# **FATHOMS**

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VSAG VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

FEB-MAR 97

## **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 confinued as a strong and active diving club since that time. If 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 frips. 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 20th February 1997 Thursday 20th March 1997

Next Committee Meetings: Tuesday 25th February - Bob Scott's home

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#### **EDITORIAL**

diving out of Flinders on a day that was forecast to reach almost 40 degrees. We had a fabulous day, including a two hour respite from the hot sun in a huge cave in the side of the cliff. I won't go into the day as such except to say that the fisheries officers boarded my boat at the end of the day at West Head on my way back. The Officer who inspected our catch was very impressed with our responsible attitude and remarked that it was indeed a pleasure to come across four divers who were obviously intent on doing the right thing. The only thing that he did point out was that he would prefer to see us carry our amateur fishing licences on the boat if we intended to take crayfish. This would save

On Sunday 5th January I had the pleasure of

the necessity of taking names and addresses and would of course be less of an inconvenience to us. Accordingly I have placed my licence in my boat folder along with other documents needed out on the water from time to time. I suggest you all consider doing the same in future.

As I prepare this editorial it is disappointing for me to know that the December/January FATHOMS has not yet left the printers. Causes for the delay were due to extenuating circumstances and hopefully we should not see a repeat of such a long delay. At present I am trying to shortcut the typesetter's work by sending articles on floppy disc for her recovery. Accordingly, those of you with Microsoft Word should Save As Text Only and simply hand me the disc which will save re-typing. I will return the disc after use.

This summer is proving to be a hot one and it would appear that we can expect many good dive days ahead. Your committee is always trying to come up with new and different dive sites but at times weather plays an important part. We would appreciate your ideas on new dive sites and invite you all to discuss any preferences to any committee member.

Thanks to those members who have submitted articles in this issue. MICK JEACLE



#### V.S.A.G. PROFILE

This month's diver profile features

John Mills

**AGE: 31** 

**OCCUPATION:** Industrial Chemist

## AS A SYDNEY BOY HOW WOULD YOU COMPARE THE DIVING TO MELBOURNE?

The diving in NSW was a little more Commercially oriented. I never came across any groups like VSAG (There would be none like it any where else for that matter), that is a club that is devoted to providing diving without pressuring you to do further courses. The level of experience within the club is something which would be difficult to find elsewhere. I would say that diving in Melbourne would be some of the best in Australia. Dives such as Wilsons Prom and Spectacular Reef would have to be some of the best kept secrets in Australia.

#### WHEN AND WHY DID YOU FIRST JOIN THE VSAG?

In 1992 I arrived in Melbourne as a wet behind the ears diver. I remained dry for 12 months and was getting keen to get back in the water. A colleague of mine was in share accommodation with this keen diver named Priya, I was introduced to her and she took me diving with a number of clubs. I was a regular visitor to the club for some time. I eventually joined. I still see a fair bit of Priya also.

#### HAVE YOU A DIVE PREFERENCE?

Mainly wrecks, reef and cave diving. I love a few abalone from time to time.

#### TELL US ABOUT ONE OF YOUR BEST DIVES?

Easter 1992 at Wilsons Prom. This was my first visit to the Prom. I was a guest of the club at the time. The conditions were superb and the visibility was fantastic. I had never dived with seals until this trip. The highlights would have to have been on the

trip home, we had an encounter with a pod of dolphins. With complete disregard for the boats everyone donned snorkelling gear and was in there swimming with the dolphins. Eventually, someone went and got a boat and we went back to camp.

#### HOW DID YOU GET INTO MAKING GLUE FOR A LIVING?

Its a way of getting paid for doing chemistry.

#### WHAT OTHER HOBBIES OUTSIDE DIVING DO YOU ENJOY?

Motorsport, photographing motorsport, Black and White photography, playing touch football, growing vegetables, brewing beer, cycling, reading and collecting Phantom comics, snow skiing.

### DID YOUR ADVANCED AND CAVE DIVING CERTIFICATION IMPROVE YOUR DIVING?

The advanced ticket was useful for underwater navigation. The major advantage of this is that it is easier to find the boat and less swimming is required. The cave course was excellent as it teaches you a whole lot of new skills, such as the use of guidelines, buoyancy control and finning techniques. It also teaches you to work as a team with your diving buddies. Another aspect of the course was that you were subjected to different levels of stress loading under controlled conditions.

