

FATHOMS

EST. 1954




Safety In Diving

INDEPENDENT
DIVING
FREEDOM

Registered for posting as
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Reg. No. VBH 2101

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A full-page photograph of a diver in a red vest and blue shorts exploring a coral reef. The diver is wearing a mask, snorkel, and a large light. The background is a vibrant, colorful coral reef.

VSAG
VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

COVER

My apologies for not having the normal details in this spot but there just wasn't time.

The Photo is of Igor Chernisov sitting inside the wreck of the Yamazuki Maru. It was taken by Keith Jensen whilst we were in the Solomon Islands last year.

I make no apology for picking one of Keith's photo's again. It was simply the best one submitted for color, clarity and format.

More details will be in next month's issue.

Alex

FATHOMS

Official journal of the Victorian Sub—Aqua Group

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MAY 1985

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Next general meeting:

Wednesday, May 15th 1985 8.00 pm
North Melbourne Football Club
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne

Next committee meeting:

Tuesday, May 21st 1985 8.00 pm
Keith Jensen's home
99 The Fairway, Kingsbury

EDITORIAL



DIVEMASTER

Many divers seek this status symbol and pay a high price on P.A.D.I. and F.A.U.I. courses to attain it. Dive-mastering is attaining proficiency in the many skills involved in diving. Whilst travelling overseas to locations such as Truk, Ponape, Solomons, Vanuatu and locally in fresh and salt water I have had the chance to evaluate some of these Divemasters. All were competent divers, but a few in my opinion, would not come up to the average V.S.A.G. diver of five or six year's experience.

V.S.A.G. diving, if you participate regularly, imparts many of the skills that are the requirements of a Divemaster and these skills are learnt by on-scene in-water experience, not in a lecture room or poolside by a talking head.

At the club dive a few divers take little notice of what is going on and let these skills pass by, but most are of an enquiring mind and will seek the whys and wherefores.

Dive Planning: Being Dive Captain involves such things as site selection, taking into account weather, tides and currents, and if a weekend camp: camp grounds, fees, boat operators, local contacts etc. Making out an information sheet with all relevant information etc. If you take on the responsibility of Dive Captain, you can be assured of input and help from the more experienced to achieve success.

Boat Handling: Observing how boat owners set up their boats for diving, launching and retrieving, the proper way to anchor and to recover it should it foul a reef or wreck, radio procedures, state of tides and currents and whether a drift line be put out are all essential. Watching a boat captain pick up a diver as he allows for drift and wind to make a safe pick up. Handling of ropes and tying knots are also good indicators of competency.

Boat handling courses often only give you the experience on one or two boats, whilst at the club level you can experience a variety.

Wreck Diving: Covers many skills. Researching records - Des Williams can impart his knowledge while locating wrecks; Using marks - Mick Jeacle and John Goulding are a delight to watch and if you enquire they will show you how to go about it. If you want to locate and remove an artifact then Geoff Birtles is your man to watch (that is if you can get in the water quick enough). Preserving these mementos advice from Dave Carrol or Tony Tipping may be sought, in short a wealth of knowledge is available.

Deep Diving: Sometimes a deep dive is required to get on a wreck or reef, or perhaps in a fresh water sink hole. Proper planning is mandatory. Shot lines, deco lines with spare tanks and regs plus safety divers, oxygen, first aid equipment. All set up in a quiet and efficient manner and if you assist with the planning and setting up, it will reinforce in your mind the proper method and sequence.

Compressor Operation: Another necessary skill, many regard it a chore to avoid, but again correct operation requires many skills. Checking oil, fuel, filters, siting of compressor so that fumes are not drawn into the intake, starting up and shutting down procedures, connecting and disconnecting cylinders, as well as the correct pressure to fill each type and size cylinders - this knowledge is a must for a skilled Divemaster.

Incident Handling: Becoming more common, locating drifting or lost divers who have drifted away from their buoys or boats. Recovering or assisting sunken or damaged boats, emergency repairs, de-bogging cars and trailers, always common sense but by participating and assisting, will give you more confidence to handle the next incident.

Other items one could include would be Cave diving, Underwater photography, Underwater hunting. At our club we are lucky to have in our midst divers who are equal to the best in these fields. Many of our older experienced divers would regard what they accomplish on dives as routine, but they will admit what they have learnt has taken a great deal of time and sometimes bitter experience. These divers will if you ask, explain a technique or show you how to operate equipment correctly. If you get in and help you will become more competent and confident.

You will not get a Divemaster badge from V.S.A.G. but I am sure that your ego will get a boost when you carry out these tasks competently or are asked by a novice how to tie a certain knot or what marks you use to locate the "George Kermodé".

TIDE TABLE, PORT PHILLIP.

JUNE, 1985.

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

ATTENTION V.S.A.G. MEMBERS

General meetings are always held on the third Wednesday of each month. 8.00 p.m. North Melbourne Football Club, Fogarty Street, North Melbourne.

