

FATHOMS

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Safety in Diving

**INDEPENDANT
DIVING
FREEDOM**

\$2

*If undeliverable, return to
Victorian Sub Aqua Group.
Box 2526W,
GPO Melbourne 3001*

VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP



VSAG

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COVER STORY

This brilliant photograph was taken by Kieth Jensen in May 1983 when diving the U.S. Destroyer Y.P. 284 off Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. The divers from bottom to top are Alex Talay, Geoff Birtles and Steve Gardiner (dive guide). Reg Thomas' dive boat can be seen on the surface. The ship lies in 120 ft. of water and was sunk on Sunday 25th October 1942 when attacked by 3 Japanese Destroyers (Akatsuki, Ikazuchi and Shiratsuyu). TECHNICAL DETAILS: Kieth used a Nikonos 3 with a 15 m/m lens. The photo was taken using natural light and Fujichrome 100 A.S.A. film.

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 North Melbourne Football Club where bar facilities are available prior to and after the General Meetings. Visitors are very welcome - smart casual wear essential.

FATHOMS

Official journal of the Victorian Sub—Aqua Group

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Next general meeting:

Next committee meeting:

EDITORIAL



Well by the time this issue of Fathoms reaches you, better weather should be prevailing, the cray season reopened and many V.S.A.G. divers coming out of hibernation. For many of us diving is a twelve months of the year affair, while others only fair weather divers. V.S.A.G. makes no distinction about how often you must dive, but after a five or six month lay off over winter a 130 feet deep submarine dive or a deep drift along the Nepean Wall would seem a little ambitious, a couple of easy build-up dives may be the answer.

Many of our experienced divers plan and carry out deco dives, always for a specific purpose to stay and see more or recover a relic from a wreck. Never and less experienced divers may think this easy but not so, all of this

diving is well planned and carried out, deco lines and tanks provided and back up of oxygen on board our dive boats, so while V.S.A.G. maintains the right of Independent Diving Freedom remember our logo, Safety In Diving.

Our October issue of Fathoms may have appeared a little light on content; but with only six days from my election to editor and the deadline, I am reasonably pleased with the result obtained. I must thank those that provided material for inclusion, Des Williams, John Goulding, John Lawler and Pat Reynolds.

Fathoms wishes to welcome new members Daryl Whithill and Ian Scholes, we all look forward to diving with you and to learn some of Ian's wreck secrets.

October's general meeting had a poor turn up of members, nearly had more visitors than members. Visitors Chris Lewellyn, Gordon Brown, and Anthony Finnegan showed an 8mm movie with underwater footage and good shark shots. The second feature by Igor Chernichov showed more of the Fathoms on our recent safari and we finished up with slides by Igor and myself.

.../Cont.

While on the subject of slides and films, Alex Talay has joined the shutterbugs. He has just acquired a new Nikonos Five complete with giant size strobe. No doubt setting out for our next cover picture.

Between now and Christmas we have a lot of dive and social events. To make them a success please try to attend and let the organisers know in advance your intentions to attend, by doing this we shall keep V.S.A.G. "The divers dive club". *

K. Jensen

COMMITTEE REPORT

October 23rd, 1984 - Birtles Residence

Present: Talay, Abell, Jeacle, Jensen, Goulding, Reynolds, Synon, Birtles, Mastrowicz.

Apologies: Williams, Truscott, Tipping.

Treasurer's Report:

Cash at Bank	\$1,199.92
Cash on hand	\$ NIL
Cash at Building Society	<u>\$1,445.08</u>
	<u>\$2,645.00</u>

Business:

- i) Applications for membership for Daryl Whitehill, Ian Scholes, Mike Weber were approved, they will be advised by letter from the Secretary.
- ii) John Goulding advised committee that at the November meeting he wishes to discuss the booking of the Easter trip to Wilsons Promontary.
- iii) Don Abell requested that the committee at the next meeting consider arranging a dive on the "William Salthouse".
- iv) Mick Jeacle queried the extent to which he should retain data relating to the accounts of the club. It was agreed that cheque and deposit books be kept for 3 years and the detailed cash book retained for 7 years.