#### HAVE YOU DONE ANY OVERSEAS DIVING?

Yes, Fiji, 2 trips to Truk Lagoon and soon Vanuatu.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE DIVING AMBITIONS?

To do more dives in 1997 than 1996.

To get some twin tanks dives under my belt and get into sinkholes such as the Shaft and Kilsbys. Eventually I would like to do more cave diving. The President Coolidge.



#### GEORGE KERMODE 28 DECEMBER 1996

BY DON ABELL.

It seemed to me that we had been starved for good diving days in the second half of 1996 so I

was both hopeful and optimistic that our last scheduled dive for the year (excluding the team at Coffs Harbour) would change the trend.

The weather forecast was exactly what I had hoped for. Light breeze from the North. Unfortunately, the prediction did extend to a South West change in the afternoon but the northerly start was perfect for Flinders.

Some bad planning - or lack of planning left one trailer bogged on launching so we had the inevitable delay. Four boats set out - Lawler, Jeacle, Viapree and Vleugel joined us after launching from Stony Point.

It was an easy trip across and the GPS put us right on the spot. Always said it was a great buy for the Club.

I dived with Terry Brooks. It brought back good memories. Terry was the one I trained with and we joined VSAG at the same time. The visibility was very good and it was perhaps the best dive I have had on this wreck. We really did the full ship.

By the time we surfaced the wind had turned. While it was not strong it certainly put a bit more crunch into the return trip.

Mick and Lewy were underwater around the point at Flinders by the time we arrived. JL and I thought an easy second dive was in order.

After all the time of not diving with Terry I had forgotten that he is very prone to sea sickness

He had not taken his quell and on this day proceeded to berley up the water next to the boat. We decided to retreat to Flinders and the Terra Firma.

Mick made it in not long after us and we proceeded to a debriefing at the Flinders Pub.

Eleven of us had a pretty good Saturday. That included Terry Brooks sea sickness notwithstanding.

There was also some general agreement that a Saturday dive was a good idea and gives us the Sunday to recover before the working week.

Darren Pearce excelled himself by registering for the dive but not showing. Perhaps he forgot during the 14 hours between telephoning and dive start. Or perhaps he just forgot to tell anyone he changed his mind. Good form suggests any diver should let someone know if he changes plans. This eliminates concern that a member may have had an accident and ensures that other divers are not held up waiting for stragglers.

The prize does go to Peter Jones. As I walked through the door on arriving home Peter was on the phone. "What is the chance of getting on tomorrows Dive?" Answer: "Plenty of room Peter except that tomorrows dive was today".

#### 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 February

Thursday 20 March

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

# TIP'S TIT-BITS CHRISTMAS TRIP 1996 COFF'S HARBOUR, NSW

#### BY TONY TIPPING

The Christmas trip started for me this time the day after the May Committee Meeting last year when Mick Jeacle rang me and said the "Club's going to Coff's Harbour and you're Dive Captain! And by the way I won't be there to help because I'll be working!"

Never mind, I'd done this five or six times before although the last was Byron Bay back in 1987 so I guess I knew the ropes - there were camping facilities to check and dive locations and charters to organise; pretty easy really because the club had been to Coff's back in 1977 and I'd dived there privately several times since.

As I write this it seems ages ago that I packed up the Jayco, the gear the junk that families take away for a three and a half week trip and left Melbourne on Friday 20 December after half a day at work and deciding to pass on the office drinks that day. Made it to Narrandera on the Newell H'Way 400 odd KM up the road then just outside Armidale the next right. This meant the last 200 KM to Coffs was done early Sunday morning in about two and a half hours via Dorrigo and was the only windy part of what is a fairly easy two day trip. Van & annex all set up by early afternoon and Gerry & Andrea De Vries arrived the same day.

The next 5 days or so were hot beach days about 30 degrees and good surf one to one and half metres for us all especially the kids - as well there was Christmas shopping and celebrating to do before the rest of our mob arrived. It also gave me time to get to know the Jetty Dive Centre people and the Dive Quest Dive Shop 30 kms up the road at Mulloway. Within a couple of days after Boxing Day we had a group of 30 people altogether including 15 divers. The Frydays, Maybus's, Mastrowicz's, Truscott's, Cornish's and Alex Talay and his mate Dale. Luckily Andy brought his boat as the charter boat could only take eight. People stayed any time from a week up to nineteen days and in all that time it only

rained twice. One drizzly half day and one short sharp downpour so no complaints with the weather.

