

# FATHOMS

OCT 84

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Safety in Diving

**INDEPENDANT  
DIVING  
FREEDOM**

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GPO Melbourne 3001*

1984

**VSAG**

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

# VSAG

Victorian Sub-Aqua Group. Box 2526W, G.P.O., Melbourne. 3001 Australia

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Barry Truscott - 789 6395  
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John Goulding - 890 6634  
Property & Safety Officer  
Pat Reynolds - 789 1092  
Public Relations  
Max Synon - 465 2812  
Committee Member  
Geoff Birtles - 846 1983  
Committee Member  
Paul Tipping - 387 2027

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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

## In this issue:

OCTOBER 1984

### COMMUNICATION

Editorial	K. Jensen	2
Committee Report		3
Presidents Report	D. Williams	5
An Observation	J. Lawler	7
Queenscliff Weekend		15
Dive Calendar		16

### ENTERTAINMENT

Flotsam & Jestsam	Miss Construed	8
VSAG Tennis Party	J. Goulding	12
Dive Report, San Remo	P. Reynolds	10

### EDUCATION

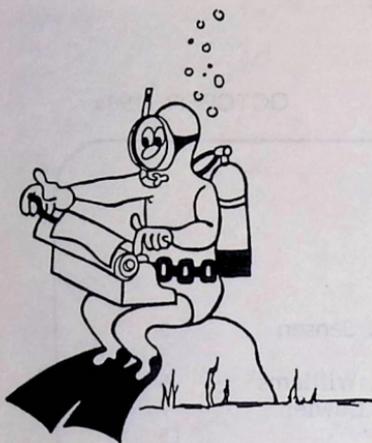
Cylinder Testing	K. Jensen	13
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**Next general meeting:** Wednesday, October 17th 8.00 pm  
North Melbourne Football Club,  
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne

**Next committee meeting:** Tuesday October 23rd 8.00 pm  
Geoff Birtles Home,  
8 Newlyn Close, Templestowe

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

## EDITORIAL



Well it had to happen, after 22 days diving and cruising at exotic locations in the Solomons and Vanuatu, still suffering from raptures of the deep, feeling very relaxed while on long service leave from work I was got at!

How did this happen? Well it was like this, at our last committee meeting at Des Williams home I had taken up a comfortable position near the heater and sucking on a tinnie and in a soporific mood, I vaguely heard some one say "do you accept this nomination Keith", I yawned and stretched out, next thing I knew congratulations were being offered by all and sundry. It seems that Fathoms had found a new Editor.

I am aware that Fathoms is the vital communication link in V.S.A.G. and shall endeavour to maintain the high standard set by previous Editors. To keep this standard, input is required by all members and readers. The Editor's job is onerous enough in compiling setting out, arranging typing, etc. I am sure that I shall receive dive reports from dive captains, social news, chit chat and photos from members to include in your magazine FATHOMS.

Along with a new Editor we have Alex Talay as President, Don Abell as Secretary, Des Williams Vice President, Mick Jeacle as Treasurer, Barry Truscott assistant newsletter Editor, Andy Mastrowicz as Points scorer, John Goulding as Social Secretary, Pat Reynolds as Property and Safety Officer, Max Synon as Public Relations and committee men Geoff Birtles and Paul Tipping.

With a line up like this V.S.A.G. is sure to remain a premier club. To Mick Jackiw who in a photo finish lost his position on the committee to Andy Mastrowicz, I wish on behalf of the club to thank Mick for his work over the year, to Andy, welcome to the Committee.

