

# FATHOMS

EST. 1954



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# VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FEB-MAR 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 freedom. It believes that divers must take a responsible attitude toward the protection and preservation of the marine environment but as a general rule is opposed to legislative measures that place prohibitive limitations and restrictions in diving activities.

Local diving is organised on a bi-monthly basis, generally out of participating member's boats. This is supported by weekend camps, charters to more remote locations and annual overseas trips. The club has a considerable investment in diving equipment.

Regular functions provide an opportunity for members, friends and families to socialise. Each month VSAG meets at North Melbourne Football Club where bar facilities are available prior to and after the General Meetings. Visitors are very welcome – smart casual wear essential.

# FATHOMS

Official journal of the *Victorian Sub - Aqua Group*

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### Next General Meetings:

Bells Hotel  
157 Moray Street (cnr. Coventry Street)  
South Melbourne - 8pm sharp!  
Thursday 15th February 1996  
Thursday 21st March 1996

### Next Committee Meetings:

Tuesday 20th February - Pat Reynold's home  
Tuesday 26th March - Chris Llewellyn's home

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John Lawler  
Leo Maybus

## EDITORIAL



The illegal taking of abalone and crayfish from Mornington Peninsula beaches and popular dive sites has received a great deal of press of late. Those who read the Age on Saturdays could not have helped but notice the front page picture of Fisheries and Wildlife officer Rod Barber in the water at cape Schanck, flashing his plastic ID badge in one hand as he retrieves a bulging bag of illegally taken crayfish and abalone from a no doubt very surprised diver. The article that follows goes on to state that this is the new face of Fisheries crime-catching on the Mornington Peninsula, as the officers have decided its time to get tough on the pillaging of the peninsula's rich reef life.

It's now an opportune time to remind all VSAG divers of their need to brush up on the rules, particularly legal size limits, localities and boundaries of marine reserves etc. Be aware that those abalone given to you by your dive buddy at the end of the day, when added to your own legal catch, will put you over the limit if your vehicle is stopped on the way home. The trip to Robe was a resounding success. The caravan park was ideally located and within an easy walk to the beach and the main street. Obviously the area has a lot to offer the diver but I feel we only scratched the surface. One thing I did notice was the distinct lack of fish life but the reefs were great albeit a bit shallow.

This edition of **Fathoms** is bulging with articles and I thank those who have contributed. In order to include articles and photo's of recent events it has been necessary to withhold some items until the next issue, and Media Watch has been dispensed with this issue. My apologies to those contributors whose articles have been withheld from this issue. I hope you'll understand.  
Enjoy the read.

Editor, Mick Jeacle

## **SPECIAL NOTE:**

At our January meeting, Robin Woods alerted me to the fact that there has been an amendment to AS 2337.1 (1989) relating to cracks in seamless gas cylinders (Scuba tanks).

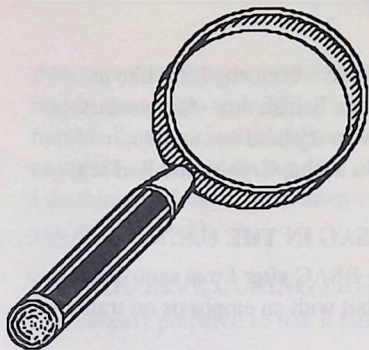
Following this amendment, cracks in any seamless cylinders are cause for the cylinder to be condemned. The responsibility of the Gas Cylinder Test Stations are as follows: Any cylinder sent to a GCTS for a periodic inspection and found to have a crack would be automatically condemned.

Scuba cylinders previously identified with a crack and stamped with an "F" would be automatically condemned without being reinspected when presented to a GCTS for periodic inspection.

Items 1 and 2 above are the only two conditions on which a GCTS can condemn a cracked cylinder.

A combined GCTS/Filling Station cannot condemn an "F" marked cylinder when it is presented to them for a fill only and the cylinder is within its inspection period.

GCTS have no control as to what is to happen with "F" marked cylinders that are within their inspection period. Amendment No. 2 does not address this issue since the standard only covers GCTS, excluding fill stations. A further bit of bad news is that tanks are now guaranteed for 7 years only. Any tank condemned which is older than this will not be replaced by CIG.. A crack is defined as a split or rift in the metal.



## V.S.A.G. PROFILE

This month's diver profile features  
**Sally Staddon**

**AGE:** 39

**OCCUPATION:** Lecturer in French  
(part time) and mother (full time)

**FAMILY:** Daughters (of course!) Joanna  
3½, Asha ( 8 mths), married to Sant Khan

### **HOW, WHY & WHEN DID YOU FIRST GET INTO DIVING?**

Whilst on holiday in France about 12 years ago, a diving friend persuaded me to try a "bapteme" (baptism) in the mediterranean near Cassis (very close to where last year a diver found pre-historic paintings in a cave accessible only by diving). From a hire boat a french instructor took me into 6m of water for 15 minutes after just a rudimentary explanation of what to do. The instructor (she) was great and I felt comfortable in this alien environment very quickly. When I returned to the UK I decided to learn how to dive properly and joined my local branch of the British Sub Aqua (BSAC) and have never looked back.

### **TELL US SOME OF THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF DIVING IN THE U.K. COMPARED TO AUSTRALIA**

The people, the jokes, the problems of a private club are similar to those we knew in the UK but the diving is different. On the whole weather and sea conditions are better here. It may also be a function of getting older but in the UK we dived in temperatures and visibility we wouldn't dream of diving in here. The majority of divers use a dry suit and even then only dive between April and October. At the beginning and end of the diving season conditions would be much like winter diving in Victoria. The British coastline offers a wide range of diving but living in London we dived mainly in the English Channel on first and second world war wrecks. Scotland, Wales and Cornwall is more picturesque with better vis and more fish life. Most BSAC clubs use inflatable boats and so being able to get in and out of an inflatable is a key part of the training - no ladders or platforms to scramble on to. It is said that if you trained with BSAC in British waters you're ready for anything and I

can only think of one or two dives I've done here that have been anything like as testing (i.e. cold, rough, currents, low vis) as an average British one - famous last words! One other difference is that a lot of British divers try hard not to dive in Britain all the time - it's comparatively cheap to get to Malta, Cyprus, the Red sea, etc. for some warmer easier diving.

### **WERE YOU WITH A PRIVATE CLUB LIKE VSAG IN THE U.K.?**

I belonged to Ealing BSAC and then to Bermondsey BSAC after I met Sant. There are hundreds of BSAC clubs run much like VSAG but with an emphasis on training and a commitment to BSAC standards.

### **WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE UNDERWATER INTERESTS?**

I like to potter and look at the marine life (plant and animal) - the big stuff (seals, mantas, etc.) but also small things like nudibranchs and sea squirts which are often quite beautiful and usually missed when you're rushing around from one bommie to the next looking for that elusive cray or ab. I also like wreck diving - again for the marine life they attract as well as for the wreck itself.