S.D.F.-V. REPORT

by Des Williams

Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd April, 1985 at the North Melbourne Football Club.

(i) Information for the "Divers Directory" has now been collated and revised and is now ready to go to print.

(ii) The recent admission of membership to the Port Phillip Safety Council of SDF-V, was welcomed very warmly by a recent meeting of P.P.S.C. They are very pleased to at last have representation from divers.

(iii) Matters discussed at P.P.S.C. meeting were:

(a) Damage done to meteorological equipment at the South Channel Fort. Apparently someone used the equipment for target practice using a rifle.

(b) Discussion on life jackets for small boats which may soon be required to have fitted strips of reflective 3M tape, to assist detection at night.

(iv) A recent meeting set up by SDF-V with Port Phillip Pilots, Water Police and Ports & Harbours reached the following result:

(a) It is now very unlikely that the lower end of Port Phillip Bay will be closed to divers and fishermen, although the authorities have given it very close consideration over the past six months.

(b) The Water Police believe that imposing fines on all law breakers in the area was not the answer to the problem, as did the Ports & Harbours Dept. Although the Water Police would like more power to fine blatant law breakers.

(c) It was decided by all present that education of the diving community generally is the answer as opposed to closure of the southern end of the Bay.

(d) In the very near future SDF-V is to set up a conference between member club delegates, AUF, commercial dive shop owners, Ports & Harbours, Port Phillip Pilots and Water Police. At such a conference all parties will be able to discuss freely. It is hoped that by arranging such a meeting, SDF-V will lead the diving world in Melbourne to a greater respect of this valuable area of Port Phillip. There is room for **all** interested water enthusiasts

and businessmen in this sensitive area.

Note: (SDF-V management are to be commended for their responsible attitude to this sensitive area. In fact the P & H, Police and Pilots were also very complimentary towards SDF-V for showing the initiative and concern to discuss with them).

(v) It has been discovered that Fisheries and Wildlife Dept. are considering an alteration to crayfish bag limits for divers from four per day to one or nil!!!! Telephone calls to F & W Dept. have been answered by very guarded replies, so something is brewing. It is believed that commercial cray fishermen are catching less and less crays and thus F & W Dept. are making a careful study of cray populations etc., and contemplating tighter rules on divers. SDF-V are keeping a very close watch on developments and have issued a questionnaire for Clubs to fill out and thus they will have details for a case to argue if necessary.

(vi) The Management Cell of SDF-V will most likely be up for nomination of new office bearers at the next A.G.M. The current office bearers will most likely be retiring at that time, so plenty of notice has been issued to Club delegates to consider new office bearers. *

Club members are asked to note dates of next few meetings as Fathoms may not be able to be out in time.

Wednesday May 15th, Wednesday June 19th, Wednesday July 17th.

TIP'S TIT-BITS

by Tony Tipping

BYRON BAY

It has been suggested that seeing I am organizing the club trip next Christmas I should let those interested know what they are in for. By the way for the newer members, I have taken on this task three times previously a few years ago when we spent Christmas at Coff's Harbour, Narooma and the first trip to Ulladulla, so there's no need to panic.

Marg, Marcus and I had 3½ weeks - 16 days at Byron Bay, four days at the tail end of the VSAG Eden trip and about 4 days on the road - the car was overloaded and the fuel economy was lousy, so if you haven't got a station wagon, tow a small trailer. We had a roof rack but it was noisy and slowed us down somewhat.

An early start is imperative and if you can leave before Christmas Day do so. We stopped at Gilgandra about 80 km past Dubbo and found an excellent motel for \$28 - it would have been \$50 at Dubbo! Coonabarabran the next town on would be the place to aim for on day one, just over 1000 km from Melbourne on the Newell Highway. From there you can take your pick as to which way you do the remainder - about 600-700 km to Byron, but you'll do it in time to get the tent up and have a beer before dark - gets dark before 8.00 p.m. up there.

We stayed at Clarke's Beach Park, the cheapest and best camp in the area despite it being very old, but they are booked out from one year to the next so we've settled for "Globetrotters" next trip. This one isn't cheap, about \$10 per night for a powered site, two adults only and kids \$1.50 or so extra - the manager raved about the Games Room, Color TV and Horse Riding facilities; it does look good - lush, green, grassy sites, sealed roads and a private beach. (You'll have to go back to Clarke's Beach to see all those pink pointers and the girls who were promoting Tasmania). Only thing lacking at Globetrotters was shade - never mind, the RSL club is pretty cool and wet. Fosters on tap and take away 24 cans or stubbies \$16 a carton cheaper than Melbourne. Why pay more to drink Tooheys or XXXX?

