

FATHOMS

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Safety in Diving

INDEPENDENT DIVING FREEDOM

\$2

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Box 2526W,
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VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

5 - JUN 1986

VSAG

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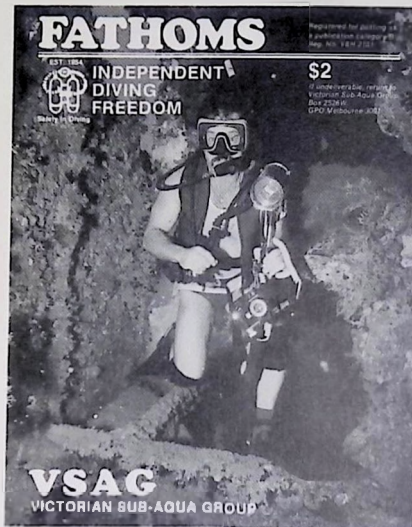
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Committee Member

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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 "Bonogi 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 Bonsgi 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/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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JUNE 1986

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Next general meeting: Wednesday, June 8th, 1986 8.00 p.m.
North Melbourne Football Club
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne

Next committee meeting: Tuesday, June 24th, 1986 8.00 p.m.
Goulding Residence,
13 Birdwood Street, Box Hill South

EDITORIAL



Well the month of June is officially the start of winter, but this does not mean that we stop diving, some of us head off to warmer climes whilst other have to remain and put up with our winter trials. This year June 1st also Heralds in the introduction of the Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve.

The concept of Marine Reserves is to protect the area from damage and preserve its flora and fauna, in short this means that as divers we can look but not touch. It seem absurd that professional abalone divers, cray fishermen and trawler fishermen who are currently licenced will still be able to work within this area. How this fits in

with conservation I do not know, perhaps the next step it to let the woodchip industries into National Parks or even let the oil companies shoot the seals and boil them down for their oil under the current form of thinking anything is possible.

Whilst in this mood, what about the legislation to stop us launching our boats over the sand at Tidal River. One of the prime reasons was that complaints had been received that boat launching over the sand was dangerous and disruptive. Well V.S.A.G. have received back a reply in answer to our request for full details under the "Freedom of Information Act" and it would seem that there have been five written complaints since 1978 and there has never been an accident or prosecution in connection with boat launching. So much for complaints have been received.



Cyclone "Namu" has been in the news as it devastated one of my favourite dive spots in the Solomon Islands. I have written frequently about the Solomons, its beautiful reefs and great ship wrecks, I also mentioned that time and nature take a toll on these attributes and I know that mother nature and Cyclone "Namu" this time will have wrought havoc. In time the reefs will regenerate, but unfortunately the wrecks will deteriorate further and the pleasure to dive upon them will be reduced.

Perhaps there is a message here, don't put off till tomorrow what you can do today. You may find that legislation or other factors will prevent you from enjoying yourself diving when and where you want to.

Keith Jensen

DIVE NEW ZEALAND

Preliminary arrangements are underway for a club overseas trip to New Zealand in March 1988.

We are extremely fortunate in having at our complete disposal a luxurious 50 foot boat operating out of Russell in the Bay of Islands.

A stay of say 2 weeks at Russell is proposed, followed by say 3 days diving at the Poor Nights, living on board the vessel (sleeps approx. 12).

Visibility often exceeds 80 feet, and the crays and fish life have to be seen to be believed.

The boat is privately owned and accordingly cost will be very reasonable indeed.

Duration of the trip will be around 18 days leaving enough time to visit the tourist spots.

Details next meeting.

Contact Mick Jeacle for booking as soon as possible on (059) 712 786.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Meeting held at 80 Liston Street, Burwood on 22nd April, 1986.

All committee members were in attendance.

The President welcomed Nicki Abell as a visitor to the meeting.

SECRETARY'S CORRESPONDENCE:

The Secretary tabled the letters received from the Department of Conservation Forests and Lands in response to the clubs submissions. These had been discussed at the previous general meeting. The club had received a brochure from the Department of Conservation Forests and Lands explaining the implications of the new Marine Reserve on the southern part of Wilsons Promontory. The only other correspondence received since the general meeting were commercial and advertising brochures.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported that the club had the following funds:

Cash at bank	\$ 403.93
Cash on deposit	1,675.06
	<hr/>
Total	\$ 2,078.99
	<hr/>

The following bills were held for payment:

M. Jeacle	\$ 51.00
J. Goulding	57.00
M. Synon	53.00

All these bills represented refunds and boat levies in regard to the Tidal River weekend.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

1. John Goulding advised that he had spoken to Mick Jackiw and that Mich is not willing to sell his compressor. Mick has said that if he ever decides to sell he will give the club first option. Mick has also said that the compressor will always be available to the club whenever they want it. It was decided that the club should write a letter of appreciation to Mick and John Lawler agreed to draft and sent this letter.
2. Mick Jeacle noted that there is some problems with the oxygen cylinders that the club rents from C.I.G. These are to be returned to C.I.G. and C.I.G. will give the club replacement cylinders. Mick will arranged to collect the cylinders and deliver them to C.I.G.
3. Des Williams has agreed to arrange sealed plastic bags to keep the cylinders dry and free from salt, a probable cause of wear on the existing tanks.
4. Mick Jeacle advised that he had looked at the budgeted expenses of the club for the following year. The club currently has the following budgeted income.

50 city members at \$27.00	\$ 1,350.00
11 country member at \$15.00	165.00
7 life members at no charge	-
	<hr/>
68 members	\$ 1,515.00
	<hr/>

Mick advised that the average cost to produce the club magazine is \$205.00 per month (for 11 issues) giving a total cost of \$2,461.00 per annum. Mick therefore proposed that the membership fees should be increased in an endeavour to cover the fixed cost of producing the magazine.

All committee members agreed that there would be no distinction between country and city members and that therefore all members would be required to pay the same subscription. Mick moved that the subscription be raised to \$35.00 per member for the 1986/7 year and this was unanimously passed by the meeting.

