

FATHOMS

Registered for posting
as a publication Category B
Print Post Approved
PP332873/0035

EST. 1954



Safety in Diving

\$2

If undeliverable, return to
Victorian Sub Aqua Group
Box 2526W,
GPO, Melbourne 3001



VSAG

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

APR - MAY 99

FATHOMS

Official journal of the *Victorian Sub - Aqua Group*

In this issue:

APRIL/MAY 1999

V.S.A.G. Committee Members	2
Editorial	3
Christmas Dinner	5
Christmas Trip Bermagui	6
A dive on the Courier	8
Dive - 31 January	9
Attacking shark species	12
Seafood Catch n' Cook 99	14
The Pinnacles	19
The top 5	21
Blue Shark Dive	22
Deal Island Easter 99	23
Media	28
Dive/Social Calendar	31
Tide Tables	33
Emergency Contact Information	36

Next General Meetings:

Bells Hotel
157 Moray Street (cnr. Coventry Street)
South Melbourne - 8pm sharp!
Thursday 20th May 1999
Thursday 17th June 1999
Thursday 15th July 1999

Next Committee Meetings:

Tuesday 25th May - Leo Maybus's home
Tuesday 22nd June - Priya Cardinaletti's home
Tuesday 20th July - Gerry Devrie's home

Editorial submissions to:

Don Abell
80 Liston Street
Burwood Vic 3125
Tel: (03) 9889 4415 (h)
9288 6548 (w)
9889 9412 (fax)
0412 140 767 (Mobile)
dkabell@kpmg.com.au (E-mail)

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 7117 (W)

VICE PRESIDENT:

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

SECRETARY:

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

ASSISTANT SECRETARY:

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

TREASURER:

John Lawler
7 Claris Avenue,
Beaumaris, 3193.
Telephone: 9589 4020 (H)
9589 7546 (W)

ASSISTANT TREASURER:

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

NEWSLETTER COLLATOR:

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

ASSISTANT COLLATOR:

John Mills
10 Wells Ave
Boronia, 3155
Telephone: 9761 0960 (H)
9369 2377 (W)

SOCIAL SECRETARY:

Helen Fryday
113 Turner Street
Abbotsford, 3067
Telephone: 9417 7513 (H)
9329 1077 (W)

ASSISTANT SECRETARY:

Gerry DeVries
16 Vinter Avenue
Croydin, 3136
Telephone: 9725 2381 (H)
0417 324 608 (W)

POINTS SCORER:

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

SAFETY OFFICER:

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

PROPERTY OFFICER:

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

PUBLIC RELATIONS &MEETINGS CO-ORDINATOR:

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

S.D.F. DELEGATES:

Andy Mastrowicz, John Lawler & Leo Maybus

EDITORIAL

(COLLATORS NOTES)



Well what happened last issue you might rightly ask. " In This Issue " was outdated, the Editorial dealt with articles that were not printed and half of the editorial was a hangover from the previous issue. Those that did not notice the problems automatically qualify to proof read the next Peter Stone dive book. So how did this come to pass?. Although it was prepared 5 weeks before I made the unforgivable error of going overseas for 4 days and the world stopped turning on its axis.

In that time a band of vigilante members decided to overule the Editor and censor the articles submitted for publication. The irony of this is that at the same time I was in Malaysia where the population is controlled by an autocrat whose prime weapon is that he owns and controls the media. Any editor who does not print the party line is without a job and is probably destined to learn to play the pink oboe in a small and overcrowded cell. This restriction of peoples basic rights is a major topic of discussion and ridicule . Isn't life strange.

I at least thought that the vote of no confidence by the committee would result in me being sacked. Unfortunately I have been told I have to stay on until I get it right . Now my fear is that the committee will severely reduce my exhorbitant stipend . So I guess the role is now Newsletter Collator instead of "editor". **** I now worry about turning 50 !

Despite a slow start the response to my pleas for articles has drawn a great response. We have a bumper issue . The club is really doing some exciting diving locally and farther afield. Andrea was a little late in submitting her Christmas Dinner and Bermagui articles but better late than never. John Lawler has pointed out that we are more likely to bite a piece of Flake than be bitten by one.

Alan Beckhurst has told us of a trip to the Bass Strait islands aboard Inspiration II . There seems to be high interest in further trips on this superb craft next year (speak to Alan or Priya). Even Chris Llewellyn came out of literary retirement to record the Catch'n Cook which is now a permanent fixture on our calendar.

Perhaps the best news of the last few weeks has been the speedy and very successful recovery of our great mate Alex. After enduring a long operation in St Vincents there was nothing better than seeing the old bloke front at the April meeting. Carefully propped against a pillar to avoid the unsuspecting slap on the back and with a pot in one hand the recovery is looking to be progressing at a fast rate. There is every chance he will resume the Tango lessons at any time.

Good diving and keep any respectable articles coming in . (I would appreciate them as soon after the event as possible so that Fathoms can be put together and sent out punctually to members)

Editor - Don Abell.

The Luxford's have moved!

Ross, Chris, Kerrilee and Tamara now reside in Mornington
at the following address:

804 Esplanade
Mornington Vic 3931
03 5977 0760

Our new postal address is:
PO Box 128
Mornington Vic 3931

CHRISTMAS DINNER VSAG

BY ANDREA DEVRIES

Well its the morning after - Gerald and I are at the Ringwood Pool for the boys swimming lessons. Gerald is semi-comatosed and still wearing the same clothes - sprawled out over the timber seating - towel over his head, which may serve its purpose of saving curious onlookers from the garlic/beer/bourbon fumes gushing out his mouth!!!

A great turn out to Shanikas Restaurant Glen Waverley - every one in the Christmas party mood. The biggest problem was getting everyone to sit down to eat. The food kept coming, the drinks also, the noise of the crowd reached a deafening pitch. Our Kris Kringle presents arrived, mine an edible Christmas game (I gave that to Cameron) and also a great ball (for Ashley) which glows when bounced.