### **TELL US ABOUT ONE OF YOUR MORE MEMORABLE DIVES**

I could talk about anything in Truk, the seals at Skull Rock or the Mantas at Lady Elliot island or a few awful dives in the UK when I'd have been better off at home in front of the TV. But I think my most memorable dive (actually a snorkel - is that allowed?) was with a wild dolphin off the Welsh coast. It had spent the summer hanging around one bit of the coast making friends with anyone who would swim with it. It used to allow a local boy to ride on its back but the rest of us had to make do with nudges in the back, playful bites on the arm and games of chasey in the low vis. The best thing was knowing that it was there by choice and could disappear whenever it had had enough of us..

### **HAVE YOU EVER FELT INTIMIDATED BY THE SUPPOSED MACHO IMAGE OF DIVING**

No, I haven't. I don't think of diving as having a macho image. I've been lucky in that I trained in a club in which two of the best diver-instructors were women and then, after I met Sant, I was to some extent "sheltered" from the worst excesses of the more inadequate male egos. There are some male divers who seek to further their



own supposed "macho-ness" by diving deep, diving into dangerous wrecks, seeking crays obsessively and talking loudly about it all but they are just (misguided - in my humble opinion) individuals and there are lots of divers of both sexes who get on and enjoy all aspects of diving. One of the nice things about diving is the camaraderie and I do think the lone women diver can feel excluded there again it just depends on who you're diving with.

### **DID YOU DIVE DURING PREGNANCY?**

No. I wasn't prepared to risk it although it was very frustrating being shore party.

### **TELL US HOW MOTHERHOOD HAS EFFECTED YOUR DIVING?**

It hasn't effected my desire to dive, only the amount of time and energy I have available for diving. I look forward to the day when Sant and I will no longer have to take turns diving and babysitting. I certainly don't worry about the girls when diving. the joy of diving is that you forget everything else Owell, almost.

### **VSAG HAS VERY FEW FEMALE MEMBERS. WAS THIS A CONCERN WHEN YOU JOINED THE CLUB AND HOW COULD WE ATTRACT MORE FEMALE MEMBERS ?**

it didn't worry me because I was used to the same situation in the UK and, as I said before, having a diving husband makes it a lot easier. Attracting more females members is really only part of the larger problem of attracting more members. Maybe more active recruitment drives are needed - advertising in the Universities and big companies, following up potential members closely and maintaining contact after first trial dive by ringing and asking how it went, when they'd like to dive again, etc. I know it already happens informally but perhaps a formal "tutoring" system where a member keeps tabs on the new or potential member. I think a wider range of dives would also be attractive to a lot of people, not just women. For example: occasional single dives on a Saturday or Sunday so the whole day isn't taken up with diving, shore dives (including night dives), a willingness to dive somewhere for the marine life (other than crays) and scenery - I've only dived Pope's Eye once but would love to go back there and I love the bommie diving around the Heads but it would be nice to have more dives planned and timed to get onto those amazing underwater cliffs.

For women, it is definitely intimidating to walk into the Pub for a meeting and see so few other women. I'm told by a former female VSAG diver that VSAG was the only area in her life where she encountered sexist comments and she didn't see why should put up with it in VSAG when she didn't have to put up with it elsewhere. I think I've been lucky because I don't feel that personally (on re-reading that I do remember the there were often times at committee and general meetings where i had to bite my tongue at offensive "for the boys" talk) but i do think some behaviour and words are thoughtless, unintentionally sexist or just make women feel uncomfortable. Or else these men think that diving is "men's business" and if women want to invade they have to tolerate their behaviour. I wonder if the men would feel the same if roles were reversed and the lone male diver was expected to join in or listen to boring or gruesome discussions on the merits of various nappies or tampons? He might get p-- ed off fairly quickly, I think.

### **WILL YOU BE ENCOURAGING YOUR KIDS TO DIVE?**

Yes, but not forcing them. Joanna is already asking when she can learn and has selected her pink fins and cylinder from a diving magazine. One of the strength of this club is the "family atmosphere" and the new generation of divers we've bred. Let's hope all those girls don't see diving as a macho sport.

### **WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE AMBITIONS?**

Not to have another 2 year break from diving. To experience again the range of diving we had in our first two years here - truk, the reef and all the top Victorian dives - and to get to jervis bay, palau and the Solomons for the first time.

## *TIP'S TIT-BITS* *at the Tennis Party*

BY TONY TIPPNG

This year's VSAG Tennis Party was held on Sunday 26 November and after a very cool showery start at 9am - Bazza even lit the fire at the tennis club - the day got progressively hotter and hotter and peaked at 31° by mid afternoon.

Special thanks must go as always to Marie Truscott for arranging the cranbourne South Tennis Courts and to June Scott for organising the games for the younger children the coveted event "The Doubles" went, this year it was wide open because Herb and Robyn didn't show up! Marcus and myself (runners-up last year) defeated Marie and Bazza in the final 6-2! As I said to the boy just belt everything back at the old bloke & he didn't let us down!

Marie got back by defeating Sant Khan in the singles 6-3 and for the first time we had a separate junior singles in which Marcus Tipping defeated his mate David in a cliffhanger Tiebreaker 7-6 (7-4). This game really was played for sheep stations!

At 3pm as usual we had the infamous VSAG mile (or as Murray Black claimed is only about 1200metres). He measured it on his motorbike and anyhow even with the handicaps it was far enough for this old soul recovering from a mid year knee operation. May I say the handicapping was excellent this year because all categories were extremely close.

Mile Results:	Overall Winner	Cathy Tipping
	Toddler Winner	Joanna Khan
	U10 girl	Laura Tipping
	10-18 girl	Cathy Tipping
	10-18 boy	Marcus Tipping
	First Woman	Jan Cornish (Ted's Wife)
	Veteran (over 40)	Sant Khan
	Super Veteran (over 50)	Barry Truscott

Although 48 men, women and children too numerous to name enjoyed the No1 family day this club has each year - infact for the 24th consecutive year & yes Pat Moore and the 3 boys retain their second (they've or Pat rather has been to the last 23 Tennis Parties!). The day finished with a friendly game of cricket & thanks to Murray also for the motor bike rides - he really kept the kids entertained all day. See you there next year.



*Does any body recognise this face?*



*Paul Tipping presents Marie Truscott with her prize for winning the open singles title.*

## **V.S.A.G. CHRISTMAS MEETING 21.12.95**

BY DES WILLIAMS  
Public Relations Officer

This turned out to be a terrific social evening, with a great rollup of V.S.A.G. members and families and best of all, at least eight visitors who were keen to check out the good old V.S.A.G. The usual General Meeting formalities were dispensed with and we simply had a pleasant evening in Christmas spirits.

We trust that everyone had a good time as Bill Bell had set aside a room for us to convene and mingle and did us proud with this famous hospitality. Good to see so many family members joining us in Christmas spirit and I believe the good prospects of the great time at Robe in South Australia, had many members looking forward to the Christmas break.

This is probably a good chance to remind all members to be sure to mingle and make welcome visitors to the Club at meetings. Looking back at the attendance list I circulated on the evening, the visitors present who signed were: Andrew Marshall, Jason Moon, Robin Woods, Paul Stafford, Felisia Wilke, Kate Caine, Tom Klarisch and Jeff Schader.