Eating out at Byron is reasonable both in selection and price - apart from the RSL Club there are 2 Chinese and several other restaurants but forget the pizza parlor - I've eaten better pizzas in the Sudan! (I still can't resist it at times!) No restrictions at the Club until after 8.00 pm, i.e. kids, T shirts and thongs all OK until then.

The night life is there for those who want it but we were quite happy to kick on outside the tent on the beautiful warm nights - you get the odd heavy shower about every third night, and it pours, too, so make sure the tent doesn't leak. The days are hot but there's plenty to do & see (diving finishes at about 10.30 after an early start). The hills and waterfalls beyond Bangalow, Nimbin the alternative lifestyle village and the Gold Coast are all within an hour or so of Byron Bay, so too is Ballina on the Richmond River, Broken Head and Lennox Head boast top beaches and rivetting scenery to the south.

One word of warning: Don't bother taking the golf clubs, it's too hot and the club's not a patch on the RSL club for slops etc! Tennis requests O.K. because you can play under lights when the atmosphere is more pleasant, but most important, take a decent stubby holder - I wore out three of the bludgers!

The Diving

Last but not least, there are the dive locations most of which are centred around or nearby the Julian Rocks about 3 km from the Pass where the boats leave. To my mind the diving in this area rates with any other locality on Australia's east coast but I guess it depends on your taste. Bill Silvester and Greg Blackburn are super friendly but at the same time run a very professional dive centre.

Over Christmas last year they constantly ran several trips per day with two boats filled each time, but Greg recently assured me that they had just taken possession of another centre console job - holds 12 divers - and they would have another before the end of the year. In other words VSAG won't have to cart boats all the way up there.

Bill Silvester confirmed a discount price of \$14 per dive (one dive only) providing we have at least ten in our group. Air fills are \$4 each. That's O.K. because we already have 12 starters as at April meeting.

I restricted my diving to five areas - the Cod Hole, Turtle Trench, Cape Pinnacles and drift in current away from Julian Rocks and a night dive near the Cod Hole. Bill & Greg claim there are at least another 10 top spots in the area, but the dives I did will take some beating. Highlights included seeing a 300 lb. giant cod (Cod Hole), 2 ten foot Grey Nurse sharks at Cape Pinnacle (plus an old bottle) and the best night dive I've ever done - visibility around 80 feet and the sheer thrill of first waking up and then gliding around on a giant turtle. It's almost

as big a thrill as locating a nineteenth century shipwreck off Queenscliff in the middle of July!

Visibility varied from 15 to 100 feet on my limited number of dives although it was claimed to be 150 feet during the day when I did my night dive - only 15 feet at the Pinnacle but that was down 140 feet and being enveloped in a school of large kingies doesn't allow much light to get through! Besides they come in much closer when the water is dirty; likewise do the sharks! The remaining fauna is prolific but you'll see for yourself - don't forget the camera.

Other interesting spots not covered by the dive centre, i.e. shore dives, are the reefs in the bay 200 metres off the beach worth a snorkel only and according to Keith Jensen the entrance to the Richmond River where the odd bottle is still being found - it's supposed to be another top night dive too.

In addition to the bonus of not carting boats there, the compressor service is quick so only take one tank per diver - it will be filled in time for a night dive the same day if necessary. One word of warning - Bill & Greg require evidence of a dive qualification and twenty-four hours notice of intention to dive - even longer in some cases, e.g. night dives.

As you have seen I listed nearly all pluses above - the only minuses are: diving is excellent when the visibility is good but Christmas traditionally is **not** the best and most consistent time of year; humidity can be quite oppressive at times but the odd storm sure does clear the air; and the distance from Melbourne is quite a haul - let's just hope it's all worth it, my mob thoroughly enjoyed the place last Christmas. By the way don't bother packing a jumper!

Sorry it's not the usual style reported in Tip's Tit-Bits - I'll make sure I get back to reporting all the usual factional fighting with the committee plus all the tales of broken romances, affairs of the filthiest kind and no doubt spread many a rumour. *

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Geoff Birtles sent in a letter from Paul Roberts who now resides in N.S.W. and is involved in the Instructor scene with FAUI. I have included in Fathoms some of Paul's letter regarding a death on a deep wreck dive. I feel that it is particularly relevant at this time in light of the second death on the submarines and the numerous cases of decompression sickness occurring of late.

Paul states:

I was recently remotely involved with a death on the "Birchgrove", a 170 foot deep wreck off Dee Why. The "Birchgrove" has been the subject of two deaths now and innumerable "bend" cases. Any way four experienced divers went on it for a fifteen minute dive and half way through noticed one had gone missing. They thought that he may have gone back to the anchor line and gone up, so completing the dive and deco stops got back on the boat, of course the fourth divers was not to be found.

A cruise around, in case of a blue water deco stop still failed to find him. No radio, into shore to the nearest Police Station and reported him missing. Police arrived 2 hours later plus the helicopter from the media. Police carried out a search with no success, packed up and left.

