

FATHOMS

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Safety In Diving

INDEPENDENT DIVING FREEDOM

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VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

-- APR 1986

VSAG

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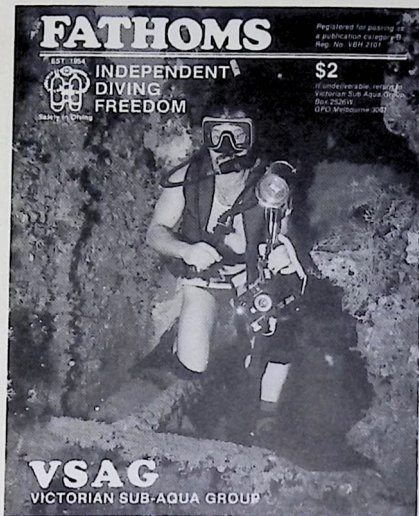
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Committee Member

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COVER STORY

This photo taken by Keith Jensen depicts VSAG member Igor Chernishov inside the wreck of the Japanese freighter Yamazuki Maru.

This ship known locally as the "Bonegi 1" was wrecked near Tassafaronga Point, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands during fierce fighting in World War 2. It is one of the wrecks that can be dived from the shore near the Bonegi River and Copra Plantation.

The Yamazuki Maru is always a great dive with part of the wreck above the surface and the stern 100' to the sand.

TECHNICAL DETAILS: Keith used a Nikonos III 15m/m lens. Fujichrome 100 film with lighting by a Melbourne made Seastrobe 160.

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:

Wednesday, April 16th, 1986
North Melbourne Football Club
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne

8.00 p.m.

Next committee meeting:

Tuesday, April 22nd, 1986
Don Abell's residence
80 Liston Street, Burwood

8.00 p.m.

EDITORIAL



Our rights to dive where and when we like have once again been threatened. This time by restricting boat launching at Tidal River thus preventing us from venturing out in our boats to dive in this great location. Last months Fathoms asked you to forward letters to the appropriate departments to voice your displeasure. V.S.A.G. has been the vanguard of diving clubs who are making thier protests heard.

Des Williams raised the matter within S.D.F. of V. which subsequently called a special meeting to discuss the matter. Details of this meeting were included as a loose leaf insert in last months

Fathoms as they were to late to include in printing and we regarded the matter so seriously that we felt that you must know what was occurring.

V.S.A.G.'s submission compiled by Secretary, Don Abell and our legal advisor Paul Tipping has been sent off. The committee has asked that these submissions be printed in Fathoms so that all and sundry may be aware of our feelings on having unjustified restrictions placed upon us.

The added weight of letters that you and other interested persons have forwarded should (we hope) help tilt the scales in our favour. This exercise should make us aware that our freedom to dive where and when we like can seriously be eroded by bureaucrats and conservationists who have little idea of what we are about.

K. Jensen

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee meeting held at Reynold's residence on 25th February, 1986.

Apologies for non attendance were received from Andy Mastrowicz.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer reported that the club had the following funds:

Cash at bank	\$ 776.42
Cash on deposit	\$ 1,574.34
Total	<u>\$ 2,350.76</u>

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. The meeting requested that the Secretary write to Robert Smith at the North Melbourne Football Club and advise the dates of the meetings for the 1986 calendar year.
2. Alex Talay presented a membership application from Peter Jones. It was noted that Peter had complied with all the requirements of the club. His membership was passed by the committee meeting and the Secretary was asked to advise Peter of his membership and request a payment of joining fee plus pro-rata subscription.
3. Laurie Wherret has advised that he would like to join the club. Keith Jensen has agreed to provide an application form to Laurie.
4. It was agreed by the committee meeting that we should investigate a purchase of a new compressor. Des Williams agreed to obtain details and prices at the next committee meeting.

