

JOHN MULLS

# FATHOMS

FEBRUARY—MARCH 2004

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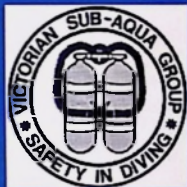
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Photo of Frog fish taken by Leo Maybus  
Rapid Bay Jetty SA, Jan 2004

# VSAG



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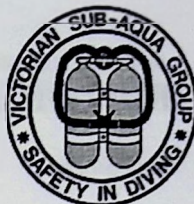
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# FATHOMS



*Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group*

***In this February-March issue...***

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*Photos courtesy of Mary Malloy, (front cover and many others), Alan Storen and John Lawler.*

## **VSAG General Meetings**

Bell's Hotel  
157 Moray Street (cnr Coventry Street)  
South Melbourne, 8.00 pm  
The 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in the month

## **Editorial Submissions to:**

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## EDITORIAL

Alan Storen

*Happy new year to all and welcome to VSAG's 50<sup>th</sup> year. I am still waiting for the final details on the celebration but it should be a great event. If you have any memorabilia, photos, stories etc I would love to hear from you so that we can publish them in the next few editions. I will scan and return within a few days if you can get them*

*to me. If you can scan please email them to me. It would help if you could add a caption to any photos but this is not essential. If you have a video of past trips to the prom etc then I can make a copy and return. It would be great to have them running in the background on the night of the dinner.*

*Diver numbers are down at the moment and many dives are just getting minimum numbers. Recently JL and myself were the only divers! The committee has put on a couple of shallower dives so that anyone out of diving for a while can recheck their gear, weights, etc. The first is on the 13<sup>th</sup> March – a night dive led by Leo Maybus – destination TBA but probably a suitable pier ie shore dive; 14<sup>th</sup> March a day dive led by Priya C – destination TBA but possibly South Channel Fort or Pope's Eye and the 21<sup>st</sup> March led by Pat R and a combination of a shore dive for those that wish, a boat dive to the Fort or Popes, a second dive for scallops, etc. This is a suitable day to invite potential new members along to see what the club does. If anyone needs gear for this day I can probably provide but need some notice – at least a week would be good.*

*A number of other events are planned and listed in the calendar. Cape Jaffa on Labour day weekend, the Prom at Easter, an IMAX night and an 'Anzac long weekend' dive trip are on the list. If you are interested in a Shark dive at the Melbourne Aquarium please contact me – if there is sufficient interest I will try to arrange a dive followed by dinner. Cost will be about \$120 each depending on the numbers. I am thinking June/July! Families could come and watch, then join us for a meal. Dives start at 3pm, 3:40pm and 4:20 pm – 4 divers at a time.*

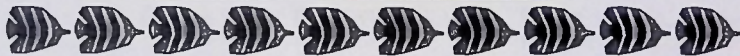
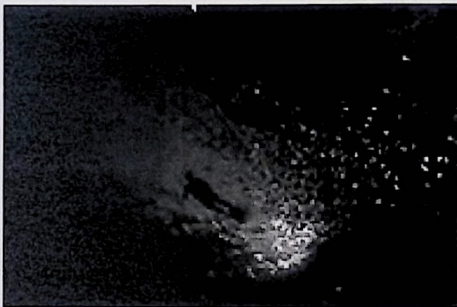


*A number of guest speakers are planned over the next 6 months but if you hear of any interesting speakers please let Pat or one of the committee know and we can follow up.*

*Alan*

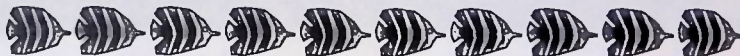


**Reports on dives and other activities are urgently needed. Please submit to the editor.**



**Got new Diving gear for my wife**

**Sure was a good trade!**



## ***Dive Report***

### ***Mary and Alan***

*Last Sunday the 20th December, we had a crew on Freediver hoping to get a dive in before Xmas, and maybe even get a cray. We had a flood slack planned, but I suggested an alternate dive, the Courier. As usual, the GPS took us straight to the site, but not as usual, we could see the shot line going down forever. The first group in, Jeff, Gerry, and Peter, came back with tales of amazing viz, and crays, though none in their catch bags.*

*Cameron and I took our turn, and found the reports to be true. From the boilers, which had schools of scad swarming over them, you could see the stern and the bow. We circumnavigated the wreck, finding 4 crays, and catching one. Cameron noted that the water clarity gave a real perception of the true size of this wreck. Clearly the prettiest wreck in Victoria, this day we saw her at her best.*

*Hanging on the deco line, I was reflecting on the awesome dive, and practicing bubble rings, when Cameron became excited. I turned around to find two Bottlenose dolphins a couple of metres away. They had just cruised in to see what all the bubbles were about, and satisfied, they moved on. Back on the boat I had to agree, this is as good as it gets!*

*We headed inshore for lunch, and then a dive off Collendina beach hoping to get more crays. Interesting bottom, limestone reef with ledges 10 metres deep, and a few crays were seen. Peter managed a nice 3 pounder, but I was content with a swim around with sweep as companions, and play with a catshark. I was still on a high from the Courier dive.*

*Xmas period is known for being windy, but with good viz until the water temperature gets high enough for plankton to cloud the water. Mary and I are working through these holidays, only having the main holidays and weekends off. We are hoping to dive at least one day on the weekends. Let us know if you are interested.*

*P.S. We have finally moved down to Queenscliff, but are currently staying*

*in Melbourne on Mon, Tues, & Thurs nights. We will cancel our Melbourne Phone (93600995) soon, and the answering machine is at Queenscliff (52583349). Mary's mobile is 0417306145, and mine is 0403536508.*

