

FATHOMS

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VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FEB - MAR 92

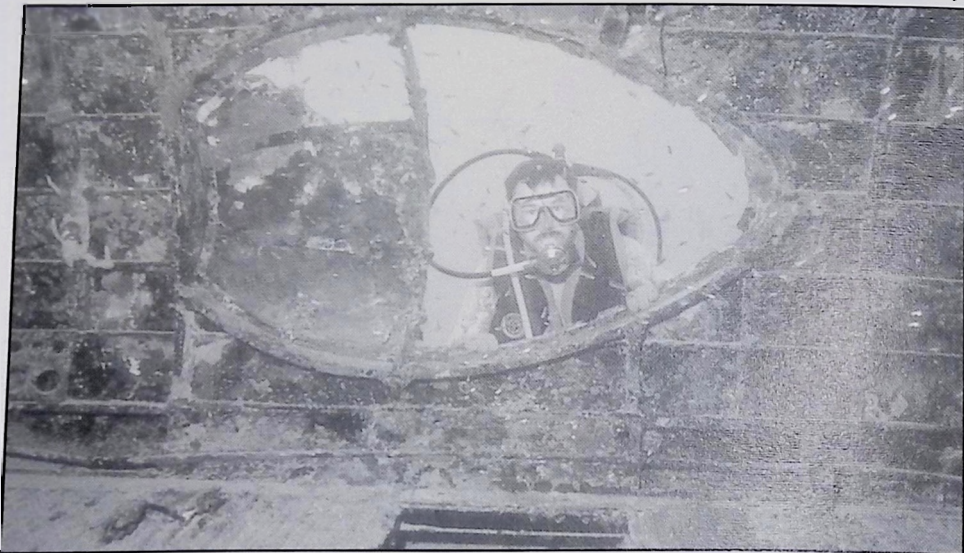
VSAG

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

These magnificent photographs are all examples of Des Williams' work taken on the VSAG trip to Truk Lagoon 1990.

I am sure you will agree that they are all outstanding, so good in fact that I couldn't decide what to keep or reject, so I've used the back cover as well and reproduced them all.

*Yours in Diving,
Alex Talay*



Front Cover:

Chris Llewellyn at Port-Side Gun Port. Betty Bomber Wreck. Truk Lagoon.

Back Cover:

1. Alex Talay with Ships Telegraph inside bridge of "Nippo Maru" Truk Lagoon.
2. Chris Llewellyn with lamp on "Nippo Maru" Truk Lagoon.

3. Chris Llewellyn on bridge of "Nippo Maru" Truk Lagoon.
4. Stern of "Gosei Maru" Truk Lagoon, divers from left to right: Neil Medhurst, Justin Liddy, Pat Reynolds & Bob Scott (standing), Ross Luxford, Andy Mastrowicz (back)
5. Alex Talay inside fuselage of Betty Bomber Truk Lagoon.
6. Stern mast of "Gosei Maru". Truk Lagoon divers left to right Chris Llewellyn, Alex Talay, Justin Liddy, Pat Reynolds and Neil Medhurst.

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 in 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 meetings

Thursday 20th February 8.00 p.m.
Thursday 19th March 8.00 p.m.
North Melbourne Football Club,
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne.

Next committee meetings

25th February - Alex Talay's
Place.
24th March - Mick Jeacle's Place.

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John Lawler

EDITORIAL



Welcome to another edition of Fathoms, and whilst we're about it, apologies for what will probably be another late issue. The fact is that having taken a weeks' holiday in January, I returned to a work load which has kept me fairly occupied most nights.

In this issue of Fathoms you'll read about the Narooma and Refuge Cove trips, plus other dive reports.

Whether you were in Narooma or stayed in Melbourne over Christmas/New Year, you would agree I'm sure, that we experienced one of the wettest holiday seasons on record. So hopefully the next couple of months will see fairer weather and good diving conditions.

Over the next few months we have some excellent dives scheduled, including the Pinnacles, Port Campbell and Wilsons Promontory.

At a recent Committee Meeting, Des Williams proposed that we make a concentrated effort to find new territory. Already one new dive has been scheduled for the Limestone Caves near Point Nepean, so who knows just what we shall find, if we start venturing to new locations.