- v) Geoff Birtles presented costs and details for cloth caps with club motif. The club will purchase 100 caps in various colours and shall sell same at \$6.00 per cap.
- vi) Geoff will enquire into having cloth badges made by the same manufacturer.
- vii) Committee reviewed points score for determining Clubman of the Year using a benchmark of 20 points for a day dive. The following basis for allocating points was agreed upon.

	<u>Points</u>
Day dive	20
Day dive - winter months	25
Weekend away - 2 or 3 days	30
Weekend away - winter months	35
Christmas trip	60
Introducing a new member	15
Attendance at General Meeting	10
Attendance at a social function	15
Introducing a guest at a social event	5

Fathoms Contributions

Dive report	10
Article of general interest	20
Article requiring research or an original article	30
Photographs or illustrations	10
Any member contributing to every issue of Fathoms for 1 year to receive a 50% bonus on all points scored for the Fathoms contributions	

Making a presentation at a general meeting (including lectures and/or films) or introducing a guest who makes a presentation 20

Points will be awarded to any member who makes a significant contribution to club administration / club development / club spirit / general safety / etc.

Points will be determined at the discretion of the Committee in accordance with the effort expended by the member.

- vii) Geoff Birtles has arranged air fills at Eden at a cost of \$2.50 per fill.
- ix) Alex Talay to be reimbursed for the cost of providing a permanent trophy to be retained by the Clubman of the Year.
- x) Dive and social calendar arranged.

The meeting closed at 11.08 p.m. We adjourned and enjoyed a nice supper provided by Isobel. Thanks to Geoff and Isobel for providing the venue for the meeting. *

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

At the next meeting (21st Nov.) selected members of the club have been asked to bring along their treasured momentos from the deep.

Many of our members have been diving for many years and have collected some fascinating objects. The idea is to display them and ask the owner how, when and where he obtained the item. No doubt heroic tales will be related, plus the odd lie or two.

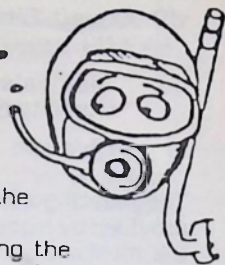
It will be the first time anyone has seen such a display of our members' relics in one place and should be very interesting. Anyone who has not been asked and who has an item of interest is welcome to bring it along.

Please support the club, and our members' efforts to bring these things to you, by turning up.

P.S. None of the items on display are from protected wrecks or are in any way illegal, so Federal Police, greenies or any other undesirables needn't bother. *

Alex Talay

FLOTŞAM & JETSAM



October was quite a month for V.S.A.G. On the 13th of the month V.S.A.G. celebrated it's 30 year anniversary with a dinner dance at the North Melbourne Football Club. During the course of the evening, President Alex Talay delivered his maiden speech to the club. Alex had researched his material well and had spoken to a number of the very early members, so as he could relate some of the history of the club. Stories of utmost dare devil activities with very basic diving gear were the norm of the day back in the 1950's. Although present day members might consider the founding fathers of our club, who were some of the early pioneers of scuba diving, to be adventure seeking bravados they did setup our organisation that has lasted well over the past thirty years and hopefully will continue so long as men and women seek enjoyment under the surface.

In the early 1960's when scuba diving was still an unusually unheard of sport V.S.A.G. was formed into a Company Limited by Guarantee with a legally drafted constitution. This gave protection to the club and its members against legal action and provided the basis for an ongoing structure and procedure for running the club. This foresight on the part of the early members has paid off. When many other scuba clubs around Melbourne are falling by the wayside V.S.A.G. continues to maintain its presence as a strong, well managed, and good spirited club.

If this sounds like a big cheer for the club, its members and its ideals, well you're right, because some of its diving activities are absolutely ratshit.

Back in 1975 John Goulding, acting on very reliable information led a group of about 20 divers to a deserted coal mine down past Geelong. This coal mine was reported as having the clearest water east of Mt. Gambier. Undaunted by the pea green slop that rippled onto the oozing black mud of the shoreline, V.S.A.G. descended into the coldest, blackest, smelliest sludge you can imagine. After 3 minutes we aborted the dive and only after a few hard questions were asked did we find out it was a well meaning joke.