My apologies if I missed anyone or misspelt a name, as signatures are often hard to read, but we never the less you are all welcome to V.S.A.G. and we hope you will soon join us on a dive and at our next General Meeting.

### **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 MARCH 21st**

**THURSDAY APRIL 18th**

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

## *VSAG CHRISTMAS DINNER*

BY CHRIS LLEWELLYN

An aging club we may well be, but I can assure anyone unfortunate enough not to make our 1995 Christmas Dinner, that there is plenty of kick left in this lot still!

Table top dancing, leather clad young men, ribald mystery gifts along with many laughs were all enjoyed till the early hours at Enri's Restaurant.

Packed in as we were, with a few seating hiccups, some forgotten raffle prizes and a couple of waiters too short, the night still went off in sparkling fashion.

Annie & Mick Jeacle brought along the obligatory candelabra as our Christmas function always coincides with their wedding anniversary. We were warned that Enri's was a great place to have some steak with your garlic, and they weren't kidding! But you could scrape it off if you had a spare bucket or order any of the succulent "Garlic Free" entrees or mains on offer. The food was magnificent and definitely made up for the slow service on our table.

Our \$2.00 mystery gift, one brought along by each in attendance, were quickly distributed to a rowdy reception as we all inspected our windfalls. I would like to personally thank the bright spark whose great imagination ensured I ended up with a motorcycle ashtray! It cost me \$2000 to buy a motorcycle!

Now that we were all feeling warm and vulnerable, raffle tickets were both sold and brought with great zeal and gusto. I had earlier told the proprietor of Enri's that we may need 10 or 15 minutes to sell a few raffle tickets, little did he know that his entire restaurant including non VSAG patrons were to be totally consumed in the VSAG annual christmas raffle for the next hour and a half.

The Big Lloyd, teetering on a chair, orchestrated the draw in a fashion that only he can deliver. While an underwater torch, dive mask and the marriage revival kit (you had to be there) went off to some lucky non VSAG diners, the major prizes went to VSAG members. John Lawler took out the nights accommodation & breakfast at the Rockmans Regency, courtesy of VSAG, the Sonar wetsuit was snapped up by Nicole Mastrowicz and Tony Tipping picked up the Nullarbor Oilskin Coat. Other raffle

prizes taken out were a dive knife, regulator bag, coil of marine rope, tank & valve hydro tests, Sarah Lee fruit cakes and a surprise \$50.00 cash donation courtesy of Justin Liddy.

On behalf of VSAG I would like to thank the following who generously donated gifts that helped make the night a success:

Bob Scott - Sonar wetsuits & Tabata Australia

Robin Woods - Allwoods Scuba Services

John Gibson - Johns Dive Shop

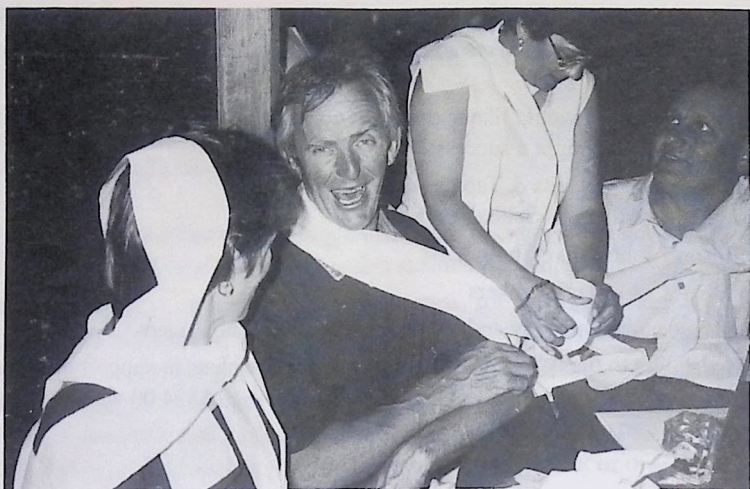
Robert Birtles - Cordage Brokers

Yvonne Lawler, Justin Liddy and national Equestrian Wholesalers.

I would also like to thank all who dug deep into their pockets in support of our only real fundraiser for the year. For the record the raffle raised \$894.00 which is a great effort indeed from a relatively small group.



*Igor and Roslyn Chernishov in the Christmas mood*



*Peter Veuigel is all wrapped up in himself*



*Johnny "Sex Pistol" Goulding showing how it's done!*





*Priya, Frank & Nicky all enjoy the evening inspite of Johns tie.*



*Mick Jackiw telling June Scott about his mystery gift!*



*A Happy bunch of garlic breathed VSAGERS*

## ***DIVE REPORT 30.12.95***

BY MICK JEACLE

Due to the fact that many members had ventured over to Robe for the Christmas break, and only a couple of boats remained in Melbourne, dive members totalled 5 as at 6.50pm on 29th December.

I telephoned Neville Viapree to see if his boat was available. The short answer was that it was in the shop for a service and that he was going to dive at Flinders the next day with Robert Birtles and Frank Natoli. It seems all these blokes did not realise that there was a club dive on Saturday, 30.12.95 despite the fact that it was clearly marked in the dive calendar. With Southerlies forecast, Neville phoned Frank and all agreed to change their plans to Sorrento and join in on the club dive.

Bill Hayes (Bill who??) agreed to pick up des Williams at his beach house and I picked up Chris Llewellyn at his McCrae hostel for wayward elderly folk. By 9.30 am we were all at Sorrento and awaiting the arrival of Frank Natoli and Co. Eventually (I don't think Frank has altered his watch for summer time) we were off in the direction of the "Heads" with no set plan in mind. Upon arrival it was agreed that we would proceed to Spectacular Reef for a drift dive as the current was still running out quite strongly and conditions outside were rather lumpy. des and Chris were soon in the water and unfortunately it became necessary after only about 10 minutes to pull them up due to an inward bound ship not previously sighted. Upon surfacing they reported the current was very strong and they could not safely drift along the wall for fear of fouling the buoy line.

A short time later repositioned them over some nice reef off Queenscliff to finish off their dive. From this point onwards we lost contact with Frank Natoli as we could not raise him on the radio.

Bill Hayes and I then entered the water and I was surprised to find that in parts the current was still quite strong. At one stage Bill held up his left foot to reveal no fin and soon after we were over the Point Lonsdale Wall and the famous drop off where the turbulence was quite severe. It was at this point we decided to

surface and we headed off to Popes Eye for lunch.

As all in the boat decided against a second dive, a leisurely cruise to one of the channel markers followed where Chris Llewellyn was ordered into the water by the Big Lloyd to gather a good feed of mussels. The lone bull seal at my eye level and only 2 feet away was not impressed with our antics and I'm glad I kept a close watch on him or I might have incurred some pain at one stage.

Another call on the radio failed to raise Frank and his crew, but we did see them back at the ramp.

All in all it was a pleasurable day finished off with a thirst quencher or two and a game of bocce' at Chris & Rhonda's.

