

FATHOMS

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2008

VICTORIAN SUB-AQUA GROUP

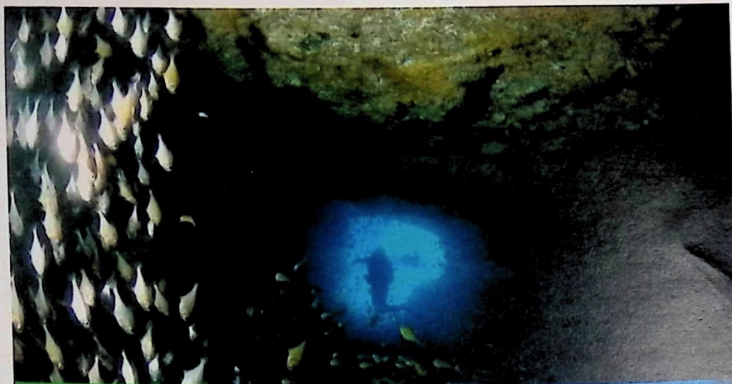


Photo Competition winner—Benita McDonough

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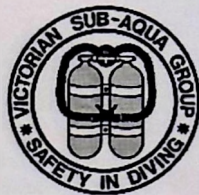




Read Greg
Richards
report on
South West
Rocks
Starts on
Page 41



FATHOMS



Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group

In this October-November 2008 issue...

Article	Author	Page
Editorial	Alan Storen	4
President's Annual Report	Alan Storen	7
The Victorian colonial Navy	Mac Gregory	10
Dive Report 7 Sept	David Geekie	21
DAN Safety devices	DAN	22
VARs Update		24
SharkWater review	Alan Storen	26
Abalone Days 2008/2009		28
Member Profile: Alan Storen		29
The Replacement Canberra		30
Swimmers Ear		32
Member Profile: Pamela Dagley		35
Critter Creatures	Bridey Leggatt	36
Member Profile: Bridey Leggatt		38
VSAG XMAS PARTY		39
Fish Rock Cave	Greg Richards	41
Member Profile: Emma Marshall & Greg Breese		46
Diving Tutukaka in NZ	Greg Breese	48
Emergency contacts		54
Tidal Stream Tables		55-57
VSAG Dive Calendar		58

Committee are listed on Page 6

VSAG General Meetings
3rd Thursday in the month

Editorial Submissions to:

Bell's Hotel
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Editorial

Alan Storen

Another club year has come and gone and we are already planning for 2009.- if you have any suggestions/ recommendations for social activities, dives, trips, speakers, etc please forward to the committee for action. The AGM was a great night and the Presidents report starts on page 7.



The Treasurer's report was circulated at the AGM and if you were not in attendance a copy should be enclosed with Fathoms. If you did not get a copy, and you are financial, please contact me by email and I will send you a copy.

We have many things coming up on the calendar including Melbourne Cup weekend at the Prom , the xmas trip to Eden, the xmas party at Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron, two great speakers at our October and November meetings, the Sulawesi trip in May 2009 as well as our normal diving days. For some of these you need to book in early to ensure a place. We will need to take booking soon for Easter 2009 – Wilson's Prom.

The weather has not been kind of late so there are not many local dive reports but two great articles from the Gregs (Richards and Breese); one on South West Rocks and one on diving in NZ. Also included is another very interesting article from Mac Gregory, this time on the history of the Victorian Navy.

When I started writing the editorial I was wondering how I would fill the magazine—had about 20 pages. I put out the call and suddenly I had over 66 pages with the promise of about 10 more and the question was—what will I defer to the next magazine? Thank you to all who responded.

Remember, there is no such thing as a had dive, just some are better than others.

Cheers
Alan

It's that time of the year again

With the summer diving about to start, the cray season opening on the 16th of November, the abalone on the 15th of November, the former HMAS Canberra due to be sunk early 2009, NOW is the time to:

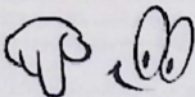


A. Have you dive gear serviced

AND

B. Have your dive medical (if not done recently)

Both could just save your life!



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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Committee 2008 - 2009

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Committee positions to be determined at the October meeting

Committee meets 2nd Wednesday of the month (except in January)
ALL MEMBERS WELCOME
Leighoah Hotel 1555 Dandenong Rd Oakleigh.

Presidents Annual Report 2007/2008

Alan Storen

Thank you to all members for your support during the past year.

The Committee

Thank you especially to the committee for their support to me as President and for their hard work during the past year. In particular I would like to thank our vice-president, John Lawler, who has continued his great work being responsible for communications (I have received nearly 1000 emails from JL this year and any member on email would have received many of these). I also thank him for the assistance he has been to me in many other areas. John has also been one of our delegates to SDFV. We had four new members on the committee this year – Bridey Leggatt (social secretary), Peter Briggs (points scorer), Greg Richards (secretary) and Lloyd Borrett (web master). All have made a significant contribution to the committee and the club and I thank them for that on your behalf. The continuing members on the committee are also thanked for their contributions - Andy Mastrowicz and Priya Cardinaletti with the books, and Mike Kakafikas with the equipment.

