

FATHOMS

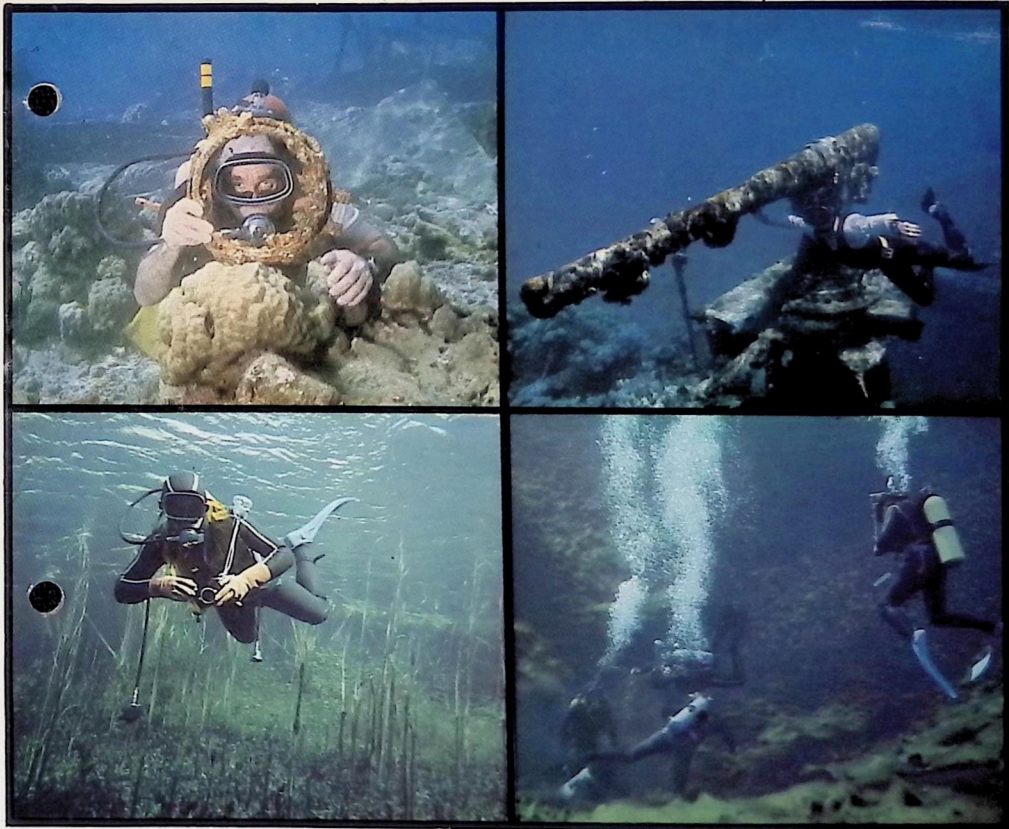
MAY 83



SAFETY IN DIVING

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VSAG

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

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465 2812

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Geoff Birtles	- Vice President, Assist. Secretary -	846 1983
	& S.D.F. Delegate	
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)	- 735 1730
Barry Truscott	- Safety Officer	- 789 5395
David Carroll	- S.D.F. Delegate	- 397 2317
Terry Brooks	- Assistant Editor	- 439 3749

CLUB MEETING:

The next meeting of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group will be held on Wednesday 18th May at 8.00 p.m. at the Collingwood Football Club, Lulie Street, Abbotsford. Bar facilities are available to V.S.A.G. 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 V.S.A.G. 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

Nobody beats Bob and June Scott when it comes to organising a V.S.A.G. Social Function! April 9th was a rainy evening, but that didn't prevent us all from enjoying ourselves, because Bob and June saw that we were very comfortable and dry. Plenty to eat and drink in a very relaxed atmosphere (COUGH! COUGH!) as Bob had the barbeques going flat out. The only disappointment was the reduction in attendance. Our thanks to Bob and June for a very well organised night.

I must take this opportunity to thank Keith Jensen, John Goulding, Bruce Soule, Brian Lynch and Kasia Quail for their contributions to this month's newsletter. There is plenty to read as a result of their efforts.

