

# FATHOMS

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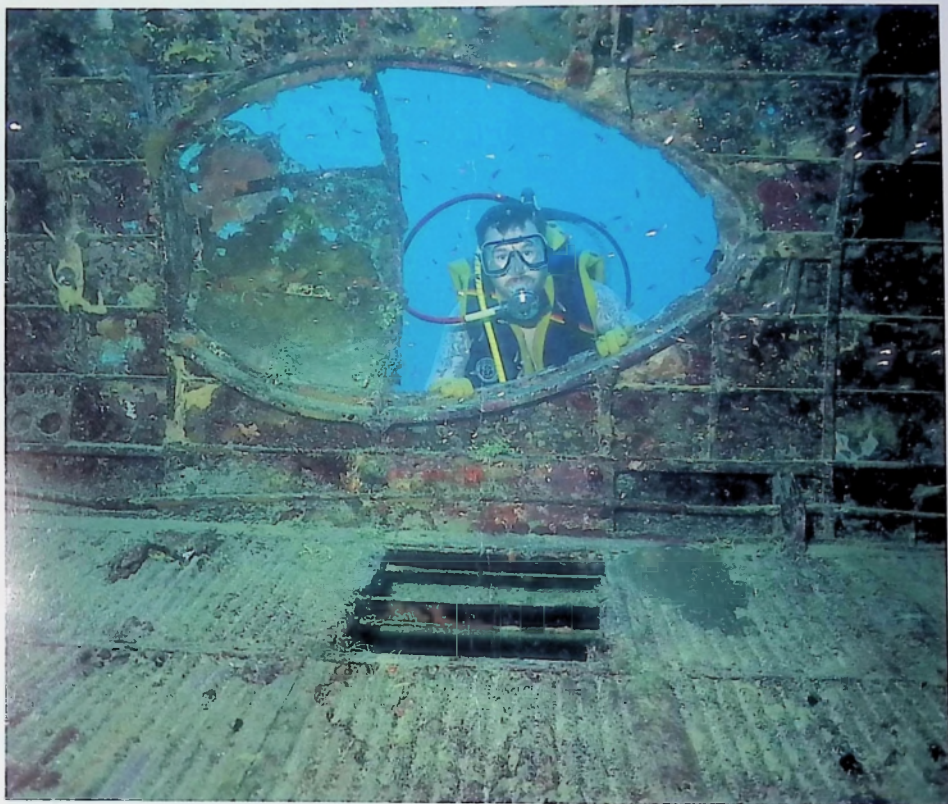
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Safety in Diving

**\$2**

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GPO Melbourne 3001



# VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

DEC 86

# VSAG

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

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**Safety Officer**  
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## Points Scorer

Max Synon - 465 2812

## Social Secretary

John Lawler - 569 9851

## Property Officer

Pat Reynolds - 789 1092

## S.D.F. & Public Relations

Paul Tipping - 387 2027

## S.D.F. Reserve

John Goulding - 890 6634

## Committee Member

Andy Mastrowicz - 318 3986

## FATHOMS



INDEPENDENT  
DIVING  
FREEDOM

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## VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

**COVER STORY:** VSAG diver Alex Talay along with proprietor of Melbourne Dive Services, Dick Whittaker, seen diving the famous Lady on the Wreck of the President Coolidge. This photo was taken by Keith Jensen whilst visiting the Island of Espirito Santo, Vanuatu 1983.

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, December 17th, 1986 8.00 p.m.  
North Melbourne Football Club,  
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne

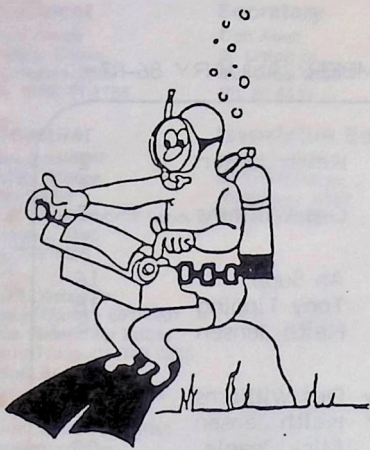
### Next committee meeting:

Tuesday, January 27th, 1987 8.00 p.m.  
Truscott Residence,  
Netherbrae Court, Frankston East

Editorial submissions to: "The Editor" Fathoms C/- 99 The Fairway, KINGSBURY 30



## EDITORIAL



The last Fathoms for the year or if you look at it another way, the first Fathoms for 1987, whatever you shall have noticed that we have a new cover and once again with a wreck diving theme and featuring a V.S.A.G. diver.

I have many memories of diving this particular wreck, the "U.S. President Coolidge" and if you have the time read Alex Talay's report of our trip in Fathoms edition September 1983, it was on this particular holiday that the cover photo was taken.

I suppose some will say that Alex and I have a vested interest in this photo, true; but until someone else is interested in submitting suitable slides for consideration, I guess that you shall have to put up with a Jensen-Talay Production.

Our year is drawing to a close but not so our diving and social activities, I ask you to note the dates carefully as Fathoms now only bi monthly is not arriving to jog your memory along. Also a phone call to a committee man will advise you of any alterations to the advertised schedule.

We are also near the peak of the dive season so I ask that you remember to take a few special photos and write a couple of notes for inclusion in our journal.

Also at this time remember to take special care when you dive, a couple of reported events recently could have had serious consequences, a complacent attitude dulls one's sense of awareness of the hazards of our sport and I for one do not want to report to a grieving family or coroners inquest into the demise of a diving companion. So once again I remind you of our Club's motto "Safety in Diving".

In conclusion on behalf of the Committee, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

K. Jensen

## COMMITTEE REPORTS,

Meeting of the committee of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group held at 15 Soudan Street, West Footscray on 21st October, 1986 and at Unit 1/3 Winborne Street, Chelsea on the 23rd September, 1986.

### TREASURER'S REPORT:

October, 1986

The Treasurer reported that the Club had the following funds:

Cash at bank	\$ 677.17
Cash on deposit	\$ 1,175.06
	<hr/>
	\$ 1,852.23
	<hr/> <hr/>

### ELECTION OF COMMITTEE,

The President declared all positions on the Committee vacant and requested Paul Tipping to preside over the meeting during the elections for Committee positions. The following nominations and elections were made to the respective positions.