5. Keith Jensen has contacted Port Lincoln in regard to the Christmas Trip for 1986. The costs of commercial dives are \$40.00 per day per person for 2 dives, including air. The meeting agreed that this was expensive. Before a decision could be made a number of details required clearing and Des Williams agreed to contact the dive shop at Port Lincoln to sort out these matters. It was agreed that a final decision will be made at the next committee meeting.
6. There was an in depth discussion of the club's attitude to the proposals in regard to closing Tidal River beach to the launching of boats at certain peak periods. It was agreed that the club should encourage all individual members to respond to the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands. The club agreed that it will also send a formal response and requested that the Secretary draft and send this response on behalf of the club.
7. The committee meeting agreed to refund the cost of replacing a stolen buoy to Mick Jeacle. Agreement was made on the basis that the buoys are the property of the V.S.A.G. Keith Jensen noted that he had also lost a buoy but would not require compensation from the club.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10.45 p.m.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE DIVE TABLES?

Dr. John Knight will be our guest speaker at the April 16th General Meeting.

Dr. Knight will be speaking about the Dive Tables and will be pleased to answer any queries that you may have on the subject.

DECO STOPS

by Keith Jensen

John Lawler organised the "Claytons Dive" on Warwick's dive charter boat. Just got through the heads when the boat started to make strange noises in the transmission then gave up the ghost. Big tow home and no dive, bad luck boys.

Alex said that there must have been a "Jonah" aboard, he was looking at Mike Weber when he spoke. It seems that Mike was on Geoff's boat when it turned over in the rip last year, on Andy's boat at Marlo when the piston blew up, on Igor's boat when it broke down at the Refuge Cove trip and finally on Warwick's boat when it gave up the ghost. Just a coincidence?

Marlo trip was a bit of a disaster only one dive over the 4 days even then the weather changed abruptly causing the boats to return to shore hurriedly, even so Big M got 4 crays and John Lawler got 3. Not bad for a quick dive.

Alex had a bit of motoring trouble as he shot through the police RADAR near Nowa Nowa, seems that because Alex was doing a bit of low flying he will be walking for a while.

Andy's trip home from Marlo took 11 hours, radiator problems meant a big detour from Orbost to Lakes Entrance and back to Orbost to have repairs carried out. As I said before Marlo was a bit of a disaster.

Martin and Josie Taliana are off to Phuket in Thailand for a diving holiday aboard a Ketch, hope to see some underwater slides of the area at a meeting soon.

Isobel Birtles off to visit her brother in Amsterdam. Geoff is being left home to do the family thing, hard to imagine Geoff being that domesticated.

Big M has shown a remarkable interest in abalone of late seems as though he likes them done "Chinese style".

Seems that Kerry Joyce prefers Victorian diving to the diving in Johs waters, Kerry was on the Refuge trip and again at Tidal River at Easter.

TIDE TABLE, PORT PHILLIP.

MAY, 1966.