The three original divers then went down again and found him 30 feet from the wreck, face up on the sand near the bow. Plenty of air and everything in order. No autopsy result as yet.

Two other cases of recent date are the bends at Port Herens. Six divers all the same profile 5 OK, one gets a neurological hit resulting in two trips to the POT over four days and no diving over sixty feet for 12 months. Nobody can see why - well within the tables, young and reasonably fit.

The other one, a diver who I knew well, got a spinal hit whilst doing his deco from a 130 foot dive which to me sounds like a case of coming up too fast. *

Editor's Note:

Ian Scholes this month has submitted copy on this very subject titled "Decompression". Don't forget the little things and last month John Goulding was hitting home on dive safety. Let's hope we can keep to the Club's motto - Safety In Diving. K.C.J.

DECO STOPS

TIDAL RIVER EASTER CAMP

Congratulations to Don Abell on a well run, (although wet) Easter trip. He also managed to make a profit.

Plenty of big crays taken, John Lawler with a couple of 10 lb., Tony Tipping with 2 at 6 lb. on one dive, a full bag said Tony.

Flying visit by firemen Keith Jensen and Paul Crellin got a few crays also.

Flying non-diving visit by Bazza (maybe he is past it?). Cameo visit by Bill Janson and his mighty jet boat.

Don Abell is turning camp profits into 2 dozen tinnies for the best limericks about our Easter camp.

GENERAL

No Flotsam and Jetsam this issue; mystery writer researching new material (maybe he has run out of pen names).

* * * * *

Geoff Birtles has resigned from committee, no longer has time to carry out job due to work commitments.

* * * * *

Debra, Carrols wife expecting another baby (Dave still has time to do something).

* * * * *

Bob Scott building a new house (could be some disease Bazza has it too).

* * * * *

Paul Tipping sporting new buoyancy jacket and combo gauges, guess the Frenzy gave out.

* * * * *

Big Mick cancelled a dive, went to Sydney for lunch on the cruise liner "Fairstar" (courtesy of the Bank).

* * * * *

Des Williams in Tassie recently, will probably write about it. John Lawler also off to Tassie, Bicheno for a dive trip, will definitely write about it.

* * * * *

DECOMPRESSION SICKNESS - DON'T FORGET THE LITTLE THINGS

by Ian Scholes

A fact that we all know but sometimes forget, that has been reinforced in my mind over the last few months is just how important some of the other things that contribute to decompression sickness, besides not following our tables, are.

We have seen a large increase in the frequency of bends cases over the last year or so in Victoria, and despite the NSC chamber at Morwell, several of those people have ended up with permanent disabilities. Serious life wrecking disabilities.

Unfortunately I have seen a couple of cases and cases lately where the divers concerned were well inside the US Navy tables, **in fact as much as double** their prescribed decompression times, but were still hit. The lesson that comes through is that all those other things we were taught about as contributing to bends, other than time and depth, really do play a big part and can be major causational factors in bends cases.

The thing that has now been imprinted on my mind is that when diving deep or regularly, it is not just a matter of time and depth control to avoid bends. Some of the factors involved in a couple of these recent cases which I highlight for all to begin being convinced about if you haven't been in the past are:

- Don't dive again within 24 hours if you have dived over 140 feet and assume you have no residual nitrogen. It's still there and makes you more susceptible the next day.
- Old and current injuries are the first spots hit and can bring on bends even when you are well inside your tables.
- When doing your stops, good buoyancy control at the 30 feet, 20 feet and 10 feet marks is important. Fluctuating between 5 feet and 15 feet on a ten foot stop isn't good enough.
- Exercise, especially soon after a dive can lead to problems.
- Don't drink excessively before dives.

Quite often these sorts of "other" factors are the butts of our jokes in relation to bends, but as several people have learnt recently, they really do make a difference. *

TIDAL RIVER REPORT

Keith Jensen

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed, notes about the Prom.
Where at Easter VSAG carries on with aplomb.
With boats all too few, and a very large crew.
Still the dives went off like a bomb.

Two divers of daring named Tipping.
To Tidal River went tripping.
Between, dipping, sipping and crayfish nipping
They thought the trip was simply ripping.

Among the tales of Promontary lore,
Stands out our bold young Igor.
Once a wild young fellow, with fair Karen is now quite mellow.
He would rush about full bore, now content to make "amore".

Another diver of great repute
Abell by name, quite resolute.
Dive Captain ordained, by Birtles was trained.
Made diving decisions quite astute.

John Lawler's fame is for his curry.
He is known for this from the Prom to the Murray.
Make not the mistake, if invited to partake,
Keep close to the toilet you may have to hurry.

A concupiscent lad called Doug,
The one the girls all like to hug.
The trip was bare, there were none so fair.
Alas, poor Doug found no-one to plug.