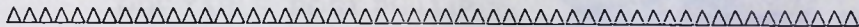
5. Don Abell raised the question of collection of fees for dive fills, the problem being that the charges remain outstanding for a considerable length of time and involve the club in chasing up members for a number of months. It was agreed that one person would be allocated to be responsible for tank filling at each weekend were the club compressor was used. That person will be responsible for collecting tanks from all members and distributing the tanks to the members after they have been filled. That person will also be responsible for establishing a compressor roster. All fees for filling tanks will be collected on the weekend so that no amounts remain outstanding at the end of the weekend.
6. Des Williams has contacted two dive shops in regard to the Christmas trip to Port Lincoln. Both dive shops will be able to satisfy the clubs requirements. Des will continue to get more details so that the matter can be finalised in the near future.
7. Paul Tipping told the meeting that he had a telephone call from the Department of Conservation Forests and Lands in regard to our Freedom of Information request. The person Paul spoke to suggested tha the club may wish to nominate representatives to meet with the Department to determine the best way of overcoming the problems the department considers they have identified. The committee agreed the club would be pleased to attend such a meeting.
8. Nicki Abell told the meeting that she has recently spoken to a representative from the Whale Rescue Centre. Nicki asked whether the club would be interested in having a representative of the centre talk to a general meeting on Whales in general and the activities of the centre. Nicki noted that there would be inevitably a conservation bias in such a talk. The committee agreed that they would be interested in such a meeting and it was suggested that Nicki try to arrange a speaker for the general meeting on 20th August. Nicki noted that the Whale Rescue Centre would not charge a fee for such a talk but would appreciate any donation the club might give. It was decided that the donation would be discussed at a later meeting. Nicki will proceed with the organisation.

- 9. John Lawler gave an update report on the Downlow Medal. The Victorian Sub-Aqua Group currently leads with 231 dives followed by Marine Divers with 156 dives. Bottom Scratchers have recorded considerably less than the other two clubs.

John reported that the individual leaders are himself and Neal Mackenzie with 20 dives each followed by Mick Jeacle with 19 dives.

- 10. Max Synon gave a vote of thanks to Don Abell for his organisation of the Easter Weekend at Tidal River.

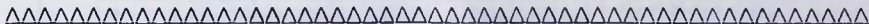
There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 11.20 p.m. and Nicki provided a tasty supper for those present.



THANKS EVERYONE

As you have seen our Fathoms has been putting on weight, this is due to the efforts of you all in collecting items of interest.

We welcome all contributions, preferably typed. Sumissions must be in prior to the committee meeting each month.



MEDIA WATCH

The Sun,
Tuesday, May 20th



● Exporter Mr Sjo with a handful of dried sea dragons, which are bought and sold for four times the price of prawns.

Harnessing sea bucks

By STEPHEN MEESE

SEAHORSES could make Australian fishermen rich and improve the health of thousands of Asians.

A Melbourne trade company wants fishermen to collect seahorses and sea dragons for use overseas in traditional Chinese herbal remedies.

A fifth-generation Chinese acupuncturist and herbalist, Yoland Lim, yesterday said powdered seahorse and sea dragon was mixed with herbs to make a health tonic.

He said the tonic was often taken for easier childbirth and kidney function.

"It can also be used as a general tonic to give people more vitality," he said.

A director of Pacific Shoal Pty Ltd, Mr Allan Sjo, yesterday said his company has exported sea horses and sea dragons to Japan and China for the past four years.

He said the demand for the odd-shaped fish, which is commonly found in Australian waters, far outweighed supply.

Frawn fishermen trawling in the Gulf of Carpentaria and off the north Queensland and WA coasts often caught many seahorses in their nets, but couldn't be bothered collecting and drying them for sale, he said.

■ Lobster mobster terrifies town

A giant lobster is terrorising the British seaside town of Lyme Regis. Nicknamed Claws, the creature is believed to be two metres long and over 22kg. Divers first saw Claws several weeks ago living in the wreck of a ship. A reward has been offered for it, dead or alive.

Australian Business,
May 7th, 1986

Divers 'stole from shuttle'

NEW YORK, Tues., Reuter
Space agency security
officers have launched an
inquiry into claims that
navy divers working to sal-
vage the Challenger shuttle
stole personal effects of the
dead astronauts.

The security officers have
also seized Challenger wreck-
age apparently kept by the sal-
vage workers as souvenirs.

The National Aeronautics and
Space Administration action

came after a phone call from a
woman claiming navy divers
told her they had taken belong-
ings of Challenger's seven
crew members killed in the
January 28 explosion.

"They said they they were
keeping souvenirs like gloves
and wedding rings. I think it's a
very immoral, sick thing to do,"
the unidentified woman told
the Florida newspaper.

Space agency spokesman
Dick Young said security offi-
cials met the salvage ship USS
Opportune yesterday and confisc-
ated two boxes of "metal

debris and tiles" from
Challenger.

He said belongings of the
seven astronauts were not
found among the debris.

The woman caller told the
newspaper she called the Ken-
nedy Space Centre after twice
meeting navy divers in a Cocoa
Beach bar.

The woman said one diver
told her "everybody was keep-
ing souvenirs. They said they
were going to take them home
to their friends."

The Herald
Wednesday 21st May, 1986

TIDE TABLE, PORT PHILLIP.

JULY, 1986.