The raffle began shortly after that - most people of course determined to win the wetsuit that Bob Scott - Sonar had so kindly donated. Deserving Des Williams won the wetsuit and of course that couldn't have gone to a nicer person. An array of toys supplied by Annie Jeacle were snapped up by doting grandparents while inhouse art "critique" Alex provided a wonderful insight into the Bali/Thailand painting plus more undiscovered artworks. (Put it this way my mother-in-laws Mothers Day present is looking great!) The crowd then went totally delirious when John Goulding offered two Return Air Flights to Fiji to be auctioned. The bidding started at a hectic pace and was then bumped along by the fact John declared they were first class tickets. Peter Vleugel was determined to have the tickets and although Leo put up a good fight it is Chris and Peter off to Fiji - maybe for Mothers Day - who Knows

A big thankyou for Gerry for organising another Christmas function that was for once alot closer to home with some easy parking. -£mawmxw~.

It was a great evening and those familiar faces who contributed to the Raffle made the evening not only enjoyable but another financial success for the club. Looking forward to this years do.

P.S. It was great to see Pat Moore there enjoying her new lease of freedom - keep up the good work Pat.

CHRISTMAS TRIP BERMAGUI

BY ANDRE DEVRIES

It was great to get away from hectic Melbourne and make for some wide open spaces. Driving to Bermagui via Mt. Buffalo Chalet, Beechworth, Gundagai & Canberra was a different way of doing it. However my sisters wedding at Mt. Buffalo Chalet was a fantastic success and well my sons as usual looked terrific in their "wedding" clothes.

We reached Bermagui on the 22nd Dec and were able to catch up on some rest and enjoy the beautiful/scenic coast. Our Christmas Day was spent at the estuary at Bermagui - Gerry, Cameron, Ashley and myself had the whole area to ourselves, warm pristine waters in which we spent the day snorkelling, swimming and trying out the rubber BOAT that Father Christmas had brought. When we heard how stinking hot it was in Melbourne we appreciated our day even more.

Ocean Lake caravan Park was quite pleasant - our sites were probably even as big and grassy as those at Coffs Harbour However the walk to the shower/toilet amenities was as though doing 20 flights of stairs on the stairmaster at the gym. I am sure we all returned home fitter).

We had trully fantastic weather with only about 4 hrs of rain and that was on Boxing Day. With a few late cancellations of some familiar faces such as Pat, Bob & June Scott and the Maybus family our numbers were down considerably. This was no problem to those there however as everyone there would agree a good time was had by all.

Apart from a very pleasant trip out on Andy's boat I did heaps of swimming with my sons and played heaps of golf (Correction I walked around the course) with the Vleugels. I read my normal quota of books for me which is about 3 plus at least 10 Goosebumps for the boys.

The diving Apparently was very good with only the huge sea really stopping more of that happening. Dale learnt how it is very good to keep with your buddy (you'll have to ask him about that) and Andy and Gail plus family became well acquainted with the Narooma Bar.

We had a great holiday and I can certainly see the attraction to visiting that area. The boys and I were able to go swimming for at least 3 to 4 hours a day at well patrolled beaches with warm water and Gerry was able to recharge his batteries and had plenty of drinking partners (thanks Dale/Gary/Alex).

Thanks for organising the trip Gerry and thanks to the Truscotts/ Brincats/Mastowiczls/Vleugels/josie/Darren/Ian /Dale & Co. for starting the year off with a bang.

A DIVE ON THE COURIER

BY JOHN ASHLEY

The last Sunday of February was an excellent day for diving, especially out in Bass Strait. There was no wind and flat seas. Des Williams decided that a dive on the paddle steamer Hygiea was the order of the day; that was until we arrived on the site and we found that it was in 185 feet of water, Des suddenly had a mutiny on his hands as the old farts in the club (which happens to be most of us) refused to dive to these depths.

So by popular choice it was off to dive the Courier which turned out to be an excellent decision. Mick located the site without any effort and all four boats dropped anchor and all nine divers prepared to dive.

I had not dived the Courier in conditions such as this ever. It was fantastic, no surge at all and about 50 ft. visibility. Darren, John Lawler and myself descended the anchor line and arrived at the bow section which was visible at about 32 meters. After a search of the bow which has a list to the starboard and stands about as high as the Ramsden, it was off to the stern section. We swam past the twin boilers, then the mid section which was mainly collapsed and on to the stern which has been reduced to mainly framework but still stands about 25 ft. off the bottom.

The dive had everything; good vis., lots of different types of fish and good company. Some divers did non decompression dives and others such as my group and Bazza and his mate (who we will not name as he was non financial at the time) had no choice but to do our deco stops because of our lengthy bottom times.

It's great to be in a club where dive plans don't need to be set because our divers know exactly what is required of them and safety is always number one.

After lunch it was off to dive the wreck of the Time which we did not find; but diving in off the Nepean Reef was just great with swim throughs, deep gutters- just fantastic diving. Others in the club decided on a drift dive as the second dive and it was enjoyed by all. Good diving, great company and a few beers afterwards made it a great way to spend a Sunday.

DIVE - 31 JANUARY

BY ANDY MASTROWICZ

After having late Saturday nights the past two weekends, followed by an early morning drive down the coast, I had promised myself that I would be having an early night this Saturday. Even given that this Saturday night was also to be Nicoles Hens night and Joe's Bucks night.

Saturdays weather had not looked to crash hot with a fairly brisk wind from the SouthEast early in the day. However it began to abate some time in the afternoon as I was getting the Southwind ready for the following day. As the phone calls started to come in the question asked by each diver booking in was, "Whats the weather looking like for tomorrow Andy?" My answer was "It Can only get better!" with tongue in cheek.

Still we ended up with 12 divers and four boats

Without elaborating on the events of the night (you can forget the Viking club) it was again 1:30am as my head hit the pillow. I now know why Pat and the boys would get to the meetings a little late and smiling after having dinner in the King St precincts in days gone by.

Well at 7am in the morning as I stumbled out of bed bleary eyed to find Kate Cain and Martin Taliana at the front doorstep ready to go. The weather was still and overcast with a fine misty drizzle. After a quick breakfast and a change of destination we finally left Footscray around 7:45am (a trifle late but made good from Queenscliff). As we threaded our way down the Princess Hwy to Queenscliff amongst the few other early morning motorists, I kept saying to my travel companions "the weather can only get better" but really wanting to be home in bed.

