FATHOMS

Registered for posting as a publication category B Reg. No. VBH 2101



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VSAG VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP OCT-NOV 92

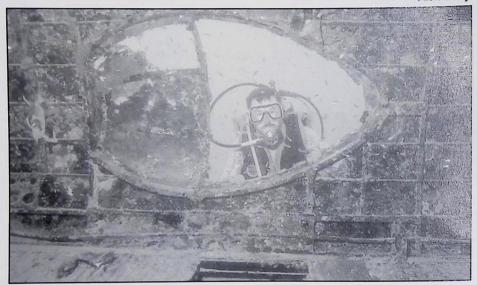
VSAG

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:

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

- Chris Llewellyn on bridge of "Nippo Maru" Truk Lagoon.
 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.
- 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 tounded 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 organisallon.

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, triends 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 15th October 8.00 p.m.
Thursday 19th November 8.00 p.m.
North Melbourne Football Club,
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne.

Next committee meetings 20th October - C. Brincat's

20th October - C. Brincat's House. 24th November - B. Scott's House.

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EDITORIAL

Once again, we appear to have another bumper edition of Fathoms again this month . . . so thanks to all those who contributed.

Three of our members have recently returned from far away places and have contributed interesting stories on their travelling exploits.

More interest will be found in the "DIVING INTO THE PAST" stories, submitted by John Lawler.

The Committee Elections have come and gone, and the new Committee positions are listed on Page 6 of this issue. Whilst there has been little change in the make-up of the Committee, one surprise was the acceptance by Don Abell of the President's position.

As members will recall, Don had indicated his intention not to seek re-election as President. However, as in all good democratic situations, the majority rule decided that he is the best person for the job.

With Spring now well under-way, the thought of warmer weather has even inspired me to dust off my wetsuit and reactivate my exercise program. The Winter idleness has put on a few centimetres to my frame, and the thought of squeezing into an over tight wetsuit is not something I look forward to. The program I'm using is a mixture of bike riding, swimming and running. The latter I can do 2 or 3 times a week at work during lunch. Apart from the obvious physical benefit, this little respite away from the office does wonders for the mind.

In this issue of Fathoms there are details of some important events coming up in the Dive/Social Calendar. Please note these dates carefully, as they are events not to be missed.

John Goulding Editor

COMMITTEE MEETINGS - 1992/1993

V.S.A.G. Committee Meetings are held on the Tuesday immediately following the General Meeting.

The venues will be as follows:-

OCTOBER C. BRINCAT B. SCOTT NOVEMBER P. REYNOLDS **JANUARY** M. JEACLE **FEBRUARY** A. TALAY MARCH S. KHAN APRIL J. LAWLER MAY D. CATHERALL JUNE JULY J. GOULDING A. MASTROWICZ AUGUST SEPTEMBER D. ABELL

Members are welcome to attend Committee Meetings, but please notify the host member at least 24 hours beforehand. ***

COMMITTEE NEWS

The following is a summary of major issues raised at the August and September Committee Meetings.

Following the Club's purchase of oxygen regulators for emergency treatment, special face masks which avoid the exchange of "spittle" and "sputum" during mouth to mouth treatment will be purchased.

It was noted that these masks were also useful when kissing ugly women!!!

- Application for membership was received from Craig Truscott (a chip off the old block).
- Wine samples will be available at the October General Meeting, in order to determine which wines will be purchased for the wine bottling venture.
- Wilsons Promontory Weekend over Melbourne Cup will be organised by Pat Reynolds.
- Medical clearance for Leo Maybus was received.

It was noted that Leo first dived with V.S.A.G. as a guest in 1975. Now after 17 years his membership will be approved.

- Cash reserves of V.S.A.G. as at 22nd September, 1992 were \$11,288.87.
- The Dive Calendar was extended through till January 1993.
- The Club will again consider purchase of a Global Positioning System, which will greatly assist in pinpointing wreck sites and other precise diving locations. ***

THE 1992 V.S.A.G. COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The 1992/93 Committee positions were determined at the September Annual Committee Meeting.

As is usual custom, the outgoing President handed over the running of this meeting to the Vice President.

In a surprise turn of events, Don Abell was re-elected President for his fifth term.

Don had earlier indicated at the Annual General Meeting that he would not stand again for the position of President, however his re-election is a firm endorsement of his abilities in this position.

Other positions on the Committee are:-

VICE PRESIDENT - MICK JEACLE
SECRETARY - SANT KHAN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY - CHARLIE BRINCAT

TREASURER - DOUG CATHERALL
ASSISTANT TREASURER - MICK JEACLE
NEWSLETTER EDITOR - JOHN GOULDING

ASSISTANT EDITOR – JOHN GOULDING
ASSISTANT EDITOR – JOHN LAWLER
SAFETY OFFICER – JOHN LAWLER

POINTS SCORER - ANDY MASTROWICZ PROPERTY OFFICER - PATRICK REYNOLDS

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER - ALEX TALAY

SOCIAL SECRETARY - CHARLIE BRINCAT

S.D.F. DELEGATES - DON ABELL - JOHN LAWLER

The President suggested that a new position be appointed, which would be primarily aimed at membership recruitment. This position will be known as:-

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OFFICER - SANT KHAN

Sant will be assisted by Alex Talay and Don Abell.

The President acknowledged the excellent work done by Sally Staddon in her role as Secretary. Sally stood down from the Committee and did not seek re-election due to her new motherhood responsibilities.

The President also welcomed back Andy Mastrowicz to the Committee. ***

CLUBMAN OF THE YEAR

by John Goulding

Congratulations to Don Abell, who once again has won the V.S.A.G. Clubman Of The Year Award.