Month	Day	WEEK DAY	PORT PHILLIP HEADS.												Week Day	Month Day				
			High Water			Slack Water (Low Stream Tides)				Low Water				Slack Water (High Stream Tides)						
			h:m	ft	ft	h:m	ft	ft	h:m	ft	ft	h:m	ft	ft			h:m	ft	ft	
1	T		06:09	1.7	17.35	1.7	07:16	0.9	20.14	1.7	10:44	0.8	22.53	0.7	01:15	1.1	13.54	1.0	16	1
2	T		05:10	1.4	18.25	1.6	08:06	0.9	21.05	1.7	11:02	0.4	23.42	0.7	02:01	1.1	14.43	1.0	17	2
3	Sa		06:11	1.4	19.19	1.5	09:02	0.9	21.59	1.1	11:51	0.5			02:56	1.1	15.06	1.0	18	3
4	Su		07:24	1.3	20.16	1.4	10:08	0.9	23.05	1.1	00:40	0.7	12.53	0.6	04:02	1.0	16.35	1.0	19	4
5	M		08:48	1.1	21.20	1.4	11:26	1.0			01:55	0.7	14.05	0.7	05:20	1.0	17.12	1.0	20	5
6	W		10:10	1.1	22.21	1.3	00:16	1.0	12.4	1.0	03:12	0.7	15.25	0.8	06:41	1.0	18.51	1.0	21	6
7	Th		11:20	1.4	23.14	1.3	01:22	1.0	14.0	1.1	04:55	0.6	16.44	0.8	07:51	1.0	19.59	1.1	22	7
8	Fr		12:16	1.4	24.59	1.3	02:16	0.9	15.04	1.1	05:19	0.5	17.53	0.8	08:47	1.0	20.96	1.1	23	8
9	Sa				11.01	1.3	03:01	0.9	15.55	1.1	06:03	0.4	18.47	0.8	09:33	1.0	21.47	1.0	24	9
10	Su		06:11	1.3	11.42	1.3	03:38	0.8	16.25	1.1	06:10	0.3	19.38	0.1	10:14	1.0	22.08	1.0	25	10
11	M		01:09	1.3	14.17	1.6	04:11	0.8	17.10	1.2	07:14	0.3	20.03	0.7	10:45	1.0	22.51	1.0	26	11
12	M		01:09	1.1	14.49	1.7	04:43	0.8	17.43	1.2	07:47	0.3	20.83	0.7	11:18	1.0	23.22	1.1	27	12
13	W		07:09	1.4	15.21	1.7	05:14	0.8	18.13	1.1	08:20	0.3	21.06	0.7	11:50	1.0	23.53	1.1	28	1
14	Th		02:41	1.4	15.54	1.6	05:47	0.9	18.45	1.2	08:53	0.3	21.36	0.7			12.24	1.0	29	14
15	Fr		01:16	1.4	16.30	1.6	06:20	0.9	19.18	1.2	09:24	0.3	22.06	0.7	00:26	1.1	12.57	1.0	30	15
16	Sa														00:59	1.1	13.17	1.0	1	16
17	Su														01:54	1.1	14.09	1.0	2	17
18	M		05:41	1.3	08.29	1.5	08.4	0.9	21.44	1.4	11.08	0.5	23.53	0.8	02:44	1.0	14.18	1.0	3	18
19	Su		06:16	1.3	09.15	1.4	09.09	0.9	21.59	1.4	11.54	0.5			03:10	1.0	15.14	1.0	4	19
20	M		07:09	1.3	20.04	1.1	10.09	1.0	22.54	1.3	00:43	0.7	12.50	0.6	04:06	1.0	16.27	1.0	5	20
21	W		06:50	1.3	20.77	1.1	11.14	1.0	23.53	1.0	01:44	0.6	13.59	0.3	05:17	1.0	17.28	1.0	6	21
22	Th		10:08	1.4	21.53	1.4			24.44	1.1	02:50	0.5	15.19	0.8	06:29	1.0	18.36	1.1	7	22
23	Fr		11:16	1.8	22.50	1.4	00:55	0.9	25.58	1.2	03:58	0.2	01.58	0.4	07:35	1.0	19.44	1.1	8	23
24	Sa		12:21	1.7	23.46	1.4	01:51	0.8	18.06	1.3	04:54	0.3	17.51	0.9	08:47	1.0	20.48	1.1	9	24
25	Su								16.04	1.3	05:48	0.2	18.52	0.8	09:42	1.0	21.46	1.1	10	25
26	M		06:11	1.5	14.05	1.7	05.40	0.9	27.55	1.3	06:40	0.1	19.44	0.8	10:34	1.0	22.49	1.1	11	26
27	W		01:55	1.5	14.78	1.9	06.43	0.8	18.43	1.5	07:42	0.1	20.29	0.5	11.15	1.0	23.28	1.1	12	27
28	Th		05:27	1.5	15.43	1.8	07.33	0.8	18.29	1.4	08:32	0.2	21.44	0.7			13.09	1.0	28	28
29	Fr		03:20	1.5	16.52	1.8	08.13	0.9	19.17	1.4	09.10	0.2	21.59	0.7	00:1	1.1	13.51	1.0	29	29
30	Sa		04:14	1.5	17.18	1.7	09.06	0.9	20.03	1.3	09.59	0.5	22.48	0.7	01:06	1.1	14.48	1.0	30	30
31	Su		05:13	1.4	18.04	1.6	09.01	0.9	20.52	1.3	10.50	0.4	23.41	0.6	02:05	1.0	14.27	1.0	31	31