Month/Day		PORT PHILLIP HEADS.																Month/Day		
Month	Day	High Water				Slack Water Flood (Stream Turns)				Low Water				Slack Water Ebb (Stream Turns)				Week Day	Month	Day
		h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.					
		h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.	h.m.	Ht. M.					
1	Tu	07 03	1.3	18 50	1.1	09 41	1.0	21 58	0.9	00 23	0.8	11 19	0.6	03 42	0.8	15 34	1.0	16	1	
2	W	08 01	1.3	19 27	1.1	10 06	1.0	22 41	0.8	01 08	0.7	11 52	0.7	04 25	0.8	16 18	1.0	17	2	
3	Th	09 04	1.3	20 02	1.2	11 08	1.0	23 23	0.8	01 56	0.7	13 06	0.6	05 16	0.8	17 04	1.0	18	3	
4	F	10 01	1.3	20 50	1.2	12 36	1.1	02 45	0.8	02 45	0.8	15 10	0.6	06 24	0.8	18 08	1.0	F	4	
5	Sa	10 52	1.3	21 39	1.1	00 14	0.7	13 40	1.1	03 17	0.8	16 21	0.6	07 18	0.8	19 01	1.0	Sa	5	
6	Su	11 52	1.3	22 14	1.1	01 05	0.7	14 09	1.1	04 26	0.8	17 26	0.6	08 10	0.8	20 00	1.0	Su	6	
7	Mo	12 39	1.4	23 29	1.1	01 53	0.7	15 29	1.1	05 17	0.8	18 20	0.8	09 58	0.8	20 54	1.0	Mo	7	
8	Tu	01 25	1.4	24 23	1.1	02 45	0.7	16 13	1.1	06 02	0.7	19 04	0.7	09 42	0.8	21 44	0.9	Tu	8	
9	W	02 34	1.3	24 51	1.5	03 34	0.7	16 51	1.1	06 44	0.2	19 42	0.7	10 22	0.8	22 28	0.9	W	9	
10	Th	01 15	1.2	24 38	1.5	04 19	0.7	17 28	1.1	07 23	0.2	20 18	0.6	11 00	0.9	23 11	0.9	Th	10	
11	F	02 05	1.2	25 12	1.5	05 02	0.7	18 02	1.0	08 00	0.2	20 53	0.6	11 36	0.9	23 52	0.9	F	11	
12	Sa	02 51	1.3	25 47	1.5	05 44	0.8	18 16	1.0	08 37	0.3	21 26	0.5	12 07	0.9	24 12	0.9	Sa	12	
13	Su	03 39	1.3	26 21	1.5	06 26	0.8	19 11	1.0	09 14	0.3	22 01	0.5	00 32	0.9	24 47	0.9	Su	13	
14	Mo	01 25	1.3	26 54	1.5	07 09	0.8	19 46	1.0	09 53	0.4	22 36	0.4	01 13	0.9	25 23	0.8	Mo	14	
15	Tu	05 16	1.3	27 29	1.5	07 57	0.9	20 24	0.9	10 38	0.4	23 03	0.4	01 57	0.9	26 03	1.0	Tu	15	
16	W	06 12	1.3	28 05	1.4	08 48	0.9	21 03	0.9	11 24	0.5	00 00	0.5	02 45	0.9	26 44	1.0	W	16	
17	Th	07 12	1.4	28 43	1.4	09 43	1.0	21 47	0.8	00 02	0.3	12 15	0.6	03 37	0.8	25 29	1.0	Th	17	
18	F	08 18	1.4	29 30	1.3	10 44	1.1	22 36	0.8	00 51	0.2	13 01	0.7	04 34	0.8	26 20	1.0	F	18	
19	Sa	09 25	1.4	20 26	1.3	11 50	1.1	23 37	0.7	01 46	0.2	14 16	0.8	05 35	0.8	27 21	1.0	Sa	19	
20	Su	10 34	1.3	21 13	1.2	13 01	1.2	02 49	0.2	15 35	0.9	06 41	0.8	06 14	0.8	18 34	1.1	Su	20	
21	Mo	11 39	1.5	22 49	1.2	00 45	0.7	14 16	1.2	03 56	0.1	16 53	0.8	07 47	0.8	19 51	1.0	Mo	21	
22	Tu	01 14	1.3	22 41	1.5	01 56	0.7	15 21	1.1	05 03	0.1	18 02	0.7	08 52	0.8	21 03	1.0	Tu	22	
23	W	00 05	1.3	23 17	1.6	03 05	0.7	16 20	1.1	06 05	0.1	19 03	0.6	09 51	0.8	22 08	1.0	W	23	
24	Th	01 12	1.3	24 25	1.6	04 08	0.7	17 12	1.1	07 02	0.1	19 59	0.5	10 43	0.9	23 08	0.9	Th	24	
25	F	02 14	1.4	25 08	1.6	05 07	0.8	18 00	1.0	07 58	0.2	20 53	0.4	11 33	0.9	24 00	0.9	F	25	
26	Sa	03 12	1.4	25 38	1.6	06 02	0.8	18 44	1.0	08 53	0.2	21 41	0.3	00 02	0.9	24 20	0.9	Sa	26	
27	Su	04 04	1.4	26 16	1.6	06 52	0.9	19 24	0.9	09 41	0.3	22 25	0.3	01 00	0.9	25 02	0.9	Su	27	
28	Mo	01 53	1.4	26 58	1.5	07 40	0.9	20 02	0.9	10 27	0.3	23 07	0.2	01 39	0.8	23 42	0.9	Mo	28	
29	Tu	03 40	1.4	27 29	1.4	08 54	0.9	20 37	0.8	11 09	0.5	23 46	0.2	02 24	0.8	14 19	1.0	Tu	29	
30	W	06 27	1.3	27 58	1.4	09 09	0.9	21 11	0.8	11 51	0.6	00 00	0.6	03 06	0.8	14 54	1.0	W	30	
31	Th	07 16	1.3	28 20	1.3	09 51	1.0	21 47	0.8	00 24	0.2	12 32	0.6	03 50	0.8	15 30	1.0	Th	31	

DECO STOPS

by Keith Jensen

Had to look twice at John Lawler when he arrived at May general meeting, something different about him, sans beard and new haircut, perhaps he does not wish to be recognised by a certain lady whose acquaintance he made at Tidal River.

No wonder that scurrilous scribe who writes Flotsam and Jetsam has no news of late, it was his loud snores that brought the wrath of the Chairman upon him at the general meeting perhaps his next nom de plume should be Rip Van Winkle.

Big M blended in with the motely as he boarded Warrick's dive boat a few weeks ago, looked like a real clone, some one said that he almost "spat out the dummy" as he received his instructions on how to dive from a petite female divemistress.

That vanishing species, the panel beating Russian sport diver has been sighted briefly again. Recent sightings were at Tidal River and again at the general meeting. The next sighting is likely to be at that pagan ritual called marriage.

Geoff's new boat has yet to be seen on an official club dive, seems that it still has a few rough spots to fix up before it is given the Birtles seal of approval. The full flow windscreen is definitely not an optional extra says Geoff.

Very expensive day in court for Handy Andy while we all expected that he would receive a monetary punishment the size of the fine left us all gasping, and we will all be most careful from now on.

ANZAC WEEKEND

by Mick Jeacle

Things started to go sour on this weekend on the Tuesday prior to departure when Igor rang to say he couldn't go. This left us with 2 boats and 12 divers, but with the possibility of Keith and John bringing their boats for the Friday and Sunday respectively.

