

# FATHOMS

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Safety in Diving

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# VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

AUG-SEP 97

# 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 16th October 1997  
Thursday 20th November 1997

### Next Committee Meetings:

Tuesday 21st October - Mick Jeacle's home  
Tuesday 25 November - John Lawler's home

### Editorial submissions to:

Mick Jeacle  
5 Donn Close  
Frankston Vic 3199  
Tel: (0359) 71 2786 (h)  
9554 0121 (w)  
9554 0144 (fax)



# V.S.A.G. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

A.C.N. 004 591 575

## PRESIDENT:

Andy Mastrowicz  
15 Soudan Road,  
West Footscray, 3012.  
Telephone: 9318 3986 (H)  
9301 2410 (W)

## SECRETARY:

Priya Cardinaletti  
10 Wells Ave,  
Boronia, 3155.  
Telephone: 9761 0960 (H)  
9344 5542 (W)

## TREASURER:

Bob Scott  
1 Donn Close  
Frankston, 3199  
Telephone: 0359 712 206 (H)  
9706 7100 (W)

## NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Mick Jeacle  
5 Donn Close,  
Frankston, 3199.  
Telephone: 0359 712 786 (H)  
9554 0121 (W)

## SOCIAL SECRETARY:

Kate Caine  
15 Valentine Avenue  
Kew, 3101  
Telephone: 9852 8028 (H)  
9244 0354 (W)

## POINTS SCORER:

Peter Vleugel  
22 bay Road  
Mt. Martha, 3934  
Tel: 0359 743 200 (H)  
018 315 484 (W)

## PUBLIC RELATIONS & MEETINGS CO-ORDINATOR:

Des Williams  
14 Dorrington Crt,  
Dingley Village, 3172.  
Telephone: 9551 3201 (H)  
9597 0777 (W)

## VICE PRESIDENT:

Don Abell  
80 Liston Street,  
Burwood, 3125.  
Telephone: 9889 4415 (H)  
9288 6548 (W)

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY:

Kate Caine  
15 Valentine Avenue  
Kew, 3101  
Telephone: 9852 8028 (H)  
9244 0354 (W)

## ASSISTANT TREASURER:

Robert Birtles  
2 Balcome Court,  
Croydon, 3136,  
Telephone: 9725 2816 (H)  
9558 0122 (W)

## ASSISTANT EDITOR:

John Lawler  
7 Cloris Avenue,  
Beaumaris, 3193.  
Telephone: 9589 4020 (H)  
0359 757 100 (W)

## ASSISTANT SOCIAL SECRETARY:

Leo Maybus  
2 Olsen Close  
Mooroolbark, 3138,  
Telephone: 9727 1568 (H)  
018 375 102 (W)

## SAFETY OFFICER:

Robert Birtles  
2 Balcome Court,  
Croydon, 3136,  
Telephone: 9725 2816 (H)  
9558 0122 (W)

## PROPERTY OFFICER:

Pat Reynolds  
14 Nurla Court,  
Frankston, 3199.  
Telephone: 9789 1092 (H)  
015 334 276 (W)

## S.D.F. DELEGATES:

Andy Mastrowicz, Des Williams & John Lawler

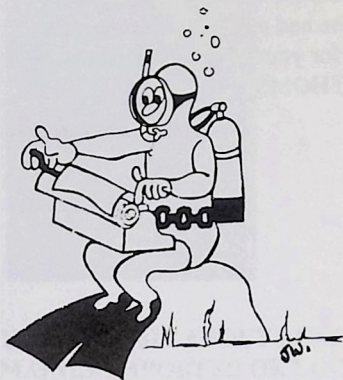
## EDITORIAL

In this issue we welcome relatively new member Andrew Gregory who finally got it together with his profile. Thanks Andrew, it was worth waiting for.

At the September general meeting three new committee members were

elected viz: Peter Vleugel, Kate Caine and Robert Birtles. Congratulations folks on behalf of the old brigade, we look forward to working with you.

At the September committee meeting, portfolios were decided, details of which appear on page 2. Of significant importance is the fact that Andy Mastrowicz was elected as President. Well done Andy.



There are a number of special notices in this issue. Please diarise them now to ensure your attendance. In particular your support would be appreciated for the **ACROSS THE BAY CHALLENGE** being attempted by Leo Maybus and Pat Reynolds on Sunday, 7th December, 1997. Also, what about you new members and families turning up at the Tennis Day and BBQ at Cranbourne South Tennis Courts on Sunday, 23 November 1997. Let's not forget the Christmas function on Friday, 5th December; this is our main fund raiser for the year and helps to keep member subs. at the current level.

Shane Martin commences his regular column Marine Awareness Program in this issue. This profiles marine creatures and will be a regular feature provided members show an interest. Please let him know and give him the support he deserves.

Des Williams has provided some information on diving Tasmania. It certainly sounds great and maybe we should seriously consider a club Christmas trip to the 'apple isle' in the not too distant future.

Also in this issue we welcome the return of our old mate Argus Tuft with his column 'Flotsam & Jetsam.' Don't ask me to reveal the identity of this fellow. Seeing it took me 10 years to find this out when he had a regular column, it's only fair that you new members have to find out for yourselves. And Argus, well done. Please ark up your old mates for future FATHOMS.

*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 20 November

Thursday 18 December (Drinks)

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



## **VSAG PROFILE**

**Ross Luxford**

**AGE:** 29 Plus a few more!

**OCCUPATION:** Company Director

**FAMILY:** Husband of Chris,  
father of Kerrilee 20, Tamara 16.

### **TELL US A BIT ABOUT LUXFORD MARINE. ARE YOUR PRODUCTS MAINLY IMPORTED OR LOCALLY PRODUCED?**

Luxford Marine was part of a family Company with Luxford Engineering since 1944. We wholesale and retail a range of marine and industrial products for ski boats, yachts and fishing boats. Including hydraulic steering, marine petrol and diesel engine conversions, heat exchangers, oil coolers, manifolds, pumps, propellers, bearings, controls, cables, anodes, shaft seals, and lots more. We are State distributors for some products, agents for others. We also manufacture our own products. We import manifolds, heat exchangers and oil coolers from Savage in New Zealand and from Bowman in England.

### **DO YOU ATTEND VARIOUS BOAT SHOWS AND WHAT IS THE STATE OF YOUR INDUSTRY?**

In the past 12 months I have attended five boat shows both in Australia and internationally. The industry is suffering from not enough people enjoying the pleasures of boating being fishing, water skiing or scuba diving.

### **HOW AND WHY DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH VSAG?**

I first got involved in diving through Mick Jeacle after a few ales at kindergarten.

### **WHERE AND WHEN DID YOU DO YOUR ORIGINAL DIVE COURSE?**

D.I.S. at Portsea on 25 March 1987 gave to the industry another competent FAUI scuba diver.

### **YOU HAVE RECENTLY COMPLETED AMONGST OTHERS A**



## **DIVEMASTER COURSE. WHAT WAS INVOLVED AND WHAT BENEFITS ARE THERE IN ADVANCED COURSES?**

Twenty four months of sheer hell, helping with new young females (and males) the art of buddy breathing, fitting their weightbelts firmly, freezing your body in water for hours whilst novice divers rescue you. An apprenticeship of theory examinations, diving, practice boat handling, assisting instructors, serving in dive shop. Benefits? Maybe help towards our retirement.

## **WHAT ARE THE PARAMETERS AND BENEFITS IN OBTAINING YOUR COXSWAIN'S CERTIFICATE?**

The Coxswain course allows you to control/drive a boat up to 12 metres long under survey with fare paying passengers up to fifteen miles offshore.

## **WILL YOU ONE DAY BUY ANOTHER BOAT AND IF SO WHAT TYPE?**

Yes, (pressure from Chris) for the non diving days (or very calm ones) a Whitley Monterey with all the mod cons.

## **WHAT ARE YOUR OTHER INTERESTS/HOBBIES OUTSIDE DIVING?**

The six "S" skiing, sex, snow bunnies, swimming, spa, stockmarket (playing) and gym work.

When too old for all of the above, golf!

## **WHAT ARE YOUR DIVE PREFERENCES AND BEST LOCAL DIVE SITES?**

The best "buzz" of all is wreck diving, for that sunken treasure or mystic of it. The best local site being the George Kermodé.

## **WHAT ABOUT OVERSEAS DIVING DESTINATIONS?**

\* Layang Layang (South China Sea) \* Truk - Palau

\* Vanuatu \* Hawaii

\* Tasmania \* To come - New Guinea, Mediterranean Sea, Maldives, Red Sea.