I had phoned ahead to Peter Vluegel with diver and boat details and that we would meet at the heads. We were launched and waiting for the others at the quarantine station and it wasn't very long before we caught sight of three boats

heading towards us in slightly choppy seas. The weather was looking better with the sun peaking out occasionally. A look outside the heads and it was quickly decided to do a drift dive of Queenscliff and then catch the slack water for a second dive on this paddle steamer Mick keeps telling us about.

As Mick, Peter and John headed to their favourite spots of Queenscliff. I punched the goto button on my newly acquired GPS and headed to the spot I'd marked after the previous weeks dive with Bazza and Peter Plytus. When after a 35-Min dive with no luck, Peter and myself had surfaced leaving Bazza below. The rest we know as history with Bazza surfacing 5 Min later clutching a 3.5Kg Cray. How does he do it??

The area was looking good on the Depth sounder as Kate and I kitted up and went over the side. We hit the bottom around 22m and with a little current were soon cruising around some very nice bommies and ledges. Vis was around 15m and the scenery here was as good as it gets with the bright yellow, blue and orange sponges always a marked contrast against the ever-present brown seaweed. Always plenty of leather jackets, blue devils and the odd boarfish about to make the dives enjoyable.

It was not long before I'd found an accessible ledge with a reasonable cray in it and after showing Kate (needed a witness) I proceeded to remove my tank and slide into the ledge after what looked like an easy catch as he had nowhere to go. My mistake, he had an exit stage right, which he immediately went for and made good his escape.

Proceeding further along the ledge which turned to the left and as I shone the torch into the dark depths of this cave was met by another much larger decapod. This I again showed Kate (witness again) but all we could do was shine the torch on him as that was as close as we were going to get. He had chosen well for his home. I was a little luckier when I swam over the ledge looking for another way in and found a 1.5kg female which easily found its way into my catch bag. The other two will still be their next time if Bazza doesn't get their first, he would probably squeeze into that ledge with inches to spare. We drifted for another ten

minutes over many more bommies but no more met the criteria and so we headed for the surface. Upon reaching the surface my prediction for the day had come true, the heads area was dead flat and the sky had totally cleared, amazing what can happen within 40 Min when your on the bottom.

Martin then dived the same area with John Lawler without any success but had none the less an enjoyable dive - Good to see Martin back in the water- and as Scotty says get rid of that wetsuit before it falls of you in little pieces.

With the other divers out of the water lunch was in order and was spent pleasantly enjoying what was turning into a great day and getting better by the minute.

After lunch we headed to where Mick had the marks of this wreck. We eventually found a rise on the depth sounder and watched as Peter Vluegel and buddy were dropped in near the mark. They hadn't counted on the current still running and were soon drifting up the bay. The procedure was repeated several times and when they finally got down to the bottom found themselves looking at a fairly large sandhill (should've taken a shovel down Peter could've been something inside). Mick gave up in disgust and headed to where the Eliza Ramsden lay and proceeded to drop his two divers over the side and into a tongue lashing from a dive charter operator who laid some sort of claim to ownership of this wreck.. Another poor misguided dive operator with delusions of self-importance.

After consultation with my crew we decided that one dive would do us, we said good bye to Mick and Peter and heading back to where John Lawler's crew were still diving. We were greeted by a large smug grin from John as he lifted a 5Kg monster for us to drool about (Not sure if this was the Cray in the weight issue).

Those that decided not to dive because of the weather missed out on a great day and if the last four weekends are any indication we are in for a great dive year. Thanks again to boat owners Peter, Mick and John for supplying the use of their boats

ATTACKING SHARK SPECIES

BY JOHN LAWLER

It is a common fact throughout the world that the GREAT WHITE SHARK (*Caracharodon Carcharias*) is the most feared of all sharks in the oceans. "White Death" as it is affectionately known, has a white underbelly with no real distinct colour on the upperside. Colours can vary from grey to blue, to deep indigos, but the white underbelly still remains.

Designed with a set of very powerful "hinge-like" jaws, the Great White can exceed a bite pressure of 3.75 tonnes per cm² for a 3-metre length shark. Despite the damage given to the White Shark in films such as "Jaws", it does not go out of its way to kill humans! The fact remains that the main functions of the Great White are to eat and make little sharks. The Great white does not attack out of necessity to attack as the share in "Jaws" did! A shark will only attack when it is hungry! If for some reason a human is the victim of an attack, then it is usually the fault of the human and not the attacking shark. It therefore follows that the shark is only doing what it needs to do.

It is interesting that the Great White shark is the only shark that is know to stick it's head out of the water to check things out. This shark attacks prey from the bottom and rarely makes a side attack or a top attack. The reason for this comes down to the design of the shark's body. due to the fact the underbelly of the Great White is totally white, it would be senseless for it to attack from the top or side, as their victims could detect it approaching. Because of their top side colour being grey and blue, it blends very well with the surrounding rocks and so can glide effortlessly along the bottom and when the prey is sighted, the shark thrusts upwards with massive speed and viciously takes the prey in one bite. Interestingly enough, whilst the Great White is greatly feared, it is also adored by many people who respect their beaut and greatness. Still the fact remains we are in their territory when we take to the water and we must respect their potential for harm.

The Great White Shark has a long snout with (naturally) big ragged teeth and can be found in most temperate and tropical waters including California, South Africa and certainly Australia. It feeds mainly on pinnipeds such as seals, se

lions and, strangely, other sharks! A full size mature female of around 5.5 metres can take one 500lb sea lion in one single gulp.

The Great White Shark can range in length from 6 metres to 8 metres. Whilst most are in the 6 metre range some specimens have reached much greater proportions.

A recent report from Miami says that Shark attacks on humans dropped worldwide in 1998 for the third straight year, leaving scientists to puzzle whether overfishing, climate changes or other factors figured in the decline. Researchers for the International Shark Attack File at the University of Florida logged 49 shark attacks on humans last year, down from 57 in 1997 and well below the high of 72 in 1995.