For those who ventured to Refuge Cove on the Australia Day Weekend, the sight of the Mirrabooka anchored in the Cove must have brought back many memories. Steve Voros, the local Ranger at Refuge, bought the Mirrabooka after Reg's death, and for the past three years has been lovingly restoring her. Steve has cleaned her out, fitted a proper stove, and even has a radar to be installed. Where once V.S.A.G. members swayed and staggered around her decks

under the flying Jolly Roger Pirate Flag, Steve's children were at play, perhaps also pretending to be swashbuckling raiders.

I think back to the wild old days aboard Mirrabooka, and how the tranquility of the Cove used to be disturbed whenever we would arrive. I suppose many a visiting yachtie would wonder in disbelief as Reg, completely naked except for his hat, would steer Mirrabooka towards the beach, whereupon huge loads of camping equipment and other assorted items would be disgorged from her bowels and rowed to shore.

Not much has changed since. The spirit of V.S.A.G. at Refuge Cove lives on, with the Rosalia now the flagship.

To record our presence at Refuge over the past 17 years we have decided to make our own sign, which will be affixed to the boat graffiti wall next year. The idea is to use treated pinewood and record our visits since 1976. Any ideas or assistance with this project will be welcome. Please contact John Goulding.

John Goulding
Editor

RED WEIGHT BELT

MISSING FROM REFUGE COVE TRIP

1 RED WEIGHT BELT AND WEIGHTS.

If any member found this amongst their dive gear after REFUGE COVE, please contact John Goulding. Thank you.

V.S.A.G. COMMITTEE NEWS

The following is a summary of major points raised during the January Committee Meeting.

Apart from extending the Dive Calendar, the Committee only discussed one major issue.

* 2 recent diving incidences which were of concern were discussed, and the Committee wishes to make the following matters known:-

1. All boats from which members are diving, must fly the divers flag (International Flag "A") AFFIXED TO A POLE, so that it is clearly visible from at least 100 metres whilst divers are in the water.
2. When diving in drift or current runs and using a marker buoy, the buoy must have sufficient buoyancy to remain on the surface, if the bottom end is temporarily secured to the bottom.

In discussing this point, the Committee was advised that on a recent occasion, a buoy that was being used was too small to remain floating whilst the divers were stopped to investigate a rock ledge. The result was that the observer in the drifting boat lost visual contact with the buoy, and when it finally appeared the boat had drifted a considerable distance away.

BUOYS SHOULD BE AT LEAST 30 CM. IN DIAMETER, AND THE TETHERING ROPE SHOULD BE AT LEAST TWICE THE LENGTH OF THE MAXIMUM DEPTH BEING DIVED.

SHOULD BOAT OWNERS NOT HAVE AN APPROPRIATE BUOY, A 15 OR 20 LITRE STURDY PLASTIC DRUM PAINTED RED/ORANGE IS SUITABLE.**

DIVE REPORT - DECEMBER 29TH, 1991

by Don Abell

Due to Sally Staddon's period of "confinement", I agreed to take over the onerous duties of Dive Captaincy - other than the taking of telephone calls on the night before.

My first task was to ensure that I was placed on Bob Scott's boat. Not only because of the proven Haines Hunter formula, not only because of the smooth power of Yamaha, not only because of Bob's "calm in a crisis" and competent running of his boat, but principally because Bob's was the only boat that rang in for the day.

We also had Doug Catherall on his last dive before his 2 month overseas jaunt, and Bob's friend Barney, who drove from Bacchus Marsh to dive with us.

A stiff northeasterly greeted us at Sorrento, so we decided to go to "The Heads" and take a look at the back-beaches. Now the end result of all of this, was that we didn't dive as conditions were bad all around the bay and the water looked filthy. Of interest, were the situations we observed along the way.

We stopped at the Portsea Hole and observed the commercial operators for about ten minutes. There were 3 boats trying to pick up divers in rough conditions. We tried radio contact and although we were not heard, we did pick up their conversation. It went something like:-

"Is there anyone else still in the water".

"Not sure - I'm still missing some".

"I've got some of yours".

"How many on your boat".

"How many did I say last time".

"I'm missing six".

"That's about right - I've probably got them".

"Okay, see you back there".

I hope the count was right when they got back to Portsea.

We progressed to "The Heads". As we arrived two divers surfaced right in the middle of "The Heads". We signalled their commercial dive boat, that made hard going of plucking one out, while the other literally body surfed to the dive boat from 100 metres away.