Well, that experience turned me off dirty water diving but being somewhat of an old wreck buff I signed on for Des Williams' dive on the Kakariki.

The Kakariki collided with the Caradale near the Old Gellibrand Pile light off Williamstown in 1937.

On Sunday 21st October after a week of hail, sleet and rain which filled the belly of the Yarra River, we dived the remains of this old steamer. The weather remained fine, but oh the water. Like a drunken slob the Yarra spewed its rotten waste out into the Northern end of the bay, with the result that visibility on the wreck site was 10% clarity at 2 feet, total blur at 3 feet, no visibility at 4 feet.

Now I've dived the Williamstown area on several occasions, and I kid you not, on some days I've had 30 to 40 visibility and been able to knife spear flathead.

Still it was an interesting day, particularly cruising around the majestic yachts moored at Williamstown, and the millionaire launches at the St. Kilda Marina. Those poor people looked enviously at us as they sipped their champagne, and I can still hear them sigh as they wished they too could join our elite little fleet.

Signed Polly Filler

P.S. Don't forget the V.S.A.G. Christmas Dinner Dance at Hunters Lodge on December 14th. See notice in Fathoms. *

FATHOMS

V.S.A.G. CHRISTMAS DINNER DANCE

AT

HUNTERS LODGE

438 Dorset Road, CROYDON

FRIDAY DECEMBER 14th, 7.30 p.m. - Midnight +
\$24.00/head (inc. dinner, beer, wine, soft drinks)

Remember last year, the fabulous Christmas Dinner Party at Hunters Lodge?

Through generous sponsorship from many diving shops and Health Works Gymnasium we were able to raffle hundreds of dollars of great prizes.

Well its on again this year and V.S.A.G. wants you there.

This year there will be dancing, raffle prizes and lucky ticket prizes.

We plan to have another great night, so be sure to book your tickets with John Goulding or Mick Jeacle. Better still get up a party of friends and book a whole table.

Deposits of \$10.00/head on full payment is required by the November General Meeting (21st Nov.). Total payment is required by November 27th.

Postal bookings with money should be sent to:

John Goulding Ph: (H) 8906634
13 Birdwood Street, (B) 3413543
BOX HILL SOUTH 3128

OCEANS 1984

Des Williams

Held at Monash University over the weekend 12th, 13th and 14th of October

Oceans this year was celebrating its 10th birthday and as usual gave Melbourne divers a chance to catch up on what is new. The usual displays of dive schools, suppliers and travel agents were there. Conspicuous by their absence this year, was the display by Southern Cross Divers who have organised their own Oceans "type" seminar to be held at Burwood at a later date this year.

Three excellent displays were on show on the mezzanine floor prepared by S.D.F - V, Cave Divers Association and the M.A.A.V. All were very professionally done and included video presentations.

In fact, I would like to congratulate the management cell of the S.D.F - V for the obvious time and effort put into their rather large display. Many T-Shirts, windcheaters and badges were sold from the stand to help increase the bank balance. The main theme of the S.D.F - V display was, of course, promotion of non profit diving clubs.

Some of the clubs who had advertising material on the stand were V.S.A.G., Goulburn Valley, Kaiaraba Divers, Marine Diving Group, Williamstown Divers and Torquay Scuba Club.

Back to the Oceans lectures: Unfortunately there were many changes to the itinerary and most of the lectures I had been looking forward to, were not presented. The organisers Barry Andrewartha and Peter Stone must have had a hard time re-scheduling lectures this year.

Lectures presented by Pat Baker (Pandora Expedition) and Tony Hambling (Cave Diving the Nullabor) were excellent.

*

JANUARY LONG WEEKEND 1985 WILSONS PROMONTARY SAFARI

The annual charter trip is on again to Wilsons Promontary over the Australia Day Weekend, January 26th - 28th.

There are 16 spots available on the luxury charter cruiser, M.V. Mirrabooka.

The cost for the weekend will be \$75.00 a head which includes: all diving, all food, and accommodation.