Attacking Species of Sharks 1954-1997

Common Name	Unprovoked Attack	Provoked Attack	Air-Sea Disaster	Boat Attack	No Assignment	Total
Great White	231	4	0	52	24	311
Tiger shark	67	3	1	8	25	104
Bull shark	57	6	0	0	6	69
Sand Tiger shark	31	14	0	6	2	53
Requiem	28	11	0	1	2	42
"Blacktip shark,"	20	2	0	0	0	22
Hammerhead shark	17	4	1	5	4	31
Blue shark	14	10	3	3	0	30
"Blacktip reef shark,"	13	1	0	0	0	14
Shortfin Mako shark	12	10	0	0	1	23
Grey Reef shark	9	1	0	0	0	10
Bronze Whaler shark	9	1	0	1	0	11
Lemon shark	9	7	0	5	0	21
Caribbean reef shark	7	9	0	0	0	16
Spinner shark	5	1	0	0	0	6
Sandbar shark	5	1	1	0	0	7
Nurse shark	5	16	0	0	2	23
Oceanic whitetip shark	4	1	0	0	0	5
Wobbegong	4	12	0	0	7	23
Dusky shark	3	1	0	1	0	5
Leopard shark	3	0	0	0	1	4
Silky shark	1	1	0	0	1	3
Sevengill shark	2	2	0	0	0	4
Galapagos shark		1	0	0	0	1
Ganges shark	1	0	0	0	0	1

Topo shark	1	0	0	0	0	1
Cookiecutter shark	1	0	0	0	0	1
Mako shark	1	0	0	0	0	1
Porbeagle shark	1	0	0	1	1	3
Scalloped hammerhead	1	0	0	0	1	2
Spiny dogfish	1	0	0	0	0	1
Whitetip reef shark	1	1	0	0	0	2
Thresher shark	0	1	0	4	0	5
Silvertip shark	0	1	0	0	0	1
Bignose shark	0	1	0	0	0	1
Bigeye sand tiger	0	2	0	0	0	2
Basking shark	0	0	0	2	0	2
Horn shark	0	1	0	0	0	1
Sixgill shark	0	0	0	1	1	2
Whale shark	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greenland shark	0	0	0	1	1	2
Smooth hammerhead	0	0	0	1	1	2
	565	125	6	92	80	868

SEAFOOD CATCH'N COOK 99

BY CHRIS LLEWELLYN

THOSE UNFORTUNATE SOULS WHO MISSED THE '99 CATCH'N COOK MISSED A GASTRONOMIC DELIGHT, ALL CONSUMED WHILE ENJOYING THE MOST PERFECT WEATHER CONDITIONS IMAGINABLE. BUT MORE ABOUT THAT LATER .

WE ARRIVED AT RYE RAMP TO SEE ALMOST MILLPOND CONDITIONS ON THE BAY AND I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THE ONLY ONE WITH YEARNINGS FOR A BEADS OR BACK BEACH DIVE ON SUCH A GLORIOUS DAY. BUT SCALLOPS AND MUSSELS WERE TIFIE ORDER OF THE DAY, SO THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK.

THE FLOTILLA OF THREE BOATS AND ONE KAYAK (IS THIS A VSAG FIRST?) CARRYING 16 DIVERS AND NON DIVERS, HEADED OFF FOR THE HUNT.

NOW I KNEW THAT THE BIG LLOYD WOULD BE ANXIOUS FOR I-US USUAL FEED OF FRESH MUSSELS, AND ALSO A WILLING PARTY TO COLLECT THEM UNDER HIS STRICT GUIDANCE AND STANDARDS AS TO QUANTIT Y AND QUALITY. ALL

WHILE ON SNORKEL, BATTLING A CURRENT WITH ONE HAND ON A CATCH BAG.

NOW IF I WASN'T TO BE IN THE UNLUCKY DRAW FOR SUCH A MISSION, I KNEW WE NEEDED A PERSON ON THE BOAT POSSESSING A NATURALLY ENTHUSIASTIC NATURE. WASN'T I LUCKY THAT THE EVER ENTHUSIASTIC DARREN PIERCE JUST HAPPENED TO BE BERTHED ON OUR BOAT! DARREN HAD HIS HAND UP BEFORE THE QUESTION WAS EVEN FINISHED AND THE ONLY SLIGHT HESITATION WAS WHEN WE TOLD HIM TO WATCH OUT FOR "OLD SCAR" THE BULL SEAL WHO IN OUR DITHERING YEARS, HAD MISTAKENLY ATTEMPTED TO MAKE LOVE TO A FEW WAYWARD DIVERS (COLLECTING MUSSELS OFF PYLONS).

DARREN DID THE JOB PROPERLY I MIGHT ADD, NO SNORKEL FOR THIS BOY, THE FULL DRESS WITH TANK! AND WHAT A LOVELY LIFT BAG OF MUSSELS HE SENT HURTLING TO THE TOP. THE LLOYD WAS QUITE SATISFIED. THEN IT WAS OFF TO THE SCALLOP BEDS WHERE WE DROPPED ONTO A GOOD SUPPLY OF REASONABLE SIZE SCALLOPS THAT QUICKLY FOUND THEMSELVES ALSO ON THEIR WAY TO THE SURFACE.

WITH A SIZEABLE CATCH ON BOARD WE PROCEEDED BACK -10 THE RAMP AND BEACH HOUSE FOR THE PREPARATION AND COOK-UP. WEREN'T WE IN FOR A SURPRISE WHEN ANDY TURNED UP WITH 5 KGS OF SUCCULENT KING PRAWNS, MOST GENEROUSLY DONATED BY VSAG, AND A MASSIVE SLAB OF SMOKED SALMON KINDLY DONATED BY JOHN LAWLER!

JOSIE AND MICHELLE HAD ALSO DUG INTO THEIR OWN POCKETS AND DONATED ANOTHER FEW KILOS OF PRAWNS TO OUR BURGEONING SEAFOOD EXTRAVAGANZA!