This month it is a pleasure to welcome two new members to V.S.A.G.; they are Robert Birtles and Igor Chernishov. Whilst I haven't as yet dived with Robert, I can say he has commenced his term with V.S.A.G. in a most impressive manner, by sending me enough material for "Fathoms" to keep a serialised column going for several months. So, it will commence next issue - many thanks Robert. Igor, Barry and I recently dived together and it was quite a change to dive with a new member who displays such competence underwater - good to have you with us Igor!

Our next issue of "Fathoms" should be full of tales of diving in the Solomon Islands as members Keith Jensen, Geoff Birtles and Alex Talay are currently diving their butts off in those wreck-littered tropical waters.

The V.S.A.G. Overseas Trip Savings Fund is going very well and it won't be long before every travel agent in Melbourne will be persuading us for the opportunity to organise our 10's of thousands of dollars in June 1984. Unfortunately, a few contributors are getting a little tardy with their monthly payments and as a result are not winning the friendship of those who are paying on time. As you know, the interest we are receiving is to be divided equally and those who are slow

at saving are in effect penalizing their fellow regular contributors. So, get to it folks and let's keep it all together as we save our way to a bunch of fun in 13 months time.

My last Editorial in April, provoked a few very excited phone calls from various diving schools regarding my comments on diving in the shipping channels. I guess this had to be expected, as my claim was not very well informed, which I guess was the product of a lack of research.

As it turns out, the concession to dive in these totally prohibited areas of Port Phillip Bay was granted to a well organised group of diving schools, who took the initiative to request exemption from Ports & Harbors, under a set of conditions formulated jointly. The approach to Ports & Harbors was made through the diving division of the Boating Industry Association, representing F.A.U.I., P.A.D.I. and the commercial diving shops.

The S.D.F. representing private divers and boat operators, was not consulted at the time of the approach, because the B.I.A. believed that Ports & Harbors would never agree to a compromise involving dozens of small boats, which had successfully been eradicated by the introduction of Section 62A, preventing anyone anchoring in the shipping channels. I am sure that small irresponsible private diving boats contributed to the Ports & Harbors decision to close the areas for all and sundry, but I would also like to remind the commercial diving schools that they weren't exactly "lily white", when it came to ruining the area either.

Some V.S.A.G. members will remember only too well the day we dived the "Eliza Ramsden" some years ago, when we had divers below and on the surface and a commercial dive boat motored right through our group of boats (all displaying "diver below" flags). Obviously the owner had promised his paying customers a dive on the wreck and wasn't going to let a bunch of private divers disappoint them.

Everybody knows there are enough dive schools these days to successfully choke every shipping channel by themselves! It is my belief Ports & Harbors will soon get sick of the number of commercial boats in the channels anyway. This view is supported by knowledge of the carelessness shown by some of the commercial dive schools, which, we as active divers see regularly. Only recently, one of our diving companions, Bill Anderson, picked up two novice divers drifting out of control through the Rip! The divers were from a "responsible" diving school, whose boat was moored further up inside the Bay. Bill returned them safely and exercised his right to tell the operators what he thought of their safety rules.

As well as listening to the point of view of those who telephoned me, I have made a personal visit to see a member of Ports & Harbors myself. The representative I saw, told me Ports & Harbors are contemplating further restrictions on divers and that dive clubs will be notified via the B.I.A. I advised them that if Ports & Harbors wanted to contact all divers the right avenues would be through B.I.A. who represented mostly commercial dive schools and also to go through the S.D.F. who represent you and me private divers.

The representative I spoke to, claimed he didn't know of S.D.F. and would use the B.I.A.!!

So, if Ports & Harbors work on that crazy idea, private divers will be at the mercy of the commercial schools who would effectively be replacing the S.D.F.

It is now up to the S.D.F. to keep an eye on future developments and make contact with Ports & Harbors, requesting any information regarding any future proposed restrictions. Now days, that sort of information is available as a result of the Freedom of Informations Act, if it is not offered at first request.

The dive schools have certainly re-opened a totally banned area to divers, who are willing to pay, and who would have

otherwise been denied access to the area. It will be interesting to see how long it takes before an irresponsible dive charter crew closes the area to one and all again.