#### President

Alex Talay nominated Paul Tipping, seconded John Lawler.  
Mick Jeacle nominated Keith Jensen, seconded Des Williams.

Elected - Mick Jeacle.

#### Vice-President

This position automatically went to Alex Talay as the retiring President.

#### Secretary

Don Abell nominated Des Williams, seconded Alex Talay.

Elected.

#### Treasurer

Alex Talay nominated John Goulding, seconded John Lawler.

Elected.

Editor

Keith Jensen nominated Max Synon, seconded Des Williams.  
Elected.

Assistant Editor

Barry Truscott nominated Alex Talay, seconded Mick Jeacle.  
Elected.

Social Secretary

John Lawler nominated Paul Tipping, seconded Pat Reynolds.  
Elected.

Property Officer

Pat Reynolds nominated Alex Talay, seconded Mick Jeacle.  
Elected.

Safety Officer

Pat Reynolds nominated Paul Tipping, seconded Barry Truscott.  
Mick Jeacle nominated John Lawler, seconded Andy Mastrowicz.  
Alex Talay nominated John Goulding, seconded Barry Truscott.  
Elected - Alex Talay.

Point Scorer

Andy Mastrowicz nominated John Lawler, seconded Paul Tipping.  
John Goulding nominated Max Synon, seconded Alex Talay.  
Max Synon nominated Keith Jensen, seconded Mick Jeacle.  
Elected - Max Synon.

Public Relations

Paul Tipping nominated Mick Jeacle, seconded John Lawler.  
Elected.

S.D.F. Delegate

Paul Tipping nominated Mick Jeacle, seconded John Lawler.  
Des Williams nominated Pat Reynolds, seconded Alex Talay.  
Both persons were elected to positions as two delegates are required.



## GENERAL BUSINESS - SEPTEMBER

1. Alex Talay made the presentation of Clubman of the Year to John Lawler. The trophy was handed to John and he was advised that a suitable inscription would be made in due course.
2. Keith Jensen moved a motion that the Club magazine be prepared every two months rather than every month. This matter has been discussed numerous times by the Committee and always been dismissed because of the importance of the magazine to the Club as a whole. It is now agreed that the cost of preparing the magazine has become too great for the Club to continue its production on a monthly basis. It was decided that the same response from members could be achieved with a bi monthly production.
3. John Goulding thanked Alex Talay for his two years as President of the Club. John noted that Alex had come in as President at a difficult time but had brought the Club together with a general approach of consensus and using much wisdom in his approach to Club matters. In all regards Alex had acted in the best interests of the Club and John commended him for his good work.
4. Des Williams told the Committee that he had contacted a dive shop in the Bay of Islands and asked them the best times for diving in that area. Des had been told that the best months were February, March and April and that there was significant plankton growth in the water during the months of December and January which made visibility poor and diving generally undesirable. The dive shop are able to provide tanks for hire but do not have compressor on the premises. They would be willing to organize a compressor for the time of our visit.
5. It was agreed that the dive to New Zealand should be scheduled for the month of March to ensure that we get the best possible conditions for diving on our trip.

6. Mick Jeacle moved a motion of thanks to John Goulding for his attendance at the conference at Tidal River. It was noted that this movement of thanks was raised as a matter arising from the previous minutes in which there was a movement of thanks to John Goulding. This caused a general discussion on the procedures at meetings and since it all seemed a bit of hard John Goulding thanked Mick Jeacle for his movement of thanks and we moved on to the next matter.
7. Des Williams tabled a letter of thanks to Peter Brown for his hospitality at Brown Bros. Winery during the recent Club trip to Rutherglen. This was also followed by a motion of thanks to Des Williams for organizing the weekend.

#### GENERAL BUSINESS - OCTOBER

1. John Goulding advised that he will contact members in regard to the attendance at the Christmas function and encouraging them to attend dives during the summer months.
2. John Lawler advised the Club that a booking for the Christmas function had been made for the Lonsdale Street Bar & Grill on the 19th December, 1986 and it would be necessary to obtain donations from various parties for the Club's raffle. John made a list of the relevant people and who they would contact for these donations.
3. Andy Mastrowicz advised that he had been contacted by a travel agent who was interested in giving a quote for the Club's trip to New Zealand. The Club will keep this in mind and obtain a number of quotes closer to the departure date.
4. Mick Jeacle raised the matter of the trip to New Zealand and it was decided that this trip should be made in March 1988, being the best time for diving. The trip would probably be early March so as to avoid the peak holiday season when students were on their semester break. It was also agreed that it would be appropriate for the Club to stay in Russell which is in the Bay of Islands. Mick will contact the boat owner and also look into possible accommodation in Russell.✱



**MINUTES OF S.D.F.-V. MEETING 7TH OCTOBER 1986**

by Des Williams

Finances:

\$531.36 General Account  
\$571.30 Seminar Account  
\$728.16 Investment Account

Statutory Report:

- (i) Michael Vize referred to an article in the Melbourne "Age" 4/10/86, which explained that all of the heavy duty recompression chambers and expertise of the National Safety Council has now been relocated at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. This means that Victoria now no longer has the large facility which used to be located at Morwell. So, tear up those stickers in your boat, which show the emergency number for N.S.C. recompression chambers. Should there be an emergency, now you have to dial (008) 088 200 in Adelaide and arrange for one of the small Duo-Comfortable chambers to take you to Adelaide to join the N.S.C. facility. What remains of the N.S.C. set-up in Victoria (a couple of Duo-Com portables - "The Boot") has now been moved to Sale from Morwell.

The recompression chamber at Prince Henry's Hospital is of no help either, as its 10 yearly certification ran out in November 1985. The Health Department has so far failed to provide the \$45,000 needed to refurbish the chamber. Anyway, it is a "low pressure" chamber and not a lot of good in case of a severe "bend". So, be very careful how you dive these days, as treatment is now interstate.

S.D.F.-V. is to contact the Minister, Race Mathews, over this matter and maybe individual Clubs should act also.

- (ii) Short discussion on the success of S.D.F.-V. and Club lobbying to prevent closure of Tidal River boat launching.
- (iii) The next area for consideration as a Marine Reserve is to be the coast from Anderson Inlet to Eagle's Nest.

