

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

APR - MAY 94

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 lunctons 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:

APRIL/MAY 1994

VSAG Committee Members		2
Editorial	D. Williams	3
V.S.A.G. 40th Anniversary	M. Jeacle	5
New FATHOMS Deadline		7
Venus Bay Long Weekend	A. Mastrowicz	7
Our Overseas Commissions	D. Abell	10
27th February Dive	L. Maybus	15
Xmas - A Time for Forgiving	D. Catherall	15
Confessions of a Camera Moll	C. Llewellyn	16
Diving Into the Past	J. Lawler	19
Battle of Savo	D. Williams	22
M. V. Queenscliffe	Capt. C. Springall	25
Queenscliff Maritime Centre & Museum		27
Adventures in Paradise	Peter Jones	28
Media Watch		32
Dive/Social Calendar		36
Tide Tables	Apri/May/June 1994	38

Next General Meetings:

Thursday 21st April 1994, 8.00pm
Thursday 19th May 1994, 8.00pm
North Melbourne Football Club
Fogarty Street, North Melbourne
Meet beforehand at club for dinner

Next Committee Meetings:

Tuesday 26th April - Charles Brintat's home
Tuesday 24th May - Alex Talay's home

Editorial submissions to:

Des Williams
14 Dorrington Crt
Dingley Village 3172
Tel: 551 3201 (h)
597 0777 (w)
598 1638 Fax

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:

Des Williams
14 Dorrington Crt
Dingley, 3172
Telephone: 551 3201 (H)
597 0777 (W)

SAFETY OFFICER &
ASSISTANT EDITOR:

John Lawler
7 Exon Street
Hampton, 3188
Telephone: 598 9874 (H)
(059) 75 7100 (W)
(018) 39 5428 (Mobile)

POINTS SCORER:

Leo Maybus
2 Olsen Close,
Mooroolbark, 3188.
Telephone: 727 1568 (H)
018 375102 (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
1/56 Leopold Street,
South Yarra, 3141.
Telephone: 867 8492 (H)
585 0277 (W)

SOCIAL SECRETARY:

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

S.D.F. DELEGATES:

Bob Scott
John Lawler

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS:

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

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



EDITORIAL

1994, a very important year for V.S.A.G as this is our 40th year. Mick Jeacle and the Committee have been preparing celebrations for this event to take place on Saturday 25th June 1994, so make sure that you mark your diary and don't miss the big night of surprises. We expect to see every member of V.S.A.G as well as past members attend this very important evening. There is more in this issue of Fathoms on the subject. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mick Jeacle for the enthusiasm and effort he has personally put into the planning of this historical event. Make sure YOU give it all YOUR support and have a great night.

Within a few weeks, seventeen members of V.S.A.G will be winging their way to high adventure diving in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu under the guidance of our fearless President, Don Abell. This must be a record number of V.S.A.Gers to attend an overseas trip and I'll bet we have a great time.

Whilst in Brisbane as a part of a week's annual leave recently, I visited the River Class Frigate DIAMANTINA which is part of the Maritime Museum. Built very late in World War Two, the DIAMANTINA had the distinction of receiving the Japanese commanders of Ocean, Nauru and Bougainville Islands to sign the instruments of surrender on board. If you are ever up in Brisbane, a visit to this ship is worth the effort.

I see in the last issue of SPORTDIVER magazine that 1993 marked the 50th anniversary of sport scuba diving, following the invention of the Aqualung by Cousteau and Gagnan. Australia's Tom Byron is working on the story of the growth of scuba diving in Australia and plans to release a book on the subject later this year titled "The Chronicle and History of Scuba Diving and Spear Fishing in Australia" It should be a good one to look out for.

EDITORIAL cont.

In Tom's research he has found that the designers and manufacturers of rebreathing systems in Australia were Ted Eldred in 1945 and Jim Agar in 1952 both from Melbourne. Whilst increasing their knowledge separately of rebreathers, Ted Aldred and Jim Agar became aware of the Gagnan Aqualung and by 1953 both had designed a single hose stage regulator. Eldred manufactured his new equipment under his trade name PORPOISE: Jim Agar produced his first single hose regulator under the name SEA-BEE in 1954.

So, this is where it all started! And one of the founding fathers of the V.S.A.G in 1954 was Jim Agar. The old V.S.A.G goes way back and this is another good reason you should support our 40th Year celebration in June, it is time to stand and be counted as a proud member of this great club.

My special thanks to those who sent in articles for this issue, especially Andy and Leo, who were put under pressure with very little notice and still delivered interesting articles in rapid time. Hope you all enjoy this issue.

DES WILLIAMS Editor

**1994 VSAG
40 YEARS**

VSAG - 40TH ANNIVERSARY

BY MICK JEACLE

1994 marks the 40th year since our great club was formed in 1954.

By the time you read this, you will have received a letter advising you of the celebratory dinner planned for Saturday, 25th June, 1994.

The details are adequately described in the letter which has been reprinted below.

Have you paid for your tickets yet to be eligible for the free night's accommodation? Have you sent your deposit?

Please act quickly at avoid disappointment, as the venue will only seat 120 people and I have no doubt we can achieve these numbers. Hope to see you there.

V.S.A.G 40TH YEAR CELEBRATION

Dear Member,

As you are no doubt aware, 1994 heralds the Club's 40th Anniversary.

This calls for a celebration, and we intend to do just that!

To this end, an anniversary dinner will be held on **Saturday, 25th June**, details of which are as follows:-

Date: 25/6/94 **Time:** 7p.m.

Venue: Bruce County Motor Inn 455 Blackburn Road, Mt Waverley
(Right on Freeway exit)

Tariff: \$45.00 per head, Including Beer, wines, soft drink, champagne/
sherry on arrival.

Dress: Gents: Lounge/Dinner Suit **Ladies:** After Five.

Music will be provided by the venue's resident band, which should contribute to a very enjoyable evening.

Forty years is no mean achievement and it is hoped we can entice many early and past members to attend to make this evening even more memorable. It is also hoped that all of our current will attend as a matter of course.

I have taken the liberty of enclosing your entry ticket, which covers both single and double attendance. The number on the ticket is recorded against your name and this will be include in a lucky door prize of a Qantas ticket for two to an Australian Capital City destination, to be drawn on the night.