A new chum called Llewelyn,
Bought along a van to dwell in.
Designed to sleep four, we packed in a dozen more
In the van bought along by Llewelyn.

The party was in full swing
When an irate Ranger called in.
If you don't shut up, I'll duff you all up
And the cops will run you all in.

The gaitly stopped with a jolt
At the interruption of this bumptious dolt.
The noise, tis said, will wake up the dead
And bought the party to a halt.

A dashing young diver named Talay
Arrived at the Prom on Good Friday.
Within his large tent, Pat & Bazza were sent
And that night snored on in relay.

And Bazza cried, Tis no joke!
To sleep amid Alex's smoke.
Without my Marie, I can no longer tarry
And set off a much wiser bloke.

On Sunday Tony visited the confessor
Who counselled the contrite transgressor
If you put in an amount, to my private account
Your penance will be much the lesser.

A doughty diver called Max
Said getting crays these are the facts.
To get a lot, first find the spot.
At finding the spot, Max is getting lax.

Captains Max, Keith and Andy
With their boats made things quite handy.
The seas were calm for days, made life hard for the crays
Diving on every day, all was fine and dandy.

Lim Erik
(Keith Jensen) *



144 Bell Street, West Heidelberg 3081
Victoria Australia
Telephone (03) 459 4432

P.A.D.I.
CAVERN DIVERS COURSE
TO CAT. 2 LEVEL
MAY 27th to JUNE 10th

A REMARKABLE DIVER INDEED!

by Des Williams

In these modern times of SCUBA and various electronic gadgets used by sport and commercial divers, we tend to forget the pioneering days of our beloved hobby - the "Hard-Hat" Divers who used canvas and rubber suits, lead boots and copper helmets fed by a surface air supply.

During research into details for my book on the T.S.S. Coramba, I frequently came across one particular "Hard Hat" diver who became a legend in his own time; namely Jack "Johnno" Johnstone. There was hardly a job of salvage in Australasia during the 1920's, 30's and 40's in which he was not involved.

Jack Johnstone and his brother Bill were unique in that they both were superbly cool salvage divers, products of the Royal Naval Salvage Section. John had been trained at Invergordon Royal Naval Dockyard and Bill at the Royal Portsmouth Dockyard. The former had the pride of having had the famous William Mears as one of his instructors, Mears being recognised during and for several years after the war of 1914-18 as a great master of his craft. For a decade, indeed, he had no peer among British divers.

Among many notable jobs performed by "Johnno" Johnstone the following were outstanding:

Recovery of a copper cargo valued at £54,000 from the "Karitane", wrecked on Deal Island in the Kent Group in 1921; the patching and refloating of the 8,000 ton steamer "Clan McNaughton" which had sunk in the Tamar River in Tasmania in 1925; the demolition of the wreck of the "Joliette" at Noumea, New Caledonia (a special commission from the French government); the putting down of the largest cylinder ever placed under water - at the Botany Paper Mills, Sydney (the diameter of the cylinder was 31½ feet and it weighed 800 tons); the cutting of steel channel bars at Eildon Weir, Victoria, where he used the oxy-hydrogen cutting apparatus at the record depth of 132 feet; the repair of the Bass Strait cable (in doing this he walked a total distance of 27 miles on the bottom of the sea!); and various surveys for Lloyds over a period of 18 years, which included the wreck of s.s. "Casino" (Apollo Bay) and the location of "Coramba" (off Phillip Island).

His crowning achievement must surely have been the recovery of 2½ tons of gold from "R.M.S. Niagara" off Whangarei in New Zealand,

during 1940-41. On today's market it would be valued at 130 million dollars!

The "Niagara" was a triple screw twin-funnelled steamer of 13,415 tons built in 1913. She was sunk by contact with two German sea mines off the east coast of New Zealand's north island in June 1940. The gold on board was to pay for munitions in America, but it was soon laying within the "Niagara" in 428 feet of water.

An Australian salvage team led by Capt. T. P. Williams, spent many months dragging for the wreck with wires and another six months blasting their way into the bullion room of the wreck. Both Johnstone brothers guided the recovery operations from a diving bell set down on the wreck each day at over 400 ft. The gold was grabbed up by using a small steel grab bucket and guided by instructions from the diver below via telephone to winch operators on the salvage ship.

It was a world record breaking operation completed on the eve of the bombing of Pearl Harbour. The operation ensured the Johnstone brothers a place in history.

THE CASE OF MOVING WRECK:

During the 1930's the British steamer "Port Bowen" was wrecked on a beach at Wanganui in New Zealand.

There were features of this enterprise which made it one of the strangest in the records of salvage, for it involved the attempted "harnessing" of a ship fast upon a travelling beach - of a wreck set in motion by countless billions of particles on the march.

The vessel had stranded some distance from shore and abortive efforts had been made to get her off. A violent westerly gale had settled the matter for all time by driving her broadside-on to the beach. It was then a question of salvaging the cargo, which consisted of valuable refrigerated stuff, wool, tallo, ingots of zinc (700 tons) and large quantities of seed, etc. etc.