*Hope you all have a great Xmas holiday and an even better New Year, and we see you soon!*

*Alan & Mary*

*UPDATE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!, READ BELOW!!*

*Before I had a chance to log on and send this e mail, another year has passed by! It's New Years Day, and Mary & I were joined by Rob Kirk, and Jeff Schmidt for a dive to see in the New Year. After all my raving about my last dive on the Courier, Mary and Kirky were keen to give it a go. The viz was only a miserable 15 metres, but all the same fish were there, as well as a couple of crays ( well, one less now!).*

*While Mary and Jeff were heading to the bow, Kirky spotted some dolphins heading straight for Freediver. We cut the engine near the shot, and the dolphins stayed, so I jumped in on snorkel with the digital camera. These were Common Dolphins, and they were here to celebrate the New Year! We finned, cavorted, dived, and just played for 15 minutes, and 40 shots! I left my mammal playmates to get closer to the shot as Mary and Jeff were due to surface, but the dolphins followed.*



*Mary was swamped by 8 dolphins, cameras going overtime! To top it off, 4 seals joined in the revelry. A juvenile seal distracting us from the dolphins by chewing on our fins! Mary also left our playmates to change film. Kirky and I rolled into the swarm for our most excellent dive on the Courier, while Mary went back for another game of mammal madness. After I got back to the boat, we had another visit from the dolphins and soon I was alone on the boat as all the others went back on snorkel to continue the experience.*

*Our second dive was a cray bash off Collendina again, in some excellent reef, but poor viz. Another cray for the pot, but it was a poor second to the magical experience with the dolphins and seals! I thought last week was as good as it gets, but it just got better!!*

*Alan & Mary*





## King crab thief locked in freezer

From correspondents in Tokyo

27Jan04

**A JAPANESE man who stole valuable king crabs from a fish market was arrested after accidentally locking himself inside a freezer, a police spokesman said today.**

Unemployed Hirohisa Matsumoto, 32, allegedly broke into a fish market's freezer storage in Kagoshima, southern Japan, early on December 23 last year.

Police said Matsumoto had netted 42,000 yen (\$A521) worth of king crabs and other seafood. However, it is alleged when he went back into the freezer to fetch more, the door closed, locking him inside.

Police said Matsumoto was trapped in the freezer, where the temperature was minus 16 degrees Celsius, for about 20 minutes.

He used his mobile phone to call a friend, who then asked a security guard to open the freezer door, police said. Investigators believed the man could have died had his mobile phone failed to work.

On his release, Matsumoto said he had been locked inside, but later the owner of the freezer noticed that king crabs had been stolen and reported the theft to the police, Jiji Press said.

***This report appears on NEWS.com.au.***

## REPORT ON THE BLACK ROCK DINNER

Alan Storen

On the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2003, 8 members of VSAG attended the BRUDG 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner. Pat Reynolds, Alan and Jude Storen, Bruce and Dawn Dart, Darren Pearce, Leo Maybus and Priya Cardinaletti joined over 100 members of Black Rock at the Mentone RSL to help celebrate their 50 years. A good night was had by all.

-----Original Message-----

From: Undersea Explorer [mailto:[info@undersea.com.au](mailto:info@undersea.com.au)]

Sent: Sunday, 8 February 2004 2:19 PM

To: [jlawler@tpqi.com.au](mailto:jlawler@tpqi.com.au)

Subject: Undersea Explorer Minke Whale Experience & Tech Diving 2004

Victorian Sub-Aqua Group

Swarms of pelagic action, thousand metre coral wall drops, a pristine underwater wilderness with visibility of 30 metres plus - that's what Australian liveaboard UNDERSEA EXPLORER is offering your dive clients this year.

Operating from Port Douglas, North Queensland, UNDERSEA EXPLORER gives adventure divers the chance to experience untimed, drift, critter, muck and night dives on remote Coral Sea reefs and the outer edges of the Great Barrier Reef.

Here are just two of the many expeditions planned for 2004:

Join the annual migration of dwarf minke whales as they travel north through the Ribbon Reefs from June to July. See eye-to-eye with these curious and gentle animals as you experience unforgettable in-water encounters.....not to mention world class diving!

In August and October internationally renowned tech diver, John Bennett, joins Undersea Explorer as guest instructor on two specialised tech trips.

In recent years, John has broken four ocean world depth records and was the first to dive below 305 metres on scuba. For divers into mixed gas and rebreather techniques, this is a rare chance to gain from John's comprehensive experience.

Ask about our special group rates and check our website  
[www.undersea.com.au](http://www.undersea.com.au)  
for the latest schedule and additional information.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Kaz

Undersea Explorer  
Adventure Diving and Research Expeditions  
Ph: 61 7 4099 5911 Fax: 61 7 4099 5914  
Email: [info@undersea.com.au](mailto:info@undersea.com.au)

**DIVE REPORT.**  
**BY JOHN LAWLER.**

*On the 9<sup>th</sup> November last year, three VSAG'ers turned out for a club dive. The lack of divers was probably due to the dive being after the Cup weekend at Tidal River.*

*Bruce Dart and Neville Viapree made up the crew for this dive day and we decided to have a look at a new dive site off Shortland Bluff. This area is probably not really new but it shown to us by a charter boat operator friend.*

*We set out from Sorrento into brilliant sunshine and calm waters and headed for Queenscliff.*

*Neville took over as boat captain and took us to the designated dive reef (I have to say this we have to lay the blame on him for the lousy dive we had.. Only joking Nev!)*