As an added incentive, all tickets bought and fully paid for by the May 19th General Meeting will be eligible to win an overnight stay for 2 including Continental breakfast, at the Bruce County Motor Inn on the night of the function. Celebrate until you drop, and walk a few paces to your room; way to go. This prize will be drawn from the eligible entries at the May 19th General Meeting so don't miss out.

Should you not be in a position to pay the full amount by the May 19th Meeting, then a deposit of \$25.00 per head is required by that time. But please note that the balance of payment is required by the June 16th meeting, as I do not wish or intend to be collecting money on the Celebration night. Please send all monies to me at my home address viz:

Mr.M.Jeacle

5 Donn Close, Frankston 3199

Cheques Payable to: V.S.A.G

The night promises to be a boomer. So come on, be in it.

Book your own room should you want to stay the night and extend the celebration.

Your sincerely

MICK JEACLE

VSAG SOCIAL SECRETARY

NEW DEADLINE FOR FATHOMS ARTICLES

To allow more time for the physical production of FATHOMS in future, the closing date for the submission of articles will be brought forward by one week.

Instead of the closing time being the last Committee meeting before the next issue, it will now be the General Meeting before the next issue. Thus:

Closing dates for articles to the Editor will be the General Meetings of:

March, May, July, September, November and Mid January.

Your assistance with this new arrangement will be much appreciated by all concerned with the production of your magazine. It is the intention of your current Editor to have the magazine in members hands BEFORE the General Meetings of April, June, August, October, December and February.

EDITOR

VENUS BAY LONG WEEKEND

ANDREW MASTROWICS

The Labour day weekend started off being a trip to Waratah Bay staying at Walkerville South, and diving the Cape Liptrap area. this coastline to my knowledge had not been dived by many V.S.A.G. members. Personally it's been 20 years since I dived the area, so I was pretty keen.

Alas, the caravan park at Walkerville could only provide camping sites and with most V.S.A.G. members getting on in years and needing the comforts of home, pitching tents for just a couple of nights was not.

Looking around the region for alternative accommodation I rang the Venus bay Caravan park. Luckily they still had 4 on-site units and 4 vans available. These I booked immediately and was nearly trampled in the rush by members to take them up.

Venus Bay is situated about 2 hrs drive from Melbourne and 20 minutes from either Inverlock or Walkerville boat launching facilities. This would give us some

choice in diving either the west or east side of Cape Liptrap depending on prevailing winds.

The four day weather forecast looked promising and with both Jack Namiota and Tony Tipping flagging their intentions to dive, I was almost certain we were in for a good weekend.

After a late start from Melbourne and a couple of stops on the comfortable 2-1/2 hour drive we arrived at the caravan around 10.30pm. Most of the other members and their families were already there. They were Martin & family, Bazza & Marie, Scotty & June, Jack & Julie, Igor & family (once a year appearance), Igor's sister & family, Charlie, Judy & Christine, Jerry & family, John Lawler (Yvonne on Sunday night), Pat and Tips came down Saturday night.

We awoke on Saturday morning to a fine sunny day with some wind evident at the sheltered caravan park. Robert Birtles and the Divemaster crew pulled up as I was organising people to dive. Mick, who was staying at a friend's holiday house (freebie), arrived at the same time to inform us that there was a stiff southerly blowing with fairly rough seas. With the days' diving cancelled most of the members found various other activities to occupy the time. Gail Myself and Kim, together with the Scotts and Taliana's headed for Walkerville to check out the boat launching facilities and have a picnic on the beach. coming into Waratah Bay we had a picturesque view of the bay with its sweeping beach and rocky outcrops at either end, set against the panoramic backdrop of Wilson's promontory across the water. this was one of the best views I've seen of the prom. boat launching was via a concrete ramp onto the sand between some rocky outcrops in a well protected spot at the southern end of the day. With our experience of launching over sand I couldn't see any difficulties arising. We had our picnic while watching Igor and his brother-in-law rock fishing without any luck. As it was he ended up rock fishing the whole weekend without any luck, he didn't even try out his new wet suit. Maybe next march. Igor!!

Saturday night ended up fairly quiet with most members retiring early, I think to watch T.V. but not sure (most hopeful that Sunday would see a better day for diving). The only eventful thing was Tony Tipping's arrival and attempt at finding some where to camp. After a few words to everyone he managed to

squeeze his tent between two cabins when no one was looking. With no diving Tips I hope it wasn't too expensive a trip for you.

Not to be, the wind was still blowing next morning, but still a clear sunny day. On big Mick's arrival with the bad news again, Scotty, Mick and myself organised a crew and decided we would go fishing in Anderson Inlet. We all had an enjoyable afternoon catching flathead, most of which were about 4in long. However, by the time we headed for shore our boat had about a dozen size flathead which went to make a reasonable meal for the Taliana'a and Mastrowicz's that night.

Robert, Frank, Peter and Jerry took Divemaster to Walkerville with the view to fishing if they couldn't dive. However, once out and no luck fishing they got game and headed for cape Liptrap lighthouse through some pretty heavy seas (all forgot their "Quells"). Their effort was well rewarded with a specimen around 9-10lb which was later enjoyed by most members around a few drinks. Monday found the wind still blowing and with the sky overcast everybody decided to pack and make the 10.30 am vacate time. All except the divemaster crew who after their success the previous day decided to try again. They managed to get some way down the coast, but ended up aborting the dive due to poor visibility and rough seas.

Having said our good-byes we headed for home only to stop at Tarwin Lower where one of those country markets was being held. It seems every one else had the same idea and we ended up saying hello and goodbye to all again. Funny thing about markets is the guys all headed for the hardware stalls and the ladies for the craft ones, hope everyone picked up something they needed?

Although very little diving was done, I think everyone had an enjoyable and relaxing weekend. The caravan park was first class with well furnished cabins (had T.V. and a microwave oven even) and clean amenities making a return trip a must. With the right weather, the diving in the area shows a lot of promise.

OUR OVERSEAS COMMISSIONS

DON ABELL

With the V.S.A.G. 40th Year overseas trip, almost upon us, it is appropriate to use this issue of Fathoms to announce the overseas Commissions for each person attending. These commissions have been long considered and recognise the particular individual skills which each person brings with them. This therefore makes them diametrically opposed to the political or public service commissions which are awarded either for total lack of any skills and the need to move the person to one side, or the great skills of being able to achieve success in a backroom role that cannot be acknowledged while their allocated responsibility is overlooked or honoured.