- (iv) S.D.F.-V. currently have the following, Stuart Boden, Neil McKenzie and Michael Vize as nominations to represent us on the Victorian Recreational Fishermans Advisory Council. Appointment to this body is by invitation only, so we trust S.D.F.-V. will very soon be accepted onto this panel, which advises the Minister.

#### Publicity Report:

- (i) The "Try-Dive" organized for October 25th has been cancelled because of lack of support in the commercial schools. We had all hoped to work together to promote diving, but on last count only D.I.S., Bob Cumberland, R. Wallace-Mitchell and Airdive were willing to co-operate.
- (ii) S.D.F.-V. to donate \$50.00 to the Southern Peninsula Ambulance Service "Chip in for a Chopper" appeal. They hope to buy a new helicopter, as the only chopper at Sorrento is a Police one which is bound by regulations as to how far off shore it can operate at present.
- (iii) S.D.F.-A. next Annual General Meeting is to be held in Perth on Australia Day long weekend in January 1987.
- (iv) S.D.F.-V. to write to Lands Conservation Council re: the inequality which currently exists within the present marine parks at Point Lonsdale and Point Nepean. At present abalone divers, commercial trawlers, commercial cray fishermen and line (beach) fishermen can operate within the parks. Only divers are banned. The L.C.C. reviews use of public lands 3 miles to seaward and reports to the Minister for Planning and Environment; a review is currently in hand, so S.D.F.-V. are to make a submission. It was suggested by one delegate that S.D.F.-V. Committee check previous correspondence on this matter, which may extend back some years; as it is possible S.D.F.-V. was at that time in favour of the ban on divers catches (as well as all other fishermen) within the areas. It appears only the divers were the ones to be banned. Perhaps a self-sacrifice on our part - noble, but not a lot of practical use. Such correspondence would be checked before S.D.F.-V. wrote to L.C.C. to avoid any embarrassment.

\* Next S.D.F.-V. meeting to be held on Tuesday 2nd December, 1986 at North Melbourne Football Club at 8.00 p.m.✱

## DECO STOPS

by Keith Jensen

### Stork Talk

Deco Stops was reminded in no uncertain terms that it had failed to announce the arrival of the latest Tipping ankle bitter. Marg has presented Tony with a lovely daughter who they have called Laura.

Also Sally and Terry Brookes had a delivery from the stork, this time a boy. Thomas is the handle that they have put on him.

Congratulations to all the new parents and welcome to V.S.A.G. Laura and Thomas.

### Travel Talk

Jack Namiota has returned from his round Europe holiday, Jack said that he could not find any crays in those old amphora that litter the sea floor of the Mediterranean sea.

John Lawler had a short stay at Club Med in Tahiti then on to Hong Kong to finish off the holiday.

Chris and Rhonda Lewellyne had fourteen sun and fun filled days in Vila. Chris said that he had a couple of nice dives and Rhonda did a resort dive course, looks like another husband and wife dive team.

Nicki Abell is overseas till Xmas, Don in enjoying a bachelors life the only loser in this deal is Tiber the pet hound as Don is out on the tiles Tiber is home on his lonesome.

### Alex's Boat

Deco Stops has heard a couple of tales about Alex's new boat. The first was during its maiden Club voyage in which the boat ran out of petrol twice. Tony Tipping who was in Alex's boat enquired of Alex, "What are you going to name the boat?", Alex's terse reply was "I think I shall call it the Bloody Petrol Guzzler".



Pat, Alex's boat moll was none too happy recently, it seems that Pat took up a position on the bow as Alex brought the boat into dock. Pat balanced precariously with foot out to prevent the boat's bow hitting the dock. Alex thought the boat was in danger of bumping the dock so he reversed the boat sharply. Pat taken by surprise lost balance and fell into the water.

It would seem that you should get a written quote these days if you get any work done on any dive gear. Geoff saw stars and was cross when he received an account of \$140.00 for the service on his and Reeces regulators, also not impressed about the caustic comments on the reports about the regulators condition. Igor also not happy about \$75.00 account for two hydros. It would seem that our sport is really a rich mans past time now.\*

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## AUSTRALIA DAY WEEKEND

JANUARY 24TH - 26TH

Have a top weekend aboard the luxury cruiser

'MIRRABOOKA'

Diving the fabulous coastline around

WILSONS PROMONTORY & THE OFFSHORE ISLANDS\*

Cost for the weekend including all meals is just \$80.00.

Deposit of \$20.00 to be given to John Goulding by  
December general meeting.\*

But hurry to ensure optimum comfort aboard the  
Mirrabooka only 12 places are available,so book now by  
calling John Goulding on 890 6634 (home) or 666 3543 (work).

\*(This trip is offered subject to suitable weather conditions.  
All bookings must be accompanied with a \$20.00 deposit.  
A cancellation fee of \$20.00 will apply if the cancelled  
booking is not able to be filled).

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**FRIDAY 19TH DECEMBER 1986**

KEEP THIS DATE CLEAR FOR

V.S.A.G. CHRISTMAS PARTY

AT

LONSDALE STREET BAR & GRILL  
389 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne  
Telephone: 671 599  
(Between Elizabeth & Queen Streets)

The venue for our party can only be described as fabulous. We have booked the restaurant exclusively for V.S.A.G. members and their friends.

Our usual raffles will be held. This year "we have prices like never before!"

Open Bar - Pay As You Go.

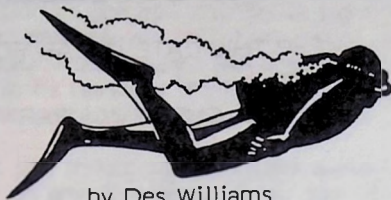
Good Wines - Reasonable Prices.

MENU: Beef, Variety of Salads, Dips, Cheese,  
Coffee etc.

COST PER HEAD . . . \$18.00 ONLY  
(Drinks Not Included)

If you have not already booked please confirm with the Social Secretary, John Lawler on 569 9851.

## SHIPS GRAVEYARD DIVE 5/10/86 - S.S. "MILORA"



by Des Williams

We had three boats for this perfect dive, namely those owned by Mick Jeacle, Alex Talay and Mark Miller (my business partner).

Our meeting at Sorrento boat ramp was preceded by a beautiful trip down the Bay in perfect conditions from St. Kilda Marina, where Mark's 28 feet Bertram is penned. Keith and Peter were on our boat.

