FATHOMS

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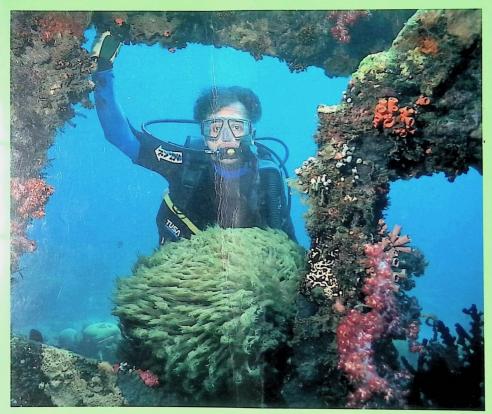
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VSAG VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP AUG-SEP 96

VSAG

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



Cover photo:

This colourful photo of Sant Khan was taken by Des Williams on VSAG's 1994 trip to the Solomons & Vanuatu

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 treedom. It believes that divers must take a responsible altitude toward the protection and preservation of the marine environment but as a general rule is opposed to legislative measures that place prohibility 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, charlers to more remote locations and annual overseastrips. 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:

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1996

V.S.A.G. Committee Members Editorial	Mick Jeacle	2
		3
VSAG Diver Profile	C. Llewellwyn/M. Jackiw	2
Election of Directors	1996/1997 Committee	
Dive Report - Courier 19.5.96	Des Williams	8
The Eaglehawk View	Don Abell	10
Reading the Tables	Mick Jeacle	13
New Member Profile	Jim Greenwood	15
Dive Report - 130ft Sub	Gerry Devries	17
Special Notice - Melb. Cup Weekend	Andy Mastrowicz	18
Diving Eaglehawk Neck Tasmania	Ross Luxford	19
VSAG Winter Luncheon	Des Williams	21
Winter in Tasmania	Des Williams	23
Special Notice - VSAG Xmas Dinner	Chris Llewellwyn	27
Special Notice - VSAG Father's Day	Chris Llewellwyn	28
Dive Report - Seal Rocks/Phillip Island	John Lawler	29
Scuba Market		30
Media Watch		31
Dive/Social calendar		35
Tide tables - September/October 1996		36
Emergency Contact Information		38

Next General Meetings: Bells Hotel

157 Moray Street (cnr. Coventry Street)

South Melbourne - 8pm sharp! Thursday 15th August 1996 Thursday 19th September 1996

Next Committee Meetings: Tuesday 20th August - Andy Mastrowicz's home

Tuesday 24th September - John Lawler's home

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Des williams

John Lawler

Leo Maybus



EDITORIAL

As I write this editorial, the rain is pouring down outside. Whilst I long for summer to arrive, I need only cast my mind back a mere seven days to Sunday 14 July, when we dived the new submarine in fantastic conditions. Visibility was around 80 feet and we had the site to ourselves.

I bring this to your attention, as we only had 5 divers on the day. Surely, a few more of you keen divers could ark up, as this time of year can often produce ideal conditions. After all, the water doesn't reach its coldest until the end of August.

This month we welcome new member Jim Greenwood. We should have done this about

2 editions ago but Jim was a bit slack in returning his new member profile. Welcome Jim, we look forward to seeing you on many future VSAG dives and camping trips away.

In this issue, you will find a committee nomination form. At the September general meeting, 4 Committee members must stand down in terms of the club's constitution.

Only 3 are re-nominating so there will be at least one vacancy. Therefore those interested in nominating for a position for Committee should do so now by completing the form and having same signed by two financial members of the club, and return the form to the Club Secretary by 5 September, 1996.

It's interesting to note that those 3 members who visited Tasmania for the June long weekend have all submitted articles for this edition of FATHOMS. However, not one of the 13 members/friends who went on the overseas trip, including the dive captain, could find time to write of his experiences of nearly four weeks away.

Many thanks Don, Des and Ross. Let us hope that those other travellers will do the right thing in time for the October/November issue.

Finally, I am most disappointed to report that less than 20 members took the effort to complete and return the club questionnaire. A lot of work was put in to the compilation of this paper by a member at the request of the Committee. The poor response would seem to suggest that the majority of members don't care about their club or its future direction.

I would rather think that they require more time to complete the task. We have therefore extended the closing date for return until 31 August 1996.

Your co-operation would be appreciated.

The editor, Mick Jeacle

REMEMBER!

V.S.A.G GENERAL MEETINGS are on the

THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH! AT BELLS HOTEL

CNR. MORAY & COVENTRY STREETS, SOUTH MELBOURNE Make a note of these dates in your diary or calendar now. Thursday 15 August

Thursday 19 September

Come and enjoy a delicious meal before the meeting which commences at 8pm sharp.



V.S.A.G. PROFILE

This month's diver profile features

Mick Jackiw

AGE: 43

OCCUPATION: Technical Officer

Single

TELL US HOW YOU GOT INVOLVED IN DIVING?

I was getting a little tired with the activities I was doing and fishing around for something interesting and different. Then I met Brian Baldock an old club member, we got talking about things and he told me about diving and VSAG, I went to a club meeting, a trip down to the Prom and I was hooked, did a dive course with the club, joined and here I still am 20 years later and still enjoying it.

HOW DID I GET INVOLVED WITH HERITAGE VICTORIA AND WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL?

I am a member of the MAAV (Maritime Archaelogical Association of Victoria) and started off as a volunteer assisting the State Archaeologists in diving operations, a permanent position came up I applied and got it. In the job I look after the units equipment, operate boats, assist in dive operations and in the office.