Not so with our intrepid VSAG crew. The commissions for the overseas trip are as follows in alphabetical order).

BLACK, Murray

His obvious and extensive knowledge of the role of a by-laws officer will be invaluable on these pacific islands. I have myself noted natives who leave their bicycles against a palm tree in the main street for longer than the permitted 20 minutes. There are vendors of food who lay their produce on leaves on the dirt road which may possibly breach health regulations. And if that's not enough I know that there are pigs roaming the streets without collars or registration tags. The fines might be sufficient to cover the cost of Murray's trip.

BLANCHARD, Graeme

See Scott Bob

CARDINALETTI, Priya

It will come as no surprise that priya has won the commission of fashion coordinator responsible for the dress standards and sartorial splendor of all members on this trip.

There was the obvious temptation to also name Priya as the time keeper responsible for ensuring that all members were punctual to all dives and other appointments, but despite her natural ability in this role the first commission was a sufficient burden.

KHAN, Sant

Sant has won the medical commission. No doubt his natural bedside manner will also mean that he is the principal counsellor for the group. And help us cope with the personal traumas of the trip.

This will of course involve the communication commission and an attempt to limit the necessity for STD calls home.

LAWLER, John

John only arrives for the last week of our trip, so it is logical for John to be in charge of emergency rations. He will be expected to load his suit case with the necessities of life that we may run out of.

For instance, canned tuna, canned salmon, canned sardines, "Mon" tomato sauce etc. etc. No doubt these will come from John's personal supply "Use by dates" sometime in the previous decade.

LEWELLYN, Chris

Here is a man who would try to sell coal to Newcastle and icecreams to Eskimos. We will put him in charge of sales. perhaps a rare yellow VSAG car sticker for \$12.50. A collector's item VSAG polo for \$49.99. A New release VSAG cap for \$9.99.

We could even arrange for a guest appearance by a VSAG members at the social functions on the islands for only \$350 for 3 hours. (cheaper than Max Walker and at a bargain at the price).

LIDDY, Justin

Justin wins the sought after portfolio of Public Relations. After the Continental Airlines flight to Guam in 1990 no one else could be considered for the position.

LUXFORD, Ross

Ross will be in charge of the "cruising for chicks" expeditions. Ross has considerable experience in this role, however I am not convinced that his success rate is high to date. Fortunately I will be available to give my total support to Ross in this challenging task.

MASTROWICZ, Andy

Andy is a member without portfolio. I think it is important to let Andy relax and enjoy this trip. He will be able to remember this as the trip on which he

- did not break a windscreen
- did not have a vehicle accident
- did not blow a trailer tyre
- did not stuff the engine leg.

This will indeed be a unique trip for Andy.

MEDHURST, Neil

Who knows what he can do. I can't even remember what he looks like.

MOORE, Dave

Dave is a natural for Safety Officer on this trip. I cannot remember the last time Dave had a problem diving.

Come to think of it I cannot remember the last time that Dave dived.

REYNOLDS, Pat

This trip will provide an enormous commercial potential for young Patrick. I cannot think of any house (HUT) that has air conditioning. If Pat can convince them to insulate the thatched grass, fit windows and doors and have the gas connected, air conditioning will be a boom industry.

Big chance that he won't even have time to fit in diving.

SCOTT, Bob

Bob has won the mantle of entertainment co-ordinator. Bob has previously proved his expertise in this field. I am prevented from saying more for fear of a law suit.

This responsibility is so significant that Graeme Blanchard has been nominated as Bob's 2nd in charge. Graeme also has not only skills but a reputation in this area. Graeme has also proved himself a big support to Bob on past trips.

VIAPREE, Neville

Neville's commando training makes him perfect as our security officer.

If any member loses a thong or their sunscreen etc. it would be Neville's responsibility to track down the locals who commit the crime, interrogate them,

force a confession, inflict the normal penalty and leave the body in a shallow grave before we move to our next dive site.

VLEUGEL, Peter

Peter has great opportunities like Pat Reynolds. The local natives are literally champing at the bit to be the first on the islands to own a 40 square thatched hut. They would of course be looking to win "Home of the year" as presented by the MBA (Solomon Islands Branch). This has the added benefit of not being traceable by the tax office as all payments are by way of pigs, fish, maybe a war canoe or whatever.

WILLIAMS, Des

What else other than catering and housing.

Des will ensure that all meals are on time, however it is unlikely that Des would return from the dinning room to tell the rest of us that meals are being served.

It is also Des' task to ensure that no one comes to the bar unless their underpants and socks are ironed. In addition all shorts have razor sharp creases, front and back.

This standard will be rigidly enforced with Des making random inspections. As Des says "The team that dresses together plays together and stays together"

1994 VSAG 40 YEARS

V.S.A.G. 40TH YEAR COMMEMORATIVE VIDEO

The committee asks all members, past and present, to join into help the Club produce its 40th year souvenir video which will be available to all members as a record of the club and its history.

Andy Mastrowicz is co-ordinating and producing the video, but he cannot do it without your help in the form of old super 8 or slides of the good times this great club has seen over the years.

So come on and have a look around the house for those old memories and share them with your fellow members.

You can contact Andy on 318 3986 (H) and discuss any material you may have, don't leave it to someone else to provide all the old photographs when you know you have some material which will make this project souvenir a source of fun for everyone.

QUEENS BIRTHDAY LONG WEEKEND JUNE 11-13

Destination:	Echuca
Accommodation:	En-suite cabins
Cost:	Approx \$50 per person
Deposit:	\$20 per person
Contact:	Charles Brincat 876 3395

SUNDAY 27th FEBRUARY DIVE PLAN - "ROTOMAHANA" SHIPS GRAVEYARD

LEO MAYBUS

On Saturday evening the 26th of February, plans for the dive on the Rotomahana were under way. The weather on Saturday was fine and looked promising for our dive the next day. (Who takes any notice of the weather forecast anyway?) On Saturday night we had 5 boats and 18 divers. Those with boats were Big Mick, Bazza, John Lawler and Andy launching from Queenscliff. The weather deteriorated over night with pelting rain in the morning. John Lawler pulled the pin at 6.30am Sunday morning, leaving us 1 boat short. We met at Sorrento ramp at 9.00am. Even Jack Namiota who had battery problems with the car still managed to turn up. With gloomy looks on our faces we deliberated over hot coffee at the aquarium as to what we would do. In the end it was decided to give the scallops a bash as we were all desperate to get wet. Having more divers than necessary boats available, Priya and friend John, decided to do other things for the day. We all geared up, launched the boats and proceeded out. Looking at one another, we wondered whether it was really worth it! We headed over to the scallop beds off Blairgowrie. Most of us dived and collected a bag of scallops. Big Mick did the macho act, dived without a wetsuit top!