Alex Talay's magnificent new cruiser was crewed by Tony Tipping, Don Abell and Pat Reynolds and they had motored down from Paterson River.

We passed through the "Rip" in perfect conditions and set a course for Torquay. It wasn't very long before dozens of dolphins joined our trio of craft leaping and zooming in our bow waves. There were several baby dolphins with their parents and they certainly had no difficulty keeping up the pace. They made a fantastic sight and I can't remember seeing so many dolphins on the sea before.

Very soon we were off Torquay and Mick Jeacle came aboard our boat to use our sounder to locate the sunken leviathan "Milora". With an excellent reading soon on the graph, we prepared to dive.

Keith Jensen and I teamed up and were soon descending to the collapsed decks of this scuttled giant. We landed near the No. 4 hold and swam towards the stern, which sticks up, the top of which is 110 ft. below the surface. Visibility was 30 - 40 ft., fantastic for the Ships Graveyard and we made the most of it. We swam over the stern rail and under the counter stern to see the gigantic rudder and end of the tailshaft where the propeller used to be.



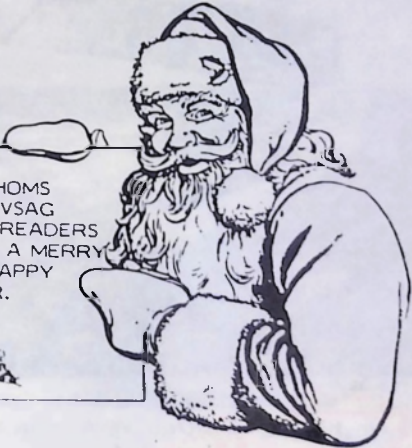
Then back along the ship over the tailshaft tunnel (housing) at 130 - 140 ft., we finally reached the vessel's boilers and this is where our dive came to an end, having been some 15 minutes below. We ascended to decompress and finally surfaced to return to the boat.

Everyone had enjoyed their dive and agreed the visibility was exceptional indeed. Very soon we had all three boats rafted together and the lunches were opened. A convivial atmosphere prevailed as we enjoyed the sunshine, light breeze and company.

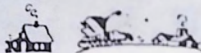
We then returned to the Heads area after some joking as Keith Jensen and Mick Jeacle enjoyed the hot shower on the stern platform of Mark's boat. This boat certainly has everything and the twin turbo-charged B.M.W. diesels make sure the boat doesn't dawdle behind either.

Once back at the Heads, we departed company with Alex and Mick's boat to go across to Cameron's Bight at Blairgowrie to check Mark's summer mooring. This job behind us, we set a course for Melbourne via the South Channel and opened the Bar. We entered St. Kilda Marina in the late afternoon in beautiful sunshine having had one of the best days on the water I have had in a long time.

Thanks to Alex Talay for job as Dive Captain and congratulations on your new Leeder Alex, it is a beauty! \*



THE EDITOR OF FATHOMS  
AND COMMITTEE OF VSAG  
WISH ALL MEMBERS, READERS  
AND THEIR FAMILIES A MERRY  
CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY  
AND SAFE NEW YEAR.





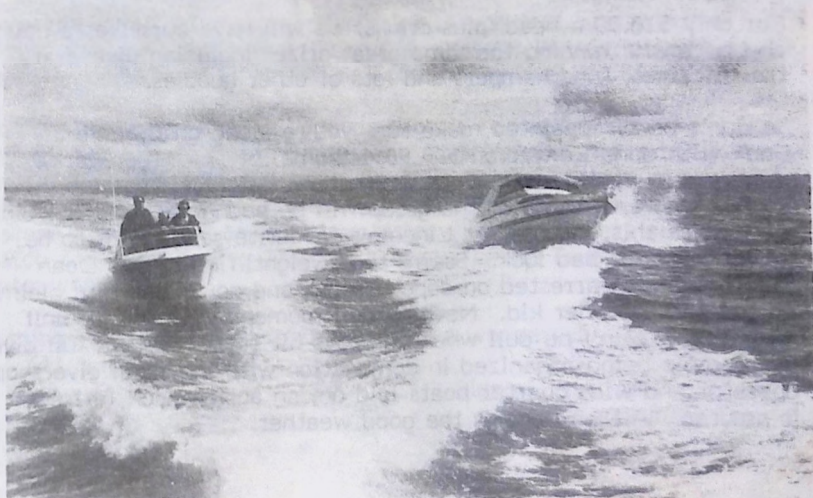
INTENSE CONCENTRATION BY PETER JENSEN AS HE PILOTS THE 28 FOOT BERTRAM TO TORQUAY.



TONY TIPPING EXAMINING THE CHART FOR MARK ON THE MILORA WRECK ON BOARD ALEX TALAY'S NEW CRAFT.

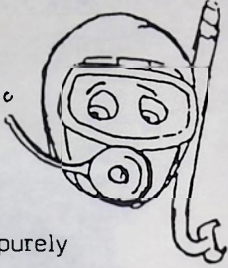


DES WILLIAMS APPLYING HOT SHOWER TO KEITH JENSEN ON BOARD THE BERTRAM. BACKGROUND BOB SCOTT & PAUL GRIFFITHS ON MICK'S BOAT.



THE DASH HOMEWARD! MICK RIDES THE QUITE WATERS WHILST ALEX SKIPS OFF THE WAKE OF THE BERTRAM





## FLOTSAM & JETSAM

Normally Flotsam and Jetsam reports about events gone and past and many a hapless Member has suffered gross indignity or had notoriety thrust upon him or her purely to fulfil the urge of this writer to expose others.

Well this time we're going to change tack, and instead of reporting history, encourage you to make history.

The summer of 1986/87 promises to be a great one for V.S.A.G., which at the end of a long cold winter and a sometimes bitter spring, the warmth of sunny days and balmy nights will certainly be a pleasant change.

One of the earliest events coming up is the V.S.A.G. Christmas function.

This year we've booked the entire restaurant - the Lonsdale Street Bar and Grill on the 19th December.

For only \$18.00 a head (plus drinks) we will have ourselves a ball and be in the running for some great prizes including dive gear, travel prizes, food hampers and lots of other goodies.

So don't be disappointed make sure you're along on the 19th. Book with John Lawler on 569 9851 (home) or 544 5166 (work).