A deposit of \$25.00 a head is required by the December General Meeting, with full payment In Cash required prior to departure on the Saturday morning of the 26th January.

Members wishing to attend should contact John Goulding on 890 6634 Home or 341 3543 Business.

This trip is usually booked out by mid December, and spots can only be guaranteed to those who pay their full money early.

The arrangements will be the same as in previous years.

Friday Night 26th January

Meet at Foster Hotel.

Arrange own accommodation by pre booking room at one of the two Foster Motels or Hotels, or make other arrangements.

Saturday

Meet at Port Franklin jetty by 6.45 a.m. to load Mirrabooka. Cruise down to Refuge Cove, set up the base camp, lunch, then go out diving - return to base camp for evening meal.

Sunday

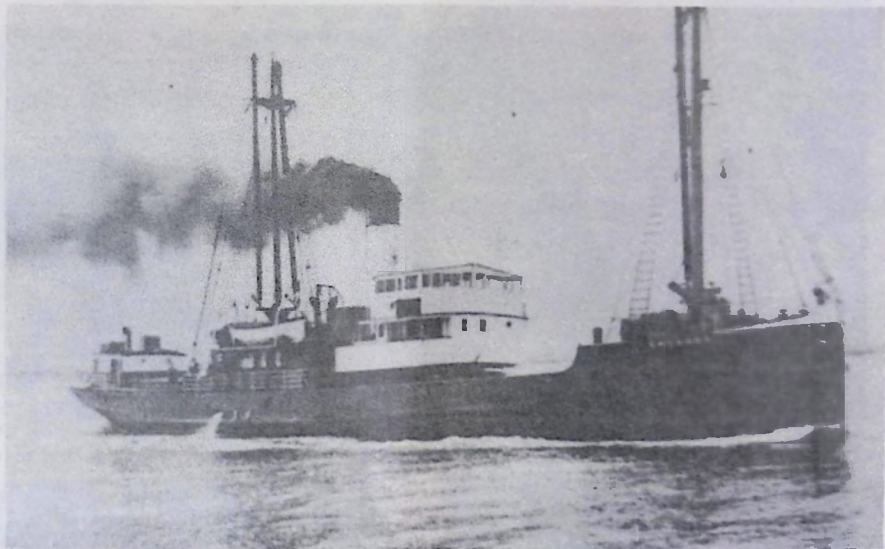
Early Breakfast. Dive all day. Return to base camp.

Monday

Dismantle camp. Go out diving. Cruise home to Port Franklin in afternoon. All diving locations will depend on the weather, but if we're fortunate as in previous years we will dive the fabulous spots like: Forty Foot Rocks, Skull Rock, Anser Island, Kanowna Island. *

GET IN EARLY FOR THIS GREAT DIVING EXPERIENCE

VICTORIA'S MYSTERY SHIPWRECK T.S.S. CORAMBA



This 531 ton steel steamship was caught in the most violent storm ever to strike Victoria's coastline on 30th November, 1934. She was fully loaded en route from Warrnambool to Melbourne with a crew of 17 men, when she succumbed to the elements near Phillip Island.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of her loss with all hands, a 100 page book about the last voyage of the "Coramba" is to be released at Port Fairy on the 30th November this year. The book is titled "Coramba - The Ship Th Sea Swallowed" and written by V.S.A.G. diver Des Williams following three years of research into the mystery. It contains many rare photographs and details of the ship's last voyage including a full transcript of an enquiry made soon after the tragedy by the Marine Board of Victoria. A full arrangement plan of the vessel is contained in a fold out section within the book. Only 1000 copies are currently being printed to ensure the book remains a collectors item. So order now.

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V.S.A.G. 30TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER DANCE

Photos By Bill Jansen



Brian & Di Lynch, Peter & Clare Takly reliving past exploits of deep & daring dives.



John & Maree Goulding enjoying the night away from Captain Ben Jarmin.



Alex & Pat watching out for good looking Wombats.



Cuddly couple Big Mick & little Anne Jeacle.



Andy Mastrowicz & Bob Scott swapping a few lies.



V.S.A.G. Clubman of the Year Geoff & Isobel Birtles.



Past Fathoms Editor Bill Jenson.