The Clubman Of The Year Award is recognition of the person who has contributed most, in many ways, to support and participate in the activities of V.S.A.G.

Don Abell has done this consistently through the past year, as in other years, which perhaps explains why he has won this award 3 years in a row.

Runner-up was John Lawler, who in his own right has been a worthy holder of the award, and remains a very active participator and contributor to V.S.A.G.

The Clubman Of The Year Award is not a competitive event. It is won by people who are "all rounders". They dive, they organise, they write, they help - and the result is they get a hell of a lot out of it.

CONGRATULATIONS - DON ABELL. ***

TONY TIPPING BECOMES LIFE MEMBER OF V.S.A.G.

by John Goulding

I have had the pleasure of knowing Anthony John Tipping for 39 years, and in all that time I have never seen a look of surprise in his face, when on the 17th September, President Don Abell, announced that Tony had been nominated for Life Membership of the Victorian Sub Aqua Group.

For the more recent members, Tony's current activity with the Club indicates very little of the past contribution that he has made, not only to V.S.A.G., but to dive training and underwater archaeology.

Tony has held several positions on the Committee, has been Clubman Of The Year on 3 occasions, and over many years has been a great organiser, helper and contributor to V.S.A.G.

He is a great diver and a good buddy to be with.

I helped him buy his first tank and regulator, not even knowing what such equipment was used for. Then several years later, when I wanted to go diving, he helped me envelop an activity which I now love.

Tony has travelled widely in his life . . . he led our first overseas trip to Truk Lagoon in 1980 and has experienced many diverse cultures. He knew what it was like to own a boat and have rat-bag divers scratch the paint-work off, as they in vain, sought comfortable positions on "Lil Ab".

Tony was involved in dive training, both with V.S.A.G. and other associations.

He helped people enjoy what diving is all about, and whenever he still comes, he makes the day more enjoyable.

CONGRATULATIONS - TONY TIPPING. ***

TAKA II

by Ross Luxford

"Taka II" is a Dive Charter Boat operated in conjunction with Cairns Underwater Camera Centre. On Saturday 11th, we left Cairns at 5.30 p.m., travelled all night, passing Port Douglas, Cape Tribulation and Cooktown. Arriving at 9.30 a.m. at "The Cod Hole" located at the top of Ribbon Reef - No. 10, with Lizard Island between us and the mainland.

We were into our first dive within minutes of mooring the boat. Giant Potato Cod, a large Wrasse, Moray Eels.

Second dive some two hours later; we fed the Cod, Wrasse and Eels, plus many hundreds of other fish. The camera worked overtime, and as always, the films are never long enough. We had a further afternoon and night dive that day on Pixie Reef - No. 9, Ribbon Reef.

The next day, Monday, our first dive was at 7.45 a.m. Clam Gardens - No. 5, Ribbon Reef, massive giant Clams. Our second and third dives were at the Temple of Doom - No. 3, Ribbon Reef. Very pretty dive site, biggest variety of fish.

With the camera I tried macro to photograph the Clown Fish. I think I ended up being the clown, they just don't seem to stay where you want them. We again moved further down the Ribbon Reefs towards Cairns. The fourth dive being at South Escape Reef, a twilight dive in at 5.30 p.m. and out in the dark.

The next day, Tuesday morning, we had a 6.00 a.m. wake up, dive gear on waiting for day break and in the water at 6.30 a.m. before breakfast. We dived Agincort Reef through a maze of coral, caves and bommies. Back into the boat, breakfast, moving further down the Reef and our last dive for the trip at 10.00 a.m. on Opal Reef. We were no sooner out of the water and under-way for the long trip back to Cairns, arriving at 4.30 p.m.

The boat, "Taka II", is a converted Gulf Prawn Trawler, as I just happened to spend a little time in the engine room and wheel-house a few of her finer points are:-

- OVERALL LENGTH 80 FT.
- BEAM 24 FT.
- ° DRAFT 10 FT.
- GROSS TONNAGE 200 PLUS.
- MAIN POWER 400 H.P. CUMMINS 6 CYL. IN LINE TURBO CHARGED INTERCOOLED ENGINE, FITTED WITH TWIN DISC NICO 6:1 REDUCTION GEARBOX, DRIVING A 72" PROPELLER IN NOZZLE.
- * AUXILIARY ENGINES.
- MAIN HINO 6 CYL. GENERATOR SET FOR ALL SHIPS POWER.
- TWIN INGERSOL RAND ELECTRIC COMPRESSORS WITH A BANK OF 6 TANKS AND FILLING HOSES TO FILL ALL 30 TANKS WITHOUT MOVING A TANK.
- PERKINS 4 CYL. STANDBY GENERATOR SET.
- THE ENGINE ROOM HAS A FULL WORKSHOP WITH OXY AND ARC WELDING FACILITIES.
- * THE WHEEL-HOUSE HAS EXTENSIVE ELECTRONICS, AUTO PILOT INTERFACED WITH G.P.S. SYSTEM: RADIO PHONES AND COLOUR SOUNDERS.

THE CREW:

On board we had a skipper and trainee skipper, engineer, two hosts/cooks and three dive masters (1 Japanese).

THE DIVERS:

The nationalities varied. 15 Japanese, 4 Swiss, 2 Finnish, 1 Frenchman, 2 Poms and 2 Aussies (yours truly plus a young lady from Canberra).

Overall the trip was very well run, a very professional organisation. The boat, the facilities, the accommodation and the meals were all first class, but the weather a little rough at times.

Maybe now after diving the reefs of Palau, Vanuatu and the Great Barrier Reef, I have seen enough coral for a while.

I took, and have got, some good slides to look back on.