Apart from diving, Coffs Harbour is a great tourist place for people of all ages. The city boasts about 68,000 permanent population and it must swell to nearly 100,000 during peak season. There are plenty of shops (as cheap as Melbourne too) restaurants, clubs, a carnival (like Luna Park) good surf beaches, the Big Banana and a heap of other thinks to see and do. I was happy to swim, dive, read, "earbash anyone", go out to a couple of clubs and generally relax and have a good holiday. New Year's Eve all thirty of us went to the Bowling Club for a decent feed then came back to the camp to see in the New Year and enjoy the Bush Dance. Another good night at the end of the trip for those still there was had at the RSL club. Victorian clubs could learn a lot from these places in NSW re cost of reasonable family entertainment instead of being hell bent on ripping tourists off!.

#### THE DIVING

I had previously booked 5 days with the Jetty Dive Centre at Coff's Harbour and one day with Dive Quest at Mulloway up the road and although I changed some of the original dates to suit our numbers thats what we did. There were also a few - Andy, Leo, Gerry and perhaps a few of the kids who had a look around the Jetty, Breakwater and Mutton Bird Island in close to shore.

Jetty Dive takes eight divers out to either South Solitary, Split Solitary, and Grouper, three of the Solitary Islands group plus nearby spots such as Black Rock and the Wash. Unfortunately we didn't get to Grouper (S.W.Solitary) but we did dive all around South Solitary several times. Visibility ranged from a worst of about 40 feet up to about 80 feet the last two days we went there. This Island is renowned for Grey Nurse Sharks, Kingfish and a thousand other species. The beauty of this group of Islands for divers extends from the he fact that officially its where the tropical and temperate waters meet so you get the overlay of both species - plenty of little pretty coloured stuff like Moorish Idols

and Blue Damsels to Sharks, Kingies and even large turtles. Split Solitary didn't appeal to me as much but from a photographers point of view Leo tells u s that the small fish and corals were exceptional. The wash was an interesting dive very similar to the Pinnacle out off Phillip Island although the waves actually break at the top as the name suggests. It was here Alex and Ted saw the largest school of Kingies for the trip.

I had no doubt we had a ball doing those dives with Jetty Dive now run by Mike Davey an ex-croweater from Kingston over near Robe S.A. He should do well in his new venture - only took over the business in November and along with Peter Merrick better known as "Skinny: (who said I had a blubbery gut!) as his deputy I'd like to wish them the best of luck in what would be a very seasonal and unpredictable way of making a living. No doubt with their friendly manner and personalities they'll make a good go of it. By the way thanks for the deal and also the lack of restrictions you placed on us, fellas - we'll be back one day!.

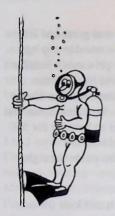
Only one day's diving was allocated to dive North Solitary Island because of distance, time and cost. Everyone still there agreed we had the best visibility that day so we did two tank dives and stopped by for a 30 minute snorkel at N.W. Solitary on the way back. There were more corals and pretty little fish here - visibility up around 100 feet too but apart from a few Wobbies no big fish. Lionfish were prevalent in one particular cave, certainly another diving highlight. Dive Quest is run by Garry Thompson and Chris Connell from Mulloway - they use an old tractor to launch their boats at a beach called Arrawarra Headland north of Coff's and travel out to North Solitary Island about 30 KM.

Every one who dived this year enjoyed it thoroughly - Leo's girl sparticularly said they'd never enjoyed such great dives but the Diver of the trip has to be Ted Cornish - he did not miss a dive and of course would always brag how much air he'd come up with (in his new 120 cub feet tank!). Myself - I just couldn't keep up with them with my poor old little 88 tank besides I was happy just enjoying swimming around and studying my new dive computer and also to be still diving at 50 is a pretty mean feat! Right Bazza?

I could rave on a lot more about the diving but I'll just say it was great and lets go back in two or three yeas! I agree with the club policy of a one day trip eg. Robe one year and a two day trip the next but you do always get a much smaller group on the long trip. The roads are improving every year and by 2000 the Pacific H'Way from Sydney to Brisbane will be a four lane freeway. The Hume already is except for a hundred kms between Albury & Yass. We came home that way and my only beef was the old Pacific H'way was bumper to bumper for 550 kms to Sydney and we had a rock slide near Gosford which closed the expressway for over an hour. Those who went back via Dubbo made the right choice.