Soon afterwards some of the group will be bound for Port Lincoln. As I write this, one of Port Lincoln's favourite sons seems to be having a bit of bad luck. Seems that weightlifting champ Dean Lukin has been arrested on dope charges and now some bird claims he has fathered her kid. Never a dull moment in Port Lincoln!! Well it sure won't be dull when our boys hit town. With a full dive programme being organized in conjunction with the local dive shop operator and with charter boats laid on, an action pack fortnight is assured. All we need is the good weather.

All members who are intending on going to Port Lincoln are reminded that this sleepy little fishing village is not just known for its weightlifters - oh no, the Port Lincoln area has featured in some excellent films in which some other sorts of heavyweights had some leading parts. The films!?? -

"Blue Water White Death"

"Jaws"

"Jaws II"

"Orca - The Killer Whale"

"Eat 'em Alive"

"Black Shadows At 20 Fathoms"

"Son Of Jaws"

Then we go from the turbulent water of the Southern Ocean to the tranquility and peace of Bass Strait and Wilsons Promontory.

On Saturday the 24th January a luxurious cruiser will slip her moorings in the early morning stillness of Port Franklin, and under the always alert eye of the dashing skipper the Mirrabooka will head for the open sea and Refuge Cove.

For 3 days over the January Australia Day long weekend we will dine and dive aboard this unique vessel.

Experience part of the great tradition of V.S.A.G. and join the Mirrabooka crew to Refuge Cove. See details in this issue or contact John Goulding on 890 6634 (home) or 666 3543 (work).

No doubt Refuge Cove will appear slightly upmarket again this year, and we can expect Geoff Birtles and Alex Talay to have their luxurious Leeder boats on hand, however by comparison to the Mirrabooka whose turn of speed and graceful style have earned her a place in the anals of maritime history, these Leeders are no match for Captain Reg Truscott and his famous Bass Strait built motor yacht!

Wishing you all a happy Christmas and a wonderful year in 1987.

Signed AH SUPP  
(The Chinese Snorkeler).

## TIP'S TIT-BITS

by Tony Tipping

Apparently I must have stirred the pot a bit when I recently wrote that some of our longer serving Committee Members should step down soon and give someone else a go. Well, I was criticized for leaving you in the dark - I reckon Mick, Alex, Andy, Des, Don, Keith and John Lawler (all fairly recent acquisitions to the Committee - the last five years or so) should stay on and continue to do the excellent job they have been doing. These seven are still comparatively fresh and have much more to contribute. The other five, and I'll stress again they are all good friends (or relatives) of mine and have each given in excess of ten years excellent service, should not re-nominate for further terms, but just remain in the Club as Members. Committees should rotate more before they run out of puff.

There are plenty of replacements in V.S.A.G. with untapped talents ready to slip into the shoes of these tired ageing Committee Members. You see diving clubs just like anything else go through highs and lows - I've seen it before here in the last fifteen years. The Club is strong and sound at the moment - we just can't afford to let it drop in stature for the sake of a little bit of foresight regarding planning our future direction. I could name several other diving clubs that were very popular in the sixties and seventies that have just disappeared altogether. This will not happen to V.S.A.G. providing we get it right and NO I'm not running for the Committee next year - seven years was enough!

I'm sure you all have your own ideas about recruiting - mine would be to give each Committee Member a dive shop/diving school to adopt as a nursery, i.e. try and recruit from each a couple of new Members per year to our Club. Not all persons who complete diving courses wish to stay on as "clones" and dive around piers and Pope's Eye forever. Also if we selected the right ones they would soon pick up invaluable diving experience at better locations, build up a much greater tolerance to alcohol and improve their ability to fraternize with Members of the opposite sex. The number of boat spaces would rarely be a problem because with increased membership there would be an increase in the number of boats throughout the Club.



No doubt there are several other solutions so let's hear them. That way in twenty years time when I'm sixty I won't object to being buddied up with a 25 year old shapely blonde female fresh out of a dive school at Pope's Eye!

Since that last edition of Fathoms I have been fortunate enough to spend a couple of pleasant Sundays aboard Alex's new boat - firstly the day we dived the Milora out off Torquay only to run out of fuel 200 metres from Frankston Pier at dusk, and secondly after a dive off Queenscliff when I had to watch all day as my passengers Don and Johnny drank slops continually at someone else's expense. Just as well you got the 23 footer Alex; an inch shorter would have been money down the drain! How anyone would even consider trying to squeeze all those luxuries in a boat like yours, but say for example only 21 feet long - well nothing more than bad planning!

### Tennis Party

Saturday 22nd November, a perfect day, saw this years annual V.S.A.G. Tennis Day and Mile race at Balnarring and Somers. Apart from celebrating my 40th birthday it was not much different to the fifteen previous years. The Scott's and the Truscott's still have a perfect attendance score with the Moore's a close third, but I did notice the Truscott's are getting old, they only came for the party. Special congratulations and many thanks to John Lawler for putting on the spit roast - would have to be the best outdoor meal I've ever had and no doubt he'll remember to bring the prizes along to the December meeting!

### The Results

Mixed Doubles - Bob & Jane Scott.

Singles - Mick Jeacle.

Mile - Danny John, 5 minutes 55 seconds.

Mile (veteran class) - Tony Tipping, 6 minutes 5 seconds.

The organizing Sub-Committee unanimously decided that because no female ran this prize would go to the winner of the veteran class mile (40's and over). Special thanks also to Don Abell who stayed over and helped clean up. \*

## DIVE REPORT - SUNDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 1986



by Keith Jensen

The scheduled dive was to be Flinders with the ever reliable Pat Reynolds as Dive Captain, these details were altered somewhat as I shall explain. As is the custom I rang the listed Dive Captain, Pat said he had to work on the Sunday and as such had asked John Lawler to act in his stead. John rang me back and informed me that the venue had been changed to Sorrento. On arrival on the Sunday the Club President asked me to act as Dive Captain as the substitute John Lawler had to scratch due to a sore throat.

Well we finally got mobile, my Haines with son Peter, Warren Cannan and Paul Griffiths aboard and Big M's Coaster with Daryle Whitehill, Jack Namiota and Charlie Brincat. The sea was dead smooth and we headed for the Heads to find some of those large crays that abound there.