One need not have worried, the weather was not kind to us at all and infact I would venture to say it was the worst I had experienced on any trip away with the club.

Needless to say no diving was done on this weekend, so this report will be very short indeed. However, a few things did happen and those who attended had a ball socially.

It is very hard for me to attend the pub with Alex, Pat & Co. on these trips, as one must do the fatherly thing and assist with the children, the cooking, the washing-up etc. So when Annie announced she was intending to partake of 40 winks with Jessica on the Friday afternoon, Samantha and I were off like a shot to the Koonya where we found Alex and Pat firmly entrenched with Kaye and Chris. After knocking down about 12 pots, I took Samantha on a 5 minute tour of the beach etc. so that we could tell mum the afternoon was not all in dad's favour.

Friday evening everyone, except yours truly and family, went to the Portsea Pub for dinner. From all reports this night should not have been missed as everyone had a great time singing along with the band and virtually took over the place.

Saturday evening saw the arrival of the Truscott family for the Dire Straits concert. The games room was organised for this. Thanks to John Lawler for the colour TV and Doug and Chris for bringing their stereo recorders. This night was fantastic, just ask the owner's wife. She was seen dancing around the place with all and sundry and when the hubby came looking for her with a torch it was Kaye to the rescue. She buttered him up nicely and sent him off with a smile on his face and minus the \$4.00 he came to collect in visitors fees.

So ended another trip away. Special thanks to Robert Swaffer who called to the camp to see if his boat was needed each day. Infact he was there that often one would have thought he was staying there as well. After so many good trips of late we could not complain bitterly about the weather, but let's hope we at least get wet on the next sojourn.

THREE SURVIVED FIFTEEN DAY ORDEAL

The stranding of *Loch Sloy* occurred at five o'clock in the morning of 24 April 1899, on rocks off the southwest coast of Kangaroo Island. The vessel became a total wreck within half an hour, but it was not until fifteen days later news of the wreck became known.

Late in the evening of 8 May Able Seaman McMillan, one of the four survivors of the wrecked *Loch Sloy* staggered up to the house of a Mr. May situated some twenty miles from the Cape Borda Lighthouse Station. McMillan, who was in an exhausted condition, stammered out the news his ship had been dashed on the rocks and that out of a complement of thirty-four, including seven passengers, only two seamen, an apprentice and a passenger had managed to reach the shore.

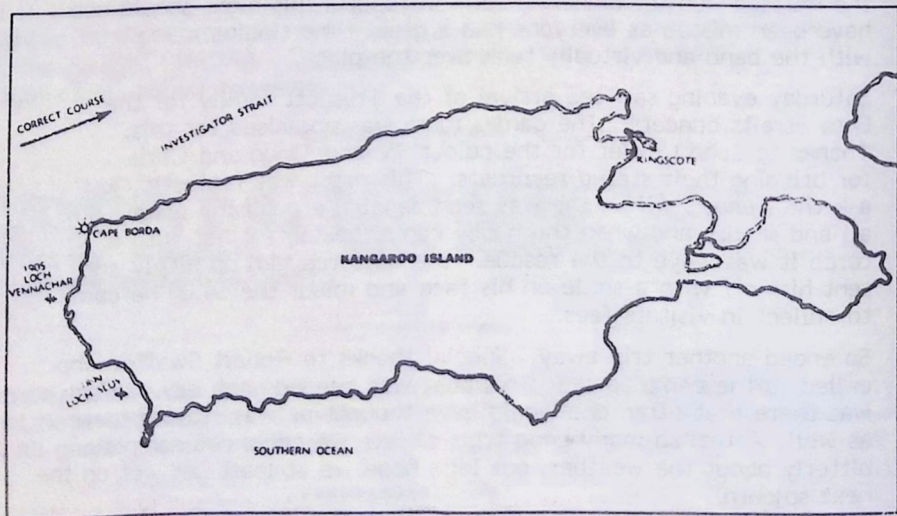
Mr. May's son, George, aged sixteen, immediately set out on horse back for the lighthouse to raise the alarm. Owing to the very rough country he lost his way in the darkness and did not arrive there until

nine o'clock the next morning. The news was immediately telegraphed to Adelaide.

Loch Sloy, an iron barque (ex ship) of 1225 tons net register was bound from Glasgow to Melbourne via Adelaide. On board were Captain Peter Nicol, Chief Mate J. McMillan, Second Mate G. Tweedie, Third Mate, T. Cleland, one carpenter, one sailmaker, two stewards, one cook, five apprentices, ten able seamen, two ordinary seamen and one cabin boy. The seven passengers were Mrs. Cartlidge, Captain and Mrs. Leicester, and Messrs. G. Lamb, MacDonald, Kilpatrick and Logan.

The vessel was carrying 560 tons of general cargo, including 3400 gallons of whisky, for Adelaide and 1250 tons of general, including 29,800 gallons of whisky, for discharge in Melbourne.

There was some doubt as to the ship's true position as land had not been sighted for more than eighty days. Why the vessel, which was travelling before a strong fair wind, was not hoisted until daylight has



never been explained as all the ship's officers were lost in the wreck.

The four survivors to reach the shore were William Mitchell, aged fifty-five, Able Seaman Duncan McMillan, aged twenty-two, Able Seaman William John Simpson, aged sixteen, first voyage apprentice; and David Kilpatrick, aged twenty-five, a passenger. They were all exhausted from swimming and were badly battered by waves and floating wreckage.

The heavy loss of life was mainly due to the fact that the vessel took a list to seaward when she started pounding on the rocks and the deaths were either caused by drowning or from injuries received by falling rigging. Those who were clinging to the rigging were either drowned or dashed against the wreckage of the barque as the masts fell. Others were swept overboard by the raging seas sweeping the exposed decks.

Following his rescue Able Seaman Mitchell described the circumstances of the wreck, and the privations the survivors suffered on land while awaiting rescue.

Mitchell said it would have been impossible for anyone who did not actually see the shipwreck to conceive what an enormous sea was running at the time *Loch Sloy* was hurled to her fate. The wind was strong from the southwest and the seas were pouring in tremendous billows over the rocks. The danger came suddenly, all passengers being asleep below at the time. Mitchell and Simpson were also in their bunks having come off watch at four a.m.