I MUST ADMIT WITH ALL THESE OTHER TEMPTATIONS ABOUNDING, IT WAS HARD TO CONCENTRATE ON SHELLING SCALLOPS THAT WERE NOW PILING UP ALL ROUND. BUT HUNDREDS WERE CLEANED BY A WILLING BAND OF WORKERS, AND WELL WORTH THE EFFORT WHEN LATER COOKED AND COMBINED WITH HOT STEAMED MUSSELS, A CHOICE OF COLD OR HOT GARLIC INFUSED PRAWNS AND SLICES OF SMOKED SALMON.

IT WAS GREAT DAY ALL ROUND WITH A GOOD ROLL UP. WE WERE BLESSED WITH THE WEATHER. THE KIDS HAD A FUN DAY AND AS USUAL VSAG MEMBERS GIVEN THE TASK, PROVED THEIR WORTH!

MANY THANKS TO VSAG, JOHN LAWLER, JOSIE AND MICHELLE FOR THEIR KIND DONATIONS THAT WENT TOWARDS MAKING THE '99 SEAFOOD CATCH'N COOK PROBABLY THE BEST YET.



Mick proudly showing Finn the catch that Darren caught.!



Big Petes boat handled the rough conditions perfectly.



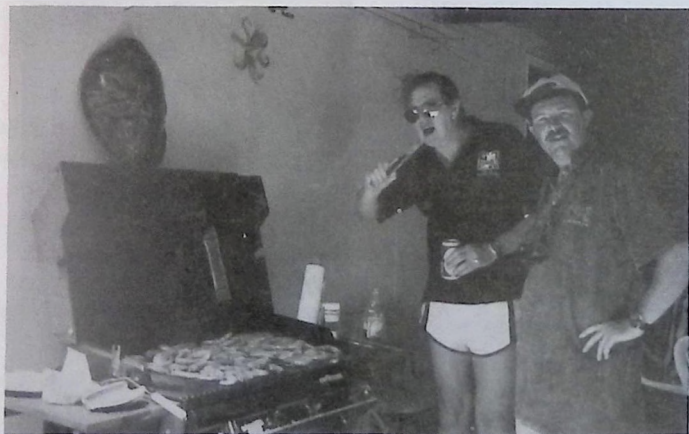
Sam Jeacle proving blondes do get fed first.



Josie's mum shows the young upstarts how to clean scallops.



Rhonda imposing her strict "shower before eating" policy on the children.



I knew Paul Tipping was hungry, but I thought he'd take the shell off first!

THE PINNACLES SUNDAY 21ST FEBRUARY

BY PETER VLEUGEL

Upon arriving at Stony Point boat ramp, there were 2 boats and 8 divers. The divers were Pat, Ted, Phillip Dunn on my boat, Darren, Jack, John Peach on John Lawler's boat. The boat ramp was busy as the cars and trailers had to park up the top end of the caravan park. After loading and launching, we headed down to San Ramo and under the bridge. The seas were very calm and you could see so many fishing boats, it was amazing. Apparently, the elephant fish were on the bite.

After heading out into the ocean, the swell got larger in fact, it was enormous! Approx. 3.5m high - a good test for the quells, I must say. My trusty GPS picked up the pinnacle easily and there was also a charter dive boat almost finished their dive, so we waited. The charter boat was a large 35 ft catamaran with a flying bridge. You realize how large the swell was when we were in one trough of the swell and the charter boat was in the next trough - you couldn't see the other boat - THAT'S BIG. I anchored my boat on top of the pinnacle in about 10m of water, John tied onto the back of my boat and with the large swell, nearly took off the cowling on my new optimax motor a few times. We should learn to use quite a long tie rope when this is the case.

After kitting up, the four of us went down. The surge was quite bad but when we descended to 34m, it wasn't as bad. What a terrific dive, lots of fish life and very colorful soft corals, sea whips and a few small crays. I finished my dive and tidied up, then noticed a lot of exhausted bubbles coming up. Then John Peach came up with them, he shot out of the water by about half his body length. It seems that it was an emergency ascent but when John hit the top of his tank on the roof of the cave, he lost it. We should try to improve on this type of ascent, hey?

Over lunch, we were kidding John saying that the first sign of the bends is that he wouldn't get it up, then comes the itching and aching joints. We all hope that this wasn't the case John because Pat said he hadn't been paid for last weeks work!

After lunch, a few of the boys decided to do a drift dive under the San Remo bridge but after deciding that you couldn't see anything and the swell was too large for another dive outside, we headed back to the ramp. Upon arriving at the ramp, along with approx 100 other boats, it took 2.5 hours to get the boat out on to the trailer. It seems that the current system is dollar-driven to the point of excessively overloading the facility to the point of ridiculous. The people that handle the parking and sort out the traffic arrangements wouldn't have a clue about fair play, as there were two queues to enter the pick-up area and the queue on the left went 10 cars to 1 for the other queue. I didn't consider that type of behavior was good and I wouldn't waste my time going to that ramp again. It certainly takes the shine off a great day. The amazing part of this is that I kept my cool and didn't get upset.

We all had a few beers after and were home by about 6 pm. It was a great day on the water and a terrific dive. Thanks to John Lawler for supplying your boat and thanks for all of the participants who took the trouble to come out and enjoy, and particularly the divers that don't dive too often - the only way you get better at it is to do more of it.

Decompression Sickness. The Bends

This painful and dangerous condition is caused by the formation of gas bubbles in the bloodstream and body tissues. It can occur when the air pressure surrounding the body decreases too rapidly.

Do you know the symptoms of decompression sickness.

Do the people you live with know the symptoms of decompression sickness.

If you have the bends others will know before you do. Then what!!!

Where do you go? Who do you see?

Visit the Hyperbaric Dept at the Alfred Hospital and listen to the full storey, followed by a tour of the newly installed Hyperbaric chamber.

WHEN: Thursday May 13th

WHERE: The Alfred Hospital - main entrance

TIME: 6.45pm

COST: \$10 for lecture and tour

Be there with your dive buddies, family and friends.

Bookings essential

Phone Helen Fryday on 9417 7513 by 10th May.

TOP 5

BY DARREN PEARCE

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

THE TOP 5 SIGNS YOU'RE DIVING TOO MUCH

(SOURCE: www.scubada.com/nftop5996.html#9/26/96)

5. You're equalizing in the bathtub.

Jeff Marriott - New Zealand

4. Your insistence on communicating only with hand signals convinces friends and family that you think you're Marcel Marceau.