CHRISTMAS, A TIME OF FORGIVING

DOUG CATHERALL, TREASURER

Well I'll forgive the absent minded person who walked off with a new V.S.A.G. polo top, when you leave your \$25.00 with me or mail an anonymous money order to our V.S.A.G. box (see Fathoms cover).

With all the action after the December meeting, it is almost possible to believe you forgot to pay or maybe two for the price of one.

This is your Club not the Government!

Also, those who have outstanding amounts, please pay at the next meeting.

CONFESSIONS OF A CAMERA MOLL

CHRIS "COVERBOY" LLEWELLYN

It is with a heavy heart I write this article as I know that with each word uttered my crown slips further into the clutches of some other hungry aspirant to the title.

What am I raving about?

The cover shot, what else! its up for grabs!

You don't actually think all those shutterbugs going on the upcoming VSAG 40th year trip to the Solomons and Vanuatu won't bring back suitcases full of award winning photos! Right at this moment they would be polishing their little cameras and salivating at the thought and the glory of their shot adorning the Fathoms cover for some years to come.

But it works both ways, because along with every bi-focalled, nerdy and desperat underwear photographer comes an even more dangerous and pathetic creature, the camera moll!!

Yes, I confess to being a hopeless and unrepentant camera moll but even I must face the inevitable fact that out there somewhere is a younger, keener and even dirtier aspirant to the title of coverboy (or heaven forbid girl).

In my search for the strength needed to face such a terrible conclusion I heard a special voice, it was spiritual and soothing and went like this "if I have at look at one more issue of Fathoms with your ugly mush on the front cover you'll have to have it surgically extracted by a proctologist " that's when I told Rhonda about my divine inspiration to publish for the first time the true confessions of a camera moll!

Being a camera moll takes a very special and dedicated type of person who can plan and scheme months in advance without any hint of your true objective given away to your quarry - The underwater photographer. Only the very naive will think that it was mere chance, pure luck that I ended up on the front and back of this very magazine, it is only the astute mind that will realise the expert timing and effort involved.

After all your early reconnaissance you will finally arrive at the airport departure lounge ready to get down to some real work. Identification - early identification of your prey is very important so a few pointers are required. The underwater photographer is very shy conservative almost insignificant type creature. they will normally congregate in numbers for protection but more so because they are so bloody boring no one else can bear standing with them for more than 30 seconds.!

They will be dressed in dreary old fashioned clothes and clutching camera cases of every type and dimension imaginable and probably standing at the newstand reading the kodak film packets.

Shutter talk - to get in with this boring group you will have to talk like this group. Always talk in a boring monotone voice and never get overly excited except when discussing such things as apertures, exposures, shutter speeds or macro photography of nudibranches. Talking with a lisp is a big advantage and bound to give you immediate acceptance in this fun group of individuals.

Once you have broken the ice with the group in general it is good to target the weak member of the group. once selected a good opening line could go something like " Hi, can I grease your O ring" this usually works well as most shutterbugs need it greased on a daily or nightly basis.

Hanging out - this is probably the hardest part for a true camera moll as to prove you are genuine beyond any doubt to these very suspicious people you will have to hang out with them or perhaps that should read hang in.

You see shutter bugs perform a nightly ritual of taking their camera to pieces and polishing every little piece whether they used it or not before retiring at 7pm sharp! I am afraid that the serious camera moll will have to keep well away from the more wayward types in the club who will no doubt be out late drinking, smoking, laughing and ----ing all night while you will have to lay awake all night and listen to it!

The dives - now we get to the real business end, where all your hard work and suffering will pay off. By now you will have gained the shutterbugs absolute trust and will be able to quickly enter the water and descend amongst them, while the other lot stumble around aboard feeling seedy from their night of revelry.

Now you must quickly go to work! Always keep out in front, just enough to annoy the shit out of your photographer. No matter where he points that lens you be there. keep smiling stupidly at him and pointing to yourself, poke your head up, in and through any article that you can find no matter how stupid you look. An old toilet seat is a beauty and bound to get them excited. if by chance some equally enthusiastic cameras moll tries to infringe on your "working area" use the old silt up trick. A few kicks of your finn amongst some fine silt will soon have your prey moving on to a clearer area. Clear that is apart from you, keep at him,. work him hard and he will soon realise there is no use and grudgingly shoot off his whole roll on you and your stupid antics.

The old props trick - if you are getting well into the trip and feel things aren't going to plan the old props trick always works. Its quite simple, you take your own genuine World war II relics down there with you! You don't actually think those pair of Japanese slippers that I'm pictured holding on the back of this magazine are genuine do you? K-Mart Hush Puppies size 9 you fools!

Of course if all else fails you will have no other alternative but to use old faithful - the nude dive! While frowning at the mention of such a disgusting craving for attention no true shutterbug bug can resist the temptation of shooting off a roll of his precious film on some idiot underwater holding up a sea cucumber for comparison against his own poor shrivelled up lot.

So go on give it a try my fellow camera molls, after all what have you got to lose except all your self esteem and friends. Remember the prize is far bigger than the shame of how you got there! See you down there!

Editors Note: Thanks for the tips Chris, I am taking my camera to the Solomons & I'll be looking out for your appearance in the viewfinder.

DIVING INTO THE PAST

JOHN LAWLER

It seems shipwrecks are always interesting and with V.S.A.G.'s 40th year dive to the Solomons and the President Coolidge scheduled for May I felt a story on wrecks would be appropriate.

I researched the fathoms archives & came up with this excellent article from the November 1977 edition.

Hope you enjoy the story as you go diving into the past.

