

# FATHOMS

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

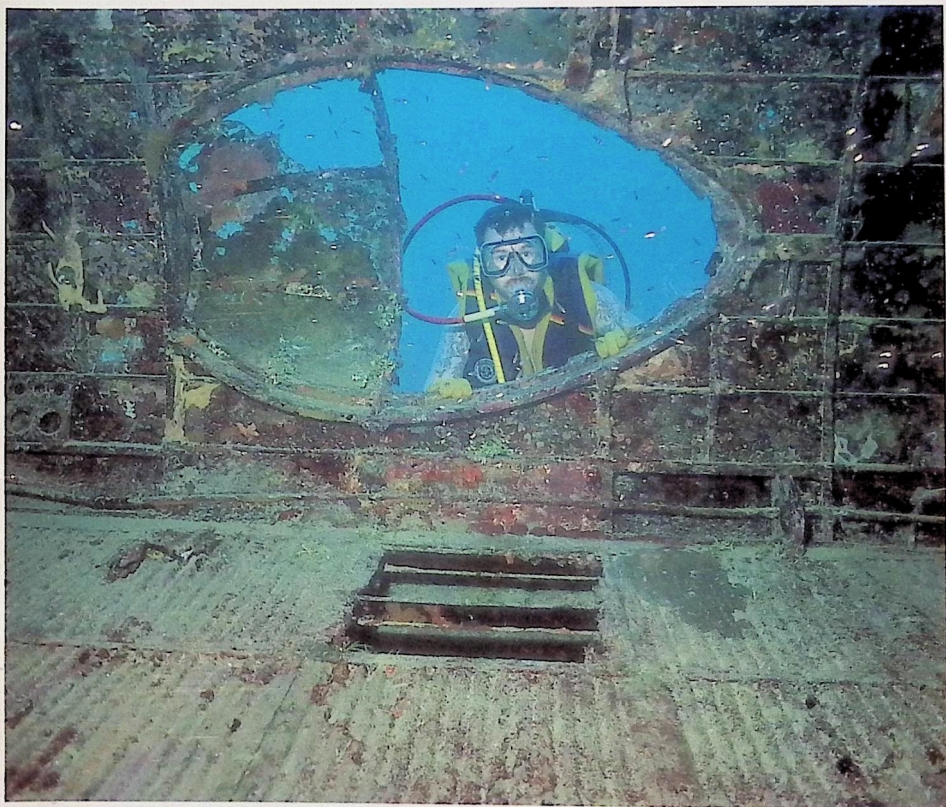
EST. 1954



Safety in Diving

**\$2**

If undeliverable, return to  
Victorian Sub Aqua Group,  
Box 2526W,  
GPO Melbourne 3001



# VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

JUN - JUL 93

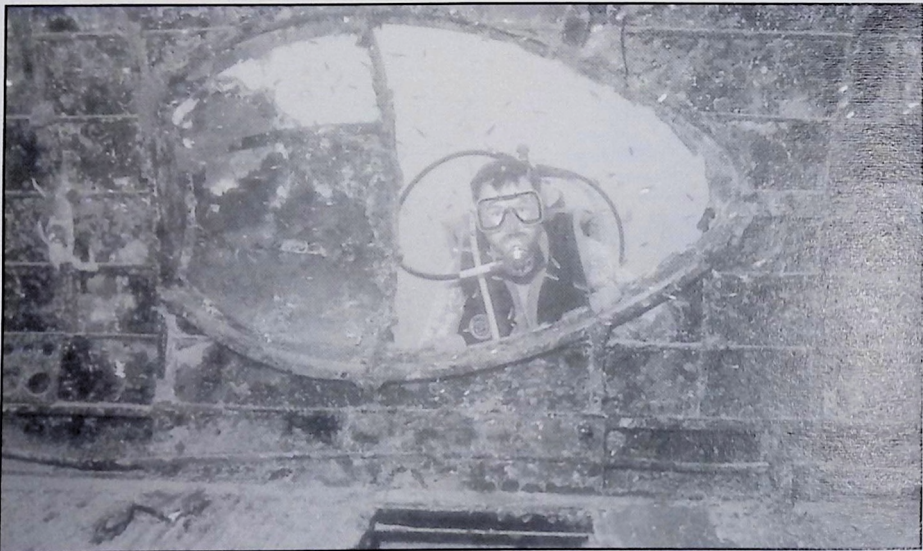
# VSAG

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*

## In this issue:

JUNE/JULY 1993

VSAG Committee Members		2
Editorial	J. Goulding	3
Notice forthcoming trips away		5
Notice Jack Lonely presentation		6
Heroes Cave	D. Williams	7
Tidal River	D. Abell	9
Easter at the Prom	B. Scott	11
Sex in the Sea	D. Abell	12
Reg Lipson at VSAG	D. Williams	14
Cape Schank	A. Mastrowicz	15
Flinders	D. Abell	17
Diving into the Past	J. Lawler	18
Predegast on Seals	D. Abell	20
For Sale Notices		5 & 8
Their Fate Sealed	J. Lawler	23
Celebrity pictures		25
Media Watch		28
Dive/Social calendar		29
Tide Tables	June/July/August	31

### Next General Meetings:

Thursday 17th June 8.00pm  
Thursday 15th July 8.00pm  
North Melbourne Football Club  
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne  
Meet beforehand at club for dinner

### Next Committee Meetings:

22nd June - D. Catherall's place  
20th July - J. Goulding's place

### Editorial submissions to:

John Goulding  
Australian Airlines  
4th Floor  
50 Franklin St.,  
MELBOURNE, VIC. 3000  
Tel: 274 2213 Fax: 274 2505  
A.H. 803 9262

## V.S.A.G. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

A.C.N. 004 591 575

**PRESIDENT:**

Don Abell  
80 Liston Street,  
Burwood, 3125.  
Telephone: 889 4415 (H)  
288 6548 (W)

**SECRETARY:**

Sant Khan  
36 Belmont Ave,  
Kew, 3101.  
Telephone: 817 3214 (H)  
276 3150 (W)

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:**

John Goulding  
c/- Qantas,  
4th Floor,  
50 Franklin St.,  
Melbourne, 3000.  
Telephone: 803 9262 (H)  
274 2213 (W)

**SAFETY OFFICER &****ASSISTANT EDITOR:**

John Lawler  
1 Katrina Avenue,  
Murrumbeena, 3163.  
Telephone: 569 9851 (H)  
794 8611 (W)  
(018) 39 5428 (Mobile)