Variations from many contributors

3. You upset elevator companions by insisting on stopping every five floors up for "safety".

Variations from many contributors

2. Two words: Neoprene Underwear

Scubaguy - New York, New York

1. You pee in your chair at work!

Will Hall - Seattle, Washington

THE TOP 5 SIGNS YOUR DIVING IS BORING

(SOURCE: www.scubada.com/nftop5996.html#10/07/96)

5. You spend your dive thinking of words that rhyme with "anemone."

Scubaguy - New York City

4. You marvel at the intricacies and delicate form of your boat's anchor.

Variations from many contributors

3. You gesticulate wildly inventing hand signals for "This dive sucks!"

Variations from many contributors

2. You whip out your slate and begin writing the script for a movie about a scuba diving dog: PAWS!

Scubaguy - New York City

1. "Wow! Look at all this water!!"

Scubaguy - New York City

BLUE SHARK DIVE

BY JOHN MILLS

This was a combined dive with the API club.

The conditions required were Northerly Winds and calm seas as we needed to go about 10 km offshore to deep water and lay Burley trails to attract the sharks.

Allan Beckhurst rang the night before to say that we would need 2 Kg of pilchards and some Tuna oil to make the trails. Priya rang Andy and as he was going to be in town, he picked up the bait.

We arrived at Sorrento on the Saturday reasonably early. Mick and Teddy were already launched. Leo and his father brought their boat, Josie and Michelle were cast adrift with them. Andy towed his boat from Footscray and Priya, myself, Shane and Martin were crewed with him.

We met up with Allan Beckhurst and Darren Salter at Pope's eye and headed out through the heads in force. About 20 minutes later we were deemed to be far enough offshore to begin burleying.

Allan provided the instructions for each boat owner for when the blue sharks arrived.

"Have two snorkellers in the water for 15 minutes and swap over with another two, keep the ladders down and if you see any Mako sharks get out".

We drifted around and spent a couple of hours laying trails. Some of the girls on Leo's boat were starting to get a bit sick, Some fishing was done. Martin got some bites. Darren Salter got some good fish and Priya had a snooze at the back of the boat whilst she was stirring the burley bucket. After two hours impatience set in , we returned to the back beaches as a front was approaching and we thought we could get a dive in before the tum. Leo took his time on the way back as they were still fishing.

We dived the back beaches in fairly low visibility. Shane took some abalone, which in hindsight were the last lot he'd be taking for a while as they slapped a surprise ban on collecting them the next week.

We returned through the heads and Priya and Andy still had some air in their tanks so they collected some scallops of Rye Pier. We retrieved the boats and unpacked. Then the front hit dropping bucket loads of rain on us as we were taking the gear to the cars. Shane had a problem with his door locks and we had to break into his car to get him home.

DEAL ISLAND EASTER 99

BY ALAN BECKHURST

Two VSAGERS , Neville Viapree & Alan Beckhurst decided to avoid packing wet tents at Tidal River with the poor people , and gatecrash BRUDG's booking on the luxury cruise vessel , "Inspiration 11 " . As Black Rock could only raise 1 member for this trip, we were joined by divers from all over Victoria, on our 5 day cruise to Deal Island, in the middle of Bass Strait.

"Inspiration 11" is without doubt the most luxurious boat ever to offer diving in Bass Strait. Skipped by the legendary Alan Cripps (of "Polperro" fame) , she is 85 ft long, with two double bed cabins, two twin bunk cabins, and one triple bunk cabin. The comfy lounge could accomodate all of us for a lazy time enjoying videos , cd's , or reading books. Traditional Aussie meals were prepared by Crippsy in the modern galley , and served in the dining room , with views of the bow area. A huge flybridge served as storage area for all the gear, and a great place to get fresh air while under cover. Covered promenades lead to the vast, teak laid bow deck, but it's slippery when wet ! With 3 heads and showers , and unlimited hot , fresh water , there was no waiting. The gearing up area at the stem was the only shortcoming, but there was enough space for half the divers to gear up at at time .

We headed out at 3 A.M. Good Friday, stopped at the Hogan Group for Lunch, and were diving by 2.00 P.M. The diving is much like the east side of the 'Prom , sloping boulder and kelp covered sides , teeming with perch and wrasse, until you get to 20metres . From here the kelp stops , and the bare rocks are decorated by urchins ,making the common N.S.W. species of maori wrasse and one spot chromis feel athome . But its not the fish most were looking for, with most heads stuck in holes and under kelp.

The competition for crays was fierce , the flybridge looked like a noose factory between dives, and the stories of the one that got away flowed, except for Neville and myself . You see , Neville never saw one , and I never came back without one No monsters were found, the biggest at around 4 kilos , and most around 2-3

kilos. Between Neville and myself we caught 10 crays , all 2-3 kilos, it would have been more if Neville had seen at least one !

Not all the dives were for crays , as we dropped in on the wreck of the "Bulli " , completely smothered in growth and crawling with fish. The rudder and prop are the best parts, all covered with colourful growth. A couple of us ventured out for a night dive at our anchorage in East Cove, which was a worthwhile swim. The deeply rippled sandy bottom was illuminated up to 15 metres from the boat by the deck lights assisting us to discover sea pens and skate . As we moved toward shore the sand gave way to reef , crawling with sea cucumbers , and dotted with sleeping fish . Among the rocks the inevitable cave with feelers - just out of reach.

We had to cut the trip back by one day as a front approached, so we were back at port Franklin on Monday afternoon, after another smooth crossing. This vessel will not last long servicing Victorian waters , so if you do not book a trip soon , you will miss the best combination of vessel / skipper / location ever in Victoria.

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 May

Thursday 17 June

Thursday 15 July

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

nikonos underwater cameras OWNERS NOTE !