*We saw the reef come up on the sounder and Bruce and I fell over and into brilliant clear water with viz around 20mtrs, but between the time we located the reef and hitting the bottom we had missed the reef and the rest of the dive was in uninteresting territory. Just the same it was still good to be in brilliant clear water and in slack water conditions.*

*We finished the dive and when back on the boat decided to have another go at this reef and Neville kitted up for this dive.*

*We made very sure we pinpointed the reef this time and Nev splashed in. We saw him 45 minutes later surfacing with a very big smile on his face. He had*

*landed on the reef and said it was just awesome..overhangs,ledges,fish and best of all large crays in the deep ledges.....very exciting!*

*It was too late for Bruce and I to have another dive here as the slack water was over and the current was running hard on the ebb, so we decided to have a look outside the heads.*

*We headed west past Point Lonsdale for around 4kms and picked up some great bommies and decided to have a look. Bruce and I splashed in and there we found some wonderful rock formations, lots of overhangs and good fish life. The crays should have been there but only one small one was seen and bagged by me.*

*The swell was a bit testy and Bruce only had a short dive due this making his dive uncomfortable. I stayed for another 20mins after this and also pulled out.*

*We had a top dive day. I have the marks in the GPS for the bommie off Q'Cliff and it is on the top of the dive agenda for the very next dive whenever that might be.*

## DIVE REPORT NOVEMBER.

BY JOHN LAWLER

*It was hard to figure out why only three divers were taking part on this dive as the conditions were simply perfect.*

*Rob Birtles, Neville Viapre and I made up the team and after the normal set up at the Sorrento ramp we headed off to check out some new territory off Shortlands Bluff.*

*I had been given some rough marks by our good friends on Ocean Divers some weeks prior and we arrived near this area around slack water time with the intention of seeing what the waters below held for us.*

*It was also a good opportunity to test run my new Canon Poweshot A70 camera and underwater housing...more on this later.*

*Rob and I were to do the first dive and this was preceded by a safety call to Lonsdale Lighthouse to check on shipping movements for both channels...no shipping for the morning which was great.*

*The area we dropped into had some spectacular scenery with a myriad of differing fish life of all shapes and sizes. Ledges were plentiful but the crays had not yet*

*come back into the bay as not one crustacean was seen.*

*We were diving in around 50ft of water so our dive time was nice and as we were in slack water it was very comfortable diving.*

*This new dive site is quite big as we still had plenty of area yet to be covered as our time to surface arrived. The area could now be included in our dive programme as it really is a must see must dive area. The particular spot we were looking for which is a big bommie has yet to be dived and I feel we may have drifted away from it before it actually got plugged into the GPS on the day we were given the info so there is a lot more excitement to come.*

*The Canon Powershot was simply amazing to use as an underwater camera. All that was needed for a person like me was to aim and shoot. Having said that, whilst the pics were ok I will need a lot of coaching from Mary Malloy to produce good quality photos. I was however very pleased with this new toy and hope to be able to show some good pics in the near future..*

*Neville decided to dive on the eastern side of the channel and his dive was also in some new territory which we picked up on simply by watching the sounder whilst motoring slowly. Neville had a huge grin on his face after the dive as he found terrific territory with a big cave and loads of exciting scenery.*

*After some surface time it was decided to dive the 90 ft J4 sub. We didn't need the GPS for this site as there were a number of private and commercial boats at the site. We waited for the crowds to thin out a bit and Nev and Rob dropped down onto this great wreck dive. The boys reported that the swell was a bit strong and so for safety did not enter the sub. None the less the dive very enjoyable.*

*Back at the ramp someone had turned up the heat as it was super hot away from the bay breezes. Time to head home after another brilliant day of diving and fun on our great Port Phillip Bay.*



# DIVE REPORT.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> 2004.  
BY JOHN LAWLER.

*It probably should not have come as any surprise that the numbers of divers for this dive was at the all time low of just two! The weather forecast was for "showers" and 10 to 15 knots winds so I guess the general thinking was that it would not be a good dive day so let's sleep in and later watch the tennis finals.*

*Alan Storen was the nominated dive captain for this dive and despite even a ring around to the normal regular divers he had no takers.*

*Alan called me on Sunday at 6.30 am to advise that "it was bucketing down here at Vermont". Well Vermont aint Sorrento so we decided to go on a note of positiveness and "you will never know if you never go."*

*Alan checked with Dive Victoria and they advised that all their dives up to 10am were cancelled and they would decide if their dives were to go ahead if the weather was ok after that time....they did.*

*I had drizzle on and off most of the way down the coast but when we arrived at the ramp it had mostly passed over. The weather to the west was a bit black and ominous but the wind was hardly up and the day was quite warm....so it was a goer we decided.*

*Alan did some training on the boat and he completed his first drive off with flying colours and then headed the boat to Queenscliff guided by the GPS marks as another part of the training.*

*Slack water (ebb...clear water) was due around 9.45 so we dropped in a shot line float and waited for the tidal flow to slow up for a comfortable dive. I won the toss of the coin for the first dive and when the reef came up on the sounder it was over the side and down into very clear water and little tidal movement.*

*The area was full of bommies,holes,ledges and lots of fish life. I recognised this dive site as I had dived it with Leo Maybus, identified by the old steel cray pot and giant anchor.*

*I knew what was north of this spot from the last dive so did a 360 and headed south into more brilliant territory. The slack was right on now and the pick could be left lightly tucked in allowing the freedom to move about the bommies with ease. The vis was exceptional at about 15 meters and this was just heaven as all the territory all around could be seen and even a long way from the line it was easy to see it*