My than's again to all those people who have written for this issue of "Fathoms", it is certainly a large issue this time. So, please keep it up folks.

D. Williams
Editor

COMMITTEE NEWS

V.S.A.G. Committee meeting held at Terry and Sally Brooks' home on Tuesday 26th April 1983. Apologies from P. Tipping, G. Birtles, D. Carroll, A. Talay, and M. Jackiw.

1. Discussion on dive calendar. Terry Brooks awaiting replies from Estate Agents re homes at Port Fairy for June long weekend.
2. P. Reynolds reported the Club compressor has received major overhaul and repairs viz: new muffler, pulley, belt, hose, intake filter, first and second stage filter pistons, and gauge. Total cost including labour \$440. Pat advised compressor should be on shock-proof frame to avoid future damage incurred by vibration. A vote was taken and all agreed to have a frame made at a cost of \$100.
3. D.W. raised subject of V.S.A.G.'s 30th year in 1984. It was decided a monster raffle and party be organised for members only (and spouse, of course). The raffle should be a trip for two people, venue to be decided and details to be discussed further.
4. Mark Staniforth of the Historic Shipwrecks Unit will make an interesting presentation at the May General Meeting - arranged by T. Tipping.
5. V S.A.G. Social Night to be organised for October. A suitable

venue with dancing facilities is being sought.

6. M. Synon asked Terry Brooks to select a film for presentation at the June Meeting.
7. D. Williams advised details of a recent visit made to Capt. Muir of the Ports & Harbors Department to clarify diving restrictions in the Heads area. It appears a far more restrictive control on diving in the area is contemplated and D. Williams asked V.S.A.G. to keep close to S.D.F. and look out for this new restriction which may affect us all.
8. Discussion on future of newsletter was brief due to the numbers of Committee absent. More next month.
9. Igor Chernishov and Robert Birtles' application for V.S.A.G. membership were ratified by the Committee.

** Next Committee Meeting to be at Paul and Lesley Tipping's home at 521 Lygon Street, North Carlton on Tuesday 24th May at 8.00 p.m.

DIVE CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT</u>	<u>MEET AT</u>
May 8	Heads Area	8.30am	Barry Truscott 789 6395	Sorrento B/Ramp
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May 18	General Meeting - Collingwood Football Club			
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May 22	Heads Area	8.30am	Pat Reynolds 789 1092	Sorrento B/Ramp
<hr/>				
May 29	Reef Dive Flinders	9.00am	Geoff Birtles 846 1983	Flinders Pier
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DIVE CALENDAR (Contd.)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>DIVE CAPT</u>	<u>MEET AT</u>
June 11/13	Long weekend at Port Fairy		Terry Brooks 439 3749	
June 15	General Meeting - Collingwood Football Club			
June 26	Kelp Beds	8.00am	Terry Brooks 439 3749	Sorrento B/Ramp
July 10	Heads Area	9.30am	Max Synon 465 2812	Sorrento B/Ramp
July 20	General Meeting - Collingwood Football Club			

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

* * * * *

SHIPWRECKS LECTURE

At our May General Meeting Mr. Mark Staniforth of the Historic Shipwrecks Unit will present a talk and slide show for your enjoyment.

Mark was recently engaged in the survey made of the wreck "William Salthouse" and will be a most interesting speaker, so don't miss the May meeting.

* * * * *

* Our V.S.A.G. member in Yarrawonga, sends the following report:

DIVING WITH A DIFFERENCE

by Bruce Soulsby

Well, we have all heard about stories of diving in water with 100 foot visibility, well, here is a report on one or two dives with no visibility at all!

Occasionally the odd customer of mud eyes, fails to stick to the right side of the river and either collides with another boat or hits something and usually sinks. Another cause is failing to see the occasional log lurking just below the surface, a difficult job especially for drivers affected by a couple of drinks.

You might get the idiot that goes parking on the end of a steep boat ramp, to get a better view, and he gets so excited in anticipation and forgets to use the handbrake; and we all know what happens then, they get wet. Or you might get someone who goes swimming after a few ales and attempts to beat the strong river currents, never to be seen again. They are not so pleasant.