Club activities between now and the new year cover a broad spectrum, something for everyone, so get the gear out of moth balls, and join the fun.\*

K. Jensen

## COMMITTEE REPORT

September 25th, 1984 - Des and Julie Williams' Residence

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

### Treasurer's Report:

Cash at Bank	\$ 715.57
Cash at Building Society	<u>\$1445.08</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$2160.65</u>

### Business:

- i) John Goulding has agreed to prepare a club notice board for Ocean's '84.
- ii) Mick Jeacle reported that the new overseas trip fund has been commenced. Response to date has been poor.
- iii) Keith Jensen reported that Geoff Birtles had won the Clubman of the Year award with Alex Talay being runner up. Keith put committee on notice that he would like to further discuss the system for allocating points for this event.
- iv) Des Williams raised the subject of the club paying ramp fees for local owners. It was agreed that fees would be paid to Andy Mastrowicz on a pro rata basis in accordance with his attendance at dives.
- v) Des noted that he was unable to contact Terry Brooks in regard to his caravan site at Eden. Terry's reservation has been cancelled and allocated to Bob Scott.
- vi) Des Williams advised that he had been contacted by 2 persons regarding committee report printed in Fathoms regarding the SDF Meeting. Des advised that he did not think the report printed had given a true account of the previous committee meeting.

- vii) Geoff Birtles put the committee on notice that he wished to discuss the club's approach to the S.D.F. submission to the Ports and Harbours authority in regard to their treatment of divers found diving improperly at Port Phillip heads.
- viii) Membership application from Ian Scholes.
- ix) Membership applications approved for Jane Thompson. (Subject to a medical certificate being received) and Paul Crellin.
- x) Dive Calendar drawn up.

Next meeting to be held at Geoff Birtles' home on the 23rd October. Meeting closed 11.00 p.m. and adjourned for a nice supper prepared by Julie Williams. \*

### **SCUBA MARKET PLACE**

Regulator	US Divers Calypso E.C.	\$90
2	S.O.S. Deco Meters Recently Serviced E.C.	\$49 each
1	Fenzy B/C Complete	\$60
1	US Divers Back Pack	\$29
1	4 Stroke Motor 6.8 HP Honda	\$125

Contact Property Officer PAT REYNOLDS

(AH) 789 - 1092

## PRESIDENTS' REPORT 1983-84

This year, our 30th year for V.S.A.G. has seen much club activity due largely to the effects of a few dedicated members.

We are currently diving through a rapidly changing world of public and government attitudes towards divers' generally. We have seen evidence of this in the need to place prohibited areas around some shipwrecks, the establishment of Marine Reserves, close scrutiny by Fisheries & Wildlife inspectors and the introduction of Port Phillip Rules 62A and 62B.

Because of these changing forces V.S.A.G. became instrumental in arranging the reconstruction of the ailing Scuba Divers' Federation of Victoria. We all sincerely hope that the S.D.F.-V will tackle directly the matters which effect individual divers' independence in Victorian waters.

In the last twelve months, our club has enjoyed many dives at locations both near and far in addition to several excellent social outings. Local dive shops received our thanks for generous donations to our Xmas party fund raising raffle and we all owe Mick Jeacle a special thank you for his efforts in his capacity as Social Secretary. We enjoyed evenings at Hunters Lodge, the Victoria Hotel, Nth. Melbourne Football Club, the Windsor Hotel and of course the day's competition at the V.S.A.G. tennis party with the assistance of Tony and Paul Tipping.

Our newsletter has never looked so good thanks to Geoff Birtles and Alex Talay, who between them have put out nine excellent issues, with assistance from Auld Secretarial (typesetting) and Barry Truscott (advertising and postage). New members to V.S.A.G. are asked to contribute to the newsletter in future, with articles on dives etc., and old members are reminded that the newsletter is supposed to be a group effort.

This year we saw our V.S.A.G. Overseas Trip Fund mature. Devised by Geoff Birtles and put together with help from Paul Tipping, Alex Talay and Mick Jeacle it was a resounding success. Twenty-one of us enjoyed two fantastic weeks diving Fiji, which was a great way to celebrate the 30th year of Victoria's most active non-commercial diving club.

Over the last twelve months we have enjoyed some eighteen one day dives, together with trips away to Mt. Gambier, Port Campbell, Wilsons Prom (3 trips) and of course fabulous Fiji. Not a bad record in a year of poor diving weather. Special thanks are due to committee members who handled the logistics of trips away, namely John Goulding, Geoff Birtles, Paul Tipping and Keith Jensen.