V.S.A.G. SUBMISSION CONCERNING WILSONS PROMONTORY NATIONAL PARK DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN



Victorian Sub Aqua Group

PO BOX 2526 W.
G.P.O., MELBOURNE 3001

The Honourable
Minister for Conservation,
Forests and Lands,
240 Victoria Parade,
MELBOURNE. VIC. 3000

20 March 1986

Dear Minister,

PROPOSAL TO BAN BOATS AT TIDAL RIVER IN PEAK PERIODS

I am enclosing for your information and consideration a copy of the Group's submission to your Department concerning certain aspects of the 'Wilson's Promontory National Park Draft Management Plan' and the associated 'Issues Statement' on boat launching at Wilsons Promontory.

A copy of the Group's related request under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 is also enclosed. Depending on the outcome of that FOI request we may need to consider a supplementary application, for example, if it could be shown that no steps or insufficient steps were being taken to apply existing legal mechanisms to control the situation in regard to the launching and retrieval of boats in the Tidal River estuary precinct of Norman Bay at Wilsons Promontory during the three holiday periods involved.

Yours faithfully,

D.K. Abell
SECRETARY



Victorian Sub Aqua Group

P O BOX 2526 W.
G.P.O., MELBOURNE 3001

Mr Peter Weinhart,
Freedom of Information Officer,
Department of Conservation,
Forests and Lands,
601 Bourke Street,
MELBOURNE. VIC. 3000

20th March, 1986

Dear Sir,

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

As the Secretary to the above group, and in that capacity the person duly authorised to do so, I seek access to documents under the Victorian Freedom of Information Act 1982 which show or would allow me to establish or assist me in establishing the following -

- the number and dates of initiation and completion of all prosecutions of persons for breaches of regulations arising from the driving, management and control of all vehicles and or trailers and or boats, in or near the Tidal River estuary and Norman Bay foreshore precinct of Wilsons Promontory;
- the number, date and description of all offence(s) for which convictions have been obtained, together with full details of the penalties imposed in respect thereof, for breaches of the kind referred to above;
- evidence that "a conflict is occurring between use of the beach by vehicles and trailers to launch and retrieve boats and use by swimmers and sunbathers" in accordance with clause 2.1 of the document dated 1986 and issued by the Department of Conservations, Forests and Lands and known as "Issues Statement- Boat Launching at Wilsons Promontory";
- that the conflict referred to in the said clause 2.1 of the said Issues Statement cannot be combatted, regulated or otherwise controlled by persons duly authorised and delegated with the powers to do any of these things and to generally exercise the powers, discretions, functions and to perform the duties of policing, regulating and otherwise controlling speed limits and other excesses on the part of drivers and/or launchers of boats on or near the Tidal River estuary and adjacent foreshore area in or near the vicinity of the northern aspect of Norman Bay at Wilsons Promontory.

2.

Would you please note that the form of access which the group would prefer would be for a right of inspection of the documents to be notified, at least in the first instance, to our Mr Paul Tipping who may be contacted for this or any other purpose associated with this request on telephone 669 7140 between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. on weekdays other than public holidays and at other times on telephone 387 2027.

Should you in the exercise of your powers and in your interpretations of the Freedom of Information Act 1982 consider that any or some of the documents requested in this letter are technically exempt from access, I would strenuously and respectfully submit that you use your discretionary powers pursuant to section 16 of the said Act to allow the access requested to the documents having regard to the general objects of the Act and more particularly to section 3 thereof.