Well, here are a few of the things you have to contend with when diving in these waters.

To get someone up here who knows a lot about diving, or the safety factors, to act as deck hand is pretty hard.

When you are diving for a boat or outboard-motor first you have to locate it, which becomes very difficult at times when the owner or driver (if he has survived) says "It could be about here somewhere" or, "it could be over there". I've used up to three tanks of air at times before I've even found the object, and to get cylinders filled you have to travel about 30 miles.

Well, that is just the start, when you're trying to locate something you have to put up with logs everywhere under the surface knocking off your mask or getting stuck under them and having your rope caught up amongst them when you're working a search pattern. And that is not all, you cannot see your depth gauge for one, the only way you can work out the depth is off the anchor rope. You cannot see your watch to get your bottom time either, and worst of all are the speedboats that roar over your head not knowing you are down there. If you put up a diver's flag, they will ski around it, thinking it was another buoy for a salamon course.

You have to wait until all the noise has disappeared and go like hell for the surface, before the next one comes along. I have found that if your "deckie" waves a shotgun around it does help a little!

When eventually you do survive all of this and locate the object, then comes the trouble of raising it. If it is a speedboat, I usually tie two good strong ropes onto the bow and take out the draining bungs. Then two stern-drive speedboats pull together and if it is not stuck in the mud, you have a chance of moving it. When it comes up, you then tow it along until enough water comes out to allow you time to get it on the trailer again before it sinks.

The last boat I raised was so badly damaged it pulled in half and it didn't have a deck on it to allow tyre tubes to be held in it, and so we had to end up winching it up on to a pontoon.

They are some of the things that happen to a Murray River diver. Probably the worst one of all was about three years ago at the start of a hot summer. The Water Trust Engineer rang up and asked me if I would dive down again and clear the main suction pipes leading to the filtration plant. The demand for water at the start of a hot season sucks up willow branches and debris restricting the flow of water.

You have to put on full gear because it is in 80-90 ft. of water and very cold, then climb down a suspended ladder 20 ft. into a well in which you just fit. Then you hit water and it is as black as a bat's ass; you grab hold of a pipe and start to descend feet first. This particular day, there was an electric current coming through the pipe, not all that much, but enough to get up to your elbows.

I thought, well I am down here now, I may as well keep going, so down I went. Half way down I noticed the shock was getting worse, so I had to descend without holding onto the pipe, and that is pretty hard to do when you are in a 4 - 5 ft. diameter well in zero visibility.

Soon I was 10 ft. from the intakes, where you have to take off your tank and crawl through a hole dragging the tank to get to the main intakes! I managed to remove the debris without touching the pipes by using my catch bag to knock off the obstruction after a lot of swearing and cursing. Then up I went, got off my gear and went straight to the engineer, to tell him of my experience with the electric current.

He wouldn't believe me, so he got the electrical engineers over and

they found that there were eight volts on the pipe at the top and probably a hell of a lot more down below, caused by one of the main intake motors not earthing properly.

I then charged them triple the amount of money that I charged last time, and naturally I haven't had to do that job again (thank goodness).

* * * *

"... AND I THOUGHT THAT DIVING WOULD BE EASY"
OR
"WHAT YOU LEARN AFTER YOU DO YOUR 'C' CARD."

"Only divers allowed on the "Mirrabooka" at our annual 'Animal' weekend", said Max at the club meeting when I put my hand up as a candidate.

"I will be a diver by then!" I replied proudly; and a diver I was by November of 1982.

Since that time, both Peter and I have scarcely missed a weekend's diving. I don't know what we used to do on Saturday and Sunday before discovering the delights of the deep.

As a relatively new and inexperienced diver, I feel that, by joining V.S.A.G., I have been able to learn from those in the club who have had experience and experiences far beyond my present limited knowledge.

On the "Mirrabooka" weekend, in particular, I felt very much part of a group and enjoyed listening to the long and tall stories which circulated the good ship as we steamed along. All those aboard were very friendly and helpful and I would recommend the trip as a good way of getting to know club members.