Conditions were rough so we got out. As we drove away, we found six other divers surfacing 400 metres away.

The first two having been plucked out not 5 minutes before a ship went through "The Heads", the dive boat came to collect the next 6 divers. The boat was the closest I have seen to rolling over in the waves in "The Heads". That left a "surprised" look on the faces of 20 divers on board, and also the driver on the bridge.

The weather conditions were worsening, so I am not trying to be too critical of the commercial dive organizations.

However, one of the boats involved at Portsea Hole was a commercial dive operator, who is loudly critical of club dive operations. As V.S.A.G. continually observes, problems encountered, are not exclusive to non commercial groups.

Personally, in all situations, I would prefer to be with the experience of V.S.A.G. both under and on top of the water.**

TRAVEL TIPS

No one said English is an easy language, especially to peoples whose mother tongue is other than – as this collection of notices from all over the world proves.

IN A BUCHAREST HOTEL LOBBY:

The lift is being fixed for the next day. During that time we regret that you will be unbearable. ■

IN A LEIPZIG ELEVATOR:

Do not enter the lift backwards, and only when lit up. ■

IN A BELGRADE HOTEL ELEVATOR:

To move the cabin, push button for wishing floor. If the cabin should enter more persons, each one should press a number of wishing floor. Driving is then going alphabetically by national order. ■

IN A BANGKOK TEMPLE:

It is forbidden to enter a woman even a foreigner if dressed as a man. ■

DETOUR SIGN IN KYUSHI, JAPAN:

Stop: Drive Sideways. ■

IN A SWISS MOUNTAIN INN:

Special today – no ice cream. ■

AT A BUDAPEST ZOO:

Please do not feed the animals. If you have any suitable food, give it to the guard on duty. ■

IN AN ACAPULCO HOTEL:

The manager has personally passed all the water served here. ■

IN A TOKYO SHOP:

Our nylons cost more than common, but you'll find they're best in the long run. ■

IN A COPENHAGEN AIRLINE TICKET OFFICE:

We take your bags and send them in all directions. ■

FROM A JAPANESE INFORMATION BOOKLET ABOUT USING A HOTEL AIR CONDITIONER:

Cooler and Heater: If you want just condition of warm in your room, please control yourself. ■

ON THE MENU OF A SWISS RESTAURANT:

Our wines leave you nothing to hope for. ■

IN A HOTEL IN ATHENS:

Visitors are expected to complain at the office between the hours of 9 and 11am daily. ■

IN A YUGOSLAVIAN HOTEL:

The flattening of underwear with pleasure is the job of the chambermaid. ■

IN AN AUSTRIAN HOTEL CATERING FOR SKIERS:

Not to perambulate the corridor in the hours of repose in the boots of ascension. ■

ON THE MENU OF A POLISH HOTEL:

Salad a firm's own make; limp red beet soup with cheesy dumplings in the form of a finger; roasted duck let loose, beef rashers beaten up in the country people's fashion. ■

IN A HONG KONG SUPERMARKET:

For your convenience, we recommend courteous, efficient self-service.

IN A BANGKOK DRY CLEANER'S:

Drop your trousers here for best results. ■

**OUTSIDE A PARIS
DRESS SHOP:**

Dresses for street walking. ■

**OUTSIDE A HONG
KONG DRESS SHOP:**

Ladies have fits upstairs. ■

**IN A RHODES
TAILOR SHOP:**

Order your summers suit.
Because is big rush we will
execute customers in strict
rotation. ■

**ADVERTISEMENT
FOR DONKEY RIDES
IN THAILAND:**

Could you like to ride on
your own ass? ■

IN A TOKYO BAR:

Special cocktails for the
ladies with nuts. ■

**ON THE FAUCET IN
A FINNISH
WASHROOM:**

To stop the drip, turn cock
to right. ■

**IN THE WINDOW OF
A SWEDISH
FURRIER:**

For coats made for ladies
from their own skin. ■

**ON THE BOX OF A
CLOCKWORK TOY
MADE IN HONG
KONG:**

Guaranteed to work
throughout its useful life. ■

**IN THE OFFICE OF A
ROMAN DOCTOR:**

Specialist in women and
other diseases. ■

**IN A PARIS HOTEL
ELEVATOR:**

Please leave your values at
the front desk. ■

NAROOMA - CHRISTMAS 1991

by Mick Jeacle

After a difficult year work-wise, I had been eagerly awaiting the arrival of 20th December, 1991, which date signalled the commencement of four weeks' annual leave.