FATHOMS

NOVEMBER 1977

SYDNEY COVE

It all started at Mt. gambier many years ago in the days of the 3¹/₂ hour thrash for a weekend's sinkhole diving. One long weekend I bought a book there, Australia Shipwrecks to 1850, by Charles Bateson. Well there it was. Apart from the Dutch wrecks on the West coast (and they were foreigners not even coming here), one in Torres Strait shades of Captain Bligh) and the Sirius on Norfolk Island (not really Australia), the first wreck in Australian waters was the Sydney Cove in 1797. It ended up on Preservation island just off Tasmania's North-East coast. Well that's just next door and since it was wrecked in shallow water it should have been easy to find.

First stage was to get someone else interested. Rob Adamson and I struck out in January 1974 to settle it once and for all. Although we had a great time around Flinders Island however, we only found the job a little beyond us.

Next September the next attempt was made, unreal. After covering miles of water, snorkelling, fragments of the wreck were found and after dodging Tasmanian black tiger snakes for a week we returned wondering what to do next. That question was answered over the weekend of the 20th-25th October.

A group from Tasmania, including representatives from the Launceston museum, the A.B.C., the Tasmanian National Parks and the owner of the island (Bruce Bensemann) headed out by boat(s) from Launceston and arrived at the Furneaux Group at 3am in the middle of rain, squalls and typical chilly Tasmanian weather.

At 10am that same morning we started work on the remains, and had soon uncovered most of two thirteen foot anchors with wooded stocks still attached. Using a principle similar to an air lift, but with a two ton water pump instead of air we kept going. Hookah is great, the air lasts for ever. Six hours later we got to the end of the anchor and there it started. Looking out at us was the pommel of something. Well it was. Not bronze unfortunately, but still a cannon. Next day it was uncovered. Were we finished? What you find under a cannon, a gun-carriage? Right! Next question, what would you find under a gun-carriage? Have you ever seen one of those Hollywood specials of naval carnage, storm or shipwrecks in the 18th century. There always seems to be some poor soul crushed to death by a cannon. Well you're right, dead men tell no tales so we can only guess whether that was how he ended up there though. Apart from this there was hemp cordage, bits of 18th century bottles, broken crockery and other odds and ends.

Next day the sand was moved along the "keel" (we think) until darkness beat us just as we came to what is probably a most important step. The next day was spent in measuring, photographing and recording as well as covering everything up with about eight feet of sand, partially to protect the wreck from the elements & partially from damage from divers.

The reason divers are not wanted there at the moment are manifold. It rests with the fact that a full archaeological excavation will be done on this wreck and that means that every rotten bit of wood or rusty connection will be recorded and examined hopefully to answer a lot of questions of historical importance concerning the opening up of the Bass Strait area and the first settlement in Australia. If someone sees a rotten bit of plank on the bottom and wants to look under it, he brushes it out of the way, probably destroys it, certainly moves it from its location and subsequently destroys the story that might have been there. An example of how this can work is as follows. The ship sank because of a leak in the front port side that could not be got at to be sealed.

During the weekend pieces of plumbing, each about 1/2' x 6" x 2'6" long were found in the port bow area. They had tarred canvas and copper sheathing covering and had been nailed to the outer hull in this area. Upon examination they were seen to be obviously a patch and a really rough job at that, over what was probably a potential leak point in the hull. If this was the case the next deduction is easy. Any ship that would have as poor maintenance work done on it as this, was definitely a scow before it left port. The ship was a coffin from the start. More information than this is needed before we can be sure that this is the case, but how many divers would not even regard a piece of wood as being in any way important and could easily destroy the rest of any evidence in not knowing this? The same applies to the cannon. Only about two cannons have been found with gun-carriages in existence with them. Anyone who lifts the cannon improperly will certainly destroy the carriage. Because it is of cast iron and concreted to other iron remains they would probably badly damage or destroy it as well because it is probably only a form of porous graphite at this stage and would be very soft and of very low structural strength. To cap it all off, they would be most likely unable to afford to preserve it so it would end up bad news all round.

In other words, don't get interested in going down there, not just yet, especially as you couldn't afford the fine if caught.

Anyway it was a great weekend.

DAVE CARROLL

THE BATTLE OF SAVO ISLAND

DES WILLIAMS

Very soon a group of V.S.A.Gers will be landing in the Solomon Islands to spend seven days diving in this once war-torn part of the world. On arrival at the airport at Henderson Field on Guadalcanal, we should spare a few moments to remember that this airport was the reason so many lives were lost in this part of the globe.

In March 1942, the Japanese landed on Buka Island in the N.W Solomon Island chain and soon the people of Japan's conquests were put to work for the benefit of their new Imperial masters. The Japanese soon had work well underway on a new airport from which they planned to wreak havoc in the Pacific and extend their reign of terror to mainland Australia.

The coastwatchers on Guadalcanal suddenly found themselves behind enemy lines. This was not the way it was supposed to be. The Australian Coastwatching Service had been set up by the R.A.N. after W.W.1 as a kind of early warning system against a future invasion of Australia. By late July 1942 Martin Clemens, a coastwatcher on Guadalcanal, had lost his native carriers who had deserted and his future became a day to day game of hide and seek.

It was Clemens who observed the Japanese building their airstrip and alerted the Allies via his cumbersome radio which he was moving daily to avoid capture by the Japs.

On the 7th August 1942, American and Australian warships joined together in Operation Watchtower consisting of 80 vessels, carriers, heavy and light cruisers, destroyers and transports carrying 19,000 troops. They rounded the northern tip of Guadalcanal and proceeded to bombard Lunga Point near the airfield where it was expected the Japanese garrison was located. But, the Japs had decided to garrison their defence troops at the pre-war centre of British rule at Tulagi on the opposite side of the channel later to become known as Ironbottom Sound.

In a nutshell, the Japs were caught napping and totally ill-equipped to resist such a huge invasion force. Jap planes were dispatched from faraway Rabaul to have a go at the invaders once they learned what was going on at their all important new airstrip. At this stage of the war, the Japanese controlled such a vast area it was almost too big for them to keep an eye on all of it.

The Allies soon set up home and took control of the airstrip leaving the surviving Japs over on Tulagi to “wither of the vine” without supplies after first giving them a very hot time in the form of a naval bombardment. It was this remaining Japanese garrison that was the target of the now famous “TOKYO EXPRESS”. The Japs courageously struggled to keep this garrison alive by repeatedly steaming down the length of The Slot from the north at nighttime, with supplies and arrangements, but that is another story.