HAVE YOU SEEN MUCH DETERIORATION ON THE WRECKS OVER THE LAST DECADE?

Personally I think there has been a quite noticeable deterioration in the state of our wrecks over the past decade, both from the elements of nature and man.

HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND TO THOSE WHO SAY SOME VICTORIAN WRECKS ARE OVER PROTECTED?

There are only seven wrecks sites with protected zones in place from six hundred

odd, divers are allowed to dive all others, and if older than the seventy - five year rolling date it is illegal to disturb. If some people think it is a waste of time and money in protecting the wrecks for the opportunity of future research and our children being able to see what we had the opportunity to see, I can't help them.

CAN DIVING FOR A LIVING EVER BECOME BORING?

Diving is only a very small part of my job, but it's great to go out and have a private dive with no responsibilities.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE UNDERWATER INTERESTS & DIVE SITES?

Photos, video and a good look at the site, no real favourite site but do enjoy the more intact ones.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR MIGHTY SHARKCAT AND WHEN WE MIGHT ACTUALLY SEE IT BACK ON THE WATER?

Well it's not a Sharkcat but a Devilcat built in Tasmania, 6.2 metres long runabout with twin 90hp Johnson outboards, VHF, 27 meg radios and sounder. I would like to get it back on the water around Xmas.

IS VSAG MEETING YOUR CURRENT EXPECTATIONS / REQUIREMENTS?

Yes I'm happy with the way the club is going.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE DIVING AMBITIONS?

I would love to some day do trips to Solomon Islands and New Guinea.

growths. We dropped to the forward bulkhead to see inside the forecastle, where gloomy green light just managed to penetrate through the deck above and the portholes along the port side.

Already eight minutes into the dive, we could see a flattened hull behind us, so we turned to swim aft and follow the course sandy bottom as a guide, because the visibility was down to 3 or 4m maximum! One of the vessels two scotch boilers loomed up out of the darkness and it was time to begin our ascent - bottom time had been 10 minutes at 43m.

We must return to see the rest of the "COURIER" another time, when visibility is better as I am sure this must be one of the most exciting graveyard wrecks so far discovered. Bob Scott and Paul Tipping were the first to dive that day and their advice on return certainly enabled the rest of us to deal with what was a very spooky dive in bad visibility against a current.

Thanks must go to Mick Jeacle, John and Andy for sorting out the GPS for this dive and to all members present who fine tuned the site with the aid of land transits and depth sounders. Next time we dive the "COURIER" we must be sure to make slack water and be sure the viz is good.

After the dive, we sat in warm sunshine on an oily sea drifting off the Heads as we took to our lunch bags - very pleasant indeed! Then on down to Pope's Eye for a second dive only to find the incoming tide a bit too much as first Kate then John had to be retrieved by boat in the stream. Again, visibility was very poor and Ross and I had about 10 minutes in front of Pope's Eye observing fish, before swimming over the rock wall into the harbour for a browse.

Another cup of hot coffee and we turned for home via the old tide gauge for a look at the seals. The Bay was still oily smooth!

We got off to a very late start and missed the tide, but still had a very enjoyable day. Divers present were: D. Williams, R., Luxford, P & T Tipping, R. Scott, M. Jeacle, K. Caine, R. Birtles, J. Lawler and T. Cornish. Special thanks to John, Mick and Ross for bringing their boats.

THE EAGLEHAWK VIEW

BY DON ABELL

At the start of this Article I want to heap praise on Des Williams for finding a wonderful new dive site in Tasmania. Two months ago Des suggested a dive on the SS Nord, a ship that went down in November 1915 on the rugged and beautiful South East Coast of Tasmania. The offer was tempting but clashed badly with my Wedding Anniversary.

One week later I rang Des and told him I was in. The negotiations in with Nicky were not too bad and could be likened to those between Costello and State Premiers over sales tax. One week later Ross Luxford signed on and we had a great team.

We dived the Nord on the first day. I am sure that Des will also have an article in this issue of Fathoms so I will not repeat the detail. It is an excellent dive and probably the best wreck dive I have done in Australia. Like all our dives we had visibility of at least 70 feet and no current. A rare experience for us Victorian Divers.

The other dives were superb and the great attraction was being able to observe The Cold Water Reef Life with no current to disturb you. With the assistance of Gerry Devries 50 Watt Halogen (again) these dives were special experiences.

But enough of diving. I hope and expect that Des will put Eaglehawk on the calender for 1997 and a few more will be able to enjoy this great location.

We stayed at the Eaglehawk Hilton otherwise known as the Lufra. The Hotel was built by Reg Ansett and spent its early days full of Pioneer Coach Travellers. The Hotel has tried to encourage divers by mounting an enormous set of dentures from a Great White above the bar. To give added confidence to our current day Mike Nelson's there is a photo of the beast before the Dental Technician applied the Anaesthetic.

The view from the Lufra is second to none; real picture post card material. The Hotel became so well known in its early days that an old nineteenth

century sailing barque was named after it.

Our intrepid tour leader Des attempted a digitectomy on the first night. A most unusual thing to do but his whole character changes when he has a pen knife in his hand. I decided the possible reasons for his action could be a) To avoid swimming with the Great White above the Bar, b) To get Ross and I to carry his gear all weekend or c) To get to meet the Lady Manageress of the Hotel.