After arriving in Cairns on the first Monday of the school holidays, we stayed right in the heart of the city and did all the tourist things, and a little work. Then Chris, Kerrilee and Tamara moved up to Port Douglas for a rest, whilst I went on this little diving excursion for 3 nights. 10 dives in $2\frac{1}{2}$ days on "Taka II", definitely not a restful holiday, it was all go-go-go.

It was great to have the next five days in Port Douglas to relax and prepare for the coming snow season. What all warm water divers should do - GO SNOW SKIING. ***

ANOTHER MEM BUNDY ARRIVES

For the second edition in a row, Fathoms is pleased to announce the arrival of another baby to a V.S.A.G. member.

Following hot on the heels of Sant & Sally, Charlie & Judy Brincat became the proud parents of baby Christine Margaret, who weighed in at 6 pounds 10 ounces on the first day of Spring (1st September).

As there is no fitting tribute in the:Tide Tables,

Dive Calendar,

or even my desk diary . .

to mark this occasion, let me just say congratulations to Judy & Charlie and welcome to little Chrissie.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED

by John Goulding

LEO MAYBUS

Resides: Mooroolbark.
Telephone: 727 1568.

Profession: Diver & Plumber.
Interests: Diving & Plumbing.
Hobbies: Diving & Plumbing.

Likes: Just about anything.
Dislikes: Ants!? (especially t

Dislikes: Ants!? (especially the Refuge Cove variety when mixed with

jam).

Partner: Carole.
Children: Yes.

BILL MAHER

Resides: Narre Warren.
Telephone: 796 6079.

Profession: Brick Layer.

Interests: Diving.
Hobbies: Diving.
Likes: Diving.

Dislikes: Laying Bricks (would rather lay

anything but bricks . . . How

about eggs, Bill??!).

Partner: Sue.
Children: Yes.

GEOFF HIGGINS

Resides: Alphington.
Telephone: 499 7362.

Profession: Aircraft Engineer.

Interests: Diving, Flying and Hiding

Sausages.

* Hobbies: Hiding Heidi, Diving and Trying

to Fly.

Likes: Living.

Dislikes: Being seated next to the test pilot on the plane he's just

fixed?!!

To Leo, Bill and Geoff, V.S.A.G. welcomes you to one of the great diving clubs of this country. We hope you will find great diving and enjoyment with your fellow members, and uphold the spirit of the Club of "SAFETY IN DIVING".

Not often do we have a visitor who has come along, as long as Leo Maybus.

I first met Leo in the mid 1970's, when he was a member of the Bass Strait Diving Club. Over a period of several years, Leo and I managed to fit in a number of dives and skiing weekends. In the mid 1980's Leo seemed to drift away for a while, but it's great to see him back diving with us again. - And now after 17 years, since first coming to dive with V.S.A.G., he is becoming a member.

It's great to see you make the commitment old buddy . . . but the bad news is . . . we're going to back date the membership to 1976 and make you pay retrospectively.

To Bill and Geoff, welcome aboard. V.S.A.G. is not only a great diving club - it's also a great club of divers. ***

FIRST AID COURSE

by Don Abell

Most members would have observed that V.S.A.G. has become particularly cognizant of the safety procedures which we all practise. For some years now, there has been an emphasis on the Club Motto - "SAFETY IN DIVING". The Club's record remains unblemished and I know we all intend that it will stay that way.

Some of the specific actions taken in recent years, other than procedural measures, have been:-

- Replacing the old oxygen cylinders carried by boats.
- Purchasing 3 oxygen regulators, so that 1 or more will be on every dive.
- Requirement that every member is equipped with an octopus regulator.
- Equipping 6 boats with first aid kits.

It will probably appear logical that the Club has organised for some members to attend a First Aid Course, to ensure that we have better than average skills available if ever faced with an emergency. Volunteers were called for at our General Meetings and 10 members have now completed the course.

Those who possess the new-found skills are Doug Catherall, Mick Jackiw, Mick Jeacle, John Lawler, Ross Luxford, Dave Moore, Bob Scott, Alex Talay, Barry Truscott and yours truly. I expect that on any normal dive day at least 3 of these members would be present.

The course is set by PADI, and was run by Jane Bowman at A.B. Ocean Divers. Members will remember that Jane and Warwick have spoken on first aid at previous meetings, and have always been supporters of V.S.A.G.

The course was held over 4 nights and was set in a modular format. The topics were not related only to diving. We dealt with:

- C.P.R. (Resuscitation).
- Choking.
- Bleeding.
- Shock Management.
- Heart Problems.
- Allergies.
- Poisoning.
- Injury Assessment.
- Broken Bones.
- Burns.

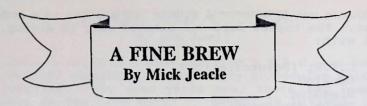
And many others. It will be a relief to everyone to know that we also dealt with snakebite. Statistics tell us that one person will die every two years from snakebite in Australia. We are now confident that the poor bugger will not be a V.S.A.G. member.

Jane showed great tolerance and patience in guiding us through the 4 nights of the course. There is no truth in the rumour that other clubs manage to finish the course in 2 nights.

Needless to say, I hope we will never need to apply the skills. However, it would be a good idea to make a note of the names of those who have completed the course. If you don't remember, they will find it necessary to thump you on the shoulder and remind you that, "I am trained in first aid and can take care of you".

Other members showed interest in the course and we can recommend it to you. If you speak with me it may be possible to have another V.S.A.G. group join a course. Otherwise contact Jane Bowman,

A.B. Ocean Divers, 237 East Boundary Road, Bentleigh. Telephone: 579 2600. ***



BEER, GLORIOUS BEER.

How our tastes and preferences have changed over the past couple of years. For instance, if someone said to me five years ago that I would be drinking N.S.W. beer in preference to the Carlton product, I'd have said he was mad. If that same person had also said that one day I'd be making my own beer, I'd have had him committed.