Notwithstanding the fate which faced them there was no excitement or panic on the ship, everybody was calm and collected, although it was seen at once that little short of a miracle could bring rescue.

As soon as the ship struck the life buoys were got out, and Captain Leicester with his wife and Mrs. Cartidge, climbed the mizzen mast to which the ladies were lashed to prevent the waves from sweeping them away. By this time everyone on board had secured a life buoy, and Mitchell jumped from the side of the ship nearest to the land.

Captain Nicol, in the best tradition was still on board when Mitchell left the ship. The mast to which Simpson was clinging was broken off by the force of the breakers and fell into the sea, but he was uninjured and was able to get ashore.

Mitchell gave a most graphic account of his long and difficult swim. He managed to grasp a floating barrel to which he clung

with the tenacity of despair, and as it drifted like a cork on the crest of the billows he saw great waves rising threateningly behind him, the surface being strewn with debris which seemed certain to dash him to pieces. He often had to dive under water in order to escape destruction, and more than once he felt some huge pieces of timber glide by him so near as to almost knock the remaining breath out of his body.

The rock on which all the survivors were providentially thrown was the only possible landing place anyone from the wreck could hope to reach. It formed a kind of shelf which, once a footing had been obtained upon it, became a place of safety.

The survivors found it very difficult to climb up the nearly perpendicular face of the cliffs. However, the sailors managed the climb, leaving Mr. Kilpatrick on the shelf below, where he remained for three days as he was unable to manage the climb. Eventually some blankets were salvaged from the cargo. These were cut into strips and tied together to form a rope. His three companions then managed to pull him to the top.

As no signs of settlement had been found a consultation was held and it was agreed that McMillan should set out and try to obtain assistance. As he was in rags with nothing on his feet, Kilpatrick gave him his boots and coat.

As McMillan had not returned after three days the other survivors decided to make for Cape Borda, the position of which they had some vague idea, although they were ignorant of the way to reach it. While painfully making their way along the coast they saw first a steamer and then a barque passing close inshore. These sightings assured them they were travelling in more or less the correct direction.

To keep body and soul together they ate anything that seemed edible. Among the food devoured was the native *Misembeyanthemum* (or pig face) as well as the roots of shrubs. They had a good supply of water for the greater part of the journey, otherwise their suffering would have been unendurable.

The pathetic little party had travelled only about two or three miles from the wreck when Kilpatrick became too weak to continue the journey. His companions were forced to leave him, their only comfort being that a good supply of water was at hand plus half a tin of fish and two bottles of whisky which had been washed ashore from the wreck.

On the night of 8 May, fifteen days after the wreck, they were cheered by the light in the sky of the reflection of Cape Borda Lighthouse. This light is visible for thirty miles at sea, but it is shut off inland, so they knew that at least help was somewhere close at hand.

While his companions waited hopefully near the wreck and then, in despair, struggled painfully towards Cape Borda Lighthouse, McMillan was making his way to May's settlement.

McMillan's story of the wreck filled in many gaps left by Mitchell. He said *Loch Sloy* left Glasgow on 27 January and did not sight land until five minutes before she struck the rocks. At the time he was on watch and drinking coffee on deck when he heard the Chief Mate call out 'Port Fore Braces' and then 'All Hands on Deck'. The crew managed to swing the vessel on to the starboard tack, but being on a lee shore she drifted into the breakers on the reef. The second breaker to sweep over the stricken vessel struck the mainmast. McMillan went to help cut away the wreckage while the Chief Mate went up into the rigging to chop away the main topmast, but the breakers washed him overboard. On seeing this McMillan went into the Fc's'le and got a lifebelt. He then dived over the side and tried to make for the land, but he could not do so as the breakers were all over the ship. He managed to get back on board by the fore-rigging where he stayed for awhile with four others, but the foremast went overboard taking them with it.

When McMillan came to the surface he saw two other men clinging to the wreckage. He was close to the vessel for some time and saw one person on a portion of the teak deckhouse, and also apprentice Simpson floating by on some of the wreckage.

Finally the breakers flung McMillan towards the shore and he landed between two rocks. He could not see anybody at that time and believed them all to have been dashed against the rocks and killed.

Soon after landing McMillan saw Kilpatrick on a flat rock. Another man then came in on the breakers. For a time it seemed as if the backwash would take him back, but he got safely on to a rock. From where he was thrown, McMillan could see several people on the mizzen mast, a lady passenger amongst them. Then the mizzen mast went overboard.

Apprentice Simpson came close to the rock where McMillan was and he managed

to help him on to it also. Simpson said he had been on the mizzen mast with the passengers, the Captain and the Second Mate. Simpson and McMillan looked about in the hope of rescuing other survivors but they could not see anyone else.

After having scaled the cliff McMillan set out to look for help. He cut his feet badly and had to return but apparently missed the rest of the survivors. After another night near the wreck he again went away for a two-day fruitless search, and on his return found that the other three had gone. He stayed near the wreck for four days and lived on tinned fish. Then he wandered about the bush until he found Mr. May's house.

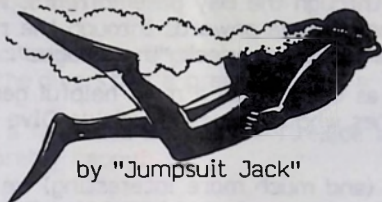
Immediately after the news of the wreck was received the Head Lighthouse Keeper at Cape Borda organised a search party. Late that afternoon the Second Lighthouse Keeper found Mitchell and Simpson crawling towards the Lighthouse. They were wearing only a few rags and a shirt. Their bare feet were fearfully cut, but despite their privations they were in remarkably good physical condition.

They had existed for the previous few days on limpets and two penguins which had been killed when dashed against the rocks at the Ravine, a local landmark. They had lost sense of time and thought it was three or five days since they had left Kilpatrick behind, but only had a vague idea of the location.

Meanwhile at Port Adelaide the Naval Commandant, Captain Cresswell, R.N., later to be the first Admiral of the Royal Australian Navy, arranged for the new steam tug *Euro* to be despatched to the scene of the disaster. The next day *Euro* with Mitchell and Simpson on board sighted the jib-boom sticking up on a reef about three-and-a-quarter miles north by east of Cape Du Couedic and about six miles north east of the Brothers Islets. Nine bodies, in a gruesome state were found washed ashore. Owing to the very rugged country it was not until 18 May that Kilpatrick's body was found about five miles north of the wreck.