## **IS VSAG MEETING YOUR CURRENT DIVING REQUIREMENTS?**

VSAG generally has given me opportunities to experience different types of diving. But a varied calendar of night dives, cave dives, beach dives, different locations would help to add a bit of enthusiasm to my diving.

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

""""TO FIND MY MERMAID.""""

## ***VSAG CLUBMAN OF THE YEAR***

BY CHRIS LLEWELLYN

The September Annual General Meeting saw the highly prized "Clubman of the year" trophy awarded to Mick Jeacle for the third year running.

With a tally of 555 points, Mick was a runaway winner.

The announcement came as no surprise to members who are well aware of the big fella's contribution in all aspects of our club activities. Whether it be dives, trips away, articles for FATHOMS or attendance at meetings, Mick is in the thick of it at every turn.

Congratulations must also go to the first and second runners up, Bob Scott (335 points) and Pat Reynolds (350 points) - well done guys.

This year a brand spanking new perpetual shield, organised by Gerry Devries, was put on display and lists all past winners of VSAG's holy grail. So if you want to get into the running for next year's award, start clocking up those points.

Clubman of the year is awarded to the member who achieves the greatest number of points between annual general meetings, currently awarded as follows (subject to change by new committee).

Holidays away (Christmas, overseas trips etc.)	60 points
Long weekend club dives	30
Standard scheduled club dives	20
Introduction of new member	15
Attendance at general meetings	10
Attendance at social events	10
Original Fathoms articles	10 maximum
Original Fathoms article in every edition (6 issues)	Double points
Guests at general meetings	5
Lectures, talks or slides	5
Guests at fund raising social events	5



### ***THE INAUGURAL VSAG LITERARY AWARD***

Well, I was quietly hoping I would have a chance of securing the inaugural Literary Award this year. I have consistently submitted articles for FATHOMS and had tried very hard to make them as interesting as possible. I was reasonably confident, until I read the piece offered by our esteemed Editor, Mick Jeacle, on the "President Coolidge" in the June/July issue!

There was no doubt in my mind that it was a winner! And our judges John Goulding and Paul Tipping thought so too. Well done Mick, the article was very well written and exciting indeed, you deserve the award, congratulations.

The Committee decided to re-introduce the Literary Award for 1996/97 as a way of encouraging members to write articles for FATHOMS on any subject at all. So, come you budding scribes, how about having a go at the 1997/98 Award?

A special thank you also to John and Paul for their work as judges, as they re-read through many, many articles over the last twelve months before coming to their decision.

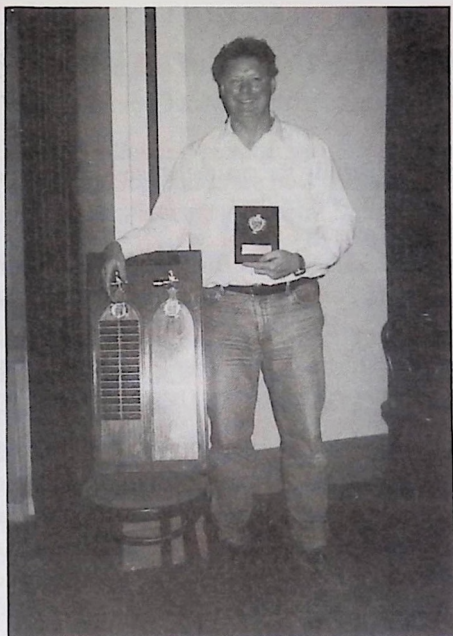
### ***CLUBMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD 1996/1997***

This coveted trophy was also won again this year by Mick Jeacle. Sincere congratulations Mick, you truly are a keen and dedicated member of the good old V.S.A.G and are one person who surely gets back what you put into the Club. Congratulations MUST go to Chris Llewellyn for his work in compiling the points over a year towards Clubman of the Year and most especially for being able to announce the winner on the night of the Annual General Meeting! I was delighted to see this happen on schedule this year.

Mick went home with a wonderful perpetual trophy for Clubman of the Year prepared by Gerry DeVries. I hope you all saw this brilliantly made trophy complete with identification plate and forged metal disc in the format of the club logo. Gerry personally saw to the preparation of this disc, which was specially forged for the trophy. Gerry gave me two spare discs to be placed in the Club filing cabinet for the next couple of years awards and I can tell you they are solid little pieces indeed. Our large Clubman of the Year honour board has also had a spectacular "face-lift" through the talents of Gerry DeVries. It is quite large, made of Tasmanian blackwood I think, in the shape of two diving tanks complete with real tank valves! All of the name plates from the retired award have been fitted and of course Mick Jeacle's name installed again for 1997. Absolutely brilliant work from Gerry and every member of V.S.A.G can be very proud of this fine piece, which will soon be installed at Bell's Hotel for all to see.

Sincere thanks to Gerry on behalf of all members of V.S.A.G.

*Des Williams*



*1997 Clubman of the year Mick Jeacle*



*Scoping the Pools! Mick Jeacle receiving the 1997 Literary Award.*

## ***SOME CHANGES IN NEW COMMITTEE LINEUP***

There have been a few changes to the VSAG Committee portfolios for the ensuing year.

Full details are on page 2. Briefly the main changes are as follow:-

- \* Andy Mastrowicz is the new President.
- \* Bob Scott takes on the Treasurer's job.
- \* Peter Vleugel, Kate Caine and Robert Birtles join the ranks for the first time and take on the positions of Points Scorer, Social Secretary and Safety Officer respectively.

Welcome to these three members. I hope your terms will be long and productive.

### **COMMITTEE MEETING DATES/VENUES 1997/1998**

October 21	Mick Jeacle	April 21	Don Abell
November 25	John Lawler	May 26	Leo Maybus
December	No meeting	June 23	Des Williams
January 20	Pat Reynolds	July 21	Peter Vleugel
February 24	Bob Scott	August 25	Kate Caine
March 24	Robert Birtles	September 22	Andy Mastrowicz

### **SPECIAL NOTICE**

#### **NO DECEMBER GENERAL MEETING**

Members please note that we are not able to secure our meeting room for December at Bell's Hotel due to the numerous office parties etc. booked at this time of the year. Accordingly, there will be no General Meeting held on Thursday 18 December, 1997. However for those wanting to meet for some good cheer and finger food on the evening then please come along to Bell's Hotel on that evening for a social get together before Christmas. This has been the norm. for the past couple of years now and has proved to be a resounding success.

As usual, a general meeting will be held in January to compensate and maintain the norm of 11 meetings per year. A reminder notice to this effect will appear in the December/January edition of FATHOMS.



## ***NON FINANCIAL MEMBERS***

(Slackarse List)

We regret to advise that the following members who had not paid their 1997/98 subscription of \$50 as at 25th September are now reading their last FATHOMS unless payment is made by the November General Meeting (20 November).

Brian LYNCH *	Gary THORN
Mick JACKIW *	Gavin LATIMER
Jim TURNER *	Tony ROSSI *
Russell OLORENSHAW	Noel ROBERTSON *
Igor CHERNISHOV *	Iain JAGGER
Mike WEBER *	Terry BROOKS *

\* Denotes also late last year (and probably every other year!)

**Note:** Members who may not be able to pay their subscription at the present time should contact Treasurer Bob Scott on 0359 712206 (A.H.)

Subscriptions barely cover the cost of production of FATHOMS, so please pay immediately.

### **REMEMBER!**

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## NEW MEMBER PROFILE

### Andrew Gregory



**AGE:** Third year of a second childhood  
(no mid-life crisis here.....)

**OCCUPATION:** Small Business  
Planning/Venture Capital

**FAMILY:** Married to Marilyn (The  
"Tolerant One") with whom we enjoy  
Jack 9 and Emmalyn 7.

### NEW HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DIVING?

In reality I've taken to the sport twice. The first time when I joined the Monash Uni. Dive Club in 1970 and did a FAUI course. Dived for several years with Uni club who tripped to Green cape near Eden at Easter each year and Mt Gambier each spring.

Then came a career, lots of courses, and marriage, travel, etc . Next thing I knew some bastard fast forwarded the tape to 1995. Least that's the best I can figure what happened. 1995 was the year that I built a house at Portsea for intended resale. At lunch the boys working on the job would very sensibly eat lunch on the cliff overlooking the bay. When there I would join them. From the vantage point we could often observe the comings and goings of these penguin like creatures waddling out along the pier carrying enough weight to put a smile on the face of even the most humourless chiropractor's accountant.

The sea started calling again. So did ego - can you still do it you mug or are you too geriatric? In to DIS-got a card says Val? Yep. Got an octopus? A what? I don't keep pets, I just want to go for a splash and look at the critters, I thought.

Got a B.C.? says Val. A what? I started to dive A.C. you fool. Not that old.

So it was off to do an advanced course to become relevant again.