Although the wreck was virtually on the beach, it was at least 1000 feet out from the high water mark. The problem of how they were to safely land the cargo was therefore a tough one for the salvagers.

It was decided to build a pier sufficiently wide and strong to carry trucks; thus imagining the task would be simplified, work on the pier was continued day and night. The plan being that the pier should connect with the forward end of the ship. But, as soon as the structure began to take shape it was noticed that the "Port Bowen" was steadily on the move. She continued to shift southward so fast that the pier was in line with her funnel, and then to the salvagers' astonishment, opposite her stern!

The salvage team tried to pull her up with two thousand feet of new six inch circumference flexible steel wire and two moorings made fast to her stern. Each mooring was made fast to a "dead man" ashore and set up by heavy tackles aboard. An additional heavy wire of eight-inch circumference was laid from the port bow leading astern, and this was also attached to the "dead man". Within a few hours both stern lines broke!! Stronger than these, the bow wire did not carry away but pulled out the "dead man" as easily as a cork out of a bottle.

Formidable as all the mooring equipment seemed, it proved quite futile, for as they had discovered by now, the entire beach - hundreds of thousands of tons of it - was creeping south.

Nevertheless, the work of building the jetty went on, though they had now put a curve in it so that it could overtake the wreck! Actually they caught up with her and eventually built a platform alongside her running fore and aft from the stern. Trucks were ordered to commence unloading the wreck the next day after completion of the jetty. But, that night, at 2.00 am, a fresh westerly gale struck. The ship at once commenced to range heavily notwithstanding that she was embedded in 13 feet of sand. She lurched and rolled as though she were at sea! Within two hours the pier had been broken to pieces. Daylight revealed it strewn in fragments all along the shore.

Deprived, after all their labour and trouble, the salvage team rigged overhead transport wires from ship to shore, where winches had been set up on the beach. A landing stage was made on the beach and a road constructed down to the beach to take the lorries. The cargo was at last being recovered, although work had to be suspended periodically to move the winches and landing stage further down the coast, to catch up with the wreck, as she continued her southward journey.

Despite this constant tussle with the creeping sand, they eventually emptied all the cargo safely and placed it in storage.

A remarkable salvage adventure indeed. *

V.S.A.G. CHRISTMAS CAMP

BYRON BAY

(837 km North of Sydney)

STAYING AT "GLOBETROTTERS BYRON BEACH
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POOL, KIOSK, GRASSY SITES, MADE ROADS

\$20.00 DEPOSITS IN BY MAY GENERAL MEETING

FURTHER DETAILS TONY TIPPING 80 4956

STOP PRESS

Christmas Camp Organizer Tony Tipping has advised the following have indicated that they will be at Byron Bay Christmas '85:

Kay Poyner, Des Williams, Barry Truscott, Chris Lewellyn, Alex Talay, Mick Jeacle, Mick Jackiw, Igor Chernichov and of course Tony Tipping.*

DIVE PAPUA & NEW GUINEA - AUGUST '85

Join Keith Jensen on a 17 day Diving Adventure to Madang, Hansa Bay and Rabaul staying at Jais Aben Resort, Madang. All meals included and at Kaivuna Motel at Rabaul.

Superb Diving.

Details - Contact Keith 460 3672

THAT ELUSIVE "O" RING

by K. Jensen

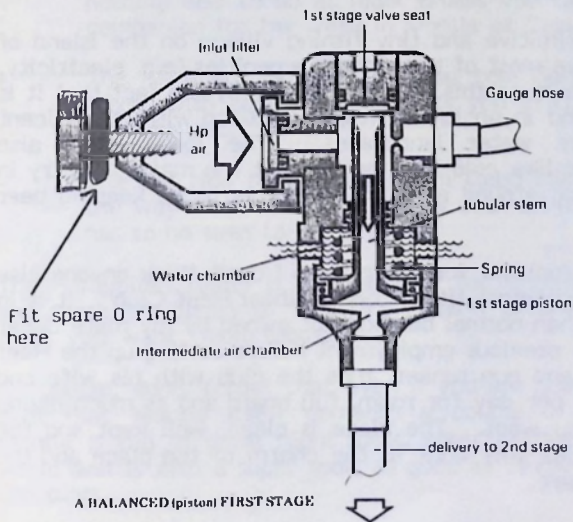
Costing only forty cents yet often the cause of a dive being aborted. The humble tank valve "O" ring found to be missing when attaching your regulator to the tank or perhaps leaking severely due to wear and tear or hardening of the rubber.

Of course you have a spare "O" ring, or do you? I have often been asked by experienced divers for a spare, usually I am able to help them out.