Dive gear was immediately washed to ensure it was dry in readiness for my departure to Robe on 2.1.96.

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## ***DIVE REPORT 19.11.95***

BY SANT KHAN

The dive was scheduled for the George Kermode but the prevailing south westerly winds would have made it uncomfortable and the venue was switched to Sorrento. There were 3 boats and 12 divers. Thanks to Mick Jeacle, Peter Fleugel and Andy Mastrowicz for providing the boats. This was my first site of Peter's boat and I was not disappointed. Plenty of room, toilet, shower, spa, full galley service and no dickhead behind the wheel!. I wrestled with my conscience, made a decision and kicked the President off the boat and found myself taking his place.

We motored over to Queenscliff. The first wave of divers were in slack water. The visibility was poor. There were good ledges and bommies with plenty of nooks and crannies to explore. The second set of divers had an ebb tide with a slick of dirty water carrying a semi submerged tree. Boat owners beware, you would not want to prang this whilst on the plane.

A strong easterly wind built up during the day and we had lunch in the lee of the Nepean side. A few people had a second dive of the Quarantine station and were unimpressed with the visibility.

It was my first dive since Easter and I had a very enjoyable day thanks to my fellow VSAGERS.

## ***ROBE CHRISTMAS TRIP DECEMBER/JANUARY 1996***

BY JOHN LAWLER

On January 26th, Yvonne and I arrived at the Sea-Vu caravan park in Robe after an easy seven hour journey from Melbourne with Haines Hunter in tow. After the settling in process we had to find the local medicine man as Yvonne had gone down with some illness which kept her inside for a few days. A few members were already at the camp so we decided a dive would be in order to burn off of the Christmas excess. I had been in contact with some divers from Naracoorte who would show us some dive sites and we agreed to a 7.30am start as the wind gets strong by mid morning.

We got underway but five minutes into the trip the warning buzzer in the Yamaha console indicated a problem so we had to let our friends move on without us but not before they pointed out a small island and little bay and told us we should try this out. The problem with the motor was a spark plug lead which had not been connected properly after service, but that fixed we were soon in the quiet and calm waters of the little bay. Bob Scott and Gerry Devries were soon into the water and started working the Island walls. Very soon Gerry surfaced calling for another catch bag as the eight pounder he pulled filled his up. When I asked about the territory Gerry could not find enough words to describe what was below and he was off to a big adventure. Not long after he surfaced again and called me over very excited, he found a cray just below which he claimed was fifteen pounds plus. Bob Scott has seen the monster also and in Bob's words "you would need a bridle to ride it home!" The boys said the cray was just a bit too far back in the hole to reach with the snare we had but just the same I decided to have a go myself. Despite all the directions from Gerry I could not find the hole and after thirty minutes of searching moved my dive away from the island to deeper waters. The territory was simply outstanding and was real cray territory but despite coverage of every ledge and hole not a crayfish was seen. The dive was very satisfying in every other respect with lots of fish life and some nice sized abalone. Between the three of us we had taken our legal catch of five crays but unfortunately the catch didn't end up on the table! The catch bag was left tied

to the side of the boat and as the boat was motoring to collect a diver the rope came away and the catch was lost forever despite a lot of searching. oh well!! We headed back to the ramp some ten minutes away with a feeling that Robe was going to be a great dive.

By now the number of V.S.A.G/ members and families has increased at the camp and another dive was programmed for the next day with three boats at around 8.00am. We followed the Naracoorte boat down the coast for around 35 minutes and we were shown this large reef two kms off shore which looked promising and it was decided to dive the area.

The conditions were quite swelly but the water was a brilliant blue and the vis was about 50 foot plus. The territory was exceptional with all the qualities for housing loads of crays but the catch was down to just a couple which for the number of divers hunting was a disappointment. We returned to our little island and calm bay where quite a few nice crays were being taken and Andy just about owned this area and was to extract many, many large crays from this place.

What was becoming clear was that the crayfish seemed to live in reefs very close to the shore and were being taken in water as shallows as ten to twenty feet. On one dive on the shore side of the little island I was working a ledge so shallow my feet were on the surface and I saw a small tunnel and dropped down to the south opening only to find a seven pound cray sitting right at the entrance.

He is now at peace in our freezer. Over the period I spent at Robe I estimate around 25 crayfish ranging in size from four pounds to nine pounds were taken from this little island and surrounding shallow reefs.

By December 31st all but three V.S.A.G. members were at Sea-Vu. Chris Luxford became the Social Secretary for New Year's Eve activities and made arrangements with a local motel to feed us at a \$28 per head Buffet Style Dinner. I was set back a little when advised that corkage on B.Y.O. wine was \$5 per bottle. After arriving with three and no waiter even attempting to come near to open our wine I had no problem sleeping that night after walking out and not paying. I opened our wine with my Swiss Army Corkscrew! We departed the motel at around 11.15pm and headed back to our base and saw the New Year in gathered around Andy and Gayle's tent and it was done with all the affection and

warmth that is typical of our club.

There was a departure from the sea and boat diving as some of our divers went over to Mount Gambier to dive in the sink holes. I will leave this to one of those divers to do a report on the dive activities on the day.

January 1st and many took this opportunity to rest up to do some sight seeing. Some of the more adventurous Four Wheel Drive boys, Peter Vleugal and Leo Maybus went off to check out some territory along the coast south of Robe. They came back with stories of these great sheltered bays and reefs close to shore but we would be doing shore dives !V.S.,A.G. doing Shore dives!!! Anyway it was a great idea as all families could join in and this made the plan even more worthwhile.

Next day, private cars and Four Wheel Drive vehicles headed off to Long gully, about a 20 minutes drive South of Robe. The 4WD vehicles transported dive gear and people along several bays and over very rough and hilly sand dunes to the bay which had been selected as the best for our shore diving. Our guest diver Helen and I were soon into the calm waters and our plan was to swim underwater across a bay to an outer reef and dive the inside wall. This proved to be a good move as we found a large hole with a long, low ledge at the base and even before I dropped into the hole we could see several pairs of feeler moving around. Fifteen minutes later we had six crays in the bag. We had to leave this area as our air was getting low, but as I felt the area had potential and I marked the place with a personal marker buoy for other divers to check out. Peter and Ross took up this option and they were met by Leo who had a very big cray in site but needed help from Ross to pull this one out. Having done this Ross went on to find and extract two six pounders which put a very big smile on the faces of all the Luxford clan. On the beach everyone was having a great time reading, eating and all the little VSAGers were enjoying the water and getting excited as the divers returned with their catches. Andy returned empty handed with a story of a nine pound but his snare had broken and he waited for a loan from Ross. Soon on his way back to the ledge and sure enough Andy returned with a nice nine pounder!! The day was over and the 4WD drivers again transported everybody back to the car park and then back to camp. We all had a magic day and a lot of thanks must

car park and then back to camp. We all had a magic day and a lot of thanks must go to the FWD owners who really went out of their way to help us all have one great family diving day.