I have also found that I am constantly learning new aspects of diving and boating as weekends, and with them, V.S.A.G. expeditions, go by. I have, for example, learnt the thrill (terror!) of speeding along in the "Blue Bullet" as we skimmed the tops of waves at something approaching supersonic speeds. A far cry from the

comforting roll of the "Mirrabooka", as my bruises and shaking knees testified. But, I did learn where to stand and how to hang on when flying through mid-air!

I have also had the unique experience of viewing the pylons of the San Remo-Phillip Island bridge from close quarters whilst on a drift dive. Do you want to know a fool-proof way of stopping on a drift? Just ask me!

On the whole though, I realise that I still have a great deal to learn and a lot of diving to do before I can in any way claim to know as much about the sea as most of those in the club. However, I appreciate the patience and openness with which new divers are treated and I look forward to the day when I too can reach the dizzy depths of my elders and master the following necessary skills:

- Drive a boat with the speed of Geoff Birtles
- Catch crays with the skill of Bazza
- Grow as tall as Mick Jeacle
- Own a boat like John Goulding's
- Ruin Gestetner machines with the skill of Des
- Find wrecks as well as Paul Tipping
- Own a hat like Tony Tipping's
- And, last but not least, pass what I can only assume to be the club initiation ceremony - sit on Reg Truscott's Knee!!

When I can master all these feats, surely then, and only then, can I too be counted as a true V.S.A.G. diver.

by Kasia Quail

ED. NOTE: *This is just the sort of material we need for "Fathoms" Kasia, it has a whole new slant for many in V.S.A.G. Hope you will write again after another dive with V.S.A.G. We are pleased to have both Peter and yourself in V.S.A.G., as diving married couples are now very scarce.*

THE FUTURE OF "FATHOMS"

As suggested by Mick Jeacle at April General Meeting, a summary of members suggestions received by the Editor regarding future publication of Fathoms, is set out below in precise form:

From Geoff Birtles

- a) An Editor whose sole function would be to edit, read, and approve submissions and provide layout priorities to the printer.
 - b) Typing, collating and printing to be handled by a small printer.
 - c) Assistant Editor to keep up to date mailing list and parcel, address and mail the collated magazine each month.
- * We may incur extra cost which could be recouped by means of a "Fathoms" levy on members' annual subs, or sale of advertising space in the magazine or a special fund-raising function as required.
- * Incentive for more people to write articles for "Fathoms" could be encouraged by greatly widening the distribution of our magazine to include all dive clubs and shops, travel agents, equipment suppliers, Fisheries & Wildlife etc. etc.

Maybe Dive Captains should be required to write a report of dives for Fathoms.

- * Shorten the deadline for closing date for articles, thus allowing more up to date news items in "Fathoms".

From Alex Talay

- a) Editor collates material as per suggestion in above submission from Geoff Birtles.

- b) Typing of layout to be done by typing service or volunteer.
- c) Layout to go to Printer (known to Alex) who would photograph it, print and collate for approx. \$60.00 per issue.
- d) A "Fathoms" levy of \$2 per member be imposed to cover extra incurred costs. Plus a Fathoms fund-raising function as required.

From John Goulding

Production of "Fathoms" to be split into two defined areas of responsibility thus:

a) *EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITIES:*

A member of the Committee be appointed Editor for a period of 12 months to provide:

Editorial Comment:

Ensure information relating to club activities is included as well as details of Club meetings and Committee meetings.

Keep an up to date mailing list.

Appoint (with Committee approval) a member to solicit advertising.

Solicit articles from members.

Reply to "Letters to the Editor".

Have sole right of censorship and refusal of copy.

Ensure finished copy is provided to a publisher, and determine deadline for receipt of articles, then approve final copy before publication.

Maintain adequate supply of Fathoms covers and wrappers.

- b) **PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION RESPONSIBILITIES:**
The V.S.A.G. committee should contract out the printing and distribution to a person or organisation who can meet the Club's requirements on standard, deadline and costs.

* The extra costs incurred by the Club in the above suggested method should be recouped by the Committee organising fund-raising events or through selling advertising space as simply increasing membership fees does not hold the answer.