*rising up to the buoy...very very safe diving conditions.*

*The hunt for a cray was on all this time and whilst there were many exceptional ledges and holes not a single feeler anywhere.*

*I came under one such overhang running north south with deep long ledges and I thought I will get the catch bag ready for this is definitely cray home...no way...nothing!! Next time maybe.*

*Bottom time ( 35 mins) was up and so was I. On the surface the southerly had sprung up but still ok for Alan's dive. He was happy to look at the same territory that I had dived and off he went.*

*Alan had moved over similar territory to mine however he was somewhat north and he also found the territory very interesting and was smiling when he got back on the boat. No crabs again!*

*During Alan's time down below I was monitoring the commercials guys and the chatter about " hey..... I got some your divers on this line...and hey.....some of your divers are way over there and hey.....etc,etc. quite amusing listening to the frenzy of communications about divers being all over the place. Then I picked up one operator who called another with a request to "call me on this mobile number" .....now there was a message he did not want to be heard over marine radio!*

*We decided to head up to the Lonsdale Wall but by this time all the charter boats had left. We decided to have lunch in the bay at the Portsea Pier and on the way we saw the guy who asked for the mobile call with his yellow charter boat being towed back to PP. At PP Alan spoke to this guy (whose motor had packed up near the rip) who apparently had to call for a charter boat to come out and tow him home as when he asked for a tow from one particular charter operator at the Wall, he got a refusal!! Obviously diplomacy doesn't permit for names here....but it was an interesting insight in the world of some of our charter operators.*

*Lunch was very pleasant, warm sun, tanks filled at Ruben's and off back to Sorrento with a little detour to ogle at Lindsay Fox's new mansion next to his current homes...and the chopper was there!*

*Great day..great diving...great company..thanks Alan...it was fun.*



## VSAG CHRISTMAS TRIP 2003/2004.

# Adelaide

**John Mills.**

Our packing was complete at 2.00am on Boxing Day morning. We were roused by the alarm at about 7.00am, the last minute things were packed and the trailer was hitched at 8.30am. I was chuffed, as that would have to be a record for us. Priya wanted to check that we had all the dive gear, "I said no need to as it was packed in the boot last night". We settled into the 9-hour drive and passed Andy just before Ballarat. Priya finalised all the Wilson's Prom arrangements on the way and we stopped at Ararat for a lunch of Christmas leftovers. We continued on our way and several hours later we passed Andy again as he was pulling back onto the road. He was stopped as his tarp was tearing itself to pieces in the breeze. We arrived at the campsite to find a stiff breeze blowing; we soldiered on and managed to get the tent up without it blowing away. The advanced party of Leo, Andrew and Pat were already set up as they had left Melbourne at 2.00am; they were well entrenched and half inebriated. An early night was had after many hours of steering.

We awoke early next morning to the sound of birds squawking and the sound of jets taking off from the Adelaide international Airport. A lazy day was had by all the intrepid adventurers as they found their bearings and all the good places to spend money. Leo and his crew had found a pizza delivery service that delivered to the campsite. This was to become their staple diet for many days. Priya was tired from the Marathon packing session and was conspicuously absent as she rested from the ordeal, a rumour was spreading through the campground that I had done something to her and was hiding the body. We turned in early to watch some telly and Andy came to tell us that we were leaving at 8.30am to dive at Port Noarlunga.

Again, we got up with the aeroplanes and started to get ready. A sinking feeling came over me as I searched the boot for my BCAs it was not there! I sheepishly told Andy that I had forgotten it and he said that he had "something to tide me over". Luckily, it turned out that Andrew had a spare one and I borrowed it. Upon telling Priya of my predicament, she gleefully reminded me that I should have let her check the dive gear before we left. I saw Mick and he said, "They are here" yet he was still sceptical that Priya was amongst us, as she had still not been seen. I thought that VSAG was going to set a record and leave on time as all were in their cars and ready to go at 8.15. Even Priya was on time and it was



noted that she was in the shower before Leo and Andrew had roused. However the gods of procrastination began to release their wrath, the air conditioner in Leo's car began blowing fuses. When Leo tried to hook Micks boat to the car, it became evident that his 2" ball was too big. A smaller ball and implement was found and a transplant was performed. We thought that Andy had taken off to lend some assistance with this delicate operation, however he was found playing blocks with the grandchildren. Finally, Leo was fully recovered and ready to go. We left the camp at 9.15. We launched at the ramp and journeyed out to where some wrecks were. After anchoring Priya and I jumped in only to find a sandy bottom. We grovelled around for a few minutes, gave up and surfaced. Andy and Baz picked us up and went back to the site. They then dived the wrecks and gave us directions to find them upon surfacing. It was with great relief that we actually found the wrecks on the second dive. After about twenty minutes, we surfaced got back in the boats and putted around the Noarlunga reefs before returning to the ramp. At the ramp a discussion was held with some of the local divers and it was decided to leave at 6.30 am and head out to Kangaroo Island.