The answer became clear. I bolted downstairs to get some first aid implements. The Manager and Manageress were obviously concerned about what hobbies we might be pursuing behind closed doors in their Hotel and insisted on following me back to the room. By the time we returned Des had stripped of Blood soaked clothes and semi-naked.

As the Manageress peered around the door she was confronted by Des in his most resplendent state. It was very easy to see that she was extremely impressed - and who wouldn't be. Ross and I had to forcefully remove her from the room and I suspect her eyebrows are still raised to this day.

A few words about the great group divers (and non divers) we met at Eaglehawk Dive Centre.

Gary: Runs a good operation with Mike and showed us four top dives. He has a sadistic sense of humour for Victorians who wear wet suits (as opposed to dry suits). After impressing urgency to kit up for the next dive he announces the boat is delayed for another ten minutes. Three Victorians Grimace as they wait in wet and cold suits.

Owen and Neil; They really came for the drinking but thought they might fit in some diving as a diversion. From the look of Neil's wet suit he has been inside the jaws of the Great White and survived.

<u>Dave</u>: An interesting guy who pursues marine biology. He swims with a miniature butterfly net and brings up species that are too small for an old accountants eyes to see underwater.

Bill: I'll remember him for his answer to a question from Gary. After doing a forty minute swim through a maze of caves (some of which would probably be

too small for a big Lloyd). Gary asked "Do you think you could lead a dive through there now?" Bill answered "I would be OK for the first half" Personally, I'll vote that as a "No" so we'll put Tony Tipping with Bill next year.

Jo: A fabulous lady who has a unique talent of knowing just when a hot cup of coffee is needed. In fact she has built an occupation of arranging conferences in Tassie by standing at the airport and handling coffee to 'in need' travellers. Organise a couple of speakers and its a done deal. Jo loaned us her Subaru Liberty for a brief time. It was great, I've always wondered about how Wheelies and hand brake turns go in a four Wheel Drive Sedan. Des found it a perfect change to do a bit of business on her car phone to those countries in different Zones.

Pat: While Pat has the credit of a good husband and two lovely daughters she then shatters her image by telling us she supports St Kilda.

Mike: Runs the operation with Gary but it is obvious that he doesn't dive. He drives the boat and turns up at the Dinners each night. While being a good boat driver he has a credit of putting me into physio for 3 days after I got home. One of those waves must have been a real bone crusher.

But there is a silver lining. While I lay on the physio table with Mary's probing fingers searching my netheregions I was quite content to imagine I was a switchboard in a small country town with Sharon Stone the Telephonist.

So with all the diving finished we were honoured by an invite to a BBQ at the Dive Centre. As all VSAG members would appreciate Ross and I led by example on the night and finished by taking in the good night air by walking back to the Hotel singing old seafaring songs. Des however over did it as usual, left early and suffered a mean hangover on Monday morning.

Everytime I have boarded a plane to go diving Des has been with me and we only missed Ross on the NZ trip to Mikhail Lermontov. My old rule stills holds - You cannot have anything but a great time when VSAG travels.

READING TIDE TABLES

BY MICK JEACLE

Being a boat owner, I made it my business to learn how to read Tide Tables many years ago, particularly the times of "slack water" at Port Phillip heads.

Of course these details are published in every FATHOMS, but it occurred to me that many of our members probably would not understand how to read the necessary information.

Let us consider the example below for 16 September 1996. High water is listed at 1408 (2.08pm) and start of ebb tide is listed at 1642 (4.42pm).

PORT PHILLIP HEADS (PT. LONSDALE)

PORT PHILLIP HEADS (PT LONSDALE)

LAT 38° 18'S	LONG 144° 37'E
TIME ZONE - 1000	

LAT 38° 18'S LONG 144° 37'E TIME ZONE - 1000

Times and Heights of High and Low Waters

Times of Slack Waters

CEL	PTI	FM	RE	R -	1996

SEPTEMBER - 1996

	Time	m		Time	Start
16	0155	1.39	16	0440	ebb
	0745	0.38		1101	flood
MO	1408	1.41	MO	1642	ebb
	2006	0.28		2329	flood

Due to the restrictions of the tidal range within Port Phillip, caused by the relatively narrow entrance into the bay at the heads, the tidal stream in the vicinity of the Heads does not turn at high and low water.

Hence a separate table of predicted times of change is included, that of times of slack waters.

Now slack water usually lasts around 20 to 25 minutes. Therefore, in the example above the start of slack water could be predicted to start at say 4.17pm.

This prediction is arrived at after subtracting 25 minutes from the time that the tide is predicted to commence to flow out of the bay.

When setting our dive calendar therefore, we would on this occasion set a meeting time of say 2.30 pm at Sorrento boat ramp. This would allow sufficient time to gear up, allocate divers to boats and be underway to ensure arrival at the dive site by 4pm.

It must be remembered that wind can effect the tidal levels of Port Phillip. West to South West winds cause a rise in sea level outside Port Phillip, and a consequent increase both in rate and duration of the ingoing stream will continue until sea levels inside and outside have reached equality, then increased ingoing stream will cease and the streams become normal.

In summary all we need to remember is to subtract about 25 minutes from the start of flood or ebb tides in order to determine the start of slack water times at the Heads.

V.S.A.G.

CLUB QUESTIONNAIRE

ALL QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED BY THE JUNE 29TH DEADLINE WERE ENTERED INTO A RANDOM DRAW FOR A YEARS FREE SUBSCRIPTION.