To secure your copy, simply fill out the order form below and mail it with your cheque direct to the author at 29 Valerie Street, Boronia, 3155. All orders will be acknowledged with a receipt by return mail and books will be despatched during the first week of December 1984. *

Please send me copies of "Coramba - The Ship The Sea Swallowed" at \$8.50 Each (including postage).

To: NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....

PHONE:

My cheque for \$..... is enclosed.

Date:

(Please make cheque payable to "D. S. Williams" as the book is only available from the author).

V.S.A.G. CLUBMAN OF THE YEAR 1983-84



As mentioned briefly in committee notes last month the much sought after Clubman of the Year trophy was won by Geoff Birtles and the runner up being Alex Talay. Geoff was a clear winner, no need for count backs or close scrutineering of records. He acquired points for day dives, weekend dives, trips away, introduction of new members and many submissions in Fathoms.

A few other achievements carried out by Geoff, but not earning points were, T-shirts and windcheaters complete with new logo, Tour Leader on V.S.A.G. Fiji Trip, updating application forms and criteria for the admission of new members and the arranging of our Xmas trip to Eden.

A worthy winner of the award, Geoff was presented with the Perpetual trophy and the individual trophy at the 30 year dinner dance on the 20th of October at North Melbourne Football Club.

Fathoms on behalf of all V.S.A.G. members says congratulations to Geoff Birtles. WELL DONE CLUBMAN OF THE YEAR '83/'84. *



Tony & Marg Tipping



Country Folk. Bruce & Val Soulsby



Bass Strait Diver,
Leo & Carole Maybus



Cameo appearance
Paul & Julie King

TIDE TABLE, PORT PHILLIP.

Add 1 hour to times shown for official 'Summer Time' DECEMBER, 1984.