Aaah then I got the bug again, didn't I. So now I've got the interest bill on the house that was too convenient to sell and my dive shop proprietor (Andy at Diveline) has a huge smile.

### WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE DIVE SITES?

Jeez, how to deal with this. The beauty of a top Coral Sea reef dive, the Coolidge for a mid life penetration, the Yongala against dropping on to the 90 ft. sub in 20m visibility, a big cray,

or a Kevin Green shark dive. Perhaps glancing at the surface from a shaft at Mt. Gambier, even a night dive at Number 16 or the Fort. Hell, I guess I'm just a diving slut - I do any of them.

But I do like rust. It's got it all which is why I put my hand up for Pat's trip to the Phillipines next year.

### **HOW DID YOU COME TO JOIN V.S.A.G.?**

I was looking for a more recreational alternative to the charter operators. Camaraderie with diving in a relaxed way. An avenue for time out.

### **DO YOU HAVE ANY PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE DIVE SITES?**

I'm looking forward to Pat's trip to the Phillipines next year (please don't clash with Targa Tas.!) and to Scotty's King Island cray bash. Shane Martin identified some really attractive sites in last issue of FATHOMS - except can't handle the "sky" one - my cylinders are too heavy to land with.

Add the Nord (coming Des?) and Mt. Gambier. Perhaps even the caves near Santo.

### **WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN A DIVE CLUB?**

Had one talk to Des Williams as a result of an introduction via Hong Kong Dave's wife Pat (our kids were training in the same swimming club). Liked what I heard.... And no regrets.

I do like the way that most activities come from the members rather than the committee - eg. dive captains,

Bob's trip to King Island and Pat's to the Phillipines.

### **DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER SPORTING INTERESTS?**

I am treasurer of a car club and have a recreational interest in amateur motor sport.

I have restored a 1963 Maserati. I have entered the 1998 Targa Tasmania in 2 litre class - just for the fun of it. (no stress out ambitions.)

*Ed. Note        Many thanks Andrew. I think maybe somebody fast forwarded the tape on my last 25 years as well.*

*Sorry to disappoint you but all activities originate from the committee. Dive captains are committee persons, and Bob and Pat are committee members. Hope to see you on more dives in the warmer weather.*



## *DIVING IN TASMANIA*

BY DES WILLIAMS

Recently, Ross Luxford rang me to suggest I request details on diving in Tasmania from the Tasmanian Tourist Bureau, as they were giving away free (my price!) a 240 page directory on Tasmanian dive sites to the first 50 people to make enquiries!! So, I did and sure enough I received a free copy of this very interesting little book. Thanks heaps Ross!

Since receiving it, I haven't been able to put it down, as the list and descriptions of dive sites from the islands off Wilsons Promontory, through King, Flinders and other Bass Strait islands to hundreds of sites and wrecks all over Tasmania is very detailed indeed.

Now, I have long thought that Tasmania has been the best kept diving secret in the country, and after the dives I did with Ross and Don back in June 1996 at Eaglehawk, I still hold this view. Too cold I hear you say! It sure is in Winter, but this is the best time to get 30M visibility in some of the most virgin waters in this country. So, I have bought a drysuit, like many others in V.S.A.G and I am heading south not north in future.

Tassy is close enough to nip over for a weekend orgy of diving and be back at work with a grin on your face the next week. So in future, I will be looking for travelling companions for the unspolited waters of Tasmania. The dives described in the directory, are all given a rating out of ten and there are plenty of great dives given 10 stars by the author Michael Jacques. Many of the best ones are around Bicheno and the Tasman Peninsula with sites like:

**"The Hairy Wall"** (8 stars) 30-35 metres. Here there is an awesome array of sea whips along a vertical granite dropoff, where clouds of Butterfly Perch hover above.

**"The Golden Bommies"** (9 stars) 35-40 metres. Basically two 10 metre high bommies on a sandy bottom. They are covered in yellow zoanthids (hence the name) fish life is prolific and there is every imaginable invertebrate life to keep the fussiest photographer busy.

**"The Castle"** (9.5 stars) 30 metres. Consisting of two granite boulders lying close together sheltering plenty of marine life. At the base of the rock spires there

is a long cave full of Bullseyes and crayfish. A 15M long swim-through is nearby, which is packed with jewel anemones and bottom dwelling fish, like rock cod. The entrance of the cave is surrounded with sea whips.

**The Wreck of the "Nord"** (10 stars) 42 metres. One of the few intact wrecks left in Tasmania. It was featured in the January issue of National Geographic magazine. I personally think this is one of the most exciting wrecks dives I have done in 30 years.

**"The Cathedral"** (9.5 stars) 12-22 metres. There is nothing like this dive anywhere on the mainland and I am sure the famous Fish Rock Cave in N.S.W would not equal this one for excitement. A readily accessible maze of sea caves, narrow tunnels and chambers. Crystal visibility abounds in the Winters months only, when the westerlies blow and the sea cave can be entered by boat. This is a very exciting dive indeed and not dived to death as I would imagine Fish Rock Cave would be.

Shall I stop now or do you want to hear more? "More, more" I hear those of you with drysuits calling! OK.....check this one out! The ship that knocked down the Tasman Bridge in 1975 is still under it in the murky waters of the Derwent River in Hobart. I think I'll pass this one up.....

**The "S.S Lake Illawarra"** (6 stars) 24-30 metres. Tasmania's largest wreck is covered in jewel anemones and disgusting river mud! The dive should only be attempted by divers with recent low visibility experience, as it is probably the spookiest dive in Tasmania and divers will be under greater than normal psychological stress. The bow is cluttered with debris and should be avoided. For a first dive, most would be content to stay around the bridge at 24 metres, where a torch is not really needed as a greenish light penetrates through the silt above. One level down is much darker and it is pitch black on the deck at 30 metres. The bottom is 35 metres deep, although the river silt is so thick and runny that it is difficult to tell if you have hit the bottom. Going inside the compartments turns a risky dive into something that is downright dangerous! It is not uncommon to miss the wreck for the first few dives and land in the hold or on the bottom. It is better to abort the dive than swim about in the dark not knowing what you have landed in!!!

Anyone interested in this one????

Here is a dive with a difference, what about a scuttled bridge.....

**Droughty Point Floating Bridge Section** (4.5 stars) 20 metres. Prior to the construction of the Tasman Bridge, the Derwent River was spanned by a floating pontoon bridge made of concrete and steel. Many of the 580ft long sections of the bridge were scuttled off Betsey Island in the Derwent estuary, but one was scuttled off Droughty Point. Having sunk unevenly into the mud, the deck is roughly level in 20 metres. The dive is popular with police divers for low water visibility training, so this will give you some idea of what it is like. This is a dive for bored and experienced divers, who want something different to do on a slow weekend.

Well, that is enough for now, I guess you get the general idea that Tasmania, in my opinion anyway, is worth a visit now and then. Maybe a full club assault with members boats and transport costs on the ship could be factored into an even cost for all divers instead of making a trip overseas, or we simply book with one of the dive charter operators. We should give it some thought! Next issue, I will report on a few of the dives around King Island for those taking Bob Scott's trip in January.



***FLOTSAM & JETSAM***  
***(Or perhaps more appropriately***  
***titled "High and Dry"™***

BY ARGUS TUFT

As I look around the club meetings these days I see two distinct groups:-

GROUP A - Those I've never been down with or on.  
Those I've never helped pull off (wetsuits that is!)  
and those who have never had the pleasurable ?? experience  
of riding the BILL BOAT or being ordered to "start bailing,"  
"row you scumbags" or "abandon ship."

And then there's the other group -

GROUP B - Those old bastards with whom I have dived for 20 odd years  
before blowing out my left ear in 1993.

For those in Group A, let me introduce myself. ARGUS TUFT is the name and I've been hanging around VSAG since 1972 when a disillusioned former girlfriend told me to "go jump in a deep puddle." - and jump I did - at every chance.

After a very quick basic course with old Fred Tidman, one of the great pioneers and characters of the early Australian dive scene, I was recruited by Tony Tipping, - an old mate from school days - yes, much to your probable surprise Tony did go to school.

In fact he used to take his dog "LUCK" with him. In 1954 our teacher, Miss Casey, decided that as Tony was having trouble with readin' and writin' and 'rithmetic he should repeat grade 3 - but LUCK advanced to grade 4.....where he licked all the boys!.....at the 100 yard race.

Aaah yards! - remember yards, 36 lovely clean inches, 3 easy to visualise feet. None of this metres crap. For a precision diver like myself, I always worked in

feet. It was a lot easier to remember the U>S>> dive tables - (Do you still use them Mick?)

60 feet            60 minutes

80 feet            40 minutes

90 feet            30 minutes and so on.