**POINTS SCORER:**

Andy Mastrowicz  
15 Soudan Road,  
West Footscray, 3012.  
Telephone: 318 3986 (H)  
420 2425 (W)

**ASSISTANT TREASURER:**

Mick Jeacle

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY:**

Charlie Brincat

**COMMITTEE MEMBER:**

Bob Scott  
21 Eildon Parade,  
Rowville, 3178.  
Telephone: 763 6872 (H)  
706 7100 (W)

**VICE PRESIDENT:**

Mick Jeacle  
5 Donn Close,  
Frankston, 3199.  
Telephone: (059) 71 2786 (H)  
541 1880 (W)

**TREASURER:**

Doug Catherall  
33 Patterson Av,  
Burwood, 3125.  
Telephone: 888 7774 (H)

**PROPERTY OFFICER:**

Pat Reynolds  
14 Nurla Court,  
Frankston, 3199.  
Telephone: 789 1092 (H)

**PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER:**

Alex Talay  
1156 Leopold Street,  
South Yarra, 3141.  
Telephone: 867 8492 (H)  
585 0277 (W)

**SOCIAL SECRETARY:**

Charlie Brincat  
57 Wellington Park Drive,  
Warren Wood, 3134.  
Telephone: 876 3395

**S.D.F. DELEGATES:**

Don Abell  
John Lawler

**MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OFFICER:**

Alex Talay  
1156 Leopold Street,  
South Yarra, 3141.  
Telephone: 867 8492 (H)  
585 0277 (W)

## EDITORIAL



A special thanks this month to Don, Des, Andy, John L and Bob Scott who contributed articles for Fathoms. As you will note some of the articles relate to dives back in February and March, I have had to defer their inclusions in Fathoms either due to their late acceptance or because we did have lots of articles for the last issue.

Regrettably, I am still not able to dive so I do rely on the members to provide the information and articles to me Please keep up the writing.

Once again the daily tabloids have gone overboard in their "reporting" of a berserk great white shark attacking and killing a diver

off the Tasmania coast. Whilst this is a terrible and sad event, calls by uninformed and miss directed individuals to take immediate steps to rid the sea of this cruel monster are pitiful.

For those of us who have dived with seals, it is certainly an exhilarating experience, however we should never forget that great white or white pointer sharks do eat seals, and are known to visit and hunt around seal colonies.

Well known Melbourne diver Henri Bounce lost his leg and nearly his life after attacked by a shark near a seal colony at Lady Julia Percy Island.

Victoria's largest shark was caught by Queensland shark hunter Vic Hislop near the seal colony at seal rocks off Phillip Island. There are many other reports of shark sightings and incidences around seal colonies. In fact one of the best known places in the world to find the great white is the seal colony at Dangerous reef off Port Lincoln. without wishing to cause alarm, diving with seals could be likened to walking unarmed around an african water hole in the knowledge that lions feed on the animals that come to drink there.



## ***EDITORIAL CONT.***

Add this to potentially dangerous mix the fact that the recent victim was diving at a colony where pups had recently been born. This may have stimulated an even greater presence of shark activity in search of the young pups to kill, or alternatively if whelping had been very recent. there would be the presence of "after birth" which is likely to be further attractions to sharks.

Perhaps one thing we should be clear about, is just when do seals around the Victorian coast wean their young? - or does it happen the whole year round?

So it is stupid to blame the shark for this latest attack and seek some revenge. Unfortunately there is really not much that a diver can do if attacked by a great white shark, however perhaps of some comfort is the thought that of the thousands of diver/seal encounters each year, and of the hundreds of thousands of actual dives undertaken each year, the actual sightings of sharks is extremely rare and the number of attacks is minuscule. OR as I used to tell my mum - People eat more sharks than sharks eat people!!

John Goulding  
Editor

---

## ***NOTICE***

### **Fathoms Articles**

Please submit your Fathoms articles to John Goulding at the General Meetings or send to:

John Goulding  
Qantas Australian  
4th Floor  
50 Franklin St.  
Melbourne. 3000  
Tel: 274 2213

## *NOTICES*

### *FORTHCOMING TRIPS AWAY*

#### *SKIING*

Members interested in getting together for a few days skiing at either Falls Creek or Mount Buller should see or contact John Goulding Tel: 274 2213 (Bus)  
Best timing will probably be around late August or early September.

#### *TIDAL RIVER - WILSONS PROMONTORY*

Tentative arrangements have been made for a 3-4 day trip to Tidal River over the Melbourne Cup weekend.

Dates are: Sat 30th October - Tues 2nd November

Over the past few years this cup weekend at Wilsons Prom has become very popular with many Diving Clubs and again promises to be a good weekend.

## *WARM WATER DIVING MAY 1994*

### *2 WEEK OVERSEAS TRIP*

- 1 WEEK WRECKS & REEF IN THE SOLOMONS
- 1 WEEK ON THE PRESIDENT COOLIDGE AND OTHER DIVES IN VANUATU.

THIS TRIP IS CENTRED AROUND THE BEST WRECK DIVE IN THE WORLD - THE PRESIDENT COOLIDGE.

INTERESTED?

CONTACT DON ABELL FOR DETAILS.

# V.S.A.G.

AT



GELLIBRAND STREET, QUEENSLIFF  
PRESENTS

## JACK LONEY

with another of his famous informal talks about our rich maritime history. Don't miss this winter Sunday entertainment in the grand dining room of this historic hotel, followed by luncheon. Talk begins at 11.15am sharp!

### SUNDAY 4TH JULY 1993

A fixed menu luncheon (\$15 per head & childrens menu) will follow in the grand dining room. Bring family and friends for this relaxing Sunday.

The ferry "Peninsula Princess" leaves Sorrento at 10am and arrives at Queenscliff at 10.45 am. Leave your car at Sorrento or drive around to Queenscliff - Return ferry at 3pm or last one at 5pm leaving Queenscliff.

\*Parking at Sorrento is almost on the beach, left of the pier. You **MUST** buy a parking ticket at the Vending machine and display in the window of the car.

Further details from Des Williams 551 3201.



## *HERO'S CAVE DIVE 28/3/93*

DES WILLIAMS

Congratulations to JOHN LAWLER for putting this dive together and thanks to WARRICK MCDONALD for a very exciting dive.

The weather was rather bleak by the time we were over the dive site and a rain squall threatened.

Graeme Blanchard and I dived together descending the buoy line that Warrick had dropped right on the edge of the precipitous Entrance deep canyon, smack in the middle of the shipping fairway in the Heads. As we descended the rain squall came through just when we needed the rays of the sun most, leaving us groping in the murky depths. Graeme and I pulled up at 120ft to see a vague outline of the lip of the wall in front of us. We swam towards it.