THE V.S.A.G. CONGRATULATES

ROBERT BIRTLES

THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS WHO HAVE RETURNED THEIR FORMS.



NEW MEMBER PROFILE Jim Greenwood

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DIVING? I began diving in early in 1990. A good friend arranged an "Introductory Dive" at Portsea Pier. After more than an hour exploring Portsea Pier and Reef, I was hooked. It wasn't long before I started my diving course.



AGE: Turned 40 in May 1996.

MARTIAL STATUS, CHILDREN: My wife is Lynda and Kids are Hannah (9) and Jesse (6)

OTHER SPORTING INTERESTS/HOBBIES: I play basketball twice a week, which is a great way to sweat, stink, and keep fit. We go camping several times a year and I enjoy boomerangs, kites, radio control gliders etc. Hence the title "Biggest kid on the block".

DETAILS OF EMPLOYMENT: Lynda and I are veterinarians and our practice is Canterbury Veterinary Clinic. My practice is a bit unusual as I do a lot of work with reptiles and fish.

FAVOURITE DIVE SITES: This is a hard question. I enjoy close encounters with fish and animals, so my most remembered dive was at the Skerries off Wingan Inlet in Eastern Victoria in July '94. Masses of seals, lots of Swell or Draughtboard Sharks and heaps of fish. The furthest North I have dived is Montague Island, which was great. However, when the weather, company, and diving conditions come together just right, it can be fantastic almost anywhere.

ANY PROPOSALS FOR NEW DIVE SITES/PLANS YOU COULD SUGGEST TO VSAG: The way that I experience new dive sites is by tagging along with other dive clubs or dive operations. The Latrobe Valley Divers introduced me to the Skerries, which is a fantastic winter dive, but very remote.

If VSAG organised an 'Introductory Dive' or 'Scuba Experience' day, members

could bring along any interested friends. A combination of thrilled first timers and a bit of our own diving could make a great day. The dive experience may produce an interest in doing a dive course and give exposure to VSAG at the same time. This could increase VSAG membership. This could be organised with independent instructors or a dive school.

Joining VSAG means that I have a diving medical certificate good for a year or so. New members may want to do a dive course while the certificate is current. Perhaps in Fathoms or at meetings any interest in further training could be mentioned. I would like to do a rescue Course this year before my diving medical certificate becomes invalid.

HOW YOU CAME TO JOIN VSAG: I am in a dive club called "The Water Dragons" that lost its connection with a dive shop and then a dive school that shutdown. While looking around for alternatives for our club, I was told about VSAG by the SDF (Priya) and another Water Dragon (Kate Caine) worked with Sant Khan. VSAG sounded good, so I joined and so did Kate.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN A DIVE CLUB? Diving, Fun, Diving, Companionship, Diving, Value, Diving, Entertainment, Diving, Training, Diving, Bit of Seafood, Diving, Adventure, Diving, Trips, Diving!!!

And more Diving!

Ed Note: Many thanks Jim. I think your idea about holding a "Scuba Experience" Day is a great idea. We will toss this around in committee and maybe organise a day in the forthcoming summer. I am sure many non diving friends of VSAG members would jump at the chance.

130 FOOT SUB DIVE 15.7.96 BY GERRY DEVRIES

It is Saturday night 6 O'clock waiting for the phone to ring..... there was no one there. Finally a ring, it was John Lawler saying that I had left the fax machine on - but this was not so as we soon discovered that my phone number had been printed incorrectly - does not matter we eventually rustle up 4 divers and one boat owner - John Lawler.

Don Abell and myself drove down to Sorrento Sunday morning but Don drew the line when I said I will pick him up at 7 O'clock in the morning - we settled for 8.00am.

Driving down to the bay which was like glass we have time for a coffee while waiting for the others. Out we go to the elements - survival kit in hand. (more on that in a moment).

As we are motoring down the bay towards the heads in nice flat water, the sun shining and the wind blowing through the hair we see the site on the first wave as the boat goes onto auto pilot. Ted, Mick, Don and myself hit the survival kit (full of soft lollies) and stack these lollies between our teeth so they wouldn't shatter.

On location with the GPS after the mooring Mick takes over the helm and up and down we went looking for the new sub - we found it in no time wasted and in we went down the line. At 80 ft a dark shadow was looming in the distance and it was the sub in prime site sitting on the bottom dropping down. The visibility was fantastic - we said at least 80ft. What a sight was the torches lit the sub up from one end to the other. We could have stayed for hours but it was time to go.

However my ascent was not quite as easy as the descent as my B.C. would not inflate so I had to drag myself up the anchor rope - glad to get aboard.

We all agreed that was the best dive we had done for a long time.

Homeward bound we had Mick giving everyone boat handling lessons in his good fashion.

Overall we had a good day, sunny skies good visibility and good fun.

HAVE YOU DIVED THE SHIPS GRAVEYARD?

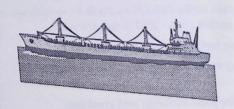
No!!!!

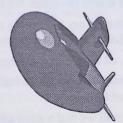
Then join VSAG for the Cup Weekend

November 1st - 5th

at the Ocean Grove Caravan Park
Cabins Available
\$60 Deposit with Booking
by August meeting or no go!
For further details contact

Andy Mastrowicz on 9318 3986.





DIVING EAGLEHAWK NECK TASMANIA Queens Birthday June Long Weekend 1996 BY ROSS LUXFORD

After hectic week of fighting with customers, I left on a weekend of diving, cruising (for chicks & ocean seas) plus a "wee bit" of Tasmania's famous Good Food and Wine!!!!!!!