We have achieved many of the things we set out to do this year and we have a good base for the future.

Financial Matters

As will be reported by the treasurer we had a positive result for the year with a balance at the end of the financial year of \$13571. This compares with \$11447 at the start of the year. Our major expenses for the year were Fathoms and Club Trips (which is a contra entry). More on that in the Treasurers Report.

Diving

We conducted many local dives during the year with some night dives and Saturday dives included. Some cancellations due to weather; and this winter has been particularly severe!

Our xmas interstate trip to Portland was a great success as were our trips to Cape Jaffa, Jervis Bay, Queenscliff (Boarfish Lodge). Our Easter Trip to Wilson's Promontory was not held this year due to Parks Vic changing the booking system and VSAG missed out on sites. The 2007 Melbourne Cup weekend went ahead but the weather gods were not kind.

Our Bali trip was fantastic and those able to go had plenty of good diving and many great times.

The Jervis Bay trip was a combine trip with Getunder and it was great to see the two clubs mix so well. We plan more in the future.



Meetings

Several guests spoke at our regular meetings. These included: Mac Gregory on Naval stories – and he has kept up his involvement with interesting stories each edition of Fathoms. I thank him in his absence.

Jeff Weir from Dolphin Research Institute – VSAG has become a corporate member of DRI.

Three speakers on Cave diving – including TankCave, CDAA history (Warrick McDonald) and Cave diving in China.

Wendy Roberts from Reef Watch

Shree Marris on Sex in the Sea

Karen Bennett from BIA on Marine Pests

Social

We had a number of social events during the year including the Annual Xmas function – last year at Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron. A great function and it promises to be even bigger and better this year - thanks to Bridey and JL for the organisation. The xmas-in-july function was also great and so was the film night when we saw Sharkwater – thanks to Bridey again.

New members

We have had many new members join this year and several more in the pipeline. Welcome to those members and we hope you have a great time with us. Thanks to Greg Richards and JL for their organisation here.

Equipment

The compressor was not used much and we had it assessed for repair. After many deliberations the committee decided to sell the unit and use the money to hire a compressor if needed. The oxygen cylinders/masks on the boats are also being assessed. The club purchased new First Aid Kits and these are located on boats, but available to any member if needed – contact Mike K.

Boats

We have mainly relied on Mick Jeacle, John Lawler, Peter Briggs and David Geekie's boats for most of the weekend diving with assistance from Andy Mas-trowicz on club trips. I thank them for the use of their boats during the past year.

Fathoms

Some great articles this year and 'keep them coming'. It was great to see some new members contributing. Many thanks to JL, Greg Richards, Rob Kirk, Jackie Storen, Jude Storen, Kathy Pedlow, Lloyd Borrett, David Geekie, John Mills, . - and many others. Without your contributions there would be no magazine.

Awards

Club Member of the year 1994: Pat Reynolds

Club Member of the Year 2008: Alan Storen



Literary Award: Alan Storen



Fathoms Award: Greg Richards & John Lawler



Photographic Competition #1

Benita McDonough

Photographic Competition #2

Benita McDonough & Andy Mastrowicz

I again thank you and the committee for your support this year.

Alan

Here is the story of the Victorian Colonial and Royal Australian Navies and the visit to Australia of The US Great White Fleet August 20/September 5, 1908.

Its the 100 anniversary of the visit to Sydney and Melbourne of 16 Battleships, all painted white and their 14,000 sailors, it carried great political consequences for Australia, and the forming of the RAN in 1911.



The Victorian Colonial and Royal Australian Navies, and the visit of The Great White Fleet to Australia, August 20, to September 5, 1908.

By Mackenzie Gregory.

Introduction.

Australia is an island continent, if you study a world map you may be surprised to learn that about 70% of the world's surface is covered by water.

Our country was discovered by Captain James Cook in 1770.

In 1950 I was appointed Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor General of Australia, Sir William McKell. At the National Library in Canberra I was able to get my hands on Captain James Cook's original Endeavour Journal to learn from the Entry for Sunday 6th of May 1770.

In the evening the yawl returned from fishing having caught two stingrays weighing nearly 600 pounds. The great quantity of huge stingrays found in this place occasioned me in giving the name of Stingrays Harbour....

(This is crossed out by Cook in his Journal, his next try was Botanist Harbour, but this also is crossed out, then Botanist Bay was given a run, but it too was erased, finally Botany Bay was used, and this name survived, to be still used today.)

We were settled, albiet, initially by convicts transported by sea from the British Isles, our imports and exports have essentially used the sea. The oceans that surround us have formed a protective barrier, prior to the development of aircraft we were totally dependent upon the sea for travel to and from the rest of the world. In our National Anthem, the importance of the sea to our country is recognised by the phrase "*Girt by Sea.*"

I suggest that we in Australia will always need " To look to the Sea."

In the early stages of Australia's development, the Royal Navy provided our shield of defence, but in the main it was based upon Sydney.

Discovery of Gold in Victoria.

It was at Ballarat in August of 1851 that James Reagan and John Dunlop discovered gold, to be followed by a number of other sites throughout Victoria.