We soon located Hero's Cave and swam inside wishing we had torches with us. A faint glow at the back beckoned and we swam clean through the cave to the exit at the rear amongst most rugged underwater scenery I have ever seen in the Heads area. This was a very gloomy dive, spooky in fact, because of the lack of ambient light.

Around us were deep crevices, yawning caves and ledges and overhanging fingers of limestone as big as houses. We were around 100ft deep, but still the terrain below called us to explore deeper. Unfortunately lack of time and air made this impossible and there was always the chance of the flood tide commencing it's run any minute.

If there was ever a place one might see a Grandfather crayfish it would have to be in this area, the ledges and crevices are huge.

We must return to this spot when the water is clearer and there is bright sunlight, it is a really heart-thumping dive. The biggest difficulty and danger will be making the dive between passing ships as the site is in the dead centre of the shipping fairway.

Graeme ascended after 25 minutes and attempted 4 minutes deco in mid water. We surfaced and were quickly picked up by Warrick.

This ancient underwater canyon through which once flowed the Yarra River is certainly a great place to dive, it is very extensive and must contain hundreds of

caves and ledges begging to be explored. What a shame the shipping in and out of Port Phillip Bay ploughs through the middle of it. The vertical wall plunges down to 85 metres (280ft) at this point and is alive with fish.

Graeme found the scenery very interesting, because it is a favorite spot for fisherman after Kingfish. Graeme says the Kingies hover in the abyss waiting for bait fish to be swept over them in the current, then they dart upwards to feed.

Great dive!!!

## FOR SALE

# TWIN TANK RACKS

EACH RACK HOLDS 4 TANKS  
SOLID-STURDY-NON COROSIVE

PURPOSE BUILT

SUITS HAINES

WILL ADAPT TO MOST BOATS.

DON'T MISS THIS OFFER TO IMPROVE TANK HOLDING,  
BOAT SPACE, & SAFETY.

**\$199** (ONO)

**PH: JOHN LAWLER (03) 569 9851**

(Answering Machine if not home)

## ***TIDAL RIVER 1993***

DON ABELL

To reiterate my words of the April General Meeting: The club can be divided into two simple groups. Those who were at Tidal River for the easter 1993 dive trip and those who wish that they had been!

Frankly I don't need to write anymore but maybe I should explain the exaltation of the 75 members, family and friends who did attend.

I was hoping as always that the weather would be kind to us at Easter. This year was more important because on my calculation it was the 20th year that the club has been regularly spending the Easter break at Tidal River. Of course this has been challenged by the older members but my reckoning is simple. Our first year of regular Easter trips to TR was in 1973. During the period we missed one year because we forgot to book. That makes 20. I am sure that we had been to TR before 1973 but not as a regular venue.

With the hard work of Murray Black we arranged a commemorative T-Shirt which read;

Victorian Sub Aqua Group

1993

20 years - Tidal River

Only 30 were printed for members on this trip. if you want one try Southebys in 100 year from now.

Mick Jeacle is right . April's weather gets better every year. A week before easter the weather pattern looked good but it improved to brilliant. The prom had 3 weeks of rain on every day before easter. VSAG had four days of the best that we could hope for.

Thanks to the boat owners Mick, J.L. Bazza, Bob and Andy. We need all the boats and even with five boats two divers were not able to dive on the Saturday.

Now how does this sound for a diving itinery:

Friday - The caves and reef on the Glennies. Water and air warm. Sea moderately calm. Plenty of beautiful sea life.

Saturday - Diving with the seals at Skull Rock including exploring some big overhangs/caves on south east corner of the rock.

Second dive off mainland. Water and air warm, sea calm..air warm.



Sunday - 40 foot rocks with the stunning drop offs, seals caves and spectacular sea life. Water and air warm. Sea like a millpond.

Monday - Tongue point and a dive with dolphin. Guess what the water, air and sea were like.

And mixed with this diving hedonism was the odd interlude of socialising of an evening.

I was as usual invited to the Gourmet Curry Extravaganza at the Lawlers Taj Mahal. I confess that I look forward to the Beef Vinaloo for the twelve months leading up to each easter.

I went to the flicks with the girls on one evening and listened to them all swoon at a sloppy Mel Gibson film. It was only recently when I noticed that my old mate Mel has made it into the top 200 rich list in Australia worth \$70 million that I realised he probably doesn't care if the film was sloppy or not.

I love those evenings when everyone sits outside with a few quiet drinks and see the night out. A bit cold on the first evenings but Sunday was great.

One by one the old fellars toddled or toppled off to bed until those still awake were surrounded by a chorus of snoring from four tents.

Paul Tipping did the right thing and took the kids on a wombat hunt. He returned one hour later tired from a 3 km walk and no wombat sightings. He was not pleased when told that one had been grazing at the tent about 18 inches from Jenny's chair about 2 minutes before his return. That is reminiscent of Nicky's famous wombat hunt some 6 or 7 years earlier.

Disasters were few, surprising I don't think Andy broke anything all weekend. J.L. broke a winch cable and has now replaced it with something which would pull the QE 11 up on slips.

Mick bent an axle in the sand but all was repaired in the Tidal River maintenance shop on Sunday.

So easter was one cut of the box. The problem is that the weather could not possibly be better next year.

***EASTER AT THE PROM***  
***VSAG's 20TH YEAR AT THE PROM***  
**BOB SCOTT**

Don has done it again, the weather could not have been better even if he had a direct line to God himself, or have you Donald.

June, Casey and myself left for the Prom rather earlier than other years, around 7am. Arrived at Second ave about 10am. Immediately set about setting up camp raised the Terka, blow up the Lilo and made the bed, unfolded the table, hooked up the stove, put ice on the beer, showered changed and settled back to watch the VSAGERS erect their weekenders.

Mick and family arrived some time later and the big Lloyd never stopped bleeding about the size of the site that Junee risked her life and limb to save for him, wheres me boat going to go, wheres the yellow brick going to go it won't fit there. [ Love Ya Mick ]

Friday dawns I decide to have a lazy day but most of the other divers did go out and have a day's diving which they enjoyed I'm sure.

Saturday is a better day than the last so I decided to throw myself into the birny. [Sometimes one must make these sacrifices] The dive captain of the day decides to dive 40ft rocks, away we go but half way there someone overrules the dive captain of the day as usual and we finished up diving Scull Rock instead. not that it's not worth diving it's a bloody good dive, my crew dive the north east corner of Scull where the rather large crack is, you swim down this crevice a few feet and you come out under a huge ledge which brings you out on the other side of Scull, but under this ledge there were heaps of seals and fish. vis was about 50 feet or so, water was reasonably warm and the dive was very enjoyable.