But making my own beer at home, I certainly am. Thanks to the excellent home brew kit made by Coopers Brewery of South Australia.

Such kits are readily available at supermarkets, home brew specialists and some other shops. These kits are not normally sold at licensed outlets, such as hotels and bottle shops, because they do not contain any alcohol until you, the home brewer, adds sugar and yeast and the fermentation process begins.

The beer kit comes in a large can which contains a concentrate of brewed malt, hops and water, and this mixture is known as the "wort". Instructions are included on the can, and also in printed form under the lid, together with a small sachet of yeast.

To make the beer is a very simple process indeed. Simply pour the "wort" into a 25 litre plastic fermenter, add up to 1 kg. of sugar, 4 litres of boiling water and mix thoroughly until the "wort" and sugar have dissolved. Add another 18 litres of cold water, pitch in the yeast and again stir for about 30 seconds. Put on the airtight lid, add an air-lock (to allow CO2 to escape) and leave for

6/7 days, by which time the beer will be ready to bottle. After bottling (60 stubbies) leave for one month to mature and then it is ready to drink.

When ready to drink, ring up Pat Reynolds and he will be around like a shot. He loves the stuff too.

Seriously though, it is the best beer I have tasted in a long while, this coming from a beer connoisseur.

Some of the advantages of making your own beer are:

- COST \$4.80 per slab.
- SUPERIOR TASTE.
- NATURALLY BREWED No chemicals.
- NO HANGOVERS.
- NO EXCISE DUTY.

As you may be aware, excise duty is calculated in accordance with the alcohol content of a product. As there is no alcohol content in the "wort" when you purchase it, there is no duty. I almost feel like I am cheating the Government, and boy do I love it!

I am now up to "Brew 25" since January of this year, and every brew has been excellent. Every time I sample this nectar I can't help but utter the words, "How long's this been going on?".

If anyone is contemplating trying home brewing for themselves, I urge you to do it. Don't hesitate to ring me if you want to talk about it. It really is the go.

Thanks Jonesy! ***

EUROPEAN (TAX DEDUCTIBLE) VACATION

by Chris "Coverboy" Llewellyn

Yes, another bloody travel adventure from Llewellyn! I know what your all thinking, but what else can I write about, I don't dive in Winter, come to think of it I hardly dive in Summer, but as the reigning "coverboy" I've got to put an appearance in somewhere.

It seems the only legitimate tax deduction left these days is business travel, so that's what the little missus and I decided upon. A legitimate business trip to an Equestrian Trade Fair in Germany, via London and Paris of course. Is there any other way!

It seems the Poms are oblivious to the fact that Australians don't actually carry balls and chains anymore. When checking into our first London hotel at 5.00 a.m. in the morning, we were given a quill and ink, and told to put our mark on the register. We were then informed our room would be available at 2.00 p.m., and to "take a pew" for the duration. After a quick explanation to the desk clerk, that if his sexual preference for men and his lack of parentage had anything to do with it, we left!

Based at a plush new one star hotel, we began exploring London. One soon learns the only way to get around London is to "tube it". The underground railway system really is a gem, its cheap, fast and efficient, and the average wait for a train would have been three minutes. Hardly gives one enough time to even shake up a spray can.

We did all the expected "toury" things, Buckingham Palace, Tower of London, Soho, Trafalgar Square, London Zoo, etc. etc., but amongst all this mundane stuff, two very significant discoveries were made. The British Museum houses a most famous document, from which the very cornerstone of English law is based, the "Magna Carta".

Whilst reading this document I was filled with emotion to see specifically mentioned, the name of the last true Welsh Prince, and you guessed it, none other than a Mr. Llewellyn.

Now before you start addressing me as Sir, there is another equally as startling a fact that came to light, during our personally escorted "Jack The Ripper" Tour of the seedy Whitechapel murder sites, it was revealed that the surgeon that attended to the bodies of those unfortunate working girls all those years ago was, need I say - yes, give the man a candy, a Mr. Llewellyn!!!

I haven't quite figured out the connection as yet, but I'm sure the above will almost surely rocket me to cult status around the Club, maybe even decky on Alex Talay's motor launch!

Paris was our next stop and having had some past experience with the frogs at New Caledonia we were prepared, I had my 25 word English to French translator, Aussie flag and a big sign "I hate Poms".

Well what a time we had in "Gay Paree", we actually enjoyed the French, did the Eiffel Tower, the Champs Elysees, cruised up the Seine and of course the Louvre. Well everybody knows that you pronounce the Louvre, the "LOOOO-V", so when I go up to this French looking guy and say "which way to the LOOOO-V", you can imagine my surprise when this Pom says, "Piss off you poofter bastard!".

The highlight of our stay in Paris was of all places, a bar called "Harry's New York Bar". This is the original Harry's, graced by legends such as Hemingway, Marlene Dietrich and now Chris & Rhonda from Melbourne, Australia. We got well and truly inebriated with the locals, and told them all the lies about Australia that they were dying to hear.

The next stage of our whirlwind tour was a five hour train ride from Paris to Cologne, Germany, which took in the north east of France and traversed Belgium from west to east. The French and Belgian countryside was a sight to behold, absolutely breathtaking, the only thing that ruined it, was Rhonda continuously waking me to tell me about it!

Cologne, Germany, courtesy of the accuracy of the allied bombers in World War 2, is a little drab I must admit. However, one landmark was left intact and it had to be by divine intervention, as the twin spires of the Gothic Dom Cathedral seem to tower into the very heavens. Once inside, one can only truly marvel at the architecture, the sheer height and the magnificent stained glasswork.