A good deal of this precious metal was shipped off to England, carried in sailing ships.

The Victorian government and the local populace of Melbourne were fearful of attacks from both the French and Russians, upon the stored stocks of gold held for future shipment, and on the vessels carrying it off to Europe.

Defence of Melbourne and Port Phillip Bay.

Port Phillip Bay is roughly 20 miles wide by 30 miles from the Heads to Port Melbourne.

Naval Reserve training commenced in 1855 with the formation of the Sandridge and Williamstown Companies of the Victorian Naval Brigade.

By 1864 there were 68 pounder batteries mounted around the Bay, eg the Sandridge Lagoon battery, Emerald Hill Central battery, Emerald Hill Advanced battery, St Kilda battery, Breakwater Pier battery, Right battery, Lighthouse battery at Williamstown near the Railway Pier (the largest of them all, with 8 by 68 pounders). At the entrance to Port Phillip Bay, at both Point Nepean and Queenscliff.

There had been an embarrassing incident when in 1862, a Russian warship had entered the Bay, firing a salute that could not be returned by the Queenscliff battery, WHY? the battery did not have any ammunition.

There were opinions aired that the Russians were merely testing out our defences at the entrance to Port Phillip Bay!

Confederate Raider Shenandoah.

On the afternoon of January 25th. 1865, Captain J. L. Waddell sailed his Confederate Armed Raider *Shenandoah* into Hobson's Bay, he requested that his ship be slipped at Williamstown for repairs, and to take on food and water.

Melbournians flocked to view the raider who also was quietly attempting to recruit crewmen, but the Victorian Government sought to ignore such reports.

Amongst the locals, some were for the Raider, others against her.

In fact about 42 men were actually recruited and were transported in four boats from Sandridge beach. (eluding a police presence)

Neutrality breach.

This breach of Neutrality was to cost the British Government dearly, after the war, an International Tribunal awarded damages to the United States against Britain of some \$ 15.5 Million, an immense sum in those days.

Shenandoah continued to attack shipping in the Pacific, and was not aware that peace had been declared, as she sank a number of US vessels after the war was over.

A newspaper captured from a ship that was sunk provided Captain Waddell with the first news that The American Civil War was actually over.

This warship had been the former *Sea King*, bought by Confederate Agents in London, and sailed to Madeira to be fitted out at sea with her 8 guns, and re-named *CSS Shenandoah*.

Early Victorian Governor.

The Royal Navy continued its influence with the appointment of Victoria's first Governor, a Naval Officer, Captain Sir Charles Hotham, after Victoria gained its independence from the Colony of New South Wales.

Sir Charles served for but a short period, from May 22 to December 31, 1855.

Victorian Colonial Navy.

The State of Victoria was to develop the largest of all the Australian Colonial Naval forces, and negotiated for their first warship, an 880 ton sloop, HMCSS (the SS denotes steam sloop) *Victoria 1*, launched at London in 1855.

She served over 1860-61 in New Zealand during the First Taranaki War, thus becoming the very first Australian unit to serve in an overseas war.

From the early days of settlement in Victoria the importance of Sandridge (the former name for Port Melbourne) in its defence was clearly recognised.

A site on Sandridge beach would be an ideal location for a gun powder reserve, and in 1861 an area of the beach near the lagoon (the future site for building HMAS Lonsdale) was reserved for Military purposes.



HMS Nelson.

A 55 year old ship, *HMS Nelson* was acquired for training purposes, and the Victorian Treasurer arranged for the construction in UK of a Monitor, *HMVS Cerberus*, so named after the Three Headed Dog that guarded the gates to Hades.

Britain agreed to pay 80% of her costs.

The new ship arrived on station in Victoria in 1871, carrying 10 inch guns.

It is a tragedy that this Monitor, the only survivor of its type world wide was sunk

as a breakwater off the beach of the Melbourne suburb of Blackrock.

She was allowed to rot, and an attempt to preserve her at this late stage now underway, may prove to be too late.

In 1883, two First Class Gun Boats, two Second Class, and one First Class Torpedo Boat were ordered at a cost of 84,200 Pounds.



The Victorian Colonial Navy ships bore names such as: *Victoria II*, *Albert*, *Childers*, *Lonsdale*, and *Nepean*. The threat from French and Russian warships was very much in the minds of the Victorian Government, and a number of Merchant Ships were fitted out as auxiliary warships.

A minelayer *Miner*, the Melbourne Harbour Trust hopper barges *Batman* and *Fawkner*, the tugs, *Gannet* and *Eagle*, the Yacht *Commissioner*, and the Launch *Spray*.

1886 saw the arrival of the Turnabout Torpedo Boat, launched as *Gordon*, designed to turn rapidly in the water after discharging her torpedoes. *Lady Loch*, the Victorian fleet's largest auxiliary also came into service in 1886, fitted with one 6 inch gun plus two one inch Nordenfelt guns.

On May 25 1889, the auxiliary Yacht *Vulcan* was launched off Williams-town, a 75 ton mine layer, she transferred from Navy control to the Permanent Engineers, as the Army was re-

sponsible for controlled mine laying, from this distance that appears an odd decision, Naval mining at sea run by the Army! But I parade my bias.