The spot was chosen and we geared up, as this was taking place we observed a very large roll on, roll off container ship steaming up the bay toward the Heads, the air reverberated with the sound of the ships hooter being sounded continuously. It was obvious that a small fishing boat anchored right in the channel was the cause of all this consternation and it was not until the ship was in very close proximity to that boat did it move.

As the ship cleared the Heads we moved onto the reef and commenced to dive, I dived with Peter and we found the current was fairly raging but the visibility was excellent and the territory fantastic. I hooked in the hook on the buoy line and checked out a few ledges and as we returned could not find the hook or line and guessed correctly that it had torn free. Pete and I surfaced and took our place in the boat, Warren and Paul were soon over the side and we watched the buoy drift at a fast rate toward Queenscliff.

Big M and Daryle meanwhile had surfaced with a total of 3 crays between them. When Paul and Warren returned their catch bags were empty, a most unusual occurrence for Warren.

As the current was running faster it was decided that the next group would dive close in to shore and nearer Queenscliff. Jack and Charlie, Peter and I set out, the territory was very mediocre but I managed one cray and one old beer bottle, Jack and Charlie scored nil.

The sea was becoming like the proverbial mill pond and we adjourned for lunch near Lonsdale Pier. A quick dive after lunch to get a few abalone and then it was off for a deep slack water dive as we neared the location it was observed that another large ship was about to enter the Heads.

So that we did not miss slack we lined up with the charter boats and dived a section of the wall that did not infringe on the prohibited area of the channel. Charlie and myself looked after the boats while the others dived, this time Warren managed to bag a cray and Mick had a tale to tell about the big one that he did unsuccessfully battle with.

A quick dash back to Sorrento over a tranquil sea, the boats trailored and we adjourned to the Dromana hostelery for a few quite ales to finish off a good days diving.\*

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## HYDRO-TEST DEAL

We have again arranged a special deal with Breathing Apparatus Services. For hydro tests and visual examination, till Christmas only tanks can be left at:

BREATHING APPRATUS SERVICES  
Factory 20, 172 Canterbury Road, Bayswater  
Telephone: 720 3455

or at pick up point:

GAINGERS  
214 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy  
(Opposite B.A.S. Old Address)

Drop in on Monday back by Friday. Don't forget to ask for V.S.A.G. special price.



## QUEENSLIFF WEEKEND



by Mick Jeacle

Friday was very bad. Situation normal coming up to a long weekend away. Alex had already telephoned to say he had pulled the pin but would drive his boat down from Carrum the next day.

Undaunted the family set off and we were soon checked in at the Beacon Caravan Park. No matter where we seem to go Martin Tallana and family arrives there first. After unpacking it was off to the creek to inform Geoff that Alex would not be there but of course we needn't have bothered as Geoff was at the Portsea pub. It then occurred that the pub was the only sensible place to be on a night such as this and it was at the Ozone that we ran into Mick Jackiw.

Mick was working at Queenscliff, or at least that's what he calls it. Driving around in a Shark Cat half the day trying to look official. After a few drinks we went back to the caravan for a few more prior to hitting the sack. At least the outlook for the remainder of the weekend was promising.

The next morning we called down to the creek just in time to see Geoff and Reece arriving. Geoff stated he had been in contact with Alex and Pat on the radio and suggested we cruise out and meet them in the vicinity of Popes Eye. This we did and upon returning we had all well and truly made up our minds that there would be no diving done that day.

Those of you who are familiar with the comfort of Geoff's and Alex's boats will understand the wisdom of our choice to spend the afternoon aboard these very fine craft. FM music, sea breezes, plenty to drink, good company etc. etc. Whilst Geoff did the odd cruise in and out of the creek the less adventurous amongst us chose to remain at the dock. Dinner time soon approached and after a quick scrub up we headed for the Ozone only to find that

we could not get a table. A quick tour of the town failed to produce a venue and after an insufferable wait of some 50 minutes at what seemed to be the most popular fish shop we headed back to the boats to consume the greasy stuff. To quote John Lawler "Well that was good, but it was bloody terrible!"

Sunday was looking good. The seas had flattened out a lot and a dive was on. Barry Truscott and crew had come across from Sorrento and joined us in the creek. We were soon on our way and a dive in the Heads was decided upon. However, as the first few descended Geoff and I were discussing whether we should even bother as the visibility looked to be about 6 feet. The return of the first lot soon confirmed this and when Alex announced over the radio that he had just popped his first "Crown" my decision was made.

It was then decided that we would meet at Popes Eye for lunch and this we did after picking up Annie and Isabel and the kids. It was obvious that the antics of Alex, Pat and Co sitting in such luxurious surroundings was too much for Bazza, John G, Don and Tony and the sight of the empty Haines tethered to the "mother ship" was to be expected. As the afternoon wore on the noise became intense and the visits to the marlin board very regular indeed. It was obvious Alex's supply must soon run out but not before everyone aboard had had a skinful. After seeing Bazza readily accept a garbage bag full of rubbish from yours truly, then executing a fantastic U turn at full speed to retrieve his hat, one must only assume that it was a fairly hairy ride back to Sorrento.

Sunday night we weren't going to be caught without a table, so the Birtles, Jeacles and Charlie Brincat booked in at the Ozone early. It was here that we planned a dive on the newest sub for the next morning in the hope that the water may be clearer out there. We also found that Charlie had not been inside any of the submarines, so much of the rest of the evening was spent convincing him that he could do it and apart from silt-outs there wasn't too much to be afraid of.

The next day looked brilliant weather wise, but after arriving at the sub we soon saw that the visibility was no better there; perhaps 15 feet. After a few minutes Geoff soon located the sub and we dropped the shot line right on top of the conning tower.

Geoff, Reece, Charlie and myself soon descended and met inside the sub after entering the hatch forward of the conning tower. This is not the ideal hatch to enter for a first timer as minimal light enters the wreck at this point and a bright torch is needed just to find the next bulkhead. However, Charlie looked as cool as you like and we soon found our way to the torpedo tubes. We then turned around and made our way to the stern of the sub, passing through that magnificent chamber midships where shafts of light are seen to enter the portholes. Upon reaching the stern I knew Charlie would want to boast that he had swam from stern to stern so I led him into the very small silty cavern at the very stern of the ship. However, I didn't realise that Reece and Geoff would also be joining us and in no time at all one could not see more than about six inches.