There was one very funny instance on that dive and Doug Catherall will recall, as I was going down this crack in between these rocks a seal of an unknown size to me came up from some depth barreled up and over the rocks with the same purpose in mind as myself to go down the same crevice as me, and not expecting anything or anyone to be there slammed straight into my rear end, and with a flurry of fins and flippers, darted off, with my heart in my mouth I counted my fin toes flippers believe me it was a bit of a how do you do feeling I can tell you.

Sunday dawns and it's a better day than yesterday if that is at all possible, the seas are as flat as a proverbial duny carter's hat all most an oil slick Alex Talay in Mick's boat, Craig Truscott in Bazza's boat and myself headed for you guessed it 40Ft rock. It was an easy ride down and an even better dive, drop offs swim through seals. Good vis everything a diver could ask for. It was a screamer one diver was heard to say, it was an experience of a lifetime. After that we headed back to the Glennies and dropped divers in another good spot, a few good sized bugs were seen with lots of colour. After that dive we all headed back to Tidal River and had the easiest boat retrieval of all time, we walked our boat right up the river to where the cars were parked. Leo was there with his Maverick, slid the boat onto the trailer hooked up a snatch strap and we were out going home for a beer.

That was the end of my diving for Easter as I had to work on Tuesday, we had to pack up Monday, but it was one bottler of a weekend.

At that point I would like to once again thank our intrepid presidency for a specially good dive trip and I would also like to thank my wife June for her usual great effort with all the kids from VSAG and I believe with some of the not so young kids on their Easter Hunt.

---

## *SEX IN THE SEA WITH REG LIPSON*

DON ABELL

I have made a particular objective of well publicising the speakers at our General Meetings because of their particularly high calibre. I was very pleased to see that the club responded in April and that well over 50 members and friends attended to hear Reg Lipson.

It has been (many) years since Reg spoke to us and many would not have had the pleasure of hearing Reg previously. After the General Meeting in April they certainly would not have been disappointed.

Reg started with the simple sea cucumber and kept going until we had heard of the man eating crayfish (a little licence taken by the author).

Well the sea cucumber is not so simple. It plays host to a small fish which lives



inside its anal canal and Reg spent a good part of his life trying to photograph it. This sea cucumber also breathes through its arse and if threatened will disgorge its insides, only to then grow them again. After that story you might think there was little else you could say, not so.

We moved on to the meaning of life. This topic has been pursued by the greatest theologians and philosophers that the world has known. Those at the meeting got the answer courtesy of Reg, "to leave as many of your own species behind you after you die". I would have thought Monty Python would have got that. And then there is the Law of the Ocean, "eat or be eaten", "screw or be screwed". I noticed that Des Williams' upper lip quivered at the thought of it.

We heard that the female sea horse has a penis. The male does not. The male carries the young and eventually gives birth to them. Now that is affirmative action gone berserk. Even a Labour Government couldn't achieve that.

So you think you've heard it all. What about the wrasse that changes sex so that their community is balanced. Reg took the male wrasse from a school and then watched. The females all started to change to males. The first female to achieve the change then nags the others and their change reverses and they are female again.

Next was the octopus that makes love through the nose of its mate. It sounds strange but I did appreciate the comment of one Tony Tipping of Deepdene who said "Don't laugh, after you've tried it you wouldn't do it any other way".

The stories just kept coming. Reg told of his trips to the outer Coral Sea where few divers go. Tales of 100 meter visibility, (that's right meters not feet) are enough to make a Southern diver swoon with envy until Reg notes that the clarity is because the sea is dead; that is it has no living organisms in it.

It kept on going, did you know that some kelp grows at 1 meter per day. We also heard some stories about sharks, including one that got too close for comfort.

I was amazed at the story of Giant Squid that lifted sailors out of life rafts during the war in the North Sea. A rare occurrence? No. 400 reports of death from Giant Squid. I always thought Jules Verne's was a fictional story.

Back to the crayfish. Yes they grow up to 80 kilos and are the size of a man. I have had big trouble with the killer claws on a 10 pounder. On my calculation 80 kg is about 200 pounds. So who would be catching who, I hope it knows that it

is illegal to use any instruments to catch humans.

Reg just kept on going for over an hour and then he took questions for another 30 minutes. What a night. It was absolutely fabulous and my commiserations to anyone who missed out.



*Reg Lipson and Des Williams after Reg's stimulating presentation at our april meeting.*

---

## **Reg Lipson at V.S.A.G.**

Thank you Bob Scott!! Reg Lipson was certainly very entertaining at our April 15th meeting, the second in our feast of high profile speakers organised by Bob Scott.

Reg spoke for about 80 minutes to about 60 members, family and friends. We enjoyed every detail drawn from his vast knowledge of our marine world.

The pipe fish which lives in the anus of the sea cucumber stole the show and drew some lively comments from the audience. Reg is the zoologist who puts a whole new dimension into learning about the natural wonders of ocean life. He really has to be heard to be believed!. If you missed this meeting you missed a real treat.

Des Williams

## **CAPE SCHANCK - 14TH FEB**

### **ANDY MASTROWICZ**

With a strong Northerly blowing all day Saturday the conditions for Sunday were looking exceptionally promising. The phone started ringing early, in fact Robert Birtles was so eager to get on this dive he rang several times during the week and finally ended up with 5 divers against his name including 2 new members prospects. By the end of the night I had 20 divers and 6 boats including my brother Peter who was coming across from Cowes mooring his boat and diving from mine.

Leaving home at around 7am with my older brother Mike on board the new Nissan with boat in tow we headed for Flinders. After a detour to Mt Waverley, meeting up with John Lawler and his boat on the freeway and then tailgating about 100 cyclists from, Hastings onwards we arrived at the boat ramp around 9am.

After a count of divers found we had an extra diver (no names mentioned Leo but only because you got the biggest cray on my boat) and with a bit of rearranging and adding my brothers boat to the flotilla, 6 boats set off for West Head.

Once outside the shelter of Flinders bay we were greeted by a 2-3 metre south easterly swell and the prospects down the coast did not look good. However with the chop on top of the swell being only slight we decided to continue on to the Schanck with the hope it would be calmer on the other side. We were not disappointed and pretty soon 6 boats had spread along the coast with divers eager to get their dive gear on and into the water.