It is an interesting fact that from a Defence Budget for Victoria in 1890, of the 145,000 Pounds total, the Navy scored 32,000 Pounds 6 shillings and 4 pence, I found myself pondering on the 6 shillings and 4 pence, what would that bring to our Naval defence?

Countess of Hopetoun was laid down in 1890 at the Yarrow and Company yard in UK, the last ship to be ordered for the Victorian Navy. She was to have a top speed of 24 knots, and was the largest and most powerful Torpedo Boat in all of the Colonial Navies. This vessel was also the first to feature a twin and rotating torpedo mounting.

In 1895 both *Albert* and *Victoria* were withdrawn from service, plus the auxiliary gun boats and *Nelson* was already in reserve.

The colony of Victoria now only operated *Cerberus* and five torpedo boats.

GORDON



The Turnabout Torpedo Boat, named GORDON. She carried two torpedoes in a revolving gun on either side and a 6 inch Nordenfelt gun on the mainmast.



Japan and the United States, early 1900's.

Japanese and United States relationships were at a new low in 1907.

Japan had been victorious against the Chinese and the Russians both on land and at sea respectively, many in the US believed that the US west coast and Hawaii were vulnerable to attack from Japan.

President Teddy Roosevelt considered that a show of strength by his Navy might deter the Japanese, he ordered his Atlantic Fleet to undertake a world wide cruise, and now named the Great White Fleet, all the ships were painted white, and consisting of 16 Battleships manned by 14,000 sailors sailed from Hampton Roads, farewelled by their President in his Yacht *Mayflower*, on December 16, 1907, to commence a voyage that lasted till February 22 in 1909.



Great White Fleet Battleships in line ahead.

As the Panama Canal was still unfinished, the fleet needed to sail round Cape Horn to enter the Pacific Ocean.

Over the 15 years before the Great White Fleet sailed on its historic world wide cruise, in the Pacific Ocean the balance of power was shifting, from the Sino-Japanese war 1894-95, and the Russian-Japanese conflict 1904-05 the pendulum had swung to a strengthening Japanese Navy in the Pacific.

The Russian Navy was destroyed at Tsushima, the French Navy was in decline, the British had withdrawn their Battleships, leaving Japan with the biggest single fleet in the Pacific Ocean. This was of great concern to President Teddy Roosevelt, hence his orders to the Great White Fleet.

Australia, Britain and the Great White Fleet.

After Federation, Australia, as we have noted, combined all its State Colonial Navies to form the Commonwealth Naval Forces, but essentially we relied upon the

Royal Navy to shield and protect us.

But both the British and Australia were really working from different agenda, the British Admiralty wanted Australian ships to act as they were required to suit the needs of the British Empire. The Australian Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin wanted more independence for the infant Australian Navy, he sought to put Australia's needs and its defence as his primary priority. He pre-empted the Australian WW2 Prime Minister, John Curtin, who after the Fall of Singapore in 1942 turned his eyes to the East to the United States for both alliance and support.

Alfred Deakin ignored the Colonial Office in London and contacted President Roosevelt to invite his Great White Fleet to visit Australia, he agreed that his ships would visit Sydney, Melbourne and lastly Albany to coal for the next leg of their voyage.

This was the commencement of an alliance between Australia and the United States that still flourishes in 2008, in 2001 we celebrated the 50th. anniversary of the ANZUS treaty.

To mark that event, at the Washington Navy Yard on September 10, 2001, President George W. Bush presented the ship's bell from USS *Canberra* (named after HMAS *Canberra*, sunk at the Battle of Savo Island on August 9, 1942.) to the Australian Prime Minister John Howard.



*to
Madelaine
best with
John*

I had been sunk in HMAS *Canberra*, and my son Raymond had been christened aboard USS *Canberra*, alongside at Station Pier on Mother's Day in 1967, using this bell as the christening font. Both my wife and myself were present in Washington for the impressive bell handing over ceremony.



The British Press.

The British press went to work with a will, trying to downgrade the importance of any visit to Australia of the Great White Fleet, they even questioned our loyalty to the Mother Country.

Australia was not expected to be the petulant child stamping its foot as we were not getting our own way.

Colonials should be aware of their proper place within the heirarchy of the Empire. Let me go forward to 1940, I was serving in HMAS *Australia* attached to the British Home Fleet, we had been seconded to the Royal Naval force supporting General Charles de Gaulle's debacle at Vichy held Dakar on the west coast of Africa. *Australia* had twice been hit by French shells, had our Walrus aircraft shot down,

Composition of the Great White Fleet.

1st. Division. USS *Connecticut*, fleet flag-ship. US ships, *Kansas*, *Vermont*, *Louisiana*.

2nd. Division. USS *Georgia*, divisional flag-ship, US ships, *New Jersey*, *Rhode Island*, *Virginia*.

3rd. Division. USS *Minnesota*, divisional flag ship, US ships, *Maine*, *Missouri*, *Ohio*.