When Reece swam past me I shone the torch in the direction of the opening and motioned for him to lead the way out. When he swam past again a few seconds later the motions were repeated. When he swam past again some time later I thought it was time to take over and lead the way out, which I found with little difficulty.

A very anxious Geoff was waiting at the opening for his son and heir but all was okay. The look on Charlie's face was not a look of concern, as we came to learn later that he took it to be a normal situation following our discussion from the previous evening. He did remark though that he kept a close look on our faces and had we showed any concern at any stage he would have shit himself.

Owing to the dirty water, Monday afternoon was spent in the same manner as the Sunday in magnificent sunshine. We returned to the creek around 4.00 p.m. and Geoff and Alex were soon on their way back to Sorrento and Carrum respectively. Everyone else also went home on Monday evening and the Jeacles on Tuesday morning.

The diving was very disappointing but one has the feeling that the Sunday afternoon on Alex's boat will be talked about for a long time to come.✱



# VICTORIA NEEDS A DECOMPRESSION CHAMBER

by Des Williams

*from Dr Allen Yuen, director  
of emergency services,  
Prince Henry's Hospital*

In November 1985, the 10-yearly certification on the only decompression chamber in a Victorian hospital (at Prince Henry's) expired. The estimated cost for servicing and materials for recertification was about \$45,000. However, the Health Department failed to provide any funds for this despite repeated submissions from this hospital.

Last month, the National Safety Council closed its excellent hyperbaric facilities at Morwell and transferred its expertise to South

Australia.

This means that Victoria no longer has any public medically supervised hyperbaric facility. This mode of treatment is established management, not only for "bends" (decompression sickness in divers), but also for certain cases of smoke inhalation, carbon monoxide poisoning, cyanide poisoning, gangrene and infected grafts.

The Health Department issued a recent circular informing ambulance services and public hospitals that alternative arrangements will now have to be made for such patients to be transported to Ade-

laide or Sydney — a delay which could well be too late, even fatal.

The former Minister for Health gave an assurance that no services at Prince Henry's would be allowed to run down, pending relocation, yet here is a service for the whole of Victoria which is unique to this hospital and which is not being maintained. There is concern among emergency department directors that patients needing this treatment are placed at risk, because this state's Health Department has not adequately recognised its importance.

**ALLEN YUEN,**  
Melbourne.

As you will see from the above article from the "Age" 4th October 1986, we as divers must now be doubly careful during deep dives. Gone are the fantastic facilities of the National Safety Council at Morwell, it has all transferred to the Royal Adelaide Hospital in South Australia. All that is left in Victoria are a couple of "Duo-Com" portable chambers (shaped like a boot) which hold the patient and an attendant.

In future cases of decompression sickness in Victoria the N.S.C. will pick up the patient in a "Duo-Com" and fly to Royal Adelaide Hospital for treatment. So make sure you are an ambulance subscriber member if you don't want an enormous bill for such a trip and treatment in a "bends" case.

The only other alternative I can see if the Melbourne Hyperbaric Centre at Port Melbourne, which is a private business owned and operated by Henri Bource. I have spoken with Henri and his facility would of course be available, but payment would be the problem for most divers. Treatment at M.H.C. could not be claimable through any hospital or ambulance benefit and you could hardly expect Henri to treat every case of bends at no charge, now that the facility at Morwell has gone.

An alternative might be to lobby the Government to make such treatment at the M.H.C. a claimable item in the light of the N.S.C.'s move to South Australia.

The chamber at the Prince Henry's Hospital now requires about \$45,000 worth of work on it to renew its 10 yearly certification and the Health Department have done nothing on this situation since the certification ran out in November last year! Prince Henry's chamber is very small and is not a high pressure chamber; it has been used predominantly to treat patients of Multiple Sclerosis, CO<sub>2</sub> poisoning, gangrene, etc. God, help them, I guess!

Why has N.S.C. moved to Adelaide, I hear you ask? This is a mystery to me so far, although I do believe that N.S.C. were importing and selling Draeger (German made) chambers in Australia and managed to sell one to Royal Adelaide Hospital. Part of the deal in that sale was the N.S.C. expertise be transferred to Adelaide from Victoria - and that went ahead.

It is interesting to note that the Draeger system is not compatible with the equipment our own R.A.N. have at present. I believe that the Navy has been fitted with adaptors to accommodate N.S.C. chambers and equipment.

So, why not send a letter to your Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Race Matthews, suggesting that treatment for "bends" be made claimable against our National Health system now that we have no suitable treatment facility at Morwell. \*

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## THE BIG EVENT

The 1986 Downlow Medal Award Presentation Dinner on Saturday 21st February, 1987.

VENUE: The Stoke House, Marine Parade, St. Kilda. B.Y.O.

TIME: 7.30 p.m. sharp

Members and friends of competing clubs will join guest presenters for the inaugural Downlow Medal Presentation.

This is the first for our diving fraternity, a night not to be missed. Diary this important night now!!!!

DOWNLOW MEDAL 1986

# TIMING VITAL AT PORT PHILLIP HEADS

Article submitted by Alex Talay

**N**OBODY should venture out of Port Phillip Heads without a thorough understanding of The Rip. It has a well deserved reputation as a hazard to shipping of all kinds, as turbulent water surges through the Heads.

This ocean access to Port Phillip is less than 3km wide and Rip Bank, a 24km rocky flat is 11 to 13 metres of water, restricts the flow of water even further.

The tides moving in and out of the Heads have scoured out channels of varying depths, and the shear force of the tidal stream is sufficient to prevent even large ships from making headway.

The uneven depths, together with the ebb tide running up to seven knots, causes this "race" or "rip", which, during and after southwest winds, still breaks furiously and dangerously for smaller craft, despite extensive blasting designed to deepen the channel on Rip Bank and to give a more even tidal flow.

Obviously the most suitable times for smaller craft to navigate the Rip is during the brief periods of slack water at the turn of the tides. These can reasonably be expected to be at the time of high and low water, but this is not so with the times of high and low water at Port Phillip Heads.

There is a 2.4m tidal range in Bass Strait, but while the tide is rising in the strait, the 2.8km-wide entrance only permits sufficient water to enter Port Phillip to raise the level inside the bay by about 1m. Therefore at high water at Port Phillip Heads, the sea level inside the bay is more than 1m lower, and the flood stream continues for a further three hours until the levels inside and outside equalise.