Unfortunately the wreck of *Loch Sloy* was not the last 'Loch' line disaster. In 1905 *Loch Vennachar*, also bound from Glasgow to Melbourne via Adelaide, was lost with all hands between Cape Bedout and Cape Borda. She still had accommodation for a few passengers but was not carrying any at the time. One of the apprentices on her was J. H. Pearce, whose father Tom Pearce, survived the *Loch Ard* wreck in 1878.

DIVE REPORT WARRICK'S DIVE CHARTER



by "Jumpsuit Jack"

Our first V.S.A.G. - Warrick McDonald dive charter eventuated on Sunday May 18th.

Don Abell and Daryl Whitehill met at my place for the trio trip and the trusty Ford of yours truly with 3 up, scuba gear and 7 tanks handled the journey down to Sorrento and back in great style.

Driving along the foreshore through Dromana the north westerly which seemed to be nothing short of a gale force had white caps on the bay way back to Melbourne. Not the most encouraging conditions for diving you might say.

After a quick cuppa at Marty's we drove back to the Sorrento Pier to a gathering of wind blown gents looking very worried and doubtful about diving conditions.

A "never say die" Johnny Goulding with advisers in tow headed for the cliffs to check conditions sea side - "flat as a tack" came the report (or was it a similar phrase!?)

Club President, Alex Talay at the wheel of his Burgundy Beauty arrived close to time with Mick Jeacle and Pat Reynolds making up a trio of guys looking very keen for diving action.

Mick's crew of Geoff and Reece Birtles and Doug Catherill had deserted him on Saturday and Mick opted for a big boat ride - it made our day to have the "Big Fella" with us.

Our skipper for the day was our good friend and V.S.A.G. member Gary Thorn. Any doubts about the diving conditions were quickly dissolved and no suggestion from Gary that the weather was against us for diving - like straight from the lip "we're goin' so let's get goin!"

Pier barrier down, a "Le Mans" type rush to the Pier end, cars emptied boat loaded and we're off.

After a near drowning from waves crashing over the bow as the big boat ploughed slowly through the Bay past Sorrento, we found calmer conditions from around Portsea onwards through the rip to our first dive sight, the coastal freighter wreck "the Coogee".

Assisting Gary Thorn as deckie was a most helpful gentlemen in the person of Warren James who manages Warrick's Dive Shop at Dandenong.

In addition to Warren (and much more interesting) we enjoyed the company of a very charming young lady Christine Riley. Christine is relatively new to diving but despite this she is currently under training for her Dive Master (dive mistress!?) Certificate and later this year is to work on the famous "Reef Explorer".

Surprising the clone type comments had been fairly minimal but around the time Christine put her vocals to work about buddies, bottom time deco etc. it all got to much for Mick who offered his version of the instruction i.e. "now buddy up, get into the drink and when you hit bottom - separate!!!!" Christine was shocked beyond belief but I noticed Gary Thorn had a big grin on his face. Don Abell could not contain his laughter and the rest of the team fell about.

Vis. on this 100 feet plus dive was quite good at around 40 feet and conditions at sea were in direct contrast to the choppy, swelly waters in the bay. These conditions remained for the rest of the day with just an odd light shower.

Back into the bay, four divers who passed up on the "Coogee" took to a drift dive inside. Mick and Pat first and your truly with Paul Tipping. Mick and Pat reported great territory and reasonable vis. and naturally Mick had his hand in and came up with a nice six pounder. Paul and I likewise had followed Mick over some unreal territory and whilst my (failing) expertise in extracting crays was in force, Paul did a great job on the buoy line.

An afternoon chill came on the bay but it seems there was some anticipation of this and as Gary did not want any "Thorns" in our side, out came a bottle of the Penfolds Club Port for all to warm up on - not bad for a charter Geoff!

Daryl Whitehill, Chris Bourier and Tony Tipping went in for a drift dive for around 30 minutes and all enjoyed the great territory.

By consensus we agree our diving for the day had finished and Gary urged the Volvo to get us home.

Without doubt the charter was a great experience and without exception each of the divers had a great day and a load of laughs.

In traditional style a few Ales around the fireside at the Dromana Pub left all of us pretty happy.

Thanks to Gary, Warren and Christine for looking after our interest.

V.S.A.G. will return.

MAYHEM AT WEST HEAD

Your Concerned President
Alex Talay

Some members may recall that a few years ago our esteemed member and friend Doug Catheral possessed a maniacal desire to be lost at sea.

Along with fellow member Gary Thorn he was involved in something very similar to the article reprinted here from July 1985 Baywatch Magazine.

This episode was only one of many hair raising exploits that these two got up to. Thank God they have slowed down a bit in their old age.

I suspect that Doug is Alf and Gary is Bill. Proof of this can be seen by the extra large whistle Doug slings round his neck when diving and that Gary is now engaged in clone charter work which he considers is much safer than diving with Doug.

HOW DOUG SURVIVED . . . BY WHISTLING IN THE DARK

Tom Delaney is a coxswain on the Port Phillip Sea Pilots' pilot launch stationed at Flinders, Westernport. Previously he spent many years as a commercial fisherman in Bass Strait, working out of Flinders. He is a keen yachtsman and finds his relaxation also sailing the waters of Bass Strait. Probably no one knows the waters around the entrance of Westernport better than Tom. Here Tom recounts one of many rescues carried out by him and other coxswains of the Pilot Service in the seaward area of Westernport and adjacent waters. Only some names have been changed to protect the innocent.

Late in the afternoon of an autumn tuck a few years ago, as I was about to tuck into a well earned meal, an urgent call came from the Westernport Pilot Station telling me that a scuba diver was missing off West Head. I was told to meet George, my assistant, at Flinders pier, and get the pilot launch "Alvina" underway. George introduced me to Bill, the scuba diver who managed to swim ashore and raise the alarm that his mate Alf was adrift, being carried out into Bass Strait by the tide.

On the way to the search area, Bill explained the situation. He and Alf often went diving in the area and observed all reasonable precautions when using oxygen tanks, diving from a boat. They had anchored their craft at the last of the flood tide, about 1/2 mile south-east of West Head, so that they could dive during the period of slack water. From their boat they had streamed a rope of some 40 metres with a buoy attached to the end.

