

FATHOMS

DECEMBER 07 JANUARY 08

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP



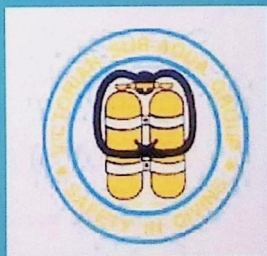
J-M Castier 1993



Mackenzie Gregory Guest
Speaker November meeting

www.vsag.org.au

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FATHOMS



Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group

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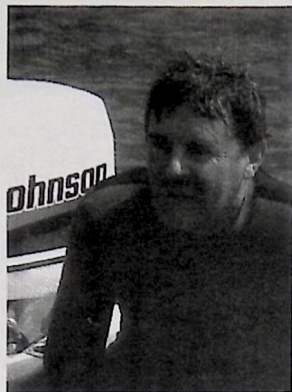
VSAG General Meetings
3rd Thursday in the month

Editorial Submissions to:

Bell's Hotel
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South Melbourne, 8.00 pm
Alan Storen
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Editorial.

What happened to 2007? It has been a busy year in many ways but it appears to have gone by even quicker than normal. Is that a sign I am getting older? I have only managed to get in the water about 120 times this year – well down on my normal. Is that a sign I am getting older? I hope 2008 slows a bit and we can enjoy many more social times together (and diving together of course!). Bridey has taken on the challenge of Social secretary and many activities are in the pipeline. Please attend as many as possible as it makes club life even better.



On the diving side we have planned to go to Bali in May 2008 and we will need to know starters soon – early new year at the latest. A flyer is included in this mag with some of the details.

I hope you have all had a good year and looking forward to 2008. Please make one of your new year resolutions 'To come out diving at least ?? times (you put in the number) in 2008 with VSAG. Try for double figures at least!

We have had many new members join this past year and JL tells me the number is almost 20. Please make them welcome at club activities and meetings. If you know of any other potential members please invite them to a club meeting and the membership committee will take over from there.

The diving in the second half of this year has been very mixed with many days cancelled due to the weather. Some of us even had to resort to shore dives! We had 4 boats and 18 divers on the Flinders dive but the weather gods were not too kind and despite the 'crays in the bag' – see a smiling Bridey on the back cover, the quells were in short supply by the end of the day.

If you have not paid your subs for 2007-2008 please contact Andy to arrange payment. We hope that we do not need to resort to a Name and Shame article in Fathoms.

You may have noticed the DAN flyers in Fathoms over the past year and I encourage those still diving regularly to become members. The club has purchased First Aid Kits from DAN and one should be available on all dives. One is normally resident on JL's boat and one on Mick J's boat and one is a floater to be given to the Dive Captain if one of the others is not available. It currently resides at my place so ring if you have a need.

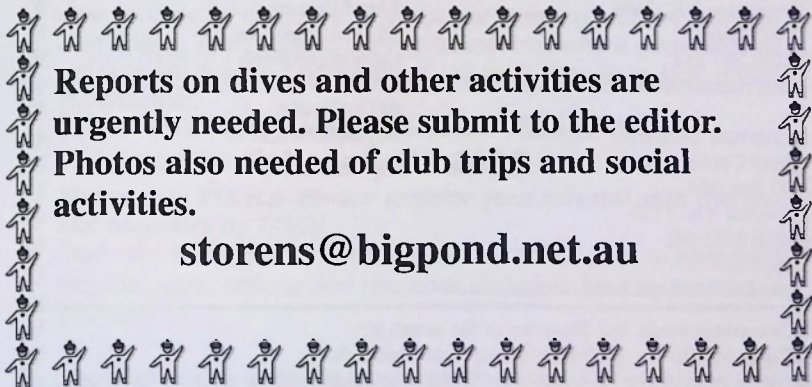
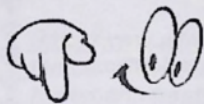
Safety is also very important to the club – have you read the club logo lately? We hope to include at least one article on safety in each edition of Fathoms and discuss safety at all club meetings. If you have any contributions please contact me and I will either list for a meeting, include in Fathoms, or both. We did not appoint a Safety Officer this year as we felt everyone should be responsible for their own safety and the safety of others on the dives. It is too important to be left to one individual!

Many members have taken the step of having a Dive Medical recently and privacy laws prevent me from discussing some of the results that I know about BUT.... It emphasised to me the need for a regular check up. If you are over 20, and who isn't, then at least ever 5 to 10 years is recommended; over 40, every 2 to 5 years and for the seniors – every year. When was your last check-up. I am not just saying this to cover the club in the event of an accident – each member is responsible for their own physical fitness. I ask myself "If xxx had a problem in the water could I lift them back into the boat to go for help?" Could they lift me back into the boat? At least if you have had a medical you can minimise some of the risks and, who knows, it could just save your life. Non divers are also included in this but obviously do not need the full dive medical test.

All the best from me, and your committee, for the festive season and the New Year.

'Work is for people who can't dive'

Cheers
Alan



Reports on dives and other activities are urgently needed. Please submit to the editor. Photos also needed of club trips and social activities.

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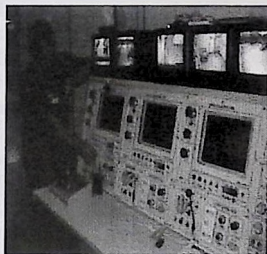
ALL MEMBERS WELCOME

February 2008 Social Events

Visit to the Hyperbaric Unit, Alfred Hospital

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) is used in the treatment of Decompression Illness (the bends), soft tissue infections and certain cases of severe trauma and problem wounds.

The Alfred Hospital in Melbourne is equipped with one of the world's most advanced hyperbaric facilities and provides Victoria's State Service in hyperbaric medicine.



<http://www.alfred.org.au/hyperbaric/>

On our visit a technician from the unit will explain the process of hyperbaric treatment and give further information, not available on dive courses, about some of the subtle symptoms of decompression illness. Then a trip to the Hyperbaric Unit where (providing no patients are present) where there will be a chance to look inside the chamber.

Join us as we take a tour of this world class facility on:

Thursday February 14 2008.

The cost is \$15 p.p. Please register your interest with the social secretary by 7/1/08

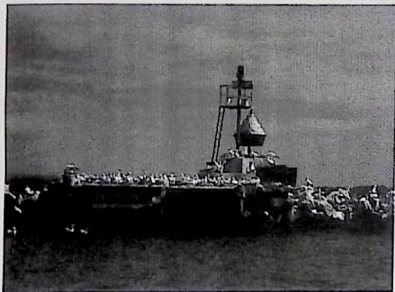
Staff take tours voluntarily and all money raised goes to furthering the education, training and reference materials for the Hyperbaric Unit Staff

The VSAG New Diver Day: October 07

After canceling the first attempt due an unfavourable weather forecast we finally assembled a crew of 6 VSAG old stagers and 5 potential new members in the early hours of Sunday the 21st at Sorrento. We had one newbie pull out late on Saturday nite and sadly it was too late to ring any of the 3 stand-bys that wanted to come.

Slack water Flood was due at 11.30 and the plan was to give the new guys an easy dive at Popes Eye, buddied with a committee member, and then hit the scallops or Rosebud Reef.

After briefing the 5 new people regarding the dive plan and VSAG boat etiquette we launched and without fuss headed for the "Eye". The 1st 2 boats anchored inside the Eye itself whilst the plan was for the SS Lawler craft to prowl around the outside and act as a safety boat should anybody need it.

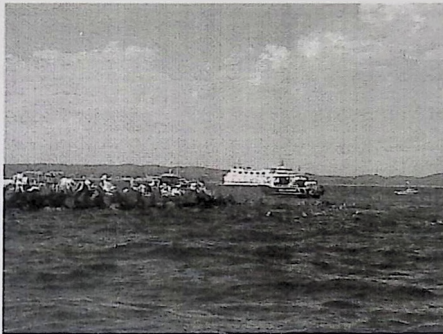


This probably provided the highlight of the day. It transpired that a certain well-known (and very respected) dive operator was also in attendance and was sending a squadron of overseas tourist divers into the clear warm waters of Popes Eye. As John Lawler and myself cruised uselessly around the outer fringes of the dive spot acting as lookouts, should any of our lot not circumnavigate the annulus, we were (...now, how can I put this!) entertained by the antics of the ever surfacing, gear los-

ing overseas tourists. To watch them surface "sans fins" (how do you lose both fins 30mins into a dive??) and then later, en-masse attempt to swim against the run out current whilst towing each other by the 1st stage. This was like a Mastercard ad- price-less.

Meanwhile our lot, were all beginning to appear, safe and sound, back inside the Eye and soon enough we recovered the last diver. We then began the pleasurable task of eating lunch and ridiculing each other, whilst discussing the dive. As I was acting as a non-diving Dive Captain, far be it for me to give you an accurate account of what was actually seen underwater, but allow me the liberty of simply making it up.

Massive schools of Old Wives, Magpie Perch and inquisitive Leatherjackets followed our intrepid divers as they were entranced by the sheer majesty of the kaleidoscope of colours. The brilliant sponges, soft corals and the hidden gems of nudibranchs and cleaner shrimp coupled with the dappled beams of sunlight coming through the swaying Kelp fronds made this an awesome dive.



After a quick stop-over for David Lennon (one of the new guys) to snorkel with the seals at the China-man's Hut we headed for Rye to hit the Scallop Beds. Now if you think I was a bit outlandish describing a dive I didn't do, then cop this, I'm about to describe 2 more that I not only didn't do, but I wasn't even there. Yep, they'd had enough of me by then, so when we reached Rye they just turfed me off the boat and sent me home.

The 3 boats went to Mick Jeacles favourite spot for Scallops and as far as my spies tell me they have now renamed it- " The spot formerly known as Micks Favourite Spot"(with apologies to Prince) Only a few scallops were sourced after much effort and it was then decided to dive the Rosebud Reef area.

Describing a dive on Rosebud Reef for me is no mean feat. I mean seriously, I have never dived it!! What the hell would I know? However, based on what I have heard and read and coupled with a fair degree of authors licence, I will offer up the following summation of this dive. They saw fish, rocks and water. That's it: just fish, rocks and water. I know, I know, its pretty basic, but I used up all my superlatives on Popes Eye.

After the dives, many of the divers stopped for a cleansing ale and many a tall story was told. The 5 new comers all enjoyed their day out with VSAG and 3 of them have since confirmed their intent to join up and we wish them a long and happy association with us.

Days like this can't happen without the support of the boat owners and the VSAG divers who volunteered their time to help out on the day. Thanks to the boat skippers , Mick Jeacle, Peter Briggs and John Lawler for providing their boats. Also a word of thanks to the commitment shown by the volunteers; Mick Kakafikas, Alan Storen, Trevor Williams and Barry Truscott, without whom I would have been doomed.

Welcome aboard to brothers Alun and Alistair , and David Geekie, and hopefully this will not be the last time we see Paul Liddiart and David Lennon. All in all, another great day on the water and we must do it again soon.

Greg Richards.



DIVING INTO THE PAST.. (revisted)

By John Lawler.

Somewhere back in time, Fathoms ran some articles under the above heading. These were articles taken from some very early magazine editions kept in my archives at home.

Some of 'em are real gems!!

Looking at some of the stories from the late 1980's it is interesting to see how the VSAG passion for diving with VSAG way back then still exists to day. Whilst some of those members are not diving these days, newer members mirror the passion from early diving with VSAG.