Should any of the documents contain information which you consider to be exempt I hereby request that you regard such other part of the residue as may be disclosed as being available to the Group for inspection in accordance with this Freedom of Information request.

Since the group is a company limited by guarantee and set up for socially desirable purposes and not for profit, I submit that all fees in any way connected with this request be waived in accordance with section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 1982. As a further basis for this submission that fees be waived, please note our submission that we consider this request for access to be in the general public interest and that the Group reserves the right to use the information sought in possible attempts to influence public opinion concerning certain options and draft proposals set out in the Documents known as 'Wilson's Promontory National Park Draft Management Plan' and associated 'Issues Statement' of January 1986.

In the event that you determine to refuse the requests contained herein or any of them, I shall be glad if you would provide a statement under section 27 of the above Act to me together with your reasons and particulars of our rights of appeal in that event.

3.

I shall be glad to receive your acknowledgement of this request at your earliest opportunity and, in any event, within the mandatory period of 45 days.

Yours faithfully,

D.K. Abell
SECRETARY



Victorian Sub Aqua Group

P.O. BOX 2526 W.
G.P.O., MELBOURNE 3001

The Regional Manager,
Yarram Region,
Department of Conservation,
Forests and Lands,
31 Campbell Street
YARRAM. VIC. 3971

20th March, 1986

Dear Sir,

WILSONS PROMONTORY NATIONAL PARK DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN
AND ISSUES STATEMENT
BOAT LAUNCHING AT WILSONS PROMONTORY

We refer to the above documents issued by your Department and dated January 1986. The statement and the recommended option would have major ramifications for boat owners using Tidal River. We believe the following points warrant consideration by your Department and the general public before any action is taken in regard to this matter.

- (1) As a group we have been using the facilities at Tidal River regularly for over 20 years and have launched and retrieved boats many times. In our experience over that time we have not been involved in any accidents with other persons engaged in other activities at Norman Bay.
- (2) Over the period we have been using Tidal River we have never had a complaint from the public or Rangers regarding the launching or retrieving of boats. Furthermore, we have not heard of any such complaint being made to other boat owners launching at Tidal River.
- (3) The launching and retrieving of boats is carried out in a limited area of the beach mouth of Tidal River. This is only a small part of the length of the beach.

The driving track from the camping area to the beach is direct and cars are not able to deviate from the path as the sand is too soft and cars and trailers would get bogged.

2.

For the above reasons, cars do not drive other than on a very defined and limited area of the beach. In our experience, cars and boats do not venture within 50 metres of 80 per cent of other beach users.

- (4) The Wilsons Promontory National Park does not extend only to the water's edge. The Park is so designated so that it can remain in its natural state and be appreciated by the public in general. Our group prefers to venture to the other areas of the Park which most of the public do not visit. Included in these areas are the offshore islands, though more particularly, the clear waters adjacent to the islands so suitable for recreational exploratory diving and underwater photography.

To restrict boat launching from Tidal River would effectively prevent ourselves and many others from visiting and appreciating these other areas of the Park.

- (5) Restriction of boat launching from Tidal River may encourage boat owners to venture from more distant launching areas. In these instances the distances involved may put less experienced boat owners at risk due to the propensity of the weather to change severely and rapidly in this area.
- (6) Those persons wishing to visit Tidal River generally prefer, for convenience, to do so on long weekends and in holiday periods. This preference is brought about by the necessity to travel a considerable distance to get to the National Park.

The long travel time is accentuated for those persons towing boats and it is therefore generally impractical for boat owners to use the facilities at times other than in holiday periods. To prevent the launching of boats at these periods removes the times that boat owners are best able to enjoy the facilities of the Park.