Month	Day	PORT PHILLIP HEADS.																Week Day	Month	Day
		High Water				Slack Water Flood (Stream Turns)				Low Water				Slack Water Ebb (Stream Turns)						
		h	m	Ht	M	h	m	Ht	M	h	m	Ht	M	h	m	Ht	M			
1	Sa	05 43	14	17 50	11	08 39	0 9	20 40	0 7	11 34	0 4	23 30	0 4	02 17	0 8	14 11	0 8	Sa	1	2
2	Su	06 19	13	18 46	11	09 17	0 9	21 29	0 8	00 11	0 5	12 15	0 4	02 55	0 8	15 31	0 8	Su	1	3
3	M	06 56	12	19 47	11	09 58	0 8	22 22	0 8	00 11	0 5	12 59	0 4	03 34	0 9	16 23	0 8	M	3	4
4	Tu	07 35	12	20 53	11	10 43	0 8	23 25	0 9	00 57	0 6	13 51	0 4	04 16	0 9	17 22	0 8	Tu	4	5
5	W	08 22	12	22 03	12	11 46	0 8	0 0	0 0	01 57	0 7	14 57	0 4	05 10	0 9	18 30	0 8	W	5	6
6	Th	09 19	11	23 04	12	00 44	0 9	12 41	0 8	03 24	0 7	16 03	0 4	06 22	0 9	19 34	0 8	Th	6	7
7	F	10 21	11	23 56	13	01 55	10	13 38	0 7	04 45	0 7	16 54	0 3	07 33	0 9	20 25	0 8	F	7	8
8	Sa	11 16	11			02 48	10	14 25	0 7	05 40	0 7	17 34	0 2	08 28	0 9	21 06	0 8	Sa	8	9
9	Su	00 38	14	12 04	11	03 32	10	15 08	0 6	06 25	0 6	18 11	0 2	09 15	0 9	21 45	0 8	Su	9	10
10	M	01 19	14	12 45	11	04 13	10	15 46	0 6	07 06	0 6	18 46	0 1	09 56	0 9	22 22	0 8	M	10	11
11	Tu	01 57	15	13 26	12	04 51	10	16 25	0 6	07 44	0 6	19 23	0 0	10 35	0 9	23 00	0 8	Tu	11	12
12	W	02 36	15	14 06	12	05 30	10	17 05	0 6	08 23	0 5	20 04	0 0	11 15	0 8	23 41	0 7	W	12	13
13	Th	03 17	15	14 50	12	06 11	10	17 50	0 6	09 04	0 5	20 49	0 0	11 57	0 8			Th	13	14
14	F	03 59	15	15 42	12	06 52	0 9	18 39	0 6	09 45	0 4	21 35	0 1	00 24	0 7	12 44	0 8	F	14	15
15	Sa	04 44	14	16 41	12	07 35	0 9	19 32	0 7	10 26	0 4	22 23	0 2	01 10	0 7	13 34	0 8	Sa	15	16
16	Su	05 29	14	17 44	12	08 18	0 9	20 27	0 7	11 06	0 4	23 09	0 3	01 56	0 8	14 25	0 8	Su	16	17
17	M	06 14	14	18 49	12	09 02	0 9	21 23	0 8	11 49	0 3	23 56	0 4	02 42	0 8	15 19	0 8	M	17	18
18	Tu	06 59	13	19 57	13	09 47	0 8	22 23	0 9			12 35	0 3	03 28	0 9	16 16	0 8	Tu	18	19
19	W	07 48	13	21 07	13	10 39	0 8	23 30	1 0	00 48	0 6	13 30	0 3	04 18	1 0	17 19	0 8	W	19	20
20	Th	08 43	13	22 19	14	11 41	0 8			01 52	0 7	14 39	0 3	05 18	1 0	18 29	0 9	Th	20	21
21	F	09 48	13	23 23	15	00 53	1 1	12 52	0 8	03 27	0 8	15 56	0 3	06 38	1 1	19 40	0 9	F	21	22
22	Sa	10 54	13			02 09	1 2	13 58	0 7	04 55	0 8	17 01	0 2	07 55	1 1	20 41	0 9	Sa	22	23
23	Su	00 21	16	11 54	13	03 10	1 2	14 54	0 7	05 58	0 8	17 54	0 2	08 56	1 0	21 34	0 9	Su	23	24
24	M	01 13	16	12 48	13	04 04	1 2	15 47	0 7	06 55	0 7	18 45	0 1	09 52	1 0	22 22	0 9	M	24	25
25	Tu	01 59	16	13 38	13	04 53	1 1	16 36	0 7	07 47	0 6	19 34	0 1	10 43	0 9	23 09	0 9	Tu	25	26
26	W	02 43	16	14 26	13	05 40	1 1	17 24	0 7	08 37	0 5	20 22	0 1	11 32	0 9	23 53	0 8	W	26	27
27	Th	03 24	16	15 11	12	06 23	1 0	18 10	0 7	09 22	0 5	21 08	0 2			12 17	0 8	Th	27	28
28	F	04 00	15	15 57	12	07 02	0 9	18 54	0 7	10 03	0 4	21 50	0 2	00 34	0 8	13 00	0 8	F	28	29
29	Sa	04 15	14	16 44	11	07 38	0 9	19 37	0 7	10 40	0 4	22 30	0 3	01 13	0 8	13 42	0 7	Sa	29	30
30	Su	05 06	14	17 30	11	08 11	0 9	20 18	0 7	11 15	0 3	23 06	0 4	01 48	0 8	14 23	0 7	Su	30	31
31	M	05 37	13	18 17	11	08 44	0 8	21 00	0 8	11 50	0 3	23 43	0 5	02 22	0 8	15 04	0 7	M	31	

SUBSCRIPTION HIT LIST

Alex Talay

As you are aware, membership fees were due a couple of months ago. The following people have not yet paid. If your name appears here, and it was an oversight, please pay by the next Meeting (21st Nov.).

As we have given you 3 months grace, those who have not paid by the 21st are reading their last Fathoms.

Bill Hayes
 Dave Moore
 Leo Canteri
 Gary Thorn
 Andy Redwood
 Peter Quail
 Tom Avery

Bob Scott
 Peter Smith
 Paul Roberts
 Lindsay Cole
 Terry Arnott
 Martin Koster
 John Suhr

Dave Carroll
 Alan Whitely
 Peter West
 Alan Currie
 Zoltan Okalyi
 Kasia Quail