So it may be time again to look back at some of the articles from those very early days. VSAG had (and yes still has) some wonderful scribes and the one article that I personally looked for with the arrival of my copy was "Flotsam and Jetsam".to this day I am really unsure who wrote those articles...perhaps John Goulding could enlighten us!

So we'll kick of this new addition to Fathoms with an article from March 1984..that is 23 years ago folks!!!!

The cover featured 4 split frame photos. (50c) Max Synon (Vice President at the time) diving in the Solomon Islands (did you bring that port hole back Max?). Paul Tipping on the bow of the "Dow Hino Maru" in Truck Lagoon. Justin Liddy at Ewens Ponds and Barry Truscott, Tony Tipping Paul Sier and Justin Liddy at Ewens Ponds.

[ED. Photo/scan on the inside front cover (page2)]

The editor at the time was Geoff Birtles, (Robert Birtle's brother), a perfectionist diver and fastidious boat owner, (See Editorial!!) one of many in the club around that time who owned a brilliant Haines Hunter V17L (?).(This was the very first boat I dived from out of Flinders after joining VSAG.. My check out dive with Geoff was a cray bash!..Never will I forget that magic day..as a club member and diver, I reckon I am today what I am due the huge impression that magic day had on me!!!) Des Williams was Editor, Alex Talay was Treasurer, Paul Tipping Secretary and (as said) Geoff was Editor and Safety Officer...excellent contributors to the magazine. The balance of the Committee were John Goulding, Barry Truscott, Bob Scott, Mick Jeacle, Pat Reynolds, Mick Jackiw and Terry Brooks.

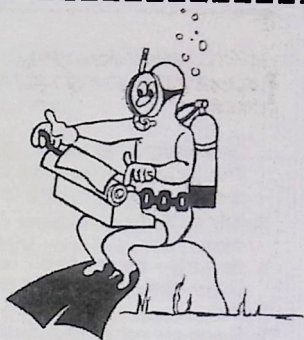
By the way..Fathoms used to feature paid advertising back in the "good 'ole days"

Hope you enjoy "diving into the past".

EDITORIAL

With Bay temperatures in the 20's and belated summer sunshine, VSAG diving is happening at its frenetic best. A recent dive on the Kermode involved 7 boats and nearly 30 divers. Ample evidence of VSAG's position as the largest and most active independent diving club in Australia.

Unfortunately, on this day one member's boat was needlessly damaged after launching when its crew and the crew of another boat left their boats virtually unattended in very sloppy seas (and crowded conditions) whilst the owners parked trailers and cars.



Now that the season is off with a bang ("in" joke!) and our warm water divers are out of hibernation it is timely to use these editorial pages to reflect on how fortunate we are to have the use of members' private boats for club purposes. Most of these boats are expensive and represent a sizeable investment to the owner. An investment that owners are naturally anxious to maintain as well as they can given the peculiar rigours of diving.

Some wear and tear is inevitable but needless chips, dents, scrapes and marks by an unthinking crew are pretty hard to cop and a \$10 contribution to petrol does not even begin to cover the pro-rated expense of using a boat for club dives, let alone the cost of repairing unnecessary damage. I don't know how Robert Swaffer felt but I felt pretty bad as I saw one member, who should have known better, heavily crash his weight belt across the gunwhale gelcoat of Robert's new \$10,000 boat on this very same dive!

If club members are good enough to provide their boats for club outings, non boat owning members should be willing, nay anxious to properly assist with boat and trailer preparation, gear stowage, launch and retrieval, parking, boat handling and other general duties. Generally this is true of most regular VSAG divers but even the veterans seem to have mental aberrations from time to time and wander off leaving it all to the owner and, as happened on this particular dive, to his expense.

Let us quickly review a few fundamental rules of small boat diving etiquette in the interests of more harmonious diving and happier boat owners.

1. Once assigned to a boat, stick with it - you are part of a team. This includes preparation, launching, looking after the boat in the owner's absence, helping to put it back on the trailer, unloading and tidying it up.
2. Be early - be prepared - be on hand when needed. Particularly at launch time ("Executive" crew are a pain in the neck!)
3. If you are not already aware of the boat owner's little idiosyncrasies, ask him. e.g. how he prefers you to exit and board the boat.
4. Stow your gear in a soft bag. Buckets and bins take up a lot of space - put 4 into a small boat and you have a crown of 8. (This is basic dive school stuff - oft forgotten).
5. Ask where the owner prefers you to stow gear. Do not put it in his favourite spot.
6. Do not smoke on board without the owner's permission (better yet - give it up!)
7. Gear up from your soft kit bag, undress into it. Do not leave gear and gear lying haphazardly around the boat.
8. Enter the water without crashing gear or equipment into the side of the boat.
9. Enter the boat only after taking off weight belt (first) and SCUBA.
10. Wear your heroes knife on the inside of your leg. By doing this you will not scratch the motor.
11. Do not pull yourself into the boat by the motor steering arm. It saves the owner tedious hours of scrubbing grease from the decks.
12. Plan your dive and keep your underwater bearings. Do not depend on the boat owner to pick you up.

13. Know how to properly secure an anchor rope to a deck cleat. The correct method is quick to tie, secure and easy to release in heavy seas. If you don't know ask. (I'll show you Pat!)
14. Offer to drop the anchor and/or pull it up. Offer to dive for it when it's stuck!
15. Provide your own food and drink. Try to avoid bringing glassware on board. (It breaks). Remove wrappings, drink containers and uneaten food when you remove your dive gear.
16. Do not wait to be asked to return undersize or out of season game to the sea. Do not clean abs or fish on the boat. Do not exceed the "boat" bag limit.
17. Don't knock the boat! A good friend of mine recently spent the entire trip explaining to me how the commercial boat he regularly dived from was more comfortable than mine. He can now spend the rest of his diving days explaining to this commercial operator how he once dived from my boat. Because he won't do it again!
18. Pay your dive fees immediately following the dive - without being asked. Have the correct change - do not ask for credit. Smile when you pay, because the days pro-rated expense for the boat owner exceeded \$100.

Well there you go! What started as a short list ended as a long list. Primarily because I consulted the other boat owners and asked for their pet hates. Please read, absorb and implement.

The slack water drop off on Sunday February 26 provided a great deal of amusement to many VSAG divers. With conditions reminiscent of Bourke Street on Christmas eve, an early tide and freshening swell it was inevitable that a "clone hunt" (clone: short for "shop club clone") would be on.

Your editor bagged two very frightened specimens on the "outside" of the heads in a breaking 15-20 ft. swell! Mick Jeacie caught another lonely specimen just nearby (I thought clones swam in pairs) and John Goulding was sighted towing another toward the Mother ship. Asked what he was trolling he responded "wouldn't you know - it's a fella. If I'd known I would have thrown it back!"

cont. p.23

Editorial: from p.4

I know my two catches were very lucky. It was an accidental sighting as I steamed out towards the intact sub. It must be time for commercial operators with big ships to think about placing divemasters in rubber duckies (shades of a Western round-up!) But then that would spoil VSAG's fun.

Also seen at the heads this day. An executive office bearer of the CDAAs diving alone at slack! We are not knocking it - it's just good to know they are human too.

Max took his Dive Captain's role very seriously this day and unwittingly provided much amusement to many spectators. In the interest of recognising surfacing VSAG divers (from the crowd) he instructed them to hold both hands aloft, finger tip to finger tip, in the CMAS and PADI nationally recognised on water surface signal of "I'm O.K." One could be forgiven for confusing our divers with ballet dancers in the classical Relevé, in fifth position!

The editorial page now proudly bears its own logo - courtesy of Des Williams. Des is a very talented cartoonist and it can only be a matter of time before his dry and quick wit find commercial expression in the media. Thanks Des.

In spite of a resounding failure last issue we have persevered with photos this issue. Alex, who organises the printing, has sacked the contract printer and promised to get us a better stock. Hopefully we are looking good this month. I'll know when you do - too late! But we'll keep trying, thanks Alex.

I have refrained from political comment this month because Dick Anderson, in his article "Buddy Diving: Only for the Lonely", has done it far better than I ever could. Its beautiful prose with a real message. A message that I suspect is very near and dear to many VSAG divers. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

Editorial thanks to regular scribes John, Keith, Brian and Des who came up trumps when this issue was looking very bare. Welcome to Igor Chernichov who makes his debut with our middle page pictorial spread and special thanks to Bazza Truscott who many of you may not be aware does the tedious task of address and postage.

Geoff Birtles

Victorian Coastal Strategy

Dear Network Participants

As you may be aware the Draft Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS) was released for public comment earlier this month on the 9th November. The VCS is the major strategic planning document for Victoria's coastal and marine environment. The strategy is only reviewed and open for public consultation once every 5 years. Therefore, this represents a great opportunity for the Victorian community to comment on the VCS and about the future of Victoria's coastal and marine environment. The public comment period on the draft VCS closes at 5pm 31st January 2008.

Marine Coastal Community Network (MCCN) is travelling around the state (23 Nov – 14 Dec) to talk with the community about the draft Victorian Coastal Strategy. If you would like to meet with me to discuss the strategy I'll be in your part of the state soon. Details of where MCCN will be holding meetings in your local area can be found attached to this email. If you would like a higher resolution meeting flier for display, as only low resolution have been sent to reduce email file size, or cannot open any of the attachments please do not hesitate to contact me.

For full details of MCCN meetings around the state please check on the MCCN website <http://www.mccn.org.au/article.php/id/2021/>

Please also note that your regional coastal board is running formal community consultations throughout your area. Details of the regional coastal board consultations can be found on MCCN's website – <http://www.mccn.org.au/article.php/id/2002/> and on the Victorian Coastal Council website <http://www.vcc.vic.gov.au/draftvcs.htm> (copies of the draft VCS can also be downloaded / requested from this page).

Please feel free to forward this email onto your own networks as all are welcome!

I look forward to meeting with many of you over the coming weeks.

Kind regards

Nicola Waldron
Regional Coordinator - Victoria
Marine and Coastal Community Network
PO Box 620, Mt Martha, VIC 3934
Tel: (03) 5973 4602

[Ed. Please contact Nicola if interested]

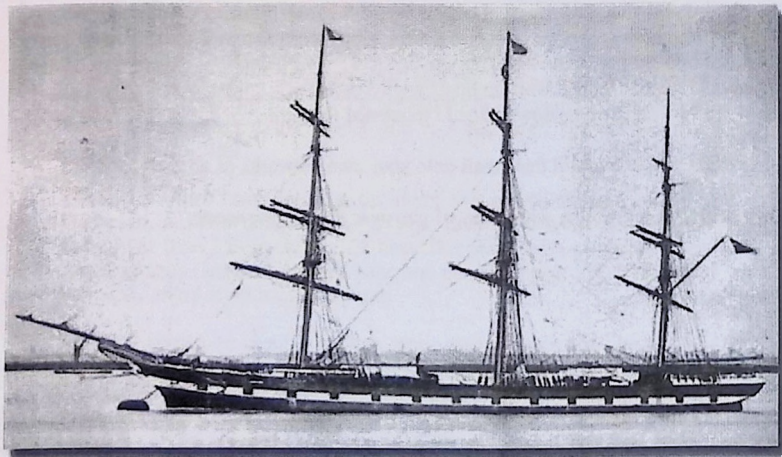
Clipper Ship *Loch Ard*, a victim of the Shipwreck Coast in 1878.