On the administration side; my thanks on behalf of members go to our committee members who have kept V.S.A.G. on the move during our 30th year. Committee meetings are more likesessions of Australian Parliament these days and it has taken extra effort to concentrate on the issues which vitally affect our Club's performance and harmony.

I would particularly like to express thanks to the unselfish work done for V.S.A.G. by Alex Talay, our Treasurer. Alex has contributed much to our Club in many ways, in a very low profile manner, which to my mind is the spirit of a true clubman. We were indeed very fortunate to find both Alex and Mick Jeacle at Wilsons Prom a few years ago.

V.S.A.G. has also broken the tradition of meeting at the Collingwood Football Club by moving its monthly meetings to North Melbourne Football Club. The new venue has proved to be a success as we now enjoy nights of slides or video movies in peace and quiet.

Other contributions made by Geoff Birtles this year have been the printing of new T-Shirts and Windcheeters as well as close attention to Club membership forms in his capacity as Safety Officer. As a result of Geoff's hard work, our individual membership forms most effectively reflect the needs of a non-commercial diving club in the 1980's.

Membership levels this year have remained static, despite the influx of many new members in 1983-84; this is about an average performance for V.S.A.G. membership.

As President of V.S.A.G., I would like to have been more active than I have been this year, but unfortunately I chose this year to write a book. The research work involved has been tremendously time consuming and I apologise for not having put in a greater effort. It has been an interesting year just the same, and I ask all members to support their new Committee for 1984-85. \*

Des Williams.

## AN OBSERVATION

By "Jumpsuit Jack"

The August edition of (the brilliant) "Fathoms" has reached me and in keeping with its normal high standard we are once again subjected, pleasingly, to some fun, some serious and some informative type reading. Great stuff and applause, applause to all contributors.

I listened to one of our high ranking members making a very pointed statement as to his intended input into Fathoms at the 15/8 meeting and I read his written confirmation of same in this issue.

I refer of course to Geoff Birtles' intention to withdraw as Fathoms "Newsletter Editor". O.K. some may think it not such a big deal however . . . . as a member of V.S.A.G., I have observed our club go from strength th strength and of course, as Geoff Birtles stresses in his second last editorial, "The club needs workers" surely, be example, he has set a very high standard (as "worker") consistant with his attitude of doing things right and doing it the way it should be done.

Geoff chose his words well in his assesment of our club magazine by reminding us of the importance of Fathoms "I really believe that Fathoms is a VITAL intra-club communication link and is (next to our members) the single most important contributor to our strength, unity and standing in the independant diving community". I repeat - well chosen words!

Editor Birtles' mastery of the application of words to highlight, "Bring undone", woo, send up, praise, crit, bitch, nark (?!!) etc. has, for this reader (and no doubt others who appreciate a good scribe) provided "High form" communicative skills.

Certainly in tandem with his many talented committee colleagues and interested contributing members, he/they/us have brought us our "Monthly injection" of mirth, motivation, advice etc.

No doubt Editor Birtles' will be given his due "Well done lad" pat on the back at some suitable point in time . . . . .

For those who may not have the opportunity to offer a "Well done lad" this letter will say it to Editor Birtles . . . . .

WELL DONE LAD !! \*

HELP

## FLOTSAM &amp; JETSAM



Well after an absence of 4 months out of the water, for reasons explained in last month's Flotsam & Jetsam, this article returned to the dive scene with a vengeance during September.

On September 9th under command of Don Abell in his first dive captaincy role since becoming a Committee man the V.S.A.G. boats departed from Flinders towards a rather bleak looking Bass Strait.

After an all too familiar "bash" down the coast towards Cape Schank we stopped near Bushrangers Bay when the big Mick developed engine trouble.

A lumpy and dirty sea greeted us and this diver decided that as the activity of diving was supposed to be enjoyable I might just give the dive a miss and concentrate on the hot soup.