It was now time to get down to work, after all that's the reason we had embarked on this arduous and tax deductible journey.

Cologne is known as the Trade Fair City and has built an enormous infrastructure to accommodate the largest trade fairs in the world. We had come to attend a Sporting Goods Fair called "SPOGA", which is held in a huge complex with over 111,000 square metres of exhibition space throughout eleven halls (1st and 2nd floors), it took Rhonda and I all of the three days to cover only the Equestrian portion! "SPOGA" is in fact only one of a continuous cycle of trade fairs held at the same complex run by the Cologne Fair Company, who claim a total of 29,000 firms exhibit from over 100 nations, drawing 1.8 million visitors annually.

Business concluded, we bid Cologne farewell and winged off to the only place one could truly call home, and as I looked out over Port Phillip Bay not long before touchdown, a tear came to my eye and I thought, "Geez, that bloody water looks cold"! ***



THE LAST WELSH PRINCE "AN UNCANNY RESEMBLANCE".

"HIS MAJESTY" KING CHRIS HENRY VIII. A LIFE LIKE IMAGE ON DISPLAY AT LONDON'S FAMOUS MADAME TOUSSARD'S WAX WORKS.



MARTINA ACTUALLY CONFIRMED TO RHONDA SHE IS ABOUT TO RETIRE, SAID SHE'D ALREADY LICKED ALL HER OPPONENTS.



ANOTHER UNCANNY RESEMBLANCE. ***

EDITOR'S COMMENT:

Thanks for the great article about your recent travels.

It's too bad that they didn't arrest Chris for implication in the "Jack The Ripper" murders. And as for him being related to a Welsh Prince . . . Well, we're not surprised . . . As he's always acted like a Queen!!!

Rhonda, it's a great photo of you and Martina Navratalova. . . . Do you know that its only taken 10 years to put a man on the moon. - But in 40 years there's never been a man on Martina!!!???

IMPORTANT FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1. MELBOURNE CUP LONG WEEKEND

SATURDAY 31ST OCTOBER - TUESDAY 3RD NOVEMBER

V.S.A.G. will once again be heading down to Tidal River at Wilsons Promontory.

Camp sites and other arrangements are being organised by Pat Reynolds - Telephone: 789 1092.

This year, as in past years, quite a number of diving clubs will be down at Tidal River, so space may be limited.

Get your names in early to Pat.

Sites have been booked on 1st Avenue at Tidal River.

Payment of \$20.00 is due at October General Meeting.

2. V.S.A.G. ANNUAL TENNIS PARTY & HANDICAP MILE

22ND NOVEMBER

This very popular V.S.A.G. event is now in its 20 or 21st year.

Usually the Tipping brothers come out of Winter hibernation at this time, to organise this fun family day.

Further details will be advised as we get a little closer to the date.

3.

4 .

V.S.A.G. CHRISTMAS FUNCTION FRIDAY 27TH NOVEMBER, 1992 AT 7.30

This years dinner will be held at
Guilfoyle's Bistro & Gallery
175 Domain Road, South Yarra
Next door to the Botanical Hotel
Guilfoyle's is a delightful restaurant and is fully licensed.
A superb menu has been provided
and a guaranteed good time will be had by all who attend.
Cost is \$30 per head with drinks at bar prices.
Contact: Alex Talay AH 867 8492 WK 585 0277

AUSTRALIA DAY WEEKEND

REFUGE COVE

V.S.A.G. will be returning once again to the magnificent hideaway at Refuge Cove.

The 36 foot luxury cruiser "ROSALIA" has been booked again, and numbers will be limited to the first 12 people who pay John Goulding the mandatory \$50.00 deposit.

Total cost, including food and accommodation, will be about the same as last time (\$130.00).

Contact: John Goulding - Telephone: 829 2213 (B)

803 9262 (H)

S.S. THORFINN

by Bobby Scott - L.M. V.S.A.G.

The "S.S. Thorfinn" is an ex-whaling boat built in 1959, the Thorfinn is 170 feet long (52 metres), 30 feet wide (9 metres) and draft 17 feet (5 metres). I believe she was designed to handle very rough seas. Captain Lance said the ship could handle seas of 100 feet plus, which you would encounter in the northern hemisphere.

Guests were bunked into small but very comfortable cabins, 2 to each cabin, located on three decks, 13 cabins in all. Each cabin has two single bunks (one over the other), a robe, 4 drawers, a hand-basin and its own air conditioner, which believe me you did really need. Of the 13 cabins there was 1 cabin called the honeymoon suite, because it does have a double bed.

Food was served in the dining room on three tables that could seat supposedly 32 people, meals were quite delicious, varied and plentiful, and nobody left the table feeling hungry.

Between dives there are a number of things to do to occupy yourself. There is an 11 man spa, which I might add was the focal point of most of the activities, a small library with a selection of light reading matter, although there was no live T.V. there were plenty of videos to select from, albeit all about diving and mostly about Truk Lagoon. There was also a projector and screen available to see your most recent slides, which were developed by the crew whilst you were out diving. There was also wind-surfers and water-skis, if you had the energy after the diving.

Diving was done from 3 or 4 tender boats which held 7 to 8 divers and their guides. Before each dive, each diver was responsible for his or her own gear, in as much as, you had to assemble your B.C. and regulator to a tank and hand it to your dive guide on the tender boat. This could be, if you wished, up to 5 dives per day, there was no real restriction on the number of dives that you could do,

up to 5 that is, and where and what wreck you could dive, but of course, for each dive you did over your package number, you paid a very reasonable \$35.00.

The Thorfinn can comfortably accommodate 26 divers, she also carries a crew of 16 who sleep in other parts of the ship. In all, it is a very comfortable home base to dive from.