By Mackenzie Gregory.

Loch Ard was a steel clipper ship built on the Clyde by Barclay, Curle and Company, and was launched on the 8th. of November 1873. She was 1,693 tons, with a length of 263 feet and 7 inches, a beam of 38 feet and 3 inches, drawing 22 feet, a handsome clipper as were most of her contemporaries, carrying three masts reaching upwards some 150 feet.

She sailed from Gravesend (in hindsight not an auspiciously named port) on the 2nd. of March in 1878 bound for Melbourne, with a crew of 36, and 18 passengers, 6 of whom all belonged to the Carmichael family who were migrating to the new Colony. When she was almost three months out from England, only a few days from her destination, *Loch Ard* ran into bad weather with poor visibility. Captain George Gibb was way off course, when sheer cliffs almost at the waters edge were sighted, only some 2 kilometers away, he fought to gain more searoom for his ship, dropping anchors. All to no avail, his clipper struck Mutton Bird Island with an awful crash, to sink within 15 minutes.

Loch Ard had come to grief off the now named *Loch Ard Gorge*, situated in Port Campbell National Park, on the southern coast of Victoria, about 250 kilometers west of Melbourne.



The clipper *Loch Ard* wrecked off Victorian coast. 1878

To reach this area by road one drives The Great Ocean Road, claiming to be one of the

most spectacular coastal drives in the world. Construction of this road commenced in 1918 as a memorial to all the Australian Soldiers killed in WW1, it was completed in 1932, and was literally carved out of the precipitous cliffs that cling so close to the pounding surf of the Southern Ocean.

Wonderful seascapes rush before your eyes as you negotiate each bend in the road, a sheer drop to the ocean below, on the left side of the road on the journey towards Port Campbell.

The ocean floor in this part of the Victorian coast is indeed littered with the bones of ships that have been wrecked over the years on what is now called The Shipwreck Coast, something like 700 vessels have finished up on the bottom here.



Seascape from Great Ocean Road

Back to the wreck of *Loch Ard*.

Eva Carmichael.

But 18 years old, Eva Carmichael, dressed in her night gown found herself in the water after the ship grounded, she clung to some wreckage and drifted into a small bay, she could not swim, and was too weak to reach the shoreline. Tom Pearce, also only 18, a young apprentice aboard *Loch Ard*, had made it ashore, and scrambled up a cliff to seek aid, he noticed Eva's plight, and swam out to rescue her.

These two young people were in fact the only survivors, 53 crew and passengers including 5 members of Eva's family all perished when the ship foundered. Eva and Tom were taken to Glenample Homestead where they spent some time recovering from their ordeal.



Glenample Homestead where Eva and Tom were taken after their shipwreck ordeal

Clamour from the Media.

Two 18 year olds, the only survivors, one young girl, one young man, all over the Colony, and of course fuelled by the media of the day, everyone could see the potential for romance. Would these two fall in love and marry? it was on the lips of the people in

the Colony everywhere, but no! it did not happen. Eva after a spell, returned to Ireland and eventually married, Tom also went home, to complete his training, in due course, Captaining his own ship.

Only 4 bodies were recovered from the wreck and the sea, to be buried atop the cliffs looking down on the scene of the shipwreck, in what is now called the Loch Ard Cemetery.

The Peacock Ceramic Piece.

A beautiful piece of ceramic in the form of a Peacock managed to survive the wreck of the Loch Ard, and was washed up intact onto the beach at Loch Ard Cove, it was duly rescued, and may be viewed when you visit the Flagstaff Hill Museum at Warnambool.



Loch Ard another victim.

The tragedy of the *Loch Ard* is but one of the threads that go to make up the quilt that may be woven about all the ships that started out on their voyage, to end up as one more victim on this beautiful but highly dangerous coastline of Southern Victoria, the Shipwreck Coast.

*With the Compliments
of
The President*



Mac, his wife
and the
Presidents
(at the time)

*To
MacKenzie
Best with
Love*

Maribyrnong River Cruise

The Maribyrnong River has been associated with boating for hundreds of years. The local indigenous cultures used the river as a major food source and European settlers enjoyed the Maribyrnong for industry and recreational boating.



The Maribyrnong River begins on the slopes of Mount Macedon and flows out into Port Phillip Bay, is flanked by beautiful parks and grasslands in which there are facilities for barbeques and picnics. (www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

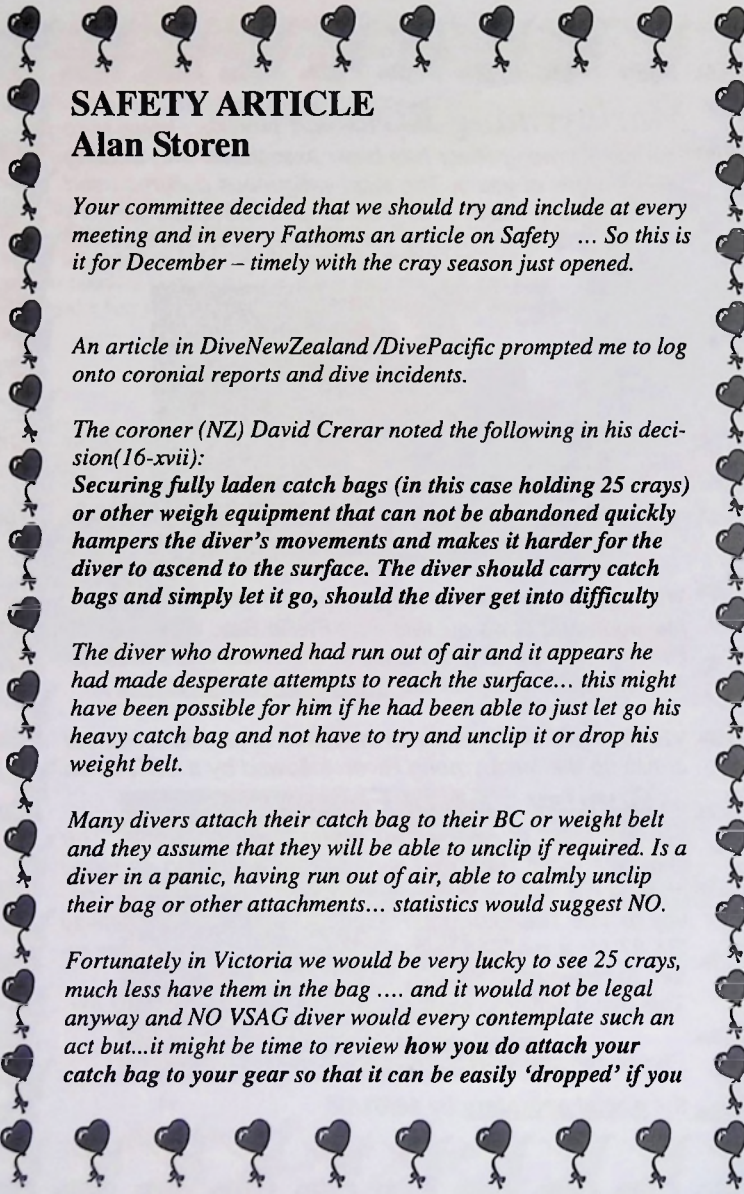
*VSAG would like to invite its members to join us on a boat cruise up the Maribyrnong River followed by a BBQ lunch on **Sunday 17th of February 2008.***

We will meet at Newport at 10am Melway 56 C9 "The Warmies Boat Ramp." It is a charge boat ramp so loose change will be needed. Once launched we'll travel in convoy to The Tea Gardens Reserve Canning place Melway G7 27 for a relaxing barbeque/picnic lunch then later return to Newport.

This event will be BYO food, drink, chairs, picnic gear etc.

Please register your interest with :

the social secretary by 10/01/08



SAFETY ARTICLE

Alan Storen

Your committee decided that we should try and include at every meeting and in every Fathoms an article on Safety ... So this is it for December – timely with the cray season just opened.

An article in DiveNewZealand /DivePacific prompted me to log onto coronial reports and dive incidents.

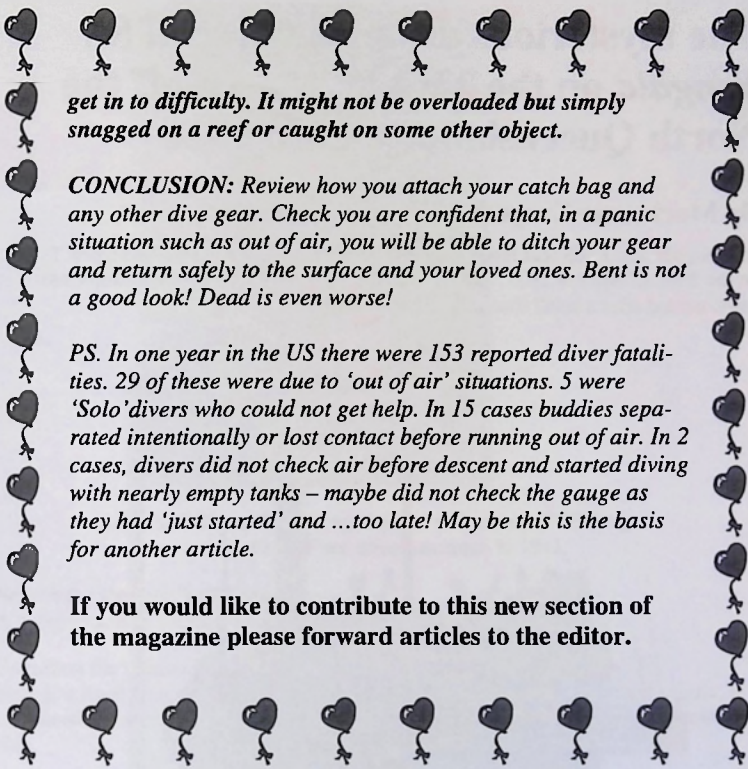
The coroner (NZ) David Crerar noted the following in his decision(16-xvii):

Securing fully laden catch bags (in this case holding 25 crays) or other weigh equipment that can not be abandoned quickly hampers the diver's movements and makes it harder for the diver to ascend to the surface. The diver should carry catch bags and simply let it go, should the diver get into difficulty

The diver who drowned had run out of air and it appears he had made desperate attempts to reach the surface... this might have been possible for him if he had been able to just let go his heavy catch bag and not have to try and unclip it or drop his weight belt.

Many divers attach their catch bag to their BC or weight belt and they assume that they will be able to unclip if required. Is a diver in a panic, having run out of air, able to calmly unclip their bag or other attachments... statistics would suggest NO.