Back at camp Mick Jeacle, Jess and Samantha, Don Abell and Alex Talay had arrived and were in the final stages of setting up camp. They were soon put into the picture as to what was what and judging by the state of the art cray snares Mick had designed and made there was no doubt the rest of the crays left were in for a short life.

with our holiday at Robe over Yvonne and I left for home full of great memories. I guess some of the late arrival crew will have their stories to tell. I have a feeling robe has not seen the last of VSAG. Thanks to all the boat owners and especially to the FWD owners and others who helped with transporting tanks for filling at Cape Jaffa.

Finally there was one particular dive which I have not reported on as the action was only seen by those on the boat. It was the two divers actually in the water to whom this story really belongs and it begs an article from Peter Vleugal and/or Gerry Devries!! Happy diving in 1996



*Shore Diving at Robe, S.A*





*Tony Tipping posing with someone else's cray at Robe, S.A.*

## ***ROBE UNPLUGGED***

BY DON ABELL

I've probably written about every other significant dive holiday on the VSAG calendar so I am pleased to be able to present the expose on the Christmas Trip - The first Christmas trip I've attended in my 16 years with the Club.

Big Mick convinced me to join him and drive to Robe for a few days after new Year. he had been talking to Ross Luxford and wanted to get some first hand experience in the fine and age old art of "Cruising for Chicks"

Mick might be disappointed that I did not grant him any of the expert tips currently known to only a very select group. However I will now give Mick, through this article, Lesson No. 1.

• When planning to go "Cruising for Chicks" leave your two daughters at your principal residential abode with your wife.

So plans were changed and Mick and I headed off with sam and Jessica (with teddy) for a Robe sojourn. Now I remember these girls as they developed through the well known stages of growing up.

Rug Rat to Ankle Biter

Ankle Biter to Knee Caper

And now to two delightful young ladies who would provide a personal challenge to Freddie Kruger.

I do acknowledge the personal challenges that have been faced by these girls. Like having to sleep in the back seat while Mick has Goodbye Yellow Brick Road at top volume. Even Samantha admits that she is the only girl in her class who asks her father to turn the volume down.

The trip down was easy and pleasant. a couple of stops for a feed and many other stops so that Samantha could gather information on her school project "Public Toilets in Country Towns". Statistically Sam can only survive 10km after a can of coke.

We arrived at the camp site to big stories of good diving, calm clear water, plenty of fish life, four wheel driving and whatever else. No one had a bad word to say and that's the way it continued until we left on the Sunday 7 January.

Diving can happen every day. If the wind blows you find a sheltered beach by 4WD and walk in offshore. There is reefs everywhere with caves swim throughs and fish life ( and a few crays if you like). Most of the diving was in 30-40 ft so you get a good long dive. BIG fish on my dives including a big Wobegong looking at me on the floor of a cave. happily that was the only shark I saw; I couldn't forget that we were in the home of the big one and I had watched the return of jaws a few weeks earlier.lads with their big cars enjoyed a little bit of beach hooning. A shore dive means driving through scrub and along beaches for 3 hours before you get wet, only to find that you are only 10 minutes from the caravan park.

Tank filling looked like a problem but the air at Cape Jaffa was clean and only 25 minutes away. An interesting place with a population of 27.

Robe is a pretty town with all amenities albeit that they are double price during the tourist season. Eating is good. Pub, cheap restaurant or take away. A good feed at either of the first two for less than \$15.

The weather needs a mention, while melbourne, Adelaide and many other places were drowning, Robe had sunshine and blue skys everyday. I told Mick in the car on the way over that our major problem would be having enough 15+ and I was right.

As usual there was a small amount of VSAG socialising. A few beers were drunk and we had just enough rice crackers to go around. And the beer is always cold. Now a little tip that I want you to keep to yourself. if your beer is not cold check Mick Large's esky.

The animal act for the trip took place in the Men's shower block. Imagine Mick Jeacle, always calm, never gets upset, waiting for a shower cubicle for 15 minutes. So he goes to the end cubicle and thumps his fist on door. Conversation that followed.

Mick - Come on in there, what do you think your doing. We want to have a shower sometime today.

Cubicle - Sorry I'll be out in a minute but i take a little longer than most.

Mick - Oh Yeah! Why do you take longer than most.

Cubicle - I've only got one leg.

Mick - Cough, mumble, clears throat but no reply.

That Mick Jeacle can be a real Lloyd sometimes.

The last night highlight was the challenge put out by Tony Tipping to see if we could set a record for the number of people we could fit in a pop up caravan. There was only about 40 VSAG members left by this time so we had to call in a few other campers.

Boy did we fill that van. You could feel the springs groan and I thought the whole thing would topple when those opal miners from Coober Pedy started rocking it. Guess it could have been dangerous because those wedged tight up the back could never have made the door.

However all well that ends well and we should try to break the record of 47 at tidal River during easter. With a few more people it should be easy.

Well that should do. I can't write about the fabulous diving at Piccanninie Ponds because I wasn't there. Nor did I make a wine tasting trip to Coonawarra, maybe next time.

J.L. deserves congratulations for finding a top location and pushing it when a few other members were not keen. It has been a good find that we will return to, but not next year because they are already fully booked. That may encourage the club to plan ahead.

## CAVE DREAMING

BY ROSS LUXFORD

On arriving at Nelson, after driving 150km in sweltering heat. I just happened to lay down for a quick snooze. As I relaxed, I reflected on the past ten days spent in Robe catching up with V.S.A.G. members. We had had good weather, great boat & shore dives and had caught the odd cray or four. Together the V.S.A.G. families had seen the New Year in and visited the historic region surrounding Robe. Among other things we had watched Peter V. get bogged four wheel driving in sand dunes and enjoyed wine tasting at Coonawarra.

I continued to relax and found myself falling into a deep slumber .....  
..... standing in full dive gear with lights and a tank of air, I saw myself on the edge of "Piccaninnie Ponds". Looking across the crystal clear water, silhouetted by the full moon, I see two divers approaching me. They appear confident and introduce themselves as cave divers.

As I agree to join them and slowly swim across the first pond, it almost feels real. The water is cool to touch and so very clear. As we come upon the dramatic sight of the chasm below I descend into the chasm and realise that something this spectacular could only be in my dreams. I glance at my gauge, guessing that we are at most 10 metres from the surface, but to my surprise I am 36 metres below. My fellow divers keep a watchful eye over me. They guided me through the dive, knowing that if I awoke at this depth I would surely drown in reality. Now we headed into the cathedral and drop down to view the jagged lime stone ledges with our lights. The experience is stunning and with my heart still pounding I begin the ascent back into the chasm. We decompress as we go and find time to enjoy the small fish and eels surrounding us. Around we see delicate algae and different weeds near the surface. The crystal water reflects the superb images from below, and we slowly amble back to jetty. The divers stay to savour the beauty of the place and we reflect on similar past experiences such as diving the engine room on the President Coolidge at Vanuatu. It had been a stunning dive with no pressures. No boat to look after, no current or salt water, no competition or need to catch the largest cray. Just simply spectacular scenery. The divers soon

walked away and I put my "crystal clean" gear in my car .....