Arranged by chief Tour Leader Des Williams and joined by fellow VSAG member Don Abell we set off for parts unknown.

Transfers from Hobart Airport to Lufra Hotel, Eaglehawk, by Eaglehawk Dive Centre.

Hotel 2 1/2 Star - large open fires - no phones or TV (in rooms). but plenty of hot water and Cold beer, "What more could you ask for?"!!!!!!!

SATURDAY: Transferred to Dive Centre - met rest of group - loaded trailer with gear, travelled in old Toyota Troop carrier to pier. Awaiting us was a SHARK CAT with twin 140hp motors. (I don't seem to be able to get away from work).

After cruising 22 km down the coast towards Port Arthur - Cliffs 200m plus high.

similar to Port Campbell area of Victoria. STUNNING, SPECTACULAR dive on the "S/S Nord" which sank at 2am Monday 8th November, 1915 after hitting "Needle Rock" unchartered between "Big and Little Hippolyte Rocks". After anchoring above the wreck, Des, Don and myself dived down at 20m. The outline of the ship appeared some further 20m below us. We swam to and over the Bow towards the Stern to a fully intact Rudder, Propeller, Keel & Dead Wood sitting upright on sand at 42m great photo subjects for all. We then made our way over the Stern Rails, under the rear Deck, I sighted the Spare Propeller below us (Instant Tax Deduction) in amongst the wreckage. We continued past Ladders, Pipe Work, Donkey Engine, Twin Boilers and Main Steam Engine, the visibility was stunning. Des was so involved with his photographic skills that time was running short, we swam back to the Anchor Rope, and headed up with slow assent/decompression stop. Total dive time was 30 minutes to 42m deep 11°C water temperature 9° C temperature on boat, wind chill freezing "What a dive". We returned to the Dive Centre after lunch & thawed out. We had 4 hrs surface time. The second dive was just a few km's down the coast to "Cathedral Dome" we tied the

boat in a canyon between cliffs to preset anchors drilled in rocks. 18 metre dive for 45 minutes again a "Stunning dive".

Following Gary, our guide, we spent the first thirty minutes in and under cliffs in caves, our VSAG Photographer Des with his camera, Don and myself carrying 50watt lights, dived with Crays, a variety of fish, sharks & octopus all sharing this great dive thru the caves. We then spent the last 10 mins looking at the brilliant colour of the cliff walls, tickling crayfish under the chin!!! whilst at any time looked 15 metres above in clear visibility and saw our boat tethered between the cliffs.

Back on the boat Gary took us for a cruise along the rugged cliff face, in and out of rocks and back to the jetty. That evening we enjoyed dinner with all the staff and divers (diving this week end) at "The Officers Mess" a licensed restaurant.

SUNDAY: Rough boat ride (due to swell) to "Hippolyte Rock" the site was very similar to "Skull Rock" Wilson Prom. with seals and incredible visibility, back to Dive centre, 4 hours surface time.

Second dive back to "Cathedral Canyon" tethered boat. Dived different caves, ledges, canyon "Purgatory Passage" again "What a stunning dive". Returned to clean up, and wash gear for BBQ Tea at Dive centre, dinner tonight consisted of "The Good Food", abalone, crayfish, chicken wings, steaks, salads and Tassy potatoes, also a Ttassy white and red wine or two. What a way to finish off four top dives.

The hospitality extended to us and friendship received from Gary, Mick and families from "Eaglehawk Neck Dive Centre" and also, the other divers that were there during our visit, was far greater than we expected and very much appreciated.

MONDAY: We packed our gear and said our good byes, with a few sore heads in great VSAG tradition. Left luggage at Hobart Airport. Don became our new Tour Guide the usual tourist visit to Salamanca Markets, Hobart Wharf Area (for the taxman it helps to have an accountant with you for all these perks). Met up with one of Don's relatives (not the Tassy devil type???) who lives at Battery Point one of the original settlements in the heart and what a lively character he is and a fitting finale to a very enjoyable trip. We feel VSAG should look at slotting into our calender a return trip for next year maybe the same June Long Weekend but extended to four days diving instead of two. Anybody who visits Tasmania should allow a couple of extra days to stop at "Eaglehawk Neck and dive at least "Waterfall Bay", Caves, Canyons and "The Nord Wreck".

V.S.A.G. WINTER LUNCHEON

BY DES WILLIAMS

What a fantastic turnout of V.S.A.Gers, families, friends and visitors we had to our Winter luncheon on Sunday 7th July at the Ozone Hotel at Queenscliff. Thank you to everyone who came along for the day, we had 58 adults, 10 children and a number of young babies. I didn't hear any complaints about a shortage of food either, as we received a very enjoyable three courses for a reasonable \$15.00 per adult.

Some members drove down to Queenscliff, whilst the majority went via Sorrento and travelled without cars on the ferry to Queenscliff. We never tire of this beautiful part of our bay and to relax on the ferry with friends, mooch around shops in Queenscliff and sit down to a very pleasant meal on a warm Winter morning was delightful.

Karen, Fiona and Mark at the Ozone looked after us in a very professional style, nothing was too much trouble and Mark even managed to do the impossible a couple of times! It was a huge group to feed and with members and children underfoot the staff stayed cool.

The Grand Diningroom at the Ozone Hotel is a living piece of history in itself, the Victorian ambience is easy on the soul, and with a few drinks and plenty of friends I couldn't think of a better way to spend a Winter's day.