There haven't been any social notes but I must say the women and kids (or non divers) got on extraordinarily well at Coff's Harbour because there are plenty of other things to do there especially with the beach and good weather.

If we lacked anything it was more true characters you need on these trips i.e. a Mick, a Don or a Paully to brighten up the place at night but the team did get on well don't get me wrong. Thanks to all those families who went. Hope you enjoyed it as much as I did and Leo didn't you ever see that famous movie "The Sting?".



#### **DECO STOPS**

#### BY MICK JEACLE

On Sunday 5th January the temperature was forecast to reach 37 degrees with moderate Northerly winds. This was enough to entice even a Taswegian out of the loungeroom for a bit of underwater adventure. I'm not sure when Dave Machen last dived, but he soon found out that you must first remove your shorts prior to putting on your wetsuit. Don't worry Dave, Paul Tipping's effort of putting his longjohns on back to front after an extended break from diving topped your minor error by a mile.

On that day the Northerly wind turned out to be a whole lot stronger than predicted and we endured a rather bumpy ride as we headed around West Head and on past the golf course. Yours truly led the way and I was looking for a new dive site under the cliffs and protected from the hot winds. About two thirds of the way down to the Schanck we came across some very large caves in the cliff face. Upon remarking that I thought I had not seen these before, Bob Scott was quick to offer a solution. "Maybe Jeff Kennett only put 'em up a couple of weeks ago." he said. Thanks mate, sounds good to me.

Jack Namiota just loves to dive Flinders. He was assigned to Peter Vleugel's boat which was to leave from Stony Point at 9:00 am. Jack claims he arrived there at 8:55 am and the boat was not there. Peter and his crew claim they were moored to the jetty until after the 9:00 am news broadcast and with no Jack in sight, they left at 9:05. Chris Llewellyn, not realising that Jack had missed the boat, really got up Jack's nose at the end of the day when he held up my large cray saying "Jack, look what you missed out on!" Boy, was he pissed!

These days it is almost mandatory to retrieve the boats at Flinders with a 4WD vehicle. Thanks to Bob Scott this was achieved with a minimum of fuss, well almost. After pulling two boats out he charged down to the beach to retrieve mine. It seems he thought the first two were a breeze and that maybe the third could be managed without the trailer. When he realised his predicament he did a

quick about face and charged back up the ramp hoping that nobody would notice. Let's not be too hard on the old bloke, after all he is 56!

Whilst in Coffs Harbour Alex Talay just loved to visit the local pub which he named "The Office." He was there one day downing the odd pot or ten and he happened to notice this rather inebriated aboriginal gentleman sitting in the corner. At one stage he had to walk past this bloke and was somewhat startled when he grabbed him on the arm. "What do you want mate?" he said. "You dropped your wallet." Said the Abo. Sure enough there was the wallet lying on the floor of a crowded pub, and according to Alex contained about \$400. I was interested to know whether he rewarded the Abo and was surprised to learn that he bought him a stubby of beer. Jeez Alex, don't you think you went a bit overboard?

While we're on Alex I heard that the dive guide one day questioned the state of his dive gear as he was about to drop overboard. He pointed out that he thought he saw some mould on his BC. "What are you @#^&\*@% talking about mate, there's no @#^&\*@% mould on my gear." Well, at this response all VSAG members present nearly fell overboard laughing. The poor bloke was somewhat taken aback as he thought for a minute he had offended Alex. How was he to know that his dive gear lived in the boot of his car.

Tony Tipping just has to find out how much air everybody has left after a dive. On one occasion he was astounded to find that relatively new diver Ted Cornish had more air left than he did. Also, according to Ted his tank was smaller than Tony's. After rechecking about five times he finally admitted defeat. Little did he know that about four divers were breathing from his occy reg. Don't worry Tony, the term "weekend bubble blower" has a nice ring about it

Those who have been away with Gerry Devries will be only too familiar with his love of VB cans. In fact some even refer to him as green can as he is seldom without one no matter the time of day. Not so this trip. You see VB up that neck of the woods is brewed in Brisbane and apparently bears little resemblance to the Melbourne product. The sight of Gerry walking around with a bottle of raspberry

lemonade in his hand was very sad indeed. It must have been a real shock to hear him talk sense for once, eh Andrea?