This was only the second time I've been west of the Schanck and have fond memories of the first time which was over 6 years ago. With the sounder showing heaps of reef below Martin, Leo s and myself headed over the side with great expectations. After losing Leo I spent 40 minutes swimming through gutters and over weed covered bommies returning to the boat disappointedly empty handed. Martin fared no better but looking over at Leo who wore a grin from ear to ear or was it a grimace as he showed us his gashed hand and the 7lb monster that he'd wrestled with and won.



The reports from the other boats was also very favourable and lunch was spent comparing and boasting about who had the largest (cray that is). Good to see Bazza getting in amongst them again thought you'd lost your touch eh! Maybe you could be Craig's bagman. He definitely wasn't coming back until he'd matched your catch!

My second dive was closer in to shore with the vis down to 10ft and the surge making the dive washing machine like. I however persisted and after 20 Min came up with a couple of table size specimens.

Time was getting on to 4pm and with the wind getting stronger the consensus was that the trip back to Flinders was going to be a little rougher than the trip down. A little rougher was an understatement. It took over an hour to get back to Flinders through a 30 knot S-E and 3 metre sea. We did arrive back safely although not without incident. I smashed my windscreen and tank rack after being hit by a wave on the port side. That's three windscreens in two years. need to look at that more closely!!

Back at the boat ramp it became a real bum fight as everybody attempted to retrieve their boats at the same time. Even the tractor that pulls out the Ab divers shark cat spat the dummy and dropped its gearbox. This created so much havoc that Robert Swaffer decided he would give up diving by blowing his motor up in the process of pushing the range rover up the hill. Sorry Robert but it happens to the best of us eventually.

Thanks go to boat owners Mick, Scotty, John, Robert and Pete as well as all the divers who attended and had themselves an enjoyable day.

PS. On the way home we were still able to make out Pete's boat as he soloed through the white caps back to Cowes. It didn't look pleasant, but he did make it back safely.

Also chin up Martin and keep diving your luck's got to change soon, or maybe you should get the camera out instead.

## *FLINDERS ON 2ND MAY*

DON ABELL

With the beautiful Autumn weather being experienced in Melbourne I was surprised that only ten divers lined up for our Flinders Dive.

Everyone gathered at 9.30am on the Sunday morning with three boats provided by John Lawler, Mick Jeacle and Frank Natoli. The hardy divers were:

John Lawler, Mick Jeacle, Frank Natoli, Sant Khan, Colin Kaye, Neville Viapree, Jack Namiota, Robert Birtles, Peter Sagona.

By the time the boats were launched there was a slight breeze coming up and a slight swell. The conditions were still good enough for all boats to power down towards the Shank. The swell was enough to keep us off shore.

Not only was the breeze warm but so was the water. Just like our dive two weeks earlier. It was difficult to notice any temperature change as we rolled into the water.

The first site was not too exciting so all boats headed back to dive in the opening just off Flinders Point. It is a great diving venue. Plenty of reef and schools of fish. Divers also sighted Octupussies (the plural), Port Jackson Sharks, Cuttlefish and of course the odd crayfish.

We did have one unfortunate incident when a cray fisherman accused us of raiding his pots. The fact is that we were never within 100 meters of his pots. John Lawler did find one pot without a line and offered to get it for the fisherman. He only got a grunt in reply.

We finished diving just as a few drops of rain started. We returned to shore, retrieved the boats without drama and changed with only the odd drop falling. A contented diving group were on the road home or to the pub by 4pm.

J.L. survived his low air fill of only 2500 which did not bring a smile to his face.

Sant survived a fill of bad air which nearly bought his lunch to his face.

Jack Namiota survived a big hangover and still caught a cray.

Frank Natoli survived his cut away still and revealing wetsuit. (Definitely a potential customer for Scotty)

Peter Sagona survived engine failure and a tow from some cray fisherman.

And the rest of us just enjoyed ourselves and survived a top day.

## ***DIVING INTO THE PAST***

JOHN LAWLER

Over the weekend, I again began my research into the back issues of *Fathoms* for some good stories.

In the April 19th Edition is an account of a collision and loss of the *City of Launceston*.

This excellent article was contributed by none other than Pat Reynolds. This is great reading and I hope you enjoy diving into the past.

In the next edition of *Fathoms* you will read an excellent informative article on "Aquaculture Food from the Deep".

### **WRECKS - CITY OF LAUNCESTON AND PENOLA**

#### **COLLISION AND TOTAL LOSS OF FORMER VESSEL IN THE BAY 19th NOVEMBER 1865.**

The striking of these two steamers was probably the most spectacular and most talked about collisions in the bay during the 1860's, although another, two years later, also attracted considerable attention.

The *City of Launceston*, 278 tons one of the best and most convenient passenger steamers on the coast, started Sunday evening, the 19th, with the English mails for Tasmania, and after going down the bay some 14 miles, was struck near the west channel in the main chains by the bow of the *Penola*, just coming up from Adelaide, at about 8.30pm. The cut water of the latter vessel penetrated into the captains's cabin.

The water rushed in, and the aft portion of the *City of Launceston* filled with water so that the vessel was nearly on end.

#### **FATHOMS APRIL, 1971**

The *Penola* got off with a loss of her cut water, the plates of which nearly torn away, and stood about 50 yards off the wreck. The night was calm the water was smooth, and the boats were got out to transfer the passengers and crew to the *Penola*. This was done under circumstances of great difficulty, there were a number of children aboard, no extra trouble arose. Strenuous efforts were made



to stop the flow of water through the aperture made by the collision but with no effect. The Bulkheads gave away and about forty minutes after, she went on end. All on board her by that time had been saved and were brought on to Melbourne by the Penola, but had to be landed as they were for no luggage at all was saved. The mail box shared the same fate and remained in the sunken vessel for some days before being raised by divers. The following morning Captain Ferguson Chief Harbor Master, proceeded in the steamer (Pharas) to the wreck and found her lying about 8 1/2 miles on the north side of the west channel lightship, right in the fairway. Her bearings were given as station peak W. by N. and the west channel lightship S.W half W. She was about 13 1/4 miles from Gellibrand Point Lightship and her top gallant yard was above water. The sea was clear and her decks could be seen far down. Before leaving Captain Ferguson placed a wreck buoy close to the spot and later a light to warn other vessels.