In stating the issues on this matter, we believe that not enough thought has been given to possible methods which may be used to overcome the problems that the Department feels exist. Surely the primary objective must be to solve these problems without limiting the use of the facilities by any special interest groups. This approach would achieve the purpose of a National Park.

3.

We make the following suggestions.

- (1) The first and most important approach must be the education of boat owners and other people who use the beach. This could be done by placing appropriate signs in the limited area used by boat owners. These would instruct both boat owners and other persons to take care.

Information regarding the matter should also be included on the instruction leaflet issued to all persons entering the Park.

- (2) Regulations should be imposed on boat owners regarding speed limits on the beach, as is the situation in the camping area.

Leaflets could also be issued to all boat owners who request the key to gain access to the beach area.

- (3) The regulations imposed should be enforced by Rangers. The Rangers should also have power to penalise persons who abuse the rules. If it is considered not to be feasible to have Rangers taking on the powers to prosecute and the Police are either unable or are unwilling to take on this role, we would not expect that all boat owners could be expected to pay the penalty for the inability to bring a minority group of offenders to justice if there is evidence that abuses are occurring. In any event, enforcing the present regulations should not be a major task. Since boat owners need to obtain a key to gain beach access, the Park officials are aware of how many boats are on the beach. There would be few times that there were a large number of boats and also a large number of other beach users.

It would, we think, be a simpler task to take administrative steps providing for the forfeiture of the right of access by persons who breach the conditions entitling them to that access.

The statement of issues suggest that there have been 900 boats launched since February 1982 with up to 35 boats on any day. Over the four year period this represents 225 boats per annum. If the average number of boats in peak periods was 23 this represents only 10 days of any year. It should therefore be a realistic task to police the use of the beach and boat owners.

4.

- (4) Any additional cost could be financed by increasing the fee to enter the Park. The cost of maintaining safety is a cost which the public must pay for.

As an alternative the boat owners could be charged a launching fee at the time they obtain the beach access key. Although this would cover the costs, it suggests that it is wholly to benefit boat owners whereas we consider that policing the use of facilities by all persons in the Park is for the benefit of all persons in the Park.

In general we do not believe that there is a distinction between the general camping area and the beach area. Both represent the Tidal River facilities. Rules are imposed in the camping area and enforced by both the Rangers and the Victorian Police. This is done successfully and there is no reason to restrict the use of the camping area unless the rules are abused.

The same principle should be able to be adopted for the beach area. Rules should be imposed and enforced. The facilities will then be able to be enjoyed by everyone without restriction. There is no obvious reason why similar success should not occur by Ranger patrolling and regulation of the beach area.

In conclusion, we request that no restriction of the type envisaged by you be imposed on boat owners who wish to use the beach at Tidal River to launch their boats. Please reassess such evidence as may exist to support the view that problems exist and then aim to overcome these problems without restricting any persons who wish to use the facilities. We emphasise that our National Parks are an important public asset and enjoyment of the Parks should not be restricted to any particular groups. Furthermore enjoyment of the Park should not be stopped at the waters edge.

At this point we note that we have made this submission on the basis of our examination of the issues and information canvassed in your Department's 'Draft Management Plan' and the more specifically relevant 'Issues Statement'. However, the dogmatic assertions in these documents that "a conflict is occurring ...", "some rationalisation is necessary", "... access by boat ... should be controlled" and "boating must be managed to limit conflict with other

5.

users" are value judgments which we believe ought to be adjudged only by reference to the empirical evidence available to sustain these conclusions. Accordingly, we have decided to press your Department for disclosure of the existence of such evidence through the medium of the Freedom of Information Act 1982. A copy of our request (the original of which has today been sent to your Department's Freedom of Information Officer) is attached for your information. You will appreciate that depending on the response to our FOI request, we may need to put in a supplementary submission to you in the light of information made available to us through that request. Accordingly, we shall be glad to receive your early advice as to whether you would be willing to allow such a supplementary submission to be made should we consider one to be necessary if documents in response to the FOI request are not made available to us in sufficient time for us to prepare our additional comments before 1 April next.