I hear Barry Truscott had some trouble with his dive computer and in fact it completely shut down on one dive. Gerry Devries kindly offered to lend his for the next dive and it too became stuffed. I guess the message here is that if Bazza prangs his car one day, don't lend him yours.

I heard that Melanie Maybus cut her toe on a fluro tube whilst on the way to Coffs, and dad had to take her to the doctor to have it stiched up. As the doctor probed around to check for slivers of glass, Melanie was less than impressed. Apparently the coonversation went something like this:-

Melanie:

"Jeez doc, I hope I never see you again.(

Doctor:

"Where do you come from luv?"

Melanie:

"Mooroolbark."

Doctor:

"Where the hell is Mooroolbark?"

Melanie:

"In Melbourne."

Doctor:

"Well then luv, there's a fair chance you'll never see

me again."

During 1996 your committee decided to refurbish the club compressor, at the same time overhauling the one owned by Mick Jackiw as we use this as well on trips away. Bob Scott arranged for transport of these to Bairnsdale where an old work colleague of his now resides for him to carry out the necessary work. During October last we were advised that the club compressor needed a new petrol motor, and as the chap was short of funds the required amount was deposited direct into his bank account in order for him to make the purchase. How were we to know that at that very moment his wife was planning her escape with another man and she proceeded to clean out the joint account at the bank, including our money deposited for the new motor? Whilst we appreciate the humour of the situation, rest assured that we shall pursue with vigour what is rightfully ours. The chap involved? - severely embarrassed. Promises to complete the job by mid February.

# SPECIAL NOTICE SCUBA EXPERIENCE DAY

DATE: SUNDAY 16 MARCH, 1997

TIME 10.30AM

PLACE: PORTSEA PIER

CO-ORDINATOR" JOHN LAWLER

At the suggestion of Jim Greenwood, VSAG is to hold a SCUBA EXPERIENCE DAY whereby friends and acquaintances of members can come along and try out the sport that we love so much.

Instructor Derek Kiddell will be in attendance and take charge of the instruction on the day.

Have you ever had a friend say to you "I've always wanted to try SCUBA diving!" Well now's their chance.

Come along and participate with your friend. There will no cost involved and gear will be provided by us. Contact John Lawler for details.

PH: 9589-4020

#### VSAG '96 CHRISTMAS DINNER

#### BY CHRIS LLEWELLYN

Our 1996 Christmas Dinner at Michelino's will probably be remembered as one of the most comfortable and pleasant for quite a few years.

After being greeted by Rhonda with a lay at the front door (floral that is) VSAGERS enjoyed leisurely drinks at the bar, while unwinding in a festive Christmas spirit.

The Frankston Mafia (Jeacles, Scotts & Cornish's) soon added to the ambience by arriving in nothing less than a chauffeur driven white stretch limo. This sight was somewhat tarnished by Jack Liddy and John Goulding pulling up behind in a black cab!

After receiving excellent service and food served up by friendly waiters, we were ready for the mystery \$2.00 gifts. Tony Tipping had assured me (three times) that his \$2.00 gift was actually worth \$50 and he'd like to go to a worthwhile home. Thanks for the diary Tony, funny thing why has it got your name on it and some pharmaceutical company?

Just who were the devious minds who came up with such things as cake mix, a jar of vicks, a scull ring, candles, or an old cheeseburger! Watch out kate Caine I think Annie Jeacle has got a month old Hagggis in mind for you!

Don Abell presented Mick Jeacle with his well deserved clubman of the year award and then it was down to serious business, the raffle! Once again we had a great array of prizes from our sponsors, who I would like to list along with the lucky winners!