This easy victory was to lull the Allied forces into a false sense of security and apart with having to try to intercept the “TOKYO EXPRESS” at nighttime and fight off evening suicidal charges by Jap troops actually on Guadalcanal, they saw little of the enemy in any great strength.

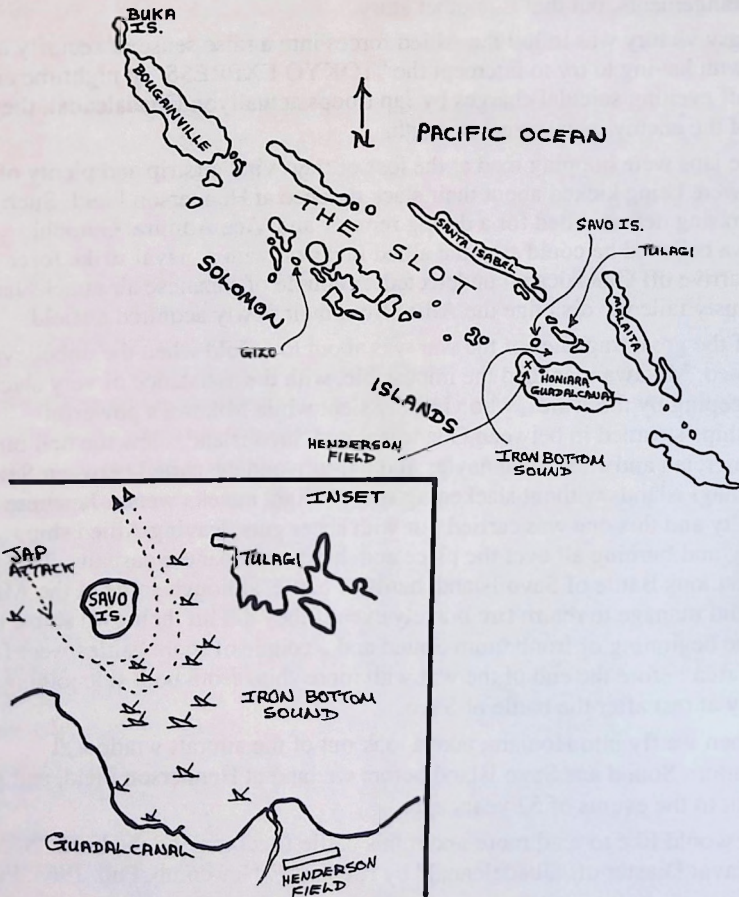
But the Japs were hopping mad at the loss of their vital airstrip and plenty of bums were being kicked about their slack defence at Henderson Field. Such an embarrassing defeat called for a daring remedy and Vice Admiral Gunichi Mikawa believed he could stop the allied invasion with a naval strike force if he could arrive off Guadalcanal undetected. A couple of Japanese air attacks had previously failed to dislodge the Allies from their newly acquired airfield.

One of the great tragedies of the war was about to unfold when the unbelievable happened. Mikawa managed the impossible, with the assistance of very slack housekeeping by the Allies, who virtually slept while Mikawa's powerful battleships steamed in between Guadalcanal and Savo island, blew the hell out of the American and Australian navies, did a u-turn and departed between Savo and Tulagi islands without slackening speed! Night attacks were a Japanese specialty and this one was carried out with sheer guts, leaving Allied ships sinking and burning all over the place and hardly a Japanese casualty. This was the infamous Battle of Savo Island, hardly a battle, although some of the Allied ships did manage to return fire bravely even if they did hit their own ships. This was the beginning of Ironbottom Sound and a couple of more battles were fought in the area before the end of the war with more ships from both sides joining those already at rest after the battle of Savo.

So, when we fly into Honiara, take a look out of the aircraft window at Ironbottom Sound and Savo Island before we land at Henderson Field, and give a thought to the events of 52 years ago.

If you would like to read more about this battle I recommend the book “SAVO - The Naval Disaster off Guadalcanal” by Richard F. Newcomb, Pub. 1963. Further

reading on the subject is "The Lost Ships of Guadalcanal" by Robert D. Ballard Pub. 1993. This book is unbelievable! It contains the full story of the battles of Guadalcanal in detail and many brilliant photographs of the sunken ships in bottom of Ironbottom Sound. Ballard is famous for his discovery of the TITANIC and the German battleship BISMARCK. His books are amongst the best I have ever read because of his attention to details.



M.V. QUEENSCLIFF

The following article is reprinted from the Newsletter of the Queenscliff Maritime Centre & Museum. This item about the delivery voyage of the new car ferry "Queenscliff" was written by Captain Colin Springall, well known through his long involvement with the sea and ships, including service as a Port Phillip sea pilot.

M.V. QUEENSCLIFF

The new car and passenger ferry M.V. "QUEENSCLIFF" was built at the Port Lincoln Ship Construction yard, South Australia. I was asked by the Managing Director of Peninsula Searoad Transport, Captain John Mackeddie, if I would be available in December to captain the vessel on the delivery voyage to Queenscliff. I was very interested to accept subject to being able to revalidate my Foreign Going Masters Certificate in time for the voyage.

On 14th December I accompanied the Managing Director to Port Lincoln. Sea trials had been conducted the previous week and were satisfactory, however, there still seemed to be many uncompleted jobs. During the next three days we were all very busy mostly with the various Surveyors both State and Federal ensuring that all items under survey were completed, particularly those regarding SOLAS (safety of life at sea).

Finally, at 0400 hours on Saturday 18th December the Surveyors were satisfied and we obtained the necessary certificates to allow us to undertake the voyage to Queenscliff. On Friday I had ordered the Pilot for 0500 hours but owing to last minute clearing of equipment etc. it was 0545 hours when the last line was let go and our voyage commenced.

This vessel is purpose built and licensed to carry road transport (cars, buses, caravans, trucks, etc. approximately 80 vehicles and 500 passengers between Queenscliff and Sorrento at the southern end of the Port Phillip Bay. The vessel is 60.1 metres long (197 ft.) and 16.5 metres beam (54 ft.) and is of twin hull catamaran type construction. The draught of the vessel is usually about 2.2 metres (7+ ft.) and the upper deck rail is 10.5 metres (34 ft.) above water level.