NIKON ANNOUNCES VOLUNTARY RECALL OF NIKONOS SB-103 SPEEDLIGHT BODY USED IN SCUBA DIVING

Nikon Corporation through its Australian distributor Maxwell Optical Industries has announced that it is voluntarily recalling all Nikonos Speedlight Model SB- 103 amphibious high performance electronic flash unit bodies sold in Australia. Gas buildup within the unit could result in the front lens and flash tube unit, along with the rubberised ring holding them in place, projecting off the front of the speedlight.

Nikon has received one report of a possible problem in the United States. No injuries have been reported. Nikon voluntarily initiated the recall as a reflection of the corporation's commitment to safety.

The Nikonos SB-103 Speedlights were distributed by Nikon through dive retailers between 1984 and 1994. The orange and black speedlight attaches to a Nikonos underwater camera by means of a metal bracket and cable and provides flash performance for photography. The Nikonos SB-103 has subsequently been replaced by the Nikonos SB-105 speedlight, which features different construction and poses no similar risk.

Consumers should immediately stop using the Nikonos SB- 103 Speedlight. Owners will have their speedlight body replaced, free of charge, with a Nikonos S13- 105 Speedlight body, with its advanced

Z1 features, as supplies are available. To arrange for your replacement, please do the following:

1. Ship your Nikonos SB-103 Speedlight body, insured (minimum of \$100), to the following address:

Reply Paid 108 m
Nikonos SB- 103
Maxwell Optical Industries
PO Box 1018
Meadowbank NSW 2114

Attention: Nikonos SB-103 Return

2. Include your name, address and telephone number, and the address to which you would like the replacement body shipped (if it differs from your home address).

It is not necessary to ship cables, brackets, or batteries - only the Nikonos SB- 103 body itself. Nikonos S13105 body replacements will be shipped as quickly as possible as supplies are available.

If you have any additional questions, please call Rod Meredith at Maxwell Optical Industries on (02) 9390 0200 between 9am - 5pm Monday-Friday or email rodm@maxwell.com.au.

KING NEPTUNE

*celebrates 23rd July, and so are we
King Neptune, the old man of the sea, celebrates his day throughout
the world by people connected with the sea.*

*Fishermen, sailors and divers alike.
Bring along your family and friends.*

Dine & Dance the night away,

*in honour of the old man,
or
storms and nasty weather will be cast upon you.*

Come along DRESSED to the THEME Or THE SEA.

*A fishy hat.
Seaweed draped around your shoulders
in your dive gear if you please!*

let your imagination go and win a prize!!

WHEN: *Friday July 23 rd*

WHERE: *Caffe MELETTI*

*526 Little Lonsdale St, Melbourne
(near the corner with William St. Plenty of parking available in the
surrounding streets)*

TIME: *7.30pm*

COST *\$28 per head (buy your own drinks at the bar)*

*Be there with your dive buddies, family and friends.
Bookings essential
Phone Helen Fryday on 9417 7513 by Friday 16 th July*

STOP PRESS

Boating Industry
Association Of Victoria Ltd
ACN 004 985 102

TO.. ALL MEMBERS Marine House
162-164 Adderley Street
West Melbourne Vic 3003

FROM.: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Australia
Telephone: +613 9328 4855

DATE: 22 JANUARY 1999 Facsimile: +613 9328 4898
Toll Free: 1800 659 106
-n fo@biavic.coin.au

SUBJECT: UNIFORM TOWING REGULATION

NSW

It's Official 1 As previously advised, the BIA has received official confirmation that on Friday 18 December, 1999 the NSW Road & Traffic Regulations were amended, Changes included:

*The abolition of the previous speed restriction of 80 kph for vehicles towing trailers caravans and boats; all are now able to travel at the prevailing posted speed limits.

*Motor vehicles with a gross vehicle mass of not more than 4.5 tonnes can now tow up to the vehicle manufacturers recommended towing limit and up to one and half times their weight where a manufacturers limit is not specified and provided the trailer has brakes. In all instances the towing capacity of the vehicle is limited to the towbar if the rating on the towbar is less than the manufacturers towing capacity.

TASMANIA:

The BIA has also been advised that the towing regulations in Tasmania were changed on 30 November 1998 and gazetted on 9 December 1998 bringing Tasmania uniformly in line with Victoria, New South Wales and the other states. This is good news which has been long awaited for the Industry!

For Victorians wishing to holiday in either Tasmania or New South Wales the changes mean that most family sedans and wagons will be able to legally tow their boats interstate; the benefits to the Retail Industry are obvious.

For your information

ell Lindsay R Grenfell Life's better with a Boat

L R e Member: Boating Industry Association of Australia - Affiliate of ICOMIA

Discovery stirs ghosts

Some residents describe it as "the day the war came to us". DEREK BALLANTINE reports from Apollo Bay on the discovery of the World War II wreck of a US freighter, sunk by a German mine.

IN Apollo Bay, where great swells from the Southern Ocean fall ashore like drunken sailors, the steamer *City of Rayville* is remembered more with pride than despair.

From this seaside haven went the fishermen who rescued the stricken cargo ship's crew almost 60 years ago.

They risked their lives in small open boats, finding the survivors in pitch black and blinding rain after the *City of Rayville* struck a German mine.

All but one of the 38 Americans on board were saved.

Memories of the day World War II came to Victoria's doorstep have faded, but evidence of the daring rescue lives on in Apollo Bay's Old Cable Station Museum, where the *City of Rayville's* lifejackets are displayed.

"It was very courageous," said history buff Bob Davis, one of the founders of the museum.

"Nine fishermen set off in three cutta boats after being alerted by the lighthouse keeper at Cape Otway, who saw rockets fired from the sinking ship.

"They had to go 20 miles (about 33km) in total darkness, not knowing what they would find.

"They were hailed as heroes in the district after that."

The rescuers and the rescued have all passed on, but ghosts of the unheralded shipwreck are stirring after its discovery off Cape Otway.

City of Rayville, the first American ship sunk in the war, lies on a sandy bottom about 80 metres below the lumbering green rollers at Bass Strait's western entrance.

It has been found by deep-sea fisherman Harry Ferrier, who operates from Warrnambool and Apollo Bay.

Mr Ferrier detected the wreck with an echo sounder. Then he took salvage expert Eric Beddome and his son, Richard Beddome, to the location with their special remote-operated diving vehicle, which was fitted with a television camera.