Nice easy to remember numbers - all you had to do was to be as fit and the same dimensions and specifications as Mr U.S. DIVER of 1952. Well we all believed we were and we all dived safely without bloody dive computers.

I remember in the '70's some of the guys bought a contraption called a decompression meter. Great idea - it was about the size of a house brick, and you strapped it to your wrist. It would tell you when you were bent. Now the dive computers are more sophisticated - but who wants to lug around a PC in a plastic bag with 200 yards of electrical cable?

For all of you Group A's, for many years I used to fill up the pages of FATHOMS with a regular article titled Flotsam & Jetsam. Every article had a different author, but ARGUS TUFT was the first and the second was written by his brother GUNGUS.

Well at the urging of Mick Jeacle, I was asked to submit an article. Mick cornered me at the August meeting which is rather a frightening experience. "Now Argus" he bellowed, "how about you getting off your arse and doing another Flotsam & Jetsam."

Well how can you politely refuse a 6 foot 6 inch (sorry 2 metre) giant who's swaying from the knees up and every time his torso lurched towards me his belly button hole nearly swallowed me.

So Mick - here it is - well here's half of it - because half's already gone.

So let me tell you how I intend to get back into diving.

For a start I found my tanks - and the air's still probably OK having been filled by Justin Liddy on the Rosalia at Refuge Cove in '93. The mask I found - complete with two blackbird eggs in the neat little nest that it had now become. The snorkel - minus the ping pong ball on top. To my surprise the wetsuit still fits and the flippers (sorry fins) those wonderful heavy bright orange Giants once painted black because I heard that sharks go for bright colours - shouldn't have

used a water based paint. Regulator with air pressure gauge in PSI - the only real way to measure air (certainly not bars - that is the measure of places to visit.)

Knife - a lethal weapon that made every abalone fear for its life, and finally the Scubapro buoyancy compensator, once the absolute epitome of diving elitism.

Next step was to take the plunge. ——— And so it happened earlier this month - a relatively easy and shallow dive on the wreck of the Swiss trading ship “R.

MEENIFE.” This wreck is located a few hundred yards off Point Percy and over the years has been one of my favourite splash sites.

My brother Gungus and I sat on opposite sides of the 4.2672 metre aluminium boat (that’s 14 feet in real length. We’d done our checks and on the count of 3 we’d go.

1 - 2 - 3. With excitement and some trepidation I leaned back to drop ungracefully into the smooth water below. The boat rocked violently as we disappeared over the side and suddenly the cool waters of Bass Strait swept over my face - gushed over my face - my face, nose, eyes - Oh shit! My mask had fallen off - the strap breaking when the tank hit the back of my head. As I tried to grab the mask sinking below me I realised that my left leg was still firmly wedged inside the boat, and to make matters worse my spare regulator hose was caught on something in the boat. This was perhaps fortunate, as with the stuck leg bent at an awkward angle over the gunnel, the equally stuck reg. Hose was the only thing keeping my head from being completely submerged. Desperately I tried to release my leg which was obviously tangled in fishing nets. Where was good buddy Gungus? - We had agreed to meet at the anchor line - oh oh - the bottom of the anchor line. I tried to grab hold of the side of the boat to haul myself up and release the pressure on my leg. Suddenly the reg. Hose let go and flashed back hitting me right on the nose - the second stage had torn off, and the thrashing hose belted me around the head. There were bubbles, churning water and now blood streaming from my nose. My weightbelt had slipped down to my neck and trickles of cold water were leaking through hundreds of tiny holes in my obviously perished wet wetsuit.

Again I try to pull myself up on the boat. Eventually I get my elbow over the side and with one mighty effort manage to get half way on board before the whole boat capsizes. Fish nets, buckets, rods, clothes, spare anchor, petrol tanks & esky



tumble all over me, but at last my leg is free. Oh, this is not a good day. I struggle free of the net and release my tank and weightbelt which I tie to the upturned boat. How do I get this thing back over again? I climb on top and try to pull it over but to no avail.

Inside the upturned hull I feel like lone sailor Tony Bullimore. Alone, desperate and capsized in the middle of the ocean. Perhaps my plight was worse than Bullimore's. I had no emergency beacon, there was no Australian Navy racing to my rescue, and we had no emergency rations of baked beans. But then again I was only 200 yards from a sandy beach, and the sea was dead calm. But worst of all it wasn't my boat and the owner, somewhere 60 feet below me would be as dark as hell when he got back.

After 25 minutes Gungas surfaced. The look on his face said it all - was he pissed off?

"Shit!" he said - and I knew I was in it. "Did you see it?" - "What" I said - not that I meant "what" as in "what" but rather "what" as in I didn't hear you. (Tony and Barry will understand that!) "The whale - the bloody great whale.... Oh gee, did it hit the boat?"

I needed no hesitation - "came at me like a charging bull - thought I was a goner. Grabbed its fin and rode the bloody thing before its tail flipped the boat over." "Jeez" he said - "that's unbelievable" - "yes it is" I mumbled to myself. Well, to cut a long story short the two of us finally got the boat righted and with some coaxing fired up the Mercury and headed back to Point Percy.

And I think to myself - this diving is all getting too hard. Perhaps I'll leave the air in the tanks for a little longer ..... or perhaps I won't.

*Ed note - Thanks Argus. 40 paragraphs, 126 lines and 1,482 words of sheer dribble, but gee it's good to see you back. Can you call on all your old friends to see if they can top your effort in future editions?*

## ***MARINE AWARENESS PROGRAM***

BY SHANE MARTIN

Just to introduce the program and tell you a bit about it, the author of the program is Shane Martin. The program was set up to improve children's knowledge and understanding about the foreshore, the habitats and the marine life existing in this fragile area. I lecture in pre-schools and primary schools generally in one hour sessions. We cover common marine creatures, conservation of habitat, dangers and raise their general marine awareness. I take live marine animals as well as a display of appropriate materials: eg. shells, sponges, etc. I hold the necessary Fisheries and Wildlife licenses to display and capture live specimens.

Maybe the intrepid divers of V.S.A.G. would like to learn-refresh their minds on some of these creatures. We are ambassadors of the the marine world after-all. Some-one once said, "The more knowledge we gain makes us realise the little knowledge we have."

So I incorporate a trial program, its future is in the hands of the members.

### **Big Bellied Sea-horse. ( *Hippocampus abdominalis* )**

It has been recorded in Australia , from South Australia around to New South Wales , Victoria and Tasmania included. It can be found in Port Phillip Bay around rocky out-crops and piers.

I have seen specimens up to 32cm in length , not to be confused with the Shortsnout Seahorse which only grows to approx. 8cm.

The colors of the male and female are very similar in most cases, ie; yellow to white tinges-shades on underbelly , checkered black, grey, white and mottled on the body and tail.

Some of the characteristics of the horses are ; They like to cling to things with their prehensile tail and stretch around to catch their food.It is easier

for them to operate this way as they are relatively poor swimmers compared to some other families of fishes.

The baby Sea Horses are called Ponies. The female lays her eggs into the males pouch, ( The one with the big belly. ) where they are fertilised. He carries and bears the young.

Avid salt-water aquarium keepers inform me that their life span is generally to a maximum of three years in captivity, there is no information at hand to say they live longer in the wild.

The main food source is small shrimp and crustaceans.

I have kept Big Bellied Sea Horses for six months or more and find them to be interesting, entertaining and curiously intelligent. To look into a Sea Horses eye makes you wonder who is studying who.

Recently you may have heard of the proposed Sea-horse farms planned for Tasmania, the *Hippocampus abdominalis* is the preferred option because of it's size and relative ease of keeping. The horses are grown to maturity, culled, dried and sold onto the Asian markets to be used in Chinese Medicine. The prices of the product tend to vary depending on who you talk to. They seem to range between \$1200 - 1500kg. It would take approximatly 200 Sea-horses per kg. dried. Viable business ? Draw your own conclusions.





## *SSCOOGEE - (1887 - 1928)*

BY MICK JEACLE

Sunday 3rd August was the day scheduled in the dive calendar to visit the SS Coogee at her final resting place in what we call the "Ships' Graveyard." And dive it we did, in near perfect conditions which produced calm seas and blue water.

Despite the great conditions, only eight divers and two boats put to sea to visit this grand old lady, a wreck that VSAG had not dived for some years. I must admit I had forgotten how good a dive the Coogee is, and I will be recommending that we visit her more often in future. The reason for this is that it is easily accessible and it is relatively shallow (110 feet) when compared to other surrounding wrecks in the graveyard, which will appeal to those divers who do not wish to venture deeper in cold water.