4th. Division. USS *Alabama*, divisional flag-ship, US ships, *Illinois*, *Kearsange*, *Kentucky*.

Fleet Auxiliaries.

USS *Culgoa* and USS *Glacier*, store ships.

USS *Panther*, repair ship.

USS *Yankton*, tender.

Torpedo Flotilla Destroyers.

US ships, *Hopkins*, *Hull*, *Lawrence*, *Stewart*, *Tuxton*, and *Whipple*.

Arethusa, torpedo flotilla tender.



USS Connecticut



USS Georgia



New Zealand.

Over August 9-15 the Fleet visited Auckland to a great reception from the New Zealand people.

Now it sailed for Sydney Australia to arrive in that city on August 20 for a 7 day day visit. Sydney viewed the visit of the Great White Fleet as a sign that any aggressive move from the Japanese Navy would be thwarted by an American Fleet.

As the Russians had been defeated, and the British had also vacated the Pacific, the remaining vacuum could only be filled by America.

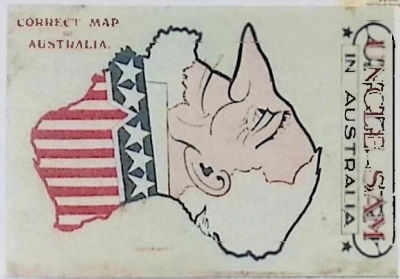
A local comment was, we have never seen a single British battleship here, now we suddenly have 16 battleships in Sydney Harbour. Their reception was overwhelming. Allow me to quote from James R. Reckner's book: *Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet*,

"So intense was Australia's and Sydney's interest in the visit of the Great White Fleet

one half of the population of that city remained awake the entire night, and thousands and thousands of them long before night was over were on their way to the hill tops outside the city limits, where they massed in unbroken lines to view the spectacle. An estimate of the viewers vary from 500,000 to 650,000." Finally on August 27 the Fleet disengaged itself from Sydney's embrace



Advertisement for the visit of the U.S. Fleet to Australia, 1908.



and sailed out through the Heads to turn south and head for Melbourne. When the Fleet sailed, 91 men had failed to report, but USS *Yankton* had stayed behind, and when she proceeded, 60 of them had come aboard, the remainder stayed in Sydney. *Melbourne Greets the US Fleet.* Even today there is a great sense of ri-

valry between Australia's two major cities. For this visit of the Great White Fleet to Melbourne, the locals knew they would have to excel to top the reception that Sydney had provided for their visitors. On Saturday August 29, 1908, the Fleet entered Port Phillip Bay just after 11 AM.



Crowds lined the foreshore, small boats greeted the majestic battle-ships to accompany them on the 30 miles trip up the Bay, where the Fleet dropped anchor in two lines of 8 ships, off Williamstown at about 3 PM.



Melbourne was about to turn on American Week. HMAS *Cerberus* was anchored at the entrance of the Yarra River, she returned the Fleet's salutes and then saluted Rear Admiral Sperry's birth-

day. The monitor was now 40 years old, tending to look her age against the might of the United States, she was spawned in a different Naval era.

Ballarat Boy's Naval Brigade.

The Boy's Naval Brigade from Ballarat wished to see the Great White Fleet, they requested Railway Passes from the Government, the then Premier, Tommy Bent, growled "Let them walk." and that is exactly what the boys did, a report says, over 5 days the Boys marched from Ballarat to Melbourne, to arrive to a great reception.

The local community raised such a fuss that the Government was forced to provide for them return train travel, so many gifts were showered upon this Naval Brigade, that an extra rail carriage was needed to accommodate it all.

Rear Admiral Sperry goes ashore.

On Sunday the 30th. of August, Rear Admiral Sperry officially landed at St Kilda Pier to attend a reception tended by the Australian Prime Minister and his Cabinet.

The next day, a US Naval Brigade landed at Port Melbourne, marched along dusty roads to the City, thence to parade down Swanston Street, to the cheers of a huge cheering crowd lining the street, people up poles for a better view, others crowding windows overlooking the parade.

Freemasons and Roman Catholics.

The Freemasons looked after some 1,000 of their members aboard the 16 ships, now the Roman Catholics, not to be outdone, arranged a special Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral for a 1,000 visiting Sailors.

Military Review.

The Military Review held on Thursday at Flemington Racecourse was probably the highlight of the US visit.

8,000 Victorian Cadets including the Ballarat Boys, and many military units took part.

Dinner.

That evening a lavish dinner for 3,000 Sailors was set up at the Exhibition Building. come the start time of 7 PM, a lone Sailor was present, by 9 PM only 7 had turned up. With female company in full supply, why would a Sailor want to leave his new found girlfriend to attend a dreary dinner with his shipmates he sailed with every day? From the girl's viewpoint, they were reluctant to give up their exciting escorts to be left alone.

The Sailors were feted.

Free rail passes were available, some went off to Bendigo, clubs made the visitors welcome, balls were turned on, homes opened, all were treated like heroes, no wonder in due course.

Time to leave.