Following an overnight stay at Eden to renew acquaintances with an old friend, we arrived at Narooma on Sunday 22nd December, 1991, to be greeted by glorious blue skies and temperature in the high twenties. These conditions continued until Boxing Day, and the warm balmy nights spent relaxing outside, or fishing from just inside the bar entrance, were indeed memorable.

Having dived Montague Island two years ago, I was looking forward to the 100 foot visibility, the kingfish that are brought in by the warm currents that are experienced in this vicinity at this time of year, and of course the sharks that frequent the depths.

The good visibility we did experience for the first two days, but the warm currents which bring the kingfish and the sharks, never came.

I think it was on Boxing Day when the rain first came. From here on in, the rain became very consistent, and the thought of those balmy nights aforementioned was only a memory.

In the next two weeks, the rain:-

- Encouraged Jack Namiota to put on his bicycle shorts in lieu of his undies.
- Enabled John Lawler to concentrate more on his indoor activities.
- Enabled the Taliana family to consume something other than fish for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

- Flooded the living compartment of my tent, and some others, on about 3 occasions.
- Reduced 4 divers to fishermen for the latter part of the trip.
- Reduced visibility to about 15 feet at Montague.
- Encouraged everybody, but Tony Tipping to pack up and leave early. Tony no doubt would have left early too, if he hadn't paid his site fees in advance.

Despite all the rain, there was at least one highlight for the trip, and one which I will never forget. Following the dive one day, somebody in my boat noticed a large school of dolphins between Montague and Narooma, and we quickly headed for them for a closer look. After about 10 minutes with them playing with the boat, I wondered what they would do if I stopped the boat. To my (and everybody else's) amazement, the dolphins stopped also and continued to circle the boat. It then became apparent that there were also seals present, and these two species seemed quite happy together.

No sooner had the boat come to rest, than there was a mad scramble by all aboard to don mask, snorkel and fins, and we were soon in the drink with these marvelous animals. The visibility here was around 50 feet, and it was fantastic to see the dolphins coming from all angles in groups of up to six, and to hear their soundings as they "talked" to each other about these strange forms around them.

All in all, we all had a lot of fun in some form or another, and the one saving grace, was that it was not cold. Had that been the case, then perhaps some earlier departures may have occurred.

Thanks to John and Andy for providing their boats, and to everyone who attended. I enjoyed the company.

P.S.: . . .

→

BEST QUOTE OF THE TRIP: Charlie Brincat.

Charlie: "What day is it today, Judy."

Judy: "Friday!"

Charlie: "Beauty! Weekend coming up!"

BEST PARTY:

At Paul Tipping's, in celebration of young Sophia's birthday. Went until all hours. Don't recall even seeing Sophia there!

LUCKIEST BLOKE ON THE TRIP: Craig Truscott.

Turned up unannounced (chip off the old block eh Bazza?). Had all the good dives, and pissed off home before the rain really set in.

THE MOST OUTLANDISH STATEMENT:

By my dearly beloved, who said "You can burn this bloody tent, I'm never going camping again!!" **

THE OCTOPUS REGULATOR RULE

Since 1st October, all V.S.A.G. divers must have Octopus Regulators. A member without this equipment will be given one warning, and will not be permitted to dive with the Club again, until such time as an Octopus device is fitted.

All guest divers must be advised that they will require an Octopus Regulator, and will not be permitted to dive without one. Any member wishing to invite a guest on a Club dive, must inform the guest of this requirement.

SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION NEWS

by John Goulding

The S.D.F.-V. held a meeting on 3rd December, to which Don Abell, John Lawler and John Goulding attended.

The only major point of business was the passing of a motion to enable S.D.F.-V. to seek Incorporation.

To mark the 30th anniversary of S.D.F., an address was given by Phil Webster, one of the founders of S.D.F.

Phil was President of S.D.F. for 17 years, and gave an interesting insight to S.D.F.'s activities in the early years.

In the 1950's, competition spear-fishing and spearo's were far more prevalent than SCUBA divers, and in 1961 S.D.F. was established to represent those clubs who were more interested in the non competitive underwater activities.