Although we are making an FOI request, we should appreciate it if you would provide us with the following information to supplement the general and non-specific comments made in the Draft Management Plan and Statement of Issues -

- (1) Firstly, what facts are documented to support the supposition that a problem does in fact exist from boat owners using the beach?
- (2) What is done to advise boat owners of their responsibilities when using the beach?
- (3) What is currently done to police the speed limit and other unsafe practices involving boats, trailers and vehicles towing them on the beach and to apply general safety procedures?

Our group has successfully worked with Government on previous matters. An example of this co-operation is the group's integral role in the raising of an anchor from the clipper 'Loch Ard' several years ago in a hazardous undertaking conducted off Mutton Bird Island via Port Campbell at the Government's request. You will be aware that the anchor is presently displayed at the National Parks Office at Port Campbell. More recently, the group (which is incorporated in Victoria as a company limited by guarantee and has been continuously active since its establishment in 1954) has been involved both in the

6.

formation and ongoing activities of the Maritime Archaeology Association of Victoria which has already done much to preserve and enrich the maritime heritage of our State and its people. Once again we would be pleased to assist the Department in its assessment of these issues.

We look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours faithfully,

D.K. Abell
Secretary



Victorian Sub Aqua Group

P O BOX 2526 W.
G.P.O., MELBOURNE 3001

The Secretary,
Scuba Divers Federation
of Victoria,
GPO Box 2526W,
MELBOURNE. VIC. 3001

20th March, 1986

Dear Sir,

BOAT LAUNCHING AT WILSONS PROMONTORY - ISSUES STATEMENT

I am attaching, as being of interest to the Federation, copies of our Group's submission to the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands on the horrendous proposal to ban boats from being launched at Tidal River at the only times of the year when Melbourne divers at any rate could realistically expect to get access to the relevant offshore areas.

Part of our strategy has been to hit the Department with an FOI request and a copy of that is also attached for your information.

Yours faithfully,

D.K. Abell
SECRETARY

EARLY DAYS ON THE MORNINGTON PENINSULA

by Des Williams

Most of us, as divers, know the Mornington Peninsula quite well. Today, it only takes about one hour to drive down to Sorrento for a dive, for those in Melbourne. This was not always so . . .

In the very early days of settlement at Port Phillip, the tiny settlements around Sorrento, Portsea and Rye (as we know them today) were only accessible by sea. The lower part of Mornington Peninsula may as well have been an island, as access by road was barred by the ridges of Arthur's Seat, until a very rough track was cut around the headland at "Anthony's Nose". This is the headland between Dromana and McCrae, which we drive past without a second thought these days.

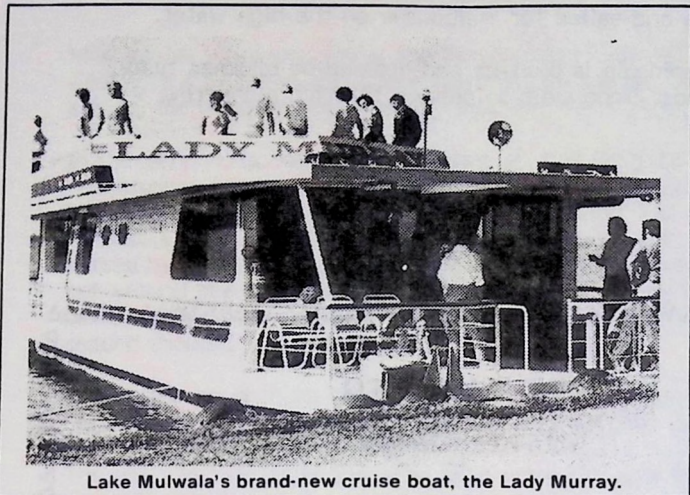
Before the rough bush track, the tiny hamlets on the lower Mornington Peninsula were serviced by a fleet of tiny ketches and steamers.