Relayed to a monitor on board Mr Ferrier's ~~small~~ boat were pictures of the ship's intact hull, collapsed bridge section, holds and broken masts.

In the clear water, silver morwong and cod could be seen swimming around the lonely wreck.



Clinching identification for Mr Ferrier were the anchors, which he said were of a type that belonged only to a freighter of her class rather than some of the older wrecks in the vicinity.

"This was history in the making," an excited Mr Ferrier said of his January find, which Heritage Victoria this week accepted as the *City of Rayville*.

"It was a great sight — it took your breath away."

Mr Ferrier, who was back at sea yesterday fishing for shark after marking his discovery with a float attached to a plough anchor, may be eligible for an award for discovering the *City of Rayville*, which only last year was declared an historic shipwreck.

But he is more excited about US reaction — he believes Americans will

prize the wreck because of its wartime significance.

Adventurers have searched for the *City of Rayville* for decades and one, Gippsland school principal and diving instructor Barry Heard, believes he was successful in 1997 when he dived to within 10 metres of a wreck off Cape Otway.

He did not register the find because he had no proof and there was a chance it could have been *Selje*, a Norwegian freighter sunk in a collision in 1929.

Shirley Strachan, manager of Heritage Victoria's maritime history unit, said the discovery was of international significance.

As the first American ship lost in World War II, the 6000-tonne *City of Rayville* went to the bottom on November 8, 1940, more than a

year before America entered the war. She went down a day after the British freighter *Cambridge* also hit a mine, the first Allied vessel sunk in Australian waters in the war.



Full steam: The *City of Rayville* in its prime.

The minelaying was carried out within sight of shore, in some cases by disguised German ships, including *Passat* and *Pinguin*, which dropped their deadly cargoes from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific.

The *City of Rayville*'s engineer and the *Cambridge*'s carpenter were trapped in their ships while trying to retrieve personal belongings.

But the mines took a heavier toll of the Royal Australian Navy.

Closing Bass Strait to shipping after the two freighters were claimed, the navy mustered a squadron of minesweepers, including *HMAS Goorangai*.

Goorangai ventured out to sea to clear the minefield and recover wreckage from the *City of Rayville*.

Back in Port Phillip Bay to take on provisions and prepare for another mission, she was steaming between

Queenscliff and Portsea on the night of November 20 when run down by the troopship *Dunroon*, which was heading for sea at high speed.

Little *Goorangai* was smashed under the charging bow of the big liner with the loss of 24 sailors.

She claimed the unwanted distinctions of being Australia's first naval loss of World War II, the first RAN surface vessel lost in any

war, and the first RAN ship lost with all hands.

But the mines which destroyed the *City of Rayville* and *Cambridge* are also linked to the loss of the cruiser *HMAS Sydney* in 1942.

The activities of the minelayers led to the retail of RAN ships from the Mediterranean, including *Sydney*, which was patrolling off Western Australia when she clashed with commerce raider *Kormoran*.

All 645 aboard *Sydney* perished.

Apollo Bay's association with the *City of Rayville* includes the ship's wooden nameplate, hanging in the Old Cable Station Museum. It had been used as a trestle by a painter after it washed ashore.

A flare gun from the ship is also in the museum, originally the mainland link for the telecommunications cable laid across Bass Strait in the 1930s.

Now there may be another connection, if attempts are made to salvage the 37,520 bars of lead the *City of Rayville* was carrying from Port Pirie.

The ship was owned

by the United States Maritime Commission but the cargo became the property of Lloyd's of London, after it paid an insurance claim.

Rights to the ship and cargo were then bought by an English salvage company, which in turn accepted a \$50,000 deposit from an Australian salvage company associated with Captain Beddome, who tried to find the wreck in the early 1980s.

Capt. Beddome is interested in recovering his outlay — the lead could be worth more than \$1.2 million.

Complicating the issue, however, are doubts about the ownership of the cargo and the wreck's historical status.

Declared a historic shipwreck long after salvage rights were sold, it would take special government dispensation to enter the *City of Rayville* at her final resting place.

No vessel protected by the federal Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976 may be disturbed without a permit — and

there is no precedent for issuing a permit for the commercial recovery of cargo.

But the red tape is not the major barrier.

At a depth well beyond normal scuba diving operations, the location is influenced by three currents — surface, mid-water and bottom — making salvage difficult and dangerous.

Some of the fastest tides in the world sweep through Bass Strait, with winds often generating waves of the scale that wrecked the *Sydney-Hobart* racing fleet in December.

"She represents an extremely challenging salvage task," Ms Strachan said.

More than 300 wrecks litter the coast between Geelong and Portland.

As he gazed out on the rolling waters where the *City of Rayville* died, recalling exploits of brave men of the sea, Mr Davis said: "What makes her different is that she represents the time the war came to us."

Caption page 26

Memories: Historian Bob Davis with a life jacket from the *City of Rayville*.

DIVE/SOCIAL CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT/LOCATION	DIVE CAPTAIN	MEET AT
2-5 April	Easter at Tidal River	Don Abell 9889 4415	Tidal River
15 April	General Meeting Bell's Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets, Sth. Melbourne		8.00 pm
18 April	Lonsdale Wall	Mick Jeacle 0359 712 786	Sorrento 8.00am
24 April	Night Dive(TBA)	Leo Maybus 9727 1568	
2 May	Rotamahana	Priya Cardinalletti 9761 0960	Sorrento 9.00am
8 May	Nepean Wall	Rob Birtles 9725 2816	Sorrento 9.00am
9 May	Yarra Valley Winery Tour	Helen Fryday 9417 7513	
12-29 May	Truk Lagoon	Pat Reynolds 9789 1092	
13 May	Recompression Chamber Tour \$10	Helen Fryday 9417 7513	Alfred Hosp. 6.45pm
16 May	George Kermode	John Lawler 9589 4020	Flinders 9.00am
20 May	General Meeting Bell's Hotel Cnr. Moray & Coventry Streets, Sth. Melbourne		8.00 pm
30 May	Uralba	Peter Vleugel 0359 743 200	Patterson River 10.am