However, they had not allowed for the phase of the moon (spring tides) when slack water is very brief and the flow of the new tide begins very quickly, with considerable strength.

After only being down for about three minutes Bill and Alf noticed the ebb was away so decided it was time to give it away and surface. They were surprised how far away they were from their boat and streaming lines and became alarmed when they found they could not swim against the tide towards their craft.

As the tide is generally not so strong close to the sea bed, they decided to dive again and swim for their anchor rope. They soon had the rope in sight, but they ran out of air in their tanks before the rope could be reached. By the time they had surfaced the tide had taken them beyond the reach of their trailing line, and despite all efforts could not swim back to it.

Bill was the strongest swimmer, so gave Alf his empty tank as it had some buoyancy as well as his inflatable life-saving vest, and told Alf not to try for the shore but to save his strength, until he got assistance. After a long anxious swim, having to head west first to get out of the tide then make for the rocks south of West Head and clamber up the cliff an exhausted Bill was able to raise the alarm.

Bill's story impressed me, which shows even the most experienced can get into difficulty and by the time he had finish-

ed, we had reached his boat. I was amazed at the strength of the tide indicated by the quivering anchor line and yawing of the boat.

Bill was most insistent that Alf was very level headed, would not try to swim against the tide but just drift. George and I worked out a search pattern to seaward, time being limited with darkness coming on and a northerly wind freshening to over 20 knots. After running out to sea and back four times with no luck we put a flashing light on Bill's boat for a point of reference. At this time we noticed the police helicopter had joined the search, which was welcome, especially having the use of its searchlight.

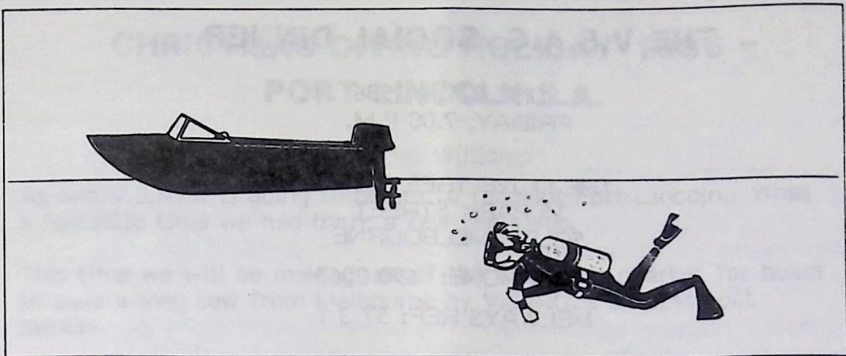
After a quick discussion with George, I decided to ignore Bill's suggestion that Alf would not try to swim for the shore (it's only human to make some effort to keep the shore as close as possible). This being so, we estimated Alf would angle across the tide, as Bill had done, and could be a mile along the coast between West Head and Cape Schank.

The "Alvina" radar was switched on and we made a run as close to the shore as it was safe to do so, checking our clearances by radar. We also noticed in the dusk, a number of naval ratings searching the rocky shore line.

After making three runs at varying distances off the shore, we were beginning to lose hope, as it was now very dark. The wind had freshened from the north even more, and the "Alvina" was spraying heavily, George used the engines to cut the spray and I thought I heard an odd squeaking noise coming from the radar scanner. I asked George to stop the engines for a listen, but the scanner noise was normal.

I was beginning to think that it was my imagination when I heard this faint squeaking noise again. I asked George and Bill to have a good listen, but did not hear it again for a minute or so, so started to motor up wind for a short while then stop again — no noise. We moved again a short distance, stopped and immediately heard a distant whistle blast. We could still not see anything with the searchlight (or spotlight), but about 30 seconds later we caught sight of a white blob in the water. It was difficult to keep this in sight but soon ascertained it was Alf's face bobbing up and down in the choppy seas.

We soon managed to get to him without losing sight again, but to my dismay



Bill had jumped over the side and swam to his friend. Now we had two to get out of the water! With only me to help, while George had to control the launch. It was very hard to keep the spotlight on both men, with the launch rolling heavily, and after finding one by a miracle, using an 80 cent plastic whistle, we now stood an even chance of losing two.

At this time George spoke on VHF to an out-bound ship telling the pilot we would be late to take him off. This conversation was overheard by Westernport Harbor Control, who immediately made radio contact with the police helicopter which came to our assistance by using its "sunlamp" and lighted up the area like daylight.

By use of a line Bill helped Alf up the side of the "Alvina", with my assistance, then I helped Bill up and waved our thanks to the helicopter, which possibly averted a double tragedy.

Heading back to Flinders jetty we were amazed at the apparent good condition of Alf, who had been in the water for five hours, his thick wet suit keeping him protected.

Alf told us that he had seen us pass him up wind twice realising we would never hear him against the wind so he waited till we were coming back down wind of him, prayed, then blew until his ears hurt. Most of the time he was facing away from us as the seas were hitting him in the face, or would spin him around to face away from the launch. He said the edge of the helicopter light went over him twice and he wished he had had a watertight torch.

We arrived back at Flinders to the applause of some of the other searchers, but it was nothing less than a miracle, with the help of a cheap plastic whistle that saved Alf's life.

A few weeks later I was commenting on this drama to Captain Ian McCaskill, and mentioned that it was virtually impossible to see Alf in the dark in the choppy seas. It was a pity his wet suit did not have the retro-reflective tape on it, as it would have made it so much easier to pick him up in the "Alvina's" spotlights and the helicopter's searchlight.

I know the Port Phillip Safety Council encourages the use of this cheap but extremely effective material on all life-

saving appliances, boats, and wet gear. People are stupid not to use it.

Sometime later, all Port Phillip Pilots had it fitted to their wet weather clothing, and there have been some good articles and illustrations on it in "Baywatch".

The Port Phillip Safety Council have done a great job in promoting this safety item and I am sure it will save many lives in the future, and make the searchers' job much easier and less frustrated at night. □



THE V.S.A.G. SOCIAL DINNER

JUNE 27TH, 1986
FRIDAY, 7.00 P.M.

THE OLIVE TREE BISTRO
15 PARK STREET
SOUTH MELBOURNE
TELEPHONE: 690 2063
MELWAYS REF: 57 J 1

NOTE: THIS RESTAURANT IS B.Y.O.