The agents of the City of Launceston despatched a diver, advised the authorities that the vessel was uninsured and worth about \$34,000. At the enquiry which followed on the 24th, The City of Launceston was held to blame for the accident. Captain Snewin's Statement: We entered the Heads at 7.15pm on Sunday Night. There was a light easterly wind blowing, and the weather was fine. There was a little haze, but the stars were shining brightly. We passed the west channel lightship at about 7.40pm and then steered north east. At about 15 minutes past 8, I saw a bright light ahead. We kept on our course about 5 minutes more at the ordinary speed which was 9 1/2 knots. We then eased the vessel and went on easy for about 5 minutes, with our helm a-port.

Not being able to see the approaching steamer's side lights although I saw her mast-head light distinctly, I stopped the Penola and the engine remained stopped for between two and four minutes. I then saw the red light of the approaching steamer about 2 points on the port bow. I gave the order to be easy ahead, the helm being still to port. Immediately after this I saw the approaching steamer's green light, and I then gave the order to stop her, and "full steam astern." We then came into collision with the City of Launceston, striking her on her starboard side near the main mast-abaft, I think. The engines were going full steam astern a minute or two before the collision took place, and at the time of the collision"

A notice to mariners published on the 21st stated the vessel lay about 8 1/2 miles from the lightship in 11 Fathoms and was with her head to the westward. A further notice, published on October 3 the following year, mentioned that the funnel masts had been removed and there was now 7 Fathoms over the vessel. The authors do not know whether the wreck was ever removed, but if not, then she would make a wonderful find for any skin diver. Particulars: Single screw steamer of 278 tons, 80 h.p. Owned by the Launceston & Melbourne Steam Navigation Co.

Further Investigations show that it lies directly where the Princess of Tasmania turns into the channel near the Heads.

PAT REYNOLDS

---

## *RON PRENDERGAST ON SEALS*

DON ABELL

The club's good fortune with guest speakers at General Meetings continued in May when we were addressed by Ron Prendergast, the keeper in charge of the Marine Mammal Department at the Royal Melbourne Zoological Gardens.

Ron's topic was seals in general and the Australian Fur Seal in particular. As I said at the meeting, this is a subject of great interest to divers as there is no more enjoyable diving experience than spending 30 minutes underwater with between 20 and 50 seals.

According to Ron, life as a male seal is not all beer and skittles. After a few years of age he reaches sexual maturity but is usually 10 years or older before being strong, solid and experienced enough to win a harem of cows. Even the winning is a very serious matter. Fighting for a lady's affections can leave both winner and loser badly injured. Some of the slides that Ron showed of the injuries should convince a young bull to curl up on a rock with a good Harold Robbins novel. In the seal kingdom there are no entrepreneurs trying to match supply and demand.

All the young in the colony are born within a day or so of each other and in a week of the birth all the females have mated again and go through the 12 month birth cycle again.

Each mother will only have one pup and will only suckle her own pup. The bond between mother and pup is for the 12 months until the next pup is born and then the older pup is sent out to the big wide world.

Through the mating period the old male will not leave the land. He stays to protect his right and retain his harem. If he turned his back some Jack Flash would be doing an Errol without even a formal introduction. Through this time the bull does not eat and can lose 20 - 30% of his body weight.

Apparently the system does break down as a few enterprising bulls who have read too many Stick magazines hang around just offshore and mate with the cows that go to sea and feed.

Another interesting fact is that seals will always return to their colony of birth to breed. This explains one of the real problems of the old sealers that wiped out whole colonies in the slaughter of the early century. It is then almost impossible to restart the colony.

Many seals are badly mauled by sharks as well as their fights for breeding rights. They may survive or not but nature must take it's course. To try and enter the colony would cause panic and many seals, particularly young pups could be injured or killed by other seals.

Some seals have been recorded deeper than 500 feet underwater. I think I remember Ron telling us of a seal in the Antarctic recorded at over 1000 feet underwater. This is determined by attaching a mini depth gauge to the seal.

The seal biology allows them to adjust to pressure which would cause human divers some real problems. They can also adapt to long periods underwater. Their blood holds a far greater amount of oxygen than humans and so they do not need to breathe as often. Obviously their design is such that they use a minimum of energy in swimming.

Ron also had a few tips for divers. Seals are friendly and would not be stressed by divers swimming with them. They are very inquisitive. We saw two skulls and Ron suggested that we keep our fingers out of their mouths. Their teeth are very mean.

Human refuse is a big problem for seals. If they get caught in netting or plastic can holders etc they have no hope of removing it. They will eventually be



permanently maimed and probably die. My experience tells me that VSAG are conscious of the environment and all rubbish is bought back to shore.

Some injured seals find their way to the zoo where they are rehabilitated and returned to sea. At the same time they are tagged. Ron asks that anyone swimming with a seal with a tag try to get their number. The number and location should be passed on to Ron at the Melbourne Zoo to assist the program of seal study.

One of the seals at the zoo called Silver is used in the Zoo Education Program of teaching humans to look after the environment and the animals and the other living creatures.

Ron's talk was the fourth in this years series of speakers at general meetings. Although I should avoid the temptation I have to say that Ron has sealed four great months of speakers.

Don't Forget Jack Loney at Queenscliffe on 4th July. It should be another fabulous day.

---

## ***THEIR FATE "SEALED"***

JOHN LAWLER

There has been an interesting and important tussle going on in Port Phillip Bay or to be more precise centering around the ageing No 6 Channel Marker Buoy.

The Port Melbourne Authority is changing the direction of shipping lanes slightly. In their program of changing from the great old wooden buoys of the bay, new more cost effective metal solar powered beacons are being installed.

The old wooden buoys will therefore be too close to the new shipping channels and this means that around five are targeted for demolition.

Now these old wooden buoys have been home for seals and their relatives since the turn of the century, in particular buoys No 6 & 10.

These wooden structures are gas powered and the units have to be replaced about once per year and in the view of the PMA this is now too costly compared with solar. They do have a good point and also solar is certainly more environmentally friendly.

The PMA has apparently offered NO 6 and NO 10 to the Department of Conversation and Natural Resources. As yet no decision either way has come back from DCNR.

The point at issue here is that the seals and dolphins that live around the southern end of the bay are a major tourism attraction apart from the fact that it's home.

The Peninsula Tourism Authority is leading a strong campaign to save the wooden buoys as the base forms a platform on which the seals live and rest.

Mr Ron Nearly who heads up the PTA estimates it would cost more to demolish the buoys than to restore them.

Around 20 operators work the bay which generates a lot of employment.

On a good weekend the charter operators claim to have counted up to 35 seals on NO 6. These playful seals are a joy to watch and the snoozing, scratching, arguing and rushing an opponent into the bay is all watched over by the family of Gannets and Cormorants that reside on the top platforms.