I was not to be disappointed the following week, when on a work assignment to the Whitsunday Coast area, managed to snatch a few spare hours to fly out to the Barrier Reef. Our Gruman twin engine amphibious sea plane skimmed low over the myriad of reefs before landing on a perfectly smooth sea in the coral sheltered lagoon.

I've dived the Barrier Reef a couple of times, always from a charter boat, and whilst it is very beautiful, you don't get the overall perspective of beauty of the reef until you see it from the air.

Our dive at Hardy reef was a typical tourist joint. The tour guide took us on a coral walk. This consisted of wandering around the reef which had about 6 inches of water over it. Quite a strange sensation when you're about 40 miles out from the coast. And as I walked around I realised this was my first dive since April.

We then downed masks and snorkels and stepped off the reef into about 70 feet of water.

Unfortunately flippers were not provided, and it was rather difficult trying to kick down using a pair of oversize Addidas reef walking shoes as the only form of propulsion. Still it was a pleasant few hours, and whilst it may not rate as a dive I can certainly recommend the area and particularly flight to the reef.

We are rapidly approaching that time of the year when V.S.A.G. members, families and friends take up the challenge of the V.S.A.G. Tennis day and Somers Mile.

This event held each year is organised by the Tipping brothers, who apart from arranging the sporting activities, also turn over their beach house at Somers.

This year Tony is the major organiser and to commemorate his political idol Malcolm Fraser's dramatic rise to power after the sackings of the Whitlam Government, he has arranged the festivities for Sunday, November 11th.

At the September General Meeting, Dave Moore sent an apology with the excuse that his wife Pat was in labour.

Now we know Mr. Hawk has had problems recently but just because Pat had gone to the party's aid was hardly an excuse for him to miss the Annual General Meeting of the Club. Seems like Pat missed out on helping the party too, because on the way to helping Bob, she popped into a Hospital and gave birth to a bonny boy, Jason. Bob was so upset he cried.

Congradulations to you both. \*

Signed Miss Construed

## **OVERSEAS SAVING FUND**

Time is running out, get your cheque to Mick Jeacle C/o  
National Bank, Kew. AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

**DO IT NOW.**

## DIVE REPORT - SAN REMO SEPT. 23, 1984

Pat Reynolds

Upon opening my peepers I quickly saw the weather was far from bad. At least there was no wind, even though it was still overcast.

After throwing down some breakfast and quickly loading the van, I flew over to pick up the Big M, a coffee and we were off.

About half way to San Remo the weather began to deteriorate rapidly, with rain and an increase in wind. We felt it would have been easier to just stay in bed. On arriving at the ramp we met "Jumpsuit" Lawler, Swaffer, Rob, Geoff & Son, and Keith and Son, Stan, Don, Warren and Andy etc. not a bad turn out for such a day.

Whilst trying to convince ourselves and each other not to bother diving at all, we geared up. Finally we took off up the channel, and after a short distance were surprised to see something that looked like a floating wreck, it turned out to be ship someone had stripped, perhaps to later sink as a natural reef. Geoff saw a couple of portholes and was all for getting the tools out! What about it Mick?

Rounding the headland with seas increasing to two metre waves, we spied Stan Watts taking a group of divers to the George Kermode. After starting out, the slop wasn't getting any better, so we returned to calmer water. Anchoring just inside the headland, a likely spot in these conditions, we went over the side. Visibility was approx. 15-20 feet. The bottom had little to offer but plenty of rock kelp enabled me to get a few abalone. Cruised around for half an hour, then headed back to the boat to find Mick waiting. He enquired as to how I went, and after a short exchange let me know there was "nothing bloody there, and let's go to the Pub! !".

Geoff, Reese and Rob returned with the only cray taken for the day, a 2½ pounder taken by Rob.

Returning to a bay inside the channel we relaxed for lunch. As we stood in ankle deep water telling a few pleasant lies, Keith felt the "heavy call of nature" and proceeded to answer it in the water, you never saw five guys move so fast into Geoff's boat and make a bee line for the ramp.