Gerry DeVries and Bob Scott had the raffle underway in fine style with assistance from Kim Mastrowicz and Jessica Jeacle, thanks guys. A neat little profit was returned, not that this is the intention, but the prize of a dinner and room for two at the Regent Melbourne was highly sought after. The winner was Yari from Sonar Wetsuits, who was more than satisfied with his last minute decision to attend our gathering.

Our leisurely luncheon concluded about 2.30pm and most of our wives and children departed for the tourist attractions of Queenscliff, whilst guest speaker Geoff Nayler, set up for his lecture.

We were soon looking at the first underwater photos taken in the Ship's Graveyard back in 1972, as Geoff explained how he first became interested in the site and eventually how many of the vessels we now regularly dive, were

discovered. The Geelong Skindiving Club were a very close group back then, but unfortunately time has thinned out their membership now. They certainly made a big contribution to some of the great dives sites we enjoy today.

The local Queenscliff fishermen and Geoff's close friendship with them returned many of the sites we now visit frequently. Geoff explained what it was like to dive for the first time to the graves of so many old ships and submarines and how each new find triggered an insatiable desire to find out more about each of the vessel's past career.

A very big thank you to Geoff Nayler for some of his valuable time on a weekend to drag us back into the past. I must also say it was great to see some members of the old Melbourne Bottomscratchers Dive Club turn out for the afternoon, as they often went out with Geoff when he was running charters to the wrecks outside the Heads some years ago.



Guest Speaker, Geoff Nayler is thanked by organiser Des Williams

WINTER IN TASMANIA

BY DES WILLIAMS

When I mentioned at the VSAG April meeting I intended going to Tasmania diving in Winter, no one was interested in accompanying me. Probably because most of the regular divers were heading for Truk Lagoon and Palau in May. So, I resolved to go by myself over the Queens Birthday weekend.

Well, as soon as Don Abell learned that Nicky was planning dog shows for that weekend, I soon had a dive buddy to join me. The Abell's wedding anniversary celebrations were on hold until the Tuesday!

I made plans with Eaglehawk Dive Centre at Eaglehawk Neck, Qantas and the Lufra Country Hotel and we were ready to go. The Ross Luxford weighed in and we were now a trio!

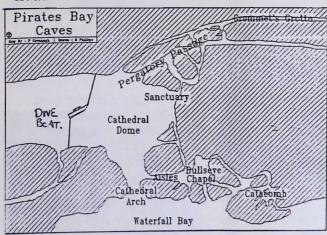
This proved to be one of the most pleasurable dive trips I can remember, good company, good accommodation, outstanding hospitality at Eaglehawk Dive



Des comes to grips with his permanent Nikonos appendage. Limo courtesy of the Eaglehawk Dive Centre.



SS Nord



Centre and some of the most exciting dives I have ever done.

Ross drove us to the airport an we departed at 3pm Friday, arriving at Hobart at 4pm, where we were met by Bill Knox of Eaglehawk Dive and transported to our hotel at Eaglehawk Neck,

as the night fell.
Over the next few
days we had just
the best time in
the company of
proprietors Mick
Baron and Gary
Myors and his
family.

Ok the weather was very cold, but Winter is when the east coast of Tasmania has flat seas and gin-clear

visibility. The coastal scenery on the Tasman Peninsula is nothing short of breathtaking, with 100m - 500m vertical sandstone cliffs, absolutely no beaches anywhere and no rivers to cloud the water.

Our first dive was a 45 minute high speed boat trip 25 kms southward almost to Tasman Island not far from Port Arthur. The 90m long iron steamer "Nord" took her last gasp here at the base of vertical cliffs back in 1917. Back in those days, navigation charts were not complete and the "Nord" tore her bottom out passing over a granite tower known as Needle Rock just beneath the surface near Hippolyte Rock at Eaglehawk.

Ross, Don and I descended the anchor line towards the wreck, passing our three Tasmanian fellow divers as they made their way up. Their gestures meant a good dive below, and we weren't disappointed. The "Nord" lies in 42m and at the 15m mark we could already see her remains sitting bolt-upright on the bottom, viz was brilliant, around 30m by my estimate.

We swam along the decaying hull about the forward hatch towards her completely intact stern. I plunged to the bottom to stand on the sand with my camera to watch Don and Ross hover around the gigantic propeller and rudder underneath her towering counter stern. The hull is covered in yellow zooanthids and rainbow coloured jewel anemones. The sight was really breathtaking from my position, as the boys played their 60w lights onto the colourful hull plates in the shadows of the stern.

I can't remember too many other wrecks where an entire propeller and rudder make such an impressive and beautiful picture.



Two Days into the trip and male bonding becomes a priority.

We then swam up over the poop-deck and into the stern accommodation area and on through the engine room past machinery and boilers until Ross pointed out a square propeller lying in the No. 4 hold. All the time we in the company of clouds of bait fish, pike and bullseyes.

But, it was the clarity of the water which made this dive so fantastic and it was one time when I really wanted to stay much longer than we could at such depths. All the way back up the anchor line, I kept looking back down at the amazing sight on the sea floor, such an exciting dive and she sank so long ago! The vessel was Scottish built and weighed in at 1057 tonnes and is still very much intact.

We did three more dives closer to Eaglehawk over the next two days and I know Ross will have written about the 30 minute underwater tour in 20m we did of the sandstone tunnels and corridors under the towering cliffs at Waterfall Bay.