At the time of writing this article, I have spoken to Marty MacKinnon who runs a salvage operation at Sorrento. Marty believes the authorities may have responded to the concerns of the various groups and a plan is in the wind to restore and reinforce at least NO 6 and NO 10.

Lets hope the authority do respond as in this age of "Rip it Down" perhaps some things just need positive thinking and should be left alone for all good reasons.





## CELEBRITY PICTURES

Who's this famous fella with this famous fella ?

Had the pleasure of meeting Rex Hunt at JV Marine's Charters Party.

Rex is just as vibrant and exciting as he comes over the TV and radio.

One thing I can assure you is that Rex is a very, very big man.

Nice to meet ya Rex!!



YIBBA DI YIBBADA THATS ALL FOLKS

***CELEBRITY PICTURES CONT.***

At our March Meeting, Barry Andrewatha provided an excellent talk on his adventures overseas. Thanks for setting this one up Bob Scott. - Great Night !! Pictured is Barry with Vol 1 No 1 of "Skindiving in Australia" magazine. some 20 years old now, together with Des Williams and President Don Abell.

**AN OLDIE - BUT A GOODIE  
SOME SNAPS FROM PAT REYNOLDS 50TH -  
FEBRUARY**



*Pat and Mick*



*Pat and foundation member Frank Coustley*



## MEDIA WATCH

# Scuba hunt for maritime treasure

**A**FTER every storm that batters the Israeli coast, archaeologist Ehud Galili puts on scuba gear for his race against man and nature.

"The national maritime heritage is a treasure in danger," Mr Galili said.

"As maritime archaeologists, we have a great responsibility because we know that in 20 years or more nothing is going to be left."

The danger arises from the reshaping of the sweeping Mediterranean coastline of beaches and sand dunes that had changed little in thousands of years until the 1940s.

Israelis then began to take sand from along the shore and build breakwaters for their new man-made ports. The crucial change was the completion of the Aswan High Dam in Egypt in the 1960s, which held back the Nile sand that had replenished the Israeli coast.

The treasures from shipwrecks had been covered by some three metres of sand in a strip extending 200 metres from shore. They are re-emerging as the sand disappears.

"There are always storms and after every storm there are new areas exposed," said Mr Galili, who heads the Israel Antiquities Authority's tiny maritime section. It has one other archaeologist.

After each storm, Mr Galili must race against treasure hunters, by slipping into scuba gear — he is in the water about half the days of the year.

His finds include remains of now submerged neolithic sites dating back 8000 years. More recognisable are those from shipwrecks: parts of large Roman and Greek statues lie on shelves beside bronze pots, coins and rows of ceramic jars.

— REUTER

***DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR***

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT/LOCATION</b>	<b>DIVE CAPTAIN</b>	<b>MEET AT</b>
17 June	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club (Meet beforehand at club for dinner)		8.00pm
27 June	Heads Area	Doug Catherall 890 6493	Sorrento 9.30am
4 July	Talk by Maritime Historian Jack Loney Organiser Des Williams - 551 3201 Ozone Hotel - Queencliff		11.00am
11 July	George Kermode	John Lawler 569 9851 018 395428	Flinders 9.30am
16 July	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club (Meet beforehand for dinner at the club)		8.00pm
25 July	Submarine Dive	Mick Jeacle 059 71 2786	Sorrento 9.30am
8 August	New Wreck Dive	Bob Scott 763 6872	Sorrento 9.00am
19 August	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club (Meet beforehand for dinner at the club)		8.00pm
22 August	Limestone Caves	Pat Reynolds 789 1092	Rye Boat Ramp 9.30am
5 Sept	Spectacular Reef	Alex Talay 967 8492	Rye Boat Ramp 9.30am

**DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR CONT:**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT/LOCATION</b>	<b>DIVE CAPTAIN</b>	<b>MEET AT</b>
16 Sept	Annual General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club (Meet beforehand for dinner at the club)		8.00pm
19 Sept	Ships Graveyard	Andy Mastrowicz 318 3986	Rye t Boat Ramp 9.30am
3 Oct	Abyss/Heroes Cave	Bob Scott 763 6872	Rye Boat Ramp 9.30am
21 Oct	General Meeting - North Melbourne Football Club (Meet beforehand for dinner at the club)		8.00pm
30 Oct-2 Nov	Tidal River (Melbourne Cup) Wilsons Prom.	Pat Reynolds 789 1092	



TIDE TABLES

PORT PHILLIP HEADS		PORT PHILLIP HEADS		TIDAL STREAM CHANGE		TIDAL STREAM CHANGE	
LAT 38°18' S LONG 144°37' E TIME ZONE -1000		LONG 144°37' E TIME ZONE -1000		JUNE 1993		JUNE 1993	
TIMES AND HEIGHTS OF HIGH AND LOW WATERS		TIMES AND HEIGHTS OF HIGH AND LOW WATERS		START OF		START OF	
JUNE - 1993		JUNE - 1993		FLOOD	EBB	FLOOD	EBB
Time m	Time m	Time m	Time m				
1 0100 0.42	0237 1.42	0208 0.47	0307 1.41	0436	1041	0644	1258
9 0811 1.36	0840 2.28	0921 1.26	25 0851 0.28	1633	2259	1838	
TU 1310 0.68	WE 1545 1.83	TH 1424 0.86	FR 1531 1.60	0543	1150	0742	0053
19 1955 1.40	2115 0.59	2042 1.25	2134 0.47	1738		1944	1401
2 0502 0.38	0323 1.39	0305 0.44	0356 1.42	0849	0003	0836	0152
9 0924 1.41	10 0923 0.34	18 1022 1.30	26 0937 0.34	1000	1000	1000	0477
WE 1415 0.77	TH 1622 1.58	FR 1533 0.89	SA 1630 1.59	0763	0107	0925	0247
20 2057 1.38	TH 2157 0.56	2142 1.23	2220 0.41	1952	0407	2137	1547
3 0308 0.33	0407 1.35	0404 0.40	0447 1.42	0852	0208	1011	0388
11 1020 1.48	11 1022 0.41	1120 1.36	27 1024 0.42	2054	1508	1065	0425
TH 1529 0.62	FR 1655 1.53	SA 1642 0.88	SU 1708 1.56	0947	0305	1055	0425
22 2201 1.38	SA 2236 0.54	2245 1.23	2307 0.36	1952	2152	2312	1718
4 0412 0.28	0450 1.31	0459 0.35	0545 1.42	1039	0400	1189	0512
13 1133 1.65	12 1039 0.48	1213 1.43	28 1112 0.52	2243	1657	2359	1801
FR 1640 0.81	SA 1725 1.48	SU 1742 0.83	MO 1749 1.53	1928	0451	1221	0589
23 2303 1.39	SA 2314 0.53	2345 1.26	2356 0.33	2383	1746		1843
5 0512 0.24	0535 1.28	0548 0.30	0653 1.41	1213	0539	0045	0647
12 1231 1.61	13 1115 0.56	1301 1.49	29 1200 0.62	0019	0623	0134	0736
SA 1745 0.78	SU 1754 1.43	MO 1833 0.77	TU 1835 1.49	1253	1910	1346	2008
	2351 0.51			0102	0705	0228	0829
6 0602 1.42	0624 1.25	0040 1.30	0047 0.32	1328	1946	1431	2053
6 0608 0.22	14 1514 0.64	0635 0.28	30 0802 1.41	0143	0745	0325	0927
SU 1325 1.65	MO 1826 1.39	TU 1347 1.55	WE 1253 0.72	1402	2020	1518	2141
1845 0.72			WE 1926 1.44	0225	0895	0405	1098
7 0958 1.43	15 0032 0.50	0130 1.35		1865	2063	1610	2236
7 0702 0.22	15 0719 1.24	0720 0.24		0308	0909		
MO 1415 1.67	TU 1236 0.72	WE 1430 1.58		1510	2169		
1938 0.67	TU 1904 1.34	2005 0.62		0356	0968		
8 0148 1.43	16 0117 0.49	0219 1.38		1550	2211		
8 0753 0.24	16 0820 1.24	0805 0.25		0449	1053		
TU 1502 1.66	TH 1512 1.60	WE 1325 0.79		1637	2258		
2029 0.62	1948 1.29	2050 0.54		0545	1153		
				1733	2334		