....."Ross wake up"..... I woke with a start and suddenly realised it had all been a dream.

The sheer magnificence of the experience may entice me into a cave divers course. So that in future, I wont have to just dream of dives like this. But, funnily enough my dive gear was "crystal clean" the next morning.

## *MARATHON TRIUMPH*

BY KERRILEE LUXFORD

After paddling 404km along the longest and most gruelling canoe race, my team and I made it.

We completed the Red Cross Murray Marathon coming 2nd in the mens Open TKI relay. But, not without help from many people.

Altogether we raised \$470 towards the Australian Red Cross and would like to especially thank V.S.A.G. and all the individual members who donated.

It was greatly appreciated. Any inquiries on the race or how to enter are most welcome.

## ***DECO STOPS***

BY MICK JEACLE

Whilst gearing up at Sorrento boat ramp on a recent Dive, des Williams was complaining about junk mail, despite, the fact that he had a "no junk mail" sign on his letter box. Nev. Viapree overheard the banter that followed and quite candidly stated that you should not put such a sign out as you may miss out on the bras and panties booklet.

The trouble is we could not tell if he was joking or not, but the wicked look in his eye said it all.

Then whilst having lunch later that day the subject changed to bedroom humour, courtesy of Bill Hayes (Bill Who??)

Bill related that he awoke one morning feeling quite frisky and dashed off to the toilet to drain the bladder. He further related that his plans were in total disarray when he raced back to the bedroom to find the bed was made!! This could be a joke, Gloria!

I hear gerry DeVries was quite excited with the cray population whilst on his first Dive at Robe. Rumour has it he caught a nice 6 lb cray only minutes into the dive, and later sighted a 15 pounder which he and Bob Scott were too afraid to tackle.

It seems a crayfish of this size will never be brought to the surface as Jack Namiota has been seeing them for years. John Lawler was also obviously very excited as he forgot they were hanging off the back of the boat later in the day and lost the lot during one of his diver retrievals. I suppose I should have known better than to put it on Dougie for packing up camp at the first sight of wind and rain. A brief chat with maxine revealed that she was the guilty party when it comes to these decisions and that she did not wish to see her strong, outdoor type he-man husband made out to be a wimp. We believe you Max. following the Christmas cheer, yours truly accompanied by Annie, decided a brisk 5km walk would be good for the system around 9am on 26.12.95. nearing the home turn, who should be coming towards us but the Luxfords, complete with boat in tow,

going the wrong way. It seems they forgot the pillows, (sound familiar?) It must have been Chris' fault as when it happens in this family it's always Annie's fault. Saturday 6.1.96 was to be my last night in Robe. As there would be no more diving I thought I would do a real job on myself. This meant finishing of the 2L flask of red, the bottle of port and copious amounts of home brew. Where better to do it than in Tony Tippings Jay Co and everyone else had the same idea. marg will be darker than Kamahl when she finds out, especially if Tony failed to get the red wine stains out of the seat covers.

Ted Cornish will be well known by those members who were at tidal River last Easter. Ted is currently doing a dive course and may soon join the ranks of VSAG.

Called in to see him recently to enquire about his first dive at Rye Pier. He was pleased with his efforts but wanted to know what were those orange things that behaved like a set of dentures? Would you believe Scollops Ted?

#### WANTED

Topics for Deco Stops. I would like to feature this column in every edition, but I can't be everywhere to jot down the funnies. please ring or fax your contributions whilst they are fresh in your mind.

Ed!!!



## **A GOOD READ**

BY JOHN LAWLER

Over the Christmas break I caught up on some reading and one book that I think will be of interest to any diver is one by that very famous Australian diver, film maker and author, Ben Cropp.

The book is actually two in one, "Shark hunters" and "Whale Of A Shark".

### **Shark Hunters**

This book contains Australia's first account of regular underwater shark hunting and tales of successful kills-initially with a barbless spear-that are spine-chilling as any thriller.

Veteran spear fisherman, underwater photographer and well known film-maker ben Cropp takes the reader on a fascinating series of dives into the waters of Australia's Northern coasts.

### **Whale Of A Shark**

Whale of a Shark tells of more encounters beyond the Great Barrier Reef, where the author made friends with dangerous sea creatures whilst exploring and salvaging underwater wrecks.

There are many exciting stories In this book like the one about Ben's first encounter with a Whale Shark off Montagu Island after a phone call from George Meyer in Canberra. Equally exciting was Ben's description of the exit through the Narooma Bar. Ben also gives a lot of credit to a number of people with whom he spent many years diving with such as Bela Csidei, Wally Gibbins, Van Laman, Eva Papp, Lorraine Ley, Bill Arrowsmith to name a few.

Ben Cropp is the man responsible for the development of the deadly 10 and 12 gauge underwater shotgun and the similar .303 explosive head. The modern name for the deadly things is "bang stick".

The book is also full of many graphic pictures of large sharks, groper and relics taken from the Dunbar, Captain Cook's Endeavour and the Scottish Prince.

This book was first published in 1964, then '69,'74,'76, and 1995. Price around \$9.95. Happy Reading!!

## ***HEADS AREA DIVE 7TH JANUARY***

**BY CHRIS LLEWELLYN**

While the bulk of the Club were enjoying the Christmas holidays in exotic Robe S.A., a few keen divers assembled for our scheduled Heads area club dive.

Interestingly we had three prospective members, along with Murray Black, booked in for the dive. Andrew Marshall, Jim Greenwood and Kate Craine had all attended our December VSAG get together at Billy Bells hotel and took up the invitation to dive with the club. With John Lawler having just returned from Robe, and Neville Viapree keen to launch their boats we were all set for a days diving.

John located some reef over near Queenscliff and Andrew and I had a slack water dive through some very pleasant and colourful terrain. After a bite to eat in the Lee near Pt. Nepean we decided for a look out through the heads. The conditions were relatively good so we headed down the back beaches for a dive on some new reef. Unfortunately Andrew and I encountered nothing but sand and pulled the pin after about 10 minutes.

While John and his crew were content to continue and locate new reef at the back beach we decided to head back to the pleasant surrounds of Popes Eye. While I sunned myself in the tranquil setting, Neville and Andrew slipped over the rocks, and from their reports, to a very rewarding dive in what is unfortunately looked at by some as a dive site only suitable for beginners.

We did not arrive back at Sorrento until about 6pm, and after launching at 10am it had been a long but enjoyable day. Let's hope we see more of Andrew, Jim and Kate at future dives.

**TERRY ARNOTT**  
**MOVES TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

BY DES WILLIAMS

There are many V.S.A.Gers who know Terry as a past member of the Club and one of the most active diver/conservationists with a very long history as a member of the Maritime Archaeology Association of Victoria.