The main industries in the area then were line-burning (to produce cement) and firewood from the native ti-tree.

The limestone was sometimes found in outcrops or by probing with a crowbar and was then taken out in large blocks and broken into smaller pieces for loading onto wagons, to be transported to the lime-kilns. It was then loaded into the kilns in alternate layers of lime and firewood and set alight. When the kiln had cooled, after firing, the powdered lime was then taken out, bagged and shipped to Melbourne.

A variety of small craft were used to transport the lime to Melbourne. In reasonable weather, it took about two weeks to load, sail to Melbourne, unload, reload and return. Lime was brought from the kilns by horse drays or bullock wagons along sand tracks down to the shore where it was either loaded into small flat bottomed boats and rowed out to the channel where the lime boats waited at anchor, or at low tide it was transferred directly from the wagons. One of the main loading places was just west of Whitecliffs at Rye.

The ti-tree on the Peninsula gave rise to another industry - namely firewood. Melbourne bakers found that the ti-tree wood was ideal for heating their ovens, as it gave quick flashing heat and burned



Lake Mulwala's brand-new cruise boat, the Lady Murray.

MEDIA WATCH

Country member Bruce Solesby with a rather large boat. Bruce and Club President Alex are in the picture at extreme right.

New cruise boat

The Lady Murray is Lake Mulwala's newest cruise boat and for her owners Noel and Pam Diffev and Bruce and Val Solesby she represents the confidence they have in the local tourist industry.

The Diffev and Solesby families have had a long association with Yarrowonga and much of their recreational activity has been focussed on the lake.

It was logical then that an enterprise like the Lady Murray be undertaken by the families.

We have always had a lot of fun on the lake and a cruiser such as ours

was an ideal way to share this fun with visitors to the area. Noel said.

Lady Murray is a 14 1/2 metre cruiser comfortably appointed both inside and out with a large sundeck designed for passenger comfort.

The cruiser specialises in dinner and lunch-time cruises meals and drinks provided with a leisurely four-hour journey around all the lake's beauty spots.

Guests are encouraged to relax and enjoy perhaps have a swim while the Diffev and Solesby families ensure that all is just right.

Dinner cruises are held each Friday and Saturday. Large steak and sumptuous salads feature on the menu with complimentary wine.

The lunch cruises run each Saturday and Sunday and a delicious light luncheon is served.

The Lady Murray was built in Mildura and completed in Yarrowonga and the journey by road from Mildura was described by Noel as "utterly hair-raising".

A Lady Murray cruise is anything but hair-raising as the hours pass in complete relaxation.

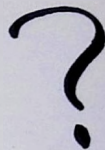
The cruiser is also available for charter. Noel or Bruce would be happy to discuss details.

DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR APRIL 1986

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event/Location</u>	<u>Dive Captain</u>	<u>Meet At</u>
April 13	Wreck Dive "George Kermode"	John Lawler 569 9851	Flinders 9.30 a.m.
April 16	General Meeting, North Melbourne Football Club Guest Speaker: Dr. John Knight		8.00 p.m.
April 25,26,27	Anzac Day Weekend Sorrento	Mick Jeacle 059 71 2786	Rose Caravan Pk. Evening of 24th
May 21	General Meeting, North Melbourne Football Club		8.00 p.m.
May 18	Charter Boat Warricks Dive Boat	John Lawler 569 9851	Sorrento Pier 10.00 a.m.
May 31	Winery & Pokies Weekend Brown Bros. Milawa	Des Williams 551 3201	Brown Bros. Winery 11.30 a.m.
June 28	Social Evening "Olive Tree Restaurant"	John Lawler 569 9851	Details being arranged

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.

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.

AQUARIUS/Dive Travel Australia
40-42 Taylor Street, Ashburton, Vic., 3147.
Phone: (03) 25 8863 Telex: AA35411

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