The next morning I was up at 5.00am before the planes and noticed that many of the members had also surfaced. The boats were loaded and everyone was ready to go at 6.30am. I was in shock and disbelief, as it appeared that the VSAG was going to execute the plan for an early morning dive without a hitch. Just as we were leaving Mick pulled up to ask Andy which was the best way to go. After 10 minutes of discussion and negotiation a route was decided upon, we got away at 6.40am; I can still hear the Big Lloyds booming voice saying, "This is unheard of, getting away on time Aw Haw Haw!" We arrived at the boat ramp at Cape Jervis at 8.00am. Priya and Mick ventured to the toilets to change and relieve themselves. Mick had returned with the news that it would not be wise to purchase a hot dog at the kiosk as he had seen one being returned black with mould. Priya boarded and though it was slightly choppy, the decision was made to make the crossing to Kangaroo Island. When we reached the Island, the sounder indicated that it was quite shallow. Mick insisted we keep going around the points where it may not be quite so rough. We found a spot with about 20metres of depth and settled there. The first crew went in and surfaced about 30 minutes later bearing crays. Big Mick was so confident that he chucked two of his back (different size limits in SA). Priya and I tried to work out the wind direction from the compass and were quite perplexed that it was coming from the south; Andy later discovered that his new radio speaker that was proudly mounted next to the compass was interfering with it. We continued to dive until 3.30 and headed back as we had pretty much reached the boat limits for crustaceans. We headed across the channel in near perfect conditions retrieved the boats and headed for home. Upon our arrival back at camp, "the carrot" was quite chuffed and reflected, "that in his wildest dreams he never would have thought that we would get to Kangaroo Island".

The next day was a lay day and it was decided to check out the wineries at McLaren Vale. We loaded Pat and his crutches in the car and away we went. The day consisted

of us ringing Mick to find which winery he was at and catching up with the group. We had missed lunch, as we had to sort some things out in Glenelg in the morning so we grabbed some pies and salad rolls. Pat had two pies, as he was concerned that his camps supplies were running low and he may have to subsist on this meal. We continued the trek around the wineries; Mick had his 25-litre port barrel to fill in case he and Annie found a tippie that took their fancy. Alas, none of the establishments dealt in such quantities. The next day it was decided to repeat our previous performance and leave early to dive the Hobart, this would enable us to get back early for new years eve.

Again all were up early, though we started to slip into the old VSAG ways with slow boat loads and general procrastination, we finally left at the "semi respectable" time of 7.30. We picked up Gabriel on the way and fuelled the boats. We arrived at the dive shop at Normanville just after it opened at 9.00am to get our diving permits. Andy admitted he had read the code of practice the night before and fallen asleep. We started to fill the permit forms out and were told that because of the tides the diving window was from 1.30 to 4.30, so much for an early start. Not everyone had their dive cards with them, however Priya's VSAG polo shirt was deemed to be enough evidence that we knew how to dive. She then showed them our advertisement in the dive log to verify our existence. Upon being asked if we understood the code of practice, Mick replied, "I don't read this crap, I just follow along with everybody else". Upon completing the formalities, we launched at the Marina and headed to the Rapid Bay Jetty to fill in the time. Leo and Andrew dived to photograph leafy sea dragons and I snorkelled on the surface. We then headed for the Hobart and tied up to the buoys. This was a great wreck dive and we explored from the engine room to the stern. It was noticed that Baz had ventured in for a second dive; the cold did not matter, as he loves his wreck dives. We did a second dive and explored the bridge and bow. We got home for New Years Eve to find a disco had been organised at the camp. We watched DVD's in Leos van. The celebrations were quite subdued and all behaved themselves.

New years day was fairly quite and all did their own thing, Andy took his family out and dived Port Noarlunga.

The following day a crew of Leo, Andrew, Barry and Mick ventured out and dived the Rapid Bay Jetty and The Hobart again. Andy's crew packed up and headed for home.

It was decided to do a night dive at the Rapid bay Jetty. We filled the tanks at the Glenelg dive shop. Leo got a warm fill and wanted a top up. In order to convince them to do this he had to remind the bloke filling the tanks that he was a minor celebrity and had been on the Channel Nine news for the across the bay challenge. We headed for the Jetty in the afternoon; we had intended to go earlier but were delayed by Leo sorting out his cameras. When we arrived at the jetty Priya decided to keep Pat company. The conditions were perfect with flat seas. Leo and Andrew got some great photos. The perfect weather we had taken for granted turned and a storm came over during the night. Pat was washed out of his tent.

On the last day in Adelaide, we went to Port Adelaide to look at the maritime museum. They must have felt sorry for Pat with his crutches, as he got in free. Priya disappeared to Leos that night to watch the Sunday movie.

The pack up morning was fine, a dry tent was packed and we were away by about 11.00. The camp commandant informed us that because it was 11.15 our gate pin would not work and we would be locked in. I strategically positioned the car and trailer to block the exit and Priya convinced them to open the gate as quite a traffic jam was building up. Leo got some directions from the camp Nazi for the best route to Naracoorte, as they wanted to check out some of the caves that had been recently opened. He suggested they take the longest route possible; Leo blindly believed him and took off without checking a map. We passed him on the way to Mt Gambier and thought he had no show of making the caves. We were correct as they missed the turn at Kingston and decided to press on to Gambier. We met up at the dive lodge at Mt Gambier to the constant cry of "I want to go home from Andrew". We had tea at the Hotel recommended by Priya as it had a nice "ambience", Pat declared that the locals must be having a big night out as they were dressed in their best Holden Racing Team fleeces and had their mullets neatly trimmed. We observed Leos handiwork at the Salad Bar as he was kicking the Salad he had dropped under the bar and was rubbing it into the carpet. All were satisfied with their meal except Andrew who got salad with his chips. We watched some television at the lodge and turned in for the night.

Leo's crew had breakfast and headed back to Melbourne. Priya and I dived Picaninie Ponds and Ewens Ponds over the next couple of days before heading for home. The Ewens dive was a little disappointing as a group got in before us and silted it up.