The boats were launched on time and we were soon on our way out through the Heads and heading for the site, all the time guided by our trusty GPS. However we were soon to discover that the coordinates entered therein were not corresponding with the transit marks in my little book, and after some adjustment we soon located the wreck and commenced preparation to dive. John's crew graciously undertook to remain topside and watch our boat whilst Ted Cornish, Bob Scott, Ross Luxford and yours truly dived first.

We descended in clear blue water to find that our anchor had dragged away from the wreck and lodged in a small reef which turned out to be only about 70 feet from the wreck.. We swam forward of the anchor and soon sighted the bow of the wreck, which was readily distinguishable as some of the railings can still be seen on the deck.. The clear water made this a great sight and we then followed the lines of the ship towards the stern and were confronted by the large boilers amidships. These also looked great as we could see their majestic outlines from some 60 feet away.

We then proceeded to the stern where we noted that the rudder and rudder quadrant are still in position. This section is very open and filled with various species of fish, predominantly bullseyes, which make for a spectacular sight in

good visibility. Swimming around the stern section and along the starboard side, I was alerted by Ross shaking his 500 candlepower light (even though I had my back turned to him) as he pointed out a three pound crayfish residing in one of the steel ledges. My attempt to grab the decapod just failed and we really did not have a lot of time left anyway for this type of activity. Those of you who dived the courier two weeks earlier will recall Ross surfacing from 140 feet with a cray in his hand. I wonder if he does indeed take notice of the wrecks or if he is merely searching the dark crevices.

Upon returning to the bow I swam out at right angles to look for the anchor, but either went out at the wrong angle or JL's boat, which was tethered to mine, may have caused my anchor to drag further. This meant we had to decompress whilst drifting in a slight current and ended up some 200 metres from the boat. However this presented no problems due to the perfect conditions, save for the fact that the Garden Gnome had to pull up the anchor himself and come and pick us up. Bob didn't get to dive with us as he had a slight problem with his ears. However he did eventually get down but did not swim to the wreck, preferring to explore the small reef surrounding the anchor.

We then had lunch in great conditions as John Lawler, Bill Hayes, Darren Pearce and Dave Machen had their dive. When they surfaced they all agreed that it was a great dive and one we must include on our calendar on a more regular basis.

We then proceeded over flat seas to the Rye scallop grounds. Ted Cornish, who only brought one tank on the day, suddenly had his pick of three as I directed him to hit the drink and bring me up 4 dozen scallops for dinner that evening. Ross must have felt sorry for Ted as he finally agreed to join him in his Dry Suit. Talk about send boys on a man's errand! Fair dinkum, they surfaced with about eight scallops, the largest of which was about two inches across. These were all returned to grow for next year. I think future scallop dives should take place much further north when boats are launched at Rye.

It was then back to the ramp and due to the lateness of the hour we proceeded straight home. Thanks for joining me chaps; be sure to tell all those other blokes in the club that winter diving is great when we are lucky enough to experience conditions like we encountered on Sunday, 3 August 1997.

## *NEW "PRESIDENT COOLIDGE" BOOK*

BY DES WILLIAMS

During a recent visit to Yarram in Victoria, I called in to see Peter Stone to rummage through his huge collection of old diving books and have a cuppa with the old "walrus"!

Peter is in good health and working furiously on another book and this time I believe every V.S.A.Ger will want a copy, when it is published later this year. The book is the first definitive work on the wreck of the "President Coolidge" and they don't come more detailed than this one is going to be!!

Peter showed me many of the fantastic contemporary photographs of this wonderful liner he has tracked down from all over the U.S.A. Some of them are even in colour! There are plans of the enormous U.S base at Loganville, as well as charts and plans of the "Coolidge" itself. There won't be a V.S.A.G member who has dived the "Coolidge" who should miss out on this book, as it is crammed full of brilliant detail of this fantastic ship.

Peter has been preparing the manuscript with the aid of Alan Power from Vanuatu, who is considered the expert on the layout of the vessel, as she lies in her grave today. Peter has dredged up many unpublished photographs of this once beautiful ship, spanning from the time she was launched right through her career as a liner, to the last day she spent afloat in the Second Channel at Espirito Santo, during World War 2.

The colour photograph I saw of the swimming pool on the "Coolidge" taken during the 1930's, was stunning. Remember the beautiful tiling pattern we saw in the pool on our dive to the vessel? Well, this photograph allows you to see the whole pattern as it was in its heyday in colour. She really was the most beautiful liner, and the photographs Peter has will have you agreeing on this point. The sweeping staircases, enormous banquet room, the childrens nursery, and the foyer where the little fountain can be plainly seen. The "Lady" on the wall in all of its original glory with passengers mooching about in comfortable lounges. This is going to be an exciting book, so I will keep you all posted when it is published and we will organise a bulk purchase from Peter for Club members who are interested.





# VSAG TENNIS PARTY

**DATE:**  
SUNDAY 23 NOVEMBER 1997

**TIME:** 9.30 AM START

**VENUE:** CRANBOURNE SOUTH  
TENNIS CLUB

BROWNS ROAD,  
(OFF DANDENONG-HASTINGS RD)  
MELWAY REF: 136 H3.

**B.Y.O.** PICNIC, DRINKS, CHAIRS  
ETC. BARBECUE.

This is the last remaining true family day for the year and includes the singles and doubles tournaments as well as the infamous VSAG mile.

Let's see some of the new families attend - there will be several prizes and no doubt June Scott will organise events for the juniors.

**For further details contact either  
Paul Tipping on 9387 2027 or Tony Tipping on 9817 4956.**

**So come on - be in it.**

# SPECIAL EVENT

## ACROSS THE BAY CHALLENGE

**DATE:** Sunday 7th December, 1997

**TIME:** 11.00 AM START

**WHAT'S HAPPENING?** (Like that Ross?)

Leo Maybus and Pat Reynolds will attempt to cross the bay underwater (without surfacing) from Portsea jetty to Queenscliff jetty.

They will be using modified (by Leo) underwater scooters and will be supported by a surface crew.

John Lawler and Warrick McDonald attempted this some years ago but did not have the right equipment. We do not believe a similar crossing has ever been achieved before.

All members are invited down to encourage and cheer for our members and a number of club boats will follow them across the bay. Book your ride now or come across on the car ferry to enjoy a BBQ at Queenscliff following this momentous occasion.

Of course, weather will play a big part, but if ideal conditions present, it will be all systems go!

So, keep this date free and come along and witness history in the making.



# VSAG CHRISTMAS DINNER

**VENUE:** LA SPAGHETTA  
RESTAURANT

**DATE:** FRIDAY 5TH DECEMBER

**TIME:** 7PM FOR 7.30 START

**COST:** \$32 HEAD  
(TOTAL AMOUNT TO BE PAID BY  
NOVEMBER MEETING PLEASE)

La Spaghetta is a fabulous Italian restaurant situated right in the centre of downtown Carlton. The restaurant has balcony tables, full bar facilities as well as B.Y.O.

Prizes - We will have the usual array of prizes to raffle including wetsuit, assorted dive gear, leather G strings etc.

Mystery Prize - Once again we ask for one wrapped mystery gift per head no more than \$2 value. This provides a bit of fun on the night at very little expense.

**Contact - Leo Maybus on 9727 1568**



# REFUGE COVE

**MARCH 1998**

VSAG will again return to fabulous  
**REFUGE COVE**

Next Labour Day long weekend

March 7, 8 & 9, 1998

A strictly limited number of positions are available aboard one of Bass Strait's great cruising yachts - well known to VSAG members in the 1970's and 1980's.

Deposits of \$50 required to be paid to John Goulding to secure your place.

For further details contact John Goulding -  
Phone 9899 3468 (H)  
9653 5703 (W)

# SCUBA MARKET

Seatec Buoyancy Vest (just serviced)

Dacor 950 First stage with XL Dacor Pacer Regulator and occy.

Oceanis pressure guage and Data Max 11 depth & combo.

**A steal at \$450 the lot! Will separate.**

All items are sitting with Robin Woods (Allwoods Breathing)  
if you wish a professional opinion on the gear.

Contact Chris Llewellyn BH 9464 1599 or AH 9431 1650

88 cf aluminium scuba tank

Very good condition, but needs Hydro

\$150 Contact Murray Black

9817 3154 0419 558 338 (w)

## MEDIA WATCH

# US sub finds buried ships

WASHINGTON—A newly discovered cluster of eight shipwrecks in deep water along an ancient trade route suggested the Mediterranean Sea might harbor its own Bermuda Triangle, an archaeologist said yesterday.

Five of the vessels dated from 100 BC to 400 AD, while the other three ranged from 100 to 200 years old. All were about 760 metres underwater at a 51.80 sq km site about equal distance from Tunisia, Sicily and Sardinia.