*Fortunately in Victoria we would be very lucky to see 25 crays, much less have them in the bag and it would not be legal anyway and NO VSAG diver would every contemplate such an act but...it might be time to review **how you do attach your catch bag to your gear so that it can be easily 'dropped' if you***

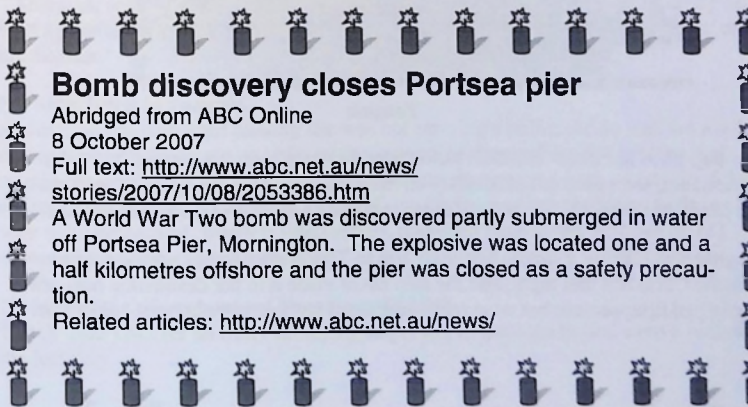


get in to difficulty. It might not be overloaded but simply snagged on a reef or caught on some other object.

CONCLUSION: *Review how you attach your catch bag and any other dive gear. Check you are confident that, in a panic situation such as out of air, you will be able to ditch your gear and return safely to the surface and your loved ones. Bent is not a good look! Dead is even worse!*

PS. In one year in the US there were 153 reported diver fatalities. 29 of these were due to 'out of air' situations. 5 were 'Solo' divers who could not get help. In 15 cases buddies separated intentionally or lost contact before running out of air. In 2 cases, divers did not check air before descent and started diving with nearly empty tanks – maybe did not check the gauge as they had 'just started' and ...too late! Maybe be this is the basis for another article.

If you would like to contribute to this new section of the magazine please forward articles to the editor.



Bomb discovery closes Portsea pier

Abridged from ABC Online

8 October 2007

Full text: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/10/08/2053386.htm>

A World War Two bomb was discovered partly submerged in water off Portsea Pier, Mornington. The explosive was located one and a half kilometres offshore and the pier was closed as a safety precaution.

Related articles: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/>

The mysterious disappearance of SS *Yongala* on the 23rd. of March off the North Queensland coast in 1911.

By Mackenzie Gregory.

SS *Yongala* was a 363 foot long, 3,663 ton vessel launched at Newcastle Upon Tyne on the 23rd. of April in 1903. She had been built for the Adelaide Steamship Company, named after a small township in South Australia.



Yongala

The ship plied her trade with both passengers and freight on the coast of Northern Queensland, she sailed out of Mackay on the 23rd. of March 1911, with a total crew and passengers of 122, and general cargo including a racehorse called Moonshine.

Yongala was making a simple overnight trip to Townsville, but a cyclone swept in from the Coral Sea that night, and the ship never made it to her destination port, she simply just disappeared, but what really happened on board can only be conjecture.



Captain William Knight aged 62, in command of SS *Yongala* at the time of her disappearance in 1911.

Search for the wreck of *Yongala*.

A massive search seeking *Yongala* found nothing.

Report on the Marine Department for the years 1910-1911.

Here is a lovely quote from this report: Reporting the loss of the Steamer *Yongala*, it contained melancholy thoughts on the inability to locate the wreck of this particular ship.

" Although, several attempts have been made to locate the wreck, the ever hungry sea, with a painful tenacity, holds on to the dread secret of her fate and the true nature of the disaster."

No radio fitted in *Yongala*.

At the time *Yongala* went missing she was not carrying a radio, and so was not aware of any warnings going out on radio of the impending danger from the cyclone that caused her demise. Ironically at the end of her current voyage (from which she did not arrive) the ship was scheduled to go out of service for the time necessary to fit her with radio equipment, which if fitted earlier, may well have saved the lives of 122 crew and passengers who all perished.

No hint of the whereabouts of *Yongala* until 1947.

It took until 1947 for an RAN surveying ship, HMAS *Lachlan* to find even a hint of the lost ship.

She made contact using her ASDIC equipment with a wreck of similar size to that of the lost *Yongala*, it lay South East of Townsville off Cape Bowling Green. But no dive was made at that time on this find.

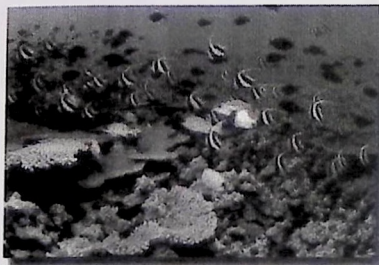


Onwards to 1958.

In 1958, two divers, George Konrat and Bill Kirkpatrick from Townsville dived on this site, the identity of this wreck was confirmed as that of the missing SS *Yongala*, the serial number of the ship's Chubb Safe being matched with company records.

Map showing the position of the wreck of SS *Yongala*, disappeared in a cyclone in 1911, and found in 1958 by two Townsville divers

Favourite dive for many recreational divers.



Yongala rests on her starboard side, the bow at 85 feet below the surface, whilst the upper part of her deck is but 50 feet down. This dive site has developed as a favourite for many recreational scuba divers, who report that the ship is covered with algae, sponges and corals. It has become the home of a multitude of fish, stingrays, giant grouper, turtles and a host of sharks.

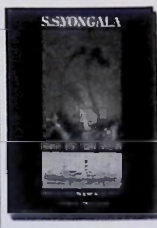


Ship's bell and one of the deck lights recovered from the *Yongala*

Max Gleeson's Books.

Max Gleeson has dived on the wreck of *Yongala* some 60 times, and has written a book with Mae Elliot called "SS *Yongala*. Dive to the Past." A second book by Max is called "SS *Yongala*, Townsville's Titanic."

Here are the cover photographs of both of them.



Max Gleeson and Mae Elliot's book: *SS Yongala*.
Dive to the Past and a second book about *SS Yongala*, also by Max Gleeson. *SS Yongala*.
Townsville's *Titanic*

Conclusion.

The sea is a hard task master, claiming many ships and lives from foundering in a raging cyclone, to collisions, and running onto a hostile shore.

Having claimed a victim, the cruel sea does not easily yield to give up her prize, it often takes many many years before a specific wreck may be located, and then perhaps a long wait before some intrepid diver, or a group of divers will take up the challenge, and dive. Only then will the identity of a wreck become public knowledge.

Such was the case of *SS Yongala*, lost in 1911, and not positively identified until 1958, then 47 years on.

Persistence is needed to force the ocean to release her secrets, many of which may never be uncovered.

Post Script.

From the records of the Townsville Maritime Museum, I acknowledge this list of all Passengers and Crew, from SS Yongana who died when a cyclone struck the ship on the 23rd. of March 1911. No one survived.

First class saloon for Townsville.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Mr Matthew Rooney | 2. Mrs Katherine Rooney |
| 3. Miss Lizzie Rooney | 4. Miss Ethel Amy Uhr, Matron, Townsville hospital |
| 5. Miss Jean Buxton, Nurse, Townsville hospital | |
| 6. Mr John James Elsdale | 7. Mrs Annie Eileen Elsdale |
| 8. Mr Rudolph August Stach | 9. Mr Francis Fothergill Viney |
| 10. Miss Mary Josephine Carroll | 11. Miss Mona Kathleen Shannon |
| 12. Mr Willie Lin | 13. Ms Emily Ada Davis |
| 14. Mr John Campbell | 15. Mr Ernest Greenfield |
| 16. Mr Clifford James Hardin O'Brien | |

For Cairns

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 17. Mrs Charlotte Louisa Davids | 18. Mrs Alice Minna Murray |
| 19. Master Ian Sheppard Murray | 20. Miss Alister Sheppard Murray |
| 21. Miss Jean Alexander Murray | 22. Miss Ailsa Mary Murray (Infant) |
| 23. Mrs Mary Ann Linedale (Maid) | 24. Mr Stephen Symons Reath |
| 25. Mrs Margaret Frances Reath | 26. Mr William James Fulton |
| 27. Mr Albert Sutherland Dette | 28. Mr T Parton |
| 29. Mr S Manwaring | 30. Miss Mary Annie Woodward |
| 31. Mrs Hanora Gertrude Magee | |

Second class for Townsville

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 32. Mr O F Thompson | 33. Mr Charles Manbey |
| 34. Mrs Mary Ann Manbey | 35. Mr W Barklay |
| 36. Mr Octagavina Carrasco | 37. Mr Jose Sareras |
| 38. Mr Walter Francis Breckenridge | 39. Mr Ernst Schneider |
| 40. Mr Richard Thomas Coade | 41. Mr Walter George Coade |
| 42. Mr James John Sutherland | 43. Mr Fraser Sutherland |
| 44. Mr William Smith | |

For Cairns

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 45. Mr James Dempsey Jolly | 46. Mr David Davies |
| 47. Mr Pianta, Antonia | 48. Mr W H Griffiths |
| 49. Mr E E Parkhurst | |

CREW

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 50. Mr William Knight | 51. Mr Richard Williams | 52. Mr Harry Harden |
| 53. Mr D Cameron | 54. Mr George H Jarvis | 55. Mr A F Hamilton |
| 56. Mr John Donaldson | 57. Mr Claude Miller | 58. Mr A Lawrance |
| 59. Mr E Mawby | 60. Mr G A Harris | 61. Mr W D Millar |
| 62. Mr E McKenzie | 63. Mr J Roberts | 64. Mr S W H Emerson |
| 65. Ms A S English | 66. Ms M Lambrick | 67. Ms S Andrew |
| 68. Ms A Rentoul | 69. Mr J H Shipton | 70. Mr G H Reid |
| 71. Mr J Elliott | 72. Mr V Cross | 73. Mr D Morrison |
| 74. Mr J W Sullivan | 75. Mr J Ward | 76. Mr J Craig |
| 77. Mr J Finlay | 78. Mr A O Armstrong | 79. Mr J E Costello |
| 80. Mr F J Wingrove | 81. Mr R W Cooks | |

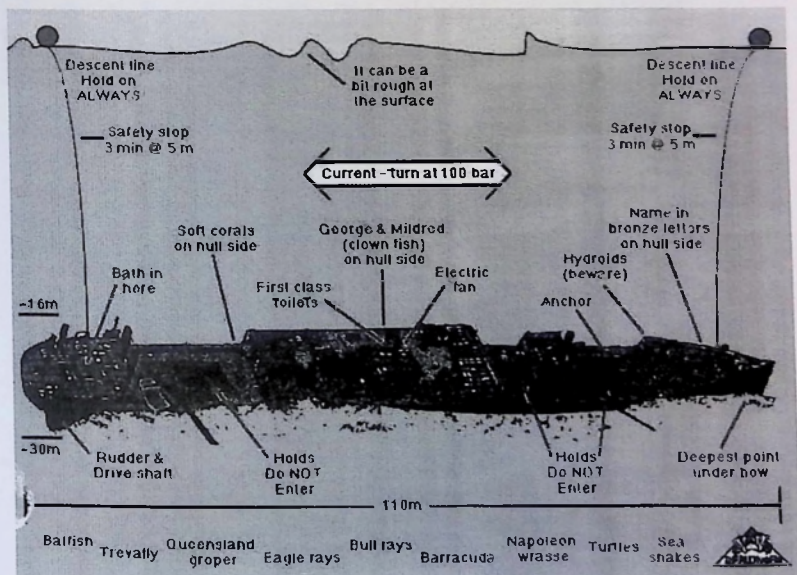
82. Mr A P W Gordon
 85. Mr R Robertson
 88. Mr P McAdele
 91. Mr W Houston
 94. Mr A Uggddahl
 97. Mr J Diamond
 100. Mr C A Davison
 103. Mr E A Rickson
 106. Mr J Calvin
 109. Mr E O Jones
 112. Mr H C Gale
 115. Mr J Johnston
 118. Mr W Paton
 121 Mr H Lewis

83. Mr G H Fox
 86. Mr W H McPherson
 89. Mr P Rankin
 92. Mr W D Murray
 95. Mr H Todd
 98. Mr J Grumbledon
 101. Mr A Lillico
 104. Mr J A Reich
 107. Mr O V Nelson
 110. Mr W Boylan
 113. Mr E H Freeston
 116. Mr J MacDonald
 119. Mr J L McNamara
 122 Mr S Donachie

84. Mr J West
 87. Mr J Gemmell
 90. Mr T Howard
 93. Mr F E Voight
 96. Mr F Medcalf
 99. Mr J Narrie
 102. Mr J F Gallagher
 105. Mr G Goldsmith
 108. Mr J McGinnis
 111. Mr R Woods
 114. Mr P Walsh
 117. Mr V R McDougall
 120. Mr C S Doyle

Very best regards. Mac Gregory.
macden@melbpc.org.au

AHOY. Mac's Web log
 URL: ahoy.tk-jk.net





**Did you know that an
Emergency Evacuation can
cost in excess of US\$100,000?**

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Dive Report 2nd December 2007

The weather report for Saturday 1st was superb and after a shore dive I was able to confirm that the viz was fantastic. The report for Sunday the 2nd was not as good with 15kt winds and half metre seas increasing in the afternoon. Slack water was at 8.50am so 9 VSAGers met at Sorrento at 8am to get an early start, catch the slack in the heads and miss the poor weather – Magic Reef was the destination.