This was one of the more enjoyable Christmas trips the club has been on for a long time. The Caravan Park facilities were in the main excellent. The weather was sensational and the range of diving offered catered for most tastes from Cray bashes to wreck dives. As always, the trip was a success due to the participation of the members who attended. Thank you for creating a memorable holiday.



# CHRISTMAS 2003 – ADELAIDE S.A.

By Mick Jeacle

*When it was announced that VSAG would venture to Adelaide for its annual Christmas diving trip last year, I must confess that I was somewhat perplexed at this decision. After all, Adelaide is not really known for great diving within close proximity of its Western shores, and I therefore resigned myself to the fact that we would need to tow our boats a fair way south, to dive sites more in keeping with what we have in Melbourne. While making my decision to go, I considered this to be no big deal, as it was only 107 kilometres to the tip of the Fleurieu Peninsula, and in between was the wreck of the ex-HMAS Hobart, the sister vessel of the ex-HMAS Perth, which of course we dived during our WA trip in March 2003.*

*So, off we went at 6am on Boxing Day, and after an uneventful trip we arrived at Adelaide Shores Resort park late afternoon. After an unsuccessful attempt to erect our new lightweight in a howling wind, and a seriously bent aluminium pole right at the join, I threw it down in disgust and made my way to Leo's van for a cold beer and a cool down. This worked wonders, and Bazza & Marie soon arrived with Bazza offering advice on how to straighten the pole, and the wind slackened off considerably. Our abode was up in no time and we settled in to enjoy a few more coldies and survey the surroundings.*

## The Caravan Park

*Adelaide Shores Caravan Park is situated about a 15 minute drive from the Adelaide CBD at West Beach. It is right next to the airport and just north of Glenelg, a very popular beach spot which is undergoing huge development at present. There is a great marina complex, surrounded by expensive apartments, restaurants & cafes. It seems half of Adelaide goes there on a fine day, as it proved very difficult to find a car park each time we visited.*

*The park itself (read Resort) would have to be the best I have ever stayed in. From memory, it has won the Tourism Award for best resort for the past 5 years running. Flat, grassy sites were fairly large, and the park featured swaying palms, landscaped and paved gardens, a licensed café, a large pavilion containing freezers, gas cook tops, microwave ovens, BBQ's and a boiling water appliance on one wall, all for guest usage.*

*The whole park was patrolled by a security guard in a small van, 24 hours a day. An added advantage was that we were not squashed in like they do in NSW, and we soon learned that some large spaces opposite us were not camping sites, allowing us to park the boats and cars, thus leaving plenty of space in front of your tent or van. There was a gate to the beach about one minute's walk away, and the ladies were no doubt thankful for this on more than one occasion, while the divers were away doing what they do best. There was a bus stop right outside the front gate if one chose not to*

drive to the city, and Glenelg Scuba was only a short distance away for tank fills. I for one was not perturbed by air traffic noise, as the first flights took off right on 6.04 a.m. each day, due no doubt to the curfew in place. On a couple of occasions, we needed to arise before this time anyway, due to our intended dives and the travel time and distance involved.

## The weather

In all of the Christmas trips I have attended, I can't recall the weather being so consistently good over a period of 9 days. Most days were around 30 degrees, with the highest temperature recorded at 39.6 on the last Saturday. Above all, there was virtually no wind to worry us, and the sight of flat seas every day was a joy to behold.

A real treat was the ability to cook and dine outside the tent every morning and evening, which made for a very relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. I know this to be true, as Annie became so relaxed, that she couldn't be bothered cooking our evening meal even once during our stay. Thank heavens for my turbo oven; yours truly easily compensated for her laziness and cooked up a number of treats with little or no effort. Leo, Andrew & Pat borrowed the oven one night to cook up a roast, with Leo vowing to purchase one prior to the next trip. Not bad, eh boys!

It was very warm throughout the night, and we soon found the need to open up the inside of the tent to relieve the stuffiness. Leo had the right idea, as he even had a pedestal fan in his van. Food for thought next year. Another problem was finding some shade out the front of the tent, but this will be rectified on the next trip with the addition of a shade cabana.

Mind you, there were no complaints with any of the above. The alternatives are miserable – wind, rain, low temperatures etc. etc.

All in all, it was one out of the box, and we would be kidding ourselves if we expected the same next year. We can only hope.

## The diving

Some months before, I sent an email to Glenelg Scuba requesting they provide me with GPS coordinates for some of their more advanced dive sites. All I received was one site, containing the wreck of **The Lumb** and the sand dredge **South Australian**, both purposely sunk at the same site in 20 metres of water.

## The Dredge

These wrecks are accessed via O'Sullivan's Beach boat ramp, some 20 km South of our caravan park. This ramp was typical of all ramps we encountered in SA. A triple concrete ramp in the centre, flanked by two double concrete ramps each side, floating pon-

toons and fully protected by circular rock walls, with the opening parallel to the shoreline. Boy, can they show us a thing or two about providing facilities to the boaters. Bracks & co should take a trip over there and take heaps of photos for when they decide to spend some of our fishing licence and boat registration fees, where these funds should be spent, improving our dismal lot on our marvelous Port Phillip bay. We live in hope!

The Lumb was sunk in 1994, and last saw service as a tuna fishing trawler in Port Lincoln. Prior to that she was a tug working in Tasmania. It is joined to the dredge by a large chain stretching some 40 metres on the sand, which ensures divers can dive both wrecks on the one dive with ease. You can penetrate these wrecks with ease and because they are both only about 30 metres long, there is more than sufficient bottom time to see everything, and not have to return to this ordinary dive site. Not my cup of tea.