Above the vehicle deck is a well fitted out passenger lounge with kiosk. The vessel is powered by two 720 H.P. Cummins diesel engines and is fitted with twin rudders. She also has a 360 H.P. bow thruster to assist berthing in adverse conditions.

The bridge of this ship extends beyond each side of the vessel to allow a clear view of the ship's side when berthing. The bridge equipment includes V.H.F. and Radio-telephones, magnetic compass, gyro compass, Auto pilot steering, radar, G.P.S. (Global Positioning System), echo sounders in each hull, wind direction and strength indicator together with the usual engine, thruster and helm indicators with controls in each bridge wing as well as amidships.

We cleared Port Lincoln at 0615 hours and followed the courses I had set to take the vessel through the lower end of Spencer Gulf into Investigator Strait thence through Backstairs passage out into the open sea.

The weather was fine throughout the voyage except for the usual swell from the Southern Ocean. We experienced one hazard when coasting between Cape Martin in South Australia and Cape Nelson in Victoria. The advice in the Sailing Directions advises mariners to remain 10 miles off shore to avoid crayfish pot buoys and moorings between November and March. Thus I had set our course for this distance of shore and we ran into a veritable mine field of craypot buoys. We spent much of the day dodging them so I finally altered our courses to about 3 miles off shore where there were less craypot buoys. Fortunately we traversed this area in the daylight hours.

At 0355 hours on Monday 20th December we rounded Cape Otway at 5 miles off and set our course for Port Phillip Heads. Speed throughout the voyage had been averaging 10.5 knots so I requested a Pilot for 0930 hours.

We arrived off the Heads at this time and we did not have a Pilot ladder I requested the Pilot to lead me through the heads in the Pilot Launch. he agreed to this course of action knowing I had previously served 26+ years as a Port Phillip Sea Pilot and we finally entered the bay at 1000 hours. The vessel was safely berthed at the new ferry terminal at 1030 hours on Monday 20th December completing a very successful voyage.

QUEENSLIFF MARITIME CENTRE & MUSEUM COMING EVENT:

On Sunday, 24th April 1994, Capt. Charles Griffiths, President of Port Phillip Sea Pilots will officially open an exhibition which describes the history and operations of the pilot service in Port Phillip.

If you are looking for something new to see on the weekend, this exhibition should be very interesting indeed. Many postcards and artefacts will be on display.

The exhibition will run from the above date and into May 1994.

The QMCM is in Weeroopna Parade, Queenscliff

ADVENTURES IN PARADISE

PETER JONES

Des, I promised John Goulding an article on our trip to the Solomons before we left. Now that we're got somebody responsible in charge of Fathoms I hope this can be of use to you. It's a long story, I know and there's part 2 still to come for the next issue but I suddenly thought you must be very close to the deadline for April/May. I hope I've made it. Sorry it's taken awhile too get around to it but we've had a bit on. We're staying up here in Cairns at least until July and probably September. We're both working - Pauline full time in a Chinese Restaurant and me full time in the Cairns Australian Football league Social Club - Jobs atleast and a bit of income for awhile. On the bad news front I've contracted Malaria since returning from the Solomons but recovering at the moment I took anti-malarial medication whilst away but didn't continue when we returned - a big no - no. Maybe Sant can fill Don's group in on the danger's or get Don to call me. Hoping you find the article useful - I'll send the second part soon.

Regards Peter Jones and Pauline

Way , way back on the 26th October last year Pauline and I boarded the good ship "Keresi". A 45' steel ketch, at the breakwater marina in Townsville on what we expected to be a six month adventure cruise around the Solomon Islands. I had wanted to dive and travel to the Solomons since Alex's planned trip in 1989 was cancelled, and had always had a desire to go ocean sailing after a couple of yacht charters around the Gippsland Lakes a few years back. The tales that old Reg Truscott on the "Mirrabooka" used to tell this eager young sailor over a flagon of McWilliams cream sherry, had long ago stirred a passion in me that wouldn't be satisfied until I'd forged a passage through the high seas. There was no need to heed the gentle warnings of people like Carrot, Dougie or John Goulding, about spending great lengths of time in confined areas with people we hardly knew - this was a once in a lifetime opportunity, one not to be missed, or so we thought.

We had met our skipper Reg and his wife Sue and their six year old son Mario, in Airlie Beach some four months earlier whilst we travelled up the east coast having a break after selling our business. We had responded to an ad that we found on a public notice board in Airlie Beach advertising for crew for a six month voyage around the Solomons. After meeting them and getting the run down on their plans we decided to give it a bash. So we travelled back to Melbourne where we both worked for three months and scraped together enough money to pay our passage for our trip without having to dip into our resources too much.

Which brought us back to Townsville in late October. We had arrived five days before our departure and met our other crewman, Mathew, a 19 year old student also from Melbourne, those couple of days saw all the last minute preparations completed including hauling the boat out of the water, rubbing down the hull and applying three coats of anti-foulant - a wonderful job that "Lets you get a good look at all of the boat" in Reg's words. So after clearing customs and waving goodbye to my father who had driven us up to Townsville, we sailed out of the Marina headed for Gizo.

Accompanying us on our voyage was a 55' ferro-cement hulled sloop named "Honeywind" also with the skipper and his wife and son, John, Shirlene and Nick, and three crew members, Thomas a german chef and dive instructor and his Italian wife, Marina both about 27 and from Airlie beach, and Twayne 25, a restaurant manager from the Gold Coast.

Well, that just about brings us to the end of the good parts in this story because it was all downhill from there. What was expected to be a fairly simple 8-10 day crossing from Townsville direct to Gizo, ended up taking 21 days punctuated by the following lowlights, and I will be brief.

Day 1 - One hour out of Townsville and just coming out of the lee of magnetic Island we were hit by a 25 knot squall which tore our headsail to shreds.

Day 2 - Approaching the Palm Passage, a narrow five mile channel that takes you through the outer Great Barrier Reef, the water pump on the motor let go. We had a spare pump, but the wrong pulley so we spent eight hours improvising and eventually repairing, hopefully well enough, to at least motor us through the

passage. Two miles the other side of the passage it let go again. This was to be the second time of probably a dozen times that we had that water pump off again before the end of the voyage.

Day 8 - Another sail. As we pulled down the missen reacher, (a spinnaker like sail set off the aft mast) a wind gust caught it and it filled again nearly dragging me over the side, then wrapped itself around the wing generator bending all the blades and tearing the sail to shreds.