Liberty was supposed to end at 11PM on Friday the 4th. of September, the Fleet due to sail next day. The last 1/4 of a mile to the Railway Station lay through packed crowds, gathered to say goodbye.

The girls hugged and kissed the Sailors struggling to reach the station, their tunic buttons grabbed as a souvenir. It was little wonder that some of the US Sailors chose to take permanent leave of the US Navy in Melbourne.

On the first count, 85 had failed to return to their ships, this figure was soon revised upwards to 221.

The problems of coaling ships.

Only two of the six British Colliers to coal the US Fleet turned up in Melbourne. Perhaps Britain was merely demonstrating that Australia was still dependent upon her.

Rear Admiral Sperry was forced to go to the local market to buy more inferior coal to make sure his ships reached Albany where coal was waiting to take the Fleet on its next leg.

Time for tears.

" Fleet bitten girls rose on Saturday morning, went to the edge of the Bay to wave heart broken to the departing Armada. Others got up with the object of their affections still there."

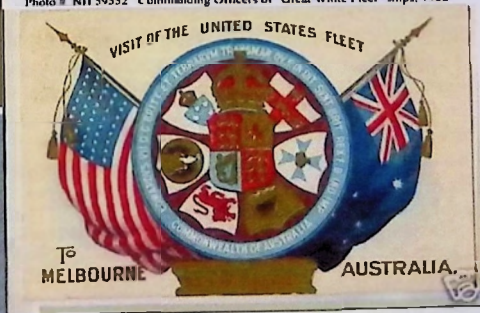
On Saturday morning, September 5th. 15 Battleships departed, leaving USS *Kansas* behind to collect any mail and other males still not returned.

When she sailed on the 10th. she carried 458 bags of Fleet mail and 100 stragglers. Still ashore and unaccounted for between 100 and 115 deserters.

How fascinating it would be to actually track down some of the descendents from those who



Photo # N11 59552 Commanding Officers of "Great White Fleet" ships, 1908



Visit of the Great White Fleet a huge success.

The visit to Sydney and Melbourne of the Great White Fleet was a huge success. The Sailors later voted that Melbourne turned out to be the best Liberty Port over the entire World tour.

Politically, the visit had vindicated Alfred Deakin's decision to contact directly President Teddy Roosevelt to invite his ships to call into Sydney and Melbourne. The visit of this powerful force raised the awareness of Australians to our vulnerability, and the need for a Navy under our own control.

We received Royal assent from King George Vth. to prefix Australian Navy with Royal, thus on July 10th. 1911 the Royal Australian Navy came into being.

New Drill Hall for Port Melbourne.

The Navy had outgrown the Bay Street Drill Hall, and in 1942 a new Drill Hall was built on the Lagoon site to open as the HQ of Lonsdale.

Any one in Victoria joining the Navy for the duration of Hostilities and a further six months had the prefix PM to their Official Number. PM stood for Port Melbourne, they thus carried with them over their career the fact they joined the RAN at Port Melbourne.

and thousands would fall into that category. In 1992, Lonsdale was decommissioned, the site was cleared to give way to a high rise apartment block named HMAS.

The Bay Street Drill Hall passed from Commonwealth ownership to the then Liberal Victorian Government, who allowed CIRCUS OZ to take possession, they are still in occupancy in 2008.

The Long Naval Association with the City of Port Melbourne ends.

Thus the long association of the Navy with Port Melbourne sadly came to an end, today no one would ever know that the Navy ever existed in the precinct.

The Naval Heritage Foundation of Australia Inc.

In January 2008, an interested group of the Navy Family in Melbourne incorporated The Naval Heritage Foundation of Australia Inc.

One of its objectives is to erect a 1.25 times normal size bronze Statue of a WW2 Sailor at Port Melbourne, adjacent to the site of the old Town Pier, demolished in 1950.

Since the mid 1850's and the Colonial Navy, thousands of naval men and women have served their country in war and peace. There is not a single Heritage Marker to remember all those who passed this way.

The *Answering The Call* Statue will be designed to honour and remember them, and is estimated to cost \$150,000.

I am proud to be President of the Foundation

Best wishes. Mac.



Spring is in the Air—and even in the Water

David Geekie

I was desperate for a cure for dehydration and was devastated to hear from JL that he couldn't raise a crew for Saturday. Even worse was the thought of having to go to work if I couldn't get an appointment for treatment of dehydration. Then I received another call from JL late on Friday afternoon..... He was in as bad a state as I was – would I be interested in a dive in the bay on Anonymous Shoal, just the two of us? Had to think that one over.... go to work (again) on a day that looked like being great... or go diving, boat to ourselves, have a relaxing lunch afterwards, nice leisurely start at 10.00AM.

Told the guys at work we could do Sunday if they had to work (and we did)! Saturday exceeded our wildest hopes, crystal clear weather, no breeze and warmth in the sun. As we approached the dive site JL expressed concern that the water was a little 'green', but as soon as we slowed we found we could clearly see the bottom in around 4m. We literally 'placed' the anchor on a sand patch between the patches of reef and kitted up. Having done the scallop dive organized by Greg R I was pleasantly surprised to find the water not quite as icy upon entry. The reef was very pretty, lots of sea urchins and abalone, but not much fish life. However it was just great to be back under and we very much enjoyed our 50 minutes exploring. Back on board we were quickly warmed up by the sun and some hot soup. It was such a lovely day we motored up to Half Moon bay for some fish and chips, then went up to Sundringham to have a look at the sub in the marina. I had never seen this, it was interesting to compare it to the J4.