Sponsors	Prize	Value	Winners
Marine Hotel (Peter Jones)	3 Dinners	\$30.00 each	John Lawler Martin Taliana Ted Cornish
Alwoods (Robin Woods)	2 Hydro Tests	\$35.00 each	Don Abell Pat Reynolds
John & Evoynne Lawler	2 Xmas hampers	\$75.00 each	Kate Caine Igor Chemishov
Justin Liddy	Cash	\$50.00	Doug Catherill
Paul Sier	Sports Mouthguard	\$80.00	Chris Llewellyn
A.B. Ocean Divers	Personal Marker Buoy	\$100.00	Graeme Blanchard
A.B. Ocean Divers	Pressure Alarm	\$100.00	Bob Scott
National Equestrian	Oilskin Coat	\$115.00	Paul Sier
Technisub Fins	John Dive Shop	\$150.00	Martin Taliana
Northsub Range (A. Finne	gan) Membership	\$200.00	Don Abell
V.S.A.G.	Mystery flight for two	\$350.00	Justin Liddy
Sonar Wetsuits	Pinnacle semi dry suit	\$600.00	Paul Sier

All up \$2005.00 worth of prizes were donated for the raffle! This is a fantastic effort and on behalf of all VSAG members I would like to thank those who generously donated to help ensure, not only a fun night, but a very profitable one for the clubs coffers with members once again digging deep we raised \$1001.00

I'm sure the \$1.00 came from Tony Tipping doing a deal on a raffle ticket, but what the heck he did donate a \$50.00 diary.



The "Frankston Mafia" arrive in style



VSAG Connoisseurs of fine wine & food!



A fox in th henhouse!



Clubman of the year, Mick Jeacle, still one step (hand) ahead of the rest.



Debbie & Rhonda bring future Granny Marie up to date on the latest motherhood techniques.



Jack's first lay in years, and it goes to his head!



The tragic aftermath



#### MEDIA WATCH

The Age 14.1.97

Terry Walker is head of the Management of Shark Fisheria in Victoria research program and the principal marine entist at the Marine and Freshwater Resources Institute; Queenscliff. He spoke to Fiona Whitlock.

#### **The Hotseat**

#### A question for Terry Walker



A pilot has said he helieves there are dangerous sharks in Port Phillip Bay is it safe to go back into the water? How many sharks are found in Port Phillip Bay?

WE DON'T really have dangerous sharks in the bay. The film Jaws gave a very inaccurate portrayal of shark behavior. The idea of a vindictive shark is farcical. If people disappear or go missing at sea in Victoria, it's not appropriate to say that a shark

In Port Phillip Bay there are probably two dozen types of sharks and most of them are harmless to humans. The only shark here I worry about is the White Shark, but they come into the bay very rarely: there hasn't been a report of one in

the bay for the past five years.

The Great White sharks that we'd worry about tend to be near seal and dolphin colonies because they feed on mammals. People are not their natural diet. If somebody drowns at sea, it could happen that a shark could maul or savage the body, particularly the Broadnosed Seven Gill

People get concerned about the Bronze Whaler, which is Shark. the biggest shark in the bay, but they don't feed on mammals. The only time to be concerned about them is if mais. The only unite to the water, which might change there's animal blood in the water, which might change there's animal blood me a bit aggressive. They wouldn't their behavior to becord, but if a human swam towards one attack a human for food, but if a human swam towards one and frightened it, it might bite as a dog might.

Herald-Sun

# Male dolphins help their lovesick mates

MALE dolphins regularly show signs of "mateship" - to the extent of helping another male pick up a female dolphin, research has discovered.

Australian scientists have found that a male dolphin will often put aside his infatuation with a female to help his best mate win her affections.

The only other species known to have the same levels of mateship are humans and primates such as gorillas.

But the dolphin courtship can often turn ugly by human standards, with two or three male dolphins herding a female towards another male.

Biologist Dr Bill Sher-

By MATTHEW HORAN

win, of the University of New South Wales, said the dolphins were often less jealous than humans.

"Men, not even within the bonds of what we know as mateship, go as far as we suspect dolphins do in sacrificing their own amatory ambitions while helping their friend's chances with a female they have both been courting,

"We already know that he said. dolphins have one of the most complex social systems outside our own spe-

"This is of great interest cies. to behavioral scientists and biologists but it is also

of a more general interest because most people who have any contact with dolphins, even if they only see them from a distance, are fascinated by them "

The project studied dolphins near the popular tourist spot of Shark Bay, in Western Australia

Dr Sherwin said it was often hard for a male dolphin to attract a female's attention.

"In the three-dimen. sional environment of water it is very easy for the female to get away if the doesn't like the male dolphin," he said.