This part of Tasmania is largely unexplored and I will certainly be heading south again in preference to going north to the tropics in future. I might even consider a dry suit, as the wind-chill factor is the biggest problem at that time of year. Don purchased a weatherproof sailing jacket and trousers before we went to Tassy and found it very comfortable between dives, even though he dived in a wetsuit.

Thanks for the company guys, I'll put your names on my list for a repeat performance next year and I'll bet we won't have trouble luring more VSAGers with us.



VSAG

CHRISTMAS DINNER

VENUE MICHELINO'S

69-73 PELHAM STREET CARLTON

DATE SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER 1996

COST \$35 HEAD

(DEPOSIT OF \$15 HEAD REQUIRED ASAP)

Micheliono's is a bright roomy Italian restaurant in downtown Carlton offering a large choice of entrees, mains and desserts.

Prizes - Last year we raffled off over \$1000 worth of prizes and this year we hope to do the same if not better!

Mystery Prize - Once again we will ask for one wrapped mystery gift per head of no more than \$2 value. This was great fun last year so get those imaginations working early!

Contact - Chris Llewellyn A.H. 9431 1650 B.H. 9464 1599

V.S.A.G. FATHER'S DAY YUM CHA

VSAG is celebrating Father's Day in China Town!

SUNDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 1996 11.00 AM SITTING SHARK FINN INN

50 LITTLE BOURKE STREET MELBOURNE

FULL YUM CHA SELECTION

\$18.00 ADULT \$10.00 CHILDREN

AND AFTERWARDS

A FREE CITY TOUR!

LET'S MAKE IT A BIG VSAG FAMILY DAY

CONTACT: CHRIS LLEWELLYN

TEL: 9431 1650

DIVE REPORT SEAL ROCKS/PHILLIP ISLAND

BY JOHN LAWLER

The days leading up to Sunday 16th June were mild wintry days with fog in the morning and good sun during the day. The kind of build up to good diving weather and sure enough the weather held up for the dive day. Mick Jeacle must have a good contact with the weather God because all the way from my home the fog was heavy and thick but just as I passed the turnoff to Flinders at Frankston the fog simply disappeared and it was clear blue all the way to Stoney point.

Two boats and seven divers took off in good time for our long run to Phillip Island for the club dive. We decided on the spot immediately East of the Nobbies. Mick's crew were in first from an anchored boat and two divers from my boat followed. Bob Scott returned to Mick's boat as he unfortunately fell sick during his dive. When Mick and his buddy surfaced Bob had difficulty starting the boat so it was left to me to give them a tow for a short distance back. The report from Mick was that despite some swell the conditions below were good and the territory interesting. After picking up my divers my buddy, new member Darren Pearce, and I were soon over the side and into 65 feet of calm clear water, just great.

We found valleys and walls with lots of growth and plenty of colour and loads of fish life. On a day like this area would be a photographers paradise. We moved around to the West side of the Nobbies for lunch into calm waters and decided to do a run with the G.P.S. for a well known wreck believed to have sunk in the area off the South side of Phillip Island and we did pick up some strong readings however the depth was too shallow for our target. It will be left to another day for us to check out just what is was below the given coordinates!

We headed back to Seal Rocks where a few divers had a ball with the always playful seals. The day was getting short so we turned for the run home on seas that were almost glass making for a great end to a perfect dive day. My only regret was we had so few divers on this because it was an exceptional day and one you wish would never end. To Mick and the divers who did make it on the day, thanks for a lot of laughs and good fun.

SCUBA MARKET

FOR SALE

Tusa Imprex Fins	- medium - green - good condition
	inc spare strap and Tusa clips

\$85

Tusa Knife - sharp point - green - excellent condition

\$45

Roth tank valve - brand new - with "O" rings

\$55

Contact: Andrew Marshall - Elwood - Ah. 9531 9384

FOR SALE

28mm UNDERWATER LENS FOR NIKONOS CAMERA
USED ONLY THREE TIMES BY GEOFF NAYLER AT GEELONG
NOW NO LONGER REQUIRED AND GEOFF WOULD LIKE TO
FIND IT A GOOD HOME,
SO IF YOU ARE INTERESTED GIVE GEOFF A CALL DIRECT ON
(052) 481772

MEDIA WATCH

Blueprint for bay's future

VICTORIANS in the Port Phillip Bay region have been urged to have their say on its environmental direction.

A strategy to balance tourism, industry, environmental and population needs was yesterday handed to the State Government by the Port Phillip Catchment and Protection Board.

It urges action to improve water quality, sustain industrial output and maintain tourist sites.

The Port Phillip Bay region is home to 3.1 million Victorians, 70 per cent of the state's population.

Its rivers and streams provide 70 per cent of the state's water supply and its residents pay 75 per cent of the state's tax revenue, board chairman Mr Vasey Haughton said.

By SIMON FERGUSON

"The Port Phillip region also provides \$400 million per year in tourism revenue.

"Yet while the State Government spends \$80 million per year on the environment, only 3 per cent of this goes to the Port Phillip region."

Mr Haughton handed the report to Liberal MP Stephen McArthur, who stood in for Conservation Minister Marie Tehan.

"I urge you and your colleagues to read it carefully," Mr Haughton told him.

Mr McArthur said by the time Mrs Tehan received the report in October, he hoped it would be full of public recommendations.

"This is all about the health and well-being of the economy and environment in the next 50 years and the next 100 years.