In the days of rock hopping up and down cliffs to dive, a missing or blown "O" ring was a catastrophe so I devised this method to carry spares. Withdraw the screw from the yoke on your regulator, thread one or two "O" rings on and replace the screw, now you will always have spares with you.

Should the screw diameter be larger than the inside measurement of the "O" ring use a large stainless split ring. Fit "O" rings on to the split ring then fit on to the regulator yoke. These large stainless split rings are readily available at specialty angling shops.

But remember to replace them when you have used or given one to your less prepared dive buddy. *



A BALANCED (piston) FIRST STAGE

PHILIPPINES

A Great Place for a Diving Holiday

by Ian Scholes

It seems that not many Australians, besides those looking for a wife, consider going to the Philippines for a holiday and it seems that even fewer Australian divers know about the wonderful style of diving to be had in the Philippines. This is probably partly as a result of the fact that even most of the travel agents don't seem to know a lot about the place or even if they did get there, caught the clap and had to stay in Manila to get it treated.

I have been to the Philippines now on several occasions with work and have had the opportunity during that time to explore a couple of diving locations including one called "Moalboal" (not pronounced mal bowell), which I believe is well worth including on your list of intended overseas diving holiday locations. Probably best in fact to put Moalboal at the top of the list, lest the revolution we read so much about occurs, and wrecks the Philippines. Heaven help the women of Australia and Japan should that ever happen. (On a serious note, despite the publicity the Philippines gets in the local press, it is perfectly safe to travel in. Basically Philipinos are extremely friendly and middle class with the chances of a bloody revolution being quite remote).

Moalboal itself is a primitive and tiny fishing village on the island of Cebu, and does not have most of the modern amenities (e.g. electricity, running water, etc.) however this is made up for by the fact that it is set on a beautiful island in an idyllic tropical setting with magnificent underwater and above water landscapes. The locals have also discovered that visitors like cold beer and in fact the major industry in the town, besides laying around and fishing, seems to be keeping beer cold.

The place to stay in Moalboal for divers, and I don't think anyone else goes there, bears the grandiose title "The Moalboal Reef Club". It is in fact a slightly larger than normal bamboo hut owned by my mate Oscar Regner. Oscar, whose previous employment before setting up the Reef Club was as a pirate and gun runner, runs the club with his wife and charges visitors US\$20 per day for room, full board and as much diving around Moalboal as you want. The place is clean, well kept and the lack of modern amenities only adds to the charm of the place and the relaxation to be had there.

The diving around Moalboal is fantastic. Within 30 yards of your bedroom at the Reef Club there is a drop-off from 10 feet to 170 feet and another couple of hundred yards out it drops to over 3000 feet. All diving besides that done straight off the shore is done from native outriggers, an experience in itself, and the available dive locations are endless.

My favourite location is an underwater mountain starting at around 80 feet and going down who knows how far which is habitted by huge numbers of large fish of all types and covered, of course, with coral. On this mountain it is not uncommon to see hundreds of scorpion and lion fish (a photographer's delight) in the one dive.

The features of Moalboal however, extend way beyond the great diving to be had there. They include:

- The host Oscar who woke me up one night out of a drunken stupor by standing on his balcony shooting down coconuts with a machine gun (he didn't sell all his stock) because the boys had run out of coconut juice to go with the rum.
- The locals love to entertain and sing with the guests. There is nothing else to do at night unless you take your wife or hire a companion for the week in Manila or Cebu City.
- The "Anhilau", a type of local rum (jungle juice), which when mixed with coconut water puts you in fine singing voice before you pass out.
- The car ride to Moalboal from Cebu City. We killed a dog on the way there and a dog and a duck on the way back. The road has to be seen to be believed.

The Philippines really is a great spot for Australian divers to head for and there are plenty of locations - many of them up market, if that's what you want, from Moalboal.

Of course, don't forget that even if you are going to the Philippines to dive that Manila itself demands a couple of days to look around. Manila is full of great night spots, entertainment as good as any in the world and is also a super spot, as good as Singapore and Hong Kong for shopping.

My recommendation is go to the Philippines if you are considering a holiday overseas. Do some great diving, live like a king at very low prices and, who knows, if you're looking and eligible, maybe even win the heart of a beautiful Spanish Philippina. Make sure she's really a girl though, some of the boys over there have bad habits when it comes to women's clothing. *

ABALONE and CRAYFISH

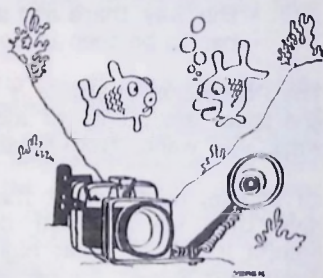
All divers who take crayfish must possess an Amateur Fishing Licence. A bag limit of 4 per day applies. Legal size male 11 cm., Female 10.5 cm.