Day 13 - Rough seas and severe wind squalls during the night had let us with our spare headsail destroyed and entangled in the self-furling gear at the top of the mast, our jib torn in half, and three tears in the mail sail. Having no motor power and master sail damaged we moved to (basically storm rigging the sails so that they counteract each other and the vessel sits in the one spot) to ride out the storm but found ourselves drifting in current at nearly three knots southwards towards Misimo Island in the Louisiade Archipelago off Papua New Guinea!! Separated from "Honeywind" and not having had radio contact with her (which was scheduled for at least twice daily) for two days, we put out a "Yacht in Trouble" call over our radio which was answered by a Filipino vessel called the "M.V. Seatown" they informed us they were 18 nautical miles from us but were on their way. It was at this point that I became extremely shall we say, anxious about our safety and the legitimacy of our rescuers, I took Reg aside and expressed these concerns and suddenly put the fear of God into him as well. Here we were sitting in the middle of the ocean disabled and helpless, and we had just broadcast our exact position to a Filipino vessel that could very well turn out to be pirates!!! As the "Seatown" was two hours from us we had a little time to think and we decided to do two things. Firstly we called Townsville Radio and expressed our concerns and explained our dilemma to them. They were able to confirm through the maritime registry in Canberra that the "Seatown" was in fact a Filipino registered fishing vessel and was legitimately in those waters but advised some caution and organised 15 minute radio sched with us as the vessel approached. Secondly I was given a crash course in how to fire an A-K-47 assault rifle and agreed to stay below as we came alongside. Shit, was this all really happening too us!!! Fear is an amazing thing - I had been constipated for five days at this stage but within ten minutes of seeing that gun my bowels began

to move very freely. Our concerns though, began to ease as the "Seatown" came into view out of the pitching darkness. She was not as we imagined a fishing trawler possibly disguised as a pirate ship, but in fact a 250 foot fully refrigerated "Mothership" for the whole fleet!!! When we were finally able to pull alongside on her leeward side we spent 4 1/2 hours untangling and repairing sails while one of the ships engineers attempted to repair our water pump. We cast off from the "Seatown" just after day break, happy to be underway again and our new friends more than happy to assist a vessel in trouble at sea but also with the three slabs of fourex, the bottle of Captain Morgan O.P. Rum for the skipper and several pairs of \$5 sunglasses - a small price to pay. Unfortunately, the water pump repair only lasted six hours, but a atleast we had sail power again.

Day 16 - The steering box collapsed!!! We spent the remainder of the voyage on an emergency tiller system from the aft cabin, and let me tell you its not easy steering and 18 ton 45" yacht from down below when you can't see the water and you have to rely 100% on the compass.

Day 17-20 - Becalmed!!! Eighty nautical miles out from Gizo and the wind dropped to nothing. We covered 16 miles in these four days - we could see the islands in the distance but just couldn't get there. We finally raised "Honeywind" on the radio - they had been in Gizo since day 15 - and they agreed to come back out to assist us. they arrived some twenty hours later, secured a-line and on the morning of our 21st day we arrived, finally into Gizo - under tow!!!

MEDIA WATCH

"The Age" 22/2/94

Dragon of the deep in fight for survival

By ANDREW DARBY,
Hobart

A rarely seen denizen of Australian temperate coastal reefs, which looks more like a mythical dragon than a fish, is under increasing threat from export fishing.

The weedy seadragon is a slow-moving, colorful 45-centimetre-long relative of the seahorse which shelters in reef seaweed, camouflaged by long, trailing leaf-like fins. It is being hunted as a prized live aquarium fish, and is also dried for export as a medicine.

Found in small numbers in all Australian waters except the tropics, the seadragon is under threat, according to the Threatened Species Network, a national group funded by the Federal Government's Endangered Species Program.

"They are naturally rare, and their biology makes the species highly susceptible to extinction," the network's Tasmanian coordinator, Mr Peter McGlone, said. "If a single population is fished to extinction, re-establishment from another population is unlikely because of its limited capacity for dispersal."

Rather than being scattered by currents, seadragon eggs are pouch-brooded by the adult male. This makes the tiny young more likely to stay in the reef

habitat of their parents.

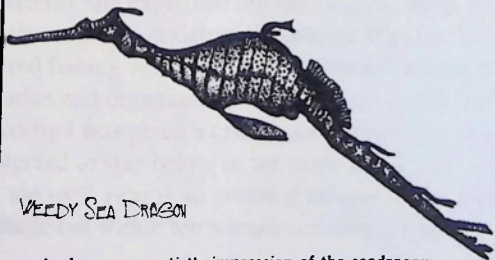
The seadragon is one of several similar species threatened by fishing. Seahorses and pipefish are also on exporters' lists. But fishing data is poor and the extent of the fishery is unknown, according to Australia's Nature Conservation Agency.

One exporter, Mr James Lee of Lakemba in Sydney, said yesterday that properly dried and intact, all these fish were in demand for Chinese medicinal compounds in Taiwan and Hong Kong markets. Mr Lee recently advertised for the fish, offering top prices, but the response from fishermen was poor.

Tasmanian Department of Primary Industry and Sea Fisheries officials say the main concern is the growing interest of aquarium buyers in Asia and America.

A recreational diver, Mr Jon Bryan of Launceston, who is working to preserve the species, said seadragons were easy to catch live by hand. "But they live on just one shrimp-like creature (and) in aquariums the adults tend to just slowly starve to death," he said.

An ANCA official said marine fish were exempt from wildlife protection regulations that prevented export without a permit. A change to protect seadragons and their relatives would have to be decided by the federal Environment Minister, Mrs Kelly.



WEEDY SEA DRAGON

In danger: an artist's impression of the seadragon.

DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR CONT:

DATE	EVENT/LOCATION	DIVE CAPTAIN	MEET AT
16 June	General Meeting Nth. Melbourne Football Club (Meet beforehand for dinner at the club)		8.00pm
25 June	V.S.A.G 40th Celebration at Bruce County Motor Inn - Blackburn - Don't miss this monster celebration - see Mick Jeacle (059) 71 2786		
2 July	"Pigott" Wreck Ship graveyard experienced divers only	Bob Scott 763 6872	9.30am Barwon Heads