

# FATHOMS

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# FATHOMS

Official journal of the Victorian Sub—Aqua Group

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### Next general meetings

Thursday 20th December 8.00 p.m.  
Thursday 21st February 8.00 p.m.  
North Melbourne Football Club,  
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne.

### Next committee meetings

22nd January - Mick Jeacle's Place.  
26th February - Pat Reynold's  
Place.

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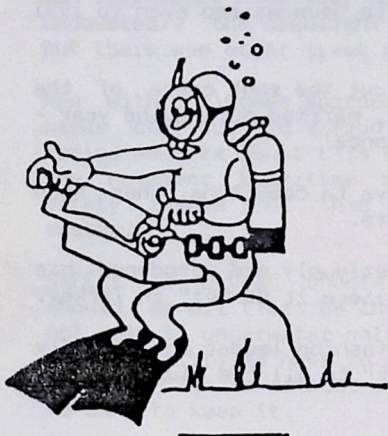
S.D.F. DELEGATES:

Don Abell  
Ross Luxford

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## EDITORIAL



Once again we come to the last issue of Fathoms for the year, and so it's timely perhaps to look back on the year that was.

Our first issue of Fathoms for the year included the wonderful and humorous article by Don Abell about the Nefarious Nineties. So let's see how Don's predictions for the '90's have turned out so far.

Alex Talay did not wait 'til 1995 to set a date for his marriage to Kerry. He had the whole thing completed and consummated by October . . . although

it might have been a different story had the grand final rematch been scheduled for the nuptial day.

Mick Jeacle is still to make his fortune another way since Annie refused to disguise herself as Sheena Easton . . . anyway - who's Sheena Easton?

Toni Rossi now misses the meetings, let alone the dive trips . . . and is still trying to sell his boat.

Pat Reynolds career as a Professional Decky went downhill when Alex got married.

Brian Lynch is still to return to diving, but that maybe delayed since he discovered QUADRATHALONS - Lynchy reckons the triathalons were getting too easy.

Don's prediction for Doug Catherall is pretty accurate. Doug recently heard a rumour that his money belt which was stolen in China in 1989 was last seen in Thailand - so he's just about to let loose in Bangkok in search for his lost jewels.

Rae Lawson and Amanda Tutton seem not to have waited even to 1991 to retire.

Fiona Bruce in an endeavour to find out the root cause of the illnesses she studied at the VD clinic, married during the year - what people will do in the name of science!

John Lawler, besides finding 1001 ways to cook tuna, has been active in a range of consulting pursuits.

Jack Namiota took Don's prediction seriously and produced his first special program of "Namiota's Believe It Or Not" in Turkey.

Tony Tipping still stands apart as a fashion leader and proudly wears his label "Dressed By Mr. Chemist" to all the Club's social functions.

Paul Tipping has survived the year at Workcare and whilst he has not increased his family at this stage - he can't wait for them to start work and make a claim.

Paul Sier's career as a TV evangelist is still to come. Somewhere Paul there must be some believers.

Barry Truscott made so much money from his building projects at Tipping's that he could afford to buy a Japanese car.

Bill Jansen was seen going into a dive shop during the year to purchase a snorkel holder - the snorkel will come next year.

Des Williams driven by his obsession to find the Coramba has had it classified as an historic wreck. This of course will add to the interest when Des' film: "The Mystery Of The TSS Coramba - The Ship The Sea Sucked" is released.

Don Abell has survived the takeover of Touche Ross and since moving into new offices where the debit side is nearest the door is now getting the accounts right.

In retrospect the year has been another great one for V.S.A.G. Undoubtedly the highlight for many was the trip to Truk Lagoon - but there was other great diving and fun too.

Now with Christmas approaching and the Port Lincoln trip a few weeks off, our big season is on again - so it's also timely to remind members about this Club's motto of SAFETY IN DIVING. At the November Committee Meeting there was a discussion about safety issues and this Fathoms contains a report on diving deaths.

SAFETY IN DIVING should never be taken for granted - Safety should at all times be the number one priority and this extends not only to underwater safety, but boat safety also. Safety is a responsibility we have to ourselves and our buddies. The record of this Club is without incident for 36 years and that's the way we want to keep it.

As Editor of Fathoms, I would like to thank all those members who have contributed articles for the magazine during the year - my thanks also to Alex Talay, Mick & Annie Jeacle and more recently John Lawler, for their assistance in the production and distribution of Fathoms.

May I take this opportunity to wish all members and their families a happy Christmas and an excellent year in 1991.

John Goulding  
Editor

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**PLEASE NOTE**

THERE IS NO GENERAL MEETING IN JANUARY.