Terry has been working in Adelaide for many months in casual employment as a marine archaeologist since he and Debbie sold their mixed business in Queenscliff. In early January '96, Terry received official confirmation of his permanent employment as State marine Archaeologist in South Australia. Believe me, he has worked tirelessly over a very long period to achieve his dream and I am sure his friends at V.S.A.G. will join me in wishing him well in this new and exciting job. Debbie has now joined him in Adelaide where she was very quick to get a job and they are both looking forward to a new challenge in Croweater land. A small group of us joined Terry and Debbie at a Southgate restaurant to farewell them in Melbourne on the evening of Wednesday 10.1.96. regards to friends at V.S.A.G. as it will be a long time before we see him back in Victoria. It is certainly an exciting job, as he is working from the very fine ex-Victorian marine survey vessel DELPHINUS, which has now moved to S.A. This very large vessel is absolutely chock-a-block full of the latest navigation and ocean probing equipment. Terry says he has to pinch himself sometimes, when out amongst the islands of the Spencer Gulf searching for historic sites both above and below the water, as even he can't believe he gets paid for doing such a job!

GOOD ONE TERRY! If anyone would like to be in contact with him, please give me a call as I have his address and telephone number.

## **PORT PHILLIP WAR GRAVE PROTECTED**

*This article is from the latest issue of SCUTTLEBUTT  
released by the Maritime Heritage Unit of Heritage Victoria - Des Williams)*

The State Government has moved to protect the war grave of one of Victoria's worst disasters on the 55th anniversary of the sinking of the HMAS GOORANGAI off Queenscliff during World War 2.

The Minister for Planning, Mr. MacLellan, announced that the auxillary mine sweeper, which sank with the loss of 24 lives after a collision with HMAS DUNTROON on 20th November 1940, had been gazetted as an Historic Shipwreck.

The GOORANGAI was the first Victorian navy vessel lost in World War 2 and the first RAN surface vessel to be lost in wartime.

The 223 Ton GOORANGAI was built by the NSW Government in 1919 and sold seven years later to Cam & Sons P/L to be fitted as a fishing trawler. At the outbreak of war the GOORANGAI was one of 35 privately owned vessels requisitioned by the RAN to help fill the gap in its minesweeper section. The minesweepers were crewed mainly from the Navy's reserve force, however in the GOORANGAI's case the RAN persuaded 16 of its civilian crew to sign up.

German mine-laying operations off Wilsons Promontory and Cape Otway on the nights of 29, 30, & 31 October 1940 caused the loss, one week later, of the CAMBRIDGE and the CITY OF RAYVILLE. The minesweepers GOORANGAI, ORANA and DURRAWEEEN were ordered into Bass Strait to locate and destroy the minefields.

At about 8.30pm on 20 November, as the GOORANGAI made its way from Queenscliff to Portsea, it was struck, forward of the funnel, by the HMAS DUNTROON which was leaving Melbourne for Sydney loaded with troops. The impact cut the GOORANGAI in two, causing the ship to sink within a few minutes. While wartime security measures prevented the DUNTROON from

heaving to or switching on search lights to locate survivors, it did lower lifeboats, fire rockets and sound three blasts on its whistle to alert the residents of Queenscliff.

When the Queenscliff lifeboat reached the scene of the disaster, the crew found the GOORANGAI in about 15 metres of water with just the tops of her masts visible. An extensive search recovered only six bodies. A Court of marine Enquiry initially blamed masters of both vessels for the collision and found captain I.L. Lloyd of the DUNTROON guilty of misconduct. Captain Lloyd was later exonerated by the Court when it found that faulty positioning of lights was the primary cause of the accident. Declaration of the GOORANGAI as an Historic Shipwreck coincided with a commemoration ceremony held at Queenscliff on Sunday 19 November 1995.

Historic Shipwreck status of the GOORANGAI makes it illegal to disturb or interfere with the wreck without a permit.

## ***CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF ROPES AND CORDS***

BY ROBERT BIRTLES

We can prolong the life of a rope when attention is given to care & maintenance. No different to any other piece of equipment we regularly use. Following are some tips to maximise our ropes working life. Of course this doesn't apply to Pat's rope collection which usually consists of soft laid low friction fibres.

1. Rope should be drawn from the centre of the coil (anti clock wise for right hand lay ropes).
2. Store ropes away from the elements and corrosive substances.
3. Dragging ropes over sharp edges naturally causes abrasion and cuts.
4. Certainly avoid contact with chemicals and solvents.
5. Rope kinks cause permanent damage and loss of strength. Never load the rope to remove a kink.
6. Always splice a rope to form an eye. Knots can reduce strength by up to 50%.
7. For pulley applications the rope diameter should be at least 5 times less than the width of the pulley. This will help reduce rope wear and distortion.
8. Never overload a rope. Seek information in regards to break force if the rope is to be used in a critical situation particularly for life support applications. Do not shock load a rope, this effectively destroys it.
9. Protects parts of the rope that are subjected to wear and tear.

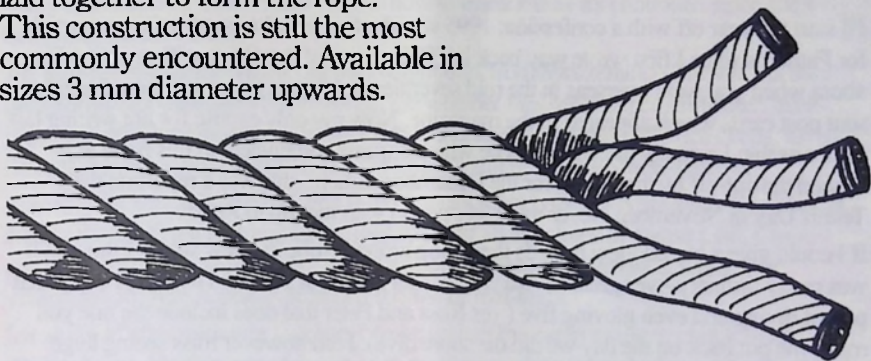
Small size ropes are particularly susceptible to loss of strength. A point we should keep in mind ropes used for recreational diving purposes fall into this category. To this end we should inspect our ropes on a regular basis by examining both internally & externally 30cm of the rope. We should look for deep scores in the strands, extreme fluffing, cuts & contusions which are indicated by local rupturing or loosening of the yarns or strands, reduction in the diameter or excessive elongation of the rope lay, discolouring and splintering/powdering of the fibres, fusion of the fibres and powdering of the rope strand internal fibres.

Some would suggest damaged areas be cut out and the rope long spliced. My thoughts on this are to cut out the damaged section then continue to use the short length if still practicable. Then use the shorter length for some other application or buy a new rope. If the rope has suffered from UV attack or internal abrasion (splintering/powdering) chances are the majority of the rope is stuffed.