It appeared the change had come early as we had a wet ride over to the Queenscliff area. Most were tempted to log the trip as their first dive! A quick check with Lonsdale reported shipping, both incoming and outgoing, and so the best laid plans were quickly changed. I do not know who suggested we try outside the Heads but that was the call.



Outside the seas were remarkably flat with little swell and the Coogee was the nominated site. I was in Mick Jeacle's boat and Tippo and I were the first in the water. The Viz was good and the wreck seemed to have more fish about than normal. I did notice that part of the stern section had collapsed since I was last on the wreck. Trevor Williams, JL and Lloyd Borrett from JL's boat were next in the

water with Greg Richards and Benita left topside. On our return Mick and Bazza dropped in and all divers reported a good dive. Bazza was toasty in his drysuit but needed braces for his weightbelt.

We lunched just inside the heads between Point Lonsdale and Queenscliff and prepared for a drift dive off Queenscliff for our second.

Mick and I dropped in and enjoyed the drift through some very interesting territory – a couple of Port Jacksons hiding in the reef, good fish life, good viz but no crays. They will be bigger next time! JL and his crew had finished their drift and we all met up back at the boat ramp for a quick debrief



and off to the Sorrento Pub for a traveller before returning to Melbourne.

Congratulations to Trevor Williams on logging his 100th dive.

Another great day on the bay – what day isn't when you go diving?

Check your tanks are in test, you are medically fit and book in soon.

Alan Storen

The Sea Cow

Lloyd Borrett

For those of us that rail against the vagaries of outboard motors here's an extract from more than 50 years ago that shows that our plight is common the world over.

"We come now to a piece of equipment which still brings anger to our hearts and, we hope, some venom to our pen. Perhaps in self defence against suit, we should say, "The outboard motor mentioned in this book is purely fictitious and any resemblance to outboard motors living or dead is coincidental". We shall call this contraction, for the sake of secrecy, a Hansen Sea-Cow -- a dazzling little piece of machinery, all aluminium paint and touched here and there with spots of red. The Sea-Cow was built to sell, to dazzle the eyes, to splutter its way into the unwary heart. We took it along for the skiff. It was intended that it should push us ashore and back, should drive our boat into estuaries and along the borders of little coves.

But we had not reckoned with one thing. Recently, industrial civilisation has reached its peak of reality and has lunged forward into something that approaches mysticism. In the Sea-Cow factory where steel fingers tighten screws, bend and mould, measure and divide, some curious mathematick has occurred. And that secret so long sought has accidentally been found. Life has been created. The machine is at last stirred. A soul and a malignant mind have been born. Our Hansen Sea-Cow was not only a living thing but a mean, irritable, contemptible, vengeful, mischievous, hateful living thing. In the six weeks of our association we observed it, at first mechanically and then, as its living reactions became more and more apparent, psychologically. And we determined one thing to our satisfaction. When and if these ghoulish little motors learn to reproduce themselves the human species is doomed. For their hatred of us is so great that they will wait and plan and organise and one night, in a roar of little exhausts, they will wipe us out.

We do not think that Mr Hansen, inventor of the Sea-Cow, father of the outboard motor, knew what he was doing. We think the monster he created was as accidental and arbitrary as the beginning of any other life. Only one thing differentiates the Sea-Cow from the life that we know. Whereas the forms that are familiar to us are the results of billions of years of mutation and complication, life and intelligence emerged simultaneously in the Sea-Cow. It is more than a species. It is a whole new re-definition of life. We observed the following traits in it and we were able to check them again and again.

- Incredibly lazy, the Sea-Cow loved to ride on the back of a boat, trailing its propeller daintily in the water while we rowed.

- It required the same amount of gasoline whether it ran or not, apparently being able to absorb this fluid through its body walls without recourse to explosion. It had always to be filled at the beginning of every trip.
- It had apparently some clairvoyant powers, and was able to read our minds, particularly when they were inflamed with emotion. Thus, on every occasion when we were driven to the point of destroying it, it started and ran with a great deal of noise and excitement. This served the double purpose of saving its life and of resurrecting in our minds a false confidence in it.
- It had many cleavage points, and when attacked with a screwdriver, fell apart in simulated death, a trait it had in common with opossums, armadillos, and several members of the sloth family, which also fall apart in simulated death when attacked with a screwdriver.
- It hated the engineer, sensing perhaps his knowledge of mechanics was capable of diagnosing its shortcomings.
- It completely refused to run:
 - when the waves were high
 - when the wind blew
 - at night, early morning, and evening
 - in rain, dew, or fog
 - when the distance to be covered was more than two hundred yards

But on warm sunny days when the weather was calm and the white beach nearby - in a word, on days when it would have been a pleasure to row - the Sea-Cow started at a touch and would not stop.

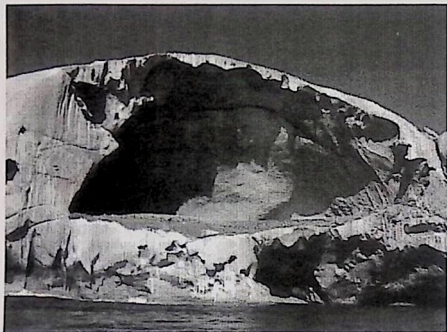
It loved no one, trusted no one. It had no friends.

Perhaps towards the end, our observations were a little warped by emotion. Time and again as it sat on the stern with its pretty little propeller lying idly in the water, it was very close to death. And in the end, even we were infected with its malignancy and its dishonesty. We should have destroyed it, but we did not. Arriving home, we gave it a new coat of aluminium paint, spotted it at points with new red enamel, and sold it. And we might have rid the world of this mechanical cancer."

John Steinbeck - The Log from the Sea of Cortez 1941

The Prom Cup Week-end Nov 07

Last year I wrote an article that began with the words "the Prom is place God likes to practice his bad weather on, before he unleashes it on the rest of the world". Little did I know that the Cup Weekend of 07 was going to be one of his little experiments to test the mettle of the unsuspecting campers who descended on Tidal river for the annual Cup Weekend orgy of excess.



Most of VSAG arrived on Saturday amid a very ordinary weather report that did not bode well for camping. In fact it did not even bode well for Jack Sparrow either. We arrived to find the ever smiling Pat Reynolds reporting that the smart divers from other clubs were already out diving to the tune of 22 boats! As they straggled back into camp late Saturday the black ominous clouds of death were circulating and the rain started its warm up for the main event.

The VSAG mob huddled in their vans and tents, confident that a few good Reds, a couple of VB's and great company would get us through the night. The rain increased to a steady drizzle whilst the wind gave notice of things to come. The usual noise from the Black Rock 1st avenue of debauchery was subdued and divers of all persuasions sat quietly in their campsites fearful of the oncoming storm.

Darren Pearce arrived late Saturday and wandered into my hired van with a stubby and a confident air. Andy and Gail along with Bazza and Marie Truscott battered down the hatches, whilst Alan Storen opened a good red and toasted the good dives to come. In the next avenue Prys and John Mills along with many others mingled at the SDFV BBQ and looked forward to next few days. The people camped behind me sat relaxed around their site without a care in the world under a large tarp and partied until late.

As we bedded down for the night the wind was averaging 35-45 knots and the rain was becoming increasingly heavy. This got steadily worse as the night progressed and sometime after midnight the tempest began in earnest. Gale force winds, with frequent stronger gusts, came down the valley, sounding like a jumbo jet as they approached. You heard the wind long before you felt it explode onto your van or tent. The rain became a torrential downpour and the night became a battle of wills between the incredible forces of nature and your burning desire for sleep.

At around 5.00am the annex on my van was torn asunder and began to whip the side of the van in never ending cacophony of sound. The bride and I manfully attempted to put it back together, but the elements beat us back and we gave up and retired to our bed amid the noise and the ceaseless rocking of the van. The rain was so intense that the van was leaking like a sieve directly onto our bed and at one stage a severe gust almost lifted the van off its wheels.

Finally dawn broke and we ventured outside to try and piece together the annex and see how our neighbours had fared. What neighbours? It seems that by 7.30am roughly half the campsites were already vacated. The surrounding tent sites were either vacant or packing up what little was left and getting the hell out of there as quick as possible.

At 9.00am the unflappable undaunted super optimistic Alan Storen came to say good bye. He had had enough. He had had a gutful!! Apparently the Ranger had informed him that it was going to stay like this all day and then get worse again tonight, Alan couldn't throw his sodden sad looking tent into the car quick enough.

I looked over at Darrens site and he was already gone. Possibly a record for a 4 day long week-end. Less than 12 hours from whoa to go! Andy shoved his beak in the door and said they would pack as soon as the rain stopped. Prya and John looked suitably disgruntled as they forlornly moped around the ruins of their campsite..

As I ran for the toilets the scene around the toilet block was of total devastation. Tents lying in twisted and torn confusion and people everywhere trying to get kids and all their wet stuff in the car or trailer and just get home. It resembled a war torn refugee camp. People whom I had watched the day before, happily erecting their pride and joy, were now cowed and beaten and in many cases simply leaving the torn carcass of the tent to the elements.

As several of us surveyed this desolate and desperate scene with the haunted look of pitiful despair from under the remains of my annex, the Truscotts pulled up in the 4x4 and smilingly announced that they were going for a sight see!! With smug self-righteousness and happy smiling faces they set off for a quick look around the headlands whilst the rest of us tried to find a reason not to burn down their caravan out of spite. I suspect they take some sort of happy pills or maybe its just enjoying retirement. I dunno.

Finally the rain eased off to only a steady downpour at about 2.00pm. By this stage 90% of all the camping ground was deserted, entire dive clubs had left en-masse. The bride and I turfed everything into the boot and headed to Fish Creek for a late



lunch, before heading for home. Needless to say that was when the rain stopped and the wind settled to acceptable levels, but the die was cast. All I wanted was a dry immobile bed. Home it was.