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## V.S.A.G. COMMITTEE NEWS

The following is a summary of main points raised during the October and November Committee Meetings.

- \* Mick Wright - Police Search & Rescue Diver, will be Guest Speaker at the February General Meeting (see separate notice).
- \* A new hotel is to be sought for the pre-meeting dinners - owing to very slow service at the Black Prince. Details will be announced later.  
  
In the meantime, meet at the Black Prince.
- \* Insurance of the Club compressor is being investigated by Pat Reynolds.
- \* Club funds as at 20th November were \$9,757.93.
- \* Membership applications were accepted from:-  
  
Murray Black, Marita Wilcox, David Cowan.
- \* Applications pending were received from:-  
  
Herb Epstein, John Johnson, Brad McLuckie, Will Bateman, Ann Murphy, Priya Cardinaletti.
- \* The following members are to be struck off the mailing list for failure to pay annual subscriptions:-  
  
Terry Brooks, Daryl Whitehall, Chris Brourier.
- \* John Lawler is to review Safety Procedures and submit revised proposal to the Committee.
- \* Ross Luxford raised matters in relation to boat launching procedures across beaches. Ross will obtain quotes on tow lines and anti bog mats.\*

**LETTER FROM MICRONESIA AQUATICS**

Micronesia Aquatics, Inc.  
P.O. Box 57  
Truk Lagoon  
FM 96942  
Ph/Fx: (691)330-2204  
Alternate Fax: -2777

September 25, 1990

Bob Scott  
Wetsuits  
Factory 1  
14 Kempson  
Court Keysborough  
Melborne, Australia 3173

Dear Bob:

Thanks for the phone call. I have been out of the dive shop for several days and wasn't aware of what had been going on. The wet suit and boots were dropped off by the gentleman. Arimichy "Stingray" really likes it - which is a real understatement! He adores it and certainly appreciates your kindness in sending it to him.

I also want to thank you for being thoughtful and giving Stingray a gift which he not only appreciates for its practical value when he dives, but for telling him with this gift that you appreciate his good work and his professional attention to you and the group. This is a much better statement than my telling the guys that they are doing a good job.

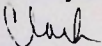
I hope you enjoyed your visit to Truk and that you will return, as you mentioned, and dive with us again. It is always nice to see returning divers.

We just launched our new 30' outboard powered dive catamaran. Lots of room for dive equipment, 2 camera/video tables for storage & changing film, fresh water rinse tank, sun awning for protection. A nice addition to our business.

Micronesia Aquatics philosophy is to try and remember that we all travel, and to hopefully treat people as we would want to be treated when we are guests in another country...and to share our underwater wonders with you in a style that is friendly, professional and environmentally aware. I hope this was achieved with you and the other divers in your group. Feel free at any time to make comments about our operation. We always learn from others.

Again, thank you for the wetsuit for Stingray!

Best regards,

  
Clark Graham



## DIVING DEATHS IN AUSTRALIA - 1988

by Sant Khan

This is a summary of a report by Douglas Walker on diving related deaths in Australia during 1988, which appeared in SPUMS journal in July 1990.

There were 9 diving related deaths; 2 involved breath holders, 4 were using SCUBA and 3 occurred on a hookah supply. The age range was 16 to 54 years. One victim died while spear fishing (post hyperventilation blackout), 5 deaths occurred in recreational divers and the remaining 3 were work related. I will restrict my comments to the recreational divers.

There is a depressing theme to the findings in the article; separation of buddies and lack of experience. Two deaths were associated with medical problems. One victim had epilepsy that had not been declared during his diving medical, the other had a viral infection that affected his heart. Both victims had become separated from their buddies prior to death. They may have lived, had the buddy contact been maintained.

This first case illustrates the stupidity of issuing an "Advanced Diver" Certificate to 2 divers who had successfully completed a total of 9 supervised dives. With the help of these Certificates they managed to convince a dive operator and a group of divers to let them dive to 43 metres. This was their first unsupervised dive. They were unable to find the anchor line, despite good visibility, and began an open water ascent. The buddy was aware of the victim's bubbles during the ascent and assumed he was close by. Halfway through the ascent the buddy realized he was low on air, inflated his vest and finned to the surface. The victim failed to surface and he was assumed dead. Divers from another boat descended to find the body lying at 43 metres on the sea bed with a partly inflated buoyancy vest. There was insufficient air left to inflate it further. Once the weight belt (35 lbs.) had been released, the body was buoyant enough to ascend. This case illustrates several points: an absurd system of certification; failure to check the experience of divers who