Copyright. The National Tidal Facility, Flinders University, South Australia

## TIDE TABLES

PORT PHILLIP HEADS  
TIDAL STREAM CHANGE

JULY 1993		START OF FLOOD		START OF EBB	
FLOOD	EBB	FLOOD	EBB	FLOOD	EBB
0525	1130	18	SU	0653	1913
1705	2336			1854	
0828	1235	19	MO	0755	0106
1815				2004	1417
0731	0041	20	TU	0852	0212
1826				2107	1515
0145	0345	21	WE	0944	0311
1448				2203	1606
0829	0246	22	TH	1033	0407
2134				2256	1655
1021	0342	23	FR	1119	0459
2229				2346	1740
1108	0434	24	SA	1204	0550
2319				1824	
1149	0521	25	SU	0035	0639
				1247	1907
0003	0604	26	MO	0130	0729
1844				1350	1949
0643	0643	27	TU	0217	0820
1916				1413	2034
0121	0721	28	WE	0312	0914
1829				1459	2121
0158	0758	29	TH	0407	1009
1401				1512	2212
0235	0837	30	FR	0504	1107
1435				1644	2312
0317	0919	31	SA	0605	1211
1512				1752	
0402	1008				
1254	2209				
0453	1102				
1643	2239				
0550	1205				
1744	2359				

## PORT PHILLIP HEADS

LAT 38° 18' S LONG 144° 37' E TIME ZONE -1000  
TIMES AND HEIGHTS OF HIGH AND LOW WATERS

## JULY - 1993

Time m	Time m	Time m	Time m	Time m
1 0145 0.32	9 0306 1.37	17 0207 0.38	25 0351 1.50	1 TH
TH 0907 1.43	FR 0901 0.38	SA 0933 1.26	SU 0927 0.36	2 FR
2025 1.39	FR 1549 1.55	SA 1437 0.86	SU 1607 1.59	3 SA
0246 0.32	2025 1.39	2050 1.22	2206 0.26	4 SU
2 1010 1.45	0348 1.35	0308 0.36	0444 1.49	5 MO
FR 1500 0.85	0639 0.43	1038 1.30	1013 0.44	6 TU
2131 1.36	SA 1618 1.52	SU 1547 0.86	MO 1646 1.57	7 WE
0350 0.31	2214 0.46	2200 1.20	2252 0.22	8 TH
3 1112 1.48	0428 1.34	0412 0.33	0541 1.47	9 FR
SA 1614 0.85	SU 1013 0.49	1138 1.35	1059 0.52	10 SA
2238 1.35	SU 1645 1.49	MO 1656 0.82	TU 1727 1.53	11 SU
0452 0.29	2247 0.44	2312 1.23	2340 0.22	12 MO
4 1212 1.52	0508 1.32	0511 0.29	0643 1.44	13 TU
SU 1724 0.80	MO 1047 0.55	1232 1.42	1145 0.50	14 WE
2341 1.35	MO 1715 1.45	TU 1757 0.73	WE 1812 1.48	15 TH
0551 0.28	2321 0.42			16 FR
5 1306 1.55	0549 1.30	0015 1.29	0029 0.24	17 SA
MO 1829 0.74	13 1124 0.61	0606 0.26	0745 1.40	
	TU 1746 1.41	WE 1651 0.63	1901 1.41	
	2357 0.40			
6 0039 1.36	0636 1.27	0114 1.36	0122 0.28	
TU 1356 1.58	14 1202 0.68	TH 0659 0.25	0846 1.37	
1928 0.67	WE 1821 1.36	FR 1407 1.55	FR 1328 0.76	
		1943 0.52	2000 1.34	
7 0732 1.37	0034 0.40	0203 1.42	0223 0.32	
WE 1440 1.58	TH 0730 1.26	FR 0749 0.26	0917 1.36	
2016 0.60	TH 1245 0.75	FR 1449 1.58	SA 1434 0.60	
		1922 1.31	2109 1.29	
8 0821 0.33	0116 0.39	0300 1.47		
TH 1517 1.57	FR 0830 1.25	0839 0.30		
2100 0.54	FR 1334 0.82	SA 1529 1.59		
	1951 1.26	2119 0.32		

Copyright, The National Tidal Facility, Flinders University, South Australia



1



2



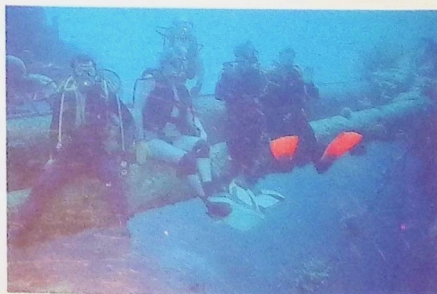
3



4



5



6