Off to the pub for a few more, then home, an end to another day of diving.

Many thanks again to our V.S.A.G. boat owners who consistently bring their boats along, and the rugged divers who turn up on these cold windy days. Thanks fellas. \*

## **V.S.A.G. TENNIS PARTY & SOMERS MILE**

November 11th, 9.30 a.m.

BALNARRING BEACH TENNIS COURTS

Don't miss out on this great family day.

9.45 a.m. Assemble at Balnarring Beach Tennis Courts,  
Balnarring Beach Road (Near the beach)

10.00 a.m. The Tennis Draw:  
(Late arrivals who miss the draw will not be  
eligible to play tennis).

2.30 p.m. Return to Tipping Residence,  
3 Sandy Court, Somers

3.00 p.m. The Somers Mile

A spectacular footrace with all starters given  
a handicap.

MEMBERS WISHING TO PARTICIPATE  
OR ATTEND SHOULD PHONE TONY TIPPING

804 - 956

## V.S.A.G. TENNIS PARTY & SOMERS MILE

Its on again folks, the Annual V.S.A.G. Tennis party and Somers Mile held at the swinging holiday spots of Balmarring and Somers.

This year the highlights will be the mens singles with a couple of hot new fancies - can you hear me Ian Scholes.

The two top seeds, Mick Jeacle and Tony Tipping have already started their psychological warfare with each other.

The mixed doubles is wide open with Barry and Marie sounding quietly confident like always.

The V.S.A.G. annual mile will be a climax to the day. Several past members will run off scratch whilst other competitors will be handicapped according to weight, size, sex, experience, etc.

At this stage the official handicapper has set the following field.

Off 120 seconds

- All women, plus Dave Carroll, Keith Jensen and Robert Swoffer.

Off 90 seconds

- Paul Sier, Bob Scott, John Goulding, Mick Jackiw, Max Synon, Mick Jeacle, Alex Talay, John Lawler, Dave Moore, Pat Reynolds.

Off 60 seconds

- Paul Tipping, Des Williams, Don Abell, Peter Jensen, Reece Birtles, Andy Mashowicz.

Off 30 seconds

- Doug Catherall, Tony Tipping, Igor Chernichov.

Off Scratch

- Barry Truscott, Brian Lynch, Geoff Birtles, Jim Turner.

GREAT PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED  
BE THERE !!! \*

## CYLINDER TESTING

K. Jensen

In Australia it is a requirement that all cylinders used for S.C.U.B.A. diving must be inspected and tested every 12 months. Most dive shops can test or arrange for cylinders to be tested. You can expect to wait 7 to 10 days for your cylinder and cost is from \$16 to \$20.

It is usual for the pillar valve to be checked at this time and necessary parts replaced and lubricated, should you still be using steel cylinders you may also be up for the cost of 'rumbling'.

The test pressure is determined at the time of manufacture and is stamped into the cylinder. These pressures vary according to the specification, type, and size of the cylinders, but a general rule is 1.1/3 (for steel) and 1.2/3 (for aluminium) the working pressure. This test pressure can not be up rated.

During the test the cylinder is first inspected externally for damage, corrosion or unauthorised repair. The cylinder markings are checked to establish the specification and test pressure and to verify that the markings have not been falsified. Also at this time serial numbers are checked against lists of serial numbers of cylinders that have been reported stolen.

The pillar valve is removed and the cylinder is inspected internally. A light bloom of rust in a steel cylinder is common and is not a serious problem, but heavy rusting or pitting may cause the cylinder to be condemned. Light rusting is removed by 'rumbling' i.e. partially filling the cylinder with cracked shot and then rotating it for several hours. At this stage the cylinder is ready for the hydraulic test.