From Des Williams

- a) Editor prepares copy for the monthly issue and edits, reads and approves submissions.
- b) Professional business house or volunteer type copy and passes on to a printer.
- c) Printer prints and collates.
- d) Assistant editor then wraps, addresses and posts the newsletter.

* All members would be asked to pay a "Fathoms" levy thus ensuring those members whom we never see but get Fathoms pay their way, as these people would probably be rarely seen at fund-raising functions which would also be necessary to pay for Fathoms.

Note: At present the average cost of Fathoms per month including postage is \$76.00.

So those are the ideas we have so far condensed down to facts. John and Geoff have made very elaborate submissions and these will be read out by myself at the next Committee and General meetings. My thanks to Alex, Geoff and John.

JUNE - LONG WEEKEND AT PORT FAIRY:

Terry Brooks is our co-ordinator again this year and he is currently negotiating with Real Estate Agents at Port Fairy to obtain several houses for rental, as we did at Apollo Bay last year.

Negotiations are a little slow, but Terry advises that all those who wish to go on this trip to be prepared to confirm and pay a deposit at May meeting. At this meeting, Terry will advise if we have houses or on-site caravans.

Please be sure you confirm and pay at May meeting.

EASTER 1983

Easter Sunday dawned bright and sunny, with the promise of being a mild, calm day. This to me seemed like a good day to be going beneath the sea, and so gathering my family around me I set off for Flinders.

I must point out at this stage that I had rung the dive captain the night before, so even had it been raining I would still have gone. Arriving at Flinders after encountering Max, Keith and Bob en route we parked the car and fed the mechanical car part attendant. A note of caution here, Don Able also fed the machine but failed to place the ticket in his car. Hey presto, a pink parking fine, however Don with some "heavy" support from Mick managed to persuade the traffic officer of his innocence, but be warned, like they say PAY AND DISPLAY - Quickly!

It being Easter Sunday there were ten of us bunnies to brave the tranquil elements in three boats. Mick's, Barry's and Max's. I being old was allotted a place in Barry's boat with Barry and Pat to look after me.

Max, Keith and Bob were together, with Mick having Igor, Don and Alex with him, to pull up anchors, or fishing rods or anything else they came across on the bottom.

Not too many divers on what was a beautiful day. "Where", I innocently asked, "was Geoff?" They told me that Jonah was away water skiing, so they expected a good day. For myself, I thought he might be away training to beat Tony (or Reece) home in next year's Fun Run - we motored out to a spot I cannot disclose except to say that for the first time in my experience we were nearer to Flinders than Cape Schank. Barry and Pat geared up with all this wonderous new equipment, that I have only ever been able to peer wistfully at in Ern Ireland's window, and plunged overboard attached to two buoys, leaving me alone in charge of the boat. What, I wondered, should I do if one of those freak waves you read about suddenly reared up at me from out of the depths of Bass Strait. Panic, I hear you say - well luckily nothing like that happened and I motored around for forty minutes until Pat surfaced with their bag full of large marine decapods - crayfish, to the uninitiated.

Taking the bag into the boat I filled the bin to the brim with the one bag, which gives you an idea how large they were. Barry surfaced and they both climbed into the boat. They are lining up to be caught, they explained to me. It would appear that the large crayfish were pushing one another aside to be first into Barry's hands?

With a cry of "Birtles eat your heart out", they plunged overboard again and proceeded to fight their way down the buoyed line, probably the hardest part of the exercise. Before going over they had decided only to bring up five or six pounders and leave the rest.

Over the radio came the cryptic remark, that perhaps in future we ought to tie Barry's hands behind his back before shoving him overboard, however, I'm sure he'd still come up with his share.

Soon the lads were back again with just one more cray, who it seemed had insisted upon joining them. None of the others were of the right size. Then it was time for me to gear up and go. Although my gear paled into insignificance beside the others, I must point out that mine was the only regulator not to hiss away merrily when I turned the air on.

Then overboard to await Max and Bob; the water was warm, I felt comfortable, but unfortunately by the time the others fell in and we dived down, we had missed the ledges and the crayfish awaiting us were to be disappointed, and so were we.

