & Bazza at Fishery Bay



Cape Wiles from above with  
dive we did arrowed.



Bob minding the boat.



hunch at Fishery Bay.



Naturally they were very excited as they cleared away their tools of trade to reveal 2 large round brass objects which we took to be none other than every diver's prized possession - PORTHOLES.

Bazza was distraught about missing such a prize, as he's been diving for donkey's years and has never had a sniff, but recovered his spirits to a very great degree upon overhearing one of the pirate's kids asking his dad what he was going to do with the third one, when he got it. The reply the kid got was some nonsense about auctioning it at the club and Bazza decided then and there that as he was on the trip and Geoff Birtles wasn't, come hell or high water that porthole was his!

Next morning when the others went up to get petrol we stole out of the harbour and Bazza opened her up. I'll swear we covered the 6 miles in about 3 minutes flat, and were in the water about 30 seconds after dropping anchor. The outcome was never in doubt so next time you go round to the Phantom's place, take a peek at the mantelpiece and see the results of our skulduggery in all its glory.

Next day we headed off to Stickney island about 26 miles offshore near Spilsby. The day was fine and we had no trouble finding it, courtesy of the chart very generously marked by Rod Smith of Southern Cross Divers, Geelong.

We all jumped in, with the exception of Pat who swore he saw a fin sticking 2 feet out of the water. I must admit, I had more than a few looks over the shoulder and positively flew out of the water when Des started spearing 10 lb. Silver Drummer.

This dive was very good with excellent viz. and a multitude of very large fish. Unlike the Prom., diving in this area is fairly shallow and good drop offs were hard to find.

By this time, we had made the acquaintance of Kim and Rosemary Stewart, who operate the local dive shop. Two more friendly and helpful people would be hard to find and they assisted us greatly



In making our stay a pleasant one. Rosemary suggested we accompany her to a place called Fishery Bay, where she would put Max's boat in over the sand with the assistance of her 4-wheel drive.

It was a lovely day as our entire group journeyed down by car to Fisherys'. The beach there is magnificent and the water crystal clear. We set up camp in the lee of a cliff and prepared for the dive.

Cape Wiles is situated near the southern tip of the Eyre Peninsula and only a short distance by boat from Fishery Bay. We anchored in a lagoon formed by towering cliffs on the mainland on one side and two small, but very steep islands on the Spencer Gulf side. The beauty of the place was awe-inspiring as we stared about us and found to our delight, that the place had its own resident seal colony.

The Southern Ocean crashes in one end of the lagoon, so we decided to make our way through the surf between the two islands. This was difficult, but the 6 of us made it O.K., and were very glad we made the effort, as upon exit from the rough water, we found the water to be absolutely clear and were confronted by a chasm formed by the two islands, and about 70 ft. to the bottom.

It swam right around one of the islands and re-entered the lagoon from the Gulf side. It was a superb dive and Bazza was very pleased as his catch bag was chocablock.

Next day Kim and Rosemary asked if we'd like to go to Smith Island. We readily agreed and they accompanied us, as we travelled 30 miles down the Thorny Passage by boat and anchored in the lee of the island. This dive was superb as the viz. was excellent as usual, and you could pick your depth, as the drop-offs here were plentiful. On most of this dive I was accompanied by three BLUE GROPER, one of which was about 60 lbs. Every time I turned my head they were just behind, waiting for a feed. There are many islands in this area and I would say that a great percentage of spots would be virgin territory.

Summing up, Port Lincoln is indeed a very long way to go and the good diving is a fair distance from the camp, but the effort is well worth it, as this trip was one of the best I've been on. Although only a small group went, we enjoyed ourselves immensely and we got the feeling we were diving areas that had hardly been visited by divers.

The amenities of the area are first-class, with plenty of Pubs and good restaurants, all of which we naturally took advantage of. We didn't lack for day or night activities and plenty of latrines were had by all.

Signed A.T.

Ed. Note: Our thanks must go to Max Synon and Barry Truscott for towing their boats 3,000 kms so we could all enjoy Port Lincoln.

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## FLOTSAM & JETSAM

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1982 finally bubbled to a close with some amazing happenings climaxing an already action-packed year.

Every so often the V.S.A.G. goes through boom periods. We had wedding booms, baby booms, trips away booms, - which sometimes resulted in boom-booms!!!

Well, 1982 seemed to be a year of super booms - We had the trip to Vanuatu, the babies of Jeacle, Goulding, Tipping and King, the weddings of Brooks (well, New Year's Eve '81) and Williams, the engagement of Wayne and Hilary and Vic and Barbara. And apart from all those devious activities, we also had a great year's diving.

It seemed that there was nothing else that could top off such a year. Barry's arrangements for the Port

Lincoln Christmas trip were well under way and after a pretty difficult year at work for most people, we were all looking forward to a well earned rest.

And then all hell broke loose!!!!

The news broke that Tony and Mmmmaaarg were married! Grown men wept openly in the streets, Ladies shun their backs on the world, never to be seen again. International jet-setters who had travelled half way round the world for a glimpse of their idol, burnt their bra's and became men-haters.

In a quiet and unheralded ceremony on 13th December, Tony and Marg exchanged vows and became boy and wife. Congratulations to you both - but one question: Marg! Why did you wait so long to ask him?

Now that the Bastion of Bachelorhood has gone to the great love nest in the suburbs, it was not long before the whole male predator empire began to tumble.

Dave Carroll, who's mind in recent years has become befuddled by power and corruption in his capacity as President-Dictator of M.A.A.V. or more commonly known as the "Movement Against Ageing Virgins", when learning of Tony's demise threw up his lunch, lay down his sword and offered himself to the fairest maid in all of Mitcham. - and as a result he and Debbie McPherson will be tying the matrimonial bow in April.

Thus, with such incredible happenings which of course this writer forecast months ago, I would now like to present my predictions for 1983:

- A) Geoff Birtles will be named in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for recognition of his life long work for the Crayfish Reserve and