To be a member of S.D.F., a club could not engage in competition spear-fishing. In fact, many of the SCUBA clubs who were formed in the 1950's and 1960's (V.S.A.G. included), had extensive training activities, and S.D.F. actively encouraged training and the general appreciation of the underwater world.

The S.D.F. conducted several important projects including:-

- * A survey of the barque Polly Woodside when it was a rotting hulk named ROMA in the Maribyrnong River.
- * A 7 year botanic survey of the underwater flora of Port Phillip Bay.

- * A survey of the old warship Cerberus, which was scuttled at Black Rock as a break water.

The surveys of the Polly Woodside and Cerberus were carried out to determine the feasibility of their restoration. The "Polly" was found to be sound enough to withstand movement and dry docking, and eventual full restoration, but time and tide had already taken its toll on the Cerberus.

When diving first became a recreational hobby in the late 1940's, the only equipment available was self made or war surplus. Air tanks were made from war time oxygen bottles, and some divers even used the old war surplus re-breather kits, which limited their depth to 30 feet.

Phil described these early years of diving as a rare privilege - seeing things and being in places that no human had experienced before. Finding wrecks that no one else had seen or explored. Many of the relics that Phil and his colleagues recovered are now in the Polly Woodside Museum, and are well worth seeing.

Phil searched for the wreck of the Loch Ard for several years, but was beaten to it by Warrnambool diver, Stan McPhee. Both Phil and McPhee probably came within inches of the wreck many times during their years of search for this wreck, but the sea is very clever at camouflaging its treasures.

Phil also was one of the first divers to explore the sink holes at Mt. Gambier, and recalled the story of one farmer who claimed to have seen a water filled cavern as big as St. Paul's Cathedral. Thus exposing the "PINES" sink hole.

Apart from the fact that divers were expanding new physical boundaries, there were other boundaries that were also being challenged.

The first divers at Seal Rocks off Phillip Island did not know what the reaction would be of the seals, nor did they know much about the way that sharks would react to

divers. Imagine their pleasure when they found how playful and graceful the seals reacted, - and as for sharks! . . . Well some do and some don't!

Perhaps the strangest and funniest episode S.D.F. was involved in, in the early days, was a project to lay an artificial reef 3 miles south west of the Mordialloc Pier.

The Victorian Government financed the project and selected the area. It was up to S.D.F. to place 500 tonnes of concrete pipes on the sea floor in the designated area.

This good idea turned into disaster because the area chosen had a 3 metre mud bottom, and within a short time of the pipes being laid, they sank beneath the mud, never to be seen again.

Phil tells a good story, and having been involved in S.D.F. during the 1970's when Phil was still President, it was good to catch up with him again.**

APRIL GENERAL MEETING

The April General Meeting, which would normally be held on Thursday 16th, has been cancelled due to Easter.

There will be NO General Meeting in April.

V.S.A.G. INVADES REFUGE COVE

by Marita Wilcox

"To go or not to go" was the question, and after going, I now face the dilemma of "to have gone or not to have gone" to the male domain of the legendary Refuge Cove, on the good-ship Rosalia. I suppose I'll put this quandary out of my mind till next year.

The trip was booked out again, with a few people hankering for cancellations right up to the last minute. Some of us met at the Foster Pub on Friday night to unwind, relax and prepare for the long weekend! Rob McLaughlin, the dive operator from Port Lincoln, was initiated into V.S.A.G. by being ignored and left standing at the bar for 5 hours, before Justin made a motion to approach him, ask for credentials, password and money. Rob was quickly sworn in as an honorary member, when he told us he could organize viewing frenzied white pointer sharks through wire cages at Port Lincoln next year.

Later we all sauntered back to the motel for a few more quiet drinks. The room was right at the back, away from any other patrons. I was told by the winking, nudging, non-chauvinistic! V.S.A.G. "HE-MEN", that this was to give them more room to park the trailers, and not because they had ever created a disturbance! Gayle B., Rob and I listened to the boys reminiscing about previous trips, and I wondered whether the yarns that were being spun, were slightly stretched or shrunk! In the early hours of the morning I finally drifted off to sleep, to the soothing sounds of raucous snoring from the many bodies sardined into the room.