The wrecks were found with the help of a wheeled US Navy research submarine that rolled along the bottom of the Mediterranean, using long-range sonar to locate the ships.

A remote-controlled robot vessel was then used to collect 115 artefacts, said archaeologist Robert Ballard.

Because so many wrecks were found in such deep water



**Found:** a 1st century BC jug.

so close together, Ballard and his team suggested this might be an area of sudden, violent storms where ships sank quickly without trace, similar to the vast Bermuda Triangle in the Atlantic Ocean between Bermuda, Puerto Rico and Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Most other shipwrecks had

been found in water less than 61 metres, close enough to shore to allow looting and damage from surf.

But Mr Ballard said these finds, made in May and June, indicated ancient sailors braved deep waters and rough seas as they followed a trade route between Rome and what is now the city of Tunis.

The advantage to such deep wrecks, Mr Ballard said, was that the cold water and inaccessibility helped preserve the ships and their cargo.

Wood-eating organisms destroyed any part of the ships that lay above the bottom mud, but other materials were in a kind of natural cold-storage.

The artefacts from the eight wrecks included kitchen and household wares, bronze vessels, two heavy lead anchor stocks, eight long-necked jars of olive oil, fish sauce and preserved fruit.

—REUTERS



# Dolphin expo on display

by ROY FLEMING

PLANS for a \$12 million Dolphin Centre on the Frankston foreshore have been released with predictions the facility will be open in time for the 2000 Olympics.

Frankston Council and the Dolphin Research Institute released a concept plan last week, giving residents and environmental groups their first look at the facility.

The unveiling ends several months of waiting for foreshore and environmental groups including the Kanook Creek Association.

The Dolphin Centre will be built behind sand-dunes on the foreshore between Frankston Pier and the Coast Guard building. Live dolphins will not be kept.

Key features of the

dicts more than 300,000 visitors to the centre each year, providing a welcome boost to the local economy.

Construction of the centre, he said, would be environmentally friendly and, in some cases, theatre seats would be built from recycled plastics.

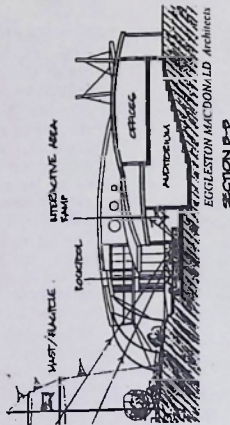
"We could build the biggest and flashiest centre but that's not necessarily the best," said Mr Weir.

"We want this world class facility to be a true eco-centre."

The research institute is seeking a partnership with government and the corporate sector to finance the \$12 million project.

A report *The Dolphin Centre Concept and Vision* is on display at the civic centre for five weeks.

Dolphins cannot be kept in captivity in Victoria.



two-level centre include:

- A research centre where the Dolphin Research Institute will be housed;
- The Dolphin Experience, showing the habitat of dolphins;
- The Dolphin Theatre, a 150 seat auditorium which promotes viewers an experience through the eyes of a dolphin;
- The Dolphin restaurant which seats 150 people;
- Classrooms for school groups;
- A Dolphin playground for children and
- A rockpool stocked with shellfish, invertebrates and fish found in Port Phillip.

Dolphin Research Institute director Jeff Weir pre-

## 'Long lining worse than scallop dredging'

DESPITE its concern for dolphins, the Dolphin Centre will not become automatically involved in environmental issues affecting Port Phillip Bay.

"Where we can we will (become

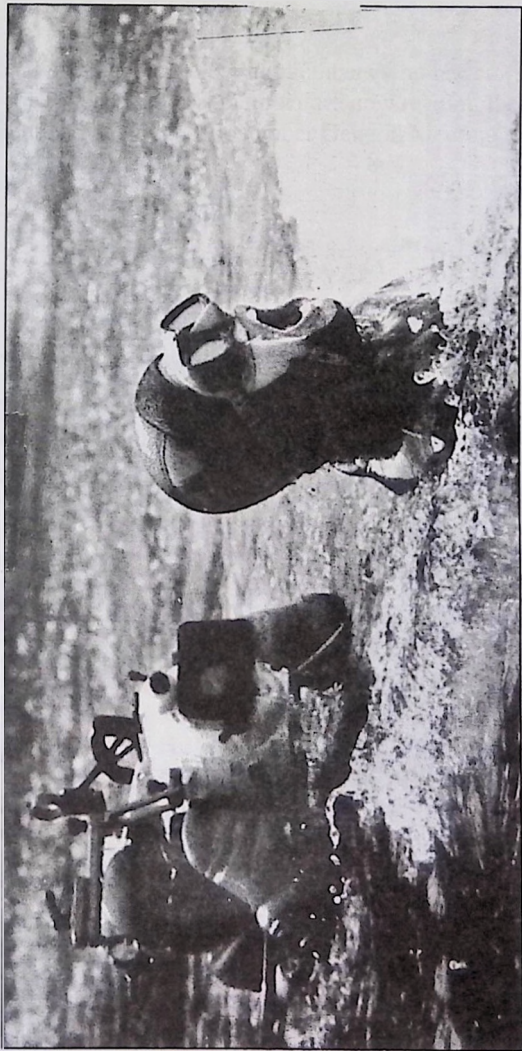
involved)," said Mr Weir. "We are particularly against long-lining."

But Mr Weir said the ban on scallop dredging was politically driven to get the vote of fishers and that

scallop dredging was not "as devastating as long-lining" to the bay.

"Port Phillip Bay is one of the most environmentally sound bays in the world for the number of people who live on its coastline," he said.

## MEDIA WATCH



**Taking a dive 2:** Heimo Hanke gasps for air as he breaks the surface of Austria's Lake Attersee after breaking the record for freshwater diving without oxygen. He plunged 86 metres in 2.5 minutes.

# Marine park proposal earns the ire of conservationists

By **TIM WINKLER**,  
environment reporter

A new marine park will be proposed by the end of November, the State Government has announced.

In a historic carve-up of the state's marine and coastal areas, the new Environment Conservation Council has been asked by the Conservation Minister, Mrs Marie Tehan, to identify options for at least one marine park and one aquaculture development site by 30 November.

The move has angered conservationists, who believe areas of biological significance should be identified and protected before fish farming sites are established.

A spokeswoman for the Victorian National Parks Association, Ms Nicci Tsernjavski, said the former Land Conservation Council had spent five years developing

recommendations for the use of Victoria's coastal waters.

But Mrs Tehan replaced the organisation with the new Environment Conservation Council this year, before its final recommendations could be published.

"The LCC had already established the preferred approach for the progressive establishment of marine protected areas in the state. After five years of study and over 2000 public submissions, we know where marine national parks ought to be," Ms Tsernjavski said.

The Victorian Aquaculture Council's secretary, Mr John Mosig, said he was disappointed that conservationists continued to campaign against fish farming.

"The reality is that where you have aquaculture, you have good-quality conditions," he said. "If you had a hundred hectares of

salmon cages in the middle of Port Phillip Bay it would be the best thing possible, because aquaculturists would be fighting alongside conservationists to get the Government to clean up the bay."

Sections of suitable coastal waters would have to be opened up for fish farming if marine-based farming was to proceed, he said.

The ECC will consider the unusually lengthy Land Conservation Council investigation as well as the federal oceans policy to provide its interim and final reports.

Controversy centres on the definition of marine parks. Despite the impending deadline for identifying a marine park site, the Government is yet to define what marine park protection involves.

While some groups refer to marine parks as areas closed only to commercial fishing, conserva-

## MEDIA WATCH



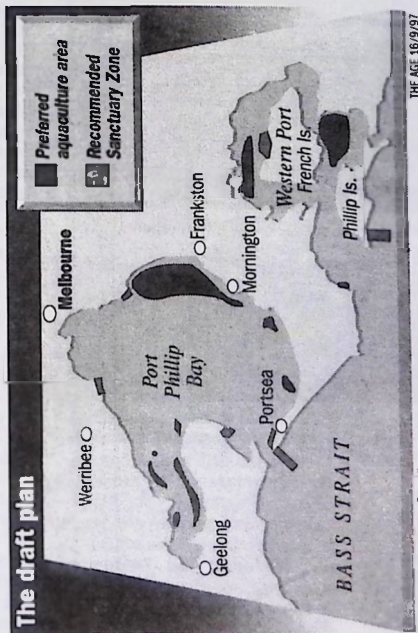
## MEDIA WATCH

tionists believe marine parks should be like national parks and be closed to fish farming, commercial and recreational fishing and anything that could disturb the marine habitat, such as mining.

Ms Tsernjavski said marine park zones would be meaningless unless they protected marine life from killing, collection and habitat disturbance.