At this point I would like to thank all the crew on the ship, Lance and his wife, Carl (Splinter) the dive master, Peter and Richard the starboard side dive guides, the young ladies that served our food and drinks and tidied our cabins for us, the cooks who did such a marvelous job of feeding us, and anyone else that I did not mention.

Well that's about all I can tell you about the good-ship "S.S. Thorfinn" without going into all the technical data etc.

Next issue I will go into detail of the dives that we did in "EAT YOUR HEARTS OUT" Truk Lagoon. ***

FOR SALE

TIUSTEW SEIIGKA

AS NEW ABALONE LADIES WETSUIT - SIZE 2.

ONLY USED FOR 6 DIVES.

LYCRA LINED AND IN PERFECT CONDITION.

ONLY \$ 225.00

CONTACT NICKY ABELL ON 889 4415

DIVING INTO THE PAST

by John Lawler

The first article of "Diving Into The Past" in the last issue of Fathoms, has attracted a great deal of interest. So in this edition, we bring you some stories from two long serving members, Brian Lynch and Tony Tipping . . . the latter having just been made a Life Member of V.S.A.G.

Whilst we don't see much of Brian Lynch these days due to his involvement in triathalon racing, he was a very active member during the 1970's, contributing articles and being present at most Club activities. Brian returned to the Club at the Annual General Meeting in September, and despite having run about 25,000 kilometres over the past 10 years, looks in remarkable shape.

Tony Tipping needs no introduction to most current or past members. He has been a vital part of V.S.A.G. for the last 20 years, and his articles in Fathoms have always been a good mixture of interest and humour.

"DIVING INTO THE PAST"

by Brian Lynch

EASTER AT THE PROM

On Thursday evening we packed up our cars in Melbourne, in typical Easter weather. Once on our way the rain continued to fall, until magically just as we entered the Prom it stopped, for a while anyway. We found our site and also Bazza, Max, Johnny, Justin, Pete and Clara, who had preceded us. We had noticed glass on the roadway some eight miles out, and discovered that Frank Derksen's Renault rolls sideways almost as well as it goes forward. Incidentally, we had noticed a few smashed wind-screens en route. Frank's wind-screen was okay, just the car smashed up around it. Frank didn't have a scratch on him, just a few white hairs. Luckily he was wearing his safety belt properly.

We got the tents up just before the skies opened up again and went to bed. Throughout the night we could hear comings and comings, as other people arrived around us. The morning dawned and brought with it Trevor and boat, Dave & Pat, Harvey and family, Tony and Rob. It wasn't a bad day so we hiked up to the top of Mt. Oberon then ran down, quite easy really. The hardest part was forcing our way through the dense bush, leeches and all, but good training for one of our subsequent dives as it happened. Back to camp, lunch and then a game of soccer. Best to draw a veil over the result, except to say I can't smile quite as prettily as I used to.

Early to bed and then up for an early start. Out with the boats and around to Oberon Bay. Choppy but reasonable, and so we all dived in. The scenery is good there, plus a few crayfish and our diving was enlivened by a seal who came to join in the fun. Both Pete and I felt sick, and then I was, so we made it to the rocks. Whilst sitting there recuperating, we noticed Trevor signalling to us. We waved back and then noticed that Bazza's good-ship "Marie" was dragging her anchor at a fast rate of knots through the water and heading for trouble. So we took off, Pete for Trevor, me for the boat. We both had a rough swim and when we got to her we were both shattered. However, we drove back to the others and taking everyone on board in a rising sea, we headed back to the calm shelter of Tidal River where I, for one, was pleased to have a firm footing underneath me again.

Saturday afternoon was good. Warm and sunny with the smaller children bathing in the river and the bigger ones catching "lots" of fish. In the evening a bit of rain and most of the crew off to see "Bazza Holding His Own" at the Tidal River cinema. Sunday dawned fine, but with a hint of more rain, certainly a lot of wind. So it was a walk up to the top of Mount Bishop with Pete Smith organising a roped descent down the granite out-crops which overlook the road. So we walked up, small children too, little Paul certainly has strong legs. Arriving at the top, those of us late on the trail found Pete and Justin preparing to absail down the rocks. So we joined in swinging off

with Pete into space normally reserved for seagulls and mountain goats. Bazza didn't mind the rope work but didn't much go for forcing his way through the bush. In passing, some of Tony's and my skin is still up there somewhere hanging off the rocks. We finished up by racing down an old walking track to the road, meeting up with our rugged walkers back at the car park.

Then a good Sunday lunch and just as I was settling back for a rest. Justin and Pete were around again, dive at Squeaky Bay. Dragging myself up, I dressed and drove with Di, Pete and Clara to Squeaky Beach car park. No one there except Bazza who was also donning his wetsuit, then Rob and Max arrived, no Pete, no Justin. We then assumed that they had found a quicker route and were already in the water. pulled on our tanks and set off. Down to the beach. Up onto the cliff tops via a steep sandy slope, along the top, through dense scrub, then down a steep sandy slope. Up the other side, all done encased in suits, carrying tanks, although I must say at this stage that Diane, Marie and Clara were also giving a hand. Bazza and I were laying bets at this stage on the casualty rate amongst our diving team. We then spotted, miles away, the distinctive "Frenzies" of Justin and Tony. They were further away than us and in thicker scrub, which heartened us considerably and so we pressed on, finally reaching our goal where we slid down the cliff, and I for one, straight into the water.

I must again say that Bazza was dead right and we had a 50% pikers' brigade. Six of us made it into the water, six didn't, special mentions here to Pete Oakley who did the whole bit and could still open a tinner at the end. I must say that the dive was fantastic, we all saw a fish, the same one, and a lot of shifting sand. Then we trekked back again, but luckily by a shorter route, into the cars and home to an early, for some of us, bed. Then the night descended and so did the rain all night. Most of us had tents complete with running water. Pete Smith's bed looked like London Bridge at one stage.