At 5.00 a.m. the red, bleary eyed mob, arose and somehow got to Port Franklin. Then, the 10 self-appointed Captains loaded the Rosalia, much to the mirth of the local fishermen. Shortly after 7.00 a.m., Skipper, Dave

Malchay, and his A-Grade!?! Decky, set sail, I mean, motor, to the mystical Refuge Cove. The weather looked promising and the sea quite calm.

Four hours later, the motley bunch of swaying, burping, swearing, V.S.A.G.'ers - give or take a couple of gentleman, and one green female (not me) - arrived at the Cove. It was a magnificent bay, with breathtaking scenery, quite unbelievable. You really have to see it to believe it.

The other V.S.A.G. boaties, Alex, Andy, Barry, Ross, Robert, and their crusty crews (no offence Gayle M.), cheered our arrival. Most had already set up camp, that is all except Alex, Mick and Pat, who were surveying the activities from the comfort of their personal floating beer garden.

The legendary "Mirrabooka" was moored in the bay, all the boys "ooed and ahhed" at how splendidly it had been restored by its new owner, Ranger - Steve Voros, (I thought to myself - golly! gosh!, what was it like before!). Only joking Steve, I hope my comment wont jeopardize my chances of using your shower next year.

One hour later Tent City was established, and we lunched a-la-carte in the Mess Tent, as did the sparrow sized march flies. To escape these god-forsaken creatures, we boarded the Rosalia and headed for a sheltered spot south of Refuge Cove for our first dive. That is all except Gayle B., who crawled into her tent, muttering something about some rotten pharmacist, and his false promise of curing seasickness by putting a patch behind her ear. She zipped up her tent and was not seen again until Sunday night. Anyway the dive was great, 40-50 feet visibility and good conditions. Those that didn't dive were steadily developing poor visibility and bad conditions.

Then it was back to the Cove, and the Compressor Party, which apparently was a customary, elite event. I chose to be excluded from this experience, and enjoyed wandering

through the camp sites, chatting to Gayle, Andy, Sant and Neville, as well as exploring the beaches, climbing rocks, and swatting march flies.

When the party finally floundered to shore, 5 hours later, in search of gastronomic delights, I was told by Captain Goulding that all who attended the ceremonial filling of tanks were definitely needed to supervise, aid and abet, the machinery in case of any complications. I ask you then, fellow members, why then was Peter F. and I abandoned at the tip at Tidal River last Easter, with 500 tanks, a mean looking compressor, no assistance and no experience, hummm!! . . . Slowly the air settled, no pun intended, and we had a yummy B.B.Q. chicken dinner, followed by frivolities around the camp fire, sorry, light. One by one we faded away to the land of nod, and slowly silence draped the camp site.

Suddenly, there was a huge commotion in the Mess Tent. I thought, who on earth would be desperate enough to raid our supplies!! Charlie and I armed ourselves with torches, and tentatively investigated. We surrounded the beast in the corner of the tent, Charlie was about to pounce, but the wombat ignored us and continued rummaging through the food. Charlie coaxed him to take the bean salad, the spam, or any of the vintage rusty cans, but the wombat took no notice, and snatched some bread and slowly waddled off into the night. We all settled down again, and silence fell. Then a blood curdling scream, followed by a deep grunt pierced the night, the result of a cheeky possum, looking for a bed in my tent. - What next!! Yes, you guessed it . . . RAIN . . . Someone yelled out . . . "Oh No . . . its Narooma revisited . . ." I wondered if I'd ever get to sleep, and Malcolm Fraser's quote - "Life wasn't meant to be easy", lingered in my mind.

We woke to a pleasant, sunny Sunday morning, and a gourmet breakfast, consisting of a choice of croissants, tropical fruits, freshly squeezed juice, cereal, bacon, eggs, flap jacks and sausages. Strangely enough everyone chose sausages!! As soon as the march flies appeared we disappeared, onto the boats and off down the coast.

Some chose to dive, the Pinnacle, Forty Foot Rocks, or in little sheltered bays, but the rugged lot on the Rosalia settled for a dive near the lighthouse. It was another pleasant dive in mild conditions, and most came up smiling.

A few of the boats joined us for lunch to exchange yarns and beverages. The major topic of conversation was the varying levels of air in the tanks, and the Compressor Party experts were put under pressure to explain. After radio conference, they came to the conclusion that some goblins had moved the fill marks on the machine, and therefore no one was to blame. Hmmm!!