Overseas studies have indicated that marine national parks can act as important nurseries for fish, helping to re-stock other parts of the ocean.

But commercial and recreational fishing groups have vigorously opposed an extensive network of marine national parks because of concerns over losing fishing access.



## MEDIA WATCH

# Undersea treasure trove found

By KEN RINGLE,  
Washington, Thursday

The explorer Dr Robert Ballard sailed into the National Geographic Society yesterday with photographs and artefacts of what he described as the largest concentration of ancient shipwrecks ever found in the deep sea.

But his presentation underlined a rarely appreciated truth about the once highly secretive world of deep-ocean search and discovery: almost every man-made object ever sunk in the seven-tenths of the world covered by water is now recoverable. In the age of computer imaging and fibre-optic cable, we may have lost forever the term "lost at sea".

Dr Ballard's mediagenic discoveries of the doomed superliner Titanic and the German battleship Bismarck have made him a kind of underwater Indiana Jones. But a six-week expedition to the Mediterranean in May and June, using the world's only nuclear submarine with wheels, yielded eight ships, and thousands of artefacts spanning more than 2000 years of history.

At one point, he said, the borrowed 13-man US Navy submarine NR-1 "was finding a Roman ship every other day — we had to tell them to stop".

The wealth of material has reinforced Dr Ballard's long-held conviction that "there is more human history in the deep ocean than in all the museums in the world combined".

Since the end of the Cold War, an explosion of sub-ocean technology has emerged from hunter-killer secrecy to civilian availability. The advances have included satellite-based global positioning systems; computer-enhanced sonar imagery; and vastly improved fibre-optic cables.

Yesterday Mr Ballard was touting new software that permits digitised mapping and exploration of each wreck site's various levels so quickly and so precisely that "someone will be able to come along later and re-excavate it on a computer in a different way asking a different set of questions".

Anna Marguerite McCann, adjunct professor at Boston College and the expedition's chief archaeologist, said at the news conference that "this sophisticated technology has come along at just the right time".

She pointed out that George Bass and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology have spent 11 years excavating a single Bronze Age wreck in Turkey with the traditional hand tools of divers and underwater archaeology.

But the mapping techniques launched on Dr Ballard's latest expedition, he said, permitted the compilation of an exact electronic camera photo mosaic of an entire wreck in four hours.

While such savings are crucial in depths like those where Dr Ballard found the Titanic, he said, they are also invaluable in the Mediterranean. Though shallower, it averages 2750 me-

tres in depth and off Greece plunges to 6100 metres.

With this year's expedition, Dr Ballard was returning to an area of the Mediterranean he first surveyed nine years ago. He has long believed that ancient mariners, far from being confined to coastal trade routes as has been long believed, gambled on shorter, deep-water voyages where their ships were often overwhelmed by famously treacherous weather.

"They were entrepreneurs," he said. "They wanted to get their products to market."

In a post-Titanic interview 10 years ago, he predicted that "literally thousands" of ancient ships — Roman, Phoenician, Egyptian and others — lay on the sea floor along the ancient Carthage-Rome trade route linking Europe and Africa.

After additional surveys in 1989 and the discovery of a fourth-century trading ship, he returned to the site in 1995, discovered two more ships and completed preparations for this year's expedition.

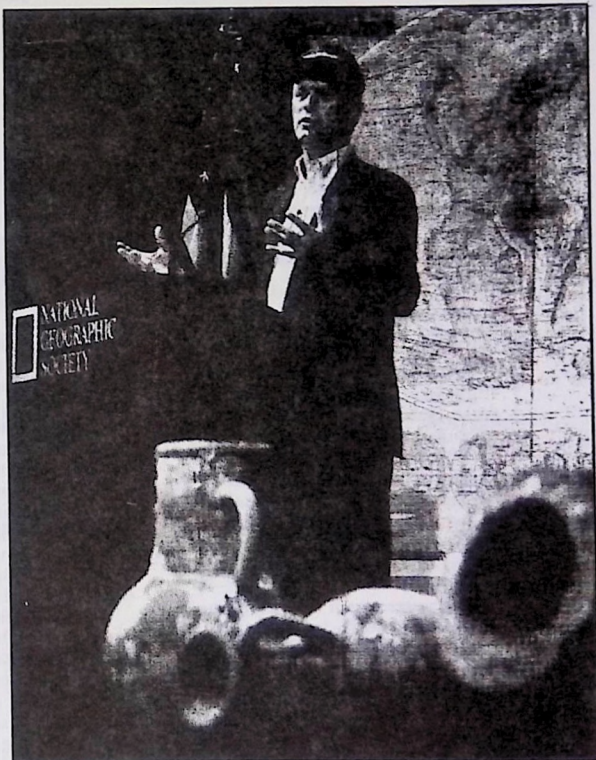
This northern spring he returned to the area 160 kilometres off Tunisia in water 760 metres deep. Accompanying his leased research ship Carolyn Chouest was the navy's NR-1, a 28-year-old one-of-a-kind research submarine powered by a tiny nuclear reactor "the size of a trash can". The reactor permits the sub to stay on the deep ocean floor up to a month at a time, avoiding the ascents and descents that can take less versatile submersibles the better part of a day.

## MEDIA WATCH

The 46-metre NR-1 also has wheels, and for this trip it "was equipped with a giant vacuum cleaner" permitting it to trundle along the sea floor sucking sediment from artefacts and removing them with its mechanical pincers.

"It's the closest thing to my boyhood dream of Captain Nemo's Nautilus (from Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*)," Dr Ballard said. "In fact, it is the Nautilus."

— New York Times



*Dr Robert Ballard tells a Washington news conference about the discovery of the ancient Mediterranean shipwrecks.* Picture: AP



# Oceans surrender lost shipwrecks to technology

## Washington, Thursday

Almost every month brings a report of some intriguing time capsule in the ocean depths: Blackbeard's pirate ship off North Carolina, one of Benedict Arnold's 1776 gunboats in Lake Champlain, the Spanish treasure galleon San Jose in the Caribbean off Colombia.

Nine years ago a trio of high-tech treasure hunters from Columbus, Ohio, found and recovered the richest treasure in North American

history from the bullion-packed steamer Central America, which sank in a hurricane off South Carolina while homebound from the California gold rush.

Two years ago a researcher, Mr Paul Tidwell, located the torpedo-punctured hull of an almost-forgotten Japanese cargo submarine, the I-52, which sank in the South Atlantic while carrying \$21 million to Hitler's Wehrmacht in the closing days of World War II.

Not all those wrecks lie as deep as explorer Robert Ballard's latest finds, 800 metres down, but some are even deeper. The Central America was more than 1300 metres deep, yet was excavated with such extraordinary robotic precision and delicacy that it yielded, in addition to gold dust and mint-condition gold coins, glassware, readable 1857 newspapers and even a perfectly preserved, unsmoked cigar.

The I-52, while not yet recovered, already promises clues to what appears to have been a heretofore unknown trade in nuclear technology between Germany and Japan: part of the cargo was enriched uranium.

Dr Ballard, a physicist, discovered the sub-ocean volcanic vents that confirmed the theory of plate tectonics and continental drift, but he remains crazy about both shipwrecks and the electronic whiz boxes that find them.

— New York Times

**DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT/LOCATION</b>	<b>DIVE CAPTAIN</b>	<b>MEET AT</b>
16 Oct	General Meeting Bell's Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets, Sth. Melbourne		8.00 pm
26 Oct	90 ft Submarine	Pat Reynolds 9789 1092	Sorrento 9.30am
2 Nov	Melb Cup Weekend	John Lawler 9589 4020	Sorrento 9.00am
3 Nov (Monday)	Melb Cup Weekend	Mick Jeacle 0359 712 786	Sorrento 9.00am
16 Nov	Coogee wreck dive	John Lawler 9589 4020	Sorrento 9.30am
20 Nov	General Meeting Bell's Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets, Sth. Melbourne		8.00 pm
23 Nov	VSAG Tennis Day Cranbourne South Tennis Courts	Tony Tipping 9817 4956	See separate notice
30 Nov	Flinders Reef Dive	Don Abell 9889 4415	Flinders 10.00am
5 Dec (Friday)	VSAG Christmas function Spaghetтата's Lygon St, Carlton	Gerry DeVries 9725 2381	See Separate Notice
14 Dec	Cape Shanck	Bob Scott 0359 712 206	Flinders 10.00am
18 Dec	Christmas Drinks/Finger Food Bell's Hotel, South Melbourne		From 6pm

Dec/Jan	Christmas trip Robe, S.A.	Andy Mastrowicz 9318 3986	Robe S.A
28 Dec &	Dive to be advised	John Lawler 9589 4020	
4 Jan	Dive to be advised	John Lawler 9589 4020	
15 Jan	General Meeting Bell's Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets, Sth. Melbourne		8.00 pm
18 Jan	Shellback Island Wilson's Promontory	Mick Jeacle 0359 712 786	Walkerville 9.30am

NOTICE: BOAT OWNERS INTENDING TO BRING THEIR BOATS  
PLEASE RING THE DIVE CAPTAIN BEFORE 6.00 PM ON EVENING  
PRIOR TO THE DIVE.  
DIVERS PLEASE RING BETWEEN 6.00 PM - 7.00 PM.  
FOR NIGHT DIVES (USUALLY SATURDAYS) PLEASE RING BY 8.00 PM  
ON EVENING PRIOR TO DIVE.