"So a couple of male dolphins will crowd the female towards their Frankston Standard 13.1.97

# Sea pilots help ships get safely into dock

NEXT time you see a container ship moving sedately past Blairgowrie on its way to the heads, remember it is under the command of a Port Phillip Sea Pilot.

It makes no difference if the ship is flying the Panamanian flag or if it is the Royal Yacht Brittania, there is a Victorian pilot giving the helmsman commands which ensure the ship negotiates the treacherous Rip and then doesn't get stuck on a sand bar off Rosebud.

And of course, what you see is the plain sailing. What you don't see are the foul storms during which these unassuming pilots have to scramble up the side of a heaving ship in the black of night on a

swaving rope ladder.

The pilots make these hazardous trips in their Queenscliff-based launches. There are 35 pilots who all own an equal share of the pilot service. A new member buys his share from the man he replaces.

The Abel Tasman is one of the few ships exempt from the pilot service.

Port Phillip's Rip is notorious to seaman around the world. When the tide falls in Bass Strait the vast amount of water in the bay begins to rush through the narrow opening. At times the ocean can be one metre lower than the bay as the ebb tide tries to get through the Rip's bottleneck.' Similar turbulence is caused when the tide is forced back in

The pilots are also an essential service in Western Port, with a base at Flinders.

Their presence on the bridge ensures the heavy tankers which call at the Crib Point refinery get in and out through the narrow channels without mishap.

A pilot is an experienced and qualified master mariner possessing extensive local knowledge of the bay, its channels, depth

of water, currents and dangers.

The history of the service goes back 150 years ago when seaman with local knowledge offered their services by sailing westwards looking for approaching ships carrving immigrants or headed for the Victorian gold fields. They offered guidance on the last and most dangerous leg of the voyage from England.

Back in 1839 Governor Gipps of New South Wales granted the first pilots' licence to George Tobin.

The original pilots camped on the beach at Queenscliff on the site of the present pilot station and were taken to and from ships by 30-ft whaleboats frequently manned by convicts.

A number of vessels have been lost at the dangerous entrance to Port Phillip. mainly due to ship masters attempting to enter without a pilot and not having sufficient knowledge of tidal and weather conditions.

The government was petitioned to take over the service and to supply a cruising pilot cutter to put pilots aboard ships at sea. The brigantine Boomerang was the first in 1853

Prior to 1901 the pilots waited in cruising cutters, under sail in all weather, waiting for foreign ships to arrive.

In 1901 the pilots took delivery of Lictoria the world's first steam-powered pilot cutter, 46 metres in length and built in Williamstown.

The profession of a sea pilot was one of the most dangerous jobs in the world. In 1860 a pilot and three seaman were drowned when the pilot cutter The Rip was swept away in a storm.

Eight years ago pilot Captain Keith Jordan slipped and fell to his death when making a transfer to a Swedish ship in a

storm at night.

In the mid-1970s the Victorian pilots switched to a fleet of fast 13-metre all-weather launches which meant they could remain at Queenscliff until ships approached the vicinity of the heads.

The modern pilot station at Queenscliff has motel-style accommodation is built on a site occupied by the pilots since 1839. The station at Western Port is at Flinders on land near the naval gunnery school on West Head. The head office is at Nelson Place, Williamstown,

In 1857 there were 57 pilots and 2.197 ships passed through the heads. Today there are 35 pilots including those in

Westernport.

Herald Sun 13.9.96

Herald-Sun 14.1.97

# Diving deaths on rise

DIVING accidents, often fatal, were happening to people who should never have been passed medically fit to dive, a medical conference was told yesterday.

Divers should ensure their diving medical assessment was done by a trained diving medical officer, said Professor John Williamson of Royal Adelaide Hospital.

He said there had been an explosion in the amount of recreational diving worldwide in the past 10 to 20 years.

"Recent data on mortality from diving shows that in Australia alone in 1992, there were at least 18 deaths associated with diving," he told the North Queensland Medical Conference.

# Dolphin tours tighter

By KRISTIN OWEN, environment reporter

THE State Government yesterday announced a new code of conduct for dolphin tour operators, ahead of legislation to tighten controls on the industry.

Conservation Minister Marie Tehan said the code provided greater protection to Port Phillip Bay dolphins while allowing tours to operate.

The new code allows dolphin tour operators' vessels to approach within 50m of a dolphin while the public, if in a boat, must not approach a dolphin within 100m.