We eventually headed back and recovered the boat before heading to JL's for a relaxing cup of tea. All in all a very pleasant way to partake in a cancelled dive day! Many thanks John for providing a treatment for my dehydration, may there be many more such treatments.

Re: Spring is in the air – and even in the water!

by BUBBLEDIVER on Mon, 08 Sep 2008 08:11 PM

....And BTW..to add just a bit more to this brilliant day. just near Ricketts Point from under oily flat calm blue waters came a pod of dolphins hunting and feeding on the bait fish that have come into the Northern part around this time of year..such a great sight!!!

Apart from the great company of David this" made my day"



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Safety devices that DAN considers an essential part of every divers kit.

Safety Sausage/SMB

A safety sausage/SMB is recommended on all dives. They are light, fold down to a small size so don't take up much space, are easy to deploy and effective in gaining attention. However, length is an obvious issue. In Richard and Allyson's case the 1.2m Safety Sausage they deployed was not effective, so size is a definite issue! DAN recommends a length of at least 1.8m.

In addition to standing up out of the water to attract the attention of boats, they can also be laid flat on the water to signal aircraft, adding to their overall value.

Dive Alert/Other Compressed Air Signalling Device

Dive Alert is an air driven sound alert that attaches to a divers inflator hose. It is loud and some can be used underwater as well as on the surface. However, these are useless if there is no air left to draw from.

Safety Whistle

Safety whistles can be useful in alerting your dive boat or companions if something untoward happens in the sea. Safety whistles can equally be useful if a scuba diver suddenly becomes injured or disabled and there is no way to get help. Safety whistles can work in and out of the water and some can be heard as far away as 1.6km. Whistles, however, will lose their effectiveness if the boat you are trying to gain the attention of is upwind and/or has the engine on. But given their small size and light weight they should be an essential part of your kit.

Torch/Strobe

The small glow in the dark from a torch could prove to be a lifesaver. A strobe is a high-intensity white light that flashes at regular intervals from 50-70 times per minute. Both are very practical for a diver as they are available in a small size, are affordable, and make an incredible difference in terms of alerting your position and existence. Strobes flash upwards as well as around, which will ensure you are seen even in rough seas.

Mirror/CD

A mirror or CD will work to catch sunlight and attract attention to you. These are small and light to carry and can prove effective in drawing attention to your location, so they should accompany you on every dive. Of course to be effective you need to create a visible and ongoing reflection of light in the direction of your dive boat and/or potential rescuers.

Reel

A small wreck reel or explorer reel can be used for navigation, towing a flag & staying connected to your dive buddy if you end up in a stranded situation together, so should also be incorporated as part of your safety kit.

Dive Knife or EMT Shears

Effective if you need to cut through line or if you find yourself tangled in something.

These above items will ensure you are prepared for whatever situation you may be faced with. As a bonus they are small in size, light in weight and therefore a logical addition to your safety kit. Don't get caught out. Make sure you have each of these elements in your safety kit.

Finally, it is essential that you know how to use your safety equipment to maximum effect. And don't be shy in using your devices. Deploy your safety devices immediately should you find yourself in a potentially dangerous situation. Don't assume you have been seen or think that you may be overreacting to a situation. Wouldn't you rather laugh at your overreaction from the safety of your dive boat or in the bar with your buddies once on shore?

Update

28th September 2008

In Brief

Work continues with ship preparation with the project still on target for a likely scuttling date sometime in early 2009.

An Information evening was held on 8th September to provide an update to the dive community and other interested parties.

Sub-committees are continuing with their work to support the scuttling and ensure that the final dive site and experience is the best possible for all.

For more info; or to join VARS; or to offer to help go to the VARS web-site(s): www.vars.org.au OR www.hmascanberra.com.au



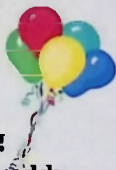
DIVE PARTY

All Divers Welcome

SATURDAY 22nd NOVEMBER - 7:30pm

RYE HOTEL - Blue Water Room

Tickets: \$20 per head



Let's kick the season off with a bang!!!
Your chance to catch up with your old dive buddies,
or make some new ones!

Plus!

**Live Dive Gear Auction with all
proceeds going towards the
*EX-HMAS Canberra Project Fund***

Entry includes: Finger Food, Tea & Coffee, Entry to door prize draw, Ability to bid at Dive Gear Auction.

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL

*Tickets available at
your local dive centre
(Only 120 tickets available)*



Please Note: Anyone wanting to have dinner at the Rye Hotel before the party starts is advised to book early with the hotel for at least one hour before the start of the party at 7:30pm.