The Noarlunga jetty is less than 3 km away, with extensive reef out front. A run over the area with eyes on the depth sounder failed to engender any enthusiasm for a second dive this day, and we all agreed to head for the ramp. It was here that we met "Chewy", a local diver with a Haines Signature, who suggested we dive **Kangaroo Island** the next day. Wow! This option certainly wasn't considered by us, so it was out with the maps that evening as we planned the trip to Cape Jervis, hoping to be on the road by 6.30am.

Well, I'm pleased to say we were on our way at 6.35 am. This is surely a VSAG record, and certainly would never have happened in Alex Talay's diving days. Who will ever forget Alex emerging from his tent in a disheveled state, fag in mouth as he scratched his nether regions, stating "no hurry boys, there's plenty of time!"

Whilst the distance to Cape Jervis was only 107 km, the roads aren't the best, and it took us 1 hour 45 min to get there. The sea displayed a small chop and some white caps, but the wind was coming from a north westerly direction, which augured well for diving the South Eastern area of the island, near the Cape Willoughby lighthouse. We were told that this area is wide open to the elements, and that it is not often that divers can venture there. The message was clear – if conditions suit, go. And go we did.

The further we went around the Southern point visible from Cape Jervis, the calmer it got. We settled on a spot just around from the lighthouse, with the territory similar in many ways to Wilsons Promontory, both above and below the water. The water was a nice shade of blue, with visibility in the vicinity of 45 feet. Fish life was varied and plentiful, with my favourite being the silver drummer, which hovered around in schools of 20 or more. I was also glad to see a number of large blue groper.

We all had two dives in this area, and 15 crays were boated in total. A big cook up took place that evening outside the Jeacle tent, with some electing to freeze the catch and take them home at end of the trip.

The 28 km trip back to the boat ramp was relatively smooth as the wind had dropped off somewhat over the course of the day.

The next day also saw an early departure, as we decided to dive the ex-**HMAS Hobart**.

On the way we pulled in to a BP service station to fill Leo's truck up with LP gas,

and purchase some Subway rolls for lunch. Andrew was first up and he proceeded to order a foot long roll filled with a dozen meat balls & grave, three large fried chicken fillets, various salads and cheese. As I was beginning to wonder how he could eat all this for lunch, he announced that he better order something for lunch while he was at it! You see, this was for breakfast, so he ordered another of the same. A family size block of Cadburys Dairy Milk, and a two litre bottle of coke saw him done. I'm here to tell you all that the first sub was devoured within 2 km, and I never did see what happened to the chocolate.

About an hour later we were in the Dolphin Dive Center in Normanville, filling out permit applications to dive the **Hobart**. These cost \$10 for the day, and we were allocated two mooring buoys for a three-hour time limit, times enough to have two dives on the ship. From there it is a 15-minute trip to Sunset Cove Resort, and it's fabulous marina and boat ramp at Wirrina Cove. Sunset Resort is currently owned by Malaysian interests, and is in receivership for the third time. It's caused in the main by the fact that it is considered to be out in the middle of nowhere, and Adelaide people won't travel that far. If you tell an Adelaide person that you are going to Victor Harbor (one hour South), he'll ask you where you are staying the night.

The Hobart is around 7 km from the ramp and sits upright in just under 100 feet of water. It is a sister ship to the Perth, and this became very obvious as we swam through its corridors and various rooms. Visibility was better than I expected, and it was quite clear inside. The main difference between the two is that you can enter the engine room of the Hobart, which makes for a much more interesting dive. Also the large guns are still in position, an awesome sight indeed.

We dived the wreck twice this day, and returned another day to dive it once again. A great dive, and one that I shall look forward to doing again next year.

About 3 km further south from the ramp lies the famed **Rapid Bay Jetty**. This jetty is 470 m long and has a 200 m T section at the end. Here one can get off on leafy sea dragons, nudibranchs, little colorful fish of myriad varieties, and all other minute, impossible to find creatures, fondly admired by the camera buffs of this world. Enter Leo Maybus, a relatively new camera freak, followed closely (right up his arse) by son Andrew, trying to out do dad in the photo stakes.

Leo and Andrew first dived here as we waited for the ideal tide to dive the Hobart. They dived it again the next day we dived the Hobart, while Bazza and I tried the point further on, which was pretty ordinary. Not yet satisfied, they returned to do a night dive from the shore, arriving back at the camp at midnight. One can only admire their enthusiasm, but it didn't rub off on me.

Well, that's about it for the diving. We dived 4 days and we did what we wanted to do. In fact we could have dived every day we were there if we so desired, as the weather and seas were perfect. But of course we had to do the right thing by the ladies, and accompany them on other activities. These included:-

- o A trip to McLaren Vale wineries, about 45 minutes south of

Adelaide.

- o A trip to Victor Harbor and Goolwa, to check the place out for future trip prospects.
- o A walk around Rundle Mall.
- o A trip to Port Adelaide and a \$3 ferry ride lasting 90 minutes.
- o Catch up with an old bank colleague on a number of occasions.

*It was a great holiday, and all enjoyed it immensely. No doubt, this was mainly due to the fantastic weather and the fact that we could dive whenever we pleased. We have re-booked our 7 sites for next year, and ordered a further 5, making 12 in all. We should find out whether we have all 12 by say end of April, as those people who were booked in this year have first preference. So, if you are interested in going next Christmas, get your booking as soon as it is announced by committee how many sites we have. A \$30 deposit will then be required.*

*Thanks to the following participants who all helped to make it an enjoyable trip:*

*Leo & Andrew Maybus*

*Pat Reynolds*

*John Mills & Priya Cardinaletti*

*Barry & Marie Truscott*

*Andy & Gayle Mastrowicz, daughter Nicole & her husband Joe (and children).*

*I, and my dearly beloved Annie, look forward to returning this year*

## Did you know?

STORY BY JOHN LAWLER.