In life you often find it's a battle of the quick and the dead. As I left, I spied Prys and John Mills checking out the dry rear half of my rental van and by all reports they found it quite comfortable for the rest of the weekend. Last Christmas I had Mick Kakafikas move into my tent when I left, now this cunning move by the Dynamic Duo! Gadzooks.

The ubiquitous Pat Reynolds along with the Andy & Gail Clan plus the laconic Bazza and Marie all stayed and apparently had quite an enjoyable time by all accounts. Amongst the other clubs, some of the few remaining divers got out on the Monday for a splash.

I look forward to the passage of time so I can look back on this weekend and laugh and romanticize the events of that god-awful night over a good Red with friends. In the meantime I will take some valium and continue with my post traumatic syndrome counseling sessions until I regain the will to ever camp at the Prom again. When is Easter next year?

THE HISTORY OF THE MIDDLE FINGER

Well, now..... here's something I never knew before, and now that I know it, I feel compelled to send it on to my more intelligent friends in the hope that they, too, will feel edified. Isn't history more fun when you know something about it?

Before the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, the French, anticipating victory over the English, proposed to cut off the middle finger of all captured English soldiers.

Without the middle finger it would be impossible to draw the renowned English longbow and therefore they would be incapable of fighting in the future.

This famous English longbow was made of the native English Yew tree, and the act of drawing the longbow was known as "plucking the yew" or "pluck yew".

Much to the bewilderment of the French, the English won a major upset and began mocking the French by waving their middle fingers at the defeated French, saying, "See, we can still pluck yew!"

Since "pluck yew" is rather difficult to say, the difficult consonant cluster at the beginning has gradually changed to a labiodental fricative "F", and thus the words often used in conjunction with the one-finger salute!

It is also because of the pheasant feathers on the arrows used with the longbow that the symbolic gesture is known as "giving the bird." It is STILL an appropriate salute to the French today.

And yew thought yew knew every plucking thing!



A woman was in town on a shopping trip.

She began her day finding the most perfect shoes in the first shop and a beautiful dress on sale in the second. In the third everything had just been reduced to a fiver when her mobile phone rang. It was a female doctor notifying her that her husband had just been in a terrible accident and was in critical condition.

The woman told the lady doctor to inform her husband where she was and that she'd be there as soon as possible. As she hung up she realized she was leaving what was shaping up to be her best day ever in the shops. She decided to get in a couple of more shops before heading to the hospital. She ended up shopping the rest of the morning, finishing her trip with cup of coffee and a beautiful coffee slice complimentary from the last shop. She was jubilant. Then she remembered her husband. Feeling guilty she dashed to the hospital. She saw the lady doctor in the corridor and asked about her husband's condition. The lady doctor glared at her and shouted,

'You went ahead and finished your shopping trip didn't you! I hope you're proud of yourself! While you were out for the past four hours enjoying yourself in town, your husband has been languishing in the Intensive Care Unit! It's just as well you went ahead and finished, because it will be more than likely the last shopping trip you ever take! For the rest of his life he will require round the clock care. And you'll now be his carer!'

The woman was feeling so guilty she broke down and sobbed.

The lady doctor then chuckled and said, 'I'm just pulling your leg. He's dead. What'd you buy?'

Try This... It's impossible

This is so funny that it will boggle your mind. And you will keep trying at least 50 more times to see if you can outsmart your foot, but you can't.

1. While sitting at your desk, lift your right foot off the floor and make clockwise circles.
2. Now, while doing this, draw the number '6' in the air with your right hand. Your foot will change direction. I told you soAnd there's nothing you can do about it

Michael Kakafikas

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 18th DIVE REPORT...FLINDERS

Well after some 10 years since VSAG dived from Flinders we finally made it happen!!!!

18 divers and 4 boats arrived at the Flinders launching area around 9am. This would be the largest turnout from our club for local diving in a very long time..brilliant!!!

After the usual minor boggings on the soft sand all boats were launched with the usual experience and hands on support typical of the VSAG'ers.

Despite the Northerly winds the swells were up. We headed round the Gunnery Reef and then South towards Cape Schanck...seems the sea spray coming into my boat sent some of us into deco!!

Barry Truscott took the lead to a reef area which has been productive in the past but the conditions for diving there were not safe.

We pushed onto to the Cape noting the conditions in Bushrangers Bay on the way. Turning west past the rocky bluff my crew were not confident about the conditions, however Mick Jeacle and Barry advised the area was diveable so we all joined up for a dive.

From my crew Cathy Pedlow and I got the nod for the first dive, however after splashing in Cathy was not comfortable and using diver safety wisdom she pulled her dive. On the bottom I was being pushed around by the bottom swell and after some 5 minutes of uncomfortable conditions I also pulled the dive and surfaced.

Other divers seemed to be ok and many finished their dive. John Merlo bagged a nice cray from this area!

Our next move was back to Bushrangers Bay and to finish my dive I was joined by AJ Storen... The bottom conditions were quite good but lacking good reef. We found abalone but no crays.

The boats headed back to Flinders, on the way waiting for Bazza to complete a dive on a reef close to the shore about 5ks North of Bushrangers Bay.

Arriving at the Gunnery Reef the conditions were much calmer and the diving continued around this area.

My crew of Alan and Jackie Storen and Cathy Pedlow decided to just enjoy the sunny conditions and again AJ and I splashed in. We bagged and measured our legal limit of Abalone and I grabbed a good cray but had to return as she was in berry...bugger! Mick Jeacle was having a challenging time with the huge rollers off the reef, and demonstrated his exceptional boat handling skills just managing to get over one biggie and so avoiding being turned over backwards....almost a mirror of my efforts on the Inverloch channel many years ago...

Back to Flinders all boats loaded back onto trailers and retrieved without too much hassle...

A big smile on Bridey Leggatt's face as she marched happily to her car with two nice table sized crays!!! Great.

A few coldies at the Flinders pub was the happy ending to an exciting and eventful day.

To Barry Truscott for his support at ther last minute to take on another diver and making his boat available for the day..thanks Bazza.

To Mick Jeacle and Andy Mastrowicz for making their boats available..many thanks.

To the following divers who nominated to make this day as great as it was. thanks for the support you showed to our great club.

Barry Truscott's crew: Tony Tipping, John Merlo, Alan Dickerson.

Mick Jeacle's crew: Benita McDonough, Lloyd Borrett, Robert Birtles.

Andy Mastrowicz's crew: Joe Mamalino,David Geekie,Mick Kakafikas,Peter Briggs, Bridey Leggatt.

John Lawler's crew: Alan Storen,Jackie Storen,AJ Storen,Cathy Pedlow.

John Lawler

Dive Co-Coordinator.



MY PHILOSOPHY OF HOUSECLEANING!

I don't do windows because ... I love birds and don't want one to run into a clean window and get hurt.

I don't wax floors because... I am terrified a guest will slip and get hurt then I'll feel terrible (plus they may sue me.)

I don't mind the dust bunnies because . I They are very good company, I have named most of them, and they agree with everything I say.

I don't disturb cobwebs because ... I want every creature to have a home of their own.

I don't Spring Clean because ... I love all the seasons and don't want the others to get jealous

I don't pull weeds in the garden because . I don't want to get in God's way, HE is an excellent designer!

I don't put things away because ... My husband will never be able to find them again.

I don't do gourmet meals when I entertain because . I don't want my guests to stress out over what to make when they invite me over for dinner.

I don't iron because I choose to believe them when they say "Permanent Press".

I don't stress much on anything because . "A Type" personalities die young and I want to stick around and become a wrinkled up crusty ol' woman!!!!

anon

SHORTLAND BLUFF AND MAGIC REEF

Dive Day Sunday November 25th

Being the DC for this dive really made me appreciate the efforts the fantastic people on the committee go to, to organize and successfully run the diving program for VSAGers. To say the least, I was feeling a bit nervous about it all going well on Sunday morning, so much so, that I had forgotten to bring along my hood, dropped my tank on my bare foot and sat waiting in the wrong car park for the crew to arrive all before 9.45am!

Due to the prediction of unfavourable winds for Phillip Island, the dive had been moved to the bay, and we had two boats (JL & Mick J), two non-diving boat captains (Greg Richards and Charlie Brincat), some shiny new-comers to VSAG, being Pam Dagley, David Geekie and Antonio Cimino, and of course myself, all bustling ready to go in the top car park at Sorrento.

My own predictions for the cloud to burn off and the sun to come out shining were yet to be realized, but there was still hope.

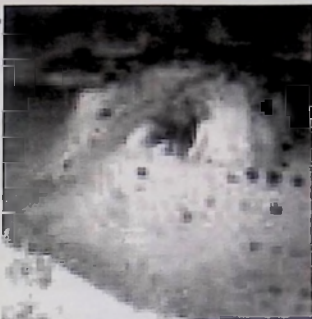
With our new recruits, the plan was to head out for a drift dive near Shortland Bluff. Antonio and I dropped over the side into almost picture perfect terrain and a stiff current. Antonio and I scooted quickly through the area admiring the beautiful sponges and hundreds of reef fish that were spending time with us. A couple of large dusky morwongs also followed us inquisitively for quite some time. All too soon the current had drifted us away from the excellent terrain, air was getting low and without my hood, I was starting to shiver. Antonio and I ascended and were picked up by the precision boat handling team of Mick Jeacle and Greg Richards.

The surface interval was spent warming up, eating lunch and wishing I had a handy-gadget.

We managed to come up trumps with no shipping in the channel at slack-water so we were able to head to Magic Reef, now known as 'Stunning Reef' (well by me at least) for the second dive. Sadly we had to leave Greg and Antonio on the boat green with envy as Mick and I splashed into the blue, blue water. And I now know exactly why it's called magic reef! It was MAGIC! Beautiful bommies, ledges and rock overhangs covered in corals and sponges of every colour – red, green, orange, yellow, white, the amazing, almost fluorescent, purple sponges that looked like termite mounds. The current didn't slack off until nearly the end of the dive and we got some respite by finding some nice big holes that were a bit protected and we could have a look around, I was especially interested to see if there were any lovely crayfish in the holes (the ones from last week



tasted magnificent and made me very popular with the family and the in-laws). It was while we were in one of these big holes that we came across a large member of the stingray family – namely a large bull ray lazing in a sandy spot, sheltered by a rock overhang. She didn't seem very interested in us checking her out and continued to mind her spot. The reason I say 'she' is that not more than one minute later – whilst I was mid-water checking out this magnificent beast that the "mothership" from Independence Day (the movie) glided effortlessly over the rock ledge and started to block out the sunlight. No, actually it wasn't the "mothership", it was another enormous bull ray – or more correctly perhaps, big bad boyfriend bull ray – and he wasn't too keen on how close I was to his 'girl'. I started to think that perhaps I was in a bit of trouble so I went backwards as gracefully as I could manage whilst watching the giant ray. He saw us safely off and we continued on our dive, more the richer for having encountered some of nature's truly wonderful creatures.



The dive continued as spectacularly as before and a few old bottles were collected before the ascent to the surface and the precision boat handling team. Alas no crayfish for the table this evening!

Another magnificent day – the sun did come out eventually, was completed with cold beers in the Sorrento Hotel with splendid views of the bay, good company and many thanks to those who attended. Many thanks to Charlie and Greg for being fantastic deckies and boat drivers, to John and Mick for providing the services of their fine vessels, and to Antonio, Pam and David for providing excellent company to dive with.