VSAG moviegoers recently attended the movie

Sharkwater, by filmmaker Rob Stewart. The film is an expose of the global slaughter of sharks, and is a call to action to save these misunderstood animals. Starters for this event were Alan, Jude and Jackie Storen, Lloyd Borrett, Benita McDonough and John Lawler

Sharks are apex predators, helping to control populations of prey species. Consequently, reducing the number of sharks may have significant and unpredictable impacts on other parts of the ecosystem. According to Stewart, these effects may even include diminishing global oxygen levels, thereby threatening the survival of our own species.

The film focused primarily on the threats from long line fishing and shark fin fisheries, which, along with other threats, have decimated 90% of sharks worldwide! Shark finning is a multi billion dollar industry, and its massive lobby power has allowed it to continue even in areas such as the Galapagos and the Cocos Islands, some of the last remaining sanctuaries for sharks.

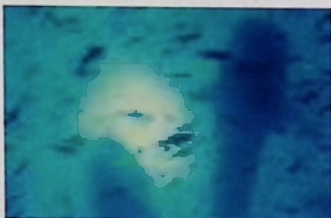
REVIEW: Sharkwater

For filmmaker Rob Stewart, exploring sharks began as an underwater adventure. What it turned into was a beautiful and dangerous life journey into the balance of life on earth. Driven by passion fed from a life-long fascination with sharks, Stewart debunks historical stereotypes and media depictions of sharks as blood-thirsty, man-eating monsters and reveals the reality of sharks as pillars in the evolution of the seas.

Filmed in visually stunning, high definition video, Sharkwater takes you into the most shark rich waters of



the world, exposing the exploitation and corruption surrounding the world's shark populations in the marine reserves of Cocos Island, Costa Rica and the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador.



REVIEW: The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou

Starring: Bill Murray, Owen Wilson, Cate Blanchett, Anjelica Huston, Willem Dafoe, Jeff Goldblum, Michael Gambon, Noah Taylor.

Steve Zissou, sea-film auteur a la Jacques Cousteau, has reason to be melancholy: his partner has been eaten, perhaps by a mythic jaguar shark, his wife may be taking up with her ex-husband, a young man appears claiming Steve is his father (Steve hates fathers), his most recent films have tanked, he's having trouble raising money for his venture to revenge his partner, and he's attracted to a pregnant reporter who prefers the pretender. At sea, in pursuit of the shark, will he escape pirates and mutiny, forge the bonds of fatherhood, place his arm around his wife, find the monster of the deep, re-establish box office hegemony, and discover a reason to smile?

My comments: The first film was very powerful and, if you missed it but have a chance to view it later, then I would highly recommend it. The second film was not my scene – the family and Benita lasted about 5 minutes but Lloyd stuck it out so if you want more details please see him. It's something of a collage of colorful imagery, fragmented shots, quirky music, strange characters, bizarre situations, and amusing montages. I do warn you though, if you are not a fan of dry humor, this one's most likely not for you. The movie's loaded with it, in all of its off-beat, tongue-in-cheek anti-glory.

Thanks to Bridey for her organisation

Alan

PS we had a meal at the 'Dicks' [Dick Whittington Pub] just down Chapel St a couple of hundred metres South of the Astor theatre and it was fantastic— great food, service and atmosphere.

**If you want to donate money to shark research visit:
www.sharkwater.com**

Editor: The movie sharkwater is well worth the visit if you missed it this time.

Permitted Abalone Days 2008.



November : 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30

December: 6, 7, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23,
24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31

January 2009 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25, 26, 31

February 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28

March 1, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 21, 22

April 10, 11, 12, 13, 25, 26, 27

May 9, 10

All care has been taken in the compiling of this list from Fisheries but you should always double check against official listings



Member Profile: Alan Storen.

1. **Favourite dive spot ?** Anywhere there is water.

2. **Favourite type of diving?** A really hard question as my outlook is: 'All dives are good dives'. Love all dives for many different reasons – saw a new (for me) fish species, great wreck, awesome cave, muck dive, solo dive, large fish – sharks, whales, sunfish, pike, barracouta, mantas, bull rays, etc, etc. Sometimes just to get wet!!



3. **Why did you get into diving initially?** I was a very keen snorkeler/ spearo in my youth and this was the natural progression. It became a passion or if you ask my wife an obsession!

4. **Perfect dive location/holiday if money no object.?** If money was not an object then my surface intervals would decrease to the absolute minimum. Any where any time! The next dive is always the best dive. Love to dive Antarctica and the Red Sea.

5. **Favourite piece of equipment?** I could not live without my mask – not just any mask but my mask – the one with the prescription lens in it – without which I would not be able to see the fantastic things under the water, or my gauges, or my buddy, or.....

6. **Worst dive and why?** Hey, there is no such thing as a bad dive – some dives might not be as good as others but:

- a. the phone can not ring
- b. the company's great
- c. it is non-stress
- d. there is always something new to see
- e. I am often joined by my sons and daughter
- f. there is no lawn to mow

The only down side is 'no red wine' underwater!

7. **Why did you join VSAG?** I initially read about VSAG in DiveLog and, having done many dives with school students at Wesley, I was keen to get back to more serious diving as I was often limited by their experience level.