On the way back the Tasmanian Seacat passed us, and as they were quite close some passengers waved. This was just enough to encourage some uncouth members of the Rosalia to climb onto the bow and bare all . . . a truly revealing experience, but nothing to brag about.

Back at camp, Neville, Sant, Gayle, myself, and a person who prefers to remain anonymous, committed sacrilege, by cautiously opening every historical can of food. After scrutinizing the contents, we arranged a smorgasbord of culinary confusion, heavily disguised by a fresh salad. The aroma of the sizzling steaks and onions lured the hungry mob, and to our surprise all but the ancient bean salad was devoured. Thanks boys for your help.

It was a beautiful night, so quite a few of us went bush-walking. The scenery and views are certainly spectacular, the air fresh, and the millions of stars were awesome. Paul Sier claimed the stars overwhelmed him into a trance like state, I think it was because he did a nose dive off a rock.

Later that evening, about 20 of the 29 V.S.A.G.'ers gathered around the camp light for joke night. Paul x 2, Bill Hayes, Mick, and a few others had us in stitches. Leo's 14 year old son, Andrew, the birthday boy, finished the evening with eyes as big as saucers, his jaw dragging on the ground, and a smile the size of Luna Park. His

father was quite overcome, and succumbing to the rigors of the day found a comfy, but sticky spot, between the car fridges, where he rested in peace till daybreak.

Monday morning, Tent City was raised to the ground. The weather was the best it had been all weekend (typical), so we quickly headed off for our last dive. The Rosalia mob dived under Cook Rock in Refuge Cove, it was excellent, great visibility and conditions. John G. had fun feeding fish with sea urchins, and Leo became captivated by a moray eel, feeding and filming it for over an hour. While we waited for his return, John G. swam ashore in search of the bat cave, believed to be hidden behind Cook Rock. He thrashed through the scrub, and scaled the rocks, just like Indiana Jones, but his retreat was swift, as he plunged Tarzan style from the cliff edge into the water, with a frenzied swarm of march flies in pursuit. Maybe next year someone will find the bat cave and be pursued by them.

Shortly after it was time to leave, and we nostalgically bid our farewell, to Steve, the Mirrabooka, and this magic bay for the 17th year. While on the voyage back, we managed to gorge ourselves with every morsel of food and drink that was left, finishing just as the ocean became wild and stormy. This certainly sorted the men from the boys. Gayle and I could tell this by the way some of them asked us to "please pass the bucket - Mum!"

On arriving at the Port Franklin Wharf, a 50 foot trawler unloading its catch of a school shark, make it nearly impossible for Dave to birth. But, with great skill and dexterity, he turned Rosalia 180°, in a series of manoeuvres, that brought Rosalia within inches of the trawler, wharf and entangled mangroves. Everyone was duly impressed.

Soon all were bidding fond farewells and heading off in different directions. Most were tired and a little seedy, but very content with another unique weekend of good diving, and fun times with new and old friends.

FOOTNOTES:

- You will soon notice that Paul Tipping has developed a nervous twitch, the result of a curse placed on him by a drenched, fully clothed, sea monster, emerging from the depths, shouting revenge on the low form of life that pushed him into the drink. This sea monster bears a strong resemblance to Paul Sier.
- I feel that the next guest speaker for V.S.A.G. should be from an English faculty, as the language of some members certainly needs extending. Especially Paul Tipping, who successfully dispelled the rumour that lawyers are gifted with a superior vocabulary.
- The saddest face on the weekend was John G.'s, when he saw that his jumbo sized can of bean salad had been opened, thus ending his fond 10 year ritual of bringing this gourmet delight to Refuge Cove . . . NOT EVEN THE WOMBAT WOULD EAT IT.
- Just as John used to bring his trusty and rusty cans, so too did Justin once again bring his diving gear . . . but as Justin explained, It would be a shame to get it wet."
- For the ladies information, you don't have to worry about the strategically placed holes in the Rangers shower, because everyone can see you through the window.
- Steve, please take note, I have been promised that in 1993 there will be, flushing toilets, grassy camp sites, hot and cold running water, electricity, no march flies or mosquitoes, and leashed wombats and possums. This I believe, as much as I expect the flying pink elephants to ferry us to and from the boats. All I can say is . . . I must re-read paragraph one . . .**