"I urge the public to make submissions before the cut-off date of August 31," he said.

Accepting the report on behalf of the community, former Olympic runner and conservation advocate John Landy said action was needed now.

"There are a number of hotspots where feral animals or plant pests or salinity or erosion or water quality have become a real problem," he said.

"The situation is retrievable, but only if the community jumps up right now and makes sure the government puts some money and manpower into protecting this region."

Copies of the draft report can be obtained from the Conservation Department, local governments and public libraries.

MEDIA WATCH



Aground: the luckless power boat: Picture: KAINE PINDER from the Channel Ten helicopter.

Rescued pair to face court

By MICHELLE EDMUNDS and PAUL ANDERSON

TWO fishermen knocked unconscious when their power boat ran aground are to be charged on summons for allegedly possessing more than the legal amount of abalone.

Fisheries officers from the Natural Resources and Environment Department yesterday recovered about 500 shelled blacklipped abalone from the sea floor near the blue-



stone fort at the mouth of Port Phillip Bay.

The department said the fishermen's boat and

equipment had also been seized.

A mobile phone saved the lives of the men whose twin hull boat struck Pope's Eye on Sunday night at such speed it mounted the boulders, rocketing the crew against the steering wheel and cabin.

The impact is believed to have knocked the men unconscious but one recovered enough to phone rescuers around 8.45pm.

Volunteers from Peninsula Rescue 499 launched a boat in treacherous conditions to save the pair, guided by a helicopter with "night sun" lighting, rescuer Trevor Heylbut said.

"Pope's Eye is a horseshoe shape of big boulders and it's marked with a red light but these guys have just gone straight for it at massive speed, flat out at 35 knots, and in the end there was none of the boat left in the water but the motors," he said.

The men, believed to be from Ballarat West, were in a stable condition in hospital last night.

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DATE 15 Aug	EVENT/LOCATION General Meeting Bells Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets,	DIVE CAPTAIN Sth Melbourne	MEET AT 8.00pm Sharp!
25 Aug	Heads Area (Slack water 10.00am)	Andy Mastrowicz 9318 3986	Sorrento 8.45am Sharp!
1 Sept	Yum Cha (Father's Day) Free City Tour (see separate notice)	Chris Llewellyn 9431 1650	11am Sharp
8 Sept	Wreck Dive Hygeia	Don Abell 9889 4415	9.00am
14 Sept Saturday	Night Dive	Leo Maybus 9727 1568	Rye Pier 5.30 pm
19 Sept	General Meeting Bells Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets,	Sth Melbourne	8.00pm Sharp!
22 Sept	90 ft Submarine (one tank dive)	Leo Maybus 9727 1568	9.00am Sorrento
6 Oct	Flinders/Nobbies	Neville Viapree 9551 1547	9.00am Flinders
12 Oct Saturday	Night Dive	Leo Maybus 9727 1568	6.00pm Sorrento Pier
17 Oct	General Meeting Bells Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets,	Sth Melbourne	8.00pm Sharp!
20 Oct	Lonsdale Wall (one tank dive)	Bob Scott 059 712206	11.00am Sorrento
2 Nov	Cup Weekend - Barwon Heads	Andy Mastrowicz	(see separate notice)
14 Dec	Christmas Dinner Michelino's - Carlton	Chris Llewellyn 9431 1650	(see separate notice)

NOTICE: BOAT OWNERS INTENDING TO BRING THEIR BOATS PLEASE RING DIVE CAPTAIN BEFORE 6PM ON EVENING PRIOR TO DIVE.

DIVERS PLEASE RING BETWEEN 6PM - 7PM.

THOSE ATTENDING NIGHT DIVES (SATURDAYS) PLEASE RING BY 8PM ON EVENING PRIOR TO DIVE.

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TIDE TABLES

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TIMES OF SLACK WATERS OCTOBER - 1996

PORT PHILLIP HEADS (PT. LONSDALE)

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ADD 1 HOUR TO TIMES SHOWN FOR OFFICIAL "SUMMER TIME"

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TIDE TABLES

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PORT PHILLIP HEADS (PT. LONSDALE)

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EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION MORNINGTON PENINSULA AREA

	PHONE							
POLICE - AMBULANCE - FIRE	(000)							
PENINSULA AMBULANCE (ROSEBUD, SORRENTO)	(008) 137333							
(MORNINGTON)	(03) 783 2222							
SOUTHERN PENINSULA HOSPITAL								
1527 NEPEAN ROSEBUD	(059) 86 8444							
FRANKSTON HOSPITAL								
HASTINGS ROAD FRANKSTON	(03) 781 3111							
MORNINGTON BUSH NURSING HOSPITAL								
MAIN ST MORNINGTON	(059) 75 2009							
MORNINGTON BAY RESCUE SERVICE	(059) 75 2733							
SOUTHERN PENINSULA RESCUE	(059) 84 2000							
DIVING EMERGENCY SERVICE	1800 088 200							
COAST GUARD	(03) 598 7003							
STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE (S.E.S)	(03) 26 1468							
WATER POLICE	(03) 662 0911							
MELBOURNE AMBULANCE	(03) 662 2533							
DOCTORS DIVING MEDICINE								
DR. GUY WILLIAMS ROSEBUD	(059) 81 1555							
DR. J De B.J. DADE MORNINGTON	(059) 75 5288							
DIVING EMERGENCY SERVICE	1800 088 200							

V.H.F. EMERGENCY CHANNEL (16)