We were in sixty feet of water, with a visibility range of between fifteen to twenty feet, plenty of weed, some fish live, the occasional small shark; but no ledges and no crays!

We traversed the bottom, with me hanging onto the buoys for thirty five minutes. I was enjoying myself, I hadn't dived for a while, my suspect ear was fine and the water was warm, and it was fun to watch Max hunting in vain for a ledge.

Actually, we should have gone up once it was obvious we'd missed the spot, but we decided that perhaps it would be just around the corner, and kept going. We surfaced halfway up Westernport, and climbed back aboard our respective vessels. At this point I decided to go ashore since we were now quite close to Flinders Pier. So we motored in. What happened after that I know not.

We drove home stopping at the Truscott residence en route to deposit almost all the crayfish, and we dined royally ourselves about ninety minutes later. It was a good day, we all enjoyed ourselves, my thanks to the boat owners without whom we would have had to dive around the pier and eat Kentucky Fried for tea.

Divers Present:

Max, Barry, Mick J., Don A., Bob, Igor, Keith, Pat, Alex and myself Brian Lynch.

by Brian Lynch

ED. NOTE:

Thanks Lynchy, always appreciate your interesting reports. Hope you will be on more dives, so we can read more of you in "Fathoms".

HYPERBARIC EMERGENCY UNIT

From 11th March 1983, the Underwater Training Centre in Sydney has become a Department of the National Safety Council of Australia, Victorian Division, and has been relocated into new facilities at Morwell, Victoria. With it are essential hyperbaric facilities normally used for training, which however, in medical opinion, are ideally suited for emergency treatment of decompression sickness of divers.

The National Safety Council of Australia's recompression facilities are as follows:

1. 20 BAR 1800 mm internal diameter twin lock chamber, capacity for up to 10 persons linked to a COMEX bell simulator with a wet chamber for training dives up to 200 ft. Oxygen bibs, environment control system, ECG connector, suction, are fitted to the chamber.
2. Twin lock 1800 mm internal diameter decompression chamber with oxygen bibs, capacity for up to 8 persons with a working pressure up to 12 BAR.

Chambers 1 and 2 can be linked together for saturation purposes.

3. Mobile twin lock 1800 mm internal diameter decompression chamber with oxygen bibs, video control system, capacity up to 8 persons and mounted on semi trailer complete with independent power, air and mixed gas supplies, working pressure up to 12 BAR.
4. A transportable 2 man DRAEGER DUOCOM chamber rated to 6 BAR complete with CO₂ scrubber, oxygen and life support system with a transport duration up to 8 hours.

The hyperbaric facilities are run and maintained by the National Safety Council of Australia, Victorian Division, in conjunction with the Bass Strait Medical Services and with

the co-operation of the Latrobe Valley District Ambulance Service as a hyperbaric emergency unit.

The small transportable chamber can readily be transported in a National Safety Council Bell 212 helicopter or King Air fixed-wing turbo-prop 200C aircraft. The chamber can be locked to the National Safety Council stationary chamber system or the National Safety Council large decompression chamber listed in Item 3. This is done by means of an international bayonet flange which they hope will ultimately become common at decompression chambers throughout the country. This system permits transfer from the small transportable chamber to the larger stationary unit which is fitted out and contains all necessary treatment facilities such as suction, oxygen bibs, ECG connections, video monitoring and environment control system.

The service will utilise existing National Safety Council/ Ambulance infrastructure for alert purposes which will ensure that the facilities are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week throughout the year.

Costs for transport and medical treatment are expected to be covered by health insurance or alternatively transport will be charged at cost to the patient. In cases of hardship, the National Safety Council of Australia maintains a non-enforcement policy. It is expected that medical practitioners will submit their own accounts to the patients.

The National Safety Council of Australia is well experienced in such operations and has been running, for example, ambulance helicopters for the Latrobe Valley District Ambulance Service and a number of other emergency transport systems for some years. The King Air aircraft has excellent endurance and can reach, for example, from Morwell (Victoria) to Sydney (New South Wales) in 1 hour, 40 minutes and from Morwell (Victoria) to Brisbane (Queensland) in 2 hours, 45 minutes.