## TIDE TABLES

TIMES OF FLOOD AND EBB - The tables of Times of Flood and Ebb give the times when the rate of change in the sea level at Point Lonsdale (Port Phillip Heads) is a maximum. Each time approximates the time when the tidal flow at the entrance to port Phillip bay changes direction, this time is given in the column marked "Time". The direction of this flow is indicated by the words "flood" and "ebb" in the column "Start". Thus the word "flood" indicates that the tide starts to flow into the bay, in the given time in the "Time" column. The word "ebb" indicates that the tide starts to flow out of the bay at that time.

## PORT PHILLIP HEADS (PT. LONSDALE)

LAT 38° 18'

TIME ZONE +1000

LAT 38° 18'

LONG 144° 37'

TIME ZONE -1000

## TIMES OF SLACK WATERS

## NOVEMBER - 1997

Time Start	Time Start	Time Start	Time Start	Time Start
1 0331 ebb 0630 flood 0644 ebb 1441 ebb 2200 flood	9 0217 flood 0644 ebb 1438 flood 2009 ebb	17 0447 ebb 1013 flood 1550 ebb 2257 flood	25 0327 flood 1000 ebb 1707 flood 2215 ebb	25 0327 flood 1000 ebb 1707 flood 2215 ebb
2 0416 ebb 1007 flood 1517 ebb 2234 flood	10 0304 flood 0927 ebb 1534 flood 2115 ebb	18 0534 ebb 1100 flood 1638 ebb 2338 flood	26 0413 flood 1038 ebb 1817 flood 2335 ebb	26 0413 flood 1038 ebb 1817 flood 2335 ebb
3 0456 ebb 1042 flood 1554 ebb 2309 flood	11 0356 flood 1015 ebb 1657 flood 2234 ebb	19 0617 ebb 1145 flood 1724 ebb	27 0514 flood 1121 ebb 1917 flood	27 0514 flood 1121 ebb 1917 flood
4 0534 ebb 1115 flood 1630 ebb 2344 flood	12 0457 flood 1107 ebb 1820 flood	20 0017 flood 0658 ebb 1609 ebb	28 0103 ebb 0630 flood 1207 ebb 2061 flood	28 0103 ebb 0630 flood 1207 ebb 2061 flood
5 0612 ebb 1146 flood 1708 ebb	13 0306 ebb 0907 flood 1206 ebb 1931 flood	21 0055 flood 0736 ebb 1314 flood 1852 ebb	29 0220 ebb 0742 flood 1256 ebb 2061 flood	29 0220 ebb 0742 flood 1256 ebb 2061 flood
6 0019 flood 0648 ebb 1220 flood 1747 ebb	14 0137 ebb 0719 flood 1306 ebb 2031 flood	22 0132 flood 0813 ebb 1401 flood 1936 ebb	30 0318 ebb 0840 flood 1344 ebb 2131 flood	30 0318 ebb 0840 flood 1344 ebb 2131 flood
7 0057 flood 0726 ebb 1256 flood 1829 ebb	15 0253 ebb 0825 flood 1404 ebb 2125 flood	23 0209 flood 0848 ebb 1454 flood 2021 ebb	30 0318 ebb 0840 flood 1344 ebb 2131 flood	30 0318 ebb 0840 flood 1344 ebb 2131 flood
8 0136 flood 0804 ebb 1338 flood 1915 ebb	16 0355 ebb 0921 flood 1459 ebb 2213 flood	24 0247 flood 0923 ebb 1556 flood 2113 ebb	30 0318 ebb 0840 flood 1344 ebb 2131 flood	30 0318 ebb 0840 flood 1344 ebb 2131 flood

## PORT PHILLIP HEADS (PT. LONSDALE)

LAT 38° 18'

TIME ZONE +1000

LAT 38° 18'

LONG 144° 37'

TIME ZONE -1000

## TIMES OF SLACK WATERS

## DECEMBER - 1997

Time Start	Time Start	Time Start	Time Start	Time Start
1 0331 ebb 0630 flood 0644 ebb 1441 ebb 2200 flood	9 0235 flood 0605 ebb 1541 flood 2119 ebb	17 0518 ebb 1046 flood 1615 ebb 2322 flood	25 0315 flood 0905 ebb 1541 flood 2119 ebb	25 0315 flood 0905 ebb 1541 flood 2119 ebb
2 0416 ebb 1007 flood 1517 ebb 2234 flood	10 0316 flood 0948 ebb 1665 flood 2238 ebb	18 0558 ebb 1135 flood 1701 ebb	26 0352 flood 1021 ebb 1830 flood	26 0352 flood 1021 ebb 1830 flood
3 0456 ebb 1042 flood 1554 ebb 2309 flood	11 0402 flood 1037 ebb 1808 flood 2238 ebb	19 0000 flood 0634 ebb 1220 flood 1745 ebb	27 0010 ebb 0441 flood 1104 ebb 1927 flood	27 0010 ebb 0441 flood 1104 ebb 1927 flood
4 0534 ebb 1115 flood 1630 ebb 2344 flood	12 0007 ebb 0500 flood 1132 ebb 1915 flood	20 0034 flood 0708 ebb 1304 flood 1828 ebb	28 0136 ebb 0554 flood 1154 ebb 2018 flood	28 0136 ebb 0554 flood 1154 ebb 2018 flood
5 0612 ebb 1146 flood 1708 ebb	13 0134 ebb 0615 flood 1230 ebb 2015 flood	21 0107 flood 0741 ebb 1349 flood 1910 ebb	29 0246 ebb 0727 flood 1248 ebb 2106 flood	29 0246 ebb 0727 flood 1248 ebb 2106 flood
6 0019 flood 0648 ebb 1220 flood 1747 ebb	14 0248 ebb 0739 flood 1331 ebb 2109 flood	22 0140 flood 0811 ebb 1436 flood 1954 ebb	30 0309 ebb 0843 flood 1345 ebb 2150 flood	30 0309 ebb 0843 flood 1345 ebb 2150 flood
7 0057 flood 0726 ebb 1256 flood 1829 ebb	15 0346 ebb 0852 flood 1430 ebb 2157 flood	23 0211 flood 0841 ebb 1527 flood 2041 ebb	31 0420 ebb 0841 ebb 1442 ebb 2231 flood	31 0420 ebb 0841 ebb 1442 ebb 2231 flood
8 0136 flood 0804 ebb 1338 flood 1915 ebb	16 0435 ebb 0953 flood 1525 ebb 2242 flood	24 0243 flood 0912 ebb 1624 flood 2137 ebb	31 0420 ebb 0841 ebb 1442 ebb 2231 flood	31 0420 ebb 0841 ebb 1442 ebb 2231 flood

## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION MORNINGTON PENINSULA AREA

	PHONE
POLICE - AMBULANCE - FIRE	(000)
PENINSULA AMBULANCE (ROSEBUD, SORRENTO) (MORNINGTON)	(008) 137333 (03) 9783 2222
SOUTHERN PENINSULA HOSPITAL 1527 NEPEAN ROSEBUD	(0359) 86 8444
FRANKSTON HOSPITAL HASTINGS ROAD FRANKSTON	(03) 9781 3111
MORNINGTON BUSH NURSING HOSPITAL MAIN ST MORNINGTON	(0359) 75 2009
MORNINGTON BAY RESCUE SERVICE	(0359) 75 2733
SOUTHERN PENINSULA RESCUE	(0359) 84 2000
DIVING EMERGENCY SERVICE	1800 088 200
COAST GUARD	(03) 9598 7003
STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE (S.E.S)	(03) 26 1468
WATER POLICE	(03) 9662 0911
MELBOURNE AMBULANCE	(03) 9662 2533
<b>DOCTORS DIVING MEDICINE</b>	
DR. GUY WILLIAMS	ROSEBUD (0359) 81 1555
DR. J De B.J. DADE	MORNINGTON (0359) 75 5288
DIVING EMERGENCY SERVICE	1800 088 200

V.H.F. EMERGENCY CHANNEL..... (16)