Bridey Leggatt

JL's Comments:

From my boat and crew's point of view (JL's Boat) we had the same WOW dive as Mick and Bridey..amazing colour, amazing fish life of so many species and the underwater world was just brilliant! We just dropped into 20metres of beautiful clean blue water as the incoming tide was ending the flow..perfect timing! Swim throughs, overhangs and on two occasions heaps of tangled ropes from snagged fishing boat anchors...Found one nice cray sitting well out on a deep ledge but my speed at grabbing his horny bits was too slow and into the hole it bolted!

Probably one the most impressive bay reef dives I have experienced....and in the great company of newbies to VSAG,..David Geekie and Pam Dagley.

A man boarded an aircraft at London's Heathrow Airport for New York, and taking his seat as he settled in, he noticed a very beautiful woman boarding the plane. He realised she was heading straight toward his seat and bingo - she took the seat right beside him.

"Hello", he blurted out, "Business trip or vacation?"

She turned, smiled enchantingly and said, "Business. I'm going to the annual nymphomaniac convention in the United States."

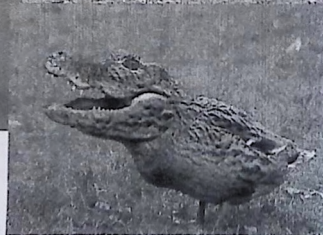
He swallowed hard. Here was the most gorgeous woman he had ever seen sitting next to him, and she was going to a meeting for nymphomaniacs!

Struggling to maintain his composure, he calmly asked, "What's your business role at this convention?" "Lecturer," she responded. "I use my experience to debunk some of the popular myths about sexuality."

"Really", he smiled, "what myths are those?"

"Well," she explained, "one popular myth is that African-American men are the most well endowed when, in fact, it's the Native American Indian who is most likely to possess that trait. Another popular myth is that French men are the best lovers, when actually it is the men of Greek descent. We have also found that the best potential lovers in all categories are the Irish." Suddenly the woman became uncomfortable and blushed. "I'm sorry," she said. "I really shouldn't be discussing this with you, I don't even know your name!"

"Tonto," the man said. "Tonto Papadopoulos, but my friends call me Paddy."



J1 Sub Report

Some divers last weekend (20 Oct) did the J1 Submarine and discovered that the conning tower has fallen off the Sub. I guess the rivets etc are now really deteriorating.

Dear Dad Letter.....Brilliant!

A father passing by his son's bedroom, was astonished to see the bed was nicely made, and everything was picked up. Then, he saw an envelope, propped up prominently on the pillow, it was addressed, "Dad." With the worst premonition, he opened the envelope and read the letter, with trembling hands.

"Dear, Dad.

It is with great regret and sorrow that I'm writing you. I had to elope with my new girlfriend, because I wanted to avoid a scene with Mom and you. I've been finding real passion with Stacy, and she is so nice, but I knew you would not approve of her, because of all her piercing, tattoos, her tight Motorcycle clothes, and because she is so much older than I am.

But it's not only the passion, Dad. She's pregnant. Stacy said that we will be very happy. She owns a trailer in the woods, and has a stack of firewood for the whole winter. We share a dream of having many more children. Stacy has opened my eyes to the fact that marijuana doesn't, really hurt anyone. We'll be growing it for ourselves, and trading it with the other people in the commune for all the cocaine and ecstasy we want.

In the meantime, we'll pray that science will find a cure for AIDS, so Stacy can get better. She sure deserves it!! Don't worry Dad, I'm 15, and I know how to take care of myself. Someday, I'm sure we'll be back to visit, so you can get to know your many grandchildren.

Love, your son, John.

P.S. Dad, none of the above is true. I'm over at Tommy's house. I just wanted to remind you that there are worse things in life than the school report that's on my desk.

I love you! Call when it is safe for me to come home!

AIN'T IT THE TRUTH !!!!!!!!!!!!!

I was walking down the street when I was accosted by a particularly dirty and shabby-looking homeless woman who asked me for a couple of dollars for food. I took out my wallet, got out ten dollars and asked, 'If I give you this money, will you buy wine with it instead of food?' 'No, I stopped drinking years ago,' the homeless woman told me.

'Will you use it to go shopping for clothes and shoes, instead of buying food?' I asked. 'No, I don't waste time shopping,' the homeless woman said. 'I need to spend all my time trying to stay alive.'

'Will you spend this on a beauty salon instead of food?' I asked. 'Are you NUTS !' replied the homeless woman. 'I haven't had my hair done in 20 years!'

'Well,' I said, 'I'm not going to give you the money. Instead, I'm going to take you out for dinner with my husband and me tonight.'

The homeless woman was shocked. 'Won't your husband be furious with you for doing that? I know I'm dirty, and I probably smell pretty disgusting.'

I said, 'That's okay. It's important for him to see what a woman looks like after she has given up shopping, hair appointments, and wine.'

Dressed For Travel

The following item is a report from Air Transport World (ATW). It seems that a scuba diver was booked on a flight from Perth to Cocos Island. The diver was alarmed to find at check-in that his weight allowance was 20 kg for bags and 7 kg for carry on.

"Laden down with wetsuit, flippers and empty but weighty tanks, the passenger was alarmed to find that he was way over the weight limit," says ATW. "The check-in agent refused to waive the charges."

"In a stroke of genius, our intrepid diver donned his entire diving kit complete with wetsuit, BC, mask, snorkel and tank and staggered back to the check-in desk some 26 kg lighter in the baggage department but much heavier in body weight."

"There is no rule on how much the passenger weighs or on how uncomfortable he makes himself in the process. The check-in agent did agree that the tank could go in the cargo hold with no penalty."

This, says ATW magazine, shows up one of the oldest loopholes in the airline system, and suggests that perhaps airlines should start charging weight for both passenger and luggage.

[ED. I am sure many divers out there can relate to this]

Abalone collection ban to continue

Abridged from Fish-e-Fax 206, Department of Primary Industries (VIC)

11 October 2007

Full text: <http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/dpi/>

Fisheries Victoria has extended a ban on taking abalone, all other shellfish and sea urchins along a stretch of coastline near Port Fairy. The ban applies to both recreational and commercial abalone fishers and also prohibits the collection and removal of any rock material from the area. The area is bound by the high water mark from approximately 1 kilometre west of the Craggs Car Park to Killarney Beach Car Park. It includes the area of marine waters extending seaward for between 500 to 700 metres. The ban will continue until 30 March 2008 and is designed to protect accessible stocks from fishing pressure while they recover from the impact of the virus.

Abalone industry welcomes money to fight virus

Abridged from ABC Online

8 October 2007

Full text: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/10/08/2053950.htm>

Victoria's abalone industry wants to see the detail of the Federal Government's funding and emergency task force which was announced. The Government is promising \$100,000 for research into the herpes-like virus that is killing thousands of abalone. Vincent Gannon of the Victorian Abalone Divers Association says the federal intervention is welcome. But he wants to see details of the task force. "It would be good to see who is on the task force and what's being done about the taskforce. But certainly we're welcoming intervention," he said. "I think aquaculture in the marine environment and diseases in the marine environment have to have a national focus because it's so hard to control once the diseases are in the wild," he said. Mr. Gannon says it is a good idea to examine biosecurity on a national level.

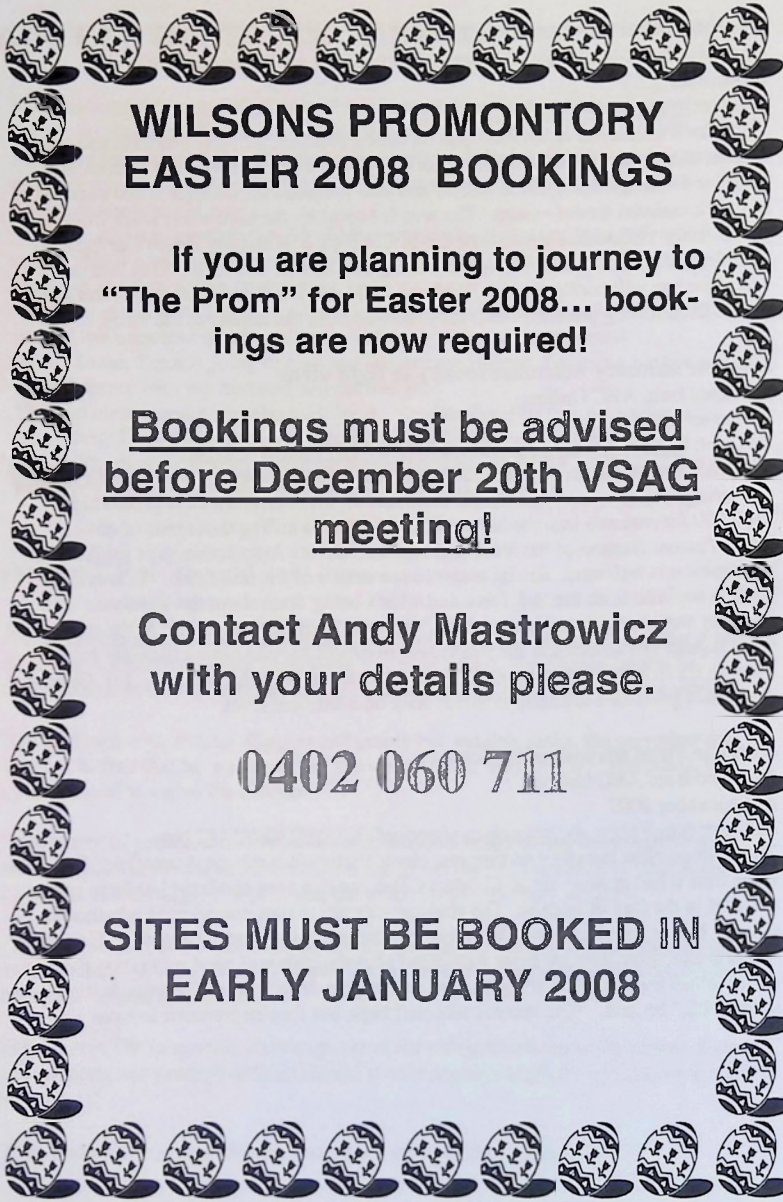
Abalone virus spreads along coast

Abridged from ABC Online

27 September 2007

Full text: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/09/27/2045147.htm>

The abalone virus has crept further east along Victoria's south-west coastline. For some time it had gone as far as Childers Cove, but it is now confirmed to have spread to a reef in the Bay of Islands. The abalone industry is now considering whether to create a buffer zone in front of the virus, by harvesting a stretch of abalone. Fisheries Victoria executive director Peter Appleford says the plan will need more consideration, but has some merit. "It's got sense and they've done it before in regards to viruses in the wild," he said. "The success rate isn't high, but they're prepared to have a go at it.

A decorative border of black and white patterned Easter eggs surrounds the text. The eggs are arranged in a rectangular frame, with a row of 10 eggs at the top, 10 at the bottom, and 10 on each side.