Mrs Tehan said the new code would form the basis of legislation being drafted and expected to be introduced this year, which will amend the Wildlife Act and provide for licensing for the dolphin-tour industry.

"This is a sound, workable code of conduct agreed to readily by the operators," Mrs Tehan said.

"It aims to prevent harm or discomfort to the dolphins but at the same time allow people to watch them in their natural habitat." The code bans sightseers from feeding or touching the dolphins.

Only one operator can allow swimmers with a dolphin or pod at any one time.

Dolphin Research Institute director Jeff Weir said the code was a sensible way to handle the situation.

"The department is doing an excellent job at trying to come to grips with the complicated issues involved with looking after the dolphins in the Bay," Mr Weir said.

Herald-Sun 24.1.97

# Hunt bid on whales

WHALES are again under threat of being slain for profit.

The World Wide Fund for Nature has said Russia wants to reopen commercial whaling because it says whales have depleted fish stocks.

WWF conservation officer Margaret Moore said the move puts the 10-year moratorium on commercial whaling at risk.

"Fish stocks are depleted by humans overfishing, not by whales, which are themselves greatly reduced," Ms Moore said.

WWF is urging people to write to Russia's President, Boris Yeltsin, asking him to reconsider its position.

#### DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT/LOCATION	DIVE CAPTAIN	MEET AT
20 Feb	General Meeting Bells Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets	, Sth Melbourne	8pm Sharp!
23 Feb	Flinders Area	John Lawler 9589 4020	9.30 am Flinders
7-10 Mar	Port Albert Long Weekend (details to be advised)	Priya Cardinaletti 9761 0960	
16 Mar	Scuba experience day Portsea pier	John Lawler 9589 4020	See separate notice
20 Mar	General Meeting Bell's Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets	, Sth. Melbourne	8.00 pm
22 Mar Saturday	Night dive Flinders Pier	Leo Maybus 9727 1568	6.30 pm Flinders
27-31 Mar	Easter Trip Tidal River Wilson's Promontory	Don Abell 9889 4415	Tidal River
13 Apr	Eliza Ramsden/Spectacular Reef	Pat Reynolds 9789 1092	10.30 am Sorrento
17 Apr	General Meeting Bell's Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets,	Sth. Melbourne	8.00 pm
20 Apr	Werribee Park Family Day	Gerry Devries 9725 2381	11.00 am
25 Apr Friday	Ship's Graveyard	Priya Cardinaletti 9761 0960	9.30 am Sorrento
25 Apr Friday	Night Dive	Leo Maybus 9727 1568	6.30 pm Portsea Pier

26 Apr Saturday	Ship's Graveyard	Doug Catherall 9888 7774	9.30 am Sorrento
11 May	New wreck dive	Bob Scott 0359 712206	9.30 am Sorrento
11-18 May	Overseas Trip President Coolidge, Vanuatu	Don Abell 9889 4415	Fully booked
15 May	General Meeting Bell's Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets,	Sth. Melbourne	8.00 pm
Dec/Jan	Christmas trip Robe, S.A.	Andy Mastrowicz 9318 3986	

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.

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IP HEADS

SH AND LOW WATERS

# TIMES OF FLOOD AND EBB - The tables of Taines of Planed and Ebb give the times when the rate of change in the sea level at Point Leursdae (Pert Phillip Heads) as a maximum each time approximate. ture when the total flow at the entrance to port Phillip hay changes direction, this ture is given in the column marked "Ture". The direction of this flow is indicated by the words "flowd" and "citis" we the column "start". Thus the word "flood" indicates that the ride starts to flow one the bay, at the given time in its "Tate" column. The word "ebb" indicates that the tast in flow one of the bay at that me TIDE TABLES

# PORT PHILLIP HEADS

# TIDE TABLES

TIMES OF FLOOD AND EBB . The tables of Times of Flood and Ebb give the times wh

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# EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION MORNINGTON PENINSULA AREA

		PHONE
POLICE - AMBULANCE - FIRE		(000)
PENINSULA AMBULANCE (ROS	EBUD, SORRENTO)	(008) 137333
(MORNINGTON)		(03) 9783 2222
SOUTHERN PENINSULA HOSPI	TAL	
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 SE	RVICE	(0359) 75 2733
SOUTHERN PENINSULA RESCU	IE .	(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
DOCT	ORS DIVING MEDICINE	
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)