The following are some common rope/cord construction types:

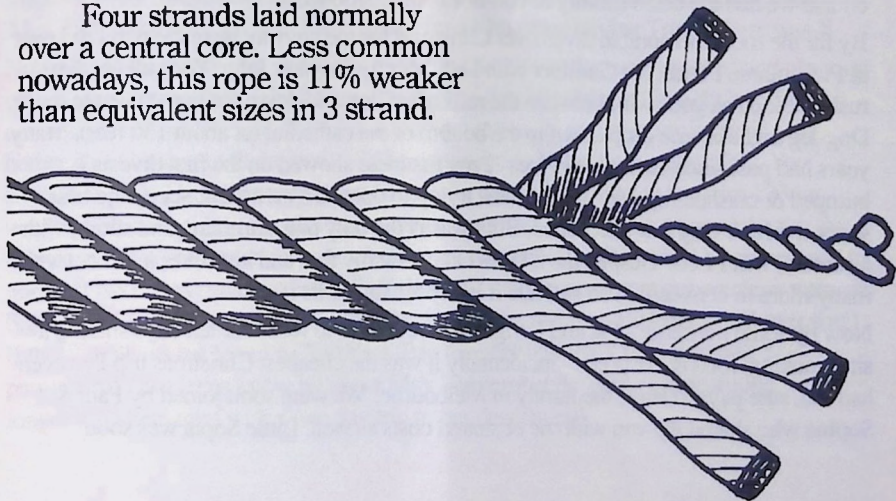
### THREE STRAND HAWSER LAID ROPE

Three strands twisted or laid together to form the rope. This construction is still the most commonly encountered. Available in sizes 3 mm diameter upwards.



### FOUR STRAND SHROUD LAID ROPE

Four strands laid normally over a central core. Less common nowadays, this rope is 11% weaker than equivalent sizes in 3 strand.



## **TIP'S TIT-BITS AT ROBE**

BY TONY TIPPING

I'll start the year off with a confession: 1995 was the first year I missed writing an article for Fathoms since I first wrote way back in 1972 - some of the oldies will say but what about when you went overseas in the mid seventies & I hasten to remind them I regularly sent post cards which appeared in the magazine. Now my only excuse for not writing last year was that I actually did write a piece which appears somewhere in this issue & it missed the cut-off by three days for the December edition - this was a report on the Tennis Day in November. Never mind let's get on with the trip to Robe!

If I could give a biased view regards the diving around Robe in a few words I thought it was pretty ordinary - yes great from a cray basher's point of view & I'll admit I enjoy that part of diving and even gloving five ( yes Ross and Peter that does include the one you made me put back on the day we did the shore dive). I did however miss seeing huge schools of kingies, trevally, blue grouper etc. like you see along the east coast and the 13° water temperature wasn't ideal for swimming. Funnily enough the best dive (in the sea) I had was the last day when on my second dive I just wouldn't come up despite boats revving around up top & a sea fog & high winds encountered upon us from nowhere - of course we had the best visibility & colour etc. (about 60 feet).

By far the most memorable dives over Christmas for me anyway were the two I did over in Piccaninnie Ponds, Mt Gambier with Leo, Murray, Priya & John. You still get that rush of blood as you swim between the reeds then descend down the first chasm to the Dog-leg and likewise drop down to the bottom of the cathedral (at about 130 feet). Many years had past since I last dived Picca & my rustiness showed on the first dive as i bumped & crashed my way down whilst trying to operate a camera & set up the best shots of which very few succeeded. But I wasn't the only one stumbling and silting with a camera, was I Leo? Despite the 24 years between my first and last dives in Piccs (with many more in between) I can still rate it in my ten favourite dives!

Now by some nonsense - Pat and I originally went over to Robe for ten days sharing a site, cooking, food & costs etc. - incidentally it was the cheapest Christmas trip I've even had too, sure pays to leave the family in Melbourne! We were soon joined by Paul & Sophia who shared the van with me & shared costs as well. Little Sopia was soon



knocked into line by me being very strict - something she wasn't used to - when you share a small van with other people you can't get in each other's way by trips end she was a tidy little angel & Lesley doesn't know how to thank me as it's continued since she's been back home! I'll bet?

We all got a few laughs out of our two neighbours from Switzerland - I'm still not sure but various club members could not decide whether they were either shirt-lifter, back-scratlers, doughnut-punchers, mattress-munchers or wind-jammers! Nice chaps, loved touring around Australia, but I'd still rather push shit uphill in a wheel-barrow!

You've gotta hand it to the old girls (I did not call them boilers!) New Years Eve back at the camp, music got rocking, Elvis, Buddy Holly all the oldies of course Gail, Chris, Marie & June really showed us old blokes how to revel until almost 2.30am. The younger mob were hopeless & in bed soon after mid-night.

Speaking of after midnight I reckon I woke up half the camp trying to chuck Mick Marge & Leo Maybus out of the van one night a few days later. -had to wait until they'd emptied the fridge before they'd budge - never mind I've done worse at Tidal River when I was much younger!

Now we all like to do the right thing by our mates; this good Samaritan act involved Big Mick - another single man on this trip - sure were a few of us Mick, Pully, Pat, Don, Alex, Leo and myself all with leave passes for a Christmas Diving Trip! Where was I!

Now Big Mick left his wet suit out hanging up on a tree in the most exposed and obvious part of the Caravan Park. The first night I noticed this late at night I bought it in & put it out of sight behind my van - thinking it may get stolen. Next day Mick just said why bother it's not going to fit anybody! So he continued to leave it out quite safely. You know he's probably right too because Mick who currently weighs in at a trim 123 kg wouldn't have too many doubles in the diving fatumity! Although I enjoyed the fun & nonsense and some of the dives as much as anyone at Robe this year I'll be going back to northern NSW next year-probably Coffs harbour where you can guarantee clean water & big fish as well as plenty to do for families & the best camping facilities you'll ever see!! If the club wants me to put a Christmas Trip together up there ( I've organised 5 previously ) just let us know by about May - remember the deal - every second year a longer trip alternating with a one day trip to our destination!

**DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR**

DATE	EVENT/LOCATION	DIVE CAPTAIN	MEET AT
15 Feb	General Meeting Bells Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets, Sth Melbourne		8.00pm Sharp!
25 Feb	Heads Area	Leo Maybus 9727 1568	9.00am Sorrento
2 Mar	Night Dive	Leo Maybus	Mornington
Saturday	Mornington pier	9727 1568	Pier 8pm
11 Mar	Broken Sub	Andy Mastrowicz	Sorrento
Monday		9318 3986	9.30am
16 Mar	Night Dive	Gerry DeVries	Flinders
Saturday	Flinders Pier	9725 2351	7.30pm
21 Mar	General Meeting Bells Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets, Sth Melbourne		8.00pm Sharp!
24 Mar	George Kermode	Doug Catherall 9888 7774	Stony Point 9.00am
30 mar	Night Dive	Andy Mastrozicz	Queenscliff
Saturday	Queenscliff Pier	9318 3986	Pier 7pm
4 to	EASTER	Don Abell	
8 April	Tidal River	99889 4415	
18 <sup>th</sup> April	General Meeting Bells Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets, Sth Melbourne		8.00pm Sharp!
21 April	Charter Boat Flinders	John Lawler 9589 4020	8.15 am sharp Flinders Pier
28 <sup>th</sup> April	Bike Ride Yarra River Boat Ride BBQ	Chris Llewellyn 9431 1650	Details T.B.A.

Those attending night dives (Saturdays ) please ring Friday evenings by 8.00pm

NOTE: THERE IS NO GENERAL MEETING IN DECEMBER(SEE SPECIAL NOTICE)

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