For the hydraulic stretch test the cylinder is filled with water and connected to a high pressure hydraulic pump. It is then pressurised to its stamped test pressure, and its volumetric expansion is measured. The pressure is released and if the cylinder is in good condition it will return to its original size. As the cylinder ages the metal becomes less elastic and does not return to its original size. The residual expansion is known as 'permanent set' and is also measured. The permanent set must not exceed 10% of the expansion measured at the test pressure. If it exceeds this it indicates that the metal has lost its ductility, or perhaps corrosion has developed a thin patch, in any case the cylinder must be rejected.

The measurement of the cylinder expansion needs to be taken very accurately. There are two methods of hydraulically testing a cylinder and the measurement of the expansion varies slightly from one to the other.

'Non Jacket Testing', the commonest test procedure, the water filled cylinder is connected to the hydraulic pump which draws the extra water needed to pressurise the cylinder from a calibrated sight tube. When test pressure is reached the amount of water drawn from the sight tube is noted, the pressure is released and the water flows back into the tube. If the cylinder is in good condition the water in the sight tube will return to the original level, but if the cylinder has undergone some permanent set (expansion) the level in the sight glass will not reach the original level.

The inspecting company should issue a test certificate for each cylinder, showing number, relevant test and working pressure, amount of permanent set encountered and comment on the internal condition of the cylinder. The cylinder will be stamped with the date and test mark of the company.

Filling stations check cylinders for test date prior to filling and will not for any reason fill or top up a cylinder that is out of test. Also, many shops will now insist on seeing your certification card prior to filling your cylinders. \*

## **CLUB WINDCHEATERS**

ONLY A FEW LEFT IN STOCK,  
IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT ONE YET,  
CONTACT MICK JEACLE ON 059 - 71 - 2786

FIRST IN FIRST SERVED.

## QUEENSLIFF WEEKEND

November 23rd, 24th & 25th

With 10 starters for what will be a great weekend's diving. Right on site to dive rip area or if weather permits to visit the wrecks of the "Victoria Towers" at Torquay or "Inverlochie" at Anglesea

Staying at, Beacon Caravan Park, a 4 star park, the Premier Caravan Park, Winner Tourism Award 1977 and 1980.

Amenities include, heated indoor pool, recreation hall, tennis courts, playground and barbeque area. Golf course nearby. \*

STILL NOT TOO LATE TO BOOK

RING DIRECT (052) 52 - 1510

Further Enquiries to Keith Jensen 460 - 3672

### BOOK RELEASE

Past President of V.S.A.G. and former Fathoms Editor, Des Williams unlocks the mystery of the "TSS CORAMBA", the ship the sea swallowed.

At Port Fairy (Coramba's home port), on December 1st 1984, Des will release his book. Many years of research and hard work have gone into this production.

Fifty years to the day since the ship disappeared. All details of the ship, its history etc. included.

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Ideal Xmas present. Des will autograph copies for V.S.A.G. members

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## DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR OCT. 1984

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT/LOCATION</u>	<u>DIVE CAPTAIN</u>	<u>MEET AT</u>
Oct. 7th	Slack Water Dive	Geoff Birtles	10.30 a.m. Sorrento
Oct. 13th	30 Year Dinner	John Goulding	8.00 p.m. Nth Melb. F/Ball Club
Oct. 17th	General Meeting	North Melbourne	Football Club 8.00 p.m.
Oct 21st	Kakariki Dives	Des Williams	10.00 a.m. St. Kilda Marina
Nov. 3rd	Mt. Gambier Weekend	Cancelled	
Nov. 4th	Cray Bash	Geoff Birtles	9.30 a.m. Flinders
Nov. 11th	Tennis Party	Tony Tipping	9.30 a.m. Balnarring Tennis Courts
Nov. 21st	General Meeting	North Melbourne	Football Club 8.00 p.m.
Nov. 24th	Queenscliff Weekend	Keith Jensen	Beacon Caravan Park, Queenscliff
Dec. 14th	Christmas Function	John Goulding	8.00 p.m. Hunters Lodge
Dec. 19th	General Meeting Xmas Celebration	North Melbourne	Football Club 8.00 p.m.
Xmas	Dive Holiday, Eden	Geoff Birtles	Details Sept. Fathoms.