Fourteen years before the "Titanic" sailed on her maiden voyage in 1912, a novel was published titled "Futility". This book was about an unsinkable and glamorous Atlantic liner, the largest in the world.

Like the Titanic, the ship's passenger list was the Crème de la Crème of some of the world's richest and famous people of that time.

Also, as was the case with Titanic, this ship did not have enough life boats.

On a cold April night the fictional and "unsinkable" vessels strikes an iceberg and glides to the bottom of the Atlantic.

The name of this liner, in the story by Morgan Robertson was "The Titan"!!

FROM THE "GIANT BOOK OF FACTS AND TRIVIA", EDITED BY ISAAC ASIMOV, LONDON 1993.



# DIVE REPORT 11th January

Nev Viapree

## *Planned dive - the Rotomahana*

*John Lawler and I stood on guard duty while the rest of the club was away for xmas however, due to the lack of divers not much diving was done over the xmas period. Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> of January - Tony Tipping was officer in chare of verbal communications. Tony and Rob Birtles were in my boat while JL took Leo and his brother. By the time we had launched the boats the sky was black and the wind was howling and murderous thunder storms were brewing however nobody except me wanted to pull the pin, so off we went as the normal VSAG speed - flat out to the heads. Much to my surprise we actually got out through the heads and headed for the 120 ft sub - it was decided the Rotamahana was too far in the windy conditions.*

*The boys had a good dive on the sub while I stayed topside controlling the boat in 9.5 ft waves. A bit of thunder and lightning came in just to keep the day interesting, however weather conditions improved and we had lunch and then a second dive at Lonsdale.*

*Robert Birtles cruelly and cold bloodedly murdered a poor slightly smallish cray, which he seemed quite proud of!*

*Ironically as we headed back into Sorrento the sea flattened, the sun came out and it turned into a great day. We were finished by 3pm*

*Robert and I headed off for the coffee bar( yes the coffee bar, not the bar). Six flat whites was a nice way to finish off the day. We all had a great day and enjoyed the social gathering.*

*I think it would be quite definite that VSAG would have to be the only dive club in Australia that would have the confidence to head out on a dive on such a day!*

*Even though there was a charter boat on the 90 ft sub, they were there for the money not the enjoyment!*

*Finally from my spiritual mentor:*

- 1. avoid all evil*
- 2. seek happiness*
- 3. never do that bloody stupid trip of letting your pet ferret run up your trouser leg!*



## Chill with the lobsters, chefs told

18Feb04

LOBSTERS and crabs should make their way to the dinner plate via a quiet descent into frozen sleep, and not by being boiled alive. That's according to the RSPCA, which today issued new guidelines on the humane killing of crabs, lobsters and other crustaceans.

The new guidelines, intended for restaurants, caterers and cooks and based on the latest scientific research, are aimed at finally ending the practice of killing crustaceans by dumping them in boiling water. RSPCA president Dr Hugh Wirth said it was previously recommended by the society and government agencies that crustaceans be immersed in an ice slurry to chill the animal and render it insensible to pain.

However, for most species, this caused death by osmotic shock, which happens when an animal's cells burst as they absorb too much water. Dr Wirth said some restaurateurs ignored the ice slurry method because diners complained the lobsters didn't taste as good. As a result, cooks were continuing to plunge live crustaceans into boiling pots of water. The new guidelines say crustaceans should instead be chilled in a refrigerator or freezer, and then killed by splitting or spiking to destroy the nerve centres. "If you chuck a live crustacean into a boiling pot of water, they feel that and you are killing them cruelly," Dr Wirth said. "While there are still traditionalists, I think this will get rid of the last resistance. "I am sure now we will get an uptake of the proper methodology." Jill Mure, whose family has run seafood restaurants in Tasmania for almost 30 years, said she had long subscribed to the practice of chilling lobsters in the freezer. "I just believe they go very nicely to sleep," she said. "I think the method of tossing them in the pot is long gone. "Apart from anything else, they die terribly of shock and shoot their legs off." Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute research scientist Dr Caleb Gardner, who helped develop the new guidelines, said lobsters were difficult to kill quickly as they did not have a centralised brain. Instead, they had a series of ganglia, or "sub-brains", running through their segmented bodies. "There is a lot of confusion out there about the best techniques for killing different crustaceans," he said in a statement. "This new RSPCA guideline reflects the current scientific knowledge and provides practical advice on how to kill lobsters and crabs humanely."peThe RSPCA will hold a seminar on the welfare of aquatic animals at Canberra's Australian War Memorial on Tuesday, where Dr Gardner will speak on the humane killing of crustaceans.

# **SCUBA MARKET.**

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**THIS UNIT IS ALMOST BRAND NEW.**

**SIZE: SMALL**

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**Contact: JOHN LAWLER.**

## Safety Notice

Nev Viapree

Boat owners are responsible to enforce all safety regulations as defined by the committee. They also have the right to enforce their own personal requests or requirements and standards ie stopping someone from diving with ill-fitting equipment – or stopping someone from diving with any equipment that is broken or unsatisfactory for any other reason.

We dive together as friends, the club motto is “Safety in diving”, most boat owners have been diving on average 30-35 years and deserve to have their requests complied with.

Reminder, buoys must be used on ALL back beach diving – NO exceptions.