WILSONS PROMONTORY EASTER 2008 BOOKINGS


**If you are planning to journey to
“The Prom” for Easter 2008... book-
ings are now required!**

**Bookings must be advised
before December 20th VSAG
meeting!**

**Contact Andy Mastrowicz
with your details please.**

0402 060 711

**SITES MUST BE BOOKED IN
EARLY JANUARY 2008**



BALI 2008

Planning dates are May 17 to 27

Some can go early and meet at
Kuta Airport

Some can stay later

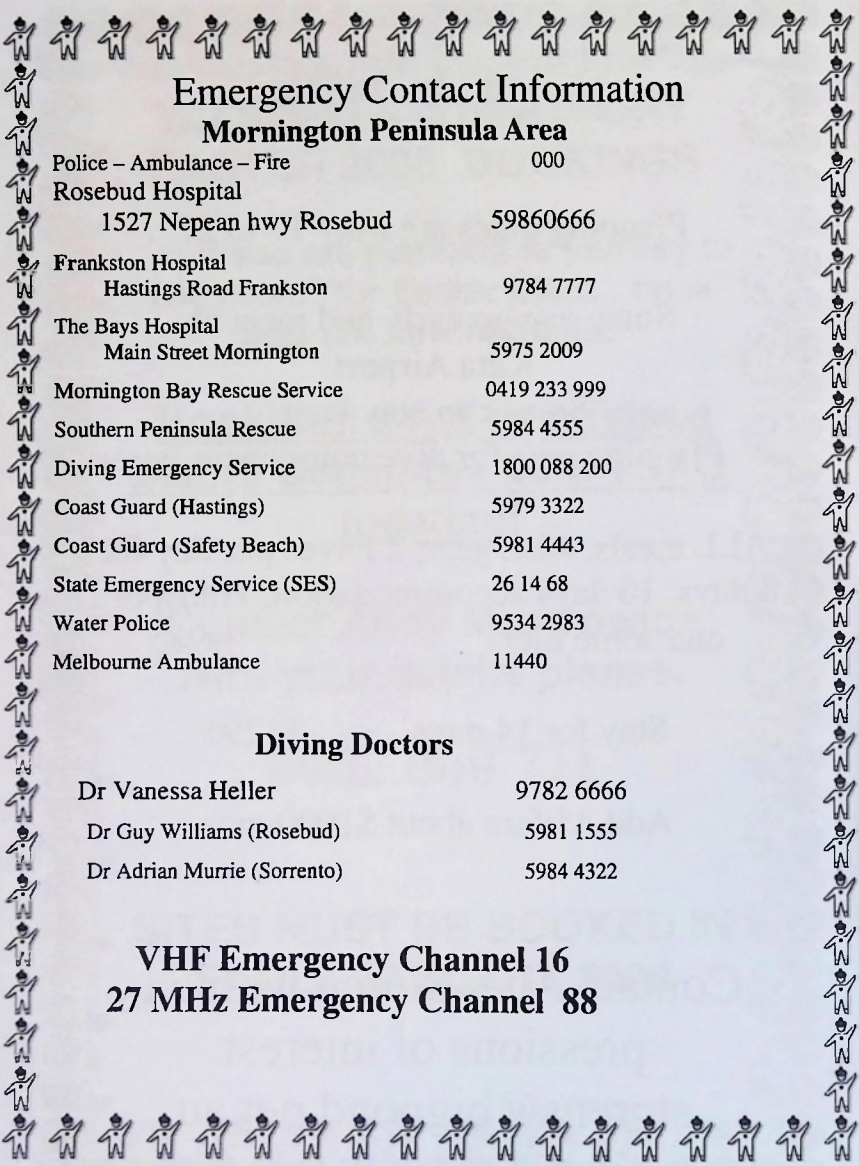
Planning cost for dive component is:

ALL meals, ALL gear, 2 Dives per day for
8 days, 10 days accommodation, Transport,
and some tours \$985

Stay for 14 days \$1295

Add Airfare about \$1000 max

Contact Alan Storen with ex-
pressions of interest
storens@bigpond.net.au



Emergency Contact Information

Mornington Peninsula Area

Police – Ambulance – Fire	000
Rosebud Hospital	
1527 Nepean hwy Rosebud	59860666
Frankston Hospital	
Hastings Road Frankston	9784 7777
The Bays Hospital	
Main Street Mornington	5975 2009
Mornington Bay Rescue Service	0419 233 999
Southern Peninsula Rescue	5984 4555
Diving Emergency Service	1800 088 200
Coast Guard (Hastings)	5979 3322
Coast Guard (Safety Beach)	5981 4443
State Emergency Service (SES)	26 14 68
Water Police	9534 2983
Melbourne Ambulance	11440

Diving Doctors

Dr Vanessa Heller	9782 6666
Dr Guy Williams (Rosebud)	5981 1555
Dr Adrian Murrie (Sorrento)	5984 4322

VHF Emergency Channel 16
27 MHz Emergency Channel 88

Tidal Streams at the Heads—December
Italic times start of EBB
Daylight savings—(adjusted)

<i>Sat 1</i>	<i>Sun 2</i>	<i>Mon 3</i>	<i>Tue 4</i>	<i>Wed 5</i>	<i>Thu 6</i>	<i>Fri 7</i>
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
129	208	247	329		45	144
826	858	930	1002	416	523	658
1420	1513	1609	1706	1039	1117	1200
1947	2045	2148	2301	1801	1853	1943

<i>Sat 8</i>	<i>Sun 9</i>	<i>Mon 10</i>	<i>Tue 11</i>	<i>Wed 12</i>	<i>Thu 13</i>	<i>Fri 14</i>
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
251	347	434	515	553	628	659
832	942	1032	1113	1147	1219	1250
1245	1335	1426	1514	1601	1647	1733
2030	2114	2156	2237	2316	2353	2429

<i>Sat 15</i>	<i>Sun 16</i>	<i>Mon 17</i>	<i>Tue 18</i>	<i>Wed 19</i>	<i>Thu 20</i>	<i>Fri 21</i>
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
29	102	136	211	249	333	426
729	757	824	850	917	947	1024
1321	1355	1431	1513	1600	1656	1800
1821	1911	2003	2102	2210	2333	

<i>Sat 22</i>	<i>Sun 23</i>	<i>Mon 24</i>	<i>Tue 25</i>	<i>Wed 26</i>	<i>Thu 27</i>	<i>Fri 28</i>
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
108	234	345	443	531	614	652
536	715	905	1014	1107	1156	1244
1110	1207	1315	1428	1541	1652	1756
1907	2015	2118	2215	2306	2353	

<i>Sat 29</i>	<i>Sun 30</i>	<i>Mon 31</i>	<i>Tue 1</i>	<i>Wed 2</i>	<i>Thu 3</i>	<i>Fri 4</i>
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
35	114	150	225	301	341	427
726	756	824	851	918	946	1015
1330	1416	1500	1542	1622	1704	1749
1853	1946	2039	2133	2235	2345	

Tidal Streams at the Heads—January
Italic times start of EBB
Daylight savings—(adjusted)

Mon 31	Tue 1	Wed 2	Thu 3	Fri 4	Sat 5	Sun 6
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
150	225	301	341	427	528	208
824	851	918	946	1015	946	700
1500	1542	1622	1704	1749	1840	1127
2039	2133	2235	2345	2458		1936

Mon 7	Tue 8	Wed 9	Thu 10	Fri 11	Sat 12	Sun 13
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
313	407	452	530	602	631	659
856	1004	1052	1130	1202	1233	1306
1222	1328	1436	1541	1642	1736	1829
2033	2129	2218	2301	2341	2416	2450

Mon 14	Tue 15	Wed 16	Thu 17	Fri 18	Sat 19	Sun 20
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
	125	200	237	317	402	48
726	751	815	841	910	945	500
1341	1419	1500	1544	1632	1730	1030
1919	2012	2108	2212	2328		1836

Mon 21	Tue 22	Wed 23	Thu 24	Fri 25	Sat 26	Sun 27
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
210	323	422	510	549	624	654
621	830	958	1059	1149	1234	1315
1130	1249	1420	1548	1701	1800	1851
1950	2103	2206	2300	2345	2426	

Mon 28	Tue 29	Wed 30	Thu 31	Fri 1	Sat 2	Sun 3
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
100	133	205	237	311	346	428
721	746	811	835	900	925	953
1352	1426	1459	1531	1608	1648	1738
1939	2025	2110	2159	2254	2359	

Tidal Streams at the Heads—February
Italic times start of EBB
Daylight savings—(adjusted)

Mon 28	Tue 29	Wed 30	Thu 31	Fri 1	Sat 2	Sun 3
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
100	133	205	237	311	346	
721	746	811	835	900	925	428
1352	1426	1459	1531	1608	1648	953
1939	2025	2110	2159	2254	2359	1738

Mon 4	Tue 5	Wed 6	Thu 7	Fri 8	Sat 9	Sun 10
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
112	225	328	415	453	524	553
522	704	920	1017	1057	1130	1204
1029	1123	1245	1415	1538	1644	1739
1839	1951	2100	2158	2246	2327	

Mon 11	Tue 12	Wed 13	Thu 14	Fri 15	Sat 16	Sun 17
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
4	40	115	151	228	305	
621	648	715	741	809	842	347
1239	1316	1357	1438	1521	1608	920
1830	1922	2015	2110	2209	2312	1701

Mon 18	Tue 19	Wed 20	Thu 21	Fri 22	Sat 23	Sun 24
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
19	132	247	348	435	514	546
441	559	814	945	1045	1130	1208
1009	1117	1255	1440	1604	1707	1800
1807	1928	2050	2157	2250	2334	

Mon 25	Tue 26	Wed 27	Thu 28	Fri 29	Sat 1	Sun 2
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
12	45	115	145	215	244	315
615	641	705	730	753	817	843
1242	1313	1343	1414	1445	1519	1557
1845	1927	2006	2045	2125	2208	2259

VSAG Meeting and Dive Calendar

Dive Date	Location	Dive Captain	Phone	Meeting Point	Time
December					
2	J4/reef	Alan Storen	0417017446	Sorrento	9am
9	VSAG XMAS FUNCTION	Bridey Leggatt	See page 18		
16	The Links	Lloyd Borrett	0418170044	Sorrento	9am
20	Social Evening at Bells			Bells	8pm
23	Nepean Wall/backbeaches	John Lawler	0414922916	Sorrento	9am
26	Portland Trip	Alan Storen			
January					
To 9th	Local Diving	John Lawler	0414922916	Sorrento	9am
13	Nepean Wall	John Lawler	0414922916	Sorrento	9am
17	General Meeting –speaker			Bells	8pm
20	Boarfish reef	Alan Storen	0417 017 446	Sorrento	9am
26/28	The Links/Hero'sCave	Andy Mastrowicz	0402 060 711	Sorrento	9am
February					
3	KNAwesome	John Lawler	0404922916	Sorrento	9am
10	Subs/ Castle Rock	Alan Storen	0417017446	Sorrento	9am
14	Alfred Hyperbaric Chamber see page 7 ring Bridey				
21	General meeting –speaker			Bells	8pm
17	Marybryngong River Cruise	Bridey Leggatt	0437 943 370	tba	
MAR	Labour Day to Cape Jaffa	John Lawler	0414 922 916		
APR	ANZAC weekend to Jervis Bay	Alan Storen	0417 017 446		

Interested in a shore dive (Saturday, etc) or a night dive (shore or boat). Ring Alan Storen on 9803 3573 (H). Gear is available for use (free) — wetsuits depending on size!



Bridey Leggatt—the before and after shot!!