The "Olive Tree" is not just a restaurant - it is an institution. Fourteen years ago my friend, Karolos Batsilas converted an old five bedroom brick house which was used at the time to sell telephones into what today is the "Olive Tree", so named because out front is . . . you guessed it!

I first ate there just after the "Olive Tree" opened and it has become "my second dining room".

The "Olive Tree" exudes warmth and friendliness and quite often "Harry" will wander around tables serenading us with his wonderful violin repertoire. You have to see Harry to believe him - he's great.

The "Olive Tree" is one bistro everyone should visit at least once in a lifetime - great food - great atmosphere and who knows, the "Olive Tree" may well become your "second dining room".

Karolos has provided us with a choice of four entrees, six main courses, three desserts, coffee and after dinner mints.

CHRISTMAS DIVING HOLIDAY 1986 - PORT LINCOLN S.A.

by Des Williams

At last V.S.A.G. is going to return to fabulour Port Lincoln. What a fantastic time we had there a few years ago.

This time we will be making use of the local dive charter for boats to save a long tow from Melbourne by V.S.A.G.'s tireless boat owners.

Port Lincoln is only just coming onto the map as a diving holiday site. In most cases the area has hardly ever been visited by divers and as a result is virgin territory. Specatcular underwater scenery, abundant crayfish, offshore islands such as Spilsby Island, Thistle and Smith Islands and newly discovered wrecks.

Daily diving will be done from two boats, at a cost of \$25.00 per diver per day (not including air). We have made sure the dive masters understand we only want to dive the top virgin areas and islands. The two boats will accommodate a total of 10 divers (each two tanks) for two dives, so we can alternate days out or go every second day whatever suits the number of divers we have.

Personally, I am very excited about returning to Port Lincoln and will tell you more about the planned trip and show a selection of slides of our previous holiday there at the next general meeting on 18th of June. If you are interested in going to Port Lincoln with us, be sure to be at our June meeting for full details.

WHALE RESCUE

For the August meeting we have been lucky enough to secure Laurie Levy from the Whale Rescue Centre to present a film and talk on Whale Rescue

WINERY & POKIES WEEKEND

SATURDAY & SUNDAY 12TH & 13TH JULY, 1986

by Des Williams

This social weekend looks like being even better than at first anticipated. V.S.A.G. member Bruce Soulsby at Yarrawonga, will be making available his luxury river cruiser "Lady Murray", so we may cruise Lake Mulwala and enjoy a Bar-B-Q lunch on the Sunday.

The "Lady Murray" normally accommodates 49 passengers, but our group will only be about 20 strong, so believe me, Bruce is doing us a favour at a cost of only \$15.00 per head for the cruise which includes a Bar-B-Q luncheon. "Lady Murray" is a magnificent vessel (see page 20 of April "Fathoms") and is fully licenced. The cruise should cap off a fantastic weekend.

WEEKEND ITINERARY:

Saturday 12th July:

Arrive Brown Bros. vineyard Milawa at noon for a Bar-B-Q lunch (B.Y.O. meat and grog). Tour winery with Peter Brown sample and purchase wines.

Leave winery late afternoon and drive to Yarrawonga; 25-30 minutes. Check into Capri Waters Motel at Mulwala. After freshening up, we will adjourn to one of the services clubs for a meal and poker machine binge.

Sunday 13th July:

Rise late and board the "Lady Murray" 10.30 a.m., at the Motel Wharf. Cruise Lake Mulwala and enjoy a Bar-B-Q luncheon until 1.30 p.m. Don't forget the cruiser is also fully licenced.



*Directions To Brown Bros. Vineyard:

Head north up the Hume Highway, pass through Glenrowan and you will see the turn off to Milawa about half way between Glenrowan and Wangaratta. Allow yourself about 3 hours from Melbourne to Milawa if you plan to drive within the speed limits.

Those with confirmed bookings are:-

Hayes - 4

Talay - 1

Synon - 2

Truscott - 3

Johnston & Poyner

Williams - 3

Jeacle - 2

Scott - 2

Reynolds - 2

Finigan - 2

Chernichov - 2

Lawler - 1

Anyone else wishing to join us on this weekend should ring Des Williams NOW!!! on 551 3201.

+++++
UNDERWATER MOVIE

Martin Taliana will show an underwater movie at the June general meeting.

The movie is about a trip to Phukel, The Islands of Pee Pee and The Similans.

Martin will also show slides of Phangi Islands and Bangkok.



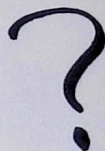
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DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR JUNE 1986

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event/Location</u>	<u>Dive Captain</u>	<u>Meet At</u>
June 18	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club		8.00 p.m.
June 22	Picnics Phillip Island <i>SORRENTO</i>	Pat Reynolds 789 1092.	Newhaven Boat Ramp 10.00 a.m.
June 27	Social Night Out Olive Tree Bistro	John Lawler 569 9851 <i>FLINDERS</i> <i>10:00 PM.</i>	Full details this edition of Fathoms
<i>JULY 6TH - FLINDERS -</i>			
July 12	Winery & Pokies Weekend & 13 Brown Bros., Milawa	Des Williams 551 3201.	Full details this edition of Fathoms
<i>JULY 20TH SORRENTO</i>		<i>MICK JUNGLE</i> <i>9:30</i>	
Aug 3	Flinders Area Reef Dive	<i>TONY</i> Paul Tipping 307 2027 <i>817 1956</i>	Flinders Pier 9.30 a.m.
<i>17TH AUG - SORRENTO</i>			<i>J.L. 9:30 AM</i>
Aug 20	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club		8.00 p.m.
<i>18th AUG 31st - SORRENTO -</i>	<i>DON</i>	<i>1152L -</i> <i>10:00.</i>	
Xmas '85/'86	Camp at Port Lincoln, South Australia Organiser Des Williams on 551 3201		
<i>N.M.C.D - DEC 7.</i>	<i>J.L.</i>	<i>9.00.</i>	<i>SORRENTO</i>
<i>N.M.C.D - OCT 19</i>	<i>A.T.</i>	<i>9.00</i>	<i>PIER.</i>

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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General holiday and flight bookings for all interstate and overseas destinations available with same personal service.

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