It was comparatively calm Monday morning so we dried out a little, packed up a lot and began to leave at around 11.45 a.m., leaving Pete and Clara to their Lilly-Pilly walk.

Despite the in and out weather, we had accomplished more than usual, just getting Justin out on nature walks is a start in the right direction, good on yer Shirley. We got in 1½ dives anyway, a couple of walks, runs, one combat endurance task, a soccer match, a cliff hanging rope descent and we saw a bit of the sun, and this time Johnny had done us proud, not just near one toilet block, but right in the middle of three of them. Thank you Mr. Secretary.

Our special thanks to Bazza and Trevor for bringing their boats, Harvey for bringing his traction engine type landrover and who figured this time as our star performer, racing the big boat out of the river with "superb" skill and horn blowing. To Johnny for booking the sites, to Pete Smith as senior tour organiser, and to Justin who has now earned the distinctive letters R.S.D.C. after his name. Also many thanks to our gallant wives and sweethearts who feed us, carry our equipment and generally look after us in many trying situations . . . and now our cast of thousands reading from left to right:-

Max, Pam and family.
Dave and Pat.
Harvey, Jenny and family.
Bazza, Marie and family.
Frank, Pete (Smith), Tony Snushall and friends.
Justin, Shirley and Katrina.
Trevor and Johnny.
Brian for a day.
Pete and Clara.
Diane and myself.

"DIVING INTO THE PAST"

by Tony Tipping

THE WALL, RIP AREA - 1st May, 1977.

This article is going to sound like a plug for the private dives, i.e. the dives between Club dives. Sure enough, according to the weather charts on the previous Thursday and Friday, you could have bet anything you like on the weather being perfect for a dive - smooth seas etc., a high over S.A., but no such luck! A cold front sprung up from somewhere on the Saturday afternoon, and need I say more.

Sunday morning dawned, conditions on the improve, 4 boats in the water at Sorrento and 8 V.S.A.G. divers plus 2 ringins - not a bad ratio! Being a conscientious dive captain, I paired everyone off and wrote it down on official V.S.A.G. letterhead: Pete Smith with Dave Carroll, Kelvin Fyfe with Max Synon, Johnny & Bazza, two guys from another club (Mario and Glenn), with myself and Ron Coomber going in after the first pair surfaced.

Bazza located the Wall with periodic swells of about 6 feet rolling in, and with much fussing around 2 boats quickly hooked anchors. The dive itself was not a patch on my three previous dives at this spot, firstly because the visibility was only about 10 feet and secondly Ron and I did not find the actual drop-off! In fact, only Max and Kelvin got a glimpse of what we were there to see - not to worry, at the 70 foot mark there were several delightful ledges and caves, which provided the usual abundance of fish, corals and sponges.

The other highlights of the day were provided by Bill's defeat by "Lil Ab" in Heat 2, and last but not least watching Dave Carroll demolish 4 Four'n'Twenty Pies in 45 seconds! Well down "Lil Ab" and Dave!

Getting back to that mention of private dives, you ask Paul T. how it was on the Eliza Ramsden on April 17th, or the Portsea Hole on April 25th - one of these days we'll get better conditions on a Club dive.

THE LAST LAP - GABO, MALLACOOTA - FEBRUARY 1977.

By now everyone knows what happened at Huskisson and around Jervis Bay Christmas/New Year 1976/77, and I guess the brother has even had his say about Coffs Harbour and those fabulous Solitary Islands, but I'd just like to mention a fine place for diving - Gabo Island about 8 miles outside Mallacoota Inlet.

Paul and I had decided to spend 3 days or so on the way back from Coffs Harbour around the inlet and hopefully get in some good diving, as well as visit the relatives. Yeah, same old story, once across the Victorian border the weather was R.S. for 2 days in fact, so all we managed to do was get "Lil Ab" up the Genoa River for a couple of days skiing around Gipsy Point.

By the third day however, the swell had dropped enough to risk heading outside and across the famous "Bar" where many an ill fated ab boat had met its demise. We were lucky enough to meet a local ab diver heading out, named Paul Munro, so the coast was clear to have a crack at Gabo, and he showed us a spot which is first class for sport diving on the western tip of the island near the lighthouse.

Over the side and down the anchor rope we went, leaving our 50 year old Uncle David in the boat anxiously waiting for a snorkel. On first impression at 40 feet where the pick dug in, I guessed it to be a typical rocky kelp covered cray bottom like Flinders, but no! Slightly to the S.W. we noticed these huge boulders forming steep chasms and an almost sheer drop to 80 feet. It was down there we spent most of our 40 minutes in the water, where several schools of small fish hovered around us and I managed to photograph a couple of really unusual sponges. With 35 feet visibility, a colourful garden of sponges and gorgonias, and an abundance of fish - Drummer, Luderick

and Trumpeter to mention a few. I would consider Gabo Island one of Victoria's prima dive spots.

We could have guessed it, after another 40 minute snorkel with Uncle David inside the islands more sheltered area, the wind had whipped up and sure enough, it was a no planing trip back to the inlet surrounded by white caps. An hour later, thanks to Paul's guesswork and a bit of luck on our side, we gunned it across the "Bar" and through the white water to the safety of the inlet.

Okay, so Gabo doesn't have the consistent weather at Christmas time to warrant a 2 week stay - we were probably lucky cracking it for 1 day in 3 - but it's a worthwhile risk for a long weekend trip and according to the local ab divers, May and June provide the calmest seas of the year. I wonder where the V.S.A.G. Committee plan on spending Queen's Birthday Long Weekend? ***

IMPORTANT NOTICE CHRISTMAS TRIP - 1992

FORSTER/TUNCURRY Situated 330 km. North of Sydney.