By that time the tide in Bass Strait has been falling for three hours and continues to fall for another three hours at a greater rate than it does inside the bay, thus creating an ebb stream for that time after low water at Port Phillip Heads. This results in the times of slack water in the Rip coinciding with the times of high and low water inside the bay (the predicted times of high and low water at Williamstown).

Southwesterly gales in Bass Strait sink the sea up at its northern extremity and thus increase the rate and duration of the flood streams to create a head of water within the bay, which in turn increases the rate and duration of ebb streams after the gales abate.

Inquiries into the cause of sailing ships being wrecked near Port Phillip Heads revealed that unwary shipmasters were encouraged by fair winds to enter against the ebb tides. These, following the course of Entrance Deep, swept the ships towards Point Nepean and the jagged pinnacle of Corsair Rock off the extremity of the peninsula.

Yachts and small craft are advised to observe the following recommendations when sailing in and out of the Heads.

When sailing out from the west channel of Queenscliff, it is best to keep up close to Shortland Bluff, and time to be there about half an hour before slack water flood. This will allow you to pass through the Heads on the beginning of the ebb, before its rate increases and causes a rough sea. Sail out on the western leads, or better still, open up the High Light so that it is west of the Hume Tower.

This course is known as "four fingers west", that is, the High Light is equidistant to the west of the Hume Tower; all low light, then Murray Tower, all equidistant apart. By keeping on this course which is about 232 degrees true, with these marks astern, note that the old lighthouse (fixed green light at night) on Shortland pier is just open off Queenscliff Bluff.

This course will take you clear of the kelp patch half way between Shortland Bluff and Point Lonsdale, and clears Lonsdale Reef (Yellowtail Rock) by 210 metres (700 feet).

This keeps you west of Lonsdale Rock, but as there is 8.7 metres (22 feet) of water over it there is no problem of touching it to a small craft.

Keep sailing out on this course until well into the white sector of Point Lonsdale Light, or about one mile off the Heads, then shape a course for your destination.

When sailing towards, well outside and well to the west of the main leads until about half an hour before slack water ebb, so that you can enter on the first of the flood. Coming from the south or south-east, keep in the white sector of Point Lonsdale Light

and cross the main leading line until four fingers west and enter on this bearing on a course of about 052 true. Keep on this course until you are near Shortland Bluff, then head for your destination.

Keep well clear of the Point Nepean side of the Heads, as this is where most ships, large and small have come to grief in the past. When entering on a flood tide, which can be done in good weather and with experience at any time during the flood, the tide may take a yacht to faster than the wind and when abeam of Point Nepean the boat may be caught in the whirlpools. This is not dangerous, but a bit hair-raising, and can catch a skipper by surprise. The use of the engine helps to keep control.

From a distance outside the Heads, the Queenscliff lighthouses will appear very small and may disappear below the horizon as the yacht rises and falls in the sea. They are often easier seen at night than in daytime, when glare from the sun may obscure them.

Note that these courses inwards and outwards keep you out of the shipping route in the Heads area, and out of the strongest tide and roughest waters. When inward bound it may be argued that you are on the wrong side of the channel or fairway, but you are well outside the shipping lane.

It must be appreciated that if you have to tack, depending on the wind direction, you may have to come into the main shipping channel, but at all times, especially at night, watch for ships and keep out of their way, using your engine. In fact it is advisable to use your engine at all times during the passage through the Heads.

If inward bound for Portsea it may be safe in fine weather and on a flood tide to sail up on the eastern leads (Murray tower in line with High Light, the eastern edge of the shipping channel), until Point King is well open off Observatory Point.

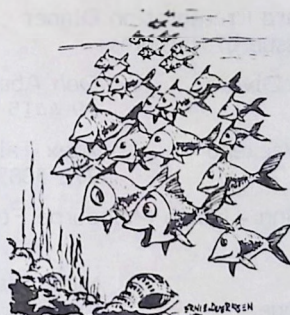
Do not attempt this passage on an EBB tide — if you have a problem you may drift on to the reefs off Point Nepean.

Watch for pilot launches on duty using the "four fingers west" passage. This area is often frequented by diving groups at slack water and on flood tides. Watch for diving buoys and attendant craft. Keep a sharp lookout for ships approaching the pilot boarding ground three miles south-west of Point Lonsdale.

Blasting operations may be carried out in daylight at slack water in calm weather. Movement through the Heads at these times is prohibited, and this includes all small craft. Watch for signals from attendant vessels.

Further information may be obtained from Point Lonsdale Signal Station by telephoning (052) 52 1252, before departure.

Information courtesy of the Port Phillip Safety Council.



"There's one thing I'd like to know—if this is a school, when do we graduate?"



**DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR DECEMBER/JANUARY 1986/87**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event/Location</u>	<u>Dive Captain</u>	<u>Meet At</u>
Dec 17	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club Social drink Yarra Bank near Anderson Street Bridge after meeting.		8.00 p.m.
Dec 19	Christmas Function Details this issue of Fathoms	John Lawler 569 9851	Lonsdale Street Bar & Grill
Dec 26	Christmas Camp	Des Williams 551 9851	Port Lincoln
Jan 24-26	Australia Day Weekend	John Goulding 890 6634	Details this issue of Fathoms
Feb 8	Wreck Dive "Milora"	Pat Reynolds 789 1092	Sorrento Boat Ramp 9.30 a.m.
Feb 18	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club		8.00 p.m.
Feb 21	Downlow Award Presentation Dinner Details this issue of Fathoms		The Stoke House 7.30 p.m.
Feb 22	Flinders Reef Dive	Don Abell 29 4415	Flinders 9.30 a.m.
March 7, 8, 9	Labour Day Weekend Cape Conran	Alex Talay 772 3085	Burbang Caravan Park
March 18	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club		8.00 p.m.
March 22	Wreck Dive George Kermodie	Mick Jeacle (059) 71 2786	Flinders 9.30 a.m.
April 5	Wreck Dive Submarine	John Lawler 569 9851	Sorrento 9.30 a.m.
April 15	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club		8.00 p.m.
April 17 - 21	Easter Camp	Don Abell 29 4415	Details Feb/Mar Fathoms

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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.