Abalone has a bag limit of 10 per day. Legal size, Greenlip throughout Victoria is 13 cm. All other species west of Lorne 12 cm. Between Lorne and Lakes Entrance (except Port Phillip Bay) 11 cm. Port Phillip Bay 10 cm. East of Lakes Entrance 12 cm.

Also divers are limited to taking only 100 scallops per day in Port Phillip Bay.



"I think we overcompensated!!!"



"They call it an underwater housing, but I sure wouldn't live in it!!"

DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR MAY 1985

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event/Location</u>	<u>Dive Captain</u>	<u>Meet At</u>
May 10	Chinese Banquet 760 Toorak Rd, E.Hawthorn	John Goulding H890 6634 B341 3543	Bejing Palace 7.30 p.m.
May 15	General Meeting	North Melbourne	F/ball Club 8.00 p.m.
May 19	Photographic Dive	Keith Jensen 460 3672	Flinders 9.30 a.m.
May 26	End of Cray Season	Pat Reynolds 789 1092	Flinders 9.30 a.m.
June 8/10	Queens Birthday Weekend Details to be finalised		Sorrento or Queenscliff
June 19	General Meeting	North Melbourne	F/ball Club 8.00 p.m.
June 23	Family Day	Des Williams 762 1623	Venue to be arranged
July 17	General Meeting	North Melbourne	F/ball Club 8.00 p.m.
Aug 4	Charter Boat Wreck Dive	Des Williams 762 1623	Queenscliff 9.00 a.m.
Aug 11/14	Snow Trip	Pat Reynolds 789 1092	Mt. Buller
Nov 2/5	Melb. Cup Weekend Camp	Mick Jeacle 059 71 2786	Marlo
Dec 26/ Jan 7	Christmas Camp Byron Bay	Tony Tipping 80 4956	Globetrotters Caravan Park Byron Bay

* * * * *

Intending divers must confirm with the Dive Captain on the evening prior to the dive irrespective of prior booking. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of reservation.

VSAG

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

President & S.D.F. Delegate

Des Williams,
29 Valerie Street,
Boronia. 3155
Ph. 762 1623

Treasurer

Alex Talay
3/7 Cross Road,
Chelsea 3196
Ph. 772 3085

Secretary

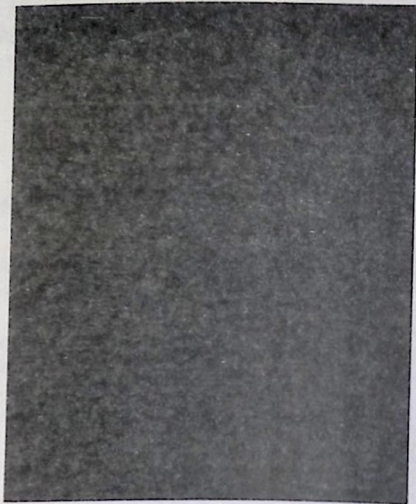
Paul Tipping,
521 Lygon Street,
North Carlton. 3054
Ph. 387 2027

Newsletter Editor & Safety Officer

Geoff Birtles,
8 Newlyn Close,
Templestowe. 3106
Ph. 846 1983

Max Synon
Vice Pres. & S.D.F. Del. - 465 2812
John Goulding
P.R., Asst. Sec. & S.D.F. Del. - 890 6634
Barry Truscott
Asst. Newsletter Editor - 789 6395
Kieth Jensen
Points Scorer - 460 3672
Mick Jeacle
Social Secretary - (059) 71 2786
Pat Reynolds
Property Officer - 789 1092
Mick Jackiw
Committee Member - 736 1730
Don Able
Committee Member - 29 4415

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.

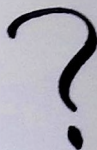
The Victorian Sub-Aqua Group was founded in 1954 and has continued as a strong and active diving club since that time. It is incorporated as a non profit company and has no commercial affiliation with any organisation.

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.

Looking for diving adventure



PAPUA NEW GUINEA

ISLE OF PINES

SOLOMON ISLANDS

PHILIPPINES

MALDIVE ISLANDS

FIJI

VANUATU

GREAT BARRIER REEF, MADANG, TRUK LAGOON, PHILIPPINES, ISLE OF PINES, RABAU, SOLOMON ISLANDS, BALI, COOK ISLANDS, WESTERN SAMOA, ABROLHOS ISLANDS, LORD HOWE ISLAND, BYRON BAY, HERON ISLAND, HAYMAN ISLAND, POOR KNIGHTS, TAVEUNI, FIJI, MALDIVES, SRI LANKA, PULAU TIOMAN, PUERTO GALERA, CEBU, VANUATU, AITUTAKI, SPILSBY ISLAND, LADY ELLIOT ISLAND.

Talk to the divers who have been there. One phone call could open up your world . . .

For personal and professional service, discuss your holiday plans with Janis, Diana, Phil or Pete.

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Phone: (03) 25 8863 Telex: AA35411

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