Attendees at time of writing are as follows:-

Jeacle Family.
Mastrowicz Family.
Taliana Family.
Barry & Marie Truscott.
Alex Talay & Pat Reynolds.
Paul Sier.
Sally & Sant Khan.
Tipping Family.

At this stage we have two sites left, but I don't think we would have a problem obtaining additional unpowered sites in need.

However, I must cancel the remaining 2 sites by 15/11/92 at latest, in order that we can obtain deposit refunds.

I would urge anyone contemplating booking a site, to please do so immediately, by ringing me on the number/s below:-

MICK JEACLE

TELEPHONE: (059) 71 2786 (Home) 541 1880 (Work)

V.S.A.G. WINERY WANDER

by Don Abell

August often produces some of the clearest diving water of the year. If we can encounter a week of still weather, then the Sunday dive may be excellent. From September to November the wind and rain increase.

However, August can also be cold. If any wind is blowing, the surface interval between dives is no fun at all.

So just for a change we planned to dive into some of the Yarra Valley Vineyard and Wineries on August 2nd. Not only did it promise a warmer day with the hypothermia some 100+kilometres away, but also it offered a civilized starting time of 11.00 a.m.

A hardy bunch of Doug and Maxy, Sally and Sant (with Joanna), Herb and Robyn (plus litter) and Nicky and myself, met at Domain Chandon for a glass of champagne. Not a bad way to start a Sunday, looking over the vines of the Yarra Valley bathed in sunlight - albeit briefly.

We took a tour of the winery, built by the French champagne company of Moet & Chandon for a price of \$10 million excluding land, vine planting and wine making equipment. On Yarra Valley standards, this is a fair investment.

The winery is already exporting and plans to increase production 700 percent in the next 5 years.

We moved to Yarravale for the next tasting. If you like the wine, you can buy the vineyard and winery for \$1 million, the opinion was not very good on these wines. Interestingly, I put on the 1988 Cabernet at a wine tasting 1 week later, and a rough bunch of could-a-been wine tasters rated it as "not bad".

We moved on to St. Hubert's, which was probably the best winery of the day. We tasted the whites, moved on to the reds, and then the lady behind the counter forced us to try some dessert wines, a Port, Tokay and Muscat. This winery is now affiliated with Baileys, and those familiar with the superb dessert wines from Baileys, will understand why we tasted them all.

The extended tasting at St. Hubert's meant that we were late for lunch. The Grand Hotel at Yarra Glen was packed, so we had to wait, but it was worth it. The food was well worth it. I had a steak and mushroom pie that covered my whole plate and only cost \$12.50.

Sant and Nicky made their best alcoholic discovery of the day - fully imported Guiness. I confess to knocking off a couple of cans myself.

From lunch we went to Fergusson's and then DeBortoli's. At the end of the day I am not sure that we did them justice. Fergusson's had a good Shiraz for \$15.50, which the couldabeens also gave a "not bad" rating 1 week later.

We found a Vintage Port at DeBortoli's for \$6.00. Not fantastic but good at the price.

I was in no condition to check my watch at the end of the day. I crawled into the car and slept for most of the trip home. We made it in time for the awesome foursome winning gold.

A very pleasant day, especially for those of us fortunate enough not to have been driving. ***

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PORT PHILLIP HEADS TIDAL STREAM CHANGE ADD 1 HOUR TO TIMES SHOWN FOR OFFICIAL "SUMMER TIME"

TIDE TABLES

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Copyright Tidal Laboratory --FIAMS, Flinders University of South Australia ADD 1 HOUR TO TIMES SHOWN FOR OFFICIAL "SUMMER TIME"

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DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT/LOCATION	DIVE CAPTAIN	MEET AT
11 Oct	Special Charter Dive	A. Talay 867 8492	Sorrento 10.00 a.m.
15 Oct	General Meeting - Nor	th Melbourne Foo	otball Club 8.00 p.m.
	(Meet beforehand for Hotel, 415 Abbotsford		omebush
25 Oct	Wall Dive	M. Jeacle 059 71 2786	Sorrento 10.00 a.m.
31 Oct -3 Nov	Tidal River Wilsons Promontory (See separate notice)		Tidal River
15 Nov	Flinders/Cape Schank	B. Scott 763 6872	Flinders 9.30 a.m.
19 Nov	General Meeting - Nor	th Melbourne Fo	otball Club 8.00 p.m.
	(Meet beforehand for Hotel, 415 Abbotsford	dinner at The H Street, North	omebush
22 Nov	V.S.A.G. Annual Tenni Handicap Mile (See separate notice)		Cranbourne South Tennis Courts
27 Nov	V.S.A.G. Christmas Pa (See separate notice.	rty Details to be	advised).
29 Nov	Wall Dive	J. Lawler 569 9851	Sorrento 9.30 a.m.
13 Dec	Annual Treasure Hunt & B.B.Q.	D. Catherall 890 6493	Sorrento 9.00 a.m.

DATE	EVENT/LOCATION	DIVE CAPTAIN	MEET AT
17 Dec	General Meeting - Nor	th Melbourne Foo	otball Club 8.00 p.m.
	(Meet beforehand for Hotel, 415 Abbotsford		
27 Dec	Flinders Dive	D. Abell 889 4415	Flinders 9.30 a.m.
3 Jan	Flinders Dive	D. Catherall 890 6493	
17 Jan	Sorrento/Heads Area	J. Lawler 569 9851	Sorrento 9.30 a.m.
January	Australia Day Long Wee	ekend	
	Refuge Cove (See separate notice)		Foster Hotel











